



Red River County Court House



Delta County Court House



Titus County Court House



Cass County Court House



Morris County Court House



Franklin County Court House



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022



Lamar County Court House



Hopkins County Court House

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

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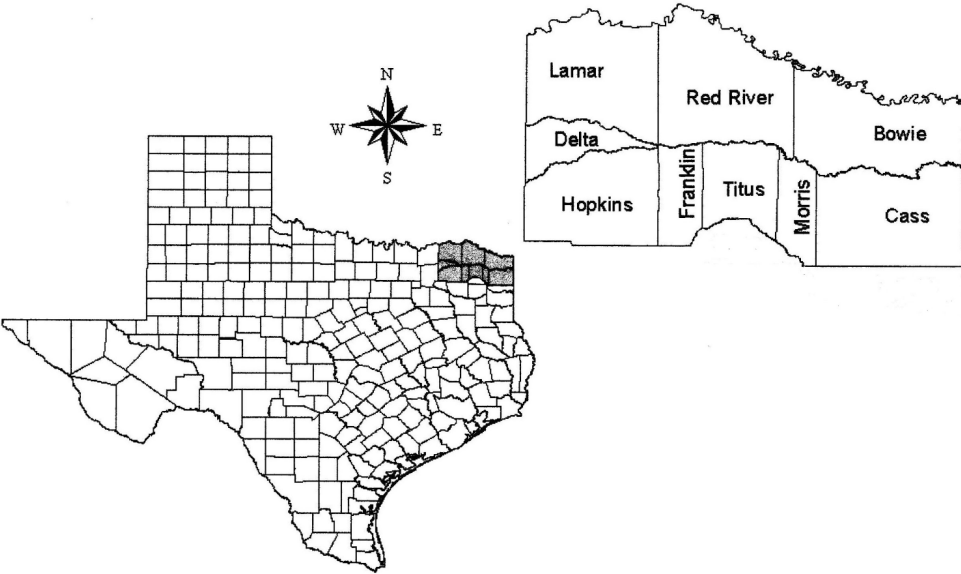
The 2018-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was approved by the NETEDD Board of Directors on 04/30/2020.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Background Summary
3. Population Growth
4. Jobs & Employment
5. Education & Workforce
6. Opportunity Zone Chart
7. Opportunity Zone Information
8. Opportunity Zone NETEDD MAP
9. Opportunity Zone NETEDD Tracts
10. County Profiles:
 - * Bowie County
 - * Cass County
 - * Delta County
 - * Franklin County
 - * Hopkins County
 - * Lamar County
 - * Morris County
 - * Red River County
 - * Titus County
7. Economic Resiliency - Changes
8. Economic Resiliency – Hazard Mitigation
9. SWOT Analysis
 - * Strengths
 - * Weaknesses
 - * Opportunities
 - * Threats
13. Visions & Plans
14. Action Plan
15. Goals & Objectives

Introduction

Counties of the North East Texas Economic Development District



The Northeast Texas Economic Development District, Inc. (NETEDD) was created in 1966 to facilitate the flow of Economic Development Administration grant and loan funds into the northeast Texas region, which currently includes Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River and Titus Counties. The geographical area of almost 5,732 square miles is home to approximately 283,978 people.

The NETEDD is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors composed of representatives from throughout the nine counties. Board members are appointed by each County Judge and represent a cross section of the region's population and economic interests. The mission of the Board is to promote the diversification of the economic base and the growth, development and retention of business and industry within the nine-county region.

Due to locally-based economic development organizations and initiatives throughout the service area of the NETEDD, the District's economic development program places an emphasis on providing a supportive role to entities focused on economic development within the region such as chambers of commerce, business associations, local government and economic development departments. While the NETEDD strives to be aware of economic development needs and potential projects in the area that will enhance the local economic base, the District's role in the implementation of such projects is limited.

Executive Summary

Community and Private Sector Participation

In consideration of the size of the district, the Board and staff relied on a variety of resources and partners to obtain input into the 2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report. Meetings with partners were used as a springboard to evoke discussion of economic development issues affecting the region. These partners provide the information that is an integral part of this report and the partners include:

- Members of the North East Texas Economic Developers Roundtable (NETEDR) were vital to the planning process. The Roundtable is a group of professionals interested in economic development in North East Texas. The professionals come from city, county, and state governments, private developers and consultants, utilities, non-profits, and quasi-governmental units such as Councils of Governments and River Authorities. The regular, open semi-monthly meetings are held in different communities in the district and serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information related to economic development in North East Texas. The Roundtable's website (www.therightcorner.com) contains information about available sites for development and community profiles for the region,
- Elected officials from counties and cities in NETEDD region were involved in the process,
- City managers/Economic Development Administrators/Chambers of Commerce staff and Board members were involved,
- Northeast Texas Workforce Commission Staff and Board members were primary contributors,
- The Ark-Tex Council of Governments staff and board members were an essential source of information,
- Local Education organizations provide information concerning their communities.

Background Summary

Taking a more in depth look into where the NETEDD Region has come from in the past two decades to allow us to better predict where NETEDD will be in 5-15 years. Where the NETEDD region is located has an impact on economic growth. Aging communities need upgraded infrastructure. Rural areas with aging population and educated younger citizens migrating to larger cities with higher paying jobs are at risk economically. Meeting the needs of todays job market through education and advanced training has become a challenge of every technological industries.

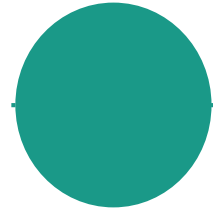
Geography

Where in the world is Pecan Gap? Located in two counties, Pecan Gap is about 13 miles northwest of Cooper.



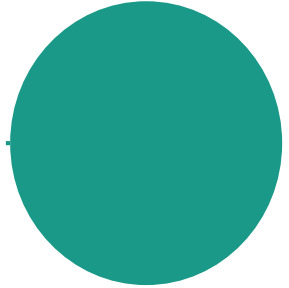
Population

Growing old in the Sulphur River Basin. The median age for the NETEDD region is 39.4, or 4.5 years above the state's.



Economics

By the numbers for the numbers. How is commerce adjusting to the aged population.

