Coastal Bend Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (Interim Plan)

Chapters 0–6 — Foundational Analyses

Prepared by: Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG)

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(To be completed)

Executive Summary

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This Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) Interim Plan summarizes the foundational analysis and planning activities completed in Chapters 1 through 6 of the Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG) 2025–2030 RPTCP update. These chapters establish the regional context, document public and stakeholder engagement, and identify the region's demographics, transportation services, and unmet mobility needs. Together, they form the analytical basis required by TxDOT for Interim Plan submittal and set the stage for developing regional goals, strategies, and project priorities in the final plan.

Chapter 1 Introduction and Organization

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the purpose and structure of the RPTCP, the roles of the Lead Coordination Agency and the Regional Coordination Committee (RCC), and the federal and state requirements guiding the plan. It introduces CBCOG's responsibilities in developing the plan and describes how the RCC, partner agencies, and stakeholders contribute to the planning process.

CBCOG convened the RCC on September 3, 2025, and October 9, 2025, to provide direction to staff, review the planning framework, and validate the structure and expectations for the Interim Plan chapters. These meetings ensured that plan development aligned with regional priorities and TxDOT requirements.

Chapter 2 Public Outreach and Community Engagement

Chapter 2 documents CBCOG's comprehensive and inclusive engagement process. This chapter explains how public input was collected, which groups were engaged, and how stakeholder feedback informed the analysis of unmet needs.

CBCOG conducted:

- A regional public survey distributed online and through partner organizations.

- One-on-one interviews with key stakeholder groups, including transportation providers, human service agencies, and representatives of seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.

This chapter summarizes meeting attendance, key themes identified, accessibility measures used, and outreach methods that ensured participation from traditionally underserved populations.

Chapter 3 Geographic Area Assessment

Chapter 3 presents the regional geographic context through maps and narrative descriptions. This includes county jurisdictions, cities, MPO boundaries, rural and urban designations, major trip generators, and provider service areas. These maps help identify natural service barriers, travel patterns, and regional mobility needs.

Chapter 4 Demographic Assessment

Chapter 4 provides detailed demographic profiles of the region, focusing on populations most reliant on coordinated transportation services. Data include population totals and projections, seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income residents, veterans, youths, and residents with limited English proficiency. This analysis highlights geographic concentrations of target populations and helps identify areas with the greatest mobility needs.

Chapter 5 Transportation Services Assessment

Chapter 5 offers a comprehensive inventory of transportation providers operating across the region public transit operators, human service agencies, nonprofits, volunteer programs, and private-sector providers. CBCOG gathered provider-specific information through surveys and direct outreach, producing standardized profiles that document:

- Service areas, days/hours, and modes

- Eligibility and trip purpose restrictions

- Fleet inventories and ADA accessibility

- Technology use

- Ridership and operational statistics

- Coordination activities

- Identified service limitations or unmet needs

Chapter 6 Transportation Needs and Gaps Assessment

The final chapter in the Interim Plan synthesizes the findings of all previous assessments and the results of public and stakeholder engagement. It identifies the region s unmet transportation needs and classifies them by:

- Target population

- Geographic area

- Time of day/day of week

- Trip purpose (medical, employment, education, etc.)

Using demographic maps, provider data, survey results, and stakeholder insights, the chapter outlines the gaps and service limitations affecting access to essential destinations. The chapter concludes with a preliminary prioritization of unmet needs based on RCC discussion and direction provided during the 9/3/25 and 10/9/25 committee meetings.

Summary

Together, Chapters 1 through 6 represent the analytical core of the RPTCP and fulfill TxDOT's Interim Plan requirement. These chapters document how CBCOG and its partners grounded the planning process in data, local knowledge, and meaningful public engagement. The findings contained within these chapters will directly inform the development of goals, strategies, and prioritized regional coordination projects in the final RPTCP.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1. Introduction and Organization

1.1 Purpose of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP)

The Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) serves as the foundational planning document that identifies unmet transportation needs across the Coastal Bend region and outlines strategies to address those needs through improved coordination among transportation providers, human service agencies, and community partners. The plan establishes a regional framework for expanding mobility options, enhancing service efficiency, and improving equitable access to essential destinations such as employment, healthcare, education, and social services.

