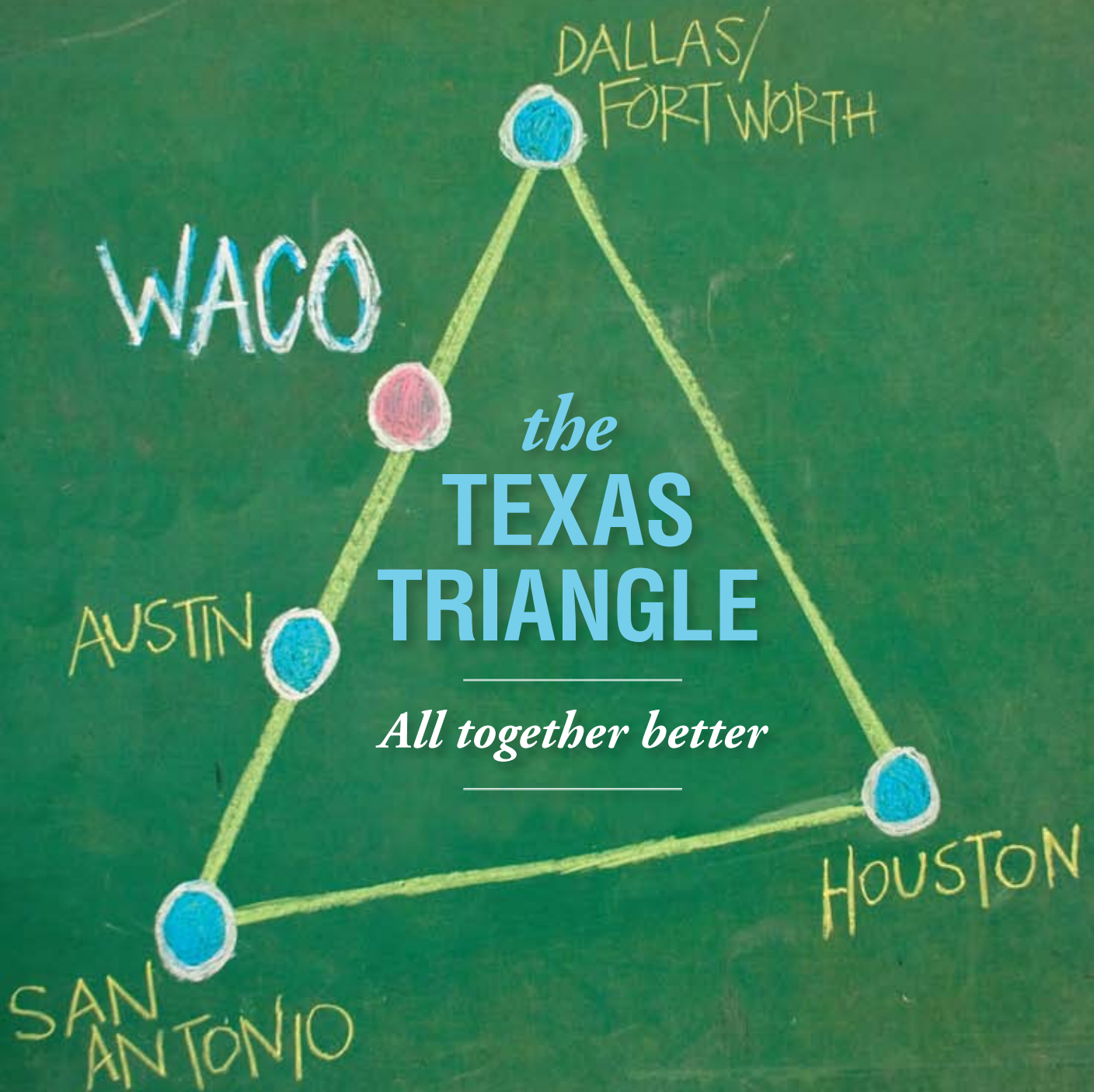


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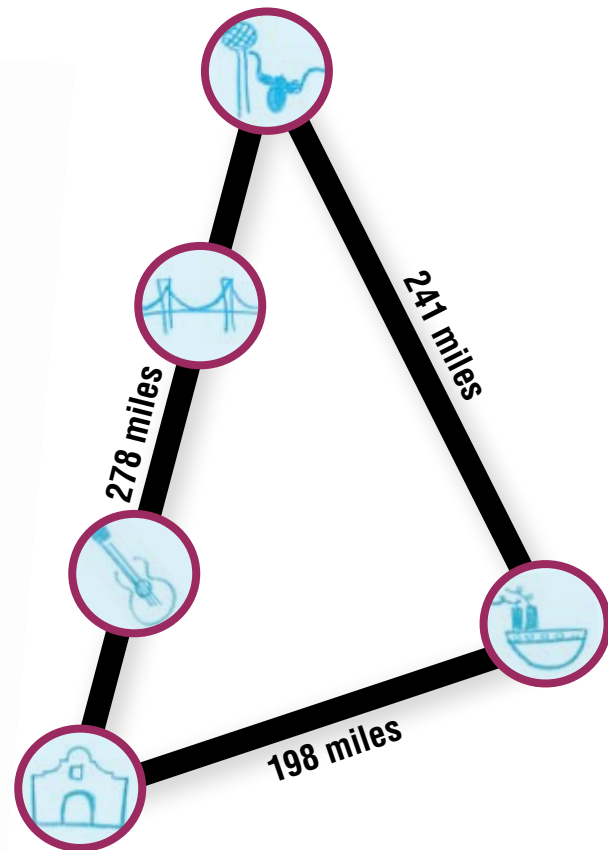
CHAMBER
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QUARTERLY

FALL 09



Texas Triangle

All Together Better



The Texas Triangle, one of the nation's 11 mega-regions, could be Greater Waco's ticket to prosperity during the next 40 years.

It's easy to market the Texas Triangle as an economic powerhouse. Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio and Houston form the points of the triangle with Waco, Temple-Killeen and Austin adding value along the western side and Bryan-College Station to the southeast.

Triangle cities include three of the nation's 10 largest and make up 62 percent of the state's population, provide 68 percent of the wage and salary jobs and 72 percent of personal income.

As the U.S. economy headed into a recession in 2008, Triangle metros led the nation in job creation with Houston the nation's leader at 42,000 new jobs. Of the top 100 metros, Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin were among the 10 largest for job creation for 2008. Waco, Temple-Killeen and Bryan-College Station each experienced positive growth.

The key to making the Triangle bigger than the sum of its already significant parts, however, is how well we collaborate to address some particularly challenging issues including sustainable growth, economic competitiveness, transportation and natural resources.

At conferences such as "Mega-regions and Metro Prosperity: Sustainable Economics for the Texas Triangle" in September in Houston, leaders—mostly from the Triangle's larger cities but

including the Greater Waco Chamber Senior Vice Presidents Scott Connell and Sarah Roberts—began to grapple with those and other issues.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

By almost every measure, the cities of the Texas Triangle have prospered in an era of good roads, cheap gasoline and the affordability of homes in idyllic suburbs. But changing demographics—a population that is younger than the national average, plus continued immigration—and the possibility of sustained higher energy prices could usher in a new ideal.

