

Improving the Landscape



PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

2009 ANNUAL REPORT





40
years

Though the Panhandle, with its regional population of 402,862 living on the West Texas prairie may seem small in comparison to those living in large metropolitan areas, residents who live here consider this region “their world.” When a tiny seed is planted, such as the one that created the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission, something important emerges. Roots grow where the resources — such as water, oxygen, and minerals — are available. Once the initial root completes its job of anchoring the plant to the soil, the secondary roots begin to branch off. Roots don’t grow toward anything or in any particular direction. Instead, root growth is opportunistic in its timing and its orientation.

The Planning Commission, like a tree growing from a tiny seed, has been developing a strong root system since its opportunistic timing four decades ago. Our roots equate to the hundreds of programs developed and sustained, the new partnerships and collaborations we have developed, the funding sources we have tapped to help underwrite our activities, the employees we have recruited and retained, and the hundreds of men and women who have volunteered to help improve our region. It is not uncommon for a tree’s root system to have a much larger diameter than the height of the tree. The PRPC’s root system has grown exponentially through the past 40 years, and is symbolic of the Planning Commission’s growth, development and success. 🍃



Jay Mayden,
PRPC Board Chair
Childress County Judge

As the title of this report suggests, our member partners in concert with the PRPC staff, have been Improving the Landscape in our region for the past 40 years. As you read the information and look at the photos, you will read about improvements and key milestones during the past 12 months in the numerous and diverse programs. You will also take a trip down memory lane, as you look at the decade-specific pages that include photos and highlights from the four decades of accomplishments, plus the photographs of Board Chairs and Executive Directors.

The position of Board Chair has given me a birds-eye view of the inner workings of the PRPC. It's hard to imagine the number of responsibilities, requests, and initiatives the staff handles in a single day. Each staff member wears many hats and juggles many projects at once. They have learned how to make their heavy workload invisible to those they serve, treating each individual and their needs with the utmost importance.

As goes the country, so goes our region. The U.S. is facing many tough issues in the coming months and years. What makes the news on the national stage, such as homeland security or healthcare reform, impacts us at the regional and local levels. The PRPC staff stays abreast of all federal and state programs, laws and new initiatives so that they can provide the most knowledgeable counsel to us – the PRPC members.

I'm convinced that tough issues and limited resources will always be a factor in the governmental landscape. What's important is that we are well positioned to look at any problems we face, identify the best solutions possible, and implement them as a team. From what I have observed this past year, we are up to such challenges. I encourage each of you to get more involved in your local and regional government. You, your family and your community will be better for it. 🍀





**Jay Mayden, Chairman,
Judge,
County of Childress;**

**Zelda Lang, Vice Chair,
Councilwoman,
City of Dalhart;**

**Wayne Nance,
Secretary/Treasurer,
Judge, County of Briscoe**

Don Allred, Judge, County of Oldham;
Tom Bailiff, Greenbelt Municipal and Industrial Water Authority;
Juan Cantu, Commissioner, County of Lipscomb;
Vernon Cook, Judge, County of Roberts;
Pete DeSantiago, Minority Citizens Representative, Perryton;
Brian Gillispie, Mayor, City of Spearman;
**Bob Gober, North Rolling Plains Resource Conservation and
Development District;**
Ronnie Gordon, Judge, County of Hartley;
David Hale, Mayor, City of Perryton;
Jack Hall, Judge, County of Donley;
Saul Hernandez, Minority Citizens Representative, Amarillo;
John James, Judge, County of Collingsworth;
Harold Keeter, Judge, County of Swisher;
David Logan, Commissioner, City of Canyon;
Debra McCartt, Mayor, City of Amarillo;
Gene Parker, Commissioner, County of Randall;
Harvey Perez, Minority Citizens Representative, Hart;
Martha Rincon, Commissioner, City of Hereford;
Tom Simons, Judge, County of Deaf Smith;
Tom Velasquez, Minority Citizens Representative, Wheeler;
Arthur Ware, Judge, County of Potter;
Tresa Whaley, Minority Citizens Representative, Vega





Gary Pitner
PRPC Executive Director

Forty years have passed since the Articles of Agreement creating the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission were executed. In these past four decades, the Planning Commission has grown from a small entity with a \$60,000 annual budget to an organization that employs more than 44 professionals, coordinates the resources of 300 citizen volunteers, and oversees an annual budget in excess of \$22 million.

Our programs and services have changed through the years in order to best meet the needs of our member local governments. As changes in focus have taken place in Washington, D.C, Austin and here at home, program initiatives have shifted. During tough economic times, companies, for example, have laid individuals off. The Planning Commission has stepped in to help retrain these men and women so they can continue to find viable work and live in the Panhandle. At other times, we have assisted in bringing new companies to the region, working with their leadership to recruit and train qualified workers to fill positions. In terms of the economy, workforce needs, aging programs, criminal justice, and many other areas of impact, our region, through the prism of the PRPC, has experienced 40 years of challenges and successes.

However, because this organization was founded on solid footing in 1969, much like a tree that develops strong roots as it emerges from a seed, the Planning Commission has remained a vibrant organization that has faced its unique challenges with perseverance and creativity, and welcomed its successes as a sign of improvement for the region.

We certainly owe a debt of gratitude to the dedicated leaders who forty years ago believed in the seedling called the Planning Commission and provided the necessary care and feeding to the young organization in its critical early growth stages. The men and women who came after those original founders are to be commended as well. Every decade the PRPC staff has been fortunate to work with some of the brightest, most concerned individuals whose first priority was to make this region the best possible place to live and work.

On behalf of today's PRPC staff, and the professionals who have been a part of this organization in the past, I want to say to our local leaders and their families, thank you for entrusting us to administer programs that have improved the health, safety and welfare of our residents. Thank you for your willingness to pitch in when more hands are needed on deck. Thank you for always believing the Panhandle, while a great place to be, can be improved for future generations by working together today. 🌱

Jamie Allen
Gracie Aragon
Andy Arias
Cindy Bagwell
Sharee Bailey
Cindy Boone
Heike Bowen
Scott Caldwell
Terrie Campbell
Dave Cann
Melissa Carter
Pam Coffey

John Kiehl
Sharla Leggett
Julie Lyles
Judy McClendon
Tanya Mock
Doug Nelson
Nancy Nickles
Michael Peters
Gary Pitner



Pamela Deemer
Tom Dressler
John Dubina
Jonathan Ellis
Edmond Esparza
Pamela Frisk
Yvette Gaytan
Greg Green
Russell Green
Elizabeth Gresham
Lisa Hancock
Leslie Hardin
Sean Hardman
Cristy Henderson
Kyle Ingham

Chuck Rivas
Rebecca Rusk
Janet Schulte
Marcus Smith
Elizabeth True
Stacey Urbanczyk
Teana Waller
Tony White
Inger Williams
Pam Zenick

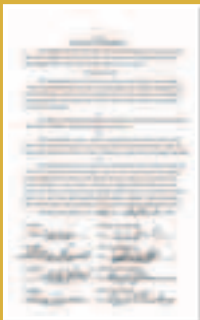


Improving the Landscape for



From 1969 to 1979...

- A \$60,000 annual budget was adopted by the PRPC in 1970.
- PRPC designated as regions health planning group in 1971.
- In 1973 the Regional "Manpower Planning" function was vested in PRPC.
- The Board authorized the development of the region's first Economic Development Plan on May 23, 1973.
- Water Quality Management Plan began on the Canadian River Basin.
- Governor Preston Smith asked the PRPC to begin working with the Sate Committee on Aging on January 6, 1971; the Board unanimously accepted the Governor's invitation.



First official meeting of the Planning Commission was held on October 20, 1969. Its initial membership consisted of the cities of Amarillo and Canyon and Potter and Randall Counties.



1969-1970 Chair
R. G. Mills,
Commissioner,
City of Amarillo



1970 - Regional
Law Enforcement
Academy



1971 Chair
Dr. D. E. Hackley,
Mayor,
City of Spearman



1972 Chair
E. B. Nobles,
Judge,
Potter County



1973 Chair
John O. Colquitt, Jr.,
Mayor,
City of Dalhart



1970 - Region's
Medical Helicopter
Transport Service
became operational.



Representatives of
23 counties began
work to establish a
network for regional
emergency medical
services.





1974 Chair
W. W. Nicklaus,
Commissioner,
City of Amarillo



1975 Chair
Warren C. Jenkins,
Judge,
Lipscomb County



1976 Chair
James McCray,
Board Member,
Panhandle
Ground Water
Conservation
District



1977 Chair
Sam Haynes,
Mayor,
City of McLean



PRPC created
the Panhandle
Regional Office
on Aging.



1976
Board of Directors



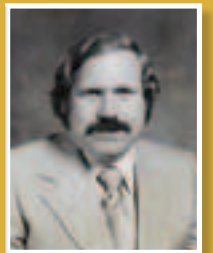
1978 Chair
Sam Morgan,
Judge, Deaf Smith
County



1979 Chair
Harold Courson,
Mayor,
City of Perryton



1970-1975
Ernest R. Clark,
Executive Director



1975-1981
George Loudder,
Executive Director



The Planning Commission's Workforce Development programs are designed to assist unemployed, unskilled and economically disadvantaged individuals in finding jobs in the region's labor market. The PRPC's role is to act as administrative and fiscal agent for the Panhandle Workforce Development Board, a 25-member, business-led board, that oversees the funding and distribution of more than \$15 million in federal and state resources for deserving Panhandle residents. Programs provide a range of services, including training at post-secondary education institutions, temporary public service employment, and child care. The PRPC oversees eight Workforce Solutions offices where the needs of employers and those seeking employment are addressed.

The Panhandle Workforce Development Board implemented two activities funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The first was a summer jobs program that provided employment for more than 300 youth from low-income families. Jobs were developed in partnership with the region's cities, counties, independent school districts, community colleges and universities. The Board also provided occupational skills training for additional dislocated workers and unemployed/underemployed adults through the region's community colleges and universities.

The Board held a series of public hearings around the region to gain input from employers on their workforce training needs. The results were used to help select the occupations for which the Board will provide training during the coming year. The results were also used by area community colleges to help their faculty develop new courses of instruction.

For a third year, the Panhandle Workforce Development Board was recognized for having the state's top program performance. The group beat our fifteen comparably-funded boards competing for \$75,000 in incentive funds.

Our eight Workforce Solutions offices located in Amarillo, Borger, Childress, Dalhart, Dumas, Hereford, Pampa and Tulia:

- Helped over 30,000 job seekers in their search for employment.
- Assisted over 3,000 employers in finding qualified workers.
- Provided financial aid to more than 500 eligible individuals pursuing a college degree or certificate
- Funded child care serves to over 4,000 children from low-income families.





Fifty-five year-old grandmother Suzie Summers, left, a former Celene employee, is taking Office Technology courses through the Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker program. Angela DeMine, her instructor, is helping her develop these new skills at Clarendon College's Pampa Center.





The Area Agency on Aging of the Panhandle (AAA) serves as the advocate for the Panhandle's elderly population. To accomplish its mission of promoting dignity, independence and quality of life for older people, the AAA offers a range of comprehensive and coordinated programs designed to assist the region's elderly population and the families and friends who care for them. Programs include congregate and home-delivered meals, adult day care, transportation, case management, and benefits counseling.

Services also include assistance with minor home repairs and modifications, homemaker and personal care services, caregiver assistance and emergency response services. Through its AAA Volunteer Ombudsman program, the elderly living in area nursing homes and assisted living facilities can also take advantage of advocacy services.

A new initiative for the AAA, called Matter of Balance, was started in 2009. Matter of Balance is a program designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falls. Area Agency on Aging Operations Coordinator Stacey Urbanczyk serves as a Master Trainer under the program. A lay coach training session was conducted certifying 28 individuals from Amarillo and across the Panhandle.

The AAA, was one of a number of partner agencies to host a Spring Eldercare Conference "Where Do I Go and Who Do I Call? – Access to Resources for the Elderly." More than 90 nurses, social workers, senior adults, caregivers and professionals toured exhibit booths to learn about the services and resources available in the Panhandle. The event was chaired by Lisa Hancock, Public Education and Volunteer Specialist for the AAA.

The AAA's Family Caregiver Support Program, BSA Hospice, Olivia's Angels, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center of Amarillo and the Amarillo Alzheimer's Academy co-sponsored the annual

caregiver workshop/seminar. More than 160 caregivers attended, learning about area resources and enjoying featured speakers who discussed such topics as normal forgetfulness versus dementia and the healthy benefits of laughter.

- More than 155,000 meals were served to seniors throughout the Panhandle region.
- 4,785 hours of in-home homemaker and personal services, as well as 4,694 hours of in-home respite care for caregivers were provided.
- 2,886 hours of ombudsman volunteer services were given, resulting in 12,313 resident contacts.

Stacey Urbanczyk, Operations Coordinator for the Area Agency on Aging, right, is a certified instructor for the Matter of Balance class. This program is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity level of older adults.





