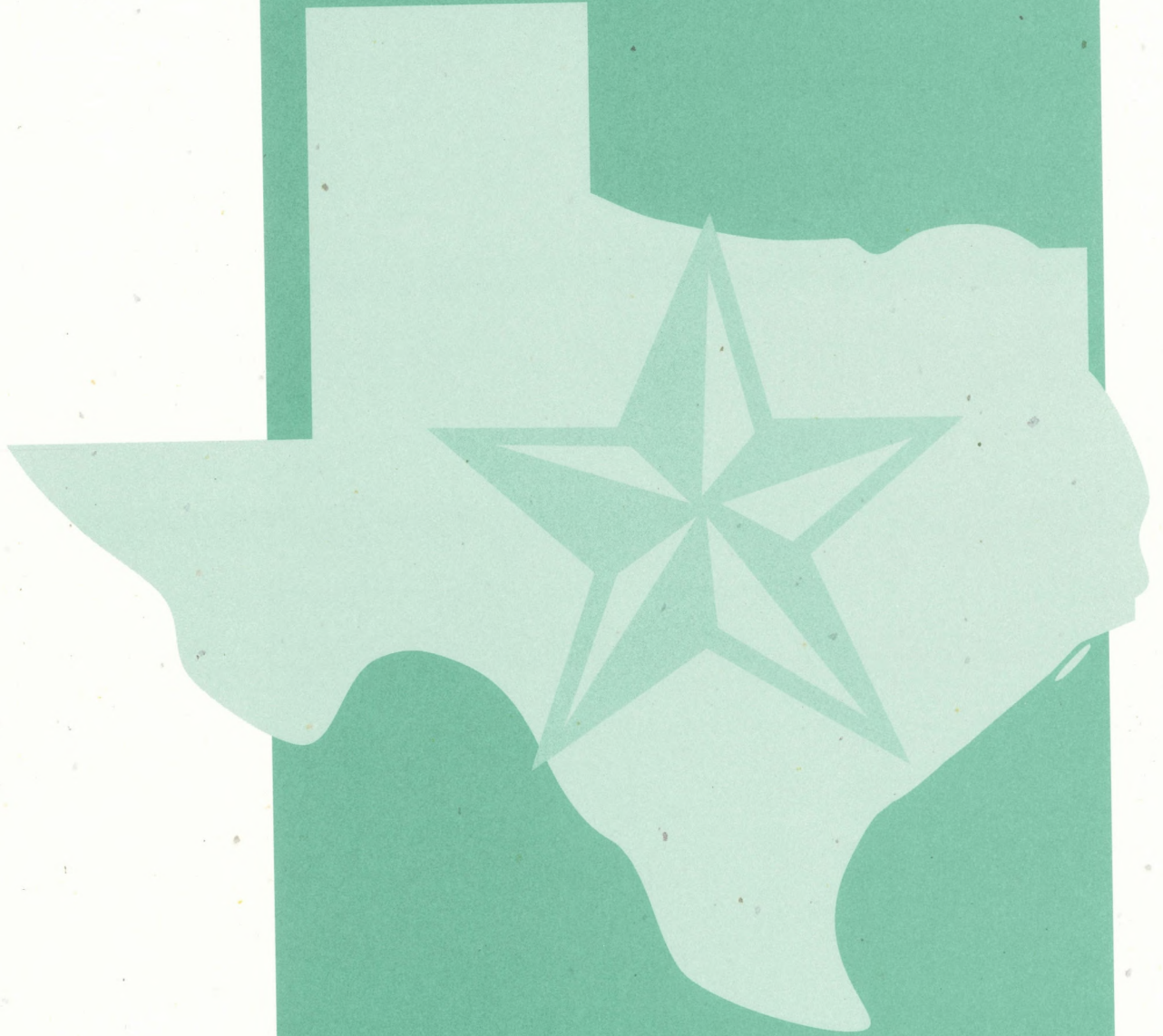


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# A Bright Future for Rural Communities: A Guide to Economic Development



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# A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES:

## A Guide to Economic Development

Economic and community development are intertwined processes. Economic development is part of a community development plan that may also include social issues such as health care and practical issues such as infrastructure.

This guide is intended to provide the process and path for successful community development.

DATE DUE

- Leadership training;
- A thorough community inventory and an honest community assessment, which are the basis for any type of development plan;
- A strategic plan, which can include economic development, infrastructure, housing and health care planning; and
- Leveraging your resources - those that you already have and additional resources that are available elsewhere.

Although this guide presents a step-by-step approach to economic development, each community is unique, and the priorities and the process should be community-driven. However, following the process identified in this guide will improve the likelihood of long-term success for your community. You will find in this guide testimonials representative of our *Texas Yes! Hardworking Communities* that talk about the important elements of this strategy for success.

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is committed to:

- Providing assistance to rural Texans and their communities in developing their communities as desirable places to live and work,
- Developing the infrastructure needed to attract and retain desirable businesses and jobs, and
- Providing assistance and guidance in developing business and other economic activities that will provide sustainable jobs and economic prosperity for current and future generations of rural Texans.

For more information on TDA Agribusiness and Rural Economic Development programs see the Web site [www.agr.state.tx.us](http://www.agr.state.tx.us).

Additional information about economic development is available through Texas Rural Partners (formerly TRDC) at [www.trdc.org](http://www.trdc.org) and the Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor (formerly Texas Economic Development) at [www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev).

## About the Texas Department of Agriculture

The **Texas Department of Agriculture** (TDA) is a state agency established by the Texas Legislature in 1907. The commissioner of agriculture, who is elected in the general election every four years, heads the agency.

TDA has marketing and regulatory responsibilities and administers more than 50 separate laws. Current duties include promoting Texas agricultural products locally, nationally and internationally; assisting in the development of the agribusiness industry in Texas; regulating the sale, use and disposal of pesticides and herbicides; controlling plant pests and diseases; and ensuring the accuracy of all weighing or measuring devices (like grocery scales or gas pumps) used in commercial transactions. TDA now administers the Childhood Nutrition Program, which includes the National School Lunch (NSLP) and the School Breakfast (SBP) Programs. TDA also helps Texas' rural communities increase rural and agribusiness development opportunities, including tourism.

TDA is a diversified state agency, providing both marketing and regulatory services. The 2002-2003 operating budget was \$114 million. With more than 500 employees, TDA headquarters are located in Austin, and there are five regional service offices, four satellite offices, seven laboratories and six livestock export facilities.

TDA's mission is to make Texas the nation's leader in agriculture while providing efficient and extraordinary service. That's why the people and programs of TDA are top-notch, goal-oriented and dedicated to Texas agriculture. With a global reach and a local focus, it's TDA's philosophy to stay one step ahead of today's changing technology, demographics and business opportunities, while keeping a steady eye on the future.

TDA is pleased to provide this guide to economic and community development to assist rural communities in achieving their full potential.

### TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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For the Hearing Impaired, Relay Texas: (800) 735-2988 (Voice),  
(800) 735-2989 (TDD)

[www.agr.state.tx.us](http://www.agr.state.tx.us)

Susan Combs, Commissioner

**Toll-free Rural Assistance Line: (877) 428-7848**



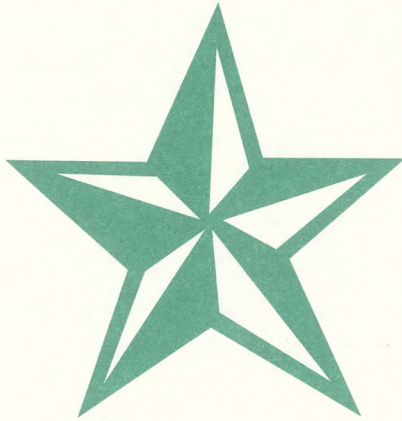
Texas Yes! is a new initiative from the Texas Department of Agriculture designed to promote the growth and prosperity of every rural Texas town, city and county. Membership in Texas Yes! is free, and open to businesses, organizations and governmental entities. Members must commit to the continued improvement, revitalization and economic strength of rural Texas through supporting the development and implementation of a local community project. For more information about Texas Yes!, go to [www.TexasYes.org](http://www.TexasYes.org).



Looking for Texas products in a store filled with so many choices can be difficult. A marketing campaign as big and bold as the Lone Star State is making choices easier.

**GO TEXAN** adds a new dimension to marketing Texas agriculture. The campaign promotes all Texas agricultural products - food, fiber, wine and horticulture - under one easily recognizable trademark: a glowing brand in the shape of Texas.

# A PATH TO DEVELOPING YOUR COMMUNITY



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## STEP 1: LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Leadership is crucial when embarking on a community or economic development plan. Texas communities need a new kind of leadership. Rural Texas needs leaders who:

- Are knowledgeable about economic trends, local needs and resources, and alternative development strategies;
- Can translate this knowledge into new strategies to stimulate the economy;
- Can mobilize people and resources to improve the community's future;
- Can work together across political boundaries and will intentionally include minority groups; and
- Can assist their communities in discovering a vision of their future.

Leadership training enables community leaders to recognize resources, learn planning methods, identify important projects in their community and learn other skills that will enable them to provide stronger leadership within their communities.

Leadership training is available from a variety of sources. Following are examples of leadership programs. Check with local trade groups, COGs or other regional associations, and institutions of higher learning for classes that may be available in your area.

