



FEBRUARY 2, 2021

3:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL

TELECONFERENCE

WORKSHOP AGENDA





**NOTICE OF WORKSHOP OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF HARKER HEIGHTS, TEXAS
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

Notice is hereby given that, beginning at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, and continuing from day to day thereafter if necessary the City Council of the City of Harker Heights, Texas, will conduct a telephonic workshop to contain the spread of COVID-19 in accordance with Governor Abbott's declaration of the COVID-19 public health threat and action to temporarily suspend certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act issued on March 16, 2020. The subjects to be discussed are listed in the following agenda:

The City of Harker Heights
305 Miller's Crossing
Harker Heights, Texas 76548
Phone 254/953-5600
Fax 254/953-5614

Mayor
Spencer H. Smith

Mayor Pro Tem
Michael Blomquist

City Council
Jennifer McCann
Jackeline Soriano Fountain
Lynda Nash
Jody Nicholas

AGENDA

I. Roll Call:

II. Presentations by Citizens:

Citizens who desire to address the Council on any matter may do so during this item. Please understand that while the Council appreciates hearing your comments, State law (Texas Gov't Code §551.042) prohibits them from: (1) engaging in discussion other than providing a statement of specific factual information or reciting existing City policy, and (2) taking action other than directing Staff to place the matter on a future agenda. Please state your name and address for the record and limit your comments to three minutes.

III. New Business:

1. Receive and discuss a Presentation by Nancy Edmonson Regarding the Hill Country Transit District Study. (Planning and Development Director)

VI. Adjournment:

I hereby certify that the above notice of meeting was posted on the bulletin board of City Hall, City of Harker Heights, Texas, a place readily accessible to the general public at all times, on the 29th day of January 2021, by 2:00 p.m., and remained posted for at least 72 continuous hours preceding the scheduled time of said meeting.

Julie Helsham
City Secretary

The public may participate remotely in this meeting by dialing-in using the toll-free number: (877) 309-2073 and use Access Code: 834-900-013

To join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone, use the following meeting link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/834900013>

The public will be permitted to offer public comments telephonically as provided by the agenda. Written questions or comments may be submitted two hours before the meeting to the City Secretary's Office. When submitting your written questions or comments, you must include your Name and Address. Agenda packet and recording of the telephonic meeting will be available on the City of Harker Heights website at www.harkerheights.gov

"This facility is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking spaces are available. Requests for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to this meeting. Please contact the City Secretary's office at 254-953-5600, or FAX 254-953-5614, or email jhelsham@harkerheights.gov for further information."

"Pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Government Code the City Council reserves the right to go into Closed Meeting on any item listed above if deemed necessary."



CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM # III-1

FROM: THE OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2021

RECEIVE AND DISCUSS A PRESENTATION BY NANCY EDMONSON REGARDING THE HILL COUNTRY TRANSIT DISTRICT STUDY.

EXPLANATION:

The cities and counties that comprise the Hill Country Transit District contracted with Transportation Consulting to conduct a study to determine the most efficient organizational structure for the provision of transit service in the District.

Task 1 of the study included the articulation of the goals of the participating parties for transit and transit provision and the objectives by which success would be measured. Goals were determined through meetings with each of the participating counties and cities. City of Harker Heights staff met with Ms. Nancy Edmonson of Transportation Consulting in September of 2020 to discuss the impacts of the Hill Country Transit District (also referred to as HCTD or The HOP) on our City and ETJ area.

Since September 2020, City staff have reviewed multiple technical memorandums issued by Transportation Consulting, and participated in multiple virtual meetings with the counties, cities, and Transportation Consulting. This presentation is a summary of the options developed from those meetings and the consultant's analysis.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. PowerPoint

Hill Country Transit District: Service Provision Options

Nancy R. Edmonson, Transportation Consulting

Bell County Commissioners Court

January xx, 2021

Purpose of Study

Does the current structure of the district meet the needs of the communities it serves?

What is the best organizational structure for providing transit in the region?

