



PRESS RELEASE

Coalition of 35 Counties Sign Joint Resolution to Support Work of the I-369/I-69 Local Planning

Kilgore, TX, March 12, 2015: A recently signed joint resolution between the policy boards of the Ark-Tex, East Texas, and Deep East Texas Rural Planning Organizations represents the first formal cooperative action of the thirty five (35) county East Texas Coalition. The resolution supports the work of the I-369/I-69 Harrison County/Marshall work group which is tasked to determine options for development of possible interstate route options. The East Texas Coalition was initially endorsed by the ETCOG Executive Committee by resolution in December of 2010 and subsequently endorsed by the East Texas Chief Elected Officials Board in April of 2011. The overall aim of the coalition is to take rural transportation planning to the next level by coordinating and collaborating on interregional projects.

The joint resolution states that the three RPOs, under the umbrella of the East Texas Coalition, will coordinate actions to provide coordinated and prioritized transportation planning for the entire thirty-five county northeast Texas area. They will support locally determined route options for the I-69/I369 route through Harrison County and the City of Marshall while supporting the mission and goals of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) by enhancing safety, addressing congestion, and connecting the communities.

"East Texas Coalition members have all said for the first time, 'This is a project we want to endorse,' because it benefits us all," said ETCOG Executive Director, David Cleveland. "This collaborative effort enhances the economic development and creation of jobs in each of the regions."

East Texas Rural Planning Organization member, and I-369/I-69 work group member, Harrison County Judge Hugh Taylor said, "Because of this coalition, we now have a mechanism to collectively get behind projects that benefit multiple regions. This is an excellent example of what elected officials from different regions can accomplish when we all work together. We need more teamwork like this in the future."

To see a copy of the joint resolution, [click here](#). For more information, contact ETCOG's Director of Transportation, John Hedrick, at (903) 281-6490 or John.Hedrick@etcog.org.

About the East Texas Rural Planning Organization

Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), as recognized by the Texas Department of Transportation, have been established across Texas and the nation to empower local officials to address and prioritize transportation issues. The East Texas Rural Planning Organization policy board was officially formed in 2011 and consists of the county judge (or appointed member of the commissioner's court) from each county, the mayors of the Cities of Longview and Tyler and the district engineers from each of the three TxDOT districts serving our region. The East Texas RPO is administered by the East Texas Council of Governments.

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.

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