



2005 East and Southeast Fort Worth Economic Development Summit



**Congressman Michael Burgess
Honorary Summit Chair**

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Fort Worth, Texas



www.publicforuminstitute.org



Overview

Throughout the past few decades, Fort Worth and its surrounding communities have enjoyed a strong period of urban renewal and economic growth. Since 1989, more than 1,000 business locations or expansions have resulted in 230,000 jobs and a diversification of the city's business base. Now, Fort Worth's economy measures as one of the strongest in Texas. However, unlike its neighboring communities, east and southeast Fort Worth have not experienced the same level of success.

While an effort is underway to revitalize the Evans and Rosedale Business and Cultural District, the percentage of residents living at or below the poverty level is more than twice that of the rest of the city. Local leaders and organizations have worked hard to create new jobs and promote economic growth, but more work must be done to realize the area's full potential.

East and southeast Fort Worth enjoy a number of assets that can help stimulate growth to achieve its potential. With a strategic location adjacent to the region's major economic engines (e.g. downtown, the medical district, and the "NAFTA Highway"), proximity to three universities and other educational centers, an underutilized workforce, and a renewed leadership commitment from the city and local economic development agencies, east and southeast Fort Worth are well positioned for a long overdue economic renaissance.

With the challenges facing local communities and possible approaches towards promoting growth, development, and entrepreneurship in mind, Congressman Michael C. Burgess hosted an economic development summit for east and southeast Fort Worth. Recommendations formulated at the summit focused on major themes for economic revival, with the most popular being leveraging local government support for renovations, developing incentive packages to encourage the creation of new small businesses, and stringently enforcing building codes already on the books.

Economic revival is an often-sought yet difficult objective to achieve. A successful and vibrant community requires the convergence of often disparate factors. First, community leaders must collaborate and cooperate with businesses and local and federal agencies to provide jobs to residents and profits to enterprise, as echoed in the summit recommendations.

In addition, Fort Worth's leaders must think globally, as the expansion of the scope of the marketplace grows every day and more broad-reaching solutions are necessary. Based on survey results taken at the summit, those assembled believed market globalization would be the biggest trend in the coming years. They supported proposals to provide incentives to small businesses that would promote innovation and allow the region to compete worldwide. Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce David Sampson mirrored those ideas: "As we think of economic development, we have to think much more broadly than just what's happening a couple of blocks away or in the next council district. We need to be thinking about opportunities to help our existing businesses plug into a growing worldwide economy."

Third, leadership at all levels must focus clearly on actionable objectives that will promote entrepreneurship, the key aspect to growing a local economy. The creation of small businesses drives the American economy and generates more jobs than any other single factor in this country. Both locally and nationally, entrepreneurship is vital to achieving and maintaining economic competitiveness. Those attending called for business and community leaders to convene and develop action plans on how to better promote small business creation as well as provide internships and business education programs to area youth.

Moreover, the entire community must be involved if this effort is to be successful, as money is not the only necessary resource. Mentoring programs for youth, neighborhood crime-watch patrols, and public works programs are all important in creating an environment that attracts business and provides for economic vibrancy. This was brought up frequently throughout workshops during the summit.

East and Southeast Fort Worth hope to not only follow in the footsteps of the other parts of the city but also to achieve the economic revitalization other similar communities have recently experienced. One such example is East St. Louis, located across the Mississippi River from downtown St. Louis. Despite a historically rich culture, crime and deteriorating housing have plagued the economically depressed section of the city since the 1960s. However, by developing master plans for redevelopment – like revitalizing its waterfront areas and offering incentives for relocating businesses – East St. Louis has begun to make real progress. Many of the changes made by East St. Louis in their quest for economic rebirth were also mentioned as suggestions in the Fort Worth summit.

Fort Worth's residents and leadership have stressed that any plan of action for economic revival must be realistic, usable, and easily updated. This solid framework for action coupled with the dedication demonstrated by local and federal leaders, make this the right time to act to bring economic prosperity to the citizens of East and Southeast Fort Worth.

Summary Report

The *2005 East and Southeast Fort Worth Economic Development Summit* attracted more than 225 participants from a vast array of personal and professional backgrounds. Proposed as an important starting point for the revitalization of this historically disadvantaged section of Fort Worth, the summit discussed various possible recommendations and devised other ideas that might allow East and Southeast Fort Worth to join in the recent economic prosperity achieved by other parts of the city.

Organized by the Public Forum Institute and hosted by Congressman Michael C. Burgess (R-TX), participants heard from a range of leaders throughout the summit. These included: David Sampson, Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce; Mayor Michael Moncrief of the City of Fort Worth; and, Wes Turner, president and publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Before splitting into four breakout sessions, participants were surveyed through the use of electronic keypads to identify preconceptions about how best to promote the area. Most participants came from small business, education, and local government – those with some of the greatest interest in seeing the area flourish. Participants thought globalization of the economy would be the greatest trend over the next ten years. When asked to identify the region's greatest asset, they suggested its proximity to major economic engines such as business parks and transit. However, a number of challenges – including a lack of workforce skills, difficulty in accessing early stage capital, and the need for more coordination among various levels of leadership – were also noted.



Congressman Michael Burgess speaks about the need for an increased focus on community in Fort Worth

The four workshop groups, "Building Communities and Changing Perceptions," "Encouraging Entrepreneurship," "Preparing the Workforce of the Future," and "Attracting Investment," consisted of panels of local experts or leaders who brought recommendations to the table and listened to community members' own ideas for progress. At the end of the daylong event, major points arose and were prioritized in terms of impact and feasibility to provide an overall ranking of the ideas presented. Participants' three highest-rated steps to creating economic growth were increasing the skill of the workforce, creating safe neighborhoods, and promoting excellence in local schools.

The summit focused on four major themes to promote growth in east and southeast Fort Worth. First, the area must make efforts to change its reputation for violence and crime as well as the perception that it lacks the commitment and resources for successful business development. Secondly, the community must find strong and capable leadership from a variety of sources such as heads of local government, business, and religious groups. The attendees called for the Congressman, Mayor, and council members to commit to a unified vision of a more prosperous east and southeast Fort Worth.

In addition to changing the perception of the area and uniting leadership, the summit also centered on following market trends to focus energy on areas where there is a high chance of growth and development, such as the promotion of entrepreneurship and attracting corporations into the area. Last, east and southeast Fort Worth need to tap into the successes that have occurred in Fort Worth's downtown and northern Alliance neighborhoods, where recent years have brought increased prosperity and a stronger local economy. Within this framework, specific recommendations were submitted and evaluated that could lead to furthering these overarching goals.

The summit will hopefully serve as the beginning of a major economic initiative for east and southeast Fort Worth rather than simply a gathering of minds and community members for a one-time event. Congressman Burgess proposed future meetings based on the workshop discussions on September 12th and 19th, 2005, and called for ideas to be submitted to his office and to community leaders as part of the effort to develop the region. He plans for this hard work to be continued with a second Economic Development Summit scheduled for mid-2006.

Opening Remarks: Leadership & the Community

Jonathan Ortmans, president of the Public Forum Institute, opened the summit by stressing that it was developed "by the community – for the community" – made up of local officials and residents, all with concerned interest in the future of the area. He urged the attendees to create actionable recommendations for economic growth that had real potential for implementation and that would have an immediate impact on the community. Rather than simply brainstorming about what the community might become one day, Ortmans suggested the creation of a short list of high-impact ideas against which one could benchmark progress against to guide the community in its struggle for economic prosperity.

