PART III

DEVELOPING A SOUND ECONOMY

CHAPTER 10: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is a process that influences the growth and restructuring of an economy to enhance the well-being of a community. Through economic development activities, existing businesses are nurtured and expanded, new businesses are attracted to an area, entrepreneurship is fostered, and new enterprises are created. Each of these activities leads to job creation, an increase to the tax base, and improvement of the overall quality of life within a community.

A community's economic health generally depends on its ability to attract and hold business establishments and industrial plants. Principal economic factors include proximity to markets, availability of a suitable labor force, land prices, prevailing wage scales, cost of living, transportation costs, utility rates, and tax levels. Increasingly, businesses are also influenced by the character of the community. They look for good housing supply, quality of schools, public safety and other services, and availability of cultural amenities.

There has been a shift over the years in policy and philosophy regarding the relationship between government and the economy. Increasingly, cities are looking for ways to influence their economies by providing more jobs for their urban residents, as well as increasing the tax base and per capita income. However, increasing the tax base and per capita income is most challenging in central city areas, where cities are faced with issues such as unemployment and disinvestment.

This chapter discusses existing conditions and trends in Fort Worth, and the City's economic development goals and objectives, policies and strategies, and programs.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

The Fort Worth economy has evolved from dependence on the defense, cattle, cotton and oil industries, to its current emphasis on services and transportation. It will be expanding to include more high tech manufacturing, such as the existing Nokia and Motorola plants, in the near future.

These conditions are a significant improvement from the beginning of the 1990s, when Fort Worth was experiencing a high unemployment rate. A Peat Marwick study identified Tarrant County as the second most defense-dependent area in the United States in the early 1990s. At that time, the local economy lost over 44,000 jobs as a result of defense downsizing and its impact on Carswell Air Force Base. Since then, community leaders have worked diligently to diversify the economy and to help stimulate small business development and growth. The City, in conjunction with local business leaders, initiated a number of economic diversification projects, including the Business Assistance Center (BAC), Fort Worth International Center, and Tech Fort Worth.

RadioShack Corporate Headquarters

The RadioShack corporate headquarters, located Downtown along the south bank of the Trinity River, officially opened in spring 2005 and will employ approximately 2,300 workers. (*Source: RadioShack Corporation, 2005.)*

Major Employers
Fort Worth is developing into a major center for industry, technology, and government. The table on the right shows selected major employers located in Fort Worth. The diversity of the city's economy should continue to expand in various economic sectors, such as electronics, manufacturing, corporate headquarters and offices, finance, health care, transportation, education, and hospitality.

Employment Centers
Employment centers are areas with large concentrations of employees, and can include business parks, business clusters, and industrial parks. These centers are generally located in areas with access to major highways. Fort Worth has five significant employment centers having over seven million square feet of leaseable area and over 8,000 employees: Downtown, Medical District, CentrePort Business Park, Alliance, and Carter Industrial Park.

The largest is the Downtown Central Business District (CBD), with an employment force of approximately 47,000 persons. This urban center has eight million square feet of office space, first-class hotels, restaurants, shops, arts and entertainment facilities, and historic structures. Employment in this area is expected to continue to grow. The recent Pier 1 Imports and RadioShack corporate headquarters projects are testament to the growing Downtown employment base. There is demand for additional goods and services as a result of the increasing number of residents and visitors in the CBD. In addition, redevelopment of the southern part of the Central Business District, including the Lancaster Avenue, Intermodal Transportation Center, and Convention Center areas, will create significant opportunities for new jobs, businesses, and services.

The second largest employment center is the Medical District, with over 30,000 employees. A Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District was established for this area, which is poised for redevelopment and job growth. The leadership of Fort Worth South, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, will be instrumental in this redevelopment.

The CentrePort Business Park, just south of the DFW airport, is tied with the Medical District as to employment, with 100 companies and over 30,000 employees. Under development since 1982, this employment center is composed of 8.5 million square feet of office, retail, and industrial space, with a total projected build-out of 14.2 million square feet. In addition, 2,000 multi-family units are currently located in the area. The area also houses a 300-room Marriott Hotel. Many of the businesses at this location are related to the airport, such as American Airlines world headquarters. Its central location to the Metroplex, along with good access to highways, developable land, a commuter rail station for the Trinity Railway Express, and the airport, will contribute to its continued growth.

Another area that will grow due to its location and access to roadways, rail, and an airport is the Alliance area. This area is a prime example of how public and private sector partnerships can stimulate local and regional growth. Between 1990 and 2004

2004 Top Ten Major Employers in Fort Worth
(Number of Employees)

Company	2004	2000	Percent Growth/Decline
Lockheed Martin	16,800	11,390	47.5%
American Airlines	11,810	14,710	-19.7%
Fort Worth ISD	11,200	9,117	22.8%
NAS Joint Reserve Base	11,062	10,225	8.2%
Harris Methodist Hospital	7,789	4,000	94.7%
City of Fort Worth	5,400	5,416	-.3%
RadioShack	4,453	4,600	-3.2%
Tarrant County	4,141	4,107	.8%
Cooks Children's Hospital	3,740	2,200	70.0%
John Peter Smith Hospital	3,473	3,000	15.8%

In 2004, Lockheed Martin was the largest employer. Over the course of the 1990s, Fort Worth's economic base became less defense-dependent and more diverse. *(Sources: NCTCOG, The Fort Worth Business Press, 2004.)*

the Alliance area generated over $372 million in property taxes for the cities of Fort Worth, Haslet, Roanoke, and Westlake, the counties of Denton and Tarrant, and the school districts of Keller and Northwest. The share going to the City of Fort Worth was approximately $63.9 million in property taxes, with $11.3 million received in 2004. Since 1993, approximately 23.7 million square feet of space has been developed in the Alliance region, most owned and managed by Hillwood Development Corporation. Approximately 130 companies are housed in the Alliance area. As of January 2005, the total jobs created are approximately 20,000. Recently completed projects at Alliance include Behr's 400,000-square-foot manufacturing and distribution facility, Cabela's 235,000-square-foot retail store, the 100,000-square-foot Alliance Air Trade Center and a 30,000 square-foot addition to the hangar at the Alliance FBO, which primarily serves as the terminal for the corporate jets and military aircraft that utilize Fort Worth Alliance Airport. In addition, a retail destination, Alliance Town Center, is currently being developed at I-35W and Heritage Trace Parkway.

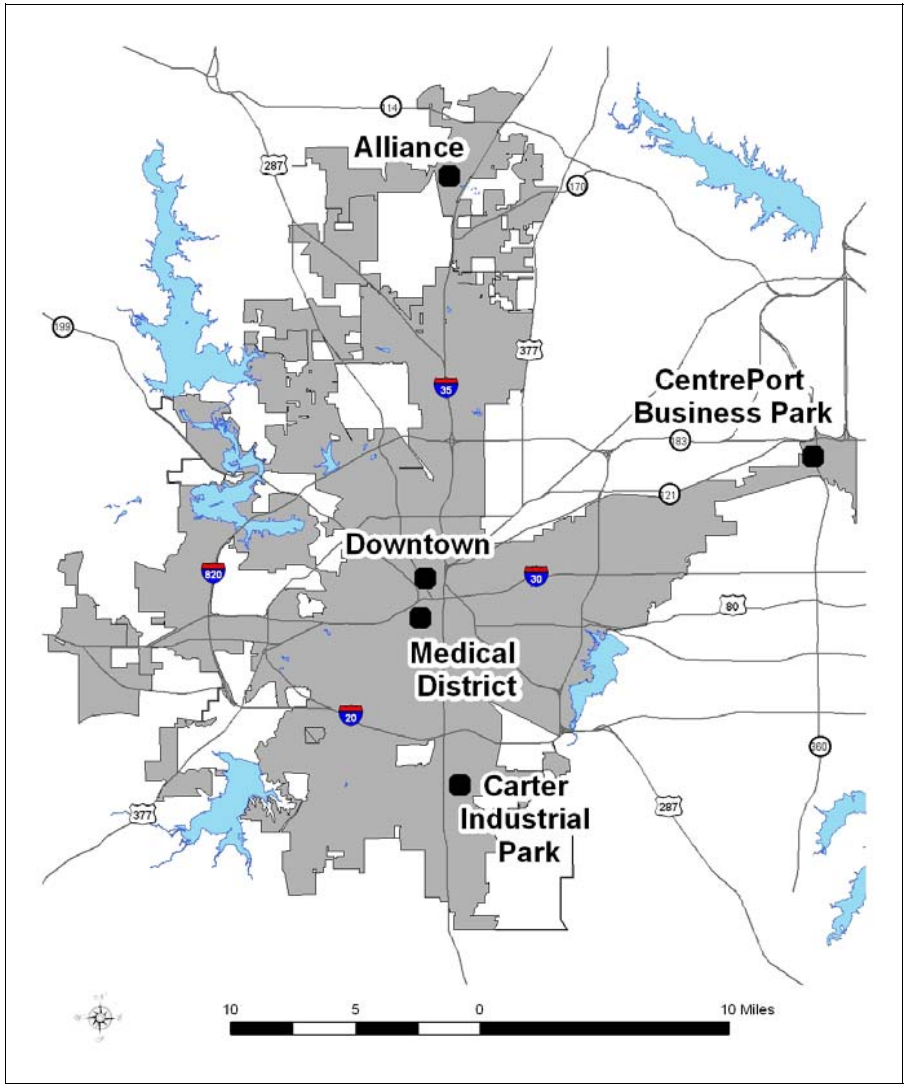
The basis for this rapid growth was the combined public and private investment and cooperation that allowed key infrastructure to be developed in the area, including a regional commercial airport, water and wastewater facilities, and highway improvements. Of a total investment of $3.7 billion in the area, $138 million in local, state, and federal funds were utilized to augment over $3.6 billion in private investment.