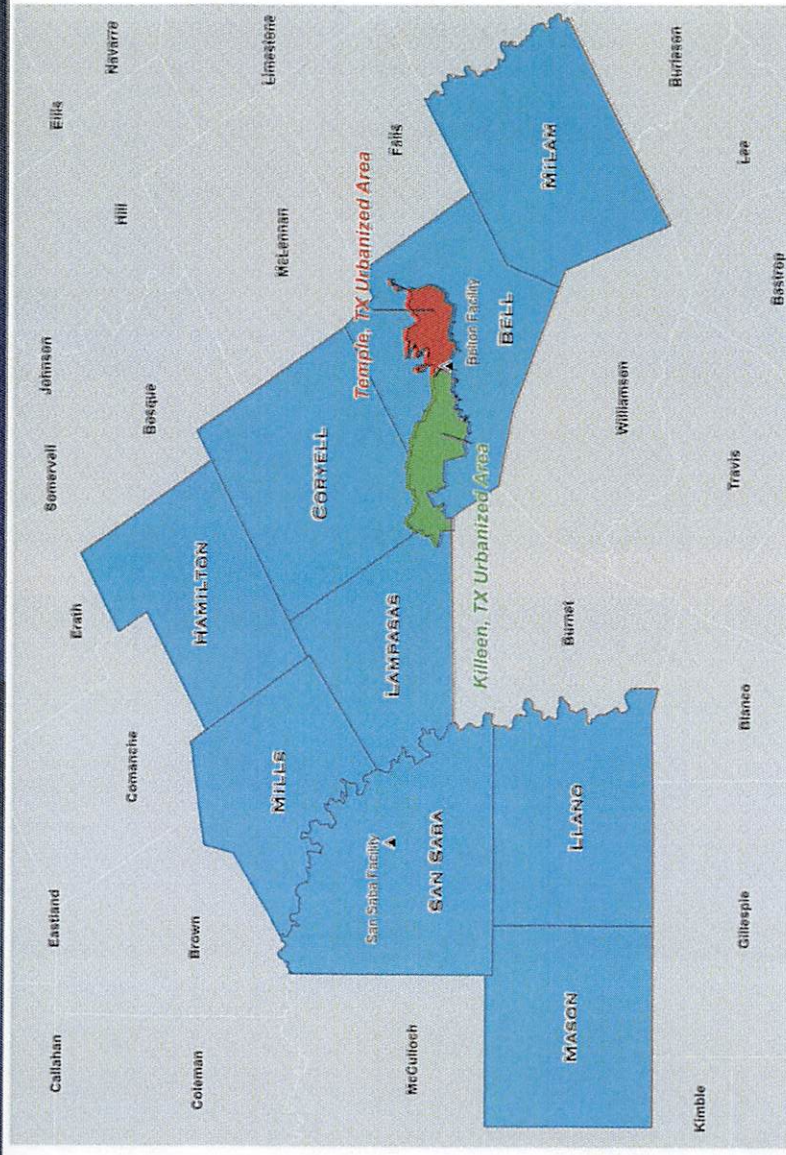
Tasks Completed During Study

Review of Existing Conditions	Assessed financial trends at HCTD over the last ten years and studied allocation of cost and labor across divisions
Stakeholder Interviews	Interviewed representatives of six counties, five cities, the HCTD board, economic interests, and social services to learn about the needs and goals for transit in the region
Peer Review	Compared HCTD to eight similar agencies in Texas using standard performance measures
Case Studies	Profiled four areas in Texas to demonstrate different approaches to structuring transit service
Assessment of Options	Developed four options for structuring transit service in the area and assessed their impact according to service, governance, and financial criteria

Overview of HCTD

HCTD provides public transportation in nine counties in central Texas. Its services include:

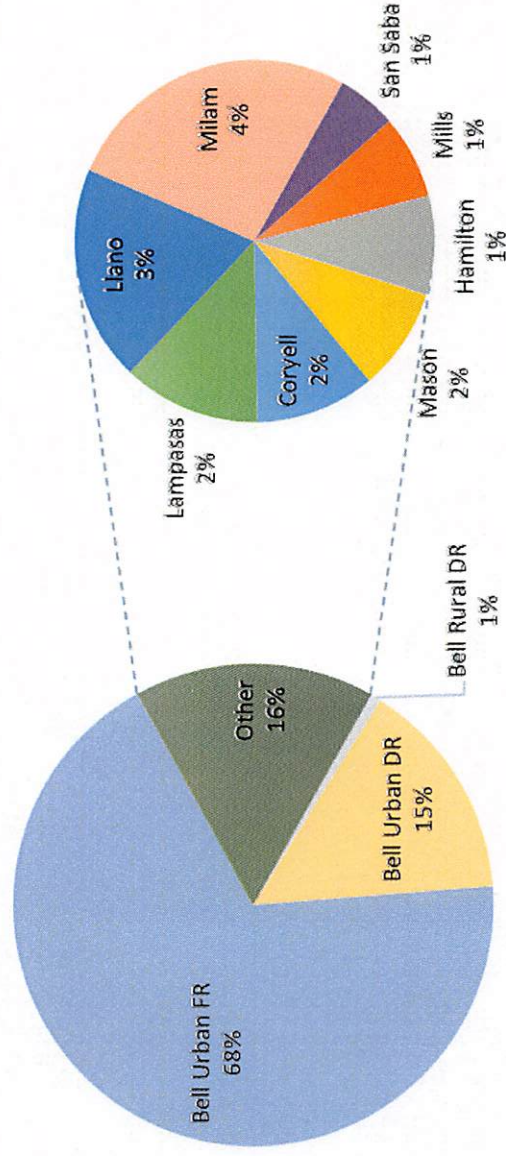
- Fixed-route bus service and ADA paratransit service in the Killeen and Temple urbanized areas
- Demand-response service (pre-arranged, door-to-door rides) for medical purposes in rural Bell County
- All-purpose demand-response service in the remaining eight counties



Service Statistics

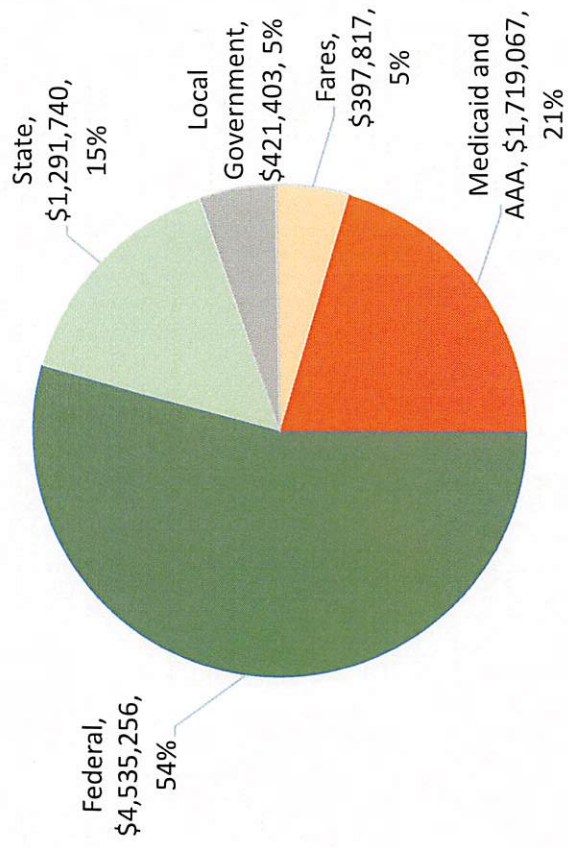
- HCTD's service area has approximately 530,000 people spread over 8,400 square miles
- Urban service accounts for most of ridership

Ridership by County, FY 2019

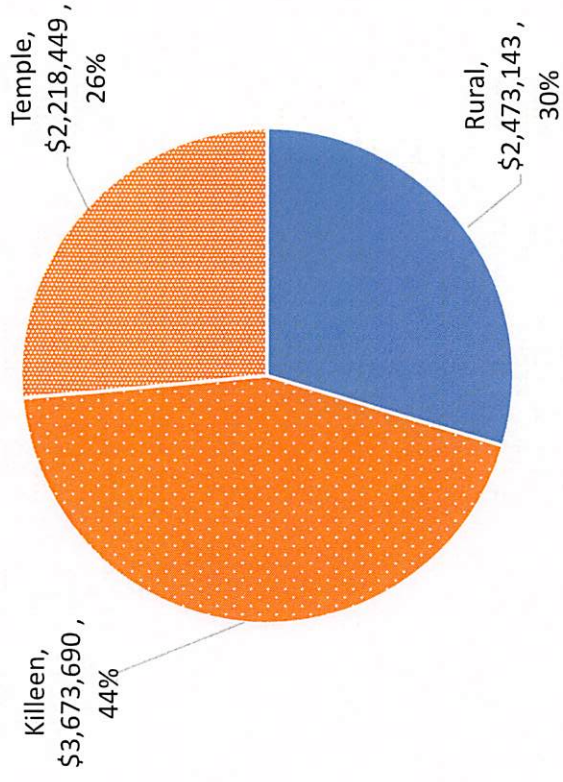


Revenues and Expenses, FY 2019

Operating Revenues by Source



Operating Costs by Division



Rural Bell County

- Demand-response trips allowed for medical purposes only, not for other uses, as in the other rural counties
- Accounts for about one-quarter of the rural population
- Generates more state and federal grant funds than are expended in the county

