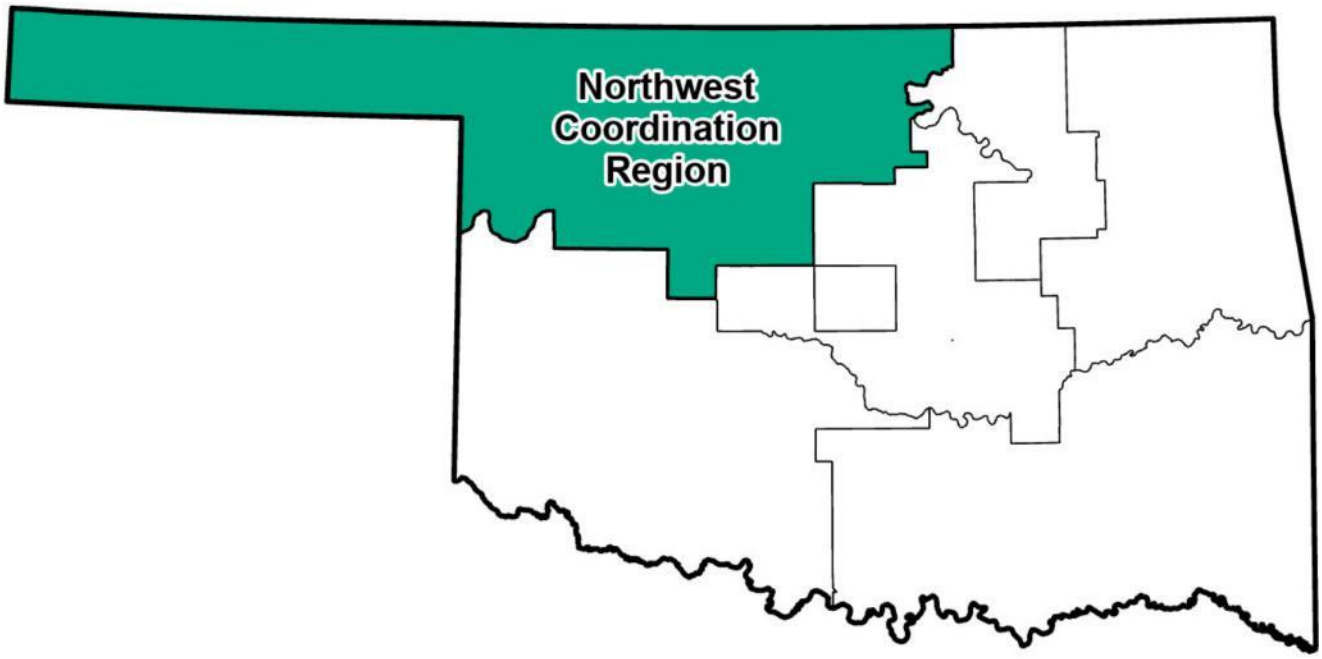
Coordinated Transportation Plan

Northwest Coordination Region

Adopted in December 2023
Updated in December 2025



Lead Agency: MAGB Transportation
For more information, contact Micky Flynn at: micky@magb.org

Contents

Frequently Used Acronyms 1
Executive Summary 2
Introduction 5
Study Area 5
What is a coordinated plan? 8
Plan Purpose 9
Plan Development Process 9
Regional Socioeconomic Characteristics 11
Population Density 11
Transportation Disadvantaged Populations 12
Justice 40 Disadvantaged Areas 18
Regional Characteristics 20
Transportation Planning Agencies 20
Mobility Management 21
Transportation Provider Assessment 22
Public Transit Providers 22
Human Services Providers 26
Service Outside Typical Business Hours 28
Transportation Technology 29
Funding Structure for Transportation Programs 31
Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disability Program 31
Other Related Transportation Funding Programs 31
Coordination Efforts 33
Existing Coordination Efforts 33
Active Transportation 33
Employment Transportation 34
Unmet Transportation Needs & Gaps 34
Summary and Prioritization of Gaps and Unmet Needs 36
Statewide Needs 41
Goals 44
Goal 1: Improve recruiting and retention of qualified drivers and office staff 44
Goal 2: Establish transit hubs to improve cross-boundary service coordination 44
Goal 3: Continued Education on LO-NO Renewable Sources (i.e. EV, AV, Hydrogen, CNG) 45
Goal 4: Increase use of technology to enhance service provision 46
The Northwest Region Coordinated Task Force 48
Working Group/Task Force 48

Public Meeting 49
Public Survey 50
Continuing Efforts 57
Plan Adoption 58
Annual Updates 58
Appendix 59
Definitions 59
Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) Office of Mobility and Public Transit 61
Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310 62
Specialized Transportation 63
Specialized Transportation 64
Public Input Notice 65

OKLAHOMA
Transportation

Frequently Used Acronyms

This Plan frequently employs acronyms which refer to specific agencies, types of agencies, legislation, and other transportation-related terms. If an acronym used is not immediately clear based on context, please reference Table 1 below.

Table 1: Frequently Used Acronyms

Acronym	Acronym Meaning
AAA	Area Agency on Aging
ADA	The Americans with Disabilities Act
COG	Council of Government
CPTS	Cimarron Public Transit System
CST	Cherokee Strip Transit
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NODA	Northern Oklahoma Development Authority
NORTPO	Northern Regional Transportation Planning Organization
ODOT	Oklahoma Department of Transportation
OEDA	Oklahoma Economic Development Authority
OKDHS	Oklahoma Department of Human Services
OKDRS	Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
OMPT	Office of Mobility and Public Transit
OSDH	Oklahoma State Department of Health
OTA	Oklahoma Transit Association
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
SMP	State Management Plan
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
UZA	Urbanized Area

Executive Summary

In Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Office of Mobility and Public Transit (ODOT OMPT) has been designated by the Governor of Oklahoma to administer the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-funded Section 5305, 5309, 5310, 5311, and 5339 programs in Oklahoma. Title 49 U.S.C. 5310, as amended by Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), requires a recipient of Section 5310 funds to certify that projects selected for funding under this program are included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan and that the plan was developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, nonprofit transportation and human service providers; and other members of the public.

This plan is the Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the Northwest Region, including the following counties:

- Alfalfa County
- Beaver County
- Blaine County
- Cimarron County
- Dewey County
- Ellis County
- Garfield County
- Grant County
- Harper County
- Kay County
- Kingfisher County
- Major County
- Noble County
- Texas County
- Woods County
- Woodward County

FTA strongly encourages coordination and consistency between the local coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan and metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes, as described in 23 CFR part 450 and 49 CFR part 613. According to FTA Circular 9070.1G, long-range transportation plans, the transportation improvement plan, and the coordinated plans are supposed to be developed and incorporated into each other. In 2022, ODOT OMPT identified overlap between long-range plans developed by Oklahoma MPOs and coordinated plans. In addition, coordinated plans thus far have not included substantial participation by MPOs, regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs), or councils of governments (COGs). The COG's and RTPO's have planning expertise that utilizes local knowledge and relationships from public engagement activities and have been identified as key stakeholders in the coordinated planning process.

FTA Circular 9070.1G requires that, "Projects identified in the coordinated planning process and selected for FTA funding must be incorporated into both the TIP and STIP in UZAs with populations of 50,000 or more; and incorporated into the STIP for rural areas under 50,000 in population." As such, direct participation by MPOs and RTPOs is highly encouraged in the coordinated planning process, and ODOT and this region's Working Group must coordinate closely to ensure this requirement is met.

Projects selected for funding shall be included in a coordinated plan that minimally includes the following elements at a level consistent with available resources and the complexity of the local institutional environment:

> (1) An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit);

(2) An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service;

(3) Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and

(4) Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

To develop the 2023 Coordinated Plan, transit providers, local governments, stakeholders, and human services organizations came together in an effort to maximize resources to better serve the region. The Coordinated Plan includes updated regional demographic data, transit capacity building strategies, as well as updated information on new and existing transportation providers serving vulnerable populations in Oklahoma.

This assessment of needs and gaps serves as the basis for the coordination strategies and opportunities for future investment identified in the Coordinated Plan that will eliminate or reduce duplicative services, fill service gaps, and otherwise provide more efficient utilization of transportation services and resources for the target populations.

Table 2 below summarizes the priorities assigned to each gap and unmet needs in the

Region: ***Table 2: Compiled Gaps and Unmet Needs***

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority		
		High	Medium	Low
Transit User	Lower Cost/Fares		X	
	Familiarity With the Transit System		X	
	Travel Assistance	X		
	Door-to-Door Transportation	X		
Service Area	It takes a long time to reach final destinations			X
	Service does not go to desired destination			X
	Accessibility to First-Last Mile Connections			X
	More Sufficient Service at Trip Origins and Destinations		X	
	Access to Jobs	X		
	Access to Medical-related Locations		X	
Service Schedule	More evening and weekend service	X		
	Shorter Trip Lengths			X
	Weekday Early Morning Service		X	
	Weekday Business Hours			X
	Weekday Late Night Service		X	
	Weekend Service		X	
	Weekend Late Nights (Friday and Saturday Nights)		X	
Outreach and Awareness	Better Information on Services	X		
	Service schedule is difficult to understand			X
	Negative Perception of Service			X
Service Quality	Limited Accessibility to Transit Stops			X
	Lack of Transit Amenities (shelters, benches, etc.)			X
	More Reliable Service		X	
	Improved Personal Safety			X
	Improved sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.		X	
	Transit vehicles that meet my needs			X
	Wheelchair Accessibility			X
	More Frequent Service	X		
	More Services for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities		X	

In addition, the following goals were identified for the Region:

- Goal 1: Improve recruiting and retention of qualified drivers and office staff.
- Goal 2: Establish transit hubs to improve cross-boundary service coordination.
- Goal 3: Prepare for electric and alternative fuel vehicle implementation.
- Goal 4: Increase use of technology to enhance service provision.

Each county in the regional planning area has its own distinct needs, service providers, government agencies, stakeholders, and demographic characteristics. This Coordinated Plan synthesizes those needs and identifies strategies and priorities for the local level and region wide.

Agencies and stakeholders that participated in this plan include:

Table 3: Working Group Members

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Micky Flynn	**MAGB Transportation (Lead Agency)**	Demitria Dixon	Enid Public Transit
Joyce Clark	Beaver City Transit	Martin Hernandez	Guymon-The Ride
Rita Kroll	Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Jonathon Cross	Northern Oklahoma Development Authority (NODA)
Jean Blough	Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Chanler Cory	Northern Oklahoma Developmental Authority (NODA)
Tiffany Plunkett	Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Brock Spencer	Northern Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NORTPO)
Angela Plumley	Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribal Transit	Cecil Michael	Oklahoma Economic Development Authority (OEDA)
Laura Corff	Cimarron Public Transit System (CPTS)	Gilbert Nuncio	Red River Transportation Service
Shelby Jewell	Cimarron Public Transit System (CPTS)	Tillie Broncho	White Eagle Transit

The FTA does not formally review or approve coordinated plans, thus the lead agency, in coordination with planning process participants, is responsible for the development, approval, and adoption/endorsement of locally coordinated plans. The planning process must include seniors, individuals with disabilities, public/private/nonprofit transportation and human service providers, and other members of the public.

The Coordinated Plan was endorsed by the Northwest Region Coordinated Transportation Network on December 11th, 2023. More information about the planning committee can be found in the **Northwest Region Coordinated Task Force** section of this Plan.

Introduction

The legislative passage of Oklahoma State House Bill 1365 facilitated the transfer of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5310 Program previously administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). The bill also created the Office of Mobility and Public Transit (OMPT) and allowed for the transferring of all state and federal transit programs previously administered by ODOT's Transit Programs Division to the new OMPT. This change required ODOT to legally transfer all 5310 associated agreements, assets, financial documents and to develop a 5310 program compliant with FTA rules and regulation for FTA approval and certification to enable the use of federal funds for the 5310 program in the state.

To administer the 5310 program in compliance with FTA regulations, several program documents must be developed, reviewed, and implemented at the local, state, and federal level. These documents include a Program State Management Plan (SMP), a Subrecipient Project Application, and a Human Service Transportation Coordinated Plan. These three documents work together to outline in great detail the 5310 program rules and requirements, as well as the application format and process for program stakeholders and grantees.

This document - and its contents and information below - directly addresses the federal 5310 requirement for the program to have a Human Services Transportation Coordinated Plan, and that the Coordinated Plan is:

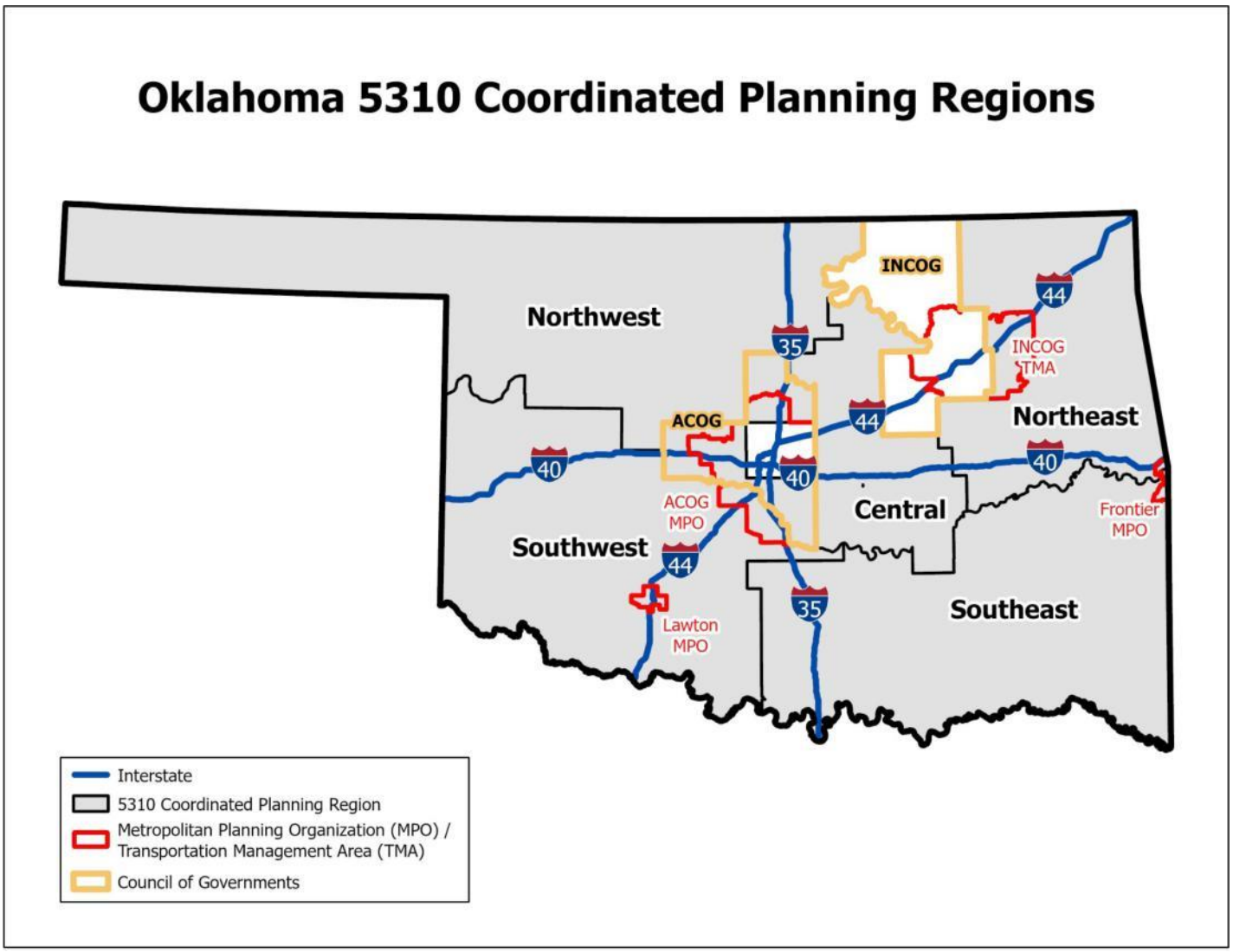
- Locally developed to determine and document availability of transportation options for seniors and individuals with disabilities in the region
- Identifies transportation gaps and unmet needs, and makes recommendations to close these barriers of mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities
- Developed through participation from the general public, private nonprofit organizations, human service agencies, transit agencies, and stakeholders

The Northwest Region Working Group, with assistance from ODOT OMPT, developed this plan to further facilitate transportation coordination throughout the Northwest Region. This plan is a living document that can and will be updated and changed as local and state transportation programs and strategies develop and mature in the future.

Study Area

ODOT identified five coordinated planning regions upon which ongoing transportation coordination and planning will be based: Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest. These region designations are based primarily on existing RTPO boundaries. The current coordinated planning regions are intended as initial boundaries and may be adjusted over the course of ongoing coordination and planning processes, subject to agreement by working groups and providers who may be affected. Figure 1 displays these coordinated planning regions alongside MPO boundaries.

Figure 1: Oklahoma 5310 Coordinated Planning Regions



The geographic area covered by this plan, identified by ODOT as the Northwest Region, includes Alfalfa, Beaver, Blaine, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Noble, Texas, Woods, and Woodward County. Counties covered in this plan are mostly rural, with the largest cities in the region consisting of Enid and Ponca City (see Figure 2).

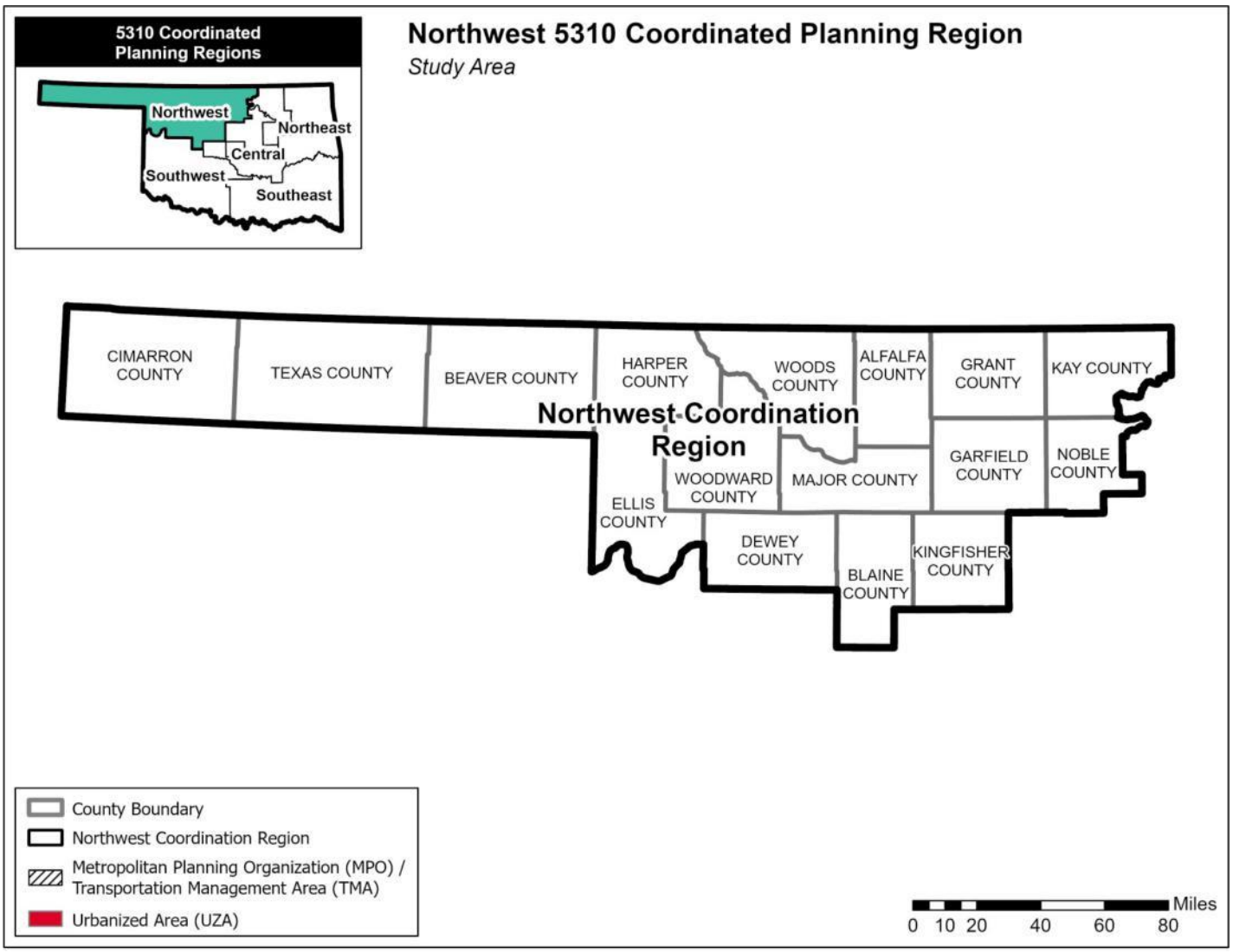
Urbanized areas are based upon agglomerations of populations and development patterns resulting in populations of at least 50,000 people within a relatively compact area. Urbanized areas are the geographic basis upon which numerous Federal transit funding programs and metropolitan planning organization (MPO) boundaries are based on. Transit providers are subject to a suite of rules and regulations that determine how Federal transit funding may be used, including when Federal funding may be used for certain transit trips and how transit agencies are incorporated (and may therefore receive Federal funding).

The Census Bureau most updated criteria for Urban-Rural classification was updated in December of 2022, changes were made to criteria classifying urban areas following the 2020 Census. Key changes to the Census Bureau's urban area concept and criteria include: 1) Adopting a housing unit density of 425 housing units per square mile as the primary criterion, and metric for determining whether a census block qualifies for inclusion in an urban area, replacing the use of population density. The use of housing unit density allows the Census Bureau to more accurately account for areas with substantial concentrations of housing that are considered part of the urban landscape but have less than average people per housing unit or seasonal populations or both. The use of housing

unit density also provides the ability to update urban areas between censuses. This is especially important in faster growing areas of the nation. 2) The minimum population threshold to qualify as urban increased from 2,500 to 5,000, and 3) The Census Bureau no longer distinguishes different types of urban areas. No longer labeling areas as either urbanized areas or urban clusters. All areas, regardless of population size, are simply called “urban areas.” Instead of those below 50,000 being “Urban Clusters.” The 50,000-population threshold that has been used to distinguish between urbanized areas and smaller urban areas (whether urban places outside urbanized areas or urban clusters) no longer has the same meaning as when it was adopted in 1950 and, therefore, should no longer be used to distinguish types of urban areas.

