

TCOG's Criminal Justice Advisory Committee honors members for their service

SHERMAN, APRIL 7, 2022 –Texoma Council of Government's (TCOG) Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) met on April 6, 2022, to score the Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division (CJD) grant applications and to honor the over 240 years of service provided by current members. Bonham Police Chief Mike Bankston, who has served the committee in various roles, including Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman, was presented an award for his 40 years of service. Sandy Barber, the Executive Director of the Fannin County Children's Center, was also presented with an award for over 20 years of service. Together, they have provided valuable insight into Texoma's criminal justice issues throughout their service.

"I would like to thank Chief Mike Bankston and Sandy Barber along with the entire CJAC for dedicating their time and expertise to the improvement of the criminal justice system in the Texoma Region," stated TCOG's Criminal Justice & Emergency Planning Program Manager Stephanie Davidson. Davidson stated both Bankston and Barber are great examples of TCOG's vision 'Better Leaders Building Better Lives.'

TCOG, in conjunction with the 25-member CJAC facilitate a federal and state grant funding process for local and regional criminal justice-related projects. The current CJAC has a combined service of over 240 years and consists of subject matter experts from various disciplines, including Law Enforcement, Juvenile Justice, Drug Abuse, Non-Profits Organizations, Victim Services, Mental Health, Courts, Education, and others. This funding aims to support programs that protect people from crime, reduce the number of crimes committed, and promote accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness for the criminal justice system. Thanks to the CJAC's service and expertise, since 1968, millions of dollars have been awarded and received for criminal justice system improvements in the region.

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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