
HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

***SERVING OUR CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES
FOR FIFTY-THREE YEARS***

***Freestone County celebrated the 100th Anniversary
of the Courthouse on April 26, 2019***



HOTCOG PRESIDENT - Honorable Alice Rodriguez***January 2019 – May 2019***

Mrs. Alice Rodriguez served as President of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments Executive Board from January 2019 through May 2019. Mrs. Rodriguez served a total of seven years on the HOTCOG Board representing the City of Waco. Alice did not seek re-election in 2019 to the Waco City Council, ending a 24-year tenure of the longest-serving council member in Waco's history and the first Hispanic woman elected to the post. She has been a long-time leader, has shown genuine care and concern for her constituents and has given her all throughout the years. As President of HOTCOG, Alice has been an advocate for improving the quality of life for all in our region and improving the economic condition for the area.

***HOTCOG PRESIDENT – Honorable Don Pool******May 2019 - present***

Judge Don Pool currently serves as President of HOTCOG representing Bosque County. Judge Pool has served as Bosque County Judge since 2016 and has been an active member of HOTOG's Board since that time. Previously, his career has spanned all facets of the construction industry including design & engineering. (Hint: ask Judge Pool about his involvement in the construction of the historic Hwy. 360 Bridge in Austin)



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR....

What is regionalism? Simply put it is neighbors helping neighbors. From the statehouse to the firehouse we must reach across boundaries to work with and support each other on vital projects and initiatives harnessing our local talent to address important issues.

We help local governments to find solutions to pressing issues, from Homeland Security, environmental quality, emergency communication and services for our seniors. We help to build bridges of trust between Federal, State and Local governments, helping counties and cities solve problems and impact the future locally. We help spur economic development and strengthen efficiency and cooperation for our members.

We have had a good year since we visited last. Homeland Security has continued its efforts in communication upgrades for the region. The local Air Quality program was created after the Governor vetoed the program and our COG received a National Award showcasing how local governments can work together. Ridership in transportation is up 14%. Our 911 program that also received a National Award continues its roll out and implementation of next generation services. Your Health and Human Services program provided over \$3.8 million in services to over 81,000 citizens in our region. Your Economic Development division is working on \$7.4 million in projects.

The concluding remark of my message last year was “Local government is where the rubber meets the road and you are all NASCAR drivers. Prayerfully I hope no one crashes.” While there was a lot of crashes during the recent Legislative session, the ultimate crash and burn demolition derby event didn’t happen till the session was over.

The 2019 Legislative session concluded May 27, which was none too soon from a local government perspective. the best news from the session is that the misguided effort to silence cities, counties, and the organizations that represent them (including TML and TAC) was soundly defeated on the House floor.

Texas Monthly said, “George Washington was famously purported to have said that the U.S. Senate was the saucer that cooled the hot coffee brewed up by the rambunctious and populist House.” In Texas, at least in recent times, it has been the Senate that has brewed the hot coffee with the House cooling it off.

For the past decade the Legislature has had a rocky relationship with local governments, though this session seemed to mark rock bottom in recent memory. The Majority pushed through property tax reform — featuring limits on local governments' ability to raise revenue without voter approval — over the fierce objections of groups like the Texas Municipal League and Texas Association of Counties. Lawmakers simultaneously took



Mr. Russell Devorsky

direct aim at that influence with a proposed ban on "taxpayer-funded lobbying." It ultimately failed to pass the House, but the fact that it made it that far underscored some lawmakers' long-building frustrations with local governments and their advocates. When the next session convenes expect to see that attack continue.

I'd like to conclude with good news, HOTCOG received its 5th consecutive Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations for our ability to collaborate across regional lines to work for our citizens.

We at HOTCOG, have a phenomenal Executive Board. I, and all my staff, are proud and honored to be able to work with you and carry out our regional mission.

HOTCOG Semi-Annual Meeting, August 22, 2019 held at the Waco Hilton Hotel, Waco, Texas



2019 Executive Committee

Officers

President - May 2019 – Current

The Honorable Don Pool
County Judge, Bosque County

Vice President

The Honorable Mike Thompson
Councilmember, City of Groesbeck

President - January 2019 – May 2019

The Honorable Alice Rodriguez
Mayor Protem, City of Waco

Secretary-Treasurer

The Honorable Linda Grant
County Judge, Freestone County

Members

The Honorable Justin Lewis
County Judge, Hill County

The Honorable Jay Elliott
County Judge, Falls County

The Honorable Jeannie Keeney
County Treasurer, Freestone County

The Honorable Kyle Deaver
Mayor, City of Waco

The Honorable Johnnie Hauerland
Mayor, City of Meridian

The Honorable John Kinnaird
Councilmember, City of Waco

The Honorable Andrew Smith
Mayor, City of Hillsboro

The Honorable Scott Felton
County Judge, McLennan County

The Honorable Richard Duncan
County Judge, Limestone County

The Honorable Kelly Snell
Commissioner, McLennan County

The Honorable Nita Wuebker
Commissioner, Falls County

The Honorable Jimmy Rogers
Councilmember, City of Robinson

The Honorable Jim Holmes
Councilmember, City of Waco

The Honorable Calvin Rueter
Special Districts

REGIONAL SERVICES

Regional Services Division is one of two operational divisions of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments.

The Regional Services Division includes two broad program areas. The emergency services area is made up of programs designed to preserve the safety of citizens and property, including 9-1-1, Homeland Security, Citizens Corps, and Criminal Justice. The planning and development services area is made up of programs including Solid Waste Planning, Community Development, and Economic Development.

The Regional Services Division consists of seven full time employees administering fifteen grant contracts and associated deliverables in six main program areas.



Pictured, L to R: Regional Services Division Staff: Kristine Hill, Harold Ferguson, Amy Derrick, Dorthy Jackson, Lana Gudgel, Falen Bohannon and Sarah Wines

9-1-1 Program

History

The 9-1-1 program was authorized in 1987, when HB 911 was signed into law establishing a funding structure to finance statewide 9-1-1 implementation. For thirty years, the program has been overseen by the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC), implemented at the COG level, and grown in technical and capability to a sophisticated and powerful network. HOTCOG's 9-1-1 program delivers this service to Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, and Limestone counties. McLennan County has its own separate emergency communications district and is not included in the HOTCOG regional 9-1-1 program.



Key Accomplishments of 2019

The Region continues to move closer to Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) as COG staff collaborates with network consultants, equipment vendors and the TriCOG Alliance partnership, Brazos Valley COG (Bryan) and Central Texas COG (Belton) and HOTCOG, to develop a robust statewide network. New 9-1-1 equipment was installed at the Region's Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) including new mapping software. This Next Generation ready, geo-diverse host-remote equipment efficiently processes our regional 9-1-1 calls. A 4G LTE wireless backup for the Region's 9-1-1 internet protocol (IP) network continues to operate as a cost-efficient alternate path to routing 9-1-1 calls during an outage. Text-to-9-1-1 is available in the HOTCOG Region as an alternate means of communicating with 9-1-1 for people with a hearing and/or speech disability, or when speaking out loud would put the individual in danger. Text-to-9-1-1 also provides a silent alternative in cases such as child abduction, active shooter or domestic abuse.

9-1-1 Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from each county and possessing a range of technical expertise, provides guidance and approval on issues related to the 9-1-1 program. Committee Members continue to be advocates for local control of the 9-1-1 program.

Strategic Planning

HOTCOG develops and submits the 9-1-1 Strategic Plan on a biennial basis. The plan contains local implementation levels and priorities; plan costs by county, level, and component; equipment worksheets for justification of need; system telephone network diagrams by county; and administrative budget information. It also clearly defines data such as system upgrades/replacements, addressing maintenance activities, PSAP training activities, etc.

