



# Marble Falls

## Strategic Economic Development Plan

April 2012



Updated March 2013

Prepared by the Community & Economic Development Department of the LCRA

## Acknowledgements

The Marble Falls Economic Development Corporation, and the LCRA Community & Economic Development Department, would like to recognize the input and support provided by numerous community leaders in gathering on-the-ground knowledge of Marble Falls.

Over the course of numerous interviews and focus groups, incredibly valuable insights were given regarding Marble Falls and its economic future. The input of these leaders laid the foundation for this plan. This Strategic Plan is a direct reflection of the vision, ideas, and solid economic understanding of the area leaders listed below:

John Kemper	Owner, Blue Bonnet Café
Mark Hodges	President, Cattleman's National Bank & Chamber of Commerce
Ryan Nash	City Councilmember; Owner, Nash Builders
Greg Mills	Owner, PEC Mfg.
Jane Marie Hurst	Marble Falls Councilmember & EDC Director
Russ Roper	Owner, HomeCorp Mortgage
Ralph Hendricks	City Manager, City of Marble Falls
Russell Buster	Owner, Uptown Marble Theatre
Joe Don Dockery	County Commissioner, Burnet County
Ronny Hibler	County Commissioner, Burnet County
Mark Mayfield	CEO, Texas Housing Foundation & EDC Director
David Crail	Store Manager, HEB
Lynette Morrison	Broker, Kuper Sotheby's Intl.
Charles Teeple	Owner, Teeple Partners
Rob O'Connor	Superintendent, MFISD
George Russell	Mayor, City of Marble Falls
Caleb Kraenzel	Director, Development Services, City of Marble Falls
Paul Brady	Owner, River City Grille
Steve Reitz	EDC Director; Owner, Steve Reitz Co., Inc.
Brian Shirley	VP, 3c Geo; former Councilmember/EDC Director
Donna Klaeger	County Judge, Burnet County

Focus groups were also conducted with the following organizations:

Marble Falls Chamber of Commerce  
Marble Falls Independent School District  
Building Industry Association of the Highland Lakes

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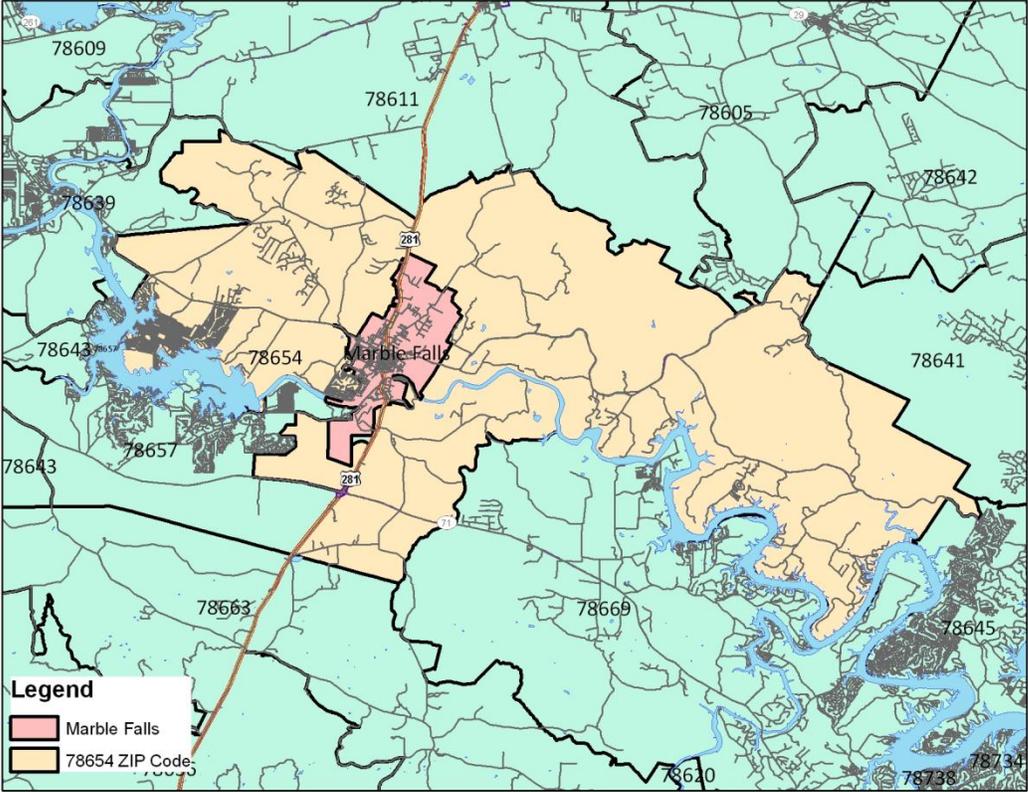
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# Context Map