The PRPC's Local Government Services group assists area cities and counties in addressing community development needs. Results of these services can be seen with such community improvements as new parks, water lines, sewer lines, water wells, and street paving. The Planning Commission plays a part in multiple phases of these projects for its members, from assisting with needs identification, grant preparation, to administrative management of construction activities, construction contracts, and compilation, and submission of all required reporting upon project completion. The PRPC delivers city management services to area municipalities as requested on an ongoing basis where there is no full-time chief administrator in place.

Since 1984, the PRPC staff has provided administrative assistance to 234 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects that have been funded in the region. These projects have provided improvements in over 40 different Panhandle communities. During the past year, staff assisted the Cities of Bovina, Canadian, Dalhart, Fritch, Hart and Vega with Texas Parks and Wildlife applications and the City of Dimmitt with a proposal to the Texas Water Development Board. Small Town Environmental Program projects were also administered for the Cities of Dalhart and Stinnett.

One of the newest initiatives provided by the Local Government Services staff is strategic planning training. This past year staff created a formalized strategic planning program and has provided it to several communities who have requested such assistance.

Since it began offering contract city management services, the PRPC staff has provided such assistance to six cities. In two of those communities – Lake Tanglewood and Timbercreek Canyon – staff has assisted the councils for more than eight years. During the past year, PRPC has committed over 720 hours of contract city management services. These services have included assisting with modification of a fiscal year, researching the viability of creating an emergency services district, handling legal concerns, and refurbishing a community dam.

- Administered 23 CDBG grant projects, totaling \$5,790,590.
- Prepared 26 CDBG applications on behalf of local governments and successfully completed the administration of eight projects.
- Hosted regional workshops on a variety of topics.



The community of Washburn, located in Armstrong County, received Community Development Block Grant funding for a new standpipe water tank.





The Planning Commission's Economic Development activities are designed to assist local government entities and area businesses in enhancing the economic environment and encouraging the sustainable development of the region. To accomplish this, the Economic Development Program operates five initiatives.

The Economic Development District program assists with regional economic planning and technical assistance, grant preparation and administration, and topical workshops. The Texas Panhandle Regional Development Corporation (TPRDC) provides commercial real estate financing to small businesses. The TPRDC also operates the Community Development Micro Loan Program for the City of Amarillo.

The Contract Procurement Center provides counseling to businesses interested in obtaining and performing on federal, state and local government contracts. PRPC's Rural Micro Loan program provides financing to small businesses in the region that are creating jobs. The Amarillo MSA Micro Loan program provides financing to small businesses in Potter and Randall Counties and focuses on assisting low- to moderate-income business owners.

The TPRDC approved nine loans totaling \$5,408,000. These projects included loans for two hotels, a recording studio, a medical doctor's office, a chiropractic office, an orthodontic practice, a car wash, a computer repair shop, and a towing company.

The PRPC staff assisted the City of Spearman in their grant writing process for a downtown revitalization project that was submitted to the Texas Capital Fund. Staff also helped West Texas A & M University secure funding from the Economic Development Administration to convert existing space into offices and laboratories.

The Contract Procurement Center assisted local businesses with 47 contracts for more than \$18 million which resulted in the creation or retention of 365 local jobs. 🍃

- 🍃 Six Micro Loans were approved totaling \$134,948. Those loans were made in Amarillo and Silverton. As a result, 12 jobs will be created.
- 🍃 The Texas Panhandle Regional Development Corporation assisted in the creation of 67 jobs through nine approved loans.

Contract Procurement Center client Jerry Reynosa, President of Tri-State General Contracting Group Inc., received this year's Small Business Administration District Minority Business Owner award.



Improving the Landscape for



From 1980 to 1989...

- In 1982, a Regional Crime Prevention Unit was established.
- Contract Procurement Center established in June 1986. Government contracts secured to sell band instruments, picnic tables, and popcorn.
- The Texas Panhandle Regional Development Corporation was formed by the PRPC Board on April 22, 1982.
- In 1985, PRPC's Job Training Partnership Act summer program began placing youth between the ages of 16 and 21 with schools and public agencies across the region in summer jobs.
- PRPC contracts with Potter and Randall Counties to create the Dispute Resolution Center in June 1989.
- The PRPC hosted the Texas Association of Regional Councils Annual Conference in Amarillo in 1988.



1980-1981 Chair
Warren C. Jenkins,
Judge,
Lipscomb County



1983-1988 Chair
Austin C. Rose, Jr.,
Commissioner,
Deaf Smith County



1982 Chair
Ralph Blodgett,
Mayor,
City of Spearman



1975-1981 Chair
George Louder,
Executive Director



In December 1981
the PRPC outgrew
its space in the
Amarillo Building
and moved to the
Gilbralter Savings &
Loan Building.



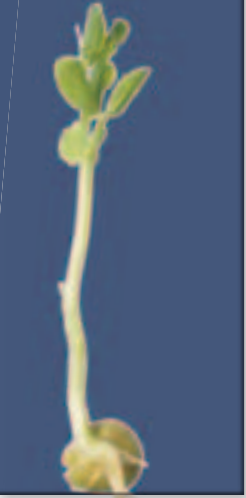
1981-1985
Jerry S. McGuire,
Executive Director



The PRPC
participated in
the creation of
the High Ground
of Texas.



The region's first
Texas Community
Development
Program projects
were funding in
Borger, Gruver,
Kress, Memphis,
Spearman and
Turkey in 1983.





Lipscomb County's Warren Jenkins, left, was the recipient of the first Regional Service Award.



The PRPC received its first Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.