Rural Addressing

HOTCOG funds addressing maintenance activities in each county. The county Addressing Coordinators' duties include, providing 9-1-1 addresses within the rural areas of the county, maintaining a local 9-1-1 database, GPS driveway and road collection, and submitting all updates to the COG.

Mapping/GIS/Database

HOTCOG maintains and utilizes the geographic information system (GIS) for the Region. The COG provides mapping activities including updating and maintaining street files, driveway locations, emergency service provider boundaries, and cellular tower sites. The program distributed 282 maps to jurisdictions in the Region in FY 2019, along with 84 printed map books. Staff participates on several CSEC and Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) focus groups relating to Next Generation 9-1-1 mapping projects. HOTCOG staff works with county addressing coordinators, telephone companies, and post offices to obtain correct address information and eliminate errors in the 9-1-1 system.

Public Education / Training

HOTCOG provides public education activities throughout the Region including the distribution of 9-1-1 educational materials. Awareness of 9-1-1 is key to getting help in an emergency. Cell Phone Sally, the 9-1-1 mascot, teaches children the proper use of the 9-1-1 emergency number. She is displayed on items such as brochures, pencils, bookmarks, coloring books, and is featured in the 9-1-1 DVD entitled: “Getting Help is Easy” which has been distributed to schools within the Region. There is also an assortment of publications and educational items carrying 9-1-1 messages such as “Help Us Help You” and “Call when you can, text 9-1-1 when you can’t,” geared toward adults and seniors. During FY 2019, 16,739 public education items were distributed in the Region. On an annual basis, the HOTCOG partners with the McLennan County Emergency Assistance District to offer comprehensive Teletypewriter (TTY) training. HOTCOG also provides refresher courses semi-annually. This training is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to assure that all 9-1-1 answering centers provide direct, equal access to their services for people with hearing disabilities. National Public Safety Telecommunications Week, April 14-20th, all telecommunicators in the HOTCOG Region were honored. HOTCOG staff presented umbrellas to the regions Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) staff to recognize and thank them for their dedication in protecting and serving our communities.

Staff: Kristine Hill, 9-1-1 Coordinator
Sarah Wines, 9-1-1 GIS Coordinator



Kristine Hill and Sarah Wines pictured with Fairfield ISD 4th graders at the Fairfield Food for America Day.

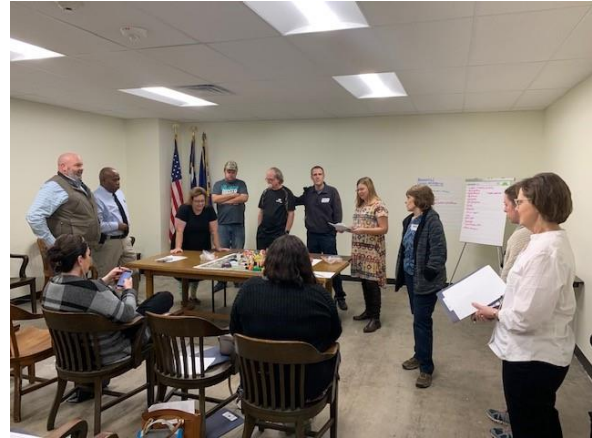
Emergency Preparedness / Homeland Security

Harold Ferguson, Homeland Security Manager

Amy Derrick, Emergency Preparedness Planner

General

In 2019, the Emergency Preparedness/Homeland Security Program continued to support local jurisdictions and emergency response agencies by assisting and maintaining partnerships that enhance planning, cooperation, coordination, training, exercises, communications, and emergency response throughout the Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG) Region. The staff continues to provide grant management and technical assistance to agencies and jurisdictions within the region and serves as an interface between local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies.



Falls County Table Top Exercise

2019 Accomplishments

- *With her first year, Amy Derrick attended training and is certified in NIMS IS 300, IS 400, CERT Basic and CERT Train the Trainer.*
- *HOTCOG Staff updated the regional Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), Stakeholder Preparedness Report (SPR), and Implementation Plans (IP).*
- *HOTCOG Staff assisted Falls County with funding and technical support for P25 communication equipment improvements.*
- *HOTCOG Staff assisted Freestone County with funding and technical support for microwave radio replacements.*



Falls County P25 Communication Shelter



Freestone County Communication Equipment

The committee is comprised of 24 key stakeholders and responders from within the region's homeland security, emergency management, law enforcement, fire, health, and other response disciplines. This group develops regional goals and makes recommendations to the HOTCOG Executive Committee on the distribution of regional SHSP grant funds. By using a regional approach, this committee shares and supports all agencies.

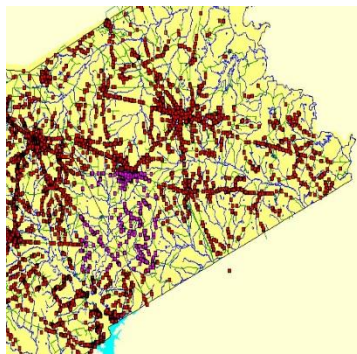
Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (EPAC)



State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)

The State Homeland Security Program grant administered by the Office of the Governor (OOG) provides regional funds for homeland security, terrorism prevention, emergency operations, planning, and the purchase of specialized equipment to enhance the capability of local agencies to prevent and respond to incidents of terrorism. The HOTCOG Region received \$511,111 in 2019 State Homeland Security Program grants. The 2019 funding provided for regional planning, Bomb Squad equipment, Hazardous Material Team equipment, Special Response Team night vision equipment, Citizen Corps program, and the regional emergency notification system. It also funded local projects for emergency generators, dispatch console, and communication microwave radios.

Emergency Notification System



The HOTCOG staff continues the administration and training of the Regional Emergency Notification System (ENS) and constantly updates our contact database. When danger threatens, this regional system allows quick notification by county and city officials to alert the general public and special response groups by sending mass telephone notices, as well as text messages, emails and weather alerts. In 2019, business cards were developed and distributed to agencies and citizens to increase the ENS registration. COG staff encourages citizens to register their address, cellular phone numbers, text, and email information at www.HOTReady.com.

Citizen Corps Program (CCP)

The Citizen Corps Program provides the training, knowledge and equipment necessary for community members to ensure the safety and well-being of themselves, their families and their communities during both times of stability and times of emergency. With the additional training received by staff, this allows the continued development of this program. Activities during 2019 allowed the program to experience growth in the number of trained citizen volunteers and the

utilization of volunteer responses. Most notable, the Bosque County CERT program and the TSTC CERT program.

Bosque County CERT Basic Training Class



Criminal Justice Planning

HOTCOG is responsible for coordinating Criminal Justice planning and implementation activities within the six county region. As part of the coordination, HOTCOG staff assists counties with developing plans and strategies that address the needs of the region.

In addition, the HOTCOG Criminal Justice program offers an extensive and TCOLE-certified training program for continuing education of law enforcement personnel.

Specific responsibilities of the Criminal Justice staff include:

- Serve as support to the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC), assist them in prioritizing projects for funding, and deliver approved recommendations to the Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Division (CJD);
- Participate in related planning throughout the region including mental health, substance abuse, and law enforcement issues;
- Provide technical assistance to CJD grantees and potential applicants throughout the year;
- Meet with the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee at least two times a year to consider matters pertinent to criminal justice funding and prioritize applications submitted to the Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Division;
- Meet with the Law Enforcement Training Advisory Committee (LETAC) at least two times a year to consider matters pertinent to the training program's content and implementation;



Criminal Justice Advisory Committee

- Maintain records and satisfy training requirements to continue TCOLE-certification of training program;

The training program expanded training classes to include additional specialized training for Patrol Officers and Telecommunicators. As part of this plan, HOTCOG staff conducted two new classes in 2019.



