

Heart of Texas Council of Governments

Executive Committee Meeting

**Thursday
February 24, 2022
10:30 AM**

The meeting will be held at the:

***Heart of Texas
Council of Governments
Offices
1514 South New Road
Waco, Texas***

The meeting can also be accessed by “Virtual/Telephone Conferencing”, (as approved by the Texas Attorney General): Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/581423741>

United States (Toll Free): 1 866 899 4679

Access Code: 581-423-741



Councilmember Jim Holmes
President

Judge Jay Elliott
Vice-President

Mayor Geary Smith
Secretary/Treasurer

Russell Devorsky
Executive Director

Heart of Texas
Council of Governments

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF MCLENNAN**

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended, the Executive Committee of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments will meet on Thursday, the 24th Day of February 2022, at 10:30 a.m. at the Heart of Texas Council of Governments, 1514 South New Road, Waco, Texas at which time the following subjects will be considered.

The meeting can also be accessed by "Virtual/Telephone Conferencing", (as approved by the Texas Attorney General): Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
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AGENDA

- I. Call to Order and Determination of a Quorum
- II. Proof of Posting of notice in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended, known as the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- III. Introduction of Guests
- IV. Consideration of and/or action on the following:

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- A. 1. Approval of the January 27, 2022, meeting minutes

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- B. New Business

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1. Rebranding and painting of current fleet of vehicles – Rural Transit

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2. Camera and Video System upgrade – Rural Transit

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3. Purchase of scheduling and dispatching software upgrade – Rural Transit

4. Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee Appointments

- C. Executive Session

In accordance with Chapter 551.071, Texas Government Code, as amended, the Heart of Texas Council of Governments Executive Committee will convene into

Executive Session to discuss legal matters.

Return to Open Session to consider decisions and/or take action relating to legal matters.

Returned to Open Session at _____ on February 24, 2022.

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| | 1. | Department of Administration |
| | a. | Financial and Personnel Report |
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| | a. | Department Activities Report |
| 29 | 3. | Regional Services |
| | a. | Department Activities Report |
| | 4. | Executive Director's Report |

V. Other Reports

VI. Public Comment

VII. Adjournment

Signed this the 18th Day of February 2022.



Russell Devorsky
Executive Director



Councilmember Jim Holmes
President

Judge Jay Elliott
Vice-President

Mayor Geary Smith
Secretary/Treasurer

Russell Devorsky
Executive Director

Heart of Texas Council of Governments

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments' Executive Committee, in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended, met in regular session, on Thursday, the 27th Day of January 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at the Waco Hilton Hotel, 113 South University Parks Drive, Waco, Texas, at which time the following subjects will be considered. (The meeting can also be accessed by using telephone conferencing, as approved by the Texas Attorney General: Dial in by using your phone: 1-866-899-4679, Access Code: 765-507-701)

Members Present

Councilmember Jim Holmes, *Vice-President*
Judge Justin Lewis
Judge Richard Duncan
Judge Scott Felton
Co. Treasurer Jeannie Keeney
Commissioner Jim Smith
Councilmember Jimmy Rogers
Judge Cindy Vanlandingham
Commissioner Nita Wuebker
Councilmember Andrea Barefield
Mayor Geary Smith

City of Waco
Hill County
Limestone County
McLennan County
Freestone County
McLennan County
City of Robinson
Bosque County
Falls County
City of Waco
City of Mexia

Members Absent

Judge Linda Grant, *President*
Judge Jay Elliott, *Secretary-Treasurer*
Mr. Calvin Rueter
Mayor Andy Smith
Mayor Dillon Meek

Freestone County
Falls County
Special Districts
City of Hillsboro
City of Waco

Staff Present

Russell Devorsky
John C. Minnix
Gary Luft
Mary McDow
Dorothy Jackson
Tim Jeske
Amy Derrick
Rep Pledger
Harold Ferguson

Executive Director
Dep. Exec. Director of Administration
Dep. Exec. Director of HHS
Personnel Manager
Regional Economic Development Manager
Homeland Security Manager
Emergency Preparedness Planner
Transportation Manager
Economic Development Planner

- I. Call to Order and Determination of a Quorum
The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 27, 2022.
- II. Proof of Posting of notice in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended, known as the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Proof of posting of the January 27, 2022 Executive Committee meeting was provided by Mary McDow.

- III. Introduction of Guests – Guests and staff were introduced.

- IV. Consideration of and/or action on the following:

- A. 1. Approval of the October 28, 2021 meeting minutes
The October 28, 2021 minutes were presented for approval. A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Smith and seconded by Judge Justin Lewis the October 28, 2021 minutes be approved as presented. Motion passed.

- B. New Business

- 1. Recommendation and Approval of Officers and Executive Committee members for 2022

Representing the Nominating Committee, Judge Justin Lewis presented a list of recommended Officers and Executive Committee members for 2022.

Officers:

President: Jim Holmes, Councilmember, City of Waco

Vice President: Jay Elliott, Falls County Judge

Secretary-Treasurer: Geary Smith, Mayor, City of Mexia

Members:

Linda Grant, Freestone County Judge

Jeannie Keeney, County Treasurer, Freestone

Justin Lewis, Hill County Judge

Andy Smith, Mayor, City of Hillsboro

Nita Wuebker, Commissioner, Falls County

Cindy Vanlandingham, Bosque County Judge

Josh Thayer, Mayor, City of Valley Mills

Richard Duncan, Limestone County Judge

Scott Felton, McLennan County Judge

Jim Smith, Commissioner, McLennan County

Jimmy Rogers, Councilmember, City of Robinson

Calvin Rueter, Member, Special Districts

Dillon Meek, Mayor, City of Waco

Andrea Barefield, Councilmember, City of Waco

A motion was made by Judge Justin Lewis and seconded by Judge Scott Felton to approve the list of recommendations of Officers and members to be appointed to the Executive Committee as presented. Further, to recommend the list of Officers and members to the Council Representatives as their annual meeting. Motion passed.

2. Heart of Texas Rural Transit District – Approval of Drug and Alcohol Policy Revisions

Mr. Gary Luft noted that the Heart of Texas Rural Transit District Drug and Alcohol Program went through a TXDOT Drug and Alcohol compliance review performed by RLS & Associates, Inc. RLS noted six findings in policy during the one day audit. The six findings were minor in nature and administrative in function. The findings were reviewed by the rural transit district staff and corrected as instructed by RLS. The policy with findings and corrections was available for review by the executive committee in the meeting.

A motion was made by Judge Justin Lewis and seconded by Judge Scott Felton to approve the recommended corrections and updates to the Heart of Texas Rural Transit District Drug and Alcohol Policy. Motion passed.

3. Resolutions for Approval of Criminal Justice Grant Applications:

- (a) Heart of Texas Sexual Assault Response Team
- (b) Juvenile Justice Alternatives

Mr. Russell Devorsky presented two applications and resolutions for the Criminal Justice Grant Program: (1) Heart of Texas Sexual Assault Response Team and (2) Juvenile Justice Alternatives for approval.

A motion was made by Judge Justin Lewis and seconded by Councilmember Andrea Barefield to approve the Heart of Texas Sexual Assault Response Team and Juvenile Justice Alternatives application and resolutions for submission to the Office of the Governor's Public Safety Office. Motion passed.

4. Everbridge Emergency Notification System (ENS) Service

Mr. Devorsky noted that Everbridge has been the provider for the Emergency Notification System (ENS) Service for the past six years and HOTCOG staff and the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee recommend to continue with the current provider. The pricing is from a current GSA purchasing agreement and has remained steady for the mass notification service. The Annual contract period will be for services from 1/1/22 to 12/31/22.

A motion was made by Mayor Geary Smith and seconded by County Treasurer Jeannie Keeney to authorize the HOTCOG Executive Director to sign an agreement and purchase emergency notification services in the amount of \$68,200.00 from Everbridge for the annual renewal agreement for emergency

notifications for our six county Region. Motion passed.

5. Resolutions for Approval of HOTCOG Homeland Security Grant Applications:
 - (a) HOTCOG Regional Planning
 - (b) HOTCOG Regional Citizen Corps Program
 - (c) HOTCOG ENS Information Sharing

Mr. Devorsky presented three grant applications and resolutions for the Homeland Security Grant program: (1) HOTCOG Regional Planning; (2) HOTCOG Regional Citizen Corps Program, and (3) HOTCOG ENS Information Sharing.

A motion was made by County Treasury Jeannie Keeney and seconded by Commissioner Jim Smith to approve the three grant applications and resolutions presented for (1) HOTCOG Regional Planning; (2) HOTCOG Regional Citizen Corps Program, and (3) HOTCOG ENS Information Sharing for submission to the Office of the Governor's Public Safety Office. Motion passed.

6. Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee Appointments

Mr. Devorsky presented recommended nominations for the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee:

- Sargent Michael Graham, McLennan County
- Phillip Cantrell, Hill County
- Brian Messman, Falls County

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Smith and seconded by Mayor Geary Smith to approve the recommended nominations, Sargent Michael Graham, Phillip Cantrell and Brian Messman to serve on the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee. Motion passed.

7. Approval of Policy regarding "Recording Devices in the Workplace"

Mr. Devorsky presented a policy on "Recording Devices in the Workplace" to be added to the current Personnel Policies Manual. Mr. Devorsky noted that HOTCOG's general counsel has reviewed the policy. The policy includes prohibiting employee use of cameras, camera phones, tape recorders or other recording devices in the workplace as a preventive step to secure employee privacy, trade secrets, and other business information. Mr. Devorsky noted that HOTCOG may place security cameras in common areas of the workplace, including at or near exits and in the front waiting area.

A motion was made by Judge Justin Lewis and seconded by County Treasurer Jeannie Keeney to approve the recommended Policy on "Recording Devices in the Workplace" to be added to the HOTCOG Personnel Policies Manual. Motion passed.

