



Tilden and McMullen County A Vision for the Future

Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research - College of Architecture, Construction and Planning

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Preface

Counties in Texas are the product of Hispanic and Anglo-American self-government practices, including the Mexican municipio (municipality) and the New England town system, the town system of Southern states, and the Midwestern town-county system. The courthouses and courthouse squares are important features of Texas counties. They historically have been a symbol of social, political, and economic activity. Although in recent times much of the economic activity has located away from the courthouse square in McMullen County, it still serves as the political/governmental center of the county.

The McMullen County Square never fully developed the blocks around the square, but still plays a central role in the community. This study examines the potential to reinforce the Courthouse Square and the town of Tilden with physical improvements that will benefit McMullen County residents. The county has been significantly impacted by oil and gas exploration in the Eagle Ford Shale Play. There have been both positive and negative impacts on the county as a result of this new economic activity. Income to the county and its residents has increased significantly in tax revenue and royalties. Sales tax revenue increased dramatically after 2010 when activity in the Eagle Ford Shale began to gain momentum. The recent downturn in the oil industry will have an impact on this income stream to the county. The citizens of McMullen County are supportive of oil and gas exploration, but are concerned by some of the side effects such as increased traffic, deterioration of local roads, and the lack of affordable housing.

A meeting was held with stakeholders in the community on October 21, 2014 to define strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to Tilden and McMullen County. Over 70 residents were present and represented all sectors of the county. The audience was divided into three discussion groups, led by facilitators from the Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research at UTSA. The results of the meeting are in Appendix A of this study. The feedback received from local stakeholders at that meeting also guided most of the discussion in the study.

This study examines the potential of a number of initiatives to create a future direction for long-term development in Tilden and McMullen County: the development of a new recreational area along the Frio River; the development of a light industrial park; an incubator for community services; and improvements to the streetscape of Tilden. An implementation strategy is discussed at the end of this study.

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February 2015

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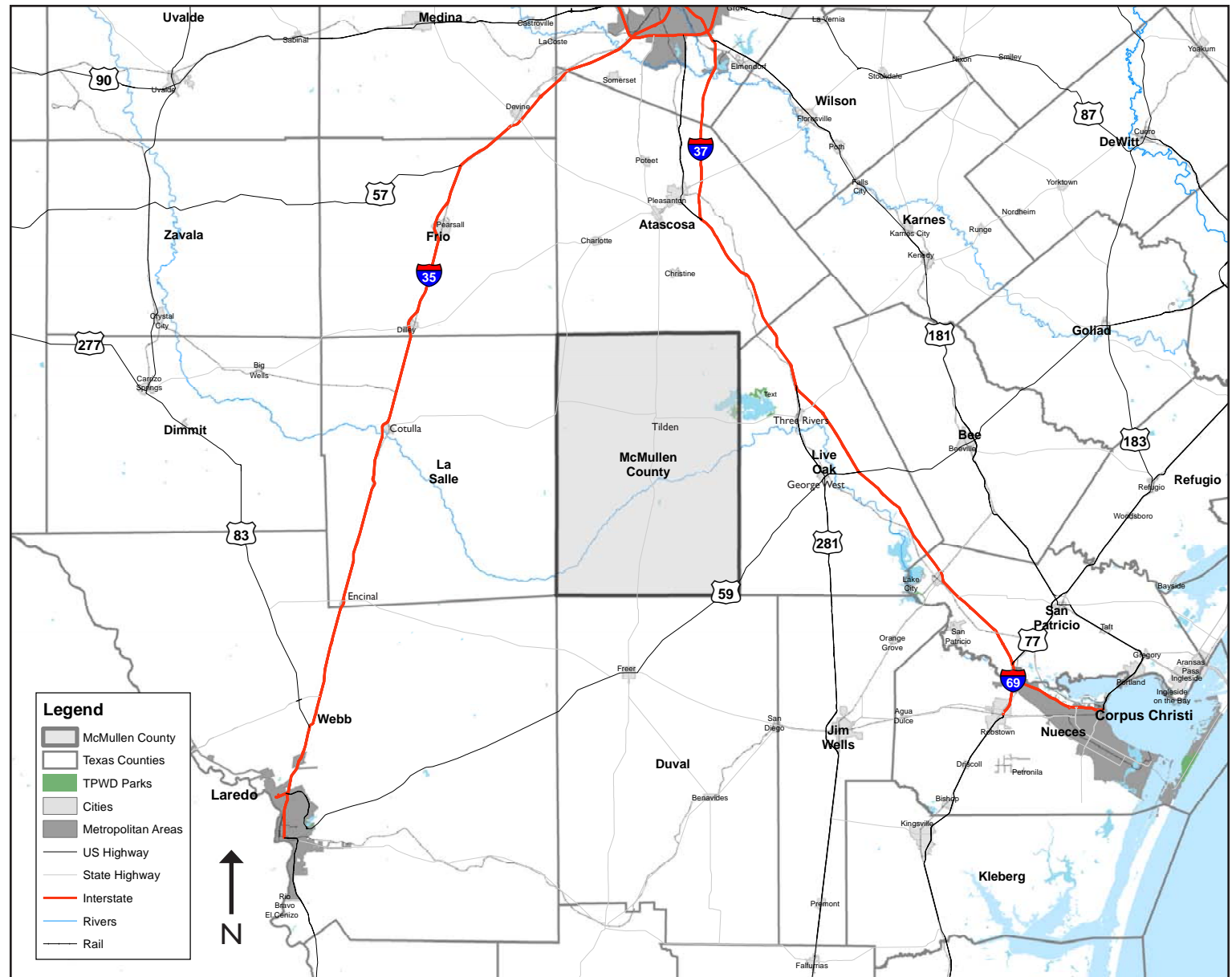
Introduction

Regional Context

McMullen County is located in South Texas, roughly equidistant between San Antonio (to the north), Laredo (to the southwest), and Corpus Christi (to the southeast). From the geographic center of the county, it is approximately 75 miles to the downtown of each of those cities (Fig. 1).

The area of the county is about 1,160 square miles, and the elevation varies from 150 to 450 feet above sea level. The terrain is flat or rolling, and the native vegetation is typical of South Texas Brush Country with mesquite brush, chaparral, prickly pear cacti, various grasses, and stands of mesquite and live oak trees where water is sufficient.

Two rivers cross McMullen County: the Nueces and the Frio. The Nueces River flows roughly southwest to northeast through the county, and the Frio River flows roughly west to east through the county. The Frio River is dammed in Live Oak County to the east, resulting in the Choke Canyon Reservoir (which straddles the county line). In addition, San Miguel Creek flows across the county from northwest to southeast, ending at Choke Canyon Reservoir.



Source: Center for Urban and Regional Planning (CURPR)

Figure 1: McMullen County Location

History

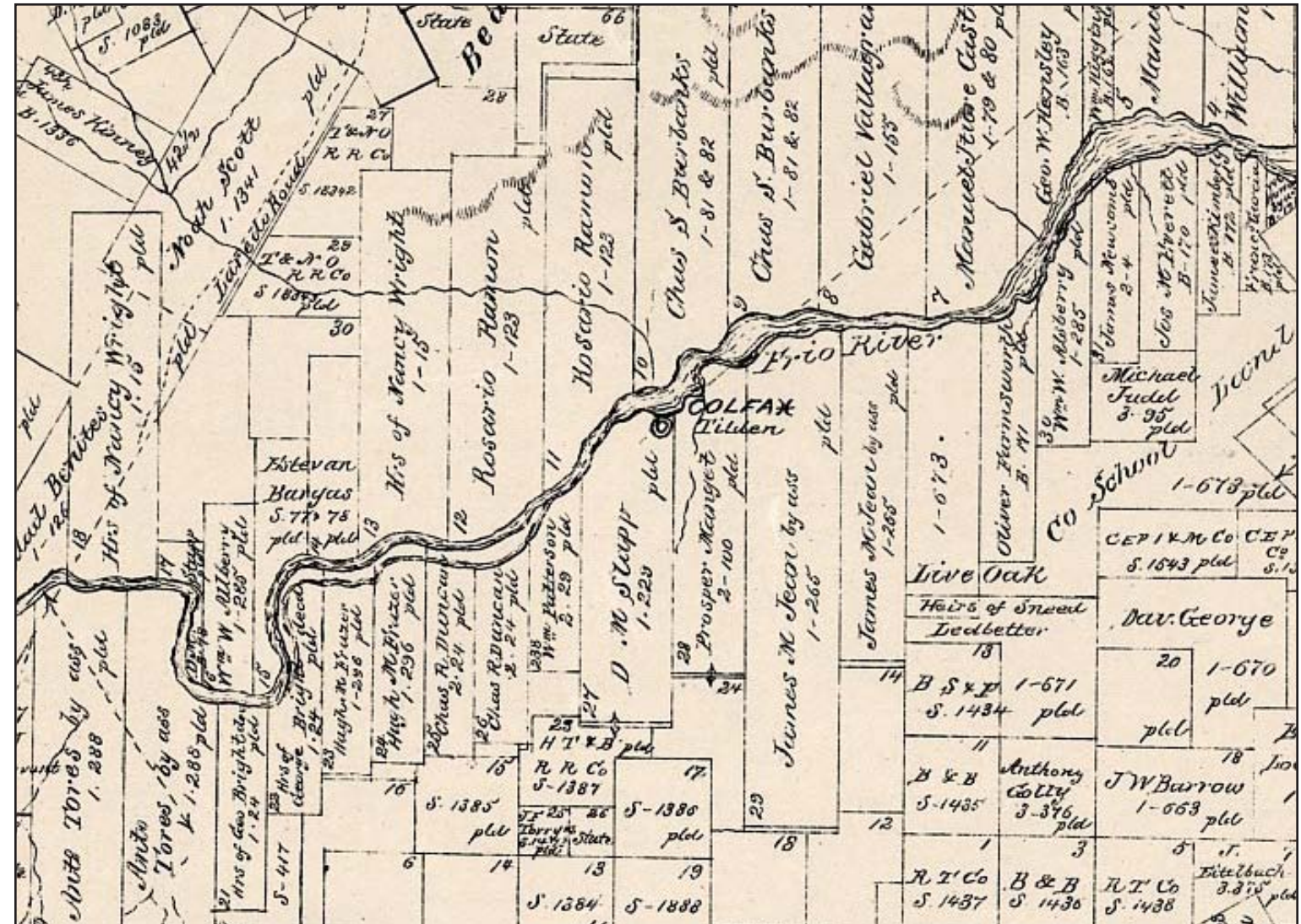
Prior to Texas independence and annexation by the United States, Coahuiltecan Indians and later Lipan Apache Indians lived in the area. Despite being part of the Republic of Texas and then the State of Texas within the U.S., the area was not extensively settled until shortly before the Civil War. In 1858, a few dozen settlers established a permanent settlement along the Frio River. The settlement was first named Rio Frio, and then Dog Town. In 1871, during Reconstruction, the town was named Colfax, after Schuyler Colfax, Jr., a Radical (pro-Reconstruction) Republican who served as Vice President during Ulysses S. Grant's first Presidential term from 1869 to 1873.

In 1877, McMullen County was formed. It was named after Irish empresario John McMullen, who had founded the colony of San Patricio (St. Patrick) on the Nueces River, not far from Corpus Christi, and to whom (along with fellow Irish empresario James McGloin) the Mexican government had offered land grants in 1828. Colfax was made the county seat and renamed Tilden (Fig. 2), after Samuel J. Tilden, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1876.

The population of McMullen County grew after the Civil War, but rather slowly. The county was not located along either of the major trade routes in the area, the San Patricio Road (between San Antonio and Corpus Christi) and the San Antonio-Laredo Road, contributing to its isolation. The settlers had built a road running west from Tilden to the San Antonio-Laredo Road, but this did not result in a new major trade route through Tilden.

The major trade routes which bypassed McMullen County provided the basis for the major rail routes built in the late 1800s: the International & Great Northern Railroad (San

Antonio-Laredo), and the San Antonio, Uvalde and Gulf Railroad (San Antonio-Corpus Christi). During the 1910s, the latter railroad ran a spur through northwestern McMullen



Source: Library of Congress

Figure 2: McMullen County - 1879 Land Plat

County in the early 1900s, and two towns were founded: Zella and Prince (see Fig. 3). However, they vanished when the rail line was closed in 1920.

Other towns based on land speculation—specifically oil exploration and irrigation for agriculture rather than location along a rail line—which came and went during this period were Crowther (14 miles northeast of Tilden), Wentz (ten miles southeast of Tilden), Norwell (in the northeast of the county), Loma Alta (in the southeast of the county),

The east-west road (east to Three Rivers, west to Cotulla or Gardendale) became Elm Street, and later State Highway 72. The main north-south road (north to Jourdanton, Poteet, and



Figure 3: San Antonio, Uvalde and Gulf Railroad Map

Source: Texas Transportation Museum

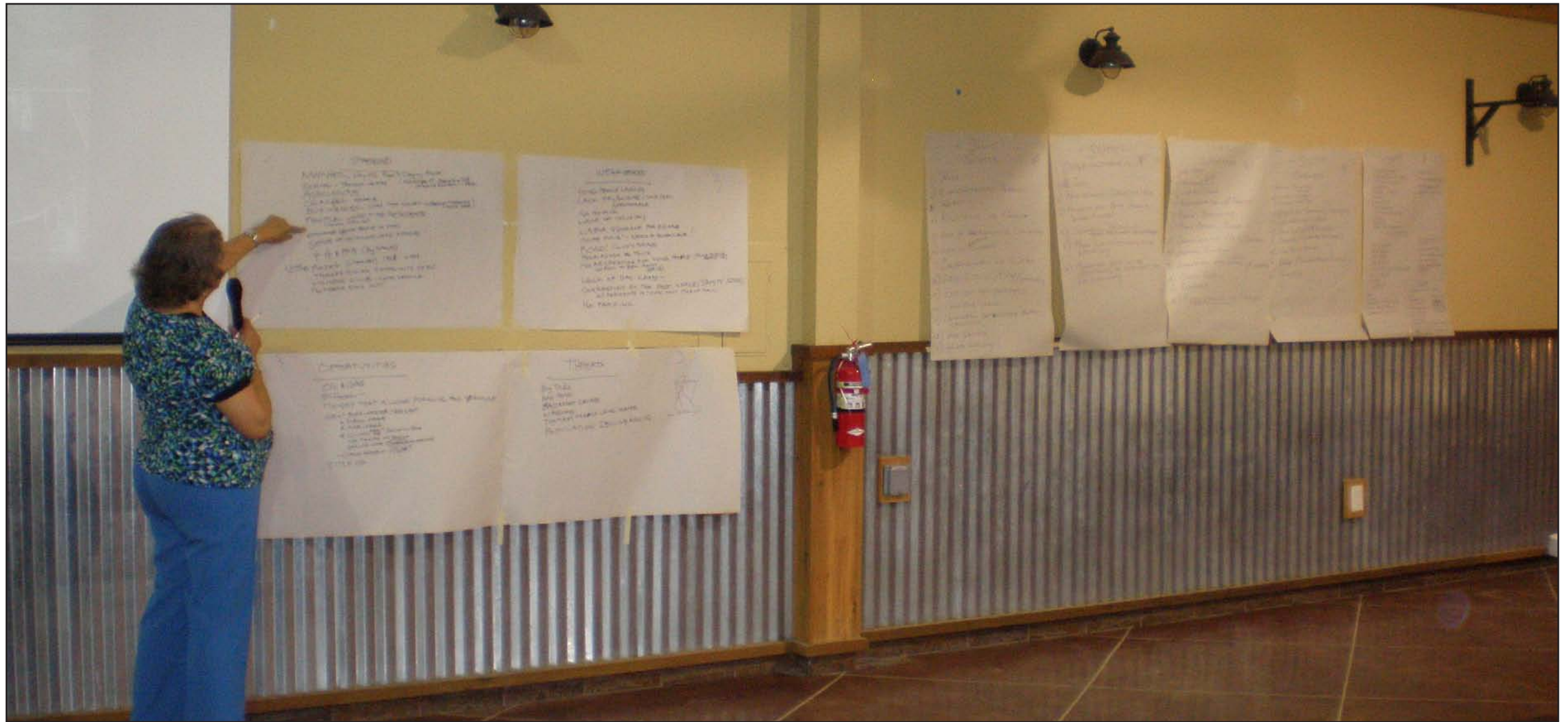
San Antonio; south to Freer, Hebbronville, and Zapata) became River Street, and later State Highway 16.

