

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 Erath County, Hood County, and Somervell County. This chapter provides an overview of outreach efforts, demographics, existing transportation services, findings, and prioritized strategies. More information about the plan and regional findings can be found in the Executive Summary.

Outreach

Public outreach for Erath, Hood, and Somervell 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 10, 2025. Emails were sent to over 200 recipients. The meeting was also promoted on the Access North Texas website. One resident and two NCTCOG staff attended the meeting.

A transportation survey was available to residents and stakeholders online, on paper, and available in English and Spanish. The online survey could also be translated into other languages by selecting the preferred language option from a 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 6 participants for Erath County, 36 for Hood County, and none for Somervell County that were submitted online. For the agency survey, participants from three agencies indicated they operate in or

serve Erath, Hood, and Somervell counties. No transit-related comments were received for the counties through Map Your Experience.

All feedback from outreach efforts was 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 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

Erath County experienced population growth, while Hood and Somervell counties experienced moderate population growth exceeding a five percent increase. According to the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Erath's population was 43,794. Compared with the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of 41,841, this reflects an over 4 percent population increase. For Hood County, the 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates show a population of 65,894. Compared with the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of 58,318, this reflects a 13 percent population increase. For Somervell County, the 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates show a population of 9,691. Compared with the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of 8,860, this reflects an over 9 percent population increase. In accordance with the region's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2050, Hood County is anticipated to have a population of 114,159 by 2050. The plan does not include Erath and Somervell counties.

When comparing 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates and 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates for Erath County, the total population numbers for older adults increased by over 10 percent, people with disabilities increased by 17 percent, and low-income individuals decreased by over 9 percent. For Hood County, the total population numbers for older adults increased by over 17 percent, people with disabilities increased by over 37 percent, and low-income individuals decreased by nearly 3 percent. For Somervell County, the total population numbers for older adults increased by over 19 percent, people with disabilities decreased by over 6 percent, and low-income individuals decreased by 47 percent.

Overall 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, are shown in the table below and in the appendix.

Metric	Erath County Population	Erath County Percentage	Regional Comparison
Total Households	16,816	-	-
Zero-Car Households	814	4.8%	4.8%
65 and over	6,497	14.8%	12.3%
With a Disability	6,049	14.0%	10.5%
Low-Income Individuals	8,312	20.6%	14.1%
Total Veterans	2,194	6.3%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	9,073	20.7%	25.0%
Total LEP Individuals	2,393	5.8%	11.9%

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

Metric	Hood County Population	Hood County Percentage	Regional Comparison
Total Households	25,523	-	-
Zero-Car Households	662	2.6%	4.8%
65 and over	16,840	25.6%	12.3%
With a Disability	9,319	14.3%	10.5%
Low-Income Individuals	7,146	11.0%	14.1%
Total Veterans	5,001	9.5%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	13,467	20.4%	25.0%
Total LEP Individuals	2,340	3.7%	11.9%

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

Metric	Somervell County Population	Somervell County Percentage	Regional Comparison
Total Households	3,713	-	-
Zero-Car Households	90	2.4%	4.8%
65 and over	1,946	20.1%	12.3%
With a Disability	1,188	12.5%	10.5%
Low-Income Individuals	1,148	12.0%	14.1%
Total Veterans	647	8.5%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	2,082	21.5%	25.0%
Total LEP Individuals	449	4.9%	11.9%

Table 3: Target Population and County Metrics for Somervell County. Data from 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Transportation Services Assessment

Erath County is served by one transit provider, City and Rural Rides. For Hood and Somervell counties, they are served by one provider as well, The Transit System. The transit maps and descriptions below provide a brief overview of the extent of services offered by the identified providers. The most updated service area boundaries, fares, and hours of operation can be found on the providers' websites. Contact information per provider can also be found in the Get-A-Ride Guide in Appendix B.

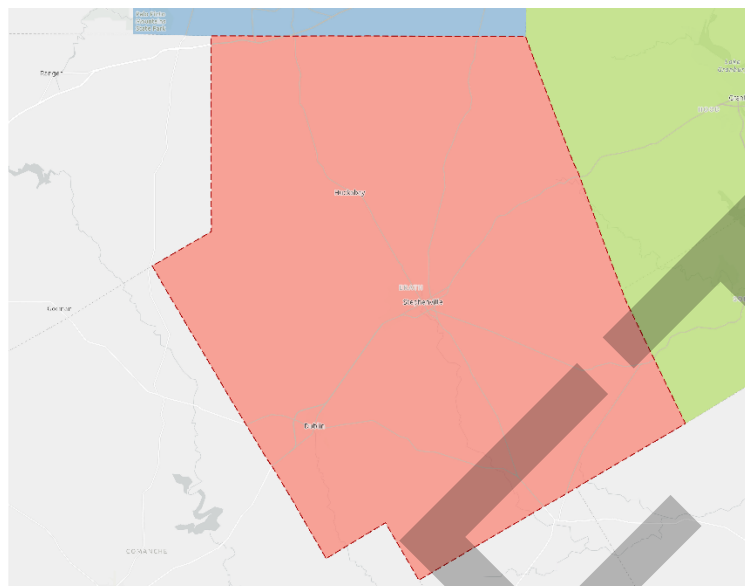
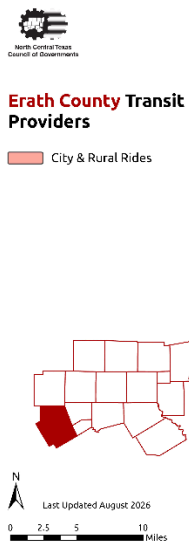


