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## **Fort Bend County, Texas Provides Premier Place To Relocate, Open A Business**

**(Fort Bend County, TX) February 3, 2010** – Despite a national economic downturn, Fort Bend County, Texas continues to provide a premier place to relocate or open a new business. Here are eight key reasons business owners should consider Fort Bend County when moving their business.

- Favorable business climate. Qualified businesses and developments relocating to Fort Bend County can take advantage of a number of incentives including: value-added tax abatement, Freeport tax exemption, tax increment financing and industrial revenue bonds. Additionally, a Foreign Trade Zone designation is currently pending on the area's new intermodal facility and logistics park.
- Strong economy. Fort Bend County is the regional leader in household income.<sup>5</sup> Ranked third in job growth in the country by the U.S. Department of Labor in 2009, its unemployment rate remains consistently below the national average.
- Low cost of living. Texas offers the fifth lowest cost of living in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- Low tax burden. Texas is seventh in the nation in lowest tax burden<sup>2</sup> and consistently ranks well below the national average. Plus, Texas is one of only seven states in the country that have no state income tax.
- Exceptional quality of life. Families make up 83 percent of the households in Fort Bend County<sup>3</sup>, most of which reside in one of 70 master-planned communities, characterized by affordable upscale homes and outstanding amenities. In addition, Fort Bend County maintains the lowest crime rate in Houston's eight-county area.<sup>4</sup> The Fort Bend County cities of Sugar Land and Missouri City both appeared on the safest cities of America list published by CQ Press' City Crime Rankings in November 2009.
- Educated workforce. Fort Bend County is the regional leader in high school graduation rate and educated adult population. Nearly 40 percent of its workforce earned a college degree or higher.<sup>5</sup>
- Optimal distribution network. More than 100 Fortune 500 companies use the Sugar Land Regional Airport annually. Plus, businesses in Fort Bend County are in close proximity to two major airports – George Bush International Airport and Hobby Airport. The soon-to-be-completed Intermodal Rail Facility will offer time-wise import/export shipping options via Mexico. And, the Port of Houston and Port Freeport are also available to export/import shipments overseas.



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- Right-to-work. Workers in Fort Bend County are not required to be members of a union. Therefore, business owners have the right to hire whomever they choose.

Fort Bend County is located in the Houston metropolitan area of southeast Texas. For more information about Fort Bend County, visit **[www.fortbendcounty.com](http://www.fortbendcounty.com)**.

<sup>1</sup> The Council for Community and Economic Research, March 2009

<sup>2</sup> Texas ranks seventh nationally in the Tax Foundation's State Business Tax Climate Index. The index compares the states in five areas of taxation that impacts business: corporate taxes, individual income taxes, sales taxes, unemployment insurance taxes and taxes on property.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau-American Community Survey

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau-American Community Survey

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau-American Community Survey

#### *About Fort Bend County*

*Fort Bend County is located in the Houston metropolitan area of southeast Texas. Its population is among the fastest growing in the United States and has been recognized among the most educated and diverse counties in the nation. According to the 2008 U.S. Census, Fort Bend County has more than 530,000 residents and is projected to grow to one million by 2017. Fort Bend's vibrant economy has also received national recognition. Fort Bend County is among the top 10 counties in the nation in terms of economic strength, according to Woods & Poole Economics, 2008. For more information about Fort Bend County, including a complete list of accolades, visit **[www.fortbendcounty.com](http://www.fortbendcounty.com)** or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.*