During the oil boom of the 1920s, however, the town of Calliham (renamed from Guffeyola in 1923) grew rapidly after both oil and natural gas were discovered on the ranch of J.T. Calliham, ten miles east of Tilden. The town had its heyday in the 1920s and 1930s but the town never surpassed a population of 400 (reached during the 1930s). In 1988 the town was evacuated in order to create the Choke Canyon Reservoir, and the existing population moved a few miles south, as did the route of State Highway 72. The location of the old town is now a boat launch facility for the reservoir.

During the second half of the 20th century, as the population of the county continued to decline, Tilden became more and more important as the only settlement in the county with a sizable population. While there were several different school districts in the county before World War Two, there is now only one school district in the county, with both schools located in Tilden. Since it was located at the junction of the only two state highways in the county (SH-16 and SH-72), Tilden became the only convenient location in the county for businesses depending upon automobile traffic for their revenue.

While the improvement in drilling technology made oil and natural gas extraction in the Eagle Ford Shale Play (including McMullen County) financially feasible, the transport of both drilling machinery and raw materials necessitated increased use of both the state highways and the county roads, and county residents have borne the cost of the declining state

of the roads without necessarily experiencing a permanent increase in residents or in the tax revenue base. This is a common phenomenon in areas with economies dominated by the extraction of natural resources. Even before the most recent oil boom, the county had experienced the ebb and flow of business activity characterized by the fluctuation of supply and demand for petroleum. Today, oil production and to a lesser extent agriculture and ranching are still the county's main industries.



Background Assessment

Summary of Tilden/McMullen County SWOT Session

On October 21, 2014, Dr. Richard Tangum, Dr. Rebecca Walter and Ernest Gerlach from the Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) discussion with over seventy residents of McMullen County. The residents were divided into three subgroups to facilitate a discussion and each subgroup reported to the overall group upon completion of their individual discussions (Figs. 4-7). Below is a summary of their observations.

Strengths

The Tilden/McMullen County residents highlighted several current strengths of their community. These included: (1) many long-time residents with strong roots in the area, a shared history, and an active local leadership; (2) a strong school system; (3) a strong sense of tradition, with conservative, spiritual and moral values, and strong churches; (4) a culture of co-operation, generosity, and a high level of community involvement; (4) the economic potential due to the presence of substantial reserves of oil and gas and a history of local entrepreneurship; (5) a traditional rural economy in which agricultural pursuits such as ranching and hunting still provide livelihoods for some residents and in which many of the youth are involved in 4H and FFA (Future Farmers of America) activities; (6) a resilient quality and “can-do” attitude when faced with challenges; and, (7) a historically safe community with a low crime rate.



Source: CURPR **Figure 4: SWOT Session McMullen County**

Weaknesses

The residents also enumerated several current weaknesses of Tilden/McMullen County. These included: (1) a dire lack of housing; (2) a lack of adequate utility services such as water,

sewer, trash collection and recycling, and cell phone/internet services; (3) the poor condition of roads, the heavy traffic (especially large trucks), and insufficient parking; (4) a lack of community infrastructure and services, such as a recreation center, public park, afterschool and summer activities for children, street lighting, sidewalks, child care, medical care, emergency services, animal control, and handicapped access; (5) increased crime, particularly related to drug use; (6) the relative isolation of the community and the historical dearth of jobs other than in agriculture, which leads many of the young to leave once they finish school; (7) a labor shortage in local businesses and in agriculture, due to the high wages paid by the oil and gas industry; (8) the susceptibility of local agriculture to drought, and the lack of effective flood control infrastructure in town; and (9) a resistance to change, especially the rapid change brought by the Eagle Ford Shale Play.

Opportunities

The local community then identified several potential opportunities for future improvement. These opportunities included: (1) the continued presence and likely increase of jobs directly in or associated with the oil and gas play; (2) business opportunities for local entrepreneurs, particularly with regard to the need for a drugstore or pharmacy, a car wash, a comprehensive medical clinic, private practice physicians and dentists, a bank or credit union, a title company, and child care; (3) creation of community programs, resources, and recreational facilities for youth, teens, adults, and seniors; (4) maintaining and improving the quality of the school district, including the ability to attract and retain the best teachers and to add technical training programs related to the oil and gas



Source: CURPR **Figure 5: SWOT Session McMullen County**

industry and to community infrastructure (welding, electrician, and plumbing services); (5) using the increased revenue to re-invest in the community by improving public infrastructure such as roads, street lighting, water and sewer lines, school buildings, etc., and (6) an opportunity to make the community

more appealing to its young people and thus to slow or reverse the trend of young people leaving the area.

Threats

The residents also named several threats to the long-term health of the community. These threats included: (1) the increased potential for environmental pollution, including the worsening of air quality (such as the presence of hydrogen sulfides) and water quality (contamination of groundwater), and possible pipeline leaks; (2) the potential for worsening



Source: CURPR **Figure 6: SWOT Session McMullen County**

housing supply shortages, water supply shortages, and waste disposal issues; (3) the continued influx of new people who don't always share the same outlook and values as long-term residents, potentially creating social tensions; (4) increased potential for road deterioration, traffic congestion, unsafe

driving, and traffic accidents, particularly due to traffic related to the oil and gas play; (5) “undercutting” of local businesses by non-local companies and income leakage (increasing share of spending goes to non-local businesses); (6) a relative lack of economic diversity, combined with uncertainty of the duration of the oil and gas play; (7) increasing “youth drain” as young people leave, resulting in an aging long-term population; and (8) the potential for continued increase in drug use and in the crime rate.



Source: CURPR **Figure 7: SWOT Session McMullen County**

Background

Population

McMullen County is a sparsely populated rural county. Its population peaked in 1940 (see Fig. 8), with a total of 1,374 residents. There were two periods with “boom” years in terms of population growth: from 1870 to 1890, when the population grew from 230 to 1,038; and from 1920 to 1930, when the population grew from 952 to 1,351. This roughly corresponds with the oil prospecting boom and the growth of both Tilden and Calliham. The low population growth between 1930 and 1940 can be attributed to the effects of the Great Depression. Since 1940, however, the population of the county has decreased steadily, with the exception of a slight increase between 1980 and 2000 (Table 1).

The forty years between 1940 and 1980 also roughly correspond with the era of increased urbanization and suburbanization, in which many rural economic sectors such as

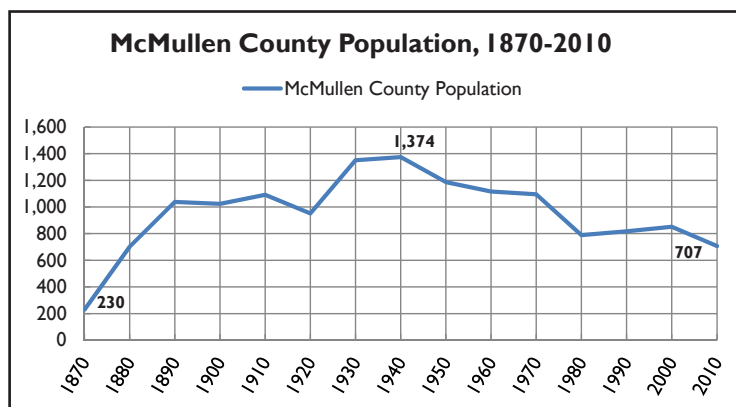


Figure 8: Population of McMullen County, 1870-2010

Source: Texas Almanac

Table 1: Population Change in McMullen County, 1870-2010

McMullen County Population		
Census	Population	Change
1870	230	n/a
1880	701	204.8%
1890	1,038	48.1%
1900	1,024	-1.3%
1910	1,091	6.5%
1920	952	-12.7%
1930	1,351	41.9%
1940	1,374	1.7%
1950	1,187	-13.6%
1960	1,116	-6.0%
1970	1,095	-1.9%
1980	789	-27.9%
1990	817	3.5%
2000	851	4.2%
2010	707	-16.9%

Source: Texas Almanac

farming and ranching saw increased mechanization and large-scale operations and a decreasing labor force. These trends, however, had only a minimal impact on McMullen County’s growth, due to its relative isolation from major urban areas in the region.

The demographic structure of McMullen County’s population is particularly notable. Whereas most large towns and cities in the region have a bottom-heavy population pyramid in which the youngest age cohorts represent a larger share of the total population than the older age cohorts, McMullen County has a top-heavy population pyramid in which the older cohorts represent a larger share than the younger cohorts (Table 2).

This discrepancy can also be seen in Fig. 9. The only three age cohorts to gain population between 2000 and 2010 were 25-34 years old; 65-74 years old; and 75-84 years old. The first cohort represents those born between 1976 and 1985 (the end of Generation “X” and the beginning of the “Millennial” Generation), while the latter two cohorts represent those born between 1926 and 1945 (those whose childhood was marked by the Great Depression and World War Two). Every other age cohort lost population during the decade, even if in some cases the share of the cohort as part of the total population increased. The large decrease in those under 20 years of age and those between 35 and 64 years of age is striking. Those between 45 and 64 years of age represent the “Baby Boom” Generation, and typically cause the age cohort they move through to increase in both absolute and percentage terms.

Table 2: McMullen County Population by Age/Sex, 2000-2010

POPULATION BY AGE/SEX	2000		2010		CHANGE	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	851	100.0%	707	100.0%	-144	-16.9%
Male	428	50.3%	367	51.9%	-61	-14.3%
Female	423	49.7%	340	48.1%	-83	-19.6%
Age Cohort	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	34	4.0%	28	4.0%	-6	-17.6%
5 to 9 years	45	5.3%	32	4.5%	-13	-28.9%
10 to 14 years	77	9.0%	42	5.9%	-35	-45.5%
15 to 19 years	61	7.2%	35	5.0%	-26	-42.6%
20 to 24 years	36	4.2%	33	4.7%	-3	-8.3%
25 to 34 years	61	7.2%	65	9.2%	4	6.6%
35 to 44 years	141	16.6%	71	10.0%	-70	-49.6%
45 to 54 years	124	14.6%	117	16.5%	-7	-5.6%
55 to 59 years	65	7.6%	56	7.9%	-9	-13.8%
60 to 64 years	55	6.5%	41	5.8%	-14	-25.5%
65 to 74 years	89	10.5%	113	16.0%	24	27.0%
75 to 84 years	39	4.6%	66	9.3%	27	69.2%
85 years and over	24	2.8%	8	1.1%	-16	-66.7%
Median Age (years)	43.1	(X)	49.8	(X)	6.7	(X)

Source: US Census

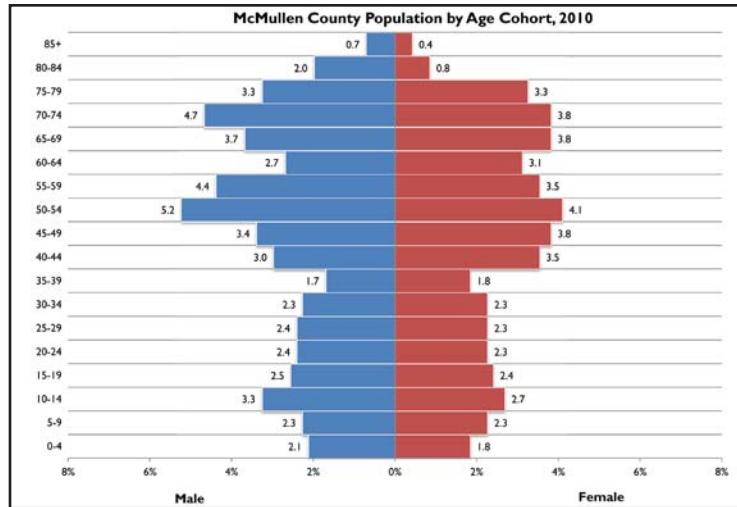


Figure 9: McMullen County Population by Age Cohort, 2010

Source: US Census

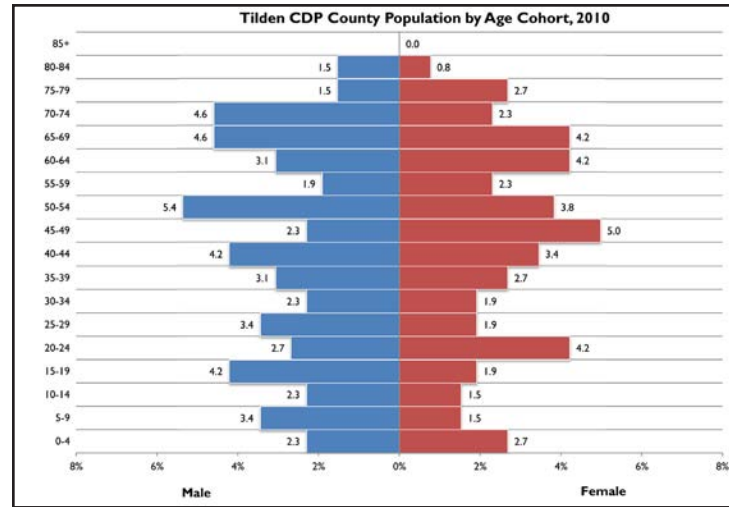


Figure 10: Tilden CDP Population by Age Cohort, 2010

Source: US Census

*CDP - Census Designated Place

Since Tilden is not currently incorporated as a city the U.S. Census defines it as a CDP.

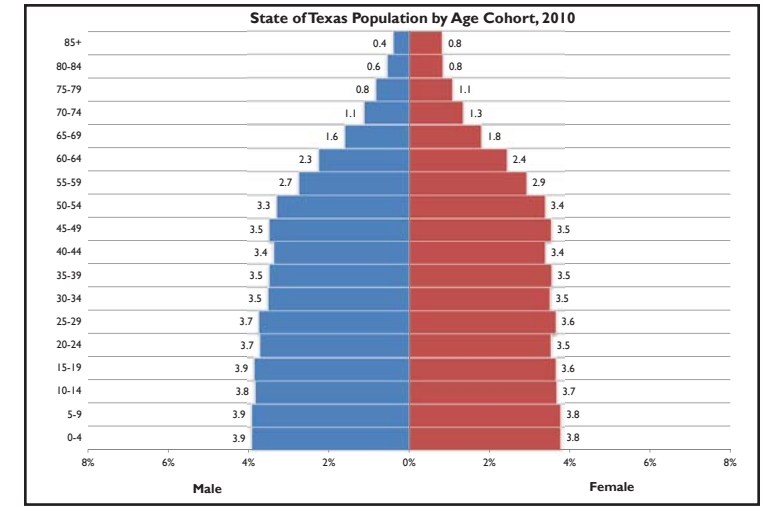


Figure 11: State of Texas Population by Age Cohort, 2010

Source: US Census

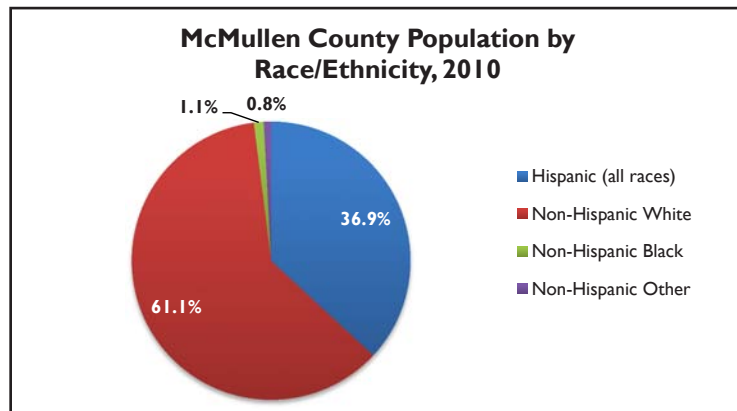


Figure 12: McMullen County Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010

Source: US Census

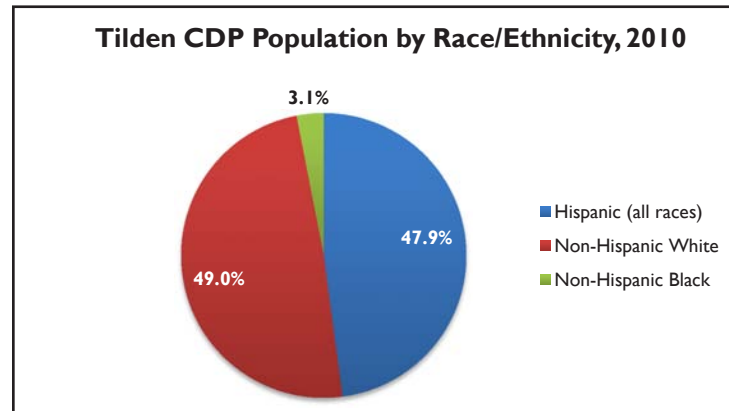


Figure 13: Tilden CDP Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010

Source: US Census

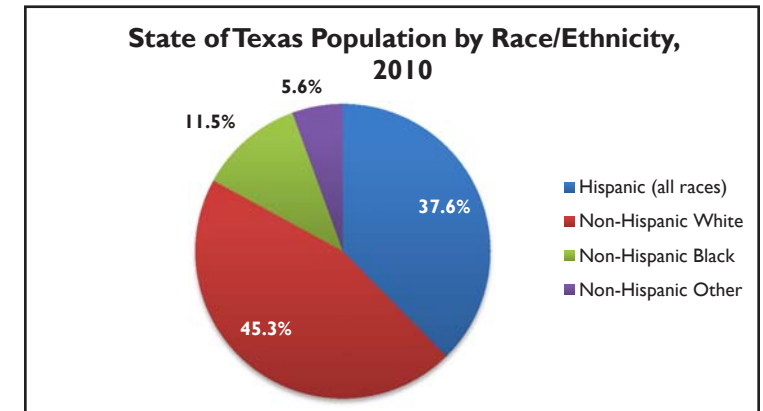


Figure 14: State of Texas Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010

Source: US Census

Race/Ethnicity

As seen in Figs. 12-14 on the preceding pages, which describe the race and ethnicity of both McMullen County and the Tilden Census-Designated Place (hereafter referred to as the Tilden CDP), McMullen County differs considerably from the Tilden CDP and from Texas. The Hispanic population is just under 37% in the county, and just over 37% in the state of Texas; however, in the Tilden CDP the Hispanic population represents almost 48% of the total population. McMullen County has a majority non-Hispanic white population, which accounts for just over 61% of the county's population, while in the Tilden CDP the share of non-Hispanic whites is 49%.

