

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 Tarrant 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 Tarrant County 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 an in-person stakeholder outreach meeting in Tarrant County at Ella Mae Shamblee Library in the city of Fort Worth on March 20, 2025. Emails were sent to over 130 recipients on the Tarrant County email subscriber list. The meeting was also promoted on the Access North Texas website. Seven individuals and four NCTCOG staff attended.

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 approximately 159 participants for Tarrant County submitted online and one additional paper and/or pdf survey submitted to staff. For the agency survey, participants from five agencies indicated

they operate in or serve Tarrant County. Finally, 41 transit-related comments were received for Tarrant 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 Tarrant County analysis as applicable, such as in situations where comments relate to multiple counties or for transit providers operating across county boundaries.

Demographics Assessment

Tarrant County continues to experience moderate growth. According to the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the population exceeds 2.1 million in comparison to 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of just over 2.0 million. This shows an over 5.7 percent increase in population. Tarrant County's population, according to the region's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2050, is expected to reach more than 2.8 million by 2050.

When comparing the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates to the 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the older adult population increased by 18.2 percent, individuals with a disability population increased by 7.9 percent, and low-income individuals in the county decreased by 5.4 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, are shown in the table below and in the appendix.

Metric	Tarrant County Population	Tarrant County	Regional
Total Households	782,419	-	-
Zero-Car Households	36,180	4.6%	4.8%
65 and over	266,889	12.3%	12.3%
With a Disability	225,275	10.5%	10.5%
Low-Income Individuals	316,569	14.8%	14.1%
Youth (under 18)	99,576	6.2%	5.5%
Total LEP Individuals	550,017	25.4%	25.0%
Total Households	227,868	11.2%	11.9%

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

Transportation Services Assessment

Tarrant County is serviced by multiple transit providers with Trinity Metro being the main transit authority. The map and descriptions below provide a brief overview of these programs, including the extent of their service areas and the types of transportation options they provide. 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.

