

CHAPTER 5

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ASSESSMENT

5. Assessment of Transportation Services

Evaluating the range of transportation services available across the CTCOG region is a key step in understanding how well current mobility needs are being addressed and where improvements in coordination may be beneficial. This effort examines the full spectrum of providers—including public agencies, private companies, and nonprofit organizations—that serve priority populations such as older adults, individuals with disabilities, Veterans, and low-income residents. The goal is to develop a clear understanding of the existing transportation network and how it functions across the region.

By compiling information on service areas, hours of operation, eligibility criteria, and trip purposes, this assessment helps identify where services are effectively meeting demand, where gaps remain, and where opportunities exist to improve coordination. This includes identifying areas of overlap, as well as opportunities to streamline services through shared resources, coordinated scheduling, or joint funding strategies. Ultimately, this analysis establishes a foundation for enhancing connectivity, improving efficiency, and expanding access to mobility options across the seven-county CTCOG region.

5.1. Data Collection and Provider Survey

As part of the coordination planning process, CTCOG will conduct a **Transportation Provider Survey** targeting public, private, nonprofit, and for-profit transportation providers operating within the region. The survey is intended to gather consistent, comparable information about services that support transportation-disadvantaged populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, Veterans, and low-income households.

The survey will follow guidance from the **TxDOT Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan Guidebook** and will collect information in several key areas:

- **Organizational Information:** Service areas, jurisdictions served, and primary coordination contacts
- **Service Types and Operations:** Types of services provided (e.g., demand-response, ADA paratransit, non-emergency medical transportation, volunteer driver programs), along with hours of operation and eligibility requirements
- **Service Policies:** Fare structures, reservation procedures, and existing coordination or partnership agreements
- **Fleet and Capacity:** Vehicle types, accessibility features, fleet size, and utilization levels
- **Technology Systems:** Scheduling, dispatch, and trip management tools, including opportunities for integration
- **Ridership and Performance Data:** Trip volumes, service hours, and common trip purposes
- **Funding and Cost Structure:** Primary funding sources and general cost considerations
- **Unmet Needs and Challenges:** Provider-identified service gaps, operational constraints, and opportunities for improved coordination

Information collected through the survey will be used to develop **Transportation Provider Profiles**, which summarize each organization's services, coverage, and capabilities. These profiles will support a more detailed understanding of how services are currently delivered and where coordination strategies can improve outcomes across the region.

5.2. Inventory of Providers

Developing a comprehensive inventory of transportation providers is essential to building a more coordinated and effective mobility network within the CTCOG region. This inventory identifies who is providing transportation services, which populations are served, and how services are distributed geographically. Understanding these roles helps uncover opportunities for collaboration, resource sharing, and improved service delivery.

The provider inventory includes the following categories:

- **Public Transit Providers:** Publicly funded services operating fixed-route, ADA paratransit, and demand-response transit across urban and rural areas.
- **Human Service Transportation Providers:** Organizations that provide or coordinate transportation primarily for their clients, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, Veterans, and low-income populations.
- **Private and Intercity Transportation Providers:** Privately operated or contracted services that provide long-distance, specialized, or brokered transportation, including intercity bus and rail, charter services, and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT).
- **On-Demand and First/Last-Mile Transportation Providers:** Flexible, locally focused services such as transportation network companies (TNCs), taxis, and shuttle providers that support short-distance and first/last-mile connections.

5.2.1. Regional Planning and Coordination Framework

Transportation planning and coordination within the CTCOG region are supported by a set of regional and local organizations that guide investment, service delivery, and interagency coordination. Key entities include CTCOG, KTMPO, and the HOP, along with partner agencies and local jurisdictions.

Table 5.1 summarizes the roles and service areas of the primary transportation planning and service organizations in the region.

These organizations collectively form the foundation for coordinated transportation planning within the CTCOG region:

- **CTCOG:** Functions as the lead regional coordination entity, supporting interagency collaboration, administering transportation-related funding programs, and guiding implementation of regional mobility strategies.
- **KTMPO:** Oversees the metropolitan planning process within the urbanized area, ensuring compliance with federal requirements and aligning transportation investments with regional priorities.

- **HCTD:** Serves as the primary urban transit operator, implementing and managing public transportation services within the metropolitan portion of the region.
- **CTRTD:** Provides rural transit service delivery across multiple counties, focusing on expanding mobility options and maintaining access to essential services in less densely populated areas.

Together, this framework supports a coordinated, regionally integrated transportation system that connects urban and rural communities and aligns services with regional mobility needs.