As the county lost roughly 17% (about one-sixth) of its population between 2000 and 2010, every ethnic/racial category except "non-Hispanic other" saw a decrease (see Table 3). While the two main non-Hispanic groups decreased by 20% or more, the Hispanic or Latino group decreased by

less than 8%. As a result, the Hispanic portion of the population saw its share of the county's total population rise from 33.1% to 36.9%.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment level of McMullen County worsened somewhat between 2000 and 2012 (Table 4). Specifically, the portion of the population with a bachelor's degree as their highest educational level decreased from 13.4% of the county's total population to only 6.1%. The shift was likely toward the portion of the population with some college but no degree. This group increased from 18.9% to 31.6% of the population. The increase in those attending college but not receiving a degree most likely includes a portion of the population which previously didn't continue education past high school, or did not finish high school. Additionally, there was a sharp decrease in the number and the percentage of those obtaining a graduate or professional degree. In general, McMullen County has a

higher level of educational attainment than the Tilden CDP. The latter has a larger share of the population with less than a 9th grade education. It also has a larger share of population with a 9th to 12th grade education but no diploma, and with some college but no degree (Figs. 15-16).

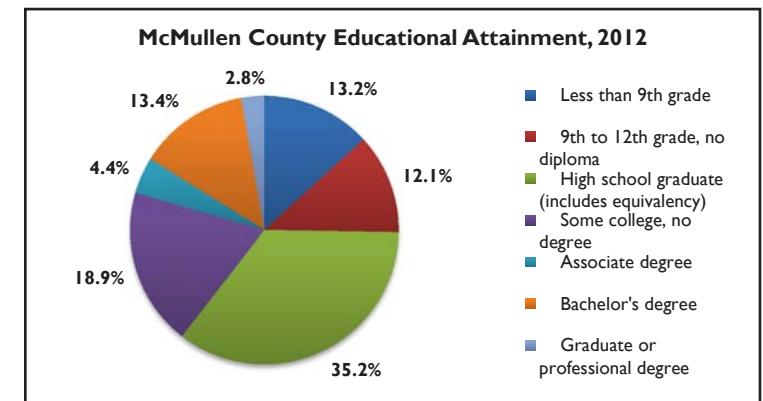


Figure 15: McMullen County Educational Attainment, 2012

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

Table 3: McMullen County Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2000 and 2010

POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY Subject	2000		2010		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	851	100.0%	707	100.0%	-144	-16.9%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	282	33.1%	261	36.9%	-21	-7.4%
Not Hispanic or Latino	569	66.9%	446	63.1%	-123	-21.6%
White alone	556	65.3%	432	61.1%	-124	-22.3%
Black or African American alone	10	1.2%	8	1.1%	-2	-20.0%
Other	3	0.4%	6	0.8%	3	100.0%

Source: Texas Almanac

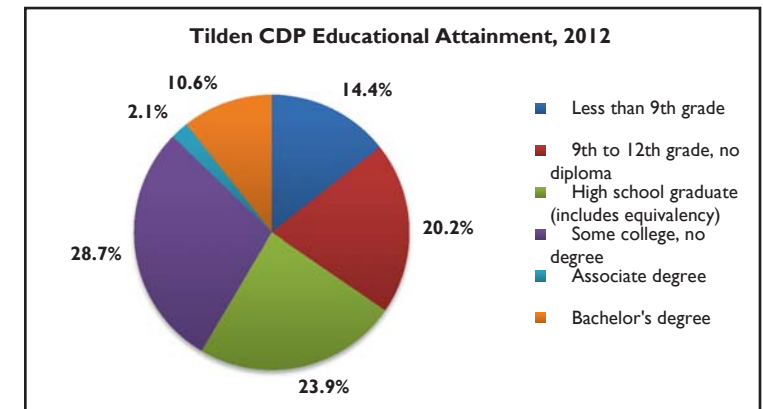


Figure 16: Tilden CDP Educational Attainment, 2012

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

Table 4: Educational Attainment, 2000-2012

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	2000		2012		Change	
	Number	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Highest Level of Education Attained						
Population 25 years and over	613	100.0%	528	100.0%	-85	-13.9%
Less than 9th grade	81	13.2%	73	13.8%	-8	-9.9%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	74	12.1%	54	10.2%	-20	-27.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	216	35.2%	172	32.6%	-44	-20.4%
Some college, no degree	116	18.9%	167	31.6%	51	44.0%
Associate degree	27	4.4%	27	5.1%	0	0.0%
Bachelor's degree	82	13.4%	32	6.1%	-50	-61.0%
Graduate or professional degree	17	2.8%	3	0.6%	-14	-82.4%

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

Housing Characteristics

Housing occupancy in McMullen County, as a whole, is far lower than occupancy in the Tilden CDP. According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 42% of housing units in the county are vacant, while only about 23% of units in the Tilden CDP are vacant (Table 5). The share of owner-occupied housing units is about the same. In the county as a whole, 81% of occupied units are owner-occupied, and in the Tilden CDP the share is 83%. This is very typical of rural areas. Of the owner-occupied houses in McMullen County, about 79% are owned free-and-clear (without a mortgage), while in the Tilden CDP just over 75% are owned free-and-clear. This indicates that McMullen County and the Tilden CDP are both very stable in terms of housing tenure, though in some cases (particularly houses outside of the Tilden CDP) a large share of housing stock remains vacant.

The Tilden CDP generally has an older housing stock than that of McMullen County overall (Figs. 17-18). For example, 36% of all housing units in the Tilden CDP were built before 1950, as compared to less than a quarter (24.7%) of housing units in McMullen County. The period between 1950 and 2000 was characterized by comparatively more housing being built in McMullen County outside of the Tilden CDP. Almost two-thirds of the county's housing stock was built during those five decades, as compared to 49% of the Tilden CDP's housing stock. Only the most recent completed decade (2000 through 2009) has seen the Tilden CDP's housing stock increase more rapidly than McMullen County's. Another way to see it is that McMullen County has a more even distribution of housing stock by age, while the growth of the Tilden CDP's housing stock has varied more from decade to decade.

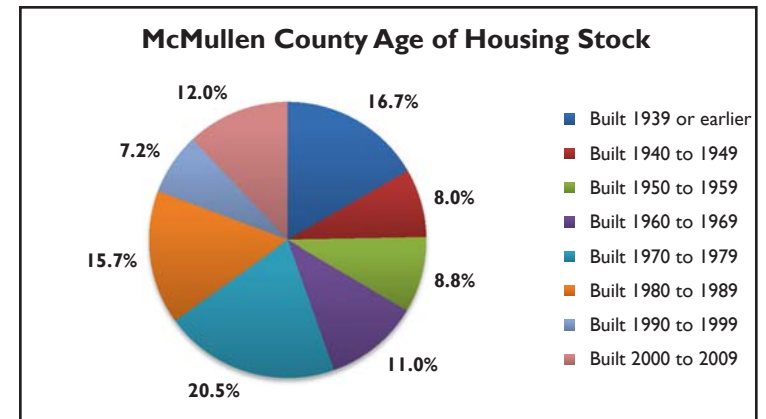


Figure 17: Age of Housing Stock in McMullen County

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

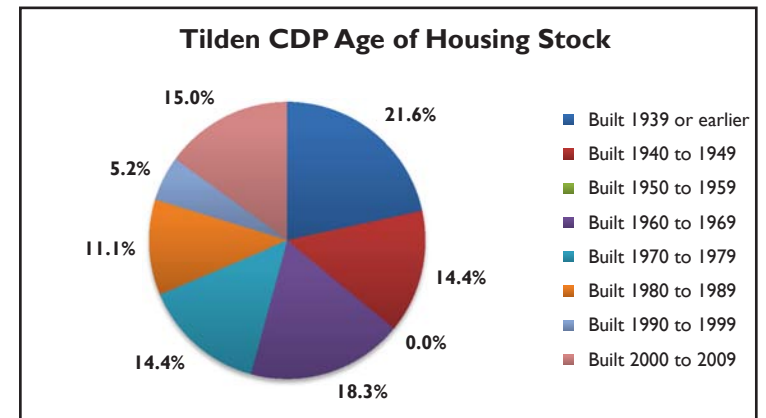


Figure 18: Age of Housing Stock in Tilden CDP

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

Table 5: Housing Characteristics, 2012

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS				
Subject	McMullen County		Tilden CDP	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
HOUSING OCCUPANCY				
Total housing units	498	100.0%	153	100.0%
Occupied housing units	289	58.0%	117	76.5%
Vacant housing units	209	42.0%	36	23.5%
HOUSING TENURE				
Occupied housing units	289	100.0%	117	100.0%
Owner-occupied	234	81.0%	97	82.9%
Renter-occupied	55	19.0%	20	17.1%
MORTGAGE STATUS				
Owner-occupied units	234	100.0%	97	100.0%
Housing units with a mortgage	49	20.9%	24	24.7%
Housing units without a mortgage	185	79.1%	73	75.3%

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

Since 2008, both McMullen County and the Tilden CDP have experienced a large influx of transitory workers due to the development and expansion of the Eagle Ford Shale Play. This influx has also had a major impact on the housing market in McMullen County and the Tilden CDP. It has also contributed to the development of so-called “man camps” within the Tilden CDP and in various parts of the county.

These camps consist mainly of manufactured homes designed to house workers employed by energy companies operating in the Eagle Ford Shale Play. For the most part these workers move frequently from one camp to another as the location of their work changes. The camps themselves are considered to be temporary. They have little in the way of infrastructure and amenities for their residents. They can be easily dismantled and moved to another location as needs dictate.

Eagle Ford Shale Play

One reason employment has been so high in McMullen County is the presence of the Eagle Ford Shale Play. The play consists of oil and natural gas reserves in a shale layer a few thousand feet below the surface. Since 2010, drilling activity in the 21 counties of the Eagle Ford Shale Play has increased by at least an order of magnitude (ten times, or 1000%).

The most recent count of active drilling rigs in November/December 2014 shows that, of the 260 active rigs in the 21-county area of the Eagle Ford Shale Play, McMullen County had 20 active rigs, or about 7.6% of the total (Figure 19). All 20 were oil rigs, even though there are substantial natural gas reserves in the county as well (Figure 21). The price of natural gas is currently too low to make drilling profitable.

Despite its relatively small population, McMullen County has usually been in the top six counties in the Eagle Ford Shale in terms of active wells (the others are Karnes, La Salle, Webb, De Witt, and Dimmit). The companies which have been most active in leasing and drilling in McMullen County are BHP Billiton, Chesapeake Energy, Conoco Phillips, EOG Resources, Murphy Oil, Swift Energy, and Talisman Energy.

Although there are oil wells scattered throughout the county, the majority of them—and all of the active wells—are currently in the northern half of the county, as seen in Figure 20.

One of the most visible effects of this increased activity is the influx of workers to the area. In the case of McMullen County, the impact is even greater due to the small population

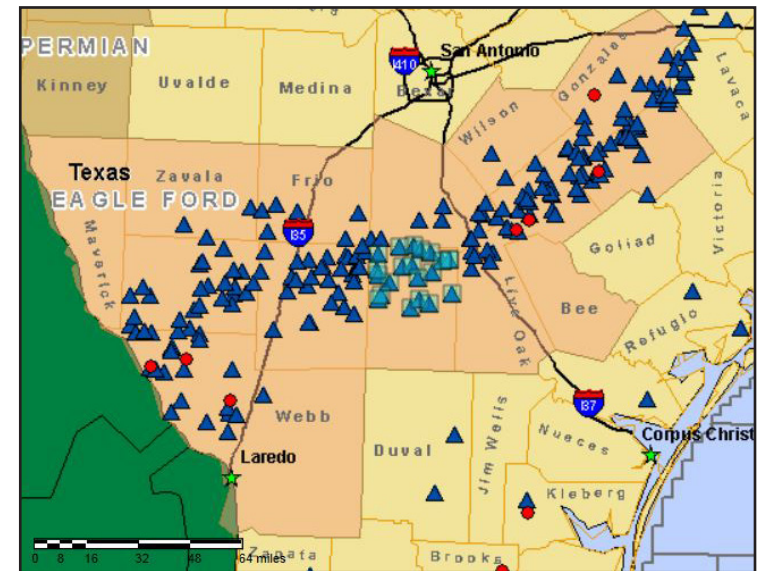
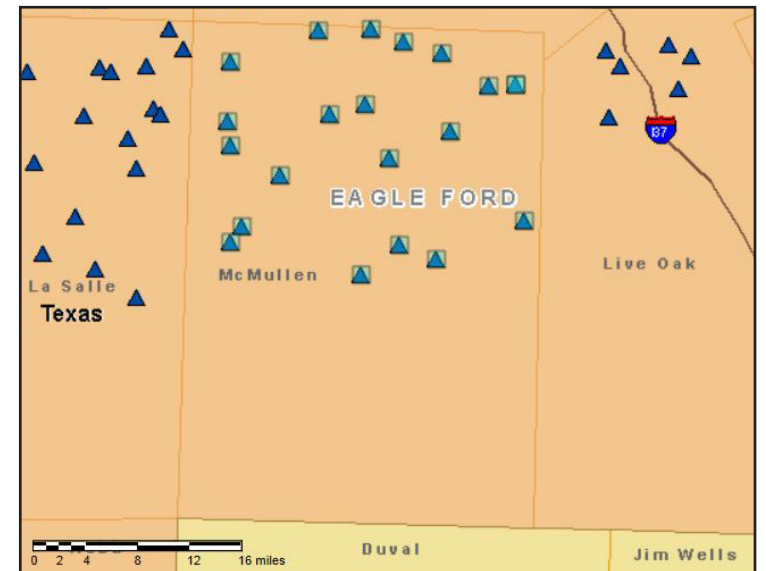


Figure 19: Active Wells in 14-County Portion of Eagle Ford Shale, August 22, 2014
Source: Baker Hughes



Source: Baker Hughes **Figure 20: Active Wells, McMullen County**

of the county. The county benefits from increased tax revenue resulting from the spending of both companies and individuals. However, it also incurs increased costs, particularly in road maintenance. Many of the vehicles used in hydraulic fracturing (fracking) carry heavy loads of sand, water, machinery, etc. These heavy loads cause extensive damage to county roads serving these areas.

Economic Conditions

The comparison between McMullen County and the Tilden CDP is made using American Community Survey 5-year estimates for 2008-2012 (Figure 6). The median household income in McMullen County in 2012 was \$38,438; the median income in the Tilden CDP was about 10% higher, at \$42,750. However, the Tilden CDP has a greater share of households receiving SNAP benefits (food assistance) and a higher unemployment rate than the county. In fact, all three of the officially unemployed people in McMullen County in 2012 resided in the Tilden CDP (hence the significantly higher—but still low—unemployment rate). This would suggest that despite the higher median income, there is more socioeconomic variation between households in the Tilden CDP than those in the rest of the county.

