

Chapter VI

Public Transportation Services

Within North Central Texas, public transportation services are provided by private for-profit, private non-profit, and public entities such as transportation authorities, small urban providers, and rural providers. These entities coordinate the provision of transportation services to the general public in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Urbanized Area, Denton-Lewisville Urbanized Area, and McKinney Urbanized Area, as well as to residents of the region's nonurbanized areas.

As transportation authorities, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (the T) provide services within the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Urbanized Area. The Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) provides services within the Denton-Lewisville Urbanized Area. Collin County Area Regional Transit (CCART) provides services within the McKinney Urbanized Area, as well as the rest of Collin County.

DART operates a multi-modal system that includes bus, light rail, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, and vanpool services for its 13-member cities: Addison, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Glenn Heights, Highland Park, Irving, Plano, Richardson, Rowlett, and University Park. Fixed-route, express, and rider request bus services are provided to the cities of Fort Worth, Blue Mound and Richland Hills by the T. In addition, rail service is planned for implementation by the T.

Together, DART and the T operate the Trinity Railway Express, a 34-mile commuter rail service linking downtown Dallas and downtown Fort Worth. The DCTA operates a commuter rail line between Denton and Carrollton, serving the cities of Denton, Lewisville, and Highland Village. DCTA also provides

fixed-route, and campus shuttle bus services, as well as vanpool service.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, DART, the T, and DCTA provide ADA-complementary service. DART Paratransit Services provides demand-responsive service to persons with disabilities who are unable to use DART buses or trains. In addition, DART offers a Travel Training Program that provides one-on-one specialized training to persons with disabilities in the use of public transportation. Mobility-Impaired Transportation Services (MITS), a demand-responsive service, is operated by the T for persons with disabilities unable to use its fixed-route bus system. DCTA Access provides demand-responsive service to persons with disabilities unable to use its fixed-route services in Denton, Lewisville, and Highland Village. DCTA also provides demand-responsive service throughout its service area to older adults.

All three providers require potential paratransit passengers to complete an application and be certified as ADA-eligible. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the three transportation authorities provides that once an individual is certified as paratransit eligible by one authority, that person may utilize all three paratransit services without the need for additional certification.

In addition to the region's three transportation authorities, a number of small urban transportation providers operate within the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Urbanized Area. The cities of Arlington (Handitran), Grand Prairie (Grand Connection), and Mesquite (MTED) operate demand-responsive



services to meet the transportation needs of older adults and persons with disabilities. Northeast Transportation Services (NETS) also provides demand-responsive service to older adults and persons with disabilities in Bedford, Euless, Grapevine, Haltom City, Hurst, Keller, and North Richland Hills.

Lastly, there are five transportation providers who provide county-wide, demand-responsive bus service to the general public.

- (1) City/County Transportation – City of Cleburne provides service in Johnson County;
- (2) the Collin County Area Regional Transit operates within Collin County;
- (3) Public Transit Services provides service throughout Jack, Palo Pinto and Parker Counties;
- (4) Special Programs for Aging Needs serves Denton County; and,
- (5) STAR Transit operates in Kaufman and Rockwall Counties.

FUNDING

Federal funding for public transportation services is provided through the following Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs:

Urbanized Area Formula Program

The Urbanized Area Formula Program funds public transportation projects in urbanized areas of over 50,000 in population. Funds are apportioned to the urbanized area by formula and provide capital, planning and operating assistance (under specific guidelines) to transportation providers operating in the urbanized area. For areas of 50,000 to 199,999 in population, such as the McKinney Urbanized

Area, the formula is based on population and population density. For areas with populations of 200,000 or more, including the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Urbanized Area and Denton-Lewisville Urbanized Area, the formula is based on a combination of population, population density, revenue vehicle miles, passenger miles, and directional route miles. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) selects the projects under this program.

Transit Capital Investment Program

The Transit Capital Investment Program provides capital assistance for three primary activities:

- (1) new and replacement buses and facilities through the Bus and Bus Related Equipment and Facilities Program,
- (2) modernization of existing rail systems through the Fixed Guideway Modernization Program, and
- (3) new fixed guideway systems through the New Starts and Small Starts Program. Generally, only transportation authorities receive funding under these programs.



Denton County Transportation Authority station at Trinity Mills, GTW

Nonurbanized Area Formula Program

The Nonurbanized Area Formula Program funds public transportation in nonurbanized areas (i.e., areas with populations less than 50,000). The goal of the program is to enhance the access of people in nonurbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation. In Texas, the program is administered by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Funds are apportioned to the State by formula, and may be used for capital, operating, and administrative purposes.

North Central Texas providers receiving nonurbanized area formula funds include:

- City and Rural Rides – Central Texas Rural Transit District (Erath County)
- City/County Transportation – City of Cleburne (Johnson County)
- Collin County Area Regional Transit (Collin County)
- Community Transit Service (Ellis and Navarro Counties)
- Public Transit Services (Jack, Palo Pinto and Parker Counties)
- Senior Center Resources and Public Transit (Hunt County)
- Special Programs for Aging Needs (Denton County)
- STAR Transit (Kaufman and Rockwall Counties)
- Texoma Area Paratransit System (Wise County)
- The Transit System (Hood and Somervell Counties).

Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program

The Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program funds transportation projects for older adults and persons with disabilities in urbanized and nonurbanized areas. To administer the program, FTA allocates capital funds to TxDOT based on the State's population of older adults and persons with disabilities. Funds are distributed to the TxDOT Districts for capital projects, including the purchase of expansion and replacement vehicles, and auxiliary equipment such as radios, vehicle shelters, wheelchair lifts and restraints, computer hardware and software, etc. Existing urban and nonurban transit providers serve as the primary recipients of funds for their service areas.

Job Access and Reverse Commute Program

The Job Access/Reverse Commute Program funds transportation projects that assist low-income persons in getting to and from jobs and employment-related activities, as well as projects that increase transportation to suburban employment opportunities. Public transportation operators, non-profit organizations and governmental entities are eligible to receive funding. Funds are apportioned directly to urbanized areas greater than 200,000 in population and support capital, operating and planning activities. NCTCOG is the designated recipient for funds apportioned to the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas, with the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) competitively selecting projects for award. In urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000 and nonurban areas, the Texas Department of Transportation administers the program.

New Freedom Program

The New Freedom Program funds transportation projects that provide new services above and beyond what is required by the Americans with

Disabilities Act of 1990. Public transportation providers, non-profit organizations and governmental entities are eligible to receive funding. Funds are apportioned directly to urbanized areas greater than 200,000 population, and support capital and operating activities. NCTCOG is the designated recipient for funds apportioned to the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas, with the RTC competitively selecting projects for award. In urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000 and nonurban areas, the Texas Department of Transportation administers the program.

Find more information about Public Transportation Services by visiting us at:

<http://www.nctcoq.org/trans/programs/transitop.asp>