C. Report of the Executive Director and Staff

1. Department of Administration
 - a. Financial, Personnel and Investment Reports

Mr. John Minnix presented the Financial, Personnel and Investment Reports to the Committee for review. Mr. Minnix noted the outside Auditors, Pattillo, Brown & Hill, were inhouse in November and the 2021 audit should be presented at the February or March meeting. There were no findings or questioned costs.

2. Health & Human Services
 - a. Department Activities Report

Department Activities Report – Mr. Luft gave a summary of the activities of the Health and Human Services programs -Area Agency on Aging, HOT Aging and Disability Resource Center, HOT 2-1-1 Call Center and the Rural Transit District. Mr. Luft noted that all programs are on track to meet all contract deliverables and requirements.

3. Regional Services
 - a. Department Activities Report

Mrs. Dorthy Jackson gave an activity report of the Economic and Community Development programs.

4. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Devorsky noted that former Mayor John Keefer of the City of Marlin passed away recently. He served on the Executive Committee during his tenure as Mayor of the City of Marlin. It was noted that a former employee, who had been with HOTCOG for about 10 years had passed away recently. Mr. Devorsky stated that the new HOTCOG website has been nominated by the International Economic Development Council for an award for the best website for economic development information. Mr. Devorsky noted that staff continues to attend chamber of commerce meetings in the region.

V. Other Reports – None.

VI. Public Comment – None.

VII. Adjournment – A motion and second was made to adjourn the meeting.

Jim Holmes, President
Councilmember, City of Waco

Geary Smith, Secretary-Treasurer
Mayor, City of Mexia

ACTION MEMORANDUM

HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

February 24, 2022

SUBJECT: Heart of Texas Rural Transit District Fleet Rehabilitation –
Rebranding and painting of vehicles – Acapulco Blue

INFORMATION:

HOTCOG RTD has \$351,319.50 available in capital funds to be used for the rehabilitation of twenty-one (21) vehicles currently making up our fleet. These funds do not require a local match to be used.

The recent up-date of the Regional Transportation Coordination Plan by KFH Group includes a recommendation to rebrand our vehicle fleet including a name and color change of the vehicles. It is the recommendation of the Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC) and desire of RTD staff to make the vehicles more recognizable to potential clients. The plan is to paint each of the 21 vehicles in the fleet with a standard color of **Acapulco Blue** with appropriate signage displaying our name and appropriate contact information. Acapulco Blue is eye catching, pleasing to the eye, and will distinguish our vehicles quickly from other transit providers.

Marketing and appropriate branding are critical to transit and can be simple and low cost to implement. Our current fleet has no HOTRTD name, system identifiers, or distinguishing branding. Our vehicles are currently painted white with a red stripe and the words "Rural Public Transit". They lack crucial identifiers such as the organization name and phone number.

The recommended change is to create attractive looking buses with a vibrant paint scheme and logo that riders and the public can quickly recognize.

An RFP will be released to third party automotive paint shops to paint our entire existing fleet of twenty-one (21) vehicles at an estimated total cost not to exceed \$176,000. In addition, we will order future vehicles directly from the factory with the specified paint scheme to ensure professionalism and name identification.

ACTION:

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments RTD staff is requesting the approval to proceed with the release of an RFP and proceed with the rebranding of our current fleet by repainting them Acapulco Blue at a projected cost not to exceed \$176,000.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

January 27, 2022

SUBJECT: Heart of Texas Rural Transit District Fleet Rehabilitation –
Camera and Video System Up-grade

INFORMATION:

HOTCOG RTD has \$351,319.50 available in capital funds to be used for the rehabilitation of twenty-one (21) vehicles currently making up our fleet. These funds do not require a local match to be used.

HOTCOG RTD staff desires to spend \$110,319.50 of the capital funds to upgrade the security and video system on our existing fleet of twenty-one (21) vehicles so that it will match the level of surveillance that is required for the safety and protection of the riders, the drivers and HOTCOG. The current system is adequate but not optimal.

A functioning and reliable security system on buses plays a vital role in logging and monitoring bus activity. The upgraded security system will allow continuous monitoring of the driver, passengers, and exterior road views from 3 sides of the bus. It will also enable staff to monitor trips in real-time, which is useful in making sure both the driver and passengers are following all safety rules. Another feature of the updated security system is allowing a higher quality recording of the videos. This is a necessity when there are instances of concerns with driver or passenger conduct. We will also have the crucial documentation needed in cases of accidents.

ACTION:

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments RTD staff is requesting the approval to proceed with the release of an RFP and proceed with the rehab of the onboard surveillance and security system on our current fleet at a projected cost not to exceed \$110,319.50.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

January 27, 2022

SUBJECT: Heart of Texas Rural Transit District Fleet Rehabilitation –
Scheduling and Dispatching Software from Shah Transportation

INFORMATION:

HOTCOG RTD has \$351,319.50 available in capital funds to be used for the rehabilitation of twenty-one (21) vehicles currently making up our fleet. These funds do not require a local match to be used.

The recent up-date of the Regional Transportation Coordination Plan by KFH Group includes a recommendation to implement an **in-town on-demand or micro transit service strategy**.

These strategies are designed to make local service easier and give customers reason to shop locally instead of venturing outside of the county. On-Demand service is now becoming the norm in smaller rural communities. Instead of having to schedule the day before the trip, customers can access the service in as little as one hour or less. Using the existing vehicles in all the cities and towns in the service area, in-town service can become real time on-demand. That is, the vehicle will arrive within 15 minutes to an hour of the call or by using the app. Service can be door-to-door, curb-to-curb, or corner-to-corner. This service is generically called micro transit and before the development of the automated apps, was called "Dial a Ride."

The plan is to procure a micro transit app and deploy a "pilot" in several of the largest cities in the service area. Staff and the Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTTC) recommend the City of Marlin as the most logical place to set up the initial pilot program based on the existing schedules of clients. From there, the program would move out to Hillsboro and other locations to be identified after the bugs are worked out and the system perfected. This type of service is quite compatible with senior trips to the meal sites, or any other in-town service currently provided.

HOT RTD utilizes Shah Transportation Manager Software for scheduling and dispatching services in Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, and Limestone County. The current software does not have the capacity to support a complete micro transit operation. However, Shah Software will have their micro transit app operational by April 2022 and it is recommended that we purchase the software at an approximate cost of \$65,000 with the capital funds.

ACTION:

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments RTD staff is requesting the approval to proceed with the purchase of SHAH's micro transit software application at a projected cost not to exceed \$65,000.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

**HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS'
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

February 24th, 2022

SUBJECT:

Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee Appointments

INFORMATION:

The below individuals have been nominated by a county judge, mayor or executive director to fill a position on the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (EPAC). The nominated individual has agreed to serve on the committee if their nomination is approved.

Name	Position	Agency	Representing	Nominated By	Term Expiration
Trace Hendricks	Sheriff	Bosque County SO	Bosque County	Judge Cindy Vanlandingham	12/31/23
Jeremy Shipley	Sheriff	Freestone County SO	Freestone County	Judge Linda Grant	12/31/23
Eric Garrety	City Manager	City of Mexia	Limestone County	Judge Richard Duncan	12/31/23
Leonard Smith	County EMC	Freestone County	Freestone County	Judge Linda Grant	N/A
Shane McLellan	County Extension Agent	Texas AgriLife Extension	Agriculture	Mr. Russell Devorsky	12/31/23
Heather Wheeler	School Safety Specialist	ESC Region 12	Education	Mr. Russell Devorsky	12/31/23
Chermaene Mathis	Preparedness Coordinator	Waco/McLennan County Public Health Dist.	Public Health	Mr. Russell Devorsky	12/31/23

ACTION:

That the Heart of Texas Council of Governments Executive Committee approve the appointments of the above nominees to fill a term on the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee as a representative of our region.

Administrative Services Department

Financial / Personnel Reports

Executive Committee Meeting

February 24, 2022

**Heart of Texas Council of Governments
Combined Balance Sheet
January 31, 2022**

Assets

Current

Cash	\$ 19,498
Investments	605,575
Due (to)/from Grantor Agencies	1,098,515
Membership Dues Receivables	4,841
Aging Match Receivables	247
Other Receivables	-
Pre-Paid Items	22,072
	<u>1,750,748</u>

Fixed Assets

Building	2,810,000
Land	690,000
Furniture & Equipment	3,028,761
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(3,596,564)</u>
	2,932,197

Total Assets

\$ 4,682,945

Liabilities

Current

Accounts Payable	360,587
Due to HOTEDD	572,828
Accrued Vacation	149,585
Deferred Revenue	178,342
	<u>1,261,342</u>

Long-term Liabilities

Notes Payable	708,485
	<u>708,485</u>

Total Liabilities

\$ 1,969,827

Fund Equity

Investments in Fixed Assets, net of related debt	2,223,712
Nonspendable-prepaid items	22,072
Restricted for Building Maintenance	8,242
Restricted for Emergency Notification System	618
Restricted for Federal & State programs	97,526
Unassigned	<u>360,948</u>

Total Fund Equity

\$ 2,713,118

Total Liabilities & Fund Equity

\$ 4,682,945

Heart of Texas Council of Governments
Combined Statement of Revenues, Expenditures
& Changes in Fund Balance
For Four Months Ended January 31, 2022

