

Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

2026
ANNUAL REPORT

SEAN FITZGERALD

(Cover photo taken by S. Fitzgerald)

Dallas-based photographer Sean Fitzgerald has spent the last decade researching and photographing the Canadian River, starting at its headwaters in New Mexico and tracing its course through six Texas counties into Oklahoma, where it meets the Arkansas River. As the project progressed, Fitzgerald became fascinated not just with the river but with the depth of human experience it has fostered.

Fitzgerald's photos capture the marvelous geology of the Canadian, something that's especially apparent at Lake Meredith. The lake's green-blue expanse is hemmed in by the Canadian Breaks—jagged sandstone-and-gypsum canyons carved by the river over millions of years. East of that is Adobe Walls, the site of two momentous battles between Native American tribes and Anglo settlers. Notable figures include frontiersman Kit Carson and Comanche war chief Quanah Parker.



“I enjoy both the beauty of it and the mystery of it. It’s the myth and history wrapped around this wonderfully unique river.” - S. Fitzgerald

PRPC ANNUAL REPORT

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PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

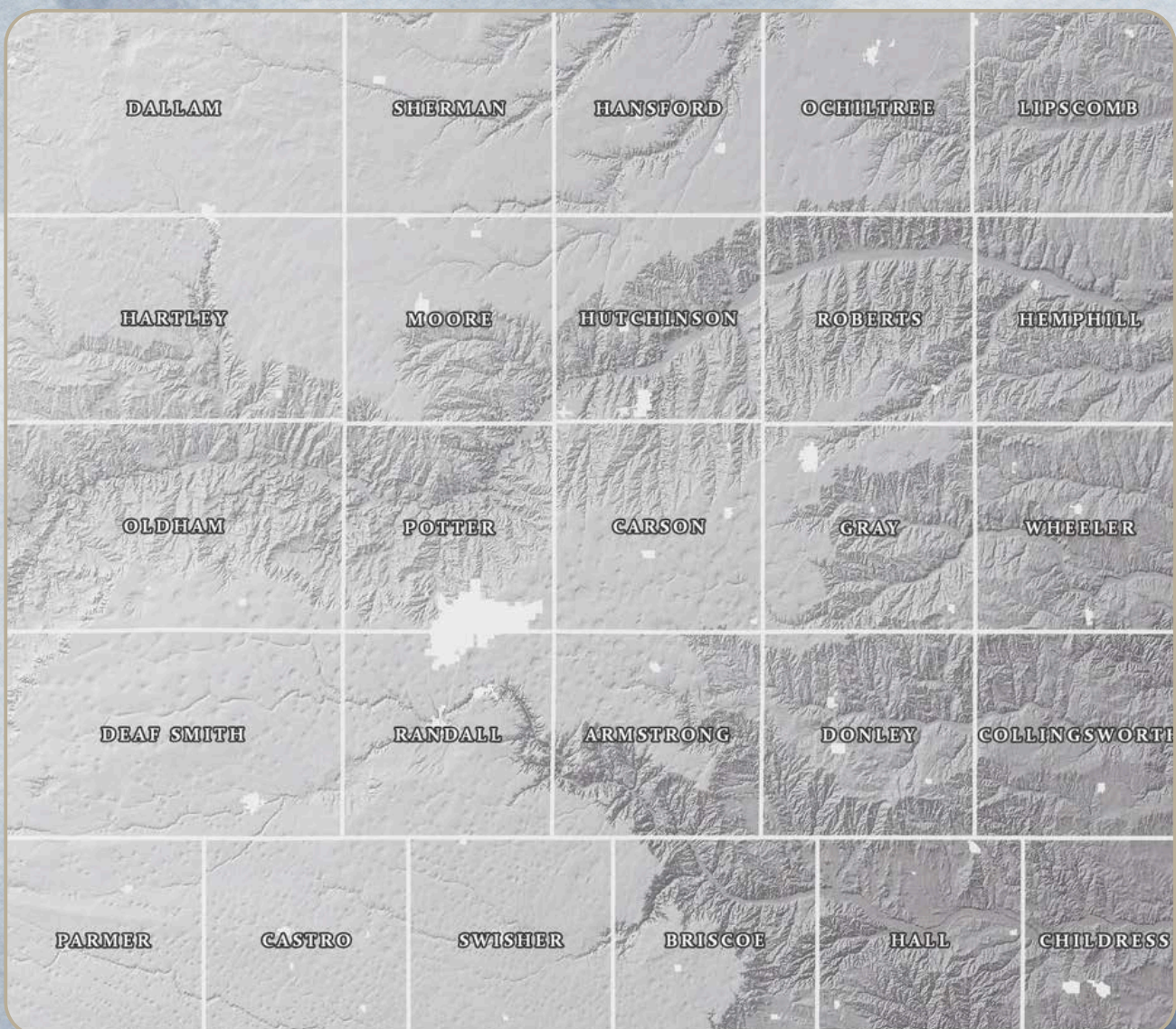
2026 STAFF PHOTO



PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

PRPC is a voluntary association of cities, counties, and special districts in the Texas Panhandle. Established in 1969, the Planning Commission assists local governments in planning, developing, and implementing programs designed to improve the general health, safety, and welfare of the citizens in the Texas Panhandle.

Since 1969, the Planning Commission has been involved in a wide range of projects and programs. Activities currently include initiatives in the areas of workforce development, aging, local government services, economic development, dispute resolution, 9-1-1 services, criminal justice, solid waste management, emergency preparedness, transportation planning, water planning, regional services, and technical assistance to the local governments of the Panhandle.



REGIONAL POPULATION 434,358

PRPC CITIES

Adrian, Amarillo, Bishop Hills, Booker, Borger, Bovina, Cactus, Canadian, Canyon, Channing, Childress, Clarendon, Claude, Dalhart, Darrouzett, Dimmitt, Dodson, Dumas, Estelline, Farwell, Follett, Friona, Fritch, Groom, Gruver, Happy, Hart, Hedley, Hereford, Higgins, Howardwick, Kress, Lake Tanglewood, Lakeview, Lefors, McLean, Memphis, Miami, Mobeetie, Nazareth, Palisades Village, Pampa, Panhandle, Perryton, Quitaque, Sanford, Shamrock, Silverton, Skellytown, Spearman, Stinnett, Stratford, Sunray, Texhoma, Texline, Timbercreek, Tulia, Turkey, Vega, Wellington, Wheeler, White Deer

PRPC COUNTIES

Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltrie, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, Wheeler

06
SPECIAL
DISTRICTS

26
COUNTIES

94
MEMBER
GOVERNMENTS

PRPC SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Canadian River Municipal Water Authority, Greenbelt Municipal and Industrial Water Authority, Mackenzie Municipal Water Authority, Palo Duro River Authority, Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District, Red River Authority

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN

**The Honorable Mayor Pat Sims | Board Chair
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission**



To Our Members, Partners, and Communities,

As a mayor, I have the privilege of witnessing firsthand the dedication it takes to build strong communities. Every decision made at the local level has a direct impact on the people we serve, and no city or county succeeds alone. Our greatest accomplishments are made possible through collaboration, shared purpose, and a commitment to working together for the benefit of the entire region. That spirit of partnership is what makes PRPC such an important resource for our communities.

By bringing together local governments, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community partners, PRPC helps us address challenges that extend beyond city limits and county lines. Whether planning for future growth, supporting infrastructure, strengthening emergency preparedness, or expanding opportunities and resources for our residents, PRPC provides the leadership and coordination that help our region move forward together. Over the past year, we have continued to see the value of regional cooperation. Communities across our service area have demonstrated resilience, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to serving their citizens. I am proud of the work accomplished through PRPC and grateful for the partnerships that make those achievements possible.

As Chairman of the Board, I have the opportunity to work alongside leaders who care deeply about the future of our region. Our Board of Directors, staff, and partners share a common goal: ensuring that every community, large or small, has access to the resources, expertise, and collaborative support needed to succeed. Together, we remain committed to responsible stewardship, thoughtful planning, and practical solutions that strengthen the quality of life for all who call this region home. Looking ahead, the opportunities before us are significant. Population changes, economic development, infrastructure needs, and evolving public priorities will continue to shape our future. By working together, sharing ideas, and supporting one another, I am confident we can meet these challenges while preserving the values that define our communities.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to our member governments, community partners, and the dedicated PRPC staff whose professionalism and commitment make this work possible every day. Most importantly, thank you to the citizens we are privileged to serve. Your trust inspires us to lead with integrity, work collaboratively, and remain focused on building a stronger region for generations to come. Serving as both a mayor and Chairman of the PRPC Board has reinforced something I have always believed: when our communities work together, there is no limit to what we can accomplish. I am honored to be part of that effort, and I look forward to what we will achieve together in the years ahead. Thank you for being part of our story.

