SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

3. SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The transportation system in North Central Texas plays a vital role in providing residents access to essential resources such as jobs, medical care, education, and healthy food. Equitable access to daily destinations and multiple transportation options contribute to the quality of life in a neighborhood, city, or region. In coordination with local governments and transportation partners, the North Central Texas Council of Governments aims to develop transportation infrastructure that is accessible to all.

To ensure the plan reflects public needs, development of the long-range transportation plan prioritizes comprehensive and meaningful public participation. The Mobility 2050 public input process reveals a strong desire to shift from car-centric planning to promoting alternative transportation options that support sustainable communities. Input from diverse communities highlights a preference for an efficient roadway network, expanded transit coverage, and walkable areas to improve access to destinations across North Texas.

Mobility 2050 includes policies, programs, and projects that support a range of mobility options that can contribute to healthy, livable communities. Proposed projects undergo a nondiscrimination analysis to ensure they do not pose disproportionate harm or delay benefits to protected populations.

This chapter analyzes the social impacts of the regional transportation system. The **Environmental Considerations**, **Operational Efficiency**, and **Mobility Options** chapters of Mobility 2050 recommend programs and projects that support healthy, livable, and sustainable communities for the existing and future residents of the region.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Regional Population and Employment Trends
- Nondiscrimination Efforts
- Public Participation Requirements

DID YOU KNOW?

POPULATION GROWTH: By the year 2050, the 12-county Metropolitan Planning Area is forecasted to grow to 12.3 million residents, 3 million more than today. The highest rates of growth are expanding outward from urban centers, necessitating both roadway and transit expansion to connect people to jobs, education, healthcare, healthy food, and other important destinations.

MULTIMODAL FUTURE: Public involvement participants strongly support a multimodal transportation future where transit, walking, and biking serve as viable alternatives to driving. The data shows a clear preference for balanced investment across transportation modes. While participants recognize the continued need for strategic roadway improvements, the dominant themes of Rail and Transit Planning (1,682 comments) and Sustainable Development (1,436 comments) indicate a strong desire for transportation options beyond private vehicles.

Images: NCTCOG Staff, Getty

3-1. REGIONAL POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

OVERVIEW

Regional population and employment trends and forecasts analyze where residents live, work, and engage in leisure activities, while projecting future patterns. Transportation planners need this information in order to provide facilities and connections that meet the mobility and accessibility needs of existing and future populations.

According to the US Census Bureau, the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Metropolitan Statistical Area[1] is the fourth most populous in the country and the most populous in the state. In 2023, the region was the fastest growing metropolitan area in the nation and surpassed 8 million residents.[2] Forecasts project that rapid growth will continue through 2050.

Several key demographics transportation planners must consider are the density, size, and profile of the population. These characteristics impact where transportation improvements are necessary to reduce congestion and shape the land use-transportation connection. These two aspects are explored further in the **Mobility Options** chapter and the **Sustainable Development** section of the **Operational Efficiency** chapter.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE DALLAS-FORT WORTH REGION ADDS

1 million people

EVERY 7 YEARS

Image: NCTCOG Staff

[1] The Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Metropolitan Statistical Area is a Census designation that consists of Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Somervell, Tarrant, and Wise counties. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2023 Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Definitions, https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm

[2] Census Bureau. "Annual and Cumulative Estimates of Resident Population Change for Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States and Puerto Rico" *2023 Population Estimates*, www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-total-metro-and-micro-statistical-areas.html

REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC FORECAST

Historical Population Growth

Historical population data from the US Census Bureau helps inform the regional population and employment projections the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) makes for the future. In the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the 12-county Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) had a population of approximately 7.9 million. By the year 2050, these counties are forecasted to grow to 12.3 million residents. This expected growth represents a 45 percent increase in the population of North Central Texas over 24 years. Historical population growth is crucial for projecting where populations will grow in the future. **Table 3-1** shows the population distribution by county for 2000, 2010, and 2020 based on Census data.

The Dallas-Fort Worth region continues to experience strong population growth, increasing from 5.2 million residents in 2000 to 7.7 million in 2020, a 48 percent increase. While Dallas and Tarrant counties remain the most populous, their share of the regional population has declined as rapid growth shifts to Collin and Denton counties. These two counties have more than doubled in population over the past two decades, now comprising over a quarter of the region's total population. Several outer counties, including Kaufman, Rockwall, and Parker, also saw significant growth, reflecting ongoing suburban expansion.

This trend highlights a continuing shift in population density and development patterns, with growth occurring outside the traditional urban core. As a result, transportation planning efforts must balance the needs of the region's expanding suburban areas while maintaining mobility and accessibility in the core counties. The distribution of population growth has major implications for infrastructure investment, transit accessibility, and long-term regional sustainability.

Table 3-1: Historical Population Totals by County, 2000 to 2020

MPA County	Population					
	2000		2010		2020	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Collin	491,675	9%	782,341	12%	1,064,465	14%
Dallas	2,218,899	43%	2,368,139	37%	2,613,539	34%
Denton	432,976	8%	662,614	10%	906,422	12%
Ellis	111,360	2%	149,610	2%	192,455	2%
Hood	41,100	1%	51,182	1%	61,598	1%
Hunt	76,596	2%	86,129	1%	99,956	1%
Johnson	126,811	2%	150,934	3%	179,927	2%
Kaufman	71,313	1%	103,350	2%	145,310	2%
Parker	88,495	2%	116,927	2%	148,222	2%
Rockwall	43,080	1%	78,337	1%	107,819	1%
Tarrant	1,446,219	28%	1,809,034	28%	2,110,640	27%
Wise	48,793	1%	59,217	1%	68,632	1%
Totals	**5,197,317**	**100%**	**6,417,724**	**100%**	**7,698,985**	**100%**

Source: 2000, 2010 Decennial Census, 2020 Decennial Census Data, www.census.gov

Population Forecasts

A population forecast is a projection of how many people will live in a certain area based on factors like past growth trends, development potential, and market demand. Mobility 2050 uses NCTCOG's 2050 demographic forecast to develop transportation recommendations. The year 2026 is used as a base year in the **Social Considerations** chapter to illustrate general trends in population and employment growth through 2050.

As shown in **Table 3-2**, the Dallas-Fort Worth region is projected to grow by 43 percent between 2026 and 2050, adding 3.7 million

residents. The fastest-growing counties are Kaufman (+127 percent), Parker (+97 percent), and Wise (+95 percent), reflecting continued suburban expansion. Collin and Denton counties will each grow by 70 percent, adding nearly 1.7 million residents combined, reinforcing their role as major population centers. While Dallas and Tarrant counties will see the highest numeric growth, their percentage increases (13 percent and 27 percent, respectively) are much lower. These trends indicate continued outward migration, emphasizing the need for regional transportation investments to support growing communities of varying compositions and needs.

Table 3-2: Forecasted Population Growth by County, 2026 to 2050 (Total Population)

MPA County	2026 Population	2050 Population	Growth	Percent Growth
Collin	1,270,549	2,154,649	884,100	70%
Dallas	2,727,559	3,070,902	343,343	13%
Denton	1,103,539	1,877,835	774,296	70%
Ellis	241,340	442,297	200,958	83%
Hood	71,509	114,159	42,650	60%
Hunt	118,721	205,990	87,269	74%
Johnson	214,786	369,655	154,869	72%
Kaufman	177,404	403,257	225,853	127%
Parker	190,386	374,523	184,137	97%
Rockwall	133,285	245,608	112,323	84%
Tarrant	2,258,130	2,866,567	608,437	27%
Wise	88,136	171,714	83,577	95%
Total	**8,595,345**	**12,297,157**	**3,701,812**	**43%**

Source: NCTCOG 2050 Demographic Forecasts

Population Density

In addition to population forecasts, population density is critical when planning transportation facilities. Denser areas may warrant more multimodal transportation infrastructure to ensure that residents are able to travel efficiently. In the four urban counties (Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant), population density is projected to increase from 2,026 to 2,742 people per square mile between the years 2026 and 2050. For the entire MPA, population density is projected to increase from 910 to 1,303 people per square mile.[3]

Table 3-3 shows increases in population density by county. **Figure 3-1**, **Figure 3-2**, and **Figure 3-3** show population density changes across the region between 2026 and 2050. **Figure 3-4** illustrates people per square mile in each county in the Metropolitan Planning Area.

Table 3-3: Forecasted Change in Population Density by County (persons per square mile)

MPA County	2026 Population Density	2050 Population Density	Growth	Percent Growth
Collin	1,434	2,432	998	70%
Dallas	3,003	3,381	378	13%
Denton	1,152	1,961	809	70%
Ellis	254	465	211	83%
Hood	164	261	98	60%
Hunt	135	234	99	74%
Johnson	293	504	211	72%
Kaufman	220	500	280	127%
Parker	209	412	203	97%
Rockwall	896	1,651	755	84%
Tarrant	2,516	3,194	678	27%
Wise	96	186	91	95%
Total	**910**	**1,302**	**392**	**43%**

Source: NCTCOG 2050 Demographic Forecasts

[3] Population density for the Dallas-Fort Worth MPA is calculated by dividing the total regional population by the land area of the region. Table 3-3 reflects population density calculated by traffic survey zone.

Figure 3-1: Population Density, 2026

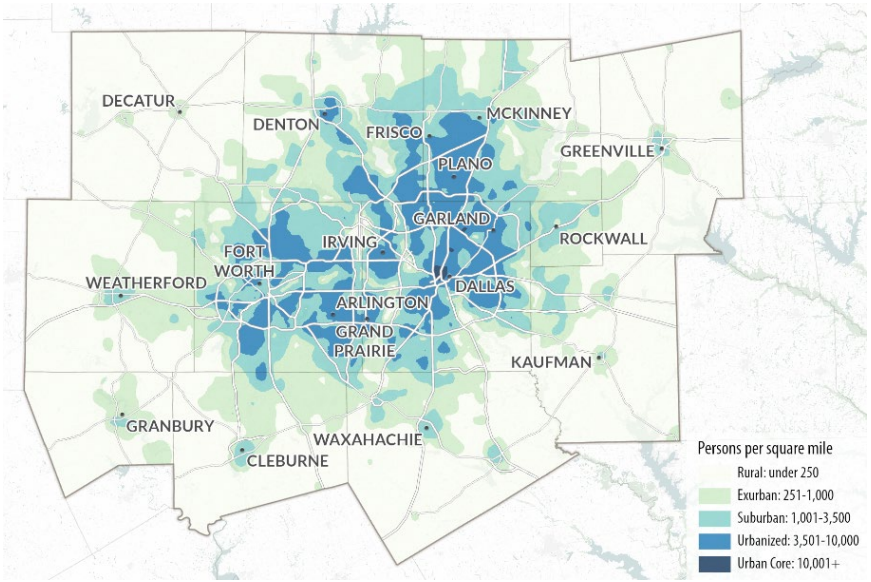
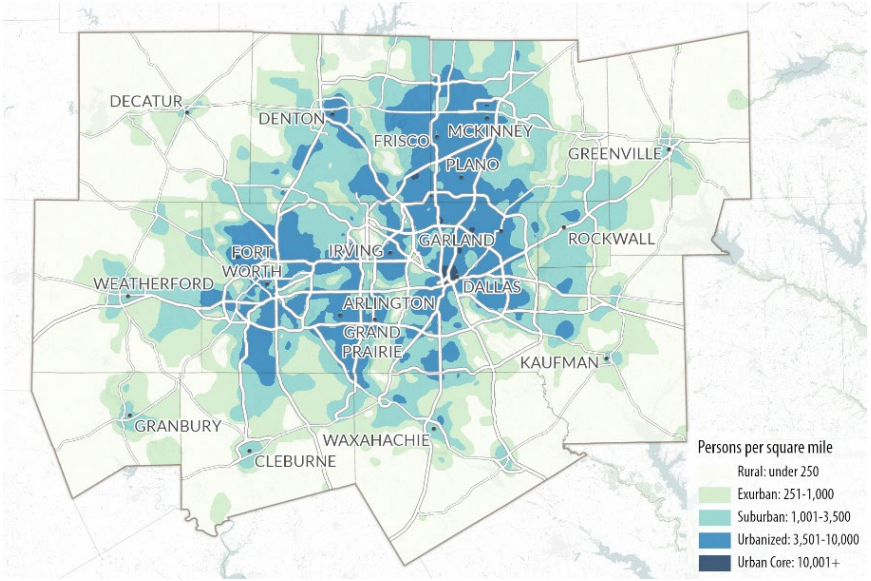


Figure 3-2: Population Density, 2050



[4] See the **Roadway** section in the **Mobility Options** appendix for more information on the modeling process.