Table 5-1 Transportation Planning Organizations

Organization Information	Description of Organization	Area Served
Central Texas Council of Governments 2180 N. Main St. Belton, TX 76513 254-770-2200 www.ctcog.org	Regional planning organization serving as the designated rural transit provider and lead agency for regional coordination. CTCOG administers public transportation programs, supports coordination among providers, and leads development of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan.	Bell, Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Milam, Mills, and San Saba counties
Killeen-Temple Metropolitan Planning Organization 2180 N. Main St. Belton, TX 76513 254-770-2371 www.ktmpo.org	Federally designated MPO responsible for transportation planning within the Killeen–Temple urbanized area. Coordinates multimodal planning, programs federal transportation funds, and conducts long-range and corridor-level studies.	Killeen–Temple urbanized area (Bell County, portions of Coryell County)
Hill Country Transit District (HCTD) 4515 E. Central Texas Expy Killeen, TX 76543 254-933-3700 www.takethehop.com	Public transit provider operating fixed-route bus service, ADA paratransit, and demand-response services in the Killeen–Temple urbanized area. Provides connections to employment, education, healthcare, and regional destinations.	Killeen, Temple, Belton, Harker Heights, Copperas Cove, and surrounding areas
Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD) P.O. Box 712 Coleman, TX 76834 (800) 710-2277 (325) 625-4491 www.cityandruralrides.com	Public rural transit provider operating demand-response and door-to-door service through its City and Rural Rides (CARR) program across a multi-county service area. Provides general public transportation and non-emergency medical transportation, with connections to employment, healthcare, education, and essential services in rural Central Texas.	Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills, and San Saba counties

5.2.2. Public Transportation Providers

Public transportation in the CTCOG region consists of a combination of **urban fixed-route services, ADA paratransit, demand-response transit, and microtransit operations**, complemented by regional and intercommunity connections. These services collectively provide access to employment centers, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and essential services across both urbanized areas and rural communities. In addition to services operated within the region, neighboring providers—such as **City & Rural Rides (CARR), operated by the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD)**—play a role in supporting cross-regional mobility and expanding access beyond CTCOG boundaries

Table 5-2 Public Transportation Providers

Provider Information	Characteristic	Description
Hill Country Transit District (HCTD) The HOP 4515 W. US-190, Belton, TX 76513 254-933-3700 www.takethehop.com	Service Area	The HOP “proudly serves the counties of Coryell, Bell and Milam, and the city of Lampasas.” Microtransit zones are specifically Belton, Cameron, Copperas Cove, Gatesville, Harker Heights, Killeen, Rockdale, and Temple.
	Service Modes	(1) Microtransit – on-demand, van-based, within a single city; (2) Urban Regional Commuter – walk-on service on a fixed route connecting mobility hubs between cities, no advance reservation required; (3) Cavazos Connector – free on-demand microtransit within Fort Hood/Cavazos for military ID or visitor pass holders; (4) Rural Demand Response – curb-to-curb within a county or to approved cross-county destinations.
	Service Policies	Booking: mobile app, online booking portal, or phone (254.933.3700); trips bookable same-day or up to 14 days in advance. Rides are commingled/shared, not private. No-Show/Late-Cancel/Suspension policy: a no-show occurs if a rider isn't present at pickup, refuses to board, or fails to board within 2 minutes of driver arrival; a late cancel is <30 minutes before pickup; 5+ no-shows in 30 days triggers a warning-then-suspension escalation (1-day, 7-day, 30-day), with a 7-day appeal window. ADA rules: shared rides, seatbelt/securement required, drivers may not accept tips.

Provider Information	Characteristic	Description
	Vehicle Operators & Training	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – not published on the website; request total FT/PT revenue vehicle operators (or FTEs) and mode-specific training requirements (e.g., wheelchair securement, defensive driving) directly from HCTD.
	Fleet / Vehicle Types & Volunteers	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – fleet size/vehicle-type breakdown is not published on the website (the plan's “~40–50 vehicles” figure could not be verified online); request current inventory and volunteer driver count, if any, directly from HCTD.
	Ridership / Service Statistics	Microtransit: \$2 base / \$1 reduced (seniors 60+, children under 12, Medicare- or disability-eligible, PCA, students, military); day pass \$4/\$2, weekly \$20/\$10, monthly \$50/\$25. Urban Regional Commuter: \$2 single urbanized-area (UZA) / \$4 two-UZA (half price for reduced categories). Rural Demand Response: \$4 base fare; \$8 County Services day pass. Fare capping applies by service.
	Operating Revenue & Expenses	Per HCTD's Q1 2026 (Jan–Mar 2026) Service Performance Report: 186,041 total riders (Urban: 129,383; Rural: 4,536; Fort Hood/Cavazos: 52,122); 91% on-time performance for demand-response/microtransit trips (up from 86% in 2025); average “leave now” wait time 13:33 minutes; 96% rider satisfaction; 2.16 safety incidents per 100k miles.
	FTA Section 5310 Funded?	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – not published on the public website; request total annual operating expenses/revenues by funding source (FTA 5307/5310/5311, state/local match, fare revenue) directly from HCTD or CTCOG grant records.
	Coordination Opportunities	Likely partial – confirm which HOP services/vehicles (e.g., rural demand-response) are supported with 5310 capital or operating funds, per CTCOG's current subrecipient records.