Utilizing wireless electronic keypads, participants identified three primary roadblocks to economic development in the community: access to early stage capital for business development; overall lack of workforce skills among the local labor pool; and a lack of coordination and cooperation among local, state and federal leaders.

Ortmans described this information as "providing food for thought in [the] discussions." The audience was advised to consider the community assets they already possessed – including proximity to the major economic engines such as the Medical District and the I-20 Development Corridor – that would aid in both internal development and the attraction of investors.

Finally, Ortmans discussed the need for the members of the community to devise certain "first wins" on the path to growth – simple and plausible ways to measure the move toward economic prosperity. This would allow for real progress to be made, rather than just the identification of ideas without implementation.

In his opening remarks to the assembled audience Fort Worth Mayor Michael Moncrief described the goal of the summit as "looking to find answers for economic vitality in southeast Fort Worth." He began by thanking the multitude of city employees for their vigilance the night before, when a gas leak threatened downtown Fort Worth. He used this example to emphasize the character of the citizens of the city as a whole, as well as those of East and Southeast Fort Worth.

Mayor Moncrief demonstrated a desire to work alongside the members of the community, to "truly make a difference in this area" of Fort Worth and to fight for economic prosperity for its

residents. In describing this section of the city as “historically overlooked and underserved,” he showed his recognition of the problem and his determination to make much needed decisions that would impact and encourage growth in the southeast. He also mentioned his eagerness to work with the newest members of the council board to better serve the community.

The Mayor also urged the community, in their workshop discussions, to think outside of the current paradigm of unsuccessful ideas for growth and instead to formulate a brand new vision for East and Southeast Fort Worth. He encouraged participants to share their ideas, not only at the summit but throughout his term as mayor. He thanked Congressman Burgess for his commitment to the community before moving on to his general ideas for development.

“Today is a new beginning... a day to focus on where we are, where we as a community need to be, and what needs to be done to get us there,” Mayor Moncrief said as he addressed the participants.

He described his vision of sustainable growth for the area rather than a temporary boost. He also called for the entire community’s commitment and cooperation – from residents to religious leaders to City Hall – in moving toward the desired level of development for this section of Fort Worth. Finally, he described the summit as a “tremendous opportunity” for everyone in the room to accomplish something and added that he, as mayor, had already begun pushing potential developers to invest in east and southeast Fort Worth because of the wealth of untapped resources the community possesses.

After an introduction from Congressman Burgess, Wes Turner, the publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, also spoke to the assembly. He emphasized the need for government and the residents of the city to make all of Fort Worth strong, not just the downtown and Alliance areas. However, he also pointed to these areas as evidence of successes in Fort Worth and as examples that the community can emulate.

Turner highlighted a few steps that had already been taken in east and southeast Fort Worth, but reminded the participants that much work remained if significant and continuing growth was to be seen. He suggested the promotion of growth in the retail sector that would provide jobs and opportunities within the community and bring with it the possibility of future expansion.

Urging the summit to focus on solutions that are forward thinking, Turner also asked for collaboration by all members of the community for the cause of development and strengthening of the local economy. “It’s time to move beyond words and dreams,” said Turner, “and to begin planning for implementation of real change in southeast Fort Worth.” Following one of the themes of the summit, he posited that strong and accountable leadership would be absolutely vital for progress to be made.

A New Vision for East and Southeast Fort Worth

Before the concurrent workshop sessions began, Congressman Michael Burgess briefly outlined his vision for East and Southeast Fort Worth. The congressman first highlighted the successes of the greater Fort Worth area, but stressed the need for East and Southeast portions of the city to join in this progress. He continued by pointing out that the effort to create a development plan for the area had been created by Southeast Fort Worth Inc. and emphasized the need for acting on that plan.

The congressman stressed the importance of finding consensus on community priorities over individual concerns. The need for change must expand the notions of security and stability to incorporate not just areas such as law enforcement, but also quality and stability in employment, education and healthcare. Reshaping goals from short-term fixes to addressing long-term growth will be the groundwork for the creation of an economic base strong enough to become self sustaining. Burgess stated, "We want to foster an economic environment through infrastructure, services and regulatory procedures that will attract investment." The congressman's sentiment was that maintaining focus on these ideals would create something that could be delivered as an actionable plan from the effort of the workshops.

The air of the meeting and the tone of Congressman Burgess's speech emphasized the need to change the generally held perceptions about the community. Rather than thinking of the area as hard hit by economic misfortune, it was time to look at its unique advantages, the availability of both infrastructure and a large workforce. Congressman Burgess noted the need to enhance the education of the workforce pool in ways that lead not only training for today's jobs, but also the jobs of tomorrow and that fosters a commitment to lifelong learning. He went on to describe the great potential of the people of east and southeast Fort Worth, "We want to develop an entrepreneurial culture where residents have the confidence that they can transform their ideas into business."

The congressman explained that the positive work conducted at the summit needed to be maintained beyond the day's events. He urged the community to accept accountability for following through on the actions discussed during the summit even as he urged the delegates to hold him personally responsible for initiating the actions necessary to revitalize the area. He laid out the idea of creating a quarterly report to keep up on issues raised during the breakout groups. While the topic of the day would be creating a progressive discourse, the Congressman reminded those attending that growth is "a marathon, not a sprint."

"Security will be critical to enhancing our neighborhoods. And I'm not only talking about security that's brought by a badge and a gun (although those are extremely important), but I'm talking about the security that comes with stable employment, security that comes with knowing that you'll have access to quality healthcare (should you need it), and security that comes from knowing that your children are safe and learning in their schools."

Workshop: Attracting Investment

Devoyd Jennings, President of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, moderated the discussion on attracting investment to the Fort Worth area – specifically in the east and southeast regions of the city. Discussion focused on facilitating sustainable growth by merging structural development, promotional efforts, capital investment, and the need for a new “master developer.” By utilizing these approaches to investment, east and southeast Fort Worth could work to raise their comparative prosperity and increase their appeal to businesses.

Moderator:

Mr. Devoyd Jennings, President, Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce

Panelists:

Mr. Bill Thornton, President, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Robert Sturns, Business Development Coordinator, City of Fort Worth

Mr. Dan Villegas, Chairman, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Discussion centered on the city planners, developers, investors and bankers with the greatest ability to impact the economic development of East and Southeast Fort Worth. Participants focused on assuring that city planners were knowledgeable about the Fort Worth area and formulated realistic plans for the east and southeast sectors of the city. The need for investors and developers that are willing to take risks was also taken up, with a spotlight on drawing less conservative investment and publicizing the potential of the region. The idea of attracting “patient money” was given particular attention within the workshop, as the development process in Fort Worth will require a lasting commitment from any future investors.