Figure 3-3: Change in Population Density, 2026 to 2050, by Traffic Analysis Zone [4]

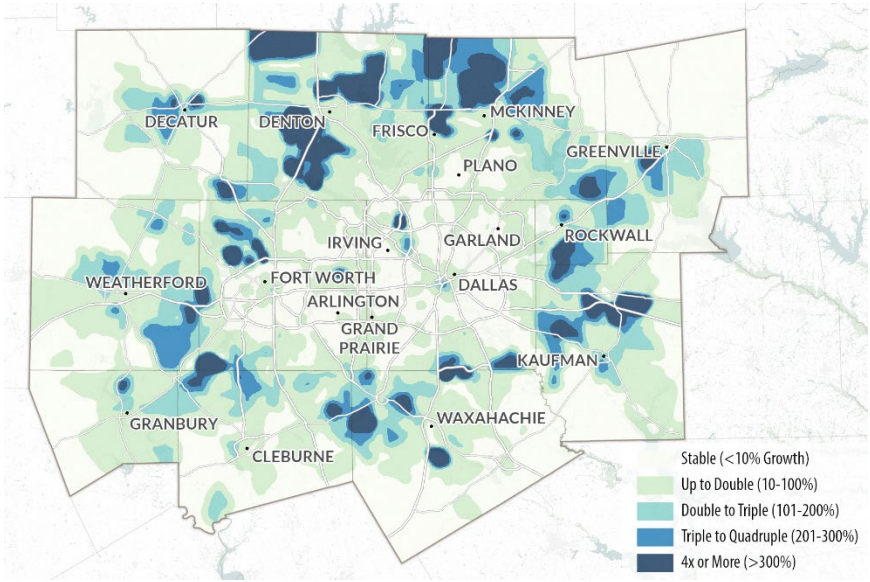
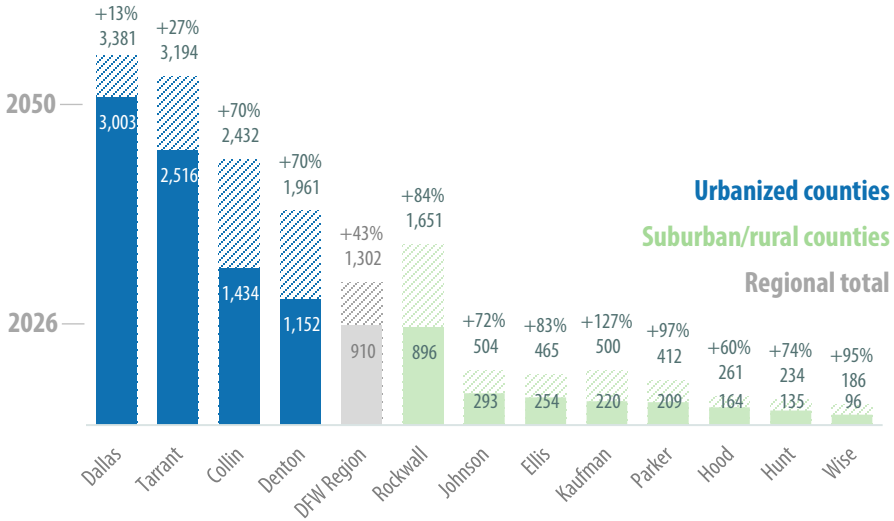


Figure 3-4: People per Square Mile by County, 2026 and 2050



INTERACTIVE MAPS ONLINE

Historic Employment Growth

North Central Texas is a major economic, social, and political center of both Texas and the United States. Job growth continues to flourish in the region and state. The North Central Texas region represents 30 percent of the state's gross domestic product and is home to 23 Fortune 500 companies.[5] From 2000 to 2023, the number of civilian employees in the region increased by 57 percent, while the number of armed forces employees increased by 72 percent.[6] The transportation system is central in supporting job growth because it allows for the efficient movement of people and goods.

Employment Forecast

NCTCOG forecasts employment growth to ensure that transportation facilities provide the region's residents with access to jobs. As shown in **Table 3-4**, employment within the 12-county MPA is projected to increase 45 percent from about 6 million jobs in 2026 to over 8.6 million in 2050.

Employment growth is a key factor in forecasting population, as regions with job opportunities retain residents and attract new ones. Transportation planners use this data to forecast revenue streams and identify areas needing infrastructure, supporting long-term economic growth in North Central Texas.

Table 3-4: Forecasted Employment Growth by County, 2026 to 2050

County	2026 Employment	2050 Employment	Growth	Percent Growth
Collin	794,610	1,243,330	448,720	56%
Dallas	2,563,341	3,289,159	725,818	28%
Denton	550,641	953,057	402,416	73%
Ellis	111,092	206,028	94,936	85%
Hood	36,155	52,007	15,852	44%
Hunt	57,309	94,878	37,569	66%
Johnson	98,510	166,900	68,390	69%
Kaufman	79,253	189,354	110,101	139%
Parker	90,489	169,621	79,132	87%
Rockwall	73,404	134,769	61,365	84%
Tarrant	1,500,877	2,120,932	620,055	41%
Wise	44,189	77,098	32,910	74%
Total	**5,999,870**	**8,697,133**	**2,697,263**	**45%**

Source: NCTCOG 2050 Demographic Forecasts

[5] North Texas Commission, *Profile of North Texas 2024*, https://www.ntc-dfw.org/

[6] 2000 US Census and 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics, https://data.census.gov

Employment Density

The employment density across the Dallas-Fort Worth region is projected to grow by 45 percent, increasing from 635 jobs per square mile in 2026 to 921 jobs per square mile in 2050. Employment density is depicted in **Table 3-5**. The highest growth rates in employment density are forecasted for Kaufman (+139 percent), Ellis (+85 percent), and Rockwall (+84 percent), indicating a significant rise in job concentration in suburban and exurban areas. These counties, traditionally lower in employment density, are expected to experience the greatest transformation as they develop further.

Meanwhile, Collin and Denton counties, which already have relatively high employment densities, are expected to see 56 percent and 73 percent growth in jobs per square mile, respectively. These counties are likely to remain key drivers of regional employment, particularly as they attract businesses and infrastructure investments. In contrast, Dallas and Tarrant counties, though still the highest in total employment density, will experience more moderate growth at 28 percent and 41 percent, respectively. This trend reflects the continued suburbanization of employment, with growth in outlying areas helping to alleviate pressure on the core counties. The rising employment density in suburban counties underscores the need for transportation planning that supports both urban cores and expanding suburban job centers.

Table 3-5: Change in Employment Density, 2026 to 2050 (jobs per square mile)

MPA County	2026 Employment Density	2050 Employment Density	Growth	Percent Growth
Collin	897	1404	507	56%
Dallas	2822	3621	799	28%
Denton	575	995	420	73%
Ellis	117	217	100	85%
Hood	83	119	36	44%
Hunt	65	108	43	66%
Johnson	134	227	93	69%
Kaufman	98	235	136	139%
Parker	100	187	87	87%
Rockwall	494	906	413	84%
Tarrant	1672	2363	691	41%
Wise	48	84	36	74%
Total	**635**	**921**	**286**	**45%**

Figure 3-5, **Figure 3-6**, and **Figure 3-7** show changes in employment density between 2026 and 2050. **Figure 3-8** illustrates jobs per square mile in each county in the MPA.

Figure 3-5: Employment Density, 2026

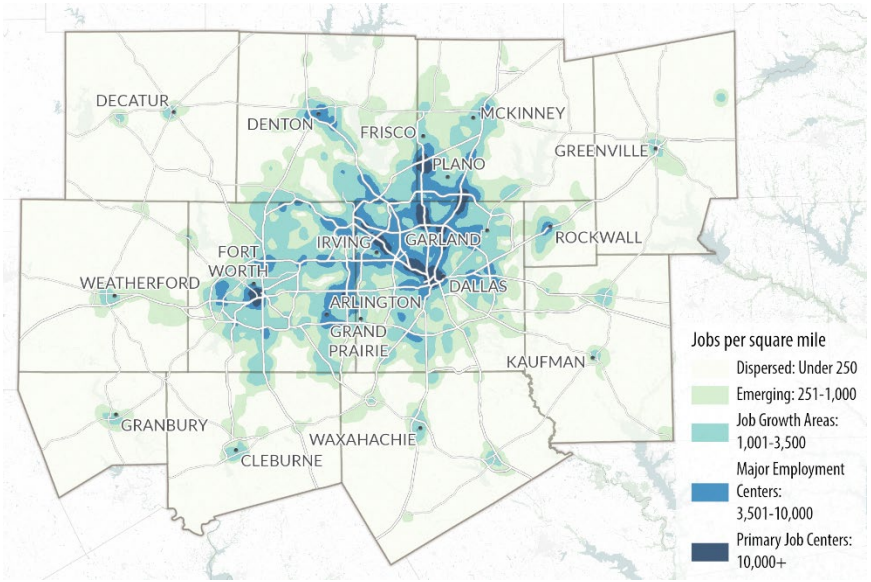


Figure 3-6: Employment Density, 2050

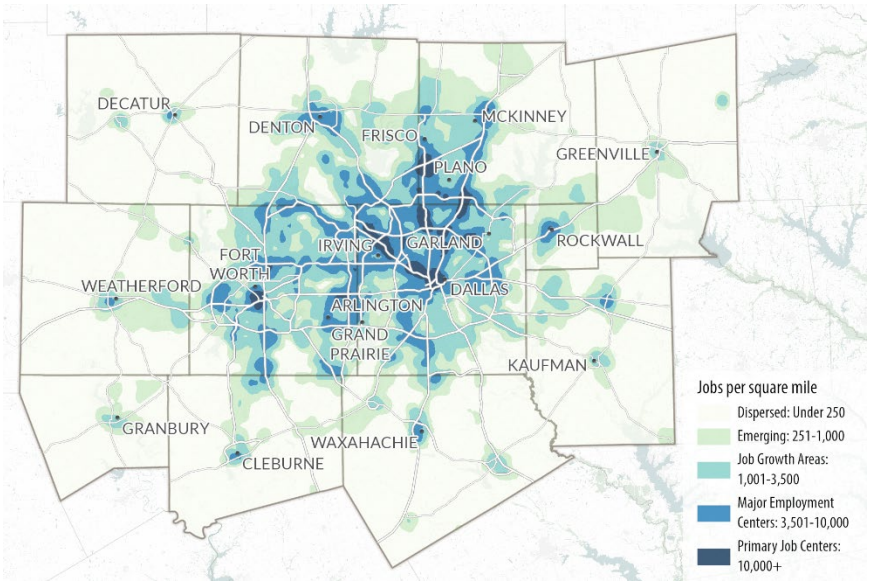


Figure 3-7: Change in Employment Density, 2026 to 2050

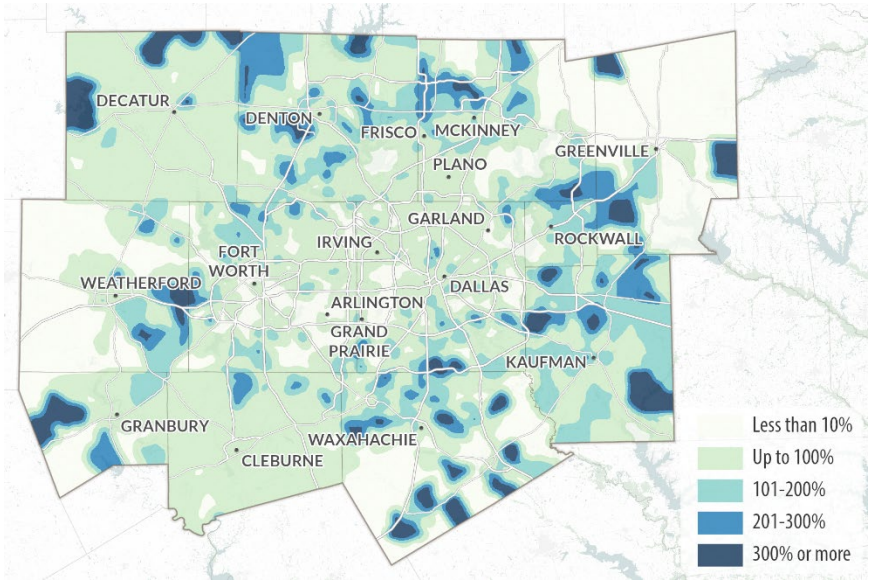
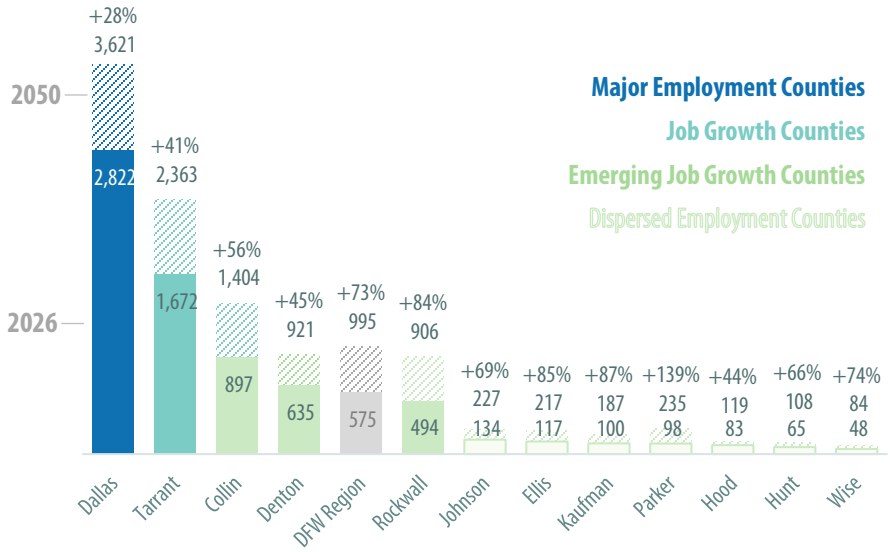


Figure 3-8: Jobs per Square Mile by County, 2026 and 2050



INTERACTIVE MAPS ONLINE

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS POPULATION PROFILE

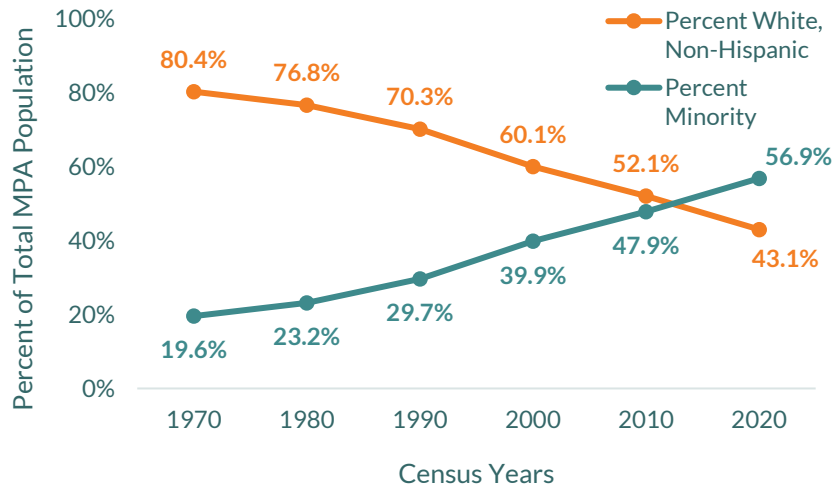
In a region that is demographically diverse, planners must consider how this affects the transportation needs of all North Texans. Demographic trends indicate the region's population profile will change over time in terms of race, ethnicity, income, language, and age. The data source for the majority of the following demographic data in Mobility 2050 is the 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the most recent dataset that included all the applicable data at the time Mobility 2050 was developed.