Law Enforcement Training Advisory Committee

- Prepare and submit grant applications to fund the regional Criminal Justice program, including purchase of services through the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention program, the regional law enforcement training program, and funding for HOTCOG planning activities;
- Pursuant to HOTCOG Juvenile Justice and Delinquency program grant, create and maintain contracts with each of the six counties to reimburse the Juvenile Probation Departments for eligible expenses on a pro rata basis;
- Report activities to CJD on a quarterly and biannual basis;
- Facilitate the development of county community plans and a regional strategic plan;
- Develop and maintain course offerings for the Criminal Justice training;
- Monitor completion of classes and arrange for appropriate TCOLE accreditation of participants; and

In August, HOTCOG held a special Sexual Assault Investigations for First Responders class and brought in a special guest speaker. Kenya Davis talked with the participants about her experience as a victim of sexual assault and working within the Criminal Justice System to bring justice to her case.

In October 2019 HOTCOG staff traveled to Falls County to conduct two required Telecommunicator courses, Basic Telecommunications and Crisis Communications for the Marlin Police Department and Falls County Sheriff's Office Telecommunicators.



Pictured: Guest Speaker Kenya Davis and staff member, Lana Gudgel

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Community Development Fund

History

The CDBG Program (formerly under the Texas Department of Rural Affairs aka TDRA) was created by the 77th Legislature to develop policy specifically addressing economic and quality of life issues affecting small and rural communities across Texas. Administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), grant dollars are awarded for Community Development projects in two-year intervals. The current cycle started in 2019 and projects will be awarded and funded for fiscal years 2019-2020. Application guidelines was completed last year and this year applications was turned in by community members. The HOTCOG Community Development program supports the Community Development Grant Program through support of the Regional Review Committee.

The most important Community Development accomplishments of 2019 was the RRC scoring for all community members who applied for the TxCDBG funds.

Regional Review Committee

The Regional Review Committee for the Heart of Texas Council of Governments is comprised of twelve members appointed by the Governor. These members are responsible for developing scoring criteria that determine funding for projects submitted by cities and counties for Community Development grant funds.

Technical Assistance

Through the Community Economic Development Program, HOTCOG also provides general technical assistance regarding community and economic development including Texas Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) procedures, application requirements and specific community development program activities such as housing workshops, infrastructure provision and financing workshops, grant writing workshops, planning and zoning seminars, and general needs assessment assistance.



Demographic Data Center

The HOTCOG Demographic Data Center is part of a network of the State Data Center of the State Demographer at Texas A&M University, which is the contact for U.S. Census information in Texas. The Heart of Texas Council of Governments serves as the region's point of contact for Census information. HOTCOG staff assists numerous local government entities, businesses, and individuals with the latest Census data and statistics.

Technical Assistance and Training

Community Development training offered by the HOTCOG in Fiscal Year Ending 2019 included several presentations about HOTCOG to various community groups, and Economic Development Corporation training. HOTCOG also provided Newly Elected Officials training that is mandated for newly elected officials. The Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act require elected and appointed officials to receive training in Texas open government laws. Technical assistance activities included research projects on behalf of our communities, with the greatest number of requests for assistance identifying grants and other sources of funding for community development projects plus basic operating procedures for municipal governments.



Staff member, Dorothy Jackson, attended the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce Banquet with a "sixties" theme



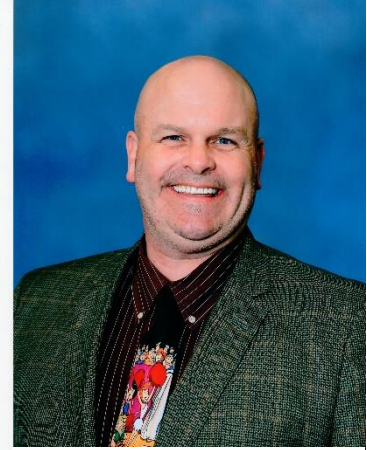
Pictured: HOTCOG staff members joined in the celebration of the 100th Year Anniversary of the Freestone County Courthouse, April 26, 2019

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**The Heart of Texas Economic Development District (HOTEDD)****History of the Heart of Texas Economic Development District (HOTEDD)**

The Heart of Texas was formerly part of the Central Texas Economic Development District (CTEDD). Following the dissolution of the Central Texas Economic Development District in

2000, there was a lack of regional economic development coordination. The many organizations, local governments, individuals, and private industries involved in economic development recognized the need for a comprehensive strategy to enhance and guide economic growth and reduce poverty in the region. This led the HOTCOG to establish an Economic Development District in 2003 with the first Board being seated in January of 2004. The Economic Development District is a stand-alone entity and not a part of HOTCOG, although the two entities partner in serving the Region.

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments provides administrative and economic development staff support for the Heart of Texas Economic Development District. The following report details the HOTCOG Economic Development Program, which operates on behalf of the EDD.



Falls County Judge, Jay Elliott, 2019 Chair, Heart of Texas Economic Development District

Key Accomplishments in 2019

- The most important Economic Development accomplishments of 2019 include: Receiving the “Impact Award” from NADO for the efforts in keeping the Region’s Air Quality program.
- Assist communities in applications for EDA funding.
- Dorthy Jackson was selected as an Emerging Leader out of the SWREDA Region.

Staff member, Dorthy Jackson, has successfully completed the year-long Training Program for Emerging Leaders, a leadership program funded by the Austin Regional Office of the U.S. Economic Development Administration.



Pictured far left is George Ayala, Regional Director for EDA’s Austin office with the Emerging Leaders participants.



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Though begun in 2004, HOTEDD received recognition as an official Economic Development District by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration in August of 2007. The EDD's main task under this designation is to conduct and maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).



The Economic Development Administration Reform Act of 1998 requires that projects comply with a regional CEDS in order to qualify for most Economic Development Administration funding. Fiscal Year 2020 requires five year CEDS. This year staff is working on the 2020-2025 CEDS documents and incorporating a CEDS that is web-based.

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

The Heart of Texas Economic Development District, Inc. (HOTEDD) has been awarded funds from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA)-Rural Development's (RD) Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) Program to make loans to rural small businesses at affordable rates.

The specific purpose of the RLF is to support small local businesses in our rural communities so that they can grow, create jobs, and diversify our regional economy. Specifically, the HOTEDD RBEG RLF Program seeks to assist qualified small and emerging businesses (less than 50 employees) in the rural Heart of Texas including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and rural McLennan Counties.

In June of 2013, HOTEDD made its first loan to Red Caboose Winery & Vineyard in Meridian, Texas (Bosque County).

In April of 2014, a second grant was awarded by USDA growing the HOTEDD RLF to over \$254,000.00.

In 2015, HOTEDD provided loans, totaling over \$160,000, to three small businesses using both grant funds and revolved funds: Net1 Connect (Rural Broadband Internet Provider in Southern McLennan and Eastern Falls Counties), Moody Hardware (local hardware store in Moody, Texas-McLennan County), and Chic-a-Doodles (Resale Super Center) of Mexia, Texas in Limestone County.

The Heart of Texas Economic Development District, Inc. (HOTEDD) Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) operates under the guidance of the USDA-RD Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG) and the HOTEDD USDA-RD RBEG Revolving Loan Fund Plan approved April 11, 2012.

HOTEDD staff completed application of a grant through the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) for the Small and Microenterprise Revolving Fund (SMRF) in partnership with Falls County. The grant was awarded in 2017. With HOTCOG staff

assistance the HOTEDD Board was able to approve two revolving loans in the Falls County community: Kent Cultivations DBA Rosebud's Artesian Alley (adding coffee bar in Rosebud), and KNV Investments (Fitness Gym in Marlin).

