

58th Annual Meeting West Central Texas Council of Governments

November 6, 2024



Purpose: As stated in the By-laws

...to encourage and assist local units of governments to join and cooperate with one another to improve the health, safety, and general welfare of their citizens and to plan for the future development of the area embraced by the communities within the area; to assist member units in solving current problems and completing capital improvements; and to establish regional coordination and communication to help eliminate monetary waste from duplication and misapplication.



Major Programs

Regional 9-1-1
Aging and Disability Resource Center
Area Agency on Aging
Area Health Education Center
Criminal Justice Planning
Economic Development District
Community & Economic Development
Environmental Services
Homeland Security
Hazard Mitigation
Pipeline Safety
Law Enforcement Training
Shallow Subsidy for Veteran Families
Supportive Services for Veteran Families
Other Regional Services

WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

58th Annual Meeting
November 6, 2024 - 12:00 P.M.
The Grace Museum
Abilene, Texas

CALL to ORDER JUDGE DALE SPURGIN
Jones County
President, WCTCOG

INVOCATION JUDGE MICHAEL ROACH
Stephens County
Secretary/Treasurer, WCTCOG

PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE..... JUDGE KEN HOLT
Fisher County
First Vice President, WCTCOG

INTRODUCTION of HEAD TABLE/GUEST RECOGNITION JUDGE KEN HOLT

PRESENTATION of WCTCOG WORK PROGRAM..... MR. JOE ROGERS
Executive Director, WCTCOG

PRESENTATION of 2025 WCTCOG BUDGET
and MEMBERSHIP DUES JUDGE MICHAEL ROACH

ELECTION of 2025 WCTCOG OFFICERS..... JUDGE BILLY BLEDSOE
Coleman County

INTRODUCTION of SPEAKER JUDGE SPURGIN

KEYNOTE ADDRESS STATE SENATOR CHARLES PERRY
28th District

PRESENTATION of AWARDS JUDGE SPURGIN

REMARKS JUDGE SPURGIN

ADJOURNMENT JUDGE SPURGIN




**WEST CENTRAL TEXAS
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
Work Program
FY 2024-2025**

The following represents the planned program activities for the West Central Texas Council of Governments during the coming year.

The numerous State and Federal funding agencies under which departmental programs operate have specific and detailed planning rules and regulations that are reviewed and adopted throughout the year by the Council's Executive Committee. These documents form the basis for reporting requirements and accountability measures submitted to the appropriate state and federal agencies throughout the year.

The following work program is designed to include all the Council's major undertakings into a comprehensive planning document for the purpose of communicating the scope and direction of the organization for the coming year.

Regional 9-1-1 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Hold 18 Telecommunicator classes.	Schedule and host telecommunicator training courses required for state mandated Telecommunicator licensing.
Train 150 Telecommunicators.	Assign rural addresses and make corrections to addressing databases through telephone service provider interfaces.
<p>Distribute 80,000 9-1-1 public education items throughout the region.</p> <p>9-1-1 social media sites will secure 25,000 views to educate social media users in the region using current social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube).</p>	<p>Update and maintain accurate county maps utilizing mapping software and global positioning system data.</p> <p>Provide GIS technical assistance and maps to counties, cities and other entities.</p> <p>Plan and implement 9-1-1 public education programs for schools, health fairs, and community events. Continue to utilize <i>Cell Phone Sally & Friends</i> educational videos and materials for children.</p> <p>Evaluate, purchase, and install 9-1-1 equipment as needed and as scheduled, through the strategic planning process.</p>
Telecommunicators will respond to 95,000 9-1-1 calls from residents and visitors in the region.	Monitor all 18 PSAPs to ensure Texas Commission on Emergency Communications rule compliance and for quality assurance of the regional 9-1-1 network.
9-1-1 Telecommunicators will respond to 80,000 wireless 9-1-1 calls (87%) from citizens and visitors in the region.	<p>Continue scheduled upgrades to NextGen 9-1-1 ESInet network and workstations.</p> <p>My911shop.com will provide quality 9-1-1 public education materials to customers in over 1,570 public safety agencies across the US, Canada, and Mexico.</p>
<p>9-1-1 Telecommunicators will respond to 11,000 wireline 9-1-1 calls (12%) from citizens and visitors in the region.</p> <p>9-1-1 Telecommunicators will respond to 1050 text-to-911 sessions (1%) from citizens and visitors in the region.</p>	
<p>Staff will maintain a regional map for addressing accuracy in 18 counties using GIS Mapping Services.</p> <p>Staff will provide GIS Mapping Services for 18 counties and 48 cities of the WCTCOG region to assign over 1,000 accurate 9-1-1 addresses, as requested, and maintain regional maps for the Regional 9-1-1 Network.</p>	

Aging and Disability Resource Center Program 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Educate professionals, persons with disabilities, those over 60, families, and partners about options counseling services throughout Council-Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) service areas.	Regularly meet with a minimum of 20 local community service partners.
Initiate highly visible and trusted information resources to consumers and service providers via increased web and media presence.	Establish paper and online marketing venues including consumer access to local, state, and federal provider information.
Continue to establish Memorandum of Understandings with Key Partnering Agencies.	Hold quarterly steering committee meetings.
Maintain Steering Committee, consisting of consumers and partnering agency staff, ensuring diversity of backgrounds.	Continue to meet with partnering agencies to obtain current referral and eligibility processes.
Initiate and/or coordinate community education opportunities in the region surrounding key areas such as long-term services, caregiving, health and wellness opportunities, and housing options for seniors and person with disabilities.	Hold annual cross-training meetings with community partners to collaborate referral protocols, eligibility criteria, and create standardized referral process.
Continue Long Term Services and Support programs to assist consumers with long term planning, housing options, and coordination of short-term services with community partners.	Host training opportunities for consumers and service providers, based on needs assessment, including long term planning symposiums.
Participate in statewide standards for Medicare Benefit Counseling as needed for benefits, services and supports.	Create culturally sensitive and diverse outreach materials and maintain website.
Review and apply for additional funding sources to continue, expand, and sustain ADRC functions.	Staff to attend appropriate benefits counseling training to provide ongoing assistance to consumers, caregivers, and family members.
Ensure all required state and federal reports are submitted within deadline.	Apply for appropriate funding to support, improve, or increase ADRC functions and expand services to families residing in the 19 counties of the Council region.
Provide self-advocacy and leadership development skills trainings to individuals with disabilities and their allies. Submit timely reports to funding source.	Submit all required documentation and reports to federal and state agencies on or before required deadline.
Provide training to individuals with disabilities, family caregivers and people working with individuals with disabilities on sexual assault topics.	Provide assistance & information for individuals applying for long-term services.
Continue to strengthen partnerships with organizations serving Veterans and their family members, with the highest focus reaching homeless Veteran families.	Provide respite services to family caregivers of a child(ren) or family member with a disability.
A minimum of 130 Veterans and Surviving Spouses will receive case management services, referrals, and coordinated assistance. Temporary financial assistance will be provided if needed in the following categories: rental assistance, utility assistance, and transportation.	Maintain an affordable and accessible housing inventory list for all 19 counties.
	Provide self-advocacy training to persons with a disability and/or their family caregivers.
	Provide sexual assault trainings to persons with disabilities, family caregivers and members of the community who work with persons with disabilities.
	Staff will arrange, manage and/or coordinate resources and information services with Veterans to achieve the highest level of assistance with a focus on service delivery to very rural areas of the 16-county service region.
	

New Housing Vision Program 2025 Work Program


PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
A minimum of 42 neighborhood families will receive case management services, referrals, and coordinated assistance. Neighbors will receive assistance through rental payments, security deposits, and utility assistance on behalf of the household.	Conduct outreach to enhance awareness of available services and resources to neighbors utilizing the program. New Housing Vision will collaborate with community partners about streamlining access procedures across all 17 counties.
Facilitate meetings with key community partners to provide Coordinated Entry and intermediate-term rental subsidy to neighbors needing assistance.	Seek and develop partnerships to enhance services to neighborhood families.
Staff will outreach throughout the region to provide information and establish contracts with property managers throughout the region.	Meet with local partnering agencies to obtain current referral and eligibility process.
Participate with Texas Homeless Network to promote and participate in public awareness campaigns on issues of homelessness in Texas.	Staff will work with participating neighbors to establish achievable goals throughout the duration of assistance.
Coordinate with CoC Balance of State to effectively address neighbors in need throughout the region.	Staff will work with neighbors to provide referrals for long term services and supports that will assist them in remaining housed in their community.
Staff will outreach throughout the region and continue to establish Memorandum of Understanding with partnering agencies.	Staff will arrange, manage and/or coordinate resources and information services with neighbors to achieve the highest level of assistance with a focus on service delivery to very rural areas of the 17-county service region.
Staff will participate in outreach events targeting neighbors in need.	New Housing Vision, West Texas Homeless Network and its partnering agencies have a goal of making homelessness something that is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. This means reaching a level known as “functional zero”. Functional Zero was obtained in November for Taylor County. The goal is to replicate this process and extend it to the additional 16 counties served in our region by New Housing Vision.
Ensure all required state and federal reports are submitted within deadline.	