### *Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership Program*

[tall.tamu.edu](http://tall.tamu.edu)

### *Texas Rural Leadership Program*

[www.trlp.org](http://www.trlp.org)

### *Texas Leadership Institute*

[www.texasleadership.org](http://www.texasleadership.org)



- *Looking to the future, Mike Hatley, executive director of Sweetwater Enterprise for Economic Development Inc., notes, "The seeds of our success are leadership and hard work. This might sound like a cliché, but we have individuals who will take time from their careers to work with us to see a project through."*
- *"Success doesn't just happen. It's captured by those with guts and vision," says Sheryl Hardy, director of Economic Development for Perryton, who is quick to acknowledge Perryton's strong local leadership "for the vision to continually grow our community." In fact, the town maintains a leadership development program to ensure a continuing supply of leaders.*

## STEP 2: COMMUNITY INVENTORY

*Larry Fields of **Graham** has advice for other communities just beginning the development process: "First, do a community inventory. Identify your assets and your weaknesses. The idea is to maximize your strengths ...but don't fool yourself. You need to do a reality check. Then, identify those companies, industries or businesses that need the assets you offer." Still, Fields concludes, "You won't be successful unless you have citizen involvement."*

The community inventory and assessment phase scrutinizes and evaluates the community's assets, liabilities and possibilities.

The first phase of the process will create a report that *inventories* what the community has to offer. This document will be used to get a comprehensive view of the current situation in the community and even to identify useful information to market the community.

The *assessment* should identify what is missing from the community and evaluate what is there. This process can help point the community toward possible projects for the future. Now is the time to set long-term goals and do serious research about how to reach them.

The community assessment requires continual updates as circumstances change in the area.

Data gathered should include:

- Demographics
- Labor market conditions
- Survey of labor force (history, background, skills and experience levels, and its willingness to attend training and be retrained in another field)
- Area's economic base (current, past, future and compared with the state and other areas)
- Physical and location conditions and assets including available real estate
- Community services and resources

Some sources of economic data are:

- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor
- National Business Incubation Association
- Small Business Administration
- Texas Agricultural Statistics Service
- Texas A&M Real Estate Center
- Texas State Data Center
- Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
- Texas Water Development Board
- Texas Workforce Commission
- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Department of Commerce

See appendices for contact information for listed agencies.

## STEP 3: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The following questions should be considered during a community assessment:

- What are the area's assets and key resources?
- Does the community have adequate:
  - Housing?
  - Infrastructure?
  - Health care?
  - Telecommunications?
  - Education?
  - Work force availability?
  - Work force training programs?
  - Natural resources?
- What challenges does the community face?
- What business, community, economic development or other projects are currently underway?
- Are there other projects that need to be undertaken?
- What are current priorities for development projects?
- Does the community actively recruit new business and industry?
- Does the community have a business retention program?

### Rural Resource Teams

Texas Rural Partners Inc. (TRP) has established a program that assists communities with their community assessment phase. The TRP Rural Resource Teams of TRP members and volunteers assist rural communities with locally conceived and driven development strategies. The Resource Teams are committed to providing rural communities in Texas with a community based planning and assessment process. The process involves interviewing a broad cross-section of people in the community, recording their suggestions and having the economic development team provide suggestions for implementation.

#### *Texas Rural Partners Inc.*

#### Rural Resource Teams

[www.trdc.org](http://www.trdc.org)

### Texas Community Futures Forum

Texas Cooperative Extension (TCE) facilitates the partnering of county government, businesses and other groups to gather information through citizen forums about local needs and issues and helps organize action teams to address them. TCE's Texas Community Futures Forum is a statewide process that allows Texans from all segments of the population to prioritize needs and issues based on current and emerging trends. Citizens of Texas identified, discussed and defined their community's current and future needs at forums held in every Texas county in 1999 and will do so again in 2004. For more information, contact your local county extension agent.

*Though the payoff is still to come from their early development efforts, community pride in **Robert Lee** runs deep. According to Beth Prather, the economic development coordinator, the keys are dedication and communication. "Be prepared to re-search all options. Then let everyone who wants to know what is going on," she says. "Citizens will act when they know what is needed and how to do it."*



## STEP 4: STRATEGIC PLANNING

A strategic plan is a tool to provide direction for area-wide economic development activities. The plan should include:

- Mission statement
- Community assessment and economic analysis
- Internal and external assessment of community strengths and weaknesses
- Realistic, attainable goals with time lines and strategies to make effective use of limited resources
- Identified opportunities for growth and development
- Identification of target industries
- Marketing strategy for the community
- Business recruitment strategy
- Business retention strategy
- Labor survey
- Continuous community improvement strategy
- Constant evaluation of results and reevaluation of the program and the strategic plan

The strategic planning process should include goals that strengthen the economy and sustainability of the community. Strategic planning also helps identify critical issues and challenges in the community. Some of these issues may become emotionally charged, and for that reason some communities choose to hire professional facilitators for this phase. For more information see the Texas Cooperative Extension publication *Is Your Community Ready for Economic Development* (E-182). That document can be found at [tcebookstore.org/pubinfo.cfm?pubid=670](http://tcebookstore.org/pubinfo.cfm?pubid=670).

Issues to consider include:

- Creating jobs that complement the community and available work force helps maintain a healthy local economy.
- Population growth will most likely occur with economic development activities, which may change the community's qualities and assets. Some members of the community may be resistant to change.
- The types of businesses and industries that may be attracted to the area and any positive and negative aspects for the community.
- Niche markets and recruiting businesses or industries that complement existing businesses.

Another helpful resource to assist with this process is the publication *Developing Your Local Economy: An Effective Planning Procedure for Rural Texas*, which provides a brief overview of an action-oriented approach to strategic planning appropriate for rural areas. This publication is available from the Texas Cooperative Extension. It is not available on-line at this time.

Once the community has prepared for economic development by identifying leaders and barriers, developing input and support for the program and setting goals, the next step is to take action. The following Web sites have excellent suggestions for getting started.

*Economic Development Administration*  
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy  
[12.39.209.165/xp/EDAPublic/Research/PlanForEcoDev.xml](http://12.39.209.165/xp/EDAPublic/Research/PlanForEcoDev.xml)

*Lower Colorado River Authority*  
Strategic Planning  
[www.lcra.org/develop/community/planning.html](http://www.lcra.org/develop/community/planning.html)

*North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension*  
Strategic Planning for Rural Community Economic Development  
[www.ces.ncsu.edu/resources/economics/cd44](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/resources/economics/cd44)

## STEP 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is improving a local or regional economy by creating wealth through new jobs (primary and secondary), business retention and expansion, increasing the tax base or recruiting new business.

Economic development is both art and science. Consider the information in this guide as suggestions for a basis to grow a community-based economic development program and as a tool to locate other resources.

The tools and strategies of economic development described in this guide have been effective in enhancing communities’:

- Labor force,
- Infrastructure,
- Business and community facilities,
- Economic structure and
- Institutional capacity (leadership, knowledge and skills) to support more development and growth.

Community development is another dimension of the planning process that has a major impact on the feasibility and success of economic development programs in a community.

### Shifting Paradigms for Rural Economic Development

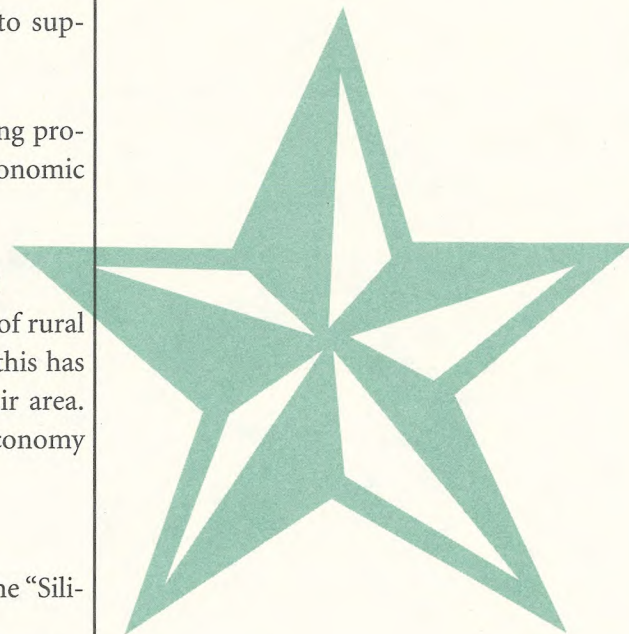
Manufacturing has traditionally been one of the key elements of rural economic development strategy in the United States. Usually this has meant that communities work to lure new companies to their area. However, manufacturing jobs have declined overall in the economy and even more so in rural areas. New strategies include:

- Supporting new or existing local businesses;
- Clustering industry and production by geography, such as the “Silicon Hills” in Central Texas, to create synergy; and
- Using the Internet to create opportunities for entrepreneurs in rural areas that did not exist before.

The following Web site often has information on new ideas for rural communities.

*Center for the Study of Rural America - Main Street Economist*  
[www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/mainstreet/MainStMain.htm](http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/mainstreet/MainStMain.htm)

# What is economic development?



## Economic Development Training

Training is an important place to start any economic development program.

Training for economic development is an important place to begin any economic development program. Professional training enables the developer to understand processes and terminology, discover resources, network and many other things.

It is important to note that taking an economic development course is only the beginning of one's understanding of this subject. Beyond job retention, community marketing and business recruitment, people in rural economic development must understand

- Infrastructure,
- Housing,
- Health care,
- Education

and a wealth of other issues that urban economic developers can defer to city and county governments.

The following organizations provide economic development training. This list, however, is not exhaustive. Contact local councils of government, institutes of higher education, industry or trade groups, and local utility providers for additional information.

*Economic Development Institute*

[www.occe.ou.edu/edi](http://www.occe.ou.edu/edi)

*Texas Community Development Institute*

[www.nhmccd.edu/cbed/cdi/index.html](http://www.nhmccd.edu/cbed/cdi/index.html)

*Texas Economic Development Council*

[www.texasedc.org](http://www.texasedc.org)

*Texas Engineering Extension Service*

[teexweb.tamu.edu](http://teexweb.tamu.edu)

*Texas Leadership Institute*

[www.lcra.org/develop/community/tli/tli.html](http://www.lcra.org/develop/community/tli/tli.html)



## Tools for Economic Development

There are many tools that can assist rural communities. Following is a list of some of the tools available.

