

Map Your Experience

2022 INSIGHTS REPORT



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

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A graphic featuring a large red location pin icon on a teal background. The text "MAP YOUR" is in white, bold, uppercase letters, and "experience" is in a white, lowercase, cursive font. A white mouse cursor arrow points to the bottom right corner of the graphic.

MAP YOUR
experience

Map Your Experience Insights

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) has established the Map Your Experience tool to receive public comments on the issues affecting travelers in our region. Using these comments, NCTCOG has identified several areas of concern for improving transportation throughout the region. NCTCOG highlighted findings from feedback submitted through the Map Your Experience tool into [Mobility 2045 - 2022 Update](#) and the transit plan, [Access North Texas](#). Map Your Experience and related information, including a dashboard and data connections, can be found at www.nctcog.org/mapyourexperience.

For the mobility plan assessment, using responses to the Map Your Experience tool between May 2020 and January 2022, NCTCOG compiled qualitative feedback from residents of the region to identify areas needing improvement.

The insights in this report are grouped by mode. Comments in the tool are entered in three different maps: a bicycle-pedestrian map, a roadway map, and a transit map. Each comment may be assigned to one of several categories classifying the type of comment—such as bike/pedestrian safety, a need for crosswalks, roadway traffic signal timing, or transit frequency. For the bike/pedestrian mode, accessibility was examined using guidance from a National Cooperative Highway Research Program report.

Map Your Experience: Accessibility

Accessibility is traditionally defined as the ability of mobility-impaired populations (such as persons with disabilities and the elderly) to reach destinations. NCTCOG has taken a broader definition for the purposes of this section. Using guidance from the Transportation Research Board's report National Cooperative Highway Research Program 08-121, accessibility is defined as "the ease with which people can reach desired destinations." Accessibility can vary by mode; a convenient five-minute drive can be a difficult and dangerous 20-minute walk. Studying accessibility allows transportation planners and providers to understand how travelers utilize transportation facilities and identify deficiencies in the transportation network across various modes.

Furthermore, the report defines multiple dimensions by which accessibility can be assessed. One dimension is impedance, or “the ease or difficulty of traveling through space.” Traditional analyses typically consider travel times or distances, but the report includes factors such as sidewalk width, curb cuts, street lighting, and parking availability. Perceptions of safety and security are important factors but can be more difficult to quantify. Put simply, studying this can help answer the question, “How easy is it to get from A to B via different modes of transportation?”

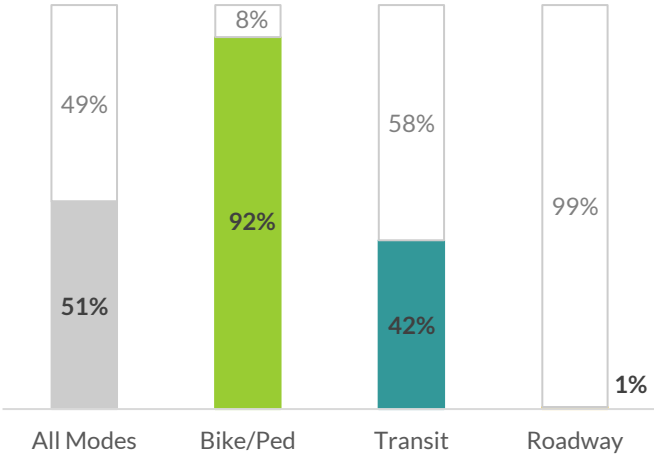


Figure 1: Percentage of Accessibility Comments by Mode

NCTCOG reviewed all comments to determine if they pertained to accessibility concerns and totaled them across the various categories, locations, and map types.

Of all reported accessibility issues (Table 1), **89 percent** were related to the bike/pedestrian mode of transportation, while **10 percent** were for transit and **0.5 percent** were for roadway. For total comments overall, **92 percent** of bike/pedestrian comments raised accessibility concerns; **42 percent** of transit comments addressed accessibility, and **0.4 percent** of roadway comments were about accessibility. Overall, out of 531 comments (including both original comments and responses to comments) received in the Map Your Experience tool, **51 percent** were identified as accessibility concerns.

	Total Comments*	Total Accessibility Issues	% of Total Comments	% of Accessibility Comments
All Modes	531	273	51%	-
Bike/Ped	265	244	92%	89%
Transit	67	28	42%	10%
Roadway	199	1	1%	0%

*Includes responses to parent comments; total comments on dashboard may be lower

Table 1: Accessibility Comments by Mode

The tally for roadway-related accessibility issues is low because traffic congestion was not counted as an impediment toward mobility. While congestion is certainly a critical issue, NCTCOG measures and addresses congestion and congestion management through existing programs and policies.