Figure 1: Erath County Transit Map

City and Rural Rides

City and Rural Rides (CARR) is a rural public transit service operated by the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD). CARR offers demand-response, door-to-door transit services to the public in multiple counties outside the North Central Texas region and Erath County, which is in the region. To schedule a ride or learn more about the services and fare structure, prospective riders can contact CARR staff through contact information on the provider's website.



Somervell County Transit Providers

The Transit System

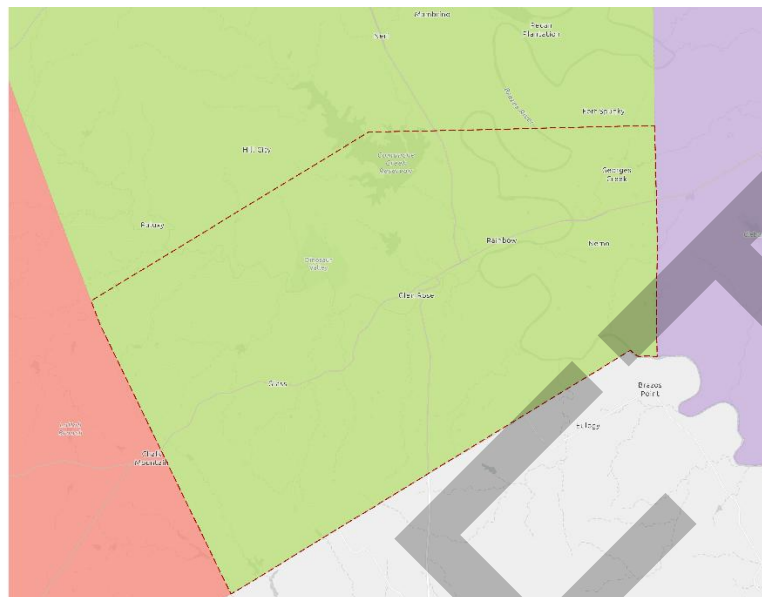
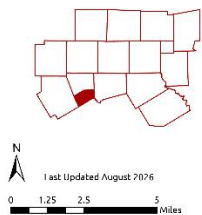


Figure 3: Somervell County Transit Map

Vanpool Program

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, one vanpool originates in Erath County. No other vanpools originate or have destinations in Hood or Somervell counties. Through DCTA, as of April 2026, there are no vanpools with origin or destination in the counties. Overall, the number of vanpools may change month to month as the regional program expands shared commuter transportation opportunities.

Overall, gaps in service still exist in Erath, Hood, and Somervell 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 Erath, Hood, and Somervell 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. 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

The outreach meeting for Erath, Hood, and Somervell counties provided an opportunity for the attendees to share their viewpoints and experiences. Feedback included reference to challenges people are experiencing with relation to public transportation options.

Challenges described include that many people are dependent on one transit provider and that many people don't go to appointments due to car issues, not having access to a vehicle, or alternative transportation options.

Public Survey

Of the total regionwide survey participants who identified a county of residence, approximately 4.9 percent were from Hood County and 0.8 percent were from Erath County. No survey responses were received from residents of Somervell County. Most public survey respondents across these counties indicated that they are not missing trips due to lack of transportation, including all respondents from Erath County. For those that indicated they have missed trips, some of the most common types identified included social/entertainment/events, work, medical, and shopping trips. Of those that identified barriers that prevent them from getting where they need to go, the top selections in Erath County were that no car is available to them and that public transportation services don't meet their needs, while in Hood County it was that they don't know the public transportation options.

For Erath County, 50 percent of the six survey respondents indicated that public transportation does not meet their needs, with the top identified reason being that it takes too long. For Hood County, 82 percent of 33 respondents indicated that public transportation does not meet their needs, with the most common identified reason being that it is not available near their places of residence. Figures 4 and 5 below further illustrate the top reasons why public transportation does not meet participants' needs in Erath and Hood counties.