### Development Corporations

A community may decide to form a development corporation to oversee economic development efforts and administer the sales and use tax fund. A community that implements an economic development sales tax, either the 4A or 4B sales tax, must comply with unique provisions that require cities to establish a corporation to administer the sales and use tax funds.

The corporation must file articles of incorporation with the Secretary of State. The composition of the corporation's board of directors and the length of a member's term differ between 4A and 4B.

#### 4A Board of Directors:

- Governing body appoints a five-member board.
- Each member's term may not exceed six years.
- There are no residency restrictions.

#### 4B Board of Directors:

- Governing body must appoint seven directors.
- Three cannot be employees, officers or members of the city's governing body.
- Four directors may be - but are not required to be - members of the governing body or city employees.
- Directors are appointed to a two-year term.
- Directors must be residents of the city authorizing the sales tax unless the city's population is less than 20,000 in which case the directors must be a resident of the county in which the city is principally located.
- Directors must meet residency requirements as specified by statute.

### 4A/4B Tax Revenue

Cities must use 4A tax revenues to focus on manufacturing and industrial development. Cities may undertake commercial business development projects in designated development areas within the city.

The 4B tax provides cities with a wider range of uses for revenues because it is intended to give communities an opportunity to undertake certain projects for quality of life improvements such as parks, athletic facilities and community centers, as well as economic development projects. Before spending 4B sales tax revenue a corporation is required to hold at least one public hearing on the proposed project

### What is the local sales and use tax?

Many Texas cities have the option of imposing a local sales and use tax to help finance their communities' economic development efforts. This sales tax, which is commonly called the 4A or 4B sales tax, may be approved by the city voters at rates not to exceed one-half of 1 percent each. This means that **some cities can adopt up to a full 1 percent in additional sales tax to fund economic development projects**. Cities may adopt either or both of the taxes so long as the total rate of all local sales taxes combined would not exceed 2 percent. It is recommended that cities contact the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts to determine eligibility.

For a city to impose a sales tax for economic development, **it must first be approved by the voters**. The city's governing body must adopt an ordinance calling for the election at least 45 days before it is held. If the election is successful, the tax becomes effective after one complete calendar quarter lapses from the date the Comptroller's office receives notification of voter approval.

## Tools (Continued)

to be funded by this tax.

Cities considering adopting the sales tax for economic development should contact the Comptroller of Public Accounts at (800) 531-5441 or see [window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/tx96\\_302.html](http://window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/tx96_302.html).

### Hotel/Motel Tax

The state hotel occupancy tax rate is 6 percent. Municipalities and certain counties are also authorized to impose a local hotel tax. Each local taxing authority may collect and administer a local hotel tax of up to 7 percent. The tax is used to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry.

Uses of the revenue collected include:

- Purchase, construction, improvement, enlarging, equipping, repairing, operation and maintenance of both convention center facilities and visitor information centers;
- Furnishing of facilities, personnel and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants;
- Advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates or registrants to the municipality or its vicinity;
- The encouragement, promotion, improvement and application of the arts; and
- Historical restoration and preservation projects, or activities or advertising as well as conducting solicitations and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums.

### Tax Abatements

Local governments can abate property taxes as an incentive for businesses to locate or expand in the area. Abatements are negotiated with the appropriate local governmental unit.

### Tax Incentives

The Legislature passed an omnibus tax relief law to encourage more businesses to relocate, expand or remain in Texas and to give Texas taxpayers relief. The law includes:

- Tax credits for qualifying capital investments in agricultural processing in rural areas,
- Franchise tax exemptions for certain businesses,
- Research and development tax credits, and
- Job creation franchise tax exemptions for certain value-added agricultural processing.

*Through the efforts of the Sweetwater Enterprise for Economic Development Inc., a 4A sales tax corporation, 150 new manufacturing jobs have been created through the recruitment of a new company and the retention and expansion of an existing business. The added annual payroll is projected to be in excess of \$3 million, not to mention the positive economic impact on local services and suppliers.*

## Tools (Continued)

### Business Benefits

**No Corporate or Personal Income Tax** - Texas maintains a pro-business attitude, limiting the number of state controls and taxes in regulating the activities of business. This is evidenced by the absence of income taxes.

**Right-to-Work State** - Texas labor laws give workers the freedom to choose where they want to work. These laws also lend stability to the work force and help Texas maintain a low rate of lost time due to work stoppages.

**Ordinances and Zoning** - Communities may want to institute ordinances and/or zoning requirements to retain control over future development and current infrastructure and resources. These tools allow communities to offer incentives and exercise some amount of control over the development process. It also gives the city a valuable tool with which to lure new business and redevelop areas that have thrived in the past.

### Industrial Parks

Many communities choose to create industrial parks. Some communities believe if they build a park, the businesses and people will follow. Others feel this speculative building is unnecessary because if the climate is right, businesses will come anyway and build for themselves, saving the community money for education, infrastructure or other needs. The community can also offer incentives such as infrastructure, land sold at below market value, cash incentives and tax abatements.

### Texas Enterprise Zones

The purpose of the Texas Enterprise Zone Program is to encourage job creation and capital investment in areas of economic distress. The program provides communities with an economic development tool to offer state and local incentives and program priority to new or expanding business in these designated areas.

The Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor, administers and coordinates local, state and federal efforts. EDT provides community and business assistance, approves applications, and evaluates and reports the program's effectiveness to the Legislature. Their Web site is [www.txed.state.tx.us/TexasEnterpriseZone/](http://www.txed.state.tx.us/TexasEnterpriseZone/).

## How do taxes compare in Texas?

Texas is known as a low tax burden state and is one of the few states that does not impose personal or corporate income taxes. A low tax burden is a powerful incentive with which to market a community to both businesses and workers with desirable skills. Texas businesses are, however, responsible for the following major business taxes:

- Ad Valorem (Property) Tax
- Corporate Franchise Tax
- Sales and Use Tax
- Unemployment Insurance Tax
- Workers Compensation Insurance

See [www.window.state.tx.us/m23taxes.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/m23taxes.html) for more information.

## Tools (Continued)

### Skills Development Fund

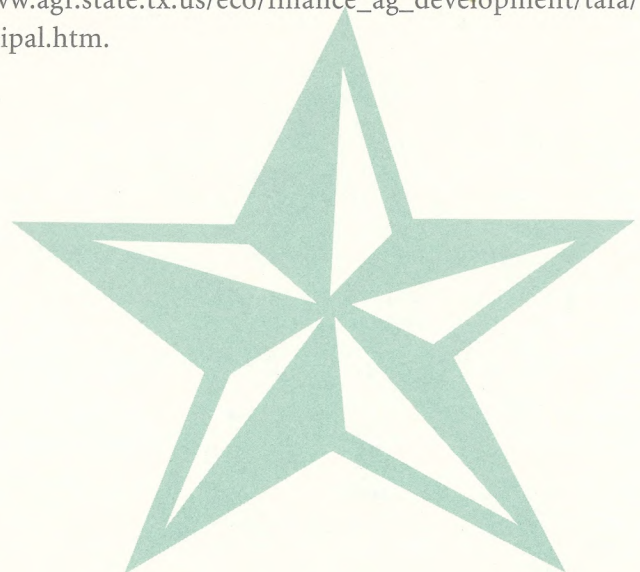
The Texas Workforce Commission administers the Skills Development Fund. This program is designed to assist businesses throughout the state with their job training needs. In partnership with community and technical colleges, and a higher education extension agency, the Skills Development Fund will assist in financing customized job training programs to fit the express needs of businesses. Their Web site is [www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/sdfintro.html](http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/sdfintro.html).

### The Texas Capital Fund

The Texas Capital Fund, administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture, provides funding to non-entitlement cities and counties to provide economic growth through job creation. The program's Web site is [www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/rural\\_eco\\_devo/capital\\_fund/fin\\_tcf.htm](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/rural_eco_devo/capital_fund/fin_tcf.htm).

### Rural Municipal Finance Program

The Texas Agricultural Finance Authority (TAFA) provides financial assistance in the form of loans to city and county governments; economic development corporations; hospital districts; rail districts; utility districts; special districts; agricultural districts; and private water and wastewater corporations. Funds are provided to projects approved by the TAFA board that improve or assist in the economic development of the rural area, such as purchase of real estate, construction of buildings and site improvements, equipment, water and wastewater systems, municipal infrastructure projects. The program's Web site is [www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/finance\\_ag\\_development/tafa/fin\\_rdfpmunicipal.htm](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/finance_ag_development/tafa/fin_rdfpmunicipal.htm).



## Business Retention and Expansion

Often, community leaders and economic development specialists are so busy working to bring in new business, they forget to appreciate and encourage homegrown, existing businesses.

There are many reasons to focus on retaining and expanding local businesses, such as:

- Local employment is strongly impacted by the strength of area businesses.
- Sixty-five to 80 percent of new job growth is created by existing businesses.
- Tax revenue also benefits because expanding businesses generate additional revenue, but generally require less from the county or community budget than a business start-up or relocation does.
- The economic impact of expanding businesses is a ripple effect, benefiting the entire community.

A community, county or group of communities working together may start a business retention and expansion program. Many retention and expansion programs begin with business visits to determine the types of assistance and help that will interest local businesses. This program fosters good will with area businesses and allows community leaders to learn about them. Some barriers to expansion may be work force issues, lack of space or sites, permitting problems or lack of support from the community and local leaders.

By working together and using program development, many problems impacting local firms can be resolved. Be prepared to keep in touch with local businesses and to address their concerns.

*Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor*  
Corporate Expansion and Recruitment  
[www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev)

*Global Communities: Business Retention and Expansion Programs*  
[www.edinfo.state.tx.us/detailv.cfm?ID=174](http://www.edinfo.state.tx.us/detailv.cfm?ID=174)

*Lower Colorado River Authority*  
Business Retention and Expansion  
[www.lcra.org/community/retention.html](http://www.lcra.org/community/retention.html)

*Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship*  
[ruralbusiness.tamu.edu/ecenter](http://ruralbusiness.tamu.edu/ecenter)

*According to Doug May, one-time volunteer and now director of the Fort Stockton and Pecos County Economic Development Corporation, the biggest keys to success in developing and diversifying the economy are "community buy-in and strategic planning." May also credits the support of local elected officials as critical to his community's success in growing both traditional and non-traditional businesses.*



## Business Development

### Resources

Economic developers must be prepared for questions about business development from business owners and residents within their community. A developer cannot be expected to grasp every nuance of running a business; therefore, it is important that the developer know of resources that can assist with business development questions. In addition to the agencies listed below, businesses can look to chambers of commerce, economic development foundations and local extension agents. Also, TDA has developed a publication called "Building an Agribusiness or Small Business Plan," which is available at the Web site below.

*Texas Department of Agriculture  
Rural and Economic Development  
[www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/index.htm](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/index.htm)*

*Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor  
Small Business Advocate  
[www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev)*

*U.S. Small Business Administration  
Small Business Development Centers  
[www.sbaonline.sba.gov/SBDC](http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/SBDC)*

"Incubator" is a generic name applied to a business development group that provides the environment and resources to accelerate business growth.

### Incubators

Incubators use a structured program that focuses on the "what's missing?" aspect of the marketing, operations, finance and administrative components of the business, then provides the "what's missing" to take the business to increasing levels of development.

An incubator teaches hands-on "entrepreneurial development" in a very precise manner tailored specifically for each business owner. It teaches what the business owner does not know or cannot do.

Incubators do not just "start" businesses. Incubators "quick start" businesses and help them grow at a rate that is seven to 22 times faster than businesses started otherwise. Incubators do this by maintaining an inventory of business experts, consultants, advisors, procedures, methodologies, state-of-the-art technologies and other resources that businesses are likely to use in the growth process.

Virtually any type of business, in almost every type of industry, has been grown with an incubator development program. Many incubators now have specialized Entrepreneurial Development Programs by business type, such as the Software Business Center, Product Development Center and International Business Center, to name a few. There are also some incubators for particular types of business owners, such as the Women's Business Center.

Emerging, growth, mature and other companies past the start-up stage can benefit from an Entrepreneurial Development Program without being physically located in the incubator.

Some incubators will identify financing if the business operator qualifies according to the incubator guidelines, passes the screening and is accepted into the Development Program. Most incubators have an internal "seed fund" and access to private placements in addition to conventional forms of debt and equity financing.

#### *Texas Business Incubator Association*

[www.tbiaonline.org](http://www.tbiaonline.org)

### Permitting Requirements for Texas Businesses

Certain industries may require state, federal or local permits. Community leaders should be familiar with commonly required permits, the permitting entity and the process to obtain permits to assist targeted businesses. Some commonly required permits include environmental permits and sales and use tax permits.

#### *Texas Commission on Environmental Quality*

[www.tceq.state.tx.us](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us)

#### *Comptroller of Public Accounts*

[www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/sales/new\\_business.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/sales/new_business.html)

#### *Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor* Alphabetical Permit List

[www.txed.state.tx.us/guide/ALPHABETlist.htm](http://www.txed.state.tx.us/guide/ALPHABETlist.htm)

*Ken Faughn, executive director of the Robstown Area Development Commission, says Robstown's current development efforts are the result of many people and organizations in the community and the county working for years to develop plans and plant the necessary seeds to turn a small town around. Faughn identifies four key steps to success for other communities: "Involve the community and its leadership in a strategic planning session. Set your priorities and agree on where you are going. Visit with successful cities for their methods, not their plans. And lastly, welcome prospects with 'What can we do for you?' Then do your best to meet their requests."*

## Encouraging Entrepreneurship

Through the 1990s, entrepreneurial companies accounted for only 4 percent of all businesses, but they generated over two-thirds of all new jobs. That kind of entrepreneurship could be rural Texas' best hope to revitalize ailing economies hit hard by losses in agriculture. Many Texas agricultural producers are already taking entrepreneurial risks by diversifying into tourism, organic production or retail sales of their products.

Community leaders and economic development organizations can foster entrepreneurial growth by setting policies that encourage business owners to take risks. They can do so by:

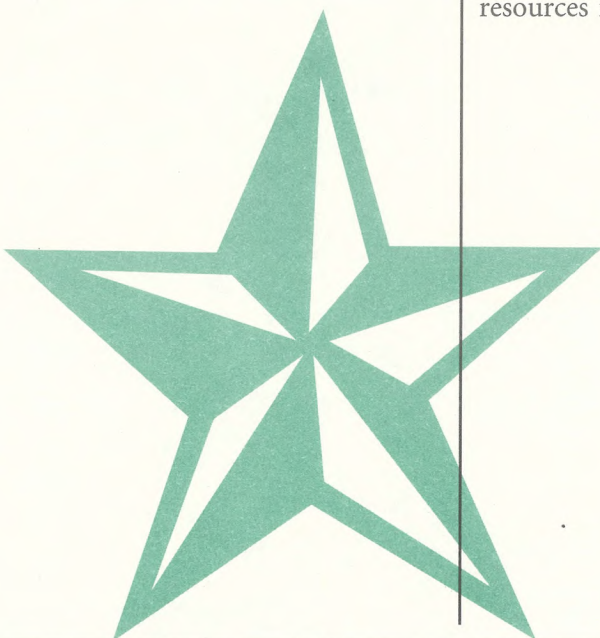
- Providing counseling, training and networking services to potential and existing entrepreneurs;
- Providing small loans, through revolving loan funds and microenterprise development programs;
- Offering a one-stop shop for information and the tools necessary to start a small business;
- Creating a business incubator; and
- Establishing a 504 Certified Development Company (CDC), which works with the U.S. Small Business Administration and private-sector lenders to provide larger loans to small businesses.

Entrepreneurship is important to a community in many ways. Jobs are created at a relatively low capital cost, a pool of skilled workers is developed, and small businesses are a source of innovation in products, services and techniques. By having small businesses in the community local savings and investments increase and the use of local resources is encouraged.

*Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship*  
[ruralbusiness.tamu.edu/center](http://ruralbusiness.tamu.edu/center)

*National Commission on Entrepreneurship*  
[www.ncoe.org](http://www.ncoe.org)

*U.S. Small Business Administration*  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)



## Marketing Your Community

The information compiled from the community assessment and the strategic plan will help you create a document that "sells" the community, which is essential. This will be a marketing and promotion tool to help highlight the community's assets and strengths. This document should be sent to prospects, recruits, funding/financing sources and others to promote the community as a desirable place to visit, live and do business.

The document should include:

- A community profile and history,
- Infrastructure details,
- Information and contacts for service providers,
- Labor force data,
- Economic details, and
- Available sites, facilities, industrial parks and training opportunities.

You may choose to include information on your region or collaborate with other communities in the region to develop marketing tools.

The Internet is a very valuable tool for marketing the community. Most communities have Web site links available for individuals, including corporate recruiters, looking for more information about the community.

### Attracting Business

It is important to recruit businesses that will benefit existing businesses and citizens in the community. Some issues to consider include:

- Marketing the community based on the community assessment and strategic plan.
- Learning about business leads from the Chamber of Commerce, TDA and/or the local utility company.
- Participating in trade shows. These offer an excellent and cost effective opportunity to showcase the community's strengths and assets and to demonstrate a desire to attract business development. Trade shows bring together industry leaders, investors and progressive communities. Often communities and partners such as utility companies cooperatively share resources in order to jointly participate in trade shows to market their region. However, trade shows must be approached strategically and worked diligently to yield results.
- Identifying target industries. These are industries identified in the community's self-assessment and strategic planning process that can be attracted to the community, are sustainable in the community and are desirable for the community. By targeting specific

*According to Tom McClurg, executive director of the Jasper Economic Development Corporation, "The keys to the success of our efforts have really been community cooperation and having an effective plan. We looked at what businesses we needed to attract to tie our development to new technologies." His advice to other communities working to diversify their economy: "Analyze what strengths you have, then set forth on a plan. If you don't have a strength, create it."*

## Marketing (Continued)

industries, efforts can be focused on business development projects with the greatest chances of success in the community.

- Advertising in magazines, newspapers and on the Internet. There are many publications, media sources and Web sites devoted to economic development, industry groups and geographic regions. The community should consider providing articles and community profiles to reach the target audience and industries.
- Focusing direct mail to targeted businesses.
- Networking with economic development professionals.

*Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor*  
Community Pages  
[community.txed.state.tx.us/communities](http://community.txed.state.tx.us/communities)

*Texas Business Advisor*  
[www.window.state.tx.us/tba](http://www.window.state.tx.us/tba)

*Texas Rural Communities Inc.*  
[www.texasrural.org](http://www.texasrural.org)

*Texas Rural Partners*  
[www.trdc.org](http://www.trdc.org)

Local utility providers may also host Web sites or have links to communities on their Web site.

### Do Your Research

Another important thing to remember when seeking to recruit a business is to research the company thoroughly, including checking their references and credit history. The Better Business Bureau and Dun and Bradstreet are good sources of information on companies. For companies that must pay franchise taxes, check with the Comptroller of Public Accounts. And for sole proprietors and partnerships, you can run a credit check with a national agency. Will the company be a good citizen?

*Better Business Bureau*  
[www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)

*Dun and Bradstreet*  
[www.dnb.com/us](http://www.dnb.com/us)

*Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts*  
[ecpa.cpa.state.tx.us/coa/coaStart.html](http://ecpa.cpa.state.tx.us/coa/coaStart.html)

The city of Bastrop's population is just over 5,000, but that number is growing. "What's happening is that it's not just Bastrop city that's growing fast – the county is growing fast," says Joe Newman, president and CEO of the **Bastrop Area Economic Development Corporation**. In fact, Bastrop County is the eighth fastest-growing county in the state and the 30th fastest-growing county in the nation.

