

Introduction

The purpose of Access North Texas is to document the public transportation needs for seniors (older adults), individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited financial resources, and other transit-dependent populations. These populations can have difficulty finding public transportation options that connect them to medical appointments, work opportunities, job training, education, food access, and other essential destinations. This plan identifies where these transportation connections could be improved within Ellis County and Navarro County. This chapter provides an overview of outreach efforts, demographics, existing transportation services, findings, and prioritized strategies. More information about the plan and findings can be found in the Executive Summary.

Outreach

Public outreach for Ellis and Navarro counties was conducted through a survey and stakeholder outreach meeting. Outreach efforts were advertised through email communication, the Access North Texas website, a Local Motion publication, and social media. Opportunity to share transit-related comments and concerns anonymously by location in a virtual public mapping tool called Map Your Experience was also available through the Access North Texas website.

North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Transportation staff conducted 13 meetings across the region, which included a virtual meeting on April 8, 2025, for Ellis and Navarro counties. Emails were sent to over 200 recipients in the Ellis County and Navarro County email subscriber lists. The meeting was also promoted on the Access North Texas website. One individual and five NCTCOG staff attended.

A transportation survey was also available to residents and stakeholders online, on paper, and available in English and Spanish. The online survey could also be translated into multiple languages by selecting the preferred language option from the drop-down box on the live survey page. The survey for the public collected input on public transportation in the region. A similar survey was also available online for organizations and agencies that work with transit-dependent populations. For the public survey, there were approximately nine participants for Ellis County and approximately three participants for Navarro County. For the public agency survey, participants from two agencies indicated they operate in or serve Ellis County, and the same two agencies also for Navarro County. Finally, one

transit-related comment was received for Ellis County, and none for Navarro County through Map Your Experience.

All feedback from outreach efforts were cleaned, compiled, and coded for analysis, in addition to the survey feedback. Using the coding key, qualitative feedback was quantified to create visual representations of feedback for identified barriers, missed trips, desired modes, and enhancements. See Appendix D for the visualizations. Additional feedback was factored into the Ellis County and Navarro County analysis as applicable, such as in situations where comments relate to multiple counties, no county was specified, or for transit providers operating across county boundaries.

Demographics Assessment

Ellis County is experiencing significant growth while Navarro County is experiencing moderate growth. According to the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the current population of Ellis County exceeds 213,000 in comparison to 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of under 174,000. This shows an over 22 percent increase in population for Ellis County. For Navarro County, through the 2024 ACS, the current population exceeds 54,700 in comparison to 2019 ACS of just under 49,000. This shows an over 11 percent increase in population. Ellis County's population, according to the region's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2050, is expected to reach more than 442,000 by 2050. The plan does not include Navarro County projections.

When comparing the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates to the 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates for Ellis County, the older adult population increased by over 26 percent, individuals with a disability population increased by nearly 22 percent, and low-income populations increased by over 8 percent. For Navarro County, the older adult population increased by nearly 11 percent, individuals with a disability population increased by over 5 percent, and low-income population increased by over 1 percent. Areas with higher concentrations of these populations should be a particular priority in efforts to promote existing or new transit services. Detailed estimates and percentages for these key populations, as well as other demographics of interest, are shown in the table below and in the appendix.

Metric	Ellis County Population	Ellis County	Regional
Households	71,759	-	-
Zero-Car Households	2,674	3.7%	4.8%
Older Adults (65 and over)	27,788	13.0%	12.3%
Individuals with a disability	24,822	11.7%	10.5%
Individuals with low-income	22,097	10.5%	14.1%
Veterans	10,529	6.7%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	56,170	26.4%	25.0%
Limited English-Speaking Individuals	14,108	7.1%	11.9%

Table 1: Target Population and County Metrics. Data from 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Metric	Navarro County Population	Navarro County	Regional
Households	19,044	-	-
Zero-Car Households	849	4.5%	4.8%
Older Adults (65 and over)	9,125	16.7%	12.3%
Individuals with a disability	8,957	16.6%	10.5%
Individuals with low-income	11,831	22.2%	14.1%
Veterans	2,760	6.9%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	14,591	26.7%	25.0%
Limited English-Speaking Individuals	4,621	9.1%	11.9%

Table 2: Target Population and County Metrics. Data from 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Transportation Services Assessment

Ellis County and Navarro County are primarily supported by one transit provider. The map and descriptions below provide a brief overview of available services, including the extent of service areas and the types of transportation options. The most updated service area boundaries, fares, and hours of operation can be found on the providers' website. Contact information per provider can also be found in the Get-A-Ride Guide in Appendix B.