Sincerely,

Mayor Pat Sims

City of Dumas
PRPC Board Chairman



2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pat Sims, Chair - Mayor, City of Dumas



Kim Jones, Vice Chair
Judge, County of Childress



Oscar Ostos, Secretary/Treasurer
Citizens Rep., of Amarillo



Shawn Ballew
Judge, County of Oldham



Ronae Bunn
Citizens Rep., of Borger



Kathy Bunch
Mayor, City of Hereford



Juan Cantu
Commissioner
County of Lipscomb



Isabel "Izzy" Carrasco
Judge, County of Parmer



Michael Clawson
Judge, County of Swisher



Rank Cogdell
Judge, County of Briscoe



Christy Dyer
Judge, County of Randall



Eddie Edwards
Canadian River Municipal
Water Authority



Chalone Hefley
Judge, County of Wheeler



Aldo Gallegos
Citizens Rep., of Cactus



Dr. John Howard
Judge, County of Donley



Daniel Jackson
Citizens Rep., of Dimmitt



Mitchell Locke
Judge, County of Roberts



Dan Looten
Judge, County of Carson



Lt. Armando Renteria
Citizens Rep., of Pampa



Salvador "Sal" Rivera
Sheriff, County of Castro



Nancy Tanner
Judge, County of Potter



Wes Ritchey
Judge, County of Dallam



Phillip Self
Greenbelt Municipal and
Industrial Water Authority



Tobe Shields
Mayor, City of Spearman



Cole Stanley
Mayor, City of Amarillo



Kerry Symons
Mayor, City of Perryton



Michael J. Peters
Executive Director
Panhandle Regional
Planning Commission

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To the Board of Directors and the Citizens of the Texas Panhandle:

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission remains dedicated to strengthening our region through collaboration, innovation, and service. Over the past year, we have continued to work alongside local governments, community partners, and regional stakeholders to address challenges, identify opportunities, and advance initiatives that support the long-term success of the Texas Panhandle. The accomplishments highlighted in this report reflect the collective efforts of our Board of Directors, member governments, community partners, and the talented professionals who serve through PRPC.

Their commitment to public service and regional cooperation has led to meaningful progress across many programs and projects that benefit our communities and improve the quality of life for our residents. As our region grows, PRPC is focused on leading, building strategic partnerships, and delivering solutions that meet the diverse needs of the 26 counties we serve. Through careful planning and collaboration, we are helping build stronger communities, support economic vitality, enhance public services, and prepare for future opportunities.

This annual report highlights the work accomplished during the past year and demonstrates the value of regional cooperation in achieving shared goals. We are grateful for the trust placed in our organization and remain committed to serving the citizens of the Texas Panhandle with integrity, accountability, and excellence. Thank you for your continued support of the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission and our mission to strengthen the communities and quality of life throughout our region.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "Michael J. Peters". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Michael J. Peters
Executive Director
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

The Executive Department provides comprehensive administrative leadership and support to the Board of Directors, committee members, and PRPC staff in service to the Texas Panhandle. Through strategic leadership, oversight, and coordination, the department supports every program and initiative of the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission. Through this leadership and collaboration, regional priorities are transformed into meaningful initiatives that strengthen communities and improve the quality of life throughout the region.



Left to right: Julie Arvello, Melissa Whitaker, Michael Peters (Executive Director), and Lori Woolf

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Area Agency on Aging of the Panhandle (AAA) is committed to enhancing the lives of older adults throughout the Texas Panhandle by promoting independence, dignity, and access to essential resources. The AAA connects individuals aged 60 and older, Medicare beneficiaries, and caregivers with programs, services, and supports that help them age well and remain active in their communities.

Through a wide range of services, including nutritious meals, in-home support, caregiver assistance, community engagement, educational opportunities, and information and referral services, the AAA helps older adults and their families navigate aging-related resources and address their unique needs. The AAA also supports the Ombudsman program, advocating for the rights, safety, and quality of life of individuals in long-term care settings.

By partnering with local organizations and community providers, the AAA strengthens access to vital resources across the Texas Panhandle. These collaborative efforts empower older adults to maintain their independence, enhance their well-being, and continue to thrive in the communities they call home.



Left to right: Michelle Surace, Terrie Campbell, Debbie King (AAA Director), Felicia Shaffer, Anna Ojeda, Dana Hoyler, Makayla Stewart, and Isabell Villareal (Panhandle Aging and Disability Resource Center)

CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM



The Caregiver Support Program exists to reduce stress, prevent burnout, and improve the well-being of family caregivers across the Texas Panhandle. Through a combination of education, emotional support, and respite services, the program empowers caregivers with the knowledge, resources, and assistance they need to continue providing safe, compassionate, and sustainable care for their loved ones while maintaining their own health and quality of life.

In 2026, the program made a meaningful impact by supporting caregivers at multiple points in their caregiving journey. Support groups provided a welcoming environment where caregivers could connect with others facing similar challenges, exchange practical advice, and find encouragement through shared experiences. Over the course of the year, more than 30 caregivers participated in 12 peer support sessions, building valuable relationships and reducing feelings of isolation.

Education remained a cornerstone of the program, equipping caregivers, community members, and professionals with practical tools and evidence-based information. Through initiatives such as Dementia Live, the Dementia Symposium, and the Caregiver Conference, hundreds of family caregivers and professionals received training designed to increase understanding of dementia, strengthen caregiving skills, and improve confidence in navigating the many challenges associated with caring for an aging loved one.



Most importantly, respite services provided caregivers with the opportunity to rest, attend to personal needs, and focus on their own health without compromising the care of their loved ones. This year, more than 30 caregivers received respite assistance, totaling over 1,800 hours of care. These services helped caregivers avoid exhaustion, manage competing responsibilities, and continue providing quality care over the long term.

Together, these services strengthen caregivers, reduce burnout, promote healthier families, and help older adults and individuals with disabilities remain safely and independently in their homes and communities for as long as possible.



A caregiver shared, "The Area Agency on Aging's Caregiver Respite program allowed me to take care of a much-needed and put-off surgery. Now I can provide the care my loved one needs, with my own health being better as well."

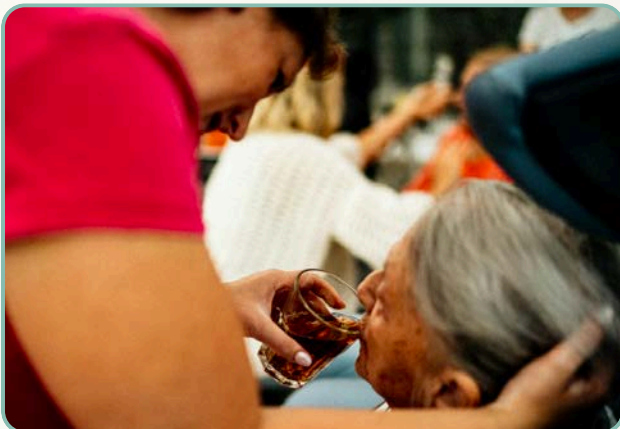
TRANSPORTATION

Promoting dignity, independence, and quality of life remains at the heart of the Area Agency on Aging's Transportation Program. By partnering with Amarillo City Transit (ACT) and the Amarillo Wesley Community Center, the program offers free, accessible transportation to individuals age 60 and older. Services support a wide range of needs from healthcare and daily errands to social connection and community involvement. Focusing on those with higher needs, including dialysis patients and wheelchair users, ACT-Connect buses provide safe, reliable, and accessible transportation. This program continues to remove barriers and empower older adults to stay active and independent.



IN-HOME PERSONAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT

"This service was very important to me when I became disabled. It allowed me to get things done that I was not able to do. They sent the same caretaker to me 3 times a week, which was perfect."



AAA client, "This agency helped me in a time of need. I have cancer with many bills and they provided a service that was very much needed. I very much appreciated the help AAA did for me!"

BENEFITS COUNSELING

Benefits Counselors play a vital role in helping older adults understand their Medicare options and make informed healthcare decisions. They provide individualized education on navigating the Medicare system, identifying cost-saving programs, comparing coverage options, and protecting against Medicare fraud and scams. Our quarterly seminar series, Destination Medicare, continues to offer clear, practical guidance for individuals approaching Medicare eligibility or seeking to better understand their benefits. Community outreach events such as our recent Power in the Community presentation with TLSC attorney Paul Zambie at Amarillo College further expand access to valuable information and legal resources that support healthy aging.



This year, outreach efforts have remained focused on expanding access to vital aging services in rural communities throughout the Texas Panhandle. Educational presentations were delivered in Ochiltree, Hall, and Hemphill counties, providing older adults, caregivers, and community partners with information on Medicare, advance directives, and other topics designed to promote informed decision-making and future planning. By bringing these resources directly into underserved communities, the Area Agency on Aging continues to reduce barriers to information and ensure that older adults have access to trusted guidance and support regardless of where they live.

AAA is pleased to welcome two newly certified volunteer Benefits Counselors, Dani Grill and Maggie Flores, whose commitment to serving others strengthens our ability to provide unbiased Medicare counseling and outreach across the region. Their certification expands the program's capacity to assist more individuals during Medicare enrollment periods and throughout the year. AAA would also like to graciously thank Candie Pickett, Erica Taylor, and Connie Morgan, who have all served as Benefits Counselors in the Texas Panhandle. AAA remains deeply grateful for the dedication of its volunteers, whose time, expertise, and compassion are instrumental in promoting independence, empowering informed healthcare decisions, and improving the quality of life for older adults throughout the Texas Panhandle.

NUTRITION SERVICES

The Area Agency on Aging's Nutrition Program brings communities together while supporting the health, independence, and well-being of older adults. Through congregate and home-delivered meal services, the program ensures older adults across the region have reliable access to nutritious food and meaningful social connection. With 14 providers serving meals at 18 locations, these sites have become more than places to eat; they are spaces where friendships grow, routines are strengthened, and individuals feel a sense of belonging.

By addressing both nutritional needs and social well-being, the Nutrition Program helps reduce isolation, strengthen communities, and support older adults as they age with dignity and independence.



Participants consistently share how the program impacts their daily lives. "It motivates me to get up and get dressed to go to lunch and talk with people my age."

Others emphasized the importance of connection and sharing: "I come to get out, visit with friends, and not be cooped up all day."

In addition to fostering community, the program also provides critical financial relief. As one participant shared, "Rising food prices make it hard to get by. Having a good meal each day really helps my budget."