Revenues	Year To Date	YTD Budget	YTD Budget Variance	12 Month Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Grants administered from State/Federal	\$ 2,325,444	\$ 3,657,284	\$ (1,331,840)	\$ 10,971,852	\$ 8,646,408
Rent-WF Bldg	130,000	130,000	-	390,000	260,000
Local Funds/Mgt. Fees	26,250	17,684	8,566	53,051	26,801
Membership Dues	-	19,000	(19,000)	57,000	57,000
Inkind Match/Program Income	9,034	274,121	(265,087)	822,364	813,330
Interest Income	78	167	(89)	500	422
Miscellaneous Income	5,542	1,000	4,542	3,000	(2,542)
Total Revenues	\$ 2,496,348	\$ 4,099,256	\$ (1,602,908)	\$ 12,237,767	\$ 9,801,419
Expenditures					
Salaries	320,571	350,598	30,027	1,051,794	731,223
Fringe Benefits	166,474	182,043	15,569	546,129	379,655
Travel	6,833	12,825	5,992	38,476	31,643
Equipment	318,724	661,897	343,173	1,985,690	1,666,966
Supplies	6,651	7,950	1,299	23,850	17,199
Other Expenses	143,829	124,161	(19,668)	372,483	228,654
Delegate Agency/Contractual Costs	1,148,632	2,097,866	949,234	6,293,598	5,144,966
Indirect Costs	288,589	289,417	828	868,251	579,662
Insurance/Maintenance-WF Bldg	23,755	16,667	(7,088)	50,000	26,245
Debt Service-WF Bldg	88,287	89,770	1,483	269,309	181,022
Inkind Match/Program Income	-	246,121	246,121	738,364	738,364
Total Expenditures	\$ 2,512,345	\$ 4,079,315	\$ 1,566,970	\$ 12,237,944	\$ 9,725,599
Changes in Fund Balance					
Excess (Deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	(15,997)			59,823	
Transfers-Due (to)/from HOTEDD	(4,586)			(30,573)	
Net Change in Fund Balances	(20,583)			29,250	
Fund Balances as of October 1, 2021	509,989				
Fund Balances as of January 31, 2022	\$ 489,406				

Heart of Texas Council of Governments
Monthly Report of Cash Transactions and Condition
As of January 31, 2022

	<u>Operating Account</u>	<u>Short Term Investments</u>	<u>Total Cash</u>
Beginning Balance 1/1/22	\$ 43,258	\$ 643,245	\$ 686,503
Transactions			
Cash In	722,633	20	722,653
Cash (Out)	<u>(784,083)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(784,083)</u>
Net Income (Outlay)	(61,450)	20	(61,430)
Net Transfers In (Out)	<u>37,690</u>	<u>(37,690)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Total Transactions	<u>(23,760)</u>	<u>(37,670)</u>	<u>(61,430)</u>
Ending Balance 1/31/22	<u><u>\$ 19,498</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 605,575</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 625,073</u></u>

**HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
PERSONNEL STATUS SUMMARY
AS OF FEBRUARY 18, 2022**

NUMBER OF POSITIONS AUTHORIZED BY GRANT/FUND BUDGETS 30

NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED 30

As of February 18, 2022, HOTCOG had no vacancies as referenced by the number of positions authorized and filled. The following is a departmental breakout of the above figures:

PEOPLE EMPLOYED

<u>Department</u>	<u>Positions Authorized</u>	<u>Regular Fulltime</u>	<u>Temporary Fulltime</u>	<u>Regular & Temporary Part-Time</u>	<u>Vacant</u>
Executive/ Admin. Services	6	6	0	0	0
Regional Services	8	7	0	1	0
Health and Human Services	16	16	0	0	0
<u>Totals</u>	30	29	0	1	0

Health and Human Services Division - HOTCOG

Monthly Report for January 2022

The following is a summary of the activities for January 2022 of the programs in the Health and Human Services Division of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments.

General Description of Services Provided by Health and Human Services Division

Gary W. Luft – Director

The Health and Human Services Division (HHS) is one of two operational divisions of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. The HHS division is made up of four different and distinct program areas that primarily serve and work with individuals and family members who need assistance through either information or services.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

- Provides access to needed social services, effective screening and assessment of individual needs, and advocacy for the older persons (age 60 and older), their family members or other caregivers.
- Directly administers services including benefits counseling, care coordination, caregiver support coordination, and long term care ombudsman services.
- Contracts with service providers throughout the region to provide nutrition (congregate and home delivered meals), homemaker care, respite care, personal assistance, minor home repairs, health education classes and caregiver counseling to caregivers and their loved ones.
- Serves six counties including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and McLennan.
- 1 of 28 Area Agency on Aging contractors designated by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Heart of Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

- Provides information and assistance to individuals (including those with multiple, complex needs) about local programs and resources as they relate to aging or living with a disability, to older individuals, individuals of any age with disabilities, family caregivers, veterans, and families with children with special needs, all without regard to income levels.
- Primary purpose is to provide information to help individuals live within their community if possible.
- Operating broad-based coalition consisting of Area Agency on Aging, local Health and Human Services, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services, Heart of Central Texas Independent Living Center, Heart of Texas 2-1-1, and Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center.
- HOTCOG serves as the Lead Agency/Fiscal Agent and has responsibility as contract administrator.
- Serves six counties including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and McLennan.
- 1 of 28 designated ADRCs by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Heart of Texas 2-1-1 Call Center (2-1-1)

- Provides referral information about health and human services to all callers regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability, or any other criteria.
- “Free” social service help line answered by trained specialists who can assess caller’s social service needs and connect them to the people and services that can best assist them.
- Answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by Information-Referral Specialists.
- Part of a national initiative to make information about health and human services readily available to all callers regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability, or any other criteria.
- Calls relate to requests for assistance for food, clothing, shelter, utility bill payment assistance, medical assistance, affordable childcare, eldercare, disaster relief, etc.
- Serves six counties including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and McLennan.
- 1 of 25 Area Information Centers designated by the Texas Information and Referral Network (TIRN).

Heart of Texas Rural Transit District (RTD)

- Provides demand response transportation to the public including transportation for seniors age 60 and older and to the disabled of any age utilizing a contracted services business model.
- Shared ride service is considered “curb to curb” meaning the vehicle comes to the passenger instead of the passenger going to the vehicle and multiple riders may be on the vehicle.
- Services are provided Monday through Friday in the rural counties of Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, and Limestone.
- Transportation into or out of McLennan County can be provided if the trip originates from or terminates into one of our five rural counties.
- Service is primarily provided using a fleet of 27 HOTCOG owned vans and small buses operated by two different sub-contractors.
- 1 of 36 Rural Transit Districts designated by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

Specific Activities for January 2022 – Monthly Report

Area Agency on Aging - (AAAHOT)

Gary W. Luft – Director

Highlights for the period include:

- We received preliminary funding notice from HHS based on level funding.
- Technical assistance was provided to our providers via email and telephone calls.

- We continue to work with the United Way of Tarrant County on the FIE2 grant which includes assistance in providing A Matter of Balance classes throughout our service area.
- We continue to provide our core services as required by contract.

Aging Program Development – (AAAHOT)

Jan Enders – Manager

Aging Program Development focuses on the identification and development of new programs/services and the establishment of partnering relationships in the community that allows the AAA to be more successful in meeting the needs of our seniors and clients. The scope of the initiative strategically strengthens our efforts, programs, and services across the entire AAA with no restrictions to specific program areas.

- Legal Awareness: (Outreach into six-county area) -- includes monthly, multiple Zoom contacts, Team Meetings, in-person outreach, publications promoting services, organizations utilizing AAA materials, and direct seminars, Resource Guides, etc.). Project Homeless Connect occurred on January 25, 2022, at the Convention Center. Multiple agencies were involved, and it was very successful and well organized.

Total contacts for January 2022 – 2107 contacts

Senior Medicare Patrol – Fraud Detection, Prevention and Reporting continues as part of the Benefits Counseling function. The outreach and educational services previously performed by the Senior Medicare Patrol have been merged into other services of the HHS Division.

New to Medicare – In-office public meetings on Medicare –

Public Medicare meetings are offered twice a month in HOTCOG's training room and will continue throughout the year.

Collaboration with Benefits Counseling – Jan Enders continues to assist the Benefits Counseling Program as it strives to serve all the clients. With increased advertising and promotions, more people are contacting AAA for services. Future programs are planned in rural areas as the objective remains for us to contact Medicare beneficiaries and caregivers in these regions on a more frequent basis.

Open Enrollment for Medicare Advantage Plans – *begins January 2022 – March 31, 2022.* There are multiple MA Plans through private insurance companies in our six-county area. Includes A-Hospital, B-Doctor and C – Prescription Drugs.

Continued outreach remains viable to educate the public about Medicare. As a result of the additional outreach, more calls came into the ADRC for assistance. Events that are in the works for the New Year include twice monthly Medicare Informational Meetings, Caregiver Forum for Bosque County, increased partnership with the Alzheimer Association, Baylor Scott & White, Texas Legal Services.

Benefits Counseling – (AAAHOT)

Donnis Cowan – Manager

Jan Enders – Manager of Special Programs, Benefits Counselor II

Rose Contreras – Sr. Benefits Counselor

The Benefits Counseling program primarily provides financial related assistance and Medicare/Medicaid related services to clients through Legal Assistance (one-on-one) and Legal Awareness (groups) events. We continue to see a growing need for Benefits Counseling for the senior population and added emphasis has been placed on expanding the services of this program.

The following services were provided:

- Legal Assistance services provided counseling to individuals assisting them with Medicare Part D, Medicare benefits, Medicare Advantage Appeals, Social Security questions, and other benefit-related questions.
Legal Assistance serving age 60 and older
25 people were served
102.32 hours were provided
- Legal Awareness service provided CMS Mailings which includes Medicare information such as Medicare Part D, Medicare A&B explanation, Medicare Preventative Services, Social Security updates, and other Medicare benefit-related information.
Legal Awareness serving age 65 and older
456 people were provided the Community Resource Guides

Care Coordination – (AAAHOT)

Donnis Cowan – Manager

Destiny Zavalla – Sr. Care Coordinator

Tiffany Soto – Program Coordinator

The Care Coordination program 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 service opportunities. Staff continues to be extremely active, efficient and productive in providing an assortment of care related services to clients.

