

Survey of Economic Development Resources in The Heart of Texas Region

Economic Development Partners

State, County, and City Economic Development Agencies

- Texas Economic Development Corporation
 - Texas Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism
 - The Texas Film Commission
 - The Texas Music Office
 - Travel Texas
 - The Texas Workforce Investment Council
- The Texas Rural Health and Economic Development Advisory Council
- Texas Economic Development Council
- Texas Downtown Association
- Texas Travel Industry Association
- Heart of Texas Economic Development District, Inc
- Bosque County
 - Clifton Economic Development Corporation
 - Meridian Economic Development Corporation
- Falls County
 - Rosebud Economic Development Corporation
- Freestone County
 - Fairfield Economic Development Corporation
 - The Economic Development Corporation of Teague, Inc.
- Hill County
 - Hillsboro Texas Economic Development Corporation
 - Hubbard Economic Development
- Limestone County
 - City of Groesbeck Economic Development
 - Mexia Economic Development Corp
 - Kosse Economic Development Committee

- McLennan County
 - Bellmead Economic Development Corporation
 - McGregor Economic Development Corporation
 - Moody Economic Development Corp
 - City of Robinson Economic Development
 - City of Hewitt
 - Lorena Economic Development Corporation

Chambers of Commerce

- Bosque County Chambers of Commerce
 - Clifton Chamber of Commerce
 - Meridian Chamber of Commerce
 - Cranfills Gap Chamber of Commerce
- Falls County Chambers of Commerce
 - Marlin Chamber of Commerce
 - Rosebud Chamber of Commerce
- Freestone County Chambers of Commerce
 - Fairfield Chamber of Commerce
 - Teague Chamber of Commerce
- Hill County Chambers of Commerce
 - Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce
 - Hubbard Chamber of Commerce
 - Lake Whitney Chamber of Commerce
- Limestone County Chambers of Commerce
 - Groesbeck Chamber of Commerce
 - Mexia Chamber of Commerce
 - Thornton Chamber of Commerce



HEART OF TEXAS CEDS

- McLennan County Chambers of Commerce
 - Bellmead Chamber of Commerce
 - Cen-Tex African American Chamber of Commerce
 - Cen-Tex Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
 - Hewitt Chamber of Commerce
 - Lorena Chamber of Commerce
 - Mart Chamber of Commerce
 - McGregor Chamber of Commerce
 - Greater Robinson Chamber of Commerce
 - Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce
 - West Chamber of Commerce

USDA

- Marlin Office
- Hillsboro Office
- Waco Office

Rural Economic and Community Development

- Marlin Office
- Fairfield Office
- Hillsboro Office
- Groesbeck Office

Other Associations

- Waco Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Waco Downtown Neighborhood Association

U.S. Small Business Administration Small Business Development Centers

- McLennan SBDC at McLennan Community College
- Navarro SBDC, Fairfield Satellite
- Navarro SBDC, Mexia Satellite

Programs, Studies & Projects

Prosper Waco¹⁹⁹

Prosper Waco is an innovative approach to community work that consolidates and builds upon the efforts of existing nonprofits and community leaders. Our vision is a Greater Waco in which all people and institutions work together for the common good. To do this, we use the Collective Impact model, which brings together key leaders and organizations in the areas of education, health, and financial security to comprehensively:

- Identify and quantify challenges facing our community;
- Articulate a shared vision;
- Establish measurable goals;
- Facilitate implementation of strategies to address each challenge;
- Monitor progress against each goal;
- Share data and resources necessary to accomplish our collective goals; and
- Engage a broad spectrum of community partners (including recipients of services) in the design of its work.

By encouraging Collective Impact strategies among leaders in city and county government, businesses, nonprofits, healthcare, education, social services, foundations, and churches, the Prosper Waco initiative builds on and steadily increases the effectiveness of efforts that address community challenges. The strategy is to raise awareness among all members of the community, focus alignment of mutually reinforcing activities for more effective outcomes, and increase levels of engagement of individuals and organizations to bring about measurable and sustainable change in citizens' health, education and financial security.

The Heart of Texas Efficient Towns and Counties Co-op (HOTETC)²⁰⁰

Communities throughout the Heart of Texas region were experiencing common but serious challenges: slow or flat growth, fewer grant dollars, rising costs and increased complexity of water/sewer and other systems. County governments were also concerned about these issues, both in the towns and also the unincorporated areas and rural water supply systems.

The common issues and need to seek solutions brought conversations at the regional level with the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. Some needs were immediate and practical, such as improved knowledge and management of water and sewer systems. Other concerns were technical and required research, and still others were subjective and cultural, like how to engage more folks in the community.

In 2011 the region began looking for answers: communities started to put together the Efficient Towns & Counties Co-op, requested a planning grant, and pledged local dollars to kick off the project. The next year the group landed the grant and staffed the effort primarily using regional staff and contractors supplemented by technical experts. Compared to a turn-key, consultant-driven approach, this method cost less, strengthened local resources that could be tapped again over time, and leveraged deep familiarity with the region and its people. All the knowledge and tools secured by the grant will remain in the region so the cities and counties can build on them over time.