Area Agency on Aging 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
A minimum of 6,000 unduplicated elderly persons and/or their family caregivers will be served directly by appropriate resources, including information and referral services, caregiver support services, service coordination, benefits counseling, outreach and awareness, meals, transportation, and evidence- based programming.	<p>Conduct outreach via phone and in person to enhance awareness of available access, assistance services and resources and to collaborate with community partners about streamlining access procedures across all 19 counties.</p> <p>Collaborate with community partners for metropolitan and rural emergency preparedness, and work to increase disaster awareness in target populations.</p> <p>Continue to seek and develop public-private partnerships to enhance programs and services.</p>
A minimum of 1800 persons will receive direct short-term services such as emergency response equipment, homemaker or chore services, personal assistance, transportation, small residential repairs, temporary financial assistance, respite, and services coordination.	<p>Continue advocacy efforts to prevent elder abuse and help seniors with their rights and benefits, especially Medicare.</p> <p>Arrange, manage and/or coordinate resources and information services with target populations and/or family caregivers to achieve the highest level of physical & cognitive health, independent functioning, optimal aging and family caregiving with a focus on service delivery to very rural areas of the 19- county service region.</p>
Availability of evidence-based health and wellness programs will be increased throughout the 19 -county service region. Programs will include Texercise Select and Dementia Live.	<p>Provide congregate and home-delivered meals at nutrition sites and in clients' homes that are Dietary Reference Intake (DRI) compliant per State requirements.</p>
A minimum of 64,000 Congregate Meals for 865 seniors, 118,500 Home Delivered Meals for 975 seniors, and 1,500 one-way rides for 74 seniors will be provided throughout the 19-county region.	<p>Train and certify 4 new Volunteer Ombudsman and provide training for nursing and assisted living facility staff and administrators.</p> <p>Advocate for the rights of residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities in response to complaints and conduct follow-up activities.</p>
A minimum of 30 family caregiver and/or support group events will take place in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association in FY24.	<p>Provide demand/response transportation services to / from senior centers and other locations including transportation to medical appointments. (As funding allows)</p> <p>Communicate with regional Texas Silver-Haired Legislators about aging activities/issues through Citizens Advisory Council meetings.</p>
The Ombudsman program staff will provide assistance to residents in nursing and assisted living facilities and resolve any complaints at a rate of 90%.	<p>Continue staff training, locally, regionally, and state-wide, while networking with the statewide AAAs to ensure the best programming and service practices.</p> <p>Continue to provide evidence-based programs including Dementia Live Tours for caregivers and Texercise Select.</p>
Staff will provide outreach throughout the region at a minimum of 4 Medicare benefits counseling enrollment events per month covering Medicare, Part D, Medigap, Supplemental plans, QMB, SLMB, QI, and/or Extra Help programs for senior citizens and persons with disabilities; and assist a minimum of 1,500 consumers with information, plan enrollment and individual client contacts as appropriate and requested throughout the year.	
Assisted living and nursing home facilities will be visited quarterly by an active certified Ombudsman, volunteer, and/or staff.	
Staff will establish outreach events, targeting potential volunteers for the Ombudsman program to increase the number of active certified volunteers who can assist staff in site visits or resolution of resident complaints.	



Area Health Education Center 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Big Country AHEC will improve healthcare <u>workforce distribution</u> within its designated 28-county region, particularly among rural and underserved populations.	<p>Recruit 30 students per center per year for the AHEC Scholar Program.</p> <p>Resident scholars will receive 40 hours of didactic material in Year One and Year Two of the program for a total of 80 hours.</p> <p>75% of students accepted into the program will be from minority or underserved backgrounds.</p> <p>Increase health professions exposure for high school students.</p> <p>Will conduct an annual community needs assessment of one or more of the counties we serve.</p> <p>5-10 students will attend Community Health Worker Training</p>
Big Country AHEC will prepare a <u>diverse</u> and culturally competent primary care workforce, representative of the community we serve.	Incorporate cultural competence modules into all AHEC Scholars program, Community-Based Experiential Learning Training, Continuing education, and pipeline programs.
<p>Big Country AHEC will develop and maintain a health care workforce that is prepared to deliver high quality care in a <u>transforming health care delivery system</u> with an emphasis on rural and underserved areas and communities.</p> 	<p>Educate health profession students about health care transformations related to new payment and quality care models through AHEC Scholars Program.</p> <p>Prepare education materials related to new health care delivery systems and models.</p> <p>Transformative and regulatory health care information will be available online through continuing education units for health care profession preceptors each year.</p>

Criminal Justice Planning 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
<p>Assist/facilitate 14 Community Planning meetings.</p> <p>Process 30 grant applications.</p>	<p>Assist in facilitating Community Planning activities.</p> <p>Receive, review, and prioritize grant applications as directed by the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division's Public Safety Office.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions, as requested.</p>
<p>Criminal Justice Planning Program will provide general planning and coordination activities.</p> <p>Criminal Justice Planning Program will regularly communicate with Criminal Justice stake holders.</p>	<p>Coordinate activities for issues related to criminal justice, juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, victim services, and related topics throughout the year.</p> <p>Will regularly communicate with Criminal Justice stakeholders, including grantees, law enforcement, non-profit organizations and other units of government when developing the region's strategic plan.</p>

Economic Development District 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Implement the Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region, including the website: wctedd.org for 2025 - 2030.	<p>Increase participation in a CEDS website.</p> <p>Meet with lenders throughout the region to make them aware of the Council's and the Economic Development District's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program.</p>
Provide support for economic development to communities in the region.	<p>Work with the Economic Development Administration, United States Department of Agriculture and other federal, state and local agencies to develop projects within the region.</p>

Community and Economic Development 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Provide general technical assistance to communities regarding community and economic development projects (through grant writing, research, and general information).	<p>Assist communities with resources and assistance that are seeking to apply for grants for community and economic development projects.</p> <p>Meet with city, county and economic development officials throughout the region and provide them information regarding funding opportunities and services that we can provide that can enhance community and economic development.</p>
Distribute general information regarding community and economic development, particularly programs provided by the Texas Department of Agriculture.	<p>Partner with other organizations to provide a Fair Housing Event in the region.</p> <p>Complete a regional housing analysis.</p>
Support opportunities to support Fair Housing.	

Environmental Services – Solid Waste 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Provide aid to communities for specific regional permitting and registration.	<p>Prepare and submit a Regional Solid Waste Management funding plan to State agencies.</p> <p>Maintain Regional Solid Waste Management Plan 2022-2042.</p>
Continue the management of Regional Solid Waste Management Program.	<p>Maintain a Regional Closed Landfill Inventory and review it yearly.</p> <p>Maintain Natural Resource Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Develop and implement a project selection process.</p>
Continue the management of the Regional Closed Landfill Inventory.	<p>Conduct Municipal Solid Waste Facility Registration and/or Permit applications/amendments/modifications, and application conformance reviews as needed.</p> <p>Conduct Municipal Solid Waste Facility Pre-application conformance reviews.</p>
Continue development and promotion of Environmental Education/Awareness in schools.	<p>Conduct site visits with solid waste management grantees, as needed.</p> <p>Promote and facilitate six waste reduction, recycling, composting and clean-up events within a 19- county region.</p>
Assist communities in developing strategies for source reduction and recycling.	<p>Provide technical assistance to communities for the waste minimization and the reduction of solid waste disposal to area landfills.</p> <p>Administer Solid Waste Pass Through Grant Sub-grant awards.</p>
Develop programs to assist communities in controlling or stemming illegal dumping.	<p>Provide communities with technical assistance for solid waste management issues.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance for communities on recycling and waste minimization best practices basics.</p>
Develop cost-effective, efficient and environmentally suitable regional solid waste management systems.	<p>Maintain and promote regional solid waste information resource center of education and outreach materials.</p> <p>Research and apply for additional funding sources.</p>
Conduct regional solid waste planning.	


Homeland Security 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
<p>Conduct trainings and exercises pertaining to Emergency Management protocols, and best practices. Provide technical assistance regarding all aspects of Emergency Management. Hold Planning and Coordination meetings</p>	<p>Update/Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Implementation Plan • Regional Interoperability Communications Plan (RICP) • Maintain and update emergency response plans • Maintain 90% or higher reporting requirement of CJS • Keep all Mutual Aid Agreements current • All entities to stay in compliance with NIMS • Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) • Stakeholder Preparedness Report (SPR) • Implementation Plan (IP) • Keep all entities eligible for disaster relief funding should the need arise.
<p>Provide \$106,961 in Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities for the purchase of SWAT and Bomb Squad equipment for the Abilene Police Department SWAT Team and Bomb Squad, for support of regional terrorism prevention, response and interdiction activities.</p> <p>Our goal is to provide training, exercises, technical assistance, and equipment to keep our region safer and better prepared for natural and manmade emergencies.</p>	<p>Assist jurisdictions with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance • Resolutions and adoption documents • Maintaining Intermediate Preparedness Level or higher • Completion and execution of Memorandum of Understanding with TXDPS for interoperable communications channels <p>Develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding allocation plans for regional priorities • Common programming protocol based on the Texas Statewide Interoperability Channel Plan • Participate in state level strategic planning sessions <p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment Justification • Facilitation for Homeland Security Advisory Committee meetings • Consolidation of Focus Group input and priority determinations • Regional needs assessments • Regional risk assessments

Hazard Mitigation 2025 Work Program

HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
<p>Administer hazard mitigation grants through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) as funding opportunities are made available. Grants are released on a rolling basis determined by disaster declarations.</p>	<p>Update/Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Hazard Mitigation Plans as needed • Grant applications for projects
<p>Administer hazard mitigation grants through the Texas General Land Office for funding Hazard Mitigation Planning operations across the region.</p> <p>Assess the needs for the region to determine applicable and relevant projects to pursue for planning and mitigation.</p> <p>Promote the proposal for a Safe Room Grant to provide safe rooms across the region.</p>	<p>Assist jurisdictions with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project preparation and funding • Assessing needs of the community <p>Develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for project completion • Developing strong applications for HMGP or other funding sources • Participate in the process of completion of the projects • Final project inspection and grant closeout
<p>Educate local officials on available resources and processes for mitigation activities.</p>	<p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding opportunities and projects to entities. • Completed paperwork to State or Federal Agencies • Overall satisfaction with outcome • Technical assistance in grant preparation • Educational opportunities for resources and processes
<p>Development of Mitigation Action Teams (MAT) to assess the needs and develop plans for the communities they serve.</p>	