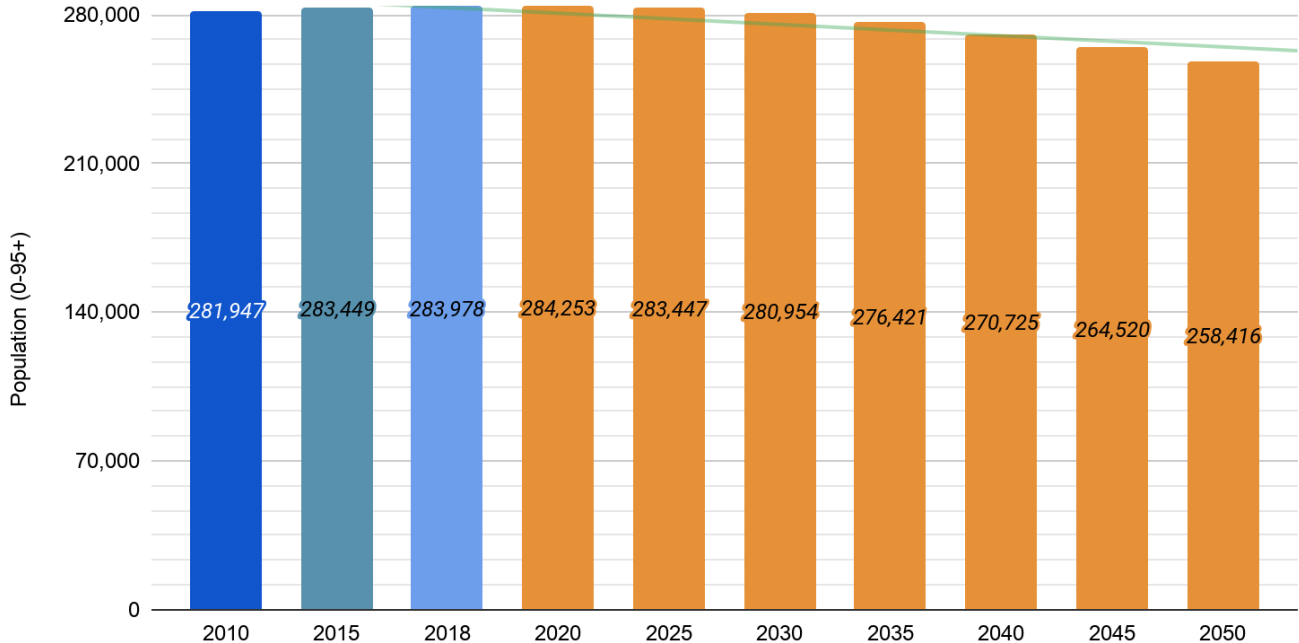


Population & Growth

NETEDD, as a region, has experienced a growth trend since 2010. However it is widely expected that the region will begin to decline in population in the coming years. This is in part due to the aged population and outward-migration of younger workers due to lack of industry in the region. The region population was 281,947 in 2010, and the population estimate for 2018 is 283,978. However, by 2040 it is projected to decline to 270,725. Older adults (65 plus) make up approximately 18% of the current population.

Population Projections, 2010-2050

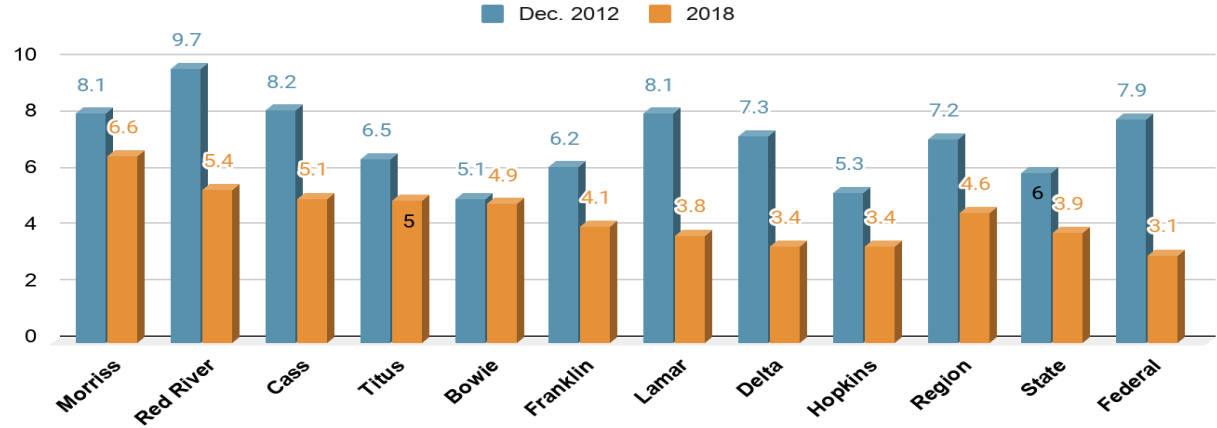
Data provided by Texas Demographic Center



Jobs & Employment

Although many of the rural communities and rural portions of the NETEDD counties continue to be dependent upon agriculture and commuting to employment, in the last 5 years the unemployment rate has decreased within the Region by 2.53%. The NETEDD Region average is 4.81% compared to the U.S. average of 3.10%. Red River County had the largest decrease (5.14%) in unemployment followed by Lamar County (4.76%). Morris County had less of a decrease (1.83%) but job prospects should increase with the re-opening of U.S. Steel in Lone Star. Training and jobs to meet the demands of tomorrow's labor force are the challenges that employers face to retain quality employees.

NETEDD Unemployment Rate

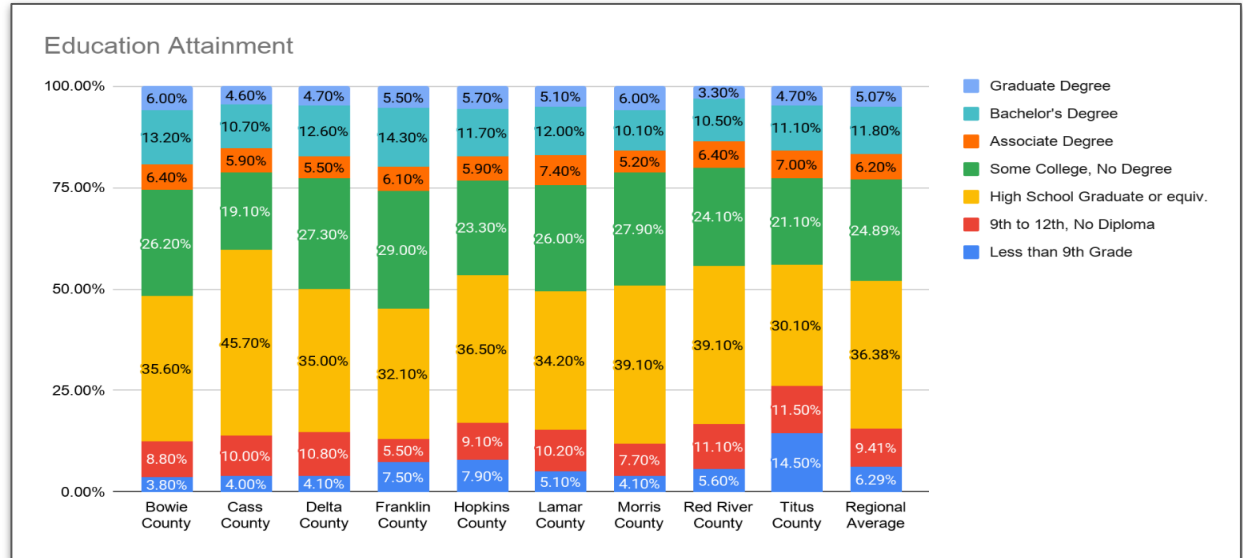


Campbell's Soup in Lamar County and U.S. Steel in Morris County.