- Care Coordination serving age 60 and older a case manager assesses the needs with the client and plans, arranges, coordinates, and follows-up on needed services. Services that can be provided are personal assistance, homemaker services, home repairs/modifications, and health maintenance services.
12 clients were assisted with Care Coordination
125.75 units or hours of service were provided
- Caregiver Support Coordination serving caregivers who care for someone age 60 and older or someone with Alzheimer's disease of any age the case manager provides support services to reduce the stress and burdens of caregiving through respite, education, and support groups.

9 caregivers were assisted with Caregiver Support Coordination
53.75 units or hours of service were provided

- Information, Referral and Assistance – Caller's age 60 and older and their caregivers call inquiring about Area Agency on Aging and/or community resources.

132 callers were assisted with IR&A Services

- Caregiver Respite provides 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.

8 clients were assisted with Respite Services
96.25 hours of service were provided

- Health Maintenance services – Provides durable medical equipment that will enable clients to be more independent and assist them with their daily activities.

5 clients were assisted with Health Maintenance
5 units of service were provided

- Homemaker – Assistance which may include light house cleaning, meal preparation and shopping.

3 clients were assisted with Homemaker Services
15.75 units of service were provided

- Personal Assistance – Assistance which may include bathing, dressing, toileting, light house cleaning, meal preparation

12 clients were assisted with Personal Assistance Services
93.25 units or hours of service were provided

- Home Repair/Modification services - Primary focus is on 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.

4 homes were repaired or modified.

Nutrition Program – (AAAHOT)

Donnis Cowan – Manager

The nutrition program is our single largest program and impacts the greatest number of individuals in the greatest geographical coverage in our service area. We have four nutrition contractors that serve the nutrition needs of the elderly in the six-county service area.

- Bosque County Senior Services – serves Bosque County
- Central Texas Senior Ministry – serves Falls, Hill and McLennan Counties
- Freestone County Senior Services – serves Freestone County
- Limestone County Senior Services – serves Limestone County

Nutrition Program - Meals Served by County			
Provider	Congregate Meals Served	Home Delivered Meals Served	Total Meals Served
Central Texas Senior Ministries - serves three counties			
Falls County			
HHS funding	33	662	695
Other funding	0	330	330
Total	33	992	1,025
Hill County			
HHS funding	207	1,136	1,343
Other funding	42	440	482
Total	249	1,576	1,825
McLennan County			
HHS funding	837	2,933	3,770
Other funding	106	7,207	7,313
Total	943	10,140	11,083
Subtotal for Central Texas Senior Ministries - three counties			
HHS funding	1,077	4,731	5,808
Other funding	148	7,977	8,125
Total	1,225	12,708	13,933
Bosque County Senior Services			
HHS funding	10	579	589
Other funding	3	529	532
Total	13	1,108	1,121
Freestone County Senior Services			
HHS funding	264	553	817
Other funding	618	802	1,420
Total	882	1,355	2,237
Limestone County Senior Services			
HHS funding	211	2,839	3,050
Other funding	3	25	28
Total	214	2,864	3,078
Grand Totals for Nutrition Program - includes all contractors			
HHS funding	1,562	8,702	10,264
Other funding	772	9,333	10,105
Grand Total	2,334	18,035	20,369

Miscellaneous Contract Services – (AAAHOT)

Donnis Cowan – Manager

Tiffany Soto – Program Coordinator

Evidence-Based Programs – Evidence-based programs are based on research. They offer proven ways to promote 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 such as: A Matter of Balance, Caregiver Stress Busting and Chronic Disease Self-Management and Diabetes Self-Management Programs to age 60 and older and their caregivers if the caregivers meet the eligibility criteria.

35 clients were assisted with Evidence-Based classes.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program – (AAAHOT)

Susan McCombs – Manager

Lynda Mitchell – P. T. Staff Ombudsman

Through direct advocacy the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program utilizes 4 volunteers, and 2 staff to achieve the best possible quality of life for approximately 4,500 residents in 35 nursing homes and 22 assisted living facilities in our service area.

Beginning in October, the first of the new fiscal year, visitations by both Staff and Certified Volunteers began again. Caution was the upmost prevalent action taken with all the visits. However, as the quarter went on more and more facilities were getting cases of COVID. Some facilities are trying to go back to the “lockdown” phase from 2020. It has kept the program active with numerous phone calls and complaints.

Another issue has been created by the Federal Government’s Vaccination Mandate for Healthcare Workers. The first mandate for December/January was postponed but now there is a new one for February/March. Some corporations have upheld the mandate therefore losing many employees. Thus a critical staffing shortage has occurred and has led to more concerns.

During the months of January Staff and Volunteer Ombudsmen:

- Completed 35 visits to Long Term Care facilities, including both nursing homes and Assisted Living Facilities.
- Shared information on 3 state surveys and investigations.
- Provided information and consultations to 34 individuals and 10 facility staff on specific issues or subjects.

Complaints:

- The 2 staff Ombudsmen and 4 CVOs handled 33 complaints and concerns January and resolved or partially resolved 94% of the issues. The complaints related to such issues as discharge, autonomy, failure to respond to requests for assistance, activities, food, environment, Medicaid or financial issues and family conflicts. Some of the phone calls and concerns expressed by the callers were

regarding COVID-19, new visitations rules, HHSC, CMS, and the CDC and staffing issues

Activities:

- The MLO and the SO listen to the HHS monthly webinars that keep us informed with all the new rules and any updates.
- Facilities are fluctuating with some new COVID-19 cases. We are continuing to watch that the facilities do not “shutdown” against HHSC visitation rules.

Heart of Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

Donnis Cowan – Manager of Aging and ADRC Programs

Eric Hobbs – Housing Accessibility Navigator

Debbie Jones – Resource Navigator

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 as long as 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 six (6) operating partners:

- Area Agency on Aging (AAAHOT)
- Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center (HOTRMHMR)
- Heart of Central Texas Independent Living Center (HOCTIL)
- Health and Human Services (HHS) – Local Long-Term Services and Supports
- Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation (formerly known as DARS)
- Heart of Texas 2-1-1 (HOT 2-1-1)

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. When more than one provider is involved the Resource, Navigator assists with coordination of services provided between the agencies.

The ADRC staff is responsible for handling the “walk-ins” at the front lobby who come in with no appointment. An ADRC staff member will meet with the individual, obtain pertinent information and connect them to the appropriate state agency and/or community resources.

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.

395 callers and walk-ins were assisted with Information, Referral and Assistance

ADRC Calls, Walk-ins, Emails, Fax			
Current Month Calls/Walk-ins	Previous Year Comparison	Increase or (Decrease)	% Increase or (Decrease)
395	375	20	5.33%

ADRC staff were involved, prepared or participated in the following activities:

- Participated in FY22 ADRC "State Office" Calls/Webinars
- The ADRC is being monitored by HHSC as part of routine contract requirements. The months of October and November of 2021 are the months being reviewed.

Heart of Texas Area Information Center (AIC) – (HOT 2-1-1)

Karen Pettit – Manager
Belinda Arocha – Information & Referral Specialist
Joanna Whitehouse – Information & Referral Specialist
Marcy Whiddon – Information & Referral/Community Database Specialist

The 2-1-1 program is a "free" social service help line answered by trained specialists who assess caller's social service needs and connect them to the people and services that can best assist them. 2-1-1 provides referral information about health and human services to all callers regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability, or any other criteria.

HOT 2-1-1 (HT) continues to take traditional calls for local social service needs including food pantries, utility bills, rent, childcare, and medication assistance, etc. for the six-county service area. In addition, we take disaster related calls when such an event occurs.

- For the period of January 3,908 calls were taken by HOT 2-1-1 staff compared to 4,784 in the same month for the previous year.
- The decrease of 876 calls was an 18.3% decrease.

Houston-Galveston 2-1-1 and routed afterhours AICs answered and provided information to HOT "after hour and weekend callers":

- For the month of January 203 calls were taken by Houston-Galveston staff compared to 284 in the same month for the previous year.
- The decrease of 81 calls was a 28.5% decrease.

Projection of annual calls:

We are able to predict the total fiscal year call volume based on using %'s for the previous three (3) years and activity through the most recent month. Using the model predicts the total fiscal year call volume (includes HOT and Houston-Galveston and other after-hours routed calls) to be 45,367 calls compared to the previous fiscal year total of 51,273 calls. The decrease of 5,906 total calls represents a projected decrease of 11.52% for the year. We will continue to watch the trend on a month-to-month basis and adjust as needed.