Law Enforcement Training 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
<p>Conduct 2 Basic Peace Officer Licensing Courses.</p> <p>Conduct 2 Basic Corrections Officer Licensing Courses.</p> <p>Conduct 2 Basic Telecommunicator Licensing Courses.</p> <p>Conduct 40 in-service courses for public safety professionals.</p> <p>Conduct 2 School Marshal Certification Courses.</p> <p>Conduct 20% of courses in auxiliary sites within the region.</p>	<p>Offer Basic Level Certification courses such as Peace Officer, Corrections Officer, and Telecommunicator, as needed or requested.</p> <p>Offer in-service law enforcement and public safety training, as needed or requested.</p> <p>Offer School Marshal certification and renewal courses, as requested.</p> <p>Seek additional funding sources to bolster training funds.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

Pipeline Safety 2024 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
<p>Continue to deliver public outreach and education to the public regarding the 811 Program.</p> <p>Conduct educational outreaches in each of the WCTCOG subregions.</p>	<p>Develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the "\$80,000 Rosebush" campaign to use in educational outreaches. Distribute county specific pipeline and utility operator guidebook to assist First Responders and Emergency Management personnel in planning and response. <p>Participate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Events throughout the WCTCOG Region Participate in the Texas 811 Summit Continue conducting the Big Country 811 Damage Prevention Council Meetings
<p>NEW Pipeline Emergency Response Grant:</p> <p>Conduct two H-100 HazMat Awareness Trainings;</p> <p>Conduct two H-200 HazMat First Responder Operation Trainings;</p> <p>Conduct two H-101 Pipeline Emergency Awareness Trainings;</p> <p>Conduct two H-201 Pipeline Emergency Operation Trainings;</p> <p>Conduct two ICS-300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents Trainings;</p> <p>Conduct two ICS-400 Advanced ICS; Identify all volunteer and full time FDs in the Region; Conduct a needs assessment for each FD as it pertains to Pipeline emergency response;</p> <p>Hold two networking events for FDs, pipeline operators, Emergency Personnel per subregion;</p> <p>Incorporate Pipeline Operators into Hazard Mitigation Planning; Raise awareness about the pipeline emergency responders initiative;</p> <p>Hold twelve regional trainings targeting emergency personnel in responding to pipeline disasters; provide gas detection equipment for nine fire departments in Coleman County; provide to the Coleman Fire Department electronic hardware and software for creating pipeline emergency response scenarios for planning, training, and exercising pipeline emergencies for first responders. The software may be utilized in cooperation with the Coleman Fire Department for the creation of scenarios in the remaining counties in the West Central Texas region; and attend the annual 811 Summit.</p>	<p>This project will focus on developing a regional network of Fire Departments, Pipeline Operators and Emergency Management Personnel. With approximately 100 volunteer and paid fire departments throughout the region, developing a network to effectively communicate during a disaster will be a top priority.</p> <p>This project offers an opportunity to address capability gaps and improve regional response to pipeline disasters. This will be accomplished by providing training, assessing the needs of our region and developing improved communications between stakeholders.</p> <p>A substantial portion of the region's first responders work multiple jobs and are often constrained by the time they have between responsibilities. Staff will offer at least one training event per topic on a Saturday and/or Sunday to allow opportunities for those that have barriers due to time.</p> <p>The locations and times of training courses will be dependent on advance student enrollment, trainers and facilities to host the events.</p>

Shallow Subsidy Services for Veteran Families 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
Veteran Families will receive rental assistance payments to landlords on behalf of the Veteran household. This rental assistance is at a fixed rate every month, regardless of changes in the household's income or monthly rent amount.	<p>Conduct outreach to enhance awareness of available services and resources to Veteran Families. Shallow Subsidy will collaborate with community partners about streamlining access procedures across all 25 counties.</p> <p>Continue to seek and develop partnerships to enhance services to Veteran families.</p> <p>Meet with local VA offices and partnering agencies to obtain current referral and eligibility process.</p> 
Facilitate meetings with key community partners to provide intermediate-term rental subsidy to Veterans needing assistance.	
Staff will participate in outreach events targeting Veterans benefits.	
Staff will outreach throughout the region and continue to establish a contract with Property Managers.	
Participate with Texas Homeless Network to promote and participate in public awareness campaigns on issues of homelessness in Texas.	
Coordinate with our CoC-Balance of State to effectively address our Veterans needs in our region.	
Ensure all required state and federal reports are submitted within deadline.	

Support Services for Veteran Families 2025 Work Program

PLANNED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE/GOALS & OBJECTIVES	PLANNED PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES
A minimum of 265 Veteran Families will receive case management services, referrals, and coordinated assistance. Temporary financial assistance will be provided if needed in the following categories in FY25; rental assistance, security deposits, utility assistance, transportation, and childcare.	<p>Conduct outreach to enhance awareness of available services and resources to Veteran families. SSVF will collaborate with community partners about streamlining access procedures across all 25 counties.</p> <p>Continue to seek and develop partnerships to enhance programs and services.</p> <p>Meet with local VA offices and partnering agencies to obtain current referral and eligibility process.</p> <p>Staff will attend appropriate benefit training such as Medicare, Medicaid, VA Disability Compensation, SSDI and SSI to provide ongoing assistance to Veterans Families.</p> <p>SSVF will arrange, manage and/or coordinate resources and information services with Veterans to achieve the highest level of assistance with a focus on service delivery to very rural areas of the 25-county service region.</p> <p>Support Services for Veteran Families, West Texas Homeless Network and its partnering agencies have a goal of making Veteran homelessness something that is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. This means reaching a level known as "functional zero". Functional Zero was obtained in November for Taylor County. Our goal is to replicate this process and extend it to the additional 25 counties served in our region by SSVF.</p>
Facilitate meetings with key community partners to provide Coordinated Entry to Veterans needing assistance.	
Staff will participate in outreach events targeting Veterans benefits.	
Staff will outreach throughout the region and continue to establish Memorandum of Understanding with Partnering Agencies.	
Participate with Texas Homeless Network to promote and participate in public awareness campaigns on issues of homelessness in Texas.	
Coordinate with our CoC-Balance of State to effectively address our Veterans needs in our region.	
Ensure all required state and federal reports are submitted within guidelines.	



WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Annual Organizational Budget - All Funds October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025

Revenue:		
Federal grants	\$	4,264,776
State grants		3,250,636
Program income		133,921
Membership dues		38,100
Local funds		3,955,098
Administration of partner programs		3,176,315
Total Revenues		14,818,846
Expenditures:		
Personnel costs:		
Wages		5,781,599
Longevity wages		62,540
Employee benefits and retirement		2,791,975
Program and other operations		6,198,811
Total expenditures		14,834,925
Other Sources (Uses):		
Reimbursement of buildings and grounds operation costs		440,000
Less: Buildings and grounds operations		(168,464)
Total other sources (uses)		271,536
Excess revenue and other sources over/under expenditures and other uses		255,457
Other - Debt service		
Line of credit repayment (internal loan)		(48,000)
Debt service (building)		
Principal		(118,444)
Interest		(2,461)
Total other - debt service		(168,905)
Projected net increase in fund balance		86,552
Unassigned Fund Balance- Beginning (Projected)		1,291,134
Unassigned Fund Balance- Ending (Projected)	\$	1,377,686



WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Proposed Membership Dues Structure - 2025

COUNTIES:	\$.05 (CENTS) PER CAPITA
CITIES:	\$.05 (CENTS) PER CAPITA
Minimum for Cities and Counties:	75.00
SCHOOL DISTRICTS over 10,000 enrollment:	150.00
SCHOOL DISTRICTS under 10,000 enrollment:	75.00
SWCDs and SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS:	75.00
ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS:	
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE in cities over 10,000 population:	150.00
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE in cities under 10,000 population:	75.00
POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES and UNIVERSITIES and SCHOOLS other than public and junior colleges that are tax-supported:	150.00



WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**Executive Committee
&
Board of Directors**

2024

WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 2024

		Term Began	Expires
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion I			
Judge Dale Spurgin	Jones County	2013	2025
Judge Nicki Harle – Alternate	Callahan County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion II			
Judge Ken Holt	Fisher County	2017	2025
Judge Dan Hicks – Alternate	Scurry County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion III			
Judge Stan Wojcik	Knox County	2023	2024
Judge Ronnie Moorhead - Alternate	Stonewall County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion IV			
Judge Michael Roach	Stephens County	2021	2025
Judge Stephanie Davis – Alternate	Comanche County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion V			
Judge Billy Bledsoe	Coleman County	2021	2024
Judge Julia Miller - Alternate	Runnels County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION			
Judge Phillip Crowley	Taylor County	2023	Local
REPRESENTING CITIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION			
Councilmember Travis Craver	City of Abilene	2023	Local
REPRESENTING CITIES OF OVER 10,000 BUT NOT IN EXCESS OF 99,999 POPULATION			
Councilmember Walker Willey	City of Brownwood	2019	Local
Councilmember Vernon Clay	City of Snyder	2015	Local
Councilmember John McPherson	City of Sweetwater	2024	Local
REPRESENTING CITIES OF 2,500 – 10,000 POPULATION			
Mayor Robert Mangrum	City of Early	2016	2025
REPRESENTING CITIES UNDER 2,500 IN POPULATION			
Mayor David K. Perry	City of Gorman	2023	2024
Mayor Laura Rozzelle – Alternate	City of Blackwell		
REPRESENTING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS			
Brian Bluhm	Jim Ned ISD	2018	2024
REPRESENTING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS			
Robert Montgomery	Lower Clear Fork of the Brazos SWCD	2023	2024
REPRESENTING SPECIAL DISTRICTS			
Russell Berry	WCT Municipal Water District	2016	2025
REPRESENTING THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE			
Representative Stan Lambert	Representative, 71 st District	2017	2024

WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024

REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTIES

Judge Nicki Harle	Callahan County	Subregion I
Judge Dale Spurgin	Jones County	Subregion I
Judge John Viertel	Shackelford County	Subregion I
Judge Phil Crowley	Taylor County	Subregion I
Judge Ken Holt	Fisher County	Subregion II
Judge Michael Redwine	Mitchell County	Subregion II
Judge Whitley May	Nolan County	Subregion II
Judge Dan Hicks	Scurry County	Subregion II
Judge Kenny Thompson	Haskell County	Subregion III
Judge Layne Coulter	Kent County	Subregion III
Judge Stan Wojcik	Knox County	Subregion III
Judge Ronnie Moorhead	Stonewall County	Subregion III
Judge Caleb Hodges	Throckmorton County	Subregion III
Judge Stephanie Davis	Comanche County	Subregion IV
Judge David Hullum	Eastland County	Subregion IV
Judge Michael Roach	Stephens County	Subregion IV
Judge Shane Britton	Brown County	Subregion V
Judge Billy Bledsoe	Coleman County	Subregion V
Judge Julia Miller	Runnels County	Subregion V

REPRESENTATIVES OF CITIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION

Councilmember Travis Craver	City of Abilene	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVES OF CITIES OF OVER 10,000 BUT NOT IN EXCESS OF 99,000 POPULATION

Councilmember Vernon Clay	City of Snyder	Subregion II
Councilmember John McPherson	City of Sweetwater	Subregion II
Councilmember Walker Willey	City of Brownwood	Subregion V

REPRESENTATIVE OF CITIES OF LESS THAN 10,000 POPULATION

Mayor Laura Rozzelle Mayor	City of Blackwell	Subregion II
Robert Mangrum Mayor	City of Early	Subregion V
David K. Perry	City of Gorman	Subregion IV

REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOOL AND JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICTS OF OVER 10,000 ENROLLMENT

Vacant

REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOOL AND JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICTS OF LESS THAN 10,000 ENROLLMENT

Brian Bluhm	Jim Ned ISD	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVES OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Robert Montgomery	Lower Clear Fork of The Brazos SWCD	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVES OF SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS

Russell Berry	WCT Municipal Water District	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVE OF TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE RESIDING WITHIN WCTCOG REGION

Stan Lambert	State Representative	71 st District
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WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**Executive Committee
&
Board of Directors**

2025

WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 2025

		Term Began	Expires
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion I			
Judge Dale Spurgin	Jones County	2013	2025
Judge Nicki Harle – Alternate	Callahan County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion II			
Judge Ken Holt	Fisher County	2017	2025
Judge Dan Hicks – Alternate	Scurry County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion III			
Judge Stan Wojcik	Knox County	2023	2026
Judge Ronnie Moorhead - Alternate	Stonewall County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion IV			
Judge Michael Roach	Stephens County	2021	2025
Judge Stephanie Davis – Alternate	Comanche County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES – Subregion V			
Judge Billy Bledsoe	Coleman County	2021	2026
Judge Julia Miller - Alternate	Runnels County		
REPRESENTING COUNTIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION			
Judge Phil Crowley	Taylor County	2023	Local
REPRESENTING CITIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION			
Councilmember Travis Craver	City of Abilene	2023	Local
REPRESENTING CITIES OF OVER 10,000 BUT NOT IN EXCESS OF 99,999 POPULATION			
Councilmember Walker Willey	City of Brownwood	2019	Local
Vacant	City of Snyder		Local
Councilmember John McPherson	City of Sweetwater	2024	Local
REPRESENTING CITIES OF 2,500 – 10,000 POPULATION			
Mayor Robert Mangrum	City of Early	2016	2025
Mayor Ruben Hurt - Alternate	City of Colorado City		
REPRESENTING CITIES UNDER 2,500 IN POPULATION			
Mayor David Perry	City of Gorman	2023	2026
Vacant– Alternate			
REPRESENTING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS			
Vacant			
REPRESENTING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS			
Mr. Robert Montgomery	Lower Clear Fork SWCD	2023	2026
REPRESENTING SPECIAL DISTRICTS			
Mr. Russell Berry	WCT Municipal Water District	2016	2025
REPRESENTING THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE			
State Representative Stan Lambert	71 st District	2017	2026

**WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS PROPOSED OFFICERS - 2025**

PRESIDENT:	JUDGE DALE SPURGIN JONES COUNTY
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT:	JUDGE MICHAEL ROACH STEPHENS COUNTY
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT:	MAYOR DAVID PERRY CITY OF GORMAN
SECRETARY – TREASURER:	JUDGE PHIL CROWLEY TAYLOR COUNTY

Executive Committee terms are for two years; officer terms are for one year; an alternate's term is the same as that of the member he/she represents; "local" indicates a sustaining position on the Executive Committee -- the member filling the position serves at the pleasure of the governing body represented.

WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025

REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTIES

Judge Nicki Harle	Callahan County	Subregion I
Judge Dale Spurgin	Jones County	Subregion I
Judge John Viertel	Shackelford County	Subregion I
Judge Phil Crowley	Taylor County	Subregion I
Judge Ken Holt	Fisher County	Subregion II
Judge Michael Redwine	Mitchell County	Subregion II
Judge Whitley May	Nolan County	Subregion II
Judge Dan Hicks	Scurry County	Subregion II
Judge Kenny Thompson	Haskell County	Subregion III
Judge Layne Coulter	Kent County	Subregion III
Judge Stan Wojcik	Knox County	Subregion III
Judge Ronnie Moorhead	Stonewall County	Subregion III
Judge Caleb Hodges	Throckmorton County	Subregion III
Judge Stephanie Davis	Comanche County	Subregion IV
Judge David Hullum	Eastland County	Subregion IV
Judge Michael Roach	Stephens County	Subregion IV
Judge Shane Britton	Brown County	Subregion V
Judge Billy Bledsoe	Coleman County	Subregion V
Judge Julia Miller	Runnels County	Subregion V

REPRESENTATIVES OF CITIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION

Councilmember Travis Craver	City of Abilene	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVES OF CITIES OF OVER 10,000 BUT NOT IN EXCESS OF 99,000 POPULATION

Councilmember Vacant	City of Snyder	Subregion II
Councilmember John McPherson	City of Sweetwater	Subregion II
Councilmember Walker Willey	City of Brownwood	Subregion V

REPRESENTATIVE OF CITIES OF LESS THAN 10,000 POPULATION

Mayor Laura Rozzelle	City of Blackwell	Subregion II
Mayor Robert Mangrum	City of Early	Subregion V
Mayor David K. Perry	City of Gorman	Subregion IV

REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOOL AND JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICTS OF OVER 10,000 ENROLLMENT

Vacant

REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOOL AND JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICTS OF LESS THAN 10,000 ENROLLMENT

Vacant

REPRESENTATIVES OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Robert Montgomery	Lower Clear Fork SWCD	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVES OF SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS

Russell Berry	WCT Municipal Water District	Subregion I
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REPRESENTATIVE OF TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE RESIDING WITHIN WCTCOG REGION

Representative Stan Lambert	71st District
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Terms on the Board of Directors are for one year; if a member is elected to the Executive Committee, terms are for two years or by local appointment of the member's governing board, as appropriate, according to the WCTCOG By-Laws.

West Central Texas Council of Governments Membership - 2024

Counties

Brown	Mitchell
Callahan	Nolan
Coleman	Runnels
Comanche	Scurry
Eastland	Shackelford
Fisher	Stephens
Haskell	Stonewall
Jones	Taylor
Kent	Throckmorton
Knox	



Cities

Abilene	De Leon	O'Brien
Albany	Early	Putnam
Anson	Eastland	Ranger
Aspermont	Goree	Rising Star
Baird	Gorman	Roby
Ballinger	Gustine	Roscoe
Bangs	Hamlin	Rotan
Benjamin	Haskell	Rule
Blackwell	Hawley	Santa Anna
Blanket	Jayton	Snyder
Brownwood	Knox City	Sweetwater
Buffalo Gap	Lawn	Throckmorton
Carbon	Loraine	Trent
Cisco	Lueders	Tuscola
Clyde	Merkel	Tye
Coleman	Miles	Weinert
Colorado City	Moran	Westbrook
Comanche	Munday	Winters
Cross Plains	Novice	

School Districts

Albany ISD	Merkel ISD
Baird ISD	Moran ISD
Ballinger ISD	Panther Creek CISD
Blackwell CISD	Ranger College
Breckenridge ISD	Ranger ISD
Brooksmith ISD	Rising Star ISD
Cisco College	Roby CISD
Clyde CISD	Roscoe CISD
Coleman ISD	Rule ISD
Colorado City ISD	Santa Anna ISD
Early ISD	Sidney ISD
Eastland ISD	Snyder ISD
Eula ISD	Stamford ISD
Gustine ISD	Sweetwater ISD
Gorman ISD	Throckmorton ISD
Hamlin CISD	Trent ISD
Haskell CISD	Westbrook ISD
Hawley ISD	Western Texas College
Hermleigh ISD	Winters ISD
Ira ISD	Woodson ISD
Jim Ned CISD	Wylie ISD
Lueders-Avoca ISD	
May ISD	



West Central Texas Council of Governments Membership - 2024

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Andrew Kent SWCD
California Creek SWCD
Lower Clear Fork SWCD
Middle Clear Fork SWCD
Mitchell SWCD
Wichita Brazos SWCD



