

ride the
RIO

New Braunfels Transit

**FY 2025
Annual Plan**

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New Braunfels Transit District

What is a transit district? A government agency or public organization specifically established to manage and provide public transportation services within a designated geographical area, like a city or region. The primary role is to operate and maintain public transportation networks, including setting routes, fares, schedules, and overseeing vehicle maintenance. It is typically governed by a board responsible for making decisions about service expansion, funding allocation, and overall transit strategy.

New Braunfels Transit District was created for the purpose of providing public transportation within the microtransit zone. The primary responsibility as a Small Urban District is to provide public transportation in an urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 but less than 200,000. Funding for the transit district is through a combination of TxDOT, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Comal County, and City contributions.

New Braunfels was the third-fast-growing city in the country from 2010-2019 according to the US Census Bureau (+56%). Due to this growth, the area was designated as a new Small Urbanized Area (UZA) distinct from that of Greater San Antonio after the 2020 census. The reclassification of New Braunfels as a Small UZA renders the City eligible to receive federal transit funding under the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program.

The City of New Braunfels recognizes the demand for transit service currently outpaces the existing on-demand public transportation provided by Alamo Regional Transit (ART). As part of this rapid growth, the City of New Braunfels started the New Braunfels Transit District to provide transit services to the community that will enhance the lives of its citizens.

New Braunfels Transit District's Mission, Vision, and Values align with those of the City of New Braunfels, with a focus on enhancing mobility and providing transportation access to the general public.



New Braunfels Transit Mission

Transform and Enhance Mobility

City of New Braunfels Mission

The City of New Braunfels serves the community by planning for the future, responding to community needs, and preserving our natural beauty and unique heritage.



New Braunfels Transit Vision

Providing safe, reliable transit services to connect the community to employment, education, healthcare, recreational, and other destinations.

City of New Braunfels Vision

The City of New Braunfels is a vibrant and inviting place where people enjoy meaningful community connections, unique cultural opportunities, and an exceptional quality of life surrounded by world class natural resources.



New Braunfels Transit Values

Teamwork – We prioritize a collaborative effort and a shared responsibility within a group to achieve common goals valuing the collective success.

Respect – We treat people with consideration for their abilities, feelings, and views while building trust, safety, and well-being in the workplace.

Communication – We value the process of sharing thoughts and perspectives to foster connection and collaboration.

Integrity – We operate in a way that is honest, authentic, and sincere with the ability to remain true to our convictions even in difficult situations.

City of New Braunfels Values

Integrity – We operate with integrity, holding ourselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct, transparency, accountability, and performance.

Service – We engage with our community in an intentional and helpful manner to find solutions for the people we serve.

Visionary Leadership – We embrace new and innovative approaches, courageous decision-making, and implement solutions that are in the best long-term interest of the community.

Stewardship of Resources – We make decisions that promote long-term viability of our financial and natural resources and are prudent and responsible so that our community is sustained into the future.

Cultural Heritage – We celebrate our unique and diverse cultural heritage, community spirit, and work to promote a sense of belonging for all people in New Braunfels.



City of New Braunfels Strategic Plan (2024 – 2029)

Enhanced Connectivity:

1. Identify and establish planning, capital, and operating funding to support and maintain a well-connected transportation network serving pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, individuals with disabilities, motorists, and freight vehicles.
2. Establish an appropriate level of General Fund funding to support the ongoing maintenance of the City's multimodal transportation network to ensure new capital investments in mobility are sustained over time.
3. Implement improved local and regional public transportation services to connect the community to employment, education, healthcare, recreation, and other destinations.
4. Collaborate with governmental partners to improve transportation access and connections throughout the region.
5. Develop a sidewalk inventory and process to assess pedestrian connectivity and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility and establish priorities for funding, constructing, and maintaining pedestrian improvements.
6. Inform residents and visitors of transportation options on the City's website and social media platforms, including transit services, sidewalks, trails, and bikeways.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029



Goal:

Coordinate land use with strategic investments in multimodal transportation, so residents and visitors can travel safely and easily throughout the City.



Transit Development Plan (October 2023)

A strategic effort to identify a path forward for the City to provide improved public transportation options for residents and visitors to the area.

Goals:

1. Provide a variety of public transportation choices so people can get where they need to go.
2. Support a robust economy where workers and visitors can get around easily.
3. Enhance sustainable transportation options to reduce congestion and vehicle-based emissions.
4. To prioritize equitable access so that needs are met.