When possible, data for the City of Marble Falls was developed. In many cases, however, the ZIP Code was used in order to provide up-to-date information. Each diagram references whether it is ZIP Code or City level data.

## Executive Summary

LCRA Community and Economic Development (CED) worked with the Marble Falls Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to develop a Strategic Economic Development Plan for the City of Marble Falls, Texas. Based on data analysis as well as input from the community, CED developed an action plan for the EDC. The plan was then reviewed and revised by the EDC Board in order to ensure it properly captured the priorities of the City of Marble Falls and the EDC.

Data analysis as well as input from the community pointed out major strengths and challenges for Marble Falls. Regarding strengths, the City enjoys a great quality of life, with incredible natural beauty, a great small-town feel, and a strategic location at the confluence of State Highway 71 and US Highway 281. It is located near Horseshoe Bay, an affluent retirement community, and has a great tourism base to draw in those residents. It acts as a regional hub for retail, too. While small-town, it offers city convenience with a short drive to Austin or San Antonio.

Marble Falls does have its challenges, however. Development is expensive. The crags and stone that add to Marble Falls' beauty also makes simple things, like laying a pipeline, incredibly expensive. There are also limited opportunities for young professionals or recent graduates with technical skills. They often have to move to find work. The ones that stay rely mostly on tourism service opportunities for employment, which usually offer lower wages. Investment capital is also a challenge.

The EDC recognizes the strengths and challenges of economic development in Marble Falls and, working with CED, has crafted the following six goals to improve opportunities within the City:

1. Develop a strong, goal-oriented business attraction program
2. Collaborate on a dynamic and multi-faceted community marketing program
3. Support the success of existing businesses
4. Strategically develop and recruit at the business park
5. Actively support workforce education to meet changing business needs
6. Create a competitive incentives program
7. Foster an environment for entrepreneurship and business creation
8. Support downtown development

The following pages provide a detailed implementation matrix and explanation for each of these goals.

## Action Matrix

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 1: Develop a strong, goal-oriented business attraction program.</b>								
Develop a long-term attraction strategy								
Establish a community vision	Q1 2012	L	S	S		S		
Create and facilitate a positive business environment	Ongoing	L	S	S	S	S	S	
Create Request for Proposal (RFP) template	Q3 2012	L	S					
Have an annual regional tour of available sites and buildings	Q3 2013, Ongoing	L						
Review and assess strategy and metrics annually	Q1 2013	L						
Identify appropriate targets								
Establish a leads matrix	Q3 2012	L		S				
Track industry trends and utilize this knowledge	Ongoing	L		S				
Utilize new demographics to identify and target gaps	Ongoing	L						
Work with the LCRA to determine industries most likely to thrive in Marble Falls	Q2 2012	L					L	
Leverage medical center development to encourage growth in healthcare and wellness sectors	Q1 2013, Ongoing	L	S	S	S	S	S	
Explore recruitment strategy for professional firms and expansion of office space	Q2 2013,	L	S	S				
Join regional business attraction groups								
Capitalize on resources of the Austin Chamber	Ongoing	L		S				
Maintain membership in and develop active relationship with Texas Economic Development Council (TEDC)	Ongoing	L						
Work with the Office of the Governor – Economic Development & Tourism	Ongoing	L					S	
Collaborate with the region in developing a regional ED approach	Ongoing	L		S	S		S	Region