Associate Memberships

Abilene Chamber of Commerce
Anson Chamber of Commerce
Ballinger Chamber of Commerce
Breckenridge Economic Dev. Corporation
Brownwood Area Chamber of Commerce
Cisco Development Corporation
Colorado City Chamber of Commerce
Comanche Chamber of Commerce
Eastland Chamber of Commerce
Haskell Chamber of Commerce
Snyder Chamber of Commerce
Sweetwater Chamber of Commerce

Special Districts

Brown County Water Improvement District
Comanche County Hospital District
Fisher County Hospital District
Haskell County Hospital District
Jones County Hospital District
Lone Wolf Groundwater Conservation District
Mitchell County Hospital District
North Central Texas Municipal Water Authority
North Runnels County Hospital District
Rolling Plains Hospital District
Rotan Housing Authority
Shackelford County Hospital District
Stonewall County Hospital District
West Central Texas Municipal Water District
Wes –Tex Groundwater Conservation District



WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS COMMITTEES – 2024

AGING/ADRC	CRIMINAL JUSTICE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	REGIONAL SERVICES	REGIONAL 9-1-1/AHEC
ADRC STEERING COMMITTEE Shelly Bailey Amanda Baker Leah Beltran Teresa Bentle Marci Leffler Jennifer Farrar Lynn Jackson Traci Kidwell Alex Koons Ashley Larry Christal Martin Diana Mendoza Erin Perkins Tammy Smith Tracy Whalen Dominique Williams SILVER-HAIRED LEGISLATORS Rea Berry Barbara King ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING Shelly Bailey Mindy Banister Kristen Bishop Max Ann Bowlin Betty Brown Nancy Byler Bruce Davis Angie Dees Shelley Drennan Tim Evans Walter Graham Ken Holt Heather Hurtado Lynn Jackson Chris Johnson Dr. Suzie Macaluso Charlie Parker Tammy Smith Pam Sites Marcus Wiley Debra Young	CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE Lynda Allen Richard Candelaria Les Cogdill Jon Cook James Fuller Dan Hicks Whitley May Laura Rozzlle Dan Wilson Carrie Windham LAW ENFORCEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE Dixon Bailey Jon Cook Jim Frazier Brian Frieda James Fuller Larry Mahan David Mercer Cherri Stegemoeller Sandi Sarringer Scott Stevenson Kim Vickers Dan Wilson Craig Griffis HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE Vince Cantu Mike Goetz Tricia Grimshaw Ken Holt John McPherson Ed Miller Mike Neal Kim Roberts Jimmy Watson	BIG COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION Steve Collins Gary Fuller ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT BOARD Laura Bowers Lori Dodd Virginia Fleming Caleb Hodges Ken Holt Barbara Leatherwood Kim Little Shaun Martin Misty Mayo Mary Ross Ray Tipton HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION BOARD Ken Holt Kim Little Michael Roach REVOLVING LOAN FUND Lori Dodd Zack Hines Ken Holt Barbara Leatherwood Kim Little Michael Roach	NATURAL RESOURCES TASK FORCE Genny Abercrobie Kelly Andrus Jodie Brewster Jeremy Essary Harold Fahlender Lori Higgins Corey Jenkins Ethan Kunkel Jess Lewis Jennifer Pacheco Mike Perez Terry Simmons E'Lisa Smetana Dale Spurgin Jim Winward Henry Wied	REGIONAL 9-1-1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE Jeremy Carter Jason Weger Les Cogdell Edward Miller Deedra Molotsky Bill Mullen Chris Pounds Dale Spurgin AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE Trisha Bos Toni Brockway Tina Butler Vicki Calfa Paul Fabrizio Missy Lewis Betty Molk Cynthia Powell Peggy Presslar Dale Spurgin Alyssa Western Robyn Wood Tenell Zahodnik



WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Overview and Objectives & Analysis of Progress

2024

**WEST CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
2024 MAJOR PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHTS**

Regional 9-1-1

Aging and Disability Resource Center

Area Agency on Aging

Area Health Education Center

Criminal Justice Planning

Economic Development District

Community and Economic Development

Environmental Services

Homeland Security

Pipeline Safety

Hazard Mitigation

Law Enforcement Training

New Housing Vision

Shallow Subsidy Services for Veteran Families

Support Services for Veterans Families

State Emergency Radio Infrastructure

Other Programs

REGIONAL 9-1-1

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Regional 9-1-1 Program of the West Central Texas Council of Governments provides direct and administrative services under the State 9-1-1 program to 18 of the 19 counties in the WCTCOG region. In 1987, HB9-1-1 was passed by the Texas State Legislature enacting a 9-1-1 system in the state of Texas. The bill, codified as Chapter 771 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, charged the state's 24 Councils of Governments with development of regional plans to provide for the establishment and operation of 9-1-1 services.

WCTCOG's principal role in 9-1-1 has been to ensure that the quality of public safety for the region continuously improves through the 9-1-1 program. All citizens have immediate access to emergency services by utilizing devices to dial or text 9-1-1. WCTCOG provides training opportunities for 9-1-1 Telecommunicators and County Addressing Coordinators, corrects 9-1-1 addresses, assigns 9-1-1 addresses, maintains accurate county maps, provides 9-1-1 public education presentations and educational materials, audits 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), evaluates and purchases equipment and software for 9-1-1 PSAPs, and provides quarterly and financial reports to the Texas Commission on State Emergency Communications.

Throughout the year, 9-1-1 Program staff coordinates and hosts 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Licensing courses and specialized training (in-person, on-site, or on-line) regarding 9-1-1 call delivery and 9-1-1 call handling.

STAFFING

The Public Safety Programs Director, a Program Specialist, a GIS Coordinator, a GIS Specialist, a Training Coordinator, and a Public Education Specialist staff this program.

FUNDING

The Regional 9-1-1 Program is funded by the 9-1-1 service fee of \$.50 per line charged every month on private and business wireline and wireless device bills and from the State surcharge fund of \$.06 per month per wireline and wireless device lines.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The NextGen911 regional network was completed in the summer of 2021. This network established a digital platform that enables the seamless transfer of 9-1-1 calls and texts from one PSAP to another and will enable future technologies such as video and real-time camera feed.

Wireless location technology (Phase 2) is maintained by all the region's wireless service providers. This technology enables Telecommunicators to locate wireless 9-1-1 callers whose phones have an activated GPS chip, by utilizing an automated on-screen mapping system at the PSAP. All wireless carriers are Phase 2 compliant in the WCTCOG region. In October 2023, the 9-1-1 call handling equipment and software were upgraded to the latest in cutting edge technology for 9-1-1.

As a cost-saving measure for the region's counties, the 9-1-1 Program has assumed addressing duties for 17 of the 18 counties and 48 cities in our 9-1-1 program. The WCTCOG's GIS staff are responsible for assigning addresses, taking GPS coordinates of structures, and the map building/maintenance process. The 18 counties are Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Shackelford, Scurry, Stephens, Stonewall, and Throckmorton. Knox County has a part-time 9-1-1 Addressing Coordinator. Staff assigned 1,508 9-1-1 addresses to structures in the WCTCOG region during the past 12 months.

A quality 9-1-1 public education program is important in maintaining an awareness of the correct usage of the 9-1-1 system. Every year, the Regional 9-1-1 staff provides, upon request, free educational materials and/or presentations for elementary schools, community events, community organizations, and businesses. *Cell Phone Sally* is our 9-1-1 mascot and is available to make appearances, upon request. 29,010 items for 9-1-1 public education were distributed during the past year to citizens in the region. Social media posts reached 7,424 social media users inside and outside our region. Visit our website for more information: www.wctcog911.org.

AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAMS

OVERVIEW for 2024

The West Central Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center (WCT-ADRC), which includes the Housing Navigator Project, Local Contact Agent for Information & Referral, Medicare, Improvement for Patients and Providers, Respite Care Services, Coordination Services for persons with disabilities and Advocacy Project for persons with Intellectual Developmental Disability. The WCT-ADRC is a single access point for information and assistance on issues affecting older adults, those with a disability, their family members, and all caregivers. The program offers information and referral services regardless of income. The mission of the WCT-ADRC is to provide information, advocacy, and assistance to individuals needing access to long term services and opportunities that support independence and individual choice for seniors, anyone with a disability, caregivers and families in a 19-county region.

STAFFING

Staffing for the 2024 program year consists of the ADRC Program Director, ADRC Resource Specialists, Community Outreach Coordinator, a Community Instructor, and various volunteers.

FUNDING

Funding for general WCT-ADRC services, Local Contact Agent, Housing Navigator Project, Medicare improvement, Respite Care Services and Advocacy Projects are received from the Texas Department of Health and Human Service Commission (HHSC), and the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The motto of the WCT-ADRC is to "Help People Stay Independent". To achieve this goal, the program provides consumers over 60 years of age, those with disabilities of any age, caregivers and professionals with information via phone, online, and in person. Our staff listen to each consumer's unique situation, help identify and prioritize their needs, provide assistance in obtaining services and share information about community resources, activities, or support groups. In addition, staff assist consumers in completing applications and discuss available service options so the consumer can make informed decisions. To better serve consumers in the targeted region, staff regularly participate in training opportunities to increase awareness, improve practices, and ensure that consumers have up-to-date information. In addition, staff meet with key service partners regularly for program and service eligibility updates to assure consumers have current and relevant information regarding requested services. For 2022 a total of 5415 consumers received information on available services specific to their needs, and/or were referred to partnering agencies for eligible services.

