

# WELCOME

*Texas Center for Border  
Economic and Enterprise Development*

*Center for the Study of Western  
Hemispheric Trade*

Texas A&M International University

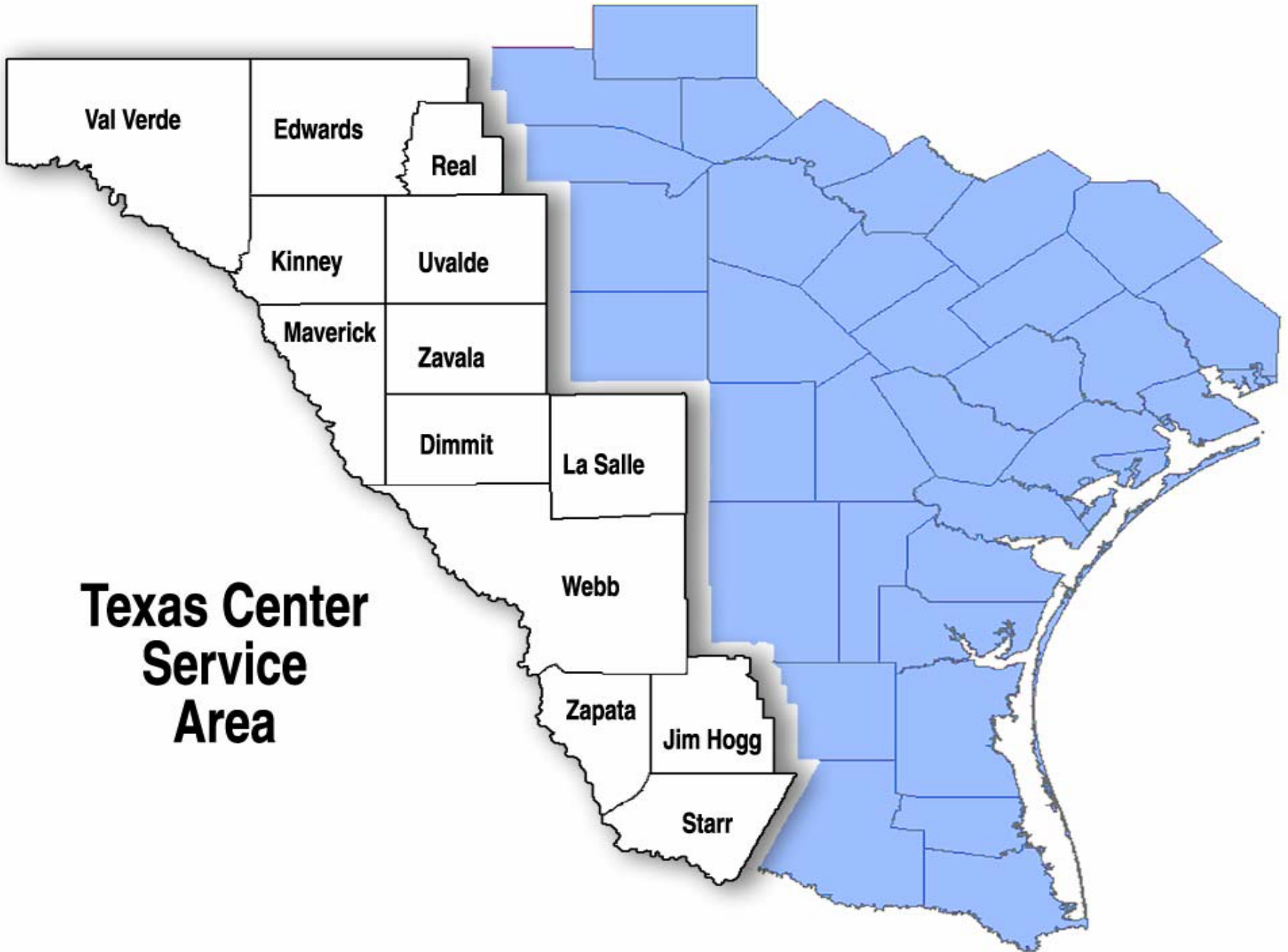


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# Introduction

- Achieving Texas A&M International University's (TAMIU) mission “to improve the quality of life for citizens in Laredo and the border region” through the synergistic efforts of two university centers, based in the College of Business Administration - the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (Texas Center) and the Center for the Study of Western Hemispheric Trade (CSWHT) - and their community partners.
- The Texas Center and the Center for the Study of Western Hemispheric Trade, through their activities and partnerships, not only achieve TAMIU's mission, but also contributes directly to achieving the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) goal to “prepare America's regions for growth and success in the world economy.”
- Socio-economic profile of TAMIU's service area, comprised, roughly, by 13 south Texas and middle Texas border counties.



