

Waller County EDP Joins Drayton McLane in Regional Marketing Effort

Earlier this year, the Greater Houston Partnership announced a bold strategic plan to promote economic growth and prosperity in the 10-county region around Houston. Its objectives are ambitious: to contribute to the creation of 600,000 new jobs, \$60 billion in capital investment, and \$225 billion in foreign trade.

The program is called *Opportunity HoustonSM*, and it is an aggressive five year marketing program that will generate leads for economic development organizations throughout the 10-county region. Houston Astros owner Drayton McLane is heading the \$40 million fundraising component of the program, which is believed to be the largest initiative of its type ever in the United States.

This is an ambitious program designed to turn those goals into reality – and to ensure that Waller County will be able to maximize the benefits that come with a strong, thriving regional economy. The results will be more leads for larger projects resulting in more jobs for Waller County citizens.

WCEDP Executive Director Vince Yokom stated; “We have already begun to see the benefits of joining this initiative. As part of the kick-off, Waller County Economic Development Partnership was listed with other participating EDO groups in a full page ad that appeared in the Houston Chronicle. We could never afford that type of exposure on our own.”

Overall, the program targets five major economic sectors: aviation and aerospace, energy and petrochemical, medical and biotechnology, information technology, and nanotechnology. All are among the industries identified by the Partnership’s plan as critical to our future prosperity. Beyond that, they create the kind of high-impact, high-yield jobs whose benefits are felt region-wide.

The money raised, which will come from large and small business throughout the region, will improve our ability to create jobs and attract new investment in a number of ways. Included among the potential components of our enhanced outreach strategy are:

- Development of a high-tech Geographic Information System that can capture location-specific data and link prospects with specific regional sites that best meet their requirements;
- New lead-generation methods that will enable the Partnership to identify – and aggressively pursue – the strongest potential prospects in key growth sectors;
- Enhanced efforts to strengthen our image and raise our visibility internationally; and
- Marketing and public relations initiatives designed to impact perceptions of the Houston region across the nation and around the world.

To learn more about *Opportunity HoustonSM*, visit www.opportunityhouston.org. For more information about the Waller County Economic Development Partnership, visit www.wallercounty.org.