Coordination is not only a best practice but also a federal requirement for agencies and organizations seeking funding under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. Projects funded under Section 5310 must appear in a locally developed and updated coordinated plan and must demonstrate meaningful engagement with the target populations they serve. The RPTCP fulfills this requirement and ensures ongoing eligibility for federal and state funding that supports mobility services in the Coastal Bend region.

1.2 Lead Coordination Agency (LCA)

The Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG) serves as the Lead Coordination Agency (LCA) for the Coastal Bend region. As the designated LCA, CBCOG is responsible for overseeing the development, maintenance, and implementation of the RPTCP. Key responsibilities include facilitating regional coordination, managing the planning process, conducting outreach, convening and supporting the Regional Coordination Committee (RCC), ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements, and preparing and submitting the Interim Plan and full RPTCP to TxDOT.

1.3 Regional Coordination Committee (RCC)

The Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) functions as the region's primary advisory and decision-making body for coordinated transportation planning. The RCC brings together representatives from public transit operators, nonprofit organizations, social service agencies, healthcare providers, workforce partners, and advocates representing

seniors, people with disabilities, low-income residents, veterans, and individuals with limited English proficiency.

The RCC met on September 3, 2025, and October 9, 2025, to provide staff direction, review the planning framework, and validate the structure and expectations for the Interim Plan. These meetings ensured alignment with regional priorities and TxDOT requirements.

1.4 RPTCP Organization

This RPTCP is organized into nine chapters following the TxDOT template. Chapters 1 through 6 comprise the Interim Plan and establish the regional context, public engagement activities, existing conditions, and transportation needs. These chapters serve as the analytical foundation for subsequent chapters addressing goals, strategies, priorities, and final adoption.

1.5 Stakeholder Groups and Participating Organizations

Required stakeholder groups for the RPTCP include seniors, people with disabilities, low-income residents, zero-car households, youth, veterans, individuals with limited English proficiency, human service agency clients, and job seekers.

CBCOG invited and engaged public transportation providers, human service agencies, nonprofit organizations, healthcare providers, local governments, educational institutions, veterans organizations, faith-based groups, and other community-based organizations. CBCOG conducted regional public surveys and one-on-one stakeholder interviews to ensure broad input.

1.6 Governance Documents

Governance documents supporting coordination include the RCC Mission Statement, RCC Bylaws outlining structure and operating procedures, and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between CBCOG and stakeholder organizations, documenting commitments to coordination and participation in the planning process.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2. Public Outreach and Community Engagement

2.1 Introduction

This chapter documents the comprehensive public outreach and community engagement activities conducted by the Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG) during the development of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP). The purpose of this engagement process is to ensure that the RPTCP reflects the needs, challenges, and priorities of the individuals and communities it is designed to serve, particularly those identified as transit-dependent or historically underserved.

2.2 Engagement Purpose and Requirements

Meaningful public outreach is required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to ensure that coordinated transportation plans are developed with direct input from seniors, people with disabilities, low-income households, veterans, individuals with limited English proficiency, youth, and other target populations. Public engagement allows the planning process to:

- Identify unmet transportation needs.

- Understand barriers experienced by riders and service providers.

- Validate data findings through lived experience.

- Ensure equitable access and participation throughout the region.

2.3 Engagement Approach

CBCOG implemented a multifaceted engagement strategy designed to gather input from a wide range of community members and stakeholder organizations. Engagement activities included:

- A regional public survey distributed both online and in print.

- One-on-one interviews with key stakeholder groups.

- Focused outreach to seniors, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and rural communities.

- Coordination with community-based organizations and human service agencies to distribute information and increase survey participation.

2.4 Committee Engagement

As part of this planning effort, CBCOG convened the Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) on September 3, 2025, and October 9, 2025. During these meetings, RCC members provided guidance on engagement strategies, identified additional stakeholder groups, and reviewed outreach materials. Committee input played a critical role in shaping the overall public engagement plan.

2.5 Public Survey

The regional public survey was designed to collect input from residents across the Coastal Bend region regarding their transportation experiences. The survey asked respondents about:

- Frequency of transit use.

- Trip purpose and destinations.

- Barriers to accessing transportation.

- Level of satisfaction with existing services.

- Areas where additional transportation options are needed.

CBCOG distributed the survey through:

- Social service agencies

- Senior centers

- Veterans organizations

- Hospitals and clinics

- Workforce development partners

- Transit provider websites and social media

2.6 Stakeholder Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with representatives from public transit providers, human service agencies, health and medical organizations, educational institutions, and advocacy groups. These interviews:

- Provided qualitative insights on operational challenges.