Carter Industrial Park is the fourth largest industrial park in Tarrant County with over nine million square feet of light industrial space, twice as much square footage as the next largest industrial park. Mereken Land & Production Company manages this fast growing employment center, which enjoys a 96.5 percent occupancy rate. Thirty-two companies employ over 9,000 people in the industrial park, having a concentration of national and regional food and beverage related processors and distributors. The largest employer is Alcon Laboratories, occupying two million square feet, with over 2,500 employees. The significance of Carter Industrial Park to the tax and employment base of Southeast Fort Worth makes the future growth of this employment center a key element of the Southeast Fort Worth Action Plan, the strategic plan guiding redevelopment in southeast Fort Worth.

Labor Force

The Fort Worth economy hosts a diverse array of businesses in all industry sectors, including high technology. A highly skilled labor force is an essential component to Fort Worth maintaining its competitiveness in business relocations and expansions. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2004 the Fort Worth labor force was approximately 282,966 civilian individuals, with about 92.7 percent employed, and 7.3 percent or 20,761 unemployed. For those city residents that are unemployed and underemployed, many lack the necessary skills for today's job market. As a result these residents remain in a cycle of chronic unemployment and underemployment. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 27 percent of persons 25 years and over did not have a high school diploma or college degree in Fort Worth. Lack of

Major Employment Centers



Downtown is Fort Worth's largest employment center, with approximately 47,000 jobs, followed by the Medical District and CentrePort with approximately 30,000 jobs each. Alliance, with over 20,000 jobs, and Carter Industrial Park, with over 9,000, are also recognized as major employment centers. *(Source: Planning Department, 2005.)*

adequate funds, transportation, and childcare services are often cited as reasons for not pursuing educational and job training programs. The lack of education and workforce skills translates into low wages, and an inadequate labor force to meet the workforce needs of the business community.

In order to address local workforce needs, various organizations have established job training programs designed to meet the current and long-term needs of the labor market (see section on job training organizations in this chapter).

Tourism

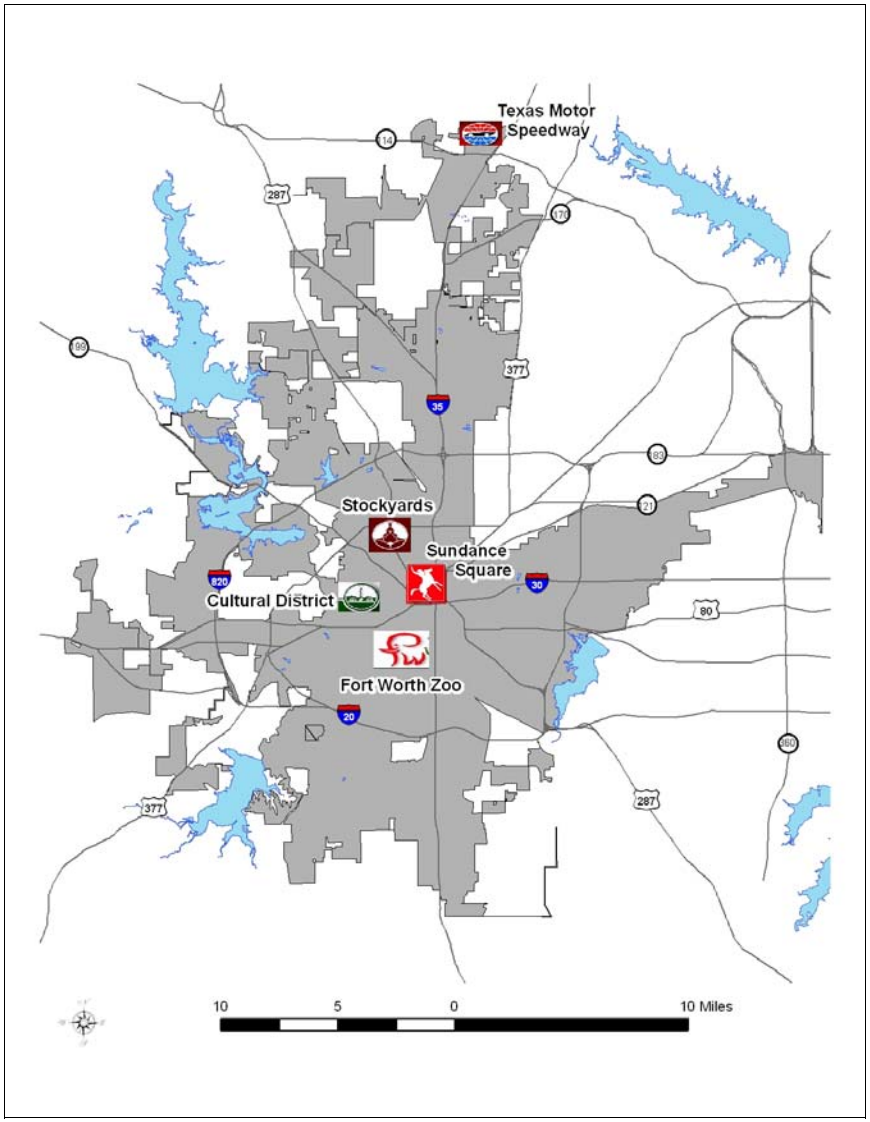
Tourism is becoming a significant component of Fort Worth's economy. The Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), under contract with the City of Fort Worth, markets Fort Worth as a destination, and develops and implements a marketing plan to attract visitors to the area. The CVB estimates that 9 million people visited Fort Worth in 2004. It is estimated that these visitors spent $1.2 billion within Fort Worth, which translates to a total contribution to the Fort Worth economy of more than $2 billion. Using the industry estimate that every $1 million in convention and tourism spending in Texas creates 17 jobs, the direct contribution in Fort Worth amounts to approximately 20,400 jobs. Approximately 80 percent of visitors (7.2 million people) came from Texas cities outside the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex area.

Fort Worth's attractions and events reflect the cultural diversity of the city. The unique blend and wide range of cultural and arts facilities, entertainment and recreational activities, and sporting events are valuable resources that contribute to Fort Worth's economy.

Many of Fort Worth's major attractions and events are located within three areas of the city: the Historic Stockyards, Sundance Square in Downtown, and the Cultural District. In an effort to create a common vision and goals for the corridors that link these historically significant and heavily visited areas, the City of Fort Worth and North Central Texas Council of Governments sponsored the Fort Worth Linkages Study. The 1996 Linkages Study recognized the importance of linking the three districts to encourage visitors of one district to remain in Fort Worth and visit the other entertainment districts. The Linkages Study called for the following: enhanced signage with distinctive icons and colors to direct visitors to each district; information systems; redevelopment of the corridors with mixed uses; and fun and frequent transportation, such as a light rail streetcar. New signage has been installed and will be updated in 2006 through a comprehensive wayfinding system, streetscape designs are being developed for North Main and Lancaster, and redevelopment is starting to occur.

The spring 2002 opening of LaGrave Field along North Main Street is one example of recent redevelopment. A part of the vision for North Main Street is that LaGrave Field be rebuilt to serve as one component of a comprehensive revitalization strategy for the North Main Street corridor. LaGrave Field serves as the ball park for the Fort

Visitor Districts



Both Fort Worth residents and visitors enjoy the events and attractions in the city's five main visitor districts. *(Source: Planning Department, 2005.)*

Worth Cats, a professional minor league team in the Central Baseball League, and for local college teams. The 5,000-seat ballpark could also be used for other playoff games and tournaments.

Although the Historic Stockyards, Downtown, and the Cultural District are the three most heavily visited areas of Fort Worth, attractions and events in other areas of the city also draw significant numbers of tourists each year. For example, the Texas Motor Speedway, located in North Fort Worth, brings approximately 1.25 million visitors to the area annually. It is the largest sports facility in the Metroplex, the second-largest in the country, and the third-largest in the world. Currently providing for an estimated 6,200 jobs per year, the facility serves as a catalyst for additional restaurant, hotel, and retail development in the Alliance area. Another tourist attraction in the Alliance area is the new Cabela's retail store that opened in May of 2005. Cabela's, a popular hunting-and-fishing retailer, built a 230,000-square foot store, the company's second-largest, in north Fort Worth. Cabela's stores are known as educational and entertainment attractions, mixing a décor of museum-quality animal displays with colorful dioramas. Cabela's Fort Worth store will employ approximately 500 workers and is expected to draw more than 4 million visitors annually from northern Texas, Louisiana, and southern Oklahoma.