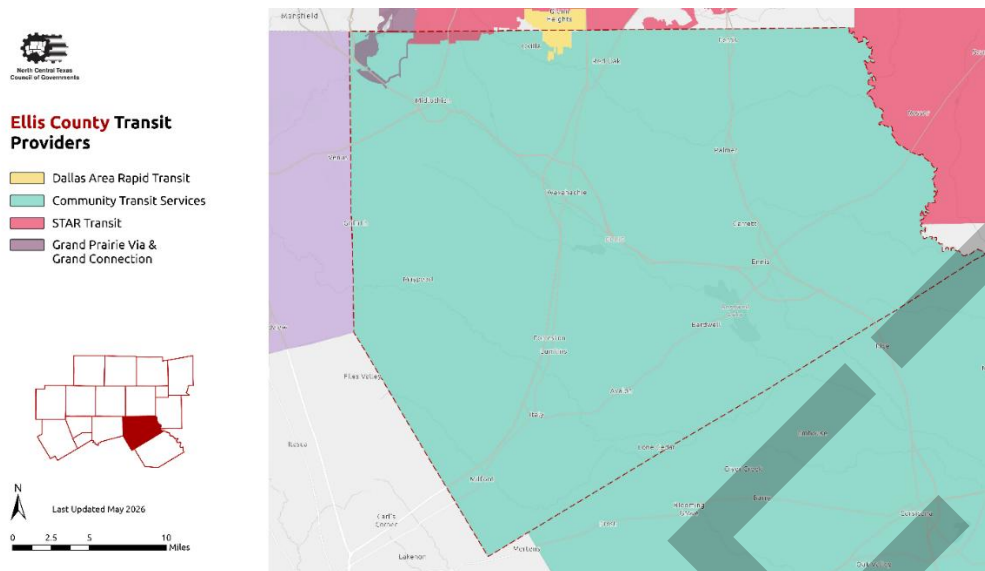


Figure 1: County Transit Service Map

Dallas Area Rapid Transit

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) operates bus, rail, GoLink microtransit, and paratransit programs in member cities, including Addison, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Glenn Heights, Irving, Plano, Richardson, Rowlett, and University Park. Highland Park, a former member city, withdrew from membership and ended service in May 2026. DART service includes some areas in Ellis County near Glenn Heights, including a bus route and access to the GoLink service. DART offers multiple transportation services and programs which include different fares and ticket types, including local and regional options. To purchase tickets, riders can use the DART GoPass App, GoPass Tap Card, and Ticket Vending Machines (TVM) located at the platforms.

Community Transit Service

Community Transit Service (CTS) serves Ellis County and Navarro County with curb-to-curb, demand-response services. The service is intended for the public and persons with special needs, as specified by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Trips must originate from Ellis County or Navarro County. To schedule a ride, riders can call the customer service line. There are multiple fares depending on the individual trip and a bus pass is available for purchase.

STAR Transit

STAR Transit offers multiple services, including an express bus route, same-day trip service, demand-response trip service, and connections to DART. In regular service areas, riders may call customer service to book rides, use the STARNow app, or use the GoPass app (excluding demand-response trips) to purchase tickets. For Ellis and Navarro

counties, clients would need to call STAR Transit during normal business hours. Multiple fares are available depending on the specific service and eligibility.

Via Grand Prairie & Grand Connection

Via Grand Prairie offers an on-demand, shared transportation service within the city of Grand Prairie boundaries, including a few destinations outside the city. A small area of the city falls within Ellis County. The program offers multiple fare options depending on eligibility. To purchase tickets and schedule rides, the rider will need to create an account using the Via Grand Prairie app or by calling the customer service line. Additionally, the service connects to the West Irving TRE Station which enables connectivity to the regional transit system.

For riders who are 60 years of age and up, or have a physical or mental disability, they may be eligible to use the city's Grand Connection paratransit service that offers door-to-door transportation within the city at no cost. Prior to using the service, prospective riders must apply to determine eligibility. After being approved, riders may schedule trips by contacting a dispatch line.

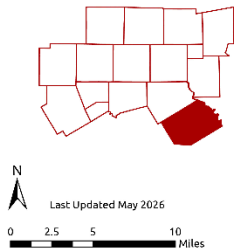
Vanpool Program

In addition to the other transportation options and services, Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) and Trinity Metro operate a Vanpool Program in the North Central Texas region. Through Trinity Metro, as of April 2026, 28 vanpools originate in Ellis County, no vanpools have a destination in Ellis County, and no vanpools have an origin and destination within the county. Through DCTA, there are no vanpools with an origin or destination in the county. For Navarro County, through Trinity Metro, as of April 2026, one vanpool originates in the county, no vanpools have a destination in the county, and no vanpools have an origin and destination in the county. Through DCTA, as of April 2026, there are no vanpools with origin or destination in the county. Overall, the number of vanpools may change month to month as the regional program expands shared commuter transportation opportunities.



Navarro County Transit Providers

Community Transit Services



Last Updated May 2026

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

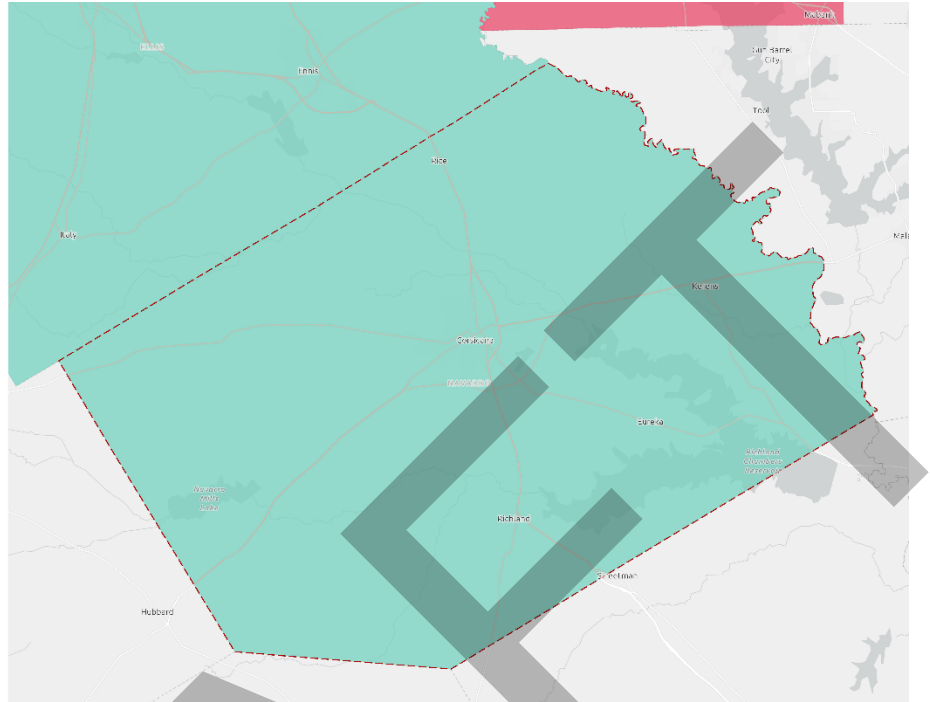


Figure 2: County Transit Service Map

Overall, gaps in service still exist in Ellis and Navarro counties due to a variety of factors. Survey and outreach responses show some insight into what gaps may exist and where further assessment is needed. Through continued collaboration amongst stakeholders, the gaps in service can be identified, reviewed, and discussed.