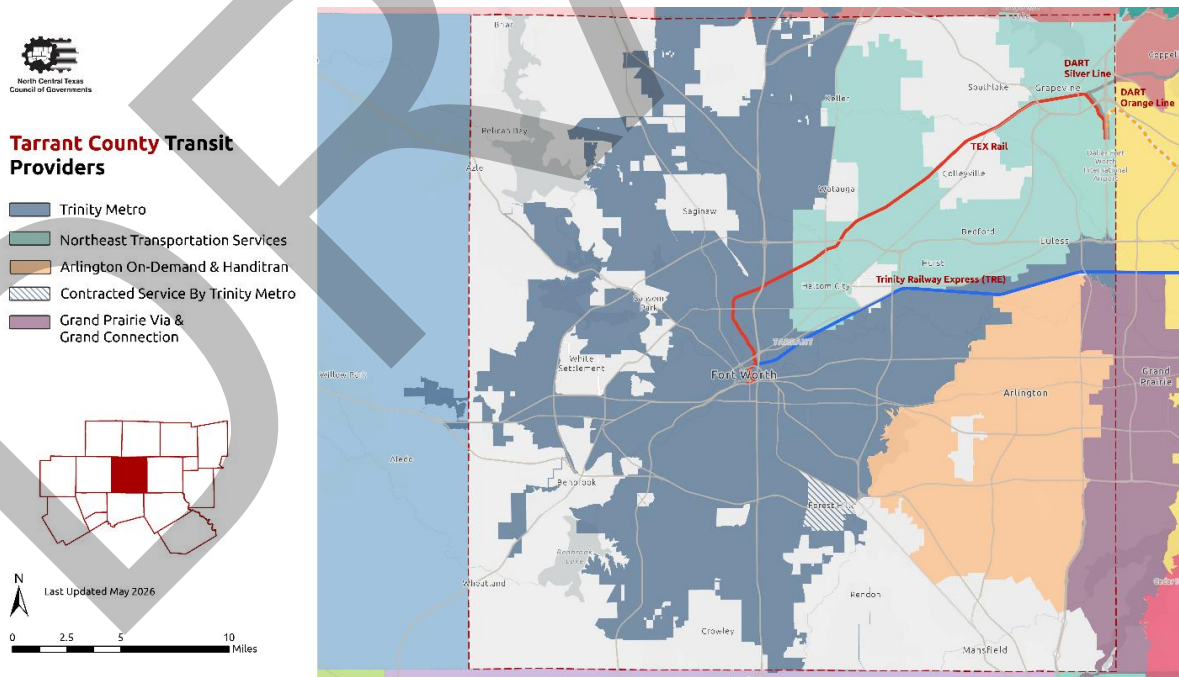


Figure 1: County Transit Service Map

Trinity Metro

Trinity Metro operates bus, rail, on-demand service, and paratransit programs primarily in Fort Worth and the surrounding areas. To acquire service, cities may choose to be a member city through a half cent sales tax, partner city through a partial sales tax contribution, or a contracted city with annual agreements. Fort Worth is a member city, Grapevine and North Richland Hills are partner cities, and Forest Hill is a contracted city. Trinity Metro offers a variety of fares, including single-ride tickets, multi-ride tickets, and on-demand paratransit trips for eligible riders. Additionally, fares may fall under local, regional, or reduced categories. Under regional fares, riders may use transportation services offered through Dallas Area Rapid Transit and Denton County Transportation Authority as well. To purchase tickets, riders can use the GoPass App, use the Trinity Metro On-Demand app (for on-demand trips), go through Trinity Metro's website, or use the kiosk at the Fort Worth Central Station.

Northeast Transportation Services

Northeast Transportation Services (NETS) offers a door-to-door, non-emergency demand response paratransit service and is managed by Trinity Metro with contracted service provided by Catholic Charities of Fort Worth. The service primarily serves Tarrant County in the cities of Bedford, Euless, Grapevine, Haltom City, Hurst, Keller, and North Richland Hills. A minor portion of Grapevine is in Dallas County. Eligible riders include individuals with a disability or are 65 years of age and older. To utilize the service, trips must be requested 48 hours in advance by calling the main line, and the fare includes pre-paid tickets that are sold in books of ten. Therefore, each rider must purchase a pre-paid ticket book prior to riding.

Arlington On-Demand and Handitran

Arlington On-Demand is an on-demand rideshare program offering trips throughout the city of Arlington, to CentrePort TRE Station, and the Eastchase Parkway area in Fort Worth connecting to Trinity Metro bus routes 21 and 22. The cost of service is dependent on miles traveled per trip. Trips between CentrePort Station and anywhere in the city is a set price. To book rides, riders may use the Arlington On-Demand app or call the customer service line.

Handitran offers transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. Being a demand response, door-to-door rideshare service, the program operates in the city of Arlington and will offer travel a mile and a half outside city limits. To use the service, prospective riders must apply to confirm eligibility for the program. Each one-way trip includes a fare, and one personal care attendant may ride for free. Rides may be paid by paying the driver in cash, using ride credit, or using a debit or credit card on file.

Via Grand Prairie and 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. 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 a 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 demand response 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, 93 vanpools originate in Tarrant County, 60 vanpools have destinations in Tarrant County, and 32 vanpools have an origin and destination within the county. Through DCTA, as of April 2026, no vanpools originate in Tarrant County, one vanpool has a destination in Tarrant County, and no vanpools have an origin and destination within the county. 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 Tarrant County 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 Tarrant County, 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 while enhancing accessibility features and technology at transit facilities. 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

As one of the meetings with larger attendance, the outreach event in Tarrant County provided an opportunity for various viewpoints and experiences to be shared. In addition to discussion, participants were asked to share their transit enhancement priority preferences in an activity, which are summarized in Table 2.