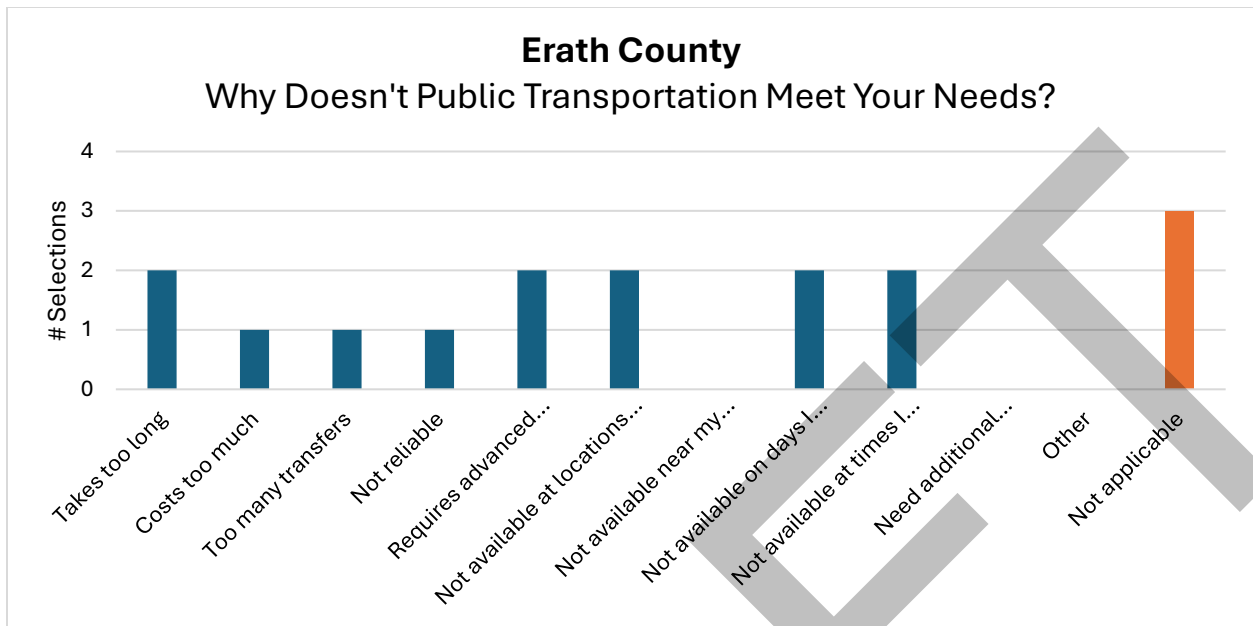


Figure 4: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections for Erath County.

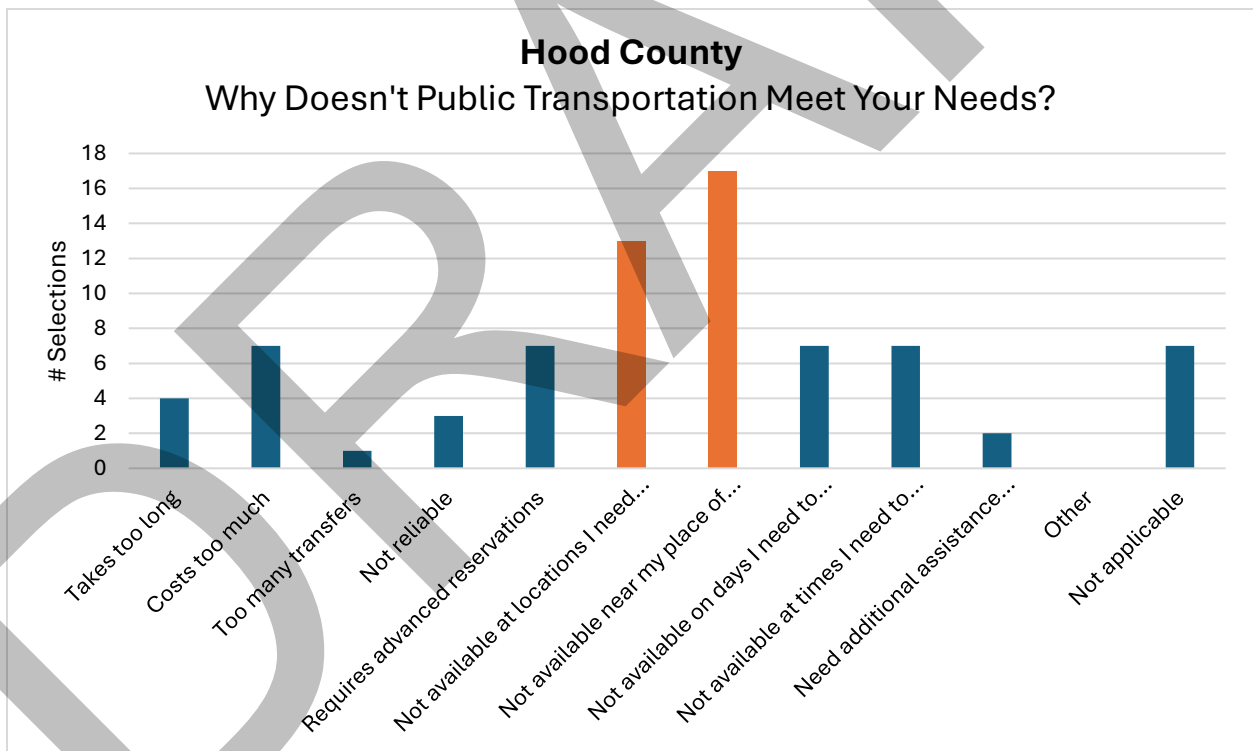


Figure 5: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections for Hood County.