Changes in Race and Ethnicity

Since the 1970s, both the overall population and minority population have increased in the region. For planning purposes, NCTCOG considers minority to be any person who identifies his or her race as Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, two or more races, or some other race; or who defines his or her ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. Individuals may identify themselves as one or more races and as ethnically Hispanic or Latino. To avoid double counting people, the total minority population is calculated as the sum of 1) individuals who identify themselves as being a member of any race(s) other than White and who are not Hispanic or Latino, and 2) all individuals who are ethnically Hispanic or Latino, regardless of race. The overall population in the region has increased nearly 212 percent, from 2.5 million people in 1970 to almost 7.8 million in 2020. During the same period, the minority population increased more than 775 percent, from 500,000 in 1970 to over 4 million in 2020. **Figure 3-9** illustrates changes in the region's racial and ethnic makeup over time.

Today, the region is demographically diverse with a total minority population of 57percent. **Figure 3-10** illustrates the racial profile of the North Central Texas region between 2019 and 2023.

Figure 3-9: North Central Texas Population Change, 1970 to 2020

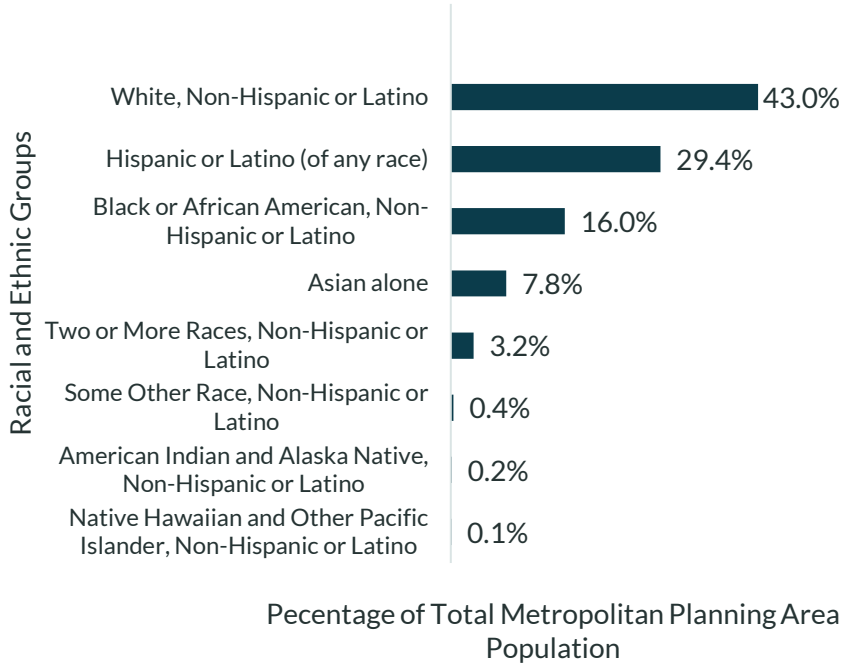


Source: Decennial Census, various years. www.census.gov

A growing number of MPA residents were born in foreign countries. The number of individuals who were born in a foreign country increased by almost 90 percent from 2000 to 2023. As a result, this demographic group's share of the region's total population has increased from 15 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2023.[7]

[7] 2000 US Census & 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, www.census.gov

Figure 3-10: Regional Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2019 to 2023



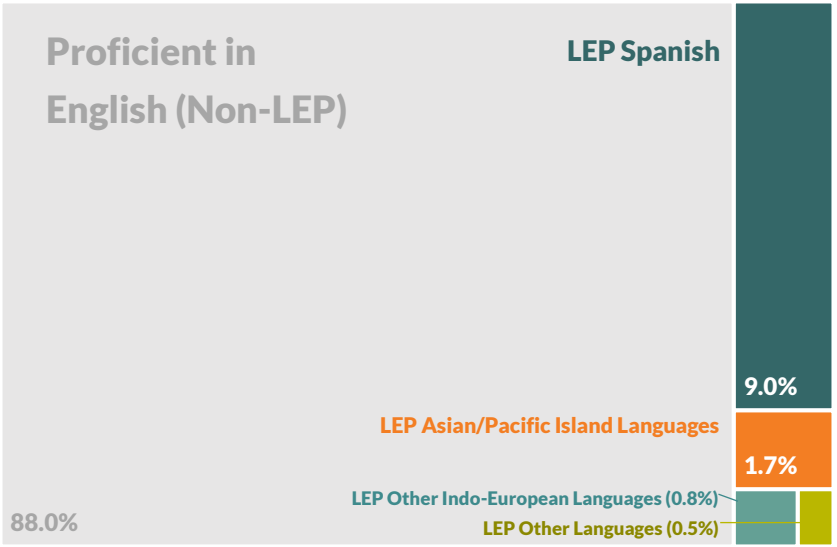
Source: 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

www.census.gov

Limited English Proficiency in North Central Texas

As North Central Texas continues to become a more diverse region, the number of non-English speaking residents will likely increase. People who identify their ability to read, write, speak, or understand English as less than "very well" are considered limited English proficient (LEP). Transportation planners are concerned with how to effectively engage LEP speakers in outreach. According to the 2019-2023 American Community Survey results, the largest LEP language group in North Central Texas is Spanish-speaking individuals at 9 percent of the region's population.[8] When all other languages are included, approximately 12 percent of the regional population has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. **Figure 3-11** represents the percentage of LEP individuals by language group in the region.

Figure 3-11: Limited English Proficiency by Language Group, 2019 to 2023



Source: 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, www.census.gov

Age Distribution and Mobility Needs

Changes in age demographics are important for planners to consider, as different age groups have distinct transportation needs. As people age, their travel behavior, housing preferences, and mobility requirements evolve. For example, an aging population may increase

[8] In calculating a language group's share of the regional population, only individuals aged 5 and older are counted.

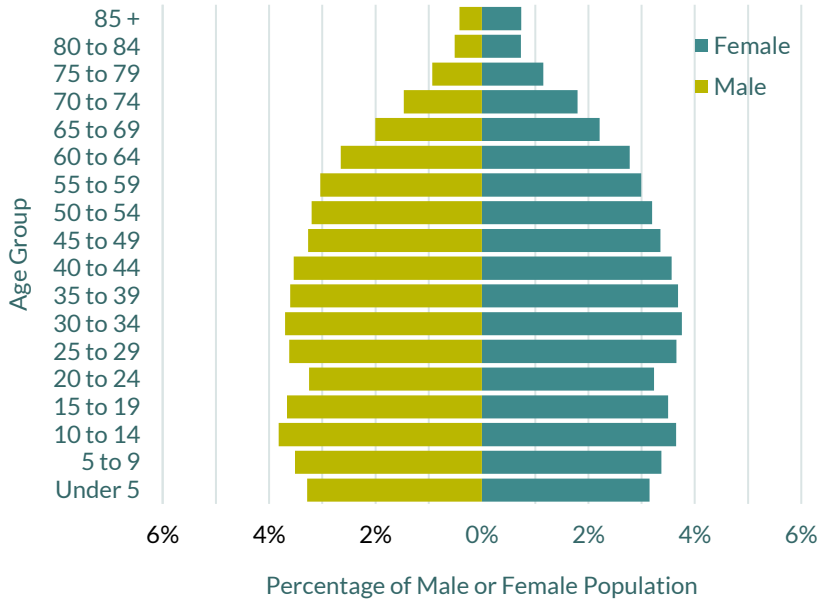
demand for transit services, particularly paratransit and other accessible transportation options.

Figure 3-12 presents the age distribution of North Central Texans from 2019 to 2023. The 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates indicate that individuals aged 65 and older now make up 12 percent of the region's total population. This share highlights the need for transportation solutions that enhance mobility and accessibility for older adults.

Meanwhile, the working-age population (ages 18 to 64) continues to account for the majority of the region's residents, making up 62.7 percent of the total. This group drives demand for commuter services and infrastructure improvements, prioritizing efficient, reliable, and affordable transportation options to support daily travel.

Additionally, children (under 18) represent nearly 18 percent of the population, reinforcing the need for safe and accessible routes to schools and community destinations. As more families settle in suburban areas, ensuring well-connected pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure becomes increasingly important for promoting safety and mobility for younger residents.

Figure 3-12: Regional Population by Age and Sex, 2019 to 2023



Source: 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, www.census.gov

Broadband Internet Access

Broadband internet access continues to be an essential service, connecting North Central Texans to jobs, education, healthcare, and social services. It enables access to critical resources such as telehealth, unemployment benefits, and online learning. As more service providers shift to digital platforms, reliable internet access has become increasingly necessary for full participation in the economy and society.

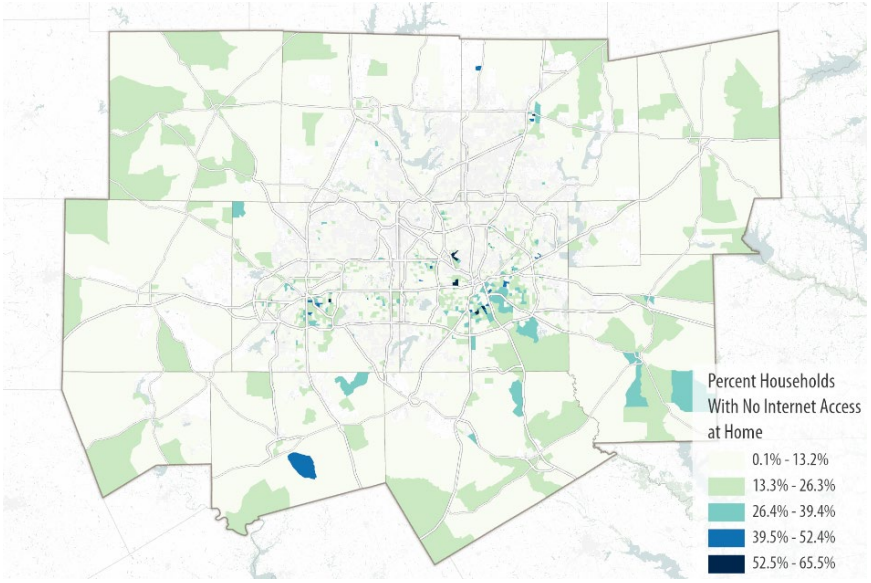
Expanding Access for a More Connected Region

Internet access in the Dallas-Fort Worth region has improved since the last MTP was adopted in 2022, with the percentage of households with an internet subscription rising from 86 percent to 93 percent, and

those without access falling from 11 percent to 5 percent.[9] **Figure 3-13** highlights areas in the region with high concentrations of households without internet access, reflecting ongoing challenges for some households in securing reliable, high-quality connections. **Figure 3-14** highlights that 12 percent of households with internet access rely exclusively on cellular data plans, which often come with slower speeds, data caps, and inconsistent coverage—factors that can make it more difficult to use the internet for work, school, and healthcare.

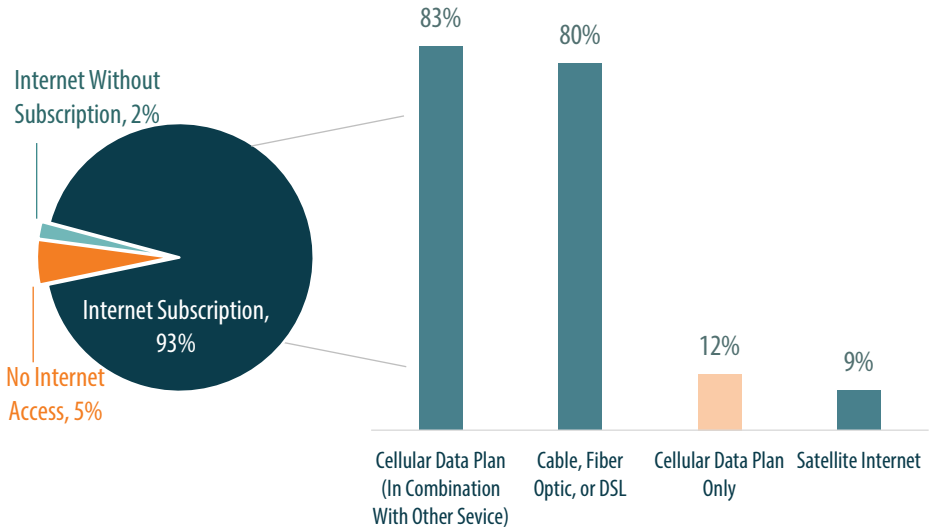
Ensuring reliable internet access for all communities remains an important consideration. Recognizing regional patterns can help shape public outreach efforts and programs that rely on digital engagement, such as transit services with app-based ticketing or communication.

