

Chamber and STEDCO announce support of EDC ballot initiative

by July Danley, President/CEO, Stephenville Chamber of Commerce / Vice President, STEDCO



The Stephenville Chamber of Commerce and Stephenville Economic Development Foundation (STEDCO) have been working together with the City of Stephenville to coordinate and improve economic development efforts in our community. After much discussion and diligent research, we believe that the establishment of a Type B Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is an important step in providing a unified, business friendly environment.



Economic development includes activities that focus on the creation, attraction, retention and expansion of businesses with the goal of adding new and higher paying jobs to increase a community's median income, thereby improving the quality of life enjoyed by all residents.

The City Council voted unanimously to place Proposition 1 on the ballot for the upcoming May election. This measure will give the City of Stephenville the ability to increase their focus on economic development WITHOUT increasing taxes or cutting current programs or services. There will be no change in any of your tax rates as a result of Prop 1. The forming of a Type B EDC will simply designate current tax dollars to be spent specifically on economic development related activities. Whether it's building, maintaining and improving infrastructure, or providing prospective businesses with a helpful place to facilitate their investment in Stephenville, the EDC will approve projects aimed at promoting new and expanded business development to ensure responsible, sustainable growth in our city for years to come.

Along with the Chamber and STEDCO, many other community partners including Ranger College and Erath County Builders Association, as well as leaders from education, manufacturing, health care, small businesses, banks and beyond are in support of this EDC initiative!

According to Wendell Hollingsworth, VP of Operations for Fibergrate, "When companies see sustainable economic development funding and a united front, they see that the city means business."

Chad Decker, owner of Hard 8 BBQ, has expanded his restaurant business into three other cities including Coppell, Roanoke and most recently The Colony. According to Decker, "The support of the local EDC in all of these cities was crucial when making our decision to open a business there. From assistance with the permitting process and locating property to coordinating with utilities and financial incentives, the welcoming atmosphere and resources provided were essential in making our investment successful."

The Chamber and STEDCO have compiled a fact sheet that addresses many of the questions that citizens may have about the ballot proposition and how the forming of a new Type B EDC will benefit the Stephenville community. We encourage you to review the fact sheet and share with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers and employees to help us educate the community about this important issue.

If you have additional questions about the proposition, please reach out to us and let us know! Please feel free to contact any of our Chamber and STEDCO Board Members listed below. We also encourage you to find Stephenville Chamber of Commerce or Stephenville Economic Development Foundation on Facebook to view and share the fact sheet to help us inform the community about this initiative and encourage residents to **vote FOR Prop 1.**

WHEN and WHERE do I vote? Early voting starts April 27 and runs weekdays through May 5 from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Election Day is Saturday, May 9 with polls open 7:00 am – 7:00 pm. All voting will take place at the Erath County Courthouse.

CHAMBER BOARD: **July Danley** - President/CEO, **Darrell Brown** - Chair - *Tarleton State University*, **Steve Patterson** - Chair Elect - *The Patterson Agency*, **Ilda Martinez** - Vice Chair - *Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital*, **Wendell Hollingsworth** - Past Chair - *Fibergrate Composite Structures*, **Kim Pack Wilson** - Finance Chair - *Fraser, Wilson & Bryan, PC*, **John Baxter** - *Baxter Chemical*, **Greg Bruner** - *Bruner Motors, Inc.*, **L.V. Coffee** - *Texas Bank*, **Ed Dittfurth** - *Cornerstone Church*, **Dr. Karen Hobbs** - *Ark Veterinary Hospital*, **Dr. Greg Hubbard** - *Hubbard Orthodontics*, **Dr. Whit Weems** - *Tarleton State University*

STEDCO BOARD: **Willy DeJong** - President - *Hidden View Dairy*, **Wendell Hollingsworth** - Vice Pres. - *Fibergrate Composite Structures*, **Christopher Leu** - Vice Pres. - *Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital*, **July Danley** - Vice Pres. - *Stephenville Chamber of Commerce*, **Ron Wulf** - Treasurer - *Boucher, Morgan & Young, CPAs*, **Ron Mullins** - Past President - *First Financial Bank*, **David Baskett** - *Texas Bank*, **Austin Brown** - *Prime Building Components*, **Keith Brown** - *Prime Building Components*, **Greg Bruner** - *Bruner Motors*, **Chris Moore** - *FMC Technologies*, **Metta Collier** - *Collier & Son, Inc.*, **Chad Decker** - *Hard Eight BBQ*, **Dr. Nathan Heller** - *Tarleton State University*, **Ed Horton** - *Tanglewood Pharmacy*, **Mark Martin** - *Stephenville InterBank*, **Cole Parks** - *Southwestern Enterprises*

Stephenville Chamber of Commerce * 187 W. Washington * 254-965-5313 * www.stephenvilletexas.org

We CARE about Stephenville

- C** **Create opportunity** – Current small businesses and local industry are our community's backbone - they need opportunity to grow and expand successfully here in Stephenville!
- A** **Attract jobs** – Stable, well-paying jobs will raise the median income and make for a strong, vibrant Stephenville!
- R** **Retain students** – With fantastic schools and world-class higher education, let's make sure high-quality jobs are available to keep those bright minds in Stephenville!
- E** **Expand Infrastructure** – Stephenville is growing and well-planned infrastructure improvements will provide the foundation we need for long-term success.