**Texas Center  
Service  
Area**



# Profile of South and Middle Texas Border Counties

- In the late 1990s, after a decade of strong growth, John Sharp, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, declared the Texas border region, a region of “growth without prosperity.”
- In his report, *Bordering the Future: Challenge and Opportunity in the Texas Border Region*, Sharp documented the region’s strong population and employment growth.
- He also found that despite the strong growth in employment and job creation, the per capita gap between the Texas border region and the state had not narrowed.
- Hence, the label “growth without prosperity.”

# Profile of South and Middle Texas Border Counties (con't)


- While the label doesn't accurately describe all border communities, for example, Laredo, in particular, which has enjoyed "growth and improving prosperity," and to a lesser extent Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and Zapata, it does characterize much of the Texas border region.
- Without getting into the specifics of why "growth without prosperity", it is fair to say the Texas border region faces many development challenges. Compared to the state, the region is less educated, poorer, and more likely to suffer from communicable diseases common in developing countries.
- Nevertheless, notwithstanding the many challenges they face, Texas border residents are, in general, hardworking and enterprising people, determined to get ahead.
- It is this spirit of entrepreneurship and determination to improve, that the Texas Center and CSWHT seeks to nurture, support and advance with its programs and activities.



# **Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (Texas Center)**

## **Mission**


“To marshal the knowledge and expertise of Texas A&M International University's faculty, students, and staff to provide effective leadership and support to Texas border communities in their economic development efforts.”



# **The Center for the Study of Western Hemispheric Trade (CSWHT)**

## **Mission**

“To promote the study and understanding of trade, investment and business activity in and between Western Hemispheric countries through research, conferences, seminars and publications. To use these insights and information to enhance economic development opportunities for Texas border communities and the state of Texas.”



# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004

- **Goal 1:** To work closely with the university's colleges, schools, and departments to involve faculty and students in community-based activities designed to foster economic development and improved standards of living in the border region.
- **Deliverable:** Planning, management, training and technical assistance provided to several economic development entities and organizations, including
  - Laredo Development Foundation,
  - Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center,
  - Laredo Manufacturing Association,
  - Middle Rio Grande Development Council,
  - Maverick Economic Development Corporation,
  - Zapata County Chamber of Commerce, and
  - I-35 South Economic Development Coalition.
- **Deliverable:** Eighteen (18) studies and reports completed for city, county, and economic development entities.





# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004 (cont')

- **Goal 2:** To support interdisciplinary research on meeting community needs and concerns in the border region. To disseminate the research results through conferences, seminars, workshops and special reports.
- **Deliverable:** Twenty-seven (27) faculty research projects funded on various border topics. Papers published in *Border Research Report* series.
- **Deliverable:** Annual Conference on Western Hemispheric Trade and Development.
- **Deliverable:** Western Hemispheric Key Note Speakers Series.

# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004 (cont')

- **Goal 3:** To maintain a U.S.-Mexico border database, containing statistical, text, and bibliographic information on development issues and social/demographic, economic, health, education, and environmental trends in the region. To make data and information available on-line and in hard copy.
- **Deliverable:** Database accessed (“visited”) 2,500-3,000 times a year via the Texas Center homepage (<http://texascenter.tamtu.edu>).
- **Deliverable:** *Border Business Indicators (BBI)* on-line and newsletters distributed monthly.



# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004 (cont')

- **Goal 4:** To serve as a U.S. Census and Texas Department of Economic Development Business and Industry Data Center affiliate office.
- **Deliverable:** Data and information requests processed by phone, mail, email and fax.

# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004 (cont')

- **Goal 5:** To support border economic development through the provision of education, training, and technical assistance to private and public sector entities.
  
- **Deliverable:** Planning, management, training and technical assistance provided to several economic Development entities and organizations, including
  - Laredo Development Foundation,
  - Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center,
  - Laredo Manufacturing Association,
  - Middle Rio Grande Development Council,
  - Maverick Economic Development Corporation,
  - Zapata County Chamber of Commerce, and
  - I-35 South Economic Development Coalition.



# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004 (cont')

- **Goal 6:** To foster self-sufficiency among the border region's limited resource population through promotion and support of self-employment and micro-enterprise activities, education and training, and access to social services.
- **Deliverable:** Colonia Business Enterprise Development Project.
- **Deliverable:** GED, ESL, and computer literacy training provided for colonia residents.
- **Deliverable:** Early Childhood Reading program established for colonia residents.



# Meeting the Needs: Texas Center/CSWHT Goals and Deliverables, 2000-2004 (cont')

- **Goal 7:** To promote youth development and leadership training through workshops, classes, and community-based service activities.
- **Deliverable:** Youth Entrepreneurship Summer (YES) Camp.
- **Deliverable:** Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) program.