Education & Workforce

As of the 2018 Texas Education Agency Snapshot for Region 8 there are 47 school districts with 56,088 students enrolled. This is a decrease from the 2013 Snapshot of 56,741 students. NETEDD is home to Texas A&M University - Texarkana and a number of community colleges including Northeast Texas Community College, Paris Junior College and Texarkana College, all of which continue to provide vocational and professional training in the region. Businesses are coordinating training programs with colleges to obtain specialty trained employees. This type of training works well in welding, computer technology, specialty machine operations, and many technological specific jobs. Today's workforce is becoming very specialized in computerized technology in many fields and the challenge is to insure quality training is available.



Opportunity Zones:
an economically distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment.

Localities qualify as opportunity zones if they have been nominated for that designation by the state and that nomination has been certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury via his delegation of authority to the Internal Revenue Service.

NETEDD
contains 25
opportunity
zones

Opportunity Zones by county

- Bowie - 7
- Cass - 4
- Delta - 1
- Franklin - 1
- Hopkins - 3
- Lamar - 5
- Morris - 3
- Red River - 0
- Titus - 1

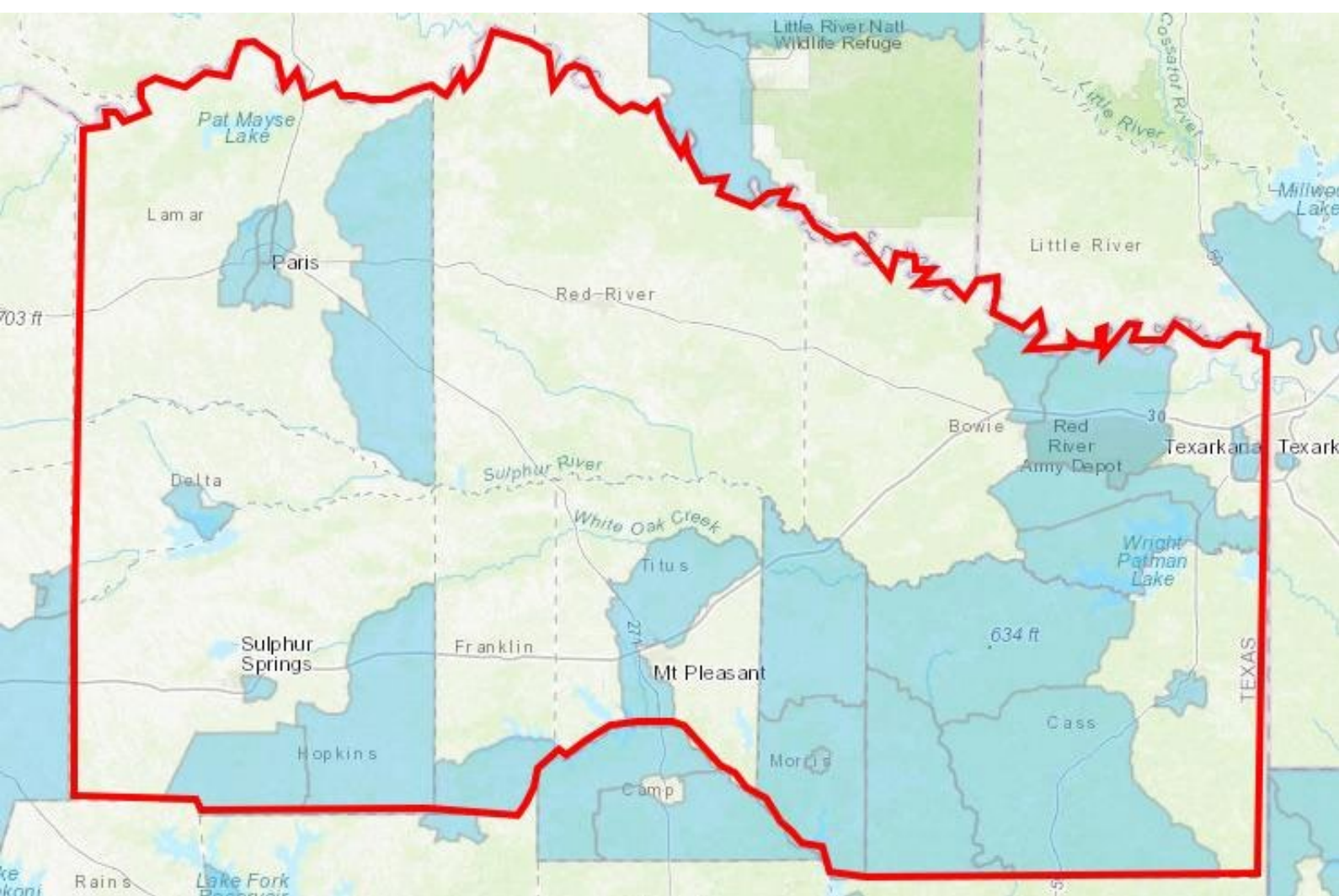
Opportunity Zones

Opportunity Zone Information

Opportunity Zones, created under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, are a federal economic development tool focused on improving the outcomes of communities across the country, especially in areas that have suffered from disinvestment over many years. Opportunity Zones are designated low-income census tracts where tax incentives are available to groups or individuals who invest in an Opportunity Fund (i.e., an investment vehicle for injecting money in an Opportunity Zone) and hold their capital gains in Opportunity Zone-related assets or property. The NETEDD Region contains 25 Opportunity Zones. By investing in Opportunity Zones, investors stand to gain a temporary deferral on their capital gain taxes if they hold their investment for at least 5 years, and a permanent exclusion from a tax on capital gains from the Opportunity Zones investments if the investments are held for 10 years. For more information on the basics of Opportunity Zones and Opportunity Funds visit <https://opportunityzones.hud.gov> or see <https://www.cdfifund.gov/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx>.

Opportunity Zone Community Playbook

To maximize the possibilities of the Opportunity Zones within the Region, the communities will need a strong economic development plan in place with a clear vision for the future that identifies important assets and challenges as well as engaged key stakeholders. “EDA believes that encouraging the desired private sector investment requires an understanding of the Opportunity Zones and the communities in which they reside from a regional perspective”. Many of the recommendations on how communities should make the most of their Opportunity Zones (see the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Opportunity Zones Community Playbook at <http://lisc.org/opportunity-zones/community-partners-playbook/>) highlight the importance of planning and stakeholder engagement – convening key players, gathering economic and demographic data on the area, identifying economic assets and challenges, etc. – all of which are important existing elements of the CEDS planning process.



Map created by staff using StatsAmerica.org to identify Opportunity Zones within NETEDD.