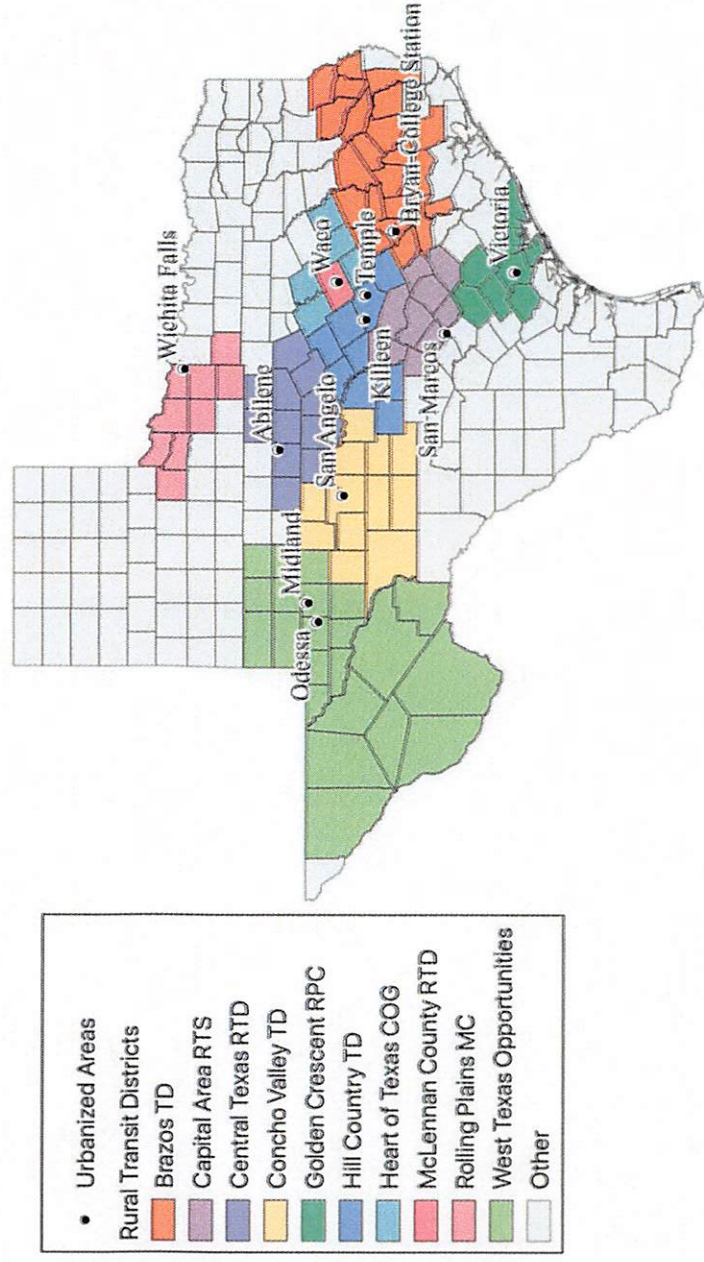
Area	Revenues	Expenses
Eight Rural Counties	\$2,116,665	\$2,333,410
Rural Bell County	\$356,478	\$139,733
<u>Total Rural</u>	<u>\$2,473,143</u>	<u>\$2,473,143</u>

Stakeholder Interviews

- Where do stakeholders agree?
 - Transit should facilitate travel across the region and should serve all residents, not just seniors and other special groups
- Where do stakeholders diverge?
 - Rural interests are largely happy with current structure
 - Urban interests feel that needs are not being met and are interested in different structures