L=Lead role on the action

S=Potentially a support role on the action

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 2: Collaborate on a dynamic and multi-faceted community marketing program.</b>								
<b>Integrate City marketing efforts</b>								
Initiate contact with other groups and agencies to develop a collaborative strategy to market the area, including the Chamber, the County and surrounding cities and communities	Q4 2012	L	S	S	S	S	S	Regional ED Orgs
Find common goals and a common vision to build on with these organizations	Q3 2013	S	S	S	S	S	S	Regional ED Orgs
Develop a unified branding campaign	Q2 2014	S	S	S	S			Regional ED Orgs
<b>Market the City to industry</b>								
Identify which industries to pursue and which to avoid	Q4 2012	L	S	S			S	
Identify appropriate ways to advertise to specific industries	Q1 2013	L						Ad Agency
Identify funds and develop appropriate incentives to support these strategies	Q1 2013	L	S				S	
<b>Strengthen the EDC's referral network</b>								
Invest in product development and messaging	Q2 2013, Ongoing	L	S	S	S			
Raise awareness through affinity marketing	Q2 2013, Ongoing	L						

L=Lead role on the action

S=Potentially a support role on the action

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 3: Support the success of existing businesses.</b>								
<b>Build local relationships</b>								
Communicate and interact with the Chamber to stay aware of business activities and needs	Ongoing	L		S				
Provide financial support to the Chamber Lunch and Learns	Ongoing	L						Retail Coach
Use questionnaire to support retention visits with existing businesses	Q1 2013, Ongoing	L		S				
<b>Train local business leaders in economic development</b>								
Create an ambassador training program to educate residents on the benefits of promoting Marble Falls	Q3 2012	L	L	L			S	
Continue to utilize Retail Coach to support the retail industry	Ongoing	L		S				Retail Coach
<b>Offer retention services</b>								
Provide an annual information forum on government support available for businesses within Marble Falls	Q3 2013, Ongoing	L	S	S				
Regularly meet with major employers to ensure they are aware of business retention and expansion support opportunities available	Ongoing	L		S				

L=Lead role on the action

S=Potentially a support role on the action

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 4: Strategically develop and recruit at the business park.</b>								
Explore the feasibility of a speculative building								
Explore the possibility of a public/private partnership	Q1 2013	L						Brokers/ engineers
Use the leads matrix and recent business inquiries to identify the appropriate scope and scale of the building	Q3 2012	L						Brokers
Enhance park infrastructure								
Contract for Phase 3 of engineering	Q1 2012	L	S		S			
Build road to access shovel-ready sites	Q3 2013	L	S		S			
Build infrastructure to access shovel-ready sites	Q3 2013	L	S		S			
Pave road	Q3 2013	L	S		S			
Pay attention to curb-appeal	Ongoing	L	S		S			

**L=Lead role on the action**

**S=Potentially a support role on the action**

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 5: Actively support workforce education to meet changing business needs.</b>								
<b>Facilitate a business education roundtable</b>								
Identify education systems and sources within the region	Q3 2012	L				S		Higher Ed Partners
Communicate with these sources	Ongoing	L				S		Higher Ed Partners
Identify businesses that would benefit from the program	Q3 2012	L		S				
Create a format to bring these entities together	Q4 2012	L		S		S	S	Higher Ed Partners
Learn where the EDC can provide support and encouragement	Q4 2012	L		S		S	S	Higher Ed Partners
<b>Retain young workers</b>								
Promote local learning opportunities in areas of local job demand	Ongoing	L		S	S	S		
Support career day, career fairs, and other events that connect schools with businesses, by sponsoring events and providing speakers	Q4 2012, Ongoing	L		S		L		
Cross-train and promote amongst the different education and learning center sources – make students aware of the opportunities each of them provides	Q2 2013, Ongoing	L				S		Higher Ed Partners

