

**Commissioner Todd Staples**  
**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

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CONTACT: Bryan Black  
Veronica Obregon  
(512) 463-7664

**COMMISSIONER STAPLES RECOGNIZES PALESTINE AS NEW GO TEXAN CERTIFIED  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY**

**PALESTINE** - Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples announced today that the City of Palestine has been approved as a GO TEXAN Certified Retirement Community (CRC). The city is the 17<sup>th</sup> community in the state to be certified.

Launched in June 2006, the Texas Department of Agriculture's CRC initiative helps rural Texas communities attract retirees and potential retirees to reside in their respective locales. The CRC Program also encourages tourism.

"I extend my most sincere congratulations to the citizens and leaders of Palestine for achieving this notable certification. It's a great honor for my hometown," Commissioner Staples said. "Not only do retirees have a significant economic impact on retirement areas, but they also bring a wealth of knowledge and energy for community service, employment and business."

"This recognition is a great tribute for the community and one that will help us with economic development and promoting all the wonderful things Palestine has to offer," Palestine Mayor Carolyn Salter said. "Palestine is a wonderful place to retire, and I commend all the members of the team who help put this application together."

Retirees spend an average \$36,000 each year in their new communities while also paying \$3,000 or more in state and local taxes. Texas is the second most popular retirement state, and native Texans account for one-fifth of retirees returning to Texas.

To become a CRC, communities must complete an application and retirement desirability assessment covering a wide range of topics including demographics, tax structure, local housing availability, safety, employment opportunities, and availability of health care services, public transportation and more. The application also includes a marketing plan and a long-term development plan. An independent volunteer advisory team that includes retirees and leaders in business, healthcare and city/state government, reviews and scores the applications.

"The Texas Department of Agriculture is looking forward to working with Palestine and our other certified retirement communities in a campaign to attract retirees and tourists to the Lone Star State," Commissioner Staples said.

The CRC Program is open to any community in Texas that wants to showcase itself as a retirement location and a tourist destination. Interested communities should contact TDA's Rural Economic Development Division toll free at (877) 428-7848 or e-mail [finance@tda.state.tx.us](mailto:finance@tda.state.tx.us).

For more information on the GO TEXAN CRC Program, please visit TDA's Web site at <http://www.tda.state.tx.us/>. For more information on retiring in Texas, please visit the official state Web site at <http://www.retireintexas.org/>.

*All TDA press releases are also available via the Internet at [www.tda.state.tx.us](http://www.tda.state.tx.us)*