

**Access North Texas
Johnson County Meeting
October 24, 2016
Cleburne, Texas**

1. Meeting Summary.....	p.1
a. Welcome.....	p.1
b. Introduction to Access North Texas.....	p.1
c. Interactive Questions & Discussion.....	p.1
d. Priorities & Solutions.....	p.3
e. Next Steps.....	p.4
2. Attendee List.....	p.4

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