L=Lead role on the action

S=Potentially a support role on the action

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 6: Create a competitive incentives program.</b>								
Facilitate and/or create an incentive policy								
Create an incentive policy	Q4 2012	L	S		S	S	S	
Create a policy for infrastructure support	Q4 2012	L	S				S	
Develop a program to streamline permitting	Q4 2012	L	S					
Make business aware of incentives policy								
Maintain a section of the website for business incentives	Q1 2013	L						

**L=Lead role on the action**

**S=Potentially a support role on the action**

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 7: Foster an environment for entrepreneurship and business creation</b>								
<b>Create a climate for entrepreneurs</b>								
Seek out input from growth-minded small businesses and entrepreneurs	Ongoing	L	S	S	S	S	S	Local Businesses
Celebrate entrepreneurs that are within the Marble Falls community	Ongoing	S	S	L	S			
Grow the number of entrepreneurs within Marble Falls	Ongoing	L	S			S		
Sell the concept for collaboration to all players	Q2-Q3 2012	L	S	S	S	S	S	Region
Specifically market Marble Falls' entrepreneurial spirit	Q3 2012							
<b>Develop the infrastructure for entrepreneurs</b>								
Establish and develop suitable real estate for growing entrepreneurs	Q4 2013	L	S		S	S		
Expand broadband infrastructure within Marble Falls	Q1 2014	L	S		S			Internet Providers
Identify support services for entrepreneurs	Q3 2012	L	S	S	S	S	S	
Provide predictable local regulations with lower bars set for startups	Q2 2013	L	L					
Help provide access to capital and financing	Q2 2013	L						
Create a regional entrepreneurship committee with authority from the organizations they represent	Q3 2012-Q1 2013	L	S	S	S	S	S	Region
Investigate feasibility of business incubator facility and/or community partnerships that can achieve same	Q4 2012							
<b>Provide support for entrepreneurs</b>								
Develop a "Tool Box" of resources for entrepreneurs	Q2 2012	L					S	
Establish a network of organizations and community partners	Q1 2013	L	S	S	S	S	S	Region
Encourage entrepreneurs to support each other	Ongoing	L		S				
Create a youth entrepreneurship program within Marble Falls	Q4 2013	L	S			L		
Explore the possibility of a revolving loan/grant fund for entrepreneurs	Q2 2013							

L=Lead role on the action

S=Potentially a support role on the action

	Timeframe (Complete by)	EDC	City	Chamber	County	ISD	LCRA	Other
<b>Goal 8: Support downtown development</b>								
Continue to implement the Downtown Master Plan and focus on building a concentration of unique retail, eating and entertainment amenities	Ongoing	L	S	S				
Investigate options for establishing mechanism to help attract private investment (P3s, TIF, building codes)	Q2 2013	L	L		S		S	
Pursue catalytic or destination projects for Downtown, including mixed-use developments with options for residential, retail and office	Q4 2013, Ongoing	L	S	S	S	S	S	

**L=Lead role on the action**

**S=Potentially a support role on the action**

## Action Plan

Based on the data and input from Marble Falls' residents, LCRA's Community and Economic Development (CED) Department assembled a list of preliminary goals with initial action steps. This list serves as a summary of discussion on the Wednesday, January 25 planning workshop with the Marble Falls Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board.

Based on observations, CED recognizes the following areas of opportunities for the Marble Falls EDC:

1. **Business Attraction** – Business attraction was seen by far to be the most important charge of the EDC. It scored the highest in the survey and was mentioned as a priority by nearly every individual interviewed. Some methods for pursuing businesses include:
  - a. Develop a long-term attraction strategy – business attraction is a long-term effort. There are over 25,000 cities, towns, villages and other municipalities within the U.S. Additionally, communities are not only competing nationally, but internationally. A 3-5 year attraction strategy needs to be developed and implemented, with realistic expectations for success.
    - i. Establish a community vision
    - ii. Create and facilitate a positive business environment
    - iii. Review and assess strategy and metrics annually
    - iv. Create Request for Proposal (RFP) response template to improve quality and efficiency of responses to businesses and site selectors
    - v. Have an annual regional tour of available sites and buildings, and invite brokers/site selectors from the Austin and San Antonio metro areas
  - b. Identify appropriate targets – EDC funds are limited, so attraction efforts must target businesses that match current strengths and future visions for Marble Falls. The EDC should take a targeted rather than a shotgun approach.
    - i. Establish a leads matrix
    - ii. Track industry trends and maximize their positive impact on Marble Falls
    - iii. Utilize new demographics to identify and target gaps
    - iv. Work with LCRA to determine industries most likely to thrive in Marble Falls
    - v. Leverage medical center development to encourage growth in healthcare and wellness sectors
    - vi. Explore recruitment strategy for professional firms and expansion of office space
  - c. Join regional business attraction groups – The EDC can benefit from the resources and attraction experience of the larger area, particularly by supporting and taking part in Austin Chamber business attraction efforts. It may also consider more local partnerships, too, especially with the City of Burnet and along the Highway 281 and Highway 71 corridors.
    - i. Capitalize on the resources of the Austin Chamber
    - ii. Maintain membership in and develop active relationship with Texas Economic Development Council (TEDC)
    - iii. Work with the Office of the Governor – Economic Development & Tourism

- iv. Collaborate with the region in developing a regional ED approach
2. **Marketing** – Marketing is part of business attraction. People must know what Marble Falls is and what it stands for. The City must get the message out to businesses, investors, and individuals throughout the region.
- a. Integrate City marketing efforts – Tourism and site visits alike can produce new investment for a City. The EDC can work with tourism organizations, local businesses, and city leaders to develop a unified branding and marketing message for Marble Falls. Just as GEICO has many taglines and commercials (caveman, gecko, etc.), Marble Falls can develop different collateral for businesses and tourists, but unify its format. This unity helps them to feed off each other rather than compete.
    - i. Initiate contact with other groups and agencies to develop a collaborative strategy to market the area, including the Chamber, the County and surrounding cities and communities
    - ii. Find common goals and a common vision to build on with these organizations
    - iii. Develop a unified branding campaign
  - b. Market the City to industry – newsletter, cold calls, trade association events, etc. – get the word out that Marble Falls is open for business
    - i. Identify which industries to pursue and which to avoid
    - ii. Identify appropriate ways to advertise to specific industries
    - iii. Identify funds and develop appropriate incentives to support these strategies
3. **Business Retention and Expansion Programs** – Some of the strongest growth stems from existing businesses.
- a. Build local relationships – Maintaining constant communication with business leaders can create opportunities. They may have suppliers or other business leads that can turn into a new business investment for Marble Falls. They may have a challenge that EDC support can eliminate.
    - i. Communicate and interact with the Chamber to stay aware of business activities and needs
    - ii. Provide financial support to the Chamber Lunch and Learns
    - iii. Use questionnaire to support retention visits with existing businesses
  - b. Train local business leaders in economic development – they can be Marble Falls’ greatest cheerleaders, talking to out-of-towners about the benefits of doing business in Marble Falls.
    - i. Create an ambassador training program to educate residents on the benefits of promoting Marble Falls
    - ii. Continue to utilize Retail Coach Workshop to support retail
  - c. Offer retention services – existing businesses are often so consumed with day-to-day operations they do not realize the support and opportunities that exist in the greater context
    - i. Provide an annual information forum on government support available for businesses within Marble Falls