HOTEDD WEBSITE RECONSTRUCTION

Staff continuously works on improving the HOTEDD Website. Falen Bohannon is the lead designer of the HOTEDD website which saves the HOTEDD organization a considerable amount of money by doing it inhouse. The Website is being reconstructed with incorporation of a web based CEDS.

Regional Marketing

In 2019, the HOTEDD Regional Marketing Committee funded promotional items to be distributed throughout the Region.



Pictured from left, staff members, Falen Bohannon and Dorthy Jackson

Regional Support Activities & Technical Assistance

HOTCOG staff provides technical support, financial and administrative reporting, record keeping and membership information for the District and its committees. HOTCOG serves as a community resource by offering technical assistance in the areas of demographic statistics to assist the economic development jurisdictions of the region in the recruitment of business and industry. HOTCOG staff maintains federal, state, and local economic development information, and participates in area economic development forums and community economic development programs. Several rural communities received extensive technical support this year due to Staff's knowledge of day to day operations of municipal government.

Public Outreach, Education and Training

HOTEDD Staff continues to fulfill its role as a regional economic development training and information resource. Staff visits with elected officials, community leaders and community committees to support economic development projects, small business development, and Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant applications. Plus, the Newly Elected Officials training for all newly elected officials in the region and for those who wish to sharpen their knowledge even if they are not newly elected officials.

EDA Grant Administration

For Fiscal year 2019 Dorthy Jackson has been administrating 3 EDA grants for the following communities:

- City of Bellmead, Tirey Road Project
- City of Mexia & Mexia EDC, Mexia Industrial Park Roadway Infrastructure.
- City of Hillsboro, Hillsboro Industrial Park Water Improvements.

Dorthy Jackson has been working closely with the Groesbeck Economic Development Corporation in putting together an application for an EDA grant.

Staff: Dorthy Jackson, Regional and Economic Development Manager
Falen Bohannon, Environmental & Economic Development Coordinator

Solid Waste Program

History

The Solid Waste Program began as a result of legislation which stipulated that each Council of Governments in the State of Texas develop a Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (RSWMP) for its respective area. The HOTCOG Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) implements the items in the plan, reviews and updates the plan every 4 years or as needed, and administers the Solid Waste Grant Program for the region. The most recent plan was approved in January 2014.

Key Accomplishments of 2019

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) determined that all funding allocations for the FY 2019 will be used for COG Managed Projects throughout the region. There were several projects completed in almost all 6 counties in the region. Game cameras and dump trailers have been a great tool to help the communities clean up illegal dump sites and has been a main focus of FY 18. With most counties equipped with these, HOTCOG has already received several reports of fines given and arrests made for illegal dumping. Bosque, Hill, and Falls County conducted several clean-up projects in the last months and the participations from the region were extremely high. All funding for the biennium were utilized.

Solid Waste Funding - The HOTCOG receives funding for the Regional Solid Waste Grants Program from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). These funds are generated from the tipping fees collected at landfill sites across the state (the tipping fee is what the public is charged to discard their waste at a landfill). Staff is also required to provide and keep an updated Closed Landfill Inventory that is available to the public upon request.

Public Outreach, Education and Training

HOTCOG provides technical assistance concerning all aspects of solid waste management. Staff has disseminated information regarding grant funding and training opportunities to local governments and has met with local officials in the region to provide assistance in obtaining funds.

Staff attended and provided outreach materials to community members at numerous recycling events though out 2019 and handed out giveaways that showed off the 100% recycled materials available to make end products with.

Staff continues to participate actively with Keep Waco Beautiful (KWB), attending meetings on a monthly basis.



Keep Waco Beautiful Project “Party for the Planet” at the Waco Zoo

Air Quality Program

History

The HOTCOG Air Quality program began in January of 2010 as a result of the region being designated a “near nonattainment region” by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The TCEQ “Rider 8 Program” is the source of direction and funding for the important work of helping communities stay below the nonattainment ozone target measure. The program began with a great sense of urgency, as expected changes in air quality standards threatened to lead to a status of “nonattainment” for a part or possibly the entire HOTCOG Region. The public health and political ramifications of high ozone always makes this issue a top concern.

Key Accomplishments of 2018

After the Governor’s Veto of the Rider 8 program, HOTCOG implemented its own localized Air Quality program that will keep running technical studies going to help get a better understanding of the needs and responsibilities of the HOTCOG region. 5 of the 6 HOTCOG counties have chosen to participate in this program and \$50,000 in funds will be utilized. The purpose of the program is to improve local air quality by reducing emissions.

Environmental experts at

Environ report all regional air quality activities to the HOTCOG Air Quality Advisory Committee that show current and estimated emission activities in the region. Environ also completed the Emission Inventory Review and has continued model performance evaluations for the latest TCEQ CAMx run for the entire 2012 ozone season. In October, the Local Air Quality program was recognized by NADO and was given an award.

HOTCOG received the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) 2019 Impact Award for the Air Quality Program.



Pictured from left: Falls County Judge, Jay Elliott, HOTCOG Exec. Dir., Russell Devorsky, staff member, Falen Bohannon, NADO President, Scott Koons, staff member, Dorthy Jackson and Hill County Judge Justin Lewis

Public Outreach

Staff continues to maintain the BreatheEasyWaco.org web site, promote public education and community outreach activities, and oversee the development of reports and other tools for analysis. Currently, HOTCOG has an outreach campaign in use with Waco-Transit to guide communities to visit the website for more information.

**Staff:**

Falen Bohannon-Environmental Planner & Economic Development Coordinator



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2019****October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019****HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) – Division Overview**

The Health and Human Services Division (HHS) is one of two operational divisions of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. HHS focuses exclusively on service delivery to individuals and families through either direct services provided by the AAA, ADRC, 2-1-1, or RTD; and/or contracted services through the AAA, ADRC, 2-1-1 or RTD.

The Health and Human Services Division is made up of four service departments including:

- Area Agency on Aging of the Heart of Texas (AAAHOT)
- Heart of Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center (HOT ADRC)
- Heart of Texas 2-1-1 Call Center (HOT 2-1-1)
- Heart of Texas Rural Transit District (HOTRTD)

Programs and services in the Health & Human Services Division of HOTCOG were delivered in Fiscal Year 2019 in compliance with required levels of service while maintaining continued stability of existing programs and service.

Contract requirements were met and/or exceeded in each of the programs (AAA, ADRC, 2-1-1 and Transportation) even though all four of the programs were faced with challenges including increased costs of operation in the face of increased demand for services across the board. Staff and management in each program excelled in their response to the challenges and met all requirements of applicable funding agencies.

Level or reduced funding in the future continues to be a limiting factor in service delivery.

The **total value of services**, excluding in-kind match and local funding, for each individual county in the HOTCOG service area provided by the Area Agency on Aging, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, the 2-1-1, and the Rural Transit District was **\$3,896,765**. Total clients, contacts, calls and trips provided by the programs totaled **81,862**.

Bosque	\$349,411	3,496 clients, contacts, calls, and trips
Falls	\$370,802	4,637 clients, contacts, calls, and trips
Freestone	\$189,045	3,824 clients, contacts, calls, and trips
Hill	\$726,283	8,332 clients, contacts, calls, and trips
Limestone	\$496,661	17,221 clients, contacts, calls, and trips-
McLennan	<u>\$1,581,392</u>	<u>29,236</u> clients, contacts, calls, and trips
Subtotal	\$3,713,594	66,747 clients, contacts, calls, and trips
Outside of area	<u>\$183,171</u>	<u>15,115</u> calls from outside HOT 2-1-1 area
Grand Totals	\$3,896,765	81,862 clients, contacts, calls, and trips

The division is directed by Gary W. Luft - Director of Health and Human Services.

HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HHSAC)

The Health and Human Services Advisory Council (HHSAC) is a voluntary group of citizens appointed by the HOTCOG Executive Committee to serve in an advisory capacity to the Health and Human Services Division.

Membership includes individuals representing the needs of health and human service consumers including older persons, minority individuals, persons with disabilities, caregivers, advocates for health and human service provider organizations, advocates for transportation provider organizations, advocates for support service organizations, local elected officials, the general public and persons with leadership experience.



Mr. Gary W. Luft

The Council is made up of twenty-five voting representatives (three from Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill and Limestone Counties and ten from McLennan County). The Council also includes our elected Texas Silver Haired Legislators (TSHL) representing the HOTCOG service area. In addition, resource representatives are asked to serve because of their special knowledge or experience in health and human service policies and issues. Resource representatives serving in this capacity may be from within or outside the HOTCOG service area and may include representatives from agencies receiving funds from HOTCOG.



Health and Human Services Advisory Council Meeting

The Council normally meets a minimum of four to six times per year.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING of HEART of TEXAS (AAAHOT)

AAAHOT is 1 of 28 Area Agency on Aging contractors designated statewide by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS).

AAAHOT provides access to needed social services, effective screening and assessment of individual needs, and advocacy for the older persons (age 60 and older) in our six-county region. Access services are provided to older persons and their family members' or other caregivers.



Staff member, Donnis Cowan

Services provided directly by AAAHOT staff includes three core programs - benefits counseling, care coordination/caregiver support coordination and LTC ombudsman services.

AAAHOT also contracts with service providers throughout the region to provide nutrition services (congregate and home delivered meals), caregiver education and training, caregiver information services, in-home care, minor residential repair, health education programs, and income support for grandparents acting as parents for their grandchildren.

- **BENEFITS COUNSELING PROGRAM**

The Benefits Counseling Program is directly administered by AAAHOT staff and provides one-on-one legal assistance services to persons age 60 and older and to any adult Medicare recipient regardless of age. Individualized counseling is offered to those in need of assistance with Medicare Part D Prescription Drug programs, Medigap supplemental insurance, Medicaid estate planning, advanced planning for retirement, health care services, Medicare preventive services, consumer issues and preparation of Advanced Directives. The program also provides group legal awareness presentations and group education for all ages through community presentations and special events to promote health and wellness, safety, and legal education.



Staff member, Rose Contreras

Staff: Donnis Cowan – Manager of Aging Programs
 Jan Enders – Manager of Program Development and Special Projects
 Rose Contreras – Senior Benefits Counselor
 Joanna Adcock – Program Specialist
 Debbie Jones – Part Time

Legal Assistance - provides counseling to individuals assisting them with Medicare Part D, Medicare benefits, Medicare Advantage appeals, Social Security questions, and other benefit-related questions.

Clients Age 60 and Older 366 clients \$145,327 in services

MIPPA funding – provides application assistance to Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers regarding Medicare Savings Programs and Low-Income Subsidy, and/or Medicare Preventive Benefits. In addition, provides education and awareness to individuals in a group meeting or at health fairs, to assist with their understanding of the programs, prescription costs and Medicare premiums.

Medicare beneficiaries 582 clients \$12,812 in services

HICAP funding – provides assistance and educational outreach initiatives that assist individuals with a better understanding of their Medicare benefits.

6528 contacts \$54,727 in services



Staff member, Jan Enders

Legal Awareness - provides public events where information and documents explaining programs, benefits, and services are distributed to the attendees.

8,079 contacts

\$90,797 in services

• **CARE COORDINATION PROGRAM**

The Care Coordination Program is directly administered by AAAHOT staff and empowers senior citizens age 60 and older and their family caregivers to maintain their independence, freedom and dignity by identifying needs and arranging social services required for living independently. The program is broad based and includes a variety of related short-term support service opportunities. Some of those needs may include homemaker, personal assistance care, and respite relief for caregivers, home repairs/modifications, durable medical equipment and numerous other services, depending on funding.

Staff: Donnis Cowan – Manager of Aging Programs
Destiny Zavala – Care Coordinator
Joanna Adcock – Program Specialist
Debbie Jones – Part Time

Care Coordination Serving Age 60 and older and their caregiver - a case manager assesses the needs with the client and their caregiver and plans, arranges, coordinates, and follows-up on needed services. Services that can be provided are homemaker services, personal assistance, home repairs and/or modifications, health maintenance services and respite for their caregivers.

515 clients \$67,552 in services
197 caregivers \$32,376 in services



Homemaker – a case manager arranges for short-term services to assist clients with light house cleaning, errands, and meal preparation.

32 clients \$8,209 in services

Personal Assistance – a case manager arranges for short-term services to assist clients with bathing, dressing, toileting, light house cleaning, and meal preparation. This covers hands-on assistance in all activities of daily living.

87 clients \$22,794 in services

Respite – a case manager arranges for short-term relief to caregivers. Services are provided in the client's home environment on a short term, temporary (6 months maximum) basis while the caregiver is unavailable or needs relief. This service also allows the caregiver to take care of themselves, so they are better able to sustain care for their loved one over an extended period.

64 clients

\$18,529 in services

Home Repair/Modification – a case manager focuses primarily on contracted repairs/modifications that improve accessibility, structure, safety and weatherization of the home for low-income homeowners age 60 and older that are living in unsafe and/or unhealthy environments.

102 clients

\$77,868 in services

Health Maintenance – a case manager arranges for the purchase of durable medical equipment that enables clients to be more independent and assists them with their daily activities.

Durable Medical Equipment using Med-Equip and Drug Emporium

44 clients

\$4,311 in services

Income Support – a case manager arranges for the purchase of school uniforms for the Grandparents Acting as Parents Program, which enables grandparent's financial assistance in raising their grandchildren.

Estimated value of \$100 for school clothes, per child – Walmart - (Polo-type shirt, khaki or capri pants)

18 grandparents

(50 grandchildren)

\$4,840



Grandparent, Darlene Jackson and Kylee

Information, Referral and

Assistance – individuals age 60 and older and their caregivers call to inquire about community resources. Services provided by AAAHOT are coordinated with appropriate staff. Services which AAAHOT does not offer are referred to the appropriate community service providers.

1,766 calls

\$61,402 in services

Evidence-Based Programs – Evidence-based programs are based on research. They offer proven ways to promote good or improved health and prevent disease among older adults. These programs are tested models or interventions into practical, effective community programs that can provide proven health benefits to participants.

The AAA contracts with several facilitators to conduct programs including: A Matter of Balance, Caregiver Stress Busting, Chronic Disease Self-Management, and Diabetes Self-Management to individuals age 60 and older and their caregivers of any age if the caregivers meet the eligibility criteria.

181 clients \$55,687 in services



Staff member, Joanna Adcock Whitehouse

- **CONTRACT SERVICES**

Contract Services are provided by subcontractors or vendors in accordance with contracts or vendor agreements managed by the Area Agency on Aging to serve the senior citizens of the region.

Staff: Donnis Cowan – Manager of Nutrition and Caregiver Programs

Nutrition Program

The nutrition program is a core program of AAAHOT that is contracted rather than directly provided by AAAHOT employees.



Pictured L-R: Sharon Gephart, Stephanie Overall, staff member Donnis Cowan, Debbie King and Tanya Phillips

AAAHOT subcontracts with four service providers throughout the region to provide nutritious meals to older citizens through congregate meal sites and/or home delivered meals. The service providers are closely monitored to insure compliance with all regulations concerning nutrition and program requirements. These providers operate 36 senior centers and nutrition sites located in the six-county region. The nutrition program is a key contributor to the health and well-being of older persons participating in the program. The program also provides social interaction that is critical to good mental and physical health for the recipients.