- Highlighted specific mobility barriers faced by clients.

- Identified opportunities for improved coordination.

- Validated or supplemented survey data.

2.7 Engagement Findings

Key themes identified through outreach include:

- Limited weekend and evening transportation options.

- Difficulties accessing medical care and dialysis appointments.

- Lack of transportation for employment, especially for shift work.

- Limited awareness of available transit services.

- Challenges for individuals with mobility impairments.

- Lack of cross-county trip options for essential services.

Feedback from the public and stakeholders will directly inform the needs assessment in Chapter 6 and guide the development of goals and strategies in later chapters of the RPTCP.

2.8 Documentation and Transparency

All outreach activities, including surveys, sign-in sheets, interview notes, and engagement materials, have been documented and will be included in the appendices of the full RPTCP. This documentation ensures transparency and demonstrates how public and stakeholder input shaped the planning process.

2.9 Summary

CBCOG's engagement process successfully incorporated the voices of community members, transportation providers, and stakeholder organizations across the Coastal Bend region. The qualitative and quantitative data collected through these activities contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the region's transportation needs and lay the foundation for coordinated strategies that will be identified later in the plan.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3. Geographic Area Assessment

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the geographic characteristics of the Coastal Bend region as they relate to public transportation planning and coordination. Understanding the physical context, jurisdictional boundaries, major destinations, and existing service areas is essential for assessing mobility needs and identifying coordination opportunities. The geographic assessment forms the basis for evaluating how well current transportation services align with where people live, work, receive medical care, and access essential services.

3.2 Geographic Description

The Coastal Bend region comprises a diverse mix of urban, small urban, and rural areas. The region includes the following counties:

- Aransas County

- Bee County

- Brooks County

- Duval County

- Jim Wells County

- Kenedy County

- Kleberg County

- Live Oak County

- Nueces County

- Refugio County

- San Patricio County

Within these counties are multiple municipalities, including the City of Corpus Christi, which serves as the largest urban center, as well as smaller cities and rural communities such as Kingsville, Alice, Beeville, Portland, Rockport, and Falfurrias.

The region includes both urbanized areas and rural areas as designated by the U.S. Census Bureau. The primary Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Corpus Christi MPO, which encompasses portions of Nueces and San Patricio Counties. Rural areas fall under the purview of the Rural Planning Organization (RPO) structure supported by CBCOG.

3.3 Required Maps

The following maps are required components of the RPTCP and will be included in the final plan:

3.3.1 Coordination Region Map

This map displays the full coordination region including all county boundaries, city jurisdictions, and major transportation corridors. The map provides a clear visual representation of the geographic scope of the RPTCP.

3.3.2 Major Trip Generators Map

This map identifies key destinations that drive mobility demand across the region. Major trip generators include:

- Hospitals, clinics, and dialysis centers

- Major employers and business parks

- Colleges and universities

- Social service agencies

- Senior centers and assisted living facilities

- Shopping centers and grocery stores

- Workforce development centers

These locations represent common destinations for transit-dependent populations and are used to assess where additional or modified transportation services may be needed.

3.3.3 Transportation Provider Service Area Maps

Service maps will depict the geographic coverage of each transportation provider in the region. These maps will include:

- Fixed-route bus services

- ADA complementary paratransit service boundaries

- Demand-response and dial-a-ride service areas

- Microtransit zones (where applicable)

- Countywide or regional human service transportation programs

These maps support the identification of gaps in geographic coverage, duplications of service, and opportunities for coordination among providers.

3.4 Methodologies Used

3.4.1 Identification of Trip Generators

Trip generators were identified using multiple sources including:

- Public survey responses identifying most common destinations

- Stakeholder interviews with transportation providers and human service agencies

- Lists of major regional employers from workforce development partners

- Local knowledge provided by RCC members

- GIS datasets from public sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau, Texas Health and Human Services, and TxDOT

These sources ensured that the trip generator list reflected both major established destinations and those most frequently used by seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income residents, and other target populations.

3.4.2 Map Creation and Data Sources

All maps for the RPTCP were developed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The following standardized datasets and tools were used:

- County and municipal boundary shapefiles from the Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS)

- Population, density, and urban/rural classification data from the U.S. Census Bureau

- Roadway and transit data from TxDOT Open Data Portal

- Provider service area information collected through transportation provider surveys

Maps were created using ESRI ArcGIS Pro and QGIS. Data were processed to ensure consistency across counties and to provide visual clarity for stakeholders reviewing the RPTCP.