Peer Review Process

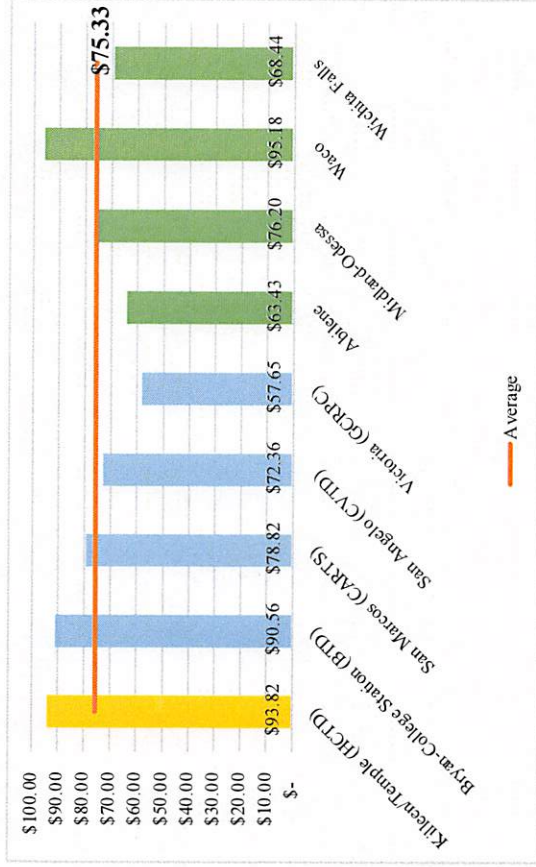
- Selected four areas where the same entity provides urban and rural transit and four areas where different entities do
- Assessed peers in terms of cost efficiency and service effectiveness



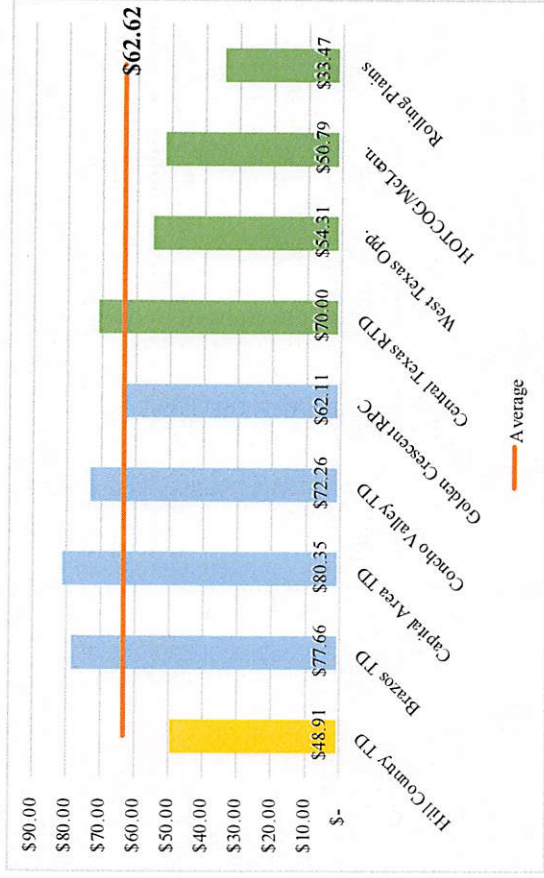
Peer Agencies: FY 2018 Operating Cost Per Revenue Hour

Service is more efficient in areas where responsibility for urban and rural transit is divided between multiple agencies