# Texas Center Surveys, Studies and Reports

- Laredo Speaks/*Habla Laredo*: Laredo Quality of Life Survey (Texas A&M International University, Laredo Morning Times, Laredo Development Foundation, Laredo Convention and Visitors Bureau)
- Zapata County Quality of Life Survey (Zapata Chamber of Commerce)
- Del Rio Quality of Life Survey (Del Rio Chamber of Commerce)
- Laredo Housing Survey (Community Development Department, City of Laredo)
- Middle Rio Grande Housing Survey (Futuro, Inc.)
- Community Service Centers Assessment Study (Community Action Agency, County of Webb)
- El Aguila Rural Transportation Services Assessment Study (Community Action Agency, County of Webb)
- Laredo Downtown Merchants Survey (Laredo Development Foundation)
- Laredo Manufacturers Needs Assessment Study (Laredo Development Foundation)
- Laredo/Webb County Colonia Business Needs Assessment (Laredo Development Foundation)
- Eagle Pass Business Needs Assessment (Maverick County Development Corporation)
- Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Needs Assessment (Middle Rio Grande Development Council)
- Laredo Community Foundation Feasibility Study (Synergos)
- US VISIT: A Preliminary Impact Assessment on the Border and Texas Economies (International Bank of Commerce)
- Profile of the South Texas Regional Economy, 1990-1999 (Future of the Region, Inc.)
- Profile of the Middle Rio Grande Regional Economy, 1990-1999 (Future of the Region, Inc.)
- Economic and Industrial Development Opportunities in the Texas Border Region (Border Development Alliance)
- The Border: Texas' Roadway to the 21st Century (Texas Border Infrastructure Coalition)
  - Thirty-one (31) TAMIU students were employed on a part-time basis to assist in data gathering and data entry activities related to studies and reports.

# Texas Center Surveys, Studies and Reports

## ***Texas Center Border Research Reports, Volume 1, 2000***

- Tom Vaughan and Jose A. Flores, “Benthic Macroinvertebrates as Monitors of Rio Grande Water Quality.”
- Kati Pletsch de Garcia, “A Sociolinguistic Profile of Heritage Spanish Speakers in the Public Schools in Laredo, Texas.”
- David W. Yoskowitz, “Trade and the Environment: Perceptions from a Region on the Border.”
- Roberto R. Heredia, “Language Code-Switching: A Psychological Analysis of Why Bilinguals Mix Spanish and English en la Frontera.”
- Stanley Green, “Guerrero Archives.”

## ***Texas Center Border Research Reports, Volume 2, 2001***

- Jyotsna Mukherji, “Impoverished Consumers: The Lived Experience of Colonia Residents.”
- Sushma Krishnamurthy, “Rio Grande and Manadas Creek Water and Sediment Chronic Toxicity Studies.”
- Linda Medearis, “The State of Child Care in Laredo.”
- Michael Landeck and Cecilia Garza, “Utilization of Physician Health Care Services in Mexico by Border Residents in Laredo, Texas.”
- Carolyn McCreight and Claudio Salinas, “Characteristics of Successful Principals in a Border Town.”
- Sweety Law, “Mi Futuro: Sexual Abstinence Program (1999-2000) for Laredo Independent School District Middle Schools.”



# Texas Center Surveys, Studies and Reports

## Texas Center *Border Research Reports: Volume 3, 2002*

- Claudio Salinas and Fred Ivy, “The Perceptions of Principals on the Texas-Mexican Border Regarding Their State of Readiness for the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)* Test .”
- David W. Yoskowitz and Michael Pisani, “Reverse Dollar-ization: An Examination of the Peso-ization of the Texas Border Retail Economy.”
- Jyotsna Mukherji, “Understanding the Role of Acculturation on Hispanic Mothers’ Communication Orientation and Consumer-Socialization Tendencies.”
- •Cecilia Garza and Michael Landeck, “Health Insurance Coverage of Texas/Mexico Border Hispanic Residents: An Empirical Study of Laredo, Texas.”
- Julio E. Valladares, “Solar Detoxification of Wastewater in the Rio Grande Contaminated with Industrial Solvents.”
- Kati Pletsch de Garcia, Heritage Language Speakers: “Development, Motivation, Maintenance, and Transfer.”
- Van Miller, “Supply-Chain Relationships within the Mexican Maquiladora Program.”

# Texas Center Surveys, Studies and Reports

## *Texas Center Border Research Reports, Volume 4, 2003*

- Jeffery H.D. Cornelius-White, "Personality, Family Satisfaction, and Demographic Factors in High Achieving Mexican-American High School Seniors."
- Terry L. Shepherd, "The Mozart Effect on Hispanic Children with Learning Disabilities."
- Julio E. Valladares, "Optimization of a Solar Detoxification System for the Treatment of Wastewaters Contaminated with Industrial Solvents."