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. For Erath

County, of the five respondents, increased safety measures was the highest ranked option with a score of 1.00 by one participant, followed closely by expanded service times with a score of 1.50 by two participants. Notably, the more park-and-ride facilities option was selected by four of the five participants, although it was ranked fifth overall with a score of 3.50. For Hood County, expanded service area was the top-ranked option by a sizeable margin, with 20 of the 24 total respondents awarding it an average score of 2.80. Additional details about these enhancement options and their rankings are reflected in the figures below.

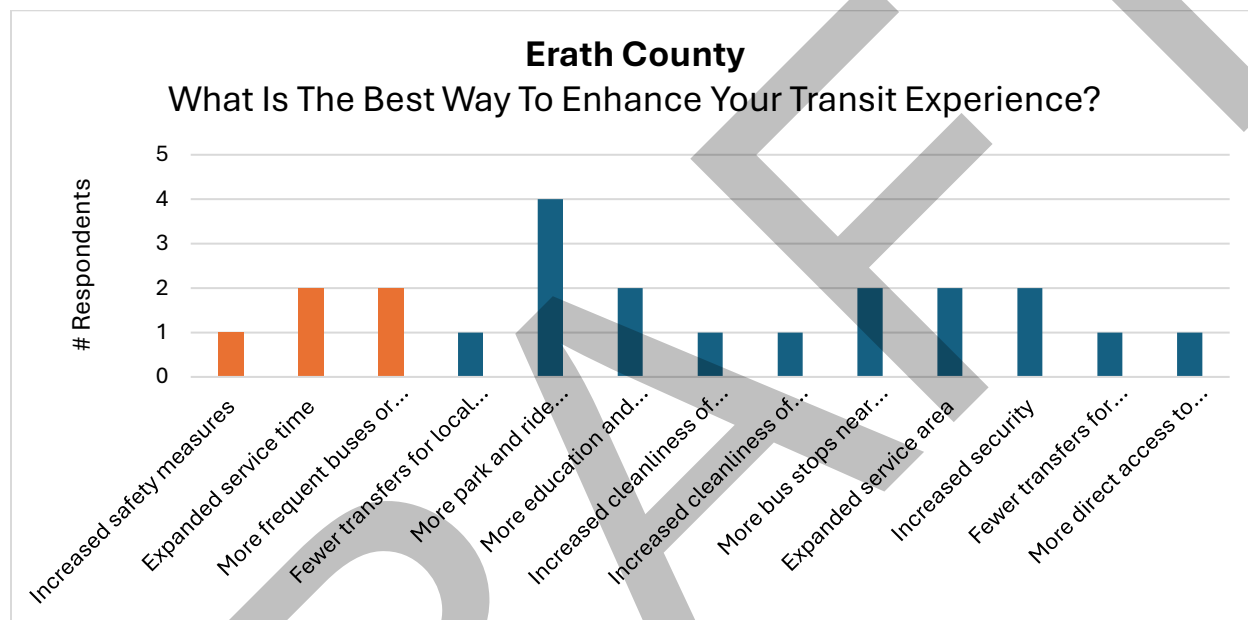


Figure 6: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements from participants.

