



# ATOP

## *Assistance Towards Opportunities for Prosperity*

A NEWSLETTER OF THE EDA UNIVERSITY CENTER  
CENTER FOR ENERGY AND ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION  
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN  
SUMMER 2000

### *The EDA University Center Offers Many Services*

The EDA University Center at The University of Texas of the Permian Basin has been working with the Visitors Development Board of Fort Stockton on a "Tourism Study" for the past six months. The study began in January 2000 and the final report was given on August 17, 2000. The report consisted of surveys of: motel operators, motel visitors, attraction visitors, demographic information and an impact study which indicates the economic impact of tourism on the city.

The center provides many services, including the following:

- ◆ Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The EDA-UC works with local areas to develop CEDS. A CEDS is a requirement for any grant proposal to EDA or other federal agencies.
- ◆ Surveys. The EDA-UC is involved in developing and conducting surveys for telecommunications, customer satisfaction, tourism, etc.
- ◆ Demographic data on counties (county profiles). The EDA-UC has placed census data, workforce data, housing data, vital statistics, retail sales, and Effective Buying Income (EBI) on our web site. It may be accessed at: <http://www.edauc.utpb.edu>. Watch this area for new counties in the next quarter.
- ◆ Internet links to local communities. We are placing links to Cities, Counties, Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Districts, Economic Development organizations, etc. on the EDA-UC web site. If you have not sent your URL address to us please do so. The address is: [williamson\\_t@utpb.edu](mailto:williamson_t@utpb.edu).
- ◆ Grant searches and assistance. We have helped many of the communities of West Texas locate sources for funding and assisted in the development of proposals.
- ◆ Leadership Training. The EDA-UC is working with the Pecos Valley RC&D to develop a leadership course to help potential leaders in rural counties develop the skills needed to take their place in the local community. The first classes will be offered this fall.
- ◆ Special demographic studies. We provide research on many types of data which is not included in our county data listing on the web. We maintain records from several state and federal agencies for these studies.
- ◆ Sudden and severe job relocation. The EDA-UC tries to respond promptly upon learning of job loss or the potential thereof for our communities of West Texas. When jobs are being lost or there is a threat of job loss, let us help.
- ◆ Industrial growth. The best growth we can find is in our own back yard. Often our firms have an opportunity to grow, with a little help. We attempt to find help for the firm and the community to increase the jobs available locally.

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## *From the Director*

The EDA University Center (EDA-UC) at The University of Texas of the Permian Basin is proud of the progress west Texas has taken in meeting the economic development and diversification needs produced by the downturn of the petroleum industry. But we have much more that is required. In an effort to address these problems, the EDA-UC is revising its primary service area to include all of the Concho Valley Economic Development District. This thirteen county area has suffered from the changes in petroleum and agriculture over the past few years. This is consistent with the Permian Basin area and therefore will provide much in the way of consistency in the programs of the EDA-UC.

The EDA-UC will provide training for economic development practitioners at the next semi-annual meeting. An agenda is being worked on at this time and we will attempt to include topics of benefit to the area. If you have a specific topic you would like to see included, please let us know. It is anticipated that topics, which cannot be adequately covered at this meeting, will be covered in a later session.

Unemployment has increased in the summer months in the region. This seasonal change will be watched carefully as we enter the fall. These figures often rise due to school age youth who look for employment at this time. The estimated population continues to be below 1998 and 1999 due to the loss of jobs and the people who went to other parts of the country for jobs.

The continuation of the drought has persisted in most of the region. This causes the agricultural portion of the economy to experience much reduced incomes and the casual labor often required is not in existence. Water shortages are plaguing many areas of West Texas. This becomes a priority when supplies decline.

Industries associated with the oil and agriculture industries have seen a decline as their services and products are not required in this downturn.

The good news is the new businesses in the area. We are seeing a change from an agricultural and petroleum dependent area to an economy with many diverse industries. This will protect our economy from the cycles of one industry. However, we need to continue to diversify with new opportunities throughout the region.

West Texas is no longer a “no-mans” land. We connect with the world through technology and telecommunications. There are businesses marketing materials in rural, off the main road communities and competing favorably with firms in New York, Dallas, Houston and other major cities. We need to capitalize on this opportunity in our area and see the economy build. We regret the loss of people who want to live in our communities, but must continue changes to provide employment.

The excitement is growing. Be a part of the WEST TEXAS of the future.

***Troy D. Williamson***

Director, EDA University Center  
University of Texas of the Permian Basin

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- ◆ Speaking engagements. The EDA-UC staff participates in discussion groups and presents programs on topics related to economic development, demographics and planning. We attempt to provide information of value on topics which are of specific interest to the audience.
- ◆ Rural Economic Development. The EDA-UC conducts meetings, at least twice each year, of rural economic development personnel. This includes elected officials, chamber of commerce officials, economic development practitioners, and others interested or involved with economic development. We will begin using this as a training opportunity. Your input is desired as we develop an agenda for the session to be conducted November 1, 2000. Please let us know of your desires.
- ◆ E-mail. The EDA-UC had developed a listing of e-mail addresses for over two hundred persons in West Texas. We use that listing to send the e-mail version of ATOP and to pass along timely information on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. If we do not have your e-mail address, please send it to:

### LOCAL COMMUNITY LINKS

The EDA-UC has developed links to local community home pages on the Internet. Make sure your community listed, please let us have the web address Send it to: [williamson\\_t@utpb.edu](mailto:williamson_t@utpb.edu). We will make sure it gets listed on our page.

### NEW STAFF

Ms. Shandy Carpenter will begin work with the EDA-UC on August 28th. She is a graduate student and will be working with us this school year. You may contact her at: (915) 552-2430.

## FALL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEETING

The Fall Economic Development meeting is being planned for Wednesday, November 1, 2000. This meeting will be a training session for basics of economic development. Mark your calendar and be ready to respond to the reservation form, which will be provided in the near future. This is the first of a series of sessions to help equip economic development practitioners with the information needed to provide economic assistance to our communities.

These meetings are held two or more times each year. Please let us know if there are persons who need to be on our mailing list.

## COUNTY DATA

The EDA-UC introduced our web site as a source of data for 33 counties. The data will be expanded to 43 counties within the next quarter.

You may access this site and review or print data about your, or any county listed on our site. We also have worked with a number of counties and communities outside of the service area to provide this information for them in printed format. This research is provided on a contract basis. If you need data for a county outside of our area, contact our offices for assistance.

The web site is located at: <http://www.edauc.utpb.edu>. After accessing the site, click on County Data. You will need to provide a user name and password. This is for our records only and will not be used for outside distribution. There is no charge for connection to the data.

Once you have your user name and password, you may access the county or counties you desire. The menu will lead you through the data that is available.

ATOP  
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If you would like to receive **ATOP** and other EDA-UC publications, or if you have any questions or comments, or would like to discuss a project with the EDA University Center staff, make your request to:

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**TAX FACTS:**

**Some items of interest from the Sales Tax Rebate of July 14, 2000.**

- ◆ July sales tax payments were sent to over 1,106 cities and 119 counties. 17.1% more than in July 1999.
- ◆ Sales tax rebates for the first seven months of 2000 are up 9%. Approximately \$6.8 million went to 51 special purpose districts.
- ◆ July Sales Tax Rebates were \$208.9 Million.
- ◆ Comptroller Rylander invites review of tax data at: [www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/allocsum/compsum.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/allocsum/compsum.html)
- ◆ New or changed sales tax rates are in effect for: Balmorhea, Big Lake, Bronte, Midland, Pecos, and San Angelo this year.

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