In the outreach meeting, discussion topics ranged from wayfinding enhancements, local transit experiences, additional resource needs for riders, training needs for staff, integrating accessibility-oriented technology, safety at rail stations, improved connectivity, optimized service, and opportunities to improve services for people with a disability. For the first activity, participants discussed how transit can be a solution to address homelessness, while also figuring out how transit agencies can best integrate technology to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities. When considering potential solutions to expand services, participants mentioned integrating audible prompting at stops and stations, and reducing fares for people experiencing homelessness. This discussion and feedback may indicate a need for providers to evaluate opportunities to enhance transit facilities using innovative accessibility-oriented technologies to improve safety. In addition, to also assess opportunities to further support and implement affordable fare options or eligibility processes for people in need.

Top Desired Enhancements		
Service Area Expansion	Pedestrian Improvements	Community Partnerships

Table 2: Services, improvements, and/or activities identified as a priority at the Tarrant County outreach meeting in Activity 3.

Public Survey

Of the total regionwide public survey participants who identified a county of residence, approximately 22 percent of participants were from Tarrant County, including both online and non-online survey participants. While most public survey respondents indicated they are not missing trips, there are others who are. Most were for social/entertainment/event trips, medical trips, and shopping trips. Of those that identified barriers that prevent them from getting where they need to go, the top three included:

- Public transportation services don't meet their needs
- They don't know the public transportation options
- Nobody to drive them

With about 86 percent of the 144 respondents to the question of "Does public transportation meet your needs?" indicating that public transportation does not meet their needs, the top reason behind this, reflected in the table below, is that services are not available at locations they are needing to travel.