Needs/Gaps Assessment (Data Analysis)

In Ellis and Navarro counties, survey respondents helped to identify a variety of transportation barriers, potential enhancements, missed trips, and desired modes. The combination of all outreach efforts, including surveys and meetings, revealed that residents are interested in the topic of public transportation and would like to see greater access and availability of service. This section analyzes survey and outreach findings while incorporating inputs through the Map Your Experience tool and the Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool map to identify priority need areas. A more comprehensive and detailed view of notes, input, feedback, and reports can be found in Appendix D.

Outreach Meeting

From the outreach meeting, no county residents, providers, or stakeholders attended.

Public Survey

While most public survey respondents in Ellis County indicated they are not missing trips, there are others who are. Most were oriented towards religious activity and shopping. Of those that identified barriers that prevent them getting where they need to go, the top selections were that there is nobody to drive them, and they don't know the public transportation options.

For Navarro County, all survey respondents indicated they are not missing trips. Additionally, many indicated they can get where they need to go; however, the only barrier identified was that the participant does not have access to a car.

For Ellis County, 89 percent of 9 respondents indicating that public transportation does not meet their needs, the top reason behind this is that services are not available near the participants' places of residence. For Navarro County, with 33 percent of 3 respondents indicating that public transportation does not meet their needs, the top reasons behind this is that there are too many transfers and that services are not available at locations they need to travel. Figures 3 & 4 show the top reasons why public transportation does not meet the participants' needs for the counties.

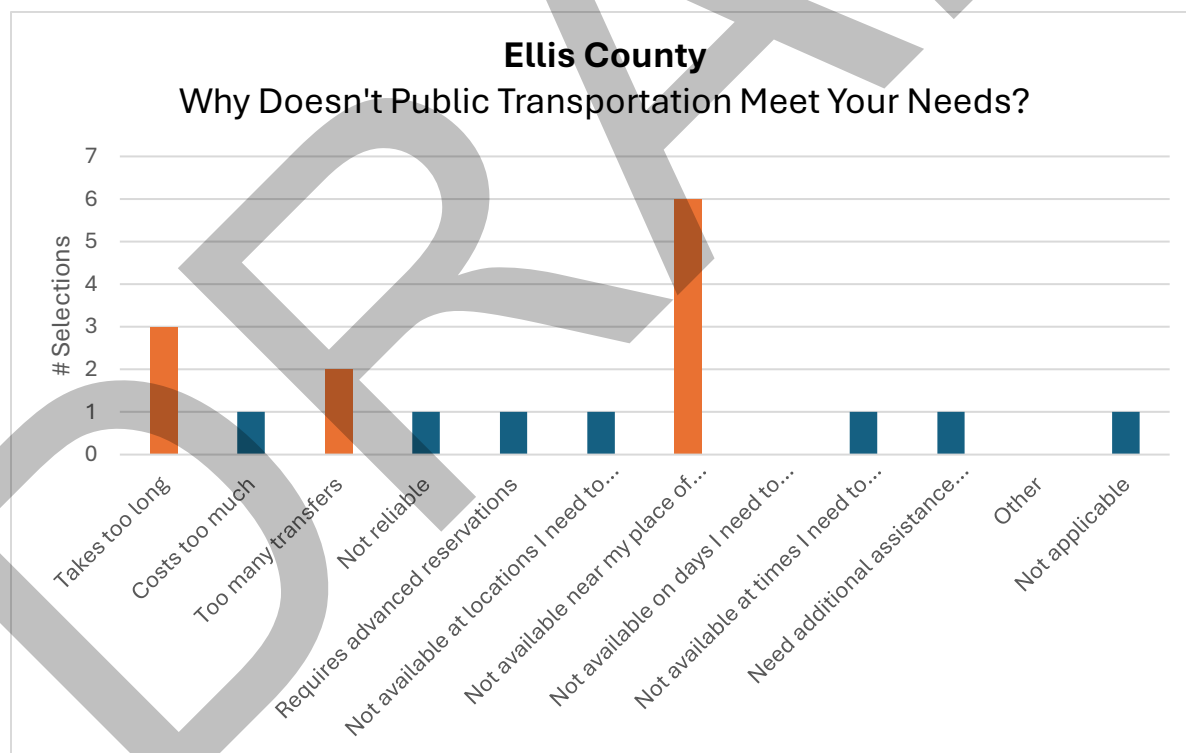


Figure 3: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections.