With more than 10 million new people expected in the Texas Triangle during the next 40 years, leaders are focused on reducing urban sprawl to preserve and maximize natural resources. This means identifying preferred areas for growth. The Interstate 35 corridor through

Central Texas is arguably the most densely populated section of the Triangle, with Waco, Temple-Killeen, Bryan-College Station and Austin the only metros outside of the cities at the points, making it a preferred region for future growth.

This Central Texas region has been recognized by Comptroller Susan Combs as a stable, diverse economy that will continue to thrive in the decades ahead. Work is underway to ensure that Central Texas maintains an environment that will attract the growth of the future.

Brookings Fellow Christopher B. Leinberger says the Ozzie and Harriet drivable suburban vision of the American Dream is being supplemented by what he has coined "walkable urbanism."

"Led by late-marrying young adults and empty-nester baby boomers, many households are looking for the excitement and options that living and working in a walkable urban place can bring," he said.

The idea that people will choose to live in a more densely populated urban area is the premise of the Greater Downtown Plan now being written by hundreds of Waco citizens in a process led by the Portland-based planning firm Fregonese Associates.

The Greater Waco Chamber called for the visionary plan to accommodate, by design, half of McLennan County's projected population and job growth through 2050 in a seven square mile target area from Quinn Campus to 18th Street and between Baylor University and Cameron Park.

As many as 400 persons participated in planning workshops in October to begin to develop the plan. Additional public meetings will be held in 2010 as the work continues.

"We will definitely have the capacity in the Greater Downtown Plan to accommodate 100,000—probably substantially more," said John Fregonese,

leader of the planning team. "We will also have a five- to 10-year goal enabling us to celebrate that success and then move on to achieving the larger goal."

Chamber President Jim Vaughan said few cities have set out to capture such a large percentage of future growth in the urban core. Just developing such a plan will put Waco on the map with a best practice growth strategy to make Waco an important city and the next major metro in the Texas Triangle.