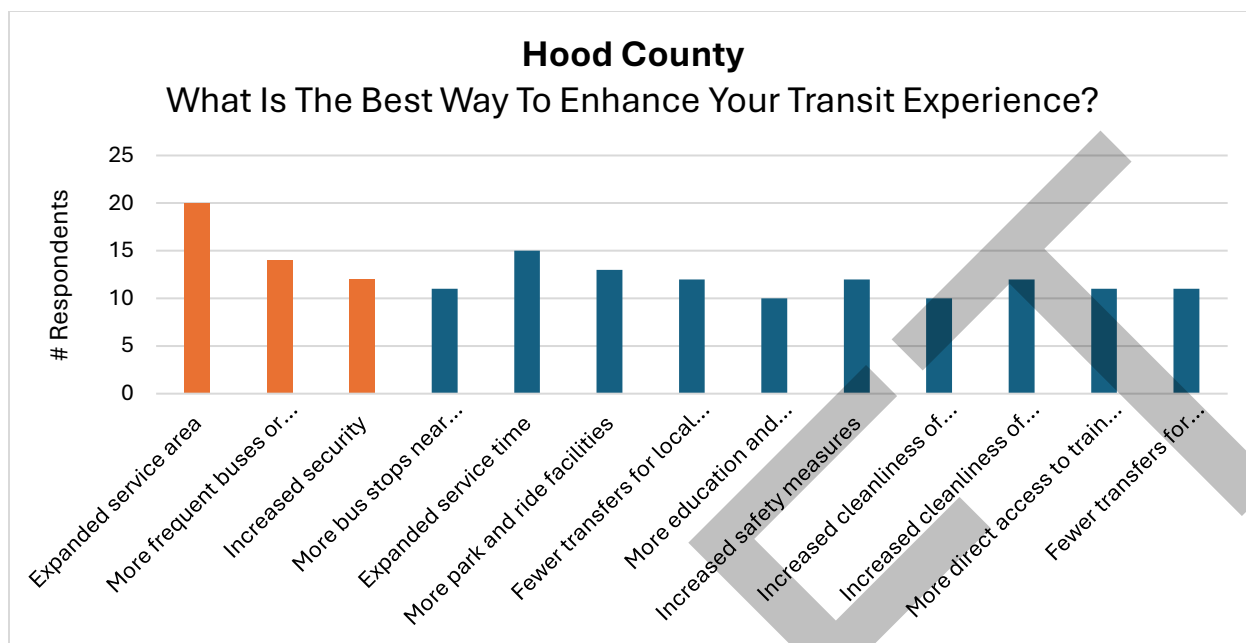


Figure 7: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements from participants.

Agency Survey

In each of Erath, Hood, and Somervell counties, three agencies who participated in the survey indicated they serve or operate in the respective county 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 in Erath County include the Central Texas Rural Transit District/City and Rural Rides, and the North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging, while in Hood and Somervell counties, these agencies included The Transit System, Inc. and the North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging.

The tables below identify top responses provided by the agency representatives and/or staff who participated in the agency survey. More information on survey responses can be found in Appendix D.

Erath County

What are the most requested trips among those you serve?
• Meals, Work
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them • Nobody to drive them • Public transportation services don't meet their needs • Not aware of public transportation options
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Not available on days needed to travel

• Not available at times needed to travel • Takes too long
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• Expanded service time

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

Hood County

What are the most requested trips among those you serve?
• Social/Entertainment/Events
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them • Nobody to drive them • Not aware of public transportation options
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Costs too much • They need additional assistance getting to/from or on/off the vehicle
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• n/a

Table 5: Summary of select public agency survey question top responses. Not all responses apply to the individual county; however, in the overall service area the agencies operate, Hood County is included.

Somervell County

What are the most requested trips among those you serve?
• Social/Entertainment/Events
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them • Nobody to drive them • Not aware of public transportation options
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Costs too much • They need additional assistance getting to/from or on/off the vehicle
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• n/a

Table 6: Summary of select public agency survey question top responses. Not all responses apply to the individual county; however, in the overall service area the agencies operate, Somervell 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 Erath and Hood counties. No additional qualitative feedback was associated specifically with Somervell County. The tables below summarize qualitative feedback on top findings that may be compared to other findings. Participation and feedback varied among the different outreach methods.

Erath County

Barriers	Missed Trips	Desired Modes	Enhancements
Not reliable Access and/or availability of service	Medical	None Identified	Access and availability of service

Table 7: Categorized qualitative feedback top findings. More information can be found in Appendix D.

Hood County

Barriers	Missed Trips	Desired Modes	Enhancements
Access and/or availability of service	Medical	Bus services	Access and availability of service

Table 8: Categorized qualitative feedback top findings. More 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 Erath, Hood, and Somervell counties, these figures describe each 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.

Erath County

In Erath County, there are multiple Census block groups where populations of individuals age 65 and older, below poverty level, and people with disabilities are above the regional percentage. Illustrated in Figure 8, these concentrated areas include a small portion of Stephenville, a sizeable area stretching to the northwest of Dublin along the county border, and a large area in the southeastern section of the county.

As illustrated in Appendix C, populations 65 and over have a generally low to moderate presence throughout the county, with some of the higher concentrations being found in areas to the northwest of Stephenville and along the northern edge of the county. People with disabilities are also found in moderate concentrations around the county, with the most substantial concentration centralized in the core of Stephenville. Low-income residents have a lower presence throughout the county, with the greatest concentrations found in sections of Stephenville, as well as the southern portion of Dublin.

Erath County Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)