Figure 3-13: Household Internet Access for the North Central Texas Region



Source: 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, www.census.gov

Figure 3-14: Types of Internet Service for Households with Access[10]



For insights into broadband infrastructure and its role in emerging transportation technologies, see the **Operational Efficiency** chapter.

Relationship between Income and Mode of Travel

Income is a crucial indicator when planning transportation facilities, as individuals or households with lower incomes may lack access to a working vehicle and rely on other modes of transportation. Studies

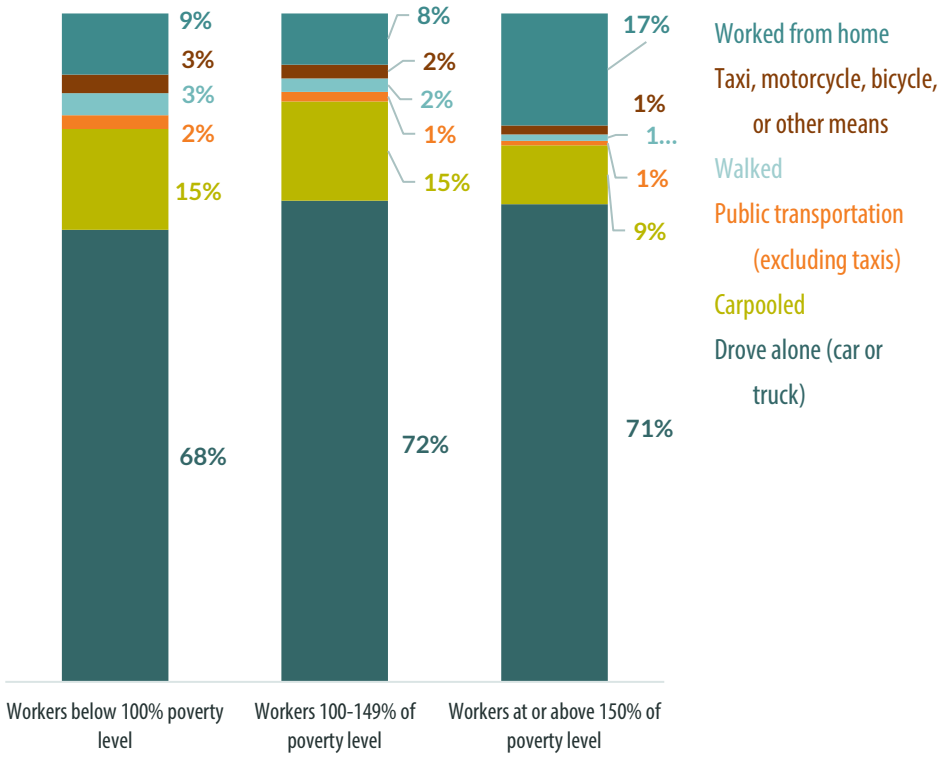
[9] North Central Texas Council of Governments. Mobility 2045 - 2022 Update, and US Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023. Mobility 2045 - 2022 Update utilized data from the 2015-2019 ACS.

[10] Note: The categories in the Internet Subscription breakout to the right are not mutually exclusive. Many households subscribe to multiple internet service types (for example, both cable and cellular data plans), which is why percentages sum to more than 100%.

have demonstrated that personal and household income influence transportation choices, individuals from higher income households are more likely to opt for travel by private car.[11]

Although most North Central Texas residents commute alone by car, Census data suggests that mode choice does vary by income group, as shown in **Figure 3-15**. For example, carpooling is more common among workers with incomes below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. As income decreases, there is a notable shift toward other transportation options such as public transportation, walking, taxis, motorcycles, bicycles, and other modes. This trend underscores the importance of considering income disparities when planning transportation infrastructure to accommodate diverse travel needs.

Figure 3-15: Mode of Travel to Work by Income in the Metropolitan Planning Area, 2019 to 2023



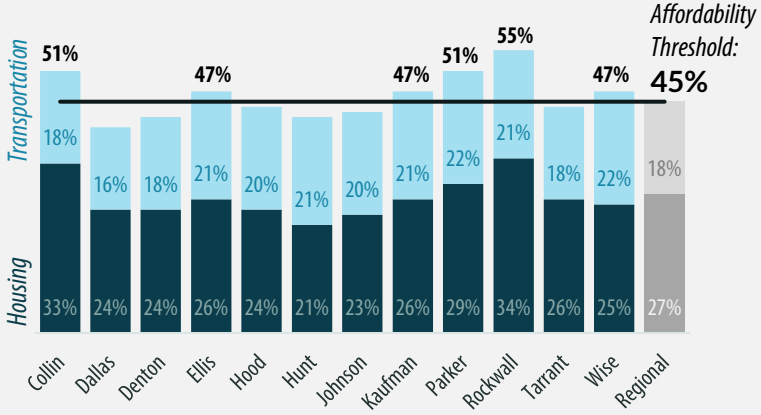
Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, www.census.gov

[11] National Center for Sustainable Transportation, 2016, *What Affects U.S. Passenger Travel? Current Trends and Future Perspectives*, https://ncst.ucdavis.edu

DID YOU KNOW?

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS ADD UP: The Center for Neighborhood Technology developed the Housing and Transportation Affordability Index to measure affordability based on the combined cost of housing and transportation. An area is considered affordable if these costs do not exceed 45 percent of household income.

COSTS VARY ACROSS THE REGION: The chart shows the percentage of household income spent on transportation and housing by county within the Metropolitan Planning Area. Areas with longer commutes or limited transit access tend to have higher transportation costs, adding to the financial burden on households.



TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Both travel and tourism continue to be among the biggest contributors to the economy in North Central Texas. Each year, North Central Texas welcomes 68.4 million visitors.[12] Each year travelers and tourists

North Texas grows by 1 person every 4 minutes	1,000+ miles of off-street trails	60 state parks within 100 miles of North Texas
33 colleges and universities	Over 1 million people attend the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo annually	Leisure and hospitality make up 10 percent of the regions' workforce
Home to the largest state fair in America by attendance	16 professional sports and E-sports teams	60 lakes and reservoirs covering 550,500 acres

Source: North Texas Commission 2024 Profile of North Texas

[12] North Texas Commission, *Profile of North Texas 2024*, https://www.ntc-dfw.org/profile

spend over $20 billion on hotels, meals, shopping, and attractions.[13] A map of the region's major tourist destinations is available in the **Social Considerations** appendix.

In addition to its year-round attractions, the region also draws tourists for special events. For instance, in 2026, the city of Arlington will host nine FIFA World Cup events at AT&T Stadium. The region boasts numerous entertainment venues with rotating programs that garner national attention. NCTCOG staff work diligently to create transportation plans for these events, ensuring multimodal travel options in and out of the region.

Tourists visiting North Central Texas benefit from its multimodal network, which includes efficient aviation facilities that complement main transit connections. This enhances tourism opportunities and provides easy access to popular destinations. Dallas Area Rapid Transit's light rail system and Trinity Metro's TexRail line both connect to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, allowing visitors to travel directly from the airport to the city centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. The Trinity Railway Express connects downtown Fort Worth with Downtown Dallas, providing a major transportation artery that allows tourists to seamlessly experience the diverse attractions of both cities without the hassle of driving or parking. This vital rail link not only enhances the visitor experience by offering convenient access to cultural venues, entertainment districts, and historic sites across the metroplex, but also strengthens the region's appeal as a premier tourist destination.

SUMMARY

Regional population and employment trends and forecasts analyze where residents live, work, and carry out leisure activities, and predict where residents will do these things in the future. In a region that is demographically diverse, planners must consider how this affects the transportation needs of all North Texans. Demographic trends indicate the region's population profile will change over time in terms of race, ethnicity, income, language, and age. Cultural changes are also important to consider when developing infrastructure recommendations. Work patterns and generational preferences play a role in people's decisions on where to live and work.

The **Social Considerations** appendix contains more information on the regional demographic forecast used in the development of this plan.

[13] Office of the Governor - Texas Travel Research Dashboard, https://www.travelstats.com/dashboard/texas

3-2. NONDISCRIMINATION EFFORTS

OVERVIEW

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and the Regional Transportation Council are committed to providing an equitable transportation system for all residents. In line with this commitment, nondiscrimination principles have been integrated throughout the development of Mobility 2050. Nondiscrimination is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, in the decision-making processes that affect their communities and environment. It aims to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or discriminated against in planning efforts.

As a part of this approach, NCTCOG seeks to understand and address the impacts of proposed projects on the regional population through assessment, analysis, and outreach efforts. NCTCOG holds nondiscrimination as a core principle in all efforts, including transportation planning.

MOBILITY 2050 SUPPORTED GOALS

MOBILITY 2050 POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Mobility 2050 includes policies and programs that address regional priorities and public needs. Policies guide decision-making and set the framework for long-term goals, while programs provide the funding and resources to turn plans into action across the transportation system.

Policies

EJ3-001: Evaluate the benefits and burdens of transportation policies, programs, and plans to prevent disparate impacts and improve the decision-making process, resulting in a more equitable system.

EJ3-002: Balance transportation investment across the region to provide equitable improvements.

EJ3-003: Based on meaningful community input, plan for and invest in projects that proactively address racial equity and barriers to opportunity or redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity.

EJ3-004: Identify and support transportation solutions to address health disparities in underserved communities, including solutions that improve access to healthy food and medical care.

Programs

For more information on program funding and implementation, see the **Social Considerations** appendix.

EJ2-001: Health Accessibility Program

LEGAL AUTHORITY

NCTCOG is contractually obligated to comply with the acts and regulations in federally assisted programs of the US Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration. The legislation that shapes NCTCOG's nondiscrimination efforts is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI states that "*No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*" Title VI holds all agencies that receive federal financial assistance accountable for their actions and mandates those agencies ensure their policies and practices are not discriminatory in nature.

Infrastructure and Investments Jobs Act

The Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, was signed into law in 2021 and provides $1.2 trillion for improving roads, bridges, public transit, broadband internet, and energy infrastructure.

NCTCOG seeks, at a minimum, to meet all current and future state and federal regulations relating to nondiscrimination; however, it is the goal of the agency to go above and beyond basic requirements to create a transportation system that is beneficial to all residents of the region. The following objectives guided the creation of Mobility 2050:

- Encourage community participation in the development of Mobility 2050, including traditionally underserved communities.
- Support data gathering and analysis of projects and programs to identify any potentially negative social, economic, health, or environmental impacts on communities.

- Seek to mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects when identified through analysis or public comment.

These goals reflect NCTCOG's continual efforts to serve all members of the community throughout the transportation planning process.

INTEGRATING NONDISCRIMINATION PRINCIPLES INTO THE PLANNING PROCESS

NCTCOG strives to address the needs of protected populations and assess project impacts from planning to implementation. Understanding how populations utilize the transportation system, coupled with the knowledge of demographic trends, helps planners design a system that will accommodate current and future needs.

NCTCOG's efforts to integrate nondiscrimination principles during planning involve three main components:

- **Assessment:** Identify the location of populations in the region. This serves as the first step in identifying potential impacts to populations.
- **Analysis:** Analyze the potential impacts of any project, policy, plan, or program recommendation. Staff should identify any disparate impacts of its decisions in the short- or long-term future.
- **Outreach:** Involve all population groups in planning processes.

NCTCOG's Title VI Program documents all nondiscrimination efforts the department undertakes. This document can be found at www.nctcg.org/titleVI. The following discussion and analysis focus on specific efforts to support nondiscrimination in all transportation planning programs, policies, and activities.

Assessment: Identifying Populations

The first step to avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority and low-income populations is to identify their location in the region. These populations are referred to as protected populations and are defined in **Table 3-6**.

Table 3-6: Federally Designated Protected Population Definitions

Population	Definition
Black or African American Race	A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
American Indian or Alaska Native Race	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
Asian Race	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent.
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Race	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity	A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South America, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.
Some Other Race[14]	A person belonging to a race other than White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
Two or More Races[14]	A person belonging to two or more of the following racial categories: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Some Other Race.
Low-Income	A person whose household income is below the poverty line as determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

[14] The populations Some Other Race and Two or More Races are not identified by Federal Highway Administration Order 6640.23A as minority populations, but NCTCOG includes these groups to meet the spirit of protecting groups who may have been historically discriminated against as a result of race, color, or national origin.

The following groups also are considered throughout the planning process to meet the requirements of Title VI-related statutes and guidance on transportation-disadvantaged groups:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People with disabilities
- People with a limited ability to speak, read, write or understand English
- Female head of household (any female-headed household with children under 18 years old and no husband present)
- Zero-car households

Maps depicting the locations of these populations in the region are found in the **Social Considerations** appendix.