Out of the various subcategories for each comment, **75 percent** (205 comments) fell under three categories in the bike/pedestrian mode: sidewalk or trail availability; bike and pedestrian safety; requests for lanes, stripes and markings for bikes and pedestrians (Figure 2, right).

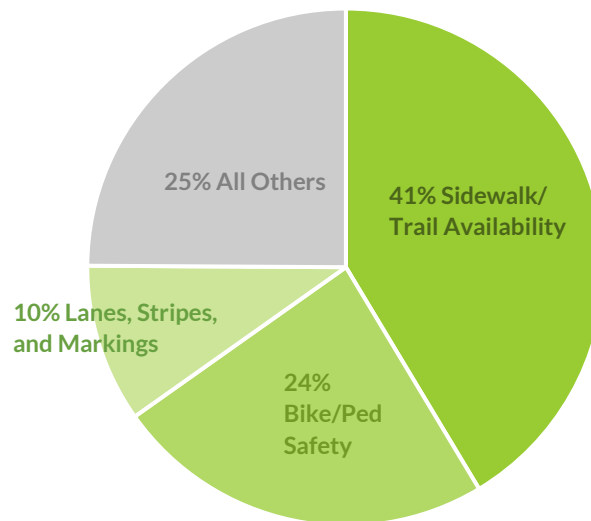


Figure 2: Share of Accessibility Issues by Category

Pedestrian and Bicycle Insights

In reviewing the comments from the Map Your Experience tool, a general theme emerges: There is great potential for improvement to pedestrian accessibility throughout the region. Many comments identified a need for wider sidewalks, completion of sidewalks, protected bicycle lanes, and safer speeds on non-arterial roads. Crosswalks across arterials would benefit from higher-visibility markings and signals such as Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, also known as HAWK signals. HAWK signals create a safer crossing environment by allowing pedestrians to trigger a red traffic signal at the crosswalk, while maintaining the regular flow of traffic when nobody is crossing.

Improving the experiences of pedestrian and transit users is a joint effort across multiple stakeholders. Cities, counties, transit authorities, NCTCOG, and the Texas Department of Transportation all have roles to play in the implementation of changes. NCTCOG recommends that governing bodies use the data from Map Your Experience as starting points for further outreach to residents to understand the accessibility issues they face. Departments of transportation should consider developing bike/pedestrian toolkits to help solve different types of accessibility problems such as incomplete sidewalks or unsafe road crossings. Accessibility improvements can be implemented as a focus area for capital improvement programs at the local level, with funds allocated specifically to address these problems.

NCTCOG is committed to improving the transportation experience for all users throughout the region and supporting regional partners' efforts to find solutions for accessibility. The Mobility 2045 – 2022 Update addresses many of these issues in the Operational Efficiency and Mobility Options chapters.

Transit Insights

Most comments received on the Map Your Experience transit map expressed a desire for increased service on existing transit lines and expansion to new areas. This includes both existing transit authority service areas and places not currently part of a transit authority. Figure 3 shows an overlay of transit-related comments against existing transit service areas, existing rail services, and recommended rail and premium bus services.

This map suggests that the proposed rail extensions into Collin County will meet the needs of residents who have expressed a desire for transit service within Collin County. Additionally, with most comments originating in Tarrant County, we can see that the proposed bus and rail lines will also serve residents in the county. The recommendations for bus and rail lines in Tarrant County are also mostly aligned with public comments within the county.

A more detailed look into the comments reveals that existing transit services for residents within existing transit authority areas do not seem to meet their needs. A common theme, particularly within Tarrant County, is a lack of nearby bus routes and low service frequencies. Transit access to major employment or residential centers, notably north Fort Worth, remains an issue for residents. Commentors in Arlington were largely supportive of increased public transit service beyond the Via rideshare program that operates in Arlington, with an emphasis on connections to area transit and to the Entertainment District.