The principle action items suggested by the *Attracting Investment* breakout group include:

- Convene top executives in Tarrant County regarding the development of east and southeast Fort Worth with investors, developers, and others to discuss economic opportunities
- Create a task force to review city ordinances and policies that limit development in east and southeast Fort Worth
- Create a task force to identify, attract, and employ “patient money”
- Create an event featuring east and southeast Fort Worth to host developers and present a convincing plan to take to the investment community
- Empower the Chamber of Commerce and southeast Fort Worth, Inc and other economic development agencies to impact the development of funds and programs
- Encourage public works projects to provide a more attractive appearance to potential investors
- Identify parties with access to capital, land or other resources with interest in revitalizing a commercial or residential pocket of the community
- Evaluate and refine marketing packages to highlight community assets – and available incentives – to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses
- Identify a “master developer” with the ability to create a vision, garner the support of the affected community and access capital

Later in the meeting, all participants were asked to rank many of these initiatives based on both their expected impact and feasibility. Based on eFORUM surveys “convene top executives” was seen as the most important, followed closely by “create a task force to review”, and “create a

'patient money' task force". The entire summit was also asked what they thought was the first step in attracting new businesses to the region. Thirty-six percent believed that a skilled workforce was the central component, followed by 19 percent who regarded safe neighborhoods as the key first step. Better schools and transportation were also highly valued by participants, drawing 14 and 11 percent of votes, respectively.

These results follow the workgroup dialogue in which best practices central to structural development, such as working within local educational and developmental institutions to utilize community assets, were examined. Workgroup participants balanced their recommendations between top-down and bottom-up proposals, culminating in five final actionable items voted on at the conclusion of the summit. Together, these ideas can serve as a framework for drawing future investment to the east and southeast Fort Worth region and increase the area's overall entrepreneurial potential.

Priority Action Items

Convene top executives in Tarrant County regarding the development of SE FW with investors, developers, and others to discuss economic opportunities

Create a task force to identify, attract, and employ "patient money."

Create a task force to review city ordinances & policies that limit development in East & SE FW

Create an event to feature East and SE FW to host developers and present a convincing plan to take to the investment community to attract that key development effort

City needs to empower Chamber of Commerce and SE FW, Inc and other economic development agencies to impact the development of funds and programs

Workshop: Preparing the Workforce of the Future

Mr. Ralph McCloud of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth opened the "Preparing the Workforce of the Future" workshop by discussing the need for continual education starting at birth. This would be a theme throughout the hour and a half workshop, which was headed by six distinguished and involved members of the East and Southeast Fort Worth community. The panelists, leaders from different community organizations and educational entities, discussed a range of issues including, but not limited to: resources, financial literacy, basic education and occupational exposure, and the need for collaboration and coordination among all groups in the community. Members of the panel and workshop participants grappled with six main ideas that could potentially have a lasting impact on the east and southeast Fort Worth area. These were:

Moderator:

Mr. Ralph McCloud, Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth

Panelists:

Ms. Daphne Barlow, Boys and Girls Club

Mr. Michael Cady, Dean of Continuing Education and Economic Development, Tarrant Community College South Campus

Dr. Sue Guthrie, Assistant Superintendent over Secondary Schools, Fort Worth Independent School District

Dr. Allen Henderson, Provost and Senior Vice President, Texas Wesleyan University

Ms. Judy McDonald, Workforce Solutions

- Create after school programs to introduce kids to basic economics, tutoring programs, and entrepreneurial workshops
- Work with area businesses to manage career workshops at local educational institutions
- Take advantage of the community's proximity to the Medical District and other businesses by working with area businesses to implement community internships and job-shadowing programs
- Establish a volunteer lecture/workshop series in the community to enhance transitional skills
- Provide hiring incentives targeted at employing east and southeast Fort Worth residents
- Develop a promotion vehicle to promote the city, county and regional workforce resources to have available for schools, neighborhoods and other organizations

One audience member pointed out that the burden of educating the community's youth should not be placed solely upon the educational facilities of a town. Panelists and participants alike agreed that cultivating future generations of workers should be a community responsibility involving all, from parents and churches to the school systems, private sector businesses and even strangers who see truant students during the day. General consensus held that there is a need for parents to emphasize the value of attending school daily, and more businesses need to assist in preparing and offering occupational mentorship, knowledge and skills. Even community organizations such as churches and clubs could reinforce certain values by offering safe spaces, workshops and greater cooperation with other civic groups.

Many participants expressed concerns regarding how to aid the teen demographic, particularly those not enrolled in school or active in the workforce. As one audience member pointed out, teens today are "multimedia babies" and consequently their education may be hindered by the way they are instructed. Mr. McCloud followed up by stating the importance of teaching people "how to learn" and the value of an education. Panelists agreed, describing how many students do

not know what career to pursue, even upon arrival at college. Students are often provided “little connection between what they are learning and what they need to learn for their occupations.”

Another issue debated among panelists and participants was funding and the availability of resources. While all of the panelists agreed that more funding would be appreciated, and at times is essential, many in the audience voiced the belief that the necessary resources for workforce education could be found in the community already. Participants repeatedly stressed the need to “think outside the box” and encourage businesses, public and civic institutions and private organizations to pool resources and collaborate on initiatives rather than operating as separate “silos.”

Audience members added many unique contributions and suggestions to those of the panelists. A recent high school graduate, after receiving a round of applause, described how he felt constrained by the curriculum offered at his school. Restricted by the limited focus of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) program resulting in “teaching to the test,” he maintained that he was prevented from exploring other occupational interests during his formative years. Educators on the panel and in the audience frequently indicated that the standardized tests necessary for high school graduation constrained the curriculum and elective options. Additionally, participants and panelists both expressed their belief that courses in financial literacy should be mandatory.

Another participant described how she and a group of volunteers had acquired a small apartment complex to replace their old community center. She discussed the importance of providing a safe space for children after school. Participants discussed the need to work with the growing Latino population in Fort Worth that suffered the highest high school dropout rate in the community, the need to pool resources within the community and other programs such as literacy coaches, Parents as Teachers, and three-week nursing certification programs.

At the final session of the workshop, recommendations discussed by this session were voted on by the group. These recommendations included such ideas as creating a Workforce Community Council, uniting community service organization and developing community profiles. Despite very similar scores in both potential impact and feasibility, developing mentorships, internships and more job-related activities for students and young adults was deemed slightly more preferable than the others.

Priority Action Items

Form a Workforce Development Community to Bring FW business leaders together to develop action plans to overcome barriers to creating internships, mentorships and jobs for youth and young adults in East-Southeast FW.

Develop detailed community profiles of East and Southeast Fort Worth.

Bring community service organizations (Rotary, Lions, etc) leaders together to discuss how their resources could be applied to future workforce needs.

Form an East-Southeast Fort Worth Workforce Development Community Council

Workshop: Encouraging Entrepreneurship

Many of the institutions and much of the infrastructure necessary to make east and southeast Fort Worth a globally competitive economy already exist within the community today. Challenges remain, however, that must be met. The Encouraging Entrepreneurship workshop session focused on how to promote an entrepreneurial spirit and community development in an area with potential for extraordinary growth.

The question posed at the commencement of the workshop was "what makes someone an

entrepreneur?" Are there intrinsic characteristics that encourage one to start their own small business? The panelists concurred that such a temperament does exist and is characterized by people who are independent risk takers willing to expose themselves to strains and stress. These people overcome obstacles by gathering all the information they can through "instinctual fortitude" and persistence. Clyde Higgs, president of Tech Fort Worth went as far as to label them "quirky." This seemingly eccentric personality allows for thinking "outside the box" and generates new ideas and fresh thinking. The ability to spawn new ideas, however, is only the first step. Actually implementing a successful business plan requires the mastery of many different business skills as well as the support of local governments and businesses councils. One needs to know how to go about such an endeavor by learning from those that have gone before them. The old adage noted by Mr. McKneely, "You better have a good lawyer and an accountant you can trust," could not have been more relevant.