"The scale of our plan will make us a poster city among small metros in America," he said. "And while congestion and costs are forcing changes in the cities at the points of the Triangle, Waco is embracing green, sustainable development because it presents our best opportunity for prosperity."

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Economic and population growth are increasingly converging in an era of globalization. In fact, America 2050, a coalition of regional planners, scholars and policy-makers organized to advance a framework for the nation's future growth, estimates that between now and 2050 more than half of the U.S. population growth and, even more impressively, two-thirds of our economic growth will occur in America's mega-regions.

Given the diverse and generally complimentary industrial and economic relationships among the cities of the Texas Triangle, obvious opportunities exist for collaboration, and that is important according to Richard Florida, author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, and a leading authority on mega-regions.

Among the Triangle's most obvious economic strengths, Austin and Dallas/Fort Worth are both home to similar high-tech industries including communications and electronics, and Houston, Fort Worth and Dallas are headquarter cities of major

airlines, Continental, American and Southwest respectively. But for the most part, the economic drivers are unique. San Antonio is a leader in federal and military sectors and tourism; Dallas/Fort Worth is a logistics center; and Houston's strength is in resource production and port operations.

Among the smaller metro areas, Temple-Killeen has a strong suit in health care and the Fort Hood Army Post while Waco, with perhaps the most balanced economy in the Triangle, is a leading manufacturer of heavy equipment, center for aviation upgrades and maintenance, producer of consumer food products and beneficiary of a robust banking and insurance sector.

Also making the mega-region economically competitive are the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport—two of the nation's top 10 international airports.

continued on page 10



HISTORY OF THE TEXAS TRIANGLE

The term "Texas Triangle" dates back to 1936 when the Missouri Pacific (MoPac) Railroad announced overnight services from St. Louis and Memphis to Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin and San Antonio. The Texas Triangle train service no longer operates and limited Amtrak connections have taken its place. Interstates 35, 45 and 10 are now the pathways for more modern modes of transportation that still connect these thriving areas of commerce.

TRIANGLE CITIES

WACO



- Home to Texas State Technical College, McLennan Community College and Baylor University
- Diverse economy with no one sector representing more than 20 percent of the workforce
- Major employers include L-3 Integrated Platform and Mars Snackfood US

DALLAS FORT WORTH



- Major inland transportation hub with Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, the fifth busiest in the world
- Distribution and service center for surrounding area and beyond state lines
- State's banking and financial center
- Strong telecommunications
- Significant oil presence

HOUSTON



- Largest port in the United States based on international waterborne tonnage
- Gateway to Texas' international business
- Half the jobs are related to oil and natural gas
- Home to Texas Medical Center, the world's largest medical center and Johnson Space Center

SAN ANTONIO



- The Alamo City claims an important place in the state's history
- NAFTA has expanded the city's distribution role for South Texas and northern Mexico
- The famous River Walk and other attractions draw visitors
- Military presence with Fort Sam Houston and Lackland and Randolph Air Force bases

AUSTIN



- State capital
- Home to the main campus of the University of Texas
- High technology with 25 to 30 percent of workforce tied to this industry
- Live Music Capital of the World



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All of the state's tier one research universities—Texas, Texas A&M and Rice—are located in the Triangle as are Baylor University, the University of Houston, UT-Dallas, UT-Arlington and UT-San Antonio plus many other public and private colleges including Texas State Technical College and McLennan Community College in Waco. With statewide approval in November of Proposition Four, more funding will be available to help Texas universities achieve tier one status.

Meanwhile, the Central Texas Research and Technology Park, announced in October as a collaboration between Baylor, TSTC, McLennan County and the cities of Waco and Bellmead, promises to enable Greater Waco to capture a larger share of future growth in innovation, research and technology.

The largest growth sector in each Triangle metro is health care and that is not expected to change. Most of the state's leading teaching hospitals are concentrated at medical centers in Houston, San Antonio and Dallas and in Central Texas at Temple where Scott and White is affiliated with the Texas A&M Health Science Center.

In Waco, the Family Medicine Residency Program was the first family medicine residency west of the Mississippi when it was established in 1970 and is now one of the largest in Texas with 12 new residents per year level.

"If we want to bolster economic competitiveness and ensure long-run prosperity, we must pursue policies that take mega-regions into account," Florida writes in the Wall Street Journal. "Above all, this means remaining committed to open global trade. Mega-regions thrive on trade, which is why their leaders—from business officials to mayors—strongly support it."