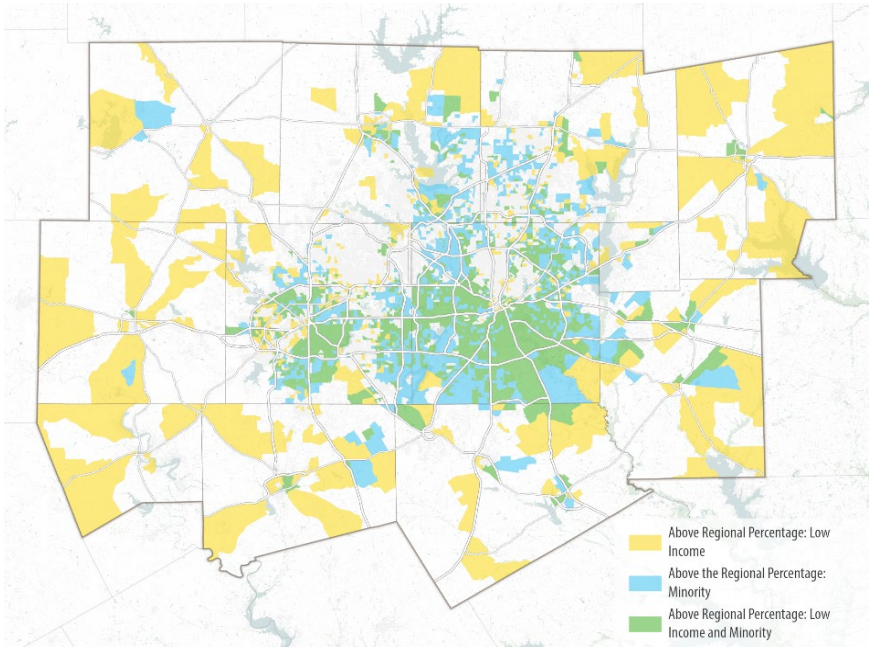
Fair Access in Communities Tool

The Fair Access in Communities Tool (FACT) was developed by NCTCOG to support analysis of community access to transportation and other opportunities across the region. FACT identifies Census block groups with certain demographic characteristics to help ensure that planning processes and outcomes do not result in discrimination, consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. While FACT is not used directly in Mobility 2050 recommendations, it informs broader regional analyses to help ensure that planning decisions support fair access for all communities.

The tool includes a range of socioeconomic variables and its outputs serve as a starting point for more detailed analysis. As noted by the Transit Cooperative Research Program, no single threshold should function as a bright line to exclude populations from analysis.[15]

Figure 3-16 displays the core variables of the FACT for the North Central Texas 12-county Metropolitan Planning Area. All calculations are based on the 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Figure 3-16: Fair Access in Communities Tool for the 12-County Metropolitan Planning Area



Analysis: Considering Potential Impacts Beyond Mobility 2050

NCTCOG's Transportation Department evaluates whether nondiscrimination principles are met through various programs and policies. This section provides a broad overview of NCTCOG initiatives that are independent of Mobility 2050:

- **Transit Accessibility:** The department practices nondiscrimination in transit by offering planning tools and guidance to local municipalities, advancing regional research

[15] Transit Cooperative Research Program, Equity Analysis in Regional Transportation Planning Processes, Volume 2: Research Overview, https://nap.nationalacademies.org/25886

efforts, and administering federally funded programs that improve transportation options for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and lower-income individuals. NCTCOG created the Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool to identify transportation-disadvantaged communities based on American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. This tool informs the *Access North Texas* plan, which assesses current accessibility to transit and serves as the regional public transportation coordination plan.

- **Sustainable Development:** The department's Sustainable Development Program incorporates nondiscrimination principles into selection criteria for active transportation, context sensitive design, and transit access projects.
- **Modeling and Review:** NCTCOG ensures that nondiscrimination principles are integrated into the regional Travel Demand Model air quality projects and periodically reviews transportation funding distribution and project-level environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Outreach: Engaging Community Members

Nondiscrimination is central to NCTCOG's ongoing improvements in public outreach as outlined in its Public Participation Plan and Language Assistance Plan. For example, the transportation department has translated several of its written publications, expanded its media list to reach distinct communities, and conducted outreach at community events like back-to-school and health fairs. These efforts extend beyond the Metropolitan Transportation Plan to other departmental programs and projects. Targeted outreach to transportation-disadvantaged groups and populations is a critical component of the department's *Access North Texas* public transportation plan and transportation corridor studies.

More information on outreach efforts can be found in the **Public Participation Requirements** section of this chapter. More information on *Access North Texas* can be found in the **Public Transportation** section of the **Mobility Options** chapter.

LEVELS OF NONDISCRIMINATION ANALYSIS

Nondiscrimination is considered at multiple levels throughout the transportation planning and project development process, from the long-range plan to project implementation. Analysis is conducted at three key levels to ensure that no population bears an undue burden from the transportation system and to provide a clearer understanding of how each project impacts communities on both a macro and micro scale.

At the regional level, analysis is conducted for all roadway and transit projects proposed in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. During the NEPA process, a more detailed analysis is carried out for specific projects or corridors. Finally, nondiscrimination considerations are incorporated during construction and project implementation through Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and contractor requirements.

The analysis framework is depicted in **Table 3-7**, which outlines the three levels of nondiscrimination analysis. This chapter section focuses on nondiscrimination analysis at the Metropolitan Transportation Plan level.

Table 3-7: Levels of Nondiscrimination Analysis during Transportation Planning and Project Development Process

Analysis	Level	Scope	Results
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Mobility 2050)	Plan Development	1. Prioritization of roadway and transit projects in the plan. 2. Potential systemwide impacts of tollways. 3. Systemwide performance of recommended roadway and transit projects.	Impacts of proposed project on regional mobility and accessibility
National Environmental Policy Act	Project/Corridor-Specific Analysis	Localized impacts on a community due to the construction and operation of a project, including noise and air quality concerns	Regional impacts on communities with the addition of all priced facilities
Title VI Coordination	Construction/Implementation	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and contractor requirements	Job Opportunities Program, enhancing nondiscrimination, community involvement and outreach

MOBILITY 2050 NONDISCRIMINATION ANALYSIS

A nondiscrimination analysis was conducted on two components of Mobility 2050:

- The prioritization of roadway and transit projects to be recommended in the plan.
- The systemwide performance of roadway and transit projects recommended in the plan.

Project Prioritization

Methodology

NCTCOG applied a nondiscrimination analysis following the project prioritization process described in the **Mobility Options** chapter. Roadway and transit recommendations in Mobility 2050 were analyzed to identify whether their staging, or the timing of their construction, may deny, reduce, or significantly delay the receipt of benefits by minority or low-income populations.

The transit stations analyzed included rail, streetcar, and high-intensity bus. Because data on plans for traditional bus routes was not available for all areas, these stations were excluded from the analysis. Some high-intensity bus routes duplicate existing traditional bus routes, but they were included in the analysis because they provide the additional benefit of reduced travel times due to their ability to travel on roadways where congestion is managed through tolls.

The analysis quantified added lane miles and added transit stations for the interim years of 2035 and 2040 and for the plan horizon year of 2050, as compared with 2026. A one-mile travel shed was established for lane miles. A half-mile walkshed was established for transit stations. Added lane miles and added transit stations were overlaid with Census block groups with a concentration of minority, low-income, or limited English proficiency populations using data from the 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates. However, the locations where concentrations of groups reside may change over time; this analysis is unable to project those changes.

Results

For 2035, 2040, and 2050, the majority of added lane miles and added transit stations provide a transportation benefit to areas with concentrations of minority, low-income, or limited English proficient populations (**Table 3-8** and **Table 3-9**). For added lane miles, the benefit is greatest in 2035 and 2040, indicating the benefit is not delayed. In 2040, 76 percent of added lane miles are located within the one-mile travel shed for groups. 27.2 percent of the Metropolitan Planning Area's population resides in a block group considered for this analysis. Therefore, 76 percent of lane miles added by 2040 serve this 27.2 percent of the region's population in these areas. This comparison holds true for 2050 as well.

However, for transit, an increasing percentage of added transit stations provide a benefit to protected populations from 2026 to 2050. In all cases, a majority of added transit stations are near these areas.

NCTCOG will repeat this analysis in future Metropolitan Transportation Plans to ensure recommendations do not deny, reduce, or significantly delay the receipt of benefits by minority or low-income populations.

Table 3-8: Project Prioritization Nondiscrimination Analysis of Roadway Lane Miles

Year	Total Lane Mileage	Lane Miles Near Protected Groups		Total Added Lane Miles*		Added Lane Miles Near Protected Groups	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2026	51,838	41,880	81%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2035	55,386	44,516	80%	3,548	100%	2,636	74%
2040	57,291	46,016	80%	5,453	100%	4,136	76%
2050	60,864	48,248	79%	9,026	100%	6,368	71%

* Roadway projects included as recommendations in Mobility 2050

Table 3-9: Project Prioritization Nondiscrimination Analysis of Transit Stations

Year	Total Transit Stations	Transit Stations Near Protected Groups		Total Added Transit Stations*		Added Transit Stations Near Protected Groups	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2026	91	86	95%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2035	97	90	93%	4	100%	14	67%
2040	121	112	93%	26	100%	32	87%
2050	161	150	93%	64	100%	84	91%

* Stations included as recommendations in Mobility 2050

Systemwide Performance

Methodology

Mobility 2050 has identified $215 billion in transportation projects spread over approximately 9,500 square miles. Because of the magnitude of projects to be analyzed, an assessment of each project is infeasible. For this reason, the Travel Demand Model is used to perform a regional nondiscrimination analysis on the entire transportation system proposed in Mobility 2050.

One goal of Mobility 2050 is to connect North Texans to vital destinations. This is achieved through enhancing mobility and accessibility. Mobility is the ability for people and goods to travel from one place to another. Mobility can be affected by factors such as design, road capacity, or Intelligent Transportation Systems, such as electronic toll collectors and dynamic message signs, that inform drivers about traffic conditions. Accessibility describes how well the system provides access to locations and opportunities. Accessibility can be affected by factors such as the cost in time and dollars and the number of modal choices available to reach a location.

Six performance indicators that identify quality-of-life factors affected by accessibility and mobility are used to evaluate Mobility 2050 recommendations. These performance indicators are shown in **Figure 3-17** and the results of the Mobility 2050 evaluation are shown in **Figures 3-18** through **3-27.**

Mobility 2050 recommendations were evaluated using the established performance indicators and demographic data from the 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates. In 2010, the decennial Census discontinued reporting income data. The NCTCOG EJI and Metropolitan Transportation Plan Regional Nondiscrimination Analysis acquire this data from ACS estimates. The ACS data is based on a sample of the population and, therefore, has a larger margin of error than the decennial Census data; however, this is the most complete data available for this analysis. More information regarding data considerations can be found at www.census.gov.

Figure 3-17: Nondiscrimination Performance Indicators

Accessibility	Mobility
• Number of jobs accessible within 30 minutes by automobile • Number of jobs accessible within 60 minutes by transit • Population within 30 minutes to universities • Population within 15 minutes to hospitals	• Average level of congestion • Average travel time

The following four steps were used to complete the Systemwide Performance Analysis for Mobility 2050:

Step 1. Identified Protected Populations: Traffic survey zones (TSZs) with a percentage of low-income or total minority population above the percentage for the total region were identified as protected. These zones are referred to as the "Aggregate Protected Population" in the results. TSZs above the regional percentage for any single population listed in **Figure 3-16** were also identified as protected. These additional results are documented in the **Social Considerations** appendix. When a TSZ is included as a protected zone, the entire population of the zone is considered protected for this analysis.

Step 2. Calculated Performance Indicators: Protected TSZs were compared to non-protected TSZs for the identified performance indicators. A detailed description of how the performance indicators were calculated can be found in the **Social Considerations** appendix.

Step 3. Analyzed Network and Demographic Scenarios: The six performance indicators were compared across several scenarios that combined existing or planned transportation networks and current and future demographics:

- **2026 Current Network:** Existing roadway and transit facilities with 2026 population.
- **2050 Build Network:** All roadway and transit facilities recommended in Mobility 2050 with 2050 demographics.
- **2050 No-Build Network:** Existing roadway and transit facilities with 2050 demographics.

Step 4. Compared Results: Current, Build, and No-Build scenarios were compared for protected and non-protected populations.

The current network forms the baseline for assessing the impacts of building Mobility 2050 roadway and transit recommendations. Rerouting current facilities to remedy potential disparities between protected and non-protected groups is not a realistic option; therefore, Mobility 2050 compares the Current and Build scenarios to see the rate at which any disparities are being perpetuated in future plans.

Comparing the Current and No-Build scenarios establishes that improvements to the current transportation system are essential to accommodate population growth. The results are compared across the different scenarios to provide a complete picture of how changes in the transportation system impact mobility and accessibility in North Central Texas.

Due to the rapid population growth that is forecast to continue through 2050, some of the performance indicators worsen even in the 2050 Build scenario. The primary purpose of the Regional Nondiscrimination Analysis is to determine whether the recommendations in the plan have a discriminatory or disproportionate or adverse impact on protected groups when compared to non-protected groups. The following discussion summarizes the results of the analysis' performance indicators. The **Social Considerations** appendix provides detailed regional results, including performance indicator outcomes for the aggregate and individual protected populations.

Results

Job Access by Auto and Transit

If Mobility 2050 roadway recommendations are built as illustrated in 2050 Build (**Figure 3-18**), the transportation system provides protected populations access to 47 percent more jobs by car within 30 minutes. The increase in job accessibility for protected populations is attributed to reduced congestion from planned roadway improvements, which enables faster travel times, as well as the projected suburban job growth in the demographic forecast, which places more employment opportunities within a 30-minute drive. Additionally, the results show that if Mobility 2050 transit recommendations are built, protected populations will gain access to 32 percent more jobs by transit within 60 minutes. Both protected and non-protected populations are expected to experience an increase in jobs accessible within 30 minutes by auto, but protected populations are expected to experience a greater increase. Both groups are expected to experience an increase in the number of jobs accessible within 60 minutes by transit. It is important to note the analysis does not include demand-response transit services and does not fully reflect the potential expansion of bus routes in the region.