In addition to attractions and special events, a significant number of people visit Fort Worth each year to attend expositions, sporting events, meetings and conventions. For example, in FY 2004/2005, the 620 events held at the Fort Worth Convention Center attracted approximately 1.2 million people. The Convention Center completed a $75 million renovation and expansion in 2003. The improvements include 255,000 square feet of exhibit space, over 60,000 square feet of meeting space, and a 28,000+ square foot ballroom. The City has contracted with Omni Hotels, Inc. to build a 600-room first class convention headquarters hotel and two parking garages, with an estimated cost of $132 million. The Omni is scheduled to break ground in the summer of 2006.

Central City Revitalization

The City has developed a comprehensive strategy to promote central city revitalization. The central city includes 30 percent of Fort Worth's land area, and over 54 percent of the population. It also has a high concentration of poverty and unemployment compared to Fort Worth as a whole. In 2000, the City Council adopted a definition of the central city for revitalization purposes as the area within Interstate 820 that consists of all:

- CDBG eligible block groups;
- State designated enterprise zones; and,
- Census block groups that are contiguous by 75 percent or more of their perimeter to CDBG eligible block groups or state designated enterprise zones.

The City's principal strategies for central city revitalization are:

- Developing compact, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use growth centers;
- Revitalizing distressed commercial corridors by developing mixed-use villages along those corridors; and

LaGrave Field

The new LaGrave baseball stadium is built on the exact site where the old LaGrave once stood and is part of the plans to revitalize the Trinity River. *(Sources: Fort Worth Cats Baseball Club, Planning Department, 2005).*

Newly Renovated and Expanded Fort Worth Convention Center

The renovation and expansion of the Convention Center has begun to spur additional development nearby, including the renovation of the Texas and Pacific Terminal, which dates back to 1931. *(Source: Public Events Department, 2003.)*

- Developing a rail transit system that connects the growth centers and urban villages.

Mixed-use growth centers and urban villages are urban districts having a concentration of jobs, housing, schools, parks, and public facilities. Growth centers and villages also provide access to public transportation in a walkable, compact area with a unique sense of place. Integrating transit in growth centers and villages can achieve economic vibrancy and sustainability in these districts.

Commercial Districts

Commercial areas contribute to both the property and sales tax revenues of the City and are important to the vitality of surrounding neighborhoods. Revitalization of commercial districts in the central city is an important component of the City's economic development efforts. Many of Fort Worth's older commercial areas developed along commercial corridors. Linear in shape and located along designated arterial streets, these corridors tend to be characterized by segregated land uses, a large number of curb cuts, large amounts of signage and impervious surfaces, and parking lots located in front of commercial structures. As higher-income populations moved out of the central city and development growth moved well beyond Loop 820, the linear commercial corridors and commercial districts could not maintain their economic viability.

The City seeks to revitalize these commercial districts by promoting their redevelopment as mixed-use growth centers and urban villages – districts which are more compact, contain a greater mix of land uses, and give greater emphasis to pedestrian and transit access.

Criteria for designating urban villages within mixed-use growth centers include but are not limited to the following:

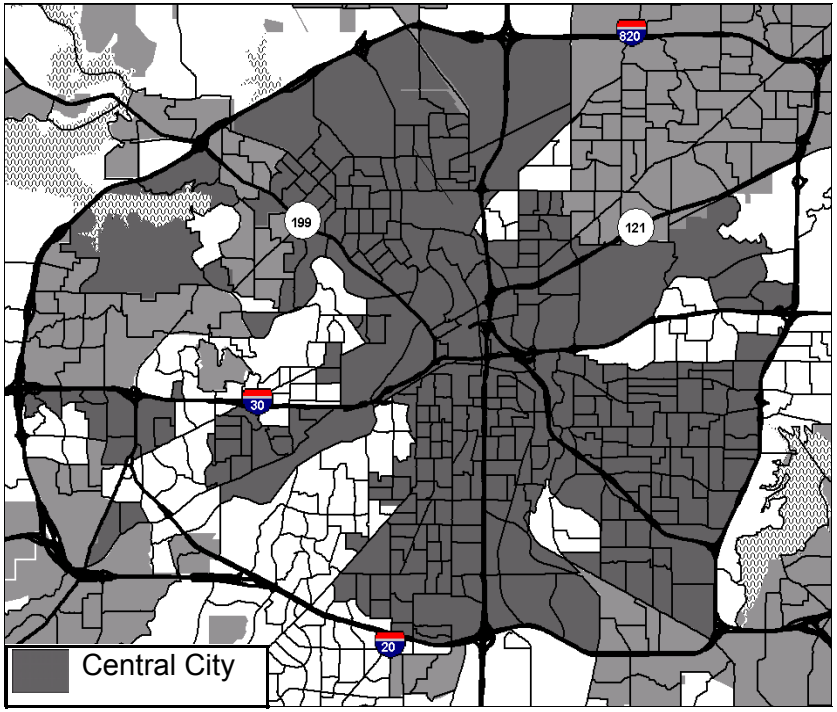
- Presence of a market opportunity in the near-or long-term
- Upward trend in local investment
- Ability to create mixed-use activity centers, emphasizing live/work/play opportunities with multi-modal access
- Demonstrated community need, both perceived and quantified and presence of unified, energetic stakeholders
- Compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan
- Physical environment including parks and open space, public improvements, historic building stock, etc.
- Potential for creating key entryways or gateways into development areas

Economic Development Studies

A significant economic development study is the Southeast Fort Worth Economic Development Action Plan, which addresses the following issues:

- Attracting capital for major investment;
- Attracting flex and technology space for enhancing business parks;
- Balancing the housing stock (including an initiative on Lake Arlington);

Fort Worth's Central City



Fort Worth is committed to revitalizing its central city through a comprehensive and coordinated strategy that addresses economic development, housing, historic preservation, infrastructure, parks, cultural programs, human services, and safety initiatives. The central city is defined to include certain low and moderate income areas within Loop 820. *(Source: City of Fort Worth, 2001.)*

- Establishing tax incentive or freeport zones in the area; and
- Conducting an updated and detailed retail trade study.

Six zones to target for revitalization are identified in the Action Plan and are shown on the map on page 86. The Plan also identifies the need for a stronger public-private partnership, and in 2000, a nonprofit redevelopment organization, Southeast Fort Worth, Inc. was established to implement the Action Plan.

Within zone one, the Evans & Rosedale Business and Cultural District is being developed in Near Southeast Fort Worth between I-35W and Evans Avenue in accordance with the community's Vision Plan. It is intended to celebrate the African-American heritage of Near Southeast Fort Worth through the development of an attractive, economically vibrant, pedestrian-scaled neighborhood center. The District concept includes retail and commercial businesses, and a park/plaza that celebrates the rich heritage of the area. Spearheaded by the Near Southeast Community Development Corporation, historic preservation is a major element of the Vision Plan. The City collaborates with the community to implement the Vision Plan. The City has leveraged approximately $14.7 million in federal funds to make the community's vision a reality. Funds are being used for property acquisition, demolition of non-historic structures, the reconstruction and streetscape of Evans Avenue, business development activities and other efforts. The City is also working to help stimulate investment by relocating the City's Public Health Department, constructing a new branch library, and rehabilitating a historic building in this area. In October 2004, the City Council adopted a consultant-prepared master plan for the district. The master plan outlines implementation strategies in accordance with the community's Vision Plan.

Woodhaven Community Development, Inc., a nonprofit community development corporation, and the Woodhaven Neighborhood Association are preparing a redevelopment plan for the Woodhaven neighborhood. Woodhaven is located in the Eastside sector, northwest of the I-30 and Loop 820 interchange. The goals of this redevelopment plan are to:

- Develop vacant, commercially-zoned property and create job opportunities;
- Attract neighborhood-oriented commercial uses;
- Provide a diverse housing stock with an increased percentage of owner-occupied units;
- Increase the amount of open space and recreation areas; and
- Create a mixed-use district with the characteristics of an urban village, including a concentration of housing and commercial uses, public spaces, pedestrian activity, and access to public transportation. This mix of uses, including a variety of owner- and renter-occupied multifamily units, would be located in buildings with minimal setbacks from the street and reduced parking requirements, achieving the densities necessary to attract private investment and create a strong sense of place.