Opportunity Zones by Census Tract

Bowie County

- Texarkana
 - 480370104.00
 - 480370105.00
 - 480370108.00
- Hooks
 - 480370113.00
- Redwater
 - 480370114.01
- Maud
 - 480370114.02
- New Boston
 - 480370115.02

Cass County

- Douglassville
 - 480679502.00
- Atlanta
 - 480679504.00
- Linden
 - 480679506.00
- Hughes Springs
 - 480679507.00

Delta County

- Cooper City
 - 481199502.00

Franklin County

- Winnsboro
 - 481599503.00

Hopkins County

- Sulphur Springs
 - 482239506.00
- Como
 - 482239507.00
- Yantis
 - 482239508.00

Lamar County

- Blossom
 - 482770003.00

Lamar County

- Paris
 - 482770005.00
 - 482770006.00
 - 482770007.00
 - 482770008.00

Morris County

- Naples
 - 483439501.00
- Lone Star
 - 483439502.00
- Dangerfield
 - 483439503.00

Titus County

- Mount Pleasant
 - 484499503.00

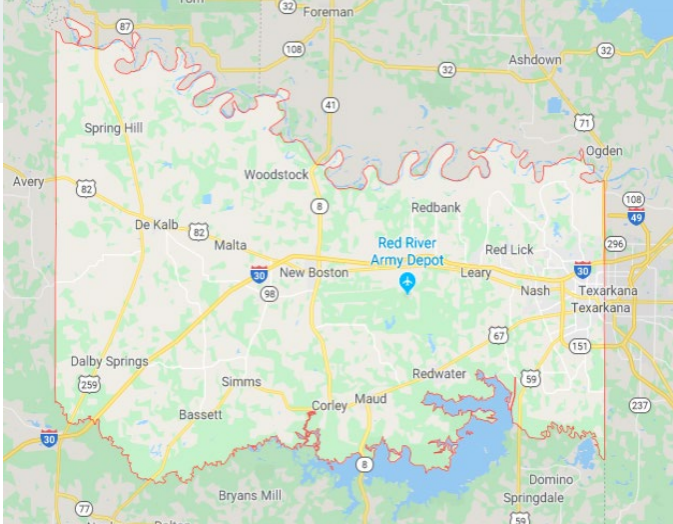
Bowie County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Bobby Howell

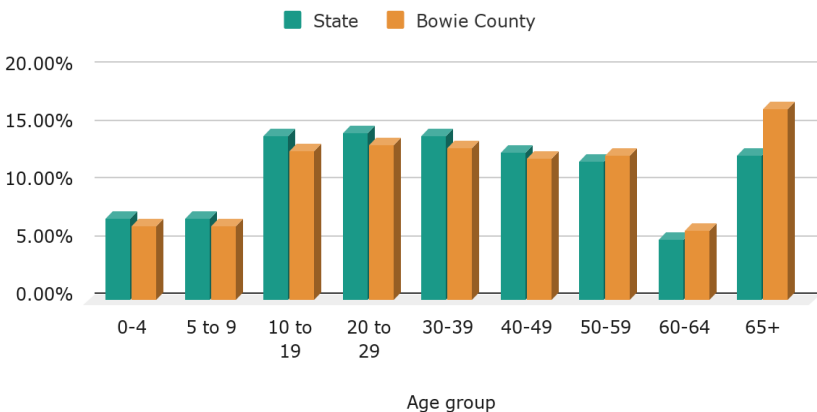
- Median Age: 38
- Median Household Income: \$45,554
- Per Capita Income: \$25,355
- Poverty Rate: 17.9%
- Unemployment Rate: 4.75%

Bowie County is the most populous within NETEDD's domain. Bowie County acts as a corridor to and from Texas with Interstates 30, 69, & 49 and U.S. Highways 59, 67 & 82. Bowie County is fortunate that TexAmericas Center (TAC) is centrally located in the county. TAC owns one of the largest mixed-use industrial parks in the United States which services the four-states market. Bowie County has 7 Opportunity Zones; three of which are located within Texarkana's city limits, one includes the TexAmericas Center.



Bowie County Population

Total County Population: 94,000



For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Bowie County](#)
- [Texarkana EDC](#)
- [TexAmericas](#)
- [AR-TX REDI](#)
- [Texarkana Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [New Boston Chamber](#)
- [DeKalb Industrial Foundation](#)
- [Nash Industrial](#)

Cass County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Becky Wilbanks

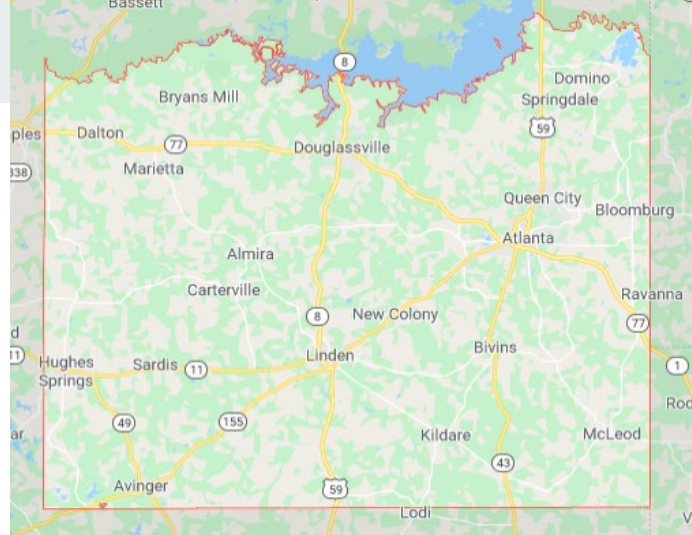
Median Age: 44

Median Household Income: \$42,167

Per Capita Income: \$22,545

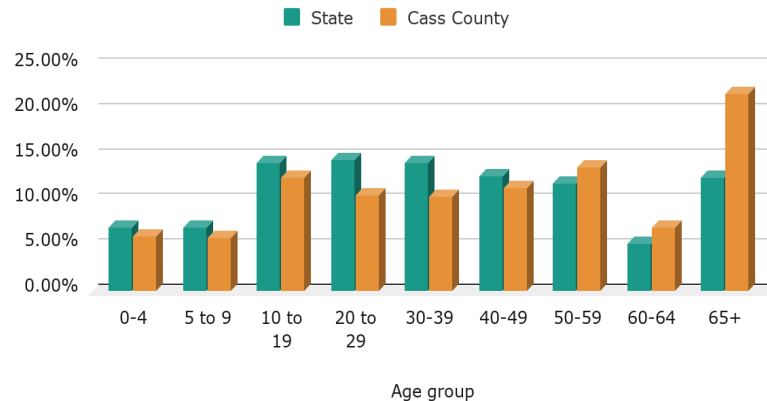
Poverty Rate: 18.5%

Unemployment Rate: 5.71%



Cass County Population

Total County Population: 29,946



For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Cass County](#)
- [Atlanta EDC](#)
- [Linden EDC](#)
- [Queen City EDC](#)
- [Atlanta Area Chamber](#)

Cass County shares a number of attributes as Bowie County, though on a smaller scale. Cass County is rich in economic resources including transportation needs served by Hwy 59 which is in the process of becoming part of the Interstate 69 system, by State highways 8, 11, 77, and 155, and by two rail lines, the Missouri Pacific and the Louisiana and Arkansas; 937 square miles of the East Texas timberlands, heavily forested with a great variety of softwoods and hardwoods; 20 to 30% of the land considered prime farmland; rich mineral resources including ceramic clay, granite, industrial sand, oil, gas, iron, and lignite coal. Cass County has 4 Opportunity Zones in or around Atlanta, Douglasville, Hughes Springs and Linden.