HOME CARE OPTIONS

Dedicated in coordinating and providing comprehensive services continues to be the main goal of the Home Care Options program for individuals 60 years of age and older within the Texas Panhandle. Whether it is assisting individuals with Personal Assistance for temporary in-home provider services or supported Health Maintenance items such as incontinence supplies, nutritional drinks, or small DME items.

In addition, collaborating with local community-based partners or service contractors has also been instrumental to The Home Care Option Program in providing valuable resources to individuals in order to stay healthy, stay engaged, and remain within their homes and communities.



TEXAS RAMP PROJECT

Home Ramp Construction

CITY OF AMARILLO

Minor Home Modifications and
Repairs



AMARILLO HEARING CLINIC

*Hearing Aid Recipient -
"We were able to have new hearing
aids. It would have been a financial
hardship otherwise."*

OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

Ombudsmen proudly serve residents across 65 long-term care facilities in the Panhandle. Each facility is visited at least every 90 days and more frequently in most nursing facilities, ensuring consistent presence and support. Over the past year, 494 facility visits were conducted, building meaningful, trusting relationships with residents. Ombudsmen also support families and community members by providing information and resources to help them navigate the often unfamiliar process of long-term care admission. 823 residents and family members were educated about their rights and facility requirements.



Left to right: Dana Hoyler (MLO), Lisa Hancock, Kathy Henry, Nelda Smith, Virginia Keys, Ross Wellesley, Steve Akeroyd, Melissa Whitaker, Wanda Fowler (Not Pictured)

4,454
Residents
Served

433
Complaints
Investigated

98%
Resolution
Rate

832
Educated on
Residents
Rights

232
Facility Staff
Consults



"I've been knowing Dana for over 4 years. She has helped me through numerous situations where my rights were being trampled by nursing home staff. She even saved me from unfair discharge. She comes to my care plan meetings and makes sure the facility is doing their job right. Now she has helped me move to my own apartment in the community. She is an asset to the Ombudsman program and I highly recommend her to others needing help. She has proven to be invaluable and can't be replaced in my life." Antoinette Williams

AGING IN TEXAS CONFERENCE

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) participated in the 2026 Aging in Texas Conference, bringing together aging professionals from across the state to share knowledge, strengthen partnerships, and explore innovative approaches to serving older Texans. PRPC AAA staff gained valuable insights into emerging trends, best practices, and strategies to enhance programs and services throughout the Texas Panhandle. The connections and resources gained from the conference will continue to support PRPC AAA's commitment to promoting independence, dignity, and quality of life for older adults across its 26-county service region.



PUBLIC EDUCATION

Our public information and outreach initiatives remain focused on enhancing the quality of life for older adults in the Texas Panhandle through strategic partnerships and innovative programming.

This year, we are pleased to reintroduce the Digital Bootcamp in collaboration with the Goodwill Career Resource Center. This program is designed to empower older adults by building essential digital skills. While learning new technology can feel daunting, our partnership with Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) has enabled us to deliver the Senior Planet program in a way that is accessible, engaging, and user-friendly.



OATS, the nonprofit affiliate of AARP, is a recognized national leader in digital education for older adults. Their programs help participants stay connected, access vital online resources, and discover new opportunities for learning, creativity, and independence. Through the Senior Planet initiative, we are actively working to bridge the digital divide and support older adults in leading more connected and fulfilling lives.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

May serves as an important opportunity to recognize and celebrate the valuable contributions, experiences, and achievements of older Americans while bringing greater awareness to the opportunities and challenges associated with aging. This annual observance provides a meaningful platform to highlight emerging trends in aging, promote positive perspectives on growing older, and reaffirm our ongoing commitment to supporting older adults as vital members of our communities.

The 2026 theme, “Champion Your Health,” encouraged older adults to prioritize their overall well-being by embracing healthy lifestyle choices, including regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, preventive health practices, and meaningful social engagement. The theme emphasized that health and wellness extend beyond physical health, encompassing emotional resilience, mental stimulation, independence, and strong connections with family, friends, and community networks.



Every May, Older Americans Month recognizes more than 60 million adults aged 65 and older living in the United States.



OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Throughout the observance, individuals were encouraged to take an active role in their personal health journeys by exploring new opportunities, maintaining a sense of purpose, and continuing to pursue interests and goals at every stage of life. May also served as a reminder that aging is a dynamic and enriching experience, shaped by lifelong learning, meaningful relationships, community involvement, and the ability to continue making a positive impact. By recognizing and supporting older adults, we strengthen our communities and create an environment where individuals of all ages can thrive.



Aging does not mean a loss of ability, purpose, or value. Across the nation, millions of older adults continue to work, volunteer, lead community efforts, create art, and make meaningful contributions well into their later years.

The way we talk about aging shapes how society views older adults. Using respectful and empowering language helps challenge outdated stereotypes and encourages a more accurate understanding of what it means to grow older. Older adults should be recognized as capable, engaged, and valuable members of our communities. By promoting dignity and respect, we create a society that honors people at every stage of life.

Older Americans enrich our communities in countless ways. Their contributions are woven throughout our families, neighborhoods, workplaces, and economy. Older adults are active and engaged contributors to civic life. Many dedicate their time and talents to volunteering with local organizations, supporting schools, assisting neighbors, and strengthening community programs. Their involvement in local government and community initiatives helps create stronger, more connected communities.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

PRPC's Workforce Development division, through the Panhandle Workforce Development Board (PWDB), assists Texas Panhandle employers in recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified workers while helping job seekers find and keep stable employment. Workforce Development receives funding from the Texas Workforce Commission, which provides structured oversight of workforce program services in the 26-county region of the Panhandle. These services are performed by Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP).

The PWDB is a business-led group, the majority of which is comprised of employers from the private sector, as well as representatives from labor, economic development, child care workforce, secondary and post-secondary education, adult and continuing education, literacy, vocational rehabilitation, community-based organizations, public employment services, and the State Department of Human Services.



The volunteer members of the PWDB are appointed by the Panhandle Workforce Development Consortium's Governing Body (PWDCGB), comprised of six county judges, chosen by their peers from among the Panhandle's Chief Elected Officials, and the Mayor of the City of Amarillo. The mission of the PWDCGB, the PWDB, WSP, and the staff of the Workforce Development Division is to establish and enhance a workforce delivery system that connects local employers with resources to find and develop the talent they need. We invest in skills development to increase workers' career opportunities and self-sufficiency. This supports economic growth by promoting collaboration among stakeholders, creating partnerships with other community organizations, and focusing on workforce development issues.

VETERAN SERVICES

Recognizing the unique needs of veterans transitioning from military service to civilian employment, Workforce Solutions Panhandle remains committed to providing specialized support designed to ease that transition. Veterans often face challenges in translating military experience into civilian career opportunities, navigating the job market, and connecting with employers who value the skills developed through military service. To address these needs, staff provide Priority of Service, individualized career guidance, skills translation assistance, job placement support, training referrals, and access to resources tailored to each veteran's unique background and career goals.



**496 PRIORITY OF
SERVICE VETERANS**

**2,370 SPECIALIZED
SERVICES
(5.24% OF TOTAL)**

During the program year, Workforce Solutions Panhandle served 496 Priority of Service Veterans and Qualified Spouses, delivering 2,370 specialized services, representing 5.24% of all services provided. Through these targeted efforts, veterans and their families received the support needed to secure meaningful employment, strengthen their long-term career prospects, and successfully transition into the civilian workforce while continuing to contribute their leadership, experience, and dedication to the communities they serve.



CHILD CARE SERVICES

Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Services (CCS) provides financial assistance for child care to low or moderate-income families who are working, in training, or attending school. The program is designed to support family self-sufficiency and ensure access to stable, high-quality child care across the Texas Panhandle.



CCS served 1,781 families, with an average of 2,543 children receiving care each day. By helping families access affordable, reliable child care, the program enabled parents to remain employed, pursue education, and work toward greater financial stability while ensuring their children were cared for in safe, nurturing environments.

On average, 2,059 children were placed in Texas Rising Star certified child care centers, across the Panhandle reflecting the program's continued focus on promoting high-quality early learning environments.



78 Texas Rising Star Certified Providers

4 Star Certification = 34
3 Star Certification = 28
2 Star Certification = 16

*100 Total providers
78% are TRS Certified*

Texas Rising Star

The Texas Rising Star (TRS) program is a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care programs participating in the CCS program. Texas Rising Star certification is available to licensed centers as well as licensed and registered child care home facilities that meet certification criteria.

The TRS program offers three levels of quality certification (Two-Star, Three-Star, and Four-Star) to encourage child care and early learning programs to attain progressively higher levels of quality.



CHILD CARE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Services invested in multiple quality initiatives to improve early learning environments, enhance curriculum resources, support professional development, and promote staff retention. Scholarship support for child care teachers and directors remained a key priority. WSP awarded \$150,000 in scholarships to 113 individuals, 43 of whom were new recipients in 2025.



Workforce Solutions Panhandle dedicated \$154,610 toward curricula Frog Street and teaching strategies. WSP also invested \$325,000 in learning materials for 184 classrooms and in training to support structured, developmentally appropriate instruction in early learning programs.

To incentivize and sustain participation in the Texas Rising Star (TRS) program, Workforce Solutions Panhandle awarded \$84,000 in program bonuses. These funds supported onboarding and reward programs based on TRS certification level.