Newman continues, "It's both our pro-business attitude and proximity to Austin that have helped us attract new jobs and new residents. Now, much of our target market for economic development efforts is the bio-tech sector."

## Regionalism

Rural community governments generally do not have all the expertise and resources available to urban governments. However, this obstacle can be overcome. When several small communities work together, they are better able to compete with the larger metropolitan areas.

Neighboring communities may have similar needs and issues. There are many benefits to regional efforts such as shared resources, a larger work force and a larger presence in recruiting. Regionalism can provide the critical mass necessary for service provision as well as cooperation on economic development programs such as tourism.

Some regional groups in Texas include:

- Central Texas Economic Development District
- High Ground
- I-10 Corridor
- Mid Texas Coast Coalition
- Northeast Texas Economic Development Roundtable
- Partnership of Southeast Texas
- Rio Grande Valley Partnership
- Rolling Plains Industrial Foundation
- South West Texas Tourism Partnership
- Texas Midwest Community Network
- Tri-County Agribusiness Association
- West Texas Alliance

Some regional groups are set up by Councils of Government (COGs) while others are initiated by groups interested in pooling efforts. Regional networks range from the informal to those that have extensive programs and paid staff.

While many groups have somewhat different objectives, they share the common goal of bringing their regions together for the common good. Contact TDA for more information on specific regional organizations.

Working together  
can yield benefits  
for all.

*The town of **Canadian's** efforts have inspired other small towns in the area, and they now work together in a regional development effort. Remelle Farrar, director of **Texas Prairie Rivers Region Inc.**, advises other communities, "Don't believe anyone who tells you it can't be done. And remember, you can do so much more if you invite your neighbors to work with you."*

## Workforce Training

*Dora Ross of Floydada Economic Development Corporation asserts, "The reality of the Technology Center will have lifelong effects on our citizens. We believe the citizens who utilize the Center and become more educated and qualified in the job market will also improve their self-esteem and quality of life. It will help us bridge the digital divide in the underserved populations and provide opportunities for our citizens to gain employable skills or advance to higher paying jobs."*

According to Texas' *Strategic Economic Development Plan 1998-2008*, building workforce capacity through training and education is the state's single most important economic development priority.

Communities are an important partner in workforce development. They must work with the employees and employers when determining how best to support their workforce. Citizens who are working and productive are the basis of a strong and thriving community.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is the agency in charge of workforce services for the state. TWC administers a number of federal and state programs that are available to rural communities. TWC created Local Workforce Development Boards to enable regions throughout the state to address their situations on a more local level. There are 28 boards located across the state. These boards were created to oversee delivery of workforce service in each local workforce area. The boards can contract with private and public organizations to deliver a full array of employment and training services from a single location.

Rural communities can benefit greatly from TWC's resources. According to the Comptroller, nonfarm employment has grown in the less populous counties of the state almost as fast as it has in the urban areas. This growth requires support in training.

A recent survey revealed that 61 percent of employers across the state find it difficult or very difficult to find qualified workers. A community interested in attracting new businesses or supporting expansion of old ones should be prepared to invest in some workforce training. Community and junior colleges can play a significant role in workforce training programs. Communities can also work with local school districts and workforce centers.

*Texas Workforce Commission*  
[www.twc.state.tx.us](http://www.twc.state.tx.us)

*Central Texas Workforce System*  
[workforcelink.com](http://workforcelink.com)

*Texas Education Agency Voluntary Workforce Training Program*  
[www.tea.state.tx.us/Cate/vwtp.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/Cate/vwtp.html)

## TOURISM

Rural Texas lends itself well to two very popular types of tourism - nature and heritage tourism.

Nature tourism is defined by the Texas Nature Tourism Task Force as “discretionary travel to natural areas that conserves the environmental, social and cultural values while generating an economic benefit to the local community.” Nature tourists are travelers who spend their time and money enjoying a broad range of outdoor activities.

Some communities in Texas are now promoting nature tourism, which may be based upon natural and recreational assets, as a way to supplement conventional economic development plans. Eighty percent of the state’s population is urban, and many urban dwellers are seeking more ways to connect with nature. Nature tourism has great potential for small communities to attract “city slickers.”

Tourism growth includes great increases in spending on nature-based travel. In 2001 the overall economic effect of fish- and wildlife-associated recreation (fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing) in Texas is estimated to have been \$10.9 billion. Biking, nature and hiking trails have been ranked by Texans as among the top 10 most needed recreation facilities in our state. Bird and wildlife viewing are also popular. Another variation on nature tourism is adventure and outdoor sports, such as rock climbing, bike racing, kayaking and more.

For communities interested in diversifying, this type of tourism offers a large market. Communities can work in a regional group, for multiple destinations, or with private landowners to ensure a range of amenities, such as lodging, dining and recreational activities.

### *Texas Department of Agriculture* Nature Tourism Guide

[www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/rural\\_eco\\_dev/economic\\_development/docs/naturetourismbook.pdf](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/rural_eco_dev/economic_development/docs/naturetourismbook.pdf)

### *Economic Development and Tourism Division, Office of the Governor* Market Texas Tourism

[www.travel.state.tx.us](http://www.travel.state.tx.us)

### *Texas Parks and Wildlife Department* Nature Tourism

[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/tourism/index.htm](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/tourism/index.htm)

### *Texas A&M University* Texas Nature Tourism Information Center [naturetourism.tamu.edu](http://naturetourism.tamu.edu)



*Patty Simmons, board director of the **Crowell-Three Rivers Area Chamber of Commerce**, recognizes that small communities with limited resources can work in a regional group to grow nature tourism from fishing, hunting and bird watching to hiking, biking and nature trails. She advises other beginners to “meet with leaders from surrounding communities who can share their knowledge and connections.” Crowell is doing just that by leveraging the experience of a former Crowell native who now heads the economic development efforts in Canadian, Texas.*



## TOURISM (CONTINUED)

Rural Texas is also fertile ground for developing cultural and heritage tourism. This type of tourism is travel directed toward experiencing the culture and heritage of a city, region, state or country.

Today's travellers expect more out of their vacation experience. A growing segment of the travelling public is retired baby-boomers. This group, as a whole, is more educated and experienced. More and more are taking time to travel, and as a result, cultural and heritage tourism are the fastest growing segments of the travel economy.

Texas has a unique culture and heritage that many people would like to learn about. Spanish, French, Czech, German, Mexican and many other nationalities have influenced the culture and the history of our state. Since 97 percent of Texas land is privately owned, much of the culturally significant property is in private hands. It depends on land-owners and communities collaborating to provide a rich experience for travelers.

A cultural and heritage tourism plan begins with an objective appraisal of your land and community assets. What can the community offer as a destination? Is there a dominant theme in the region? To draw tourists, community leaders should partner with other communities, area businesses and landowners to create a multilevel experience, including several possible destinations with a similar theme.

An excellent resource for information on cultural and heritage tourism is the Texas Historical Commission (THC). THC has worked with the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Texas Association of Museums and the Texas Travel Industry Association to create a Web site, *Uniquely Texas*, which serves as a resource for cultural and heritage tourism. THC's Main Street program helps communities revitalize their downtown areas and better market to tourists and locals alike.

In addition to traditional tourism, some communities have turned their cultural and natural heritage into larger-scale events, like festivals and sporting events, while others use the draw of their small towns to attract movie, television and advertising productions.

*Texas Historical Commission*

[www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)

*Uniquely Texas*

[www.uniquelytexas.org](http://www.uniquelytexas.org)

*Texas Yes!*

[www.TexasYes.org](http://www.TexasYes.org)

According to Gail Coldiron with the **Mason County Chamber of Commerce**, "The entrepreneurs who operate our B&Bs, recreational venues and restaurants approach their businesses with a focus on professionalism and customer service. They strive to provide visitors with a quality experience so visitors want to return again and again."

## LEVERAGING YOUR RESOURCES

Grants can be a useful resource for economic development programs. Grants are available for infrastructure improvement, libraries, health care improvement, environmental mitigation and almost limitless other subjects. However, obtaining grants can be challenging, as more people and organizations try to obtain these limited resources.

*It is important to remember the resources you already have in your community and to use those first.* The more resourceful you are, and the more self-sufficient your community, the better. It may require some creative thinking, but when you do apply for a grant, your resourcefulness will be appreciated by the grantmaking organization.

Grants for economic development are available from public and private sources. They are available to nonprofit organizations or governmental entities that support private business and industry, providing infrastructure or training assistance. Most require some kind of matching funds, in-kind or cash, often provided by the organization receiving the grant.

Because grants have become more widely available, grant writers have become more specialized. There are many resources available to communities who may not have the expertise to create a grant proposal and application. Consultants often perform this task when working with a community. However, there are other options for communities who cannot afford a consultant. Organizations such as the Center for Community Support provide grant writing assistance; and there are many grant writing courses available through various sources.

Following are a list of Web sites about grants and grant writing. Information is also available at public libraries.

### *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*

[www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)

### *Center for Community Support*

[ppri.tamu.edu/ccs](http://ppri.tamu.edu/ccs)

### *Office of the Governor*

State Grants Team

[www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/stategrants](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/stategrants)

### *The Foundation Center*

[fdncenter.org](http://fdncenter.org)

### *Ten Most Common Reasons Grants are Declined*

1. The organization does not meet grantmaker priorities.
2. The organization is not located in geographic area of funding.
3. The proposal does not follow prescribed format.
4. The proposal is poorly written and difficult to understand.
5. The proposed budget/grant request is not within funding range.
6. Unfamiliar with grant applicants. Are they credible?
7. The proposal does not seem urgent. Grantor not sure it will have an impact.
8. The objectives and plan of action of the project greatly exceed the budget and timelines for implementation.
9. All money already allocated for this grant cycle.
10. There is not enough evidence that the program will become self-sufficient and sustain itself after the grant is complete.

