APPENDIX C.8

JOHNSON COUNTY
Access North Texas – Johnson County
North Central Texas Council of Governments

Kelli Schlicher, AICP

Cleburne Conference Center
Cleburne, Texas
October 24, 2016
Agenda

Welcome and orientation

Introduction to Access North Texas

Identify needs and resources

Re-evaluate 2013 priorities

Questions, comments, discussion

Next steps
How to Use the Keypads

Press the number on the keypad that corresponds to the answer choice on the screen.

Press with the pad of your finger – not your fingernail.

A green light will illuminate briefly when the answer is received.

The answer will show briefly on the LCD screen.

Please do not push the channel button in the bottom left.
What type of agency do you work for?

1. Local or state government
2. Transportation provider
3. Healthcare provider
4. Non-profit
5. Social service organization
6. Community advocate / community member
7. Other
North Central Texas Council of Governments

Conducts planning and supports coordination for a variety of purposes

Transportation department coordinates service and creates short-term and long-term plans
Access North Texas

Is…

A plan to coordinate public transit and human services transportation

Identifying solutions to address unmet need

Specific, short-term plan

Prioritizing recommendations for limited federal and state funding

Focused on coordinating existing services
Access North Texas

Is not...

Unlimited funding

A transportation service

Detailed feasibility studies or highway planning

Top-down requirements for service or activities
Access North Texas

Timeline and Outcomes

- Kick-off, August 2016
- County-by-County Outreach Meetings, Fall 2016 – Summer 2017
- Final Plan Document, Fall 2017
- Plan Implementation and Maintain Partnerships, Early 2018
Updating the Plan

Continue to identify successfully implemented strategies

Work with communities to identify transportation needs

Identify, update, and prioritize solutions

Implement projects through ongoing partnerships and coordination
Johnson County

Goal: Clearly identify short-term transportation needs and resources to plan for efficiency and coordination

Successes and challenges to transportation

Destinations accessible and inaccessible

Barriers to accessing transportation

Benefits of transportation options

Kinds of service or accommodations needed
With the agency you work for, what is the highest day-to-day transportation need?

1. Medical
2. Work
3. Nutritional / Grocery store
4. Social
5. Other

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What is your primary area of concern?

1. Improve awareness of available services
2. Increase coordination between agencies
3. Fund new services
4. Enhance the user’s experience
5. Create targeted implementation plans
6. Other
What funding approach will have the biggest impact on improving access to transit?

1. Focus on getting additional federal or state investment in transit
2. Focus on getting additional local government investment in transit
3. Focus on increasing user choice
4. Focus on integrating funding sources from multiple programs (Aging, Workforce, Medicaid, etc.)
5. Other
What method could improve the awareness of available services?

1. Targeted marketing to local agencies
2. Public marketing campaign
3. A centralized location to receive information about transit
4. Materials provided in another language
5. Other

17%  39%  35%  4%  4%
What about coordination between agencies is the biggest barrier for you?

1. Knowing where to start
2. Identifying appropriate contacts
3. Successfully contacting other agencies
4. Developing agreements between agencies
5. Other
What is the best way to enhance the user’s experience?

1. Personal instruction on the phone or in person
2. Better information about how to use transit
3. Additional assistance provided by the driver or personal attendant
4. Fewer transfers between providers for regional trips
5. Other

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Which technology advances are most likely to help improve transportation options for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals in the next five years?

1. Transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft
2. Web or smartphone apps with info on multiple providers
3. Assistive driving technology (stay-in-lane, automatic breaking)
4. Driverless cars
5. Driverless cars, buses or shuttles
6. Other
7. None – most people won’t access these options
Next Steps

Continue to identify successfully implemented strategies

Work with communities to identify transportation needs

Identify, update, and prioritize solutions

Implement projects through ongoing partnerships and coordination
Your Feedback on 2013 Priorities

**Top Priorities**

1) Coordinating committee
2) Build county partnerships to fund service
3) Link to Tarrant County
4) Increased awareness of existing services
5) Coordinate with Transit Advisory Board

**Additional Priorities**

- Expand service in evenings and weekends
- Subsidized fares and affordable subscription service
- Incorporate transit into city redevelopment/revitalization
- Improve transit service along county corridors
Please Return Your Keypad!

Thank you
Questions or Comments

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1. Meeting Summary
   a. Welcome
      Kelli Schlicher from the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the Johnson County meeting.

   b. Introduction to Access North Texas
      Ms. Schlicher provided a short presentation and covered the following material:
      - An overview of NCTCOG
      - What Access North Texas is and is not
      - The general timeline of the plan update
      - A summary of the 2013 plan

   c. Interactive Questions and Discussion
      The attendees answered several interactive polling questions and participated in open conversation about the public transportation needs and challenges in Johnson County. The polling questions and discussion are summarized below.

      With the agency you work for, what is the highest day-to-day transportation need?
      46% of respondents indicated that the highest day-to-day transportation need for their agency is work trips, while 38% specified that medical trips is their highest transportation need.

