



**For Immediate Release:
February 12, 2016**

Contact: Denise Perrin | Community Relations Manager
City of Rowlett | 4000 Main St., 75088 or P.O. Box 99 | Rowlett, TX 75030-0099
o 972.412.6192 | dperrin@rowlett.com

Request for Individual Assistance Denied

ROWLETT, TX – The City of Rowlett has been informed that Governor Abbott’s office received an official denial from the federal government for the Individual Assistance (IA) portion of his February 26 request for a major disaster declaration in the aftermath of the December 26, 2015 tornado. IA is used to help individual property and homeowners who are uninsured or underinsured in the event of a disaster. Based on a review of all the information available, including the results of the Preliminary Damage Assessment, it was determined that the impact to individuals and households in the requested counties (Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Franklin, Rockwall and Van Zandt) from this event was not of the severity and magnitude to warrant the IA designation, as it did not meet their threshold of 800 properties that are uninsured or underinsured “and” fall into the category of major damage or totally destroyed.

The governor’s office has 30 days to appeal the denial. We have also been informed that the offices of Governor Abbott and Congressman Pete Sessions will indeed launch such an appeal. The City of Rowlett will actively advocate for our citizens and support this appeal, providing any and all information and assistance possible toward this effort. If the appeal is denied, a Small Business Administration (SBA) declaration will be sought. Dallas and Rockwall counties alone are well above the mandatory damage threshold so we are optimistic this declaration will be granted. The SBA offers assistance not only to small businesses, but also to homeowners and renters in the form of low-interest loans.

“We are very disappointed with this decision and we appreciate the efforts being made on our behalf by Governor Abbott and Congressman Sessions,” says Rowlett Mayor Todd Gottel. “Although we will remain hopeful, we are sharing this notification now because we also realize that current information is essential to our citizens trying to recover from this disaster.”

As previously reported, the President did grant the request for Public Assistance (PA) on Tuesday, February 9. This is very important to our community and citizens as PA is used to help cities and counties recover a portion of the costs associated with a disaster, such as infrastructure repairs and debris removal.

###