After opening remarks from panelists, the audience was asked to share its concerns. Some of them expressed that anxiety was the result of the problems that arise when someone with great skills but very low income has to take the risks necessary for starting a new business. Another concern spotlighted the dearth of funding and advisory opportunities for low-income people in getting their ideas off the ground. Furthermore there was also worry over the way youth are currently being educated in Fort Worth. There seems to be little incentive and reward, at least from the perspective of youth, to follow an entrepreneurial track. The only two options appeared to be either attending a four-year university or training in a vocational field, the former drives a young educated workforce from the southeast and the latter limits youth to low-income jobs that do not produce or reciprocate wealth. An entrepreneurship program or track in secondary education would not train someone for any single job but educate the youth on how to create new jobs as noted by the moderator, Dorothy Wing.

After deliberation a consensus was reached that the course taken should be limited to five actionable items for the 2005 summit. Each task was critiqued on a scale of one (least important) to nine (most important) in terms of both impact on the southeast Fort Worth area and the feasibility of their implementation. The greatest concern was the desire to access help in adhering to new renovation codes in the older structure of center city which can be a time-consuming and expensive activity, that pulls limited resources away from achieving the aims of their small business plan.

Moderator:

Ms. Dorothy Wing, Manager of Economic Diversification City of Fort Worth

Panelists:

Ms. Alicia Fannon, Executive Director, William Mann Jr. Community Development Corporation

Mr. Clyde Higgs, President, Tech Fort Worth

Mr. Floyd McNeely, Vice President, FMB Manufacturing

Ms. Rosa Navejar, President, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Priority Action Items

City development department HELP with permitting for renovation

Incentive packages for small businesses (like those to attract big businesses)

Network for service providers for entrepreneurs; referral system for technical assistance

Tarrant County - Fort Worth establish Angel Investor Network

BAC & chambers to partner with schools to provide entrepreneur education at middle school & high school levels; create "Road Show" to highlight successes and resources

Workshop: Building Communities and Changing Perceptions

Faced with an increasing reputation for crime and a community struggling with the challenges of deterioration in east and southeast Fort Worth, this workshop evaluated methods to reverse these troublesome trends. The discussion consisted of airing concerns over current problems within the community, as well as addressing possible solutions.

The level and style of development was a key component of the workshop. Many speakers suggested that additional resources were needed specifically to monitor and control the type of development. This related most notably to rezoning, including the phasing out of incompatible businesses that deter further growth, such as industrial storage centers and outdoor tire sales. Some thought that similar restrictions should be placed on the size of buildings in certain areas to maintain a unified community feel. Other administrative necessities include ensuring that development is distributed throughout the areas in need.

Additionally, the intent and end result of individual investment projects should be monitored in order to prevent potentially desirable investment from producing undesirable results. This is of particular concern in the case of "boom investors" who finance development to capitalize on a growth project, and once a profit has been made, remove their capital. Specifically, the need for "patient" and permanent capital was requested. The economic makeup of the planned and "mixed-income" communities was also an important issue. Participants thought new developments should target middle income and upper-middle income families in single-unit homes. Also, in a nod to East and Southeast Fort Worth's historical position as a vibrant historical community, attendees suggested new architecture coordinate with older styles. As a method of generating new building development, land banking was also encouraged. This system of banking relates to the encouragement of banks to invest in cheap east and southeast property due to its higher than average potential yield.

Crime has become an increasing concern for potential investors, and reshaping the image of east and southeast Fort Worth has become important to developers. Many of the problems center on "soft crimes"; drug sales and prostitution were part of the perceived image of certain areas. While not particularly violent, these activities impact the integrity of the entire community, making it difficult for even the most dedicated residents to take pride in their neighborhoods. Another community development problem is the high level of transients currently living in the area. One suggestion was to work with shelter providers to better assist in homeless aid, while also enforcing loitering codes with more regularity. Currently there is a high burnout rate among law enforcement officials in the area. One suggestion has been to increase the number of police officers, which would provide more coverage, as well as reducing the workload for any one officer, removing a great deal of stress. Other methods of prevention include increasing public awareness and working to create community watch programs. Working with area youth has also been suggested as a method to reduce crime rates. Mentoring programs, as well as more educational options would give youth the tools and instruction to care about their communities.

Moderator:

*Pamela Dunlop Gates, Esq., Trial Lawyer,
The Misko Law Firm*

Panelists:

*Mr. C. Donald Babers, Deputy Regional
Director, U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development*

*Ms. Shirley Lewis, President, Southeast
Fort Worth CDC*

*Mr. Dan Quinto, President, Roaring
Brook Development Company*

*Mr. Jerome Walker, Director of Housing,
City of Fort Worth*

*Captain Bryan Sudan, Fort Worth Police
Department*

Transportation was the last issue pointed to as important for community development. Expansions were suggested for current mass transit systems, as well as repairing existing systems. Other ideas included providing incentives to encourage bus or walking accessible business development.

Priority Action Items

- Stringently enforce building standards and existing codes while working with communities to apply and enforce design standards unique to the respective communities
 - Bring patient capital to communities for more effective and creative redevelopment programs
 - Create a representative task force to develop an effective strategy for using federal, state, and local funds for Land Banking in the Southeast
 - Bring private development/non-profit/public development partners together to implement the comprehensive plans developed by and for each community
 - Strengthen the enforcement authority and funding of Federal and local agencies charged with preventing redlining and other illegal impediments to redevelopment
 - Provide technical & financial resources to each SE Fort Worth community to develop comprehensive plans that will lead to mixed-income, financially healthy, safe, stable communities
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Leadership: The Federal Perspective

According to David Sampson, Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce, thinking of economic growth as an exclusively provincial endeavor is shortsighted. Sampson remarked, "Economic development is not sealed within artificial boundaries." Such a statement reinforces the idea that business is no longer conducted entirely on a local stage but increasingly on a global one. Rather than envisioning a position of interconnectedness merely within a given locality, one must have the foresight to see development, not only as something that gives back to the neighborhood, but also as a structured undertaking that uses the resources of a global marketplace to continually seek to increase its competitive advantage.

Following this theme, Sampson stressed that for development in the east and southeast Fort Worth area to be successful it must be ever vigilant in minding its global priorities. The ability to maintain this focus must come from an informed and responsible leadership that he categorized into two distinct arrangements. The first is local leadership that will understand the needs and complexities of their own region better than anyone else and will be the key criteria for prosperity. The second is federal leadership that helps to build a productive and hospitable environment for growth. Sampson believes that these two groups of leaders must work in careful collaboration to transform "strategy into action."

Federal policies have helped to transform stagnant and blighted regions into prosperous economic hubs. It is the responsibility of local leadership in east and southeast Fort Worth to link into this pattern of revitalization. At one point Sampson alluded to the way in which North Carolina took its burdened and beleaguered textile industry and transformed it into a progressive outward looking economy. However, it is clear that one should not follow step-by-step in the shadow of North Carolina or Silicon Valley but rather emulate their ability to make their region known as truly unique economic models. Making east and southeast Fort Worth the leader in a new regional economic entity would entice new investment and in turn, achieve the over-arching vision of a safer, more prosperous area.