Nutrition Contractors:

Bosque County Senior Services
Central Texas Senior Ministry
(Serves Falls, Hill & McLennan counties)

Sharon Gephart, Project Director
Melody McDermitt, Executive Director

Freestone County Senior Services Stephanie Overall, Project Director
Limestone County Senior Services Tanya Phillips, Acting Oversight

In addition to providing meals at the congregate sites the subcontractors also prepare and deliver meals to the homes of isolated elderly who are unable to travel to the congregate sites and/or prepare meals for themselves. Home delivered meals, commonly referred to as “Meals on Wheels,” provide critical daily nutrition requirements while allowing the delivery person to make daily contact with the home bound elderly person.

- **Congregate Meals:** - meals served in a group setting at senior centers
745 clients served
39,317 congregate meals served
\$253,141 funding from AAAHOT
- **Home Delivered Meals:** - meals delivered to the homes of seniors
1,081 clients served
111,777 home delivered meals served
\$634,537 funding from AAAHOT

The individual subcontractors are primarily funded by AAAHOT but each contractor is required to obtain additional funding from their local communities and clients for their specific program.

Caregiver Education and Training

AAAHOT subcontracted with Howard Gruetzner to provide dementia related counseling to caregivers to assist in making decisions and solving problems relating to their caregiver roles. This included counseling for dementia related illnesses for individuals, support groups; and caregiver training for individual caregivers and families.

48 clients \$44,000 in services

- **BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU CONTRACT**

Contract service provided by subcontractors in accordance with contracts or vendor agreements managed by a local Area Agency on Aging to serve the senior citizens of the region.

Staff: Jan Enders – Manager of Senior Medicare Patrol
Janice Mancherian – Volunteer Coordinator

Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) – funded in part with a five-year \$20,000 annual grant by the Better Business Bureau of Houston. The mission of SMP is to empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report healthcare fraud, errors, and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education.



Staff member, Janice Mancherian

The program utilizes one volunteer coordinator (Janice Mancherian) operating under the direction and supervision of the AAAHOT.

Number of team member hours – 1285.92

Team members – 7

Number of group outreach and educational events - 68

Number of people reached – 4236

Number of contacts reached through media, PSA's, etc.

462,000



Pictured: L-R: Staff members Jan Enders and Janice Mancherian

• **LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**

The Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program is directly administered by AAAHOT staff and is charged with the promotion of quality of care and quality of life for nearly 5409 residents in 37 nursing homes and 24 assisted-living facilities in the six-county service area. The program is managed by the State Ombudsman office and hosted by the local Area Agency on Aging.

Staff: Susan McCombs - Managing Local Ombudsman
Lynda Mitchell – Staff Ombudsman
Twelve (12) Certified Volunteer Ombudsmen (CVOs)



Pictured left: Lynda Mitchell and Susan McCombs

The program is authorized through the Older Americans Act and advocates for rights of residents as provided by state and federal laws. Residents of Long-Term Care facilities may receive advocacy services and assistance from an Ombudsman whenever they encounter unresolved problems with the care or services they receive or whenever their rights are perceived as being violated.

A primary focus of the LTC Ombudsman Program is the use of an organization of 12 Certified Volunteer Ombudsmen (CVO). Each CVO is provided with state developed training on Long Term Care facility operations and requirements, aging issues and advocacy skills, with training that follows HHSC requirements. The success of the program is directly impacted by the activity of the CVO's. Each CVO provides services

to residents in their assigned facility, or facilities, typically spending two or more hours a week at each nursing home or assisted living center.

The Ombudsman Program plays an important part of promoting and assisting resident who are eligible to return to the community through the Money Follows the Person program. The staff promotes this program through education and consults with facility staff and through assisting residents and families in relocation information. The Staff attends the Community Transition Team (CTT) meeting monthly. This meeting is designed to discuss and resolve issues regarding residents transitioning back to the community.

Each Certified Ombudsman is dedicated to ensuring *quality of care* and *quality of life* for the residents. During the year the staff and CVOs produced, assisted with, or accomplished:

- 1650 documented activities including residents, family and staff consultations, survey participations, facility visits and community presentations;
- 34265 resident contacts throughout all facilities;
- 438 complaints investigated ranging in severity from verbal or psychological abuse, to poor nursing care. The complaints addressed most often related to care issues 85 complaints), environmental issues (35), dietary issues (48) and resident rights (55);
- 98.2% of the complaints were resolved or partially resolved; and
- 612 consults were performed by Ombudsmen to educate facility staff and to inform and assist residents and/or family members with regulations.

An important part of the Ombudsman program is to establish and maintain a good working relationship and good communication with state surveyors. The staff participated in the nursing home surveys in the region and routinely consulted with the complaint investigators. The staff also participates in the Region 7 Quarterly Regulatory/Ombudsman meeting held quarterly.

To improve the quality of care and services provided by local facilities, the LTC Ombudsman Program has a goal of offering training in the Waco area to LTC staff throughout the region. The program provided 3 days of HHSC Continuing Education training during the fiscal year. The Program was also active with presentations at various LTC facilities for required in-services. The Managing Local Ombudsman also served on the RSVP Board and participated in their Recognition Luncheon and Health Fair.

Total program expenditures	\$121,359
In-kind CVO contribution	\$41,581

Total Funding for All Aging Programs in FY19:

Health and Human Services (formerly DADS)	\$1,467,563
State General Revenue (SGR)	\$100,396
Nutritional Supplemental Incentive Program (NSIP)	\$201,269
MIPPA	\$12,812
HICAP	\$54,727

Better Business Bureau – SMP Program	<u>\$20,000</u>
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Total Federal, State and Grant Funding For Aging Programs – FY 2019	\$1,856,767
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HEART of TEXAS AGING and DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (HOT ADRC)

In September 2014 the Heart of Texas Council of Governments was awarded and designated an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). The HOT ADRC is 1 of 25 ADRCs making up the statewide network serving the needs of Texas.

Staff: Donnis Cowan – Manager of Aging / ADRC Programs
Eric Hobbs - Housing Navigator
Tiffany Soto – Resource Navigator



Staff Member, Tiffany Soto

The ADRC model is a “way of doing business” that is intended to respond more effectively and efficiently to the needs of individuals looking for long term services and supports. ADRC’s provide older individuals, individuals of any age with disabilities, family caregivers, veterans, and families with children with special needs, all without regard to income levels, *information and assistance* about local programs and resources as they relate to aging or living with a disability. ADRC’s help those in need navigate through a complicated and complex network of available support services with the primary purpose of helping individuals live within their community if possible.

ADRCs provide visible, trusted, comprehensive and streamlined access to long-term services and supports by establishing a “virtual no wrong door” model of information exchange, person and family-centered planning, and service

provision.

The Heart of Texas ADRC is made up of a broad-based operating partner’s coalition consisting of the following operating partners:

- Area Agency on Aging (AAAHOT)
- Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center (HOTRMHMR)
- Heart of Central Texas Independent Living Center (HOCTIL)
- Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)
- Heart of Texas 2-1-1 (HOT 2-1-1)

HOTCOG serves as the Lead Agency/Fiscal Agent and has responsibility as contract administrator. ADRC employees are housed in the ADRC office located in the HOTCOG

building. The “hub” of the HOTADRC model is in Waco with projected “satellite” sites located in each of the five rural counties.