Fixed-Route Service

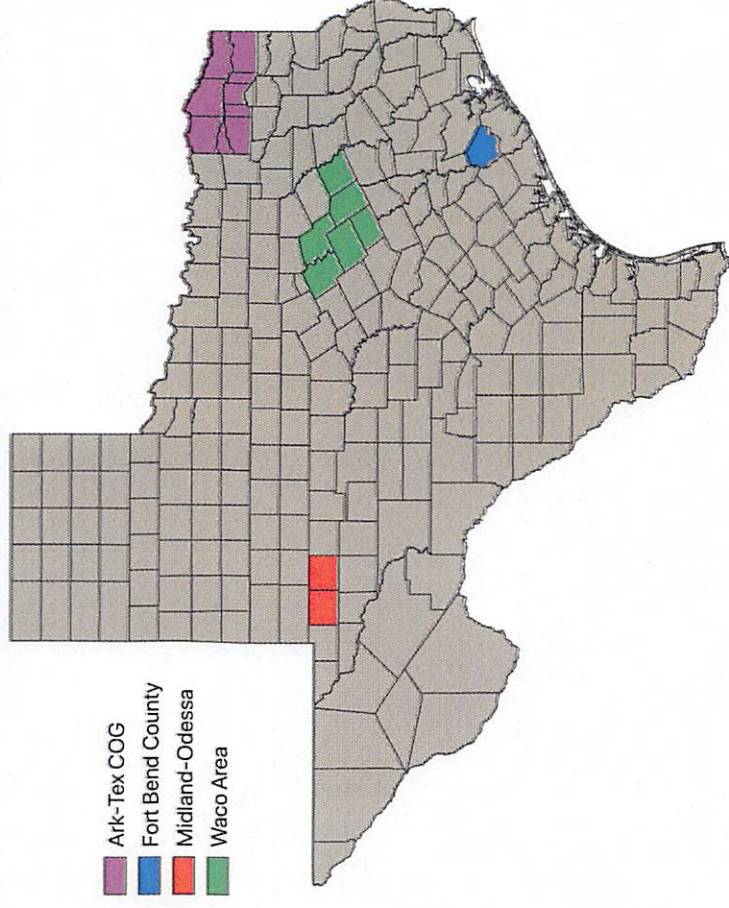


Rural Service



Case Studies

- Case studies demonstrate different approaches to structuring and funding urban and rural transit in Texas
- Structures in Midland-Odessa and Waco informed development of options for HCTD



Development of Options

- Options were designed to be:
 - Plausible ways of meeting goals expressed in stakeholder interviews
 - Acceptable to local stakeholders
 - Distinct from one another
 - Illustrative of different structures for provision of transit in Texas

OPTION ONE: STRONGER TOGETHER

Structure: One joint urban and rural transit district



Governance: One independent board comprised of urban and rural representatives

Advantages

- Facilitates regional transit connections
- Existing structure is the simplest and has no associated transition costs
- Rural service is relatively well-liked and cost-efficient

Disadvantages

- Urban areas have different needs than rural areas, and the current structure has not responded well to them
- No one area has control over its service
- Urban service could be more cost-efficient

OPTION TWO: SEPARATE WAYS

Structure: One urban transit district and one rural transit district



Governance: Two independent boards, one for each transit district

Advantages

- Urban and rural service could be more responsive to changing needs
- Increases local control
- Potentially more cost-efficient, based on data from peer review

Disadvantages

- Regional connections could be more difficult to coordinate and develop
- Limits opportunities for shared overhead costs, either between agencies or with cities
- Splitting into two entities would incur transition costs

OPTION THREE: DIFFERENT PEOPLE, DIFFERENT NEEDS

Structure: One urban transit district and two rural transit districts (Rural Bell County and the remaining eight counties)



Governance: Three independent boards, one for each transit district

Advantages

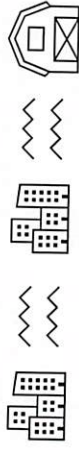
- Urban and rural areas could be more responsive to changing needs
- Rural Bell County could capture more funding and have more comprehensive service
- Demonstrated model in Waco area

Disadvantages

- Regional connections could be more difficult to coordinate and develop
- Significantly more complex than Option One or Two to implement
- Eight-county rural transit district could end up with less funding

OPTION FOUR: DIFFERENT CITIES, DIFFERENT GOALS

Structure: Two municipal departments (serving the Killeen and Temple UZAs) and one rural transit district



Governance: Two city councils or independent boards and one independent rural transit district board

Advantages

- Cities in the Killeen and Temple UZAs can independently decide how best to serve their residents
- The cities of Killeen and Temple could cover some city overhead costs with federal transit grants
- Uses existing resources of cities

Disadvantages

- Travel between cities could be more difficult
- Distribution of assets between cities could be complex, since there is only one urban operating facility as of now
- Risks fragmenting the region and reducing possible funding partners

Recommendation: Option Three

- One urban transit district and two rural transit districts
- Best meets needs of local communities
- More favorable assessments than unfavorable assessments on most criteria
- Not the simplest option
 - Complexity of governance structure is mitigated by having a model in the Waco area

Runner-Up: Option Two

- One urban transit district and one rural transit district
- No strong advantages or strong disadvantages
- Splits evenly between favorable and unfavorable assessments on the criteria
- Could be a first step toward Option Three

Still Not Bad: Options One and Four

- Option One
 - Current structure
 - Makes regional connections easier and organizational structure simpler
 - Struggles to meet the needs of communities in urban and rural Bell County
- Option Four
 - Two urban transit districts and one rural transit district
 - Offers a high degree of local control
 - Divides the urban area
 - Requires many new governance structures