

Glen Whitley in the News

Working together

Fort Worth Star-Telegram Editorial

One of the most crucial issues facing urban counties in Texas -- and especially Tarrant and Dallas -- is transportation. The area is already gridlocked for parts of the day, and there is no indication that the problem is getting better. It certainly will not go away.

Under the laws that govern transportation issues, county commissioners' courts and elected county judges are central in developing and implementing solutions.

As Fort Worth and Dallas consistently demonstrate, it is difficult for cities with competing interests to cooperate in the ways that growth in the 21st century requires. Much of that has to happen at the county level.

And that is precisely why Glen Whitley should be elected county judge in Tarrant County.

Whitley is a lifelong area resident -- born in Grand Prairie, educated at the University of Texas at Arlington and a longtime local accountant and businessman.

He was elected a Tarrant County commissioner in 1996 and has made regional transportation one of his passions and an area of expertise.

Whitley is past chairman of the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

He's chairman of the Tarrant Regional Transportation Council and is secretary of the Texas High Speed Rail Transportation Corp.

He's well-known and well-respected by other elected and appointed officials within the council of governments -- and that is crucial because the only real solution to growing transportation issues in North Central Texas is a cooperative effort among entities that traditionally haven't gotten along that well.

County government isn't just about transportation, of course.

The county government system in Texas, by establishing commissioners' court precincts, creates four fiefdoms within a county -- usually headed by four strong personalities. Being able to form and maintain coalitions within that small group is vital to success. At stake is the county budget, the operation of the sheriff's office and the jail, the court system, the county hospital and many road issues in unincorporated areas.

Whitley's lengthy service as a commissioner proves his ability to work with the others on the court.

His accountant's eye has served county taxpayers well in the past and should do so in the future, especially as the demands on the county hospital district increase with population growth.

The county's top elected official must approach the issues facing an increasingly urban area with aggressiveness and energy.

Whitley has the traits, coupled with demonstrated hard work and dedication that will make it possible to form and maintain coalitions not only within Tarrant County but also within the 16 counties that make up the North Central Texas Council of Governments -- and the seven other COGs that surround it -- whose destiny rests in recognizing areas of needed cooperation.

There is no Democratic candidate in the race, so the next county judge will be determined in the Republican primary.

The *Star-Telegram* Editorial Board recommends Glen Whitley for Tarrant County judge.