For FY2022 The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities Leadership and Advocacy Skills Grant assisted in educating individuals with disabilities on their rights and way to advocate for themselves in Brown, Coleman, Comanche, and Runnels Counties. In addition, staff worked with service providers, family members and the community on services and support available as well as methods on inclusive practices for individuals with developmental disabilities. Staff conducted trainings throughout the four-county area to encourage self-advocates or ways to participate more in their community. 3 newly trained Mighty Advocate Squad members were inducted into the program to begin training others in the community on leadership and self-advocacy skills.

For FY2022 the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities Sexual Assault Response and Prevention grant has focused on developing collaborative partnerships and supports to assist individuals with disabilities, their caregivers, and other professionals. Classes have been held to educate individuals with disabilities about ways to healthy vs toxic relationships, consent, and other sexual self-advocacy topics. It is the goal of the project to hold educational activities and events in the region that reduce the risk of sexual abuse of individuals with disabilities and bring public awareness concerning the topic.

In the year to come, focus areas include: expanding services to persons with disabilities, improving housing selection and providing respite for families raising a disabled child/younger adult throughout all 19 counties of the region, particularly those at risk of becoming homeless or are currently homeless with supportive and case management services; continuing the Housing Navigator Project with a focus on awareness and education to private sector housing businesses, holding a minimum of 4 symposium to increase awareness surrounding intellectual and developmental disability inclusiveness in communities; and holding a minimum of 6 trainings to increase awareness around the topic of sexual abuse and personal rights and safety; while implementing the statewide model of options counseling program for persons needing assistance in navigating through long term services planning with health care and social service providers, and assisting family caregivers with respite services and education with a focus on children with disabilities and persons under the age of 60 with a disability.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

OVERVIEW for 2024

The mission of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) of West Central Texas is to plan, coordinate and direct a comprehensive delivery system of services to persons over 60 and their family caregivers, including short term support services, nutrition and transportation services, advocate for the rights of older persons at home or in institutional setting, assist persons with Alzheimer's or dementia. In addition, the AAA will provide services assisting older persons within the WCTCOG region to age well with dignity while maintaining independence.

First established as a Regional Office on Aging in 1974, the Area Agency became a distinct department of WCTCOG in 1977 with expanded Older Americans Act funding. The program has marked 48 years of successful service. Due to the region's high percentage of elderly citizens, two-way communications between the elected officials and AAA staff were developed. The WCTAAA continues to be a vital pathway to providing the most updated information to the region's citizens, including Medicare information, emergency preparedness, frauds and scams, aging and wellness information, nutrition information and assisting streamlining access to long-term care services and support from regional partners and providers.

The Area Agency on Aging continues to be committed to play a key role with its local government linkages as a potential single point of access to best serve the region's seniors. Certified Ombudsman staff and volunteers advocate to enhance senior's quality-of-life and protect the rights of residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. They may provide on-site in-services for facility staff members and administrators provide representation in formal hearings for residents provide information and support for family councils distribute educational material on information to empower individuals to be self-advocates mediation services as requested to resolve conflicts assistance to individuals in understanding nursing home and assisted living facility care, as well as the Texas Health and Human Services - Long Term Care regulatory and quality monitoring systems information on rules and regulations governing residents' service systems and visits to the facilities to intervene on behalf of residents, as requested.

STAFFING

Staff consists of a Director, Project Managers, Service Coordinators, Certified Benefits Counselors, Information and Referral Specialist, Health and Wellness Coordinators, Quality Assurance Coordinator, Managing Local Ombudsman, Staff Ombudsman.

FUNDING

The AAA receives federal Older Americans Act (OAA) funding and State General Revenue (SGR) as passed through the Texas Department of Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) according to funding formulas, or other program grants. Federal funds include Title III B, III C1, III C2, III D, III E, Title II EAP and OAG for Ombudsman programs, and funds from the American Community Living (ACL) for services such as Benefits Counseling. These funds are matched according to individual grant requirements through the local funds and or in-kind match by community partners.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

Older persons and or their family members received answers, referrals and or general support service assistance, Medicare recipients received legal assistance, heard presentations, received mail-outs, and or gathered information at health fairs about Medicare A, B, and D, Medigap Medicare Supplements, Medicare Health Plans, MB SLMB I, Medicare Extra Help programs, and other State Health Insurance Programs (SHIP) assistance, as well as, training and support for caregivers of seniors and Evidence Based Activities such as Texercise Select and Dementia Live.

WCTAAA funded 285,752 meals to 3,894 seniors through regional senior activity centers. 256 older persons received services including homemaker, respite services, emergency response (the button) systems, residential repairs modification, personal assistance, and income support, and 70 home bound consumers received an assuring call each week. To promote AAA services, persons were contacted through family caregiver activities including training events, mail-outs, newspaper articles and media outputs. To best coordinate and implement services, community partnerships included Rolling Plains Memorial Hospital, Wisteria Place Retirement Living, RS P, Alzheimer's Association, Windcrest Alzheimer's Care Center, 2-1-1 United Way, ACU Pruett Gerontology Center, Taylor County

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS continued

Extension Service (Agri-Life), Nolan County Health Department, Taylor County Sheriff's Department, Adult Protective Services, Texas Legal Services, Legal Aid of Northwest Texas, Mesa Springs Retirement village, Social Security Administration, Caption Call, Comfort Keepers, West Texas Rehab, Love and Care Ministries, Rolling Plains Management Corporation, Disability in Action, visiting Angles, Outreach Health Services, Nurses Unlimited, ADT, RI Associated Home Services, M and G Construction, Abilene Constructors and Tile, Lynkup, City Link, City and Rural Rides, Kinder Hearts, City of Abilene, Abilene Senior Services, multiple school districts, Integra care, HHSC, Long Term Services and Supports, Betty Hardwick Center for MHMR, Texas Ramp Project, 9 rural Senior Centers, West Central Texas Aging Disability Resource Center (WCT-ADRC) and many more

Three Staff Ombudsman and Certified volunteers completed indoor visits to 44 nursing homes and 26 assisted living. Due to CO ID-19 emergency restrictions set by the State Ombudsman in the second quarter, each nursing home and assisted living facility received at least one visit in the quarter, more depending on the residents needs or request. During quarters one, three and four facilities were visited on the regular schedule set by the State Ombudsman. Due to the second quarter limitations, the State Ombudsman reduced the number of visits to large nursing homes from 9 visits per year to 8 visits per year. A total of 47 indoor visits were made to facilities in the 19-county region during this time. Certified Ombudsman staff gave information and assistance to residents, staff, family members and friends of residents had a resolution rate of 86%. Additionally, Ombudsman staff held key trainings for volunteers, nursing home administrators, assisted living directors and facility staff. Ombudsman staff attended weekly virtual state trainings to keep in place the latest rules, regulations, and best practices with the overarching goal to improve the quality of life and rights for residents in nursing and assisted living facilities.

A primary service provided by AAA staff is the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP). Trained and certified staff provided 2,116 hours of assistance to 930 Medicare enrollees beneficiaries with information, applications, enrollment into various plans, and advocacy, and Medicare approved health and wellness activities.

In the year to come, the AAA will continue to expand opportunities through available funding from federal, state, and local funds. The AAA continues to be responsive to the varying needs of its clients and values, working with area elected officials, community partners and to citizens 60 and over residing in the West Central Texas Region, to provide the short and long-term care services and supports enabling our seniors to remain independent in their community as long as possible.

AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Area Health and Education Center Seeks to address the healthcare provider shortage and improve healthcare access in twenty-eight (28) counties of North and West Central Texas, through education and development of the healthcare workforce. Area Health Education Center services include Health Careers Promotion, Community-based education, Health Professional Support, and Healthy Living Promotion. Program and funding support is provided by Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center's Office of Rural and Community Health.

STAFFING

The Community Economic Development Director, Administrative Assistant, Health Careers Coordinator, and the Community Based Education Coordinator staff this program.

FUNDING

Primary program funding sources are Federal Title VII Health Professions funds with additional state match funds allocated by Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center's F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

TECHNICAL WRITING / SUPPORT - The Big Country Area Health Education Center's activities included technical writing and technical supportive assistance for the region specializing in the development of Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) for various hospitals and organizations. The CHNAs provided an overview of the public health conditions within the specified community and helped identify existing resources and opportunities to enhance them, intended to be utilized as a tool to help prioritize and address the specified needs. CHNAs completed in 2024, Haskell Memorial Hospital, Moore, Parker, Howard, and Scurry Counties.

HEALTH CAREERS PROMOTION AND OUTREACH - The Big Country Area Health Education Center provided several different opportunities to youth, grades K-12 students through its Jr. Scholars Program and outreach events. The program provided education on the various career opportunities available in healthcare, increasing student exposure to training experiences in rural and underserved communities. With a primary focus on high school 9-12 grade students, the program is geared towards providing exposure to a wide range of medical career options as well as local opportunities and resources via presentations and distribution of H.O.T. (Health Opportunities in Texas) Job Directories. AHEC partnered with regional high schools by presenting to over 1,390 high school students, distributing 1,532 Job Directories, and providing 114 sets of scrubs to students participating in a CAN class or entering the healthcare workforce. In addition, the Area Health Education Center is committed to generating excitement about the pursuit of continued education and promoting overall healthy living through its programs. The program also provided information on other health-related topics such as healthy living, nutrition, and mental health. The Area Health Education Center participated in various health and career fairs and provided regional support for school districts and educators, community-based educators/administrators, and other health organizations.

COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION – Provides health professions students a real-life experience in a community setting that contributes to the development of general knowledge, skills, and attitude. Each placement provides many opportunities for the students to develop their skills and knowledge under the direction of practicing community health professionals. Additionally, the Area Health Education Center provides a vital link between higher education institutions focused on health professions and community preceptors. The Area Health Education Center recruits preceptors, assists students (Medical/ Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant/Physical Therapy and Dental Students) with selecting the community-based experience that meets their needs, and assists with student housing when requested.