Sampson recognized the great economic potential of Tarrant County and its place within the global market. If East and Southeast Fort Worth is able to link up with the other actors in the Tarrant County area, it may well be on its way to carving a large niche in the global market. More importantly, it would be creating business and prosperity in an area where it is much needed.

Looking Forward

Congressman Burgess closed the summit by thanking everyone involved for their ideas, participation and their efforts evaluating multiple recommendations. He also urged that the summit not be restricted to a one day affair and instead produce continued efforts over the coming months. He offered September 12th and 19th as future dates for further discussions on the topics discussed at the summit. Urging accountability at all levels of government, including his own, Congressman Burgess made a strong pledge to the people of the area to help them in their efforts. With his ongoing support and the dedication of the residents and local leaders of the community, it is hoped that east and southeast Fort Worth will begin to take hold of its economic future and continue to revitalize the area for its residents and future generations.

"Setting goals and holding people accountable to those goals is going to be a big part of this process. I'm here to tell you this morning I want that accountability to start with me. I want you to hold me accountable to this process and it includes everyone else in this room, whether or not they're members of an elected body, a member of the private sector, or citizens of the community."

Congressman Michael Burgess

ADDENDUM

eFORUM Results

In what capacity are you here today?

1. Large Business (>500 employees worldwide)	4%
2. Small Business (<500 employees)	17%
3. Education	17%
4. Interested citizen	13%
5. Elected official	3%
6. Federal government representative	2%
7. State government representative	4%
8. Local government representative	25%
9. Other	16%

In your opinion, the most important trend driving the economy in the next 10 years is going to be:

1. Tax policies	5%
2. Aging of the Baby Boom generation	28%
3. Global developments (e.g. terrorism)	10%
4. Economic globalization	38%
5. Technology innovation	16%
6. Other	4%

What is the most significant roadblock to economic development in the region?

1. Workforce skills	24%
2. Investment in R&D	3%
3. Access to early stage capital	25%
4. Lack of coordination / cooperation	23%
5. Current state of the economy	9%
6. Restrictive tax policies	0%
7. Inadequate infrastructure	8%
8. Other	9%

In your opinion, what is the area's greatest asset?

1. Human capital	24%
2. Coalition of training and education resources	11%
3. Proximity to major economic engines (e.g. Medical District, Carter Industrial Park, I-20 Development Corridor, I-35)	42%
4. Commitment from leadership	18%
5. Other	6%

E. In your opinion, what is the first step in attracting new businesses to the region?

1. A skilled workforce	36%
2. Advanced telecommunications	2%
3. Efficient transportation	11%
4. Excellent schools	14%
5. Safe neighborhoods	19%
6. Quality health care	2%
7. An appealing civic life	7%
8. Housing costs	5%
9. Other	4%

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Each of the following recommendations was rated on a scale from 1 to 9 (low to high) on two sets of criteria, the **impact** that it would have if implemented and the **feasibility** of implementing it. These two scores were combined to assign the priority level identified below. In the case of a tie - priority was given to the recommendation with a higher 'feasibility' score.

Attracting Investment (priority order)	I/F
Convene top executives in Tarrant County regarding the development of SE FW with investors, developers, and others to discuss economic opportunities	6.7/6.4
Create a task force to identify, attract, and employ "patient money."	7.0/5.8
Create a task force to review city ordinances & policies that limit development in east and Southeast Fort Worth	6.5/6.2
Create an event to feature east and southeast Fort Worth to host developers and present a convincing plan to take to the investment community to attract that key development effort	6.0/5.4
City needs to empower Chamber of Commerce and SE FW, Inc and other economic development agencies to impact the development of funds and programs	5.8/5.0

Preparing the Workforce of the Future (priority order) **I/F**

- Bring FW business leaders together to develop action plans to overcome barriers to creating internships, mentorships and jobs for youth and young adults in east and southeast Fort Worth. 6.7/5.9
- Develop detailed community profiles of east and southeast Fort Worth. 6.1/6.4
- Bring community service organizations (Rotary, Lions, etc) leaders together to discuss how their resources could be applied to future workforce needs. 6.1/5.9
- Form an east and southeast Fort Worth Workforce Development Community Council 6.0/6.0

Encouraging Entrepreneurship (priority order) **I/F**

- City development department HELP with permitting for renovation 7.6/6.8
- Incentive packages for small businesses (like those to attract big businesses) 7.7/6.7
- Network for service providers for entrepreneurs; referral system for technical assistance 6.3/5.9
- Tarrant County - Fort Worth establish Angel Investor Network 6.9/5.3
- BAC & chambers to partner with schools to provide entrepreneur education at middle school & high school levels; create "Road Show" to highlight successes and resources 6.2/5.8

I/F

Building Communities & Changing Perceptions (priority order)

- Stringently enforce building standards and existing codes while working with communities to apply and enforce design standards unique to the respective communities 7.6/6.9
- Bring patient capital to communities for more effective and creative redevelopment programs 7.7/6.1
- Create a representative task force to develop an effective strategy for using federal, state, and local funds for Land Banking in the southeast 6.9/6.6
- Bring private development/non-profit/public development partners together to implement the comprehensive plans developed by and for each community 7.6/5.9
- Strengthen the enforcement authority and funding of Federal and local agencies charged with preventing redlining and other illegal impediments to redevelopment 7.0/6.4
- Provide technical & financial resources to each SE Fort Worth community to develop comprehensive plans that will lead to mixed-income, financially healthy, safe, stable communities 7.2/6.2

Speaker Remarks

The Honorable David Sampson Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development

Thank you very much; it's a pleasure to be back home. You don't have to twist my arm too terribly hard with an invitation to come back to Texas. Every time I land at DFW, it's always good to breathe that free Texas air again.

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Burgess for his leadership in bringing this forum together. I can tell you that this has been something he's been thinking about – very concerned about – for many, many months now. He is the kind of congressman who doesn't just get caught up in everything that is going on in Washington as an end in and of itself. He is the kind of congressman who is there focused on what the needs of his district are in trying to identify how the federal government can assist communities within his district to achieve their greatest economic potential. I know that he is deeply committed to bringing economic opportunity – more and better jobs – to every community and every area within his district. And so, I want to thank him for being the leadership behind this forum here today.

He mentioned that the President did announce my nomination to serve as Deputy Secretary of Commerce on April 1st of this year. I got a lot of calls from friends back here in Texas and some of my friends in Washington asking if this was the President's idea of the ultimate April fool's joke announcing the nomination on April 1st. So I was very relieved three days later on Monday when my nomination did actually get sent up to the Senate. We await the Senate's disposition on that nomination now.

Having been in this business of economic development for a long time, one of the things that I've learned is that success takes teamwork. That's one of the themes I'd really like to emphasize here today. I think that's reflected by all the individuals and organizations participating in this room today. It takes many people working together in common purpose – city and county officials, state economic development folks, people at the federal level. It also takes folks who are involved in community and state-based organizations to successfully position a community to grow properly. Above all it takes local business leaders.

As we were having lunch I was looking up at the screen and that list of all the sponsors for today's events; there are some really blue-chip companies up there and I think it bodes well for this community to have business groups and leaders who are willing to be involved and bring this kind of group together. Working as a team we can create more opportunities for people who live here. We can improve the quality of life for the residents of East and Southeast Arlington – Fort Worth actually. I used to live next door; I hope you'll forgive that.

