



Great American Defense Community Designation and Interstate 14 Signing Ceremonies

Saturday, April 22, 2017

9 a.m.

Central Texas College Anderson Campus Center

The Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce will host joint ceremonies April 22 to celebrate the designation of the Fort Hood-Central Texas Region as a Great American Defense Community and to officially unveil Interstate 14 signage. The ceremony begins at 9 a.m. at Central Texas College Anderson Campus Center. The public and media are invited to attend.

Great American Defense Community Designation Ceremony

The Association of Defense Communities awards the designation of Great American Defense Communities to recognize outstanding support of military installations. Communities are evaluated on their efforts to improve quality of life of service members and their families in areas such as education, employment, housing, deployment support and community appreciation.

Great American Defense Community Vice President Bill Parry will present Great American Defense Communities flags to Lieutenant General Paul Funk representing Fort Hood, the county judges of Bell, Coryell and Lampasas counties and the mayors of Belton, Copperas Cove, Gatesville, Harker Heights, Killeen, Lampasas and Temple.

The Fort Hood area is one of eight communities selected for the 2017 designation. Other honorees are The Alamo - San Antonio Region, The Charleston South Carolina Region, Christian County, Kentucky, Hampton Roads, Virginia, Maricopa County, Arizona, Sierra Vista, Arizona and the Governments of Southeastern Connecticut.

More information about the Association of Defense Communities and the Great American Defense Communities program can be found at defensecommunities.org.

Interstate-14 Sign Unveiling Ceremony

Congressman John Carter and Congressman Roger Williams will join state and local officials in unveiling the first Interstate 14 signs installed on the highway also known as US 190.

The 25-mile stretch from Copperas Cove east to Interstate 35 is the first segment to be designated Interstate 14. The entire interstate will eventually reach from El Paso east to Savannah, Georgia.

The Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition, made up of cities, counties, local authorities and economic development organizations in Texas and Louisiana, has been working for more than a decade in support of highway upgrades to enhance access between forts and ports. Connecting Fort Bliss, Fort Hood and Fort Polk to the Port of Corpus Christi and the Port of Beaumont is essential to strategic deployment.

TxDOT has invested more than \$120 million in US Highway 190 since 2005 bringing the central Texas segment to interstate standards and making it the natural starting point for the new system. Federal legislation and advocacy along with state support brought the designation to fruition.

In addition to the national defense benefits, the Interstate 14 designation brings new economic development potential to the region.

More information about the Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition is available online at gulfcoaststrategichighway.org.