Delta County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Jason Murray

Median Age: 40

Median Household Income: \$42,759

Per Capita Income: \$25,004

Poverty Rate: 22.9%

Unemployment Rate: 3.44%

Delta County has the smallest population in the NETEDD. Delta County's economy significantly relies on agriculture, in-transit consumerism, and tourism despite the aged population. Delta County has the tourism/economic benefit of Lake Cooper. Thousands of acres of parks and wildlife management areas surround the lake. The park sits where the Tallgrass Prairies and Post Oak Savannah ecosystems meet inviting tourists to the area annually. There is 1 Opportunity Zone in Delta County.

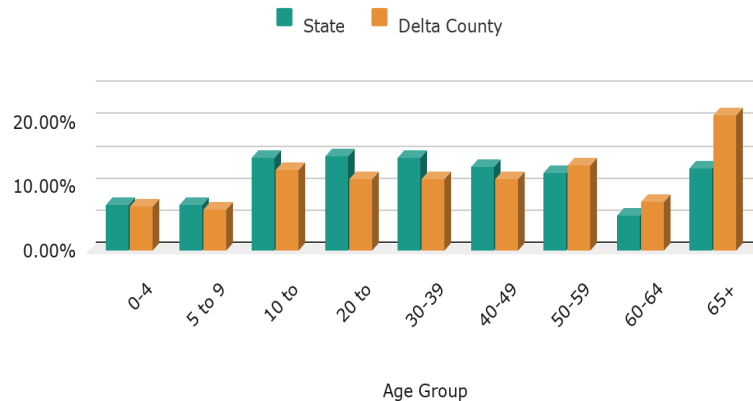


For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Delta County](#)
- [City of Cooper](#)

Delta County Population

Total County Population: 5,305



Franklin County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Scott Lee

Median Age: 43

Median Household Income: \$45,086

Per Capita Income: \$25,602

Poverty Rate: 15.0%

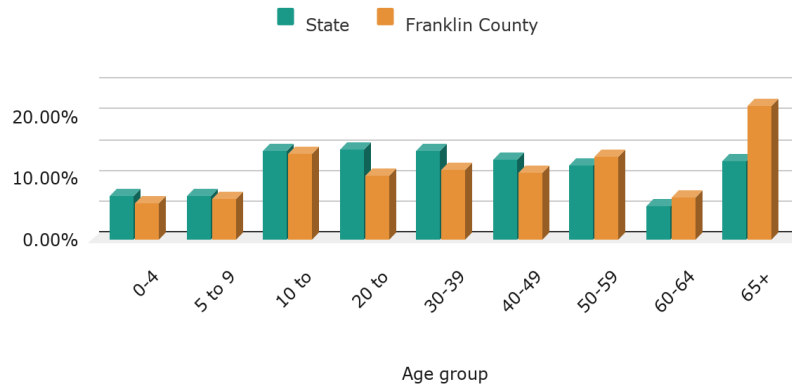
Unemployment Rate: 4.49%

Franklin County has a welcoming attitude of a "perfect blend of country living and developing business atmosphere". While Franklin County is the 8th smallest county in the State of Texas, it has been among the top counties in dairy and broiler production. Franklin County is known for Lake Cypress Springs (lakecypresssprings.org), a reservoir lake used for recreation, municipal, and industrial purposes. Lake Cypress has 20 subdivisions surrounding the lake and is home to 6 parks. Franklin County has 1 Opportunity Zone.



Franklin County Population

Total County Population: 10,789



For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Franklin County](#)
- [Mt. Vernon EDC](#)
- [Franklin County Chamber](#)
- [Franklin Texas Agrilife Extension](#)

Hopkins County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Robert Newsom

Median Age: 40

Median Household Income: \$48,691

Per Capita Income: \$26,267

Poverty Rate: 17.9%

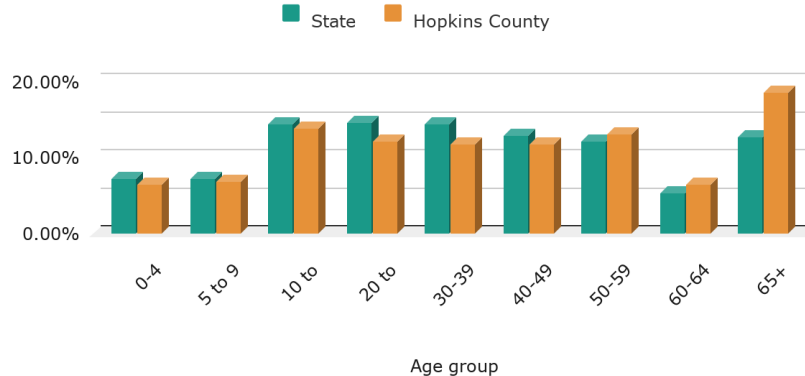
Unemployment Rate: 3.55%

Hopkins County has a steady growing population in the southwest corner of NETEDD. As the population grows, the employment rate continues to increase. Agricultural, industrial, and consumer manufacturers serve as the primary economic stimulus for the county. The City of Sulphur Springs is in a prime location for business growth with I-30, and Hwy's 11, 19, & 154 as they travel from North, South, East and West. There are 3 Opportunity Zones in Hopkins County, including Sulphur Springs, Como and Yantis.



Hopkins County Population

Total County Population: 36,677



For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Hopkins County](#)
- [Sulphur Springs EDC](#)
- [Hopkins County Chamber of Commerce](#)

Lamar County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Brandon Young Bell

Median Age: 40

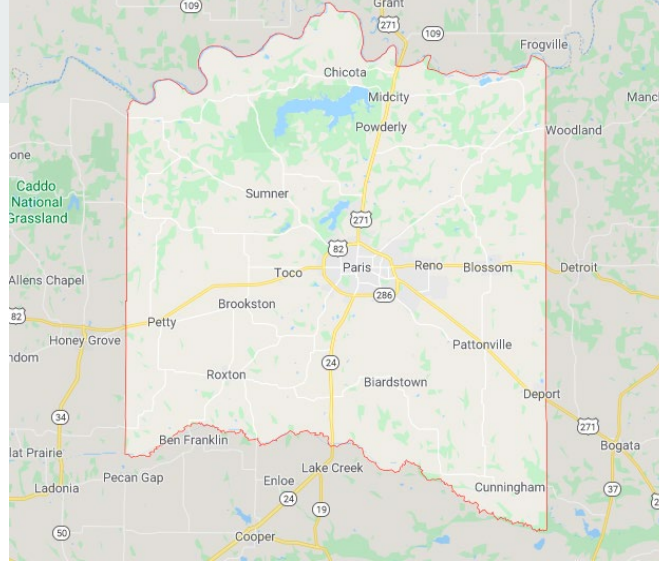
Median Household Income: \$43,335

Per Capita Income: \$23,833

Poverty Rate: 17.8%

Unemployment Rate: 4.08%

Lamar County's population is the second largest in the NETEDD. The rural nature of the county land is primarily dependent on agriculture; 49% of which is devoted to crops, 36% to pasture, and 12% to woodlands. Beef, dairy, hay, soybeans, wheat, corn, and sorghum are the chief agricultural products. Lamar is fortunate to be part of North East Texas Trails with Trail de Paris (<http://traildeparis.org/>) where Parks, Gardens, Trails, and Campsites are enjoyed by many. Lamar County has 5 Opportunity Zones with the City of Paris containing four of the Opportunity Zones.