\$84,000
TRS
Bonuses

\$150,000
Scholarships to
113 AC
Students

\$154,610
Invested in
Curricula

\$325,000
Learning
Materials



EMPLOYER SERVICES

Employer Services provided over 80,000 services to 8,800 individuals, including career counseling, job referrals, and workshops, with 30,000 job referrals and 6,000 new WorkInTexas.com registrations, boosting regional employment. The Business Services Unit (BSU) delivered tailored consulting to 3,800 employers across 26 counties, offering job postings, recruitment assistance, labor market data, and customized workforce solutions to meet regional workforce needs.

80,000 Job
Services
provided by
Employer
Services

8,800 Served
Career
Advancements
Opportunities

30,000
Job Referrals
& 6,000 WIT
Registrations

3,800
Employers
Served Across
26 Counties

High Demand Job Training

Continued investment in HDJT initiatives, supported by local Economic Development Corporations and the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission, has contributed more than \$2.47 million since 2018 to expand hands-on training and modernize career and technical education programs.



Plains Dairy Skills Development Fund

The Skills Development Fund completed a \$154,985 project with Plains Dairy, providing training to 166 employees and exceeding the original target of 127 participants. The project contributed to a 30% increase in productivity, while also helping reduce employee turnover and workplace injuries. These results demonstrate the positive impact of targeted workforce training in strengthening employee skills, improving operational efficiency, and supporting a safer, more productive workplace.

\$154,985
Plains Dairy
SDF

\$278,177
Healthcare
SDF

Healthcare Initiative Skills Development Fund

The Skills Development Fund awarded a \$278,177 grant in partnership with Frank Phillips College, Hemphill County Hospital District, and Ochiltree General Hospital to strengthen the rural healthcare workforce. The initiative supported training for 47 new healthcare positions and upgraded the skills of 179 existing healthcare workers, helping address critical workforce shortages and expand access to a skilled healthcare workforce in rural communities.

EMPLOYER SERVICES

133
Job fairs, Hiring Events,
and Career-focused
Recruitment Activities

12,345
Job Seekers

1,447
Employers

2,450
Reported Hires

Job Fairs and Hiring Events

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) hosted 133 job fairs, hiring events, and career-focused recruitment activities, connecting 12,345 job seekers with 1,447 employers and resulting in 2,450 reported hires. These events included large-scale job fairs, single-employer hiring events, and targeted career fairs designed to strengthen connections between employers and qualified candidates.

Eleven large-scale job fairs alone brought together 479 employers and 4,239 job seekers, resulting in 992 hires and demonstrating the continued impact of workforce-driven recruitment efforts across the region.



Teacher Externships

Teacher Externships partnered with education and industry leaders to place 53 teachers (54.7% from rural areas) in externships at 29 employer sites across 15 school districts, impacting 7,728 students by integrating real-world industry experience into classroom instruction.

TEXAS PANHANDLE CAREER SIGNING DAYS

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) is proud to support Texas Panhandle Career Signing Days, an initiative that connects local high school students with in-demand careers. By partnering with schools, employers, and community organizations, WSP equips students with the resources to explore diverse career paths and gain hands-on experience, while also addressing the skills gap and fostering a strong workforce for the region.



The Texas Panhandle Career Signing Days held 11 events in partnership with 16 regional high schools, where 261 students signed with 92 employers and postsecondary institutions, fostering early career connections.



TRAINING SERVICES

The Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) Training Services team strengthens the regional workforce by connecting individuals with training, career development, and employment opportunities. Through occupational training assistance, career counseling, and supportive services, participants gain the skills needed to overcome barriers and pursue in-demand careers. By aligning training with local industry needs, the program helps individuals achieve meaningful employment and long-term economic stability while supporting employers in building a skilled and qualified workforce.

SUMMER EARN & LEARN (SEAL)

The SEAL program is a statewide initiative that provides students with disabilities, aged 14-22, with work readiness training and paid work experience. SEAL achieved a 94.74% placement rate for 18 students with disabilities, who worked 1,880 hours, earned \$22,985.19, and completed 66.7% of work readiness training, enhancing employability.



YOUNG ADULT TRAINING SERVICES (YATS)

Young Adults who are 24 years old or younger and experiencing difficulties or challenges are eligible for workforce benefits and qualify for the Young Adult Training Services program.

WSP engaged 101 young adults, with 68 in training and 33 in paid internships, targeting high-demand fields like healthcare and community services.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) WORK EXPERIENCE

The TANF Work Experience program placed 47 rural youth across six school districts, providing 7,900 hours of valuable work experience and \$93,725 in earnings. The program not only helps meet participants' immediate financial needs but also provides opportunities to develop essential job skills, build a strong work ethic, and gain experience that prepares them for future employment and long-term career success.



EDUCATION OUTREACH SPECIALIST (EOS)

The EOS provides customized in-school services to 15 regional school districts, reaching over 5,800 students in grades 6-12 through presentations and workshops on career exploration, employability skills, labor market trends, and postsecondary pathways. The program provided 3,359 Virtual Reality career exploration experiences and 1,468 workshop participants, helping prepare students for high-demand careers.

\$22,985
earned by 18
SEAL students
in 1880 hours

\$93,725
earned by 47
TANF students
in 7900 hours

101
YATS enrolled,
68 in training
and 33 in paid
internships

3,359
Career
Exploration
Experiences
and 1,468
workshop
participants

364
enrolled in
Adult &
Dislocated
Worker
Programs

ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

The Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs provide career and training services to help job seekers find employment and advance their careers. 364 individuals were enrolled in workforce services, including 279 adult participants, 9 statewide Dislocated Workers, 66 Dislocated Workers, and 3 statewide Dislocated Workers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

As local government challenges continue to grow in complexity, the Local Government Services (LGS) Department remains committed to helping cities, counties, and special districts across the Texas Panhandle address critical infrastructure, community development, and economic growth needs. While LGS continues its strong foundation in traditional funding programs supporting water and wastewater systems, parks, streets, sidewalks, and industrial infrastructure, 2026 marked an increased focus on diversifying funding streams and expanding technical services to better meet evolving community needs.

Recognizing that traditional funding sources remain essential but are often no longer sufficient on their own, LGS has strategically expanded its role to preserve these core programs while actively pursuing additional state, federal, and alternative funding opportunities. This approach allows communities to remain competitive, better align projects with local priorities, and strengthen long-term resilience.

Beyond grant administration, LGS continues to provide expanded professional services including regulatory compliance, environmental documentation, grant reporting, procurement support, and strategic project development, offering critical capacity to communities that often lack these resources in-house.



Left to right: Max Seymour, Erick Garcia, Paige Goodell, Alex Guerrero (LGS Director), Brynna Burnett, Jarian Fred

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Strengthening Communities Across the Panhandle

The Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) program continues to be a cornerstone of rural resilience in the Panhandle. Administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture, the program provides essential funding that allows communities to address pressing infrastructure needs, especially in areas where local budgets are often stretched thin. These investments are designed not only to meet immediate public health and safety requirements but to position small communities for long-term economic sustainability. Whether replacing failing water systems or revitalizing downtown areas, TxCDBG projects remain vital tools for enhancing the quality of life and ensuring our region remains a place where families and businesses can thrive.

Downtown Revitalization Program (DRP): Building a More Accessible Bovina

The City of Bovina is currently undergoing a major revitalization of its downtown district areas through the Downtown Revitalization Program (DRP). By leveraging federal funding to replace aging infrastructure, the city is transforming deteriorated pathways into a safer, more accessible space for residents and visitors alike.

The project targets long-overdue improvements to sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, creating a welcoming and compliant public space that promotes both economic activity and community gathering. With the integration of ADA-compliant ramps and new pedestrian light fixtures, downtown Bovina is positioning itself to attract investment and support local shops while reinforcing its unique small-town charm. While construction is moving toward completion this August, this ongoing work demonstrates the power of strategic investment in driving the long-term resilience and quality of life for the Bovina community.



Community Development Fund (CD): Enhancing Resident Safety and Resource Reliability in Kress

For a small community, the loss of a single home or building to fire is a devastating event that ripples through the entire neighborhood. Recognizing that reliable water access is the first line of defense in an emergency, the City of Kress utilized the Community Development Fund to address critical gaps in their local infrastructure.

This project was driven by a commitment to resident safety, focusing on the replacement of aging fire hydrants and the installation of approximately 120 linear feet of six-inch waterline. These upgrades ensure that local emergency responders have the necessary water pressure and proximity to hydrants to act swiftly when every second counts. By addressing these "blind spots" in the distribution system, the City is directly investing in the long-term security and peace of mind of its residents.

Complementing these safety measures, the City installed approximately 290 high-efficiency water meters and a sophisticated Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. While the technology modernizes utility management, its primary impact on quality of life is the preservation of the community's water supply. Through rapid leak detection and more reliable service, Kress is ensuring that its infrastructure is not just a utility, but a resilient foundation that protects the lives and homes of every resident.

Community Development Fund (CD) | Strengthening Municipal Resilience in Shamrock

In rural communities, the invisible network of waterlines is the most critical factor in maintaining public health and neighborhood safety. To address aging infrastructure and ensure long-term service stability, the City of Shamrock utilized the Community Development Fund to execute a major overhaul of its primary distribution system.

By replacing these high-priority segments, Shamrock has significantly reduced the risk of major line breaks and ensured that its residents have a reliable, safe water supply for years to come. This investment represents more than just new infrastructure; it is a commitment to the long-term reliability and quality of life for every resident in the Shamrock community.

Texas Community Resiliency Program | Timbercreek Canyon Senior Facility

Funded through COVID-19 relief legislation and administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), the Texas Community Resiliency Program (TCRP) was designed to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to the long-term impacts of the pandemic. With assistance from LGS, the Village of Timbercreek Canyon successfully secured these HUD-directed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) funds in 2022 to bring a transformational vision to life.