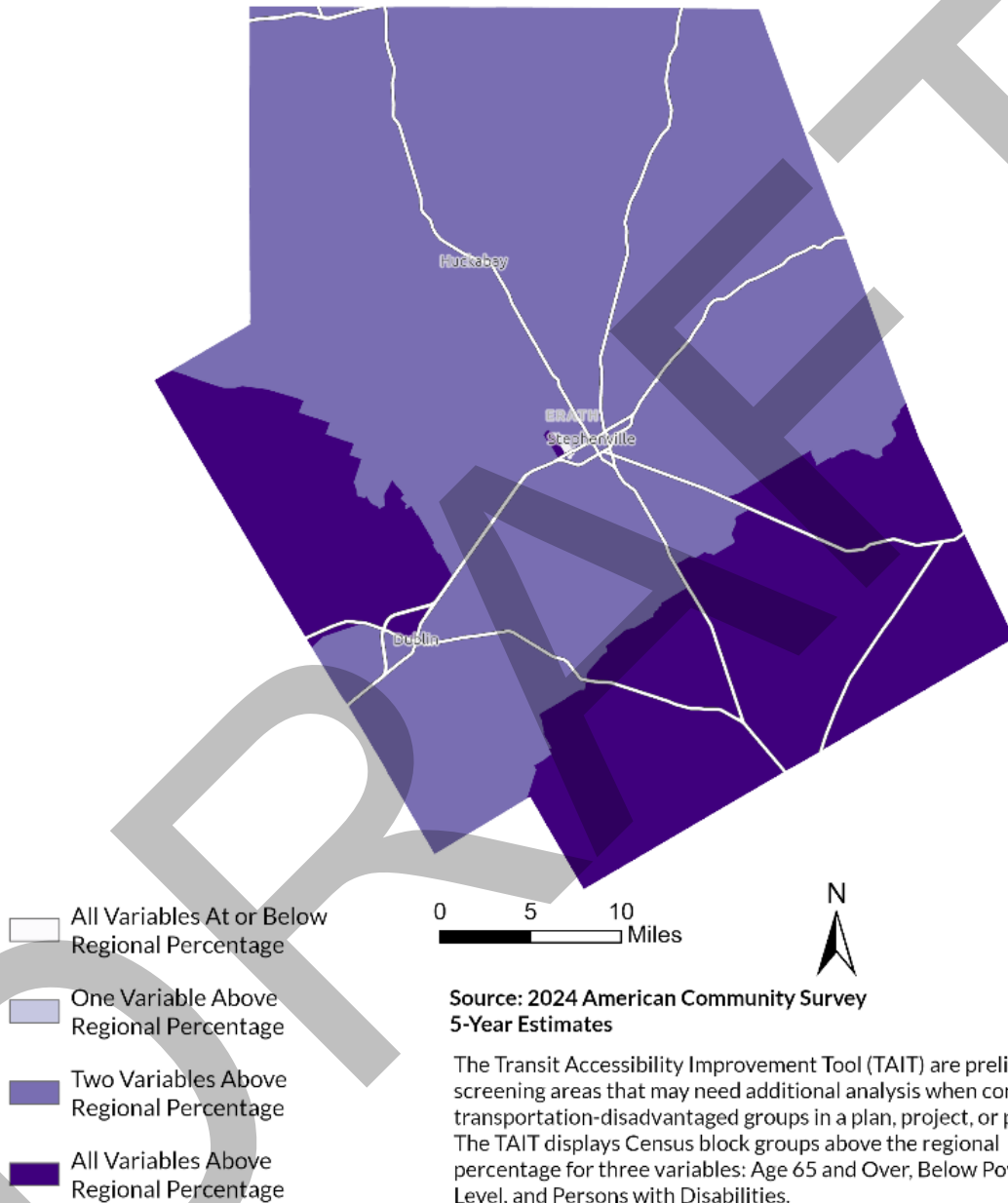


Figure 8: TAIT Map for Erath County

Zero-car households, as illustrated in Figure 9, have a relatively low presence in the county, with the most substantial concentrations found in areas of Stephenville and a tract to the northeast of Dublin.

Erath County Zero-Car Households



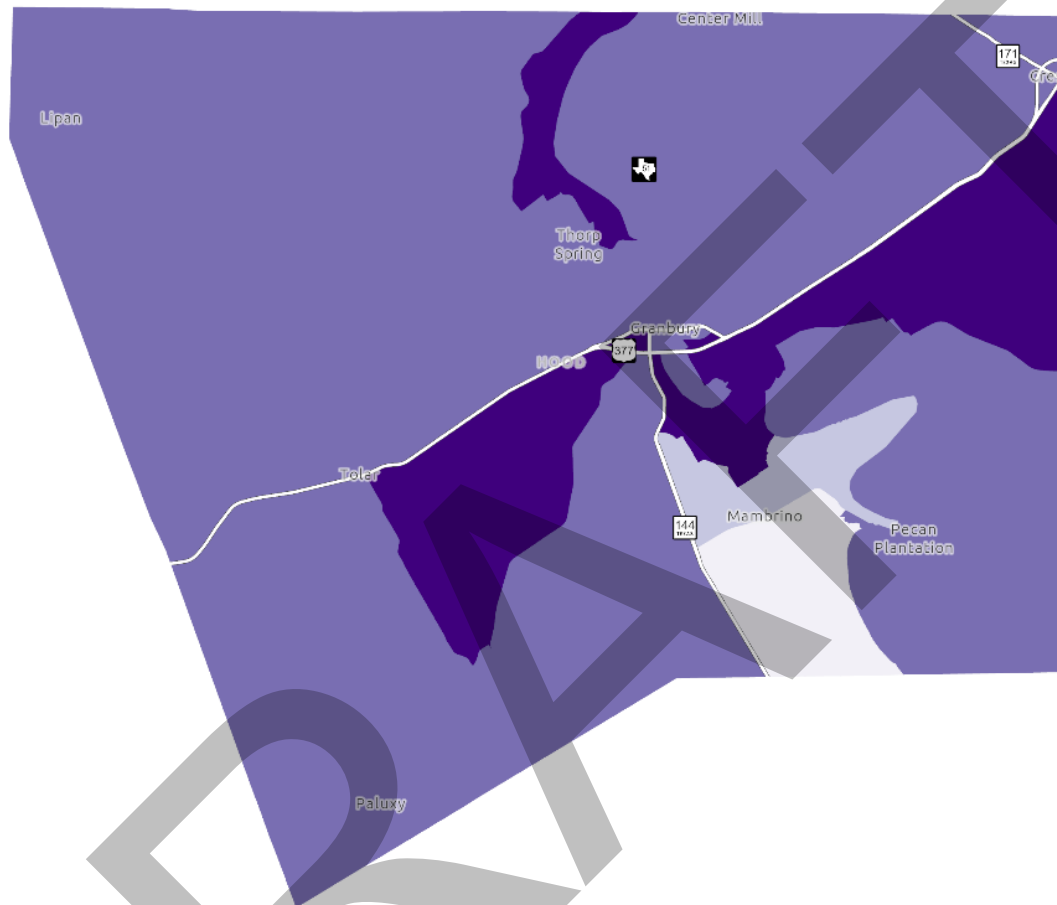
Figure 9: Zero-car households map for Erath County