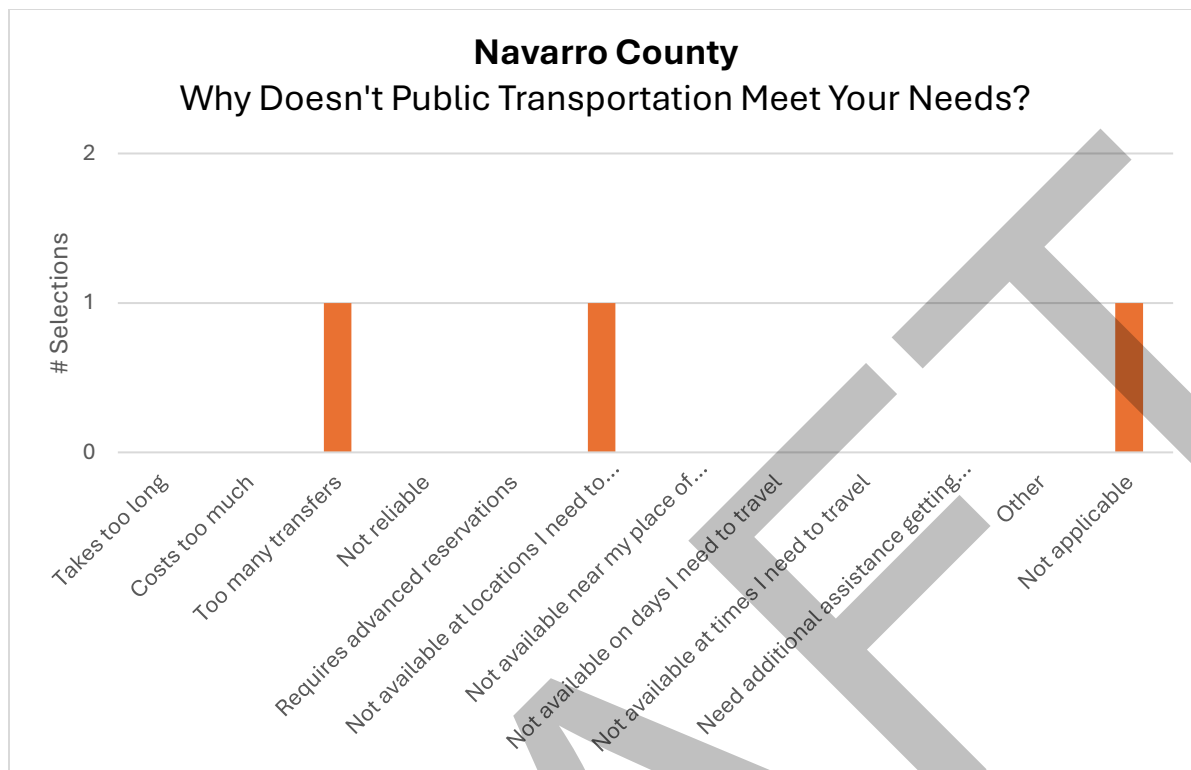


Figure 4: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections.

The survey also asked about potential ways to enhance the public transit experience. For this question, respondents selected desired enhancement options and ranked them in order of preference, with a score of 1 indicating the most preferred option. Of the seven Ellis County respondents, the “More frequent buses or trains,” “More education and training on how to use transit,” and “More direct access to train stations” options were selected as most preferred with equal rankings of 1 by one participant each. The top three ranked enhancements are reflected below. Of the three Navarro County respondents, the most preferred option was “More education and training on how to use transit” with a ranking of 1 by one participant. Figures 5 & 6 below show the other top enhancements selected by the survey respondents.

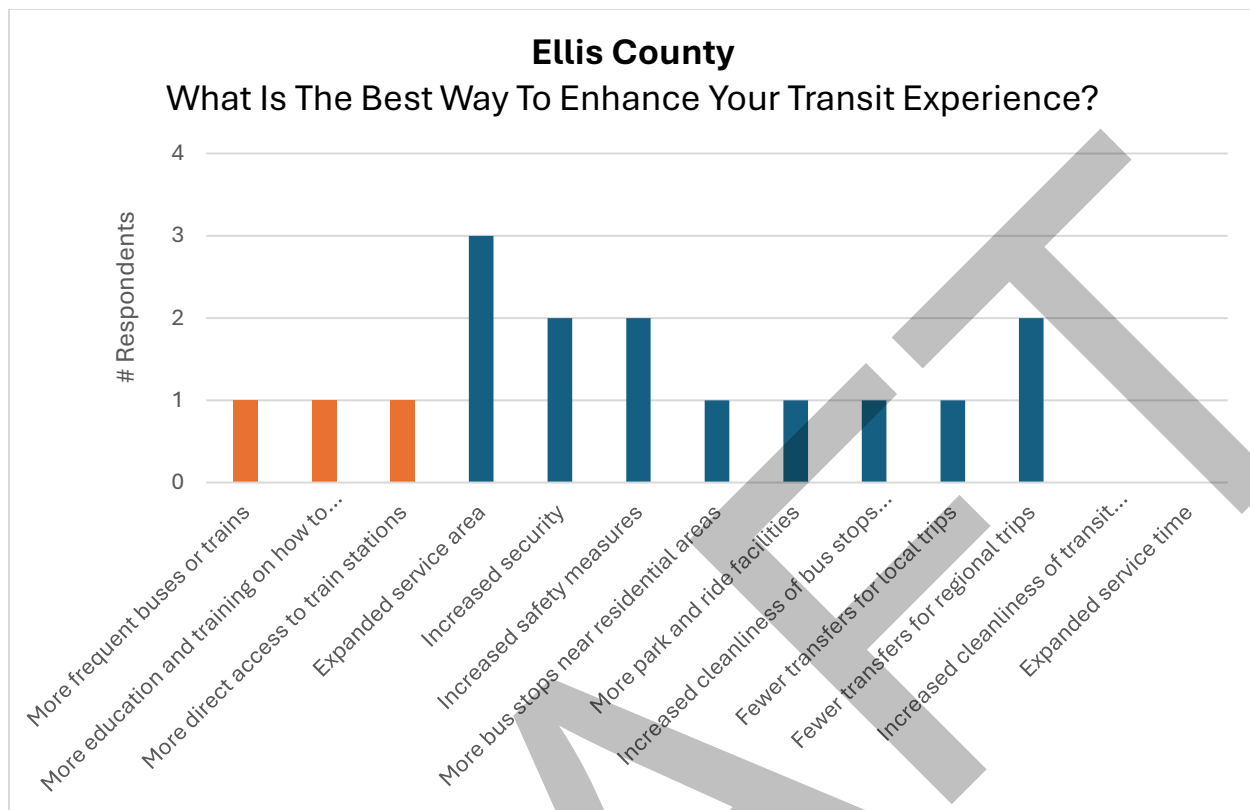


Figure 5: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements.