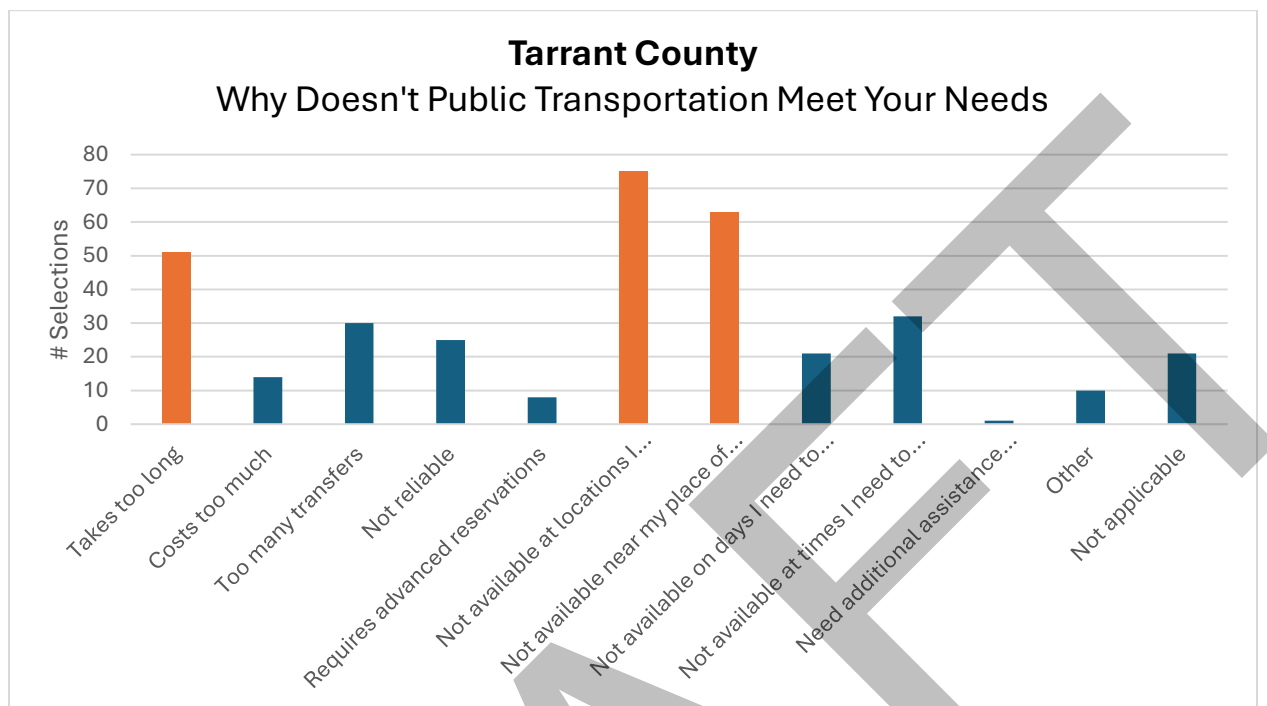


Figure 2: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections.

When looking at the best way to enhance the transit experience question in the survey, the online responses below were the preferred enhancement options selected.

- Expanded service area (average ranking of 2.65 by 98 participants)
- More frequent buses or trains (average ranking of 3.68 by 69 participants)
- Increased security (average ranking of 4.59 by 68 participants)

Of the 127 online respondents for this specific question, about 77 percent selected Expanded Service Area, making this the most preferred option by a sizeable margin. The top three ranked enhancements are reflected below. Of the additional surveys submitted to staff, the most preferred enhancement was also expanded service area.