# NOTES

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is the backbone of the local economy. Infrastructure can include roads, rail, water and wastewater, electricity and other utilities and telecommunications. These things provide support to local businesses and consumers. A healthy infrastructure is vital to a healthy community economy. In rural communities water supply lines, sewer lines, roads and other infrastructure are old or nonexistent. Improvements to these structures are important to retain and attract residents and prepare for new growth.

The Texas Capital Fund (TCF) provides grants to rural communities to make public infrastructure and/or real estate improvements to support a specific business that is expanding or beginning operations in the applicant's jurisdiction. TCF grants require the business to make a capital investment and create or retain jobs for Texans.

For communities under 50,000, TCF also works with the Texas Historical Commission to administer the Main Street program and has recently developed a downtown revitalization program, which are designed to foster and stimulate the economic development in downtown areas by providing financial assistance to non-entitlement cities for public improvements.

Why is a thriving main street or downtown important?

- Downtown is a symbol of community economic health, local quality of life, pride and community history.
- A vital main street retains and creates jobs which produces a stronger tax base.
- Downtown is a good incubator for new small businesses.
- A vital main street area reduces sprawl.
- Main street provides an important place for community members to gather.
- Many downtown districts become tourist attractions.

*Texas Department of Agriculture*

Texas Capital Fund

[www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/rural\\_eco\\_devo/capital\\_fund/fin\\_tcf.htm](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/rural_eco_devo/capital_fund/fin_tcf.htm)

*Office of Rural Community Affairs*

Community Development Block Grant Program

[www.orca.state.tx.us/CDBG/index.html](http://www.orca.state.tx.us/CDBG/index.html)

*Texas Water Development Board*

Technical and Financial Assistance

[www.twdb.state.tx.us](http://www.twdb.state.tx.us)



- *Margie McMullen, local business owner and president of the **Yoakum Economic Development Corporation**, believes their development effort has helped not only to revitalize interest in downtown, but it has revitalized the people as well. "Good things are contagious," she says, "I've seen people really take ownership in this town. It just catches on and grows."*
- *"While private enterprises have recognized the opportunity for business in **Falfurrias**, all of our infrastructure is 40 to 50 years old and in need of replacement," notes Wesley Jacobs, the recently reelected mayor of Falfurrias. Efforts are underway to secure funding for replacement of the water treatment systems that serve Falfurrias and nearby colonias.*

## Transportation

Transportation planning is an important part of a development program.

Transportation is a cornerstone of economic development. In rural Texas, transportation includes roads, rail, air and public transit. It links rural residents with jobs and services, enables commercial shipping and includes everything from cars and buses to planes and trains. It is vital that strategic plans take into account the impact that new businesses, industries and residents will have on the local transportation infrastructure. Planning should include the many different transportation options, considering cost, ease of use, convenience and connecting points, as well as the long-term impact on a community's character.

*U.S. Department of Transportation*

Federal Highway Administration - Rural Transportation Planning

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/rural/index.html](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/rural/index.html)

*U.S. Department of Agriculture/U.S. Department of Transportation*

Rural and Agricultural Transportation Toolbox

[www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/transprt.htm](http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/transprt.htm)

### Road

As of 2003, city and county governments were responsible for 73.6 percent of the total road miles in Texas - meaning they pay for the road maintenance. This high level of responsibility often constitutes a large part of the local governments' budgets, so it becomes all the more important to establish policy and plans for road maintenance and construction within a community development program.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) assists rural governments with planning and maintaining their roadways. For information about these programs contact the local district office of TxDOT.

*Texas Department of Transportation*

[www.dot.state.tx.us/localinfo/localinfo.htm](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/localinfo/localinfo.htm)

### Rail

Rail still provides a number of advantages to rural communities. Rail still is the cheapest means of bulk transport, and rail cars can carry three to four times the weight of the heaviest trucks. Rail transport has the potential to alleviate the deterioration of roads, lessen the cost of moving rural products to market and mitigate the deterioration of air quality.

## Transportation (Continued)

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Recognizing the advantages of rail transportation to rural communities and agribusiness, the legislature created Rural Rail Transportation Districts to enable rural communities to improve their local rail infrastructure. Rail districts have the authority to issue revenue bonds to finance the purchase or rehabilitation of lines.

### *Texas Railroad Commission*

[www.rrc.state.tx.us/divisions/rail/rail.html](http://www.rrc.state.tx.us/divisions/rail/rail.html)

### *United States Department of Transportation*

Federal Railroad Administration

[www.fra.dot.gov/rdv/index.htm](http://www.fra.dot.gov/rdv/index.htm)

### Public Transit

Public transportation provides an important link for the approximately 20 percent of adults in Texas who do not have access to a personal vehicle. Nationally, about 40 percent of the “transit dependent population” - people with disabilities, seniors, and low-income citizens - live in rural areas. Accessible transportation options allow people to keep jobs and get to shopping and services. While providing public transportation in rural areas remains a challenge, there are programs available to help. Several Texas providers have been recognized for their innovation in providing rural transportation.

### *Community Transportation Association*

[www.ctaa.org/home.asp](http://www.ctaa.org/home.asp)

### *United States Department of Transportation*

Federal Transit Administration, Welfare-to-Work Programs

[www.fta.dot.gov/wtw](http://www.fta.dot.gov/wtw)

### *Texas Department of Transportation*

Public Transportation/ Rural Transit Assistance Program

[www.dot.state.tx.us/ptn/geninfo.htm](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/ptn/geninfo.htm)

### Capital Area Rural Transportation System

[www.ridecarts.com](http://www.ridecarts.com)

A mix of transportation choices ensures people can get to work, shopping and other activities, and that goods can get to market.

## Telecommunications

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Access to the Internet provides new opportunities for entrepreneurs in rural areas.

Modern telecommunications and the incumbent infrastructure are a part of everyday life in today's society. This technology can help rural communities overcome many of the economic obstacles that face them. The technology diminishes the limits of the physical world, bringing customers closer to their product, employees closer to work and communities closer together.

Advanced telecommunications, broadband or dial-up, are an important community resource. Access to the Internet is a critical competitive advantage for businesses, providing a broader market for local products and services, as well as offering more to the rural consumer.

High speed services can provide access to telehealth services, linking small town hospitals with specialists and larger hospitals. They also enable distance learning and education, linking schools to more teaching resources.

Telecommunications infrastructure has a high initial cost to establish. As with other parts of infrastructure, telecommunications may require the local government to work with businesses and citizens to come up with a policy and plan on how to bring affordable telecommunications to the community.

Regional alliances are another way for communities to provide a larger consumer pool to a potential provider of telecommunication services.

### *Lonestar Broadband*

Connectivity Toolkit for Underserved Texas Communities

[www.lonestarbroadband.org/index.htm](http://www.lonestarbroadband.org/index.htm)

### *Texas Rural Partners*

Telecommunications Infrastructure Committee

[www.trdc.org/Telecom/telcom%20committee.htm](http://www.trdc.org/Telecom/telcom%20committee.htm)

### *U.S. Department of Agriculture*

Rural Utilities Service-Telecommunications

[www.usda.gov/rus/telecom](http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom)

## HOUSING

Economic development is largely a process of creating new jobs, whether by expanding existing businesses or attracting new ones. However, as new employees arrive to fill those new jobs, they may be unable to remain in the community if they cannot find adequate and affordable housing. Community leaders across the state are working to make rural housing more affordable, available and livable. If new workers are not able to find adequate housing, they cannot become a part of the local community. Low housing stocks also affect long-time residents who may be interested in upgrading their housing.

Housing stocks have grown at a much slower rate in rural areas than in urban areas. There are far fewer rental units available. New housing is generally too expensive for moderate- to low-income families. Communities must work with developers to provide affordable housing for all levels of income within the community. This provides a natural progression of home ownership and investment that encourages residents to remain in the community. Housing and home ownership must be part of an overall development strategy that helps create jobs and strengthen communities.

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is the best place to start when considering a housing plan. Their Housing Resource Center provides assistance to communities and developers to determine local housing needs and locate possible funding.

*Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs*  
Center for Housing Research, Planning, and Communications  
[www.tdhca.state.tx.us/hrc.htm](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/hrc.htm)

*Housing Assistance Council*  
[www.ruralhome.org](http://www.ruralhome.org)

*National Rural Housing Coalition*  
[www.nrhweb.org](http://www.nrhweb.org)

*U.S. Department of Agriculture*  
Rural Housing Service  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/index.html)

*U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*  
[www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rhed/index.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rhed/index.cfm)

Lack of housing affects new and long-time residents of a community.



## HEALTH CARE

Adequate health care will help rural communities keep and attract people.

Adequate health care is critical to the survival of rural Texas. It is important that communities address the challenges facing rural health care.

Lack of adequate funding for hospitals and a shortage of doctors are the two greatest challenges. Most people recognize that health care is a significant quality of life issue, but only recently has it been acknowledged that it also is an economic development issue.

Rural economic developers must promote health care as an integral part of the local economic development picture. Without health care, retaining, attracting and expanding businesses and jobs becomes much more difficult.

Rural areas are also growing popular as destinations for retirement. While incoming retirees present additional challenges to the health care system, they typically bring wealth and outside income into their new communities. One economist from Arizona estimates that for every retiree that moves into Arizona two service sector jobs are created.

Developers should know that the business of rural health care contributes significantly to the economy. By maintaining local accessibility, the community strengthens itself. One dollar spent on health care within the community is multiplied one and one-half to four times within the local economy. Creating jobs in the health care industry not only increases the number of jobs, but also provides support for residents and the local economy.

Community leaders and developers must be aware of the economic influences and other reasons for strong local health care and ensure that the subject is addressed in any community development plan.