1989 Chair
Les McNeill,
Mayor,
City of Panhandle



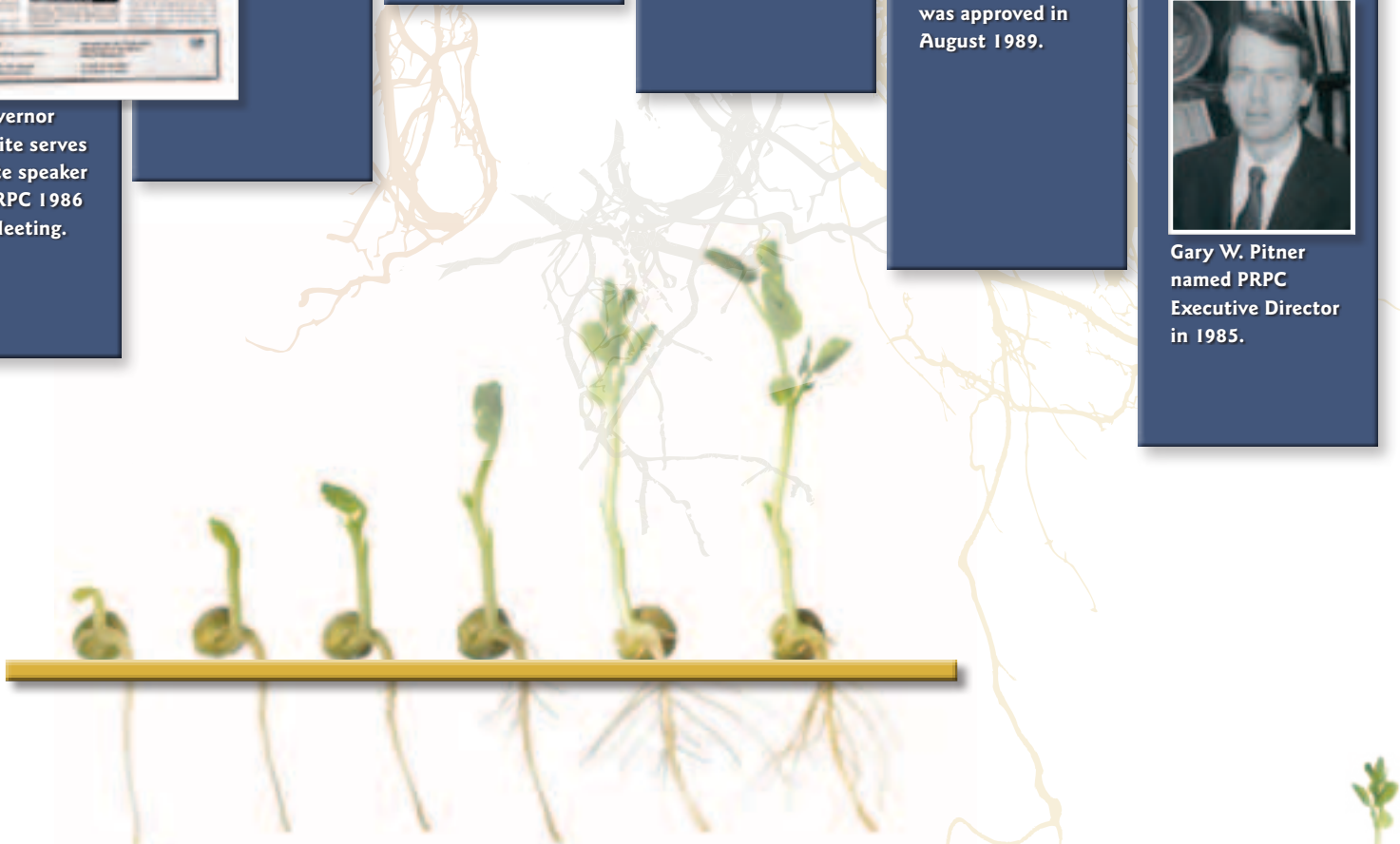
The initial Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network Plan was approved in August 1989.



Texas Governor Mark White serves as keynote speaker for the PRPC 1986 Annual Meeting.



Gary W. Pitner named PRPC Executive Director in 1985.





The PRPC's Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) is designed to empower residents of this region to resolve all types of conflicts through the use of mediation. The DRC offers mediation assistance for a variety of controversies, including divorce/custody, visitation arrangements, consumer complaints, minor criminal mischief, personal injury, landlord/tenant disputes, property and damage disputes, threats and trespassing, financial disputes, police and court referrals, employer/employee conflicts and neighborhood and community conflicts. Such resolution is achieved with the assistance of trained, impartial mediators who facilitate meetings between the disputing parties.

Of the 1,800 area residents that the DRC provided information and referrals for, mediation was provided for nearly 300 cases. The settlement rate of 75% was achieved from these conflicts. The majority of mediation cases continued to be in the area of family law.

To keep the volunteer mediators informed about changes in various laws, the DRC provided a 2009 legislative update meeting. Recruitment and education opportunities were conducted by the DRC staff and volunteers in Clarendon, Pampa, Borger, Memphis, Childress, Hereford, Canadian and Amarillo.

In addition, the DRC staff conducted speaking engagements to various civic and school organizations, helping to inform individuals about the conflict resolution services provided. 🍃

- 🍃 Volunteers contributed more than 700 hours of mediation and community outreach services.
- 🍃 Winston Stahlecker, a mediator since 2003, was named the 2008 Mediator of the Year.





The Criminal Justice program plans, develops and implements a wide range of local and regional strategies and initiatives that serve to improve the Panhandle's criminal justices systems. Under this program, the Planning Commission oversees the distribution of grant funds administered by the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office. Programs, both juvenile and non-juvenile, are intended to help combat violent crimes, drug- and gang-related crimes, deploy remedial services to crime victims, maintain safe and drug-free schools and neighborhoods, and provide law enforcement training to Panhandle peace officers.

The PRPC continued to partner with Amarillo College in the operation of the Panhandle Regional Law Enforcement Academy (PRLEA). The Academy graduated its 98th and 99th classes this past year, with a total cadet graduate count of 32. With continued support from the Planning Commission, the Academy is also able to conduct mandatory training for local law enforcement officials and offset training costs that would otherwise be totally borne by local departments.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 provided law enforcement agencies across the state with much-needed resources for new projects and daily activities. The Panhandle region received \$1,032,562 in allocated funds for nine law enforcement agencies through direct Justice Assistance Grant funds. These agencies were selected based on violent crime statistics reported to the state. An additional \$1,033,125 was made available to the region for other law enforcement enhancements.

Through the Reinvestment Act, the PRPC staff helped develop and apply for a new initiative to develop a common mobile data environment for the region. The objective of this project is to provide and/or enhance access to mobile data technology to area law enforcement officers. It will also fund the creation of a Class C Misdemeanor Warrant Database and the establishment of a regional "hub" that will provide local law enforcement agencies access to various databases. 🍃

The City of Panhandle received funding through the PRPC's Criminal Justice program to fund a portion of the salary for School Resource Officer Ryan Griffin. Griffin visits with students at Panhandle High School.



- 🍃 Assisted in the preparation of seven state-funded grants totaling \$287,447, primarily to purchase equipment and provide peace officer training.
- 🍃 Assisted in the preparation of 11 Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities applications. These funds are used to help maintain a safe, drug-free school environment for Panhandle students.
- 🍃 Nine victim services agencies were assisted in preparing 14 Victim Services Grant applications totaling \$494,134.
- 🍃 717 officers received a total of 10,948 hours of in-service training through the Panhandle Regional Law Enforcement Academy.