The purpose of MPOs is to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process for their planning area, including the planning and programming of transportation projects through the long-range transportation plan and transportation improvement program. At the moment, no MPOs are within the Northwest Region, although this is expected to change in the near future. The Enid urban area recently passed the 50,000-population threshold, triggering Federal rules regarding MPO formation and associated transportation planning. Enid is currently in the process of designating its initial planning area boundaries. Once established, the Enid MPO will be a key regional partner for transit agencies, as it will be responsible for developing the metropolitan transportation plan for the Enid MPO planning area. The metropolitan transportation planning process is an opportunity for transit agencies to advance their interest in what will likely become a key transportation hub in the Northwest Region.

Figure 2: Northwest Coordinated Planning Region



What is a coordinated plan?

A coordinated plan is a process that requires local stakeholders and transit agencies to coordinate efforts in providing transportation services to seniors and people with disabilities. It documents the current local transportation services for this targeted population. Gaps and unmet needs are identified through robust stakeholder engagement, and recommendations to close these barriers are developed.

A coordinated plan is important in detailing and understanding this information. It is also an application requirement and scoring criteria for the ODOT 5310 program application and award process. In the 5310 subrecipient application process, applicants are required to reference the transportation gap or unmet need that their project is proposing to address. ODOT will also view agencies who participated directly in the plan development process favorably compared to those who did not. Without an applicant's understanding and involvement in the coordinated planning process and plan, their application will not be complete and will receive less scoring points.

The **Oklahoma Northwest Region Coordinated Transportation Plan** is prepared in compliance with federal transportation legislation under Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and reauthorized under Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) as described in FTA's Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & People with Disabilities program (49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, Section 5310).

Plan Purpose

The coordinated plan makes federal resources available to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. To be eligible for 5310 grant funding, the program specifically requires projects selected for funding be "included in a locally developed, Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan." This document - and its contents and information meet all requirements of the Federal Transit Administration.

These inaugural Coordinated Plans are initial efforts to develop a plan that documents and uses local input and knowledge to better understand and coordinate transportation services for 5310 populations. The plan details regional transportation providers, gaps and unmet needs in their service, and strategies to recommend and prioritize local projects that expand mobility choices for older adults and people with disabilities.

Other on-going ODOT transportation planning and program efforts will eventually develop and better inform the strategies and ideas documented in this Coordinated Plan. In addition, all stakeholders will learn from the initial implementation of this plan. In time, however, the recommendations will be molded to best provide services to seniors and people with disabilities. The Coordinated Plan is a living, breathing document that encourages stakeholders to participate regularly in the development and implementation of this plan so that it remains current and continues to provide efficient, coordinated human transportation services.

Plan Development Process

Federal law requires that a Coordinated Plan be developed locally in a manner that includes the participation of older adults, persons with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers, as well as members of the public. A coordinated plan needs to include three major elements: 1) information on the current transportation services available, 2) unmet needs and gaps in those services, and 3) recommendations and strategies in prioritizing projects that will fill the identified gaps and unmet transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities.

Developing this plan with these three major elements required a team of professionals over several months to engage in a number of activities to conduct research on transportation programs, services, and demographics of county populations; to engage local residents and transportation stakeholders in providing information, recommendations, and strategies that prioritize and fill those unmet needs and gaps in transportation service; and to analyze this information to create a coordinated plan document.

A timeline of staff and public engagement activities to develop the compliance documents for the 5310 Program - including the Coordinated Plans - is detailed below:

Figure 3: 5310 Coordinated Planning Process

	March		April		May		June		July		August		September		October	
	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4	1-2	3-4
Demographic Analysis	■	■														
Draft Document			■	■	■	■										
Working Group Meeting (Set 1)				■	■											
Survey							■	■	■	■						
Public Meetings								■								
Working Group Meeting (Set 2)									■							
Update Document										■	■					
Working Group Meeting (Set 3)												■				
Finalize Document													■	■	■	■

The process of gathering the appropriate material and information to develop the Coordinated Plan document included several steps:

- **Transportation Provider and Demographic Analysis:** ODOT reviewed the current transportation providers in the Region as well as the populations of seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income households to determine a baseline of transportation services available and the existing gaps and unmet needs for the targeted population.
- **Working Group Meetings (April 2023 – August 2023):** ODOT convened a series of three working group meetings in which public and private transportation providers and planning agencies participated. These meetings were focused on gathering in-depth information on unmet transportation needs and mobility gaps for seniors and people with disabilities. Micky Flynn from MAGB Transportation was selected as the representative from the lead agency. A new lead agency and lead agency representative may be chosen by the Working Group as needed. This group will be responsible for coordinating and updating the Plan on an annual basis.
- **Public Survey (June – July 2023):** ODOT conducted an online public survey to gather information from the general public and organizational stakeholders, including current FTA program recipients, regional planning offices, human service organizations and agencies, and public and private transportation providers. The survey was open from June 6th – July 21st.
- **Regional Virtual Public Meetings (June 2023):** ODOT hosted a regional virtual public meeting to provide general 5310 program information, request additional local input on human service transportation in the region, and to receive feedback on the draft Coordinated Plan. The public meeting took place on June 29th and had 16 participants.
- **Draft Coordinated Plan for Stakeholder Input (July – August 2023):** A draft plan was distributed to stakeholders the week of 8/21/2023. Additional comment from the public survey and other outreach opportunities were solicited from participants and incorporated in the plan accordingly.
- **Finalize Coordinated Plan document (October 2023):** ODOT has accepted the Northwest Regional Coordinated Transportation Plan.

Regional Socioeconomic Characteristics

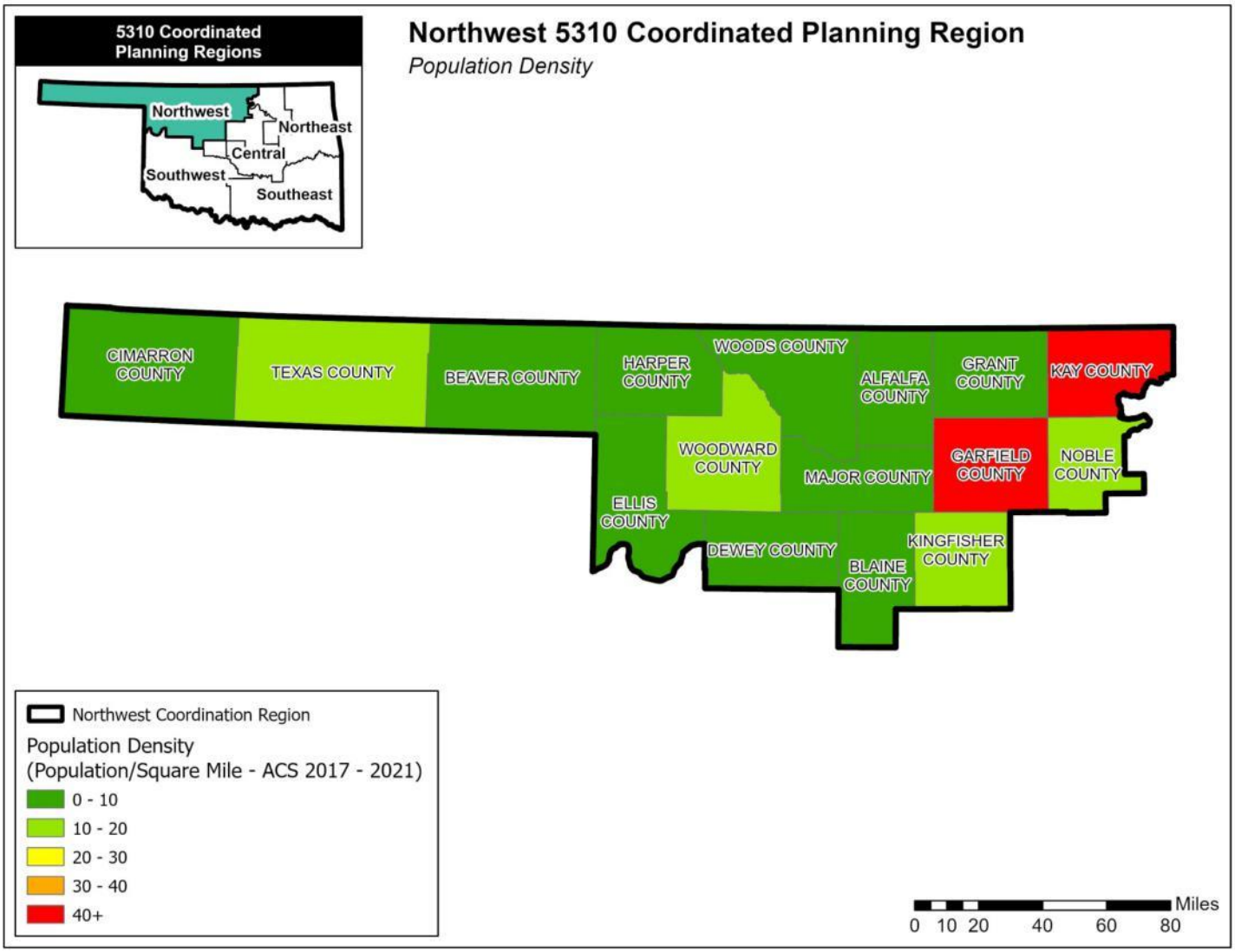
Settlement patterns of the general population and transportation disadvantaged populations are critical to analyze to understand where people live and how service can be better designed to meet their needs. ODOT reviewed Census demographic data for general population and various transportation disadvantaged populations throughout the Northwest Region. This data is reported at the county-level using five-year American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2021.

Population Density

As of 2021, the region's population is estimated to be 229,261 with a population density of 12.1 people per square mile (PPSM). Population density is a significant factor in the viability of transit service, with higher population densities tending to support higher frequency and more efficient transit service. Figure 4 displays population density at the county-level in the Northwest Region.

The Northwest Region is very sparsely populated. Ten of 16 counties have population densities between zero and 10 PPSM while four of 16 have population densities between 10 and 20 PPSM. Garfield and Kay County have population densities above 40 PPSM, due in major part to the presence of Enid in Garfield County and Ponca City in Kay County.

Figure 4: Population Density (Population / Square Mile)



Transportation Disadvantaged Populations

The following sections describe the settlement patterns of the following transportation disadvantaged groups throughout the Northwest Region: Seniors, People with Disabilities, Low-income Individuals, Limited English Proficiency Individuals, and Zero-car Households. These groups are unified in the fact that they often face mobility challenges, often due to difficulty in accessing public transit or being unable operate or afford a personal vehicle. Specific challenges these groups face in accessing public transit are described in each respective section. It is critical to understand the settlement patterns of these groups in order to develop transportation and other related services that best meet their needs. The locations of Justice 40 areas throughout the Northwest Region are also described.

A number of 5307, 5311, and 5310 agencies provide critical transportation service to these groups in the Northwest Region, including different assistance programs to help them afford transportation fares. These groups often utilize the fixed-route or demand-response public transit service provided by transit agencies and paratransit services/human service transportation services. More information on these providers can be found in the **Regional Characteristics** and **Transportation Provider Assessment** sections.

Table 4 compares the percentages of each transportation disadvantaged group in the Northwest Region to Oklahoma as a whole. Percentages of transportation disadvantaged populations vary in comparison to Oklahoma as a whole, with the Northwest Region percentages being higher in some cases and lower in others. The Northwest Region has higher levels seniors, people with disabilities, and limited English proficiency individuals. Meanwhile, the Northwest Region has lower levels of low-income individuals (14.6% vs. 15.2% and zero-car households (4.2% vs. 5.4%).

Table 4: Demographic Summary

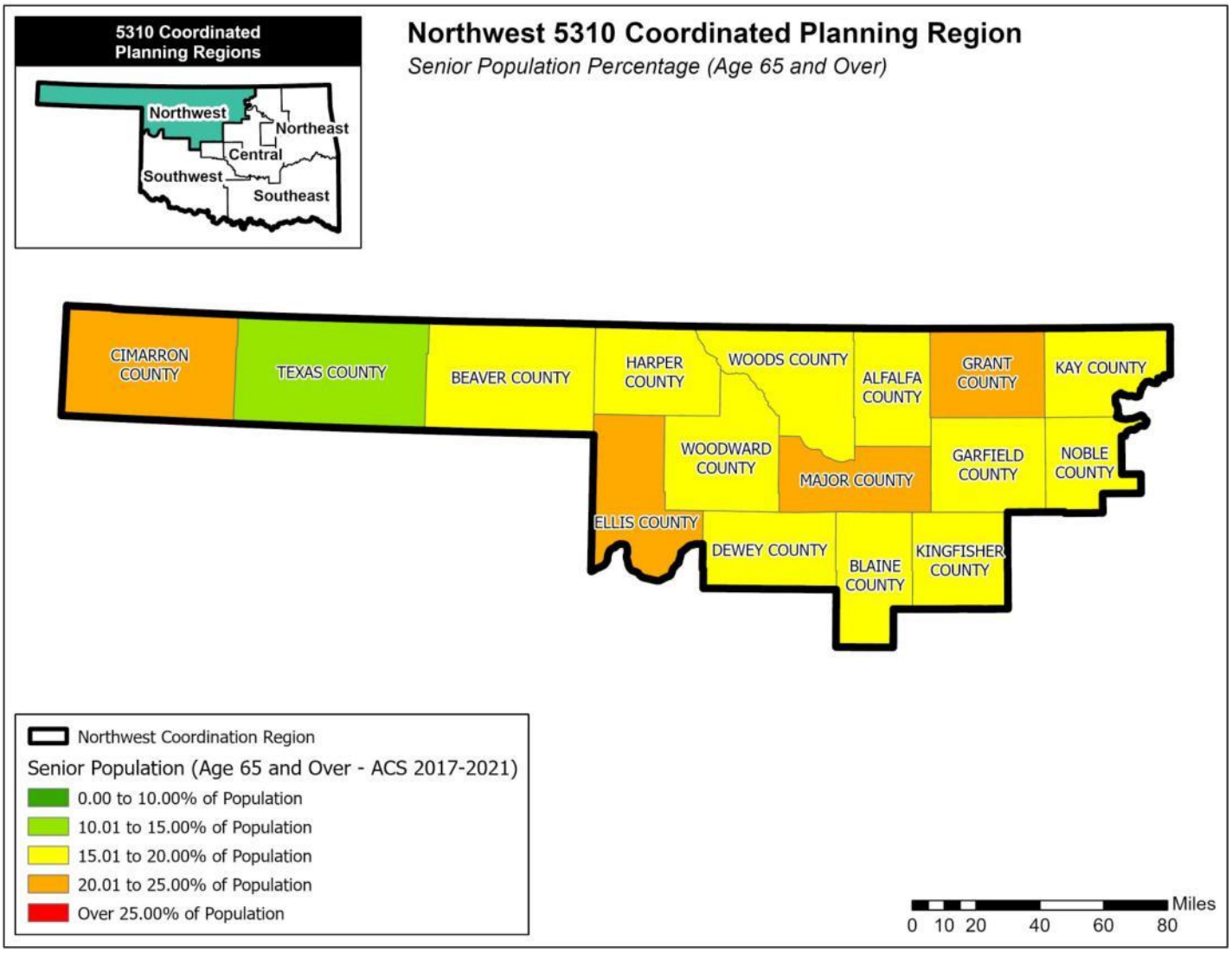
	Northwest Region		Oklahoma	
	Region Total	**% of Region**	**OK Total**	**% of OK**
Total Population	**229,261**	**100%**	**3,948,136**	**100%**
Seniors	39,152	17.1%	615,832	15.6%
People w/ Disabilities	37,940	17.1%	631,051	16.3%
Low-income Individuals	32,216	14.6%	583,853	15.2%
Limited English Proficiency Individuals	11,039	5.1%	142,223	3.9%
Total Households	**85,505**	**100%**	**1,503,868**	**100%**
Zero-car Households	3,600	4.2%	81,196	5.4%

Senior Population (Age 65 and Over)

Seniors (age 65 and over) often have unique transportation needs due to a host of age-related physical and cognitive conditions. For example, deteriorating eyesight as a result of age makes it difficult to operate a vehicle. Seniors may face challenges in understanding public transit systems, including the policies that must be followed and the technology that public transit systems utilize. Seniors also typically must access medical care more often than other groups.

Figure 5 displays percentages of seniors in each county throughout the Northwest Region, and these percentages are compared to the percentage of seniors for Oklahoma as a whole (15.6%). County-level percentages of seniors in the Northwest Region are generally similar to the State as a whole, with 11 of 16 counties having percentages of seniors between 15% and 20%. Cimarron, Ellis, Grant, and Major County have elevated percentages of seniors, between 20% and 25%. Texas County has a particularly low percentage of seniors, between 10% and 15%.

Figure 5: Senior Population Percentage (Age 65 and Over)



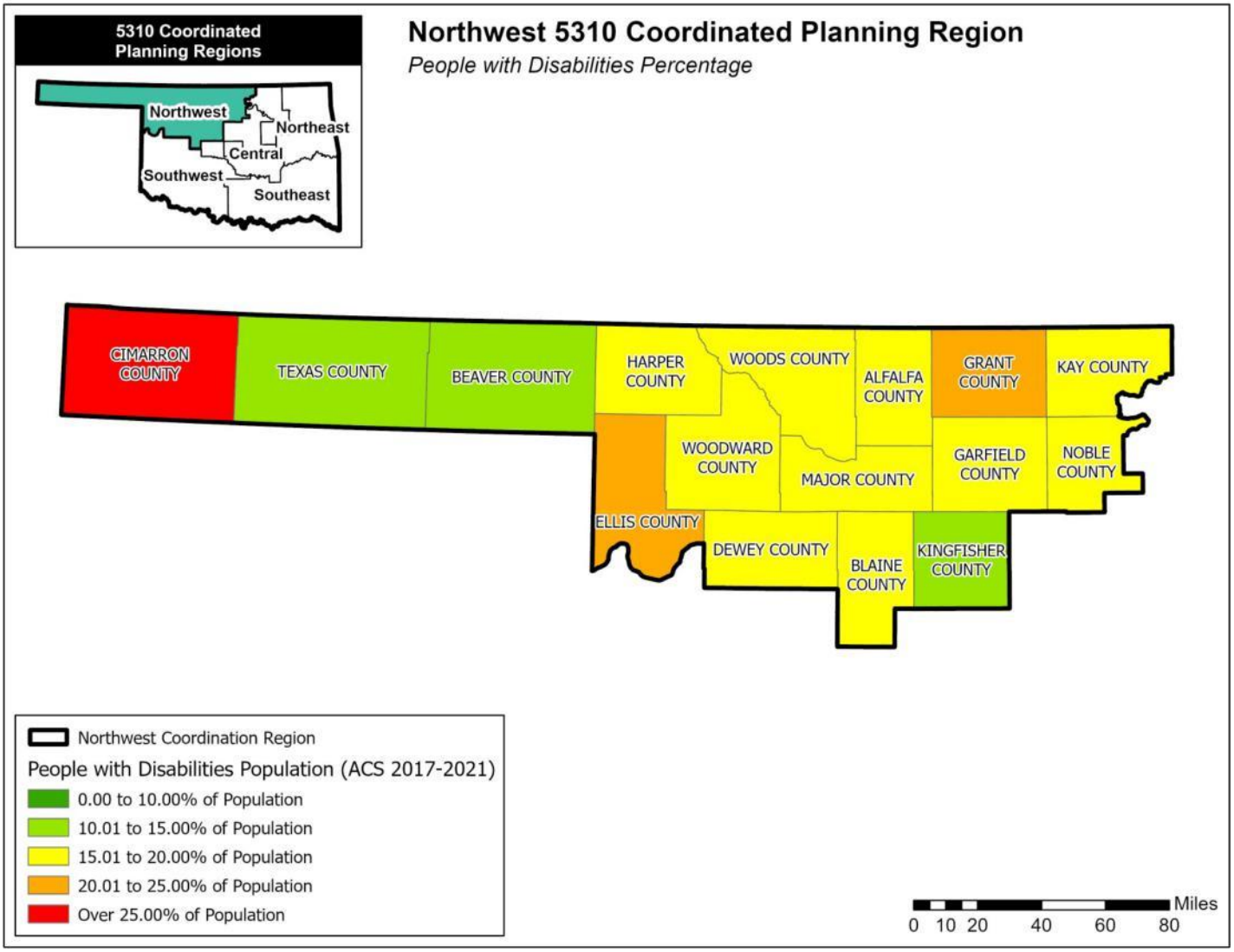
OKLAHOMA Transportation

People with Disabilities

People with disabilities, be they physical or cognitive, also often have unique transportation needs. They frequently require personal assistance using public transit, such as a personal care assistant (or PCA). Similar to seniors, they often have increased need to access medical care compared to individuals without disabilities. Disabilities that people have may also be age-related, creating compounding mobility challenges.

Figure 6 shows percentages of each county in the Northwest Region with a disability, and these are compared to percentage of Oklahomans as a whole with a disability (16.3%). Northwest Region counties generally have percentages of people with disabilities similar to Oklahoma as a whole. Ellis and Grant County have elevated percentages of people with disabilities, between 20% and 25%. Cimarron County has a particularly high percentage with at least 25%.

