



## BUDGET OFFICE

### Fort Bend County, Texas

Pamela Gubbels  
Director of Finance & Investments

December 2010

The Honorable Commissioners Court of  
Fort Bend County  
Richmond, TX 77469

The staff of the Budget Office is pleased to present the *Annual Operating Budget for Fort Bend County for Fiscal Year 2011*. The 2011 Budget, adopted by the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court on September 21, 2010, was prepared based on the assumption that the County's debt service would grow and consume a larger share of our financial resources over time, and the assumption of decreased growth in the County's property valuation. The Sienna Branch library was completed this year, and required the County budget to include a full year's salaries of the librarians and related staff that were on board in mid 2010 as well as operating of the new branch library. The citizens approved a bond referendum in 2008 to construct a new courts facility to house all the County's courts. Construction began in 2009 and is scheduled to be completed in 2011. This has increased the debt service requirement in 2010, as well as future years.

## BUDGET OVERVIEW

Again for fiscal year 2010, the County's budget document was awarded the Government Finance Officer's Association's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. As a measure of our adoption and practicing of superior financial policies and procedures, the award enhances the rating of the County in the issuance of bonds and other indebtedness. Rating agencies use such factors as The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award in determining the credit rating of the County. We intend to continue this tradition, and make it an annual award.

This budget decreased from the prior year's budget by 2.4 percent. Due to current economic strains in our nation, state, and subsequently our county, the Budget Office requested each department and office to reduce their operating accounts by 8%. The major increases in the budget occurred in Debt Service, which increased by \$2,002,140, or 7.7% percent and Facilities Janitorial by \$152,160, or 21.1% percent. These increases are wholly due to the new buildings going up around the County including the various new buildings on Eugene Heimann Circle (Ransom Road.)

It was through the dedication of each official and department head that we were able to keep our commitment to maintaining at least 15 percent of the amount of the General Fund budget as its ending balance even with lower assessed property values and revenues. The 15 percent ending balance allows the County to have a cushion for almost any conceivable emergency that could occur, even one of a long duration. The ratings agencies view this practice as optimal. It balances the need to reduce taxes to the taxpayers in the County as much as possible with the need to provide for realistic emergency funds.

The County engaged in a major series of bond projects beginning in 2007 and is currently wrapping the facilities projects up. The County had largely outgrown the ability to pay for capital projects from current funds. We now must plan in advance to build major capital assets by use of bonds or other debt issuance, while maintaining our infrastructure with current funds. Our current round of projects has resulted in an increase in the debt service tax rate, which is balanced by reductions in the rest of the budget.

This year, the County ceased to grow at double digit rates as in years past. This year our General Fund tax base decreased by 0.6% while only increasing by 3.7% last year. This is compared to the County's tax base increasing by an average of 12% over the prior 8 years.

The adopted budget contains:

- Tax rate decreases for the General Fund, Road & Bridge, and Drainage District to compensate for the necessary increases in Debt Service. This has resulted in the need to reduce the Operating and Maintenance budgets.
- No increase in pay for employees.
- No increase in salaries for the County's Elected Officials.
- Forty-four new positions throughout the County some of which are eighteen Civilian Detention Officers for Sheriff – Detention, four librarians for the new University Branch Library scheduled to open in Fall 2011, three Investigators, a Telecommunications Officer and Victims Liaison Assistant for Sheriff – Enforcement, six Custodian positions and a Building Maintenance Worker for the new facilities around the county, and an Animal Services Adoption Coordinator.

## FUND BALANCES

For several years, it has been a goal of the County to maintain the General Fund Balance at no less than 15 percent of the current fiscal year's budget. It is also an element of the Adopted Budget Policy for this year. Because of the slowed growth in tax base last year along with increases in Debt Service, it was necessary to use some of the "rainy day" reserves in fiscal year 2010. Therefore, we had to bring our fund balance back up to 15 percent for fiscal year 2011 which meant more budget reductions.

In Fiscal Year 2011, the budgeted General Fund expenditures are in excess of revenues by \$5,046,632, leaving an ending projected General Fund Balance of \$28,221,366, or 15.7 percent of the General Fund Budget. Revenues in general have remained constant, with interest earnings declining over the past year as the Federal Open Markets Committee will maintain the target range for the federal funds rate at 0 to 1/4 percent and continues to anticipate that economic conditions, including low rates of resource utilization, subdued inflation trends, and stable inflation expectations, are likely to warrant exceptionally low levels of the federal funds rate for an extended period.

Road and Bridge Fund expenditures will exceed revenues by \$2,858,800 this year. We estimate the ending Fund Balance will be \$3.2 million after the 2011 budget year is completed. The ending Fund Balance is estimated to be 15.8 percent of the budget amount.

Drainage District expenditures will exceed revenues by \$187,878. The ending balance of this fund is estimated to be \$1,284,214, or about 15.8 percent of the 2011 budget amounts.

Debt Service revenues will increase considerably this year in response to the need to pay for the new bonds. We will receive an estimated \$28,212,554 from taxes and other revenues. Our Debt Service payments will be \$28,157,181, leaving an estimated \$4.4 million in Fund Balance.

We carefully manage the Fund Balances to remain in a strong financial position. We always plan to provide adequate reserves to demonstrate to the bond rating agencies that we are one of the stronger Counties in the state financially. Our current ratings are AA by Standard and Poor's Company and Aa2 by Moody's, both very solid ratings. This represents a slight improvement in the rating by Standard and Poor's. Considering that the County will soon issue bonds for Mobility Projects, it is essential that we maintain these excellent ratings.

## TAX RATES

Property taxes make up 82.5 percent of our FY2011 revenues. As proof that Counties are among the most fiscally responsible of all governmental entities, the Fort Bend County Tax Rate has not increased in 12 years. In 1992, eighteen years ago, the Tax Rate was 66 cents per \$100 of property valuation. For the 2010 tax year (FY2011), it will be 49.976 cents per \$100. For the last 18 years, since 1992, the total Tax Rate, including the General Fund, the Debt Service Fund, the Road and Bridge Fund and the Drainage District, has either been reduced, or held steady. (For 12 of those years, the rate has dropped.) This is partially due to the increase in the County's net assessed taxable value each year, but also to the fiscal guidance of the Commissioners Court. This year the overall County Tax Rate remained the same. Although the Debt Service Tax Rate increased, General Fund, Road and Bridge and Drainage District Tax Rates decreased by the same amount. The Tax Rate is now \$0.49976 per \$100 of taxable value. Included in the overall Tax Rate is the General Fund Tax Rate of \$0.38100, or a decrease of \$0.0052. This will decrease General Fund Tax Revenues by \$3,639,431. The Road and Bridge Tax Rate decreased by \$0.0033 to \$0.02770, and Tax Revenues decreased by \$1,389,239, and other revenues decreased by \$535,000. The Drainage District Tax Rate decreased from \$0.02076 to \$0.01960, resulting in a decrease of \$617,831 in Tax Revenues. However, due to an increase in Other Revenues of \$262,500, the overall Drainage District Revenues only decreased by \$355,331. The only increase was in the Debt Service Tax Rate, which increased by \$0.00966 to \$0.07146, resulting in \$3,551,058 more in Debt Service Taxes even with the lower property values.

## OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

The County will buy 27 new patrol vehicles, and seven other vehicles, for the Sheriff's Office. Three of these vehicles will be additions to the fleet, while the rest are replacement vehicles. In Road and Bridge, we will replace five three-quarter ton trucks and six dump trucks. Three lift arm trucks, an F550 truck and a Tahoe will also be purchased for Road & Bridge. The Drainage District will buy three four-wheel drive tractors, three 15' shredders, one track loader, a bulldozer, and an excavator. Elsewhere, we will buy 12 vehicles of various types.

The County has completed the \$7 million implementation of an integrated case management system. The configuration and implementation is under the direction of the county's Judicial Steering Team. The vendor is Tyler Technologies of Plano TX. The integrated system is called Odyssey and it replaced 22 software applications used by all the judicial stakeholders throughout the county. This was a five year project that was completed at the end of FY'10. Additional applications will be added over the next few months such as redaction and jury. Fort Bend County also completed the implementation of the financial and human resources software. We went live in December 2007 with the Lawson Financial and Human Resources software. We look forward to a long useful life of this package and plan an upgrade in the near future. Together, these systems will go a long way to bring Fort Bend County into the Information Age. Operations in all these departments will be enhanced and made more efficient by being able to share information. This has come at a cost to the County in time and dollars, but should pay off in time and efficiency and result in better information being available to the County's users.

The County's Facilities Operations and Maintenance budgets naturally have increased due to the various new buildings going up around the County. In fiscal year 2009, the County opened the new Precinct 1 Building, Tax Office, Gus George Law Academy, Needville Service Center, and completed the jail expansion on the 40 acres on Ransom Road. Fiscal year 2010 saw the opening of the Sienna Branch Library, the Missouri City Annex, Emergency Medical Services Medic One in Rosenberg, the Dew House at Kitty Hollow Park in Missouri City, and the Fort Bend County North Annex. Facilities to open in fiscal year 2011 include the Justice Center on Eugene Heimann Circle, expansion to the Animal Services building which will double its size, a Senior Center on South Post Oak and Court Rd., and University Branch Library.