Provider Information	Characteristic	Description
Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTR TD) City & Rural Rides (CARR) P.O. Box 712 Coleman, TX 76834 (800) 710-2277 (325) 625-4491 www.cityandruralrides.com	Service Area	CTR TD serves Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Erath, Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills, Nolan, Runnels, San Saba, Shackelford, Stephens, and Rural Taylor counties – 14 counties total, headquartered in Coleman, TX (outside the CTCOG region). Only 4 of those 14 (Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills, San Saba) fall within the CTCOG seven-county planning area. Recent service expansions also include Stephenville (with Tarleton State University, under a TxDOT expansion grant) and the Brownwood/Early city limits with extended weekday/Saturday hours.
	Service Modes	Demand-response, door-to-door service open to the general public, with on-demand priority scheduling for elderly and disabled passengers. In addition to general public trips (shopping, work, medical, visiting family/friends), CTR TD also performs Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) medical transportation trips through the state Medical Transportation Program (MTP)/HHSC broker relationship – this NEMT component is not mentioned in the current draft and should be added.
	Service Policies	Reservations must be made at least one business day in advance by 12:00 p.m.; shared-ride (“commingled”) service; cash or check only – no credit cards – and exact change is required (drivers cannot make change). Escorts must pay the fare each time except personal care attendants, who ride free with an eligible passenger. General service hours are Monday–Friday 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. (office hours 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; phone hours 6:30 a.m.–6:30 p.m.), with weekend service limited to the Brownwood/Early city limits (Saturdays 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.) and closures on 11 named holidays. A General Manager-approved weather policy allows CTR TD to reschedule or cancel service in inclement weather. Complaints go to the administrative office and receive a decision within 10 business days, with a 30-day window to appeal to the General Manager; separate Title VI and ADA complaint procedures and forms are published.
	Vehicle Operators & Training	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – not published on the website; request number of FT/PT drivers and training requirements specific to rural demand-response/NEMT operation directly from CTR TD.

Provider Information	Characteristic	Description
	Fleet / Vehicle Types & Volunteers	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – fleet size, vehicle types, and ADA-accessible unit counts are not published on the website; request current inventory directly from CTRTD.
	Ridership / Service Statistics	Fares are distance-tiered by one-way trip, from \$1.00 (1–5 miles) up to \$12.00 (56–60 miles), in roughly \$1.00 increments per 5-mile band – not the flat “\$1.00 per 5 miles, \$20.00 day pass” stated in the current draft. CTRTD instead offers two prepaid value passes: a \$20.00 pass loaded with \$24.00 in value, and a \$10.00 pass loaded with \$12.00 in value (an incentive/discount pass, not an unlimited day pass as currently described). Cash/check only; exact change required.
	Operating Revenue & Expenses	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – not published on the website; request annual one-way trips and revenue vehicle hours/miles directly from CTRTD.
	FTA Section 5310 Funded?	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – not published on the public website; request annual operating expenses/revenues by funding source (FTA 5311, 5310, state/local match, fare revenue, Medicaid MTP reimbursement) directly from CTRTD or CTCOG grant records.
	Coordination Opportunities	[DATA NEEDED – confirm via Transportation Provider Survey / follow-up outreach] – confirm with CTRTD/CTCOG grant records.