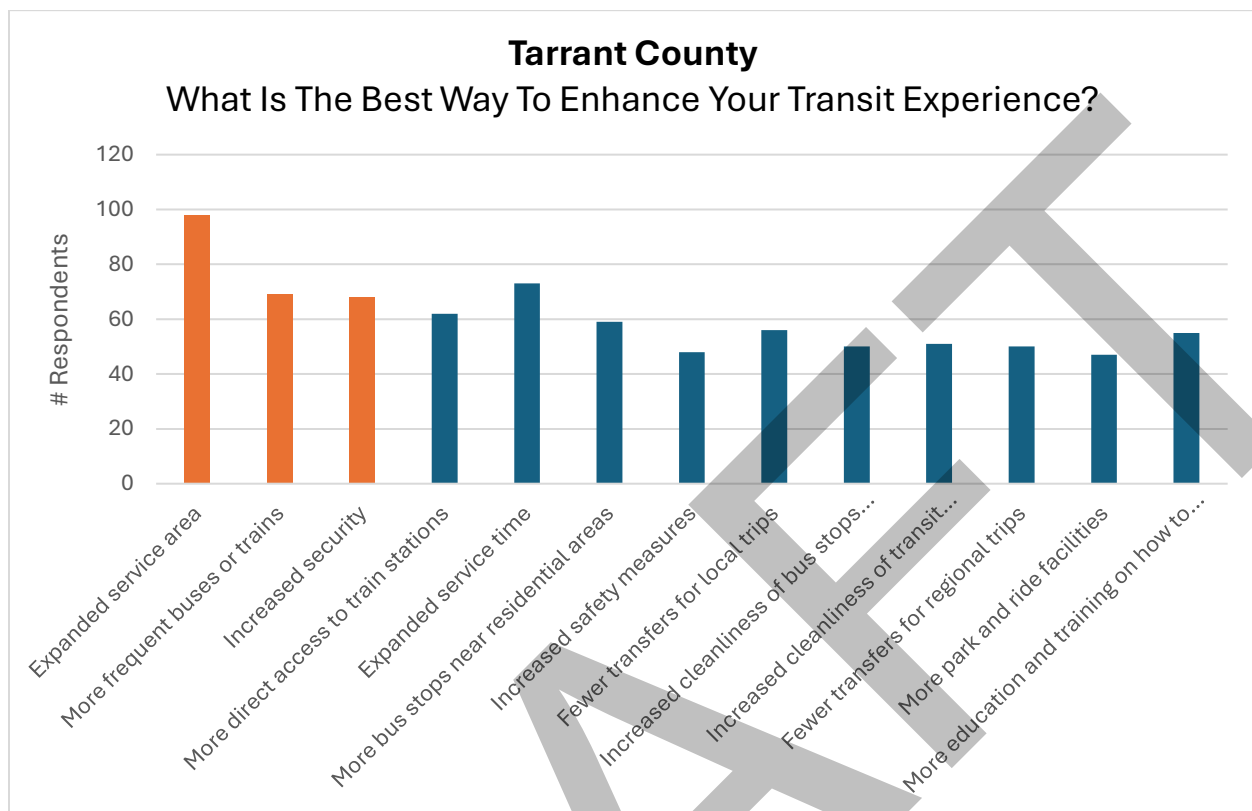


Figure 3: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements from online participants.

Agency Survey

Approximately 31 percent of agencies who participated in the survey indicated they serve or operate in Tarrant County and that their agency serves multiple populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited financial resources, and others. Agencies who provided feedback include the city of Arlington, city of Crowley, city of Grand Prairie, and the town of Westlake. Trinity Metro, the largest transit provider in Tarrant County, did not participate in the survey or the individual provider meeting opportunity.

The table below identifies 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.

What are the most requested trips among those you serve? (Top trips identified)
• Work
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Other (Need larger vehicles to meet disability constraints) • Other (Requires use of technology and that can be a barrier)
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience? (Top 2 selections from participants)
• More education and training on how to use transit • Expanded service area

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

Categorized Qualitative Feedback

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

Barriers	Missed Trips	Desired Modes	Enhancements
Lack of access and/or availability of service	Work Social / Entertainment / Events	Rail service	Access and availability of service
Options don't meet their needs		Bus service	More transit-oriented infrastructure
Takes too long		Non-motorized options	
Transit facility and /or operational issues			

Table 4: Summary of categorized qualitative feedback. More detailed information can be found in the 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 Tarrant 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.

Areas where all or two variables are above the regional percentage are scattered throughout the county, with more widespread and concentrated areas near Fort Worth, Arlington, Forest Hill, White Settlement, Briar, and Haltom City. The upper north and northeast areas of the county have less areas where all variables are above the regional percentage. Examples include Saginaw, Colleyville, and Grapevine.

For populations 65 and over, as illustrated in Appendix C, areas with moderate to high concentrations are scattered primarily west and southwest of Fort Worth with a few small, high concentration areas near Mansfield, Arlington, and just north of Haltom City. North, south, and east of Fort Worth is comprised of block groups reflecting mostly low to moderate concentrations of the population. For persons with a disability population, as illustrated in Appendix C, areas with moderate to high ranges are found near Azle, White Settlement, Benbrook, Fort Worth, Forest Hill, Arlington, and Haltom City. Northeast of

Fort Worth shows more low to moderate concentrated areas such as near Saginaw, Colleyville, Keller, and Grapevine. For low-income populations, as illustrated in Appendix C, areas with moderate to high ranges are primarily concentrated in the center of the county near Fort Worth, White Settlement, and north of Forest Hill. Additionally, there is a mixed conglomerate of Census blocks with low to moderately high concentrations near Arlington as well. Moving farther out from the city centers closer to the county borders, there are more widespread areas exhibiting low to moderately low concentrated areas of low-income populations. For example, near Saginaw, Keller, Colleyville, and Mansfield.

