

Before



After



Sam's Place



JJ's Garage

While in search of expansion property for Leggett Tactical Solutions, the EDC contacted Foster Charitable Foundation in Colorado regarding the possible purchase of the former Parrish Building located in the southeast corner of the Square. After explaining the planned use of the building and agreement to memorialize Kent Foster in the process, the Foundation agreed to grant the building and \$15,000 in renovation costs to the Eden Economic Development Corporation. The building will be named the **Kent Foster Center** for use as an entrepreneurial center to encourage business development and will also memorialize the history of the building as the Burton-Lockett Garage of 1936. To ensure the renovation of the building, both the EEDC and the Spirit of Eden approved the reallocation of funds originally designated for sidewalk improvements (*see Community Projects & Activities*) to this renovation. The EDC awaits final transfer of the deed to the EEDC before soliciting bids for the project. If plans proceed as expected, the Center will be ready for occupancy during the 1st Quarter of 2011.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

The Economic Development Division is responsible for providing timely and accurate information and education to City leaders, the business community, media and the public regarding the area of economic development and its relationship to broad public policy. During 2010, the EDC worked to bring several educational/program workshops to local businesses including “Build Your Own Website”, Small Business 101, Nature Tourism for area land owners, and two USDA Office Days. A Business Mixer was introduced in late 2010, the second of which will take place in January 2011, geared toward providing timely presentations of interest to small business including marketing, social media, customer service and profit & loss check-ups. The Economic Development Division participated in the Texas Department of Agriculture’s Texas Rural Internship Program which provides college students from the metropolitan areas of Texas an opportunity to experience rural Texas. Jessica Carmona, a student at Sam Houston State University, spent four weeks working and living in Eden as our intern. Ms. Carmona attended a variety of government and civic meetings, spent several days shadowing City Department Heads and the City Administrator, assisted in the compilation and prioritization of responses to a community survey, and helped to develop a Leadership Program to be implemented through the Eden Chamber of Commerce. The experience was positive on both sides and the City will soon be considering an opportunity to participate again this year. Ms. Carmona walked away with a deeper appreciation of rural life and as a result of her work in City government, is now working part-time for the City of Huntsville.



The EDC has provided information on the Development Corporation Act of 1979 – the 4B sales tax statute – in one-on-one meetings with business owners and the public as requested. News articles are routinely submitted to the media including such outlets as area newspapers, related organizational newsletters and magazines highlighting the economic development work of the community. Responding to the ever increasing social media market, Eden’s Facebook and Twitter pages were revised and have seen a steady increase in page views as well as providing a reliable outlet for items of community interest. Retail recruitment remains at the forefront of development goals. In

TheRetailCoach®

Partnership *The Retail Coach* – the company hired by the Eden Economic Development Corporation to provide a leakage analysis for Eden’s Trade Area – the EDC attended the International Council of Shopping Centers Conference in November. Several briefings were given to general merchandise store representatives in attendance and follow up letters were mailed the week following this Conference. The EDC also met with representatives of WEDA – World Economic Development Alliance – and are exploring professional marketing avenues to further Eden’s opportunities with regard to retail and transportation/distribution/logistics markets. WEDA is a nationwide site consultation service to new and expanding industries and provides client information at numerous trade and industry shows around the country.

To ensure up-to-date information, the EDC is committed to active participation in available educational venues which offer a high degree of impact for the local business community and the leaders charged with the making of economic sustainability decisions.

INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT

As 2010 comes to a close, various projects are in development and have the potential to benefit the Eden Industrial Park. Verizon Wireless identified property on which to construct a new

telecommunications tower near the existing entrance to the park. This project continues to be a viable project but has maintained an “on hold” status through much of 2010. The General Services Administration (GSA) continues to conduct inquiries by mail for existing office space and recently confirmed its Assignable Purchase Option executed in 2009 for property in the Park.

One of disappointments in 2010 was the closing of Mueller Fabricators and the loss of approximately 15 jobs. The Economic Development Division immediately organized a meeting between the Texas Workforce Commission Office out of San Angelo and affected employees to inform them of job opportunities and available training as well as to facilitate enrollment into the Unemployment Compensation System. The EDC worked with the owners of Mueller Fabricators to secure a buyer for the property and is now working with the existing owners on two possible company relocations through the development of potential incentive packages.

The Industrial Park site continues to be marketed in leads received from the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and is one of the focuses of the Division’s exploration of specialized marketing with WEDA (*see Economic Development Information and Education*)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS

The Economic Development Division plays an integral part in the negotiation of various economic development programs and projects. The most significant activities in 2010 involved the development and negotiation of agreements for façade improvements and economic development proposals for both the Industrial Park and retail opportunities. The Division also provided technical advice and services in exploring IRP opportunities in proposal development.

EEDC BUDGET, REPORTING AND PLANNING

The Economic Development Division is responsible for operating its activities within the confines of the approved budget. This is accomplished by on-going monitoring of accounts and working in cooperation with the EEDC and City Council to identify goals that ensure continued economic progress. Reports are provided monthly to both entities summarizing the previous month’s activities and the status of current sales tax receipts. As a barometer for the local economy, the Economic Development Division pays close attention to monthly sales tax receipts and makes a concerted effort to adjust Division expenditures accordingly. As confirmed by the 2009-2010 Audit Report, the Economic Development Division ended the fiscal year 4.85% under budgeted expenditures (adjusting for the receipt of grant proceeds). The EDC also began a monthly reporting to the Chamber of Commerce in mid 2010 and currently provides subscription service of this report through the City’s website. Additional reporting responsibilities include the review and follow-up of quarterly reports submitted by the EEDC and Business Incubator clients.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION

The Economic Development Division participates in a wide variety of initiatives focused on securing opportunities which benefit Eden both in quality of life and business retention and growth. The EDC is an active Board Member for the Texas Midwest Community Network, Texas Fort Trails, and the West Texas Training Center-San Angelo. The Division also actively participates in the Association of Rural Communities in Texas, the Concho Valley Workforce Development Regional Consortium, the Texas Travel Industry Association, Economic Development Peer-to-Peer Network,

and the Texas Economic Development Council. Additionally, the Division promotes open dialogue with various State agencies including the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Texas Department of Rural Affairs, the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, and the USDA Office in Ozona to ensure funding opportunities are realized and accessed, as community needs warrant. During 2010, the EDC was honored to be invited as a guest panelist for the Texas Department of Agriculture Economic Development Workshop in March and the Concho Valley Rural Small Business Forum in November.

MOVING FORWARD IN 2011

As 2010 comes to a close, a number of initiatives focused on positioning Eden for success as the nation and West Texas rebound from the recession have been completed or nearing completion. Eden became the 51st city in Texas to have a business incubator and, as stated previously, is the first step in becoming recognized as an Entrepreneurial Ready Community. The renovations along our business corridors have been recognized by such organizations as the Texas Midwest Community Network and the Small Business Development Center in San Angelo but most importantly by our citizens who take pride in the community we all call home. The Texas Economic Development Council – a statewide organization of over 600 experience economic development professionals – recognized our partnership and creative thinking efforts to bring about substantive economic impact. Two new businesses were established in Eden – one positioned to bring global recognition to this small, rural, West Texas community. As we move into 2011, the Economic Development Division looks forward to engaging in a retrospective and visionary dialogue between City leaders, civic organizations and our citizens as a whole. The results will undoubtedly provide the roadmap for our continued pursuit of economic sustainability in the Garden of Eden.