PROJECTION of CALLS	
51,273	Actual FY21 Total
45,367	Projection FY22
-5,906	Decrease Projected
-11.52%	Decrease Projected

HOT 2-1-1 Number of Calls and Yearly Projection									
Heart of Texas 2-1-1 staff only					GC + Routed afterhours 2-1-1				
	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22		FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	
October	3,013	2,917	4,549	3,386		188	260	165	
November	2,354	2,988	2,949	3,130		149	270	161	
December	2,183	2,264	4,373	3,032		161	225	120	
January	2,461	3,713	4,784	3,908		161	284	203	
February	2,074	2,648	4,400			153	382		
March	2,246	4,384	5,021			137	275		
April	2,394	5,835	3,336			104	207		
May	2,377	3,828	2,977			97	226		
June	2,639	4,573	3,779			86	217		
July	3,175	4,673	3,552			60	198		
August	3,059	4,904	4,444			83	265		
September	3,180	3,606	4,079			77	221		
Total	31,155	46,333	48,243	13,456		1,456	3,030	649	
		15,178	1,910	(38,787)	FY 22 Yearly Projection		1,574	(2,381)	FY 22 Yearly Projection
% Increase		48.7%	4.1%	-72.1%	43,735		108.1%	-78.6%	1,632

Roll-over of calls:

Due to the volume of calls and staffing schedules during work hours, all calls cannot be answered in a timely manner in any one specific 2-1-1 operation. To reduce long waits there is a roll-over after two (2) minutes of unanswered calls to available I & R staff in 2-1-1s across the state. Heart of Texas calls that cannot be answered in the allotted time of two minutes are also routed to other call centers just as HOT receives unanswered calls rolled to us from other call centers based on the same two-minute wait time. Because of the "roll overs" between 2-1-1s, familiarity with the state-wide data

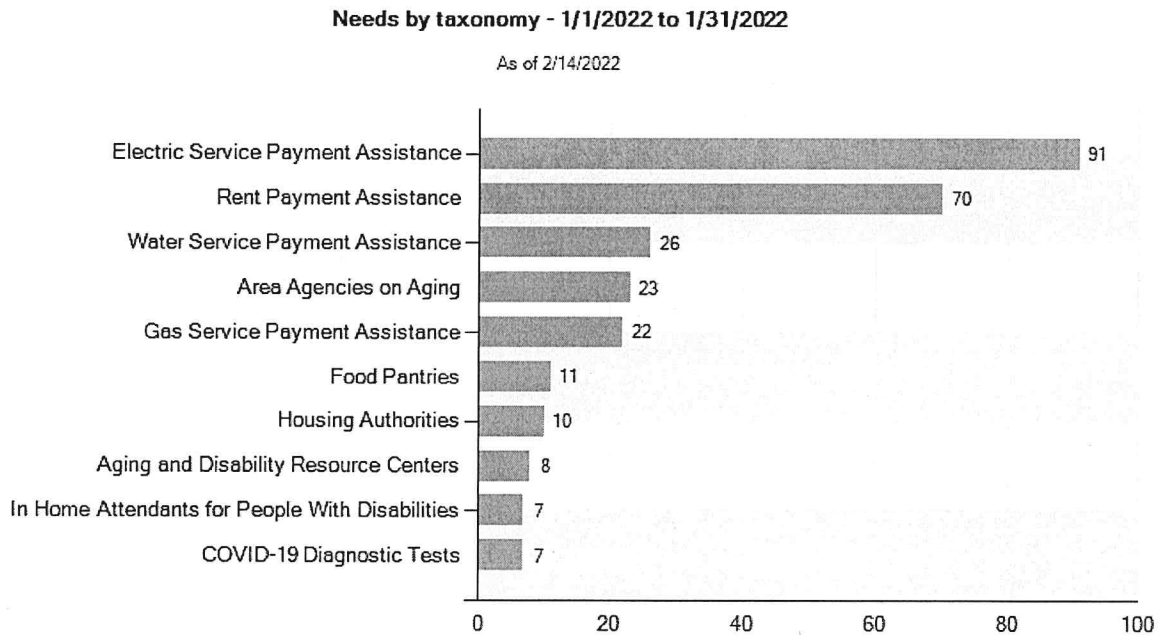
base of taxonomy and how to search service providers is critical. All 2-1-1 staff must be able to make referrals using the data base for any location in Texas.

Tracking of calls since early 2020 has revealed changes in the allocation of the origination of calls. During this past year approximately 56% of the calls received by HOT 211 came from outside our service area with 44% of the calls coming from within our service area. During the height of COVID-19 call received from out of our area were as high as 75%. The trend is downward and now is coming close the historical pattern of approximately 50% from inside and 50% from outside the six counties in our service area. With the impact of COVID-19 the percentage had dramatically shifted to a heavier percentage coming from outside our service area which we hypothesized were due to the increase in calls being received from coastal areas which were affected by multiple hurricanes as well as by calls coming in from large metropolitan areas such as Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio where the effects of COVID-19 impacted larger populations.

Although COVID-19 calls continue to come in on a regular basis, with increases and decreases in volume dependent on numerous factors, we are experiencing a leveling off and return to more "normal" call volume, as reflected in the charts above.

Most requested services for HOT Counties:

January, 2022:



HOT Counties calls by Gender for January:

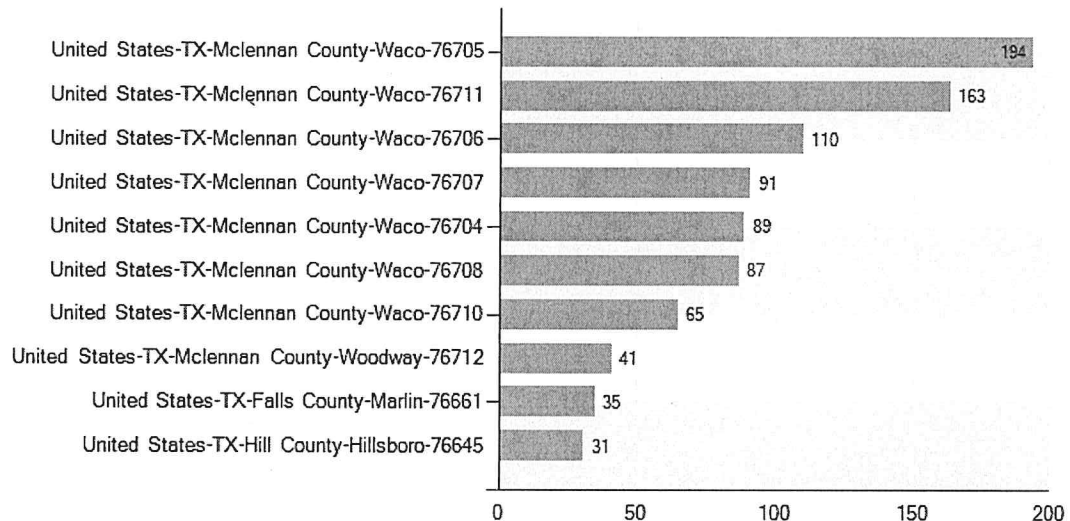
Gender	Female	888
	Male	168

Calls by HOT Counties Zip Code:

Most calls originating from our six counties 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, the city of Waco, or the surrounding suburbs of Waco.

List of locations - 1/1/2022 to 1/31/2022

As of 2/14/2022



Heart of Texas Rural Transit District

Ronald E. "Rep" Pledger - Manager
Frances Ramirez – Transportation Specialist
Misty Hendon – Transportation Admin

General Information:

Transportation continues to work diligently during this time of uncertainty and continue to follow local and state guidelines regarding Covid-19. We are doing everything necessary to ensure our clients are safe and feel secure in the services we provide. Our drivers are continuing their disinfecting efforts and cleaning their buses after each trip as well as providing logs for those cleanings. We've made sure each bus is equipped with disinfecting solutions, sprays, and wipes. Our drivers have also been provided with masks to further our safety efforts in keeping them, as well as our clients, safe.

Staff is continually reaching out to current and previous clients to see if there is anything, we can do to get them to keep using the service or start using the service again. We hope that our continued efforts to provide safe and reliable transportation to our riders will help get us back to normal quickly.

Funding

Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM) funds - \$264,019.00

Regional Transportation Coordination Plan funds - \$130,000.00

Trainings/Meetings

February 15 – RTCC meeting

Regional Transportation Coordination Council - (RTCC)

RTCC has reached the final stage of getting the 5-year plan, presented by KFH Group, finalized. We received feedback from TxDOT and KFH Group is currently incorporating those comments to the plan, as well as making minor corrections. The final plan should be received within the next two days. RTCC plans to meet next week to vote on the final plan and then it will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval.

Once the final plan has been approved, HOTCOG RTD will begin working on implementing the first 3 action items. The first item will be to purchase the software needed to execute a micro transit / on-demand service. This software will be purchased from Shah, who is the existing provider of our transportation application. This service will allow quicker access to transportation within our cities with a population of 20-30k. The rides can be requested by both phone calls and the software program. Not only will this provide a needed service in those areas, but we also hope to see an increase in residents staying local for their purchases, which will help with county growth.

An update to our bus security system on the existing buses would be our second task. With board approval we would issue an RFP for that purchase. This will help with ensuring all safety measures are being followed by both riders and drivers. It will further provide video from the driver's point-of-view, rear point-of-view, and handicap entrance of the bus. This is a vital part of transportation security in showing what is always happening with our bus while it is in use.

The third task enact would be to issue an RFP to update the paint schemes on the buses to ensure they are noticeable and reflect helpful contact information for potential riders. Our current buses are plain white with a red stripe and have no identifiable contact information, which causes them to blend into their surroundings. With a vibrant paint scheme and updated advertising, we will be able to catch their eye and in turn hope to see increased ridership.

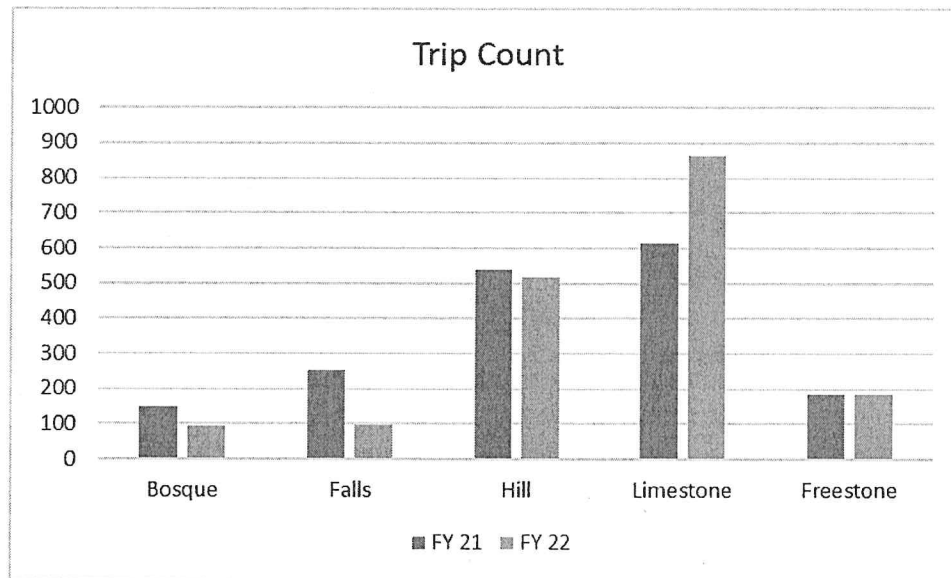
Rural Transit District – (Operations)

Staff is constantly calling clients that have previously cancelled and is assuring them that we are taking every precaution for their safety.