That does play, however, into a broader theme that I would like to mention, and that is that economic development is not sealed within artificial boundaries. Economic development takes place, really at a regional level, and I want to come back to that in just a few minutes. But [east] and southeast Fort Worth are part of a broader economic region, and there is great economic potential that lies in developing strategies that better link east Fort Worth and southeast Fort Worth with a thriving Tarrant County economy. And I would think that would be one of the most important items on my agenda if I were still here thinking about economic development in this region as how to build those linkages with this part of the Fort Worth community to a broader economic region, and I'll come back to that in just a few minutes.

Today what you've been doing is looking at new approaches for economic development, and certainly the federal government plays an important role in economic development strategies. We play an important role in creating the kind of macro, or national conditions for economic growth. And one of the most important things, I think, as a backdrop to your discussions here today, is that the national economy is strong and it's getting stronger, and it's growing. So, now is a great time to be thinking about how east Fort Worth and southeast Fort Worth can plug into that growing national economy and a very strong Tarrant County economy.

The economy grew by 3.6 percent last quarter; that's a very robust rate of growth at the national level. Payrolls have increased by over two million jobs over the past twelve months, and the economy has created nearly 3.5 million new jobs since May of 2003. Just this morning the government reported that 78,000 new jobs were created last month, and while that is lower than the rate of job growth that all of us want to see, it's important to put that into context. Last month there were 260,000 jobs created and we have now experienced twenty-three consecutive months of job growth.

The point of all of that is, the national economy is strong and it's getting stronger. The manufacturing sector continues to expand with April marking the twenty-third consecutive month of growth and the longest period of manufacturing growth over the past sixteen years. But President Bush clearly believes that we need to do more. And that's really what our job at the Department of Commerce is—to work with America's business communities, to work with communities around the country to create the conditions where the private sector can do what it does best, and that is to invest capital and create jobs. And that is really the foundation at its most elementary level of what it takes to really redevelop communities and revitalize them.

At the local and regional level, developers and local leaders around this country are rethinking their strategies for growth and opportunity in the twenty-first century. Based on my experience from here in Texas and across the country, I would like to offer a few thoughts today on why this is so important and how communities can move forward in this direction.

You're here focusing on new strategies to move this part of Fort Worth forward economically. If what we have been doing over the course of the last 20 years had worked adequately, we probably wouldn't be here today having this discussion. And so the question arises, what's different today or what do we need to do differently today than what we've been doing to achieve better results in terms of attracting new business investment and the creation of more and better jobs to east and southeast Fort Worth.

Well, there are several things that have fundamentally changed. First of all, the emergence of a truly worldwide economy is transforming the economic landscape. Intensified global competition is forcing U.S. businesses to find ways to reduce their costs while continuing to produce high quality products and services, and it is an ability to help businesses tap into that growing, thriving, dynamic worldwide economy that offers great local economic development opportunities. And you here, in east Fort Worth have a great example of that sitting right here in the front row of a company that is rebuilding diesel engines, selling in a worldwide market, attracting new investment right here in this part of Fort Worth. And as a matter of fact, my boss, Secretary Gutierrez was here just within the last month—three weeks ago—to present an export achievement award and to talk about how important it is for even small businesses to tap into this growing worldwide economy.

Now, there are challenges, clearly, as we think about how integrated the worldwide economy is today. There are dislocations that take place. There are regions of the country that experience structural economic change. I've spent a lot of time over the last four years working specifically

in those parts of the country—the Southeast of the United States has been very heavily dependent on the textile industry over the course of the twentieth century, and I've seen employment continually decline over the last thirty years. And [I] recognize that textile and tobacco is no longer going to be the economic engine of their economy and North Carolina the way it was in the twentieth century.

And the good news I can share with you is that over the last four years, we have been through some twenty intense projects just like you're doing here today throughout North Carolina and South Carolina, and folks there are seeing a repositioning of their economic growth strategy and great opportunities emerge as they begin to develop strategies to plug into their worldwide economy. And so, as we think of economic development, we have to think much more broadly than just what's happening a couple of blocks away or in the next council district. We need to be thinking about opportunities to help our existing businesses plug into a growing worldwide economy.

Second, in terms of the spatial context of how we need to think about economic development, I want to come back to a point that I made earlier. Economic development doesn't respect artificial political boundaries. Capital doesn't realize where Fort Worth ends and Arlington begins, doesn't necessarily recognize where county lines take place. When you fly over an area, you don't see those lines that you see on maps. Businesses think in terms of regions and market opportunities within regions. And so, as you think about specifically your economic revitalization strategy for southeast and east Fort Worth, what I would encourage you to think about is those linkages that you can build with other parts of the Tarrant County economy. How can you link into what's going on in other parts of Fort Worth? The university district—you are in close proximity to major universities here in Fort Worth. How can you look to the East and develop strategies to help link into what's going on in Arlington? Think more broadly than just your council districts. That's an increasing insight that economic developers and communities all over the country are beginning to address.

Third, the drivers of economic growth in the twenty-first century center on the vigorous pursuit of competitive advantages. Really look at, "What can we bring to the marketplace?" One of the great insights that I have learned over the last four years as we think about redevelopment of communities that have experienced a pattern of disinvestments over the course of the last thirty years, is that reliance on federal government money, state money, local money, or even philanthropic charitable resources are not adequate to address the needs of community revitalization. There is not enough money in any government or in any charitable organization to successfully accomplish real community revitalization. What we have to do is to find out what we can bring as a community to the marketplace, because what we need to do is to find strategies to tap into the power of the marketplace. The marketplace is still the most powerful force that mankind has ever discovered to bring opportunity and prosperity and investment and revitalization to communities. So at the heart of all of your discussions, I encourage you to think about, "How can we tap in to the power of the marketplace?"

And then finally what I would like to suggest is that the foundation on which all of these other strategies are built is cultivating local leadership. I have had the great privilege over the course of the last four years to visit 46 out of our 50 states, and many communities within those 46 states. I see many communities that have the same kinds of challenges in terms of disinvestment, job loss, and the same opportunities of tapping into the market.

Some of those communities continue to stagnate and decline, while others thrive and grow. And people always ask me, "What makes the difference?" And I'm fairly comfortable in saying that the key criteria for advancing and diversifying the economic base and building new prosperity is leadership. And that's why I am so encouraged to be in a room with two hundred leaders from

this community. Focus on leadership and cultivating leadership and leadership skills and leadership talents. Don't sit back and wait for some elected official in Austin, or in City Hall, or Washington to solve all of your problems for you. You have the insights and the ingenuity and the creativity right here in this room to really take your community to the marketplace and sell it.

And what you're going to come out of today's session with, I fully suspect, are some very clear action strategies and agendas to move forward. Identify some critical components, identify leadership, who's going to be responsible for moving those projects forward, and move from strategy to action. And don't take no for an answer. I believe that if we continue to cultivate that kind of leadership, east and southeast Fort Worth is poised to see a new period of renaissance, and revitalization, and opportunity.

Let me close with those insights and if we have a few minutes, what I want to do is to be available to take some questions from you about issues that you're concerned about, either at the national level or what we've seen in other communities going through similar challenges to [yours] before we move to the next part of the program which is to look at some of the strategies that have emerged. So I'll stop and I'll be happy to respond to some of the questions that you may have.