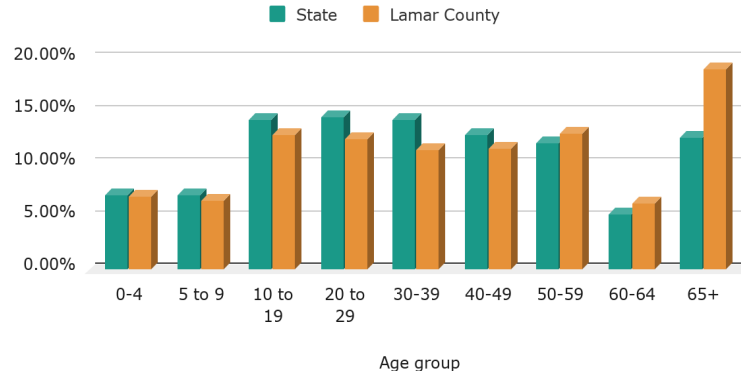


For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Lamar County](#)
- [Paris EDC](#)
- [Paris Chamber](#)
- [Paris SBDC](#)

Lamar County Population

Total County Population: 49,549



Red River County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. L.D. Williamson



Median Age: 47

Median Household Income: \$37,513

Per Capita Income: \$21,656

Poverty Rate: 16.5%

Unemployment Rate: 5.41%



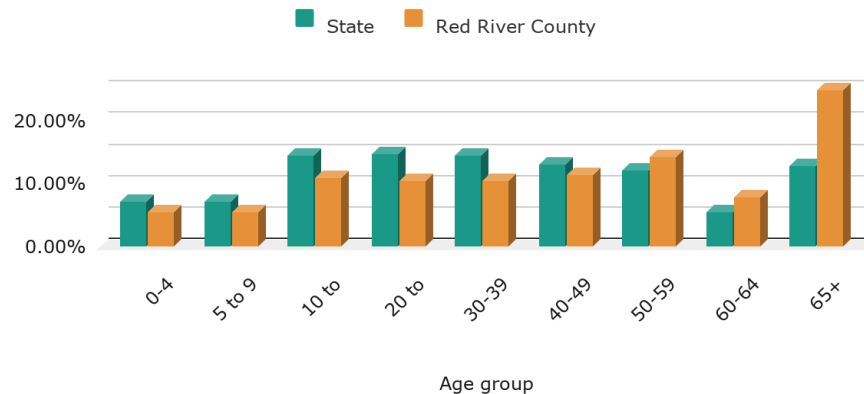
For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Red River County](#)
- [Clarksville EDC](#)

Red River County has experienced minimal decline through the last decade. The entire northern border is the Red River and the southern border is the Sulphur River. Mineral resources in the county include oil, gas, clay, industrial sand, and chalk. No Opportunity Zones are identified in Red River County.

Red River County Population

Total County Population: 12,138



Titus County

Board of Directors

Judge: Hon. Brian Lee



Median Age: 30

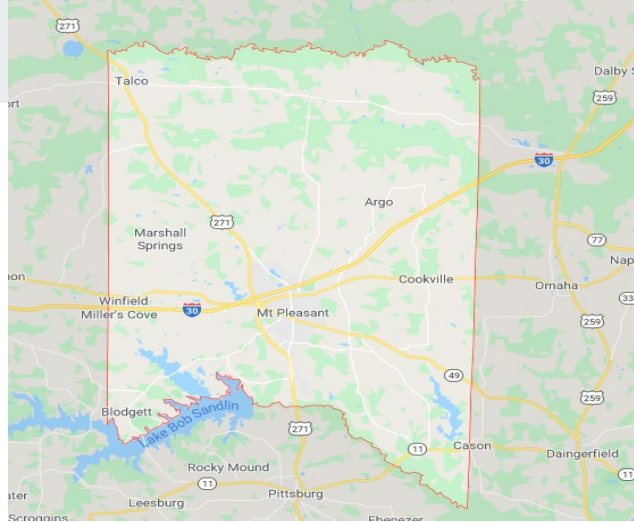
Median Household Income: \$48,024

Per Capita Income: \$20,533

Poverty Rate: 19.3%

Unemployment Rate: 5.34%

Titus County has experienced a steady increase of population and employment since 2013. Their Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Council strives to “*inspire business leadership, promote regional tourism, and enhance quality of life in Mount Pleasant and Titus County*”. It should be noted that Titus county has the youngest median age in the NETEDD domain. By working with the Mount Pleasant Young Professionals and engaging an emerging group of young leaders who are committed to personal growth, career advancement, civic engagement, and service, the Chamber is enhancing the economic growth of Titus County. There is 1 Opportunity Zone in Titus County.

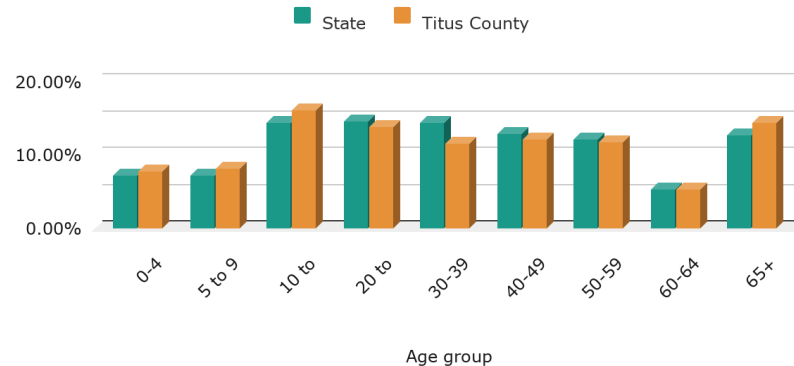


For other resources available in the county click the links below

- [Titus County](#)
- [Mount Pleasant EDC](#)
- [USDA Area Office Mount Pleasant Texas](#)

Titus County Population

Total County Population: 32,971



Economic Resiliency

A. Economic Changes

Economic ups and downs continue in the Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD). The decline in the dairy industry continues to plague the rural portions of Hopkins and Franklin Counties. Sulphur Springs and Paris have seen industries come and go. Morris County is rebounding with the renewal of U.S. Steel (formerly Lone Star Steel). Texarkana and Bowie County benefited during the past several years from the expansion of Cooper Tire in Texarkana, Arkansas and from several businesses moving into TexAmericas Center (an Opportunity Zone) located in New Boston. The NETEDD region as a whole continues to work together to maximize resources, share information, and share positive economic information.