Table 6: Economic Characteristics, 2012

Subject	McMullen County	Tilden CDP
Total Households	289	117
Median Household Income	\$38,438	\$42,750
Households with SNAP Benefits	25	12
% of Total Households	8.7%	10.3%
Population in Civilian Labor Force	418	130
Unemployed	3	3
% of Population Unemployed	0.7%	2.3%

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

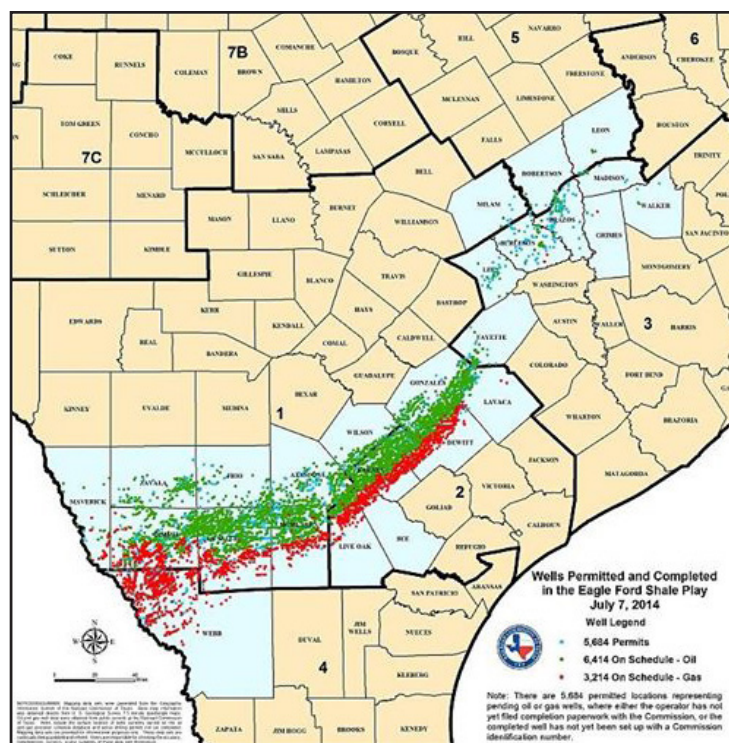


Figure 21: Permitted and Completed Wells in Eagle Ford Shale Play, July 7, 2014
Source: Texas Railroad Commission

Sales Tax (Gross Sales and Taxable Sales)

The impact of Eagle Ford Shale activity on the economy of McMullen County can clearly be seen in the amount of total and taxable sales within the county each year. From 2002 to 2013, gross sales in the county increased from about \$5.7 million annually (of which about \$1.3 million was taxable) to \$197.4 million (of which about \$54.8 million was taxable). The

gross sales thus increased by a factor of over 34 (3,400%), and the taxable sales increased by a factor of over 43 (4,300%). As Figure 22 shows, almost all of this increase has come since 2010, when Eagle Ford Shale activity began to gain momentum.

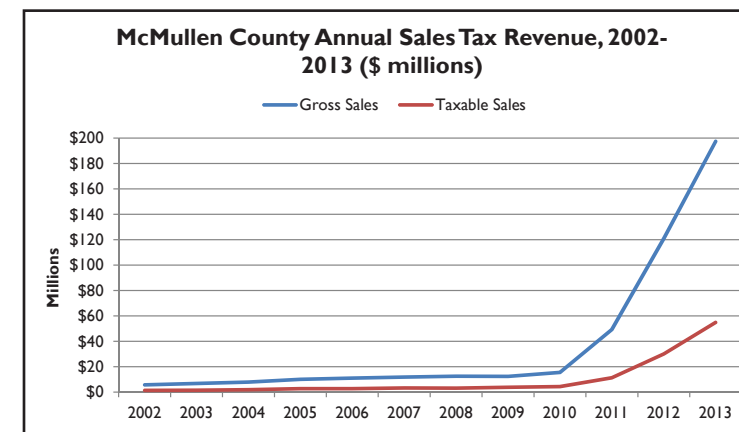


Figure 22: Annual Sales Tax Revenue in McMullen County, 2002-2013

Hotel Occupancy Tax (Total Receipts and Taxable Receipts)

A very similar pattern can be seen in the increase in both capacity and revenue from hotel accommodations, although in this case the data is specifically for Tilden (which is not defined as a Census-Designated Place in this case). There was little to no change in capacity until 2009, and even then the significant change did not occur until 2011. Note that this figure represents formally registered hotel accommodations, and does not include the various non-hotel accommodations frequently used by Eagle Ford Shale workers (such as unofficial RV parks, etc.).

The number of official hotel establishments in Tilden tracked by the Texas Comptroller increased from just one (with a capacity of eight beds) in 2009, to three (with a capacity of 30 beds) by 2011, and to seven (with a capacity of 270 beds) in 2014 (Fig. 25). Note also that although the total sales/receipts from hotel occupancy in Tilden increased considerably, they still represent only a small portion of total sales revenue for McMullen County.

In the case of accommodations, the increase is even more recent than the increase in overall sales revenue; almost the entire increase has come since the beginning of 2012 (see Figs 23-24). The data for quarterly receipts per bed show that with the drastic increase in capacity, the increase in revenue per bed has come in stages while the overall revenue (not taking per-bed average into account) shows a much more steady increase over the past two years.

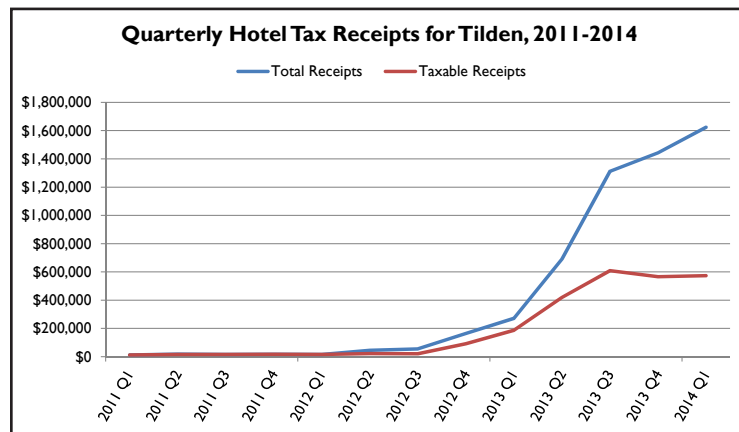


Figure 23: Quarterly Hotel Tax Receipts for Tilden, 2011-2014
Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

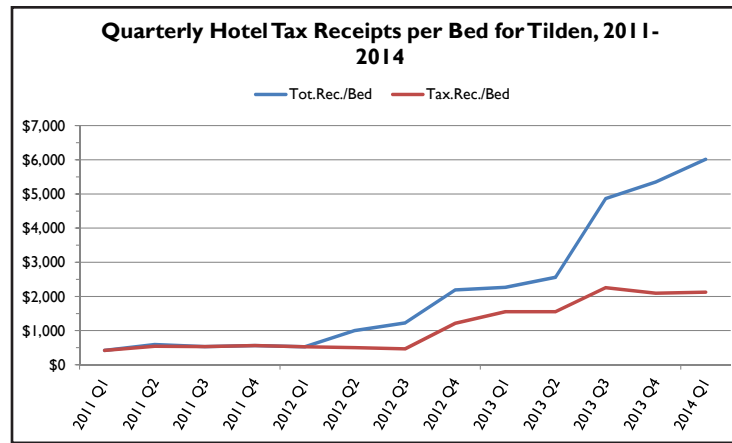


Figure 24: Quarterly Hotel Tax Receipts per Bed for Tilden, 2011-2014
Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

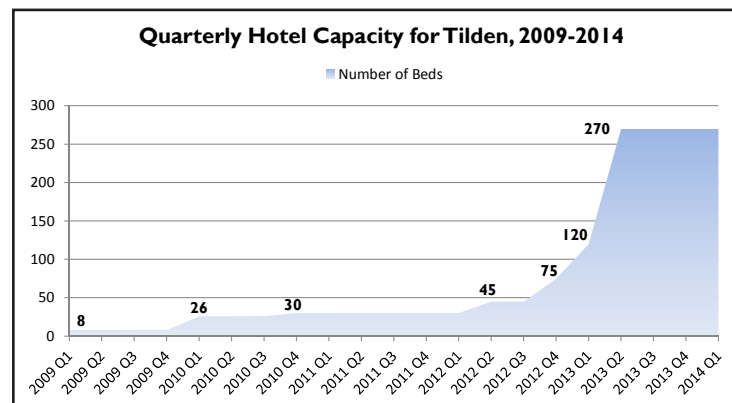


Figure 25: Quarterly Hotel Capacity for Tilden, 2009-2014
Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

Circulation

A review of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts clearly shows a dramatic increase in traffic in and around Tilden from 2010 to 2011, 2011 to 2012, and 2012 to 2013 (Fig. 26). Most locations actually saw a slight drop in traffic from 2008 to 2009, almost certainly as the result of the economic downturn that began in 2007-2008. However, 2010 marked the beginning of intensive drilling activity in the Eagle Ford Shale, and in most cases traffic increased by fourfold or more.

The eight locations in and near Tilden can be sorted into three groups: two locations in the “peak” group (AADT counts of 12,000 or more in 2013); four locations in the “rapidly climbing” group (AADT counts between 10,000 and 12,000); and two locations in the “slowly climbing” group (AADT counts below 7,000). The AADT counts for the busiest location of the eight (River Street and Live Oak Street) in each given year are shown in bold in the graph below in Figure 26.

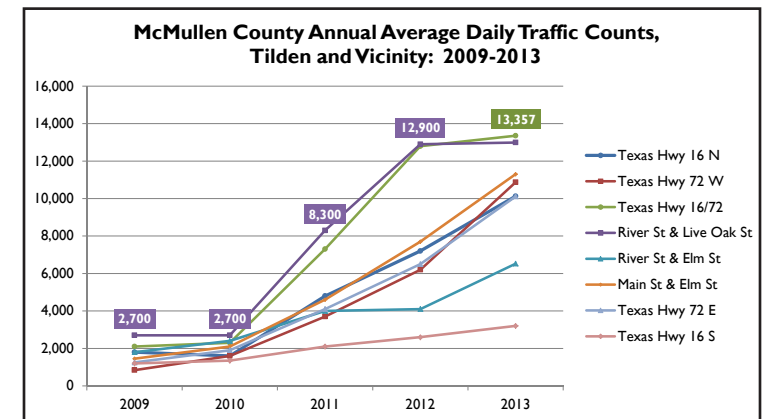


Figure 26: Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts, Tilden and Vicinity, 2009-2013
Source: Texas Department of Transportation

The location of the eight AADT count locations in and around Tilden can be seen in Fig. 27. Given that the counts for the two stations south of the intersection of River Street (Texas Highway 16) and Elm Street (Texas Highway 72)—shown in aqua and rose in Fig. 26—are the only two of the eight to have an AADT count under 10,000 in 2013, it is reasonable to assume that the traffic associated with the Eagle Ford Shale Play moves along Texas Highway 72 in both directions (east and west), with Texas Highway 16/River Street providing the link between those two segments of Texas Highway 72. This makes sense because the most active parts of the Eagle Ford Shale Play outside McMullen County lie to the east and west, rather than to the north and south. Indeed, the only two locations in and around Tilden with an AADT count above 12,000 are along the segment of Highway 16 which also serves as the connection between the two segments of Highway 72.