The fact that the Texas Triangle is completely within a single state is a huge advantage because state policies—specifically economic policies—can be put in place in a single capitol. And since Texans proudly sing of being the "boldest and grandest" state, winning support for initiatives for the Texas Triangle mega-region should be possible.

TRANSPORTATION

The funding challenges facing the Texas Department of Transportation are real but may have a positive result

for the Texas Triangle mega-region. An overwhelming majority (75 percent) of participants in the Houston conference said that transportation provides the greatest opportunity for the Triangle to work together. Transportation also provides the connections of talent and trade to support economic growth through 2050.

And while TxDOT officials are committed to complete six- and eight-laning I-35 ensuring that it will continue to be a primary transportation link for the western side of the Triangle, 71 percent of participants at the conference believe a high-speed rail system will be in place in 15 years. High-speed rail could be as important for Waco in the 21st Century as the Interstate highway system was in the second half of the 20th.

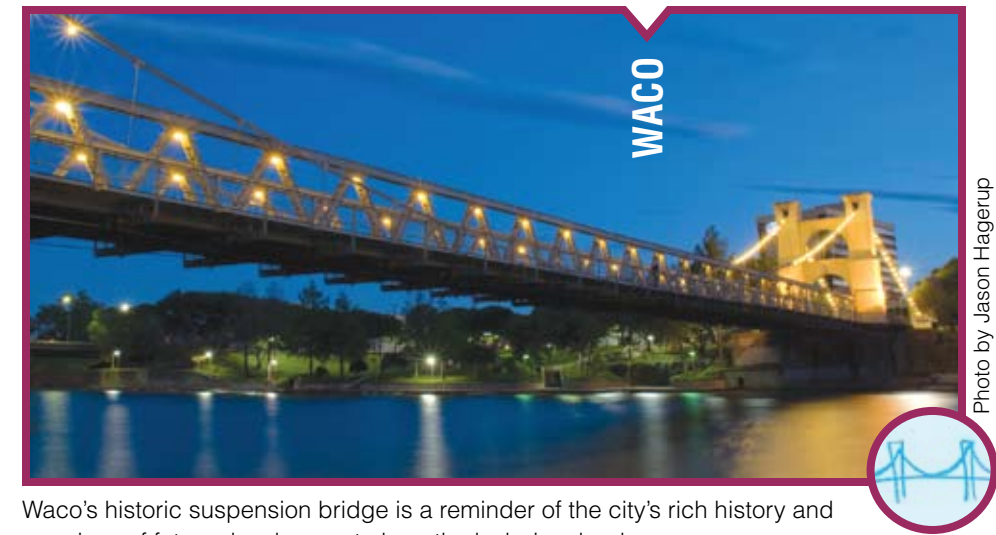
Boding well for high-speed rail in the Triangle is Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) criteria for determining potential market demand that works in favor of such city pairs as San Antonio-Dallas and Houston-Dallas. City and metropolitan area population is No. 1 on the FRA criteria list. Also important are distance between city pairs favoring distances between 100 and 500 miles and linking metropolitan regions within a mega-region.

A challenge to the cities along any future rail route is how passengers will get around when they arrive at the station. Dallas and Houston have limited streetcar lines and there's talk about a starter line in Waco linking Baylor with the city center.

One model for Triangle cities is Portland, Ore., which has a 52-mile light rail system with 84 stations including the Portland International Airport, and streetcars operate in the downtown area along an eight-mile continuous loop with 46 stops. Portland is in the Cascadia mega-region with Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Regardless of when the state gives higher priority to rail and transit, more funds are needed. In its Strategic Plan 2009-2013, TxDOT said, "relying on the motor fuel tax as a primary source of revenue to finance projects simply won't get the job done."

The state's gasoline tax has not been increased since 1991, and then by only 5 cents to 20 cents per gallon. Including the 18.4 cents federal tax, Texas motorists pay 38.4 cents per gallon. In recent years, TxDOT has, however, used toll revenue



Waco's historic suspension bridge is a reminder of the city's rich history and promises of future development along the lush river banks.

and debt financing to construct projects that would otherwise be delayed.

"Since the economies of the cities of the Texas Triangle are dependent on efficient transportation systems, transportation is a high priority for collaboration," Vaughan said noting the Chamber's membership in the Texas High Speed Rail & Transportation Corp.

NATURAL RESOURCES

With 16.1 million residents, projected to grow to 23.6 million by 2025 and to 35 million by 2050—a whopping 70 percent of the state's population—it's tempting to talk about the Texas Triangle in terms of urban issues alone. But vast portions of the Triangle are rural and determined to stay that way.