The number of calls received by the HOTADRC has been steadily increasing since opening our doors. All calls to the Heart of Texas ADRC terminate into 254-292-1855. This includes local calls as well as any calls originating in our six-county service area placed to the statewide toll-free line for ADRC’s.

Referrals are made to appropriate agencies or service providers based on the needs of the caller. Multiple and complex cases may involve several service providers rather than just one provider. When more than one provider is involved the Resource Navigator assists with coordination of services provided by the different agencies.

The ADRC staff is responsible for handling “walk-ins” at the front lobby who come in with no appointment. An ADRC staff member meets with the individual, obtains pertinent information and routes them to the appropriate department or individual in the AAA, ADRC, 2-1-1, Rural Transit District and/or other community resource.

ADRC Referrals – individuals age 60 and older and disabled individuals of any age call to inquire about state and community resources.

3,920 calls and walk-ins
\$103,500 in services provided through calls and follow-ups
\$98,820 in services provided through Housing, Relocation, and Outreach



Staff Member, Eric Hobbs

The ADRC is actively involved in community efforts for cross training and information sharing between local social service providers including state agencies, local agencies, non-profits, and any organization providing social services in our six-county service area. The ADRC organizes and hosts 3 events per year with guest speakers from 6 different service providers explaining their eligibility criteria and how to make a valid referral.

The ADRC also chairs and hosts Community Resource Coordination Group (CRCG) meetings monthly, which staff client cases involving multiple complex needs. Representatives from various agencies attend, discuss the cases and identify providers who can assist with the needs of the clients.

Funding for the Heart of Texas ADRC is based on a three-year contract with projected annual funding through August 31, 2019:

Total Funding for ADRC in FY 2019:

State Generated Revenue	\$103,500
Money Follows Person Housing Navigator	\$51,653

Money Follows Person Contract Agency	\$6,832
Promoting Independence	\$17,019
Medicare Improvement (MIPPA)	10,142
Caregiver Respite	\$13,174
Total Yearly ADRC Funding	\$202,320

HEART of TEXAS AREA INFORMATION CENTER (HOT 2-1-1)

HOT 2-1-1 is 1 of 25 Area Information Centers (AICs) designated by the Texas Information and Referral Network (TIRN). TIRN is part of a national initiative to provide information about health and human services to all callers regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability or any other criteria.

Staff: Misty Stipe – Call Center Manager/Resource Coordinator
 Kathy Lyons – Senior I & R Specialist (full time)
 Belinda Arocha – I & R Specialist (full time)
 Carolyn Berry – I & R Specialist (part time)
 Debbie Jones – I & R Specialist (part time)

HOT 2-1-1 is a “free” social service help line answered by trained specialists who assist callers with their social service needs and refer them to the service providers or agencies that can best assist them. The help line is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by Information-Referral Specialists with multi-lingual capabilities available, if needed. HOT 2-1-1 staff provides assistance and information to callers concerning food, clothing, shelter, utility bill payment assistance, medical assistance, affordable childcare, eldercare, disaster relief and much more.

HOT 2-1-1 staff received 31,155 calls during the period of October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. An additional 1,862 calls were received after hours and on weekends by the Houston-Galveston Gulf Coast 2-1-1 which is contracted to take HOT 2-1-1 calls when HOT is closed.

31,155 calls received by HOT 2-1-1 staff (94.25%)
1,862 “after hour” calls taken by Houston-Galveston 2-1-1 staff (5.98%)
 33,017 total calls identified with HOT 2-1-1 (100%)

54.3% or 17,902 of the calls were identified as originating from within our six-county service area and 45.7% or 15,115 calls originating from outside of our six-county service area. This supports the concept that the Texas Information and Referral network is a statewide service and the various AICs work together to serve the entire state of Texas. Each of the twenty-five AICs that make up the TIRN network take calls both from their service area as well as roll-over calls from outside their service area.



A majority of calls originating within our six-county service area came from McLennan County and the City of Waco rather than from the surrounding lower populated rural counties. This pattern is expected because the largest concentration of people living in our service area reside in McLennan County and specifically Waco or the surrounding suburbs of Waco.



Pictured L-R: Staff members, Belinda Arocha, Kathy Lyons, Debbie Jones, Carolyn Berry and Misty Stipe

HOT 2-1-1 completed the initial 3-year contract of September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2018. We are now in the second of two 1-year renewals for the period of September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2020. The second and final 1-year renewal, if executed by both TIRN and HOTCOG, will be for the period of September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021. After expiration of the second renewal, we will respond to an RFP from TIRN as we have in the past. Hopefully, our application will be favorably received and HOTCOG will again be awarded a contract to provide services.

HOT 2-1-1 consistently maintains service levels that meet or exceed state contract requirements. Service level is defined as the length of time a caller waits in queue before getting to an Information and Referral Specialist for assistance.

The Texas Information and Referral Network (TIRN) began working with Relias Learning several years ago to provide access to online training for all 25 call centers in the state. Relias Online Training allows staff to take courses at their own pace – and at the times most convenient to the call center. Previously I&R Specialist would have to log out of the phone system to view webinars or go to offsite locations for training. Online training provides I&R Specialists the opportunity to attend health fairs, conferences and other events away from the office to promote 2-1-1 services.

The statewide Texas Information Referral Network (TIRN) of twenty-five AICs continues to assume increased visibility and importance because of their effectiveness and success in dealing with hurricanes and natural disasters. TIRN fills a substantial role in the Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan.

TIRN is the backbone for information distribution throughout the state during times of emergency and natural disasters including floods, hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, and tornadoes. The most recent example was Tropical Storm Imelda which made landfall on September 17, 2019. The 2-1-1 state network of local 2-1-1's immediately began to feel the impact of the disaster with thousands of frantic callers asking for evacuation assistance, shelters, food and supplies.

Based on 33,017 total calls taken by HOT 211 staff and Houston – Galveston staff on our behalf during the fiscal year, the average cost per call for FY 2019 was \$12.13 per call.

Total Funding for the HOT 2-1-1 in FY 2019:

211 Operations	\$389,000
211 Child Care	<u>11,427</u>
Total 2-1-1 Funding	\$400,427

HEART of TEXAS RURAL TRANSIT DISTRICT (HOTRTD)

The Heart of Texas Rural Transit District (HOTRTD) is 1 of 40 Rural Transit Districts designated statewide by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

HOTRTD provides demand response public ground transportation to the general public of any age, including transportation for seniors age 65 and older, and individuals with disabilities of any age. HOTRTD transportation services are provided in five counties - Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, and Limestone County. McLennan County is served exclusively by the McLennan County Transit District.

Pictured from left: Staff members, Frances, Misty and Rep



HOTRTD Staff consists of:

- Ronald E. “REP” Pledger – Manager of Transportation
- Frances Ramirez – Public Transportation Operations Assistant
- Misty Hendon – Transportation Administrative Assistant

HOTRTD utilized a combination of “contractor” model and “in-house” operations in throughout FY2019. HOTRTD contracted with Limestone County Senior Services Project to provide services in Limestone County while HOTRTD ran the operations for services in Bosque, Falls and Hill counties.

Service is provided by the utilization of twenty-four (23) HOTCOG owned vehicles with fourteen (14) leased to and operated by one service provider. Ten (9) vehicles are operated by HOTRTD and used as spare vehicles for the program.

HOTRTD service is classified as “origin-to-destination” meaning the vehicle stops at the passenger’s address instead of the passenger being required to go to a pick-up location or hub of service. Transportation is provided Monday through Friday (schedule varies) in the rural areas of the HOTRTD service area (Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, and Limestone counties).

Service Delivery and Trip Performance

30,172 trips were provided during FY 2019 compared to 30,793 during FY 2018.