Trip activities for January are as follows:

Transportation Services – One Way Trips		
Transportation Provider	FY 2021	FY 2022
Bosque County	148	93

Falls County	254	97
Hill County	540	516
Limestone County	616	865
Freestone County	184	186
Total - All 5 Counties	1742	1757



Trip Type by County						
Trip Type	Limestone	Hill	Freestone	Falls	Bosque	Grand Total
Dialysis	287	262	68	26	17	660
Work	228	86	22	11		347
Medical	141	33	26	16	37	253
Shopping	65	63	33	12	6	179
Personal	102	13	17			132
MH-MR	3	37	4		17	61
Education		4	1	20	16	41
Recreation	21		15			36
Veteran		18		12		30
Foster Grandparents	13					13
Parole	5					5
Grand Total	865	516	186	97	93	1757

Report submitted: February 16, 2022

Gary W. Luft – Deputy Executive Director for Health and Human Services

REGIONAL SERVICES REPORT

February 2022

9-1-1

HOTCOG 9-1-1 IP Network (Next-Generation 9-1-1)

Members of the TriCOG 9-1-1 Alliance (BVCOG, CTCOG and HOTCOG) continue to collaborate with network consultants and equipment vendors to maintain a robust network. The TriCOG Alliance renewed its partnership with Mission Critical Partners (MCP) for NextGen Core Services (NGCS) Consulting and Cybersecurity Support. MCP follows a scope of work that was provided to the TriCOG identifying 5 tasks to assist the TriCOG in technical issues to include Project/Task Management, Geospatial Call Routing, Text Over ESInet and Cybersecurity Support. Members of the TriCOG participate in regularly scheduled conference calls to discuss NGCS projects and planning for the future of the regional networks.

The last phase of planning for the implementation of NGCS in the HOTCOG Region came to fruition on September 22, 2021, with the migration of all PSAPs to VESTA Router for NextGen911 routing. This migration is 4 years in the making with the original Request for Proposal being written in 2017. After countless conference calls, face-to-face and virtual meetings we've gotten steps closer to a system that does not rely on the legacy 9-1-1 system that is slowly being decommissioned. Project planning calls will continue with Vesta Solutions, Inc. as we migrate all the telephone carriers to the VESTA router so we can decommission the legacy network. The calls have moved to bi-weekly, and discussions include ongoing project deliverables and discussions for upcoming activities.

Enterprise Geospatial Database Management System (EGDMS)

In NG9-1-1 systems, an EGDMS (GIS map data) replaces the traditional Master Street Address Guide (MSAG) for location-based 9-1-1 call routing and location validation. An EGDMS is crucial for the transition to NG9-1-1 because it provides a means to create and maintain data critical to NG9-1-1 success. Staff participated in the Customer Focus Group (CFG) for this project. The CFG was responsible for assisting with development of the Quality Assurance/Quality Control plan, participating in GIS Data Management collaboration meetings, and assisting in GIS data management workflow development. 9-1-1 staff exceeded the 99% data match rate as recommended by the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) with a match rate of 99.99% with no critical errors remaining. HOTCOG has completed the transition to an EGDMS, and staff is a participant in a focus group for continued implementation across the state.

Text-to-9-1-1

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.

LTE Backup (IP network wireless backup)

The wireless backup for the Region's 9-1-1 internet protocol (IP) network continues to operate as an alternate path to routing 9-1-1 calls during an outage.

Meetings/Training/Conference Calls and Site Visits

- CSEC Touchpoint conference call, HOTCOG – February 1st
- MVP NGCS project discussion conference call, HOTCOG – February 7th
- TARC NextGen Committee conference call, HOTCOG – February 7th

- TARC 9-1-1 Coordinators Association meeting, HOTCOG – February 9th
- MVP NGCS project discussion conference call, HOTCOG – February 14th
- Carrier testing/migration, Region – February 17th-18th
- MVP project discussion conference call, HOTCOG – February 17th
- CSEC NGCS project update conference call, HOTCOG – February 22nd
- PSAP Monitoring, Region - TBD
- MVP NGCS project discussion conference call, HOTCOG – February 23rd
- TriCOG/NCTCOG 9-1-1 Networking meeting, HOTCOG – February 25th
- MVP NGCS project discussion conference call, HOTCOG – February 28th

Criminal Justice

Planning Grant

CJ Planner, Lana Gudgel, conducted three grant workshops in January. CJ Planner facilitated the first meeting of the Regional SART on February 16. CJ Planner assist with several grant applications, including in person meetings with Wortham Police Department, Freestone County DA, and City of Rosebud. CJ Planner scheduled a special CJAC board meeting for March to review the scoring process with new board members before the April 8, 2022, scoring meeting. The Criminal Justice program has received a total of 24 grant applications over four funding programs.

Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy Grant

Criminal Justice Planner, Lana Gudgel hosted the Special Investigative Topics, and contracted with a new instructor to offer the Advanced Instructors Course. CJ Planner interviewed a new CIT 1850 Instructor to assist with the high demand for this class. CJ Planner began working on the FTO course and will be offering this class in 2022. The new registration training software for the Law Enforcement training program has registered 179 officers since October 2021. The training program has collected \$950.00 in out of region fees.

408 students attended HOTCOG training since January 2021.

Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness

Grant/COG Projects

- Staff attended the monthly Homeland Security conference calls with the Office of the Governor (OOG).
- Staff attended the Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) conference in Austin to get firsthand updates from various government partners on grant issues and funding.
- Staff continues to work on the \$1.6M Radio Infrastructure grant:
 - A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been issued for the 180' Marlin Tower.
 - A Request for Proposal (RFP) is being drafted for the 200' Woodway Tower.

- The VHF System upgrade in Bosque, Hill, Limestone, Freestone and Falls County continues with equipment deliveries scheduled through April with installation to be phased. Staff is coordinating with EMCs to ensure a smooth transition and install.
- Staff has attended several meetings with the Texas Youth Preparedness Council and is an advisor for the Council.
- Staff completed four grant applications for Homeland Security funds in the FY 2023 grant cycle.
- Staff has conducted three grant workshops for both SHSP and CJD, helping ensure jurisdictions were prepared for the open grant cycle.

Technical Assistance

- Staff assisted 5 jurisdictions with their grant applications, ensuring they had complete and competitive grant applications.
- Staff continues to work with the Capital Area Regional Trauma Advisory Council (CATRAC) on radio issues between healthcare facilities in our region.

Economic & Community Development Department Staff Report

EVOLVING LOAN FUND

HOTEDD currently administers two revolving loan funds: One through USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) and one through TDA (Texas Department of Agriculture).

The USDA fund is to support our local businesses 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 in the rural Heart of Texas including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, and rural McLennan Counties. Any private business that will employ 50 or fewer new employees and has less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues located in the rural (as defined by USDA) Heart of Texas region including Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and rural McLennan Counties (McLennan County communities that are not contiguous to the City of Waco). On a case by case basis, the Loan Committee may waive this requirement and provide loan funds to a business located outside the region if the committee determines doing so will have a positive economic impact on the community to be assisted with RLF funds. The project will create or retain one full-time job per each \$10,000.00 in loan funding. At least 51 percent of the interest in the business (applicant) must be owned by those who are either citizens of the United States or reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence certifiable by HOTEDD and USDA. HOTEDD RLF's financial assistance is necessary to the viability of the project: There must be evidence presented by the applicant that demonstrates that the projects financial requirements cannot be met from owner resources or a commercial financial institution.

Texas CDBG funds provided under the TCF SMRF program are required to comply with the national objective of principally benefiting persons of low and moderate income. The objective of the program is to expand economic opportunities that create or retain jobs, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. The SMRF program provides resources for an eligible applicant to support qualified small and microenterprise business(es) (a for-profit entity) to create or retain jobs for Texans. The CDBG regulations provide the following definitions: **Microenterprise Definition, A** "microenterprise" is a commercial enterprise that has five or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the enterprise. "Persons developing microenterprises" means persons who have expressed interests in and who are, or after an initial screening process are expected to be, actively working toward developing businesses, each of which is expected to be a microenterprise at the time it is formed. 24 CFR §570.201(o)(3); **Small Enterprise Definition** is an enterprise" or "small business" is a commercial enterprise that has 25 or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the enterprise. Falls County is the only county under the SMRF fund. The funding period through TDA and regulations is over but once TDA closes out the contract with Falls County then HOTEDD can lend the revolving funds back into Falls County without the stricter requirements of TDA. At this time Falls County has not received closeout information.

HOTEDD is currently seeking applicants for approximately \$245,240.79 in USDA revolved funds.

SMRF has \$39,759.34

Currently loans are out to:

Net1 is behind in payments. He has not responded to invoices or email to give request for deferment in writing to us.

KNV Investments is current.

U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION GRANTS

EDA prefers to use HOTCOG as the grant administrator of all projects within the HOTCOG region. EDA helps fund the Economic planning division of HOTCOG. All EDA funding projects must support the HOTCOG regions CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies). Dorthy Jackson administers all of the grants at this time. This includes help with applications and once grant has been award then all financial reports and special conditions are fielded through Dorthy Jackson and then submitted to EDA.

EDA is seeking new public works grants. Please contact Dorthy Jackson if you have a need that we can fit into the national objective of the EDA.

EDA received disaster funds for Covid-19. These funds have been allocated. They are now doing continuum of the regular public works grants. They expect those funds to be expended by end of this month and the coal community funds to be expended by end of February.