Figure 6: People with Disabilities Population Percentage

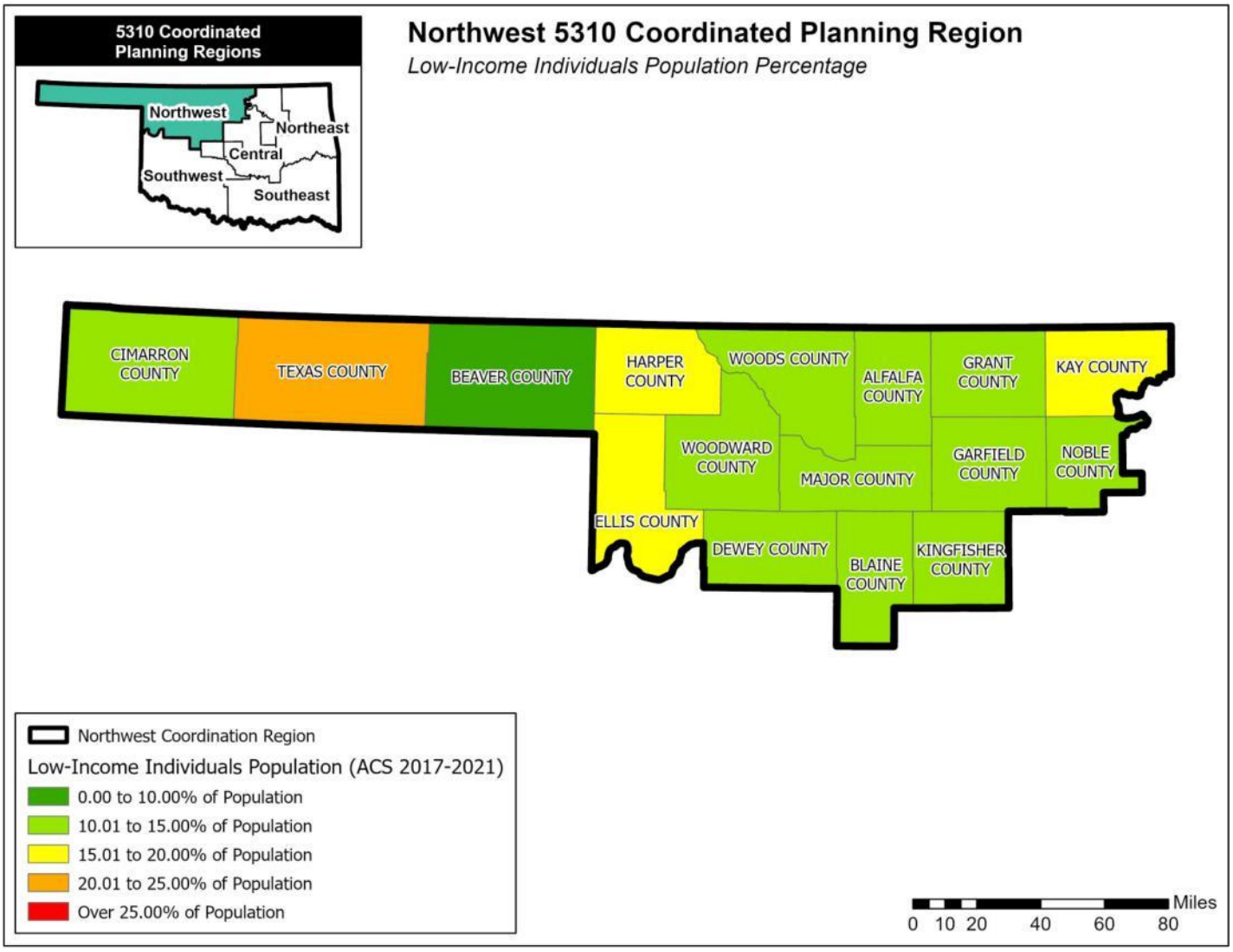


Low-income Individuals

Defined as individuals with annual incomes below the poverty level ($12,880), low-income individuals similarly face unique mobility challenge. They often struggle to afford forms of transportation available to those with higher incomes, including personal vehicles and ride-hailing services (Lyft, Uber, etc.). As a result, public transit and human services transportation play critical roles in ensuring that low-income individuals can fulfill their day-to-day needs, particularly when low-income individuals are older and/or have disabilities.

Figure 7 displays the percentage of the population in each Northwest Region county that is low-income, and these are compared to the percentage of Oklahomans as a whole that are low-income (15.2%). Most of the Northwest Region has significantly lower percentages of low-income individuals than the state as a whole. Eleven of 16 counties have between 10% and 15% low-income individuals, while Beaver has between 0% and 10% low-income individuals. Texas County has a significantly higher percentage of low-income individuals, with between 20% and 25%.

Figure 7: Low-Income Individuals Population Percentage

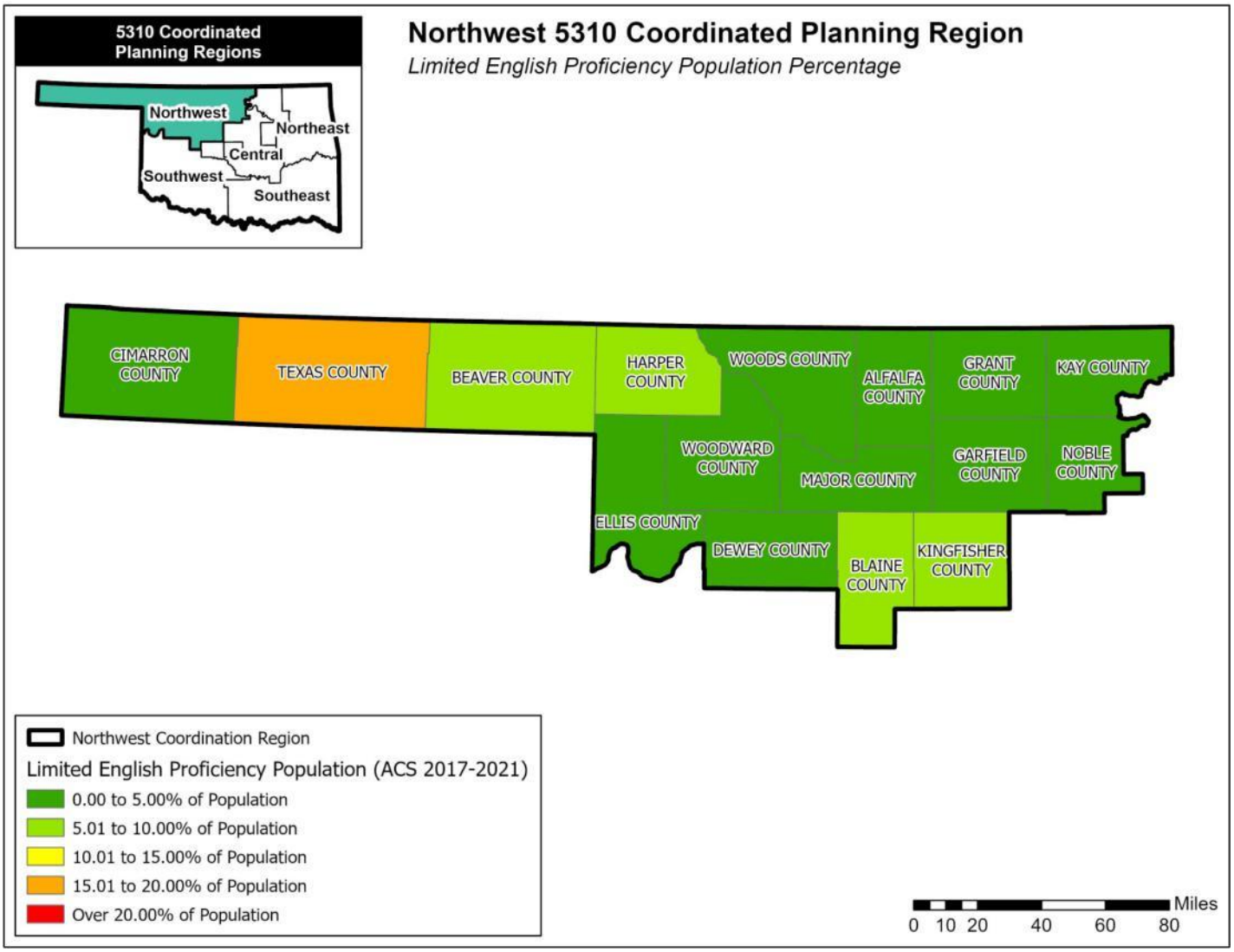


Limited English Proficiency Individuals

Limited English proficiency individuals are those who do not speak English very well. They face challenges in understanding transportation policies and materials as well as communicating with transportation provider staff. They may require special accommodations that make public and private transportation services and materials accessible to them. For example, transit schedules may need to be translated from English into another language, or an interpreter may be needed for a public meeting.

Figure 8 shows the percentage of population of each county in the Northwest Region with a limited English proficiency. The Northwest Region generally has low levels of limited English proficiency, with all counties aside from Texas County having between 0% and 10%. Between 15% and 20% of Texas County residents have a limited English proficiency. In comparison, 3.9% of Oklahomans as a whole have a limited English proficiency.

Figure 8: Limited English Proficiency Population Percentage

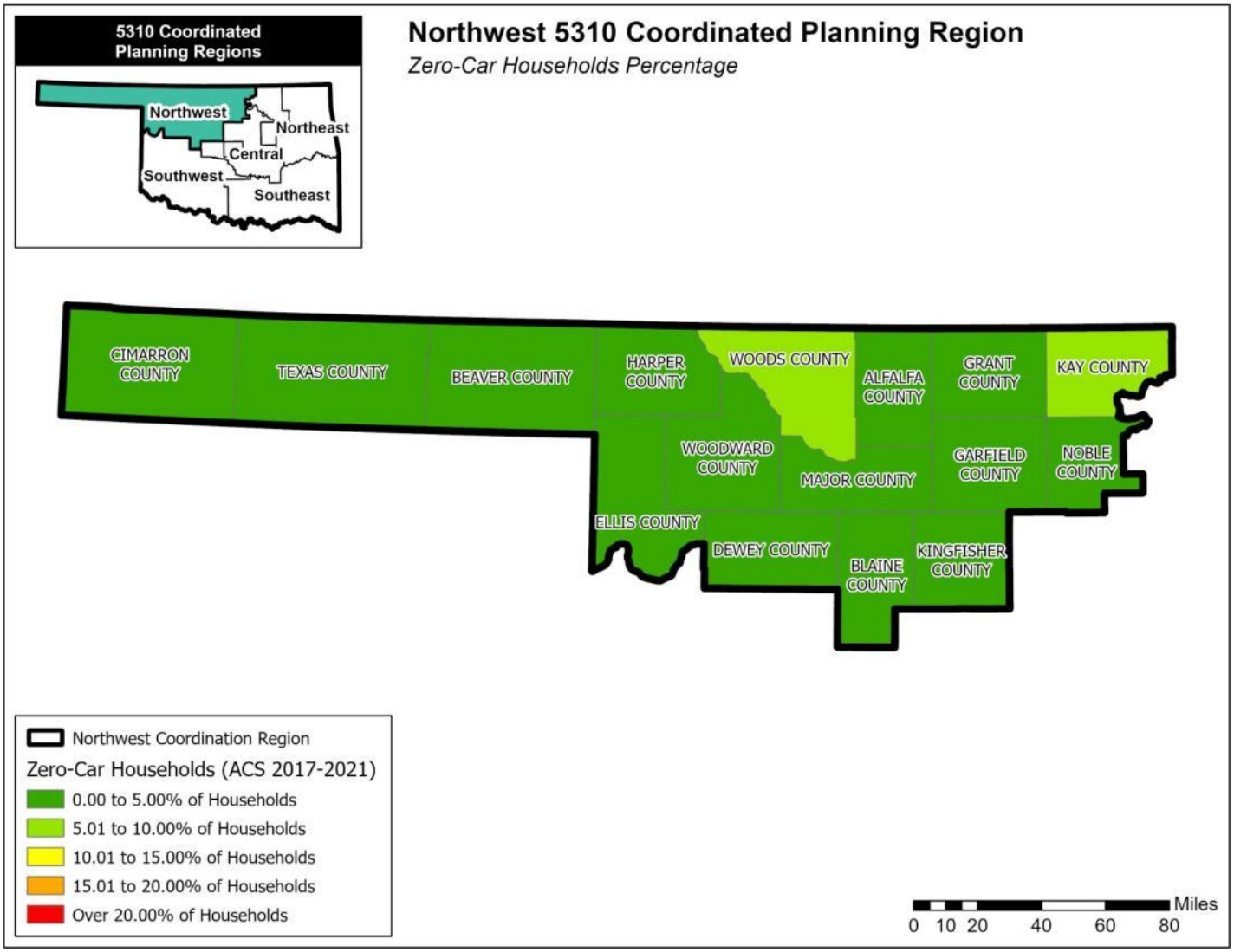


Zero-Car Households

Zero-car households face acute mobility challenges due to most transportation systems being constructed to serve personal vehicle trips rather than public or active transportation. Public transit and other private transportation services are a critical lifeline for these households. Often, there is an overlap between zero-car households and low-income individuals, with limited financial resources making car ownership a challenge.

Figure 9 displays percentages of zero-car households for each Northwest Region county. Percentages of zero-car households are very low throughout the region, with all counties aside from Kay and Woods County having between 0% and 5% zero-car households. Kay and Woods County have between 5% and 10% zero-car households. By comparison, 5.4% of Oklahoman households are zero-car households.

Figure 9: Zero-Car Household Percentage



Justice 40 Disadvantaged Areas

Justice 40 Areas are Census tracts that are marginalized, underserved, or overburdened by pollution, according to numerous socioeconomic and environmental indicators. These designations are made pursuant to Executive Order 14008, which directs the federal government to identify how certain federal investments can be made with the goal of at least 40% of benefits flowing to disadvantaged communities.

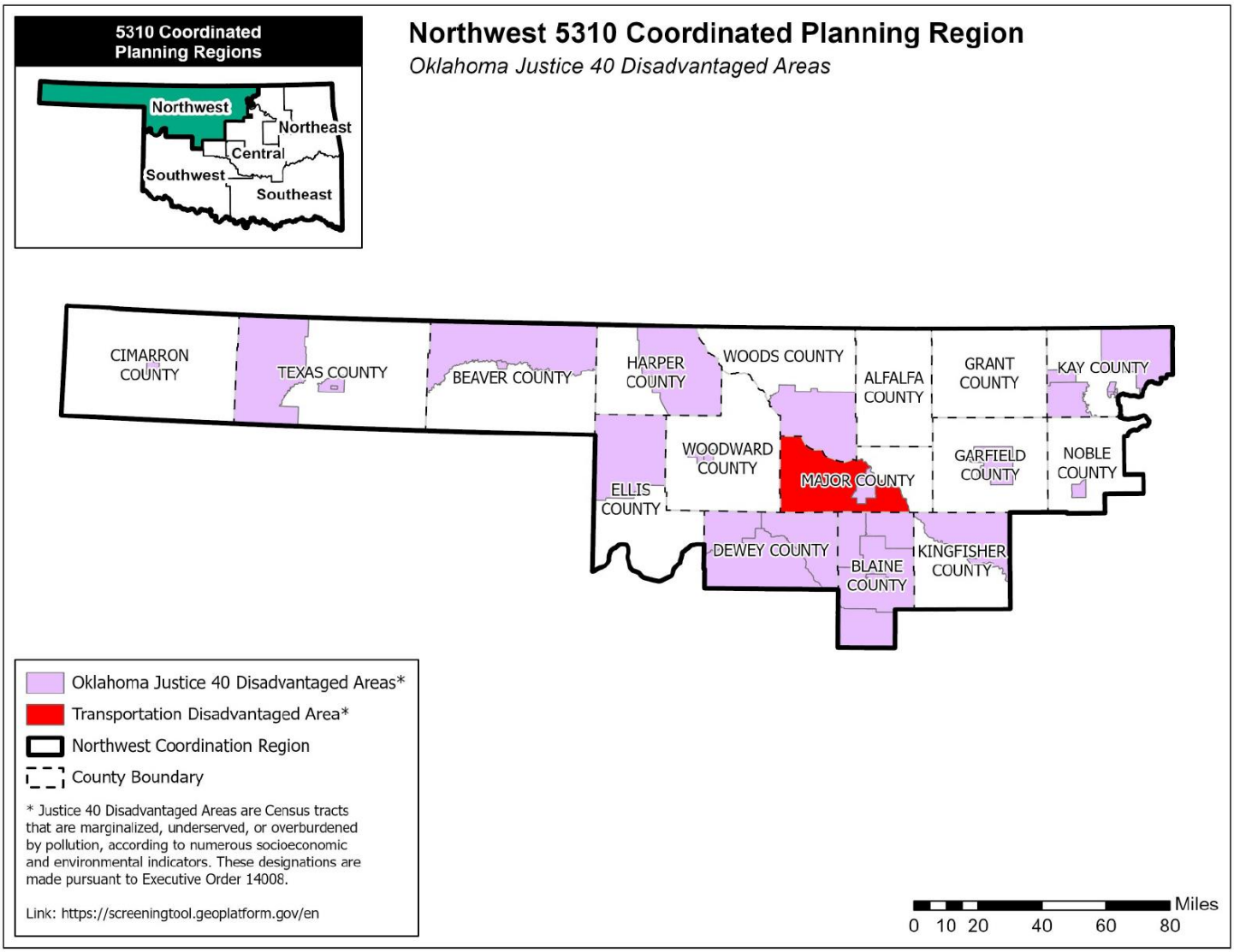
Coverage of Justice 40 areas varies significantly throughout the Northwest Region. Two counties have no Justice 40 areas (Alfalfa, Grant) and four counties have very little Justice 40 coverage (Cimarron, Garfield, Noble, Woodward). By contrast, Blaine and Dewey County are entirely within Justice 40 areas. Approximately half of the area of the remaining counties are within Justice 40 areas.

Beaver, Ellis, Harper, Kay, Kingfisher, Texas, and Woods County each have approximately half of their land area within Justice 40 areas. Kay County in particular, while not entirely covered by Justice 40 areas, bears mentioning due to how concentrated various disadvantages are in the County. Kay County is host to three native tribes and is the second largest county in the Region. As a result, transportation disadvantages are concentrated highly in a relatively large area. Similarly, a considerable portion of Garfield County's population is in a Justice 40 area, which includes Enid and its surroundings.

Justice 40 areas are primarily concentrated in the center of the region, split among Blaine, Dewey, Kingfisher, and Major County, each of which is served by MAGB Transportation, Red River, or Cherokee Strip. As a result, all providers in the region play an important role in delivering mobility to the disadvantaged populations in these areas. Additionally, Kay County, of which wide swaths are considered Justice 40 areas, is served by both Cimarron Public Transit and Cherokee Strip Transit.

One Census Tract is considered transportation disadvantaged according to Justice 40 criteria, which evaluates proximity to traffic, diesel particulate exposure, transportation barriers, and income. It is located in Major County, and includes the Chester, Cleo Springs, and Orienta areas.

Figure 10: Oklahoma Justice 40 Disadvantaged Areas



Regional Characteristics

The Northwest Region includes multiple transportation planning agencies that, in concert with transportation providers and mobility managers, work to ensure the mobility needs of Northwest Region residents are effectively met through well-coordinated transportation service provision. The following sections describe the different transportation planning agencies within the Northwest Region, as well as any mobility managers whose service area is within the Northwest Region.

Transportation Planning Agencies

The Northwest Region is served by three primary planning agencies: Northern Oklahoma Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NORTPO), Northern Oklahoma Development Authority (NODA), and Oklahoma Economic Development Association (OEDA).

NODA and OEDA are regional COGs in the Northwest Region that provide a number of services critical to the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities and seniors and rural residents in general. Services provided to seniors include caregiver support, case management, home care services, and many others. NODA acts as the parent organization to NORTPO, which is the regional transportation planning organization (RTPO) for the Northwest Region.

MPOs are primarily responsible for the development, administration, and approval of their long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement program (TIP) as well as various public engagement and statewide transportation coordination activities. NORTPO also offers various forms of technical assistance in its planning area, such as grant writing and support, that would be valuable to agencies in pursuing different competitive grant funding sources.

Table 5: Planning Agencies

County(ies)	Agency Name	POC	Email	Phone	Website
Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Noble	Northern Oklahoma Development Authority (NODA)	Jonathon Cross	jonathon@noda-oeda.org	580-237-4810	https://noda-ok.org/
Alfalfa, Beaver, Blaine, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Noble, Texas, Woods, Woodward	Northern Oklahoma Regional Transportation Planning Agency (NORTPO)	Brock Spencer	brock@noda-ok.org	580-237-4810	https://nortpo.org/
Beaver, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Harper, Texas, Woods, Woodward	Oklahoma Economic Development Authority (OEDA)	Cecil Michael	cecil@noda-ok.org	580-237-4810	https://www.oeda.org/

While not currently an MPO, the Enid Urban Area surpassed the 50,000-population threshold in the 2020 Decennial Census. Under Federal rules, an MPO must be established to carry out transportation planning for urban areas with a population of 50,000. Enid is currently developing its initial MPO planning area. Upon establishment of the Enid MPO and formalization of its voting and technical bodies, it will be a valuable regional partner for transit provision.

Mobility Management

Mobility management professionals help coordinate transportation services throughout the state and conduct mobility management projects. Working with a host agency, mobility managers and navigators help conduct mobility management projects, which increase mobility access for all Oklahomans to healthy living resources, healthcare, and employment through various activities that connect transportation with the needs of individuals and communities.

Mobility management is new to Oklahoma, having been implemented in 2023 through pilot programs in the Northwest and Southwest regions. The program is continuing to evolve, and implementation is contingent on funding.

Table 6 below summarizes the mobility management programs which serve the Northwest

Region. ***Table 6: Mobility Management Programs***

Service Area	MM Name	Host Agency	Email	Phone	Website
Counties: Alfalfa, Beaver, Blaine, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Noble, Texas, Woods, Woodward	Chanler Cory, Mobility Manager	Northern Oklahoma Developmental Authority (NODA)	chanler@noda-ok.org	N/A	https://noda-ok.org/

Transportation Provider Assessment

The Northwest Region is served by numerous public transit providers, tribal transit providers, and human services transportation providers, all of which serve as key lifelines to individuals with disabilities and seniors. These providers often have overlapping or abutting service areas and thus stand to benefit greatly from increased coordination and communications among each other. This chapter describes the transportation providers in the Northwest Region, including detailed information on their service characteristics (e.g., service area and schedule), and eligibility information.

Public Transit Providers

Figure 11 below displays the public transit agencies and tribal transit agencies within the Northwest Region.

Public transit agencies serving the Northwest Region include Red River Public Transportation, Cherokee Strip Transit, Cimarron Public Transit System, and MAGB Transportation Service, as well as Enid Transit in the Enid Urban area, Guymon's The Ride, and Beaver City Transit. Tribal transit agencies serving the Northwest Region include the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribal Transit and White Eagle Transit.

Not appearing in Table 7 does not necessarily preclude an agency from applying for and being awarded 5310 funding, although applications must address the gaps and unmet needs identified in this plan. However, participation in the coordinated planning process will be viewed favorably by ODOT, so potential applicants are encouraged to contact the lead agency of the Northwest Working Group to see how they can participate.

Transportation providers primarily provide demand-response transportation services, although Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribal Transit is currently investigating implementation of fixed-route services to Oklahoma City, El Reno, Weatherford, and other locations in the Northwest Region. While under development, fixed-route services are an opportunity to greatly increase transit choice in the Northwest Region, as well as an opportunity for demand-response providers to coordinate amongst themselves.