What began as an ambitious effort to create the Village's first dedicated senior facility ultimately became a long-awaited milestone project, successfully completed in 2026 after years of grant management, regulatory compliance, project oversight, and strategic problem-solving. Designed to serve Timbercreek Canyon's growing senior population, the facility provides a resilient, modern space for community programming, essential services, and social engagement.

Due to evolving project needs, bid challenges, and rising construction costs, the total project budget increased to \$1,775,045.00, reflecting LGS's continued commitment to navigating complex funding adjustments while maintaining full compliance and project momentum. This expanded investment supported full construction of the senior facility, associated site development, parking infrastructure, and critical on-site water and sewer improvements.

The successful completion of this first-of-its-kind facility represents not only a major achievement for the Village of Timbercreek Canyon, but also a testament to LGS's persistence in guiding complex projects from grant award to final closeout. Through years of dedicated oversight, LGS helped transform this project into a lasting community asset that enhances quality of life, strengthens local resilience, and demonstrates the powerful impact of strategic grant administration in rural communities.



Community Development (CD) Fund

- Total Awarded: \$2,250,000 – (3) projects were funded over the past year to address essential water and wastewater infrastructure.
- Projected Funding: \$2,250,000 – (3) additional projects are anticipated to be funded at \$750,000 each under the 2026 program cycle.

This shift reflects an increase in the grant ceiling from prior years.

Downtown Revitalization Program (DRP)

- Total Awarded: \$1,000,000 – (1) project was funded during the past year to support downtown infrastructure enhancements.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING & EXECUTIVE SEARCHES

The Local Government Services (LGS) Department continues to broaden its scope of support by providing tailored professional services to cities and counties across the Panhandle. In addition to our longstanding work in grant and loan administration, LGS continues to play a more proactive role in helping local governments secure funding, comply with state and federal procurement standards, and build long-term strategic frameworks. Over the past year, LGS assisted several communities through targeted services such as strategic planning for the City of Hereford and the City of White Deer.

PRPC Staff has continued expanding its support to local communities through strategic planning initiatives. PRPC staff worked closely with both the City of Hereford and the City of White Deer to facilitate the development of the first strategic plan for each community. These efforts were designed to help local leadership establish a unified long-term direction for municipal operations, organizational priorities, infrastructure investment, and community growth. Through extensive collaboration with elected officials, city staff, community stakeholders, and planning committees, PRPC guided both cities through a structured strategic planning process focused on identifying critical challenges, evaluating opportunities, and building consensus around future priorities.

These projects also reflect PRPC's continued commitment to strengthening local governmental capacity throughout the Texas Panhandle, particularly within rural and small communities that often have limited internal planning resources. By providing technical assistance, facilitation services, and strategic guidance, PRPC helped both Hereford and White Deer establish foundational planning documents that will support future decision-making, organizational alignment, and sustainable growth.



Other professional services provided this past year include:

- Professional Recruitment Searches: City Manager for Spearman
- Procurement and Compliance Assistance: Oldham County (project management and procurement guidance), multiple cities (procurement file reviews, ARPA compliance, budgeting support)
- Grant & Loan Application Support: PRPC assisted communities across the region with outreach, technical assistance, and application support related to the Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB) HB500 Water Supply Infrastructure Grant (WSIG) opportunity. PRPC worked directly with local officials, utility providers, and engineering firms to identify eligible projects, discuss program requirements, and support applications.

TRANSPORTATION

This past year marked a pivotal moment in how the PRPC approaches transportation planning and infrastructure development. As our region faces growing safety and mobility challenges, we've broadened our strategy, expanding beyond traditional planning efforts to include public health access, competitive application support, and strategic planning that aligns with evolving federal priorities.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) | Building a Foundation for Safer Roadways

PRPC was awarded a \$1,500,000 SS4A Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Following contract finalization in early 2026, the PRPC Board of Directors approved the selection of Kimley-Horn as the project consultant, based on the recommendation of a special proposal scoring committee comprised of members of the Panhandle region; Safety Action Plan - Panhandle Advisory Committee. Throughout 2026, Kimley-Horn has collected input and data from the public, by taking part in community events throughout all 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle. They have also launched a social pinpoint website, allowing Panhandle residents to provide feedback on hazardous roadway conditions via written survey and an interactive mapping application.

The consulting team is now working toward the development of both a High-Injury Network, an online platform identifying roadway safety project priorities, and a High-Risk Network, a platform highlighting roadways with characteristics shown to correlate with higher-than-expected crash rates. This plan will bring together stakeholders from across the Texas Panhandle to identify our most dangerous roadways and explore data-driven, design-forward solutions that reduce roadway fatalities and injuries. The SS4A effort not only opens the door for future federal infrastructure funding but ensures our communities are positioned to pursue implementation grants for identified safety projects.



TxDOT 5-Year Transportation Planning Program

In partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation, PRPC continues to lead long-range transportation planning for the Texas Panhandle. In 2025, Local Government Services staff secured \$255,000 in funding, an increase from previous planning cycles, to support updates and enhancements to the 5-Year Comprehensive Transportation Plan, in addition to continuation funding from the prior planning cycle. This year, LGS staff partnered with KFH Group, a nationally recognized transportation planning consulting firm, to develop the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP). Draft Chapters 1-9 of the RPTCP have been approved and adopted by the PROMPT Committee and submitted to TxDOT.

We anticipate completion of the 2027-2031 Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan in late-2026, following the formal adoption by the PROMPT Committee and then by the PRPC Board of Directors.

Amarillo Ride-Share Voucher Pilot Program | Addressing Transportation Gaps in Amarillo



Following extensive planning, stakeholder coordination, and program development, PRPC successfully launched the Ride-Share Voucher Pilot Program on February 16, 2026, in partnership with Amarillo City Transit (ACT). This six-month pilot was created to address critical transportation barriers for eligible Amarillo residents by providing affordable access to non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT), employment, education, child care, and other essential daily services.

Since launch, the program has demonstrated significant value to qualifying residents while continuously improving through stakeholder engagement and outreach efforts aimed at increasing voucher utilization and community impact. Due to its early success, the program received an extension from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), reinforcing its importance as an innovative regional mobility solution.



TxDOT 2026 Coordinated Call for Projects Panhandle Regional Mobility Connect Pilot

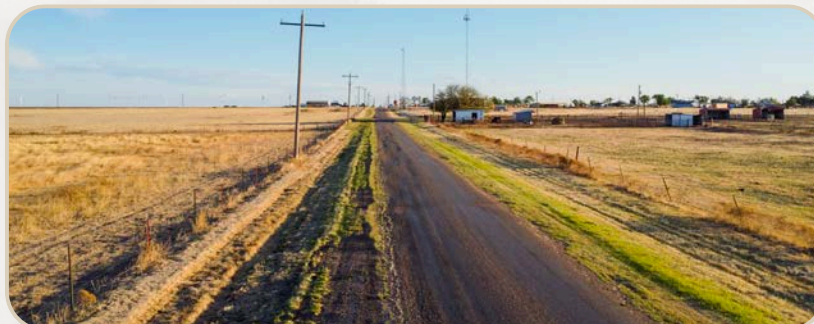
Following an application submitted through the TxDOT Coordinated Call in early 2026, Local Government Services (LGS) staff successfully secured funding approval for the Panhandle Regional Mobility Connect initiative. This award represents another significant milestone in LGS's continued success in diversifying grant funding opportunities, strengthening regional partnerships, and developing innovative transportation solutions that address the evolving needs of communities throughout the Texas Panhandle.

As the region's lead transportation planning entity, the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) was awarded \$105,000 for the initiative, which is scheduled to launch September 1, 2026. The project will establish an interactive mapping system designed to improve access to comprehensive public transportation information throughout the region. By bringing transportation resources together in one accessible platform, the system will help residents, service providers, and community partners better identify available transportation options and make more informed decisions about mobility.

Panhandle Regional Mobility Connect will also support improved coordination among transportation providers and regional stakeholders, helping to strengthen connections between communities and existing transportation services. The project is intended to enhance awareness of available resources while supporting more efficient regional transportation planning and encouraging greater access to mobility services, particularly in rural and underserved areas.



This project further demonstrates LGS's leadership in advancing strategic, technology-driven transportation initiatives that respond to the unique challenges of a large and predominantly rural region. Through continued collaboration, innovative planning, and successful pursuit of grant opportunities, LGS remains committed to strengthening mobility, expanding access to transportation resources, and supporting the long-term economic and community development of the Texas Panhandle.



STATISTICS AND AWARDS

From 2025 to 2026, Local Government Services (LGS) continued to strengthen regional transportation planning and collaboration by conducting 15 meetings with transportation planning boards across the Texas Panhandle. These meetings provided opportunities to share information, identify regional transportation needs, and support coordinated planning efforts focused on improving infrastructure and mobility throughout the region.



LGS showcased the success of the FTA Ride-Share Voucher Pilot Program at the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Expo & Conference in May 2026, presenting the program as part of the “Innovative Concept to Community Impact” session. The presentation highlighted the program’s innovative approach to addressing transportation challenges and demonstrated how regional partnerships and creative solutions can translate into meaningful benefits for communities.

Further demonstrating the program’s regional impact and innovative approach to addressing transportation challenges, PRPC received the Excellence in Regional Transportation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for the development and implementation of the Ride-Share Voucher Pilot Program. This recognition highlights the program’s success in creating a flexible, community-focused transportation option that responds to the unique mobility needs of residents in rural areas throughout the Texas Panhandle. By encouraging innovative partnerships and exploring alternatives to traditional transportation models, the program has helped expand access to essential services, employment opportunities, healthcare, and other community resources.