Designated Urban Villages

In 2002 the City created conceptual redevelopment plans for urban villages along priority commercial corridors targeted for reinvestment. Since that time the City added new urban villages for a total of sixteen. The City has secured $4.5 million to be allocated for planning, design and construction in selected urban villages. In addition, the 2004 bond packages designated $2 million in local match funding to secure other funding as it becomes available. *(Source: Planning Department, 2005.)*

Urban Villages			
1	Mercado	9	Berry/University
2	West Seventh	10	Hemphill/Berry
3	Oakland Corners	11	Six Points
4	Ridglea	12	Near East Side
5	Magnolia	13	South Main
6	Evans & Rosedale	14	Berry/Stalcup
7	Polytechnic/Wesleyan	15	Berry/Riverside
8	Historic Handley	16	Bluebonnet Circle

Incentives

The City of Fort Worth encourages and participates in economic development efforts that expand Fort Worth's economy and tax base and increase local employment. The City seeks to provide a positive business environment that allows businesses to grow and prosper while making Fort Worth an attractive place for new businesses to locate. Incentives are focused in targeted redevelopment areas within the central city such as urban villages, Model Blocks neighborhoods, and neighborhood empowerment zones (NEZs).

The City of Fort Worth analyzes economic development projects on a case-by-case basis and designs incentives to serve as gap financing in order to expand the City's tax base, and retain and create jobs. When the City partners with a private enterprise by providing public incentives, the private entity employs Fort Worth residents and makes significant investments in developing or redeveloping specific sites. In 2000, the City created the South and Southeast Enterprise Zones, and in 2001 established the State's first pilot Neighborhood Empowerment Zone in the Stop Six neighborhood. The creation of these zones, particularly around mixed-use urban villages allows the City to offer tax incentives and/or waive fees to promote economic development.

Fort Worth has been successful in using incentives and partnership programs with private businesses to help ensure the growth and diversification of the local economy. In Magnolia Village, the City has obtained $1 million in federal funds to leverage a $35 million Magnolia Green mixed-use project. To date, $961,212 in federal Economic Development Initiative funds have been appropriated for streetscape and pedestrian improvements in the Polytechnic/Wesleyan Village. It is widely accepted that redeveloping central city property is relatively more expensive than building in suburban "greenfield" areas. Therefore, the City seeks to facilitate central city revitalization by offering multiple choices of incentives that can be used in combination. For example, a project in the Evans & Rosedale Business and Cultural District may take advantage of incentives from the Southeast Model Blocks program, the Medical District Tax Increment Finance District, and the South Enterprise Zone. This layering of diverse economic development tools lowers the relative cost of a development project in the central city versus other areas. Please refer to Chapter 23: Financial Incentives for more detailed information on incentives that promote economic development.

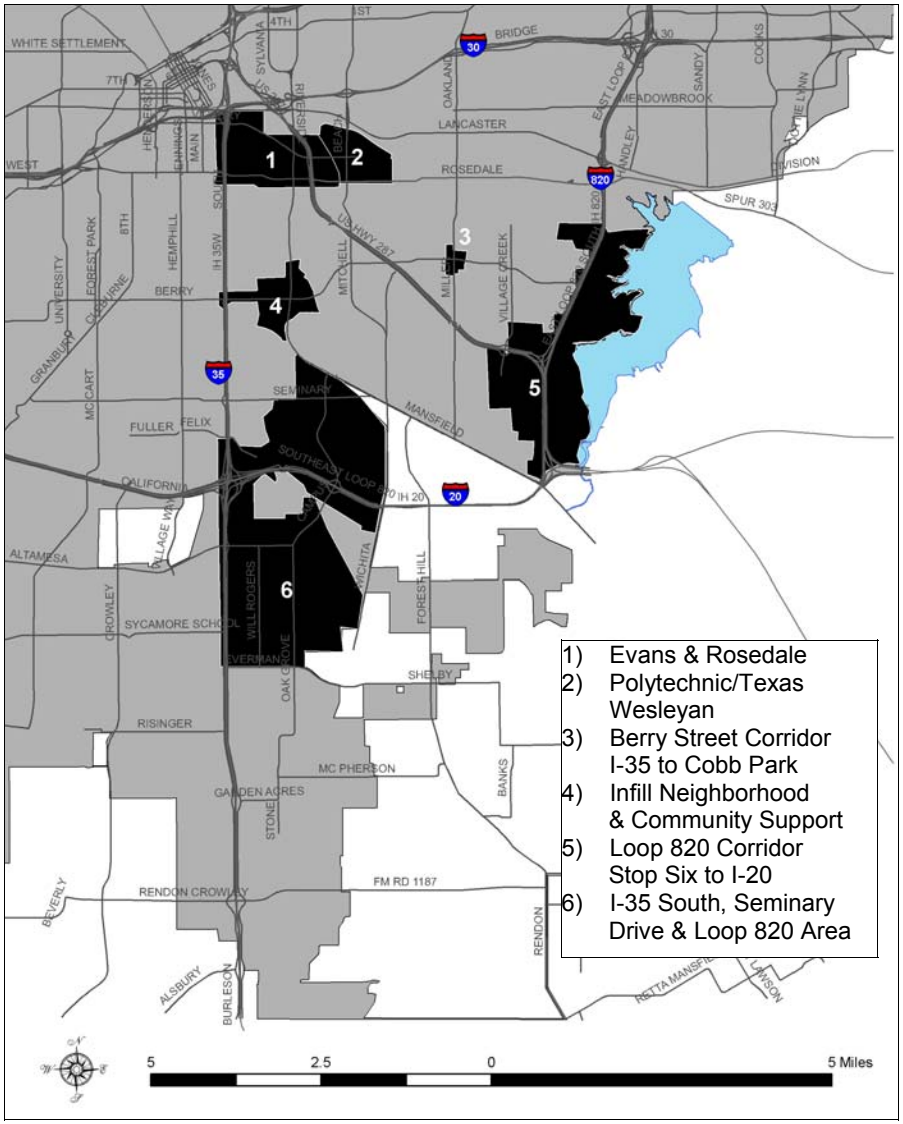
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are the primary economic development goals and objectives of the City of Fort Worth:

Diversify the economic base and create job opportunities.

- Attract businesses that provide employment opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed, diversify the economy, and offer salaries that will increase Fort Worth's median income.

Southeast Fort Worth
Areas Targeted for Redevelopment



The 1999 Southeast Fort Worth Economic Development Plan identifies six target zones for revitalization. *(Source: Southeast Fort Worth Economic Development Plan, 1999.)*

- Assist existing businesses with issues impacting their growth and development.
- Support international trade and investment opportunities for local businesses.
- Support small business start-up and development through the provision of information and technical assistance.

Revitalize central city neighborhoods and commercial districts.

- Encourage new development and redevelopment in the priority commercial corridors by coordinating efforts of redevelopment organizations and committees, incentives, and funding streams.
- Market central city locations to business prospects.
- Offer technical and counseling services to existing central city businesses in order to ensure business survival through the Business Assistance Center and Chamber of Commerce.
- Assist Southeast Fort Worth, Inc. and its partners in reaching their goal of creating 8,000 new jobs in the six economic development zones in Fort Worth's southeast quadrant over the next ten years.
- Increase the number of loans to central city residents for business start-ups and expansions through the services offered by Fort Worth Economic Development Corporation and the William Mann Jr. Community Development Corporation (CDC).
- Increase the number of clients served each year through BAC services.

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The following recommended policies and strategies will aid economic development in Fort Worth:

Current Policies

- Use the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone program to promote the development of designated urban villages, Model Blocks, and other targeted redevelopment areas.
- Utilize the City's interim land banking policy to expedite redevelopment and reuse of underutilized property.
- Utilize the siting and co-location of City facilities as a catalyst for redevelopment.

Recommended Policies

- Attract redevelopment and new development in the corridors linking the major districts of Downtown, the Historic Stockyards, and the Cultural District.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of economic development incentives by including appropriate capital improvement funding in an overall incentive package that would encourage central city redevelopment.
- Assist community development corporations broaden their capacity to fund and support revitalization projects.

Rendering of the Historic Handley Urban Village

The urban village development program seeks to create a mix of uses within a pedestrian-friendly environment. *(Source: Planning Department, 2003.)*

Strategies

Business Development

- Continue the close partnership between the City and the local chambers of commerce in marketing Fort Worth to business prospects.
- Support the growth of small minority- and women-owned businesses by continuing to fund agencies that provide counseling and technical assistance to these businesses.
- Market available low interest loan programs for business start-ups and expansion in the central city.
- Enhance collaboration between the Business Assistance Center (BAC) and local chambers of commerce in offering business technical and mentorship services to central city businesses.
- Recognize the importance of tourism to Fort Worth's economic development, and support programs such as Linkages.
- Encourage small business development in and around neighborhoods targeted for Model Blocks funding.