Figure 11: 5311 Transit and Tribal Transit Providers

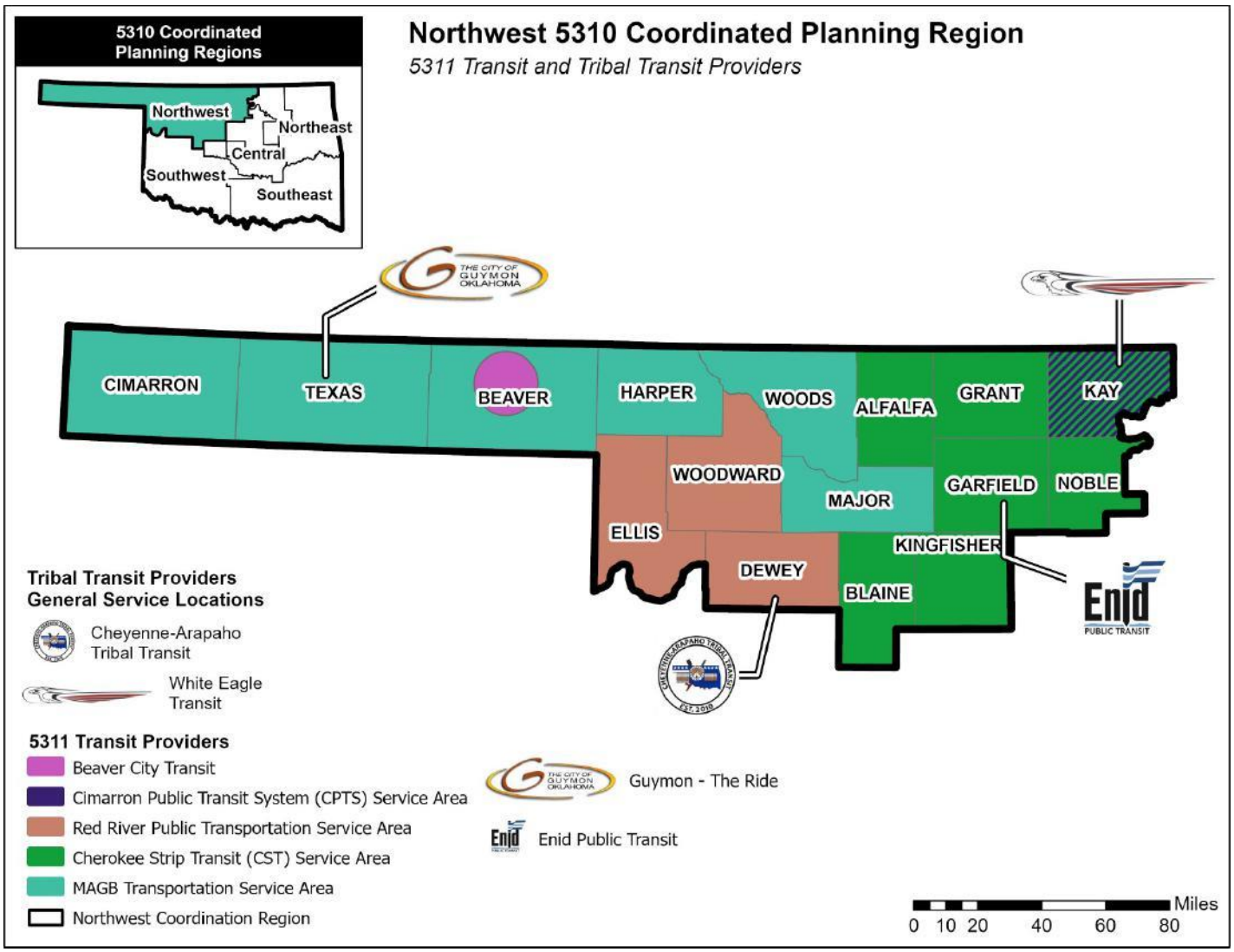


Table 7 shows an inventory of transportation providers in the Northwest Region, including public transit providers receiving 5307/5311/5310 funding, human services transportation providers receiving 5310 funding, and tribal transit providers. The user models of each provider are shown, which may include open-door, closed-door, or combination of open- and closed-door services. Open-door is defined as service that is available to everyone. By contrast, closed-door service is available to members only through the use of eligibly criteria.

More detailed information on each provider is provided in the Appendix in Table 25. This information was derived from a combination of ODOT data and survey responses. Plan users are encouraged to use Table 7 to identify if coordination may be necessary with a particular agency and to use Table 25 in the Appendix to further determine what level of coordination may be possible or appropria

Table 7: Transportation Providers

Agency / Transportation Provider Name	Provider Type	User Model	Service Area	Eligibility Criteria (if not open to the public)	5310 Recipient?
Cimarron Public Transit System (CPTS)	Private, nonprofit transportation company	Open-door	Counties: Kay, Osage, Pawnee, Washington, Creek	N/A	Yes
Red River Public Transportation	Public Transit Authority	Open-door	Counties: Beckham, Caddo, Canadian, Carter, Comanche, Cotton, Custer, Dewey, Ellis, Jefferson, Kiowa, Roger Mills, Stephens, Tillman, Washita, Woodward	N/A	Yes
Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Public Transit Authority	Open-door	Counties: Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, Noble	N/A	No
MAGB Transportation	Public Transit Authority	Open-door	Counties: Beaver, Cimarron, Harper, Major, Texas, Woods, Ellis, Woodward, Dewey	N/A	Yes
Guymon – The Ride	Public Transit Authority	Open-door	Guymon City Limits	N/A	No
Enid Public Transportation Authority	Public Transit Authority	Open-door	Enid City Limits	N/A	Yes
Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribal Transit	Tribal Transit	Open-door	Counties: Beckham, Blaine, Canadian, Custer, Dewey, Roger Mills	N/A	No
White Eagle Transit	Tribal Transit	Open-door	Counties: Kay, Noble, some of Osage	N/A	No
Otoe- Missouria Transit	Tribal Transit	Open-door	Counties: Kay, Noble, Pawnee, Payne	N/A	No
Beaver City Transit	Public Transit Authority	Open-door	Beaver City limits and surrounding 10 miles	N/A	No

Human Services Providers

Transportation providers are part of a network of human services providers whose services help ensure that seniors and people with disabilities can maintain a high quality of life. Human services providers who may not provide transportation services still play a valuable role by connecting their clients with transportation providers. Human services providers themselves may be destinations for transportation users or may provide services that assist seniors and people with disabilities in using transportation, such as personal care assistants.

Table 8 below displays an inventory of human services providers throughout the Region, including both those who provide transportation and those who do not. Additionally, the SoonerRide and RideCARE sections below describe the SoonerRide and RideCARE programs, which are State-administered human services transportation programs.

The user models of each provider are shown, which may include open-door, closed-door, or combination of open- and closed-door services. Open-door is defined as service that is available to everyone. By contrast, closed-door service is available to members only through the use of eligibly criteria.

Not appearing in Table 8 does not necessarily preclude an agency from applying for and being awarded 5310 funding, although applications must address the gaps and unmet needs identified in this plan. However, participation in the coordinated planning process will be viewed favorably by ODOT, so potential applicants are encouraged to contact the lead agency of the Northwest Working Group to see how they can participate.

Table 8: Inventory of Human Services Providers

Agency Name	Service Area	Service Hours	Types of Provided Service	User Model	Eligibility Criteria (if not not open to the public)
Families Helping Families Food Bank	Beaver	11AM – 6PM, One day per month	Food Bank	N/A	N/A
Blackwell Associated Charities	Blackwell, Braman, Nardin	9AM – 4:30PM, Wednesday	Food Bank	Open-door	N/A
LTCA of Enid Area Agency on Aging	Counties: Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Noble	N/A	Transportation, Transportation for Seniors/People with Disabilities, Nutrition	N/A	For transportation services: 60+ of age
Wheatheart Nutrition Project LLC	Counties: Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Noble	7AM – 4PM, Monday - Friday	Food Services, Referral Services	N/A	N/A
HELP, Inc.	Counties: Beckham, Dewey, Roger Mills, Washita	9AM – 1PM, Monday and Wednesday 3:30PM – 6PM, Tuesday 3rd Saturday of month	Social Services, Food Assistance, Seniors Boxes/Meals	N/A	N/A
OU College of Nursing Case Management	Counties: Caddo, Grady, Blaine Western Oklahoma	8AM – 5PM, Monday - Friday	Case Management	N/A	N/A
Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services	Counties: Canadian, Cimarron, Texas, Beaver, Harper, Garfield, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Woodward, Woods	8AM – 5PM, Monday - Friday	Health Care, Social Services, Public Transportation, Transportation for Seniors/People with Disabilities, Employment Services/Vocational Services	Both closed- and open-doors	N/A
OKDRS-SBVI	Northwestern Oklahoma		Social Services	Both closed- and open-doors	Must be blind or visually impaired
Complete Home Services	NW Oklahoma	8AM – 430PM	Health Care	N/A	N/A
SoonerRide (Oklahoma Health Care Authority)	Statewide	7AM – 6PM, Monday - Saturday	Transportation, Lodging, Meal Services	Closed-door	SoonerCare Members
RideCARE (Oklahoma Mental Health & Substance Abuse)	Statewide	24/7	Transportation	Open-door	N/A
RSVP of Enid	Enid	9AM – 3PM, Monday – Thursday 9AM – 12PM, Friday	N/A	N/A	N/A
RSVP of Ponca City	Ponca City	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
OSU Health Access Network	Statewide	8AM – 5PM, Monday -Friday	Health Care, Social Services	Both closed- and open-doors	SoonerCare Members

Oklahoma Department of Human Services	Western Oklahoma	8AM – 5PM	Social Services, Child Protection, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Both closed- and open-doors	Depends on program: income thresholds, open child welfare cases
Oklahoma State Department of Health	Western Oklahoma	8AM – 5PM, Monday - Friday	Health Care, Social Services, Economic Development	Open-door	N/A
4RKids Foundation	Enid Oklahoma	N/A	Vocational, educational, and social/recreational opportunities for children and adults with disabilities.	Closed-door	Individuals with disabilities and their families
Fairview Fellowship Home	Northwest Oklahoma	N/A	Christian-based, non-profit retirement center	Closed-door	senior citizens and disabled individuals
Beaver County Nursing home • *Community Clinics of Beaver*	Beaver County	N/A	Long-term care	Closed Door	Seniors
Center of Family Love	Kingfisher county	N/A	Residential and vocational programs for atypical, neurodiverse individuals	Closed Door	Individuals with IDD and neurodivergence
Cimarron Senior Activity Center Inc.	Cimarron County	N/A	Senior center and Recreation center	Closed Door	Seniors
Evergreen life services	Garfield County	N/A	Full range of professional services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)	Closed Door	Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)
Veterans Ride Connect	Eastern Oklahoma	N/A	Transportation for Veterans	Closed-Door	Veterans Medical transportation
Safe Ride Health	Statewide	N/A	Transportation	Closed -Door	Medicaid Advantage program members
United Community Action Program	Counties: Pawnee, Creek, Osage, Kay, Washington	7am to 5pm	Public Transportation, Head start, Low-income Housing, Early Head Start, and Child Care Food Program	Open- door	N/A

SoonerRide

SoonerRide is Oklahoma's Medicaid-backed non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) service, which is administered by the Oklahoma Healthcare Authority (OHCA). OHCA provides a suite of Medicaid benefits under the SoonerCare banner, one of which is the SoonerRide program.

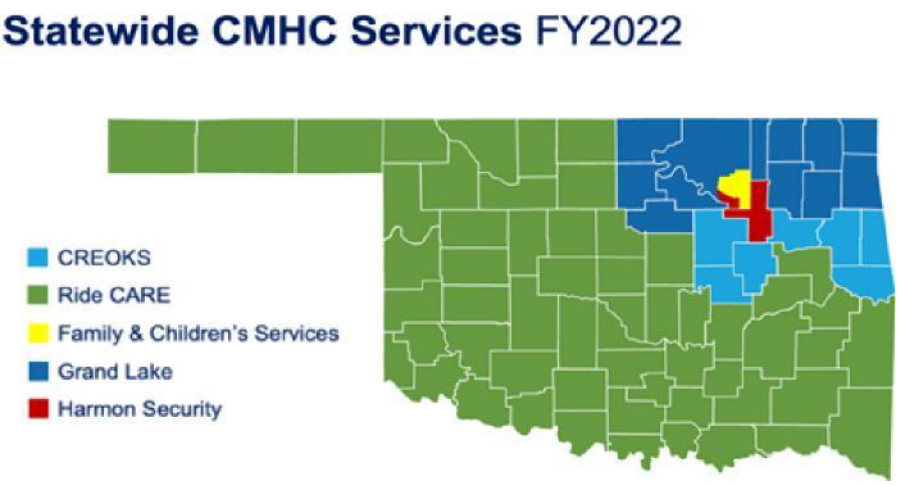
SoonerRide connects patients to medical appointments covered by SoonerCare. Trips are booked online or by phone and must be done at least three business days in advance. Alternatively, SoonerCare members who use their own vehicle to transport themselves to a SoonerCare-covered medical appointment can apply for gas and mileage reimbursement.

SoonerCare members can also apply for assistance with lodging and meals if they must travel a long distance for SoonerCare-covered medical services with a specialist. The SoonerCare website documents approved lodging providers in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, as well as Dallas, Texas and Omaha, Nebraska.

RideCARE

Oklahoma Mental Health and Substance Abuse (OMHSA) administers the RideCARE program, a statewide human services transportation program for transporting children and adults to inpatient psychiatric treatment. RideCARE is operated through partnerships with regionally-based human services providers, including OK RideCARE, Grand Lake Mental Health, Harmon Security, and CREOKS Health Services. Figure 12 below displays each provider's service area. Requests for transportation are made by treatment facilities, medical facilities, and law enforcement personnel.

Figure 12: RideCARE Provider Service Areas



Service Outside Typical Business Hours

Coordination between services providing service outside typical business hours and those who do not is especially critical to meeting the needs of seniors and people with disabilities. Medical appointments such as dialysis treatment may be scheduled outside typical business hours, or certain trips may require transfers between services where one leg of the trip is outside typical business hours.

Table 9 provides a detailed summary of providers that provide service outside typical business hours, including early/late weekday, weekend, and 24/7 service. Plan users are encouraged to use Table 9 to identify potential coordination partners in meeting the need for service outside typical business hours.

Table 9: Agencies Providing Service Outside Typical Business Hours

County	Early/Late Weekday	Weekend by appointment	Regularly on weekends	24/7 Transportation service
Alfalfa	CST	N/A	N/A	N/A
Beaver	MAGB Transportation,	N/A	N/A	N/A
Blaine	CST	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cimarron	MAGB Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dewey	MAGB Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ellis	MAGB Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Garfield	Enid Public Transportation Authority	N/A	Enid Public Transportation Authority	N/A
Grant	CST	N/A	N/A	N/A
Harper	MAGB Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kay	CPTS (Ponca City), CST	N/A	CPTS	N/A
Kingfisher	CST	N/A	N/A	N/A
Major	MAGB Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Noble	CST	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texas	MAGB Transportation, Guymon – The Ride	N/A	N/A	N/A
Woods	MAGB Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Woodward	MAGB Transportation, Red River Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A

Transportation Technology

Transit technology has advanced appreciably in the recent past, particularly trip scheduling and dispatching platforms. With the requisite training and interoperability between the systems of other nearby agencies, modern transit technology platforms unlock considerable efficiencies and coordination opportunities between agencies. As such, a strong understanding of the technological capabilities of nearby agencies is critical to identifying these opportunities or starting initiatives to acquire software platforms in a coordinated manner.

Table 10 below summarizes key scheduling and dispatching systems available to agencies in the region. In certain cases, agencies may not have certain capabilities or may use differing software platforms that do not work together. These should be used as opportunities to identify where technology systems may be coordinated across multiple agencies or even across different regions, including in procurement, to realize the benefits of these technologies.

Northwest Region agencies generally operate specific call centers that correspond to cities where vehicles are dispatched from, enabling them to better respond to riders depending on their place of residence. Additionally, information on agency services is generally found on the agency website rather than on mobile applications. Cimarron Public Transit is an exception in that while its primary business hour service is scheduled via phone, evening and weekend service offered through the PICK program can be scheduled through the VIA phone app, online, or by phone.

Table 10: Provider Technology Capabilities

Agency Name	Scheduling ability on agency website	Scheduling ability on mobile app for riders	General Info on mobile app	Name of Dispatching Software	AVL System/ GPS
Cimarron Public Transit System (CPTS)	No	Yes (PICK)	Yes (PICK)	Transit Assistant, VIA	Yes (GPS)
Red River Public Transportation Service	No	No	No	Outlook calendar	Yes
Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	No	No	No	Transit Assistant	No
MAGB Transportation Service	No	No	No	N/A	N/A
Guymon – The Ride	No	No	No	N/A	N/A
Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribal Transit	No	No	No	Transit Assistant	No
White Eagle Transit	No	No	No	N/A	N/A
Otoe- Missouria	No	No	No	Outlook calendar	No
Enid Public Transit	Yes	No	No	N/A	N/A
Beaver City Transit	No	No	No	N/A	N/A

Funding Structure for Transportation Programs

The following sections provide information on the various public transit funding programs. Note that many of these programs are specific to public transit agencies. Those interested in more in-depth information on these programs, including eligibility, are encouraged to review the corresponding section in ODOT's State Management Plan. [1]

Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disability Program

Section 5310 is a formula funding program apportioned to states to meet the mobility needs of seniors and people with disabilities, especially when existing service is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting those needs. ODOT is the Governor's designee for the administration of state and federal public transit financial assistance programs for areas under 50,000 population. ODOT's Office of Mobility and Public Transit is responsible for the management of these state and federal programs. ODOT is not an operator of public transit services, but through its administration of these programs, financial and technical assistance is provided to Oklahoma's public transit providers. ODOT will only approve 5310 funding to be used for the purchase of traditional ADA-accessible vehicles at a maximum federal share of project costs of 85%.

ODOT administers the 5310 program through a competitive application process due to funding limitations. Eligible applicants include the following: private nonprofits, public transit agencies, federally recognized Indian entities, and public agencies that can certify that no private nonprofit are providing the proposed service in a readily available fashion. Projects proposed in the Northwest Region must be found in the Northwest Region Coordinated Transportation Plan and the coordinated plans of any other coordinated planning regions in which the project will occur.

ODOT will provide notice to potential applicants once 5310 funding will be made available. This notice will include a deadline by which application materials must be submitted. Applicants may be asked to provide the following at different stages throughout the application process to determine if the applicant is eligible to advance to the next stage: notice of intent to apply, draft application, and final application.

Technical assistance in preparing an application is provided by ODOT OMPT. However, the development, preparation and timely submittal of the document is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Application instructions may be obtained by requesting from ODOT OMPT.

Those interested in pursuing 5310 funding in the future are encouraged to review Section 7 of ODOT's State Management Plan, which describes how potential applicants may access 5310 funding in greater detail.[2]

Other Related Transportation Funding Programs

The following funding programs are also used to support public transit service, both for the general public and for people with disabilities and seniors.

Section 5307 Urban Public Transportation[3]

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

For urbanized areas with 200,000 in population and over, funds are apportioned and flow directly to a designated recipient selected locally to apply for and receive Federal funds. For urbanized areas under 200,000 in population, the funds are apportioned to the governor of each state for distribution.

Eligible activities include: planning, engineering, design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement, overhaul and rebuilding of buses, crime prevention and security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger

[1] https://oklahoma.gov/content/dam/ok/en/odot/omm/ODOT%20SMP%202022_1.16.23_Final.pdf
[2] https://oklahoma.gov/content/dam/ok/en/odot/omm/ODOT%20SMP%202022_1.16.23_Final.pdf
[3] Section 5307 program language from the FTA's website

facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. In addition, associated transit improvements and certain expenses associated with mobility management programs are eligible under the program. All preventive maintenance and some Americans with Disabilities Act complementary paratransit service costs are considered capital costs.

Section 5311 Rural Public Transportation

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 5311, FTA apportions or awards funds to states and other eligible recipients located in rural areas for planning, public transit capital projects, operating costs, and the acquisition of public transit service. The Section 5311 program supports both the maintenance of existing public transit services and the expansion of those services.

The program year allotment establishes the maximum amount of Section 5311 funds available to the subrecipients. The amount of Section 5311 funding that will be made available to each subrecipient will be determined by the cumulative amounts of their Incentive Allotment and Performance Allotment. Any funds not programmed or obligated by the subrecipient during the contracted program year will be deemed as lapsed by ODOT and any such balance of funding will be carried forward for allocation within the subsequent year's Statewide Allotment. Note that ODOT may evaluate and change the methodology and formula to distribute annual program funds after notifying and receiving input from subrecipients.

The following entities are eligible to access 5311 funding: existing 5311 subrecipient, public agencies, operators of public transit, and federally recognized Indian tribes. ODOT may also accept 5311 applications from agencies that are not current subrecipients if the legislative body of a local government submits a formal request to ODOT.

Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Program

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 5339, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awards grants under this section to the designated recipients in the large-urbanized areas (UZAs) and States for the purpose of financing capital bus and bus-related projects that will support the continuation and expansion of public transit services in the United States. Only existing 5311 subrecipients are eligible to access 5339 funding.

See the Appendix for ODOT Office of Mobility and Public Transit contact information.

Coordination Efforts

Coordination among transportation providers is essential to meeting the needs of seniors and people with disabilities, as providers can coordinate their services to make up for gaps in each other's service. This section documents existing coordination efforts between service providers in the Northwest Region identified in either the public survey or the working group meetings as well as challenges to coordination. This serves as a record of coordination currently taking place so that other providers may further pool their efforts. This section should also serve as a collection of ideas that may be implemented throughout different areas of the Northwest Region.

Existing Coordination Efforts

Transportation providers and human services agencies had opportunities throughout the working group meetings, public meetings, and through the public survey to report on steps they currently take to coordinate amongst themselves.

Throughout Working Group Meeting #1, agencies reported various forms of coordination between each other. When **MAGB Transportation** cannot provide a trip, they will work with the prospective rider and the appropriate agency to arrange transportation. Another agency reported that they go out of their way to visit with the staff of other agencies when they perform field work.

Agencies provided additional information on existing coordination efforts during Working Group Meeting #2. **Cimarron Public Transit System** noted that they have recently increased efforts to share information with other agencies and have been working more closely with **Cherokee Strip Transit** and have a coordinating agreement to work together to provide needed service, without duplication.