Congressman Michael Burgess

Thank you Wes and, again, I really appreciate you taking part of your busy day to be here with us at this summit. You know, Dee Jennings has been after me for some time to get the President of the United States to come to a Chamber event. And on Wednesday, for those of you who were here, we almost thought we had done it. But it was a near miss. But really, that was a great event on Wednesday at the Fort Worth Chamber. For those of you who weren't there, we were given a very complete recap of why Fort Worth, Texas has been designated as one of America's most livable cities.

Central to the success was the celebration and the acknowledgement of the twenty-year work in progress known as Sundance Square. A revitalized downtown in turn accentuates the stockyards to the North, the cultural district over to the West, the hospital district to the South, but it stopped there. And where was the East? And it was like a giant piece missing from an otherwise completed puzzle. And the absence was jarring. And that brings us to our meeting here today to focus on the needs, and the work, and indeed the success that's already happened in east and southeast Fort Worth. And part of the good news is, we don't have to start from scratch.

Big steps [were] taken when Glenn Forbes and Southeast Fort Worth, Inc. laid the groundwork for this event today by providing us with the master plan for the redevelopment of some of the more challenged areas of our city. Now, I work in Washington, but Washington is indeed a workstation; I commute back to the district every weekend. We talk a lot about security up in Washington, and security is on our minds at so many levels. But here in southeast Fort Worth, security will be critical to enhancing our neighborhoods. And I'm not only talking about security that's brought by a badge and a gun (although those are extremely important), but I'm talking about the security that comes with stable employment, security that comes with knowing that you'll have access to quality healthcare (should you need it), and security that comes from knowing that your children are safe and learning in their schools.

And often times this type of security cannot be bought at any price. It has to be grown from within in the community. And it will require the effort of everyone in this room. It will require, in many instances, putting the interest of community ahead of self-interest. Setting goals and holding people accountable to those goals is going to be a big part of this process. And I'm here to tell you this morning, I want that accountability to start with me. I want you to hold me accountable to this process. And it includes everyone else in this room, whether or not they're members of an elected body, members of the private sector, or a citizen of the community.

So this morning we begin the hard work of taking up the master plan of Southeast Fort Worth, Incorporated and bringing it up to date. If it's necessary, identifying actions and needs of the community and those areas that you would like to see addressed. The road to success begins with our breakup sessions, which will start exactly on time in just a few moments.

We're going to be focusing on some deliverables in those breakup sessions and I do urge you to concentrate on those deliverables. We want to foster an economic environment through infrastructure, services, and regulatory procedures that will attract investment and development of new and growing and established businesses. We want to enhance all levels and all facets of education and workforce development. We want to strengthen our highly skilled labor pool. We have to enrich the quality of life for all residents. And if there are negative perceptions held by others outside the community, it's time to do the work to put those to rest. We want to develop an entrepreneurial culture where residents have the confidence that they can transform their ideas into business.

So, in closing, I want to state how thankful I am for your participation this morning. Mr. Mayor, thank you for your time you've generously given us as well this morning. Thank you Councilman Wheatfall; thank you Commissioner Brooks for being here. This is truly going to be a marathon and not a sprint. And I expect us to begin a process this morning that we will want to revisit at least yearly, and in fact, what I would like to tell you is that we're going to provide you with not just a report at the end of this session, but a report that will recur on a quarterly basis from each of our breakup groups.

To those of us elected in office, this is not about politics or partisan advantage. This is about stewardship and doing what is right. I have not been in elected office very long and I'm not sure that I really understand what is meant by the term, "political capital." I don't even know if I possess any of that commodity. But if I do, I can't think of any place better to spend it than in southeast Fort Worth. So, now it's time to roll up our sleeves and get to work exploring some of the ways that we might depart for this destination.

We are going to divide up into our breakout sessions. The sessions are an extremely important part of the day. This is your opportunity to confer in detail about the action steps we need to take together in order to build this region's economy. The first two sessions this morning will be "Attracting Investment," led by the capable Dee Jennings, with the help of Robert Sturns, Dan Villegas, and Bill Thornton. This will be held in the Venice Room, which is out the door and immediately to the left. The other concurrent session will be "Preparing the Workforce of the Future," led by former Mayor Pro Tem Ralph McCloud with the help of Dr. Allen Henderson of Texas Wesleyan, Michael Cady, Daphne Barlow, Sue Guthrie and Judy McDonald, and this will be in the Rome Room, which is just a little further down the hall.

And then after an extremely short break—thank for your remarks again, Mr. Mayor—after an extremely short break, we will then immediately convene to begin the second two sessions which will be "Encouraging Entrepreneurship," led by Dorothy Wing with the help of Alicia Fannon, Clyde Higgs, Rosa Navejar, and Floyd McNeely, and this will also be held in the Rome Room. And the other second concurrent session is "Building Communities and Changing Perceptions" by Pamela Dunlop Gates with the help of Donald Babers, Dan Quinto, Jerome Walker, and Shirley Lewis, and this also will be in the Venice Room.

Immediately following the second set of breakout sessions, we'll all meet back here for lunch. The hotel staff will need to have—oh, this is the most important part, if you haven't been listening to anything else I said, do pay attention—you need to have your blue card for lunch. If you do not have one, check with the registration desk on your way to the workshop. Now remember, the leader of each of these sessions has been given the charge of bringing a few specific recommendations back for the whole group discussion after lunch. So, help your moderator, keep your group focused, good luck and let's get to work. Thank you.

Mayor Michael J. Moncrief
City of Fort Worth

Thank you very much for that unique introduction. I am delighted to see this turnout for, I think, this much-needed meeting and this forum.

Before I get into my comments, I want to get into a real quick observation. Last night was a truly frightening experience for all of us when we had the gas leak that took place downtown. We had close to seventy firefighters and I don't know how many police officers respond. I went to the scene and what I saw—not just as your mayor, but as a citizen who lives here—was truly a remarkable response en masse to making sure that the people who live in our city and those who visit were safe and secure.

This morning could have been a much different morning, councilmen. We could have been, instead of being here looking to find answers for economic vitality in southeast Fort Worth, instead at a memorial service. And it wasn't until I got home after the immediate danger was over and the cause was pretty much determined, that I really realized what this job is all about. And I will confess to you that inside of me, physically, I was shaken. It scared me. It scared me because I thought we had another water garden. I thought we had another tornado. And that was frightening as an individual and in this role as your mayor, but it was truly reassuring to see the massive response on behalf of your city and those who worked in this city. I want every city employee who's here to stand up. Every one of them.

Some of these folks didn't get a whole lot of sleep last night because they were in the stand-down mode from this incident. But I watched this city, not just react, but respond to a need. And it just gives me all the more confidence of our ability to respond to a need right here in southeast Fort Worth. It's something that when you say your prayers tonight, thank the good Lord for smiling on Fort Worth yesterday, because it could have been a much different outcome. We had some businesses that were shut down, some businesses that were evacuated; and they might have lost a little bit of money last night with a Van Cliburn and all those who would have attended some of those downtown restaurants either prior to or following the event, but it's much better to be safe. And so, I really salute the fire department: Jay and y'all's response, you and Petey really partnered up and I can't thank you enough.

Well, we have two new, young, vibrant council members. Council Members Hicks and Wheatfall bring to the table tremendous energy, tremendous vision, and I don't want there to be any doubt in anyone's mind here that they have my full and complete support in ensuring that we move to truly make a difference in this area of our city.