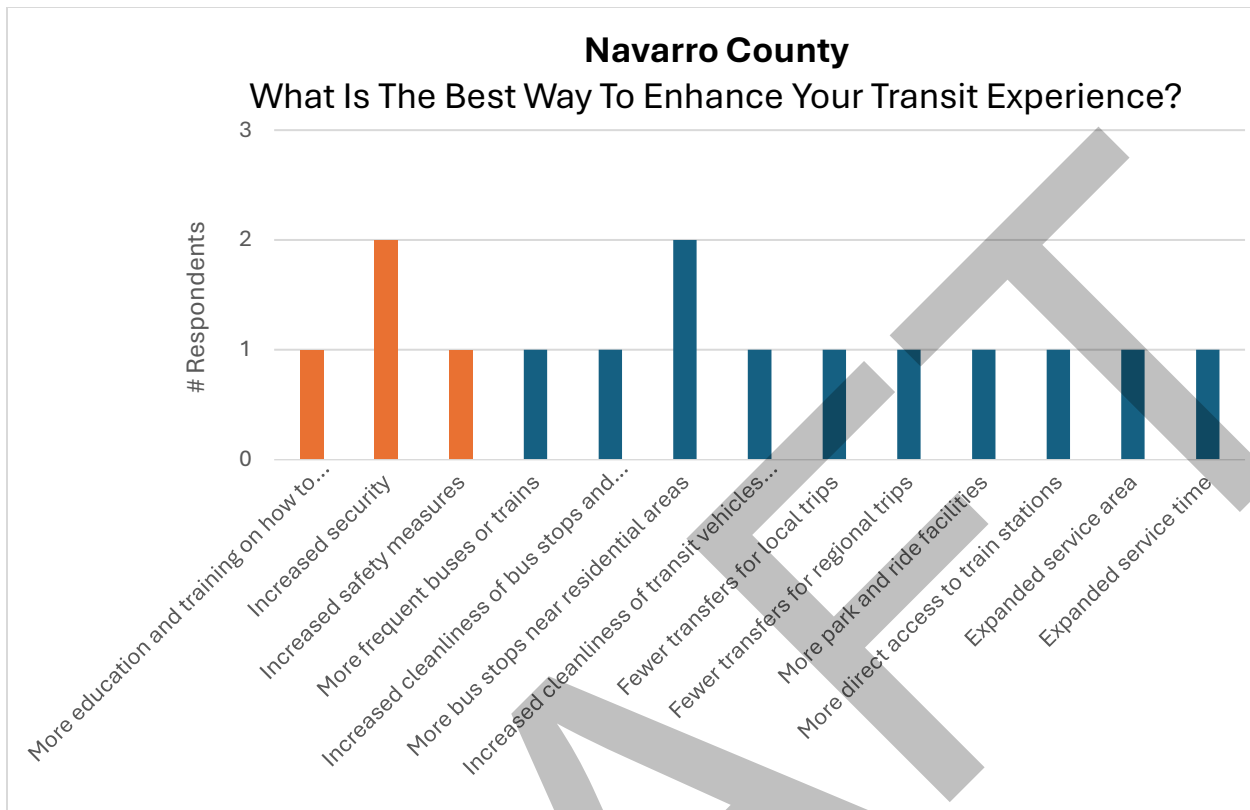


Figure 6: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements.

Agency Survey

Approximately 19 percent of agencies who participated in the survey indicated they serve or operate in Ellis and Navarro counties and that their agency serves multiple populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with lower income, and others. Agencies who provided transportation-related feedback include STAR Transit and the North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging. The table below summarizes top and common responses provided by the agency representatives and/or staff who participated in the survey.

Ellis County

What are the most requested trips among those you serve?
• Medical
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them • Nobody to drive them
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Costs too much • Requires advance reservation • Not available at locations needed to travel • Not available at times needed to travel • Not available on days needed to travel • Need additional assistance getting to/from or on/off the vehicle
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• Expanded service area

Table 3: Summary of select public agency survey question responses. Not all responses apply to the individual county; however, in the overall service area the agencies operate, Ellis County is included.

Navarro County

What are the most requested trips among those you serve?
• Medical
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them • Nobody to drive them
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Not available at locations needed to travel • Need additional assistance getting to/from or on/off the vehicle
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• Expanded service area

Table 4: Table 4: Summary of select public agency survey question responses. Not all responses apply to the individual county; however, in the overall service area the agencies operate, Navarro County is included.

Categorized Qualitative Feedback

Meeting notes, comments in the survey questions, and additional feedback from providers offered insight into experienced barriers, missed trips, desired modes, and enhancements in Parker and Palo Pinto counties. The table below summarizes qualitative feedback top findings that may be compared to other findings. Participation and feedback varied among the different outreach methods.

Ellis County

Barriers	Missed Trips	Desired Modes	Enhancements
Lack of access and/or availability of service	None Identified	Preference for None	Access and availability of service

Table 5: Summary of categorized qualitative feedback. More detailed information can be found in Appendix D.