MAGB Transportation has multiple strong working relationships with different organizations throughout its service area, such as senior centers and nursing homes. They have contracts with organizations to provide service, which they've been able to secure by ensuring a strong awareness of **MAGB's** service offerings. They also have coordinated agreements with the towns of Beaver and Harper to provide service.

NORTPO expressed willingness to assist agencies in any way it can with pursuing grant opportunities, including assistance in writing grant applications and other forms of technical assistance. The mobility management programs also can support coordinating between public transit and other agencies as well as other community engagement efforts. Agencies should contact **NORTPO** as needed to take advantage of this assistance.

Additionally, members of this Region's working group are coordinating with **Pelivan** and other Northeast Region providers to implement the PICK (Pelivan, Cimarron, KI BOIS) program.[4] PICK operates in 21 counties in rural eastern Oklahoma, providing curb-to-curb service between 5PM – 9PM Monday to Thursday, 5PM – 10PM on Friday, and between 10AM – 2PM on Saturday. It currently operates using Via technology. Users may schedule rides via their computer, smart device, or by calling a telephone number. Originally started among Northeast Region agencies, agencies statewide are coordinating to expand its use.

Active Transportation

Transit agencies typically are not directly responsible for planning, designing, and maintaining active transportation infrastructure such as sidewalks and bike lanes. Nonetheless, active transportation infrastructure has a direct impact on the attractiveness of public transit and the ability of transit users to reach their final destination. For example, a transit user who takes a demand-response trip to centrally located downtown area may wish to alight at one destination and use sidewalks or bike lanes to circulate among multiple clustered places. Given the lack of direct control that transit agencies have over this infrastructure, it behooves transit agencies to coordinate with agencies who do to ensure that active transportation infrastructure meets the needs of transit users.

Statewide Active Transportation Resources

ODOT is currently developing its first Active Transportation Plan, with the plan tentatively being completed in 2023. As part of that process, ODOT is working with stakeholders to understand their active transportation needs and what

[4] http://okpicktransportation.com/

statewide policies and resources can be used to guide state or local active transportation efforts. More information, including how to participate, can be found on ODOT's website.[5]

BikeOklahoma[6] is a statewide bicycle advocacy organization with the goal of promoting safe bicycling throughout Oklahoma. They have a number of events, initiatives, and other resources that may be helpful for transit agencies wishing to promote active transportation in their communities, including links to guidebooks on creating bicycle and pedestrian advisory committees.[7]

During working groups and the public meeting, no agency in the Region has indicated that they coordinate with ODOT or other local agencies, committees, or other bodies on active transportation matters.

Employment Transportation

Public transit often provides vital trips to current employment or employment opportunities. Aside from public transit, various other human services agencies may also provide employment transportation or employment-related services, creating an opportunity to coordinate services in a way that meets the needs of riders in an effective and efficient manner. Table 11 below identifies agencies from the Northwest Region, including both public transit agencies and human services agencies, who provide employment transportation or services as well as key information that may affect coordination of services.

The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS) provides a number of services to members of the public, especially individuals with disabilities and others who need assistance achieving independent living. These services include job readiness and employment training, which can include services such as vocational education, career planning, and health screenings.

Public transit agencies and human services transportation providers should also consider identifying employers with employees who may need reliable transit service in order to get to work. Partnerships with employers are an opportunity to raise revenue while meeting a consistent and reoccurring need for employment-related transportation. At the moment, no transit agency in the Northwest Region has indicated that they have contracts with employers to provide service or similar agreements. However, the mobility manager from NODA collaborated with Tyson Food to implement Enterprise Commute vanpool services for their employees. Additionally, employers have reached out to NODA in the past to get data and other information on transportation services that are available, providing an opportunity to coordinate with employers.

Table 11: Agencies Providing Employment-related Services

Agency Name	Service Area	Service Hours	User Model	Phone #	Contact Email
Enterprise Commute	Statewide	N/A	Closed-door	N/A	Allen.Robbins@ehi.com
Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services	Counties: Canadian, Cimarron, Texas, Beaver, Harper, Garfield, Kay, Kingfisher, Major, Woodward, Woods	8AM – 5PM, Monday - Friday	Both closed- and open-doors	580-233-0244 580-819-3620 405-522-7989	melissa.bell@okdrs.gov eishmael@okdrs.gov mkaiser@okdrs.gov apebley@okdrs.gov rparker@okdrs.gov

Unmet Transportation Needs & Gaps

ODOT conducted a series of activities to involve stakeholders and members of the public as much as possible in identifying service gaps and unmet needs. These activities included the following:

5 https://www.okatp.org/
6 https://www.okbike.org/content.aspx?page_id=0&club_id=86708
7 https://www.okbike.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=86708&module_id=154201

- Working group meetings made up of key transportation providers in the Region
- A working group prioritization survey, wherein working group members prioritized the various gaps and unmet needs below
- A virtual public meeting
- An online survey

The working group meetings and public meeting were held on the following dates:

- Working Group Meeting #1: May 18, 2023
- Working Group Meeting #2: July 18, 2023
- Working Group Meeting #3: August 29, 2023
- Public Meeting: June 29, 2023

ODOT made a public survey available online via SurveyMonkey from June 6th to July 21st that asked for information from organizations and individuals regarding their transportation service gaps and unmet needs, particularly those of seniors and people with disabilities. The survey received 1,561 total responses across all regions, 838 of which were from individuals and 723 of which were from organizations. Among respondents who could definitively be assigned to a coordinated planning region, 23 individuals and 39 agencies from the Northwest Region responded, which is notably lower than other regions.

The Northwest Working Group may consider investigating the methods by which it spreads awareness of surveys and other planning initiatives, with an eye towards increasing public participation substantially. The discussion of unmet needs and goals for the Region may serve as a starting point for identifying strategies.

The subjects covered in the outreach activities described above generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Transit User: needs of users to ensure accessibility of the transportation service
- Service Area: general areas that services are needed in as well as specific types of destinations
- Service Schedule: when service is provided and length of trips
- Outreach & Awareness: accessibility of information about transportation service
- Service Quality: various qualitative aspects of transportation service

Within each category, individual gaps or unmet needs were prioritized by assigning a high/medium/low priority rating. These ratings are based on feedback received from participants in the various outreach activities conducted, with the working group prioritization survey being the primary determinant of priority. Table 12 displays a high-level summary of categories, gaps/unmet needs, and associated ratings, while the following sections describe the feedback received in each category in more detail. These sections and tables are meant to identify the struggles and limitations that providers face so that goals and strategies can be developed to address them.

Table 12: Compiled Gaps and Unmet Needs

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority		
		High	Medium	Low
Transit User	Lower Cost/Fares		X	
	Familiarity With the Transit System		X	
	Travel Assistance	X		
	Door-to-Door Transportation	X		
Service Area	It takes a long time to reach final destinations			X
	Service does not go to desired destination			X
	Accessibility to First-Last Mile Connections			X
	More Sufficient Service at Trip Origins and Destinations		X	
	Access to Jobs	X		
	Access to Medical-related Locations		X	
Service Schedule	More evening and weekend service	X		
	Shorter Trip Lengths			X
	Weekday Early Morning Service		X	
	Weekday Business Hours			X
	Weekday Late Night Service		X	
	Weekend Service		X	
	Weekend Late Nights (Friday and Saturday Nights)		X	
Outreach and Awareness	Better Information on Services	X		
	Service schedule is difficult to understand			X
	Negative Perception of Service			X
Service Quality	Limited Accessibility to Transit Stops			X
	Lack of Transit Amenities (shelters, benches, etc.)			X
	More Reliable Service		X	
	Improved Personal Safety			X
	Improved sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.		X	
	Transit vehicles that meet my needs			X
	Wheelchair Accessibility			X
	More Frequent Service	X		
	More Services for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities		X	

Summary and Prioritization of Gaps and Unmet Needs

Transit User

This section summarizes the feedback received regarding the unmet needs of transit users and the priorities assigned to each service gap/unmet need.

All Transit User-related issues received either high or medium priority ratings. Travel assistance and door-to-door transportation were rated high, while lower cost/fares and familiarity with the transit system were rated medium.

Despite door-to-door transportation being a high priority, providers generally offer door-to-door transportation on a case-by-case basis, in compliance with federal rules to do so without fundamentally altering the nature of their services. Most door-to-door challenges reported by agencies concerned riders needing assistance beyond assistance to and from the vehicle, such as assistance getting ready or getting out their door.

Similarly, while travel assistance was rated as a high priority, providers generally allow riders to bring personal care assistants (PCAs). One proposal from providers is to work with Area Agencies on Aging in the Region and other human service agencies to see if riders can be matched with PCAs.

Cost was also a common challenge cited by both providers and members of the public. In particular, the higher fares associated with longer trips are often a barrier to riders using transit to reach farther destinations.

Additionally, members of the public requested alternative options for scheduling rides. Specifically, they would like to be able to schedule rides via a smartphone app or over the internet. In addition to using new, familiar technology, scheduling options aside from phone would make it easier for individuals with difficulty speaking to schedule transit rides.

Uber- or Lyft-like services were one option raised to address the cost and familiarity issues raised by members of the public. Using already well-developed and intuitive interfaces, riders can easily schedule rides on an on-demand basis and at an affordable price. There are even specialized providers who are ADA-accessible and FTA-compliant to use in conjunction with services more geared towards the general public.

Increased funding is necessary to improve upon the Transit User challenges identified and to implement the solutions discussed above. To the extent that door-to-door transportation is an issue, trips will need additional time built into them to accommodate door-to-door assistance, which will increase costs. Simultaneously, funding will be needed to ensure that these additional costs are not passed onto the rider, particularly for longer rides that may stretch outside the Northwest Region. Finally, improvements to websites and other outreach materials will cost money and staff time, both of which additional funding would support.

Table 13: Transit User Gaps and Unmet Needs

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority		
		High	Medium	Low
Transit User	Lower Cost/Fares		X	
	Familiarity With the Transit System		X	
	Travel Assistance	X		
	Door-to-Door Transportation	X		

Service Area

This section summarizes the feedback received regarding service area gaps and the priorities assigned to each service gap/unmet need.

Service Area gaps varied in the priority that agencies and transit providers assigned to them. Access to jobs was the only Service Area issue that received a high priority, while more sufficient service at trip origins/destinations and access to medical-related locations received medium priorities. Finally, trip lengths, service not going to desired destinations, and accessibility to first/last mile connections received low priorities.

Among both agency/provider feedback and public feedback, a significant number of comments identified general areas and specific towns/counties where additional or new service is needed. Two general areas frequently mentioned were rural areas and trips between towns/cities. Connections to the following areas were requested in particular: Concho, Hunter, and Oklahoma City. One provider also noted that they would like provide service to Northwest Oklahoma State, in the far northwest corner of state, but that they have not had the staff capacity nor the funding to do.

While Oklahoma City is well outside the Northwest Region, the myriad of medical services and other destinations in the area make Oklahoma City a vital destination for Northwest Region residents. Transit providers noted a need to better coordinate trips across service area boundaries, which would better enable trips out to particularly rural areas or between towns/cities within different service areas.

One proposed idea is to create regional hubs where services can reliably be coordinated, such as by transferring passengers between services. This would be contingent on transit agencies more readily sharing information on when and where they are providing trips to facilitate coordination. SoonerCare was also identified as a potential partner in the creation of regional hubs. However, closer coordination with SoonerCare would be warranted, particularly opening of their dispatch and scheduling systems to public transit agencies.

Long-term dedicated funding that can be used for transit operations is ultimately needed to address many of these challenges. Coupled with project development funding to assist agencies in high upfront costs of service expansion, transit providers would be better positioned to address transit deserts. Partnerships with local governments, Area

Agencies on Aging, and other human services agencies are an opportunity to obtain both initial funding and ongoing funding for service expansion.

Lack of funding was highlighted as driving decreased staffing, making it more difficult for existing staff to have the requisite time to coordinate with different agencies. Decreased staffing in terms of drivers also complicates providing longer trips, which in turn complicates transferring passengers to different agencies when their trips cross service area boundaries.

Integrated dispatching would also allow local transit providers and statewide providers, such as SoonerRide, to coordinate trips and share resources more efficiently. Coordinated trips would address some of the concerns raised by providers, planning agencies, and members of the public surrounding service between particular areas, as agencies would be better able to transfer rides amongst themselves. The PICK program is a template to build on, whether by expanding the PICK program directly or creating similar services elsewhere.

Table 14: Service Area Gaps and Unmet Needs

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority High	Priority Medium	Priority Low
Service Area	It takes a long time to reach final destinations			X
	Service does not go to desired destination			X
	Accessibility to First-Last Mile Connections			X
	More Sufficient Service at Trip Origins and Destinations		X	
	Access to Jobs	X		
	Access to Medical-related Locations		X	

Service Schedule

This section summarizes the feedback received regarding service schedule gaps and the priorities assigned to each service gap/unmet need.

The priorities assigned to Service Schedule-related issues varied. More evening and weekend service was the only gap/unmet need that received a high priority. Weekday early morning, weekday late night, weekend, and weekend late night service all received low priorities. Meanwhile, weekday business hour service and shorter trip lengths received low priorities.

Most providers do not provide any early or late weekday service. Likewise, few providers provide weekend service. While this is currently the case, some Northwest Region providers will be participating in the PICK Program, which will offer late weekday services as well as limited service on Saturday. The PICK Program is a great opportunity to leverage technology to service hours. That said, barriers remain for some agencies to participate in the program, most notably an ongoing driver and general staff shortage driven by limited funding. Specific challenges noted by providers in meeting demand for weekend and early/late weekday service mainly involved funding challenges and coordination challenges with healthcare providers, particularly dialysis providers.

In terms of funding, providers require additional funding to justify providing service outside typical business hours. In particular, regular funding sources to fund ongoing operations are needed, such as funding from ODOT or through contracts with municipalities and regional planning agencies. Multiple providers in the Northwest Region are experiencing acute driver shortages, of which limited funding is a primary cause, making providers unable to provide competitive salaries and therefore limiting the pool of applicants.

Rural transit agencies play a key role in connecting residents to medical care, especially dialysis appointments. In the Northwest Region, providers noted that dialysis clinics generally do not or struggle to pair residents with physicians and clinic locations that are close to their home. As a result, dialysis trips are longer and more difficult for transit agencies to serve. Contributing factors are that physicians may only be affiliated with certain hospitals/clinics and that dialysis locations may only accept certain insurance plans. To the extent that dialysis trip lengths can be shortened through better coordination between residents, dialysis providers, and transit providers, this represents a coordination opportunity with the potential to benefit transit users.

Northwest Region providers have also experienced challenges in coordinating their services due to varying service spans through service areas. Due to limited funding and other resources, agencies must sometimes make difficult decisions about where to focus service, such as by providing wider service spans in higher-demand areas. While agencies can always be flexible when the need arises, this makes their service inherently more difficult to understand for other agencies and may complicate providing longer trips out to the boundaries of service areas, where transfers between agencies can occur.

Table 15: Service Schedule Gaps and Unmet Needs

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority High	Priority Medium	Priority Low
Service Schedule	More evening and weekend service	X		
	Shorter Trip Lengths			X
	Weekday Early Morning Service		X	
	Weekday Business Hours			X
	Weekday Late Night Service		X	
	Weekend Service		X	
	Weekend Late Nights (Friday and Saturday Nights)		X	

Outreach and Awareness

This section summarizes the feedback received regarding outreach and awareness and the priorities assigned to each service gap/unmet need.

Outreach and Awareness-related issues were either rated as high or low priority by transit providers and planning agencies. Providing better information on services was rated high, while difficulty in understanding schedule and negative perception of service were each rated low.

Agencies generally have social media presences and carry out more traditional marketing activities, such as distributing brochures, attending community meetings, sharing newsletters and reports, and attending resource fairs. In addition, the mobility manager for the Northwest Region reported that they share various marketing materials throughout the region as opportunities arise. Mobility managers will continue to be a valuable resource for coordination and marketing between transit agencies as well as various stakeholders throughout the Northwest Region.

Community health workers were highlighted as another valuable marketing and outreach resource throughout the Region. Their role is to connect members of the community to services to meet their daily needs, which can include public transit. Similarly, community engagement specialists are employed by the Oklahoma Department of Health, who can be a valuable resource in distributing transit information to the community.

NORTPO is also a valuable resource for outreach and awareness as well as many other domains. Employers contact NORTPO when considering locating in the Northwest Region, inquiring after data and other information on transportation infrastructure and services. This is an opportunity to potentially influence an employer's location within the region as well form a lasting relationship that may develop contracted transportation for employees. Additionally, NORTPO often released surveys and engages in other planning activities, which agencies should participate in as part of raising their profile.

One tribal transit provider noted that native elders in particular may struggle with using technology or accessing information on the internet. As such, it is critical that different forms of outreach be employed that can reach people in a setting and manner they are most comfortable with. For example, a 1-800 number is used to ensure that tribal elders do not need to use the internet to find information on services.

With that said, transit providers are struggling to maintain adequate back-office staffing levels in addition to operators. As a result, existing staff are being stretched thin with fulfilling their day-to-day operational duties as well as being tasked with conducting public outreach. Agencies need more staff, particularly dedicated public engagement staff, to ensure that operational duties and public engagement both receive the attention they deserve.

Given limited budgets, agencies will need increased funding to hire more staff, particularly long-term dedicated funding to ensure that additional staff can be maintained over a long period of time.

CPTS reports conducting outreach to employers through the Ponca City Development Authority and the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, though no other agencies reported similar activities. To the extent that this is true, this is an opportunity to fulfill a need for employment-related transportation in the Northwest Region while raising additional revenue. With that said, increased coordination between transit agencies and employers is another task that increased staffing, and therefore increased funding, will facilitate.

At least one agency noted that they have existing grants and contracts with development districts in the Northwest Region to provide rides. Agencies who do not currently have these types of relationships should be seeking out these opportunities, as they represent another opportunity to serve people with disabilities and seniors while raising revenue. Agencies who already have these agreements should seek to maintain them.

Table 16: Outreach and Awareness Gaps and Unmet Needs

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority High	Priority Medium	Priority Low
Outreach and Awareness	Better Information on Services	X		
	Service schedule is difficult to understand			X
	Negative Perception of Service			X

Service Quality

This section summarizes the feedback received regarding gaps in service quality and the priorities assigned to each service gap/unmet need.

Priorities assigned to Service Quality gaps/unmet needs were generally medium or low priority, although more frequent service was assigned a high priority. Service reliability, improved crosswalk/sidewalks, and services for people with disabilities/seniors received medium priority ratings. Accessibility to stops, lack of amenities, personal safety, transit vehicles, and wheelchair accessibility received low priority ratings.

While service frequency was the sole gap/unmet to be rated high, a few working group and public comments directly touched on service frequency. Providers noted that they generally provide on-demand service, though lead times may be necessary depending on trip length and current demand.

Frequency and reliability are interrelated; the ability of Northwest Region agencies to provide these aspects of service is ultimately dependent on staffing and funding levels (absent other operational challenges). Multiple providers have reported that they struggle to hire and retain drivers, which has decreased their ability to maintain core business-hour service. Without additional drivers, they cannot improve frequencies, such as decreasing the lead time with which trips must be scheduled, nor will reliability improve.

Uber-like on-demand service is commonly mentioned by human services agencies and members of the public. With short lead times, vehicle tracking, and intuitive interfaces, Uber-like services offer a high level of service that is convenient to use. The technology allows vehicles to be tracked in real-time, which improves both the ability of agencies to respond to unforeseen issues, increasing actual reliability, and it allows riders to see the status of their vehicles, increasing perceived reliability. No agencies in the Northwest Region offer scheduling on their website or via mobile applications outside the PICK program.

Transit agencies also would like to implement Uber-like service, however they need increased funding to do so. As mentioned before, agencies struggle to maintain adequate staffing levels, which limits the ability to increase service frequencies and administer new technologies. These technologies also require upfront acquisition and ongoing costs that agencies will need assistance with, such as upgrades to AVL systems and acquisition of new software. Agencies need increased funding to use these technologies, both in long-term operational funding and short-term project development funding.

Sidewalk and crosswalk accessibility was highlighted as an issue by working group members, despite the Northwest Region being particularly rural. Providers and planning agencies viewed sidewalks and crosswalks as complementary to transit service, even in a rural area. If a town has relatively good sidewalk connectivity, a rider may take a transit trip to town, circulate among different destinations, and leave town via another transit trip. This is opposed to chaining multiple transit trips together.

Transit agencies typically do not have direct control over the location of sidewalks and crosswalks. As such, partners such as NORTPO, ODOT, and town public works department will be invaluable partners in improving sidewalk and crosswalk connectivity. Partnerships with these organizations are opportunities to ensure that infrastructure is developed in such a way to enhance transit provision rather than impede it.

While vehicles were not a main concern in the Northwest Region, working group members noted concerning developments in vehicle procurement. Transit agencies noted that they are paying significantly more for vehicles than in the past, with delivery times also being significantly longer. While few agencies reported serious state-of-repair issues with their vehicles, difficulty in procurement can contribute to state-of-repair issues in the future. As such, it behooves agencies to coordinate with ODOT to the extent possible to resolve these procurement issues.

Table 17: Service Quality Gaps and Unmet Needs

Category	Transportation Service Gap or Unmet Need	Priority		
		High	Medium	Low
Service Quality	Limited Accessibility to Transit Stops			X
	Lack of Transit Amenities (shelters, benches, etc.)			X
	More Reliable Service		X	
	Improved Personal Safety			X
	Improved sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.		X	
	Transit vehicles that meet my needs			X
	Wheelchair Accessibility			X
	More Frequent Service	X		
	More Services for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities		X	

Statewide Needs

By virtue of its participation in the planning processes for all five regions, ODOT is positioned to identify needs, challenges, and opportunities that are of statewide concern. Described below are challenges that were frequently cited by agencies across multiple regions, indicating the severity of these challenges and the fundamental importance of them to providing transit service.

Technology

Technology was commonly cited as a need across different regions, particularly with regard to dispatching, scheduling, and the staffing necessary to implement new transit technology.