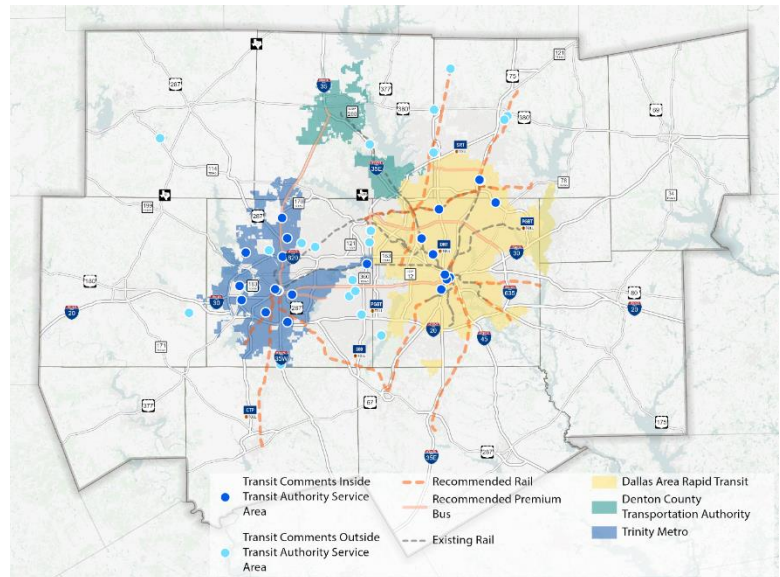


Figure 3: Transit Comments with Service Areas and Proposed Enhancements

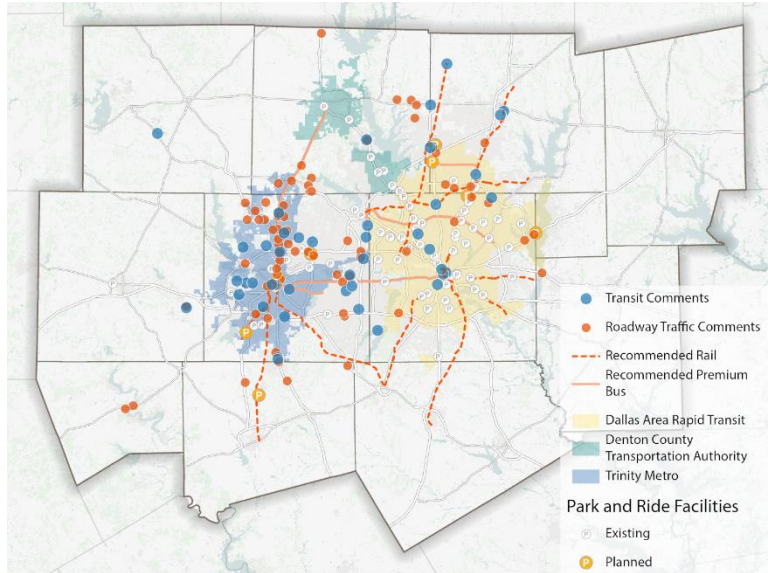


Figure 4: Transit Comments and Roadway Traffic Comments with Park-and-Ride Facilities

Another common refrain was a desire to avoid heavily congested roadway corridors. Figure 4 displays an overlay of both transit- and traffic-related comments from the roadway map against transit service areas and park-and-ride facilities. Tarrant County, particularly the north Fort Worth area, shows significant overlap between traffic comments and transit comments, and with far fewer park-and-ride facilities along IH 35W.

Two major insights can be gleaned from this information:

- 1) The proposed major corridors for new rail and premium bus services will help meet the needs of commenters.
- 2) Additional planning needs to be done to serve travelers in Tarrant County.

Local jurisdictions, transit authorities, and NCTCOG will need to work together to develop these plans and improve services and transit access for residents of the region. NCTCOG recommends that municipalities and transit authorities assess the distribution of park-and-ride facilities and plan for access to bus and rail lines in areas with especially high congestion.

Roadway Travel Insights

Of 199 comments entered on the roadway map, 66 percent pertain to either traffic or safety (Figure 5). Concerns regarding roadway conditions and signal timing made up the third- and fourth-highest categories.

By overlaying the traffic-related comments on the regional level-of-service map, planners can identify hotspots for congestion that seem to weigh more heavily on travelers' minds.

According to Figure 6, most traffic comments appear along IH 35W and other major highways with 'F' levels-of-service. This would corroborate the measurement of level-of-service in those corridors. Conversely, traffic-related comments along corridors with higher levels-of-service may indicate an issue with inconsistent levels-of-service.