Tarrant County

Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)

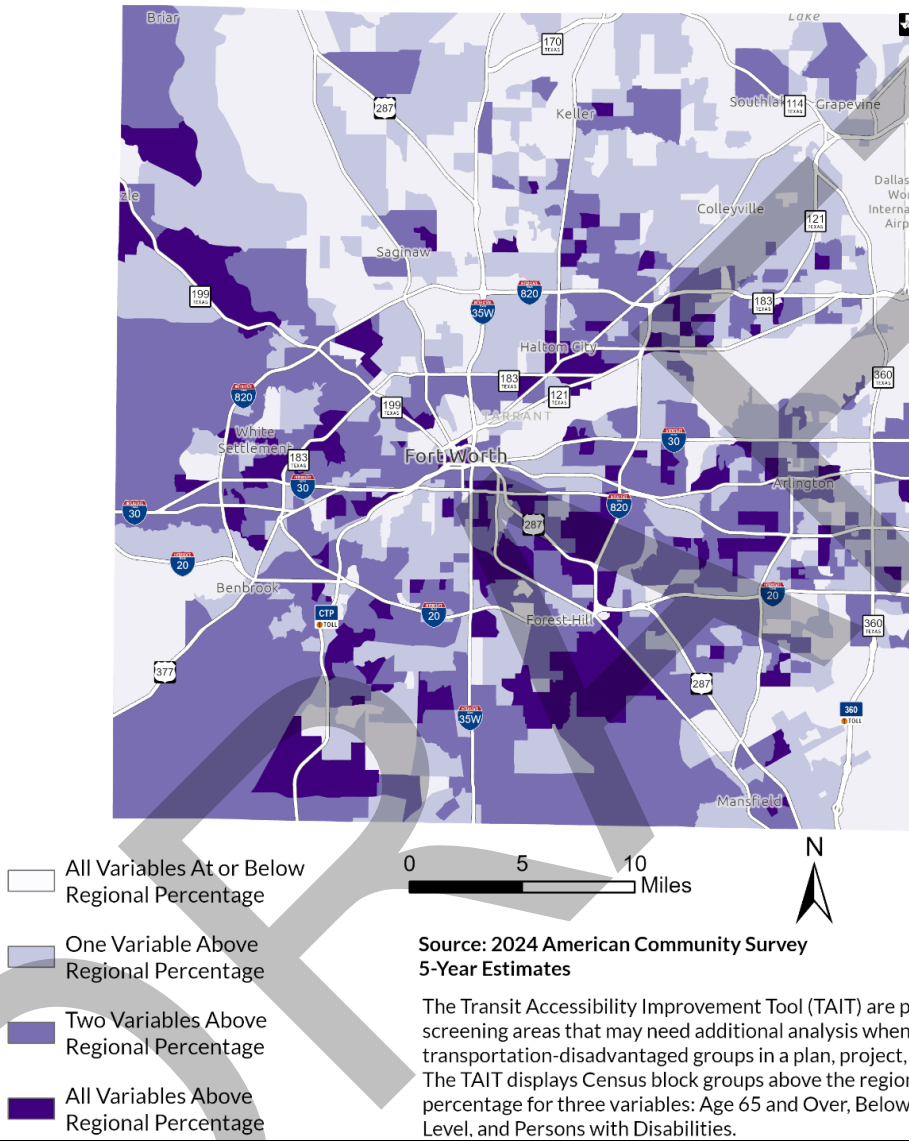


Figure 4: TAIT Map for Tarrant County

Tarrant County Zero-Car Households

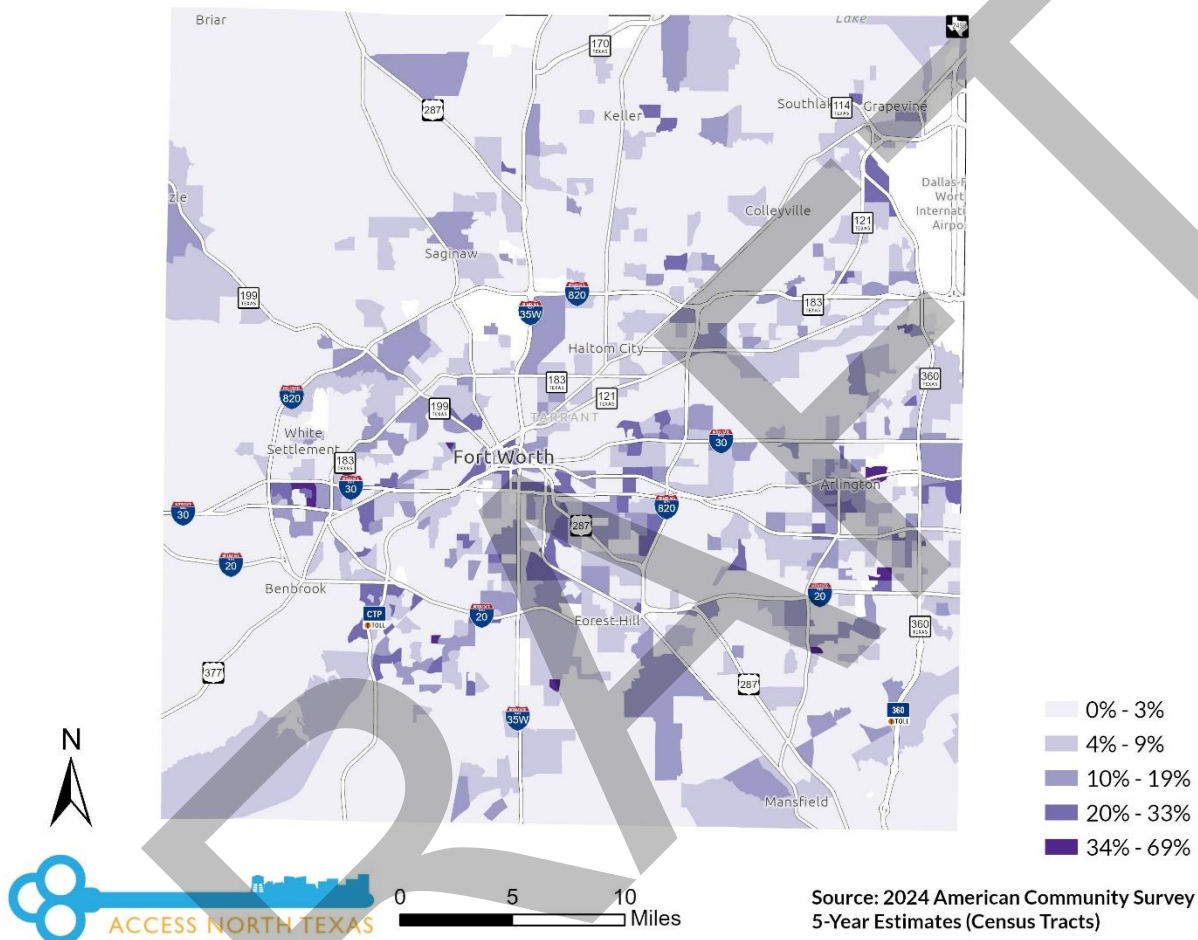


Figure 5: Individual Variable Map showing Zero-Car Households in Tarrant County

For zero-car households, as illustrated in Figure 5, areas with moderately low to moderately high concentrations are scattered throughout the county. The most concentrated area with Census block groups reflecting a moderate range of zero-car households is near Fort Worth. There are additional mixed areas near Arlington, east of Benbrook, and near Forest Hill.

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 Tarrant County 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	Tarrant County – Specific 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. Prioritize programs that facilitate transportation for work-related trips, medical, and healthcare appointments.
Implement Services by Enhancing Transportation Options and Expanding Where Service Gaps Exist	1. Expand public transportation services to key destinations throughout the region without comprehensive service and support regional integration of new services. 2. 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. 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 across various fare structures.
Drive Sustained Growth of Public Transportation Ridership	1. Promote partnerships between public transit providers and other public or private organizations to increase opportunities to

Regional Goal	Tarrant County – Specific Strategies
	make fares more affordable for those in need. 2. Integrate various funding sources to maximize efficiency and increase availability of affordable public transportation options. 3. 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.