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT – Provides support to healthcare practitioners in rural and underserved areas and assists communities to enhance their capacity to attract new healthcare professionals and retain them once they are in place. As part of these retention efforts, the Area Health Education Center assists healthcare professionals with continuing education and professional development opportunities. The Area Health Education Center Staff surveys healthcare professionals and facilities to determine educational needs and organizes programs to meet these needs. The Area Health Education Center promotes and assists with continuing education events sponsored by a variety of community partners.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNING

OVERVIEW for 2024

Criminal Justice Planning Program assists the Public Safety Office Criminal Justice Division (CJD) of the Office of the Governor and local grantees with the application process for Criminal Justice Grants under five state and federal funding sources.

STAFFING

The Public Safety Programs Director and a Criminal Justice Planner, staffs this program.

FUNDING

The program funding source is the Office of the Governor's Public Safety Office.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

Through its interlocal cooperation agreement with the Office of the Governor, WCTCOG's Criminal Justice Planning Program provides planning and intergovernmental services relative to grants awarded through the Criminal Justice Division (CJD). WCTCOG staff works with a local Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) which review, scores, and prioritizes criminal justice grant applications for the region. Grant application process, resources and technical assistance is provided to grantees by program staff. This past year, staff worked with 10 Community Planning Groups, disseminated 535 notifications of availability of grant funds, provided 130 hours of technical assistance for grantees, performed 12 on-site monitoring visits to grantees, and assisted with development of 27 grant applications. Criminal Justice Planning and intergovernmental services are provided for the following funding sources: *Victims of Crime Act* (VOCA) which may include child sex trafficking applications, *Violence Against Women Act* (VAWA) including domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking, *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act* (JJDP), *Truancy Prevention* (TP), Criminal Justice Programs that include *State Criminal Justice Planning* (421) Fund, and *Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program* (JAG). The Criminal Justice Planning Program will continue to offer services in the coming year with emphasis on planning and collaboration between grant projects to attain maximum benefit from available funding.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

OVERVIEW for 2024

The West Central Texas Economic Development District provides Economic Development Administration (EDA) planning and grant facilitation. This program directly impacts the local economies of the region in that it works directly with community businesses, institutions, and individual citizens to improve economic viability and quality of life.

STAFFING

Community Economic Development staffs the program.

FUNDING

The source of funding for the District is an Economic Development Administration planning grant.

The District is currently working with EDA for regional grant opportunities and will continue to focus on developing projects to address community economic development. The District maintains a website "wctceds.com" to support the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) which provides much needed statistics for planning by partners, counties, cities and other interested parties as well as showcasing economic projects within the region, promoting economic growth, increasing employment opportunities and assisting with local government planning.

The District also manages a USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG). Technical support will be provided with economic plans and will focus on the use of Revolving Loan Funds. Long term RBDG goals are to develop and implement economic development outreach strategies that result in identifiable and documented progress toward, and initial achievements in, creating and saving jobs through regional partnerships that respond to the six CEDS goals and objectives.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS continued

The CARES Act Recovery Assistance planning grant for the WCTEDD is to reduce the direct and indirect economic cost of the Coronavirus pandemic for the WCTCOG region. This grant was awarded to the WCTCOG and began in July of 2020. Since COVID-19 has hit American soil, the pandemic has caused widespread social and economic disruption, posed threats to the continuity of essential services, and caused significant job reductions and losses, as well as production and distribution difficulties.

Over the defined 24-month period, the two new regional coordinators will work within the region and be responsible for both organization and regional specific planning development, coordination required by the grant. They will determine the type and levels needed, assess the strengths and gaps, desired outcomes, available resources, and existing time constraints.

EDA Disaster Relief Grant – The WCTCOG through the WCTEDD will assist the 19 – WCTCOG region in addressing long-term disaster relief recovery efforts to reduce, prevent, and avoid economic losses from natural disasters. Eight of the 19 counties are included in the FEMA 4416 DR Texas Disaster Declaration – Knox, Throckmorton, Haskell, Jones, Callahan, Nolan, Comanche, Brown. These designated counties have been given priority and will be the starting point of this project. The grant project period is 36 months which began in February of 2020.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW for 2024

West Central Texas Community & Economic Development Assistance (CEDAF) Program. This program is intended to serve the 19-county area of state planning region 7. These counties include: Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Kent, Knox, Jones, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, and Throckmorton.

STAFFING

Staff from Community and Economic Development are on an “as needed” basis.

FUNDING

Funded by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA).

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

Staff provides technical assistance to communities by: 1) providing census and income data to TxCDBG eligible localities; 2) distributing Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Community Development program information; 3) providing general technical assistance as related to non-specific community and economic development program areas; 4) training local elected officials about community and economic development or related contract administration.

Staff hosted Newly Elected Officials Events bringing multiple state and federal agencies to share development programs and capacity building ideas to communities and newly elected officials.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES – SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Solid Waste Management Program has as its primary purposes the implementation of provisions of §361.014(b) of the Texas Health & Safety Code and provision of regional coordination, planning and technical assistance to local governmental entities and individuals for the Solid Waste Pass through Grant program. WCTCOG staff carries out several core functions as the State's designated regional solid waste planning entity. Additionally, the Regional Services staff conducts informational programs in schools and communities throughout the region and participates in civic and community organizations and events related to municipal solid waste issues.

Solid Waste Management Program staff is actively supported by the Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) which advises the WCTCOG Executive Committee on regional solid waste issues and planning. Amendments to the Regional Solid Waste Plan and maintenance of the Closed Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Landfill Inventory for the 19-county WCTCOG region fall under Advisory Committee oversight. The NRAC also reviews permit applications for MSW facilities and reviews and scores applications for MSW grant funding.

Since its inception in 1996, the Solid Waste Management Program has administered multiple grants supporting the West Central Texas region. In addition to the direct local benefit of these funds, the region's governments and citizens also benefit greatly from ongoing implementation of the Regional Solid Waste Plan through the efforts of WCTCOG and the NRAC.

STAFFING

Environmental Program Manager and Environmental Project Coordinator staff this program.

FUNDING

Solid Waste Management Program funding is provided through a biennial pass-through grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, funded through the distribution of Municipal Solid Waste tipping fee revenue (Fund 5000).

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

Staff managed \$138,319 in grant funding to WCTCOG communities; For FY 2022, COG-Managed solid waste management projects resulted in a reduction of just over 180 tons of waste material to area landfills through recycling and source reduction efforts.

During the past year, staff implemented and maintained the goals and objectives found in the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. These goals/objectives include: 1) Secure regionally adequate levels of transportation and disposal capabilities; 2) Improve local reduction, waste minimization, reuse, recycling, and composting programs to conserve disposal capacity and resources; 3) Develop programs to assist regional and local entities in controlling and stemming illegal and improper disposal practices and; 4) Create regional cost-effective, efficient, and environmentally suitable solid waste management systems. During the year, staff maintained and expanded the West Central Texas Environmental Partnership (WCTEP), a recycling marketing and transportation co-op program, to 4 communities: provided training to local enforcement officials on current environmental laws through West Central Texas Regional Law Enforcement Academy and provided technical assistance to 5 eligible cities regarding the tire monofill permit process. In addition, staff provided technical training and assistance regarding substandard structures, dilapidated building laws, local illegal dumping and environmental code enforcement laws and regulations and best practices regarding the Texas Health & Safety Code and Texas Water Code. Staff assisted 18 communities with basic best practices for solid waste management issues. The Solid Waste Department also managed a project which supplied tire trailers to 16 communities and collected over 16,144 tires.

HOMELAND SECURITY

OVERVIEW for 2024

Since 2002, the Homeland Security Department of the West Central Texas Council of Governments has worked with local first responders and emergency management partners to build and improve the preparedness and emergency response capabilities for the region. Over the past year, the Homeland Security Department has administered the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA) funds for the region. Terrorism Prevention equipment purchases were allowed only for specialized teams.

The current grant year Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activity Grant went to assist the Abilene Police Department's SWAT Team. Previously, the Brown County Combined Law Enforcement SWAT Team received needed equipment to form a SWAT Team available for regional deployment throughout our 19-county region.

The Homeland Security Department conducted training events, held Planning/ Coordination meetings, community preparedness events, and held Tabletop Exercises. The Homeland Security Department provided the regional representative for the State Executive Committee for the Texas Interoperability Communications Coalition (TXICC) Texas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC). The delegate represented the region and provided input for updates to the Texas Statewide Interoperability Channel Plan (TSICP). The Homeland Security Department has completed the mandated annual submission of the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), the Stakeholder Preparedness Report (SPR), and the Implementation Plan. Each submission received scores for good quality from the state's Office of Homeland Security.

STAFFING

Homeland Security staffing consisted of the Homeland Security Director, the Emergency Management Program Coordinator, Homeland Security Planner, and Homeland Security Program Specialist.

FUNDING

The source of funding is the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) utilizing federal pass-through grants to the State of Texas Office of the Governor (OOG) and the OOG Office of Public Safety, who administers the Homeland Security grant activities at the State level. The State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activity (LETPA) grants comprise the collective sources of funding for the regional programs of service. The WCTCOG Homeland Security Department administers the Homeland Security Grant funds for the region.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

During the past year the WCTCOG managed three Homeland Security grants through the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office. Grant funds are allocated to regional projects according to federal, state, and regional guidance for grant investment priorities. The federal level guidance is provided by FEMA. The state level guidance is provided by the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office. Local guidance is provided by the Homeland Security Advisory Committee and the WCTCOG Executive Committee. The nineteen (19) regional counties specified regional projects, and the WCTCOG Homeland Security Department are the primary recipients of grant funding. All grant expenditures are administered by COG staff to ensure compliance with the prioritized initiatives approved by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA for use of grant funds. Homeland Security grant funds are to be invested in Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activity (LETPA). The scope of compliance requires a funding plan and continued investment of Homeland Security grant funds well into 2023. The WCTCOG Homeland Security Department manages the funding to meet the requirements of the LETPA projects.