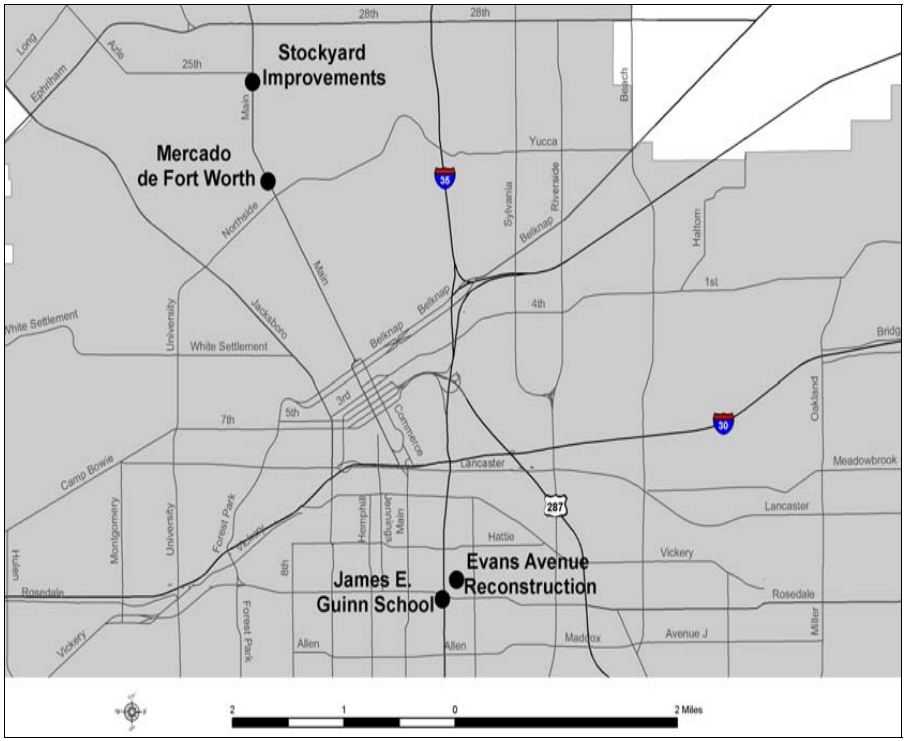
Capital Improvements and Real Estate

- Include capital improvement funding in enhanced incentive packages under Neighborhood Empowerment Zone and State Enterprise Zone programs to further central city redevelopment goals.
- Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of existing commercial structures throughout commercial districts, where feasible.
- Develop and implement targeted revitalization strategies for the city's commercial districts in order to create environments that will attract private investment.
- Establish potential incentives to promote development of vacant land and redevelopment or reuse of deteriorated properties within designated commercial districts.
- Encourage the utilization of federal brownfields programs to assist in central city revitalization.
- Support redevelopment, community development, and nonprofit organizations efforts to spur the revitalization of business districts where investment is not occurring but that have redevelopment potential, and efforts to expedite central city revitalization.

Workforce Development

- Encourage local businesses to create paid training programs that provide unemployed residents with skills for high technology jobs and building trades.
- Encourage enhanced partnership between the business community and the local chambers of commerce that are designed to strengthen and expand employer coalition groups, increase linkages between business and education to ensure necessary skills are achieved for the future labor force, expand and coordinate customized employer services, provide job fairs, assessment and screening for new hires, and help employers identify skill sets.

EDA Grant Funded Projects



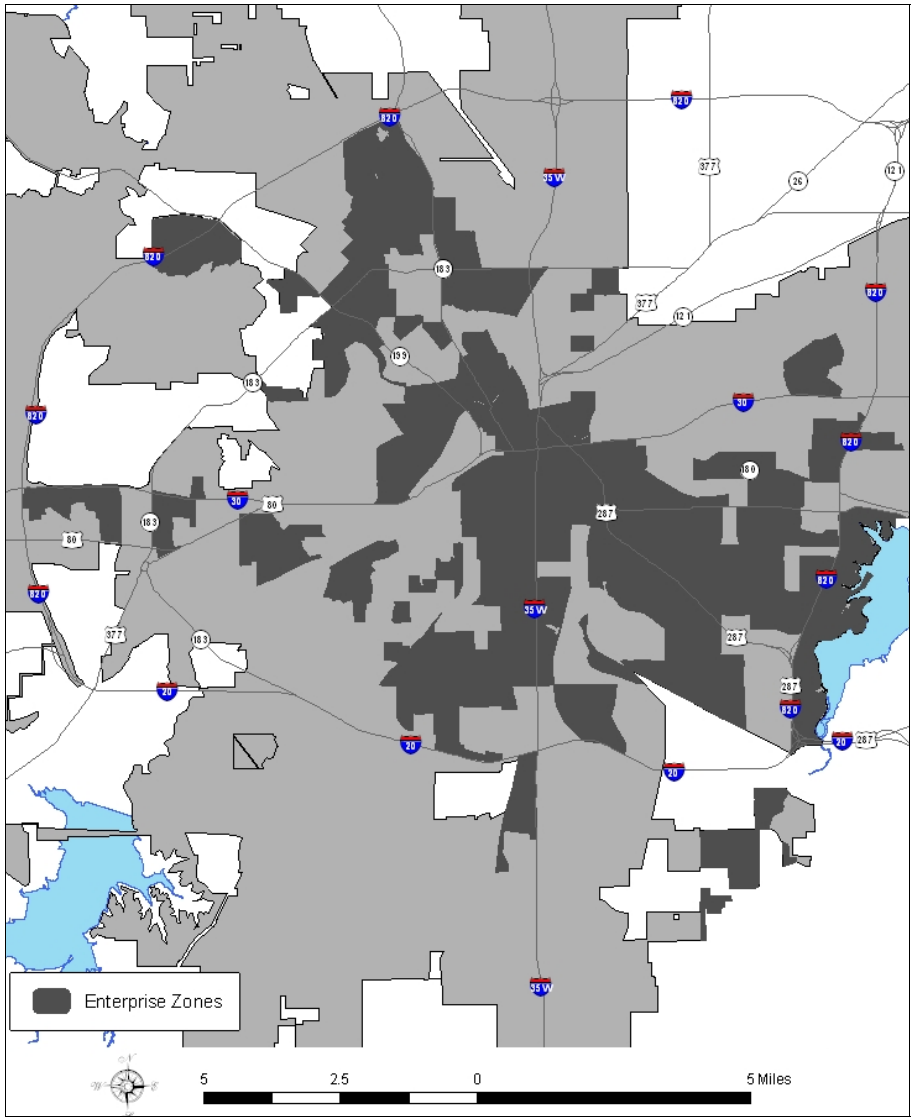
Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds are federal funds tied to job creation and business expansion. In Fort Worth EDA funds have supported infrastructure improvements in the Stockyards, the Mercado de Fort Worth, the renovation of the Guinn School as the permanent location for the Business Assistance Center and related programs, and street reconstruction for Evans Avenue within the Evans & Rosedale Business and Cultural District. *(Sources: Economic and Community Development Department, Planning Department, 2002.)*

INCENTIVES AND PROGRAMS

The Economic and Community Development Department administers the following programs:

- Tax Abatement – An exemption for tax collection purposes of all or part of the increase in value above the value in the year the abatement contract is executed. State law limits abatements to a maximum of 10 years. Abatement is tied to conditions outlined in the abatement agreement, which are based on the criteria in the City's abatement policy, such as amount of capital investment and the number of jobs created. To review the City's incentive policy, please refer to Appendix H.
- Enterprise Zones – This designation is reserved for areas of high unemployment and poverty and targeted for business redevelopment, including creation of jobs and economic revitalization. Based on new state policy from the 2003 legislative session, any census block group that has a poverty rate of at least 20 percent, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau during each decennial census is a state enterprise zone. The census block group will remain an enterprise zone until it no longer qualifies, as a result of a subsequent decennial census. Prior to the new policy, the City of Fort Worth had designated three enterprise zones: the South and Southeast which will sunset in 2007, and the North Enterprise Zone that expired in 2004. The State provides direct development incentives for a limited number of qualified businesses nominated as an enterprise zone project. Major financial incentives include refund of state and use taxes paid on machinery and equipment, building materials, labor for the rehabilitation of existing buildings, and electricity and natural gas purchased for use at the qualified business site. The refund is based on the level of capital investment and jobs created at the qualified business site. Only six businesses per biennium may be designated as an enterprise project. Refunds are calculated at $2,500 for each new permanent job created or retained up to $1,250,000 per year. Enterprise zone incentives provided by the City are varied and based on the needs of individual projects. Incentives for the enterprise zones include reducing development fees, and reduced investment requirements in consideration of tax abatement.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – A TIF is an identified area designated as a reinvestment zone for a limited number of years in which tax revenues exceeding the base year amount are used primarily for public improvements but can also include services within the zone. The TIF revenues are spent according to an approved project and financial plan for development of the designated reinvestment zone. Currently, nine TIF districts exist in Fort Worth:
  - TIF # 2 – Texas Motor Speedway: A 489-acre zone created to provide a mechanism for the purchase of the Texas Motor Speedway as a public improvement by the FW Sports Authority, Inc., which is a 4B economic development corporation, and to provide for the development of future public improvements within the District. The TIF became effective January 1, 1996, and is scheduled to terminate on December 31, 2025, or earlier if all funding obligations associated with the purchase of the Speedway are met. The TIF devotes $20 million to the purchase of the Speedway. The City of Fort Worth, Denton County, and the Northwest ISD participate.