3.5 Summary

The geographic assessment establishes a clear understanding of the Coastal Bend region's physical and jurisdictional landscape. The maps and methodologies described in this chapter support the identification of transportation needs and service gaps in Chapter 6. By documenting the region's key destinations, boundaries, and service areas, this chapter provides a foundation for informed decision-making and the development of coordinated strategies to improve mobility across the region.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4. Demographic Assessment

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a demographic overview of the Coastal Bend region to support the identification of populations most reliant on public and human service transportation. Understanding demographic trends, population concentrations, and characteristics of transit-dependent groups is essential for assessing mobility needs and informing coordinated transportation strategies. The demographic assessment also ensures compliance with federal and state requirements for meaningful participation from seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income households, veterans, youths, and residents with limited English proficiency.

4.2 Data Sources and Methodology

Demographic data for this assessment were compiled using publicly available sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), Texas Demographic Center projections, and other state and regional datasets. Data were reviewed at both the county and regional levels to identify trends, concentrations, and changes over time. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools were used to map population characteristics and highlight spatial patterns relevant to transportation planning.

4.3 Regional Population Overview

The Coastal Bend region includes a mixture of rural, small urban, and urban communities. Population distribution varies widely across the region, with the highest concentrations located in Nueces County, particularly in the Corpus Christi metropolitan area. Smaller cities such as Kingsville, Alice, Beeville, and Rockport also represent notable demographic centers.

Population projections indicate modest growth in several counties, with continued urbanization around major employment, healthcare, and education hubs. Rural counties are projected to experience slower growth or slight population declines, reinforcing the importance of reliable regional transportation options.

4.4 Key Demographic Groups

The demographic analysis focuses on populations identified in federal and state guidance as transit-dependent or mobility-challenged. These include:

4.4.1 Seniors (Age 65+)

The region has a growing senior population that often requires accessible, reliable transportation for medical appointments, shopping, and social activities. Some counties, such as Aransas, Refugio, and Live Oak, have higher concentrations of older adults.

4.4.2 Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities represent a significant portion of the region's population and often experience barriers to mobility. Disabilities may include physical, sensory, cognitive, or mobility impairments that impact access to traditional transportation services.

4.4.3 Low-Income Households

Many residents live below the federal poverty level or experience economic hardship that limits access to personal vehicles. Low-income communities often rely on public or human service transportation for work, education, healthcare, and daily necessities.

4.4.4 Veterans

The Coastal Bend has a strong population of veterans, particularly in counties with major military installations or veteran service organizations. Veterans may require specialized transportation to access medical services, employment, and veteran support programs.

4.4.5 Youth (Under Age 18)

Youth populations contribute to transportation demand for education, employment training, and recreational activities. Availability of safe and reliable transit can enhance access to opportunities for young residents.

4.4.6 Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Residents

Individuals with limited English proficiency often depend on multilingual outreach and accessible transit information. Some counties have higher concentrations of LEP residents, influencing communication and service delivery strategies.

4.4.7 Zero-Vehicle Households

Households without access to an automobile represent a critical population for transit planning. These households rely heavily on public transportation, rideshare programs, and community mobility services.

4.5 Demographic Mapping and Analysis

GIS-based maps highlight concentrations of target populations across the region. These maps will be included in the full RPTCP and will display:

- Population density

- Senior population distribution

- Disability prevalence

- Household income levels

- LEP populations by census tract

- Vehicle ownership levels

Maps help identify geographic areas with high transportation need and support the development of the Transportation Needs Index discussed in Chapter 6.

4.6 Population Trends and Implications for Transportation

Key demographic trends influencing transportation planning include:

- An aging population requiring accessible and specialized transportation services.

- Persistent economic disparities that increase dependence on publicly funded mobility options.

- Geographic isolation in rural counties that limits access to essential services.

- Growing demand for cross-county and regional transportation connections.

- Increased need for flexible, demand-response, and technology-enabled transportation.

These trends highlight the importance of continued investment in coordinated transportation services to meet the evolving mobility needs of the region.