The Planning Commission's Solid Waste Management program was developed to assist the region's local governments in implementing the recommendations of the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. The plan was created in response to federal and state regulations that were significantly impacting landfill costs.

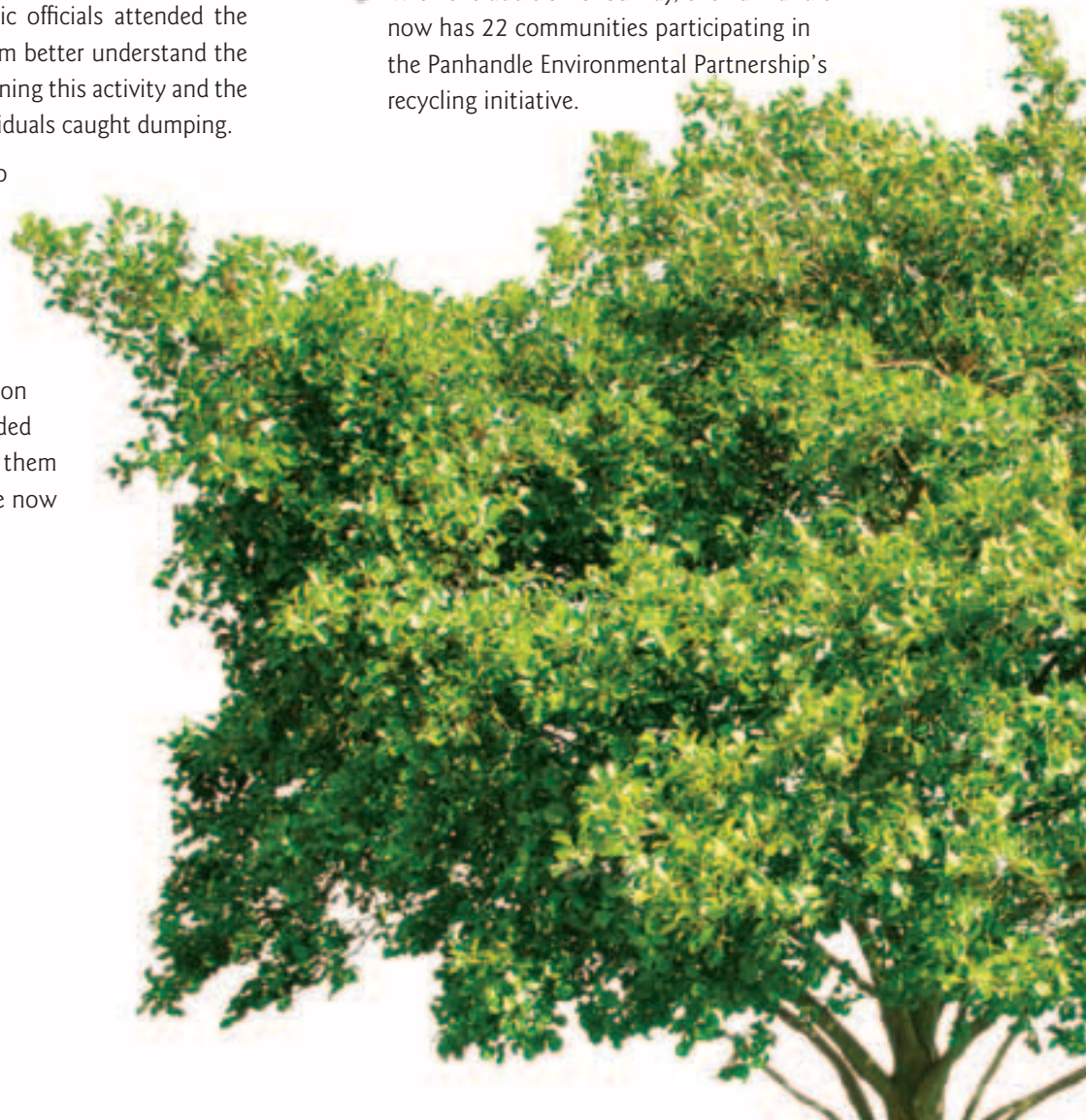
The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) provides the region with funds to support the costs of implementing projects recommended by the Regional Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee and approved by the PRPC Board of Directors. The funds are intended for projects that will reduce the region's reliance on landfilling as the sole means of managing solid waste and is supported by tipping fees paid by the state's landfill operators for each ton of waste deposited into their landfills.

Several initiatives took place during the past twelve months. The City of Sunray requested and received funding in the amount of \$80,250 to begin a new recycling program, starting from the ground up.

Training on illegal dumping took place in three communities: Dumas, Hereford, and Amarillo. More than 50 law enforcement and public officials attended the sessions, designed to help them better understand the state and municipal laws governing this activity and the penalties associated with individuals caught dumping.

The Planning Commission also hosted a storm water permit workshop to assist municipal landfill operators in developing storm water runoff plans and learn about the permitting application process. Of the 15 who attended the workshop, 100 percent of them completed the process and are now in compliance. 

-  Fourteen solid waste projects were funded in the amount of \$316,715.66.
-  The PRPC staff facilitated the recycling of two million pounds of material from the region's landfills.
-  With the addition of Sunray, the Panhandle now has 22 communities participating in the Panhandle Environmental Partnership's recycling initiative.





The PRPC assisted Sunray with funding for its new recycling facility. Sunray City Manager Greg Smith leads the City's recycling efforts.

Improving the Landscape for



From 1990 to 1999...

- The first 9-1-1 system in the network went online on September 22, 1991, in Donley County. In May 1992, 9-1-1 service became available to all Panhandle citizens.
- On October 11, 1995, the original Panhandle Regional Solid Waste Management Plan was approved by the state.
- Panhandle's Workforce Development Board certified by Governor Bush in October 1996.



1990 Chair
Therese Abraham,
 Mayor,
 City of Canadian



1992 Chair
Jack D. Powell,
 Judge,
 Moore County



1995 Chair
J. Pat Stephens,
 Commissioner,
 City of Canyon



1994 Chair
Tom Simons,
 Judge,
 Deaf Smith County



1991 Chair
Wayne Collins,
 Mayor,
 City of Dimmitt
 Mayor Collins was
 elected president
 of the Texas
 Association of
 Regional Councils.



All county roads in the region were mapped, named and sign installation had begun. Parmer County Judge Bonnie Heald pictured with one of hundreds of signs installed in the region.



David Landis, Perryton City Manager, was the recipient of the first Goodwin Regional Public Administrator Award.



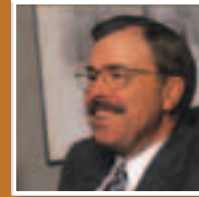
Regional recycling efforts began under the Panhandle Environmental Partnership banner.