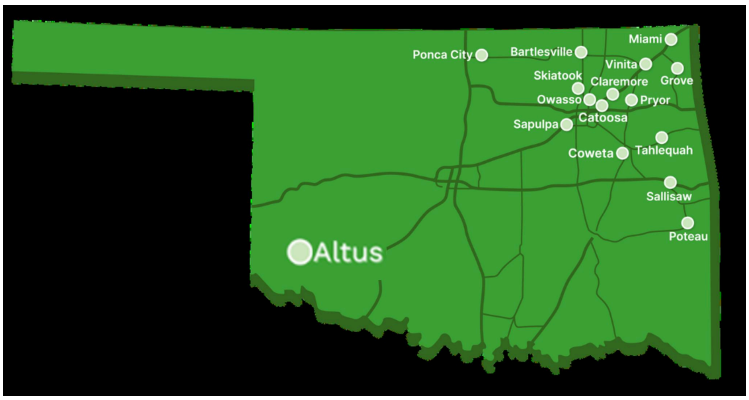
New, innovative dispatching software was identified as a desire in multiple regions, particularly with new software platforms offering improved scheduling, route assignments, and data tracking. Newer software platforms also present opportunities for agencies to coordinate across agency boundaries. When multiple agencies with contiguous service areas and the requisite coordination agreements use interoperable dispatching software, agencies can coordinate interagency service in a more efficient and flexible manner.

Similarly, **app-based scheduling** was a common desire of both transportation providers, human services agencies, and members of the public. Given the proliferation of smartphones and other digital technologies, app-based scheduling is seen as the next step beyond the call-center systems that most agencies in Oklahoma currently use. Certain software products include integrated dispatching and user-facing scheduling platforms, ensuring complete and seamless communication between dispatch, drivers, and clients. Beyond convenience, smartphone apps are a way to further increase accessibility of scheduling systems, such as for those with speech impairments who may not be comfortable using the phone or other accessible scheduling options provided.

New technologies present lucrative opportunities, though transit providers noted that **hiring and retaining staff who are trained in these technologies** is a current challenge. Having trained staff members is critical to ensuring that current operations can be sustained with new technology platforms as well as training new or existing staff members who are not yet familiar with these new technologies.

While there are barriers to using new technology to enhance transit service, this has not stopped transit agencies from initiating grassroots efforts on their own behalf. In response to demand for after hours and weekend service, providers in the Northeast Region began the PICK (Pelivan, Cimarron, KI BOIS) program.[8] PICK operates in 21 counties in rural eastern Oklahoma, providing curb-to-curb service between 5PM – 9PM Monday through Thursday, between 5PM - 10PM on Friday and between 10AM - 2PM on Saturdays. It currently operates VIA Technology. It currently operates via the Uber app but is being transitioned over to Via technology. Users may schedule rides via their computer, smart device, or by calling a telephone number. Efforts are underway to expand PICK to the rest of Oklahoma's rural transit agencies.

Figure 13: PICK Transportation Service Area (Source: PICK Website)



Funding

Many agencies described funding challenges that ultimately undergird every current activity or any prospective initiatives. Agencies exclusively viewed their current funding levels as a constraint on their ability to meet demand for public transit on a day-to-day basis, as well as a constraint on the implementation of any new or innovative initiatives or technologies.

As previously discussed, many agencies wish to implement new dispatching and scheduling software and to hire the requisite personnel to train others on these systems and operate them. In general, **agencies are struggling to hire and retain staff**, both for day-to-day operations (drivers, etc.) and to operate new technologies. The fundamental limiting factor on agencies' ability to hire new staff is a lack of funding. Wages are simply too low to reliably attract operators and other backend staff who are critical to day-to-day operations, and agencies do not have the funding to offer competitive wages. Agencies have noted a clear trend of operators earning their commercial driver's license (CDL), working for their agency for a short period, then leveraging their CDL for higher-paying employment.

Funding also acts as a fundamental constraint on the level and breadth of service that agencies can provide. Agencies can easily provide affordable service within a short distance of major towns/cities and near their dispatch locations, but due to how rural much of Oklahoma is, trips outside core service areas quickly escalate in cost due to their length. This forces agencies to make difficult decisions, such as whether to provide these trips at all or to charge significantly higher fares, which may be unaffordable for some clients.

Additionally, **agencies' service schedules are typically limited to normal business hours** (8AM – 5PM). While most trips necessarily occur during this period due to the nature of those trips (employment, shopping, etc.), agencies still note considerable early morning, afterhours, and weekend demand that they are generally unable to meet due to limited funding. Schedule challenges are also related to the workforce challenges that agencies are experiencing, as operators are typically not willing to drive far outside of business hours. Some operators may be incentivized to do, such as through increased wages, but this is unlikely given funding constraints
.http://okpicktransportation.com/

SoonerRide

SoonerRide plays a pivotal role in ensuring that seniors and people with disabilities can access essential medical services and have been a key partner for rural transit agencies, who enter into contracts with SoonerRide to provide NEMT. Multiple agencies statewide have reported coordination challenges with SoonerRide that are impacting the ability of rural transit agencies to ensure that the medical transportation needs of their clients are being met. Specifically, that clients are not being informed when their SoonerRide contracted trip will not be provided despite recent implementation of text notifications, nor are rural agencies being notified that this is the case so they can fulfill the ride themselves. This communication challenge should be addressed to ensure that SoonerRide and rural transit clients can readily access medical services.

Agencies have additional concerns regarding the ongoing Medicaid reenrollment process, whereby Medicaid users may be stricken from the Medicaid roles due to changes in income or other changes in status that affect their eligibility and therefore their ability to utilize SoonerRide. Agencies are concerned that disenrollment may lead to individuals being unable to access medical care due to lack of transportation and the attendant burden this may place on rural transit agencies. Additionally, agencies are concerned about the degree of communication between SoonerCare and clients about their eligibility, with some clients being unknowingly disenrolled and thereby it being a surprise when they are unable to access SoonerRide.

In 2024, Managed Care Organizations began providing additional NEMT services. These providers include:

- AETNA Better Health of Oklahoma
- Humana Healthy Horizons of Oklahoma
- Oklahoma Complete Health (OCH)
- Oklahoma Complete Heath Children’s Specialty Plan (OCH-CSP)

OKLAHOMA Health Care Authority | Serving Oklahomans through SoonerCare

SOONERSELECT
NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION (NEMT)

SoonerSelect Entity	MEMBER LINE: Reservations and Ride Assistance	MEMBER LINE: Reservations and Ride Assistance Hearing Impaired	EXCEPTIONS-FACILITY ONLY LINE: Hospitals, Dialysis Centers, Nursing Homes, etc. For Urgent or Special Circumstances	General Member Services Line with Hearing Impaired Option
AETNA Better Health of Oklahoma	877-718-4208	866-288-3133	800-435-1276	844-365-4385 (TTY: 711)
Humana Healthy Horizons of Oklahoma	877-718-4213	866-288-3133	800-435-1276	855-223-9868 (TTY: 711)
Oklahoma Complete Health (OCH)	877-718-4212	866-288-3133	800-435-1276	833-752-1664 (TTY: 711)
Oklahoma Complete Heath Children's Specialty Plan (OCH-CSP)	877-718-4212	866-288-3133	800-435-1276	833-752-1665 (TTY: 711)

SOONERRIDE

for Members on SoonerCare Traditional

7 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday

Member Line: Reservations and Ride Assistance	Member Line: Late or No Arrival Contact (Where's My Ride?)	Member Line: Reservations and Ride Assistance Hearing Impaired	Exceptions Only-Facilities Line: Hospitals, Dialysis Centers, Nursing Homes, etc. For Urgent or Special Circumstances	General Members Service Line with Hearing Impaired Option
877-404-4500	800-435-1034	800-722-0353	800-435-1276	800-987-7767 (TTD: 711)

ADDRESS
4345 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

WEBSITES
oklahoma.gov/ohca
mysoonercare.org

PHONE
Admin: 405-522-7300
Helpline: 800-987-7767

Goals

During Working Group Meeting #3, working group members held a focused discussion on the goals that they would like to accomplish in the Northwest Region. This discussion included identifying agencies primarily responsible, supporting agencies, resources needed, and other critical aspects for accomplishing these goals. Working Group members were also encouraged to expand on the goals they would like to see for the Northwest Region during the review period of the draft Northwest Region Coordinated Transportation Plan.

The following goals were identified by the Working Group and are discussed in further detail below:

- Goal 1: Improve recruiting and retention of qualified drivers and office staff.
- Goal 2: Establish transit hubs to improve cross-boundary service coordination.
- Goal 3: Prepare for electric and alternative fuel vehicle implementation.
- Goal 4: Increase use of technology to enhance service provision.

Goal 1: Improve recruiting and retention of qualified drivers and office staff.

Challenges hiring and retaining drivers and office staff were common in the Northwest Region and were identified as a key focus. Addressing these challenges will help alleviate day-to-day operational challenges that agencies face as well as set the stage for level of service improvement in the future.

Table 18 summarizes the strategies identified by the Northwest Working Group in pursuit of Goal 1.

Table 18: Goal 1 Strategy Summary

Goal 1 Strategies
Strategy 1.1: Identify new recruitment opportunities.
Strategy 1.2: Identify ways to improve driver pay and benefits.

Different strategies will ultimately be necessary to both recruit and retain drivers and office staff. In terms of recruiting new drivers, it is critical to maximize the reach of recruiting activities, including by identifying previously unutilized recruitment venues. These may include technology and vocational centers, Workforce Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, universities/schools, faith-based organizations, and diversion programs. Reaching potential drivers through a diverse array of venues will increase the chance of identifying suitable candidates.

Driving for transit agencies must also be made more attractive. The primary concern identified by Working Group members revolves around pay, which significantly affects the attractiveness of jobs. As such, ways to improve pay must be identified. Agencies must coordinate with each other as well as other planning agencies throughout the Northwest Region to investigate and implement ways to do so, especially novel funding sources. For example, novel funding sources may allow agencies to increase the hourly wage of drivers on top of the base wage directly provided by agencies. Similarly, retention and referral bonuses may be possible given new funding, which would enhance both recruitment and retention.

Goal 2: Establish transit hubs to improve cross-boundary service coordination.

Establishing designated locations, or hubs, where agencies can transfer passengers amongst themselves can greatly enhance the ability of agencies to provide trips that cross service area boundaries. In turn, this increases the competitiveness of public transit in relation to other modes by increasing distances over which customers can use public transit.

Table 19 summarizes the strategies identified by the Northwest Working Group in pursuit of Goal 2.

Table 19: Goal 2 Strategy Summary

Goal 2 Strategies
Strategy 2.1: Establish at least one location in every county that can serve as a transit hub.
Strategy 2.2: Implement coordinating agreements amongst all agencies.

Agencies should work towards identifying at least one location in every county that can serve as a transit hub. These hubs would serve as regular transfer locations, where agencies can transfer riders between services, thereby increasing the range that riders can take public transit. Transit hubs do not require any improvements or other capital expenditures. They can be as simple as a parking lot, a safe street corner, or at different public institutions (e.g., a public library).

Doing so will require agencies to regularly enter the service areas of other agencies, potentially deeply. As such, agencies must also ensure that the requisite coordinating agreements are in place to ensure service is not duplicated and that costs can be allocated in a fair manner.

Achieving this goal will primarily depend on the openness of transit agencies to coordinate with each other in this way. Agencies must cooperate in identifying hubs that meet the needs of agencies that will be using them. Similarly, agencies must be open to establishing coordinating agreements that meet the needs of all agencies involved, such that hubs can be reached in the first place.

Agencies must also work with local stakeholders and maintain relationships with them to ensure that transit hubs can be implemented and maintained long-term. For example, if transit agencies wish to use the parking lot of a public library as a hub, an agreement must be gained from the public library for use of their facilities, as well as to ensure that the needs of the library are met.

Goal 3: Continued Education on LO-NO Renewable Sources (i.e. EV, AV, Hydrogen, CNG)

Significant resources are being dedicated at the Federal and state level towards replacing traditional internal combustion vehicles with electric and alternative fuel vehicles. While these technologies hold significant promise, significant work must be done to prepare to implement them, especially detailed study of agency needs and the current state of electric/alternative fuel infrastructure in the Northwest Region.

Table 20 summarizes the strategies identified by the Northwest Working Group in pursuit of Goal 3.

Table 20: Goal 3 Strategy Summary

Goal 3 Strategies
Strategy 3.1: Conduct a state-wide planning study that evaluates available fuel technologies and examines agency readiness for implementation.
Strategy 3.2: Become familiar with Federal and state funding sources for electric and alternative fuel vehicles, such as the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program.

Agencies are not yet positioned to adopt electric and alternative fuel technology. As such, advance study must be conducted to evaluate the most appropriate fuel and charging technologies and examine agency readiness. A statewide planning study would assist in preparing to adopt these technologies, especially by analyzing the challenges agencies currently face in doing so and how to overcome those challenges. Specific challenges identified by Working Group members included what technology is available, infrastructure needs, and the costs associated with vehicles and charging/fuel infrastructure. Part of the study process may include small-scale testing, whereby agencies are awarded funding to obtain a small number of vehicles to test throughout their service area.

Given the statewide interest in this technology, ODOT is a natural partner to lead a statewide electric/alternative fuel vehicle study, with significant participation by transit agencies, human services agencies, municipalities, and regional planning agencies. ODOT is currently responsible for developing and overseeing Oklahoma's National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Plan and funding distributions.

Transit agencies should also familiarize themselves with Federal grant programs such as the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program. As an example, the CFI program is a competitive application process for funding to install electric vehicles chargers. Municipalities are a natural partner for CFI applications, as chargers are typically available for public use, but the needs of transit agencies can be specifically accounted for in charger locations and pricing. This is also viewed favorably in application evaluations.

Agencies will likely require additional funding to install charging/fueling infrastructure and acquire vehicles given the cost premium electric/alternative fuel vehicles frequently carry. ODOT will play a key role in this process through its oversight of Federal funds that flow to rural transit agencies and 5310 providers. In addition, the structure of the statewide vehicle contract will need to evolve as electric/alternative vehicles become standard, which ODOT must be a willing partner in.

Goal 4: Increase use of technology to enhance service provision.

New technologies can greatly improve transit service provision through increased efficiency in various processes (planning, scheduling, etc.) and enabling greater coordination between agencies. Particularly when used in coordination with other agencies, technologies hold great promise in improving service delivery in ways that can outweigh the costs of implementing technology.

Table 21 summarizes the strategies identified by the Northwest Working Group in pursuit of Goal 4.

Table 21: Goal 4 Strategy Summary

Goal 4 Strategies
Strategy 4.1: Identify opportunities to implement technology into day-to-day service provision, such as in dispatching, scheduling, and vehicle inventory management.
Strategy 4.2: Leverage group procurement when procuring new technology to achieve system interoperability and cost-savings.

Northwest Region agencies should work towards identifying opportunities for implementing new technology into their day-to-day activities. In particular, more advanced dispatching and scheduling software has the potential to streamline multiple transit functions, including recordkeeping and driver assignments. Agencies should also consider supporting technologies necessary to implement different software programs, such as adding GPS-capabilities to vehicles to allow vehicles to be monitored by dispatchers, other transit staff, and mobility managers.

New technology also enables agencies to improve the experience of users, particularly by making scheduling more intuitive. Mobile phone applications and web applications are familiar to many transit users, or transit users may be taught to use these interfaces. These applications need not replace traditional phone-based scheduling. Rather, they may supplement phone-based scheduling, which ultimately offers more choice and flexibility to transit users.

Group procurement represents an opportunity to collectively acquire software, hardware, and other new technologies at prices that otherwise would not be feasible if procured individually. Additionally, it would enable agencies to acquire technology that is natively interoperable with the technology used by other agencies, which facilitates direct coordination between agencies.

Transit agencies will be the primary party responsible for identifying opportunities, as they have the greatest understanding of their daily needs and will ultimately be using the software. This may involve researching different available technologies, speaking with other agencies to understand their needs (such as through the Working Group), and meeting with vendors for demos.

Transit agencies and ODOT must work closely to ensure that group procurement is supported, particularly if done as part of a statewide technology procurement. Similarly, transit agencies pooling their efforts independent of ODOT

will need to work collectively to identify their needs, investigate different technologies, and select vendors. OTA may also play a supporting role in identifying and evaluating different vendors.

Mobility managers may play a supporting role in identifying new technologies, including by doing research themselves and convening discussions among different providers. Similarly, OTA may be a resource given its coordination among all transit agencies in Oklahoma. ODOT may also play a supporting role in evaluating new technologies and identifying potential funding sources to acquire technology.

The Northwest Region Coordinated Task Force

ODOT and Northwest Region transportation providers worked in concert to establish a coordinated mobility network to maximize participation and coordination by transportation providers and members of the public. This included the Northwest Region Working Group, interchangeably referred to as the Northwest Region Coordinated Task Force, consisting of ODOT personnel and transportation provider staff conducting working group meetings to identify challenges that providers are facing and to foster greater coordination amongst members of the network. Additionally, ODOT and the Northwest Region Working Group held a public meeting to solicit additional feedback from organizational stakeholders and members of the public.

Working Group/Task Force

The coordinated planning region held three working group meetings for the development of the 2023 Northwest Region Coordinated Transportation Plan. These meetings consisted of polling, open discussion, and presentations by ODOT to identify the most pressing issues facing participating providers and solutions that may help address these issues.

Members of the Working Group voted on and selected a lead agency in April/May of 2023, whose responsibilities are to:

- Facilitate regular outreach.
- Host at least one meeting per year to update data and information in the plan.
- Maintain and make available planning process documentation.
- Lead stakeholders through reviews and updates of the plan.
- Submit the adopted Northwest Region Coordinated Transportation Plan to ODOT.

MAGB Transportation was selected as the lead agency for the Northwest Region. The Northwest Region Working Group was composed of the following agencies and individuals:

Table 22: Working Group Members

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Micky Flynn	**MAGB Transportation (Lead Agency)**	Demitria Dixon	Enid Public Transit
Joyce Clark	Beaver City Transit	Martin Hernandez	Guymon-The Ride
Rita Kroll	Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Jonathon Cross	Northern Oklahoma Development Authority (NODA)
Jean Blough	Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Chanler Cory	Northern Oklahoma Developmental Authority (NODA)
Tiffany Plunkett	Cherokee Strip Transit (CST)	Brock Spencer	Northern Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NORTPO)
Angela Plumley	Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribal Transit	Cecil Michael	Oklahoma Economic Development Authority (OEDA)
Laura Corff	Cimarron Public Transit System (CPTS)	Gilbert Nuncio	Red River Transportation Service
Shelby Jewell	Cimarron Public Transit System (CPTS)	Tillie Broncho	White Eagle Transit

The following sub-sections provide dates and high-level agendas for each working group meeting.

Working Group Meeting #1
Working Group Meeting #1 was held on May 18, 2023.

The primary purposes of Working Group Meeting #1 were to familiarize working group members with the 5310 program and working group process, gain a broad understanding of challenges and existing coordination among providers, select a lead agency, and provide additional technical resources for members to draw upon.

Working Group Meeting #2
Working Group Meeting #2 was held on July 18, 2023.

The primary purposes of Working Group Meeting #2 were to provide an interim update on the planning activities carried out prior to Working Group Meeting #2, set the stage for additional coordination activities prior to Working Group Meeting #3, and to have an in-depth discussion with working group members on activities they had carried out since the previous coordinated plans and initiatives they would like to take to improve service in the future.

ODOT provided summary-level findings from the public survey, public meeting, and Working Group Meeting #1, with a focus on the service characteristics and challenges that appeared to be of most importance based on these activities. This information was used as the basis for focused discussion on activities that providers and planning agencies have taken since the previous coordinated plans to improve their service. Meeting participants discussed challenges and successes they had faced in the past as well as improvements to service they would like to implement in the future. The discussion was structured to also identify challenges that participants may face in implementing these improvements and the resources that they would need to overcome these challenges.

Working Group Meeting #3
Working Group Meeting #3 was held on August 29, 2023.

The primary purposes of Working Group Meeting #3 were to give working group members another opportunity to comment on the gaps and unmet needs in the Region, as well as develop goals and associated strategies.

ODOT highlighted specific sections of the Plan that Working Group members should prioritize during their review, including the **Unmet Transportation Needs & Gaps** section, and incorporated any feedback received during the meeting into this Plan. ODOT then facilitated an in-depth discussion of goals, strategies, responsible parties, required resources, and other aspects of goal development for the Region. This information, alongside information collected during a two-week review period following Working Group Meeting #3, was incorporated into this Plan.

Public Meeting
ODOT and the Northwest Region Working Group conducted a public meeting on June 29, 2023, which had 16 public attendees. The meeting was held virtually on Zoom and consisted of both presentations and discussions in the main Zoom meeting as well as smaller group discussions in breakout rooms facilitated by ODOT and WSP staff.

Members of the public, transit agencies, and human service agencies were afforded the opportunity to discuss mobility challenges facing seniors and people with disabilities. The following are the key challenges identified throughout the public meeting:

- **Lack of Coordination**: Transit providers described different reasons why a lack of coordination amongst each other has been inhibiting the mobility of seniors and people with disabilities. One agency described their service to dialysis providers as well outside typical business hours, starting as early as 3AM and ending as late as 10PM. This same provider believed that other providers were not aware of this service, leading to a lack of necessary coordination with providers who may be unable to provide service during these hours.
- **SoonerRide**: Transit providers and human service agencies reported challenges they have experienced with SoonerRide. They stated that SoonerRide has been cancelling scheduled trips and failing to notify the client or the transit agency in a timely manner.
- **Information**: Lack of information, especially for smaller counties, was identified as a major barrier to rural residents accessing public transit.

- **Multimodal Infrastructure**: Sidewalk improvements were a common need reported by participants to enable transit users to access the area around where they take transit to.
- **Challenges Scheduling Rides**: Participants described a host of challenges scheduling rides. One participant described a need for different options for those with impaired speech, such as an app or online interface instead of via phone. Additionally, the need for more on-demand service was a common request due to the difficulty of scheduling rides one or more days in advance.
- **Communication with Clients**: Multiple issues regarding communication were described by participants. Riders reported being surprised when their rides were contracted out, as this was not communicated to them, and sometimes the contracted vehicles did not meet their needs. Participants wished they could more readily receive information on when their vehicle was arriving so they could know if the service was reliable or not.
- **Lack of Options**: Riders generally have few options, so a cancellation typically means the trip is not completed at all or an expensive alternative is chosen.
- **ADA Accessibility**: Participants described anxiety regarding whether or not their vehicle would be ADA accessible.