## REVENUE

Overall County revenues have decreased by \$596,757, or 1.1%, compared to FY2010. Tax Revenue decreased by \$2,095,4438, while Other Revenues increased by \$1,498,686. The overall revenue in the County will be \$231,054,415, with \$192,355,004 in Tax Revenues and \$38,699,411 in Other Revenues. Our yield on investments has been moderate, with rates near 1%, and we expect this to hold steady in the new fiscal year as the federal open market committee has kept rates low.

Contracts to provide additional Law Enforcement in unincorporated communities will continue to provide protection to the Communities with which contracted; however, those revenues and expenditures will be shown in a budget amendment when the contracts are finalized. Thus, the revenues and expenditures do not appear in this budget, as they have in the past. .

Each of the five other funds included in the budget for this year has a source of revenue attached. The County Clerk Records Management Fund and the County Records Management Fund each have a Court case-filing fee attached, and these fees provide the money to pay for the records management and preservation costs associated with the respective offices. The Gus George Law Enforcement Academy is funded with registration fees for attendees at the academy. The Courthouse Security Fund is also funded by a Court Cost for filing a Court Case.

The Law Library is funded by a Court Fee, and is self-sufficient. It is managed by the local bar association. The increased fee in 2001 has insured that the Law Library is fully funded.

The Debt Service Fund pays the costs (principal, interest and fees) of County and Drainage District Debt. It is funded by Property Taxes (and interest earned on the money in the fund prior to being expended).

## GOALS

The County's **Long Term Comprehensive Plan** outlines goals to be accomplished by the County through its various departments. Many of the specific goals have been met, but since all are long term, many are still in the future. The County's departments are working hard to realize these on a continuing basis. We intend to achieve all the goals and objectives in the plan over time. Specific programs in the 2011 budget address the goals as set out below.

### GOAL 1

**Assure that the County is a safe and attractive place to live, work and play.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* - The Sheriff's Department's base salary for deputies has been increased from \$17.93 an hour to \$19.22 an hour in order to help in the recruitment process as well as retention. These deputies provide needed services in a growing County. Because of the need to reduce our budget this year, The Sheriff's Office will not sponsor a cadet class this year. Over the past few years, the cadet class provided a source of new and replacement deputies. The cadet program has been a notable success, and will likely be reinstated once the budget is better able to sustain it.

Our Animal Services department will add a sub-station in Arcola to reduce response time to the east side of the County. We added an additional Animal Control Officer along with a truck and equipment in the FY2010 budget. Funds are also included to renovate a portion of a County building to house this sub-station. The FY2011 budget includes funds to expand the current Animal Services facility in Rosenberg. The expansion will double the number of kennels available. Also included in the Animal Services budget this year is an Adoption Coordinator. Both the expansion and the new position will help reduce the number of animals being euthanized every year.

The Sheriff's Department and Constable's Offices continue to provide additional law enforcement to several of the County's master planned communities. The communities pay the cost of these services through a contract with the County. As previously stated, we do not make a budget for these contracts until they are executed, but there is no reason to believe that they will not continue as in the past. These officers are available in cases of emergency, which gives the County additional resources for critical situations.

The County continues to be blessed with homeland security grants that enable the County to partner with other cities and counties to provide true preparedness for terror attacks or epidemics, either natural or manmade. The grants related to health and bioterrorism preparedness have been, and will continue to be, well used for their purposes. We anticipate that we will continue to receive valuable funding for commendable projects in the next year.

## **GOAL 2**

### **Utilize state-of-the-art equipment and methods appropriately in the provision and timely delivery of authorized and allowed services.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* In 2011, the County will be live for the third year on the new financial and human resources software and in the first year after implementing the new courts management system. These projects were funded by short-term debt, and some current funds. We anticipate a busy year refining the financial and human capital systems and continuing the implementation of the Courts Management system, scheduled to be completed in 2010. These applications should serve the County well for at least a decade, or more.

## **GOAL 3**

### **Provide the necessary support for mobility and transportation needs in the County.**

**Objective 1** Provide public transportation planning studies and right of way acquisition to leverage funding from the state and federal governments that will advance projects desired by the County to supplement and expand existing transportation services.

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* In 2010, through partnerships with the City of Sugar Land and The City of Rosenberg feasibility studies were initiated to determine the transportation needs within both cities. Internal circulator services were recommended in Sugar Land and two fixed routes were recommended for Rosenberg. Both Cities have reviewed and accepted the plans. Rosenberg will begin implementation of the study recommendations in FY2011 via implementation of increased public outreach designed to educate the public regarding the availability of transportation services. The City of Sugar Land elected to postpone implementation activities for at least a year. In partnership with the Gulf Coast Rail District, a multi-phased planning process was initiated to assess the feasibility of a freight rail by-pass in Fort Bend County. The goal of the study is to address mobility and freight movement needs within and through the county. Phase I of the study provides analysis of routing options for freight rail services to allow commuter rail services along the Hi. 90A corridor and is expected to be completed in November of 2010. In FY2011 funding will be provided for Phase II of the project, which will provide more detailed study of route alignments recommended during Phase I.

**Objective 2** Apply for grants and funding for local projects

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* The Public Transportation Department was successful in receiving a grant to initiate park and ride services into the Texas Medical Center area of Houston. Services were implemented during the summer of 2010. Monthly ridership increasing has been consistent. Marketing efforts planned for later this year will insure the continued success of the project. An application was submitted for transportation services designed to accommodate elderly and disabled citizens in Fort Bend County. Proposed services included trips into congregate meal programs for senior citizens as well as trips to training centers for people with cognitive disabilities. Funding awards were announced in September 2010, with Fort Bend County's application receiving funding to provide the senior citizen services only.

**GOAL 4**

**Promote a favorable environment for retaining and expanding existing businesses while attracting a wide variety of new businesses to provide employment opportunities.**

**Objective 1** Support existing local business.

The County provides numerous services that enable businesses to operate efficiently. The Texas Online program in the County Clerk's Office is successfully operating into its sixth year, and the District Clerk also provides online access to many records. In addition, the District Clerk provides a much needed Passport service that allows citizens; both business and personal, to more easily get their travel documents in the County.

**Objective 2** Continue to work with the Economic Development Council to attract new businesses to Fort Bend County.

The Economic Development Council continues to attract new businesses to Fort Bend County. The growth in population has a natural effect of bringing in new enterprises, and our corporate tax base is growing as a percentage of the total tax base. We will provide 50 percent more in support to the EDC to promote marketing the County to worldwide businesses. In the future, we expect this to continue the growth pattern of the County, and to add greatly to the Commercial growth.

**GOAL 5**

**Support environmental concerns for preservation of natural and historic resources balanced with sensitivity to the needs of development and recreation.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* The County has increased funding for the Fort Bend Museum to encourage historical preservation of our heritage. The County supports the Fort Bend County Museum Association in preservation of historical materials relating to the County and its historic beginnings. Fort Bend County is rightly proud of its heritage starting with the Original 300 pioneers lead by Stephen F. Austin settling at Fort Bend. Two historical houses were saved from demolition, and moved to County Parks, where they are being preserved to provide a sense of where we came from. The County is currently working on the Taylor House and has included \$25,000 in the FY2011 budget for remodeling.

In February 2010, Fort Bend County received a planning grant for the restoration of the Fort Bend County Courthouse and the Courthouse Square to the original 1909 configuration. The grant represents 75% of the total cost of producing design documents to restore and rehabilitate the building and provide

upgrades to data and voice infrastructure, HVAC and elevator systems, and greater accessibility while maintaining the integrity of the historic landmark.

The County is very supportive of environmental goals of the state and nation. We operate an active program to replace older, polluting automobiles for citizens that are unable to afford newer cars. This is thru a grant from the state. We also exchange older diesel trucks for newer, less polluting diesel trucks, also on a grant from the state.

## **GOAL 6**

### **Encourage cultural development and ethnic diversity.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* The County has an Equal Opportunity Policy and actively supports equal treatment for all its citizens. During County-Sponsored events, there is an emphasis on promoting cultural awareness.

This County has among the most diverse ethnic mixes in any county in the United States. Among major ethnic groups are African-American, Hispanic, Caucasian, Middle-Eastern and Asian peoples. We work and prosper together.

## **GOAL 7**

### **Develop a quality, consumer sensitive, holistic approach to health and human services that keeps pace with the County's growth.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* The Health and Human Services Departments provide health services to indigent citizens, and to monitor and protect against outbreaks of any type illness in the community. The County continues to support the local healthcare community, and anticipates further expansion of local hospital facilities.

The Health and Human Services Department has received several grants to promote community health. We have recently placed a Bio-terrorism Epidemiologist on staff to track and control diseases that may be spread by terrorists and infect large populations.

## **GOAL 8**

### **Actively seek to increase and coordinate volunteerism and active citizen participation that strives for the good of the County as a whole.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* Several County Departments, especially the Extension Service, promote volunteerism and citizen participation. The County Fair Association works closely with the County to provide events that promote an active and joyful lifestyle in Fort Bend County. The Veterans Services Office is working to expand Veteran's Services by calling on Veterans working for the County to contribute time and capital to aid our Military Veterans. This year, Dwight Marshall, Fort Bend County's Veteran Services Officer was awarded the Annual Veterans County Service Officer Appreciation Award by the Texas Veterans Commission on behalf of the entire 92 county Houston Region. The Veterans Services office has also added two Assistant Veterans Officers to their staff in recent years.

## GOAL 9

### **Work cooperatively with other governmental entities to complement their efforts.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* The County budget funds numerous cooperative programs, including a cooperative program to allow other county governments to purchase goods on county contracts. Many counties across the state buy their patrol cars from the Fort Bend County contract. The County has in place agreements with all communities in the County to assist and cooperate in projects that benefit the County as a whole through improving the communities by using county equipment and resources at cost to accomplish work for those county governments. These programs ensure that public tax dollars are used with the greatest efficiency.

The County Purchasing Agent contracts with other cities and political subdivisions in the County to cooperatively purchase their needs for them, thus saving money for all County taxpayers.

The County is party to a cooperative regional effort to protect the region from terrorist threats and from natural and manmade disasters, including hurricanes, tornados, floods, disease outbreaks and toxic spills or leaks. This Cooperative effort received over \$4 Million in federal Homeland Security grants in the past two years to equip an efficient effort to combat terrorist threats, and to respond to natural disasters.

The County Health Department, working with the County Emergency Management Department and local fire and police departments, has formed a regional cooperative response group and developed plans to deal with any disaster we may face. These plans assign duties and responsibilities and make agreements to aid one another in case of any event.

## GOAL 10

### **Operate the County government in the most fiscally responsible manner.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* All departments are required to operate in a fiscally responsible manner. Recognizing that the provision of services costs money, we still strive to make each dollar produce the most service. The budget works to reward those programs that operate most efficiently while encouraging all to hone their operations to produce the most efficient result.

#### **Objective 1** Maintain a Fund Balance of **15 percent**

The General Fund Balance is projected to be 15.7%. Overall Fund Balance is projected to be 18.1 %. The General Fund Balance fell slightly below the 15 percent level in FY2010; however, the Commissioners Court felt the economic strains of the national recession justified this dip. The Court made every effort to bring the fund balance back up and did so this year.

#### **Objective 2** Assure that the Investment Policy is instituted to maximize the funds invested, while insuring safety of principal.

The County's investment earnings have decreased as interest rates have decreased by virtue of the Federal Reserve Bank decreasing the Federal Funds interest rates. The period of increasing rates is over for now, as the Open Market Committee has maintained the 0 to ¼ percent target range for the federal funds rates. This is due to the worsening economy, and by the collapse of the Sub-prime Mortgage market. Many houses nationwide have been foreclosed, and the end is not in sight. However, the Houston area is in much better shape than anywhere else in the nation. We still have growth in the housing market for now, and our prices are holding up. But we will necessarily be impacted negatively by all this turmoil, and our investment earnings will suffer. However, the County depository bank contract has a clause whereby the minimum Fort Bend County can earn is 1% and even up to 1.5%. This has helped interest earnings substantially. With the yield curve still flat, we

are still keeping most of the investments in the short term, and waiting for a more normal yield curve before making any long-term investments. Most of our investments are one year or less.

The County's Investment Policy insures that all investments are as safe as possible, stressing first *safety*, then *availability of funds* as needed, and finally *return on investment*.

**Objective 3** Maximize the use of facilities in the County through the implementation of proper space utilization.

The County's building program is in full swing, with the new Jail addition completed last September. On the Forty acre plot on Ransom Road across from the Jail, the Precinct 1 Building , the Tax Office Building and the Law Enforcement Academy/ Fire Marshal are also complete, and the Justice Center will be complete in fiscal year 2011.

The Jane Long Building was remodeled extensively to better accommodate the Information Technology Department now that the Tax Office has moved out.

## **GOAL 11**

**Reorganize and consolidate departments under the direction of competent, trained senior managers who would report to Commissioners Court.**

*Programs to Achieve the Goal* In past years, the County structured its senior administration by naming Executive Managers in the areas of Budgeting, Health and Human Services, Library, and the Parks Department. To this organization has been added an Information Technology Director and a Facilities Director. This will be the makeup of the County for the foreseeable future. These managers work closely with one another and the Court to provide operational efficiency in those departments controlled by the Commissioners Court, and to promote cooperation countywide.

## FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

The Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County has focused its efforts along the economic front on Mobility issues. With the completion of US 59 past the Grand Parkway in early 2009, and the widening of US 90A into Richmond, most of the active Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) projects in our area will be completed. And, TxDOT has let it be known that they are short of funds for the foreseeable future. Federal Highway dollars will also be hard to come by as well. This means that local projects will be the best means to expand the capabilities to commute quickly into the Metro Area. We are working, by means of the Mobility Bond package passed in May 2007, to partner with our cities to bridge the gap. If Big Brother is not able, we must take up the slack ourselves.

As the County continues to grow at a rapid pace, the Western part of the County will be exploding. Major subdivisions are building along the US59 corridor, and as far southwest as western Rosenberg. In recent months, The Town Center Mall on both sides of the US 59 frontage in Rosenberg has brought most of the major retailers into the Richmond/Rosenberg area.

The Commissioners Court will continue to use tax abatements appropriately to attract new businesses to make the tax base grow. The focus will be on attracting commercial development to balance the tax burden between residential taxpayers and businesses more evenly.

The County's growth has already made us expand our county facilities. A bond package to construct the jail and other county buildings was the beginning. Now, we are expanding our courts space to accommodate additional courts as the County grows. As one of the major counties in the state, we must employ careful planning to balance the needs of growth and the requirement to maintain financial prudence.

This letter provides an overview of the 2011 budget. Following, you will find additional charts, tables and summaries that fully explain the budget. As always, we have attempted to develop a budget that leads the County through the year in a fiscally responsible manner. We thank all the County's departments for their cooperation and assistance in providing the information used in preparing the budget. Our thanks go to the Commissioners Court for guidance in providing policy and leadership in developing the budget.

Sincerely,



**Pamela L. Gubbels**  
**Director of Finance & Investments**

**2011 Salary Schedule for  
Fort Bend County Elected Officials**

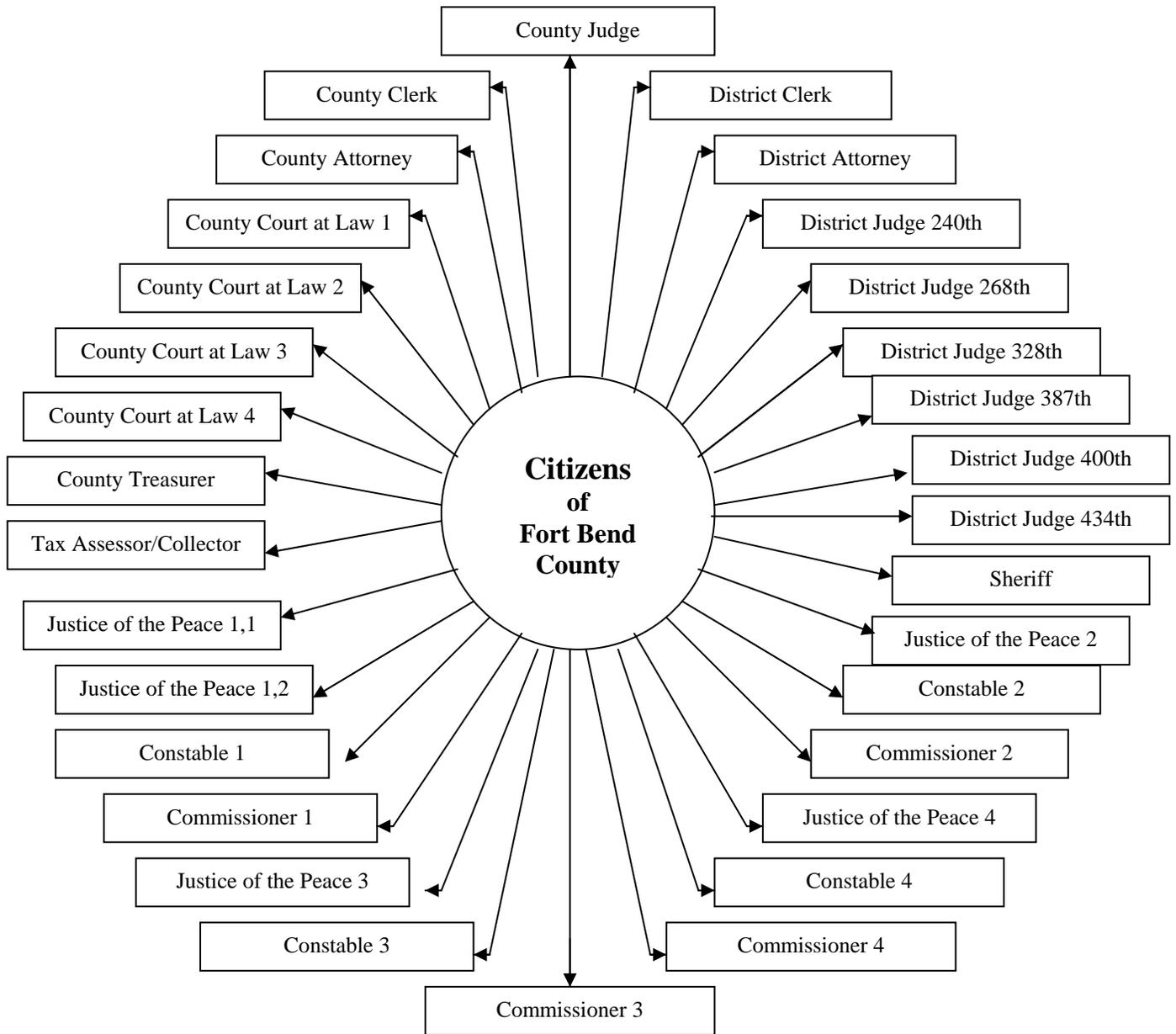
<b>Elected Officials</b>	<b>2010 Annual Salary</b>	<b>2011 Adopted Annual Salary</b>	<b>Juvenile Board Supplement</b>	<b>Drainage District Board Supplement</b>
County Judge	\$105,000	\$105,000	\$7,200	\$2,400
Commissioner, Pct 1	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$2,400
Commissioner, Pct 2	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$2,400
Commissioner, Pct 3	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$2,400
Commissioner, Pct 4	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$2,400
Sheriff	\$105,000	\$105,000	\$0	\$0
County Attorney	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$0
Tax Assessor/Collector	\$97,500	\$97,500	\$0	\$0
County Clerk	\$97,500	\$97,500	\$0	\$0
District Clerk	\$97,500	\$97,500	\$0	\$0
County Treasurer	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$0	\$0
Justice of the Peace, Pct 1, Pl 1	\$87,500	\$87,500	\$0	\$0
Justice of the Peace, Pct 1, Pl 2	\$87,500	\$87,500	\$0	\$0
Justice of the Peace, Pct 2	\$87,500	\$87,500	\$0	\$0
Justice of the Peace, Pct 3	\$87,500	\$87,500	\$0	\$0
Justice of the Peace, Pct 4	\$87,500	\$87,500	\$0	\$0
Constable, Pct 1	\$81,250	\$81,250	\$0	\$0
Constable, Pct 2	\$81,250	\$81,250	\$0	\$0
Constable, Pct 3	\$81,250	\$81,250	\$0	\$0
Constable, Pct 4	\$81,250	\$81,250	\$0	\$0

<b>Elected Officials not Published</b>	<b>2010 Annual Salary</b>	<b>2011 Adopted Annual Salary</b>	<b>Juvenile Board Supplement</b>	
District Attorney	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	
Judge, County Court at Law #1	\$131,800	\$131,800	\$7,200	
Judge, County Court at Law #2	\$132,827	\$33,207	\$1,800	*
Judge, County Court at Law #2	\$0	\$98,850	\$5,400	**
Judge, County Court at Law #3	\$131,800	\$131,800	\$7,200	
Judge, County Court at Law #4	\$131,800	\$131,800	\$7,200	
Judge, 240th District Court	\$3,600	\$7,800	\$7,200	
Judge, 268th District Court	\$3,600	\$7,800	\$7,200	
Judge, 328th District Court	\$3,600	\$7,800	\$7,200	
Judge, 387th District Court	\$3,600	\$7,800	\$7,200	
Judge, 400th District Court	\$3,600	\$7,800	\$7,200	
Judge, 434th District Court	\$3,600	\$7,800	\$7,200	

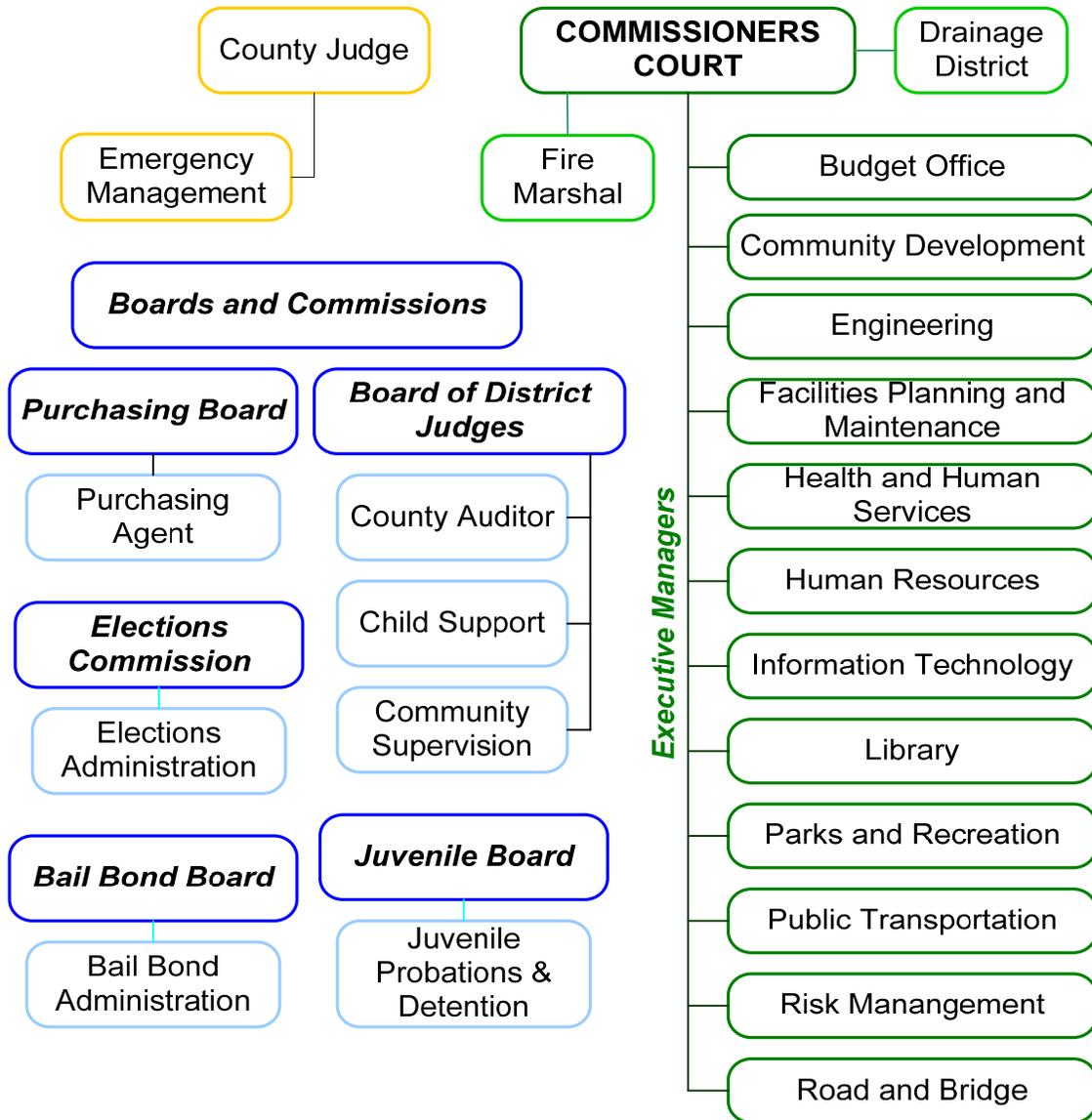
\*October 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010

\*\*January 1, 2011 – September 30, 2011

### Organization Chart of Elected Officials Fort Bend County, Texas



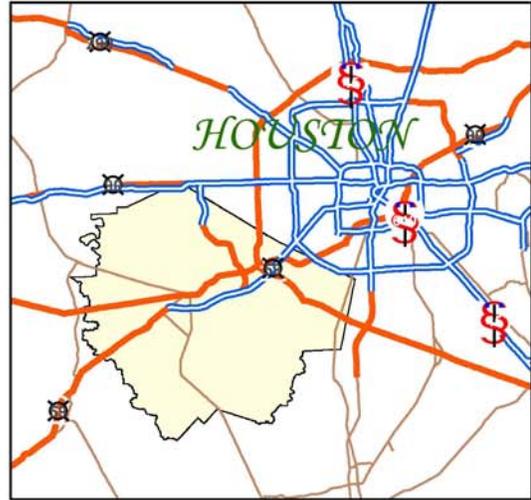
## Organization of County Department and Agencies Fort Bend County, Texas



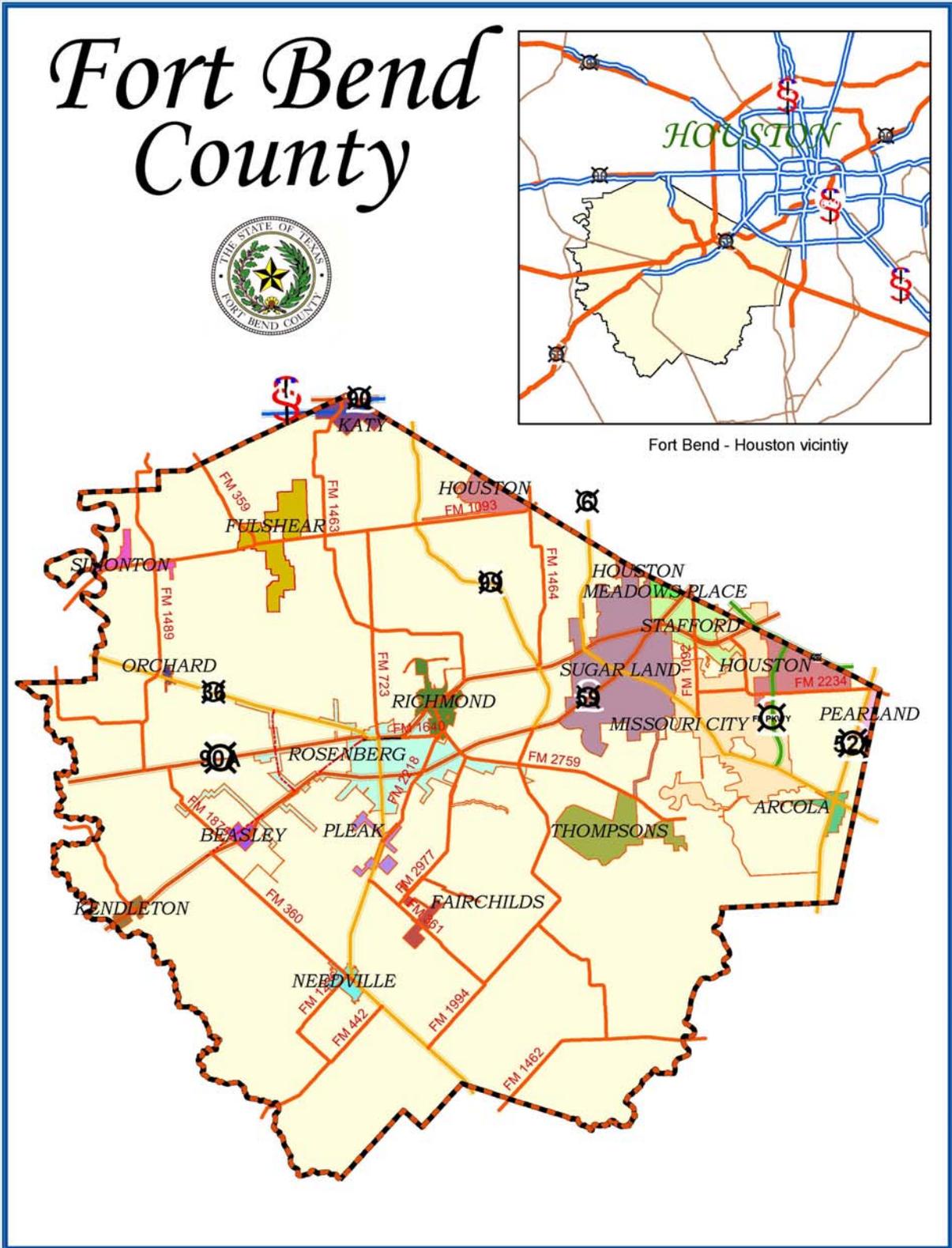
*Legend*

Orange – Reports directly to County Judge  
 Green – Reports directly to Commissioners Court  
 Blue – Reports directly to Board or Commission as governed by Statute

# Fort Bend County



Fort Bend - Houston vicinity



# FORT BEND COUNTY PROFILE

## A. INTRODUCTION

For more than 15 years, Fort Bend has been in the top 20 counties in the United States for economic excellence and population growth. Fort Bend County is the third fastest growing County in Texas, and one of the fastest growing in the United States. The growth fuels an ever-increasing need for County services. We have attempted to meet the growth demands by increasing our efficiency. Additional filings with the County Clerk are being done on line 24 hours a day. The Tax Office is using expanded banking services to more effectively collect the County's taxes and those of most of the governments in the County. In every area, we are looking to advanced technology to improve our services to the public without unnecessarily increasing County Staff.

With the major roadways already heavily congested, mobility has been, and continues to be, a primary concern. Continued residential and commercial expansion has increased the use of the County roads. What were once little used rural roads are more heavily traveled due to the new developments. Bridges, ditches and right-of-ways are requiring more attention.

The rapid growth of the County provides an expanded tax base, but this is more than compensated for in the need for new services. To hold the line, we must be vigilant to always perform only those services that are needed, and always in the most cost-effective way.

## B. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

### 1. Location

Fort Bend County is located in the Houston metropolitan area of southeast Texas. It encompasses a total of 875.0 square miles (562,560 acres). The terrain varies from level to gently rolling with elevations from 46 to 127 feet above sea level, with an average elevation of 85 feet. US 59 traverses the center of the County from northeast to southwest, while US 90A crosses from east to west. State Highways (SH) 6, 36 and 99 provide important north-south routes. Neighboring counties are Austin, Brazoria, Harris, Waller and Wharton.

### 2. Climate

The growing season is 296 days, with an average annual rainfall of 45.3 inches. The average first freeze date in the fall is December 7, and the average last freeze date is February 14. Temperatures range from a mean minimum in January of 41° to a mean maximum in July of 93°. The Gulf of Mexico is located only 50 miles from Fort Bend County and its close proximity helps to hold the summer and winter temperatures to moderate levels. Extremes in climatic changes are usually short in duration.

### 3. Natural Resources

Fort Bend County has approximately 11 square miles of surface water in rivers, creeks and small lakes. The County is drained by the Brazos and San Bernard Rivers as well as Oyster Creek. The Brazos River formed a broad alluvial valley, up to ten miles wide in places. The resulting fertile soils have been a major contributing factor to the agricultural industry in the County.

The three permanently floatable waterways in Fort Bend County are the Brazos River, the San Bernard River south of Farm to Market Road 442, and Oyster Creek south of State Highway 6.

The San Bernard River south of Interstate Highway 10 is a seasonally floatable waterway, shared on the west with adjacent counties. Soils vary from the rich alluvial soils in the Brazos River Valley to sandy loam and clay on the prairies. Native trees include pecan, oak, ash and cottonwood, with some old bottomland forests remaining along waterways.

Mineral resources include oil, gas, and sulfur. Sand, clay, and gravel are commercially produced.

### **C. HISTORY**

Fort Bend County holds a prominent place in Texas history. Karankawa Indians once roamed the plains and inhabited the river bottoms. In the early 1820's, the Anglo-American colonization of Texas under grants from the Spanish government was initiated. The arrival of Stephan F. Austin's original colony of 300 families at the bend of the Brazos River was delayed until 1822 by the death of Moses Austin and the independence of Mexico. Ninety miles inland from the coast the settlers built a two-room cabin that was known both as Fort Settlement and Fort Bend. Fifty-three of the land grants to the early settlers were in Fort Bend. They found the area suitable for crops and livestock.

In 1837, the Congress of the Republic of Texas incorporated Richmond and eighteen other towns. Later in the same year, the County of Fort Bend was created from portions of Austin, Harris and Brazoria County. Notable citizens of the County included Jane Long, Mirabeau B. Lamar, and Samuel May Williams. During the Texas Revolution, many of the residents fled from Santa Anna's troops in what became known as the Runaway Scrape. They returned to find their homes plundered and their livestock scattered or dead.

Richmond became a prosperous trade center for the surrounding agricultural region. Cotton and sugar and other products were sent down the Brazos River to the Port of Galveston. The early sugar cane plantations and farms supplied the Imperial Sugar industrial complex and its company town evolved into the current City of Sugar Land. When the railroad from Galveston through Richmond was built in the 1850's, the County became a ready provider of agricultural products and raw materials to coastal markets and beyond. Cotton became and continues to be a staple of the agricultural economy.

Much of the early prosperity based on the plantation system ended with the Civil War. At that time Fort Bend had a large black population, mostly slaves. Fort Bend planters and property owners generally supported the Confederacy and many joined Terry's Texas Rangers, led by Benjamin F. Terry of Sugar Land. No battles reached the area, but the war's duration and the economic, social and political hardships that followed put great stress on the community.

The years after the Civil War were a time of uneasy compromise between the political parties and officeholders. This resulted in a brief, but violent confrontation known as the Jaybird - Woodpecker War. During Reconstruction, several black men were elected to County offices, including Mr. Walter Burton, Sheriff and Tax Collector, Mr. Shade Croome, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2, and Mr. Tom Taylor, Commissioner. Mr. Burton was later a state senator. The era of reconstruction lasted until 1888, when the Jaybird Party took control. They were powerful in Fort Bend County until the 1950's.

Additional railroads further opened the County to new settlers, many from central Europe. Small productive family farms formed the central focus of the economic and social life from the 1880's through World War II. Ranching and cotton production then began to replace the small farms. Missouri City, Stafford, and Rosenberg developed along the rail lines

Discovery of oil and gas at Blueridge in the early 1920's, followed by discoveries at Orchard and Thompsons, then later at Katy, signaled the beginning of Fort Bend's petroleum industry. Production continues today in several areas of the County.

Beginning in the early 1970's with Houston's expansion, Fort Bend saw new growth in the form of increased residential development. Greatwood, New Territory and Cinco Ranch followed the master-planned communities of Quail Valley, First Colony and Pecan Grove. More recently Sienna Plantation, River Park East and West, Canyon Gate, Bridlewood and Texana have joined the ranks.

Fort Bend has a long and richly varied history and an exceedingly bright future as it continues to build on the foundations established by the original settlers of Texas.

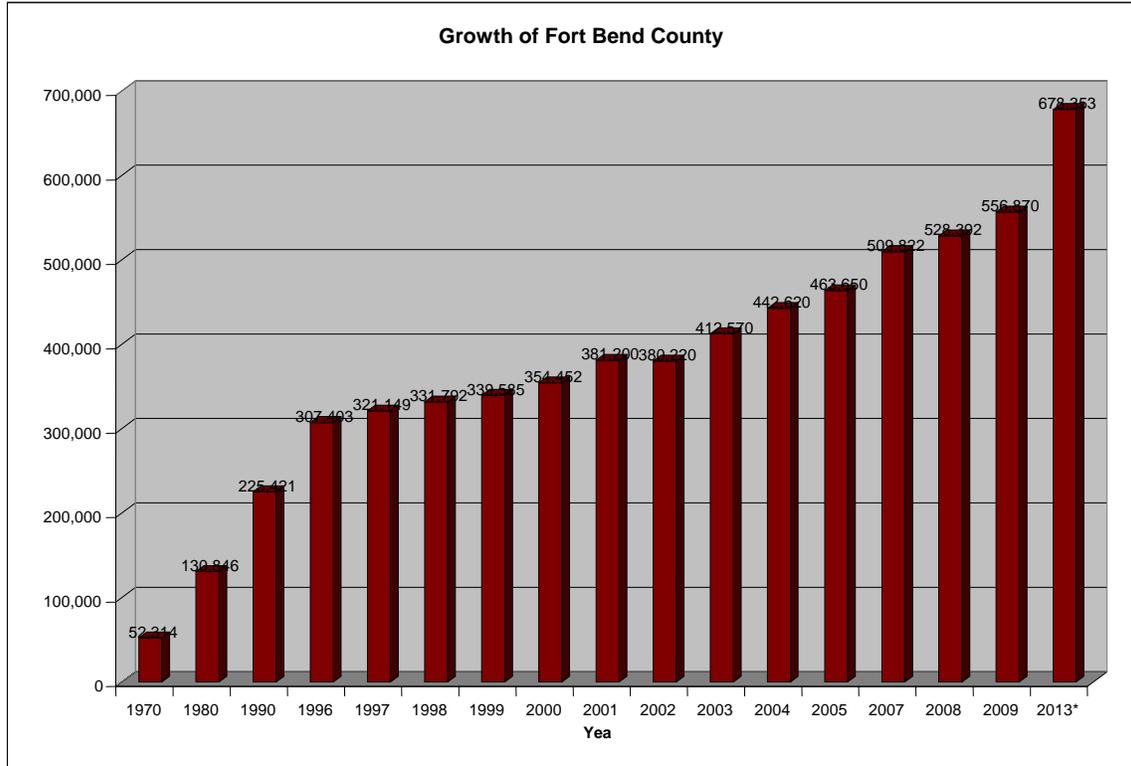
#### **D. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Fort Bend County citizens enjoy a number of opportunities to celebrate their historic and cultural heritage at the Fort Bend County Fair in October, Texan Market Days at the George Ranch in October, and the Fort Bend County Czech Fest in May. Points of interest are the Fort Bend Museum, Confederate Museum, George Memorial Library, George Observatory and Challenger Center of Fort Bend, Brazos Bend State Park, the George Ranch, the Thomas Barnett Home and the Imperial Holly Sugar Refinery complex. With so many immigrants to the County, there are a variety of ethnic heritages. Continued attention should be given to building on the cultural diversity that is evident in the County.



**E. POPULATION**

Fort Bend County’s population is among the fastest growing in the United States. While the state of Texas grew at a rate of 18.8%, the U.S. Bureau of Census concluded that Fort Bend County grew at a rate of 57.1% in 2000 through 2009 and is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in growth of all U.S. Counties. That growth is predicted to continue - Woods and Poole Economics ranks Fort Bend as 2<sup>nd</sup> in growth for all U.S. counties with more than 250,000 in population for the years 2003 - 2025.

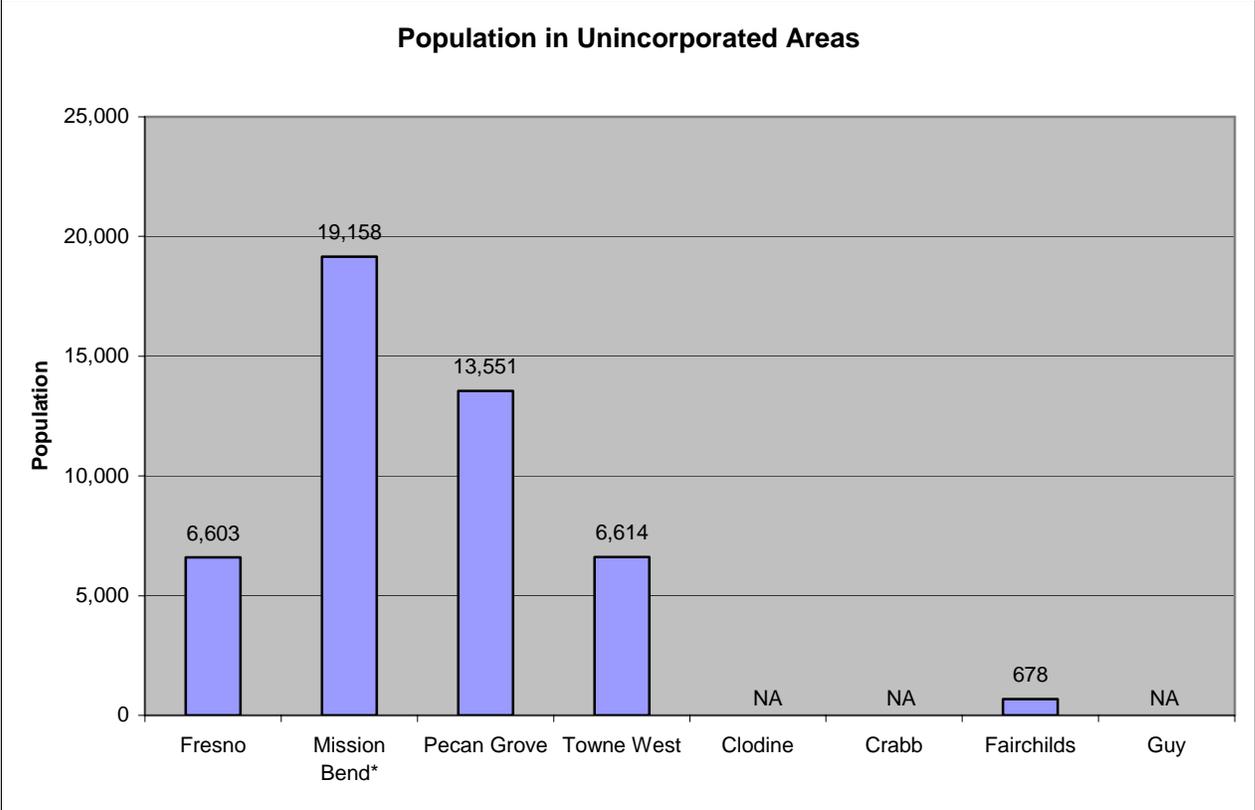


\* 2013 Projected population by Fort Bend Economic Development Council

The Texas State Data Center estimates that the population could reach 770,060 by the year 2020. In other words, it took 160 years for Fort Bend to gain its first 350,000 residents, but will add the next 350,000 residents within the next 20 years. The population increases daily with the construction of new homes and subdivisions.

### 1. Population in Unincorporated Areas

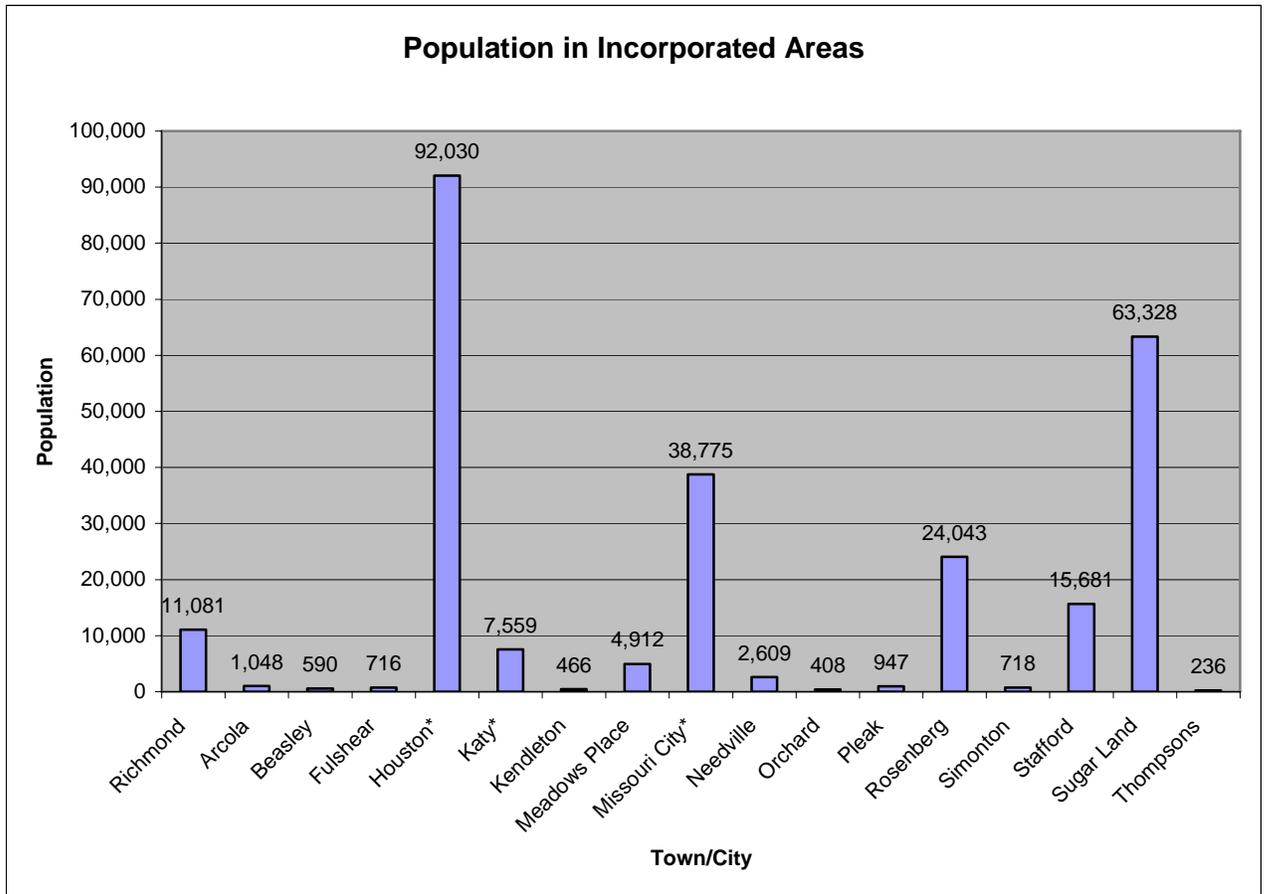
An estimated 83,000 of Fort Bend’s population lives in other unincorporated or rural areas. The following is a chart of unincorporated communities in Fort Bend County that add another 35,000 to the population. Those with population numbers are defined as Census Designated Places. The remainder of the 83,000 population lives in other unincorporated or rural areas. Since the 1990 census several other master planned communities have developed which include New Territory, Greatwood, and Cinco Ranch, each adding additional population. Other residential developments including Teal Run, Tara, Pheasant Creek, Providence, Teal Briar, Waterford, Dover, and Weston Lakes also account for a portion of the population. Current new developments include Sienna Plantation, Grand River, Bridlewood, and Texana.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000  
\*Fort Bend portion. Also located in Harris County

## 2. Population in Incorporated Areas

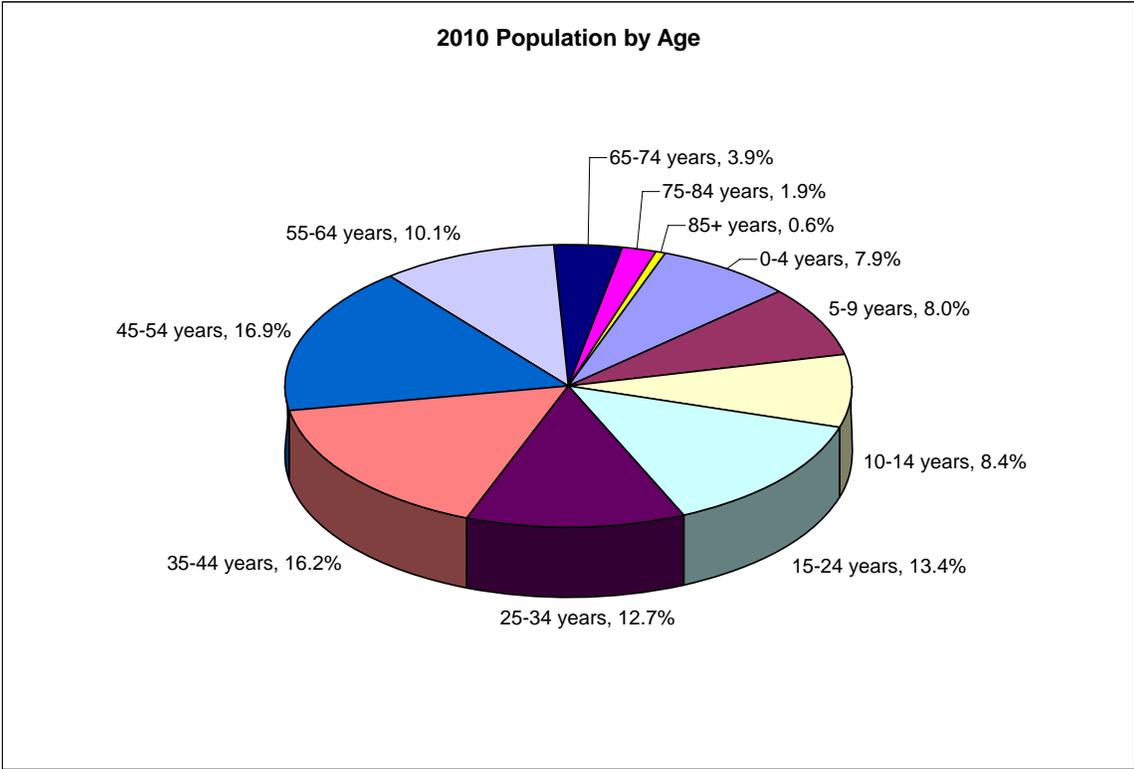
Population in incorporated areas of the County includes citizens in 17 cities and towns ranging in population from 200 to 73,000. The incorporated communities account for a population of more than 199,000 in 2000. Katy, Missouri City and Houston are also in Harris County. A portion of Katy is in Waller County. The Chart below gives only the population that is in Fort Bend County in the 1990 census. The population for the remaining cities in Fort Bend County is the 2004 estimate provided by the U.S. Census Bureau.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000; \* Fort Bend portion

### 3. Population Distribution by Age

The following population distribution chart shows a large number in the 45-54 years group and in the 35-44 years group with 70.8% of the population of Fort Bend County over the age of 18.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The population of the County by age is very much concentrated in the young family categories. People are continuing to locate to Fort Bend to take advantage of the quality of life provided by the cities, County and school districts. In the foreseeable future, the age distribution should be assumed to be essentially the same as in 2009. As the baby boomers get older, an increase in the over 60 age group is expected to occur.

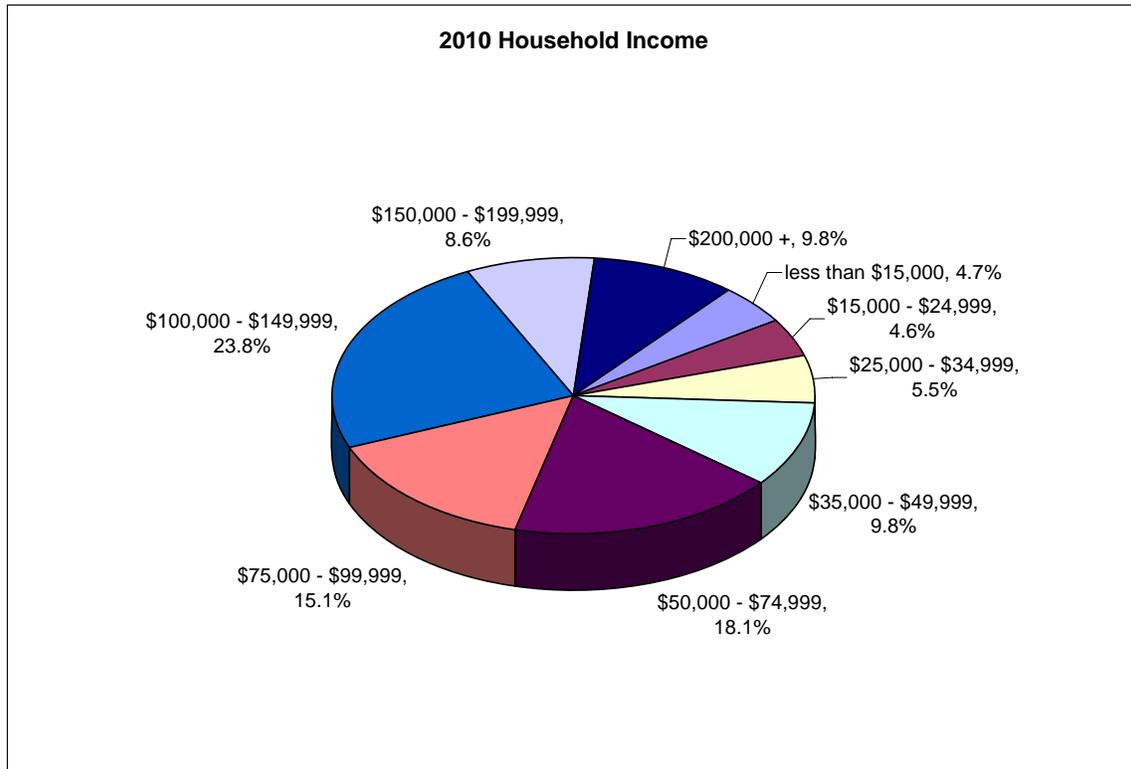
### 4. Household Income

Household incomes were generally higher in Fort Bend County in 2010 than in the surrounding counties, as well as the national average.

Median Household Income (\$)	
Fort Bend County	\$77,016
Harris County	\$49,977
Texas	\$47,563
United States	\$50,740

Persons Below Poverty Level	
Fort Bend County	8.4%
Harris County	16.3%
Texas	16.3%
United States	13.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Source: Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council

**5. Population by Race and Ethnicity**

The race and ethnicity population distribution is from the 2009 Census estimates. The distribution is assumed to remain approximately the same throughout the time frame of the budget period.

**POPULATION BY RACE**

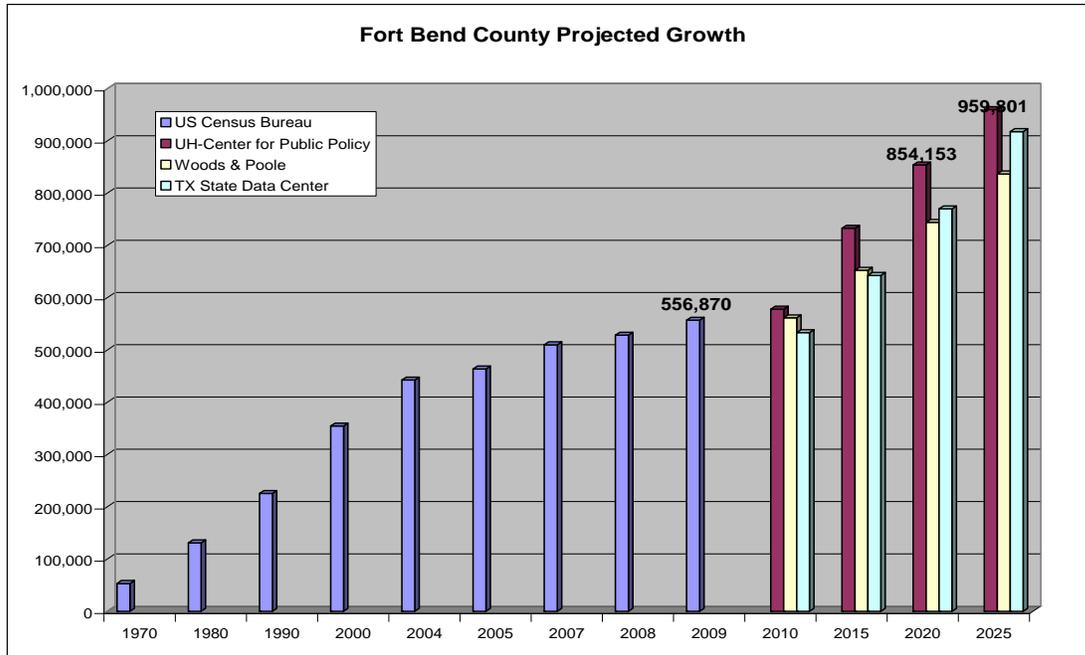
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2014</b>
White Alone	52.3%	50.3%
Black Alone	19.7%	19.5%
American Indian Alone	0.3%	0.3%
Asian or Pacific Islander Alone	13.5%	14.5%
Some Other Race Alone	11.3%	12.3%
Two or more Races	2.9%	3.1%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	26.0%	28.2%
Diversity Index	79.7%	81.5%

Source: ESRI forecasts for 2009.

## 6. Population Projections and Expected Growth

Projections by Woods and Poole Economics for the Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council show increasing population growth continuing through the year 2030. The projections of the *Fort Bend Mobility Plan* update uses Houston Galveston Area Council (HGAC), the regional Council of Governments numbers. Information from the Texas State Data Center (TXSDC) at Texas A&M University, uses two growth scenarios. One is for the population growth from 1990 to 2030 to continue at a rate that is 50% of the growth from 1980 to 1990; the other is for 100% of that same period.

The following table shows those projections.



Source: Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council

These projections for the population growth for Fort Bend County are based on the historical growth trends. For the past few years' growth has exceeded four percent (4%) per year. This level is expected to continue for the next three years, then continue at three percent (3%) for the next ten years with a long-term sustained growth of two percent. Even the most conservative population estimates are triple in the next 20 years.

## **F. NATIONAL RANKINGS**

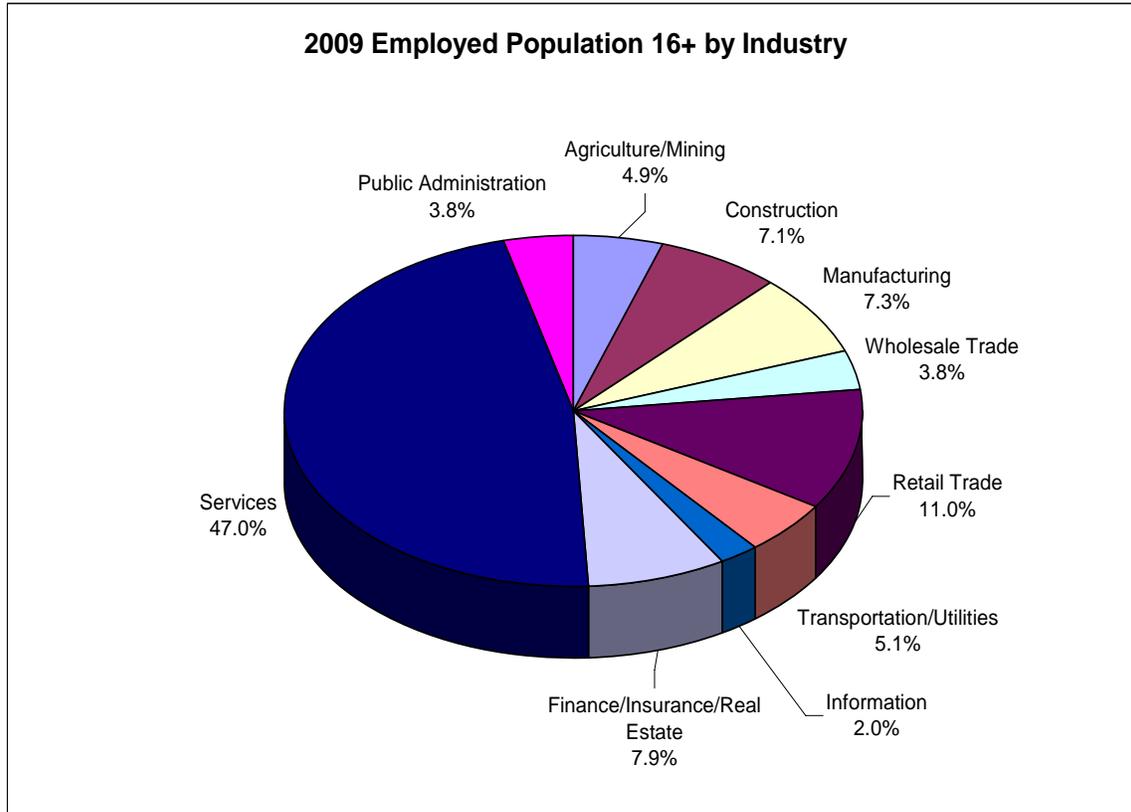
Recently, the County was ranked against all 3,091 counties in the United States for factors that make up economic and demographic excellence. In the sixteen categories measured, the County ranked in the top 10% of all counties in 14 categories. By each ethnic grouping, the citizens of Fort Bend County have the highest educational attainment in the region; and exceed the national averages. The high school dropout rates are well below area, state, and national averages. All six of our school districts exceed state and national testing standards.

Fort Bend ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation for percentage of traditional families (married with children). 74% of the population lives in family households; and 45% are married with children compared to the national average of 26%. 75.6% of Fort Bend residents own their own homes. The average household income is \$75,517 versus \$58,449 for Texas and \$56,184 for the United States. Each ethnic grouping in Fort Bend County outpaces its counterpart in the comparison with state and national household income levels.

CNN Money ranked Fort Bend County 6<sup>th</sup> in Job Growth in 2009. The job growth between 2000 and 2008 was 61.3%. With about 250,000 jobs in the County, many residents work within Fort Bend in traditional agricultural industries like cattle, cotton, and sugar cane, and for the number of new companies to the area like Minute Maid. Fort Bend Economic Development Council has been actively upgrading the area's infrastructure to attract more employers.

**G. THE ECONOMY**

Recognized as a very fast growing business and industrial area, Fort Bend County still maintains a viable agricultural base, dating all the way back to the original settlers who raised cattle, cotton, and sugar cane. Agriculture, petrochemicals, technology industries, and sugar refining are the major businesses in Fort Bend County. The following table shows employment by industry in the County.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. ESRI forecasts for 2009.

This year’s economic downturn has caused Fort Bend County’s normally low unemployment rate to increase along with the state and national rate. The County’s unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in August 2009 compared to 8.2 percent for the state of Texas and 9.8 percent nationally. Many new companies, particularly “high tech” ones, are locating their offices and plants in the County due to the favorable business environment, quality living conditions and outstanding educational facilities. The County is expected to grow in commercial and retail developments. More companies are considering Fort Bend County to locate their offices, as well as manufacturing and distribution facilities.

## H. LAND USE

Although county governments in Texas do not exercise land use control, it is important to know how the land is being used, how the uses have changed and what might be expected in the future. The County is comprised of 562,560 acres of land. Over the past twenty years residential development has increased more than six times. Even with all the residential development, the County is still primarily agricultural. The following table gives an overview of the land use distribution in the County over the past twenty years and a general estimate of the changes that may occur.

<b>LAND USE (ACRES)</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1970</b>
Residential	31,671	22,320	5,443
Single family	29,755		
Multi-family	506		
Mobile homes	1,410		
Commercial	5,382	3,385	3,331
Industrial	4,519	4,500	
Educational	1,122	1,100	
Parks and Open Space	8,025	7,640	4,897
Resource Production	5,475	5,475	
Government	5,358	N/A	
Roads and ROW	5,310	5,310	
Agricultural, Including Undeveloped and Vacant	466,864	510,000	528,094
Water	7,163	7,140	7,958
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>562,560</b>	<b>562,560</b>	<b>562,560</b>

Sources: H-GRTS 1990, 1996 and Farm Bureau, 1997