Because of the location of this region between Dallas and the Port of Shreveport, its central location between the east and west coasts of the U.S., and the fact that it lies within the north-south transportation corridor connecting Mexico and eastern half of the U.S., our region has drawn attention from numerous industries in regards to sites for distribution centers. A trade zone at TexAmericas Center west of Texarkana will be an attraction for the region. The plans for proposed Interstate 69 and completion of Interstate 49, the upgrade to U.S. 59, and the availability of U.S. 271, U.S. 259, U.S. 82 and several state highways should increase the attractiveness of this region for distribution centers and other industries dependent upon access to major highways. Continued expansion of area airports will be an important part of this growth as will development of large industrial parks near major transportation corridors.

Developing new and expanding industrial opportunities will produce the benefits of creating new jobs, and increased tax base and business opportunities, and new and expanding industrial development. **These new developments, however, propose some significant challenges to the NETEDD region:**

1. Providing regional development coordination and technical assistance
2. The need for new infrastructure
3. The need for business financing capital
4. Workforce Development and technical training
5. Available housing and improved infrastructure

Economic Resiliency

A. Economic Changes Cont.

The availability of municipal utilities, business capital, and a trained labor force are vital for this region to sustain its current and future economic growth. These challenges are constantly on the forefront of the governing bodies of the counties/ the cities/ and the EDC's of the NETEDD region. The demand for federal assistance programs, such as those administered through EDA, is increasing and outpacing available federal funding. Local communities continue to search for additional resources and ways to leverage existing resources such as public-private partnerships and creative financing vehicles, to ensure that challenges and costs for tomorrow's economic growth is met.

Over the next five (5) years, NETEDD, in conjunction with ATCOG, will continue to expand its involvement in creating solutions to the following challenges:

- Development of skilled and technological workforce by-way of enhanced cooperation and support between North East Texas workforce Commission, new/existing employers and regional educational institutions
- Creation of meaningful jobs in an economically depressed region by attracting new businesses to the region that offers higher skilled and higher wage jobs
- Continuation of business incentives and competitively priced financing for existing and new small businesses in the region by offering SBA loans, SBDC training, Microloans, RLF loans, SCORE assistant, Workforce Commission cooperation and other services that promote small business retention and growth
- Solicitation of increased public sector subsidies for economic assistance to develop infrastructure, industrial parks and other public works projects
- Preservation and protection of the environment while encouraging economic development by management of water resources, remediation of Brownfields sites and control over existing and proposed waste disposal facilities
- Maximizing the Opportunity Zones within the NETEDD region to apply for available federal funds

Economic Resiliency

B. Hazards & Mitigation

Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD) partners recognizes the importance of planning for hazards in their cities and/or counties. To remain in compliance with 44 CFR Part 201, all of the NETEDD region participates in the Texas Standard Mitigation Plan (at a minimum). The State of Texas Hazard Mitigation Plan is updated every 5 years. Goals of the State Plan are to reduce or eliminate hazardous conditions that (1) cause loss of life, (2) inflict injuries, (3) cause property damage, or (4) degrade important natural resources. Objectives are to (a) implement activities that assist in protecting lives by making homes, businesses, infrastructure, critical facilities, and other property more resistant to natural hazards; and (b) improve hazard assessment information to make recommendations for discouraging new development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards. (2) Public Awareness Objectives are (a) develop and implement education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the risks associated with natural hazards; and (b) provide information on tools, and funding resources to assist in implementing mitigation activities. (3) Natural Systems Objective is to preserve, rehabilitate, and enhance natural systems to serve natural hazard mitigation functions. (4) Partnerships and Implementation Objective is to encourage leadership within public and private sector organizations to prioritize and implement local, county, and regional hazard mitigation activities. (5) Emergency Service Objectives are to (a) establish policy to ensure mitigation projects for critical facilities, services and infrastructure; (b) strengthen emergency operations by increasing collaboration and coordination among public agencies, non-profit organizations and business; and (c) integrate natural hazard mitigation activities with emergency operation plans and procedures.

Economic Resiliency

Hazard Mitigation Plans

Each of the counties have individual Hazard Mitigation Plans. In order to be in compliance with 44 CFR, local mitigation plans have to be updated every 5 years. Updated plans allow the counties the ability to participate in program funding when needed, which is outside of the funding that is allowed with the State of Texas Hazard Mitigation Plan. One of the greatest challenges facing the counties every five years is the ability to apply and receive grant funding to assist with the extensive updating requirements of a plan update. Some of the NETEDD region plans have expired due to funding constraints.

Click on the county(ies) below for their specific Hazard Mitigation Plan:

[BOWIE COUNTY TEXAS](#)

[CASS COUNTY TEXAS](#)

[DELTA COUNTY](#)

[FRANKLIN COUNTY TEXAS](#)

[HOPKINS COUNTY TEXAS](#)

[MORRIS COUNTY TEXAS](#)

[RED RIVER COUNTY TEXAS](#)

[TITUS COUNTY](#)

SWOT Analysis

Responding to the economic changes and needs outlined in the previous sections requires an organizational framework that categorizes those trends and leads to development responses. The CEDS utilizes a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to identify areas within the region that could have an economic impact on NETEDD. Visions and Plans are derived from the SWOT analysis and goals and objectives are determined for a period of time. Analysing something as simple as a chart can bring to light that “**Education**” for instance can play a role in Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat in a Region yet be such a vital part of economic development.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible higher education • Available workforce • Good water resources • Land Development opportunities • Growth Potential in Agribusiness, Logistics and Ecotourism • Affordable Housing • Transportation Corridors • Good natural resources • Adequate hospitals and other medical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate and aging infrastructure (broadband, roads & water) • Skilled and Technological Workforce • Funding for technological education • Creation of Meaningful Jobs • Providing Regional Economic Coordination • Providing Regional Technical Assistance • Per capita income is lower than state and nation
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-369 development • Multiple education avenues • Workforce Available for Training • Business Incentives and Public Sector Subsidies • Farming and Agriculture Food Co-op Opportunities • Interstate commerce from roads and rail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding required for infrastructure updates • Inability to compete w/ higher paying areas (in state) • Outmigration of educated students to higher paying quality jobs • Economy and Business Closures • Uncontrolled population changes - Census

Visions & Plans

THEME 1: INCREASE INVOLVEMENT WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESSES TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION.

The Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) is a voluntary association of local governments established under State law for the purpose of promoting intergovernmental cooperation and strengthening local units of government within Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River, and Titus Counties, Texas and Miller County Arkansas. The ATCOG, through its Regional and Economic development departments, provides services within our region to promote the expansion of existing underutilized properties and newly planned developments which benefits the citizens within the region. While working in conjunction and partnering with the Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD) to encourage economic growth, the region has experienced progressive job creation and ongoing economic development.