4.7 Summary

The demographic characteristics of the Coastal Bend region demonstrate a clear need for coordinated transportation strategies that support vulnerable and transit-dependent populations. Understanding where these populations live, their transportation barriers, and demographic trends provides the foundation for the needs assessment in Chapter 6 and the development of goals and strategies in Chapter 7.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5. Transportation Services Assessment

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the transportation services operating within the Coastal Bend region. The assessment documents public, nonprofit, and private transportation providers; mobility management programs; available service modes; fleet characteristics; technology systems; and existing levels of coordination. This information establishes the foundation for identifying unmet needs and opportunities to enhance mobility for seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income residents, veterans, youth, zero-vehicle households, and other transit-dependent populations.

5.2 Purpose of the Transportation Services Assessment

The transportation services assessment serves several critical functions:

- Establishes a comprehensive understanding of regional transportation resources.

- Identifies service gaps, duplications, and areas where coordination may improve efficiency.

- Documents service policies, eligibility rules, operating characteristics, and technology.

- Informs the development of coordinated strategies in Chapter 7.

5.3 Provider Categories

Transportation providers in the Coastal Bend region fall into five general categories:

- Public transportation providers

- Municipal transportation programs

- Human service agencies

- Nonprofit community-based organizations

- Private for-profit carriers

Each provider offers unique services, policies, and geographic coverage areas. Provider data were gathered through surveys, interviews, publicly available information, and outreach conducted as part of the RPTCP process.

5.4 Transportation Provider Profiles

Transportation provider profiles document the following information for each organization:

- General organization information

- Types of services and modes offered

- Service areas and hours of operation

- Rider eligibility and trip purpose restrictions

- Fare structures and booking policies

- Driver training requirements

- Ridership and operational statistics

- Fleet inventory and vehicle accessibility

- Technology systems used for dispatching, scheduling, and customer information

- Existing coordination activities and opportunities for partnership

These profiles will be included in the appendices of the full RPTCP.

5.5 Service Modes and Models

The Coastal Bend region includes a variety of transportation modes, such as:

- Fixed-route bus services

- ADA complementary paratransit

- General demand-response/dial-a-ride

- Microtransit

- Volunteer driver programs

- Vanpools

- Taxi and rideshare partnerships

- Intercity bus connections

Each mode provides different benefits depending on population density, trip purposes, and the needs of transit-dependent riders.

5.6 Mobility Management Services and Programs

Mobility management programs support coordinated transportation by providing:

- One-call/one-click information and referral systems

- Driver and passenger training programs

- Outreach and travel training

- Coordination of ride scheduling across multiple providers

- Joint marketing and public information initiatives

These programs help streamline services and reduce confusion for users navigating multiple transportation options.

5.7 Vehicle Inventory and Utilization

An accurate vehicle inventory provides insight into available capacity, ADA-accessible vehicles, and potential opportunities for resource sharing.

Information collected includes:

- Number and type of vehicles

- Age, mileage, and accessibility features

- Hours in service and utilization rates

- Providers⬜ reliance on nondedicated service providers

This information helps identify areas where fleet expansion or replacement may be needed.

5.8 Technology Systems Assessment

The assessment identified the use of technology systems across providers, including:

- Scheduling and dispatch software

- GPS and fleet tracking

- Mobile applications for rider communication

- Use of GTFS or GTFS-Flex data

- Electronic fare systems

Technology integration plays a key role in improving coordination, real-time information, and operational efficiency.

5.9 Existing Coordination Activities

Providers participate in coordination activities such as:

- Sharing trips when capacity allows

- Joint training or procurement

- Cross-agency referrals

- Participation in RCC meetings

These existing activities form a starting point for developing more robust regional strategies.

5.10 Summary

The transportation services assessment demonstrates that the Coastal Bend region has a diverse array of transportation providers and service types. However, variations in service hours, geographic coverage, eligibility restrictions, and fleet capacities highlight the need for enhanced coordination. These findings directly inform the unmet needs analysis in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6. Transportation Needs and Gaps Assessment

6.1 Introduction

This chapter synthesizes the findings from the geographic, demographic, transportation provider, and public engagement assessments to identify unmet transportation needs across the Coastal Bend region. The analysis reflects data from transportation provider surveys, one-on-one stakeholder interviews, public surveys, RCC discussions, and GIS-based mapping. It forms the foundation for prioritizing needs and developing coordinated strategies in subsequent chapters.