      For work related trips, it was noted that young adults have particular difficulty accessing job opportunities. Employers within the county as well as in southern Fort Worth are difficult to access.

      Regarding medical trips, needs include access to ongoing mental health services and dialysis appointments in Tarrant County. Huguley Hospital brought up that Medicaid no longer provides trips for individuals being discharged from the emergency room. Many no-shows to medical appointments are due to individuals not having a transportation option.

      City/County Transportation noted that same day trips are sometimes possible, but seven days’ notice is best because there is limited capacity. The cost of the fare for transit is
often times a barrier in itself. A homeless shelter noted that they have given out bicycles to help individuals connect to services. Hill College noted that students have trouble accessing both their Burleson and Cleburne campuses. Lastly, finding transportation for school-aged children is a challenge for families as they try to access work and medical appointments.

Regarding public transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, etc., what is your primary area of concern?

43% of respondents indicated that funding new services was their primary area of concern. There is an interest to expand existing services provided by City/County Transportation and make additional connections to the Fort Worth Transportation Authority’s (FWTA) system. However, a financial commitment to FWTA (1/2 cent sales tax or equivalent) is significant. Additionally, in previous communications with FWTA, opportunities for contracted service were unclear. One attendee thought that creating a comprehensive plan for transportation could include information about transit service and a financial plan to support that service.

What funding approach will have the biggest impact on improving access to transit?

35% of attendees indicated that both focusing on getting additional federal or state investment in transit and focusing on integrating funding sources from multiple programs (Aging, Workforce, Medicaid, etc.) are equally important. Local government has not considered public transportation a priority for local funds. Integrating existing funding sources could expand service to additional people and locations. A connection starting in Johnson County, linking to downtown Fort Worth and the airport is needed as there are limited independent or private options. This connection to the airport would also help with tourism and conferences that locate in Johnson County.

What method could improve the awareness of available services?

39% of respondents indicated that a public marketing campaign would help improve awareness of available services, while 35% answered that a centralized location to receive information about transit was the best method. An attendee noted that a 1-800 number with available resources would be very helpful. There was low awareness of 2-1-1’s program that connects individuals with local transportation and other services and the data may need to be updated. Agencies and nonprofits need to know what resources are available so they can better inform their clients. However, there is the added complexity of marketing a transportation service (City/County Transportation) that is currently at capacity. Currently the operating hours don’t accommodate jobs on alternate or third shifts. Additional operating funds would help increase capacity and the ability to market available services.

What about coordination between agencies is the biggest barrier for you?

36% of respondents indicated that developing agreements between agencies was the biggest barrier to coordination, while 27% answered identifying appropriate contacts was the biggest barrier. Cities in Johnson County are interested in developing an agreement with FWTA for additional transportation services. Individuals with very low incomes also have transportation needs that are not being met. Additional partnerships are necessary.
to overcome the existing negative perception of low-income individuals who often rely on public transportation. Lastly, the “my money” perspective of some agencies is an added barrier to coordination.

**What is the best way to enhance the user’s experience?**
59% of attendees indicated that better information about how to use transit would be the best way to enhance the user’s experience. An attendee mentioned it would be nice to have information about transportation resources across our region as well as the state. Subsidized fares would assist individuals with low or limited incomes. A person noted that perhaps funding from the Area Agency on Aging could be used to fund supplemental fares or trips. Reduced pick-up times for Medicaid transportation would also enhance the user’s experience.

**Which technology advances are most likely to help improve transportation options for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals in the next five years?**
35% of attendees believed that most people wouldn’t access these options, followed by 30% of attendees who voted for driverless cars, buses, or shuttles. People in attendance didn’t believe that seniors would utilize these types of technology. Uber and/or Lyft would increase the number of transportation options available in Johnson County, but most users use a smartphone to access services. Additionally, there was a concern about accessibility for individuals using mobility devices because they may need a vehicle with a lift or ramp. Since Uber and Lyft are run with a private fleet (people’s personal cars) this is not a fully accessible transportation option without additional features, services, or partnerships.

d. **Priorities & Solutions**
In closing, Ms. Schlicher asked participants to rank the priorities (through a dot exercise) that were most important to them or indicate if new priorities have since arisen. Participants ranked priorities in the following order:

1. Expand service during evenings and weekends to improve access to service sector jobs, recreation activities, and medical facilities.
2. Increase and improve access and availability of transit service along major east/west and north/south corridors throughout the county.
3. Explore opportunities to strengthen regional transportation links into Tarrant County to allow for improved education, employment, and medical access.
4. Explore options for subsidized fares and affordable subscription services with City/County Transportation.
5. Establish and build partnerships with cities, employers, and other stakeholders in the county; explore options for additional funding to grow transit service in the county.
6. Create and maintain a county coordinating committee to focus on ongoing transportation needs.
7. Increase awareness by educating local officials on available transit services, local demand, opportunities to leverage funding, and opportunities for economic development with transit.
8. Coordinate with cities to incorporate transit into redevelopment and revitalization planning activities.

e. **Next Steps**

A point-person committee for Johnson County will soon be developed. The committee will discuss and further refine Johnson County transportation needs and solutions. Agencies or individuals interested in participating should contact Ms. Schlicher.