## *Texas Center Border Research Reports, Volume 5, 2004*

- Hamid R. Kusha, "A Preliminary Report to Laredo City Government: Laredo Is Vulnerable to Bio-Chemical Terrorism."
- Doris J. Rosenow and Crystal Cantu, "Barriers Affecting Health Care of Mexican-American Border Residents."
- Kristina M. Mendiola, Stephanie Tuttle, Roberto Heredia and Barbara Greyback, "Child Bilingualism: A Psychological Analysis of Code-Switching in Children."
- Michael S. Yoder, "Federalism, Planning, and Economic Development in the Texas-Mexico Border Region: A Study of Three International Bridges."
- Christy Terenishi, "Impact of Gender, Generation, Parental Education, and Ethnic Identity on Latino College Students' Perceptions of their Future Opportunities."
- Sukho Lee, "The Comparisons of Dietary Patterns, Physical Activity Levels, Obesity and Muscular Strength in Hispanic Americans: A Three Generation Study."



# Conclusions

- The Texas Center and CSWHT, with its community partners, are fulfilling TAMIU's mission to “improve the quality of life for citizens in Laredo and the border region”, hastening the day when the Texas border region enjoys “growth with prosperity”.

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# Profile of South Texas Border Counties (Webb, Jim Hogg, Zapata, Starr)

- Population - 264,177 in 2000
- Rapid growth in the 1990s
- Webb County grew the most, 44.9 percent, followed by Zapata County, 31.3 percent compared to 22.8 percent for the state
- Region outpaced the state in terms of job creation in the 1990s, 44.3 percent to 23.3 percent
- Webb County posted the highest job gains (43.4 percent) with 21,148 new jobs. Zapata County had the highest percentage gain (64.8 percent) with 4,303 new jobs
- Employment gains in the region driven by strong population growth and expanding trade, investment, and commerce with Mexico
- Population growth sparks sharp increase in demand for health services and social services: also gives strong boost to the construction industry, as additional schools, hospitals, and homes were built to accommodate the growing demand.



# Profile of South Texas Border Counties (cont')

- A three-fold increase in U.S.-Mexico trade in the 1990s, pushes demand for transportation services and warehousing as well as business services up 70 to 100 percent.
- The growing trade relationship also gives an added boost to the construction industry, as new bridges, port facilities, roads, and warehouses were built to service the expanding volume of merchandise trade.
- Over the decade, total personal income in the region increased by 87.4 percent, compared to 80.9 percent for the state.
- Nevertheless, the per capita income gap between the region and the state did not change, remaining at 47.3 percent.

# Profile of Middle Rio Grande Border Counties (Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde and Zavala)

- Population - 154,381 in 2000
- Modest growth in the 1990s, increasing 15.1 percent compared to the state's 22.8 percent growth.
- Two counties however, outpaced, the state- Maverick county (Eagle Pass), 30.9 percent and Val Verde county (Del Rio), 29.0 percent.
- Overall the region, lagged the state in employment growth in the 1990s, growing only 18.3 percent compared to the state's 23.3 percent.
- Maverick and Val Verde counties, however, outpaced the state, 31.5 percent and 30.0 percent respectively, accounting for 89 percent of the employment growth in the region.
- Employment gains driven by growth in U.S.-Mexico trade in the 1990s; transportation services, warehousing, finance, insurance, and business services were the top job gainers.

# Profile of Middle Rio Grande Border Counties (cont')

- Strong population growth in Maverick and Val Verde counties spurs job creation in the construction, health services, and education areas.
- While total personal income in the region in the 1990s, led by the strong employment growth in Maverick and Val Verde counties, increased 89.4 percent compared to the 86.6 percent for the state, the region's per capita income gap with the state widened to 49.8 percent.
- With the exception of Webb County (Laredo), it can be said the counties of the South Texas and Middle Rio Grande region experienced growth without improved prosperity.
- Unlike all other counties in the two regions, Laredo outpaced the state in job growth and actually reduced its per capita income gap with the state





# South Texas Growth Poles

- Laredo has become a dynamic growth pole in the South Texas region.
- Laredo is the leading U.S. in-land port on the southern border, accounting for over 41 percent of all overland U.S.-Mexico merchandise trade, valued at \$100 billion annually.
- Laredo is the port of choice for shipments to and from Mexico-based maquiladoras and U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico.
- In 2004, Laredo led the state in the rate of new jobs created, diversifying its economy with strong growth in the construction, medical and health care services, and business and financial services.
- In 2005, Laredo became the only border community to lower its unemployment rate below 5 percent.
- Eagle Pass and Del Rio have also posted strong population and employment growth and show signs of economic diversification, nevertheless unemployment rates remain high.
- Zapata's recent gains in population and employment suggest the community is on the verge of renewed growth and change.