If the transportation system remains as it is today, as illustrated by 2050 No-Build (**Figure 3-19**), protected groups are still expected to experience an increase in the number of jobs accessible by auto and transit. This is largely due to an expected employment growth in core areas of the region that are highly populated by protected populations. Non-protected groups, however, will see a decrease in jobs accessible by auto and transit in the No-Build scenario. This is caused by the lack of sufficient roadway and transit recommendations in suburban areas where non-protected populations often reside.

Figure 3-18: Job Access by Auto and Transit, Current to 2050 Build

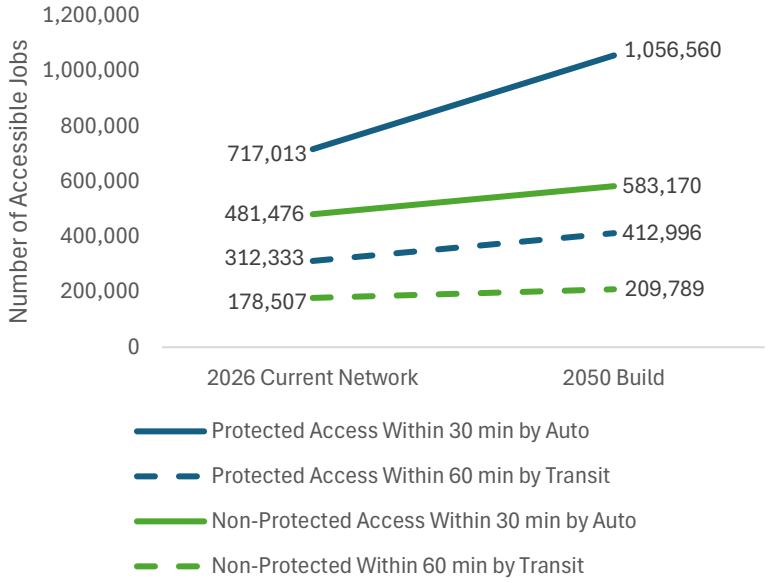
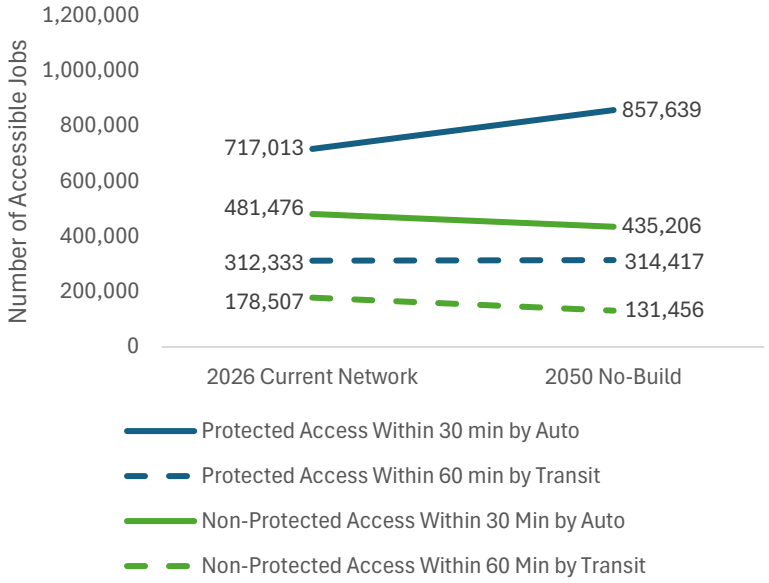


Figure 3-19: Job Access by Auto and Transit, Current to 2050 No-Build



Localized Congestion Change

Figure 3-20 and **Figure 3-21** display congestion changes for protected and non-protected populations across the three scenarios. In the Current and 2050 Build scenarios, the protected populations experience more localized congestion than the non-protected populations. This may be because many protected populations live close to the urban core where congestion tends to be worse. Additionally, roadways in the urban core have little room for expansion, making transit improvements the more meaningful method for congestion relief. In the 2050 No-Build scenario, non-protected populations experience greater localized congestion, primarily because the No-Build scenario does not include suburban roadway expansion projects that would otherwise alleviate congestion.

Figure 3-20: Localized Congestion Change, Current to 2050 Build

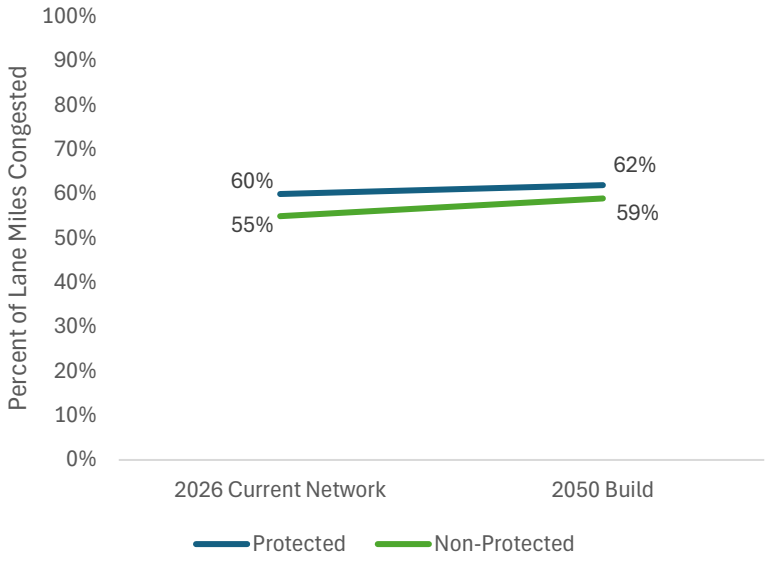
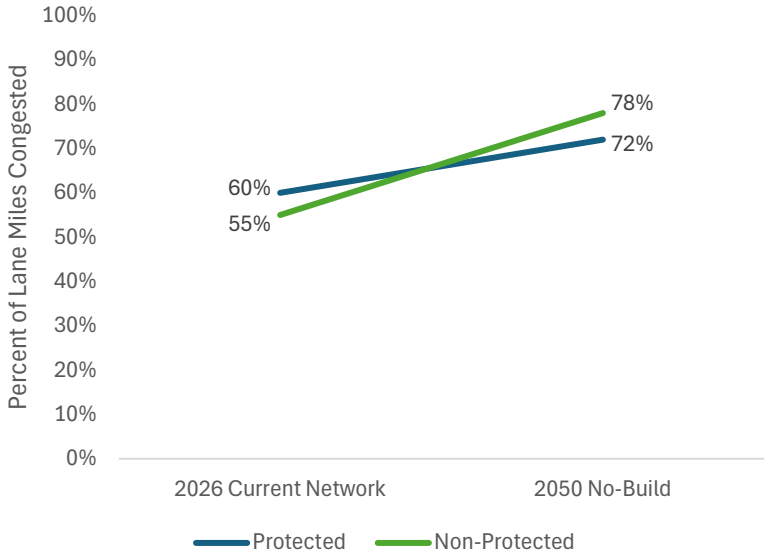


Figure 3-21: Localized Congestion Change, Current to 2050 No-Build



Average Time in Minutes to Travel 20 Miles by Auto

With increased congestion, the length of time to travel a set distance increases. To relate the localized congestion to everyday travel, the average trip time and length for each scenario was determined. An average mile per hour was calculated to determine the time it would take populations to travel 20 miles across all three scenarios. Twenty miles was used as the threshold because it represents an average commute length in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

The results in **Figure 3-22** and **Figure 3-23** reflect the outcome of this congestion. In the 2050 Build scenario, protected groups are expected to experience a one-minute decline in the amount of time it takes to travel 20 miles by auto, whereas non-protected groups are expected to experience a one-minute increase. In the 2050 No-Build scenario, both groups would experience longer commute times due to an increase in congestion.

Figure 3-22: Average Time in Minutes to Travel 20 Miles by Auto, Current to 2050 Build

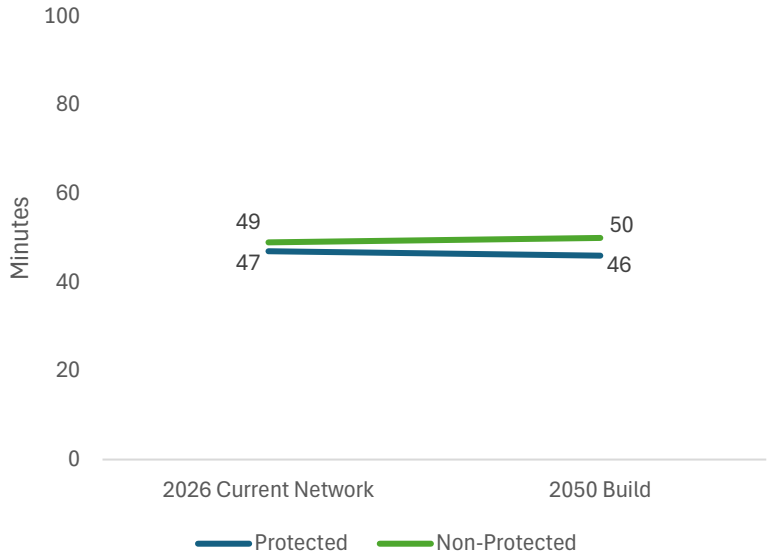
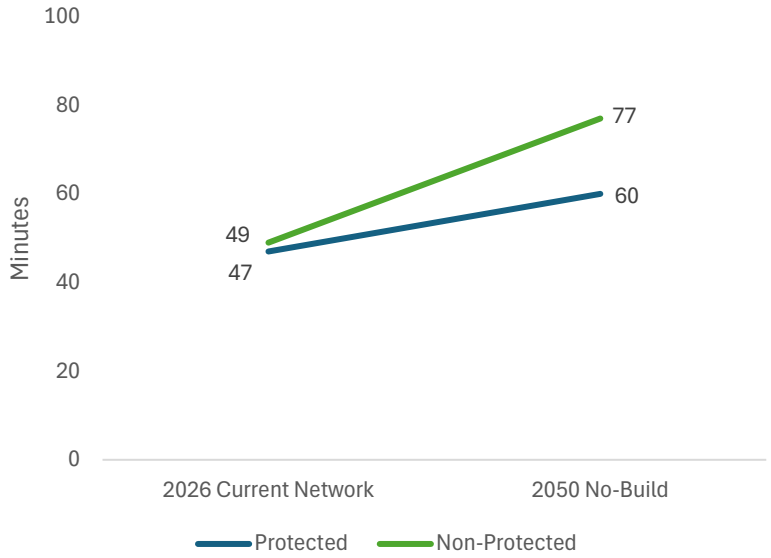


Figure 3-23: Average Time in Minutes to Travel 20 Miles by Auto, Current to 2050 No-Build



Access to Universities

To determine accessibility to regional attractions, the systemwide nondiscrimination analysis calculated the percent of populations residing within 30 minutes of universities by auto and within 15 minutes of hospitals by auto. The lower time threshold of 15 minutes was used for hospitals due to the critical nature of accessing emergency care.

A greater percentage of the protected population lives within 30 minutes of a university across all scenarios (**Figure 3-24** and **Figure 3-25**). Both populations remain at or above 95 percent with the 2050 Build scenario. Both populations see greater declines with the 2050 No-Build scenario, but non-protected populations' access declines at a greater rate.

Figure 3-24: Percent of Population within 30 Minutes of a University, Current to 2050 Build

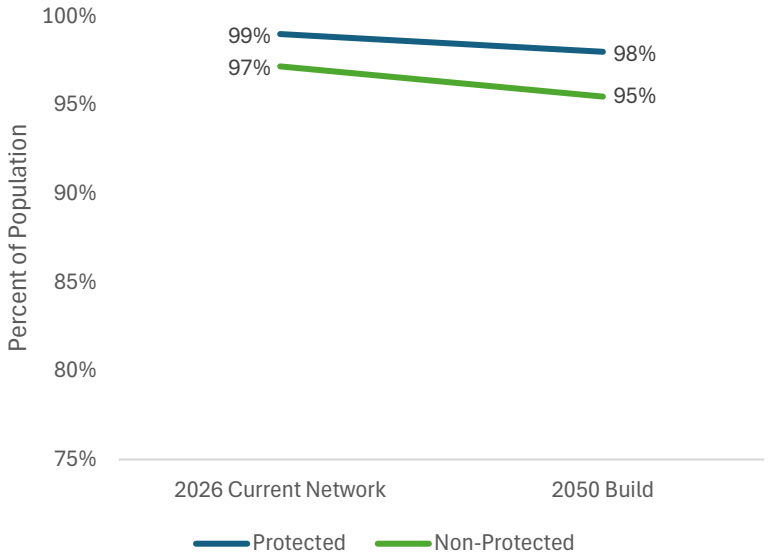
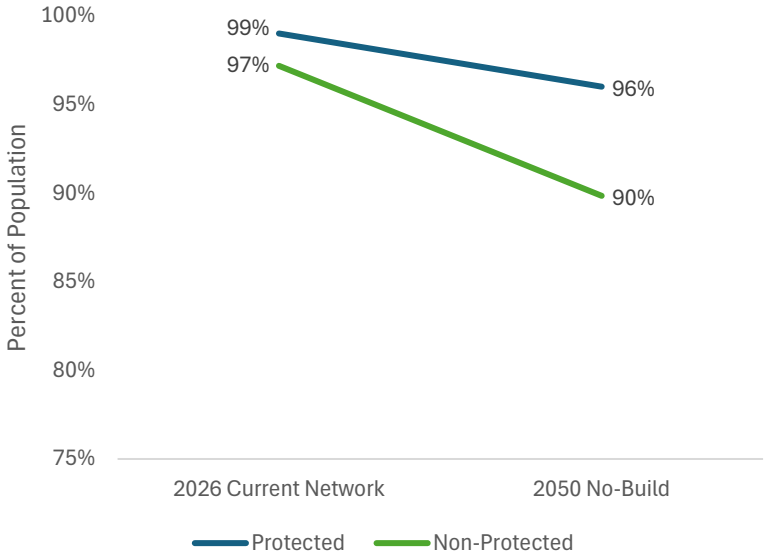


Figure 3-25: Percent of Population within 30 Minutes of a University, Current to 2050 No-Build



Access to Hospitals

A greater percentage of the protected population lives within 15 minutes of a hospital across all scenarios (**Figure 3-26** and **Figure 3-27**). Both populations see a decline with the 2050 Build scenario, and less than 75 percent of the protected population remains within the 15-minute threshold. Both populations see greater declines with the 2050 No-Build scenario. With both the 2050 Build and 2050 No-Build, the percent of population within the 15-minute threshold declines at a higher rate for non-protected populations than for protected populations.