Enterprise Zones

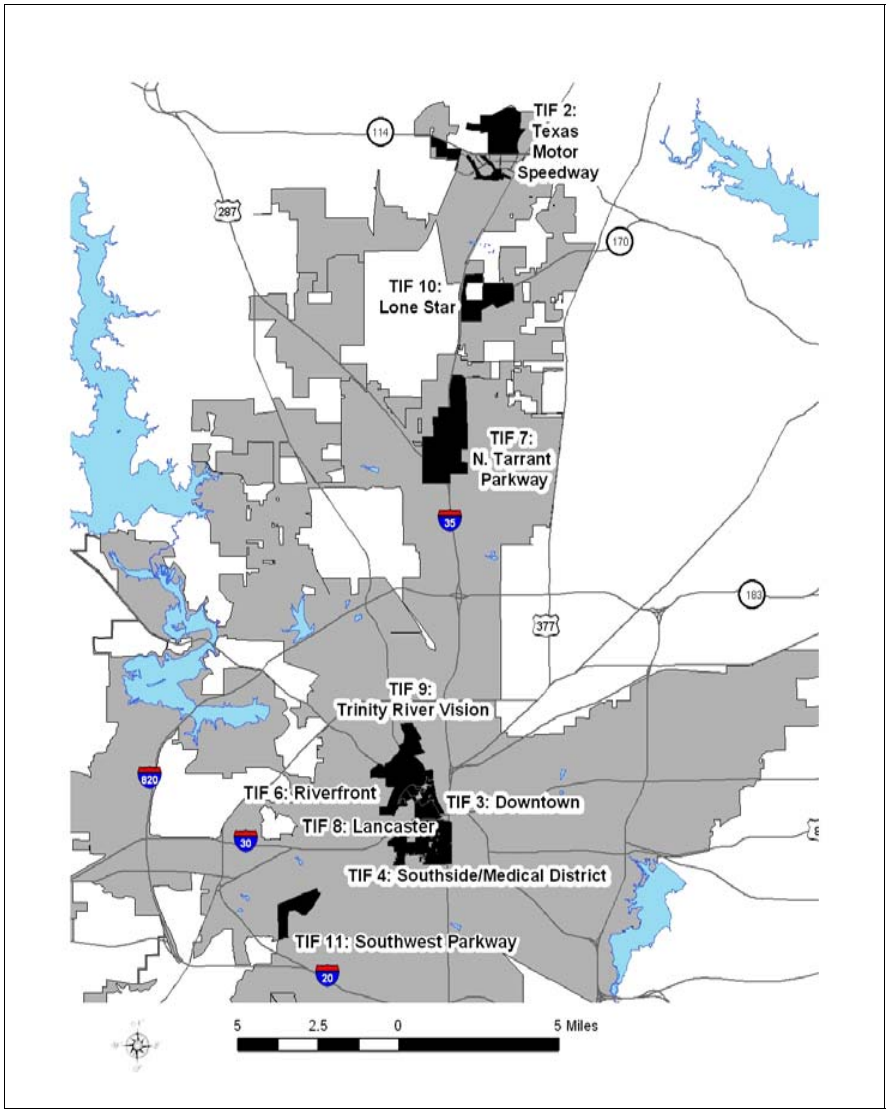


Based on new state policy enacted in 2003, census tract block groups with 20 percent or more poverty are considered enterprise zones. To determine if a property is located in one of the City's Enterprise Zones, please refer to the following website: http://maps.fortworthgov.org/Incentives_Map/. *(Sources: Economic and Community Development Department, Planning Department, 2004.)*

- TIF # 3 – North Downtown: Replacing TIF #1, this district was created in 1995, and is scheduled to terminate in 30 years or when the goal of the $50 million of tax increment is met, whichever comes first. The 1993 Downtown Strategic Action Plan called for a TIF to finance such projects as free public parking, a central plaza, parking garages, special pedestrian and streetscape systems.
- TIF # 4 – Medical District: The district was established November 1997, and is scheduled to terminate in 25 years or when tax increment revenues reach $60 million. The project plan calls for public improvements within the boundaries of Fort Worth South to implement the Medical District Plan.
- TIF # 6 – Riverfront: Established in December 2002 to help provide public infrastructure, including a public plaza at the RadioShack campus. It is scheduled to terminate in 2036.
- TIF # 7 – North Tarrant Parkway: Established in December 2003 to provide infrastructure improvements associated with the construction of North Tarrant Parkway, including interchange ramps, frontage roads, and a connecting road from Interstate Highway 35W east to Rainey Lake Road. It is scheduled to terminate in 2019.
- TIF # 8 – Lancaster: Established in December 2003 to help with redevelopment of the Lancaster Corridor in southern downtown and specifically with the redevelopment of the T&P Terminal building into a multi-family residential complex. It is scheduled to terminate in 2024.
- TIF # 9 – Trinity River Vision: Established in December 2003 to help encourage development and redevelopment along the Trinity River. It is scheduled to terminate in 2028.
- TIF # 10 – Lone Star: Established in June 2004 for the development of public space and infrastructure on and near the site of the Cabela's facility in north Fort Worth. It is scheduled to terminate in 2025.
- TIF # 11 – Southwest Parkway: Established in December 2004 for the construction of public infrastructure in the vicinity of Southwest Parkway. New and improved infrastructure will help spur private development adjacent to Southwest Parkway. It is scheduled to terminate in 2025.

- Enhanced Community Facility Agreements – administered in concert with the T/PW Department, the City pays a portion of the public infrastructure costs that would otherwise be the developer's expense in order to assist in gap financing resulting from the disproportionately higher cost of replacing inadequate and aged infrastructure.
- Under the City's Economic Diversification Division (formerly Strategy 2000), the BAC is a one-stop shop of fourteen independent service providers in one convenient location to support the growth and development of small businesses. Located in the newly renovated historic James E. Guinn School, the Center is a public-private partnership funded by the City of Fort Worth (CDBG), Small Business Administration, corporate sponsors and individual donors. Between May 2001 and first quarter 2005, the BAC has helped to create 165 new businesses, 4,226 new jobs, $104 million in small business loans and $181 million in contracts for clients. The BAC provides a variety of programs through its

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Reinvestment Zones



TIF districts pay for public improvements within their respective boundaries using tax revenues from increases in property values. Currently, the City has eleven TIF districts. *(Sources: Economic and Community Development Department, Planning Department, 2005.)*

service providers:

1) Specialized Support:
   - Women's Business Center – Opened in 1999, its goal is to provide technical and financial support to women entrepreneurs as they start or expand their businesses. The WBC offers free one-on-one counseling, group coaching, training, mentoring, networking opportunities, advocacy and technical assistance and hosts the annual Entrepreneur Expo Conference and Trade Fair for small businesses.
   - Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce – Formed in 1979 and located at the BAC, the Black Chamber of Commerce primarily serves the interests of the African-American business and professional community and communicates those interests to business, civic and industrial leaders. Member services include business counseling, M/WBE and HUB certification, contracting opportunities, financial management, target marketing, tax appraisal, networking opportunities, workshops and seminars.
   - ACORN Project – the objective of the ACORN (Able & Confident Owners Rebuilding Neighborhoods) project is to provide an alternative way to reach the goal of self-reliance through business ownership. The ACORN project is an initiative of the Fort Worth Women's Business Center.

2) Access to Capital:
   - Fort Worth Economic Development Corporation (FWEDC) – Located at the BAC, the FWEDC provides financial assistance to small businesses through its SBA 504 Loan Program, the City's Revolving Loan Fund Program, the Micro-Loan Program, and the City's Mercado loan program.
   - William Mann Jr. Community Development Corporation (WMCDC) – This multi-bank Community Development Financial Institution was created in 1994 by a consortium of banks and the City of Fort Worth. It provides debt/equity financing for small, minority, and women-owned businesses located in Tarrant County. Loans of up to $250,000 are available for working capital, inventory, equipment, real estate and business acquisition. The WMCDC is a participating lender in the Texas Capital Access Program and the Texas Mezzanine Fund.
   - Community Express Loan Program – Community Express loans offer start-up, minority, women and veteran-owned businesses the opportunity to secure financing for their ventures. Community Express loans are available from JP Morgan Chase, Innovative Bank, Bank One and Banco Popular from $5,000 to $250,000, and include business development training provided by the Women's Business Center and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

3) Technology and Manufacturing Assistance:

Fort Worth Business Assistance Center

The Fort Worth Business Assistance Center, located at I-35W and Rosedale in the James E. Guinn Complex, is home to 14 independent business service providers. (*Source: Fort Worth Business Assistance Center, 2003.*)

- Tech Fort Worth – A nonprofit business incubator designed to nurture and provide specialized and industry-specific business assistance to technology start-up companies in three industry sectors: aerospace, biotech and information technology. Tech Fort Worth invests time, money, and expertise in the critical first years of emerging companies which demonstrate the potential for economic and commercial success. Tech Fort Worth occupies the former gymnasium on the James E. Guinn School campus, which was renovated as a 22,000 square foot office building, providing space for companies participating in the incubator program.
- Business Information Center – Equipped with state-of-the-art Dell computers, clients have free access to desktop publishing, business magazines, videotapes and over 200 Entrepreneur Guides.
- Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center – It's mission is to increase the global competitiveness of small to mid-size manufacturers by providing support in the appropriate use of technologies and techniques. It works with manufacturers across the metroplex to assess their operations, identify opportunities for improvement and develop and implement appropriate solutions. Headquartered at the UTA/Riverbend campus in Fort Worth, offices are also located at the BAC.
- Manufacturers Association of North Texas – Created in 1997 as a trade association for manufacturers, it provides assistance to members through partnerships with key manufacturing-support organizations, such as the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center and the University of Texas at Arlington Automation & Robotics Research Institute.