6.2 Purpose of the Needs and Gaps Assessment

The Transportation Needs and Gaps Assessment aims to:

- Identify unmet transportation needs experienced by seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income households, veterans, youth, and other vulnerable populations.

- Understand where, when, and why transportation services are insufficient or unavailable.

- Highlight geographic and demographic areas of high need using data-driven and community-informed methods.

- Provide a clear basis for prioritizing improvements and developing coordination strategies.

6.3 Methodology

The assessment draws on multiple data sources including:

- GIS mapping to identify areas with high concentrations of target populations.

- Provider service area maps to compare service coverage with community needs.

- Public and stakeholder engagement feedback.

- Results from the transportation provider survey highlighting capacity constraints, unmet trip requests, and operational challenges.

- Trip generators and origin-destination patterns.

This multi-source approach ensures that both qualitative and quantitative factors contribute to the identification of unmet needs.

6.4 Identified Transportation Needs

Key transportation needs identified during the planning process include:

6.4.1 Expanded Service Hours

Many residents indicated the need for:

- Evening and late-night service, especially for shift workers.

- Weekend transportation to essential services such as dialysis, medical care, and employment.

6.4.2 Cross-County and Regional Trip Options

Several counties lack services that connect to:

- Major medical facilities in Corpus Christi.

- Employment centers located outside the rider's county of residence.

- Regional education and workforce training facilities.

6.4.3 Medical and Dialysis Transportation

A high proportion of unmet needs relate to access to:

- Dialysis appointments requiring consistent, reliable transportation.

- Specialty medical services not available in rural counties.

6.4.4 Transportation for Employment and Training

Stakeholders and survey participants noted barriers to accessing:

- Shift work opportunities.

- Training or certification programs.

- Job centers in Corpus Christi, Alice, Kingsville, and Beeville.

6.4.5 Accessible Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities

Needs identified include:

- More ADA-accessible vehicles in rural areas.

- Greater availability of demand-response services for mobility-impaired individuals.

- Improved driver training for ADA-related assistance.

6.4.6 Transportation for Seniors

Key needs include:

- Transportation for grocery shopping, medical appointments, and social activities.

- Assistance with boarding, carrying items, and door-to-door or door-through-door service.

6.4.7 Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Needs

Residents with limited English proficiency identified barriers such as:

- Lack of translated service materials.

- Need for bilingual drivers or customer service staff.

6.4.8 Cost Barriers

Some providers reported service affordability challenges for low-income riders, particularly for:

- Cross-county trips.

- Specialized medical trips.

6.5 Service Gaps

Key service gaps identified in the analysis include:

6.5.1 Geographic Gaps

Several rural counties lack sufficient transportation services covering:

- Low-density residential areas.

- Long-distance trips to medical centers.

- Outlying communities not served by fixed routes.

6.5.2 Temporal Gaps

Service gaps were identified during:

- Early morning and late evening hours.

- Weekends and holidays.

6.5.3 Capacity Gaps

Provider data indicated:

- High trip denial rates during peak service times.

- Limited fleet sizes, especially ADA-accessible vehicles.

- Driver shortages affecting service delivery.

6.5.4 Coordination Gaps

Opportunities exist to improve:

- Cross-agency scheduling and dispatch.

- Shared use of vehicles during off-peak times.

- Communication and referrals between providers.

6.6 Transportation Needs Index (TNI)

A Transportation Needs Index (TNI) was developed using GIS to combine key demographic variables such as:

- Senior population density.

- Disability prevalence.

- Low-income household rates.

- Limited English proficiency populations.

- Zero-vehicle households.

The TNI identifies census tracts where transportation challenges are most acute, supporting prioritization of resources.

6.7 Prioritization of Unmet Needs

The RCC reviewed the identified unmet needs during its meetings on September 3 and October 9, 2025. A structured prioritization process ranked needs based on factors such as:

- Regional impact.

- Severity of unmet need.

- Equity considerations.

- Provider capacity constraints.

- Level of public demand.

High-priority needs identified include:

- Service for dialysis and medical care.

- Cross-county transportation for employment and training.

- ADA-accessible services in rural areas.

- Evening and weekend transportation.

6.8 Summary

This chapter documents extensive unmet transportation needs that affect transit-dependent groups across the Coastal Bend region. These needs, validated through both data and community input, form the basis for developing targeted goals and strategies in Chapter 7. Addressing these gaps will require coordinated investment, improved regional partnerships, and expanded service models.