- ii. Regularly meet with major employers and ensure they are aware of business retention and expansion support opportunities available
- 4. **Business Park** – Love it or hate it, there is a lot of strong feelings about the business park. These concerns need to be addressed.
  - a. Explore the feasibility of a speculative building – Building a 20,000 square foot shell can be relatively affordable. One can even put it up without utilities or a cement pad. This helps businesses visualize their presence and reduces the time to occupancy. Time is a huge concern in today’s market. Most deals are made in existing buildings. Open site lots are mainly desired by businesses with very specific needs or by major employers looking for very large green fields.
    - i. Explore the possibility of a public/private partnership
    - ii. Use the leads matrix and recent business interests to identify the appropriate scope and scale of the building
  - b. Park infrastructure enhancements –
    - i. Contract for Phase 3 of engineering
    - ii. Build road to access shovel-ready sites
    - iii. Build infrastructure to access shovel-ready sites
    - iv. Pave road
    - v. Curb-appeal is essential – an ugly model home does not sell. The park must look inviting and be impeccably clean, mowed, and trimmed
- 5. **Education** – Workforce is a challenge in Marble Falls. Unless it is addressed, business attraction will remain a challenge.
  - a. Business-education roundtable – The EDC can develop a roundtable of local business leaders and school administrators to find ways to match curriculum with skills needs. This can often be a great way to get students connected into jobs faster and for businesses to hire stronger talent.
    - i. Identify education systems and sources
    - ii. Communicate with these sources
    - iii. Identify businesses that would benefit from the program
    - iv. Create a format to bring these entities together to begin discussions on bridging the workforce gap, and ensure ongoing regular meetings (2-6 times per year)
    - v. Learn where the EDC can provide support and encouragement
  - b. Retain young workers – There are limited opportunities for recent graduates to find work, from technical jobs to professional fields.
    - i. Promote local learning opportunities in areas of local job demand
    - ii. Support career day, career fairs, and other events that connect schools with businesses, by sponsoring events and providing speakers
    - iii. Cross-train and promote amongst the different education and learning center sources – make them aware of the opportunities each of them provides
- 6. **Incentives** – Incentives are necessary in today’s market. This does not mean they have to come at a large local cost.
  - a. Facilitate and/or create an incentive policy –

- i. Tax incentives – The EDC can work to support incentives that reduce taxes on capital and other investments. This is only an opportunity cost – it does not reduce the tax base – and only reduces the rate of tax gains.
    - ii. Infrastructure support – Constructing pipes and wire is expensive in Marble Falls. The EDC needs to offset part of these costs, if only to make the area competitive with neighbors with fewer infrastructure constraints.
    - iii. Develop a program to streamline permitting – The amount of time until a business is able to begin operating is often a deal breaker. Any support in the permitting and approval process that can expedite it is a strong incentive. The more brief and concrete you can make a permit timeline, the stronger this acts as an incentive.
  - b. Once incentives have been identified, they need to be advertised on the EDC and City websites
    - i. Maintain a section of the website dedicated to incentives. It isn't an incentive unless people know about it.
- 7. **Business Creation (Entrepreneurship)** – In addition to growing existing businesses and attracting new businesses, Marble Falls must foster a climate that encourages locals to create new businesses.
  - a. Create a climate for entrepreneurs
    - i. Seek out input from growth-minded small businesses and entrepreneurs – The EDC should seek out the entrepreneurs in the community with a strong growth-oriented perspective and find out their challenges in doing business.
    - ii. Celebrate entrepreneurs that are within the Marble Falls community – starting a business is a real challenge. Recognize the efforts of residents and celebrate their achievements.
    - iii. Grow the number of entrepreneurs in Marble Falls – Create ways to encourage growth in entrepreneurship in Marble Falls. Educate students and train adults. Capitalize on the proximity to the business experience of Horseshoe Bay and Marble Falls retirees.
    - iv. Sell the concept for collaboration to all players – working collaboratively throughout the region creates a strong support network to assist businesses as they grow and change over time. This concept needs encouragement throughout the region.
    - v. Specifically market Marble Falls' entrepreneurial spirit – Marble Falls has significant entrepreneurship, but many people are unaware of it. This spirit must be marketed to attract additional entrepreneurs as well as to retain existing ones.
  - b. Develop the infrastructure for entrepreneurs
    - i. Establish and develop suitable real estate for growing entrepreneurs – Utilize upstairs downtown space, devote available municipal space to incubation, think outside the box!
    - ii. Expand broadband infrastructure within Marble Falls – This is a key piece of infrastructure for many startups. Without strong internet connectivity, companies are at a distinct disadvantage.
    - iii. Identify support services for entrepreneurs – startups need people with marketing, bookkeeping, and business law skills. Marble Falls should develop a list of businesses or retirees that can be utilized for basic services.
    - iv. Provide predictable and reliable local regulations with lower bars set for startups – Create a clear, efficient process for startups, recognizing they lack the overhead support

large businesses have to meet extensive reporting requirements. Use historical preservation rules for reducing the code restrictions on using spaces.