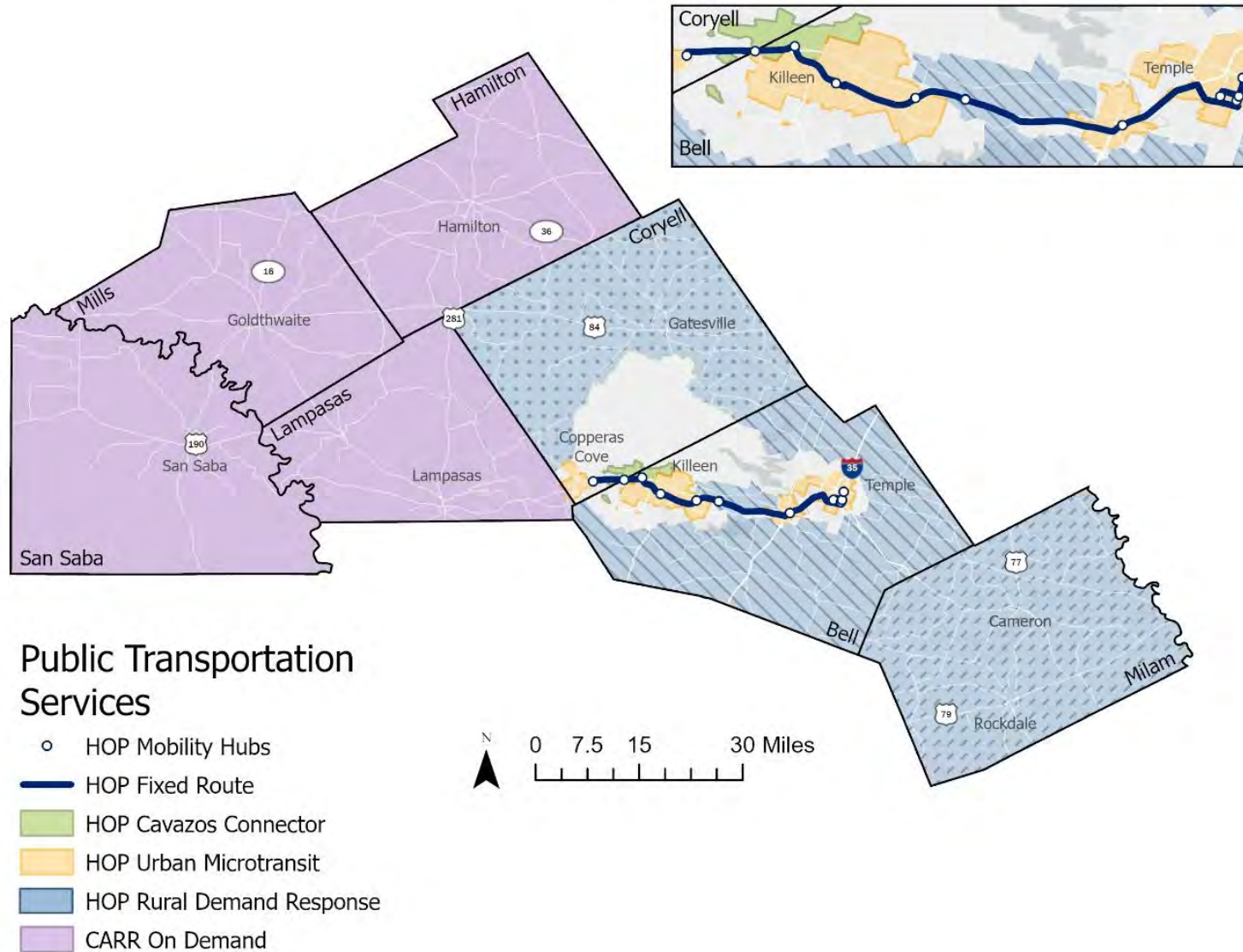
The **Hill Country Transit District (The HOP)** serves as the backbone of public transportation within the CTCOG region, providing a comprehensive range of services across both urban and rural areas (see **Figure 5-2**). Within the Killeen–Temple–Belton urbanized area, The HOP operates fixed-route and ADA paratransit services that support higher-frequency travel along key corridors and connect residents to major destinations.

Beyond the urbanized area, The HOP provides **demand-response and microtransit services** that serve smaller communities and rural areas across the region. These services are essential for residents who may not have access to a personal vehicle, particularly older adults, individuals with disabilities, and those living in lower-density areas. By connecting rural residents to regional hubs such as Killeen and Temple, these services play a critical role in maintaining access to healthcare, employment, and other essential services.

City and Rural Rides (CARR) complement the regional network by providing transit services in adjacent areas and supporting trips that extend beyond CTCOG boundaries. As a neighboring rural transit provider, CARR represents an important partner for **interregional coordination**, particularly for trips that cross planning areas or connect rural residents to destinations outside the CTCOG region.

Together, these providers—supported by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding programs including Sections **5307, 5310, and 5311**—form the foundation of the CTCOG region’s public transportation system. Their combined services create a coordinated network that balances **urban efficiency, rural accessibility, and regional connectivity**, supporting mobility needs across diverse geographic and demographic contexts, as illustrated in Figure 5-2.

Figure 5-1 Public Transportation System Overview



5.2.3. Private and Intercity Transportation Providers

Private and intercity transportation providers in the CTCOG region play a supporting role in the broader mobility network by offering connections beyond the reach of local transit services. These providers link Central Texas communities—particularly those in Bell County and the Killeen–Temple urbanized area—to major statewide and national destinations, including Austin, Dallas–Fort Worth, San Antonio, and beyond.

Intercity travel is anchored by **Amtrak service in Temple**, which provides a critical rail connection along the Texas Eagle corridor, while **intercity bus providers such as Greyhound and FlixBus** offer flexible regional and long-distance travel options. Charter and shuttle providers, including Arrow Trailways and airport shuttle services, further supplement regional connectivity, particularly for group travel and airport access.

In addition to these services, the region is supported by a network of **NEMT providers**, including ModivCare and Medlift, which play a vital role in connecting residents—especially Medicaid recipients and older adults—to healthcare services across the region.