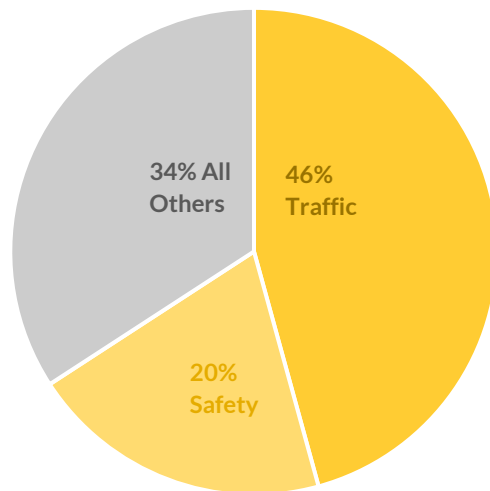


Figure 6: Share of Roadway Comments by Category

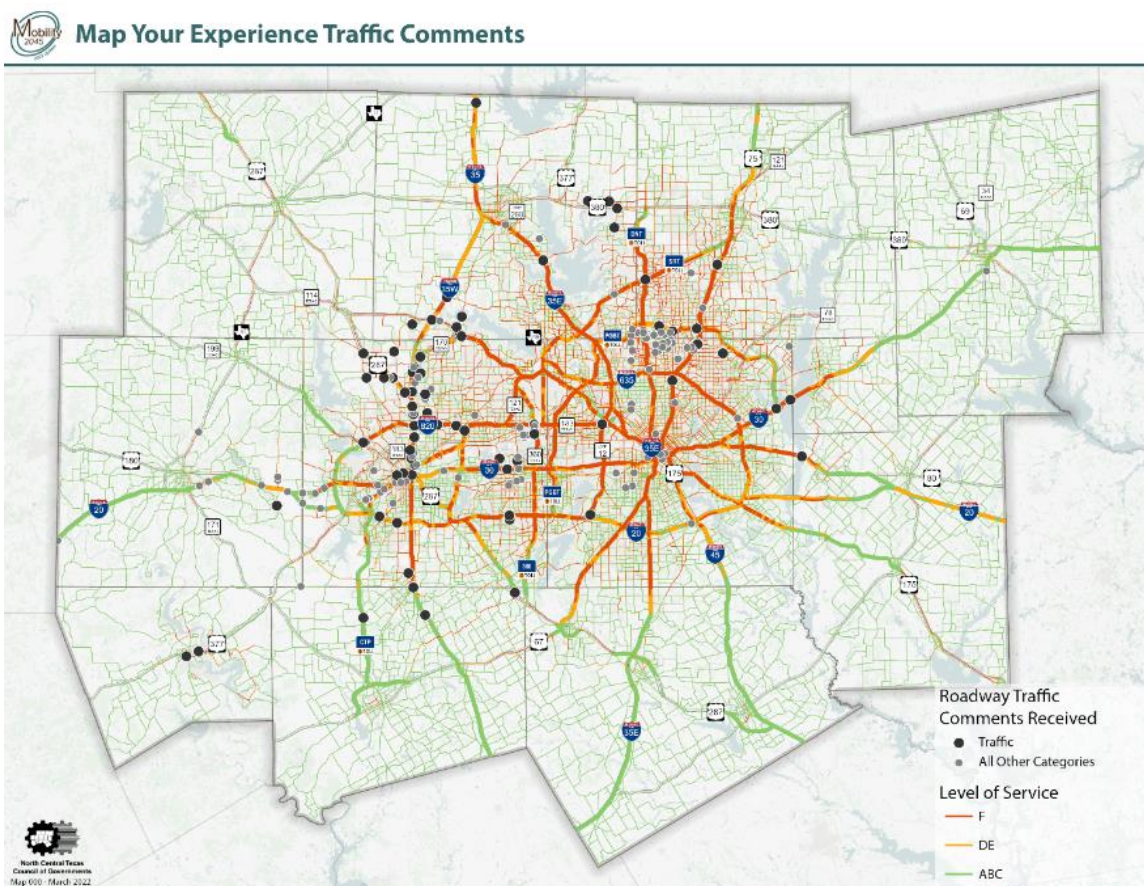


Figure 5: Traffic Comments and Level-of-Service

Turning toward safety, Figure 7 shows safety-related comments overlaid on the same level-of-service map. Much like the comments on traffic, these comments are mostly found along roadways with lower levels-of-service. In many cases, these comments are not concerned with speeds, but rather with the safety of merging onto a road or poor visibility and blind spots when turning onto a surface road.