Section 5310 Trips – Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities		
441 - Clients Served	20,523 - Trips Provided	\$977,330.68 in services provided
Section 5311 Trips – General Public Transportation		
302 - Clients Served	9,649 - Trips Provided	\$459,920.32 in services provided
Grand Totals – Combination of Both Services		
743 - Total Clients Served	30,172 - Total Trips Provided	\$1,437,251 in services provided

Section 5310 – Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities

- Annual cost to RTD for service provided - \$977,330.68
- Number of trips provided – 20,523
- Average cost to RTD per trip - \$47.62
- Number of clients served - 441
- Average cost to RTD per client - \$2,216.16
- Average number of trips per client – 46.53

Section 5311 – General Public Transportation

- Annual cost to RTD for service - \$459,920.32
- Number of trips provided – 9,649
- Average cost to RTD per trip - \$47.66
- Number of clients served - 302
- Average cost to RTD per client - \$1522.91
- Average number of trips per client – 31.90

Combined Programs

- Total cost to RTD for services provided - \$1,437,251
- Total number of trips provided – 30,172
- Average cost to RTD per trip - \$47.64
- Total number of clients served - 743
- Average cost to RTD per client - \$1,934.38
- The average number of all trips per client – 40.6

Maintenance of Vehicles

The HOTRTD contracts with Waco Transit for all preventive maintenance and a majority of repairs on fleet vehicles. This practice complies with the TxDOT initiative to use Regional

Maintenance Facilities and is consistent with our on-going maintenance agreement with Waco Transit. HOTRTD and WTS are reviewing the current MOU to make sure it is still beneficial to both agencies.

Fleet

HOTRTD staff is currently in the process of completing the acquisition of eight new replacement vehicles. These new vehicles will replace eight of the vehicles currently being utilized in HOTRTD's aging fleet. HOTRTD's fleet currently consists of five MV-1 mini vans and eighteen twelve passenger buses.

Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC)

The Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) did not meet in 2019 due to scheduling conflicts and inability to meet quorum requirements at the scheduled meetings.

Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments formally established a Rural Planning Organization (RPO) for the five rural counties of the Heart of Texas region including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill and Limestone counties.

Total Funding for the HOTRTD in FY 2019:

Section 5311 – State Funds	\$ 491,766
Section 5311 – Federal Funds	\$ 462,632
Fares and other contracts	\$ 326,078
Section 5310 – Elderly Persons & Persons with Disabilities (Federal \$)	\$ 156,775
Total Transportation Funding	\$ 1,437,251



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Administrative Services is responsible for the internal and external services for all HOTCOG program areas. Responsibilities include accounting, budgeting, financial management and reporting, personnel/payroll, benefits administration, purchasing, records management, website content and overall facilities management.

Administrative Services also provides support services as needed to implement programs in accordance with grant and contract agreements, and each year publishes the Regional Directory for the HOTCOG six county region.

HOTCOG's website, <https://hotcog.org/> is continually updated to include information about the region and the services we provide. The transparency and Reports page has the Annual Report, Annual Financial Reports, Annual Budget, Annual Local Debit Report and other links. Please visit our website and take a look around the region.

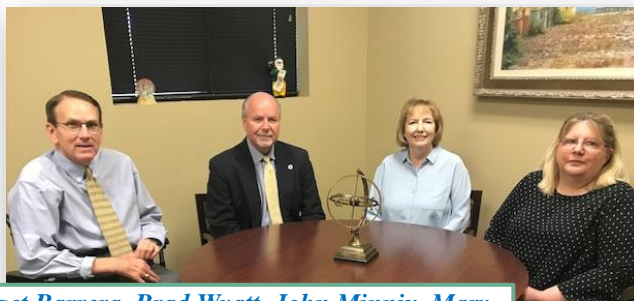
Each year all 24 regional planning commissions (RPCs) in Texas are required by Chapters 391 of the Texas Local Government Code to annually report to the State Auditor their financial, productivity, performance and salary information for the past year. HOTCOG submits those reports by December 31st of each year. The State auditor reviews and analyzes the submitted reports and annual audits to determine whether the 24 RPCs submitted statutorily required information. HOTCOG was determined to have met those requirements.

In addition, HOTCOG's outside auditors issued an unmodified or "clean" report that had no findings or questioned costs for Federal and State Awards.

The Administrative Services department organizes and conducts staff training during the year. Trainings include such topics as ethics training, purchasing policy training and wellness programs for employees.

Throughout the year several employee holiday events and the annual picnic were held to provide fun and relaxation. These events are not only a way to get to know each other but also to get to know our families and promote team building for our organization.

As always, the Administrative Services goal is to do whatever is necessary to give the best support for the operations of HOTCOG during the year.



Staff members, from left, Bridget Barrera, Brad Wyatt, John Minnix, Mary McDow and Michelle Vasquez

May 2019 Staff Picnic



Staff Christmas Party, December 2019



Heart of Texas Council of Governments
 Summary of Fund Availability and Proposed
 FY 2019-2020 Program Expenditures

Fund Availability

Local		
HOTCOG Dues	\$ 57,000	
Local Govt./HOTEDD Program Match	121,004	
Rent-Workforce Building	390,000	
HOTEDD Management Fee	15,126	
Interest Income	5,000	
Miscellaneous Income	3,000	
Local Govt. Program Income and Inkind Match	<u>1,056,256</u>	
		1,647,386
Federal/State		
Federal/State Administered Grants	5,553,404	
		<u>5,553,404</u>
Total Available Funds		7,200,790
Less: Program Income/Inkind Match		<u>1,056,256</u>
Net Available Funds for FY 2019-2020		6,144,534
Less: Delegate Agency/Contractual Costs		<u>2,835,376</u>
Net Available Operating Funds FY 2019-2020		<u>\$ 3,309,158</u>
<u>Program Expenditures</u>		
Council Management and Administration	1,310,673	
Aging Services	4,701,835	
Regional Services	2,028,829	
Total Proposed Dept. Expenditures	8,041,337	
Less: Transfers to Indirect Cost Pool	<u>903,173</u>	
Total Proposed Expenditures	7,138,164	
Less: Program Income/Inkind Match	<u>1,056,256</u>	
Net Proposed Expenditures for FY 2019-2020	6,081,908	
Less: Delegate Agency/Contractual Costs	<u>2,835,376</u>	
Net Proposed Operating Expenditures FY 2019-2020		<u>\$ 3,246,532</u>
Transfers Out-(Due to HOTEDD)		(32,876)
Net Surplus		<u>\$ 29,750</u>

Heart of Texas Council of Governments
 Summary of Revenues and Expenditures
 Proposed FY 2019-2020 Line Item Expenditures

Revenue

Local	\$ 1,639,386
Federal/State Administered	5,553,404
Other	<u>8,000</u>

Total Revenue	<u>\$ 7,200,790</u>
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Line Item Expenditures

Salaries	1,403,222
Benefits	716,041
Travel	63,762
Equipment	113,000
Supplies	21,280
Space	298,809
Communications	34,455
Copier/Printing	12,283
Computer	50,800
Postage	16,687
Audit	33,000
Other	163,884
Indirect	850,232
Debt Service-WF Bldg	269,309
Insurance/Maintenance/Other-WF Bldg	50,000
Management Fees	52,941
Program Income/Inkind Match	1,056,256
Delegate Agency/Contractual Costs	<u>2,835,376</u>

Total Proposed Expenditures	8,041,338
Less: Transfers for Indirect Cost Pool	<u>903,173</u>

Net Proposed Expenditures	<u>\$ 7,138,164</u>
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Transfers Out-(Due to HOTEDD)	(32,876)
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Net Surplus	<u><u>\$ 29,750</u></u>
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Number of Employees: 30