4) Business Support and Counseling:
   - Small Business Development Center – Funded by SBA and Tarrant County College and located at the BAC, it provides professional, confidential business counseling to business owners on topics such as management, marketing, and accounting. In addition, counselors explain business planning and SBA loan application preparation.
   - Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) – Sponsored by the SBA, the Service Corps of Retired Executives provides professional one-on-one counseling for people considering a business start-up. SCORE volunteers counsel with an emphasis on creating a business plan that can be utilized in day-to-day operations as well as for obtaining financing. A "How to Start a Business" workshop is held monthly.
   - Small Contractor Development Program. The Small Contractor Development Program provides technically qualified construction companies with the technical, bonding and working capital support to compete successfully in the open market.

Another program administered by the City's Economic Diversification Division is:

- Fort Worth International Center (FWIC) – Created in 1997 as an initiative of the

ACORN Project

Recent graduates of the ACORN (Able & Confident Owners Rebuilding Neighborhoods) project committed to an eight-week course that is designed to re-educate, motivate, and empower individuals to start their own business. (*Source: Fort Worth Business Assistance Center, 2005.*)

City's Economic Diversification Division, the FWIC is a public-private partnership, and is funded by the City of Fort Worth and the organizations that office in the Center. The FWIC houses organizations that provide services to promote international trade between businesses located in Fort Worth and abroad. The FWIC also provides services to promote cultural exchanges and social relationships. In addition, the FWIC attracts foreign investment. Since its inception, the FWIC has conducted over 1,032 counseling sessions; hosted over 1,350 international visitors and 12,000 other visitors; generated approximately $43 million in international trade transactions; and secured two new international business relocations to Fort Worth.

1) International Trade Services:
   - Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Office of International Business Development – The Office promotes international trade and investment, recruits direct foreign investment to Fort Worth, and assists in international transactions, and organizes business trade missions. The Office is a partnership between the Fort Worth Chamber and the FWIC.
   - Fort Worth Office of International Affairs – The International Affairs Office promotes international trade and investment, recruits direct foreign investment to Fort Worth, assists in international transactions, organizes business trade missions, and provides protocol services to Fort Worth City officials.
   - Tarrant County Asian/American Chamber of Commerce – Promotes business opportunities, civic responsibility and cultural education to the Asian/American community through various programs including the annual Egg Roll Festival, Asian College Days and Community Health Screening and Outreach Program.
   - Tarrant County College International Trade Center – Offers one-on-one counseling and seminars on topics relating to import/export. Helps develop international business plans, identify foreign markets, conducts market research and available financing sources.
   - US Department of Commerce Export Assistance Center – Provides export counseling and market research to help North Texas companies expand export opportunities. Accomplishes its mission using American Embassies and Consulates.

2) Cultural Exchanges and Social Relationships Services:
   - Sister Cities International – Cultivates successful relationships and international understanding among the youth, adults and organizations of Fort Worth and its seven sister cities through educational, leadership, and exchange programs.
   - World Affairs Council of Greater Fort Worth – Conducts lectures and seminars on foreign policy and world affairs. Serves as the official host for the State Department's International Visitor's Program for the Fort Worth area.

Fort Worth International Center

The Fort Worth International Center, located at 808 Throckmorton Street in Downtown, is home to seven service providers. (*Source: Fort Worth International Center, 2005.*)

The City's Finance Department collects revenues, and by contract, administers the following:

- Hotel/motel sales tax revenue – The City receives nine percent per room per night from those who stay at Fort Worth hotels and motels. This fund is used primarily to support the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Fort Worth Herd, but is also used for maintenance and operations of City facilities managed by the Public Events Department. This source of revenue also supports various cultural institutions and programs. The City has also used this revenue for such projects as the rebate of school district property taxes for the redevelopment and conversion of the Blackstone, a historically significant building, into a modern hotel. Two percent is used solely for the Convention Center.
- Public Improvement District (PID) – Based on a petition from property owners, fees are assessed on property in the district, in addition to property taxes, to pay for services and improvements over and above regular city services.

The following economic development programs are also administered by the City:

- Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Program – The City's Department of Environmental Management administers this EPA-funded program directed at the assessment and/or remediation of "brownfields," idle or abandoned industrial and commercial sites where redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. The City has identified over 240 sites that are potential candidates for redevelopment under the brownfields program. An example brownfields site was the Cowtown Inn facility, which had been vacant for over a decade with practically no redevelopment potential due to its dilapidated condition and asbestos. If a private developer has interest in redeveloping the Cowtown Inn site, or any other brownsfields site, the City can assist by undertaking Phase I environmental assessments and, if warranted, Phase II environmental assessments. Please see Chapter 18: Environmental Quality for further information.
- Local Development Corporation – An economic development corporation created by City Council and comprised of City Council members and the Mayor. The Corporation acquires tax delinquent property and either leases the land or holds the land until there is a development proposal.
- Local Government Corporation – The City Council is authorized to create a local government corporation pursuant to Chapter 431 of the Transportation Code to undertake any governmental purpose. The City Council created the Lone Star Local Government Corporation to issue tax increment bonds to pay for public improvements in support of the Cabela's development.
- Minority/Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE) – A City program created to ensure that minority- and women-owned businesses are afforded maximum opportunities to participate in the City's procurement activities, directly and indirectly. The M/WBE Office identifies M/WBEs that can provide a service or product that the City purchases, encourages their participation in City procurement activities, and monitors ongoing contracts to ensure targeted M/WBE participation is advanced.
- Model Blocks Program – A comprehensive neighborhood improvement program

Camp Bowie Boulevard
Public Improvement District

The Camp Bowie Boulevard Public Improvement District (PID) runs along the boulevard from University to I-820 and also includes West 7th Street from University to Montgomery. Property owners pay an assessment that funds public improvements, marketing, and other activities of the nonprofit management corporation, Historic Camp Bowie, Inc. Incorporated in 2000, Historic Camp Bowie oversees the revitalization of the corridor. *(Sources: Historic Camp Bowie, Inc., and Planning Department, 2004.)*

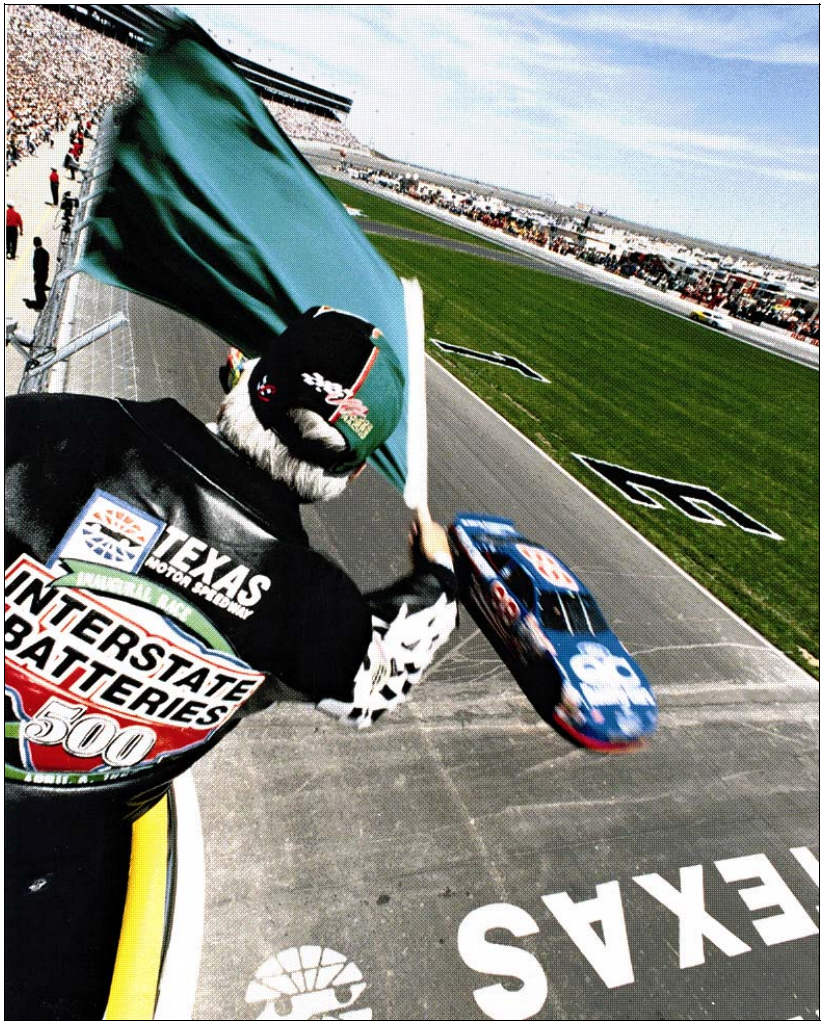
in which the City of Fort Worth allocates $1.2 million of CDBG funds for revitalization efforts (including economic development) in a small geographic area, in order to have a visible, measurable impact on the neighborhood. This program is also expected to create a ripple effect of private initiatives that will improve the living conditions of the residents in the surrounding area.