A rural addressing project using advanced satellite technology was completed. The project provided a physical address for every Panhandle rural resident.



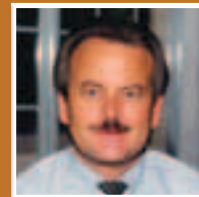
1996 Chair
Vernon H. Cook,
Judge,
Roberts County



1998 Chair
Don Allred,
Judge,
Oldham County



1997 Chair
John Bowman,
Mayor,
City of Silverton



1999 Chair
Robert Keys,
Commissioner,
City of Amarillo



Gary W. Pitner,
Executive Director



In 1999, Bell Helicopter Textron plant was opened and Workforce Center staff fielded 15,000 inquiries from those interested in employment. More than 2,400 qualified applicants were referred to the company.



1993 Chair
Burl Buchanan,
Mayor,
City of Spearman

- The PRPC purchased its current headquarters, at 8th and Jackson Streets in downtown Amarillo, in 1992. The 25,000 sq. ft., four-level building was purchased for \$240,000.
- Water planning efforts in the Panhandle began in earnest in 1997, with the passage of Senate Bill 1. In April 1998, the PRPC was designated by the Panhandle Water Planning Group to oversee the development of a Panhandle Water Plan.
- In 1997, the PRPC assisted Potter County in obtaining a \$3 million grant to support the restoration and renovation of the historic Santa Fe Building in downtown Amarillo.



The Regional Emergency Preparedness Program supports the state's homeland security Strategic Plan, which in turn supports the National Strategy for Homeland Security. In the Panhandle, the program's primary goal is to better prepare the area's first responders to thwart and/or respond to and recover from large-scale, man-made or natural disasters. The key objectives are to prevent terrorists' attacks; reduce vulnerability to terrorism or natural disasters; and to minimize losses and affect a speedy recovery when incidents occur.

Implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Program is overseen by the Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (PREMAC). Under the guidance of PREMAC, the Planning Commission developed Phase I of the Regional Catastrophic Response Plan, which is intended to lay out the procedures and processes to be followed when a large-scale disaster event occurs.

The Public Safety Interoperable Communications grant program provided a one-time allocation of funding to the area to support the further development of the region's interoperable communications system. The region's funds are being used to cost-share the purchase of 660 user radios for first responders and to pilot the use of four-channel repeaters to facilitate the utilization of the state's new mutual aid channels.

Incident Command System courses must be taken by local officials in a classroom setting led by a certified instructor. To assist local emergency management officials in meeting their training requirements, the PRPC staff obtained the certifications needed to teach such courses and successfully delivered more than 20 different classes.

The PREMAC conducted the first Panhandle Regional Preparedness Conference in January to engage the region's officials and responders in the plans for regional preparedness and response. More than 450 participants attended the day-long event which included a presentation from Steve McCraw, Director, Office of Homeland Security on "The Texas 'State' of Emergency Management". Numerous emergency response equipment displays, an overview by state representatives on the state's expectations of regional preparedness planning, a keynote address entitled "The Lessons of Katrina and Rita," and five workshop sessions on a variety of topics were also part of the Conference.



Work continued on the Panhandle Regional Interoperable Radio Communications System project, a \$7 million initiative which will result in the complete replacement and modernization of the infrastructure that supports emergency radio communications in the Panhandle.

The PRPC staff completed its work on the Regional Safe Room Program, in which funds were provided to homeowners, developers and builders who installed certified safe rooms and storm shelters. The PRPC received nearly \$3.5 million to support the Regional Safe Room Program. A total of 1,415 tornado shelters were installed throughout the Panhandle. 🌱

- 🌱 PRPC staff facilitated the delivery of 350 classroom hours of Incident Command training.
- 🌱 The last nine of the total 39 radio towers needed to outfit the PANCOM system were secured and equipped. Briscoe, Childress, Collingsworth, Hall and Swisher Counties have now successfully completed the migration to the new PANCOM narrowband system.
- 🌱 PRPC staff assisted 24 local jurisdictions in updating their emergency operations plans.

The Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Council (PREMAC) conducted its first Panhandle Regional Preparedness Conference last year. More than 450 participants attended the day-long event.





The Planning Commission provides a variety of services in response to the common needs of area local governments. Under the heading of Regional Services, the needs of these Panhandle local entities are addressed through services such as workshops and seminars, facilitation of roundtable discussions, grant writing assistance and management of special projects.

PRPC, serving as grant administrator to Potter County on its Historic Courthouse Restoration project, facilitated the completion of the project's Selective Demolition/Phase I Remediation work and the final completion of the project's restoration design. PRPC will continue its administrative assistance as this project moves into the construction phase.

The PRPC staff assisted several communities in securing grant funding through the federal government's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The Cities of Tulia and Adrian received assistance in completing their grant-funded outdoor warning system improvement projects. Staff also worked with the City of Cactus to implement their community shelter project.

The PRPC staff continues to serve as the administrative arm of the Panhandle Regional Transportation Advisory Group (RTAG), a group responsible for developing the Regional Transportation Plan funded by the Texas Department of Transportation. In 2009, PRPC has taken on the Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP), as well as moving into the development of the next regional transportation plan development process.

The Planning Commission provided second year funding from PRPC local funds to Class 4 Winds, Inc., a Panhandle based 501(C) (3) nonprofit. Class 4 Winds, Inc. is dedicated to providing educational opportunities and information to promote the region's vast wind energy resources. The group's four primary goals involve education, communication, advocacy and synergy. 🍃

The PRPC served as grant administrator for Potter County's Historic Courthouse Restoration project during the design and interior demolition phases.



Workshops hosted by Class 4 Winds, Inc. covered topics such as small wind systems, wind power for the home and office and renewable energy zones.

Improving the Landscape for

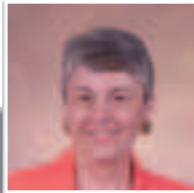


From 2000 to 2009...

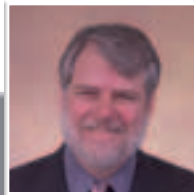
- A new loan program – the Rural Micro-Loan Program – was established and offered eligible applicants in the Panhandle’s 24 rural counties loans of up to \$15,000 that could be used for a variety of business purposes.
- In 2005, Phase I of the regional interoperable communications plan was completed, enabling the region to proceed with the re-construction of the emergency communications system in the Panhandle.