Current EDA funding opportunities:

FISCAL YEAR 2021 AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

Under the American Rescue Plan, EDA was allocated \$3 billion in supplemental funding to assist communities nationwide in their efforts to build back better by accelerating the economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and building local economies that will be resilient to future economic shocks.

American Rescue Plan funding enables EDA to provide larger, more transformational investments across the nation while utilizing its greatest strengths, including flexible funding to support community-led economic development.

With an emphasis on equity, EDA investments made under the American Rescue Plan will directly benefit previously underserved communities impacted by COVID-19.

EDA is making a Coal Communities Commitment, allocating \$300 million of its \$3 billion American Rescue Plan appropriation to ensure support for these communities as they recover from the pandemic and create new jobs and opportunities, including through the creation or expansion of a new industry sector. This commitment will be fulfilled through \$100 million in Build Back Better Regional Challenge grants and \$200 million in Economic Adjustment Assistance grants.

EDA has published the following funding opportunities: **EDA reported all funding has been allocated.**

- Economic Adjustment Assistance (funding will end January)
- Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation (no deadline but EDA strongly advises no later than 1/31/22)
- Indigenous Communities (Deadline 9/30/22)
- Build Back Better Regional Challenge (Closed and funded)
- Statewide Planning, Research and Networks (Original closing was 10/31/21 but extended to 9/30/22)
- Good Jobs Challenge (Deadline 2/10/22)

Deadlines: Varies based on program.

Economic Adjustment Assistance: Rolling. EDA strongly encourages all applicants to start early and contact their EDA representative for assistance.

While EDA encourages eligible applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible, EDA strongly advises eligible applicants to submit complete applications no later than March 31, 2022, so that EDA can review and process the application in time to get a potential award in place prior to deadlines imposed by Congress. Submission by March 31, 2022, is not a guarantee of funding. Any award is subject to the availability of funds. See Section E of this ARPA EAA NOFO regarding EDA's review process.

Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation: Rolling (Competitive Tourism Grants). EDA encourages eligible applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible.

For EDA Competitive Tourism Grants, there are no application submission deadlines. While EDA encourages eligible applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible, EDA strongly advises eligible applicants to submit complete applications no later than January 31, 2022, so that EDA can review and process the application in time to get a potential award in place prior to deadlines imposed by Congress. Submission by January 31, 2022, is not a guarantee of funding. Any award is subject to the availability of funds. See Section E of this ARPA Tourism NOFO regarding EDA's review process.

Indigenous Communities: Rolling. EDA strongly encourages all applicants to start early and contact their EDA representative for assistance.

While EDA encourages eligible applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible, EDA strongly advises eligible applicants to submit complete applications at least by March 31, 2022, so that EDA can review and process the application in time to get a potential award in place prior to deadlines imposed by

Congress. Submission by March 31, 2022 is not a guarantee of funding. Any award is subject to the availability of funds. EDA strongly encourages all applicants to start early and contact their EDA representative for assistance. See section E of this Indigenous Communities NOFO regarding EDA's review process and section G of the NOFO for EDA Regional Office Point of Contact (POC) information.

Current Projects HOTCOG is administrating

TSTC Project: Scope of work on this EDA project is to provide COVID responsive renovations in the Technical Studies and Electronics Centers. The renovations are estimated at \$6,113,594.00. TSTC was asking for \$4,800,000.00. EDA came back and approved to give \$3,500,000. TSTC accepted that amount. The final approval letter was issued on April 15, 2021, for project award. Authorized scope of work includes the renovation of building space within the 30,887 -SF Technical Studies Center (TSC) building and 41,223-SF Electronics Center (EEC) building. Other major components for both buildings include Conduct abatement; conduct demolition; installation of electrical, plumbing and IT infrastructure; renovate interior lab and classroom space; and equipment purchase of technology equipment to support on-line lecture distribution. This is the largest project for HOTCOG to administrate under HOTEDD to date. Project paperwork is moving forward. The proper lien filings have been completed and approved by EDA.

EDA has approved TSTC's engineering contract and now TSTC is working on plans and design.

Fairfield Project: This project has been officially awarded for \$950,000.00 September 16, 2021. The Fairfield Economic Development Corporation is making improvements to Old-Mexia Fairfield Road to accommodate the expected increase in commercial and industrial traffic in the area. The improvements are to construct 3,750 linear feet of industrial grade roadway with a pavement section of 7-inches of concrete pavement and 10-inches of chemically treated subgrade.

Engineering contract has to be approved by EDA and currently we are waiting on EDA to review contract and answer questions from Fairfield's engineering firm.

EDA Disaster funds in response to COVID-19

EDA opened up grant for Regional Council of Governments and Planning Commissions for extra funding in response to Covid-19. HOTEDD was awarded \$400,000.00 that covers next two years for this specific grant. Due to the fact that Covid-19 has totally changed the trajectory of the CEDS for all of the United States they understand the need for planning in regard to such disasters. The following is their scope of Work.

Scope of Work for EDA Economic Development Districts and EDA Indian Tribe Planning Grant Recipients

Under this EDA's CARES Act Recovery Assistance letter invitation for application, an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD) or an Indian Tribe that is a current EDA partnership planning grant recipient (Indian Tribe) may apply for funding under one or more of the following Scope of Work elements that has been pre-approved by EDA, based on past planning- and disaster-related grant awards: An EDA Award to an EDD or Indian Tribe shall support authorized activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, or respond to economic injury as a result of coronavirus, and shall include one or more of the following pre-approved grant activities that shall focus on the geographic region within the EDD or Tribal territory:

1. Short-term and long-term economic development planning and coordination to develop or update a disaster recovery and resiliency economic development plan, focused on pandemic recovery and resiliency, consistent with the approved CEDS maintained by the recipient. Alternatively, rather than a separate plan, the CEDS itself can be updated to include a focus on pandemic recovery or resiliency based on the existing or anticipated COVID-19 impact, general needs, and capacities of the EDD or Indian Tribe;

2. Funding for one or more regional disaster economic recovery coordinators for a two-year period to serve the communities and local governments across the geographic region within the EDD or Tribal territory. Disaster recovery coordinators will also serve as a liaison in identifying potential resiliency, mitigation, and economic recovery projects in the disaster-impacted areas. Additional work elements of the position will include but not be limited to the following: i. Implement economic recovery and resilience plans with the goal of rebuilding resilient and sustainable communities throughout the organization's region;

ii. Assist in local, state, and federally led coronavirus recovery planning efforts among the most highly impacted communities;

iii. Help identify economic development grant-eligible projects with state and federal resources for locally impacted communities to ensure these entities take full advantage of available funding opportunities;

iv. Identify and foster private and non-profit partnership opportunities;

v. Serve as a liaison between local, state, and federal partners in order to speed the recovery process through strategic technical assistance and local capacity augmentation for the highly impacted communities within the organization's jurisdiction; and

vi. Facilitate the implementation of locally generated disaster recovery economic development projects developed as part of the CEDS or CEDS-aligned economic recovery and resilience plan;

3. Technical Assistance and capacity building for member organizations, local businesses, and other local stakeholders impacted by coronavirus; and/or

4. Organizational capacity support for coronavirus response, including technology costs and personnel costs for staff members directly working on or supporting the work of the organization's coronavirus-related economic development response, including additional hiring as needed.

HOTEDD has received grant of \$400,000.00 for the next two year period to address needs within the stated above parameters. Retired Homeland Security Manager, Harold Ferguson, has agreed to work with Dorthy Jackson for the next two years on this project and has come on board as of July 1, 2020. Training, restructuring CEDS & HOTCOG website, and HOTCOG equipment is part of the plan.

Staff reviewed two contractors of website design that submitted proposals. Golden Shovel is the contractor approved and staff is working with them.

Website development complete and the equipment for the board room is installed and at use. Now staff is evaluating the option to make training room available for instructors to hold in class instruction and same time do digital instruction. Staff is looking at different options for spending the remaining funds. Equipment for air purification and Covid tests are part of the planned expenditures.

Training

Staff attended TARC biannual training Feb 8-10 in Austin. EDA did report that all grant funds have been allocated at this time and will let us know if more is allocated to them for disbursement in the future.

TDA is reporting that some regions are not expending allocated funds like they should. They are open to suggestions on how to carry forward, such as changing how the State CDBG Board operates.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Staff is forwarding information to the community that comes down from Federal partners on upcoming grants.

Texas State offices are still working remotely.

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

Announced a second Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) of \$3 million in Community Development Block Grant CARES Act (CDBG-CV) funds for cities, counties, local and regional nonprofits, and regional organizations to provide mortgage assistance through the Texas Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (TEMAP) to areas not currently covered under the initial TEMAP NOFA earlier this year.

The TEMAP program provides mortgage assistance to homeowners at or below 80% of the Area Medium Income who have been economically impacted by COVID-19 to help provide housing stability during the pandemic. The program can pay up to six consecutive months of an eligible household's mortgage payments, including mortgage arrears, with at least one of those months covering a month of future mortgage. The maximum assistance to homeowners must be at or below 150% of the Small Area Fair Market Rent or 150% of the Fair Market Rent – whichever is applicable. For areas where no Small Area Fair Market rent is available, Fair Market Rent must be used.

Through the initial TEMAP NOFA mortgage assistance is available to Texas homeowners in 223 Texas counties. This Round 2 TEMAP NOFA targets the remaining 31 Texas counties (see Table below) to ensure geographic distribution is achieved throughout the state and make assistance available to all COVID-19 impacted Texas homeowners struggling with their mortgage due to loss of job, reduced income, or increased living expenses. Eligible applicants are cities and counties in areas not having TEMAP coverage from the initial NOFA awards or local and regional nonprofits, including community action agencies and regional organizations such as councils of governments, willing to serve areas not covered.