Navarro County

Barriers	Missed Trips	Desired Modes	Enhancements
Lack of access and/or availability of service	None Identified	None Identified	Better information on how to use transit

Table 6: Summary of categorized qualitative feedback. More detailed information can be found in Appendix D.

Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool

While the Demographics Assessment earlier in the chapter shows the number of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and other transit-dependent populations in both Ellis County and Navarro County, these figures describe the county as a whole and don't show where these populations are concentrated. The Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) fills this gap by mapping seniors, individuals with disabilities, and individuals below poverty at the Census block group level to identify where transit-dependent populations may be located and where transit need may be greatest.

Ellis County

In Ellis County, there are multiple areas where populations of individuals age 65 and older, below poverty level, and persons with disabilities are above the regional percentage. Illustrated in figure 7, the highest concentration areas within the county are near the cities of Italy, Waxahachie, and Ferris. Illustrated in Appendix C, populations 65 and over have a moderate to moderately low concentration distribution. The few moderately high concentration range areas are near the cities of Midlothian and Red Oak. The population of people with disabilities is highest in the area that surrounds the city of Italy in the more southern area of the county. Additionally, there is a smaller, high concentrated area as well near the city of Ennis and US 287. The rest of the county has a more even distribution of moderately low to moderately high ranging areas. The county has a low to moderate concentration distribution of low-income populations. Near the city of Ennis, there is a small, concentrated area where the range is moderately high. The few areas with a moderately concentrated range are near the cities of Ennis, Italy, Waxahachie, Midlothian, and Ferris.

Ellis County Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)

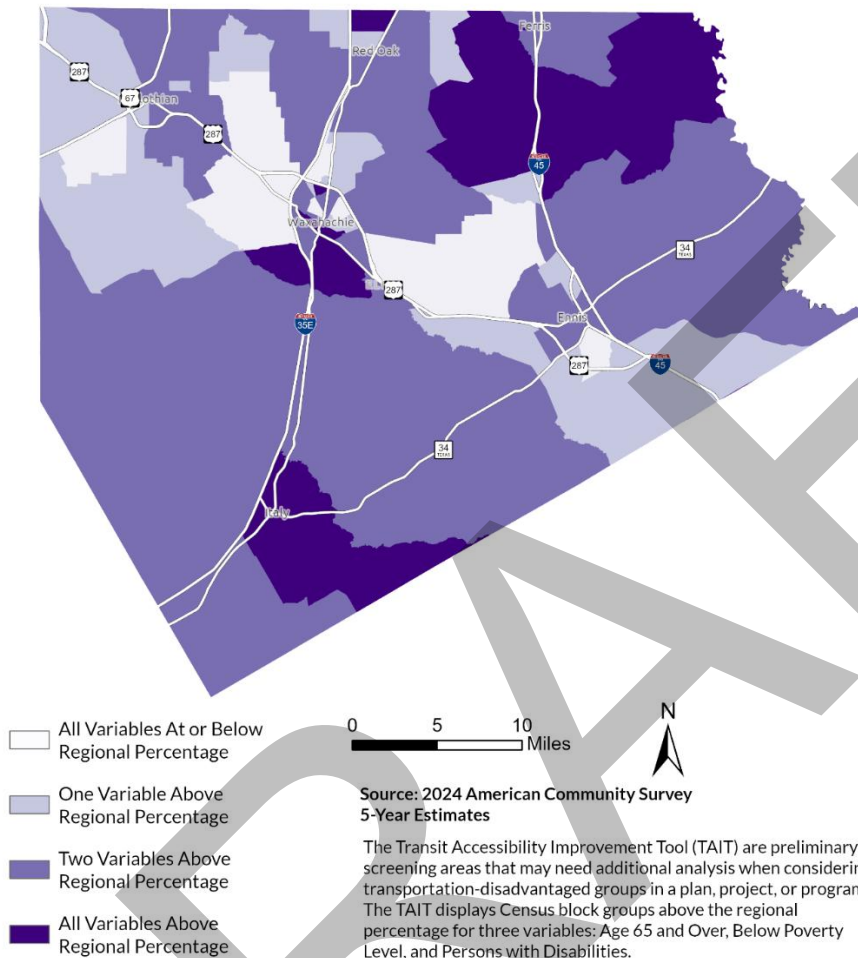


Figure 7: TAIT Map for Ellis County

Zero-car households, as illustrated in Figure 8, have a low to moderately low concentration area distribution. The higher concentrated areas are near the cities of Ennis, Waxahachie, Midlothian, Red Oak, and Ferris. However, these areas are small in comparison with areas with low concentrations.