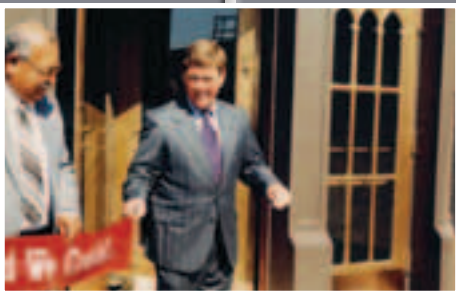
2000 Chair
Ronnie Gordon,
Judge,
Hartley County



2001 Chair
Judy Flanders,
Mayor,
City of Borger



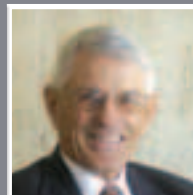
2002 Chair
Skip Huskey,
Commissioner,
Randall County



Work was completed on the \$14 million restoration of Potter County’s Santa Fe Building in downtown Amarillo in 2000. PRPC provided management services throughout the project.



In 2002 the PRPC worked with the Governor’s office to develop a regional Homeland Security approach as it relates to first responders.



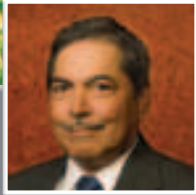
2003 Chair
Boyd Vaughn,
Mayor,
City of Tulia



The Panhandle Water Planning Area’s Regional Water Plan was adopted locally and submitted to the Texas Water Development Board. The Plan indicated that the 21-county planning area is projected to use over 559 billion gallons of water each year for the next 50 years.



2004 Chair
Jack Hall, Judge,
Donley County



2007 Chair
Juan Cantu,
Commissioner,
Lipscomb County



2008 Chair
Martha Rincon,
Commissioner,
City of Hereford



2009 Chair
Jay Mayden,
Judge,
Childress County



2005 Chair
David Hale,
Mayor,
City of Perryton



On May 17, 2004, a groundbreaking ceremony for Frank Phillips College's Allen Campus took place in Perryton. PRPC assisted in the process by writing a grant application to the Economic Development Administration that awarded the project \$1 million.



2006 Chair
Charlie Rivas, Jr.,
Amarillo



Wildfires in the spring of 2006 put the Regional Response Plan's Regional Resource Coordination Center to its first real test.



Gary W. Pitner,
Executive Director

- The Panhandle Revenue Recovery Association an initiative created in 2003 enabled public entities to work together to assist each other in collecting unpaid utility and solid waste bills.
- The texasvipers.org website facilitated the registration of more than 6700 volunteers who wanted to assist with the local/statewide Hurricane Katrina relief effort in 2005.
- The PRPC participated in the Entrepreneur Alliance, Inc. – a consortium formed to maximize the effectiveness and outreach of all technical assistance and capital resources available to the business community of the Texas Panhandle.
- The Panhandle Workforce Development Board was recognized on several occasions as the top performing Board of its size in the state of Texas.



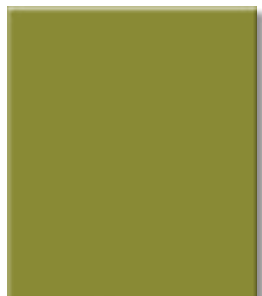
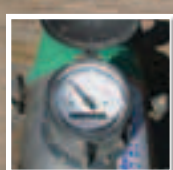
Twelve years ago, Senate Bill I mandated that the state of Texas undertake a comprehensive water planning process designed to assist water users and providers in planning for and meeting future water demands and needs. Delegated to the regions to accomplish, the PRPC continues to serve as the administrative agent for the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG).

During 2009, the PWPG completed an interim Ogallala Recharge Study which focused on the water recharge rate of the aquifer in Roberts and Hemphill Counties. The study found that only 1/4 to 1/3 of an inch of water is recharging the Ogallala Aquifer on an annual basis. These findings are important to future planning cycles. The PWPG and PRPC staff began work on the development of the 2011 Panhandle Regional Water Plan, which will be available for initial public review and comment in the spring of 2010.

The PRPC also worked with Groundwater Management Area #1 in establishing a Desired Future Condition for the major aquifers in the region. The Texas Water Code requires Groundwater Management Areas to incorporate Desired Future Condition's into Regional Water Plans. The Management Area has met 19 times

in the past three years, and recently submitted its Desired Future Condition information for the Ogallala Aquifer to the State of Texas. In addition, the PRPC assisted the Management Area with administrative activities. Groundwater Management Area #1 was among the first in Texas to complete the Desired Future Condition development task. 🍃

- 🍃 \$64,000 in local funds were contributed in support of regional water planning activities.
- 🍃 A \$510,030 contract was executed with the Texas Water Development Board to develop the 2011 Panhandle Regional Water Plan.



Monitoring wells are used to track the drawdown of the Ogallala Aquifer to assist with future planning cycles.



Mike Peters, Regional 9-1-1 Network Operations Coordinator, shows Sherman County Judge Terri Carter some of the 9-1-1 network equipment recently installed to serve her community.



The PRPC's Regional 9-1-1 Network provides emergency communications services to the residents in 24 Panhandle counties through a network of twenty-three 9-1-1 call centers located in sheriffs' offices and police departments.

Regional 9-1-1 Network staff completed competitive procurement and executed a \$2 million contract to replace 9-1-1 call taking equipment at all 23 call centers. The installation of equipment is underway which will transition the system from analog to digital technology in order to accommodate text, instant and video messaging.

In the last year, the Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network, working with local agencies and wireless phone companies, completed a two-year project to certify the regions' call centers' ability to receive, display and map the latitude and longitude of wireless 9-1-1 calls. With nearly two thirds of all 9-1-1 calls originating from a wireless device, this level of service is critical to ensure that residents can be located if they need emergency assistance.

During the past 12 months, the Planning Commission was awarded over \$1 million in additional State 9-1-1 funds to plan and acquire hardware to support shared 9-1-1 and interoperable radio networking.

Regional 9-1-1 Network Program Specialist Pamela Frisk played a key role in the planning and development of the Panhandle-South Plains Chapter of the Texas Emergency Response Taskforce, a team of 9-1-1 professionals designated to develop a model recommendation for emergency deployment for 9-1-1 call taker mutual aid response in the aftermath of disasters. 🍀

- 🍀 The PRPC served as the lead applicant for a coalition of 15 West Texas 9-1-1 entities requesting 9-1-1 equalization surcharge revenue for the purpose of funding master planning activities regarding Next Generation 9-1-1. The request was approved by the Commission on State Emergency Communications in the amount of \$284,000.
- 🍀 Delivered more than 82,000 9-1-1 calls.
- 🍀 Distributed over 38,500 public education items at 50 events.