Envision New Braunfels (June 2018)

It is a comprehensive plan that established a vision and framework for the future of New Braunfels. It was created through public dialogue and review and reflects the vision of New Braunfels residents. It is not a “how-to-guide” for the City, but a declaration of values.

Transportation:

The City’s transportation network, the transportation/land use relationship, and how it connects and interacts with the region; all modes will be addressed, from walking to air travel.

Transportation Goals:

1. Coordinate regional transportation investments with planned and existing economic centers.
2. Improve vehicular connections into and within New Braunfels to reduce congestion while mitigating the impacts of the automobile on the urban fabric.
3. Establish a self-sustaining and improved public transit system.
4. Promote healthy lifestyles and relieve automobile congestion through improved and increased pedestrian paths, on-street bicycle lanes, and off-street bicycle paths to major hubs within New Braunfels and beyond.
5. Increase parking options in high-demand areas of New Braunfels, such as downtown, while ensuring efficient and economical land use strategies.

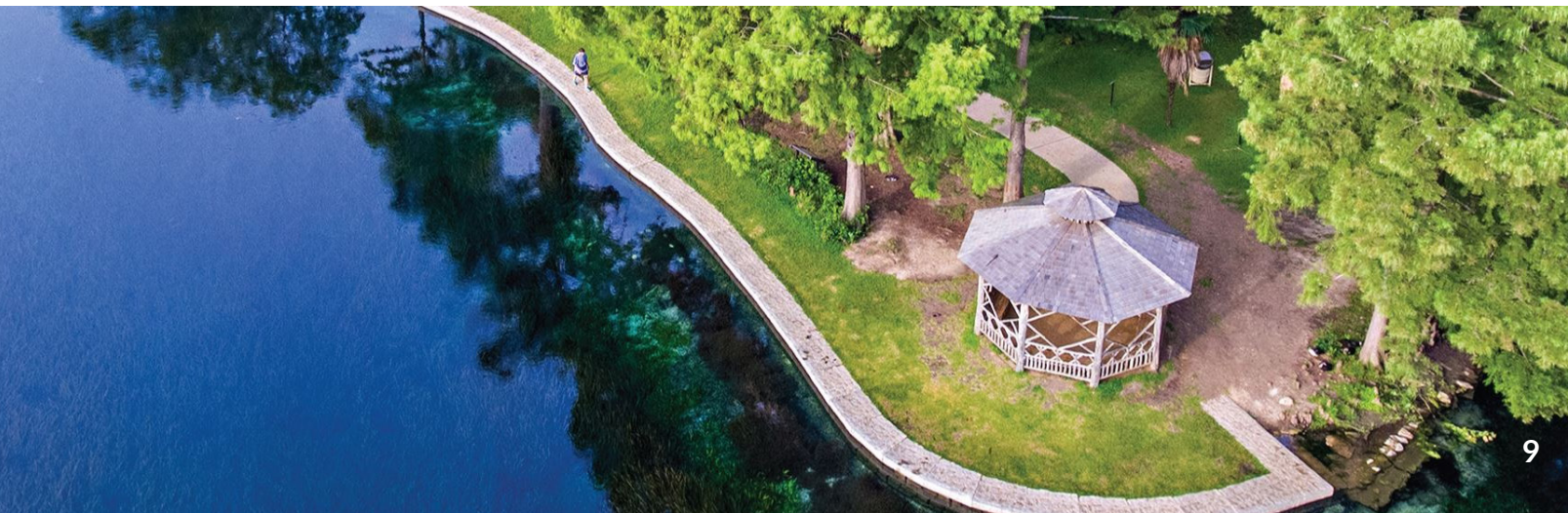
Transportation Strategy:

Bolster resilient infrastructure.



Envision
New Braunfels

A SPECIAL PLACE BY DESIGN



Roles of the New Braunfels Transit Team:

City Council – is the Board of Directors for the New Braunfels Transit District. Through the city manager's office, they provide direction and support for the transit district.

Transit Services Coordinator – management of the Small Urban Transit District and will manage the day-to-day operations of the transit system while working with the third-party provider to ensure the best quality service is being provided to the community of New Braunfels.

Transportation Planner – support the short-term and long-term planning to achieve community transportation goals.

Capital Projects Manager – aid in the coordination and planning of transit-assistive elements in the City's ongoing capital projects.

Transportation & Capital Improvements Director – provide leadership to the transit team while overseeing all aspects of transportation needs for the City of New Braunfels.

Transportation and Capital Improvement Staff – provide administrative and logistical assistance for the Transit District. Including tasks like document preparation, communication coordination, and budget tracking to ensure a smooth implementation of the transit services.