Challenges abound according to a Texas A&M report, Texas Urban Triangle: Framework for Future Growth, principally water supply and distribution, the conversion of prime farm and ranch lands to exurban sprawl and metropolitan traffic congestion. Also cited are air and water pollution and high per capita rates of energy consumption.

It is in addressing the unintended consequences of growth on the environment that Waco may have its greatest influence in the mega-region.

State Sen. Kip Averitt (R-Waco) is chairman of the powerful Senate Committee on Natural Resources. During the 2007 Session of the Texas Legislature, Averitt crafted and passed Senate Bill 3 to ensure a clean, adequate and affordable supply of water for future generations of Texans, according to his Web site.

In conjunction with the \$750 million in water infrastructure funding that he

helped secure, Senate Bill 3 advances the development of Texas water policy by protecting instream flows, encouraging conservation of existing water resources, and allowing new water projects identified by the State Water Plan to meet our future water needs.

Another effective way to protect and preserve natural resources is to embrace LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and other standards to improve the efficiency of buildings.

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, developers of the LEED program, buildings account for 72 percent of electricity consumption, 39 percent of energy use, 38 percent of all carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, 40 percent of raw materials use, 30 percent of waste output (136 million tons annually) and 14 percent of potable water consumption.

In 2000, Austin became one of the first cities in the country to require LEED Silver Certification for its new, publicly owned buildings. Houston and Dallas require all new construction of city facilities more than 10,000 square feet to be LEED-certified.

Going a step further, Dallas City Council became one of the first major American cities to pass a comprehensive green building standard for both residential and commercial construction.

The Greater Waco Chamber is the first Green Chamber in America, receiving LEED Gold certification in 2009. Baylor University, Caterpillar Logistics, McLennan Community College, Midway Independent School District and Wells Fargo have also constructed buildings to meet LEED standards in Waco. ■

Photo by Jason Hagerup

Waco's role in the Central Texas region

By Lesly Rascoe, APR, Vice President, Communications, Greater Waco Chamber

Waco's role as a metropolitan area within the surrounding rural areas of McLennan County emulates its capacity as a regional center within a seven-county region that also includes Bosque, Hill, Limestone, Falls, Bell and Coryell counties.

Neighboring counties provide a statistical collaboration that is stronger as a whole than individually. That's a plus when attracting employers to this area.

Hill County to the north and Bell County to the south provide interesting neighbor-to-neighbor relationships for employment and commuting opportunities. For instance, the merger of Temple's Scott & White Hospital with Waco's Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center creates a city-to-city partnership for both employees and patients of these health care facilities. The two cities also share a commonality as they are homes of Veterans' Affairs health centers.

In fact, some 7,109 residents from

the surrounding counties commute to McLennan County for employment while 3,675 McLennan County residents commute to the surrounding counties for work.

The strong presence of Fort Hood in Killeen is felt in this area as these military families travel to nearby destinations such as Waco for recreation, and the base brings in jobs from beyond the state borders. Some 53,000 soldiers are assigned to the base plus 5,100 civilian employees and 9,200 service and contract

This seven-county region is home to 680,440 people with a workforce of 310,695

employees make it the state's largest single site employer. According to the state comptroller, the world's largest military base contributed \$10.9 million to the Texas economy in 2007.

Big 12 athletics through Baylor University; attractions such as Cameron Park Zoo, the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum, the Texas Sports Hall of Fame; and activities on the Brazos River make Waco a regional destination. In fact, Waco's central location puts it at the disposal of larger surrounding cities such as Dallas/Fort Worth and Austin for tourism.

Waco's Mars Snackfood US and L-3 Platform Integration are major employers both locally and for the wider region. Mars makes most of the world's Snickers bars, and L-3's aerospace scope also is international.

20-COUNTY REGION

The larger 20-county region that the state defines as Central Texas stretches from San Saba to the west, Hill to the north, Madison to the west and Washington to the south and is anchored by Waco, Temple-Killeen and Bryan-College Station MSAs. This area demonstrates steady population growth and a stable economic base, according to the comptroller's office.