*Office of Rural Community Affairs*

Rural Health Unit

[www.orca.state.tx.us/Rural%20Health%20Unit/index.html](http://www.orca.state.tx.us/Rural%20Health%20Unit/index.html)

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Office of Rural Health Policy

[www.ruralhealth.hrsa.gov](http://www.ruralhealth.hrsa.gov)

## APPENDIX A State Agencies

### For a complete list of state agencies:

[www.tsl.state.tx.us/trail/agencies.html](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/trail/agencies.html)

Texas A&M University  
College Station, Texas 77843  
(979) 845-3211

**Agricultural Lifetime Leadership Program**  
7607 Eastmark Drive, Suite 101A  
College Station, Texas 77840-4027  
(979) 845-1554  
[tall.tamu.edu](http://tall.tamu.edu)

**Center for Community Support  
Public Policy Research Institute**  
4476 TAMU  
College Station, Texas 77843-4476  
(979) 458-3239  
[ppri.tamu.edu/ccs](http://ppri.tamu.edu/ccs)

**Center for Rural Entrepreneurship**  
P.O. Box 38  
Overton, Texas 75684  
(903) 834-6191  
[ruralbusiness.tamu.edu/ecenter](http://ruralbusiness.tamu.edu/ecenter)

**Cooperative Extension**  
112 Jack K. Williams Administration Building  
College Station, Texas 77843-7101  
(979) 845-7800  
[texasextension.tamu.edu](http://texasextension.tamu.edu)

**Real Estate Center**  
2115 TAMU  
College Station, Texas 77843-2115  
(800) 244-2144  
[recenter.tamu.edu](http://recenter.tamu.edu)

**State Data Center**  
2125 TAMU  
College Station, Texas 77843-2125  
(979) 845-5115  
[txsdc.tamu.edu](http://txsdc.tamu.edu)

Texas Department of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 12847  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-7476  
TDD: (800) 735-2989  
[www.agr.state.tx.us](http://www.agr.state.tx.us)

**Agricultural Statistics Service**  
P.O. Box 70  
Austin, Texas 78767-0070  
(512) 916-5581  
[www.nass.usda.gov/tx/index.htm](http://www.nass.usda.gov/tx/index.htm)

**Rural Economic Development**  
(877) 428-7848  
(512) 936-0273  
[www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/index.htm](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/index.htm)

**Texas Agricultural Finance Authority**  
(877) 428-7848  
(512) 936-0273  
[www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/finance\\_ag\\_development/index.htm](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/eco/finance_ag_development/index.htm)

**Texas Yes!**  
(866) 4TEX-YES  
[www.texasyes.org](http://www.texasyes.org)

**Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts**  
P.O. Box 13528  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-4600  
(800) 531-5441 Ext. 3-4679 Local Government Assistance  
[www.window.state.tx.us](http://www.window.state.tx.us)

**Texas Education Agency**  
1701 N. Congress  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 463-9734  
[www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us)

**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality,**  
P.O. Box 13087  
Austin, Texas 78711-3087  
(512) 239-1000  
(800) 447-2827 Local Government Assistance  
[www.tceq.state.tx.us](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us)

**Texas Engineering Extension Service**

301 Tarrow  
College Station, Texas 77843  
(979) 458-6800  
(877) 833-9638  
[teexweb.tamu.edu](http://teexweb.tamu.edu)

**Texas General Land Office**

P.O. Box 12873  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-5001  
(800) 998-4GLO  
[www.glo.state.tx.us](http://www.glo.state.tx.us)

**Governor, Office of the**

P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711-2428  
(512) 463-2000  
(800) 843-5789 Citizen's Assistance Hotline  
[www.governor.state.tx.us](http://www.governor.state.tx.us)

**Economic Development and Tourism Division**

P.O. Box 12728  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 936-0100  
[governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev](http://governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev)

**Texas Film Commission**

P.O. Box 13246  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-9200  
[governor.state.tx.us/film](http://governor.state.tx.us/film)

**Texas Department of Health**

1100 West 49th St.  
Austin, Texas 78756  
(512) 458-7111  
(888) 963-7111  
[www.tdh.state.tx.us](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us)

**Texas Historical Commission**

P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-6100  
[www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)

**Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs**

P.O. Box 13941  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 475-3800  
[www.tdhca.state.tx.us](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us)

**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**

4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, Texas 78744  
(512) 389-4800  
(800) 792-1112  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

**Texas Railroad Commission**

P.O. Box 12967  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-7288  
[www.rrc.state.tx.us](http://www.rrc.state.tx.us)

**Office of Rural Community Affairs**

P.O. Box 12877  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(800) 544-2042  
[www.orca.state.tx.us](http://www.orca.state.tx.us)

**Secretary of State**

P.O. Box 12967  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-5770  
[www.sos.state.tx.us](http://www.sos.state.tx.us)

**Texas Department of Transportation**

125 East 11th St.  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 463-8588  
[www.dot.state.tx.us](http://www.dot.state.tx.us)

**Texas Water Development Board**

P.O. Box 13231  
Austin, TX 78711  
(512) 463-7847  
[www.twdb.state.tx.us](http://www.twdb.state.tx.us)

**Texas Workforce Commission**

101 East 15th St.  
Austin, Texas 78778  
(512) 463-2222  
[www.twc.state.tx.us](http://www.twc.state.tx.us)

## APPENDIX B Federal Agencies

### For a complete list of federal agencies:

[lcweb.loc.gov/global/executive/fed.html](http://lcweb.loc.gov/global/executive/fed.html)

**Department of Agriculture**  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

**Office of Community Development**  
Reporters Building  
300 7th St., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
(202) 619-7980 or (800) 645-4712  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/ocd/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ocd/index.html)

**Rural Housing Service**  
South Agriculture Building  
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 5037  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
(202) 690-1533  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/index.html)

**Rural Utilities Service**  
South Agriculture Building  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
(202) 720-9540  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/rus/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rus/index.html)

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance**  
1800 F St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20405  
(202) 208-4052  
[www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)

**Census Bureau**  
4700 Silver Hill Road  
Washington, D.C. 20233-0001  
(301) 763-4636  
[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**Department of Commerce**  
1401 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230  
(202) 482-2000  
[home.doc.gov](http://home.doc.gov)

**Economic Development Administration**  
327 Congress Ave., Suite 200  
Austin, Texas 78701-4037  
(512) 381-8144  
[www.doc.gov/eda](http://www.doc.gov/eda)

**National Telecommunications and Information Administration**  
1401 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230  
(202) 482-7002  
[www.ntia.doc.gov](http://www.ntia.doc.gov)

**Department of Health and Human Services**  
200 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
(877) 696-6775  
[www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

**Office of Rural Health Policy**  
5600 Fishers Lane, 9A-55  
Rockville, Maryland 20852  
(301) 443-0835  
[ruralhealth.hrsa.gov](http://ruralhealth.hrsa.gov)

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**Department of Housing and Urban Development**

451 7th St., SW  
Washington, .D.C. 20410  
(202) 708-1112  
[www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)

**Small Business Administration**

4300 Amon Carter Blvd., Suite 108  
Fort Worth, Texas 76155  
(817) 684-5581  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

**Department of Transportation**

400 7th St., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20590  
(202) 366-4000  
[www.dot.gov](http://www.dot.gov)

**Federal Aviation Administration**

800 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20591  
(202) 366-4570  
[www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov)

**Federal Highway Administration**

300 E. 8th St., Room 828  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 536-5900  
[www.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov)

**Federal Railroad Administration**

4100 International Plaza, Suite 450  
Fort Worth, Texas 76109  
(817) 862-2200  
[www.fra.dot.gov/site/index.htm](http://www.fra.dot.gov/site/index.htm)

**Federal Transit Administration**

819 Taylor St., Room 8A36  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102  
(817) 978-0550  
[www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov)

## APPENDIX C

### Other Resources

**Access Fund, The**  
2475 Broadway  
Boulder, Colorado 80304  
(303) 545-6772  
[www.accessfund.org](http://www.accessfund.org)

**Central Texas Workforce System**  
300 Cheyenne  
Killeen, Texas 76542  
(254) 200-2000 or (800) 460-8801  
[www.workforcelink.com](http://www.workforcelink.com)

**Economic Development Institute**  
1610 Asp Ave., Room 600  
Norman, Oklahoma 73072  
(405) 325-3891  
[www.occe.ou.edu/edi](http://www.occe.ou.edu/edi)

**Foundation Center, The**  
79 Fifth Ave.  
New York, New York 10003  
(212) 620-4230  
[fdncenter.org](http://fdncenter.org)

**Housing Assistance Council**  
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 606  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 842-8600  
[www.ruralhome.org](http://www.ruralhome.org)

**Lower Colorado River Authority**  
3701 Lake Austin Boulevard  
Austin, Texas 78703  
(800) 776-5272 ext. 3399  
[www.lcra.org](http://www.lcra.org)

**National Business Incubation Association**  
20 E. Circle Drive, Suite 190  
Athens, Ohio 45701  
(740) 593-4331  
[www.nbia.org](http://www.nbia.org)

**National Commission on Entrepreneurship**  
444 North Capital St., Suite 399  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 434-8060  
[www.ncoe.org](http://www.ncoe.org)

**National Rural Housing Coalition**  
1250 Eye St. NW, Suite 902  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 393-5225  
[www.nrhweb.org](http://www.nrhweb.org)

**North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension**  
Agricultural and Resource Economics  
P.O. Box 8109, NC State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27695  
(919) 515-3107  
[www.ag-econ.ncsu.edu/extension.htm](http://www.ag-econ.ncsu.edu/extension.htm)

**Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**  
1100 17th St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(877) 476-9297  
[www.trailsandgreenways.org](http://www.trailsandgreenways.org)

**Texas Community Development Institute**  
250 N. Sam Houston Parkway East  
Houston, Texas 77060  
(281) 260-3120  
[www.nhmccd.edu/cbed/cdi/index.html](http://www.nhmccd.edu/cbed/cdi/index.html)