Supporting Department Roles:

Finance – ensures investments, reports, payroll, cash collection and expenditures are completed following the City Charter, applicable statutes, and generally accepted accounting principles.

Purchasing – will ensure all transit related RFP's are developed and issued in accordance with state purchasing law and federal grant requirements while being responsible for sourcing supplies and services for all City departments.

Grants Management – will oversee grant management from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and other sources such as Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

Human Resources – will maintain and enforce the City's policies related to Title VI, EEO, and ethics along with other employment related tasks to support transit.

City Attorney – will handle all legal aspects and provide legal advice for the City of New Braunfels and the New Braunfels Transit District.

City Manager – to provide clear direction and support for the transit system, by collaborating with City Council to ensure transparency.



Communication Tools

Print Publications:

- Annual Budget
- Annual Plan
- Swag – pens, stress balls, notepads
- Vehicle Wrap - logo
- Herald Zeitung – media releases
- Community Impact

Digital Publications:

- City Website
- Transit Website

Social Media:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Transit Application

Community Outreach:

- Parades
- Job Fairs
- National Night Out
- Meet the Trucks
- Council Connect

Contractor:

- Scheduling application
- Provider's website



Annual Approach/Strategies

Name: New Service

Success Outcome: Community Value & Customer Satisfaction

Owner: Julie Sitton

Team Members: Garry Ford, Brenadette Faust, Barbara Coleman, Jenna Vinson

Name: Engage & Promote

Success Outcome: Community Value

Owner: Julie Sitton

Team Members: Garry Ford and Elizabeth Dupont

Name: Transit Reporting

Success Outcome: Community Engagement

Owner: Julie Sitton

Team Members: Garry Ford

Name: AAMPO New Braunfels Connection Study

Success Outcome: Community Value

Owner: Julie Sitton

Team Members: Garry Ford, Elizabeth Dupont, TCI support



Contact List

Julie Sitton
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Transportation & Capital Improvements Department
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Links

Ride the Rio! Webpage
<https://newbraunfels.gov/3923/Ride-the-Rio---New-Braunfels-Transit>

- Provide transit feedback
- 2023 Transit Development Plan
- June 2024 City Council update presentation
- Microtransit Zone map

Strategic Plan
<https://newbraunfels.gov/3866/Strategic-Plan>

- 2024 – 2029 City Strategic Plan

Envision New Braunfels
<https://www.newbraunfels.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16593/Envision-New-Braunfels-Final>

- June 2018

Transit Development Plan
<https://www.newbraunfels.gov/2372/Transit-Development-Plan>

- October 2023

Contractor's Website

Glossary

Charter Service – a vehicle hired for exclusive use that does not operate over a regular route, on a regular schedule and is not available to the general public.

Complementary Paratransit Services – transportation services required by the ADA for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route transportation services. Service must be provided in a corridor $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on either side of the bus routes.

Cutaways – a vehicle in which a bus body is mounted on the chassis of a van or light duty truck; typically seat 15 more passengers and accommodate standing passengers.

Demand Response (DR) – transit mode comprised of vans or small busses operating in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator. The vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule. The vehicle may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pickup points before taking them to their respective destinations.

Fixed Route – services provided on a repetitive, fixed schedule basis along a specific route with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations; each fixed route trip serves the same origins and destinations. (Bus)

FTA – Federal Transit Administration

FTA Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 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.

Microtransit – a shared transportation service that uses technology to provide on-demand rides. Can be provided in a variety of ways:

- Turnkey – a third-party operator provides all the elements of service, including vehicles, drivers, and technology.

- Software as a Service – agencies purchase the software to use on existing vehicles in their fleet.

Minivan (MV) – a light duty vehicle having a typical seating capacity of up to seven passengers plus a driver. Typically cannot accommodate standing passengers.

National Highway System (NHS) – provides a wide range of transportation activities such as: fringe/corridor parking facilities, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and vanpool projects.

National Transit Database (NTD) – a reporting system that collects public transportation financial and operating information.

Paratransit – types of passenger transportation which are more flexible than conventional fixed-route but more structured than the use of private automobiles. Most often refers to wheelchair-accessible.

Public Transportation – transportation that provides regular and continuing general or special transportation to the public, but does not include school bus, charter, or intercity bus transportation or intercity passenger rail.

Service Area for Demand Response – area encompassing the origin to destination points wherever people can be picked up or dropped off.

Transit – synonymous term with public transportation.

Urbanized Area (UZA) – an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more. The Census Bureau delineates urban areas after each decennial census.