Charter services such as Arrow Trailways primarily support pre-arranged travel, while NEMT providers focus on healthcare access for eligible populations. Local on-demand services such as taxis, rideshare, and airport shuttles are addressed separately in Section 5.2.5

While these providers enhance regional accessibility, they are generally not designed for frequent daily use due to **limited schedules, higher costs, and lack of integration with local transit services**. As a result, opportunities exist to improve coordination through:

- First- and last-mile connections to intercity services
- Better trip planning integration across providers
- Development of mobility hubs and transfer points
- Strengthened partnerships between transit agencies and private providers

Improving coordination across these services will be essential to creating a more seamless and connected regional transportation system, particularly for residents traveling between rural communities and major service hubs.

Table 5-3 Private and Intercity Providers

Provider Information	Description of Service	Fare/Cost	Operating Data
Amtrak Temple Station: 315 W Ave B, Temple, TX 76501 1-800-USA-RAIL www.amtrak.com	Intercity passenger rail via the Texas Eagle line , providing daily connections to Austin, Dallas–Fort Worth, San Antonio, and national destinations. Temple remains the primary rail access point in the CTCOG region.	Varies by distance and class.	National network service Provider Type: Intercity Rail Eligibility: General public
Greyhound / FlixBus www.greyhound.com www.flixbus.com	National intercity bus providers with service connections accessible in/near Temple and Killeen. Provides regional and long-distance trips across Texas and the U.S.	Varies by route and booking.	National network service Provider Type: Private Eligibility: General public
Arrow Trailways of Texas	Regional and charter bus provider operating in Temple, Killeen, and surrounding Central Texas areas. Often supports group travel and intercity connections	Charter-based pricing	Provider Type: Private Eligibility: General public / contracted services
ModivCare (formerly LogistiCare)	Brokered NEMT provider coordinating Medicaid transportation trips across the region. Connects users to healthcare services using contracted providers.	Typically covered by Medicaid	Provider Type: Private (NEMT Broker) Eligibility: Medicaid-eligible users
Medlift	Private NEMT provider offering scheduled trips for medical appointments across the CTCOG region.	Subscription or per-trip cost	Provider Type: Private Eligibility: General public

5.2.4. Social Service and Human Transportation Providers

A network of public, nonprofit, and community-based organizations supports transportation access across the CTCOG region by serving populations with specialized mobility needs, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, Veterans, and low-income residents. These providers typically do not operate large-scale public transit services but instead focus on **trip coordination, client-specific transportation, and mobility assistance**, helping fill critical gaps—particularly in rural areas and for healthcare, workforce, and social service trips.

Organizations such as the Area Agency on Aging of Central Texas, Central Counties Services, workforce agencies, Veterans' programs, and local nonprofit partners play a critical role in providing mobility for transportation-disadvantaged populations across the CTCOG region. Rather than operating traditional transit services, these providers focus on coordinating trips, funding transportation, and delivering targeted services for specific client groups.

These services are especially important in **rural portions of the region**, where public transit coverage may be limited and trip needs—particularly for healthcare and social services—require more flexible, individualized solutions. Many of these organizations work in coordination with regional transit providers through programs such as **FTA Section 5310 and Older Americans Act funding**, helping extend the reach of the broader transportation network.

However, these services often rely on **limited staff capacity, small vehicle fleets, and volunteer drivers**, which can constrain availability, service hours, and geographic coverage. In many cases, transportation is provided only to eligible clients, leaving gaps for individuals who may not qualify but still face mobility challenges.

Opportunities to strengthen this network in the CTCOG region include:

- Expanding mobility management and centralized coordination efforts
- Enhancing partnerships between transit providers and human service organizations
- Improving trip scheduling integration and information sharing
- Leveraging additional funding sources to scale volunteer and client-based transportation programs

Strengthening coordination across these providers will be essential to reducing duplication, improving efficiency, and ensuring that all residents—particularly those with the greatest needs—have access to reliable transportation options.

Table 5-4 Social Service and Human Transportation Providers

Provider Information	Description of Service	Fare/Cost	Operating Data
Area Agency on Aging of Central Texas 2180 N. Main St. Belton, TX 76513 https://aaact.org/	Provides mobility management, transportation coordination, and funding support for older adults. Coordinates trips through partner providers rather than directly operating service.	No cost for eligible users; donations encouraged.	Funded through Older Americans Act (Title III) Service Model: Coordination / Mobility Management
Central Counties Services 304 S. 22nd St. Temple, TX 76504 www.ccsct.org	Provides client-based transportation for individuals receiving mental health and intellectual/developmental disability services, including access to treatment, employment, and daily activities.	Low-cost or no-cost for eligible clients.	Provider Type: Community MH/IDD Eligibility: Enrolled clients
Veterans Transportation Programs (VA & Local Partners) Temple VA Medical Center www.va.gov	Provides transportation coordination for Veterans , including volunteer driver programs, DAV services, and mileage reimbursement for medical trips.	No cost for eligible Veterans.	Service coordinated through VA programs and volunteer networks
Workforce Solutions of Central Texas 300 Cheyenne Dr #101, Killeen, TX 76542 https://workforcesolutionsctx.com	Provides transportation assistance programs for eligible job seekers and workers, including support for accessing employment, training, and workforce programs.	Varies by program eligibility.	Provider Type: Workforce agency Service Model: Subsidy / coordination
County- and City-Supported Senior Programs (e.g., senior centers, nutrition programs)	Provide limited transportation services or trip coordination for older adults, often tied to meal programs, senior centers, and local services.	Typically donation-based or low-cost	Limited fleets and service hours; varies by community
Nonprofit and Faith-Based Organizations (e.g., local churches, United Way partners, community groups)	Provide supplemental transportation services such as volunteer driver programs, trip coordination, and occasional direct transportation for clients (e.g., churches, food banks, community organizations).	Typically free or donation-based.	Limited capacity; often volunteer-driven