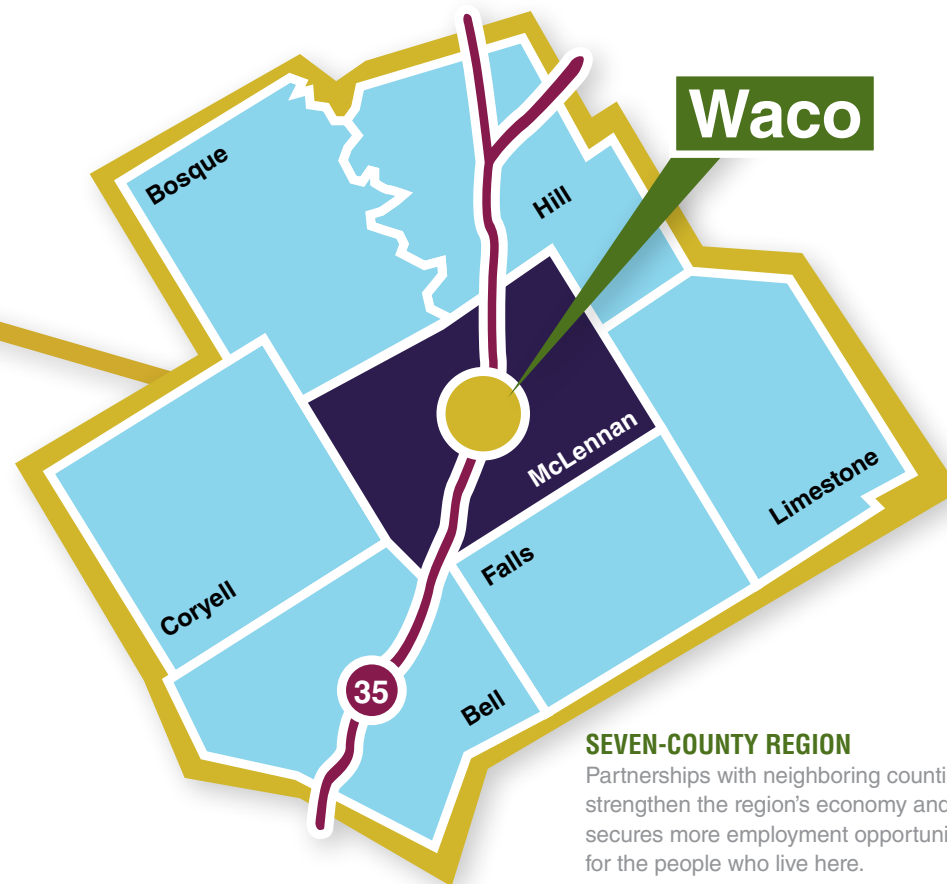
The people who live here are a younger demographic than that of the state or the nation. In 2008, 40 percent of these residents were younger than 25 compared to 37.4 and 34 in the state and United States respectively.

Interestingly, personal income growth in this region rose by more than 36 percent from 2001 to 2006, outpacing the statewide rate.

Job growth in this region is predicted to grow by 21 percent between 2003 and 2013 outpacing state job growth. Professional and business services is expected to top all growth with 36 percent more jobs, and leisure and hospitality will likely grow by 32 percent.

Both of these supersectors are strong in Greater Waco where the banking and insurance industries and legal services are mainstays of the professional services arena. Tourism is rooted here in Waco's enviable location for conventions and family vacations. The renovation of the Waco Convention Center and opening of a national park are anticipated to attract even more groups from Texas and beyond.

Clearly, the education and health services sector is forecast to lead job growth at 42 percent. Waco is well-poised to contribute to this growth as home to three colleges and Providence Health



SEVEN-COUNTY REGION
Partnerships with neighboring counties strengthen the region's economy and secure more employment opportunities for the people who live here.

Center, Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center and the Waco VA Hospital.

The region also provides excellent educational opportunities with 11 institutions of higher education operating

on 15 campuses. Texas A&M University is the region's only four-year public university, and Tarleton State University-Central Texas serves junior, senior and graduate students.



WACO: Collaborating in eight regions

TEXAS TRIANGLE With more than 16 million people according to the 2000 census, this megalopolis contains Greater Waco. See story on Page 8.

CENTRAL TEXAS Encompassing 20 counties, this dynamic region is diverse in its economy and assets. See story on Page 12.

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 17 The 17th Congressional District of Texas is represented by Congressman Chet Edwards and includes Bosque, Brazos, Grimes, Hill, Hood, Johnson, Madison, McLennan and Somervell counties and parts of Burleson, Limestone and Robertson counties. The district is home to two Big 12 schools, including Baylor University. Major employers include L-3 Communications and Sanderson

Farms. The district's population is 651,620, according to the 2000 census. Offices are located in Waco, Bryan and Cleburne.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION The Waco District of the Texas Department of Transportation encompasses eight counties—McLennan, Bell, Falls, Limestone, Hamilton, Coryell, Bosque and Hill. This hot spot of transportation includes a 100-plus-mile stretch of Interstate 35 along the nation's primary trade corridor between Mexico and Canada.

HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS This voluntary organization of local governments plans for a six-county area covering Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and McLennan counties. With an estimated population of 331,213, HOTCOG has more than 80 member governments with its headquarters in Waco.

Waco boasts one of the region's two private universities, Baylor University with 14,000 students, while Belton is home to the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

Central Texas has six community colleges, including Waco's McLennan Community College, and is home to the Texas State Technical College system and its largest campus.

The natural resources here afford economic advantages with major aquifers and substantial coal, oil and natural gas deposits that ensure strong economic growth.

Interstate 35, one of the country's major transportation arteries, bisects this region keeping a constant flow of people and products traveling through. The stretch of I-35 that runs through Waco serves about 50,000 vehicles per day. Expansion projects for roadways throughout the region are slated as priorities by the Texas Department of Transportation partly to accommodate the large share of truckers on this trade corridor.

Commercial airports in Waco, College Station and Killeen and privately owned lines enhance logistics operations.

The many attributes that the Central Texas region, and more specifically the seven-county region, possesses project a future with steady economic progress. ■

BRAZOS RIVER AUTHORITY The Brazos River basin provides 6.75 million gallons of water each year for cities, agriculture, industry and mining as well as recreational opportunities. The BRA serves as the state agency, headquartered in Waco, to manage this vital resource over a 70-county region.

EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER REGION 12 ESC Region 12 is dedicated to serving school districts, charter schools and area private/parochial schools in improving student performance. Based in Waco, with satellite offices in Corsicana, Hamilton, Nolanville and Teague, the ESC Region 12's service area includes Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Freestone, Hamilton, Hill, Lampasas, Limestone, McLennan, Mills and Navarro counties.

McLENNAN COUNTY Waco is the county seat for this 1,000-square-mile area. See story on Page 14.



Cameron Park Zoo

84% of travelers to the Waco Metropolitan Statistical Area were from Texas with Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and Austin being the top three cities of origin. The other 16 percent come from out of state.

Office of the Governor
Economic Development
and Tourism

McLennan County's treasures lie in cities far and wide

By Lesly Rascoe, Vice President, Communications, Greater Waco Chamber

McLennan County's 22 incorporated and two unincorporated cities share a population of almost a quarter million people on more than 1,000 square miles.

The distinct cities that are found on a McLennan County map represent both cultural and economic eclecticism that provide opportunity and excellent quality of life for the people who reside here.

With a population of 230,213 and a workforce of 114,886, McLennan County is a metro area worthy of consideration by potential employers. Its distinct communities offer business parks and trained workers suitable to key sectors.

Its rich Blackland Prairie and rolling hills are dissected by the Balcones Fault and the Bosque and Brazos Rivers creating an ideal setting for a strong economy that reinforces diverse sectors such as health care, advanced manufacturing and aerospace.

Agriculture is a viable sector bringing in excess of \$100 million in 2008 in sales in this county, according to the Texas Farm Bureau.

WACO

As the county seat, Waco is the hub of many of the county's shared resources and services including the sheriff's department, courts, landfill and recycling.

Lake Waco and several notable attractions and events, many major employers and three colleges make Waco a diverse center for this dynamic county. Its neighboring cities however make Greater Waco interesting and varied in culture and personality.

In fact, one doesn't have to drive far to discover another corner of the county that certainly offers its own strengths whether through tourism or a growing business community.

WEST

To the north, West's Main Street designation and Czech heritage lends a European flair to Central Texas with its annual Westfest Polka Festival each Labor Day weekend that draws thousands of visitors. Its hospitality is thriving with bakeries, restaurants, gift shops and hotels along the I-35 corridor and in the downtown district.

LACY LAKEVIEW

Lacy Lakeview is home to a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas call center, prime real estate on Interstate 35 and Veterans Memorial Park where several annual events create a sense of community. Fourth of July is marked with a parade and celebration at the park where police officers and volunteer fire fighters serve hot dogs to local residents.

BELLMEAD

Neighboring Bellmead's Business Park, strategically located adjacent to Texas State Technical College and L-3 Platform Integration, is home to Texas Machine Tool International and robust commercial development. The city's annual Christmas Parade has been entertaining children on the city's streets for more than half a century and is the largest holiday parade in Central Texas. Bellmead also hosts an annual Civil War reenactment every spring.

McGREGOR

To the west, McGregor's 9,000-acre business park received a \$1.5 million

grant from the Economic Development Administration to fund infrastructure improvements. The park boasts Convergys, one of the county's largest employers. McGregor's annual Founder's Day Festival features a parade and family activities all day with a street festival at night.