The final plan is slated for fall 2017 and implementation will begin in early 2018. The final plan will include prioritized solutions will improve the coordination and availability of public transportation for the 16-county region.

Contact: Kelli Schlicher, AICP, Transportation Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments; (817) 695-9287, kschlicher@nctcog.org
Sarah Chadderdon, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments; (817) 695-9180, schadderdon@nctcog.org

2. **Attendee List**

City of Burleson: Kent George
City of Cleburne/City/County Transportation: Grady Easdon
City of Joshua: Mayor Joe Hollarn, Josh Jones
Cleburne Chamber of Commerce: Cathy Marchel, Tara Janszen
Cleburne Dialysis Center: Evelyn Flatt, Linda Aas
Cleburne Economic Development Foundation: Jerry Cash
Cleburne Housing Agency: Sallie Watson
Cleburne Workforce Center: Amanda Mason
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Johnson County: Tammy King, Karrie Wallace
H.O.P.E. Medical & Dental Clinic: Diana Wescott
Hill College: Noelle Barnes
Huguley Memorial Medical Center: Melody Argueta
Johnson County Christian Lodge: Bill Wissore, Eileen Wissore
North Central Texas Council of Governments: Sarah Chadderdon, Kelli Schlicher, Karina Maldonado, Chris Reed, David Tidwell
United Way of Johnson County: Aly Allen-Engstrom
Community Opportunities, Inc.: Cheryl Severance
**Prioritization Process**

NCTCOG staff contacted stakeholders in Johnson County to follow up on the outcomes of the outreach meeting that took place on October 24, 2016 in Greenville. The following individuals, representing a variety of interests in Johnson County, participated in the prioritization of strategies to address the needs identified.

Terry Leake, Director of Finance, City of Cleburne/City/County Transportation
Ikisha Cross, Cleburne Workforce Center
Aly Allen-Engstrom, Executive Director, United Way of Johnson County
Tracy Robinson, Director of Client Services, Meals-on-Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties
Kathryn Fasci, Veterans Service Officer, Johnson County
Diana Westcott, Executive Director, H.O.P.E. Medical & Dental Clinic
Bill Wissore, Executive Director, Johnson County Christian Lodge
Megan Gross, Special Education Coordinator, Venus ISD
Melody Argueta, Social Service Supervisor, Huguley Memorial Medical Center
Mayor Joe Hollarn, City of Joshua
Kelli Schlicher, Transportation Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments

This document summarizes conversations during the prioritization process.

Several stakeholders noted that additional resources such as funding and drivers would be necessary before increasing the level of service or expanding hours of operation. All of this should be done before the transit agency tries to market or increase knowledge about available services. City/County noted that there are some complications with being housed within the city of Cleburne. Currently, they’re doing all they can with the existing federal and State funds. Johnson County contributes some funding, but any shortfalls are absorbed by the city of Cleburne.

The United Way asked why the draft priorities were listed in a different order than those in the meeting minutes. COG staff explained that the priorities listed in the minutes were from 2013 and ranked based on what was still most important to the attendees at the Johnson County outreach meeting. The draft priorities that were emailed were developed and ordered based on the overall conversation of transportation needs from the October outreach meeting.

The United Way asked for clarification on a mobility manager’s role. COG staff explained that a mobility manager helps develop relationships between transit
providers, cities, and agencies to improve the available transportation. This can also include educating local elected officials, cities, and agencies about the cost of transit to increase local contributions to expand available service.

The group agreed that a steering committee was needed to advocate for increasing the available transportation. This would include advocating to local elected officials (cities, County Judge and County Commissioners) and creating an actionable public transportation plan for growth. This plan should also assess whether City/County Transportation would be better suited at a county-level or as a stand-alone agency, rather than within the city of Cleburne. A lead agency would need to be identified and tasked with gathering, presenting data, and speaking to local officials about the local transportation need.

On May 2, 2017, COG staff spoke with Tracy Robinson from Meals on Wheels to review what was discussed by the committee. She identified that exploring new partnerships with agencies within the community should be the highest priority. Not everyone knows what transportation options are available. A general public marketing campaign would be the best way to increase knowledge. She noted that the connection between Johnson County and Fort Worth was difficult due to the early morning pick-ups and multiple transfers required to get to their final destination. A solution would be to have scheduled days where direct service was provided from Johnson County to Fort Worth. For example, transportation from Johnson to Fort Worth is provided on Wednesdays and can accommodate appointments made between 8am and noon. A bus would wait for the appointments to be completed and drive everyone back to Johnson County.

Prioritized strategies for Johnson County that incorporate stakeholder feedback will be included in the plan document.