Figure 3-26: Percent of Population within 15 Minutes of a Hospital, Current to 2050 Build

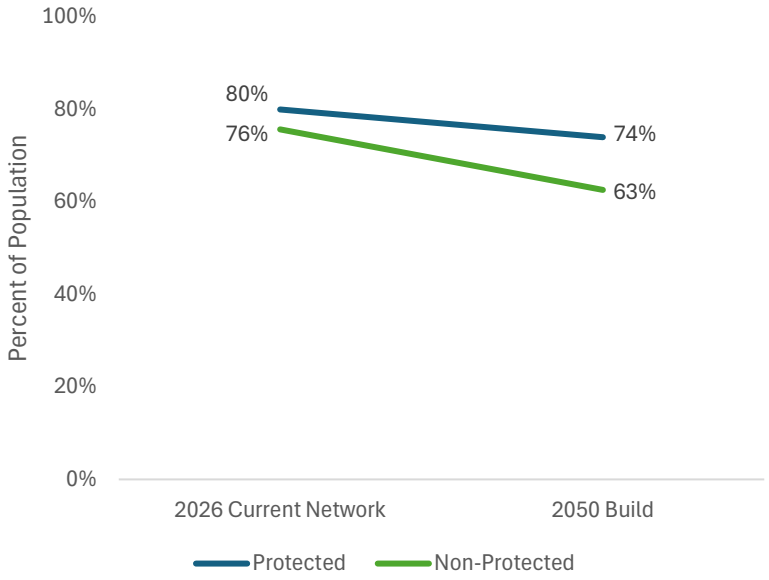
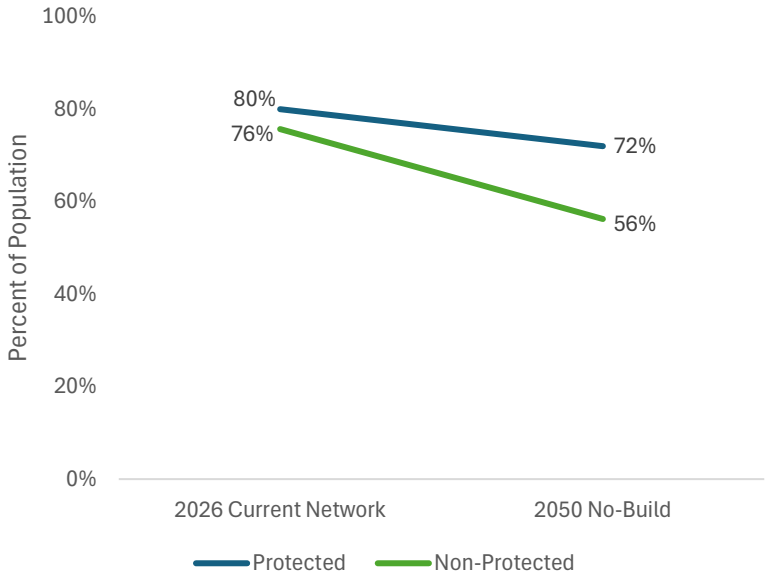


Figure 3-27: Percent of Population within 15 Minutes of a Hospital, Current to 2050 No-Build



SUMMARY

Mobility 2050 roadway and transit recommendations, when considered as a regional system, do not have disparate impacts on minority or low-income populations above the regional percentage. **Table 3-10** illustrates the overall results of the three main performance indicators for the aggregated protected population compared with the non-protected population. Population and employment growth are expanding at similar rates, leading to overall increases in auto mobility and accessibility in the 2050 Build scenario. In both the Current and 2050 Build scenarios, protected populations experience more localized congestion in urban areas where many reside, while in the 2050 No-Build scenario, congestion worsens for non-protected populations due to limited roadway expansion in growing suburban areas. However, protected populations also live in suburban areas where roadway capacity constraints may impact their accessibility. Mobility 2050's multimodal recommendations help offset congestion, with transit investments playing a key role in improving accessibility. The number of jobs accessible by transit is expected to increase for both groups in the 2050 Build scenario, with protected populations seeing a greater relative improvement. NCTCOG will continue to analyze accessibility in future Metropolitan Transportation Plans to ensure disparate impacts do not develop. The **Social Considerations** appendix contains the complete methodology and results for all protected populations for the systemwide nondiscrimination analysis.

Table 3-10: Nondiscrimination Analysis Performance Results for Aggregate Protected Population Compared to Non-Protected Population

Performance Measure	Population	2026 Current Network	2050 Build	2050 No-Build	Percent Change (Current vs Build)	Percent Change (Current vs No-Build)
Protected Population vs Non-Protected Population	Protected	4,949,054	6,300,265	6,300,265		
	Non-Protected	3,646,324	5,996,889	5,996,889		
	Totals	**8,595,378**	**12,297,154**	**12,297,154**		
Number of Jobs Accessible within 30 Minutes by Auto	Protected	717,013	1,056,560	857,639	47.36%	19.61%
	Non-Protected	481,476	583,170	435,206	21.12%	-9.61%
	Difference	**235,537**	**473,390**	**422,433**		
Number of Jobs Accessible within 60 Minutes by Transit	Protected	312,333	412,996	314,417	32.23%	0.67%
	Non-Protected	178,507	209,789	131,456	17.52%	-26.36%
	Difference	**138,825**	**203,207**	**182,961**		
Percent of Lane Miles Congested	Protected	60%	62%	72%	2.62%	16.49%
	Non-Protected	55%	59%	78%	5.70%	32.93%
	Difference	**5%**	**3%**	**-6%**		

3-3. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

OVERVIEW

A proactive public participation process is vital to ensuring the transportation planning process fosters meaningful involvement by all users of the system, including the business community, community groups, environmental organizations, freight operators, and the traveling public. It is essential to keep stakeholders informed about key challenges in the region and create ample opportunities for them to share ideas and provide feedback. This ensures the development of a plan that reflects diverse interests and mobility needs while protecting air quality and quality of life.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG) Public Participation Plan plays a dual role in guiding outreach efforts. Firstly, it leads the outreach efforts for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), ensuring that the development of the MTP is reflective of the community's needs. Secondly, it provides a comprehensive framework for engaging the public in all transportation-related activities. The overall objectives of the Public Participation Plan are to be proactive and provide:

- Accurate information
- Timely public notice
- Transparency and accessibility
- Opportunities for early and continuing involvement

Federal laws and regulations provide some requirements for public involvement. NCTCOG strives to go beyond these requirements, offering a program that ensures all residents can participate in decision-making and stay informed about accessible, viable, and sustainable transportation planning.

Did You Know?

The Public Participation Plan addresses the following:

PARTICIPATION & FEEDBACK: Public notifications, online comment opportunities, inclusion of technology.

FAIRNESS & COMPLIANCE: Title VI complaint procedures and Language Assistance Plan.

EVENT LOGISTICS: Provisions for inclement weather, public meeting timelines, and 72-hour notices.

View the Public Participation Plan on our website ↗

MOBILITY 2050 SUPPORTED GOALS

MOBILITY

Improve the availability of transportation options for people and goods.

Support travel efficiency measures and system enhancements targeted at congestion reduction and management.

Ensure all communities are provided access to the regional transportation system and planning process.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Preserve and enhance the natural environment, improve air quality, and promote active lifestyles.

Encourage livable communities which support sustainability and economic vitality.

SYSTEM SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure adequate maintenance and enhance the safety and reliability of the existing transportation system.

Pursue long-term sustainable revenue sources to address regional transportation system needs.

IMPLEMENTATION

Provide for timely project planning and implementation.

Develop cost-effective projects and programs aimed at reducing the costs associated with constructing, operating, and maintaining the regional transportation system.

MOBILITY 2050 POLICIES

Mobility 2050 includes policies and programs that address regional priorities and public needs. Policies guide decision-making and set the framework for long-term goals, while programs provide the funding and resources to turn plans into action across the transportation system.

PI3-001: Meet federal and state requirements to ensure all individuals have full and fair access to provide input on the transportation decision-making process.

PI3-002: Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to the public input received.

PI3-003: Use strategic outreach and communication efforts to seek out and consider the needs to those traditionally underserved by the transportation planning process.

PI3-004: Enhance visualization of transportation policies, programs, and projects.

PI3-005: Provide education to the public and encourage input and engagement from all residents on the transportation system and the transportation decision-making process.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The NCTCOG Transportation Public Participation Plan, updated in 2022, guides how and when public involvement will be carried out on decisions made by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC).

Language Assistance Plan

Through the Language Assistance Plan, NCTCOG seeks to ensure all residents can provide input on transportation decisions regardless of their ability to read, write, or understand English. The Language Assistance Plan includes a four-factor analysis to identify limited English proficient (LEP) populations and determine how these individuals are served or are likely to be served by NCTCOG Transportation Department programs. To better serve the LEP population, several key documents are translated into Spanish, and a Google Translate widget enables website visitors to read basic translations of Transportation Department webpages in more than 100 languages. Notices of public input opportunities, describing how to request alternate formats and language interpretation, include text in English and Spanish. Reasonable effort is made to accommodate language interpretation requests if sufficient notice is provided.

Media and Press

Regional public input opportunities are held throughout the year. These opportunities request input on upcoming decisions by the RTC, and they inform the public of other planning activities. The NCTCOG Transportation Department maintains a database of individuals and groups wishing to receive notice of these public input opportunities. Notice is sent to these individuals before every input opportunity, and advertisements are placed in the Texas Register, local and minority newspapers, and online. **Table 3-11** lists the different types of media outlets that receive press releases announcing public input opportunities and other department news.

The Transportation Department also publishes monthly and semiannual newsletters, technical brochures, and required planning documents each year. Fact sheets help educate the public about department projects, air quality, transportation funding, and sustainable development. These publications are listed in the **Social Considerations** appendix.

Table 3-11: Number of Media Outlets Receiving Press Releases

Local newspapers/magazines (total)	168
Student newspapers/magazines	15
National newspapers/magazines	37
Minority newspapers/magazines	19
Television stations (total)	12
Minority television stations	2
Radio stations	13

Online

The Transportation Department website is updated regularly to ensure accurate and timely information is available. Modernizing public involvement procedures by utilizing virtual tools, animation, maps, and renderings creates new avenues for all stakeholders. The department leverages social media networks and an online public engagement platform to broaden outreach and facilitate more convenient public comment submission. RTC meetings are livestreamed on the department's website. Video recordings of public input opportunities are posted online, allowing greater access for the public to learn about and provide input on plans.

Enhanced Community Engagement

The Transportation Department collaborates with community partners to educate members, stakeholders, and the public on transportation programs and planning. By leveraging existing networks of homeowner associations, business groups, and community organizations, especially those that engage individuals and families who don't regularly attend

public meetings, NCTCOG attempts to reach greater numbers of people and more diverse audiences.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR MOBILITY 2050

A variety of strategies were used to encourage public participation during Mobility 2050. Information about involvement opportunities, demographic and employment forecasts, financial constraint, air quality impacts, and more was disseminated through various sources. The primary channels to request and collect public input on Mobility 2050 were:

- Online Engagement Platform
- Map Your Experience
- Postcards and Paper Surveys
- Public Meetings and Outreach Events
- NCTCOG Website and Social Media

In compliance with the Public Participation Plan, public meetings were held 60 days and 30 days prior to RTC adoption of Mobility 2050. A list of both virtual and in-person public engagement events at which Mobility 2050 was discussed and a summary of public comments received for Mobility 2050, including official responses to those comments, can be found in the **Public Involvement** appendix,

Early Input

Survey

NCTCOG developed a transportation survey to gather insights into the mobility needs and preferences of North Central Texas residents. The 5- to 10-minute online questionnaire featured multiple-choice and open-ended sections. To reach communities with limited internet access, paper copies were distributed at public libraries in designated areas. Responses were reviewed weekly and reported to staff, the RTC, and the public. A feedback form was released alongside the draft Mobility Plan to gather additional feedback.

Map Your Experience

Map Your Experience[16] (MYE) is an online mapping tool designed to gather crowdsourced data from North Central Texas residents. MYE is available in both English and Spanish and provides an interactive experience where users can like or comment on comments submitted by other users. The tool also offers a dashboard[17] with summaries of submitted comments by mode, comment category, or optional demographic information.