Hood County

In Hood County, there are a number of Census block groups where populations of individuals age 65 and older, below poverty level, and people with disabilities are above the regional percentage. Illustrated in Figure 10, these concentrated areas include two long stretches along US 377, one extending southwest from Granbury towards Tolar and another extending from Granbury to the northeast towards Cresson, as well as a curved block group following the Brazos River north from Thorp Spring towards the county border.

As illustrated in Appendix C, populations 65 and over have a moderate presence throughout the county, with the highest concentrations found in areas of Granbury and Pecan Plantation. There are also moderate concentrations of people with disabilities in the county, with the densest populations located in tracts in and around Granbury and Thorp Springs. Populations of low-income individuals have a low to moderate presence within the county, with some of the higher concentration areas, including a tract to the southeast of Granbury, two areas to the north of Thorp Springs, and a sizeable area in the northeast corner of the county around Cresson.

Hood County Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)



- All Variables At or Below Regional Percentage
- One Variable Above Regional Percentage
- Two Variables Above Regional Percentage
- All Variables Above Regional Percentage

0 5 10 Miles



Source: 2024 American Community Survey
5-Year Estimates

The Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) are preliminary screening areas that may need additional analysis when considering transportation-disadvantaged groups in a plan, project, or program. The TAIT displays Census block groups above the regional percentage for three variables: Age 65 and Over, Below Poverty Level, and Persons with Disabilities.

Figure 10: TAIT Map for Hood County

For zero-car households, as shown in Figure 11, there is a relatively low concentration in the county, with the most substantial presence located in a central area encompassing much of Granbury and stretching north towards Thorp Springs.

Hood County Zero-Car Households

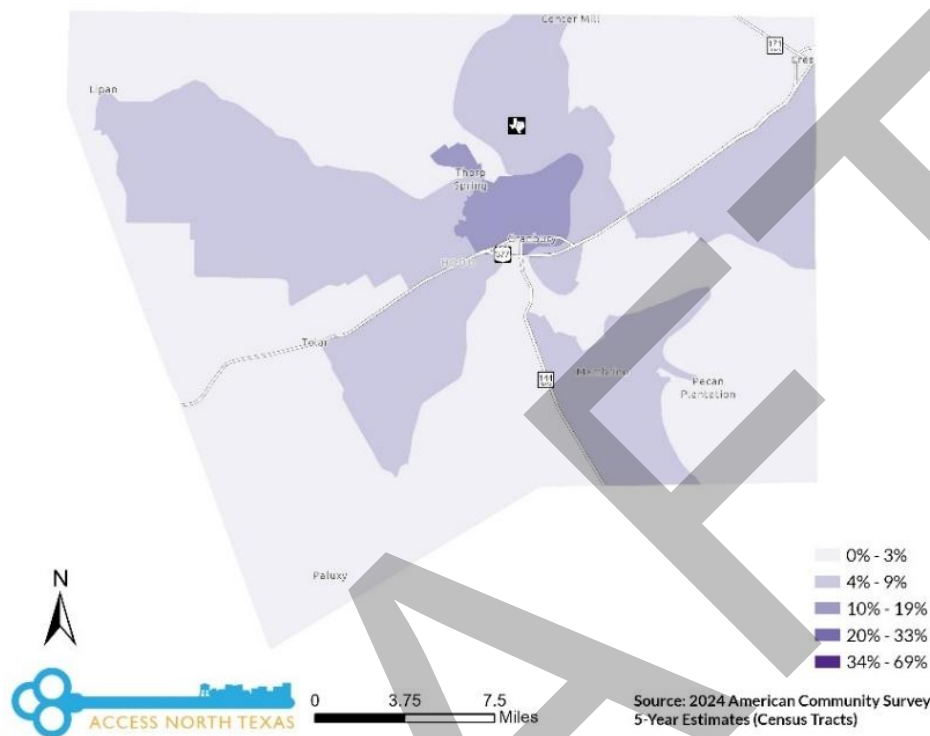


Figure 11: Zero-car households map for Hood County

Somervell County

In Somervell County, there are a few Census block groups where populations of individuals age 65 and older, below poverty level, and people with disabilities are above the regional percentage. Illustrated in Figure 12, these concentrated areas include sizeable block groups in the northwestern and northeastern corners of the county.