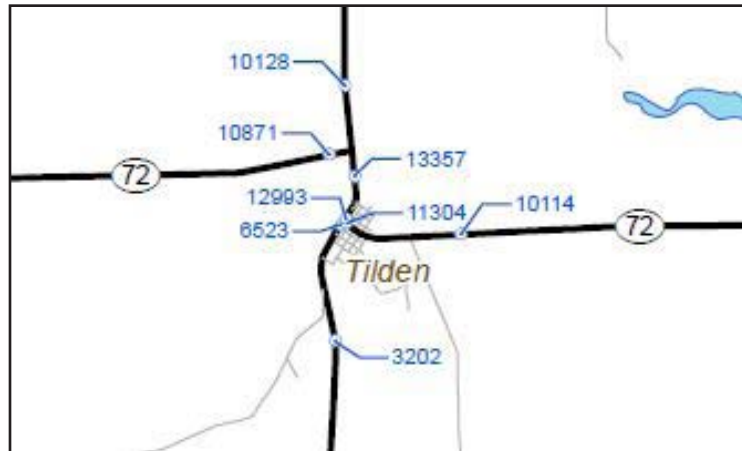


Figure 27: Tilden and Vicinity

Source: Texas Department of Transportation

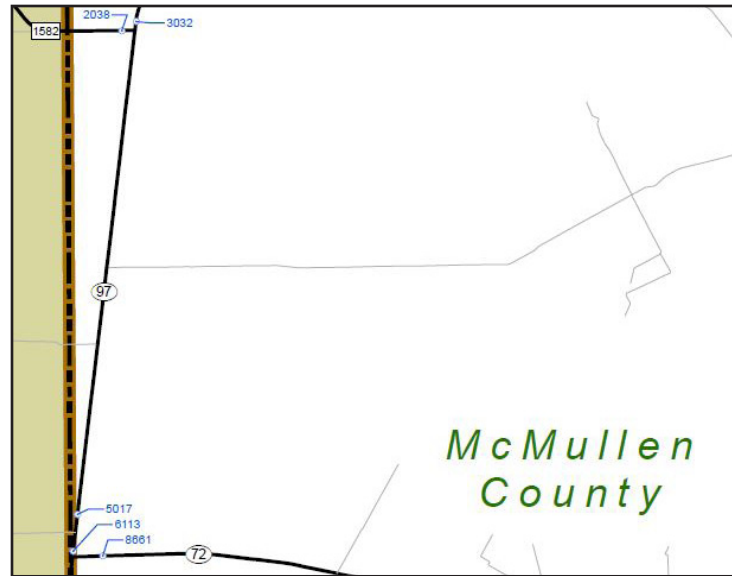


Figure 28: Northwest McMullen County

Source: Texas Department of Transportation

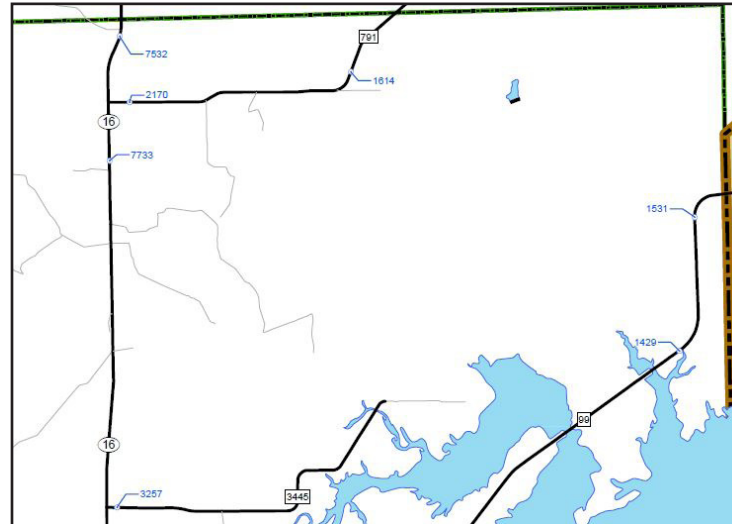


Figure 29: Northeast McMullen County

Source: Texas Department of Transportation

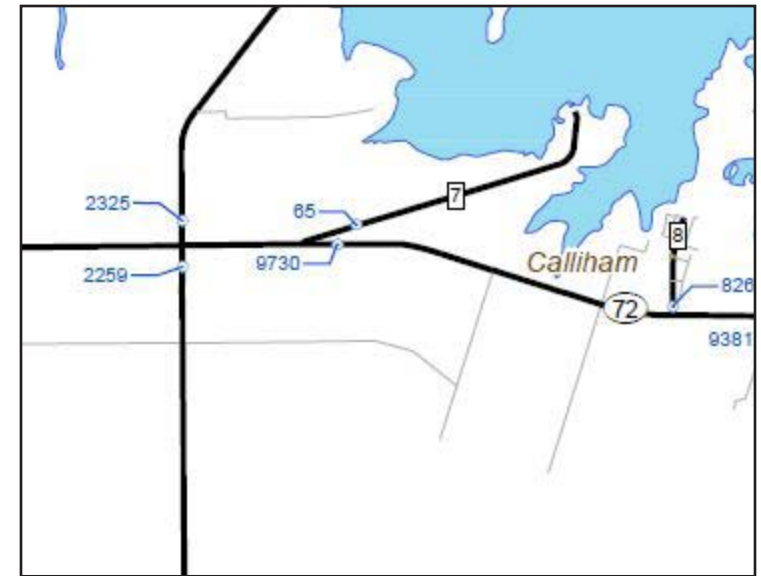


Figure 30: Calliham and Vicinity

Source: Texas Department of Transportation

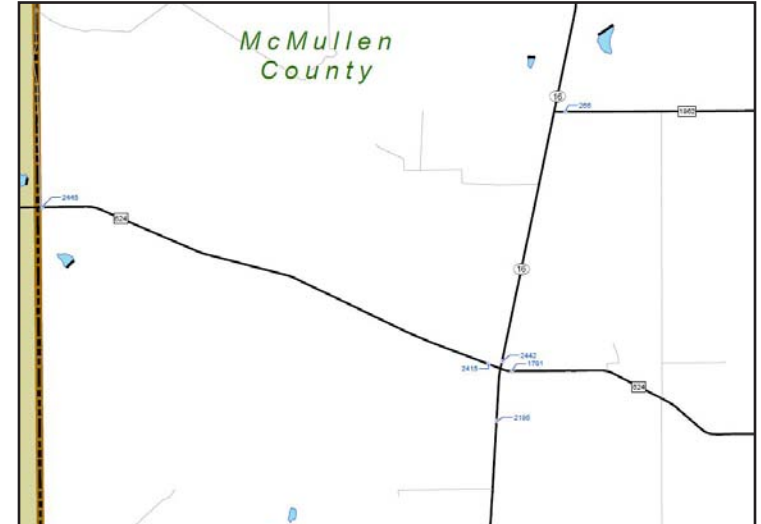


Figure 31: Southern McMullen County

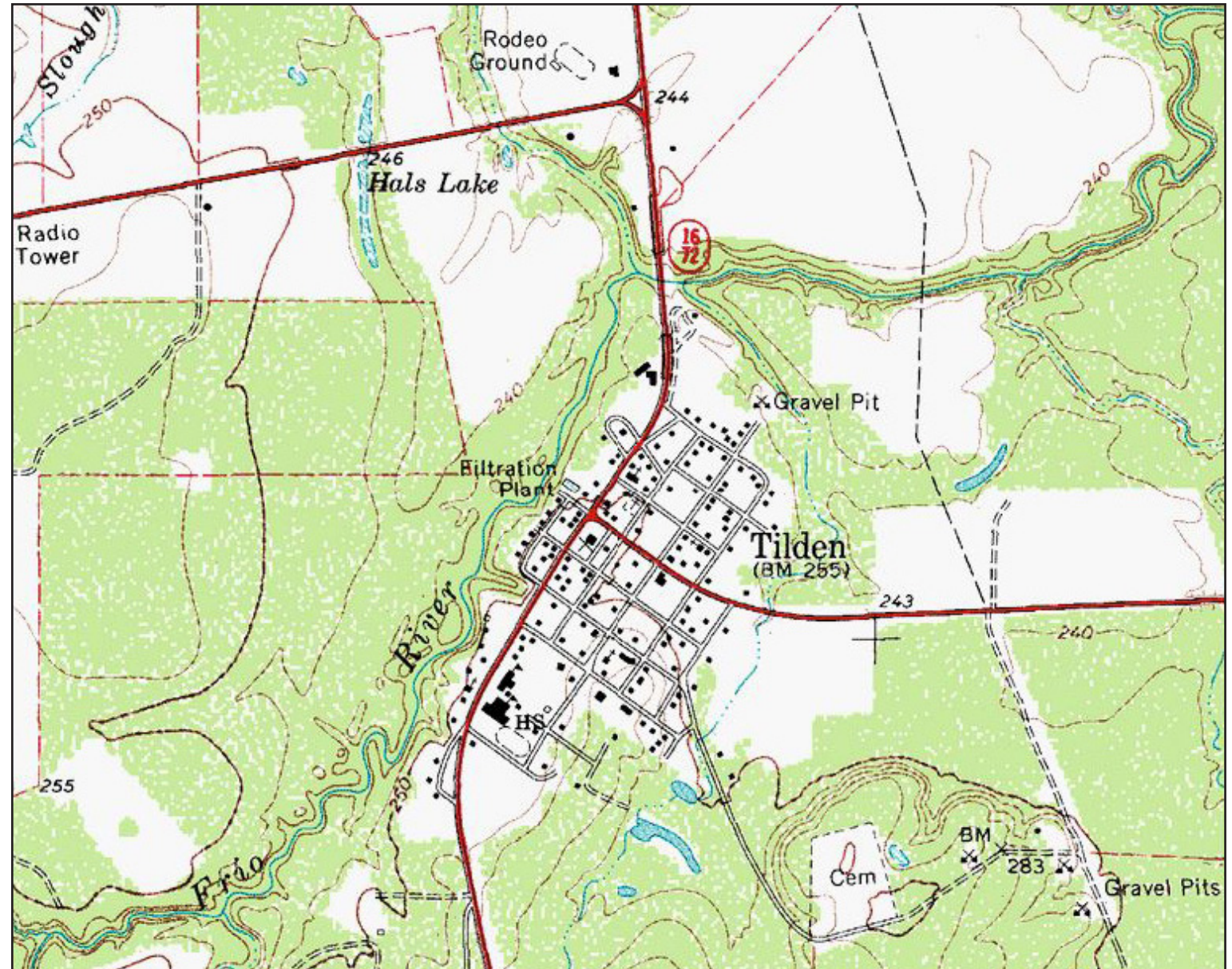
Source: Texas Department of Transportation

Floodplain

The two major rivers in McMullen County are the Frio and the Nueces. The Frio River flows roughly west to east through the northern part of the county and into the Choke Canyon Reservoir, which was created in 1982 with the completion of Choke Canyon Dam a few miles west of the city of Three Rivers in Live Oak County. The reservoir itself straddles the county line between McMullen and Live Oak counties. The Nueces flows roughly southwest to northeast through southern and central McMullen County, and converges with the Frio east of the reservoir and about a mile south of Three Rivers.

Tilden was settled at a point along the Frio River where the elevated right bank ended and the floodplain of the river widened. The current town actually lies partially in the floodplain across from where Leoncita Creek flows into the Frio River (Fig. 32). The floodplain is extensive to the north of Tilden—and also to the west and east, as Tilden sits partly on what would be a peninsula if the entire floodplain was underwater (see Fig. 33)—and contains numerous lakes and sloughs. The portion of Texas Highway 72 that runs east of Texas Highway 16 marks the approximate edge of the floodplain; most of Tilden to the north of this is at a higher risk of flooding.

The tributaries in the vicinity of Tilden are: Leoncita Creek (mentioned above), which flows from the northwest to the southeast and joins the Frio River just across from Tilden; Big Slough, which flows from the southwest to the northeast and joins the Frio River a short distance south of town; Birds Nest Slough, which flows southwest to northeast into Leoncita Creek; Hackberry Hollow, which flows south to north and joins



Source: TopoQuest

Figure 32: USGS Map of Tilden and Vicinity



Source: CURPR

Figure 33: 100 year Floodplain - Tilden, TX

the Frio a short distance east of town; and lastly, Salt Branch and Cottonwood Creek, which both flow from northwest to southeast and join the Frio River a few miles to the east of Tilden.

Historical Floods in Tilden

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has traditionally been responsible for monitoring stream flow and providing information to assist emergency response and emergency management activities (http://www.usgs.gov/natural_hazards/). Primary among this information are real-time flood warnings, which are usually provided in conjunction with the National Weather Service (NWS), a division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

There are five USGS gaging (measuring) stations in McMullen County: Frio River at Tilden; Frio River at Calliham; San Miguel Creek near Tilden; Plant Creek near Tilden; and Nueces River near Tilden (Fig. 34). The most important of these is obviously the first one, Frio River at Tilden, which was first established during the flood event of 1932 (described below). Most of the data in this section will refer to this station.

Since the 1930s, McMullen County, Tilden, and the surrounding region have experienced a number of documented major floods resulting from heavy rains and hurricanes. These events had a significant impact on the county and those living in the area. Several of the more serious flooding events are discussed below.



Figure 34: USGS Stream Gaging Stations in McMullen County and Vicinity

Source: USGS. http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2003/ofr03-193/cd_files/USGS_Storms/Intro_Map1.htm

Table 7: Peak Stream Flow for USGS Stream Gaging Station 08206600 (Frio River at Tilden), 1979-2001

Water Year	Date	Gage Height (feet)	Stream-flow (cfs)	Water Year	Date	Gage Height (feet)	Stream-flow (cfs)
1979	Aug. 2, 1979	24.13	6,790	1990	Jul. 22, 1990	23.90	7,620
1980	May 19, 1980	26.35	12,600	1991	Sep. 23, 1991	16.56	1,910
1981	Jun. 17, 1981		8,400	1992	Dec. 27, 1991	26.17	12,000
1982	Oct. 11, 1981	21.52	4,230	1993	Nov. 22, 1992	12.34	923
1983	Oct. 12, 1982	19.79	2,790	1994	Jun. 15, 1994	17.02	2,060
1984	Oct. 9, 1983	4.77	159	1995	Sep. 28, 1995	10.91	784
1985	Sep. 29, 1985	26.73	11,800	1996	Sep. 2, 1996	16.49	1,890
1986	Oct. 1, 1985	22.29	1,930	1997	Jun. 28, 1997	29.56	20,800
1987	Jun. 9, 1987	29.18	20,900	1998	Aug. 29, 1998	24.44	8,520
1988	Jul. 12, 1988	15.44	1,580	1999	Oct. 24, 1998	24.80	9,160
1989	Mar. 23, 1989	7.90	476	2000	Mar. 15, 2000	10.15	719
				2001	Nov. 12, 2000	16.80	2,000

Source: USGS. http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2003/ofr03-193/cd_files/USGS_Storms/USGS_map_pages/peakdata/08206600.htm

1932 Flood

The flooding in July 1932 was widespread and hit many communities in South Texas. In Tilden, the Frio River began rising on July 4, 1932, and most of the residents fled the town to the relative safety of the Catholic Church, which was on higher ground. According to the telephone operator in Calliham (which was several miles to the east), the water was four feet deep in Tilden; the only Tilden resident with a phone, a hotel owner, had stayed until the water reached three feet deep and had relayed the information to Calliham (Burnett, 2008).

1967 Flood (Hurricane Beulah)

Hurricane Beulah hit the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Southern Texas in late September, 1967. Large portions of South Texas and Northern Mexico were affected by flooding, with the record crest for many rivers and streams in the area still dating back to this event. In South Texas, a north-south corridor running approximately along U.S. Highway 281 from Falfurrias to Three Rivers was hit the hardest, with over 20 inches of rain between September 19 and 25. The Frio River crested at over 36 feet near Calliham; the Nueces River crested at 26 ½ feet south of Tilden, and at over 49 feet at Three Rivers in Live Oak County.

1971 Flood (Hurricane Fern)

Hurricane Fern hit Louisiana and Texas in September, 1971, coming ashore twice, once near the mouth of the Mississippi River in Louisiana and once near Freeport, Texas, after which it skirted the Texas coast along Matagorda Bay and Matagorda Island before heading inland near Corpus Christi. The maximum land precipitation for the entire event occurred near Beeville, Texas, approximately 50 miles east of Tilden. Major flooding occurred along the lower reaches of the Nueces, Frio, Lavaca, Navidad, Guadalupe, Mission, and Aransas Rivers, primarily between September 10 and 13.

1987 Flood

A series of storms moved over South Central Texas in the first half of June, 1987. Both Canyon Lake and Medina Lake reached their spillway elevations, while severe flooding occurred along the Guadalupe, Medina, Colorado, Frio, and San Antonio Rivers, as well as Leon Creek in Bexar County, Walnut Creek in

Guadalupe County, and Tinsley Creek in Gonzales County. In Tilden, the Frio River crested three times: once on June 5, once on June 9, and once again on June 17 (see Table 7 on previous page and Figure 35 below for a comparison of the 1987, 1997, and 2002 floods).

1997 Flood

In late June of 1997, a major storm event resulted in a rainfall of 12 to 20 inches within 48 hours. This resulted in flooding in portions of the Hill Country north of San Antonio and areas downstream along the Llano, Frio, Nueces, Sabinal, Guadalupe, Lavaca, and Navidad Rivers (Blaha and Thoren, 1997).

2002 Flood

According to the National Weather Service, prolonged heavy rain in the Nueces River Basin (which includes the Frio River) resulted in the rapid rise of the Frio River from 2 feet to 25

feet within 24 hours on July 1, 2002, surpassing the flood stage of 22 feet. Over the next nine days the river continued to rise, and reached its record high of 30.06 feet on the morning of July 10, 2002 (the 1932 high of 38.44 feet is listed as “July 1932” with no specific date). Extensive areas of the floodplain from Tilden to the Choke Canyon Reservoir were inundated.

certainly be mitigated and reduced in order to protect the community. Equally important for the long-term development of Tilden is the need to put in place some kind of strategy to provide other options for the community. One such strategy is described in the next section.

Flood Mitigation Measures

These flooding events strongly suggest that Tilden is subject to flooding during extreme weather conditions such as major storms and hurricanes hitting this region. Given that Tilden partially lies in a flood zone, steps should be taken to make sure that the impact of such storms is minimized. Several local strategies can be used to alleviate the impact of these events in the community. These include:

- Conduct studies to determine if stream retention dams can be used to lessen the impact of flooding.
- Undertake a study to mitigate the impact of the 100 year flood plain in Tilden, and to better define areas that are subject to flooding in and around Tilden.
- Develop a comprehensive land use plan for Tilden delineating areas which are subject to flooding. These areas can then be set aside as open areas, recreational zones, parks or drainage areas.

These strategies can be undertaken at little or no cost to the county. As Tilden grows, however, additional steps will have to be taken to reduce the impact of flooding in the area. While it is likely that flooding events resulting from extreme weather conditions cannot be totally eliminated their impacts can

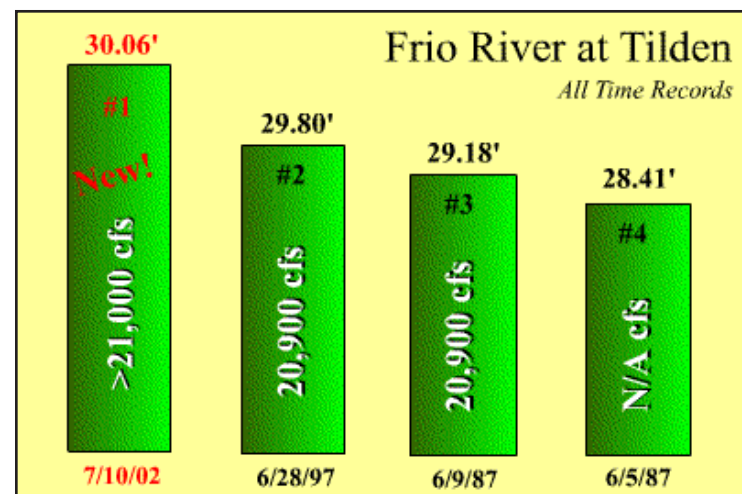


Figure 35: Frio River at Tilden, Flood Records



Planning for the Future: Long -Term Strategy for Tilden and McMullen County

Overview

This study presents a number of strategic initiatives and plans designed to create a path for the long-term development of Tilden and McMullen County. They include such things as the incorporation of Tilden into a general law city; the need to undertake several key infrastructure related projects to improve Tilden's sustainability and livability; the development of a strong central core in Tilden centered on Courthouse Square; the development of additional housing options for local residents and new families moving into the county; the creation of new education facilities and programs in the county's school district; the development of a light industrial park in Tilden to spur economic growth; and the development of a new park and recreational area along the Frio River near Tilden to improve the quality of life for local residents and provide a valuable new asset to spur development in the county.

Communities tend to be extremely complex. Even the smallest are made up of many different parts and interrelationships. These parts include such things as businesses, cultural assets, infrastructures, social networks, governmental entities and institutions, families and various types of support services to name but a few. The community of Tilden has, over the years, managed to create a rather distinct living environment incorporating these parts. However, changes being generated by external events such as energy related development in the Eagle Ford Shale Play has created the need for reassessing current conditions in Tilden and McMullen County. These changes include increased population pressures resulting from energy development in the county and the surrounding region;

the need for additional services; the creation of new investment possibilities in Tilden and the county; the requirement for new housing to handle expected increases in population; and, the need for a more diversified economy. These same changes will also likely set the stage for new types of activities that will affect Tilden and the county in the coming years.

The current thrust of development in the county and the surrounding region also dictate the need for devising a long-range strategy to develop Tilden, enhance its quality of life, and improve its economy. Equally important is the need to be thinking about the county, as a whole, and where it wants to be some 10 to 20 years in the future. The key here is to devise a strategy to accomplish these ends, and put in place an implementation plan that will help the leadership in Tilden and McMullen County to achieve its long-term goals and aspirations.