THEME 2: MAKE AFFORDABLE FINANCING TO BUSINESSES IN REGION FOR EXPANSION

Developing new and expanding industrial opportunities will produce the benefits of creating new jobs, an increased tax base and business opportunities, and new and expanding industrial development. Development poses significant challenges for our region such as (1) providing regional economic coordination and technical assistance (2) the need for new infrastructure (2) the need for business financing capital, and (4) workforce development and technical training. The availability of business capital and a trained labor force are vital for this region to sustain its current and future economic growth. These challenges **must be met** for Northeast Texas to remain attractive to existing and new industry and to remain competitive with other regions, both nationally and internationally.

Visions & Plans

THEME 3: ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

Texarkana, Texas (Bowie County) and Paris, Texas (Lamar County) the two MSA's in the region, are both experiencing steady and robust economic development. Texarkana, the largest MSA in the NETEDD Region, has undergone major infrastructure activity as a result of the expansion of Interstate activity by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and consequently will continue to be a major and more efficient thoroughfare for traffic from Little Rock and Dallas. However, many of the rural communities and rural portions of the Region, are increasingly experiencing the detrimental impact of high unemployment, out migration, reducing per capita income and increasing poverty rates. The staff of NETEDD continues to be diligent in its efforts to promote the retention, creation and increase in employment levels in the Region it serves, as well as meeting the goals and objectives in its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Job retention and creation is the primary focus of NETEDD, and this objective is being supported through EDA Economic Development and Public Works grants, EDA RLF Loans, TxCDBG grants, and other RLF loans and grants.

THEME 4: EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

The NETEDD Region has a less well –educated workforce than state averages. While somewhat equal numbers hold a high school diploma, the percentage with Associate's and Bachelor's degrees or higher educational levels is significantly less than state averages. In Titus counties, more than 25% of adults over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma. To the extent that education relates to skills, these low education levels results in low wages and high poverty rates for the region. Consequently, average annual wages continue to be significantly lower in the NETEDD Region than all state comparison areas. The local High Schools and Community Colleges work together with students to help prepare them for the workforce. Quality education and quality training are vital to meet the needs of todays fast moving industries.

Visions & Plans

THEME 5: DISASTER RECOVERY and ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Establishing economic resilience in a local or regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity. As one of the most distressed parts of the State, the NETEDD Region will continue to be plagued with many economic challenges in the coming years. However, resolutions of these challenges are attainable with the support from the following partners and advocates:

- U.S Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Small Business Administration
- Housing and Urban Development
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Homeland Security
- Ark-Tex Council of Governments
- Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas
- Texas Department of Economic Development
- Texas Office of Rural and Community Affairs
- Texas Department of Agriculture
 - County Officials
 - City Officials
 - Economic Development Corporations
 - Housing Authorities & Affordable Housing Developers
 - Educational Institutions
 - Private Foundation

Action Plan

The Northeast Texas Economic Development District is fortunate to have stakeholders who are committed to their communities and desire to contribute to the implementation of this CEDS. The NETEDD Board of Directors is comprised of a group of stakeholders from throughout the region's local governments to ensure that the diverse perspectives and interests in the region are reflected, as well as to give the NETEDD efficacy in implementing the CEDS.

The Action Plan will be utilized as a tool for the Northeast Texas Economic Development District. The CEDS will guide the District with tools provided by the Strategic Direction and Action Plan as identified by the NETEDD Board of Directors. Below, the Board identifies the actions necessary to reach the Strategic Direction. As such, at the end of the calendar year, the District's performance will be evaluated by the Board of Directors. The methodology in place will determine the effectiveness of the performance measure (PM) and whether the set targets were achieved.

- I. Development of a skilled and technical workforce by-way of enhanced cooperation and support between the North East Texas Workforce Commission, new/existing employers and regional educational institutions.
- II. Creation of higher paying and meaningful jobs in an economically depressed region by attracting new businesses to the region that offers higher skilled and higher wage jobs.
- III. Continuation of business incentives and competitively priced financing for existing and new small businesses in the region by offering SBA loans, SBDC training, RLF loans, SCORE assistant, Workforce Commission cooperation and other services that promote small business retention and growth.
- IV. Solicitation of increased public sector subsidies for economic assistance to develop infrastructure, industrial parks and other public works projects.
- V. Preservation and protection of the environment while encouraging economic development by management of water resources, remediation of Brownfields sites and control over existing and proposed waste disposal facilities to improve infrastructure.
- VI. The NETEDD will meet in conjunction with coordinate with other divisions of ATCOG to discuss the Hazard Mitigation Plan and find ways to provide community assistance and become familiar with how the Mitigation Plan will work.
- VII. Participate in the establishment of coordinated leadership plan for disaster recovery to include a plan for short, intermediate, or long-term recovery needs.

Goals	Measurable Outcomes	Objectives
THEME 1: PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Increased involvement with local governments and businesses to promote economic development of the region.	Number of jobs created in a measurable period and/or number of projects resulting in job retention; number of technical assistance visits made on job creation/retention projects; decreased unemployment in the region.	Assist local governments in planning to support economic development and leadership development that results in lower unemployment and poverty rates in the local community and the region.
Provide assistance to governmental entities in region to promote economic development.	Number of EDA proposals submitted during fiscal year; number of technical assistance visits to communities during fiscal year; completed CEDS for region.	Provide planning and technical assistance to communities in the region that result in new businesses or expansion & job creation.
Maximize growth in Opportunity Zones	Number of Proposals, grants, loans, and businesses in Opportunity Zones	To increase economic growth in low income areas

Goals	Measurable Outcomes	Objectives
THEME 2: MAKE AVAILABLE AFFORDABLE FINANCING		
Make available affordable financing to businesses in region for expansion.	Number of loans outstanding in NETEDD RLF, SBA 504, ETRAP RLF, Chapman & RLF portfolios.	Source of economic development finance programs for small businesses and local Economic Development Corporations.
Maximize loans for businesses in Opportunity Zones	Number of loans for businesses in Opportunity Zones	To increase economic growth in low income areas
Educate Communities on the availability of 504 and RLF's available through the CDC and the benefit of low interest financing	Number of education units provided	Increase the opportunities for communities to participate in low interest financing

Goals	Measurable Outcomes	Objectives
THEME 3: ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE		
Adequate infrastructure for residential, commercial, and industrial growth.	Number of Jobs indicates an increase in accessibility & capacity of basic utilities, growth in industrial parks and other public work needs.	Decrease in the number of residents living at or below the national poverty rate in substandard housing; increase per capita income through additional job creation/retention.
THEME 4: EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE		
Development of higher educated, skilled and Technological workforce ready to fill the employment needs of new and existing businesses.	Number of semi and skilled workers with increase in per capita income and decrease in unemployment.	Raise standard of living for residents of the region by emphasizing higher education & technical skills as route to higher wages.
THEME 5: DISASTER RECOVERY and ECONOMIC RESILIENCY		
Provide assistance to government entities in the region to build plans to enhance their response capacity.	Number of Hazard Mitigation plans submitted during the fiscal year.	Increase number of approved Hazard Mitigation plans