HAZARD MITIGATION

OVERVIEW for 2024

In 2023, Homeland Security staff prepared and submitted applications on behalf of local jurisdictions to provide funding for the purchase and installation of generators to provide emergency electric power to critical facilities. These grants are awarded with a required local match. The local match may be satisfied with cash, in-kind materials and labor, or a combination of cash and in-kind labor and materials. In 2023, seven of the projects were approved for funding by FEMA, two of the projects were completed, one remains in progress, and seven projects were declined by the local jurisdiction. Additional projects related to critical facility generators remain in review status by FEMA. Funding for these additional projects is expected to be approved in the future.

Planning is underway for the Homeland Security Department to administer the WCTCOG Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. The region's plan is required to be updated every five years. Each jurisdiction in the region must have a FEMA approved hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant funding. The 19 individual Hazard Mitigation Plan is due for updating in 2025.

The funding sources for the projects are made available on an annual basis through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Additional funding is made available through any federally declared disaster in Texas. When a federal disaster is declared for any county or counties in Texas, Hazard Mitigation Grant funding is available to the county or counties named in the declaration. If the available funding is not utilized in its entirety by the county or counties named in the disaster declaration, the balance of available funds is available for hazard mitigation grant funded projects across the State of Texas.

STAFFING

The Homeland Security Department's Hazard Mitigation Program staffing consisted of the Homeland Security Director, the Hazard Mitigation Program Coordinator, Hazard Mitigation Planner, and four Hazard Mitigation Program Specialists.

FUNDING

The source of funding is the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Applications are submitted to the Texas Division of Emergency Management, acting as the state administrative agency. Funding for Hazard Mitigation planning is provided by the Texas General Land Office for a portion of the counties in the region.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

Two of the funded projects have been installed and are in the process of closeout. One funded project is awaiting the arrival of equipment that has been delayed due to supply chain issues. The remaining generator projects remain in FEMA review. The Hazard Mitigation Plan Update project application process is ongoing with participation. Solicitations for participation in the update project from local jurisdictions have been sent out. Mitigation Action Teams have been formed and local meetings designed for stakeholder input are ongoing.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Regional Law Enforcement Training Program provides basic and in-service training for public safety personnel within the WCTCOG region.

STAFFING

The Public Safety Programs Director and a Training Coordinator/Criminal Justice Manager staff this program.

FUNDING

The program funding source is the Criminal Justice Division of the Office of the Governor and student tuition.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy is currently in its 50th year. This program affords all public safety personnel the opportunity to attend basic, in-service, and mandatory training within the region, thus alleviating the time and expense associated with sending public safety professionals outside the region to meet state training requirements.

The project operates under the guidance of the West Central Texas Law Enforcement Training Advisory Committee, which is comprised of law enforcement officials, criminal justice professionals, victim services representatives, and other community and regional representatives. This committee determines the number and types of courses to be offered, as well as the locations, times, instructor qualifications, entry requirements, and cost of tuition. Throughout the year, the majority of classes are hosted at the West Central Texas Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy, however, a portion of courses are conducted at auxiliary sites through-out the WCTCOG region. Hosting courses within our region enables public safety agencies keep travel and personnel costs down and affords public safety professionals the best opportunities to attend training. Whenever possible and appropriate, enrollment to classes is extended to elected officials, other emergency responders and school juvenile personnel who may benefit from the training courses.

This past year, the Law Enforcement Training Academy conducted 1 Basic Peace Officer Licensing Course, 3 Basic Corrections Officer Licensing Courses, 2 Basic Telecommunicator Licensing Courses, and 43 in-service courses, totaling 22,336 contact hours of training to a total of 519 students. To ensure well-rounded and thorough instruction, we contracted with 48 adjunct instructors with expertise in a wide variety of public safety subject matter. The Academy also hosted 52 students in 2 state-mandated certification courses in School Marshal Training. As funds allowed, instructors with specialized expertise were brought in to provide 2 specialized training courses for the region. 12% of all the courses offered this past year were conducted at auxiliary sites through-out the WCTCOG region

Examples of in-service courses provided are: New Supervisor / Missing and Exploited Children / Canine Encounters / Basic Telecommunicator / Interacting with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Drivers / Intermediate Arrest, Search and Seizure / Use of Force / Defensive Tactics / Environmental Law 101/ Radio Use and Interoperability
An example of specialized courses offered is: Valor-Leadership Training.

PIPELINE SAFETY

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Pipeline Safety Program has been an informative program of the West Central Texas Council of Governments for several years and is under the Homeland Security Department. Over the past few years, the Pipeline Safety Program has worked to increase awareness of the “811 One Call” law requirements and process amongst the public, First Responders and those working in the agricultural or construction industries.

The Pipeline Safety Program normally conducts informational educational outreaches with participants and visits with each of the 19 counties in the WCTCOG region to distribute thousands of pieces of educational materials through local hardware stores, feed and seed stores, equipment rental companies, nurseries, and other retail businesses.

STAFFING

The Homeland Security Department’s Pipeline Safety Program staffing consisted of the Homeland Security Director, the Emergency Management Program Coordinator, and two Pipeline Safety Program Specialists.

FUNDING

The source of funding is the United States Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration’s Technical Assistance Grant.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The Pipeline Safety Program has attempted to expand outreach opportunities to include emergency management and first responders while continuing outreach to the public. The Program has been able to draw attention to several recent public safety impacts of line strikes within the region as part of the outreach campaign.

SHALLOW SUBSIDY SERVICES (SSS) FOR VETERAN FAMILIES

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Shallow Subsidy initiative provides rental assistance to very low-income and extremely low-income Veteran households who are enrolled in SSVF.

Most participants will have already received rental assistance via traditional SSVF services but remain rent burdened and require the longer-term, shallow subsidy rental assistance to maintain permanent housing. Under the Shallow Subsidy initiative, we will provide the maximum amount of 35 % Fair Market Rate (FMR) rental assistance payments directly to landlords on behalf of the Veteran household for up to two years based on AMI.

STAFFING

Staffing for the 2024 program year consists of a Veteran Director, Veteran Program Specialist, and 2 Case Managers.

FUNDING

Funding for the SSVF program is provided from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The Veterans department received this grant in October of 2021 to 2025. The programs focus is to deliver services and referrals appropriate to Veteran needs while achieving housing stability. SSS works to maintain crucial coordinated partnerships and housing options with landlords throughout our rural region. SSS has served 134 Veteran Families in FY2024 by approving rent with participating landlords. These contracts are approved for rent covering up to 24 months of assistance for each Veteran household.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES (SSVF)

OVERVIEW for 2024

The Support Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) serves homeless or potentially homeless Veterans and their families with permanent housing assistance, including, working with landlords and property management organizations in finding appropriate and affordable housing for long term family stability. SSVF is working with many partnering agencies across our region on Coordinated Entry.

Support Services for Veteran Families, West Texas Homeless Network and its partnering agencies have a goal of making Veteran homelessness something that is rare, brief and nonrecurring. This means reaching a level known as “functional zero”. Functional Zero essentially means that we have an efficient system of housing veterans that are homeless. It means Veterans can be housed as soon as their need is discovered, without having to wait for an extended period. With the support of community partners and our Continuum of Care, SSVF was able to obtain Functional Zero in November of 2018 in Taylor County. Our goal is to replicate this process and extend it to the additional 25 counties served in our region.

The mission of the SSVF program is to prevent, address, and reduce Veteran and family homelessness in our 25-county region.

STAFFING

Staffing for the 2024 program year consists of a Veteran Director, Veteran Program Manager, Quality Assurance Case Manager, Outreach Case Manager, Health Care Navigator and 5 Case Managers.

FUNDING

Funding for the SSVF program is provided of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The programs focus is to deliver services and referrals appropriate to Veteran needs while achieving housing stability, including maintaining strong coordinated relationships and housing options with landlords and crucial partnerships throughout our rural region. SSVF served 334 Veteran households in FY24, 150 of those Veterans were assisted with homeless prevention and 184 of those Veterans were literally homeless and were assisted with Rapid Rehousing.

STATE EMERGENCY RADIO INFRASTRUCTURE

OVERVIEW for 2024

In 2019, the Texas Legislature recognized the urgent need to improve the State’s emergency radio infrastructure. To accomplish this, the State Emergency Radio Infrastructure program (SERI) fund was created. Only state agencies and regional councils of government are eligible to apply for SERI funding. The SERI grant period of performance is two years in length. The current SERI period of performance began on September 1, 2022 and concluded on August 31, 2024. Statewide, approximately 12 million dollars in project funding was provided. The Governor’s Office of Homeland Security was tasked with receiving applications and disbursing funds.

The West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) Homeland Security Department contacted the 19 counties within this region with emergency radio needs request and we received 25 projects in 11 counties. The WCTCOG Homeland Security Department received an award of 1,000,000 to fund 18 of those projects.

STAFFING

The Homeland Security Department staffing consisted of the Homeland Security Director, the Emergency Management Program Coordinator, the Homeland Security Planner, and the Homeland Security Program Specialist.

FUNDING

The source of funding is the State Legislature with their funds coming from multiple funding sources with the State of Texas. The WCTCOG Homeland Security Department administers the SERI Grant.

ANALYSIS of PROGRESS

The projects funded by the SERI grant have been completed and the grant is in the final stages of closeout.