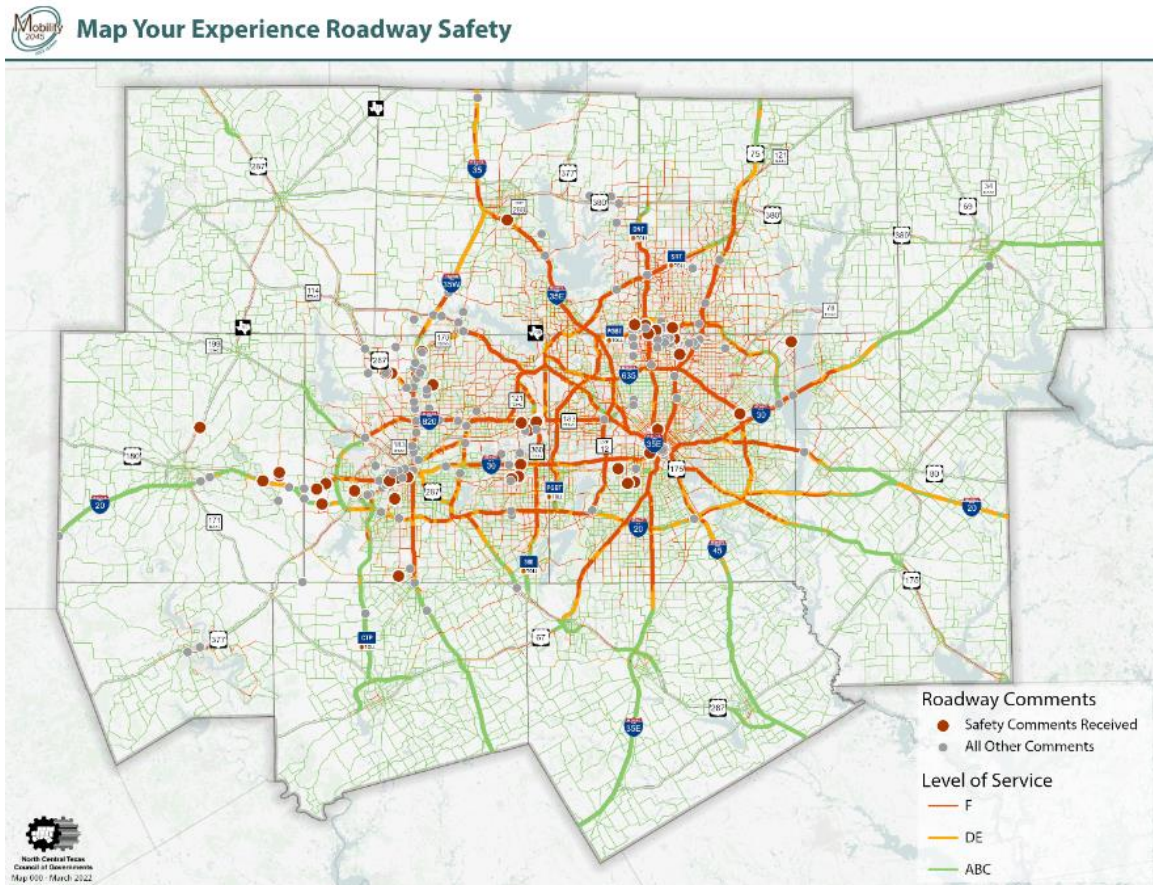


Figure 7: Safety Comments and Level-of-Service

NCTCOG recommends that local and state roadway authorities use these comments to home in on the issues present in the most problematic parts of the road network. Quantitative data, such as levels-of-service, average vehicles per peak period, and number of motor vehicle collisions, provide information on where problems are occurring. Comments from tools such as Map Your Experience can then provide information on why such problems occur.

Key Insights

The following are the key takeaways from Map Your Experience comments received during the analysis period of January 2020 through March 2021. NCTCOG recommends using these as a springboard for further analysis and discovery.

KEY INSIGHTS



1

Accessibility issues of impedance, or barriers to traveling, are of greater concern for the bicycle/pedestrian mode than transit or roadway.

2

Key bicycle and pedestrian needs are:
wider sidewalks | completion of sidewalks
protected bike lanes | safer speeds on non-arterial roads | crosswalks across arterials

3

Key transit needs are:
1) increased frequency and coverage in existing transit service areas
2) expansion of service to new areas

4

For roadways, traffic and safety are the top comments, frequently showing up in areas with poor level of service.

5

In many cases, roadway comments are not concerned with speeds, but rather with the safety of merging onto a road, poor visibility, or blind spots.

What's Next?

The Map Your Experience tool is always available online. NCTCOG will continue to assess comments to glean insights from the experts of their traveling experience, to determine transportation needs and look for solutions. In the meantime, check out our [website](#) to view comments, view an interactive dashboard, connect to data, and more.