Ellis County Zero-Car Households

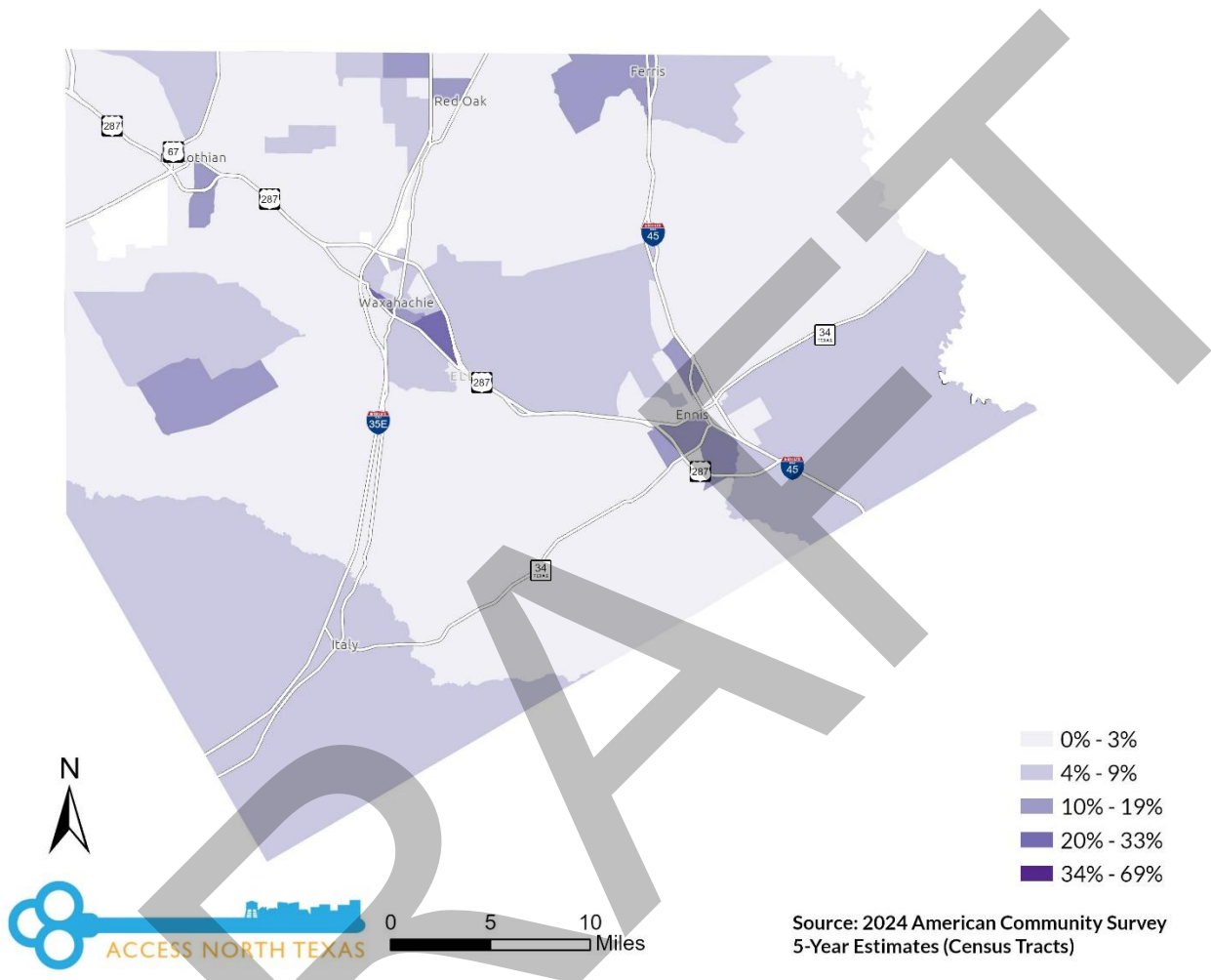


Figure 8: Individual Variable Map showing Zero-Car Households in Ellis County

Navarro County

In Navarro County, there are multiple Census block groups where populations of individuals age 65 and older, below poverty level, and persons with disabilities are above the regional percentage. Most Census block groups in the county reflect all variables being above the regional percentage.

Illustrated in Appendix C, populations 65 and over have a moderate to moderately low concentration distribution. The few moderately high concentration range areas are near Corsicana, Eureka, and east of Richland along IH 45. The population of persons with a disability is moderately high to high concentration range distribution. The area northwest of the city of Corsicana has a more moderate range. The cities of Richland, Eureka, and Kerens are all in the high concentration range areas. Low-income populations have a low

to moderate concentration distribution. Near the city of Corsicana, there is a small area that has a higher concentration of people with low income.

Navarro County Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)