Together, these accomplishments reflect LGS’s continued commitment to advancing innovative transportation solutions and strengthening regional collaboration. Through strategic planning, community partnerships, and programs designed to address local transportation needs, LGS continues to play an important role in improving mobility, expanding transportation access, and enhancing the quality of life for residents across the Texas Panhandle.



PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In 2026, park development projects facilitated by Local Government Services staff led to increased recreational opportunities and quality-of-life amenities for communities throughout the Texas Panhandle. The year included the completion of several Texas Parks & Wildlife Local Parks Grant-funded projects, as well as the award of new grants through both the Texas Parks & Wildlife – Local Parks and Recreational Trails Programs.

The Cities of Dimmitt and Friona completed splashpad projects, opening the splash pads to families for the first time over the summer. Dimmitt's splashpad is the first public aquatic facility in Castro County. Additionally, the Village of Timbercreek Canyon completed a playground equipment project in its park.

In January 2026, the Cities of Childress, Spearman, and Turkey were each awarded \$150,000 through the Local Parks – Small Community Grant Program for local park improvements, including a splashpad at Fair Park in Childress, an accessible splashpad at Martin Park in Spearman, and enhancements to Turkey City Park featuring a walking loop, basketball court, and restroom facilities. The City of Wellington was also awarded \$609,000 under the Local Parks – Nonurban Outdoor Recreation Program for comprehensive improvements to Ellison Park, including new playground equipment, resurfaced tennis courts, pickleball courts, sand volleyball facilities, a xeriscape garden, concrete walking trails, and other amenities.



Dimmitt, Texas



Friona, Texas

In May 2026, the City of Perryton was awarded a \$216,000 Recreational Trails Grant by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Commission to construct a 0.57-mile accessible concrete trail with lighting and shaded benches around Murphy Park, following damage sustained during the June 2023 tornado.

Altogether, through the tireless efforts of LGS staff, these initiatives brought a remarkable \$1,275,000 in park grant funding to Panhandle communities in 2026, further solidifying parks development as a cornerstone of LGS's continued success in delivering impactful, community-focused projects.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The PRPC was designated as the Economic Development District for the Texas Panhandle by the U.S. Economic Development Administration in 1978. In this role, PRPC leads regional economic development planning, facilitates training and economic development initiatives, and provides communities with grant writing assistance and compliance support for EDA-funded projects.

In summer 2026, the City of Perryton and the Perryton Community Development Corporation broke ground on the Rebuild Perryton Incubator, supported by an approximately \$2.7 million EDA Disaster Fund grant. The project will provide retail space for businesses that were displaced or whose operations were affected by the June 2023 tornado that destroyed part of downtown Perryton, enabling them to reopen on the 100 Block of Main Street.

The Dumas Economic Development Corporation also completed utility and road infrastructure improvements in the Dumas Business Park, supported by a \$1 million EDA investment. The project has enabled business openings and supports continued development within the industrial park.



Micro-Loan Programs

PRPC has administered two micro-loan programs since the early 2000s. The Amarillo MSA Micro-Loan Program, originally capitalized by four local banks, serves small businesses in Potter and Randall counties. The Rural Micro-Loan Program, originally capitalized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), serves small businesses across the remaining twenty-four counties in the Panhandle region.

The Panhandle Micro-Loan Committee approved one new Amarillo MSA Micro-Loan to Salted Light Event Services, a Texas Panhandle-based lighting and audio-visual support company. The loan provided capital for equipment purchases needed to launch operations.

REGIONAL WATER & FLOOD PLANNING

Region 1 Canadian-Upper Red Regional Flood Planning Group

The PRPC continued serving as the sponsor and administrative agent for the Region 1 Canadian-Upper Red Regional Flood Planning Group (RFPG) during development of the 2028 Regional Flood Plan. Regional flood planning efforts continued throughout the year in coordination with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), local governments, stakeholders, and technical consultants to evaluate regional flood risks, identify flood mitigation opportunities, and support long-term flood resiliency across the Texas Panhandle.

During the reporting period, the RFPG advanced several major planning tasks associated with the second regional flood planning cycle, including ongoing Flood Management Evaluations (FMEs), development of draft plan chapters, and prioritization of flood mitigation needs for small and rural communities. Current evaluations include the Potter County Drainage Master Plan, Wilbarger County Drainage Master Plan, and a Region-Wide Dam Assessment intended to support identification of future flood mitigation projects and strategies.

Planning activities remain on schedule toward completion of the draft 2028 Regional Flood Plan in May 2027 and final adoption in January 2028. The second cycle regional flood planning contract administered through the TWDB provides approximately \$2.3 million in funding to support regional flood planning activities, technical analysis, public outreach, and development of flood mitigation strategies throughout the Canadian-Upper Red River Basin.



Region A Panhandle Water Planning Group

PRPC has served as the administrative entity and regional sponsor for the Region A Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) since April 17, 1998, when the PRPC Board of Directors approved an agreement designating the agency to oversee the regional water planning process. Since that time, PRPC Local Government Services staff has assisted in the development of six Regional Water Plans completed in 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021, and 2026.

Regional water planning occurs in five-year cycles and includes projecting water demands over a 50-year planning horizon, assessing existing water supplies, identifying future shortages and needs, recommending water management strategies and projects, and coordinating with water providers, local governments, and stakeholders across the region.



Region A Panhandle Water Planning Group



On September 24, 2025, the Region A PWPG formally adopted the 2026 Region A Regional Water Plan, completing the sixth cycle of regional water planning for the Texas Panhandle. Following adoption, PRPC staff coordinated posting of the adopted plan to the Region A PWPG website and initiated final contract closeout activities associated with the sixth cycle planning grant administered through the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

In February 2026, TWDB released planning guidelines and a Request for Applications for the 2026–2031 planning cycle. Acting on behalf of the PWPG, PRPC applied for \$321,098 in initial Phase I funding to support early planning activities, including municipal and non-municipal water demand projections and public participation efforts. PRPC staff also began preparations for procurement of a technical consultant through a Request for Qualifications process to support timely implementation of the next regional water planning cycle.

Groundwater Management Area #1

The Groundwater Management Area -1 (Joint Planning Committee) has worked in conjunction with the PRPC (Sponsor) and INTERA, Inc. (Technical Consultant) in the joint planning for the development and adoption of Desired Future Conditions. The data and modeling collected and developed through this process help shape the regulation of groundwater use within the region and are incorporated in the Region A Regional Water Plan.



\$773,270

WATER PLANNING

6th Cycle Funding
TWDB Contract



\$2,305,100

FLOOD PLANNING

2nd Cycle Funding
TWDB Contract

NUMBER OF MEETINGS OCTOBER 2025 TO 2026



REGIONAL SERVICES

The Regional Government Services consist of Emergency Preparedness, Solid Waste Management, Criminal Justice, and Homeland Security. By working together on a regional level, we are able to support the Panhandle through workshops, seminars, facilitation of round-table discussions, table-top exercises, grant writing assistance, project administration, and more.



Left to right: Katrena Volden, Victoria Isbell, Lori Gunn (RGS Director), Shane Brown, and Abby Sanders

HOMELAND SECURITY PROJECTS



The City of Amarillo Police Department (APD) received an updated bomb Explosive Detection K-9 (EDK9) truck to safely transport the EDK9 as dispatched. The APD Bomb Squad is the only bomb squad in the Panhandle. The next closest squads are located in Lubbock or Oklahoma City. APD has agreed to respond under mutual aid to incidents throughout the Panhandle where the capabilities of the bomb squad are needed. When responding to potential IED incidents, the APD Bomb Squad relies heavily on its EDK9 to locate explosive residue before robots are deployed to safely assess suspect packages found on-scene to determine if they are explosive. The addition of a EDK9 unit will enable the bomb squad to quickly and safely assist on scenes around the region. The APD Bomb Squad is a Type 1 squad and this project will help the squad in maintaining that status, as well as continue to serve the entire region.



Amarillo Regional Crime Center or ARCC opened in 2025. The relationship between criminal activity in Amarillo and the rest of the Panhandle is one and the same. The ARCC is continuing to build out technology to assist with criminal cases. The ARCC received funding for additional cameras in high crime areas of the city.

HAZARD MITIGATION FEMA REGIONAL PROJECTS

RGS staff has assisted with the development of applications for various hazard mitigation projects. To date, we have seen 15 projects get approval from FEMA. PRPC is working with jurisdictions to implement these projects that will reduce risks, loss of life, and damage to property.

The hazard mitigation projects tie into the needs listed in a jurisdiction's hazard mitigation plan. With PRPC having staff working on the plans, it makes a smoother transition to assist with project administration for our jurisdictions.



HAZARD MITIGATION FEMA PLAN UPDATES

The staff has diligently worked on hazard mitigation plan updates this year. Staff has scheduled and conducted hazard mitigation planning meetings with jurisdictions. They are in the final stages of finishing the current plans for FEMA approval and then adoption by the jurisdictions.

PANCOM



Panhandle Area Regional Information System (PARIS)

An aerial photograph showing a tall, lattice-structured radio tower with a red and white striped pattern. The tower stands prominently in a suburban neighborhood with numerous houses, trees with autumn foliage, and commercial buildings. The scene is captured during the golden hour, with warm sunlight illuminating the landscape.

MACC

T-ACC600 and T-ACC601 Courses

44

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Annual PREP Conference

PRPC staff hosted our annual PREP Conference at the Amarillo Civic Center, where we had 203 attendees, including emergency management coordinators, law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, public works, industry partners, volunteers, local government officials, as well as state agencies. The conference had four tracks that attendees could attend sessions in, giving a more individualized approach to discipline. The annual conference continues to draw in attendees that learn from speaker experiences whether incidents at a local or national level.



