

## Texoma Housing Partners (THP) Welcomes Leonard

SHERMAN, May 24, 2017 – TCOG Executive Director Susan B. Thomas, PhD, announced today the addition of the Leonard Housing Authority to the Texoma Housing Partners (THP) Consortium, bringing the total number of participating housing authorities TCOG operates for THP to 19.

Texoma Housing Partners is the nation's first consortium of small public housing authorities. It is also the largest and enables cities across Texoma to participate in a regional solution and realize tremendous cost savings by pooling resources and working together as a consortium.

"Shelter is one of our most basic human needs, and this is true for people from all walks of life. We meet that very basic need for some of our most vulnerable citizens, and we do that very well," stated Dr. Thomas. "This kind of work is what TCOG's vision is all about. By leading the way in public housing and striving for excellence & efficiency in the delivery of those services, we ensure a better life for hundreds of families across Texoma."

TCOG has been involved in public housing since 1993 when the organization administered individual contracts with seven housing authorities. That number grew to 13, and after the Quality Housing Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) legislation was passed by Congress in 1998, the 13 housing authorities from Collin, Fannin, Grayson, and Hunt Counties joined forces to create the nation's first public housing consortium in 2000. TCOG's administrative contracts were reduced to one agreement between TCOG and THP, and the organizations have enjoyed a positive and productive partnership focused on the provision of safe, decent, and affordable housing across Texoma.

Allison Reider, Director of TCOG's Client Services Department stated, "THP has been very successful and I believe the primary reason is the regional mindset and selfless leadership modeled by the board of commissioners. The THP board understands the benefit of regionalism and working together for the best interest of the region. They understand by pooling their resources they can achieve the common goal of maintaining a strong, superbly managed, award-winning public housing program."

THP has since grown from 13 to 19 cities over the last 17 years. Marty Burke, President of the THP board commented, "What we have accomplished together would never have been possible to accomplish individually, and I have seen firsthand how well TCOG staff has managed our Public Housing Program. We are consistently rated as high performer and we are nationally recognized as an authority on public housing consortia. Leonard is joining a very strong partnership."

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:**

Allison Reider  
(903) 813-3520  
areider@texoma.cog.tx.us

**For Statements or Interviews Contact:**

Susan B. Thomas, PhD  
(903) 813-3514  
stthomas@texoma.cog.tx.us

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