Putting in Place a Development Strategy

While this study outlines a long-term vision for Tilden and McMullen County to pursue, the next and perhaps most important step is to define a workable course of action to help the county's leadership achieve its goals. This section proposes such a plan and describes an overall implementation strategy to assist both Tilden and McMullen County in redeveloping the community's downtown and surrounding area. It also provides a framework to guide their long-term growth and development. In devising any kind of strategy it is important to keep in mind two things. First, the recommendations included in this study are only a start. Second, the development process is always ongoing. Planning is a continuous process that constantly builds

upon past successes and ongoing changes in the environment. The first step in this process is to carefully address the proposed recommendations for action and make adjustments as needed. Once this is done it will then be important to establish priorities for development. This will be one of the main tasks for the implementation team. These priorities will always be governed by the availability of resources to carry them out, and their relationship to other needs the community and the county have to address. As these priorities are decided on the next step is to put together an implementation strategy and plan to carry them out.

It is useful to acknowledge at this point that the team or working group responsible for carrying out the plan must always be cognizant of the fact that adjustments and changes in the plan are likely to be made as the community moves forward with its implementation. This means that whatever plan is originally decided on, that plan will likely have to be modified as needs dictate over time. As a result, it will be important to carefully monitor the plan's implementation to make sure that it stays relevant. The plan's ultimate success, however, will largely depend on the kinds of leadership provided over the course of its implementation. In the end leadership more than any other factor will drive this effort.



Source: CURPR

Figure 36: Birds Eye View of Tilden, TX

Proposed Development Strategy

As part of any long-term development strategy for Tilden and McMullen County it is strongly recommended that high priority be given to the following:

Incorporation of Tilden

In order to move forward with its development it is recommended that Tilden incorporate itself as a General Law City. At this time, the county is the only incorporated governing entity in McMullen County. As a “general purpose government” the county provides both governmental and administrative services to its citizens on behalf of the State of Texas. These services include road construction and maintenance, jails and courts, welfare, health and law enforcement. However, county governments have no planning or annexation powers in Texas. Nor can they provide for the direct management of public services to citizens not granted by the State of Texas

In Texas there are two categories of incorporated cities – home rule and general law. General law cities are usually smaller cities with limited powers that operate in conjunction with specific state powers that define their powers and duties. Home rule cities, on the other hand, are cities with populations of 5,000 or more where citizens have adopted a home rule charter through an electoral process. The charter is a document that establishes the governmental structure, i.e., mayor-council, council-manager, etc., and provides for the

distribution of powers and duties among various branches of government within the city.

If Tilden is to chart its own course it will have to incorporate itself. Because it lacks the necessary population to become a home rule city, it should seek to incorporate itself as a general law city. However, even if Tilden should decide to take this course of action, it will still have only limited powers. This is because general law cities operate according to specific state statutes that define their powers and duties. In other words, they are restricted to things that the state directs or permits them to do. As Tilden grows and attains a population of at least 5,000 it can then incorporate itself, if its citizens agree to do so, as a home rule city.

By incorporating Tilden as a general law city the community will be able to establish the means for governing itself. Obviously, this is a major decision to be made by those residing in Tilden and McMullen County. Local citizens will have to weigh the pros and cons of choosing this course of action. As the only community of any size in the county, Tilden’s population and local leadership will have to make the hard choice of deciding whether to incorporate or not. If it is decided not to incorporate the county will have to devise an alternative approach to chart Tilden’s future.

Undertake Infrastructure Improvements

Because Tilden’s basic infrastructure is, at best, rudimentary, steps will have to be taken to begin developing an infrastructure plan for the community. This should be done regardless of its decision to incorporate or not. This infrastructure plan will

incorporate baseline data, guidelines and requirements for establishing land uses; streets, water and sewer connections; utility linkages; and housing standards. It will also include the community’s long-term goals and aspirations. In addition, it will include an assessment of what is already in place in terms of housing, infrastructure, services and utilities. Finally, the plan will set the stage for Tilden’s long-term development. It will also complement its existing comprehensive plan.

Improve Courthouse Square and Surrounding Area

This vision study provides a possible option for Tilden to transform its present courthouse complex into a viable central core for the community. As shown in Fig. 37, 38, 39 and 40 this part of Tilden, centered on its courthouse, can become an active part of the community by providing additional spaces for business enterprises, professional offices, a health clinic and the community’s post office. In addition, the area around the existing courthouse can be upgraded by improving its streets and drainage, enhancing its streetscape, adding new housing, developing a heritage center, creating an incubator building to foster new business development and providing spaces for people to gather. The intent here is to make this part of Tilden a place where local residents and visitors can go to shop, seek services and do business.

The first step in improving this area is to develop a detailed plan for the courthouse and the surrounding area. This plan could be an integral part of the community’s comprehensive plan or it can be a separate downtown study centered on



Source: CURPR

Figure 37: Proposed Streetscape/Highway Improvements at the Courthouse Block -Tilden, TX



Source: CURPR

Figure 38: Proposed Central Core at the Courthouse Block (Viewing South) -Tilden,TX



Source: CURPR

Figure 39: Proposed Central Core at the Courthouse Block (Viewing East) -Tilden, TX



Source: CURPR

Figure 40: Propsed Incubator Building and Brush Country Heritage Center -Tilden,TX

the courthouse. In addition, a marketing assessment/gap analysis should be undertaken to determine just what kinds of businesses are needed in the area. At present, most, if not all of the residents in McMullen County have to travel elsewhere to buy goods and secure services. By developing Courthouse Square into a viable civic and economic center for Tilden and McMullen County local citizens will have a place to shop, seek services and come together.

Increase Housing Options

Affordable quality housing for local residents and newcomers is currently in short supply in Tilden and the county as a whole. This shortage is reflected, in part, in the number of trailers located within and around Tilden to house workers engaged in energy related work in the area (Fig. 41). The key to developing a livable and sustainable community is to provide sufficient housing options for local families and for new families looking to relocate to Tilden. While many of those employed by the oil and gas industry are considered to be transitory every effort should be made to house them in adequate, affordable and attractive accommodations. In addition, infill housing where there is now vacant land or trailers can be built. To the extent possible this housing should be affordable. Well designed apartments that are both affordable and permanent can also be incorporated into areas that are now vacant, underutilized, or used for trailers.

The first step in increasing options for housing in Tilden is to conduct an assessment of existing housing conditions in the community. This can be done in conjunction with the infrastructure planning process described earlier, or separately.



Source: CURPR

Figure 41: Temporary Housing (Shaded Orange) - Tilden, TX

The goal here is to determine what is in place and where are the needs. Temporary housing for workers in the energy industry should, if possible, be located outside of Tilden. Some of the trailer compounds surrounding the community should be left in place, and, if feasible, improved by planting trees and surfacing roads and parking areas serving these compounds. If it is decided to retain temporary housing within Tilden steps should be taken to improve these areas by providing landscaping, utility services and other amenities. The intent here is to improve the overall appearance of neighborhoods in the community where trailers are the primary housing option.

A comprehensive land use plan will be necessary to determine those areas in the community that will be dedicated for housing. Some neighborhoods may also want to incorporate mixed uses blending housing, businesses, and other uses together. Other areas will be set aside for future residential development as the community's population increases. Again, housing in Tilden will likely be varied ranging from trailers, to low-cost apartments, to affordable single family housing, to more expensive single and multi-family residential areas. In addition, neighborhood plans will be incorporated into the comprehensive plan. These plans will provide additional guidelines designed to govern the types of housing and streetscapes in various parts of Tilden. The goal, of course, is to create a more sustainable and attractive living environment for those living in and around Tilden. Another goal, as noted earlier, is to increase the range of housing options for both temporary and permanent residents alike.

Expand Education Options

The community of Tilden and McMullen County has the benefit of a small, but well rated school district. The McMullen County Independent School District currently has two schools that serve approximately 200 students in grades PK through 12. The district's boundary parallels that of McMullen County. The main concern voiced by local residents is the ability to maintain sufficient school enrollment in the district given its low population. This means that new options need to be explored that can expand the district's enrollment base and provide additional educational services to its existing population.

Several small school districts in the Eagle Ford Shale Play have experienced similar needs. Because the region is mainly rural and sparsely populated school districts have begun to experience declining enrollments as families move out of these districts to seek opportunities elsewhere. One strategy used by many rural districts is to consolidate schools by merging those with declining enrollments with those that are still viable. Because of its remote location the McMullen County ISD and its two campuses will likely remain open. The concern here is how to maintain a sufficient student enrollment base to keep the school operating efficiently. One option is to reach out to the adult population in the county by providing extended education and enrichment programs. Another option is to tap into the large temporary worker population in the county by providing them educational services. A third option would be to examine the possibility of providing ongoing safety training and skill upgrading for oil and gas workers in the area utilizing existing school facilities.

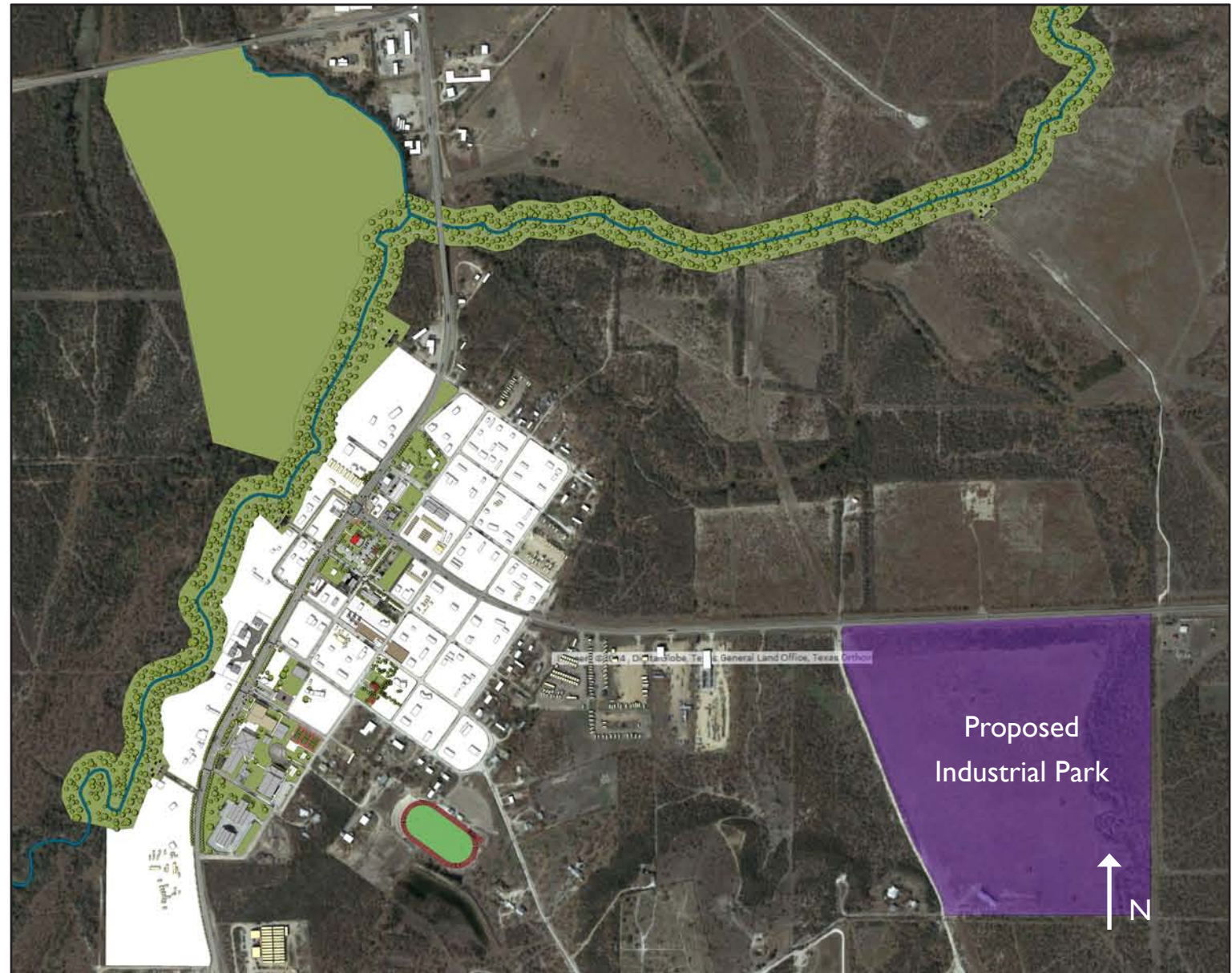
Energy companies in the Eagle Ford Shale Play and other parts of South Texas often work closely with communities and local governments to help them adjust to unexpected shifts in population due to the movement of workers in the region. BHP Billiton, for example, has been assisting Tilden and McMullen County to adjust to the increased oil and gas development in the area. By expanding local facilities and providing a broader education and vocational training program the school district could ensure its survival and perhaps even become a catalyst for additional development in Tilden. Linkages with community colleges in the area should be strengthened, as well, to expand local education programs and training opportunities for those working in the region's energy industry.

To accomplish this, a careful assessment of the area's workforce and training needs will be required. In addition, an assessment of the school district's current educational program, capabilities and facilities should be conducted to determine the feasibility of expanding its program. This can be done independently of the other activities and initiatives already discussed here. Plans for enhancing the district's current facilities and exploring its technical options should also be explored. The intent here is to build on an important community asset and expand its role as an economic and educational/cultural generator for the community and the county.

Create a Light Industrial Park

At the present time and for the foreseeable future the energy industry will drive the economy of Tilden, McMullen County, the Eagle Ford Shale Play and a large part of the South Texas region. In Tilden this development is evident in the numerous man camps scattered in and around Tilden housing workers employed by the industry, and the siting of oil field equipment storage and construction yards located along the community's two major state highways – 16 and 72. While important for the local economy these man camps and storage yards consume valuable land that can be used for higher level activities. They are also unsightly.

One way to address this situation is for Tilden and McMullen County to build a light industrial park that would be able to consolidate some of these equipment storage and construction yards, and provide a site for new businesses that might be interested in moving into the area (Fig. 42). The proposed park would include facilities for warehousing equipment, supplies and vehicles. In addition, it would have its own infrastructure and specialized containment areas designed to hold chemicals and other field assets. It would also provide facilities for management and administrative personnel, as well as training areas for workers employed by energy companies in the area. Again, the intent is to build an industrial type asset that would not only bring together dispersed storage areas, but provide a strong foundation for the county's future development. Moreover, it will not only reduce the current dispersal of unsightly storage yards in and around Tilden it will open up additional land for development.



Source: CURPR

Figure 42: Proposed Light Industrial Park

Develop Frio River Park/Natural Area

Just west of Tilden lies the Frio River. This river and its tributaries has its origins in northeastern Real County. From its origin the Frio River flows generally southeast until it empties into the Nueces River just south of Three Rivers in Live Oak County. Along the way it provides water to the Choke Canyon Reservoir located east of Tilden in McMullen and Live Oak counties. While the water volume in the Frio River at Tilden is usually insufficient for most boating related activities it does provide enough water for a potential park/recreational area for residents in Tilden and the surrounding area.

At present McMullen County has only a limited number of recreational areas within its boundaries. Tilden has no natural areas set aside for park/recreational use. The intent here is to develop a natural asset, i.e., the Frio River, into a park/recreational area for the community to improve its livability and attractiveness. As envisioned in this study the proposed park/natural area would be just west of the courthouse across State Highway 16 (Figs. 43-44). Some park facilities and pedestrian walkways or paths would be constructed to provide access. The park/recreational area will at first have only a limited range of facilities to accommodate local users and visitors. Over the long term additional facilities would be built, if warranted, to accommodate visitors. Also a retention dam could be constructed as a flood control feature and to build a small lake to enhance its usage and attractiveness.

The proposed Frio Park/Natural Area is one way to improve both the appearance and sustainability of Tilden. It is also a way to create additional assets, in this case a natural asset, to



Source: CURPR

Figure 43: Proposed Frio River Park

grow the community. If it is decided to undertake this initiative it will be necessary to conduct a comprehensive site study to determine the exact boundaries of the park. In addition, information on the sites' flora and fauna will have to be

gathered to determine what is there. In time the park could become a major asset for the community and the county as it grows and takes shape. The key point here is that in order to transform Tilden it will be necessary to use all of its assets to

build a livable and attractive community. The Frio River is one such asset.



Source: CURPR

Figure 44: Proposed Frio River Park

Implementation Strategy

To carry out the recommendations and action steps discussed below it will be important to bring together the community's and county's leadership to address issues of common concern and to develop an overall implementation strategy. The key players in this task should be McMullen County and its designated Community Development Committee. Both, in turn, should draw in local citizens, business and civic leaders and public officials as the implementation process moves forward.