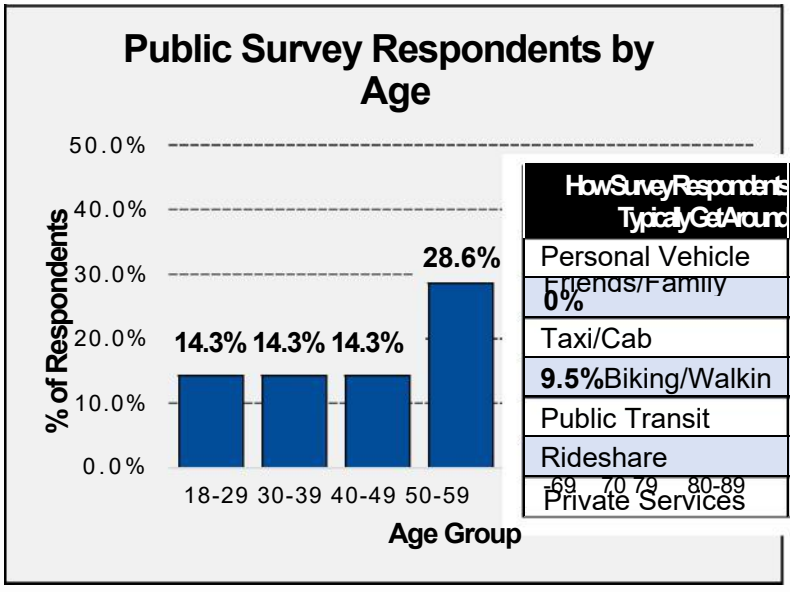
A copy of the public notice for the public meeting is included in the Appendix.

Public Survey

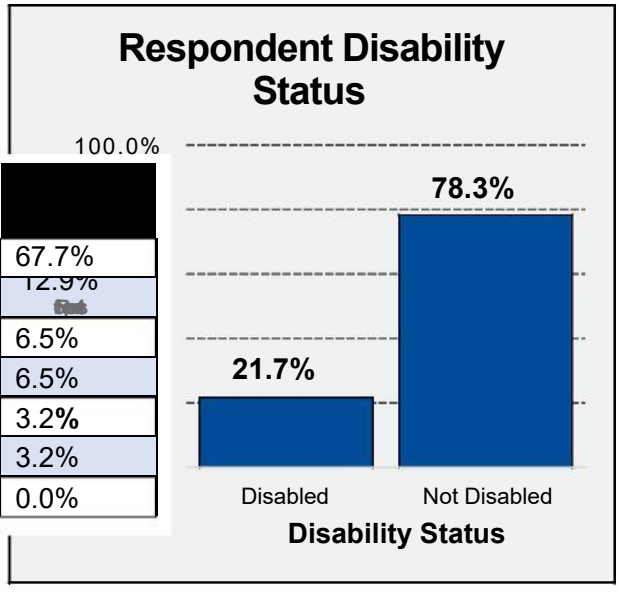
ODOT conducted an online public survey from June 6, 2023, to July 21, 2023, to gather deeper feedback from both members of the general public as well as to give agencies, including both transportation providers and other human services providers, an additional opportunity to identify unmet needs and potential coordination efforts. Respondents were asked to identify themselves according to the county they were located in, and project staff used this information to assign their feedback to specific regions. Summaries of the agency and public feedback received for this Region are summarized below.

General Public Feedback

In total, 838 members of the general public responded to the public survey, 649 of which provided adequate information to sort them into a region. Of those, 23 respondents were from the Northwest Region. Seniors were disproportionately represented among survey respondents, with 28.5% of respondents being 60 years of age or older. People with disabilities were also well represented compared to their statewide percentage. Five of 25 respondents had a disability (21.7%%) versus 16.3% for Oklahoma as a whole.



How Survey Respondents Typically Get Around	
Personal Vehicle	67.7%
Friends/Family	12.9%
0%	
Taxi/Cab	6.5%
9.5% Biking/Walkin	6.5%
Public Transit	3.2%
Rideshare	3.2%
69 70 79 80-89 Private Services	0.0%



Respondents were asked about their day-to-day travel behavior to establish a basis for how they get around. Personal vehicles were the most common method of transportation used, with 67.7% of responses (21 respondents) indicating they commonly use personal vehicles. Rides from family and friends was the second most common response, with 12.9% of responses, or 4 responses.

Public transit use and awareness was a key part of the survey to evaluate how agencies may best reach members of the public. Results of questions asking about paratransit use and knowledge of public transit indicate potential information and marketing gaps. No survey respondents reported using paratransit, while 52.2% indicated they do not and 47.8% indicated they are unsure or do not know what paratransit is. When asked if public transit is available in their area, 47.8% said no and 21.7% said they do not know.

Respondents were also asked to indicate how they would find information about transit services or private transportation services. General internet searches, friends/family, and phone calls to providers were the most commonly cited sources (48.4%, 22.6%, and 9.7% of responses, respectively), highlighting the importance of having a fundamentally strong marketing strategy. The sources that respondents indicate they turn to are often predicated on knowing of public transit in the first place. Friends/family members are also especially critical in raising awareness of transit given the reliance of seniors and people with disabilities on their assistance.

Public Transit Use and Awareness

Do respondents use paratransit?		**Is public transit available in respondents' areas?**		**How do respondents typically find information on public transit?**	
Yes	0%	Yes	30.4%	Internet Search	48.4%
No	52.2%	No	47.8%	Friends/Family	22.6%
Not sure/Unsure what paratransit is	47.8%	Not sure	21.7%	Phone Call to Provider	9.7%
				Provider Websites	6.5%
				Smartphone Apps/Text for Info	6.5%
				Community Organizations	3.2%
				ODOT	3.2%

Discussion of the needs of current and future transit users is critical to understanding those needs and addressing them. Respondents were asked to describe challenges they face in using existing service, including unmet transportation needs and cases where lack of transportation has prevented them from accomplishing a day-to-day activity.

Survey respondents generally identified fundamental aspects of transit service delivery as unmet needs, including services for people with disabilities/seniors, service area, and service frequency. Weekend service, services for seniors/people with disabilities, and access to medical-related locations were all tied for the most common response, reflecting the need to ensure that transit is service is appropriate for these populations. Weekday late night service and more locations served tied for second place.

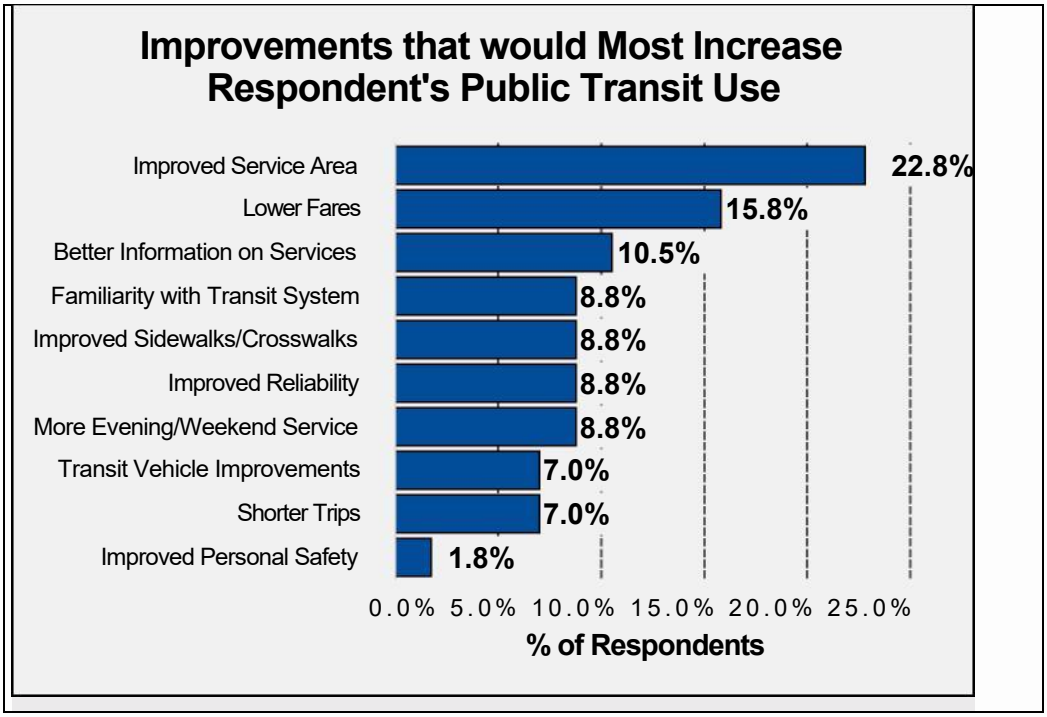
Respondents were also given the opportunity to identify specific transportation needs. The most common needs revolved around convenient services for seniors/people with disabilities and service schedule. Door-to-door transportation was the most commonly identified need, alongside weekend service. Weekday business hour service and weekday late night service were both tied for the second most common need, reflecting the importance of providing strong service throughout all business hours and on the weekends.

Transportation Needs of Members of the Public

Unmet Needs of Clients		Specific Needs of Clients	
Weekend Service	14.0%	Door-to-door Transportation	17.3%
Senior/Disability Services	14.0%	Weekend Service	17.3%
Access to Medical Locations	14.0%	Weekday Business Hour Service	13.5%
Weekday Late Night Service	12.3%	Weekday Late Night Service	13.5%
Locations Served	12.3%	Last Mile Connections	13.5%
Last Mile Connections	10.5%	Travel Assistance	9.6%
Access to Jobs	8.8%	Wheelchair Accessibility	7.7%
Weekday Early Morning Service	7.0%	Weekday Early Morning Service	7.7%
Service Frequency	7.0%		

Respondents were prompted for cases when lack of transportation has prevented them from taking part in certain activities. Responses reflect the fact that seniors and people with disabilities have needs outside medical appointments and accessing human services. Shopping and personal errands were the most common activity, while medical trips and agency services were the second and third, respectively. Education was a common response as well.

When asked about improvements that would increase their transit use, service area was the primary improvement, with 22.8% of responses. Lower cost/fares were the second most common, reflecting that transit fare can sometimes be a barrier to using transit. Better information on services was the third most common improvement, reflecting the importance of marketing transit service to target populations.



Cleanliness and safety were also commonly identified in written responses outside of multiple-choice questions. Respondents reported feeling unsafe being around other patrons when using service that required riding with others, potentially due to substance use on the part of other patrons. Cleanliness was highlighted from the standpoint of making riders feel comfortable and presenting an attractive image for marketing purposes.

Agency Feedback

Four hundred and twenty-two (422) agencies responded to the agency survey who provided enough information to assign them to a region. Of those, 39 were from the Northwest Region. Thirty-nine (39) agencies responded with the type of agency they are with heavy representation from federal/state human services agencies (43.3% of responses) and private, nonprofit human services agencies (26.7% of responses).

Agencies were also asked to identify the populations they primarily serve. A diverse mix of populations are served by respondents. The three most commonly identified populations were individuals with disabilities (18.6% of responses), low-income individuals (17.2% of responses), and seniors (16.6% of responses).

In terms of the services they provide, social services and health care are the primary services provided by respondents. Thirty-two-point six percent (32.6%) of responses were for social services while 25.6% were for healthcare. Twenty-point nine percent (20.9%) of responses indicated transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities.

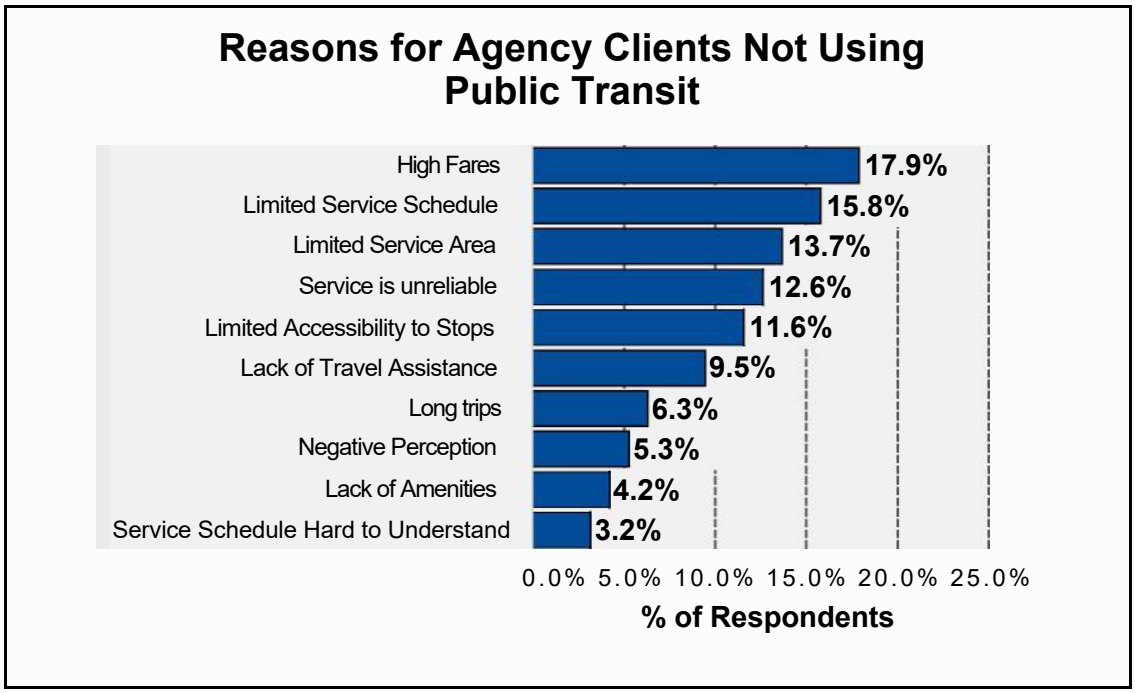
Respondents were similarly diverse in the type of transportation services they either provide or purchase, with a variety of services being provided/purchased and many agencies not providing/purchasing any transportation. Not providing/purchasing transportation was the most common response with 32.2% responses. Among agencies that do provide/purchase transportation services, demand- response service was the most common at 27.1% responses with recurring trips receiving 16.9% of responses and special events receiving 15.3% of responses. Among agencies who provide transportation services (but do not purchase), nine providers use agency-owned vehicles and six use non-agency-owned vehicles.

Agency Characteristics

Agency Type		Populations Served		Services Provided		Transportation Services Provided/Purchased	
Federal/State Human Services	43.3%	Individuals with Disabilities	18.6%	Social services	32.6%	None or N/A	32.2%
Private, Nonprofit Human Services	26.7%	Low-income Individuals	17.2%	Health care	25.6%	Demand-response	27.1%
County Government	6.7%	Seniors (65+ years)	16.6%	Senior/Disability Transportation	20.9%	Recurring Trips	16.9%
Private, Nonprofit Transportation	6.7%	General Public	14.5%	Public Transportation	16.3%	Special Events	15.3%
Public Transit Authority	6.7%	Veterans	12.4%	Economic Development	4.7%	Fixed-route	8.5%
Tribal Transit	6.7%	American Indians	10.3%				
Private, For-profit Transportation	3.3%	Youth (17 years or younger)	7.6%				
Municipal Government	0.0%	Agency Clients Only	2.8%				
Regional/State	0 0%						

The ADA-accessibility of agencies' fleets varied which may present a barrier to seniors and people with disabilities. Among agencies who responded, eight agencies reported only some vehicles being ADA-accessible and three agencies reported having no ADA-accessible vehicles. By contrast, five agencies reported their fleets being entirely ADA-accessible.

Agencies were asked a number of questions to identify the challenges faced by and unmet needs of their clients. When asked why their clients do not use public transit, cost, service schedule, and service area were the most commonly cited reasons. Beyond the usefulness of the service, cost can be a barrier to some riders, particularly for longer rides or rides that extend outside of core cities and towns. A moderate number of respondents also highlighted issues with accessibility to service and a lack of reliability.



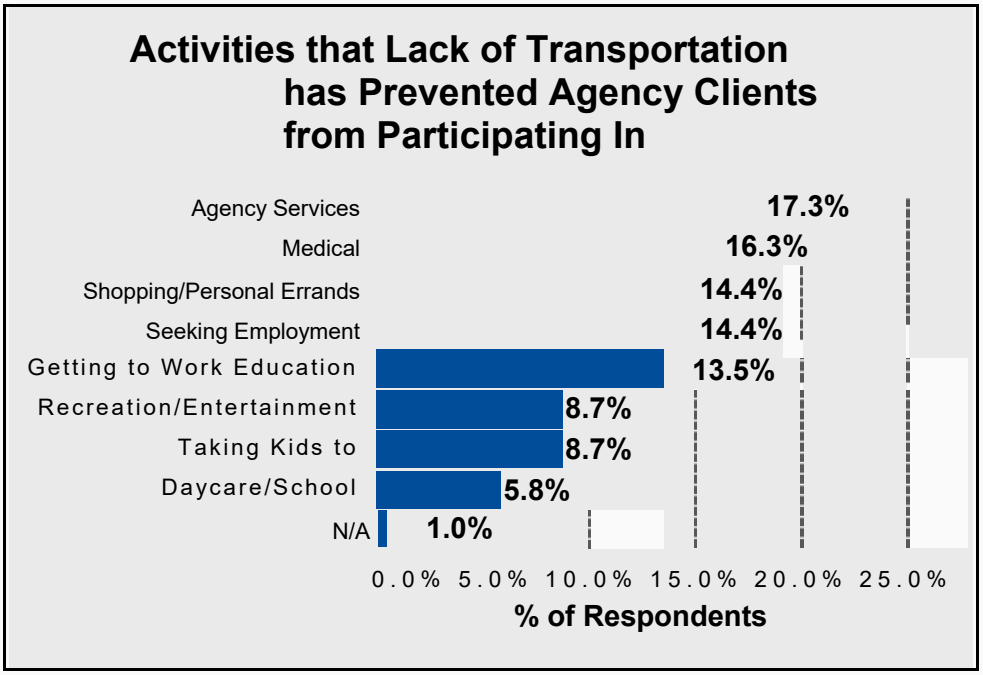
When asked about unmet transportation needs of agency clients, service area and service schedule were again major unmet needs, further underscoring the importance of providing service in the right location at the right time. Although services for seniors and people with disabilities was the most common transportation need, reflecting the importance of human services transportation to these groups. Weekend service was the second most common unmet need, while more locations served and access to medical locations were tied for the third most common.

Agencies were also asked about specific transportation needs that their clients have. Services specifically for seniors and people with disabilities were a major theme. Door-to-door transportation was the most commonly identified need, while travel assistance was the second. Wheelchair accessibility, alongside weekday business hour service and weekend service, were the third most commonly identified needs.

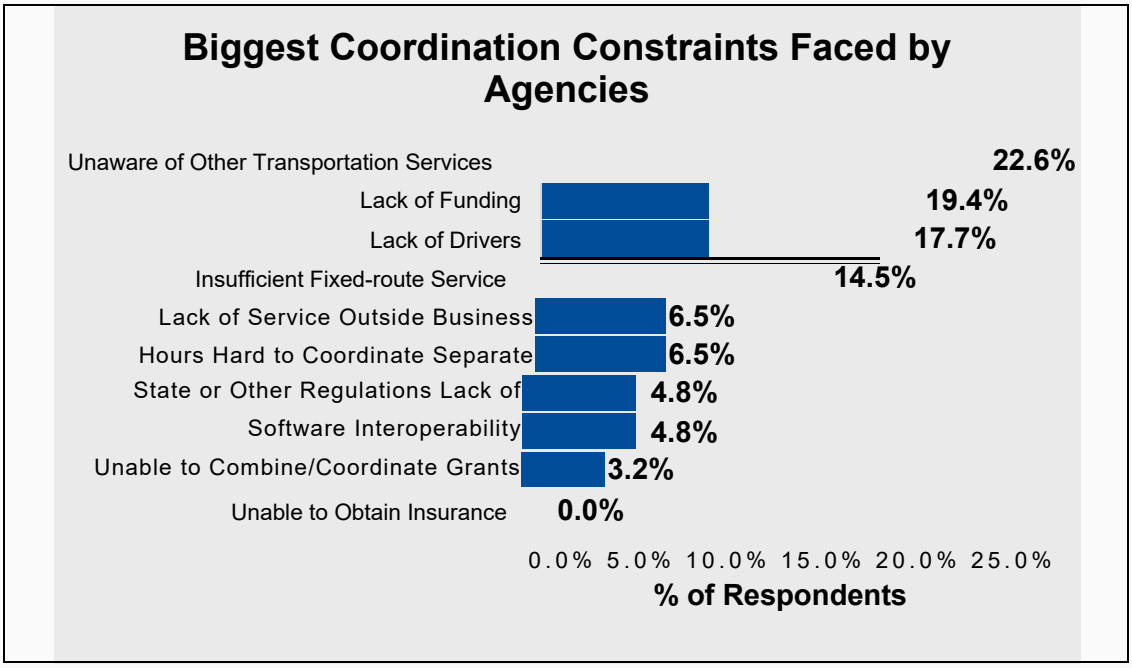
Transportation Needs of Agency Clients

Unmet Needs of Clients		Specific Needs of Clients	
Senior/Disability Services	18.6%	Door-to-door Transportation	19.6%
Weekend Service	15.0%	Travel Assistance	16.1%
Locations Served	13.3%	Weekend Service	14.3%
Access to Medical Locations	13.3%	Weekday Business Hour Service	11.6%
Access to Jobs	10.6%	Wheelchair Accessibility	12.5%
Service Frequency	9.7%	Weekday Late Night Service	10.7%
Weekday Late Night Service	9.7%	Weekday Early Morning Service	10.7%
Weekday Early Morning Service	6.2%	Last Mile Connections	4.5%
Last Mile Connections	3.5%		

Analyzing types of activities where lack of transportation access has been a barrier to participation helps further identify user needs and barriers. Most responses centered around employment, agency services, and medical services. These responses reflect the importance of agency services and medical appointments to seniors and people with disabilities. Additionally, shopping/personal errands was one of the most common responses, reflecting the need for seniors and people with disabilities to travel outside of medical-related appointments to meet their daily needs.



Beyond the needs of clients, agencies were asked to evaluate their needs as organizations and any constraints they were facing in coordinating with each other to provide improved service. Lack of funding, lack of staff to drive, and being unaware of other transportation services were the most common constraints identified. Lack of funding may partially account for the challenges reported by respondents surrounding service area and service schedule, as well as the lack of staff to drive. Additionally, a lack of awareness of other services highlights the importance of outreach to other organizations as well as the public. Agencies must be acquainted with each other to coordinate their services.



Service area continued to be a major concern in written responses. Respondents specifically mentioned needing improved service in Edmond, Guthrie, and Moore. Service directly to Oklahoma City was also commonly requested. Agencies also noted a need for a driver pay increase due to an ongoing shortage of paratransit operators. This need can be a component of various operation challenges, including limited service area and service schedule, both of which were among the most pressing needs identified in the Northwest Region.