BUDGETED EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM

Workforce Development	\$12,639,496
Aging	1,967,273
Local Government Services	183,342
Economic Development	361,300
Dispute Resolution	119,500
Regional 9-1-1 Network	3,146,692
Criminal Justice	200,669
Solid Waste Management	441,166
Water Planning	321,714
Emergency Preparedness	3,151,252
Regional Services	101,439
Reserve Contribution	61,832
TOTAL 2009 BUDGETED PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	\$22,695,675

BUDGETED PROGRAM REVENUE BY SOURCE

Federal Funds	\$116,412
Federal Funds through State	16,338,732
State Funds	1,826,187
State Planning Assistance Funds	64,734
State Emergency Communications Funds	3,146,692
Dispute Resolution Court Fees (Potter & Randall Counties)	68,000
Contract Service Fees	470,970
Local Government Membership Dues	64,690
Local Matching Contributions	530,258
Interest and Miscellaneous Revenues	69,000
TOTAL 2009 BUDGETED PROGRAM REVENUES	\$22,695,675



COUNTIES

CITIES

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

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

Adrian
 Amarillo
 Bishop Hills
 Booker
 Borger
 Bovina
 Cactus
 Canadian
 Canyon
 Channing
 Childress
 Clarendon
 Claude
 Dalhart
 Darrouzett
 Dimmitt
 Dumas
 Estelline
 Farwell
 Follett
 Friona
 Fritch
 Groom
 Gruver
 Happy
 Hart
 Hedley
 Hereford
 Higgins
 Howardwick

Kress
 Lake Tanglewood
 Lakeview
 Lefors
 Mc Lean
 Memphis
 Miami
 Mobeetie
 Nazareth
 Pampa
 Panhandle
 Perryton
 Quitaque
 Sanford
 Shamrock
 Silverton
 Skellytown
 Spearman
 Stinnett
 Stratford
 Sunray
 Texhoma
 Texline
 Timbercreek
 Tulia
 Turkey
 Vega
 Wellington
 Wheeler
 White Deer

- Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
- Greenbelt Municipal and Industrial Water Authority
- High Plains RC&D Area, Inc.
- Mackenzie Municipal Water Authority
- North Rolling Plains Resource, Conservation & Development District
- Palo Duro River Authority
- Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District
- Red River Authority





The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission 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.

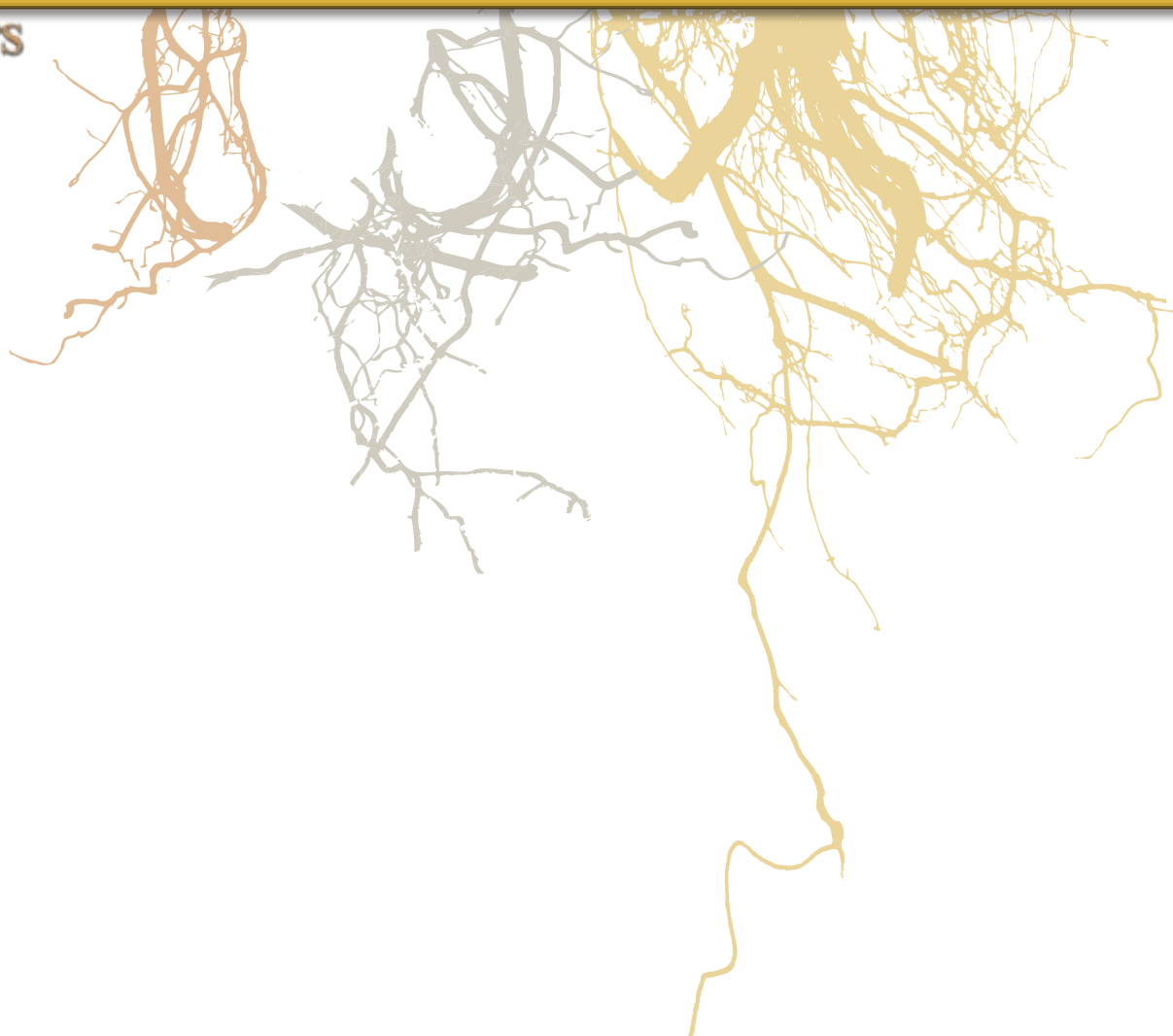
The Planning Commission is an organization of, by and for local governments. It was created based on the concept that more can be accomplished by local governments acting cooperatively rather than alone. Since 1969, the Planning Commission has been involved in a wide range of projects and programs. Activities currently include programs 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 services, water planning, regional services and technical assistance to the local governments of the Panhandle.

The Panhandle region covers a 26-county area consisting of almost 26,000 square miles. The region's population is 402,862. The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission has 94 member governments — including all 26 counties, 60 incorporated cities and 8 special districts. 🌱





40
years





Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

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