Target County Areas

Bosque	Brazos	Brewster	Burleson	Culberson
El Paso	Falls	Fannin	Fayette	Freestone
Grayson	Grimes	Hamilton	Hill	Hudspeth
Jeff Davis	Limestone	Llano	Lee	Leon
Lubbock	Madison	Mason	McLennan	Milam
Mills	Presidio	Robertson	San Saba	Travis
Washington				

HOTCOG applied for all 6 Counties to make sure that there was coverage for everyone in the Region. The EOAC applied also to cover McLennan County and Lazarus House Initiative applied for Limestone County. Following chart is the allocations that is recommended by TDHCA.

Economic Opportunities Advancement Corporation	McLennan County	67	\$ 300,000.00
Heart of Texas Council of Governments	Counties of Hill, Bosque, Falls, and Limestone	63	\$ 200,000.00
Alliance of Border Collaboratives	City of El Paso and west El Paso County including all the cities of Anthony, TX, Vinton, TX and Canutillo, TX.	61	\$ 500,000.00
Travis County	Travis County (Excluding the City of Austin)	60	\$ 415,000.00
Lazarus House Initiative	Freestone County	60	\$ 85,000.00
Hudson County Latino Foundation	Counties of Brazos, Falls, Limestone, and McLennan	56	\$ -

Staff is taking applications for the TEMAP program. Currently we have approved 7 applications and are working on 1 more. We need more applications to come through. **We have approximately \$127,000 left to spend.**

TDHCA Texas Community Resiliency Program (CRP)

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) has announced a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) of \$38 million in Community Development Block Grant CARES Act (CDBG-CV) funds for the Community Resiliency Project (CRP) for non-entitlement cities and counties to create, expand, or enhance public facilities that provide medical care, social services, and/or emergency housing and increase the community's long-term resiliency and ability to mitigate future coronavirus outbreaks. Further, because few rural and small metro areas have had the opportunity to implement mobile response units or emergency medical services that would have a positive impact on their capability to reach certain households, CRP funds allow for the purchase of equipment to increase capacity to carry out a public service.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, homeless emergency shelters, health clinics/facilities, medical facilities, domestic violence facilities, and senior centers have been required to reduce capacity and services to clients, and establish non-congregate shelter options to adhere to CDC guidelines and social distancing. Community Resiliency Project funds will allow low- and moderate-income areas, and rural and small metro communities to address gaps in their ability to prepare, prevent and respond to COVID-19 or a future pandemic. Many rural and smaller urban areas lack capacity in these critical areas, which limited a quick, safe and effective response to the

pandemic. Public facility structures can be modified or constructed with these funds to prevent the transmission of the coronavirus and allow for adequate social distancing or remote access. The minimum funding request per Public Service project is \$300,000, the minimum funding request per Public Facilities project is \$500,000, and the maximum funding request per Applicant is \$5,000,000.

CRP funds will be made available for applicants that are non-entitlement units of general local government. Priority will be given to those applications with a readiness to proceed and are “shovel-ready” or which procurement has been identified and ready to proceed.

1. Public Facilities and Improvements – Activity with a documented COVID-19 Tieback. 24 CFR §570.201(c)

- Acquisition, rehabilitation, and/or new construction related to publicly owned:
- homeless shelters/facilities, (presumed benefit population)
- domestic violence centers/facilities, (presumed benefit population)
- health clinics (area benefit)
- emergency medical (EMS) stations (area benefit), and
- senior centers/facilities (presumed benefit population)

2. Public Service – Activity with a documented COVID-19 Tieback. 24 CFR §570.201(e) & 24 CFR §570.207 (b)(1) Purchase of equipment, supplies, and materials necessary to carryout a public service. This activity is limited to the purchase of the following real property if intended to be publicly owned and managed:

- Mobile food pantries
- Mobile health clinics, and
- Emergency medical services vehicles

Dates and Estimated Program Timeline Dates:

- Applications were due January 19, 2022
- Estimated Award Announcements March 10, 2022
- Estimated Grant Contract Start Date March 15, 2022

Applicant Thresholds Requirements *[CRP NOFA Pg.6 Part II]*
CDBG-CV Applicants must:

- meet both a National Objective and Eligible Activity;
- be a non-entitlement unit of general local government. Non-entitlement units are cities with populations of less than 50,000 (except cities that are designated principal cities of Metropolitan Statistical Areas), and counties with populations of less than 200,000;
- not be suspended or debarred as per General Services Administration (GSA) Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System of Award Management (SAM) Program;

- meet Citizen Participation review;
- pass Previous Participation requirement; and
- ensure project readiness to proceed upon award.

Dorthy Jackson worked with Hill County and the City of Mexia on applications to this grant funding opportunity. Hill County is a Public Facilities project and Mexia is a Public Service project. There was an ask of approximately 141 million dollars throughout the State and only 38 million is available.

Hill County Project: \$4,980,925.08

Hill County Senior & Community Shelter Expansion at the Hill County Exhibits Building

This project is for expansion of the Hill County Exhibits Building which is also the Community Shelter building at 205 Stadium Dr in Hillsboro Texas. This project would expand the current facility from 12,000 square feet to 20,750 square feet. Upgrades would include better indoor air quality and ventilation to improve public health and prevent spread of coronavirus by replacing the HVAC and adding more space with kitchen improvements along with other improvements that will ensure the building's continued usefulness for feeding seniors and providing shelter during an outbreak and other natural disasters. This will establish an appropriate ventilated space for a senior food service program at this facility. This facility has a kitchen with old appliances that urgently needs upgrading and they need to add plumbing for a third stainless still sink in order to comply with Health Department standards for commercial kitchens. This facility is also currently being used as the official County Covid-19 testing and vaccination site. This building has been used for warehouse operations for distribution of PPE and donated food multiple times during pandemic and other natural disasters. Texas Task Force One has used this facility for staging location during disaster events. The facility is also used for housing displaced citizens during disaster events. The expansion project will allow Hill County to provide a better place for the senior citizen feeding program that complies with Health Department commercial kitchen regulations. This also will allow Hill County to do Covid 19 testing with better efficiency that will comply with CDC social distancing, plus be able to service the seniors at the same time. This will also allow proper social distancing for residents who need to use the facility during natural disasters. This building is located in a community where 66 percent of the beneficiaries are at or below 80% of AMI. Just some examples of building usages are:

1. Shelter during the winter storm Uri.
2. Several food distributions during the 2020-2021 Covid pandemic
3. Warehouse operations during the West Explosion
4. Stood up as an emergency shelter during Hurricane IKE

With the facility also being used as testing site the County needs more room to allow for testing to continue and to do other services at same time, such as the senior feeding program and housing of displaced citizens during natural disasters with capability to social distance with CDC guidelines.

City of Mexia Project: \$654,484.75
Advanced Life Support Mobile Units

This project is to purchase two Advanced Life Support Mobile units to provide for increasing calls for service due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Two vehicle units will be purchased along with two stretcher loading system equipment and two heart monitoring systems. This will improve the City of Mexia's fleet of reliable emergency medical service vehicles for service to the most vulnerable population. Currently the Mexia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (MFEMSD) operates three Advanced Life Support Mobile units for the City of Mexia and the entire northern region of Limestone County. They also have interlocal agreements with the Limestone Hospital District which covers the City of Groesbeck and southern part of Limestone County. The City of Mexia has the only full-time, paid career emergency medical services department in the service area. The City of Mexia needs these two Advanced Life Support Mobile units to meet the increased call volume and the longer service times due to transporting more Covid-19 patients to out of area hospitals. 26.8 percent of the overall population within the City of Mexia are in poverty. An estimated 42.7 percent of children under 18 years of age were below the poverty level and 21.6 percent of all households received assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. All data quoted in this Section is cumulative data retrieved from the American Community Survey. As noted previously, all clients in the service area benefit from services provided by MFEMSD. In addition, the City has implemented a full charity care policy which provides write-down (or write-off) of emergency medical service charges for individuals/families who qualify at a level of 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. MFEMSD serves the most vulnerable people in the community. If the City is unable to get funding in the near term, they will be forced to increase risk of death or injury to their vulnerable population because an adequate fleet of vehicles to respond to calls for service will simply not be available.

TDA (Texas Department of Agriculture)

TDA has released the United Scoring Committees criteria for the 2021-2022 TxCDBG grant cycle. The link for that criteria is: <https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Portals/0/Publications/RED/CDBG/CD/2021-2022%20Adopted%20Scoring%20Factors.pdf>

Staff attended virtual training from TDA on the new requirements for all communities who receive TxCDBG funding including COG/Planning organizations. Part of the requirements is presentation, to Executive Board Members; City Council members; County Commissions, etc..., on Section 3 HUD information.

Dorthy Jackson did training session with the City of West's Economic Development Corporation Board members concerning 4B EDC criteria on February 15, 2022.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Community and economic development technical assistance was provided to:

- City of West/EDC
- Fairfield EDC
- TSTC
- City of Mexia
- Groesbeck EDC
- Freestone County
- Hill County

SOLID WASTE

The SWAC meet in on July 22, 2021 and determined that the next Biennium will be split with COG managed projects in FY 22 and Implementation projects starting in FY 23. The 2022/2023 biennium will begin October 1st with new funding opportunities for all 6 counties in the HOTCOG region. The City of Gholson was able to conduct a very successful community collection event that involved both roll-off dumpsters and tire trailers. The City of Mart was also able to complete a community collection event. They were able to fill up several dumpsters and a tire trailer. There will be 4 more events that will take place in all 5 of the rural areas of HOTCOG. Hill County is next, with an event starting in March. HOTCOG is still trying to schedule events for Bosque, Falls, and Limestone.

AIR QUALITY

Ramboll completed the final report to the end the FY 20/21 biennium. They have created a Scope of Work to be turned into TCEQ for the new biennium. After TCEQ reviews and accepts the SOW, Ramboll will continue working with HOTCOG to conduct further studies to keep our region in compliance with the ozone standards.