Provider Information	Description of Service	Fare/Cost	Operating Data
Healthcare System Transportation Programs (e.g., Baylor Scott & White partnerships)	Some healthcare providers offer limited patient transportation support , including coordination of rides for medical appointments or partnerships with local providers.	Often free or subsidized for patients	Service Model: Coordinated / case-by-case

5.2.5. Taxi and Shuttle Operators

On-demand and first/last-mile transportation services provide flexible mobility options within the CTCOG region, particularly in the Killeen–Temple–Belton urbanized area. These services are typically used for short-distance trips, late-night travel, and connections to transit.

Unlike intercity and charter providers described in Section 5.2.3, these services operate on an on-demand or reservation basis and are designed for flexible, local travel.

These services provide a critical layer of flexibility within the CTCOG transportation network, particularly in areas and time periods where fixed-route or demand-response transit options are limited. **Rideshare services (Uber and Lyft)** have become the dominant form of on-demand transportation in the region’s urbanized areas, offering relatively quick response times and broad geographic coverage within Bell County.

Traditional taxi services remain present but are **limited in availability and coverage**, reflecting broader industry trends and competition from app-based platforms. Meanwhile, **airport shuttle providers and private transportation services** offer important regional connections, particularly for trips to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport and other long-distance destinations.

Despite their benefits, these services present several challenges:

- **Limited availability in rural areas**, leaving gaps outside the urban core
- **Higher and variable costs**, which may be prohibitive for some users
- **Lack of integration with public transit**, including limited coordination in scheduling, trip planning, and payment systems

Opportunities to better integrate these services into the regional mobility network include:

- Expanding **mobility management strategies**, such as voucher or subsidy programs
- Improving **first- and last-mile connections** to transit stops and hubs
- Enhancing **trip planning tools** that incorporate both public and private services
- Exploring partnerships to support equitable access for priority populations

Strengthening coordination between these providers and the broader transportation system can help improve overall accessibility, particularly for trips that require flexibility, occur outside normal service hours, or extend beyond the reach of existing transit services.

Table 5-5 Taxi, Rideshare, and Shuttle Operators

Provider Information	Description of Service	Operating Data
Transportation Network Companies (Uber, Lyft)	App-based, on-demand transportation services operating primarily in Killeen, Temple, Belton, Harker Heights, and Copperas Cove. Widely used for first/last-mile connections, late-night travel, and trips not served by fixed-route transit.	Availability concentrated in urbanized areas, limited coverage in rural counties. Requires smartphone access and digital payment.
Local Taxi and Private Car Services (Limited Presence)	Traditional taxi services and independent operators providing on-demand or pre-arranged trips within Bell County communities. Availability has declined in recent years due to competition from rideshare services.	Service levels vary, often limited hours and fleet availability. Advance booking may be required.
Airport Shuttle Services (e.g., Aero-Nautical Services, regional operators)	Reservation-based shuttle and private car services connecting the CTCOG region to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport and other regional destinations. Commonly used by residents, military personnel, and business travelers.	Operates on a scheduled or on-demand basis; pricing varies by distance and group size.

5.2.6. Analysis Insights

Urban and Rural Service Coverage

The Hill Country Transit District (The HOP) serves as the backbone of mobility within the CTCOG region, providing fixed-route and ADA paratransit services in the Killeen–Temple–Belton urbanized area, along with demand-response and microtransit services in surrounding communities. These services offer relatively reliable and structured mobility within higher-density areas while maintaining essential coverage across rural portions of the region.

Despite this broad coverage, differences between urban and rural service models present challenges. Fixed-route services provide predictability and efficiency in urban areas, while demand-response services in rural areas often require advance reservations, involve longer travel times, and operate within more limited-service windows. These differences highlight the importance of strengthening coordination between service types, including improved transfer points, more seamless connections, and enhanced regional trip planning to better link rural communities with urban destinations.

