

Bylaws
Deep East Texas Rural Transportation Planning Organization
of the
Deep East Texas Council of Governments

Article I - Name, Purpose, Responsibilities

The Deep East Texas Rural Transportation Planning Organization, herein referred to as DETRTPO, enhances regional mobility through education, coordination, and advocacy. The DETRTPO serves as a forum for elected officials to come together on transportation issues to recommend changes in policy and practice, advocate for legislation, recommend regional priorities, direct certain planning and data initiatives, oversee the federally-prescribed local consultation process, and collaborate with the Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG), Local, Regional, State and National Rural Planning Organizations, Regional Mobility Authorities and Metropolitan Planning Organizations within the DETCOG Region..

"Transportation", for the purposes of the DETRTPO's mission, shall be defined as any road, rail, transit, aviation, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure, as well as the associated physical, economic, political, and social impacts of that infrastructure.

The DETRTPO was originally created as a response to TEA-21 legislation, which called for state departments of transportation to work with officials in non-metropolitan areas when making transportation planning and programming decisions. The DETRTPO's responsibilities include:

- Providing a forum for elected officials and community leaders to learn about and discuss relevant transportation topics;
- Evaluating and recommending projects with a regional impact to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHA).
- Overseeing research and education on financing mechanisms for transportation and related projects;
- Studying and recommending changes in statutes, rules, or policies related to state or federal transportation programs;
- Coordinating with DETPO on transportation issues;
- Developing a regional mobility strategy for the twelve-county area; and
- Serving as an information clearinghouse for transportation related data.

DETCOG shall provide staffing and administrative support for all DETRTPO activities.

Article II - Membership

The DETRTPO membership shall be open to representatives from cities, counties, transportation agencies, private and non-profit organizations, and citizens who are interested in regional transportation issues. The DETRTPO is composed of voting, non-voting ex-officio, non-voting associate, and staff members.

Voting Members

Each county in the 12-county DETCOG region with a population of 25,000 may choose two (2) elected officials to serve as voting members. Counties with population under 25,000 may choose one (1) elected official to serve as a voting member. Individual counties are encouraged to include at least one municipal representative in their voting membership. Cities with population over 10,000 in the region may each appoint one government official to serve as a voting member.

Ex-Officio Member

Each of the following regional transportation stakeholder organizations may choose (1) official to serve as a non-voting ex-officio member:

- Texas Department of Transportation - Lufkin District (TxDOT)
- Texas Department of Transportation - Beaumont District (TxDOT)

Associate Member

Any government, organization, or individual interested in regional transportation issues may serve as a non-voting associate member.

Article III - Officers

1. The DETRTPO shall elect from among its voting members a Chair, Vice Chair at the first meeting of the calendar year. The DETCOG President will appoint the initial Chair who will preside at all meetings until the election of a Chair by the membership.
2. All DETRTPO officers must represent a city or county in the 12-county DETCOG region.
3. Officers serve two-year terms, beginning on the date they are elected.
4. In the event an Officer is unable to fulfill his/her term, the DETRTPO shall elect a replacement, at a regular or specially called meeting, who serves for the remainder of the unexpired term.
5. In the case of a tie vote at which a quorum is present, the Chair will be deemed to have the authority to break the tie.
6. In case the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent or unable to preside over meetings and perform their duties, the DETRTPO may appoint a Chair pro tem for said meeting.

Regular Article IV - Meetings

Regular

1. The DETRTPO shall meet at least four (4) times annually on a day, time and place specified by the DETRTPO Chair or the DETCOG Executive Director.
2. Written notice of each regular meeting shall be prepared by the DETRTPO liaison and mailed, or electronically transmitted, or hand-delivered to each DETRTPO representative at least five (5) business days before the meeting date.
3. DETRTPO Ad Hoc Committees may meet regularly or specially if called by the Ad Hoc Committee Chair, DETCOG Executive Director, or Executive Director's designee.

Special

1. The DETRTPO shall meet specially if called by the DETCOG Executive Director, the Executive Director's designee, or the DETRTPO Chair.
2. Notice of any special meeting shall be given at least 72 hours prior to the special meeting.

Quorum and Action

1. A quorum exists when at least one voting member from seven of the 12 counties in the DETCOG region is present.
2. If a quorum is present when a vote is taken, the affirmative vote of a majority of the representatives entitled to vote and present is the act of the DETRTPO, except when scoring the Call for Projects.
3. If a quorum is present when scoring the Call for Projects, the average score of the Voting Members from each county is summed and divided by the total number of counties that voted. Voting Members must abstain from scoring projects which exist within the county they represent. The list of projects submitted for evaluation is prioritized according to the average score of the counties present and represents the act of the DETRTPO.
4. Proxy votes may be cast at any meeting of the DETRTPO and will be counted toward the attendance at any meeting of the DETRTPO and will be counted toward the attendance at any meeting of the DETRTPO. Proxies shall be in writing; stating the name of the holder, date of meeting and signed by the person giving the proxy with this stipulation: proxies may only be held by those representing the membership of the person giving the proxy, i.e., member who represents an entity must give his or her proxy to someone representing the entity of which the member represents. The presiding officer at the meeting shall be the sole judge of the validity of the proxy and shall call for all proxy votes at the beginning of each meeting. The DETRTPO staff and employees shall not be designated by any board member as a proxy.

Open Meetings and Records

1. All meetings of the DETRTPO shall be open to the public. The meetings are not subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.
2. Minutes of the DETRTPO meetings, documents distributed and other records are the property of DETCOG.
3. Except where these bylaws require otherwise, *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of the DETRTPO meetings.

Article V - Ad Hoc Committees

Appointment

Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the DETRTPO Chair and shall serve for special purposes to comply with special needs.

Terms

Terms of membership on ad hoc committees shall be established to achieve the purpose for which the committee was created. At least three (4) counties and/or cities must be represented in each ad hoc committee. Ex-Officio members may also be appointed to ad hoc committees for technical expertise and will serve in a non-voting capacity. The DETRTPO Chair has the authority to dissolve the ad hoc committee once the committee's purpose is achieved or the committee becomes inactive.

Meetings

The method for calling ad hoc committee meetings shall be at the discretion of the ad hoc committee membership to discharge their responsibility.

Officers

The Chairs of the ad hoc committees shall be appointed by the Chair of the DETRTPO.

Article VI- Amendments

The DETCOG Executive Committee may amend these bylaws at a regular or special called meeting. The written text of a proposed amendment must be included with the notice of the meeting at which the amendment will be discussed and voted on.

Representatives to the DETRTPO may recommend amendments to these bylaws at a regular or special called meeting. The written text of a recommended amendment must be included with the notice of the meeting at which the amendment will be discussed and voted on. If the DETRTPO representatives approve the recommended amendment, it is then forwarded to the DETCOG Executive Director to be brought to the DETCOG Executive Committee.

Effective Date

An amendment to these bylaws takes effect when approved by the DETCOG Executive Committee.

Bylaws History

Adopted: 4-28-2011

Amended: