

PRESS RELEASE

ETCOG and the Marshall Depot Board of Directors to Hold Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Friday, December 13 for New ADA-Compliant Elevator Lift at the Historic Marshall Depot

Marshall, TX, December 9, 2013: East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) and the Marshall Depot Board of Directors cordially invite members of the public to attend a special ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the newly-completed ADA compliant elevator lift at the Marshall Depot on Friday, December 13, 2013 at 11:00am.

The brief ceremony will be held at the tunnel entrance to the historic Marshall Depot, which is on the south side of the Depot, adjacent to the parking lot. The Marshall Depot is located at 800 North Washington Street in downtown Marshall, Texas.



SANTA TAKES A "TEST DRIVE" ON THE RECENTLY-COMPLETED ADA-COMPLIANT ELEVATOR LIFT AT THE MARSHALL DEPOT. THE PUBLIC IS CORDIALLY INVITED TO A RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY FOR THE ELEVATOR LIFT AT THE MARSHALL DEPOT THIS FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13 AT 11:00AM. (PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA ANDERSON)

"The project to make the south entrance to the Marshall Depot ADA-compliant with a workable elevator lift for visitors to the Depot and those traveling on Amtrak has been a truly collaborative effort and many people should be thanked," stated John Hedrick, Director of Transportation for the East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG).

ETCOG received a \$109,846 grant from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and served as the fiscal agent for the grant which funded a major portion of the project.

"We thank TxDOT for providing the major portion of the funding for this project, as well as Union Pacific who gave the Marshall Depot Board \$5,000 in funding to assist with the project. We also want to thank the Depot Board for voting to provide a funding match on the project of up to \$5,319.80."

We also want to extend a very special thank you to the members of the Marshall Depot volunteer Board of Directors who, as our partners on this project, played an instrumental role in working with us to make sure that the

design and building of the lift would meet the accessibility needs at the south entrance of the Depot now and long into the future."

Mr. Hedrick noted that special thanks should go to Marshall Depot Board Chairman Robert Wood. Wood was voted board chair in January, 2013 and took a keen interest and leadership role in finding the most effective solution to the design and building of the lift.

Depot Board member Rachel Myric also played an important role in that she suggested that David Sellers, the owner of D&T Custom Iron Works in Marshall, come to the Depot to evaluate the accessibility issue at the tunnel entrance of the Depot. It was Mr. Sellers who developed the concept that became the solution.

Robert Wood stated, "David Sellers was the person who devised the concept of extending a walkway over the east side of the Depot tunnel stairway and installing a small elevator that would then take visitors who could not use the stairs and who needed accessibility the short distance down to the Depot's tunnel level."

Wood added, "We were very grateful when David presented that design. When everyone saw it, we all said, "That's it. That's the solution."

Once this design was established, ETCOG and the Marshall Depot Board worked with Troy Brown of Thacker | Davis Architects, Inc. to develop biddable specs based on David Sellers' concept.

Several proposals from construction companies were received, with the contract awarded to Slone Construction Company of Marshall, with Ross Slone overseeing the walkway and lift construction. The lift was installed and received approval from the state inspector on October 30.

John Hedrick also expressed appreciation to Jim Pedison, a mechanical engineer who has served as a volunteer on the Marshall Depot Board for 25 years. "Jim donated a substantial number of hours of in-kind pro bono services as a consulting engineer on this project and we appreciate the work that he did and the work that all the volunteers did on this project."

Mr. Hedrick also expressed appreciation to ETCOG Executive Director David Cleveland, also noting the contribution of Depot Board member Mary Hendricks who played a key role in the early stages of the project in pursuing the initial funding from TXDOT and Union Pacific.

Hedrick also noted his appreciation for the contribution made by Depot Board members Richard Anderson, Griff Hubbard, and Harold Hoffmeister.

Robert Wood stated, "We want to thank ETCOG, the members of the Marshall Depot Board for all their volunteer time and service, Union Pacific, David Sellers, and all who worked to make the final product of this lift a success. We also want to thank Amtrak and EasTexConnects for being supportive of this project."

Longtime Marshall Depot board member Griff Hubbard, who also serves on the regional transportation committee EasTexConnects and has worked for Amtrak for 43 years in both the Marshall and Longview Depots, provided this historical perspective and look to the future.

"The completion of the lift at the south entrance of the Marshall Depot is a great achievement and an excellent first step in accomplishing the Depot's three-step goal of attaining, as an operating rail station, full accessibility for checked baggage and express," stated Mr. Hubbard.

Hubbard continued, "Earlier this year, we made a presentation with regard to the need for the elevation of the Marshall Depot train platform to be raised so that it is ADA-compliant. This platform improvement will be step 2 in this project to make the Marshall Depot fully accessible, with step 3 being our taking the steps to provide

improved access from train-side to the waiting room. We're in the process of taking the next necessary and collaborative steps to continue to move forward on this project to make the Marshall Depot fully accessible."

About ETCOG

The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) is a voluntary association of counties, cities, school districts and special districts within the fourteen-county East Texas region. ETCOG assists local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. Established in 1970, ETCOG, either directly, or through its contractors, provides programs and services for East Texas seniors, employers, and job seekers. ETCOG and its contractors also build the 9-1-1 emergency call delivery system, provide peace officer training and homeland security planning services; and deliver rural transportation services, business finance programs, and environmental grant funding for the region.

###