Implementing the Plan-Areas of Responsibility

In carrying out this plan a blend of public and private participation will be necessary. This public/private partnership is important because no one entity has the resources needed to fully implement this kind of plan over time. Each sector also has a set of responsibilities. These are briefly described below:

Public Sector – McMullen County

County government in McMullen County is the only incorporated public entity in the county. It is responsible for the planning and construction of infrastructure improvements, the platting of land for various uses, and the development of various ordinances and laws to guide its long-term economic and community growth. It is also responsible for, along with the Texas Department of Transportation, developing, maintaining and upgrading the county's roads and highways. To help it carry out its community development and housing responsibilities the county has established a Community Development Committee. As envisioned in this plan this committee,

along with any other committees or working groups the county may designate, will take on the primary coordination role in carrying out this plan.

Private Sector

The private sector in McMullen County creates the basis for Tilden's and the county's overall economy. It also helps to generate the necessary revenue and investment assets which drive its economy. It is comprised mainly of local and area businesses that provide goods and services to the local population. The role of the energy industry is equally important. That industry is now driving most of the economic growth and investment in the county today.

Communities are most successful when they can pull themselves together when they need to do so. Successful communities are also proactive. They seek to anticipate change rather than simply react to it. This plan reflects McMullen County's desire to create new opportunities for its citizens. It also sets the stage for transforming Tilden into a strong, viable and sustainable community.

Implementation Plan – Tilden

The Implementation Plan described below presents each of the recommendations discussed earlier and the steps needed to carry them out. It also provides information on obtaining critical resources needed for implementation. Additional information describing possible funding sources to support these initiatives is included in Appendix B of this study. As noted previously, the primary coordinating and implementing entity for the plan is McMullen County working through its existing venues. It is also

recommended that its Community Development Committee be given the responsibility of overseeing the implementation process for the county. As it moves forward the county and its coordinating committee will also draw in other partner's and assets to facilitate the implementation process. The long-term goal is to develop Tilden into a prosperous, livable and sustainable community to make it the center of community life and commerce in McMullen County.

Specific Initiatives

To carry out this plan McMullen County should take steps to form a special working group or team to lead the development effort in Tilden. The county already has formed a Community Development Committee to spearhead activities and projects focusing on community development and revitalization. This committee could also serve as the lead project team for the this initiative. Whatever group is formed one of the primary roles will be to create an effective public/private partnership to develop a long-term plan with timelines to implement the recommendations put forth in this study. It will also be responsible for mobilizing the community's assets, talents and resources to develop the actual plan of action. Once the committee or task force is in place it will focus on the following:

1. Incorporate Tilden into a General Law City establishing its boundaries, governing framework and planning responsibilities. The intent here is to establish the jurisdictional prerequisites to move Tilden from a community that serves as the county seat for McMullen County to an incorporated community that will have the responsibility of governing itself. This process and the

process of incorporation will, of course, have to follow legal guidelines established by both McMullen County and the State of Texas.

2. Undertake necessary infrastructure initiatives in Tilden to improve its livability and sustainability. This can be done in conjunction with the incorporation process discussed previously. Under the leadership of the county's Community Development Committee and/or a designated public/private team efforts should begin to work on developing a comprehensive infrastructure plan for Tilden. This plan, at a minimum, should focus on developing an overall strategy for Tilden covering such areas as land uses, infrastructure needs, zoning, transportation planning, housing, cultural and historical preservation, economic development, environmental needs and community design. The goal here is to put in place a baseline plan that will govern both the short-term and long-term development of Tilden.
3. Improve Courthouse Square and surrounding blocks in Tilden. This can be done separately from the other initiatives described previously. The goal here is to create a new focus for Tilden built around the McMullen County Courthouse. To move forward with this effort a special public/private partnership committee should be formed, or the task can be assigned to the county's Community Development Committee to acquire the services of a planner/architect to develop a plan to revitalize and upgrade the area immediately adjacent to and around the courthouse. As noted earlier, this area can be transformed

by improving the streetscape, incorporating civic design features in the area, creating several plazas, and providing additional facilities for new businesses, health providers, restaurants and public service entities like a post office. The plan would also provide a detailed framework for developing new housing and rehabilitating existing housing in and around the square.

4. Increasing housing options in Tilden is another major initiative being proposed here. The intent is to not only provide additional housing for residents and workers in Tilden, but to improve housing conditions in structures already occupied, as well. By rationalizing the use of land set aside for housing and developing new sites for low-cost apartments and affordable homes in Tilden the organization of existing land uses and related land values in the community can be improved. Another goal is to make better use of underdeveloped and underutilized land in the community, and to consolidate the existing dispersion of trailers within the community to land specifically set aside for this type of housing. A third goal is to improve existing trailer type housing for workers employed in the energy industry in and around Tilden. To move forward with this effort it will be important to proceed with the incorporation of Tilden, and to develop a comprehensive housing plan for the community. The incorporation of Tilden will provide it with a legal basis for developing new housing options in the community in a rational and sustained manner. The development of a comprehensive housing plan will also provide Tilden with

the rational basis for siting various housing types in the community.

5. Expanding education options in Tilden and McMullen County is an initiative that can be pursued apart from the others being recommended here. The intent of this initiative is to strengthen and enhance the use of existing school district facilities by expanding its reach into markets that are not being tapped into, i.e., adult education and temporary workers employed by the energy industry. To move forward with this it is recommended that a joint team of local educators and energy industry representatives come together to explore the possibility of improving the education and skill levels of workers currently employed in the oil and gas industry in the area. This same group could also examine the prospects of developing an adult education program for county residents and energy workers in the county. In addition, steps should be taken, if not already done, to develop a strong working relationship with community college districts serving the area to expand educational options for those living and working in the county and surrounding region. The long-term goal is to maintain and, if possible, expand the role of the McMullen County ISD and its main campus in Tilden. Equally important, is the need to maintain this asset as an important part of the community's cultural life.
6. In order to expand the local economy in Tilden and McMullen County it is strongly recommended that a light industrial park be developed and sited near Tilden. The proposed industrial park will not only consolidate current

storage and equipment yards now used by the energy industry in McMullen County, but also provide the means to create additional job and business opportunities for local investors and entrepreneurs. To move forward with this initiative it is recommended that a joint public/private committee and/or the county's Community Development Committee develop an overall site concept plan for the proposed industrial park. In addition, a market analysis/economic base study should be carried out to help the committee develop a list of potential businesses that could be targeted or recruited for the industrial park. This effort could also be expanded to include other parts of Tilden and the county. In addition, the designated committee can work with existing businesses in Tilden and McMullen County to improve their operations, upgrade facilities and expand their markets. The proposed park should be relatively self-contained and have its own infrastructure in order to accommodate a wide range of businesses. Its location should be determined by taking into account several factors including its access to highways, environmental restrictions and zoning requirements.

7. Developing a park and recreational area along the Frio River just west of Tilden represents another major initiative that can contribute to the economy and quality of life of residents living in the community and McMullen County. As envisioned in this study the proposed park/natural area will be located in a flood plain situated in close proximity to the main branch of the Frio River running through McMullen County. To accomplish this, the county can establish a special working group to scope

out the boundaries of the park, and develop an overall implementation plan to make it a reality. As noted earlier, the proposed park will not only spur additional economic development by attracting visitors and tourists to Tilden, it can also serve to enhance the community's quality of life. This project could work in partnership with the Texas Department of Agriculture and other state agencies that could provide funding and marketing assistance.

In carrying out these and other projects in Tilden and McMullen County it will be necessary to put in place a management team that can coordinate, sustain and move forward with them. The lead entity for implementing these projects will be McMullen County and its various departments and committees. In addition, other public/private sector committees can be formed to coordinate specific initiatives in Tilden and the county. To ensure that these projects stay on course it is also recommended that the county have a manager or development director to oversee them. This person can also serve as a link between the groups actually planning and carrying out projects and the Commissioner's Court. The goal of this effort is to make sure that McMullen County is able to successfully move forward with the implementation of projects that will have a bearing on its future economy and quality of life.

Economic Development/Investment Strategies

Equally important for the long-term development of Tilden and McMullen County is the need to expand the economy, generate new investment, provide job opportunities for local residents and create a more sustainable growth process for the community and the county as a whole. To achieve these

aims it is recommended that McMullen County put in place an economic and business development strategy that centers on expanding its small business sector, enhances entrepreneurship, brings in new investment, and takes advantage of an expanding oil and gas industry in the county and the surrounding region. The county can also work with existing local businesses in the area to build up their operations. To accomplish these ends several initiatives are proposed. These are described below:

- To expand the economy in Tilden and the county, as a whole, McMullen County should take steps to build up the small business sector mainly located in and around Tilden. This can be done by developing a small business support network in the area. This network would focus in on several things such as training, providing technical support and market research. The county can also work with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network and the Rural Business Program housed in the Institute for Economic Development at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Also housed in the institute is the Eagle Ford Shale Community Development Program. This program is specifically designed to assist communities in the Eagle Ford Shale area with planning services, research support and training to promote sustainable economic growth strategies. The intent of this initiative is to strengthen existing businesses in the community and grow new ones by providing them with the support they need to better meet the needs of their market.
- In addition to working with existing businesses and bringing in new businesses McMullen County should

also seek to capitalize as much as possible on the growing energy industry in and around the county. Development in the Eagle Ford Shale Play is expected to continue over the next decade at a fairly steady pace. While there will be ups and downs in the oil and gas industry over time, the long-term prognosis is good for continued growth. One way McMullen County can take advantage of its strategic location within the Eagle Ford Shale Play is to actively encourage energy related companies to locate facilities in the county. This strategy can be broadened by providing additional facilities such as the light industrial park proposed earlier. Expanded housing options would also provide additional incentives for companies to locate their administrative and management personnel in the area. The key, however, is to do this in a way that minimizes any negative impacts that might result from unplanned and/or haphazard development.

- One of the limiting factors being confronted by McMullen County as it seeks to build up its local economy is its small population base. This small population translates into a small market for local businesses. Even with the large number of workers employed by the energy industry in the county and the surrounding area the local market base is too small to support a robust small business sector. This can be addressed over the long-term by encouraging more people to move to Tilden and McMullen County. However, this may or may not be a desirable strategy for local leaders and residents. To counter this, McMullen County could

recruit certain types of businesses that are needed to provide goods and services to the existing population in Tilden and the county, as a whole. It can also take full advantage of development in the Eagle Ford Shale Play to attract and encourage energy companies to locate facilities in the county. In addition, it can take a look at growing its tourism industry. This would entail an expanded marketing strategy. It would also require the development of new facilities to accommodate visitors and tourists coming into the area for extended stays. Over the long-term the continued development of the energy industry in the county; and, the development of a tourism based industry could be the kinds of catalysts needed to expand the economy in McMullen County.

- In order for Tilden and McMullen County to strengthen and broaden its long-term economic future the availability and capabilities of the workforce is extremely important. One way to improve its local workforce is to expand its existing education facility in Tilden to provide additional training opportunities for area residents and workers currently employed in the energy industry in the region. This approach would also help to encourage some of the younger residents to stay in the county. At the present time many of the students who graduate from high school in Tilden are forced to move elsewhere to seek employment and educational opportunities. This outward migration of talent also keeps the county's population base low. By providing additional opportunities for local residents and for those just graduating from high school this

outward migration of talented young people might be reversed. The end results, will be a stronger economy for both Tilden and McMullen County. This would also ensure a better trained workforce of local businesses and the area's energy industry.

- In addition to the above, McMullen County may want to develop a range of incentives designed to attract new businesses to Tilden and the county. These incentives should be targeted to selected types of businesses to grow the local economy, provide new job opportunities, bring in additional investment, diversify the economy, and improve the quality of life for local and area residents. There are a number of economic development policies and incentives the county can use to accomplish these aims. They range from a reduction in property taxes to the creation of reinvestment zones better known as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts. One approach McMullen County might want to consider is to make the proposed industrial park facility a TIF District to attract new businesses. The county may also want to consider using enhanced infrastructures to incentivize development in Tilden and the surrounding area. In this instance, McMullen County could extend planned or existing public infrastructure to develop a particular site or property above and beyond a level that would normally be provided to other land owners in the area. Finally, it may want to consider the possibility of creating an economic development corporation

to better organize its economic and community development priorities. This, however, would entail the imposition of an economic development sales tax. If this were done, McMullen County could establish a Type A or B economic development corporation. Type A sales taxes are mostly restricted to spending for economic development purposes, while Type B sales taxes are broader in scope and have more flexibility. Again the intent is to build a stronger economy for Tilden and McMullen County. The development of a stronger local economy is crucial for the long-term growth of both.

Economic and community development are closely linked together. Without a strong local economy it will be difficult to move forward with the development of Tilden. At the same time, certain preconditions are necessary to support this economy. Many of these preconditions were discussed previously. The reality, however, is that many of these preconditions and assets are lacking in Tilden and McMullen County. The recommendations and strategies included in this vision study are designed to address these conditions.

Next Steps

The initiatives and strategies outlined in this section are designed to improve the sustainability, attractiveness and economic potential of Tilden and McMullen County. They are also designed to improve Tilden's quality of life by adding amenities and services that will provide new opportunities for local residents. They will also bring more residents and visitors to Tilden's downtown and increase the revenue base

of local businesses in the area. In order to move forward with their implementation, a detailed a plan of action which takes full advantage of Tilden's and McMullen County's assets must be put in place. This effort must also be cost-effective and incorporate realistic goals. The next step is to review the recommendations and strategies included in this study to determine their merit. This will then set the stage for creating appropriate mechanisms and organizations at both the community and the county levels to move forward with their implementation.

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Appendix A

Summary of Community SWOT Session

Strengths

Group I

1. Strong Roots
2. Strong Group of Leaders
3. Strong School System
4. Co-operation
5. Strength/Resilience of People
6. Generous
7. Conservative
8. Local Economy
9. Oil/Natural Resources
10. Hunting
11. Ranching
12. Community Involvement
13. Moral Values
14. 100% Graduation Rate
15. Business Opportunities

Group II

16. People (close knit community)
17. Generous Community
18. Excellent School District
19. Spiritual Community
20. Safe Community (low crime rate)
21. Rich Culture and Tradition
22. Minerals/Natural Resources
23. Can-Do Attitude

24. Outdoor Recreation

25. History

Group III

26. Ranches (Very Old; Property Passed down through Generations)
27. Schools (Teachers who Stay)
28. Exemplary School Status, Volleyball and Basketball Teams, Future Farmers of America (FFA)
29. Agriculture
30. Churches
31. Businesses (Joe's Food Market, Wheeler's Mercantile, Max's Cafe)
32. People are Long-Time Residents (Senior Citizens)
33. Encourage Young People to Stay (4H and FFA Groups/ Activities)

Weaknesses

Group I

1. Lack of Housing
2. Poor Condition of Roads
3. (Lack of Adequate) Water Supply
4. (Lack of Adequate) Sewer System
5. Environmental Concerns (Air Quality)
6. Trash/Litter on Roads
7. (Amount of) Traffic
8. Lack of Child Care
9. Isolation
10. (Lack of Adequate) Emergency Services
11. Lack of Medical Facilities
12. Increased Crime

13. Stray Animals

14. (Lack of Adequate) Recycling

15. Drugs

Group II

16. No Park
17. (Lack of Adequate) Housing
18. (Lack of Adequate) Water/Sewer System
19. (Amount of) Transportation/Traffic
20. (Lack of Adequate) Roads/Sidewalks
21. Minor Medical Clinic (too small)
22. (Lack of Adequate) Communication Network (cell/internet)
23. (Lack of Adequate) Animal Control
24. (Lack of Adequate) Afterschool & Summer Activities for Children
25. (Lack of Adequate) Child Care
26. Flooding
27. (Lack of) Street Lighting
28. (Lack of Public) Facilities
29. (Lack of) Handicapped Access

Group III

30. Young People Leaving
31. Lack of Long Term Affordable Housing
32. Lack of Industries (Other than Energy)
33. Labor Shortage for Local Businesses
34. Agriculture Susceptible to Drought
35. Conditions of Roads (County Roads)
36. Poor Roads in Town

- 37. No Recreation Facilities for Young People (except Baptist Church)
- 38. Lack of Day Care
- 39. Traffic Congestion at Post Office (Residents do not get mail delivered to their homes)
- 40. No Parking (Lack of Adequate Parking)

Opportunities

Group I

- 1. Jobs
- 2. Business
- 3. Community Improvements
- 4. Great Schools/Teachers
- 5. Infrastructure Development

Group II

- 6. Jobs (Employment Opportunities)
- 7. New Business (Start-Up) Opportunities
- 8. Funding for Programs for Youth, Teens, Adults, and Seniors
- 9. Potential for Technical Training (Welding, Electrician, Plumbing)
- 10. Make Community More Appealing
- 11. Opportunity to Re-invest in Community

Group III

- 12. Oil and Gas Industry
- 13. School
- 14. Increased Revenue = Allows Planning for the Future
- 15. New Businesses Needed: Drug Store, Car Wash, Medical Clinic, Dentist, Bank, Title Co.