Continuing Efforts

The Northwest Region Working Group is planning to meet monthly with the Coordinated Plan itself being updated on an annual basis.

Participation in the coordinated planning process is a prerequisite to accessing 5310 funding, and any project an agency wishes to use 5310 funds for must appear in the applicable 5310 coordinated plan. Agencies who wish to participate in the coordinating planning process who are not currently doing so should contact Micky Flynn (MAGB Transportation) via email.[9] Alternatively, Olivia Hook with ODOT OMPT can direct interested agencies to the Region's lead agency.[10]

Northwest Working Group Meetings are also open to individuals and organizations not directly associated with transportation providers, such as advocacy groups (e.g., disability coalitions). Those wishing to attend and participate in the working group meetings as an individual or as a representative of an organization, are encouraged to do so. The area mobility manager can also provide information on how to get involved in the transportation discussions throughout the Northwest Region. See Table 6 for contact information.

[9] micky@magb.org

[10] ohook@odot.org

Plan Adoption

The FTA does not formally review or approve coordinated plans; thus, the Northwest Coordinating Transportation Network is responsible for the development, and through consensus, the group endorses/adopts the regional locally developed coordinated transportation plan. The planning process must include seniors, individuals with disabilities, public/private/nonprofit transportation and human service providers, and other members of the public. Working group members are encouraged to contact mobility management programs and ODOT OMPT staff for help with the coordinated planning process as needed.

After considerable involvement of all groups indicated in Section 5310 Program language, this Coordinated Plan was locally endorsed by the Northwest Region Working Group on December 11th, 2023, and expires in 2027, when a new regional coordinated plan will be developed. The Working Group will update the current plan annually. In relation to the long-range and statewide transportation improvement plan, this Coordinated Plan data is valid for four years until a new Coordinated Plan is written.

Annual Updates

Coordinated Plans are to be updated annually. The Northwest Region Working Group meets regularly to implement strategies and update the Coordinated Plan. The following items are updated annually in the Coordinated Plan:

- Transportation Provider Assessment:
  - Providers are added or removed
  - Information for existing providers is updated
- Goals: Updated statuses for each goal and strategy are provided
- Cover page is updated to reflect annual updates
- Annual Updates section is updated to note that the annual update has been completed

Once updated, the Coordinated Plan may be submitted to ODOT OMPT to review, accept, retain on file and to be used for 5310 program applications. Similar to FTA, ODOT does not formally adopt the regional coordinated plans, however, ODOT does review the plans for completeness, compliance and will only award 5310 projects that are within the FTA 9070.1G Circular eligibility guidelines.

2025 Update

The 2025 plan update was adopted by transit stakeholders in a meeting held on _____.

Goal 1: Improve recruiting and retention of qualified drivers and office staff

Progress & Activities

- Agencies continue to navigate driver qualification requirements tied to SoonerRide, Medicaid NEMT, and insurance carriers, including background checks, drug testing, online modules, and medical cards.
- National RTAP resources are being leveraged for free driver and staff training, reducing cost barriers for agencies (excluding CPR/First Aid).
- Regional meetings are serving as a forum for agencies to share operational lessons learned, including onboarding challenges for new services (e.g., Cimarron County senior transportation launch).
- Discussion of contract complexity and administrative burden (e.g., DDS contract renewal fees and documentation demands) highlighted impacts on staff capacity and retention.

Challenges

- Driver shortages persist, particularly for long-distance and specialized trips.
- Varying driver capabilities and training levels create inconsistencies in service delivery and ADA implementation.
- Administrative workload associated with multiple brokers and contracts affects office staff retention.

Next Steps

- Continue peer-to-peer sharing of driver recruitment strategies and training resources.
- Encourage use of National RTAP training and ODOT guidance to reduce onboarding burden.
- Elevate state-level contract and documentation concerns through coordinated advocacy.

Goal 2: Establish transit hubs to improve cross-boundary service coordination

Progress & Activities

- Ongoing coordination across counties and agencies has strengthened cross-boundary trip planning, particularly for medical and nutrition-related trips.
- Red River's transition of 5311 services to MAGB (effective October 1, 2025) will require regional coordination to maintain continuity of service.
- Increased collaboration with healthcare partners, including hospitals, WIC clinics, and senior centers, is improving awareness of transportation options across service areas.
- Mobility Managers are actively supporting new service startups (e.g., Cimarron County senior van service) to integrate them into the regional network.

Challenges

- Limited formal hub infrastructure; coordination relies heavily on relationships and informal agreements.
- Cross-boundary trips remain resource-intensive, especially for rural and frontier counties.

Next Steps

- Continue strengthening regional referral pathways among transit, healthcare, and human service providers.
- Explore opportunities to formalize transfer points or shared coordination practices as services expand.

Goal 3: Prepare for electric and alternative fuel vehicle implementation

Progress & Activities

- Regional planning discussions acknowledge the importance of future low- and no-emission vehicle readiness, while recognizing current uncertainty around federal priorities and funding.
- Fleet updates funded through 5310, 5311, and 5339 programs have focused on service reliability and capacity as a near-term priority.
- Agencies continue to monitor IIJA funding trends, including the 5.6% increase in federal transit funding, to inform long-term fleet planning.

Challenges

- Rural service areas face infrastructure and cost barriers to immediate EV adoption.
- Agencies are prioritizing fleet replacement and operational stability over alternative fuel transitions.

Next Steps

- Revisit low- and no-emission vehicle strategies as federal guidance and funding clarity improves.
- Continue documenting fleet needs and infrastructure gaps to position the region for future opportunities.

Goal 4: Increase use of technology to enhance service provision

Progress & Activities

- Expanded use of BlackCat software for claims, invoicing, and document management is improving efficiency, audit readiness, and coordination with ODOT.
- Agencies discussed successful use of TransitAssist, PICK, and TA hotspots, including interest in mapping pick-up and drop-off data to identify service gaps and demand patterns.
- RideSheet (National RTAP) was identified as a low-cost coordination tool that allows multiple 5310 agencies to interface using Google Maps.
- Mobility Managers are supporting agencies in improving data consistency and reporting across platforms.

Challenges

- Technology adoption varies by agency capacity and staff familiarity.
- Limited staff time can slow implementation of new tools, even when low-cost options exist.

Next Steps

- Encourage broader adoption of shared, low-cost technology tools for scheduling, coordination, and data visualization.
- Continue peer learning and demonstrations during regional meetings.
- Expand participation in the National RTAP directory to improve visibility and coordination statewide.

2024 Update

The 2024 plan update was adopted by transit stakeholders in a meeting held on January 9, 2025.

Goal 1: Improve recruiting and retention of qualified drivers and office staff

Regional partners continued discussions on driver recruitment barriers, including regulatory requirements and workforce availability.

Medical marijuana testing requirements were identified as a potential hiring challenge, with anticipated regulatory changes (saliva-based testing) expected to reduce long-term barriers.

Some agencies reported recent improvements in recruitment, with fewer open driver positions compared to previous years.

Staffing constraints continued to impact service coverage in certain communities, with limited driver availability restricting service areas.

Key Takeaway
While driver recruitment remains challenging, agencies reported early signs of stabilization in 2024, supported by evolving regulations and shared regional problem-solving.

Goal 2: Establish transit hubs to improve cross-boundary service coordination

Mobility Management advanced the concept of a multi-modal mobility hub, envisioned as a shared call center, training, and transfer coordination resource serving multiple agencies.

Discussions emphasized strategic hub locations along major corridors (including I-35 and US-412) to support cross-boundary travel.

New partnerships, including Medicare Advantage non-emergency medical transportation contracts, strengthened regional service coordination.

Development of a Mobility Management resource guide and implementation of the Take Charge OSDH Pilot Project improved cross-county coordination and demonstrated hub-like functions through proactive transportation planning.

The Take Charge pilot emerged as a model case study illustrating the value of transit hubs in connecting services and partners.

Key Takeaway
The region made meaningful progress toward transit hub development through planning, partnerships, and pilot projects that function as foundational coordination infrastructure.

Goal 3: Prepare for electric and alternative fuel vehicle implementation

Agencies explored potential funding opportunities related to carbon reduction initiatives and reduced local match requirements for federal transit programs.

Regional partners acknowledged that zero-emission vehicle deployment remains challenging in the Northwest Oklahoma context due to rural service characteristics.

Interest was expressed in lower-emission alternatives, such as propane vehicles, as a more feasible interim solution for future fleet investments.

Key Takeaway
The region focused on realistic, phased approaches to alternative fuel adoption, prioritizing funding readiness and feasible low-emission options over immediate zero-emission deployment.

Goal 4: Increase use of technology to enhance service provision

Agencies expanded use of TransitAssist analytics, including heat-mapping features that identify high-frequency trip locations and service demand patterns.

Mobility Management engaged with UZURV to explore rural transportation solutions and potential regional demonstrations.

The region formalized a bi-monthly meeting schedule, improving consistency in coordination and information sharing.

Mobility Management participated in RideSheet technology demonstrations, targeting small rural agencies with limited fleets.

Regional partners engaged in TransitAssist training and peer discussions to increase shared understanding of technology capabilities and data use.

Key Takeaway
Technology adoption accelerated in 2024 through training, demonstrations, and practical application, supporting more data-informed decision-making and regional coordination.

2025 NW Region Participation Report & Sign I...

	Agency Name & Employees	Agency Type	2024 Jul 8 2-3pm	2024 Sept 9 2-3pm	2024 Nov 11 2-3pm	2025 Jan 9 2pm	2025 Mar 13 2pm	2025 May 8 2pm	2025 July 10 2pm	2025 Sept 11 2pm	2025 Nov 13 2pm
1	(BCT) Bever City Transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☐
2	MAGB Transit (lead agency)	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑
3	White eagle transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
4	4R Kids Foundation- Garfield	5310 Specialized Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Cherokee strip transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑
6	Cimarron public transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑
7	Enid public transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Guymon- the ride	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Transit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Otoe-Missouri tribe- noble	5310 Specialized Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Beaver county nursing home-beaver	5310 Specialized Transportation	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Center of family love- Kingfisher	5310 Specialized Transportation	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Cimarron county Senior Center	5310 Specialized Transportation	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐
13	Fairview fellowship home and village– major	5310 Specialized Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
14	J.D. Community Health Center	5310 Specialized Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
15	Newman Memorial Hospital Transit	Future 5310 Applicant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☑	☐	☑
16	Beaver County Memorial Hospital	Future 5310 Applicant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
17	Ponca Tibal Title IV senior center	Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
18	Evergreen presbyterian ministries- Garfield	5310 Specialized Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	Opportunity Center - kay	Past/inactive 5310 Agency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Mobility Management- Chanler Cory	Mobility Management	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
21	Mobility Management- Cristi Williams	Mobility Management	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	ODOT	ODOT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
23	NORTPO (NODA & OEDA)	Planning Agency	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑
24	Maple Lawn Manor inc.- Blaine	Past/inactive 5310 Agency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25	Mike Woodhams	ODOT	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☑
26	OkTA- Andrea Ball	Transit Association	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2024 NW Region Participation Report

OKLAHOMA Transportation

Agency Name & Employees	Agency Type	2023 Nov 13 2-3pm	2023 Dec 11 2-3pm	2024 Jan 8 2-3pm	2024 Feb 12 2-3pm	2024 Mar 11 2-3pm	2024 Apr 8 2-3pm	2024 May 13 2-3pm	2024 Jul 8 2-3pm	2024 Sept 9 2-3pm	2024 Nov 11 2-3pm
MAGB Transit (lead agency)	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Cherokee strip transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑
Cimarron public transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Enid public transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Guymon- the ride	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(BCT) Bever City Transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐
White eagle transit	5311/Tribal/5307 Public Tra	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☐	☑	☑
Beaver county nursing home-beaver	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑
Fairview fellowship home and village– majc	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☑	☐	☑	☑	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
Opportunity Center - kay	Past/inactive 5310 Agency	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐
Otoe-Missouri tribe- noble	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4R Kids Foundation- Garfield	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evergreen presbyterian ministries- Garfield	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Center of family love- Kingfisher	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑
Cimarron county Senior Center	5310 Specialized Transpor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑
Maple Lawn Manor inc.- Blaine	Past/inactive 5310 Agency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mobility Management- Chanler Cory	Mobility Management	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☑	☑
Mobility Management- Cristi Williams	Mobility Management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐
ODOT	ODOT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
OkTA- Andrea Ball	Transit Association	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
NORTPO (NODA & OEDA)	Planning Agency	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑

Appendix

Definitions

There are several terms used throughout the plan that may be unique to transportation providers or human service agencies. The terms are defined here for reference.

Agency Transportation Providers: Agency transportation providers, also known as human services transportation, are services that operate for the sole benefit of program participants. Traditionally, the agency operating the service has a non-transportation core mission and elects to provide transportation services to meet the overall core mission.

Coordination: Collaborative efforts toward understanding and meeting mobility needs in the most appropriate, cost effective, and responsive manner.

FAST Act: Congress established the funding for Federal Transit Administration programs through authorizing legislation that amends Chapter 53 of Title 49 of the U.S. Code. On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorizing surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020.

Gaps in Service: A break in the continuity of available transportation resources, such as a break between hours of operation or a break between two or more geographic areas.

Lead Agency: The organization responsible for facilitating outreach; composing a plan that meets the requirements of current Federal and State legislation; maintaining documentation from the planning process and making it available upon request; and leading stakeholders through annual reviews, amendments, and updates of the plan. The Lead Agency is also responsible for submitting the adopted Coordinated Plan and all amendments or updates to participating stakeholders and ODOT.

Mobility Management: Federal Transit Law (49 U.S. Code § 5302) defines mobility management as a capital project "consisting of short-range planning and management activities and projects for improving coordination among public transportation and other transportation service providers carried out by a recipient or subrecipient through an agreement entered into with a person, including a governmental entity, under this chapter (other than section 5309); but excluding operating public transportation services." This role is also referred to as Mobility Navigator in this plan as that is the job title for many mobility management professionals in Oklahoma.

NEMT: Non-Emergency Medical Transportation, any transportation service for medical reasons that does not include emergency medical purposes.

NMT: Non-Medical Transportation; Non-medical transportation is transportation that is used by waiver enrollees solely to access adult day support, vocational habilitation, supported employment enclave, and/or supported employment community services, as specified by their individual service plans (ISP). 5123:2-9-18 (B)(9)

Public Transit Providers: Public transportation is shared-ride transit services that are open to the general public and charge a set fare. There are generally two types of public transit: fixed-route and demand-response transportation services. Fixed-route services operate on a set schedule along a fixed route. Demand-response transportation services operate on a prearranged schedule determined by customer and service provider. Demand-response is a scheduled pick-up and drop-off system that operates between the origin and the destination in the most efficient route possible. Demand-response transportation includes those services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Ridership: The total number of passengers who boarded transportation vehicles are counted each time they board a vehicle.

Section 5307 Program: The Urbanized Area Formula Grants program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more.

Section 5310 Program: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides Federal formula funding for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. The program aims to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options.

Section 5311 Program: The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000 where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Subrecipients may include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.

Social Service Providers: In addition to the transportation providers listed above, the Region benefits from numerous human service agencies and organizations which serve as regional partners that have an impact on transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities.

Transportation: Transportation is broadly defined to include traditional transit, human service agency services, on-demand (taxi-like) services, bicycle and pedestrian programs and amenities.

Transportation Service Provider: Any transportation agency or human service agency that directly provides transportation for any reason to a client, patient, or anyone from the public.

Unmet Transportation Needs: Transportation that is wanted or desired but is not currently available.

Working Group: The Working Group is composed of key community stakeholders. The Planning Committee members agree to actively participate in the planning process and act as the plan advisory and adopting entity.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) Office of Mobility and Public Transit

Table 23: ODOT OMPT Staff

Name	Position	Contact Information
Jared Schwennesen	Multi-Modal Division Manager	Oklahoma Department of Transportation Multimodal Division 200 N.E. 21st Street Oklahoma City, OK 73105 405-521-4203 ODOTWeb-transit@odot.org
Eric Rose	Office of Mobility and Public Transit Manager	
Bobby Parkinson	Sr. Program Manager	
Olivia Hook	Statewide Mobility Manager	
Veronica Ross	Project Manager	
Bobby Parkinson	Project Manager	
John Heavrin	Program Manager	
Mason Brown	Program Manager	
Stephanie Davis	SSO Project Manager	Website: https://oklahoma.gov/odot.html
Rileigh Johnson	Project Manager	
Justin Gregory	Project Manager	
Thomas Nutter	Project Manager	
Bart Vleugels	Active Transportation & Rail	
Mike Woodhams	Project Manager	
Melanie Rakoczy	Project Manager	

Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310

Federal transit law, as amended by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU), requires that projects selected for funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) program be "derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan" and that the plan be "developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public."

History: Established in 1975, Section 5310 has been primarily directed to social/human service agencies, nonprofit organizations and other public bodies for the purchase of vehicles. The program is administered through the states, and it is at the state level that specific funding decisions are made.

Program Goal: The goal of the Section 5310 program is to improve mobility for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities throughout the country. Effective July 1, 2019, Section 5310 responsibilities, oversight and management of the grants and resources associated with Section 5310 will be transferred from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

Expenses are reimbursed at 80% federal funds and 20% local match. Certain expenditures made in an effort to satisfy the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Clean Air Act Amendments can be reimbursed at a 90% federal commitment (10% local match).

Vehicles and vehicle-related expenses including buses; vans; radios and communication equipment; vehicle shelters; wheelchair lifts and restraints; vehicle rehabilitation; manufacture, or overhaul; preventive maintenance, as defined in the National Transit Database (NTD); and extended warranties which do not exceed industry standards.

Agencies interested in applying for the 5310 programs can contact one of these offices for more information. ***Table 24: 5310 Application Information***

Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT)	EMBARK	Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG)
Statewide	OKC Urbanized Area	Tulsa and surrounding areas
The state does not operate public transportation services directly; ODOT administers 5310 federal funds for other areas of the state not served by INCOG (Tulsa and surrounding areas).	EMBARK is the designated recipient of Section 5310 funding for the urbanized area.	INCOG is the designated recipient of Section 5310 funding for the Tulsa region. Local governments and nonprofit agencies are eligible to apply for the funds.
For more information, contact **Eric Rose** OMPT Manager erose@odot.org	For more information, contact **Jeff Wheatley** 5310 Program Manager 5310Program@okc.gov	For more information, contact **Mahathi Akella** Transportation Planner makella@incog.org
https://oklahoma.gov/odot/programs-and-projects/transit-programs/section-5310-elderly.html	https://www.embarkok.com/5310	https://www.incog.org//Community_Economic_Development/commdev_com dev.html

*Agencies applying for 5310 program grants must participate in the coordination planning process, have the project listed in the coordinated plan, the project must address an unmet need in the plan, and abide by the FTA Section 5310 Circular and the Oklahoma Statewide Management Plan. FTA Section 5310 Circular

Additional technical assistance for participating agencies in the coordinated planning process can be found by visiting the National Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) www.nationalrtap.org. Agencies can also contact the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Multi-Modal Division and the Oklahoma Mobility Management Program for planning activity support.

Specialized Transportation

Table 25 below summarizes additional information collected from transit agencies and tribal providers following Working Group #3. “N/A” corresponds to agencies who did not explicitly provide this information.

Table 25: Specialized Transportation

Agency Name	Provides Medicaid Eligible trips?	Primary Funding Source	Primary Source of Match Funds	Level of Passenger Assistance Provided
Cherokee Strip Transportation	Contracted provider with ModivCare for Medicaid transportation. ModivCare has the current contract with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for Medicaid transportation.	5311	NEMT contract	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribal Transit	N/A	5311	N/A	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
Cimarron Public Transit System	Contracted provider with ModivCare for Medicaid transportation. ModivCare has the current contract with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for Medicaid transportation. SafeRide Health - Medicare Advantage members and, LTCA (Long Term Care Authority), TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	5311	NEMT contract	Door-to-door as needed and/or requested
Enid Public Transportation Authority	Contracted provider with ModivCare for Medicaid transportation. ModivCare has the current contract with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for Medicaid transportation.	5311	NEMT contract	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
Guymon – The Ride	N/A	5311	N/A	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
MAGB Transportation	Contracted provider with ModivCare for Medicaid transportation. ModivCare has the current contract with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for Medicaid transportation. LTCA (Long Term Care Authority)	5311	NEMT contract	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
Red River Public Transportation	Contracted provider with ModivCare for Medicaid transportation. ModivCare has the current contract with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for Medicaid transportation.	5311	NEMT contract	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
White Eagle Transit	N/A	5311	N/A	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation

Otoe- Missouria Transit	N/A	5311	N/A	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation
Beaver City Transit	N/A	5311	N/A	Demand-response curb-to-curb public transportation

Public Input Notice

ODOT seeking public input for Coordinated Transportation Plan

p=m3=0 a. PRINT 2 EMAIL

Monday, June 12, 2023

ODOT seeking public input for Coordinated Transportation Plan

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is looking for the public's input on the development of the 2023 Coordinated Transportation Plan. The plan is designed to identify transportation needs of Oklahomans with disabilities, seniors and low-income communities. The plan, will provide strategies for meeting those identified transportation needs.

Oklahomans can participate in the development of the plan through an online survey, that can be found and through a series of virtual public meetings. The public meetings will be highly interactive and allow participants to provide valuable input towards the plan.

There are five regional meetings scheduled between June 20 and June

29: Northeast Region (Including rural areas around Tulsa)

- 1 p.m. Tuesday, June 20
- Online: bit
- Call: 888-475-4499 (Meeting ID: 845 9658 2858)

Southeast Region

- 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 21
- Online: bit
- Call: 888-475-4499 (Meeting ID: 864 0808 4567)

Central Region (Including rural areas around OKC)

- 10 a.m. Thursday, June 22
- Online: bit
- Call: 888-475-4499 (Meeting ID: 863 9749 4440)

Southwest Region

- 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 28
- Online: bit
- Call: 888-475-4499 (Meeting ID: 821 4379 8899)

Northwest Region

- 1 p.m. Thursday, June 29
- Online: bit
- Call: 888-475-4499 (Meeting ID: 865 6063 6177)

To locate your region, click here.

About Coordinated Transportation Plans

Locally developed coordinated plans provide a unified regional strategy for transportation services for transportation-disadvantaged groups in need. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law requires a coordinated transit-human services plan be locally developed through feedback from older adults and individuals with disabilities, as well as transportation planning agencies, transportation provides and government agencies.

For more information, please click here

Last Modified on Jun 15,2023