As illustrated in Appendix C, populations 65 and over have a fairly uniform moderate presence throughout the county, with the northwestern portion of the county representing the most substantial concentration of this demographic. People with disabilities similarly have a consistent moderate presence across the county, with a central area encompassing much of Glen Rose making up the densest presence of this group. Low-income individuals have a relatively lower presence in the county, with the most significant concentration again being found in a large tract in the county's northwestern area.

Somervell County

Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)



Source: 2024 American Community Survey
5-Year Estimates

The Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) are preliminary screening areas that may need additional analysis when considering transportation-disadvantaged groups in a plan, project, or program. The TAIT displays Census block groups above the regional percentage for three variables: Age 65 and Over, Below Poverty Level, and Persons with Disabilities.

Figure 12: TAIT Map for Somervell County

Zero-car households, as illustrated in Figure 13, have a relatively low presence in the county, with the few areas of denser concentration located in the northwestern portion of the county, as well as an area within Glen Rose.

Somervell County Zero-Car Households

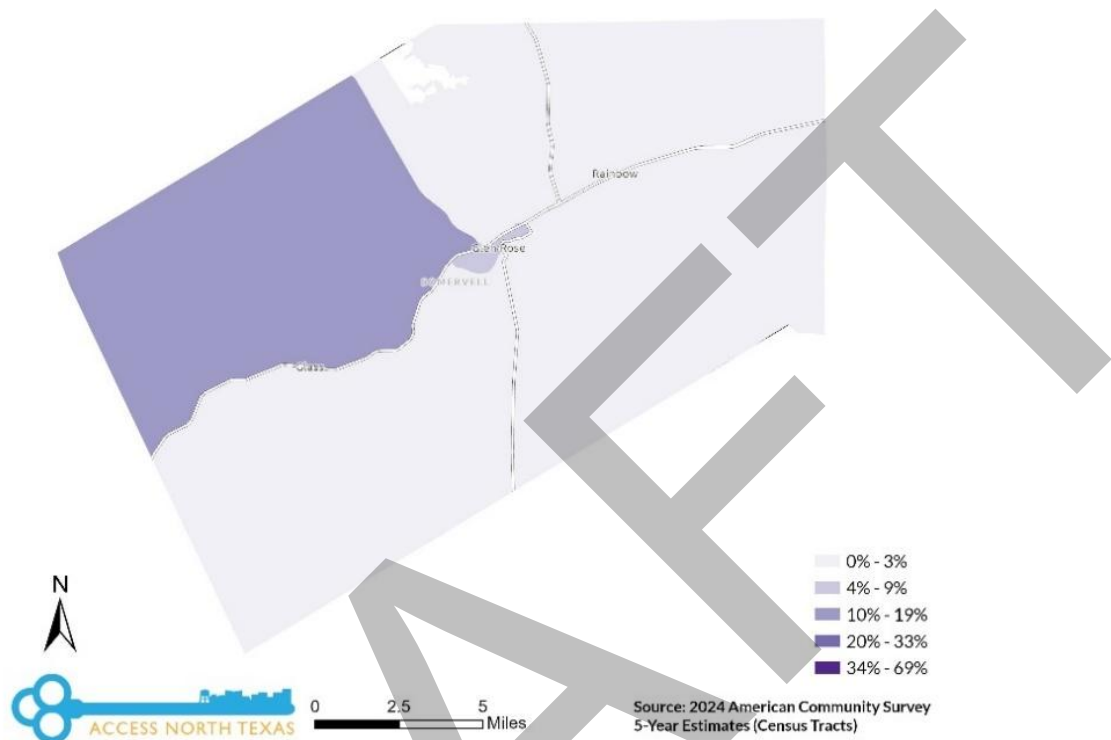


Figure 13: Zero-car households map for Somervell County

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 Erath, Hood, and Somervell counties are applicable to furthering those goals while also addressing needs within the county. 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 – More to be added later

Regional Goal	Specific Strategies
Plan and Develop Transportation Options by Assessing Community Needs and Challenges	1. Invest in programs to assist with filling gaps in public transportation. 2. Prioritize programs that facilitate transportation for work-related trips, medical and healthcare appointments. 3. Engage transit-dependent populations to ensure all are provided access to the planning process.
Implement Services by Enhancing Transportation Options and Expanding Where Service Gaps Exist	1. Implement service enhancements, including route frequency, service optimization, mode connectivity, 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.
Drive Sustained Growth of Public Transportation Ridership	1. Promote partnerships between public transit providers and other public or private organizations to increase opportunities to make fares more affordable for those in need. 2. Integrate various funding sources to maximize efficiency and increase availability of affordable public transportation options.
Promote Access and Information about Available Transportation Options	1. Enhance communication and outreach programs to improve awareness of existing or new transportation options.