Private and Intercity Connectivity

Private and intercity transportation providers expand mobility beyond the limits of the local transit network by connecting the CTCOG region to major statewide and national destinations. Amtrak, intercity bus providers, and charter operators offer important long-distance travel options, while NEMT providers support access to healthcare for eligible populations.

However, these services generally operate independently from public transit and are not well integrated into the broader mobility system. Opportunities exist to improve coordination through shared pickup and transfer locations, improved schedule alignment, and enhanced trip planning tools that incorporate both local and regional transportation options. Strengthening these connections would improve access for residents traveling between rural communities and major service hubs.

Human Service Transportation

Human service and community-based organizations play a critical role in addressing mobility needs for transportation-disadvantaged populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, Veterans, and low-income residents. These providers often focus on coordination, funding, or client-specific transportation rather than general public service, helping fill important gaps that are not addressed by traditional transit.

At the same time, these services are often fragmented, with varying eligibility requirements, limited resources, and minimal integration across providers. Enhancing coordination through mobility management strategies, improved communication, and shared data systems could help reduce duplication, improve efficiency, and expand access to essential services across the region.

On-Demand and First/Last-Mile Services

On-demand transportation options—including transportation network companies (e.g., Uber and Lyft), limited taxi services, and airport shuttle providers—play an increasingly important role in the regional mobility system. These services offer flexibility and convenience, particularly for short-distance trips, late-night travel, and connections to transit stops or regional destinations.

However, availability is largely concentrated in the Killeen–Temple urbanized area, with limited coverage in rural communities. Additionally, higher and variable costs, along with limited integration with public transit, can create barriers for some users. Expanding partnerships—such as first/last-mile programs, voucher initiatives, and coordinated trip planning—could help better integrate these services into the broader transportation network and improve overall system accessibility.

Key Coordination Observations

The presence of both HCTD and CTRD creates opportunities to expand service coverage and capacity; however, it also introduces coordination challenges related to service boundaries, trip transfers, and rider navigation. Stakeholder input indicated that coordination between providers is often informal, particularly for trips that cross county lines or require multiple services. These conditions highlight the need for improved coordination mechanisms, including shared information, scheduling alignment, and clearer communication for riders.

5.2.7. Alignment Between Service Design and User Needs

Analysis of survey and stakeholder feedback reveals a consistent disconnect between how transportation services are currently designed and how residents need to travel. While a range of transit and coordinated transportation services exist across the region, many respondents reported that these services are not viable options for meeting daily needs.

The most commonly identified issues include service that does not operate in needed locations, limited service hours that do not align with work or medical schedules, long wait times, and concerns about reliability. As a result, many residents rely on personal vehicles, rides from family or friends, or forgo trips altogether—even when transit services are technically available.

This pattern suggests that underutilization of transit services is driven more by service misalignment than by a lack of demand. Addressing these gaps will require a stronger focus on service design, coordination across providers, and improving the overall user experience to better reflect real-world travel patterns.

5.2.8. Ridership and Service Capacity

A comparative review of operating scale among the region’s primary transit providers highlights key differences in service delivery, capacity, and efficiency across the CTCOG region. Small urban and urbanized transit systems typically demonstrate higher ridership relative to fleet size, reflecting more concentrated demand and established fixed-route networks. In contrast, rural transit providers operate across larger geographic areas with lower population densities, resulting in lower ridership per vehicle but a broader service coverage footprint.

Intercity providers play an important complementary role by connecting regional population centers to statewide and national destinations. However, these services often operate at limited frequencies and are not consistently integrated with local fixed-route or demand-response systems, creating potential gaps in regional connectivity.

Balancing small urban operating efficiency with rural service accessibility requires targeted and strategic funding approaches. Ensuring sustained support for both fixed-route and demand-response operations will be essential to maintaining regional mobility and meeting federal program objectives, including Title VI and FTA Sections 5307, 5310, and 5311. For example, agencies may maintain high-frequency service on productive routes in more densely populated areas while allocating incremental operating resources to expand rural demand-response capacity for essential trips such as healthcare, employment, and education access. Similarly, agencies may rebalance funding sources to strengthen partnerships with human-service providers—such as senior centers, Veterans’ programs, and disability service organizations—while preserving reliability across the broader transit network.

While detailed fleet utilization data varies by provider, stakeholder input suggests opportunities to improve vehicle utilization through better coordination of scheduling, trip sharing, and cross-provider collaboration.

Planned investments identified through HCTD’s implementation program are expected to improve system capacity and reliability over time. Fleet replacement and service expansion efforts will help reduce service disruptions, accommodate future ridership growth, and improve the overall customer experience, particularly in high-demand urban corridors and emerging microtransit service areas.

5.2.9. County-Level Service Availability

A county-level assessment of available services reveals disparities in multimodal coverage across the CTCOG region. More populated counties and regional centers generally offer a wider range of transportation options, including fixed-route transit, ADA complementary paratransit, demand-response service, and private transportation providers. In contrast, more rural counties often rely primarily on demand-response services, volunteer driver programs, or human-service transportation supported through aging services and local nonprofit organizations.