**Texas Economic Development Council**  
1301 Nueces, Suite 101  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 480-8432  
[www.texasedc.org](http://www.texasedc.org)

**Texas Rural Communities Inc.**  
12401 Hymeadow Drive Building 1, Suite 1-B  
Austin, Texas 78750  
(512) 219-0468  
[texasrural.org](http://texasrural.org)

**Texas Rural Health Association**  
P.O. Box 2337  
Austin, Texas 78768  
(512) 990-7755  
[www.trha.org](http://www.trha.org)

**Texas Rural Leadership Program**  
8140 Burnet Road, Suite 218  
Austin, Texas 78757  
512-323-6515  
[www.trlp.org](http://www.trlp.org)

**Texas Rural Partners**  
8140 Burnet Road, Suite 218  
Austin, Texas 78757  
(512) 323-6515  
[www.trdc.org](http://www.trdc.org)

## APPENDIX D

# Councils of Government

### Alamo Area Council of Governments

8700 Tesoro Drive, Suite 700

San Antonio, Texas 78217

(210) 362-5200

[www.aacog.com](http://www.aacog.com)

Counties: Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Medina, Wilson

### Ark-Texas Council of Governments

P.O. Box 5307

Texarkana, Texas 75505

(903) 832-8636

[www.atcog.org](http://www.atcog.org)

Counties: Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River, Titus

### Brazos Valley Council of Governments

P.O. Drawer 4128

Bryan, Texas 77805

(979) 775-4244

[www.bvcog.org](http://www.bvcog.org)

Counties: Brazos, Burleson, Grimes Leon, Madison, Robertson, Washington

### Capital Area Planning Council

2512 Interstate Highway 35 South, Suite 204

Austin, Texas 78704

(512) 443-7653

[www.capco.state.tx.us](http://www.capco.state.tx.us)

Counties: Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis, Williamson

### Central Texas Council of Governments

P.O. Box 729

Belton, Texas 76513

(254) 933-6036

[www.ctcog.org](http://www.ctcog.org)

Counties: Bell, Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Milam, Mills, San Saba

### Coastal Bend Council of Governments

P.O. Box 9909

Corpus Christi, Texas 78469

(361) 883-5743

[www.cbcog98.org](http://www.cbcog98.org)

Counties: Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, McMullen, Nueces, Refugio, San Patricio

### Concho Valley Council of Governments

P.O. Box 60050

San Angelo, Texas 76906

(915) 944-9666

[www.cvcog.org](http://www.cvcog.org)

Counties: Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Kimble, Mason, McCullough, Menard, Reagan, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, Tom Green

### Deep East Texas Council of Governments

274 E. Lamar St.

Jasper, Texas 75951

(409) 384-5704

[www.detcog.org](http://www.detcog.org)

Counties: Angelina, Houston, Jasper, Nacogdoches, Newton, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity, Tyler

### East Texas Council of Governments

3800 Stone Road

Kilgore, Texas 75662

(903) 984-8641

[www.etcog.org](http://www.etcog.org)

Counties: Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt, Wood

### Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission

P.O. Box 2028

Victoria, Texas 77902

(361) 578-1587

[www.gcrpc.org](http://www.gcrpc.org)

Counties: Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Victoria

**Heart of Texas Council of Governments**

300 Franklin Ave.  
 Waco, Texas 76701  
 (254) 756-7822  
[www.hotcog.org](http://www.hotcog.org)  
 Counties: Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, McLennan

**Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments**

P.O. Box 22777  
 Houston, Texas 77227  
 (713) 627-3200  
[www.h-gac.com](http://www.h-gac.com)  
 Counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, Wharton

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council**

311 North 15th St.  
 McAllen, Texas 78501  
 (956) 682-3481  
[www.lrgvdc.org](http://www.lrgvdc.org)  
 Counties: Cameron, Hidalgo, Willacy

**Middle Rio Grande Development Council**

P.O. Box 1199  
 Carrizo Springs, Texas 78834  
 (830) 876-9415  
[www.mrgdc.org](http://www.mrgdc.org)  
 Counties: Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, LaSalle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, Zavala

**Nortex Regional Planning Commission**

P.O. Box 5144  
 Wichita Falls, Texas 76307  
 (940) 322-5281  
[www.nortexrpc.org](http://www.nortexrpc.org)  
 Counties: Archer, Baylor, Clay, Cottle, Foard, Hardeman, Jack, Montague, Wichita, Wilbarger, Young

**North Central Texas Council of Governments**

P.O. Box 5888  
 Arlington, Texas 76005-5888  
 (817) 640-3300  
[www.nctcog.dst.tx.us](http://www.nctcog.dst.tx.us)  
 Counties: Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Erath, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Navarro, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Somervell, Tarrant, Wise

**Panhandle Regional Planning Commission**

P.O. Box 9257  
 Amarillo, Texas 79105  
 (806) 372-3381  
[www.prpc.cog.tx.us](http://www.prpc.cog.tx.us)  
 Counties: Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, Wheeler

**Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission**

P.O. Box 60660  
 Midland, Texas 79711  
 (915) 563-1061  
[www.txregionalcouncil.org/regions/pbrpc.htm](http://www.txregionalcouncil.org/regions/pbrpc.htm)  
 Counties: Andrews, Borden, Crane, Dawson, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Howard, Loving, Martin, Midland, Pecos, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Ward, Winkler

**Rio Grande Council of Governments**

1100 N. Stanton, Suite 610  
 El Paso, Texas 79902  
 (915) 533-0998  
[www.riocog.org](http://www.riocog.org)  
 Counties: Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Presidio

**South East Texas Regional Planning Commission**

2210 Eastex Freeway  
 Beaumont, Texas 77703  
 (409) 727-2384  
[setrpc.org](http://setrpc.org)  
 Counties: Hardin, Jefferson, Orange

**South Plains Association of Governments**

P.O. Box 3730  
 Lubbock, Texas 79452  
 (806) 762-8721  
[www.spag.org](http://www.spag.org)  
 Counties: Bailey, Cochran, Crosby, Dickens, Floyd, Garza, Hale, Hockley, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Terry, Yoakum



South Texas Development Council

P.O. Box 2187

Laredo, Texas 78044

(956) 722-3995

[www.stdc.cog.tx.us](http://www.stdc.cog.tx.us)

Counties: Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, Zapata

Texoma Council of Governments

1117 Gallagher Drive, Suite 100

Sherman, Texas 75090

(903) 813-3512

[www.texoma.cog.tx.us](http://www.texoma.cog.tx.us)

Counties: Cooke, Fannin, Grayson

West Central Texas Council of Governments

P.O. Box 3195

Abilene, Texas 79601

(915) 672-8544

[www.txregionalcouncil.org/regions/wctcog.htm](http://www.txregionalcouncil.org/regions/wctcog.htm)

Counties: Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Knox, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, Throckmorton

## APPENDIX E

### 2003 Texas Yes! Hardworking Communities

Rural Texas faces its own unique set of challenges, but everywhere across Texas, small-town communities are rising to the occasion, proving that there are plenty of reasons to fight for the future of rural Texas. Through strong economic development efforts, these shining stars are bringing new opportunities, new jobs and new ideas to the table. For more information about Texas Yes! and the Hardworking Communities, go to [www.texasyes.org](http://www.texasyes.org).

#### Gun Barrel City

[www.gunbarrelcity.org](http://www.gunbarrelcity.org)

#### Sulphur Springs

[www.sulphurspringstxcdc.com/index.html](http://www.sulphurspringstxcdc.com/index.html)

#### Brownwood

[www.ci.brownwood.tx.us/](http://www.ci.brownwood.tx.us/)

#### Sweetwater

[www.sweetwatertexas.org/](http://www.sweetwatertexas.org/)

#### Fort Stockton

[tourtexas.com/fortstockton](http://tourtexas.com/fortstockton)

#### Crowell

[www.crowelltx.com](http://www.crowelltx.com)

#### Robstown

[www.community.tded.state.tx.us/communities/commpages/371.htm](http://www.community.tded.state.tx.us/communities/commpages/371.htm)

#### Mason

[www.co.mason.tx.us/index.html](http://www.co.mason.tx.us/index.html)

#### Floydada

[www.floydadaedc.com](http://www.floydadaedc.com)

#### Clifton

[www.cliftontexas.org](http://www.cliftontexas.org)

#### Canadian

[canadiantx.com](http://canadiantx.com)

#### Robert Lee

[community.tded.state.tx.us/communities/commpages/984.htm](http://community.tded.state.tx.us/communities/commpages/984.htm)

#### Ozona

[www.ozona.com/crockettcounty](http://www.ozona.com/crockettcounty)

#### Bastrop

[www.bastropchamber.com](http://www.bastropchamber.com)

#### Yoakum

[www.cityofyoakum.org](http://www.cityofyoakum.org)  
[www.yoakumusa.com/](http://www.yoakumusa.com/)

#### Jasper

[www.jaspercoc.org](http://www.jaspercoc.org)

#### Graham

[www.visitgraham.com](http://www.visitgraham.com)

#### Perryton

[perryton.org](http://perryton.org)

#### Falfurrias

[community.tded.state.tx.us/communities/commpages/89.htm](http://community.tded.state.tx.us/communities/commpages/89.htm)

#### Duval County

[duval-tx.tamu.edu](http://duval-tx.tamu.edu)  
[agdirectory.tamu.edu/  
dept\\_detail.cfm?id=265&table\\_id=4.0](http://agdirectory.tamu.edu/dept_detail.cfm?id=265&table_id=4.0)

#### Coleman

[www.colemantexas.org](http://www.colemantexas.org)

*According to JoAnn May of the **Coleman Development Company**, the dedication of the people of Coleman has been the key to success "This group of leaders has worked so hard," she says. "They just won't take 'no' for an answer. If they hit a dead end, they back up and try another way."*

# NOTES

## **NOTES**

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