- Neighborhood Empowerment Zone Program – A Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) is an area within a municipality created to promote the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing, increase economic development; and increase the quality of social services, education, or public safety provided to residents of the zone. The City may waive fees related to the construction of buildings within the zone; release City liens, enter into agreements abating municipal property taxes on property in the zone, for a period of not more than 10 years, and set baseline performance standards to encourage the use of alternative building materials that address concerns relating to the environment or to building costs, maintenance, or energy consumption. Mixed-use zoning is a prerequisite to the application of NEZ incentives in urban villages. A map in Chapter 23: Financial Incentives depicts the City's current NEZs.

The following are a selection of the major business advocacy and support organizations operating in Fort Worth:

- Chambers of Commerce – Five chambers (Fort Worth, Metropolitan Black, Hispanic, Asian-American, and American Indian) exist in Fort Worth and support the business community through the provision of programs and services. In addition to their regular programs and activities, the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, Tarrant County Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, and the American Indian Chamber of Commerce, under contract with the City of Fort Worth, provide outreach and technical assistance to their communities. The Fort Worth Chamber also provides an outreach program, Job Link, which brings all of the work force development service provider organizations together with the business community to match people with jobs. The U.S.-Argentina Chamber of Commerce promotes international trade and develops business opportunities between North Texas and Argentina.
- Chiapas World Trade Commission (CWTC) – Located at the FWIC, CWTC promotes tourism and exports products from Chiapas to the United States, while creating a working international relationship with the United States. CWTC collaborates in attracting foreign investment and ensures adequate channeling.
- Fort Worth Export Assistance Center, U.S. Department of Commerce – Funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce and located at the FWIC, it provides free export counseling and market research and utilizes U.S. Government programs and services to help North Texas companies expand export opportunities. It is linked to American embassies and consulates.
- Fort Worth Office of International Affairs (OIA) – Promotes international business and education programs and coordinates international contacts with City of Fort Worth Officials. It is the host organization for the annual Mayor's Export Award, where Fort Worth recognizes a local company who exemplifies

Fort Worth Sports Authority
Texas Motor Speedway



The FW Sports Authority was created in 1997 to oversee the administration and development of the Texas Motor Speedway. With two NASCAR races, an IRL race and ongoing events throughout the year, Texas Motor Speedway brings 1.25 million visitors to the area annually. Texas Motor Speedway is the only track on the Indy Racing circuit that hosts two races each year. The facility generates approximately $162 million in business for the Fort Worth-Dallas area and currently provides an estimated 6,200 jobs per year. *(Sources: Texas Motor Speedway, Sports Business Journal, and AllianceTexas, 2005.)*

excellence in international business practices and global competition.

- Tarrant County College International Small Business Development Center (ISBDC) – Funded by SBA and Tarrant County College and located at the FWIC, it offers free one-on-one counseling and seminars to businesses interested in importing and exporting. ISBDC helps develop international business plans, identify foreign markets, conduct market research, and apply for government financing.

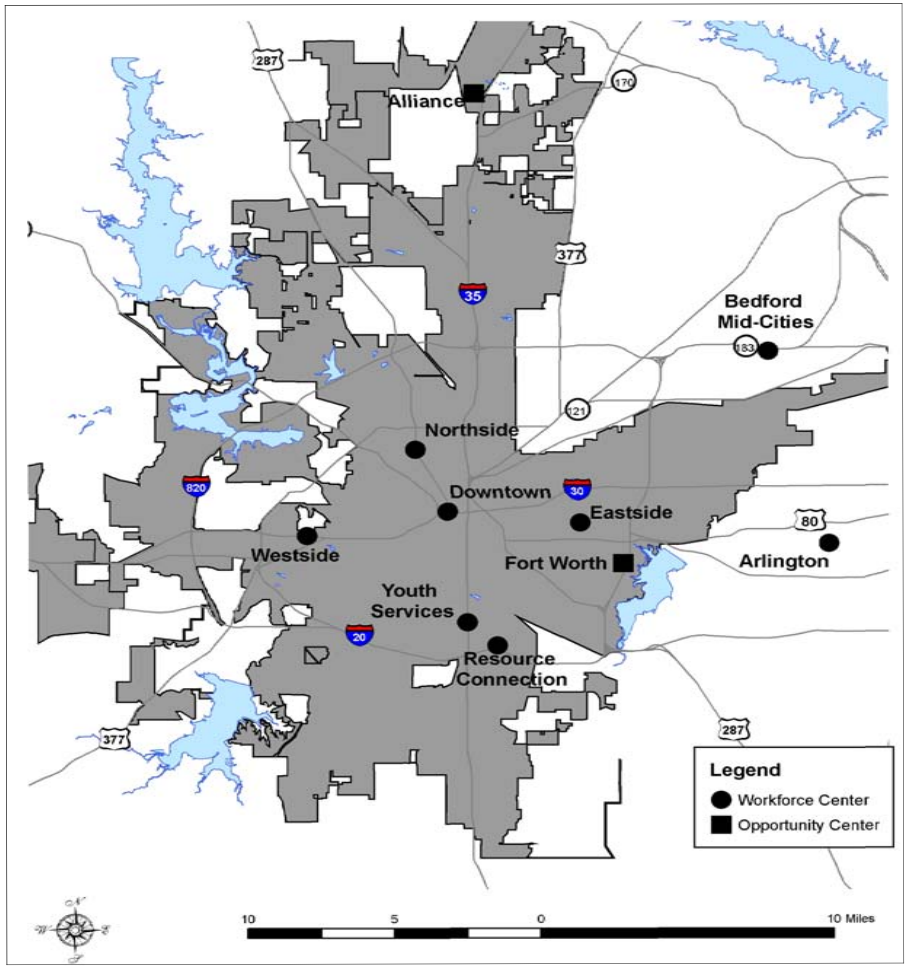
The following are a selection of the major non-City sponsored job training organizations operating in Fort Worth:

- Fort Worth Opportunity Center – Located in Southeast Fort Worth, it is a privately funded, nonprofit training and employment center located in Southeast Fort Worth. Companies and corporations that donate money to the $5-6 million endowment fund of the Center may contract with the Center for recruitment and training leading to guaranteed employment. The Center opened in early 2000, and has future plans to expand to a second building and possibly add a daycare. The Fort Worth Opportunity Center will work closely with the Alliance Opportunity Center, which was established in May 1998, to match and train job candidates with openings at the companies of Alliance.
- Texas Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County – A number of workforce development services have been combined at eight one-stop workforce centers throughout Fort Worth and Tarrant. The centers provide a full range of employment services to all job seekers and employers. These centers also provide job recruitment, eligibility determination, assessment, and case management, job training, and placement services for program clients.

Capital Improvement Projects

Changing economic conditions have made economic development an important activity of local government. Fort Worth has responded to these conditions by establishing a proactive economic development program. Twelve economic development capital improvement projects are identified for the next 20 years, totaling more than $419 million, nearly $410 million of which is not funded. A list of the projects, estimated costs, completion dates, and potential funding sources are included in Appendix D and Appendix E.

Fort Worth Workforce Centers and Opportunity Centers



A number of workforce development services have been combined at eight one-stop workforce centers throughout Fort Worth and Tarrant County. These centers provide job recruitment, eligibility determination, assessment, and case management for program clients. The Alliance Opportunity Center in Far North Fort Worth offers job training and placement services for Alliance. The partners of the center include Tarrant County Workforce Development Board, Hillwood Development Corporation, Tarrant County College, and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. In April 2000, the Fort Worth Opportunity Center opened in Southeast Fort Worth as a privately funded, nonprofit training and employment center. *(Source: City of Fort Worth, 2001.)*