- v. Help provide access to capital and financing – Marble Falls should support state and national small business loan and grant programs, and should consider creating its own incentives targeting startups.
  - vi. Create a regional entrepreneurship committee with authority from the organizations they represent – The entrepreneurship committee would work to develop regional policies and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) for growing and strengthening entrepreneurship.
  - vii. Investigate feasibility of a business incubator facility and/or community partnerships that can achieve same – Incubator space is a need of startups, but a challenge for communities. Investigate the feasibility of some sort of incubator program for Marble Falls as well as the greater region.
- c. Provide support for entrepreneurs
- i. Develop a “tool box” of resources for entrepreneurs – Marble Falls needs a place with all entrepreneurial resources available, as well as a person who can act as liaison to businesses seeking to start up.
  - ii. Establish a network of organizations and community partners – Include in this tool box a network of people and organizations both locally and at the state and national levels to act as a resource for starting businesses.
  - iii. Encourage entrepreneurs to support each other – Entrepreneurs who have faced challenges and survived are the best resource for new businesses starting up. Creating ways for them to network helps to strengthen this support.
  - iv. Create a youth entrepreneurship program within Marble Falls – Getting students to be entrepreneurship-minded helps them see opportunities for business in Marble Falls and it helps the community create jobs through natural local growth.
  - v. Explore the possibility of a revolving loan/grant fund for entrepreneurs.
8. **Support Downtown development** – Marble Falls must continue to bolster its downtown, a major tourist attraction and anchor for the City.
- i. Continue to implement the Downtown Master Plan and focus on building a concentration of unique retail, eating and entertainment amenities.
  - ii. Investigate options for establishing mechanisms to help attract private investment.
  - iii. Pursue catalytic or destination projects for Downtown, including mixed-use developments with options for residential, retail and office.

## SWOT: Summary of Interviews and Focus Groups

<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Quality of life</li> <li>• Family-oriented</li> <li>• Strong retirement area</li> <li>• Natural beauty (lake, landscape, etc.)</li> <li>• Regional retail hub</li> <li>• Small-town feel with access to major metros Austin &amp; San Antonio</li> <li>• Destination (boat races, Bluebonnet Café)</li> <li>• Confluence of 71/281</li> <li>• Local Texas Tech Campus</li> <li>• Current leadership is strong</li> <li>• The EDC appears to be moving in a good direction</li> <li>• Recent creation of comprehensive and downtown plans</li> <li>• Horseshoe Bay resort nearby</li> <li>• The new hospital being built</li> <li>• 6,000 foot, jet-accessible runway at Horseshoe Bay</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suppliers and other ancillary businesses supporting Scott &amp; White hospital</li> <li>• Attracting the steam train tours to add Marble Falls as a stop</li> <li>• Promoting the growth in Arts in Marble Falls</li> <li>• Skilled workforce graduating from Texas Tech</li> <li>• Year-round tourism growth</li> <li>• Support a community-wide marketing/branding program</li> <li>• Develop a “war chest” to attract strategic firms</li> <li>• Small, light industry and technology firms</li> <li>• Wealth management firms</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of business recruitment efforts</li> <li>• Lack of strong customer service skills tourist-related workforce</li> <li>• Limited vision until recently</li> <li>• Limited coordination between EDC, Chamber and the City</li> <li>• Existing heavy industry in downtown area hinders strategic growth</li> <li>• Overbearing police presence, discouraging tourism</li> <li>• Limited “night life” for young professionals</li> <li>• Anti-competitive attitude of businesses towards new businesses entering the market</li> <li>• No municipal golf course</li> <li>• Limited capital availability</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of middle-income housing</li> <li>• Lack of young professional job opportunities</li> <li>• The business park challenges need to be addressed</li> <li>• The EDC needs to clearly define its function</li> <li>• Big box stores are essential, but must be appropriately planned</li> </ul>

## Interview and Focus Group Responses

Note: This list comprises a summary of all responses from interviews and focus groups conducted in Marble Falls. Some responses may contradict each other or inaccurately reflect Marble Falls. However, we felt it important to include all responses to capture public sentiment.