Threats

Group I

- 1. Increased Crime
- 2. Flooding
- 3. Increased Traffic
- 4. (Worsening) Air Quality: Hydrogen Sulfide
- 5. Environmental Issues
- 6. Increasing Waste Disposal Issues
- 7. Worsening Housing Shortage
- 8. Worsening Water Shortage
- 9. Uncertainty of Future Oil Production
- 10. Influx of New People
- 11. Poor Assimilation of New People into the Community
- 12. Income Leakage (Consumer Spending, Opportunity Gap)
- 13. Drugs
- 14. Possible Pipeline Leaks
- 15. Competition between New and Old Businesses

Group II

- 16. Trash (Litter and/or Waste Management)
- 17. Environmental Issues (Pollution)
- 18. Traffic (Overload)
- 19. Resistance to Change
- 20. Lack of Economic Diversity
- 21. Lack of Access to Fresh Water
- 22. Contamination of Water
- 23. Drug Issues/Increasing Crime
- 24. Potential "Bust" at End of EFS Play
- 25. Changing Values
- 26. Current Infrastructure Cannot Handle Population Growth

- 27. Worsening Air Quality

- 28. Youth Leaving

Group III

- 29. Big Trucks = Bad Roads

- 30. Bad Drivers (Speeding, Unsafe)

- 31. Car Wrecks

- 32. Not enough Water for Growing Population

- 33. Population Decline and Aging (among Long-Time Residents)

Appendix B

Community Resources

U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development Programs (USDA-RD)

Business and Industry Guaranteed Loans (B & I)

B&I loans are offered to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. Cooperative organizations, partnerships, non-profits, public bodies, or individuals can apply for a loan provided that the funds are used for specific purposes. They can be used to start up or acquire a business if doing so will prevent employment loss and/or create employment opportunity. Funds can also be used to modernize a business or purchase equipment, land, buildings, or easements. Further information can be found on the USDA-RD website: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_gar.html

Rural Energy for America Program

This program is available to rural small businesses and agricultural producers through local lenders approved by the USDA. The loans and grants must be used to purchase renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements. More information is available at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_ReapResEei_Eligibility.html

Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program (RBEG)

The RBEG Program provides grants for the development of rural businesses, provides funding employment rated adult

education programs, and funds distance learning networks in order to give employees access to adult education programs. Examples of eligible projects include construction or renovations, training and technical assistance, and distance adult learning for training and advancement. More information can be obtained by visiting the RBEG Program website: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_rbeg.html

Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)

The purpose of the IRP is to alleviate poverty and increase economic activity and employment in rural communities. Low-interest loans are provided to community organizations for the establishment of revolving loan funds. These organizations can then provide loans for activities like construction or repair of businesses, purchasing and development of land, or pollution control and abatement. More information can be found at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_irp.html

Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

These grants are designed to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. Funds can be used for strategic planning, feasibility studies, leadership and entrepreneur training, and more. This program is designated for any area not within the boundaries of a city that has a population of more than 10,000. More information can be found at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_RBOG.html

Community Facilities Grants

This program provides grant funds to develop essential community facilities in rural communities and areas up to 20,000 in population. Funds may be used to build healthcare

facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities. More information on the program can be found at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-CF_Grants.html

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable communities and ensure everyone has access to an affordable home. They accomplish this through a variety of grants and programs that offer assistance for a variety of needs including disaster recovery, home-improvement, and housing for the elderly.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program

This program offers grants to states and local governments to implement local housing strategies for increasing homeownership and affordable housing opportunities for low-income Americans. Funding can be used for the rehabilitation of housing, provide assistance to homebuyers and facilitate the construction of new housing. Participating jurisdictions must match 25% of HOME funds. More information can be found at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-12.pdf>

Good Neighbor Next Door

Law enforcement officers, teachers, firefighters, and EMT's are given the opportunity to buy homes in revitalization areas at a significant discount. The goal is to make the neighborhoods safer and stronger. More information can be found at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-21.pdf>

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

The CDBG Program is a national program whose goal is to develop viable communities by providing decent housing, suitable living environments and expanding economic opportunities principally for those of low to moderate income. Funds can be allocated for several uses including disaster relief, water and sewer infrastructure improvements, and renewable energy pilot programs. More information can be found through the Department of Housing and Urban Development website at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/toc>

Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program

This program offers competitive grants to private non-profits, counties, and local governments for re-housing of individuals placed in emergency or transitional housing, and for improving the housing situation of low-income families in a geographical area. Funds can also be used to help low-income residents keep their homes and/or improve their access to affordable housing. Additional information is available at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-15.pdf>

Self-Help Housing Property Disposition

This program makes surplus federal properties available to state and local governments at less than fair market value for the purpose of building self-help housing for low-income residents. Residents of the property must make a substantial contribution of labor towards the construction, rehabilitation, or renovation of the property. More information can be found by visiting the HUD website at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-47.pdf>

Community Challenge Planning Grant Program

These grants are given in partnership with the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency for the development of affordable, economically vital, and sustainable communities. Funds can be used to modify master plans, zoning, and building codes to promote development and the re-use of older buildings with the goal of promoting sustainability at the neighborhood and community levels. More information can be obtained at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-85.pdf>

Other Federal Agencies and Programs

U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The EDA has several programs designed to improve communities throughout the country. The Public Works Program provides funding to revitalize, expand and upgrade infrastructure in distressed communities to draw in new business and job opportunities to an area. They also provide planning and economic development strategies to designated Economic Development Districts, communities and councils of government. More programs and information are available at: <http://www.eda.gov/>

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The SBA offers a number of financial assistance programs for small businesses. They also set guidelines for loans through lenders and community development organizations, help small business contractors obtain surety bonds, and provide mentors and counseling through its Service Corps of Retired Executives

(SCORE) Program. While they do not directly provide grants, they have several sources of funding listed on their website at: <http://www.sba.gov/content/what-sba-offers-help-small-businesses-grow>

Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)

FEMA offers a variety of grants not only for victims of natural disasters, but for mitigation activities that avert future damage. They also offer grants to local fire departments for staffing, volunteer firefighter retention, and reducing injuries and deaths among high-risk populations. More information can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/grants>

Texas Historical Commission Programs

Texas Main Street Program

The Texas Main Street program was formed over 30 years ago and is operated through the Texas State Historical Commission. The programs goal is to provide technical expertise, resources and support to Texas communities to preserve and revitalize historic downtowns and commercial neighborhood districts. Communities can apply annually, and each year up to five cities are selected for Texas Main Street designation. Once accepted, cities pay a nominal annual fee based on population and have access to strategic planning reports, design services, resources for funding projects, and much more. More information can be obtained by visiting: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/texas-main-street> or by contacting the Texas Main Street State Coordinator at (512)463-6092. (Texas Historical Commission)

Museum Services

The Texas State Historical Commission also helps small history museums through its Museum Services Program. Staff provides free consultations and assistance in a number of areas including museum development, strategic planning, exhibit design, fundraising and volunteer training. Additionally they offer training on various museum topics through workshops and online. More information can be found by visiting: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/museum-services> or contact the Museum Services Coordinator at (512)463-6427.

Cemetery Preservation

The Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation provided through the Texas Historic Commission protects these cemeteries by recording boundaries in county records to alert current and future owners of land surrounding these areas. This designation does not impose any restrictions on the private use of land. The site must be designated as an HTC before it is eligible for a historical marker. More information is available at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/cemetery-preservation>.

Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation (THCP)

The THCP Program was established in 1999 to help counties restore their historic courthouses. The program provides partial matching grants and is regularly funded by the Texas Legislature. Training and education is also provided to county staff for future preservation needs. Further information can be found at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/texas-historic-courthouse-preservation>

Certified Local Government Program (CLG)

The CLG Program is a partnership for historic preservation of state, federal, and local government. Local governments work independently to develop and maintain a successful preservation program. To qualify, a city or county must enforce legislation that protects historic properties, establish a qualified review commission, maintain a survey and inventory of historic properties, and provide for public participation in the preservation process. More information is available at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/certified-local-government>

Texas Department of Agriculture Programs

Texas Capital Fund (TCF)

This program allocates funds to incorporated cities and county governments that do not meet the standards set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program. Funds can be used for real estate development, infrastructure improvements, and downtown revitalization efforts. The TCF can also help attract new business and grow the local economy. More information can be found at: <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/TexasCapitalFund.aspx>.

GO TEXAN Rural Community Program

This program is designed to encourage the growth of rural communities throughout Texas. It is a membership-based program that promotes economic activity in rural areas through restaurants, tourism, and special recognition of products made in Texas. Restaurants as well as items manufactured or grown in Texas can receive the special GO TEXAS label.

More information is at: <http://www.gotexan.org/ForMembers/GOTEXANPartnerProgram.aspx>

State Office of Rural Health (SORH)

The SORH works with local healthcare providers, county leaders and state partners to support access to quality healthcare for rural Texans. It also assists healthcare providers through programs that provide information and referrals, medical licensing, grants, and educational awards. A complete list of programs can be found by visiting: <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/StateOfficeofRuralHealth.aspx>

Other State Agencies and Programs

Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The TEA provides grants to schools and school districts throughout Texas for the academic enrichment of students. Examples of grants offered are the Algebra Readiness for Small and Rural Schools Grant, the Online College and Career Preparation Technical Assistance Grant, and the Public Charter School Start-up Grant. More Information can be found at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147487872>

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

The mission of the TDHCA is to improve the quality of life of all Texans through the development of better communities. They act as an intermediary for federal grant funds for housing and community services. They also act as a financial and administrative resource that provides essential services and

affordable housing to those who qualify and provides resources for first-time home buyers. More information is available at: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/index.htm>

Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT)

TXDOT offers a number of grants for infrastructure and accessibility improvements. The Safe Routes to Schools Grant is designed to improve the safety of children in grades K-8 that walk or bike to school. The routine Airport Maintenance Program matches local government grants up to \$50,000 for basic improvements like parking lots, fences, or other similar needs at airport facilities. TXDOT also administers funds from several federal grant programs designed to help cities with planning and research, rural public transportation, and transportation for individuals with disabilities. Further information can be found at: <http://www.txdot.gov/government/funding.html>

Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)

The TWDB offers grants and loans for the planning, design, and construction of water related infrastructure and improvement programs. They also offer grants to local governments and technical assistance for agricultural water conservation, flood mitigation, and clean drinking water programs. More information can be found at: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/financial/programs/AWCG/index.asp>

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

The TCEQ offers both competitive and non-competitive grants to local governments for a variety of uses. Funds can be provided for cleanup or prevention of pollution, research

into pollution reduction, or for replacing old municipal vehicles with newer, more efficient models. The Texas Clean School Bus Program provides money to school districts to replace old school buses with new ones or retrofit them with new technology to reduce the pollution from diesel exhaust. More information can be found at: http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/governments_main.html

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

The TSSWCB offers a matching funds program for soil and water conservation assistance. Through local conservation boards they also offer technical and planning assistance to agricultural producers to incorporate best management practices on their farms and ranches. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/swcdassistance>

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

The TPWD offers 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, and other units of government for the development of parks, nature centers, urban outdoor recreation, and recreational trails. They also offer 75% matching funds for the construction of public boat ramps throughout Texas. Further information on programs and deadlines can be found at: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/#outdoor>

Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)

The TVC awards reimbursement grants to local government agencies and Veterans Service Organizations that provide direct assistance to Texas veterans and their families. Grants

are offered for limited financial assistance, transportation services, housing assistance, and family and child services. More information, grant applications and deadlines can be found at: <http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Apply-For-A-Grant.aspx>.

Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA)

The TCA offers a variety of grants to municipal and county arts agencies to provide services and support in the advancement of the cultural arts. Information and deadlines can be found at: <https://www2.arts.state.tx.us/tcagrants/TXArtsPlan/TAPTOC.asp>

Economic Development

Type A and B Economic Development Sales Tax

These voter-approved taxes are used by cities to promote economic development. To date, more than 583 cities in Texas have collected over \$500 million annually in sales tax revenue. (Office of the Attorney General of Texas) There are key differences between the Type A and Type B sales tax mainly in the ways cities can adopt a sales tax, use tax revenue, and the oversight of project expenditures. Not every city can collect Type A sales taxes, but every city in Texas can collect Type B.

Type A is considered more restrictive and allows more traditional types of economic development initiatives that assist manufacturing or industrial activities. It can fund things like buildings, equipment, facilities, distribution centers, and infrastructure improvements. It can also fund business related airports, port facilities, and some airport activities within 25 miles of an international border. (Office of the Attorney General of Texas)

Type B Sales Taxes fund the same projects that Type A can, as well as projects considered to be community initiatives. Facilities and expenditures for a professional or amateur sports park, entertainment facilities, tourist facilities, and affordable housing are allowed under Type B funds, but with additional procedural requirements. More information is available through the Office of the Attorney General of Texas: https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/econdevhb2013.pdf

Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT)

The HOT is imposed on anyone paying for a room or space in a hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast costing \$15 or more per night. It also applies to condominiums, apartments, and houses that are rented for less than 30 consecutive days. The State of Texas charges 6% of the cost of the room, and local city and county taxing authorities are allowed to impose an additional percentage provided it does not go above 15% of the room rate. Funds collected must be used to directly enhance and promote tourism. They must also fit into one of the nine statutory categories outlined in the tax code. These categories include the funding of a visitor's center, tourism related advertising, programs that enhance the arts, historical preservation, and others. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/hotel/index.html>

Property Tax Incentives

Attracting new businesses and encouraging economic growth can be accomplished using the right property tax incentives. Property tax abatement, tax increment financing, and the Texas Economic Development Act are three ways a municipality can

grow economically, attract new industries, and retain existing employers.

Property tax abatement is where incorporated cities, counties, and special districts are permitted to enter into an agreement with a taxpayer (i.e. a business) that exempts all or part of the increase in property value from taxation over a period of up to ten years. (Texas Comptroller's Economic Development & Analysis Division)

Tax increment financing can be used by a city or county to publically finance needed improvements to infrastructure and buildings within a designated reinvestment zone. (Office of the Texas attorney General) The cost of improvements is financed by future tax revenues levied against property in the improved area.

The Texas Economic Development Act also gives school districts the ability to create jobs and attract investment. A school district can provide tax credits and an 8-year limitation on appraised value of a property on the school district property tax to eligible corporations or limited liability companies (LLC). In return, the companies are required to use the property for manufacturing, research and development, clean energy generation and other similar uses. (Office of the Attorney General of Texas) More information on property tax incentives can be found by visiting: https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/econdevhb2013.pdf

County Development District (CDD)

Counties with a population of 400,000 or less can be petitioned

by landowners to establish a CDD in an effort to promote and develop tourism in the county. They are allowed to levy taxes for such purposes provided that they do not exceed the 2% cap on local tax rates. More information can be found at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.383.htm>

Public Improvement Districts (PID)

PID's provide a way for cities make necessary public improvements by allowing them to collect special assessments on property within the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. A PID can be formed to improve drainage and wastewater facilities, construct or improve libraries or off-street parking, acquire and install pieces of art, or other similar projects that improve public safety and economic development. More information of PID's can be found at: http://www.texasahead.org/tax_programs/pubimprovement/

Municipal Management Districts (MMD)

Also called a downtown management district, a MMD is created within an existing commercial area as a supplement to municipal services in the area. Improvements to infrastructure and facilities are paid for by a combination of self-imposed property taxes, impact fees, and special assessments. Many cities in Texas have used this tool with great success. Additional information can be found by visiting: https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/econdevhb2013.pdf

Neighborhood Empowerment Zones (NEZ)

A NEZ can be established by a city to promote economic development activities within a designated area. The zone must promote the creation of affordable housing; an increase

in economic development; an increase in quality of social services; education, and public safety; and, the rehabilitation of affordable housing. The city has certain development powers within the zone to draw in economic activity. They may grant waivers for building fees, issue municipal sales tax refunds, offer property tax abatements, and establish baseline performance standards and environmental goals on construction projects. More information can be found at: <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.378.htm>

NAFTA Impact Zones

Cities with areas affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement are authorized to establish this zone. The rules are nearly identical to Neighborhood Empowerment zones. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.379.htm>