MOODY

Just down the road, the Moody Business and Technology Park is fully developed to support small technology companies. In contrast but historically relevant is the Moody Cotton Harvest Festival that celebrates the town's heritage when farmers and their families plowed its rich soils.

RIESEL

Riesel, a town of about 1,000 residents just east of Waco, experienced a major surge in sales tax revenue, 761 percent from 2003 to 2008, from its new Sandy Creek power plant. The annual Riesel Fair is a long-standing old-fashioned tradition in this rural community.

HEWITT

Hewitt is the largest city outside of Waco with a population of 13,561 and was named No. 46 in Money Magazine's list of 100 Best Places to Live. The city is proposing a town square and is known for quality neighborhoods and excellent schools, Hewitt is a popular place for families to reside.



The Riesel Fair has been entertaining Central Texans for generations. It is one of many community events throughout the county that remain cultural traditions here.

LORENA

Lorena's Main Street designation fits the style of this quaint town with Southern charm. Specialty shops, including antiques, art, lighting and ceramics, and a disc golf course add amenities to this livable city. Its business improvement grant helps businesses revamp the façade, signage and other exterior property elements.

WOODWAY

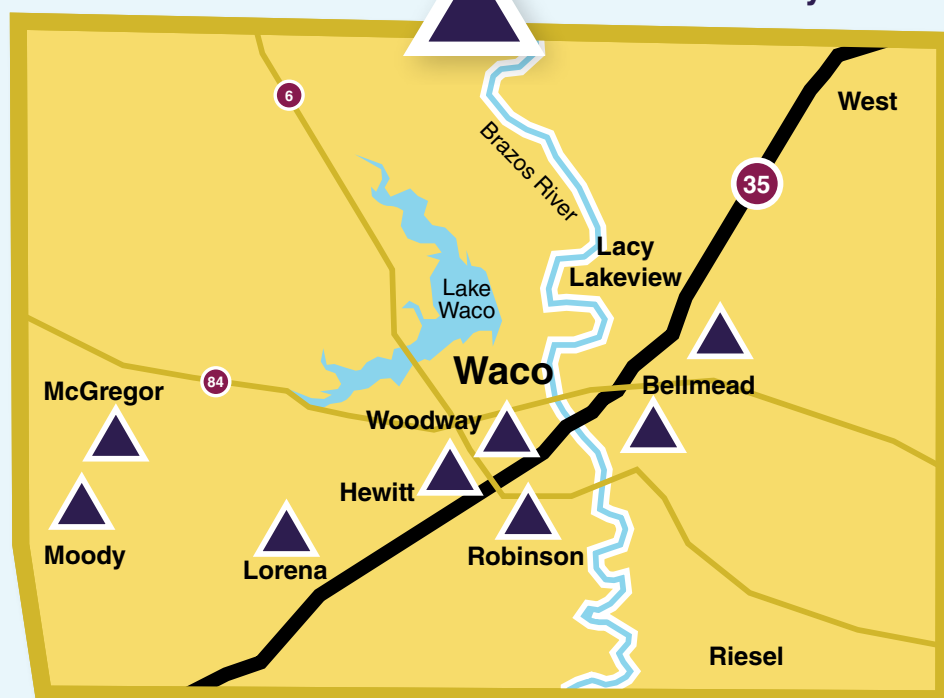
Woodway's popular Poage Park and Carleen Bright Arboretum, picturesque neighborhoods and views of Lake Waco make it an excellent quality-of-life suburb just outside of Waco. Quiet neighborhoods and tree-lined streets offer some of the highest points in McLennan County.

Woodway is a master-planned community with more than half of its 1,850 acres dedicated to residential use. Several hotels along the Highway 84 corridor in Woodway provide hospitality to visitors to Waco and the surrounding area.

ROBINSON

Robinson is the fastest growing city in McLennan County at 31.6 percent since 2000. With two business parks and significant growth opportunities in the largest land territory outside of Waco's extraterritorial jurisdiction, Robinson has received a \$75,000 matching grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to construct a new park adjacent to the Robinson Primary School. ■

McLennan County Industrial Parks



- Bellmead Industrial Park**
40 acres
- Hewitt Commerce Park**
147 acres of commercial and light industrial property
- Lorena - Texas Corridor Industrial Park**
145 acres of industrial and commercial property
- McGregor Industrial Park**
9,500 acres of industrial and commercial property
- Moody Industrial Park**
87 acres of industrial and commercial property
- Robinson Industrial Park**
145 acres
- Robinson Young Industrial Park**
40 acres
- Texas Central Park**
3,000 acres
- Waco International Aviation Park**
200 acres
- Waco Regional Airport Industrial Park**
300 acres

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