SEVERE WINTER WEATHER TABLETOP EXERCISE

In January 2026, RGS hosted a Regional Severe Winter Weather Tabletop Exercise. PRPC staff had worked with FEMA's National Exercise Division over the previous year to develop the tabletop exercise for our region's first responders. The tabletop exercise brought together the National Weather Service, Panhandle RAC, 211, and FEMA personnel to develop scenarios that the region is accustomed to seeing so that our first responders could have open discussion to plan and prepare for any future winter weather events



CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The Office of the Governor's Public Safety Office contracts with the Councils of Government to oversee criminal justice matters within the region. In 2026, the region had the following criminal justice projects:

8 - VICTIM SERVICE PROJECTS FUNDED	\$1,752,654.56
1 - FELONY DV PROSECUTOR PROJECT	\$121,801.00
1 - TRUANCY PREVENTION PROJECT FUNDED	\$99,889.02
6 - LAW ENFORCEMENT PROJECTS FUNDED	\$373,233.28

The criminal justice program includes the Panhandle Regional Law Enforcement Academy. The PRPC awarded eight (8) scholarships to recruits to attend the basic peace officer academy. In 2026, we saw the 132nd class graduate 13 recruits and the 133rd has started with ten recruits. All are fully TCOLE licensed upon graduation and ready to sign to an agency.

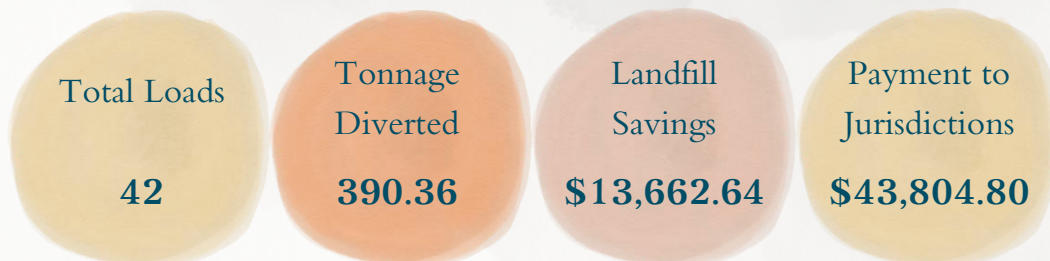
In addition to the academy, PRPC contracts with Amarillo College to provide on-going continuing education to our region's TCOLE officers to maintain their licensure. To date we have had 3,560 hours of In-service courses for 295 of the region's TCOLE officers.

The contract with Amarillo College is not limited to TCOLE peace officers, we also hosted a regional TCOLE Basic County Corrections Course where 43 newly minted jailers graduated after passing their 120 hours of coursework.

REGIONAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Each year, funding from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) enables the region to expand its waste diversion efforts, reducing the amount of material sent to local landfills. Several jurisdictions have broadened the range of materials accepted at their recycling facilities, reflecting ongoing progress across the region.

In 2026, the region as a whole has reported the following:



In FY 2026, the following received solid waste grants to implement projects in their cities:

- The City of Hereford held scrap tire clean-up events to remove scrap tires from illegal dump sites. They partnered with Deaf Smith County to expand their reach.
- The City of Higgins received a grant for a new skid steer. The city was able to build upon last year's efforts to clean up wood piles, broken limbs, and yard debris. The skid steer enables them to clean up the piles and get them to their woodchipper much more easily.
- The City of Howardwick is working to clean up illegal dump sites. They received a grant for roll-off containers to remove the trash from these sites and have it recycled.
- The City of Stratford received new yard waste containers to maintain their yard waste collection efforts and keep residents from combining their trash and yard waste. The yard waste is composted for use in flower beds around town.
- Swisher County was able to hold five scrap tire clean-up events. By working with each of their cities, the county recycled several tons of tires.



REGIONAL 9-1-1

The Regional 9-1-1 Network is responsible for the maintenance and ongoing improvement of the network, equipment, and software needed to deliver every 9-1-1 call in the Texas Panhandle. The 9-1-1 Network also assists public safety professionals with software and equipment training, certification requirements, and intra-regional collaboration. In support of emergency responders in the Texas Panhandle, the Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network provides enhanced location capabilities through the rural addressing program. Using state-of-the-art Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and digital aerial photography, the program provides physical addresses for homes and businesses in the unincorporated areas of the 24-county program.



Left to right: Khasi Campos, Mandi Jones, Craig Wolf, Melissa Caulkins, and John Schaumburg (9-1-1 Director),

9-1-1 CALL-HANDLING EQUIPMENT (CHE) SOLUTION

As technology continues to advance, the Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network has taken significant steps to meet the evolving demands of modern public safety communications. Alongside this successful migration, we have comprehensively upgraded every circuit and piece of hardware region-wide, including backup batteries and network infrastructure—to deliver greater resiliency and operational reliability. These enhancements strengthen dispatch speed and response times by offering superior redundancy, faster recovery, and unwavering connectivity, even under the most demanding conditions.

The new cloud-native, modular architecture of the CHE further enhances our capabilities by enabling seamless, on-the-fly updates and greater customization moving forward. Equipped with AI-powered language transcription and translation, the system assists dispatchers in serving non-English speakers more effectively. The intuitive interface also allows callers to instantly share live video, photographs, and precise location data with call-takers, information that can be forwarded directly to first responders in the field. This marks a true evolution to Next-Generation 9-1-1 across the Panhandle region.



The Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network educates the public on the proper use of the 9-1-1 system, including how emergency calls are transmitted and routed, what callers can expect during a 9-1-1 call, the effective use of mobile devices, and when to use non-emergency numbers.



DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER

For more than three decades, the PRPC Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) has helped individuals, families, businesses, and organizations find constructive paths through conflict. Through mediation services provided by trained volunteer mediators and the Program Coordinator, the DRC offers the people of the Texas Panhandle an accessible, respectful, and effective way to resolve conflicts while reducing the emotional and financial costs often associated with legal disputes. The DRC's roots trace back to 1989, when a dedicated group of community leaders recognized the need for a local resource that would help citizens resolve disputes outside the courtroom. The Center was founded through the vision and leadership of individuals including Elisha Demerson, Bill Thomas, Judge David Gleason, Judge Darrell Carey, Judge E. J. Hail, Judge Cliff Roberts, Danny Hill, Randall Sherrod, Charles Warford, Harold Hook, Judge Janis Thorn, Richard Darmon, Dr. George Miller, Nancy Garms, Linda Craven, and Rev. Jacinto Alderete, who served as the first Advisory Board members.



Left to right: Kate Freeman and Trenton Taylor (DRC Director)



Attorney Dave Kemp
Chairman

DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

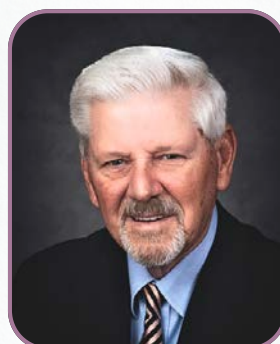
The Dispute Resolution Center Advisory Board provides leadership, guidance, and community insight to support the Center's mission of promoting peaceful and effective conflict resolution throughout the Texas Panhandle. Board members contribute their knowledge and experience to strengthen mediation services, increase community awareness, and ensure programs remain responsive to regional needs. Through their service, Advisory Board members help expand access to alternatives to litigation, encouraging collaboration, communication, and positive outcomes for individuals, families, businesses, and communities.



Dr. Tacy Gamel



Judge Joanne Garcia-Flores



Commissioner H.R. Kelly



Judge Dee Johnson



Judge Dale Rabe Jr.



Attorney Vaavia Rudd



Judge Nancy Tanner



Judge Phil Vanderpool



"The courts of this country should not be the places where resolution of disputes begins. They should be the places where the disputes end after alternative methods of resolving disputes have been considered and tried." Sandra Day O'Connor

DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER PROGRAM COORDINATOR

In December, Kate Freeman joined the DRC as Program Coordinator. Having completed both Basic Mediation Training and Advanced Family Mediation Training through the DRC in 2023, Kate brings a passion for conflict resolution and a strong commitment to the DRC's mission of providing accessible and affordable dispute resolution services throughout the Panhandle. Kate is a member of the Texas Association of Mediators, a Candidate for Credentialed Mediator with the Texas Mediator Credentialing Association, and represents the DRC with the Texas DRC Directors Council. Professional development continues to be a priority, and Kate attended the Texas Association of Mediators Conference in Austin this spring.



MEDIATIONS

Their vision remains at the heart of the DRC today, as the DRC continues to serve as a valuable resource for communities across the Texas Panhandle. This year, the DRC handled more than 100 mediation cases from 15 counties.

While sixty-five percent of those cases involved the Department of Family and Protective Services, the DRC also assisted parties in resolving a wide variety of disputes, including boundary disagreements, family reunification matters, landlord-tenant conflicts, and various contract disputes.

The majority of mediations were conducted virtually through Zoom, although the DRC remains committed to offering in-person mediation services for those who prefer a face-to-face setting.



PRE-TRIAL DIVERSION

The DRC also continued administering its Pre-Trial Diversion Program in partnership with Randall County Justice of the Peace Precinct 1. The program provides eligible minors cited for certain alcohol-related offenses with an opportunity to accept responsibility, complete educational and community-based requirements, and ultimately move forward without a lasting mark on their record.

By emphasizing accountability, education, and personal growth, the program offers young people a second chance while helping families and courts achieve positive outcomes.