VOTE FOR PROP 1!

ENDORSED BY:



Stephenville: Where everyone has an opportunity to succeed!



Prop 1 increases government efficiency and gives citizens a voice in how our tax dollars are spent! Our own Economic Development Corporation will implement Stephenville's strategic plan and keep voters, like you, in the driver's seat. You deserve responsible spending and a solid return on your investment in Stephenville.

- * Prop 1 does **NOT** raise taxes
- * Prop 1 gives Stephenville citizens the **voice they deserve**
- * Prop 1 gives everyone an **opportunity to succeed** in Stephenville

VOTE FOR PROP 1

www.StephenvilleTexas.org

WHEN?

Mon, April 27 – Fri, May 1: 8am to 5pm
Mon, May 4 and Tues, May 5: 7am to 7pm
ELECTION DAY is Sat, May 9: 7am – 7pm

WHERE?

The Erath County Courthouse

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WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Economic Development is a community-wide effort to preserve and promote OUR community of Stephenville to support current and future generations. Focused on efforts related to the creation and retention of primary jobs, economic development is a term given to activities that provide additional jobs and income given a community's standard of living. It will include the creation, attraction, retention and expansion of businesses. Efforts to create new and higher paying jobs should also produce new retail, restaurants and shopping, filling vacant buildings, additional tourism and hotel occupancy, improved infrastructure and an increased housing inventory.

WILL PROP 1 INCREASE ANY OF MY TAXES, LIKE PROPERTY OR SALES TAX?

Absolutely not! There will be no change in any of your tax rates as a result of Prop 1. The measure would simply designate current tax dollars to be spent specifically on economic development.

WILL THE CITY HAVE TO CUT OTHER SERVICES FROM THE BUDGET?

Not at all! Prop 1 focuses on only 3.5% of the City budget, which can still be spent for critical city functions. This is a low risk step for the city budget, because the dollars designated for economic development are less than the normal conservative growth rate of our local economy. With Prop 1, we have the ability to increase our focus on economic development without increasing taxes or cutting other programs or services. The City Council is committed to protecting government's core functions while seeking increased efficiency.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS CAN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EDC) FUNDS BE SPENT ON?

Whether it's building, maintaining and improving infrastructure or providing prospective businesses with a helpful place to facilitate their investment in Stephenville, the EDC will approve projects aimed at promoting new and expanded business development to ensure responsible, sustainable growth in our city for years to come.

WHAT IS "INFRASTRUCTURE"?

Infrastructure refers to the key structures and facilities that allow a city to function. Roads, rail spurs, water supply, sewer systems, electric and gas utilities, telecommunications, and even buildings such as police and fire departments, all constitute infrastructure. A strong, well-maintained infrastructure makes for a city where people love to live and work.

DO OTHER CITIES OUR SIZE HAVE A TAX-FUNDED EDC?

Yes, and it works! Most cities comparable to Stephenville have this type of system in place and they are having great success with it! Of the 41 cities in Texas with a population size similar to Stephenville, 34 of them also have a plan similar to Prop 1's proposed Economic Development Corporation. Places like Belton, Brenham, Corinth, Palestine, Ennis, and Brownwood are just a few of the growing cities experiencing an improved quality of life and strengthening economy because of initiatives like Prop 1.

HOW WILL THIS HELP CURRENT BUSINESSES?

A primary function of economic development is providing support in order to retain and grow existing businesses. Stephenville is only as strong as its economy and we are proud of the businesses that have chosen to call Stephenville home. By ensuring local businesses have access to a strong, educated workforce, reliable infrastructure, and a growing customer base, Prop 1 will give everyone in Stephenville an opportunity to succeed.

WHO WILL DECIDE HOW THE FUNDS ARE SPENT?

The 7-member board of the EDC will be appointed by the City Council and propose projects to them for ultimate approval. Because the EDC will be made up of a diverse group of community members, from both the private and public sectors, citizens of Stephenville will not only have a strong voice for how their tax dollars are spent, but also a strong system of checks and balances within city government. Voting FOR Prop 1 will increase government efficiency, accountability, and effectiveness.

DOES THE CITY HAVE A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WILL THE COMMUNITY HAVE INPUT?

The City is in the process of building and approving their new strategic plan. Community partners including the Chamber, STEDCO, Ranger College and Tarleton State University have each provided a portion of the funding for this strategic planning process. Input from across the community is being given and considered. Comment periods will allow the chance for every citizen to have their voice heard. Once Prop 1 is passed, the EDC will help guide and implement the new strategic plan.

IS THIS JUST TO GET MORE MONEY FOR STEDCO AND THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

No. Neither STEDCO nor the Chamber will receive any funds as a result of Prop 1. They are supporting Prop 1 because it is good policy for Stephenville and will bolster critical economic growth while creating a unified, business friendly environment for new and existing businesses.

WHO IS BEHIND THIS EFFORT?

The Chamber, STEDCO, Ranger College, Erath County Builders Association, and community leaders from education, manufacturing, health care, small businesses, banks and beyond! The City Council voted unanimously to put this EDC initiative on the ballot. The breadth of support that Prop 1 has received, as well as the unification of our community around this effort, is truly unprecedented. We encourage you to support it with us by **voting FOR Prop 1!**