This uneven distribution of services underscores the importance of mobility management initiatives that improve coordination among providers and expand access in underserved areas. The results of this analysis should directly inform FTA Section 5310 project prioritization, with an emphasis on investments that strengthen coordination, address geographic gaps, and enhance service availability in rural communities.

5.2.10. Connectivity Hierarchy

The regional mobility network in the CTCOG region can be understood as a layered system in which different types of transportation services work together to provide comprehensive access across urban and rural areas:

1. **Intercity and Regional Transportation Services** – Long-distance and specialized transportation options, including intercity rail, bus, charter services, and NEMT, that connect the CTCOG region to major population centers across Texas and beyond.
2. **Public Transit Network (Urban and Rural)** – Publicly operated services, led by the Hill Country Transit District (The HOP), that include fixed-route transit, ADA paratransit, and demand-response/microtransit. These services provide the core mobility framework within the Killeen–Temple–Belton urbanized area and extend essential access to surrounding rural communities.
3. **Human Service and Coordinated Transportation Programs** – Client-focused transportation and mobility management services provided by human service agencies, workforce programs, and community-based organizations. These programs support transportation-disadvantaged populations through coordinated trips, funding assistance, and targeted service delivery.
4. **On-Demand and First/Last-Mile Services** – Flexible, locally focused transportation options such as TNCs (e.g., Uber and Lyft), limited taxi services, and airport shuttle providers that help connect riders to transit stops, regional hubs, and destinations not directly served by public transit.

This layered framework highlights how different provider types complement one another and support the identification of key transfer points, shared facilities, and coordination opportunities—such as integrated trip planning, first/last-mile connections, and improved scheduling—that can enhance multimodal connectivity across the CTCOG region.

Planned service enhancements, including expanded microtransit coverage and improved coordination between urban and rural providers, are expected to strengthen connections across the regional network. These improvements will support more seamless travel between communities and improve access to key destinations, including healthcare facilities, employment centers, and regional hubs.

5.3. Mobility Management Services and Programs

Within the CTCOG region, mobility management functions as a coordinating framework that helps align a diverse set of transportation providers and services into a more cohesive system. Rather than focusing on direct service delivery, mobility management emphasizes improving how existing services are connected, accessed, and utilized—particularly for residents who may face barriers to mobility.

This approach is especially important in Central Texas, where the transportation network includes a mix of urban fixed-route services, rural demand-response operations, human service transportation programs, and private mobility options. For many users—especially older adults, individuals with disabilities, and residents of smaller or more remote communities—understanding how to navigate this system can be as challenging as accessing the service itself.

A critical element of mobility management in the region is **supporting the transportation workforce**. Transit providers and partner organizations depend on trained drivers and operational staff to deliver reliable service. Expanding opportunities for local training, certification, and workforce development can help address staffing constraints and improve service consistency across both urban and rural areas.

Improving **access to information and trip planning** is another key focus. Centralized tools—such as one-call/one-click systems—can simplify the process of identifying available services and determining eligibility requirements. By consolidating information across providers, these platforms can help riders more easily plan trips and connect with appropriate services, reducing confusion and improving overall accessibility.

Mobility management also plays an important role in **linking transportation with human service programs**. Many organizations across the CTCOG region provide transportation or transportation assistance as part of broader services related to aging, healthcare, workforce development, and social support. Strengthening coordination among these entities can help ensure that limited resources are used effectively and that services are delivered in a complementary, rather than duplicative, manner.

In addition, there is an opportunity to advance **regional collaboration around funding and service integration**. Coordinated approaches to funding—particularly through programs such as FTA Sections 5307, 5310, and 5311—can help maximize available resources and support more seamless connections between service types and geographic areas.

Finally, **community outreach and rider support** remain essential components of mobility management. Travel training, multilingual communication, and targeted engagement can help residents better understand their transportation options and build confidence in using available services. These strategies are particularly important for expanding access among populations that may be underserved or less familiar with existing transportation resources.

5.3.1. Key Takeaways

Regional coordination is well-positioned for expansion:

The CTCOG region has an established network of public, private, and community-based transportation providers. Building on this foundation can further strengthen coordination and improve how services are delivered across jurisdictions.

Strategic coordination can extend system capacity:

Centralized trip planning, shared training resources, and provider partnerships can improve mobility outcomes without requiring significant new infrastructure or fleet investments.

Rural mobility remains a key challenge:

Lower-density areas continue to face longer travel distances, fewer service options, and limited flexibility. Addressing these conditions will require a continued focus on demand-response services and stronger regional connections to urban centers.

Better integration can improve system performance:

Increasing collaboration through data sharing, communication, and coordinated service planning can help streamline operations, reduce inefficiencies, and improve the rider experience across the CTCOG transportation network.