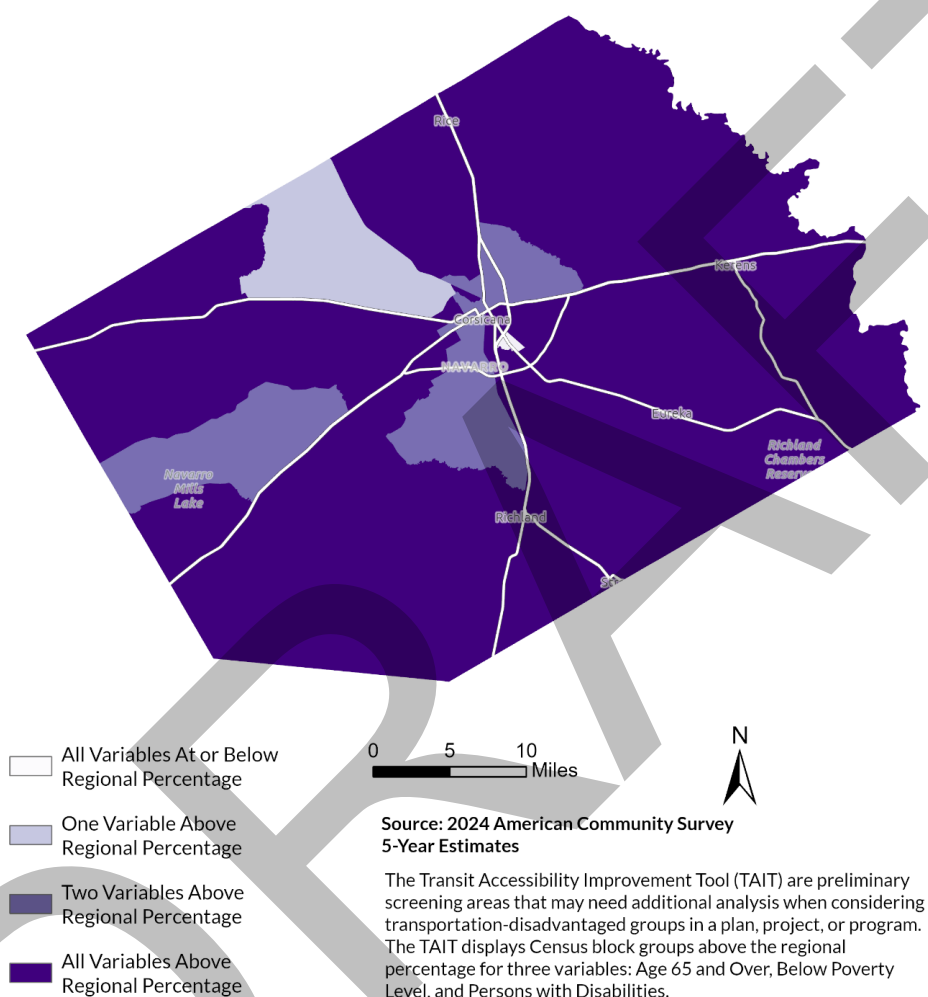


Figure 9: TAIT Map for Navarro County

For zero-car households, as illustrated in Figure 10, much of the county has a low to moderately low concentration area distribution. The majority being low with a range of 0 percent to 3 percent. The few moderately concentrated areas with a range between 10 percent to 19 percent are near the city of Corsicana and west of the city.

Navarro County Zero-Car Households

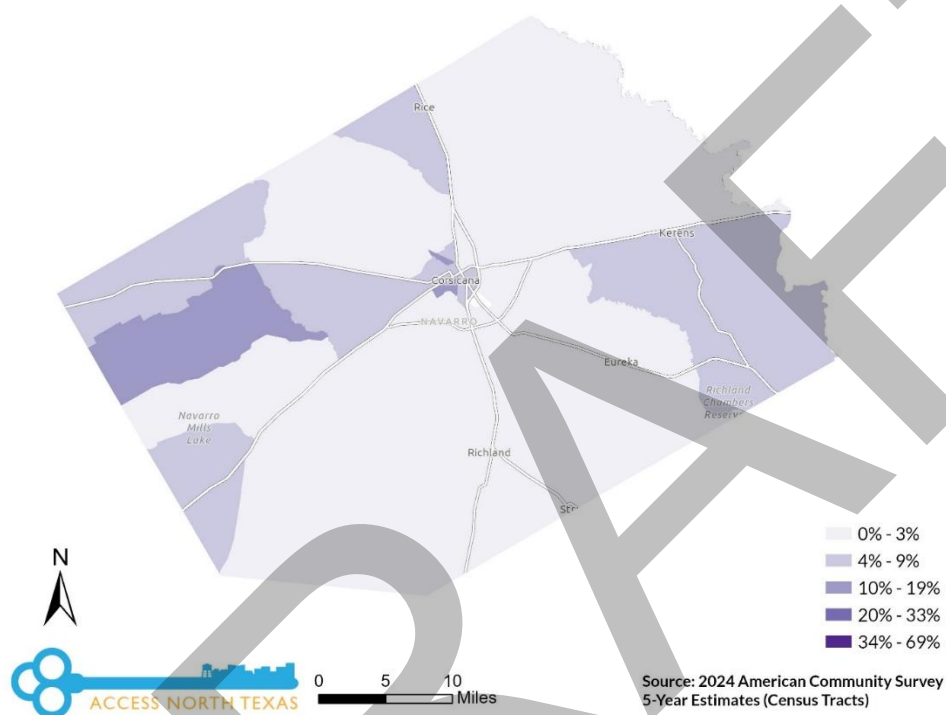


Figure 10: Individual Variable Map showing Zero-Car Households in Navarro County

Goals/Strategies Development

The regional goals (five main categories identifying themes across the 16-county region) provide a framework for Access North Texas on a regional level, while the individual prioritized strategies applied to Ellis and Navarro counties are applicable to furthering those goals while also addressing needs within both counties. These goals and strategies help provide direction for transit providers and stakeholders to plan and implement future projects and services that support transit-dependent populations.

The prioritized strategies were developed using information from multiple sources, including outreach, meetings, surveys, available data, and regional knowledge through stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Data and information were compiled and

analyzed to help identify patterns and gaps. Prior to the finalization of the plan, the goals and strategies were provided to stakeholders for feedback and review.

Goals & Strategies

Regional Goal	Strategies
Plan and Develop Transportation Options by Assessing Community Needs and Challenges	1. Conduct planning activities to further identify public transportation needs of residents outside of existing transportation authorities and define additional coordination opportunities for existing providers. 2. Invest in programs to assist with filling gaps in public transportation.
Implement Services by Enhancing Transportation Options and Expanding Where Service Gaps Exist	1. Increase access to employment, social (such as entertainment and shopping centers), religious, and well-being trips in areas with limited to no public transportation service. 2. Implement service enhancements, including optimization, mode connectivity, route frequency, and operating hours.
Coordinate with Transportation Providers, Public Agencies, and Stakeholders to Increase Efficiencies	1. Work with public transportation providers and stakeholders to improve or maintain services connecting riders to the transit system, healthcare, and other key destinations. 2. Improve regional connectivity by increasing ease of travel across municipal and county boundaries, providing access to different transit modes, and enabling transfers to existing systems.
Drive Sustained Growth of Public Transportation Ridership	1. Improve safety, security, and sanitation measures to build rider confidence and comfort.
Promote Access and Information about Available Transportation Options	1. Enhance communication and outreach programs to improve awareness of existing or new transportation options.

	2. Conduct travel training to educate the public on available services and policies.
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