Postcards

As part of Mobility 2050 outreach, NCTCOG mailed multilingual postcards to minority households within the region. The double-sided postcards shown in **Figure 3-28** included a QR code directing recipients to two input opportunities, Map Your Experience and the Mobility 2050 online survey. This targeted approach aimed at engaging communities that do not often attend public meetings, ensuring they are aware of the transportation plan and have opportunities to provide input. Conducting outreach through a variety of methods, including mail, online platforms, and in-person engagement is vital to ensuring broad public participation that reflects the region.

[16] NCTCOG, Map Your Experience Webpage, https://www.nctcog.org/trans/plan/mtp/map-your-experience

[17] NCTCOG, Map Your Experience Dashboard, https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4b62c8101dd7476389f3e934455b78dc

Figure 3-28: Public Input Opportunities Postcard

Public Meetings

NCTCOG hosted multiple public meetings to engage North Central Texas residents in the transportation planning process. From November 2023 to June 2025, Mobility 2050 was presented six times at NCTCOG public meetings. Face-to-face interactions not only gather valuable feedback but also help educate residents on the planning process, ensuring more informed and meaningful decision-making.

Community Events

In addition to public meetings, NCTCOG engaged with the community by participating in local events, providing an informal setting for interaction and information sharing. Informational booths showcased a variety of programs and often included interactive elements such as voting or prize contests. During the development of Mobility 2050, NCTCOG attended 11 outreach events at local colleges, sporting events, community fairs, and more.

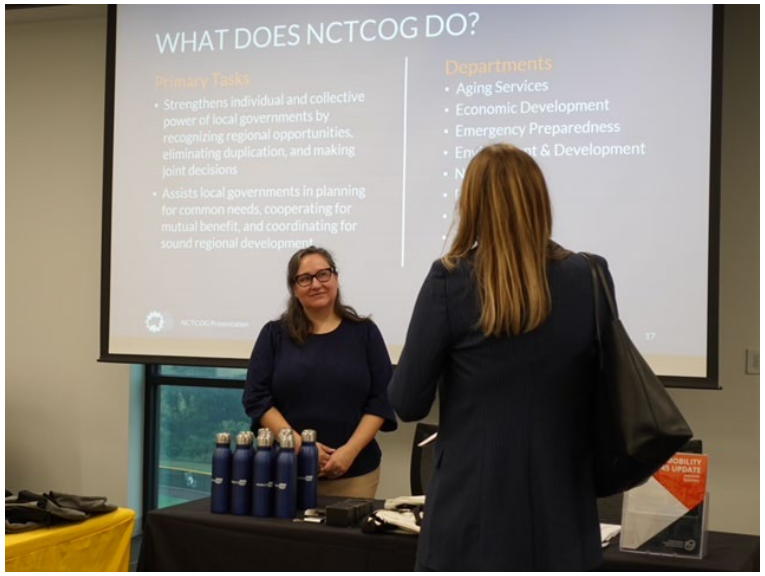


Photo credit: NCTCOG staff

Website and Social Media

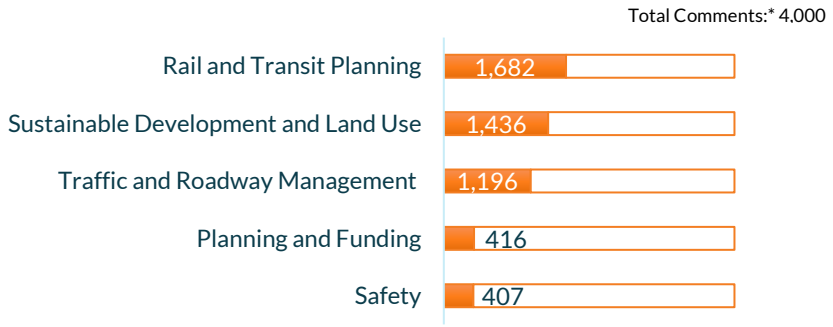
NCTCOG utilized its official website and social media to engage residents across the region. The Mobility 2050 landing page on the NCTCOG website provided educational resources, important updates, and opportunities for feedback. Specific redirect pages included the limited-time survey, public input summary, resources for local governments, and more. All pages were available in multiple languages via Google Translate.

In addition to the website, NCTCOG posted on social media throughout the plan's development, both organically and through Facebook Ads. The ads were available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese and proved to be highly successful, generating the largest source of survey traffic.

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC INPUT

Comment Themes

Public engagement efforts gathered valuable insights from thousands of North Central Texas residents. NCTCOG analyzed 3,492 open-ended survey comments and 508 Map Your Experience entries from November 2023 to December 2024 to discover what the public needs and prioritizes the most. Five main themes of concern were revealed:



** Please note that multiple tags may be applied to a single comment, so the total number of tags does not correlate to the total number of comments*

Rail and Transit Planning

There was a significant call for enhanced public transit options, such as commuter high-speed rail, to reduce traffic congestion and improve mobility across the region. Residents asked for increased investments in transit to provide more reliable and frequent alternatives to driving, especially in suburban areas experiencing rapid population growth.

Sustainable Development and Land Use

Comments revealed rising support for transit-oriented development, both in established and new areas, to support the connectivity of communities across the region. Residents recognized that dense, walkable communities with accessible transit options can enhance regional connectivity and improve overall quality of life.

Traffic and Roadway Congestion

Residents experience the current roadway network as not keeping pace with growth. Residents believe that a comprehensive approach, combining freeway expansion with arterial roadway improvements and enhanced transit options, is essential to address the regions' growth.

Planning and Funding

Comments revealed a public perception of imbalanced allocation of revenues among transportation modes, particularly between transit and roadway infrastructure. Additionally, concerns were raised about infrastructure planning lagging behind development in unincorporated areas, further exacerbating fragmented regional connections.

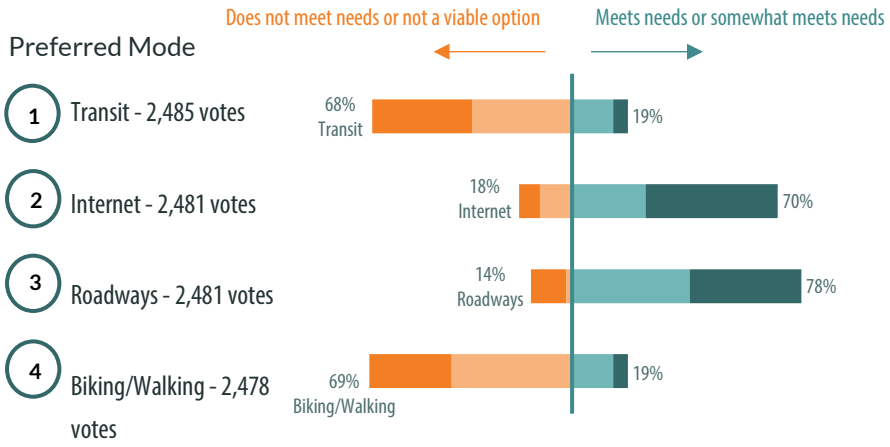
Safety

There is a sense of safety insecurity among travelers, in both motorized and non-motorized transportation users. Residents desire improved bicycle and pedestrian pathways, roadway conditions such as markings and signage, and stricter enforcement of traffic laws.

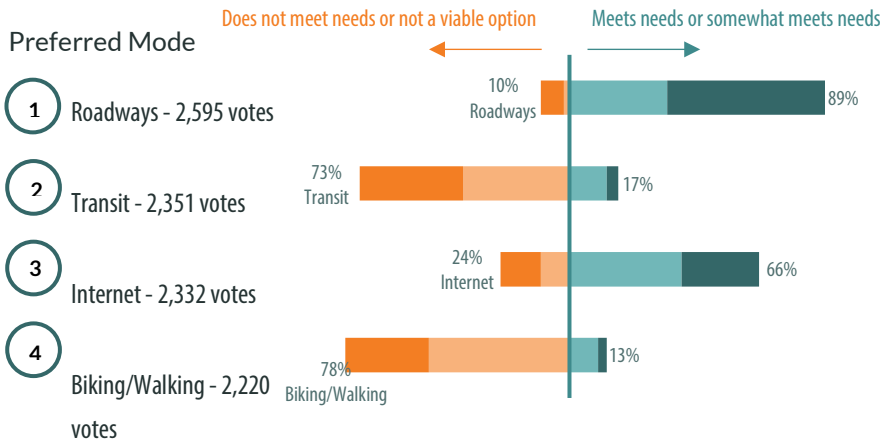
Access Rankings

We surveyed the public to identify their preferred modes of transportation for accessing vital destinations and to evaluate the effectiveness of each mode in providing access to those destinations.

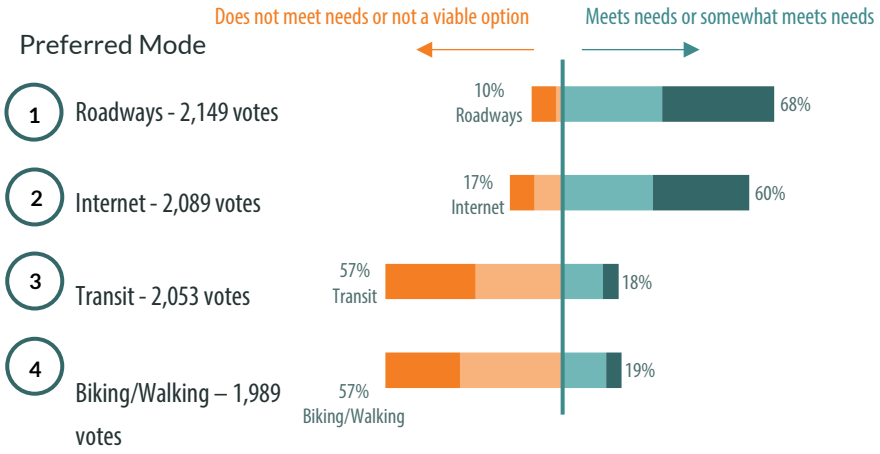
Jobs



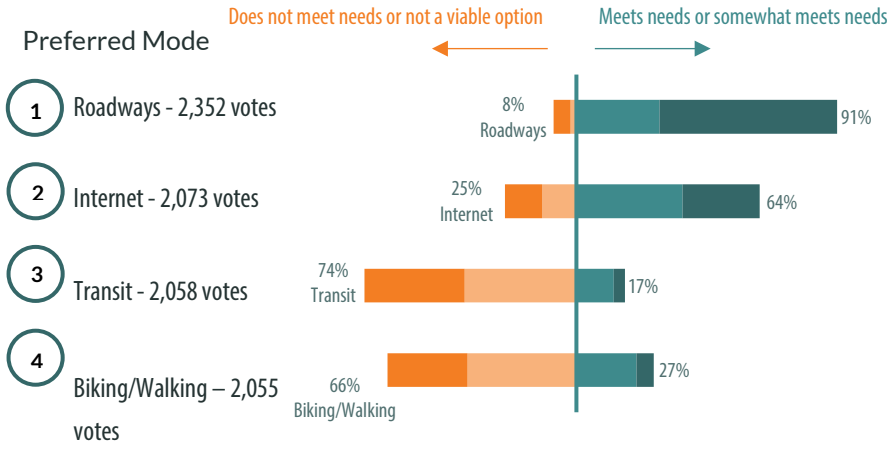
Healthcare



Education



Healthy Food



STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

Collaboration and coordination are essential components of the transportation planning process. NCTCOG works closely with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that Mobility 2050 reflects diverse perspectives and addresses regional needs comprehensively. These partnerships enhance the development of policies, programs, and projects that align with the region's goals and priorities.

Partner Agencies

In addition to engaging the public, regional, state, and federal transportation and non-transportation-related partners were consulted throughout the development of the policy, program, and project recommendations in Mobility 2050. Regional transportation partners include the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), North Texas Tollway Authority, regional transit authorities, and environmental resource agencies. A table of tribal, state, and federal partners is included in the **Environmental Considerations** appendix.

Advisory Committees

These partners were involved through meetings and other correspondence to coordinate long-range regional transportation efforts.

- Surface Transportation Technical Committee
- Air Transportation Technical Committee
- Regional Freight Advisory Committee
- Regional Safety Advisory Committee
- Land Use Transportation Task Force
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Advisory committees lend expertise and help develop recommendations for the RTC to consider. The RTC guides Mobility 2050 priorities and policies and is ultimately responsible for approving and implementing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Communication with Federally Recognized Tribal Nations

NCTCOG values the input of federally recognized Tribal Nations with historical and current interests in the region. We are committed to respecting their sovereignty and fostering meaningful participation in transportation planning. In March 2019, the RTC adopted a policy to facilitate meaningful participation from Tribal Nations in the transportation planning process. Additionally, NCTCOG staff developed and distributed “Having a Say in Metropolitan Transportation Planning: Opportunities for Federally Recognized Tribal Nations,” a document that describes existing opportunities for federally recognized Tribal Nations to engage in transportation planning in North Central Texas. NCTCOG provides spatial data files to be included in the TxDOT Early Tribal Coordination Tool. The data files identify NCTCOG-led projects and studies that have the potential to impact cultural resources and historic or prehistoric remains. NCTCOG sent letters and emails to 22 Tribal Nations with interests in the North Central Texas region in spring 2025 requesting feedback on the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

SUMMARY

A successful transportation system offers options for all residents, as mobility enhances quality of life and drives economic vitality. To achieve this, the RTC employs strategies that prioritize social considerations in Mobility 2050. Transparent processes and public engagement are key to developing a multimodal, financially sustainable plan that improves air quality. The public plays a critical role in shaping the plan, while its impacts on communities across North Texas are carefully analyzed. This approach ensures recommendations that reflect the needs and values of residents to expand public transit, improve the safety of active transportation users, and reduce roadway congestion.