Southeast Fort Worth, as you have heard me say before, has been historically overlooked and underserved. Well, these two members bring to the table excitement and I am very much committed to working with them to make a difference. There's an old saying, "You can sit inside a box and do the same old thing, or you can get out and dance on top of the box." We do a lot of dancing in Fort Worth. And it's time we did more dancing in Southeast Fort Worth.

We are very fortunate to have these individuals, to have the vision and enthusiasm to carry out that vision. Like I said, some good things have already happened. And we're going to continue that synergy to create more opportunities. Southeast Fort Worth is a jewel in the rough, and we can make her shine if we all remain committed. In fact, I asked the city manager to have several of our city staff be present today to participate in this summit, and I want them to hear some of your ideas, some of your concepts, some of your suggested approaches. I want them to see the results of this evaluation that's taking place today from those magical calculators you have in front of you.

It's going to take all of us working together to affect the positive changes that we want for this area of our city, and I'm sure that your council members will be participating in various sessions throughout the day today and perhaps, more importantly, they as well as our city staff will be doing a lot of listening to you and what your vision is for your community. They say that God gives you two ears and one mouth; that means that you should do twice as much listening as you do talking. And that's what I'm going to ask them to do today.

Well, today I also have the special responsibility to introduce Congressman Michael Burgess and I want to thank him for hosting this event. In his brief period of residency as our Congressman for this area, he has truly shown his commitment to serving this city that he represents, along with me and the members of this council. I'd like for you all to think of today as a new beginning for Southeast Fort Worth—a day to focus on where we are, where we as a community need to be, and what needs to be done to get us there.

I know that Congressman Burgess is committed to stimulating needed sustainable growth—not temporary growth—sustainable growth to this area of our city and to add and complement the strong economic growth that the city as a whole is experiencing now. Our city stands behind the Congressman and he has our full support in this endeavor, as well as our sincere thanks for undertaking this particular summit. He's a man of his word, and he's determined to make a difference. We are all partners here in our effort to make southeast Fort Worth a place with a quality of life that we can all be proud of. Again, I want to thank all of you for taking the time out of your day to be here. I think it shows that you, too, have a commitment to our city, and in particular to this area of our city.

Congressman Burgess serves on the prestigious House, Energy, and Commerce Committee. The unique part of this committee is it has one of the broadest jurisdictions in Congress. It covers legislative oversight for issues relating to healthcare, energy, telecommunications, air quality, and environmental health. If you think about that, those are all quality of life issues for each one of us. This is an important summit, and I urge you to think hard about what it's going to require for us to accomplish our goal.

Fort Worth is a family. We don't operate like anybody else. This city is unique, and while we are the fastest growing major city in the United States, we're not growing fast enough in Southeast Fort Worth and we need to change that. Not just from those who live here, and not just from the city and from the government, but from this community as a whole. It's going to require that kind of focus and that kind of commitment.

There's not a meeting that I have with people that come to our city wanting to spend money and develop, that I don't mention southeast Fort Worth because this area has so much to offer, and so many opportunities. The price of land is right, the workforce is there, people here need jobs, and people here are qualified to fill those positions, given the opportunity. I want to work on not just Rosedale/Evans, I want to work on not just Riverside/Barry; I want to work on the entire quadrant. I want to see these abandoned malls and shopping centers rejuvenated. There is tremendous opportunity there, tremendous opportunity. All it takes is vision. And yes, it takes capital. We pride our self on a can-do attitude in Fort Worth. We pride our self on an attitude that tells our staff, "Don't tell us why we can't do something; tell us how we can." And that's what I encourage you to do today. You got some of the best staff in the business; these folks stay outside the box. They wear themselves out dancing on top of that box, and I encourage you to do the same. Give them your feedback. Don't hold back—give them what they need to understand what we have to do.

Finally, I would like to introduce your host, your Congressman, and my friend: Michael Burgess.

Wes Turner
President & Publisher, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Thank you, Congressman Burgess and thank you for asking me to take part in this. I also want to thank the Public Forum Institute for making this possible. It's a great opportunity to come together to talk about the challenges and opportunities facing East and Southeast Fort Worth. You know, before I say another remark, is there any way I can get about a half a million of those little devices and pass them out to all my readers so they can respond every day about what they like and what they don't like? I've never seen anything like that!

Mayor Moncrief was introduced as "Mayor Horseradish Moncrief," I think, and the Mayor is often fond of saying that Fort Worth is a great city and it's strong as horseradish. But I know he joins me in our overall common need to make sure that all of Fort Worth is as strong as horseradish, and he's said that many, many times. Looking back at the past decade, you have to marvel at the incredible development we've had in this community, throughout Fort Worth. But much of that development has been in downtown, and now we have [such] a revitalized and vibrant downtown that a day doesn't go by when we don't get a phone call from some city wanting to come here to visit and figure out how we've done it. Of course it helps to have a Bass family to get things kick-started. But we have had an incredible redevelopment of downtown. You go out to the Alliance area, [with] all the jobs that have been created out there because of the airport, and the Texas Motor Speedway, and now Cabellas coming in. All the new household formation. So, Fort Worth's been really smart in how it's worked together in public/private partnerships to create incredible growth.

We have a great city. We've got a great airport which helps us drive that growth. We have a great workforce; it's a great community. But I'll bet you didn't know that the largest single taxpayer in all of Fort Worth is the Alliance area. They pay more taxes than any other area of Fort Worth. That's a return on investment that the city of Fort Worth got by making an investment in that kind of growth. And that's the same kind of growth we need in east and southeast Fort Worth, and there's a lot of opportunity for us to do that going forward, and [to] receive a great return on our investment. We need that kind of growth right here.

I'm sure we've had some success here; we've had some retail move in. The Mayor mentioned we've had redevelopment ongoing now on Rosedale and the Evans Corridor, but there's much more to be done. The Fort Worth Opportunity Center is a great resource that we've yet to take full advantage of, and that is a great place to train a workforce. And there's much opportunity yet to be explored in that area. But, we've got to make sure that we're preparing our workforce going forward.

The main thing we need to try to do, of course, is to create growth in retail: hotels and jobs and opportunity for East and Southeast Fort Worth. This area has a large population and it has to go outside of its community to meet [its] needs, and it should not have to be that way. And that's why the Fort Worth Star Telegram has editorially supported and financially supported Southeast Fort Worth, Inc. since its very inception.

The issues that we're going to address today are very important and I think it should be our full intention of the day to come up with good solutions to move forward.

Congressman Burgess has created this event for this purpose. The challenges cannot be solved by one person only. We must pull the city, the state, and [the] federal government resources together to create sustainable action on much-needed redevelopment in this area. This is not a

day of political activity. I see people in this room who understand the needs and have the authority and the resources to help Congressman Burgess and our city and state leaders to accomplish this today. Today is a day of opportunity, that as a resident of Fort Worth, I'm pleased to see this community coming together in a united cause.

You are here today because you can make a difference. It's time to move beyond words and dreams, and to begin planning for the implementation of real change for East and Southeast Fort Worth. I challenge Congressman Burgess, the Mayor, our city council men and women and the residents of our great city gathered here today to work together to take these ideas and these goals from this summit, put them into action to make our city even prouder and a better place to live. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today, and I wish you great luck today in your endeavors. Thank you.

This summit would not have been possible without the generous support of the following:



and

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