

Texoma Council of Governments Releases Results of Regional Needs Assessment

SHERMAN, August 23, 2018 –Texoma Council of Governments (TCOG) announced it has published an updated regional needs assessment for Cooke, Fannin and Grayson counties. This report contains information as it relates to poverty, housing and employment, along with survey and focus group data. The needs assessment follows guidelines set forth by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs and is funded through a Community Services Block Grant designed to identify priority populations and issues in the TCOG service area. The assessment is revised every three years.

“We hope the results of this needs assessment clearly demonstrate the conditions and correlates of poverty in each county within the Texoma region, as well as the region as a whole,” explained Dr. Randy McBroom, Deputy Executive Director of TCOG. “We take the process and the accompanying results very seriously. The Community Needs Assessment is more than a check-off or a placeholder for a grant application.”

Data sources for this assessment included the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 2012–2016 (ACS 2016), with 2016 estimates used whenever possible, as well as Community Commons maps, with data usually from the ACS 2016. The study took two overlapping approaches to understand poverty in the region: demographic (who is more likely to be in poverty) and geographic (where are higher rates of poverty).

The report shows that while aggregate data for poverty does not differ much from Texas and US figures, a different and more concise picture of poverty in the region emerges when disaggregated by age, race/ethnicity, education level and family composition. The report identifies that children under five are most vulnerable to living in poverty, with a prevalence of childhood poverty common in all three counties. Poverty rates are higher for people of color and female-headed families. There are “pockets of poverty” throughout the region.

After analyzing the data, TCOG reports five major needs categories including medical/mental health, housing issues, transportation issues, utility assistance, and food insecurity. The assessment concludes with county strengths and weaknesses, trends, barriers to addressing needs, prioritized needs and suggested actions.

A full report of the Regional Community Needs Assessment can found online by visiting www.tcog.com.

The Texoma Council of Governments is a voluntary association of the local governments in Cooke, Fannin, and Grayson Counties. Established in 1968, the Texoma Council of Governments promotes economy and efficiency in the coordinated planning and development of the tri-county region through its community and economic development activities. Either directly, or through contractors, the Council provides housing, utility assistance, and weatherization services for low-income citizens in the region and assists the elderly through a variety of Area Agency on Aging programs. The Council also facilitates the delivery of grant funding for homeland security and criminal justice.

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For Additional Information Contact:

Judy Fullylove
(903) 813-3537
jfullylove@texoma.cog.tx.us

For Statements or Interviews Contact:

Randy McBroom, PhD
(903) 813-3523
rmcbroom@texoma.cog.tx.us

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