OUTREACH

Community outreach remained an important focus throughout the year. In addition to presentations and participation at Rotary clubs, other civic organizations, and 2-1-1 community events, the DRC partnered with Amarillo College's Legal Studies Program to host a spring-semester intern.

Ashley Lundegreen gained firsthand experience observing mediations, assisting with outreach efforts, and learning about the important role mediation plays in strengthening communities and reducing strain on the legal system.



MEDIATION VOLUNTEERS

The DRC continued its commitment to developing the next generation of mediators by offering 40-Hour Basic and 30-Hour Advanced Family Mediation Training, providing participants with valuable conflict resolution skills that meet Texas Mediator Credentialing Association standards. Following training, new mediators gain experience through observation and co-mediation before serving independently. The success of these efforts is made possible by the dedicated volunteer mediators who generously share their time, talent, and expertise to serve families, businesses, and communities throughout the region. This year, the DRC proudly recognized Lee Haas as New Mediator of the Year and Lydia Miller as Volunteer Mediator of the Year, honoring their outstanding commitment to service and the DRC's mission.



As the DRC looks ahead, it remains focused on building stronger connections throughout the region, increasing awareness of mediation and conflict resolution services, and identifying new opportunities to meet the evolving needs of the communities it serves. Guided by the vision of its founders and supported by dedicated volunteers, community partners, and local leaders, the DRC is well positioned to continue expanding its impact and helping Panhandle residents find constructive paths through conflict for years to come.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance staff provides professional accounting services necessary to establish and maintain financial policies, practices, and controls, ensuring the highest degree of financial accountability and safeguarding all funds entrusted to PRPC.

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2024. This was the 40st consecutive year that the PRPC has achieved this prestigious award. To be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government must publish a comprehensive annual financial report that is easily readable and efficiently organized. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.



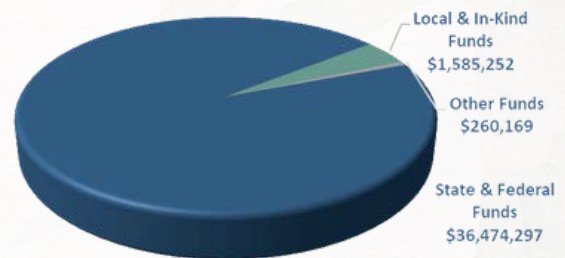
Left to right: Diana Green, Jaden Eder, Trenton Taylor (Finance and Deputy Director), Cristy Henderson, and Heike Todd

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- Financial accountability to the public, board of directors, membership, state and federal agencies.
- Development of the PRPC Annual Budget.
- Assist in multiple monitoring reviews.
- Completion of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.
- Completion of annual independent audit.
- Management of all organizations' fixed assets and expendable equipment.
- Provision of timely financial trends and opportunities.
- Management of employee benefits.
- Prepare payroll and related tax forms.
- Maintain financial integrity.
- Ensure adherence to all federal/state fiscal policies, rules, and regulations.
- Development of cost allocation plans.
- Maintain an adequate system of internal controls.

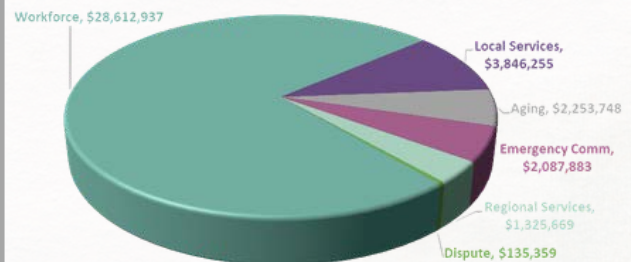
SOURCE OF REVENUE	PERCENTAGE	AMOUNT
State & Federal Funds	95.0%	\$36,474,297
Local & In Kind	4.0%	\$1,585,252
Other	1.0%	\$260,169
		Total: \$38,319,718

SOURCES OF REVENUE FISCAL YEAR 2026



EXPENDITURES BY DIVISION	PERCENTAGE	AMOUNT
Workforce Development	74.8%	\$28,612,937
Local Services	10.0%	\$3,846,255
Aging Services	5.9%	\$2,256,748
Emergency Communications	5.5%	\$2,087,883
Regional Services	3.4%	\$1,325,669
Dispute	0.4%	\$135,359
		Total: \$38,264,851

EXPENDITURES BY DEPARTMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026
REPRESENTING 70 + PROGRAMS



2026 STAFF SERVICE AWARDS

SHANE BROWN

Regional Emergency Communications and Preparedness Manager

15 years

For the past 15 years, Shane has managed the Panhandle Emergency Communications System (PANCOM), a regional public safety radio network serving the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle. PANCOM provides first responders and emergency service agencies with a reliable, interoperable communications system that is critical to public safety operations across the region.

The PANCOM system buildout began in 2007, and Shane assumed leadership of the project in 2010. Under his management, the network was officially completed in 2012. Although the initial build was finished, Shane has continued to oversee ongoing enhancements, system upgrades, and technology improvements to ensure PANCOM remains a dependable and modern communications platform capable of meeting the evolving needs of emergency responders.



CRAIG WOLF

Regional 9-1-1 Network/Information Technology Program Coordinator

10 years

Craig Wolf joined the Planning Commission on July 13, 2016, as the 9-1-1 Network Information Technology Program Coordinator. Over the past 10 years, Craig has been responsible for maintaining the computer systems and servers for the Planning Commission and 9-1-1 Network. He has become an expert in managing our complex virtual server environment, individual computers, websites, firewalls, and networking components. Before joining the Planning Commission, Craig gained many years of valuable experience working for Chesapeake Energy as a customer support field agent in Wyoming.

Since joining our organization, Craig has spent many late nights troubleshooting and resolving complex routing and communications issues to ensure our daily operations continue to run smoothly. Craig also has exceptional people skills and has become an invaluable resource when it comes to the software and hardware needs of our organization.

His technical expertise, dedication, and willingness to go above and beyond have made him an important part of the Planning Commission team. Outside of work, Craig enjoys spending time with his daughter, Alyx, whether they are cooking together or enjoying the outdoors. Before long, he will also be taking on the next big challenge: teaching her how to drive!

TERRIE CAMPBELL
Area Agency on Aging
Benefits Councilor

10 years

Terrie is deeply committed to serving the older adult population. She has served as a Certified Benefits Counselor with the Area Agency on Aging for 10 years, providing trusted guidance and support to Medicare beneficiaries. Throughout her tenure with PRPC, she has connected individuals with valuable community agencies, resources, and networking opportunities to help meet their needs.

She developed the concept for quarterly education seminars with Destination Medicare and self-help DIY Medicare Comparisons to help individuals who are new to Medicare make informed healthcare decisions. Over the years, she has also collaborated closely with the Texas Legal Services Center to provide community education on legal issues affecting older adults through the Empowering Older Adults and Power in the Community conferences.

Her passion for direct service is reflected in her dedication to Medicare counseling, empowering older adults through education, along with mentoring and training future Benefits Counselors. Terrie is married to her husband Jon of 40 years, mother to two adult sons, and two big dogs. She enjoys traveling, cooking, and playing games with friends.



DANA HOYLE
Area Agency on Aging
Managing Local Ombudsman

5 years

As a late bloomer, Dana entered the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program as an intern during her final year of study at Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) in 2019–2020. She graduated virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic, earning a Bachelor of Social Work, magna cum laude, at the age of 58. In June 2021, she joined AAA as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman under the direction of Melissa Whitaker, MLO. She immediately began visiting half of the long-term care facilities across the Texas Panhandle, helping ease the workload she carried during the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic, while also assuming the role of Volunteer Coordinator. In December 2022, she was promoted to Managing Local Ombudsman (MLO). She remembers feeling terrified that she wasn't ready for the responsibility, but it has become the greatest blessing of her career.

Over the past four years, the Ombudsman Volunteer Program has flourished. Today, she has the privilege of leading 8 certified volunteer ombudsmen who are dedicated to protecting the rights and well-being of residents across 39 long-term care facilities. It is an honor to advocate for some of the community's most vulnerable individuals, many of whom have no one else to speak on their behalf. During her tenure as MLO, the program has made 2,235 facility visits, participated in 80 care plan meetings, provided information and assistance to more than 2,200 individuals, and protected dozens of residents from inappropriate or unfair discharges. In May of this year, she successfully completed the program monitoring with no findings. While she is proud of the program, she is most proud of the volunteers. The volunteers are a dedicated, close-knit team of compassionate individuals who consistently place the needs of others above their own. Their commitment inspires Dana every day. She truly loves her work and considers it a privilege to serve both the volunteers and the long-term care residents of the Texas Panhandle.

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Robert Mahaffee - Spearman
Jessica Mann - Pampa
Kalee Massey - Panhandle
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John Spearman - White Deer
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The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission sincerely appreciates our community sponsors for their generous support and commitment to the Texas Panhandle. Their contributions reflect a shared interest in strengthening our communities and supporting initiatives that benefit residents, businesses, and local organizations throughout the region.

We are grateful for the opportunity to recognize organizations and businesses that invest in the communities they serve. Their support helps enhance regional events, outreach, and community engagement while contributing to a stronger, more connected region. The Planning Commission values these community partnerships and thanks our sponsors for their continued support and investment in the Texas Panhandle.

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"Rise in Canadian River, Sept. 8th '09. Canadian ... Texas."

Photographer - George A. Addison

(Photo use graciously donated by the River Valley Pioneer Museum in Canadian, TX)

Mr. George A. Addison captured the image of four women observing a dramatic rise on the Canadian River as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) train crosses the trestle bridge leading into town. The AT&SF was one of the largest Class 1 railroads in the United States between 1859 and 1996.