### 1. What are Marble Falls' strengths as a community?

- It is a regional hub for retail
- Beautiful location with a constant-level lake in the middle of town
- Strong volunteerism and philanthropy
- Natural resources
- High quality of life
- Proximity to Austin and San Antonio
- Community is open/welcoming to new people
- Easy road access (281, 71, and 1431)
- Strong public leadership
- Recreation assets, especially golf
- Progressive momentum in the city
- Strong economy
- Expanded school system
- Lower cost of living
- Lower labor costs
- Good coding and planning
- Environmentalism
- Family-oriented
- Retirement community
- Bluebonnet Café is a tourism draw
- Great relationship with neighboring cities
- People are starting to focus on issues rather than arguing about ideas
- Sewer reclamation is prescient in these tough water times

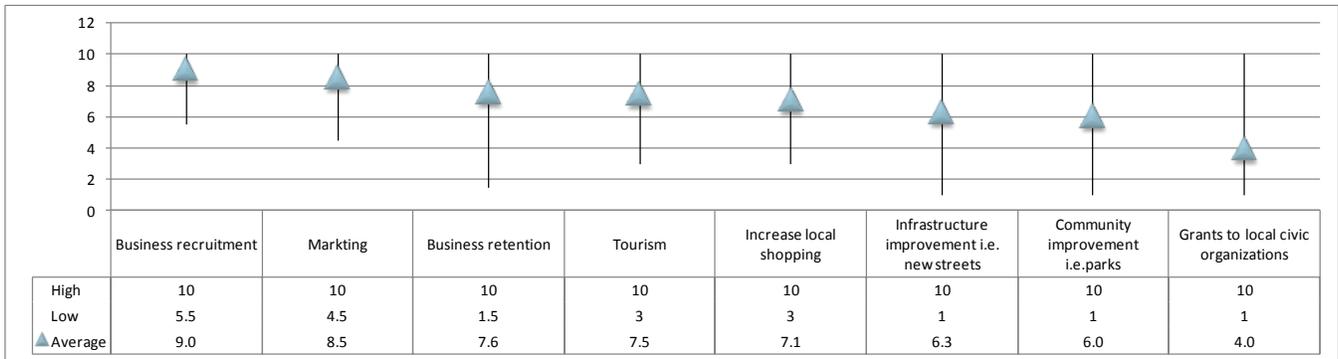
## 2. What are Marble Falls' weaknesses as a community?

- Property development costs are incredibly high
- Lack of cohesive community plan – this process is a good first step to combat this
- EDC has historically been weak – had no vision in the past
- Industrial park is a drain on the EDC with limited results
- Mostly a tourist/retirement community, so creating diverse job opportunities is a real challenge
- Very limited housing in the middle-income range – very few \$120k-\$250k homes
- Permits for building are onerous
- Weak workforce
- Limited job opportunities, especially for young professionals
- Weak middle-class presence
- Aging infrastructure
- No rental space, especially residential
- Few incentives/abatements
- Lot availability is becoming a challenge
- Not enough support for the arts
- Nothing to do at night
- Very weak middle-class; gulf between haves and have-nots
- Community is divided – many people still think small town and don't see the big picture
- Business attraction has been weak
- Some interests work for themselves rather than the best interests of the City
- Lack of cohesive response to news outlets by city, chamber, EDC
- Limited clear direction and goals for the community
- Long term health care options are limited
- Illegal drugs
- Immigration challenges

**3. What in the recent past has been EDC’s greatest success story?**

- Hiring an EDC director
- Starting this strategic plan
- Texas Tech campus has been good for the community
- EDC’s support in getting the hospital
- The current EDC board is a real positive
- Developing the visitor’s center
- Unaware of any recent successes
- Ron Motors is potentially a success
- Tech park is a mild success
- Has a strong war chest
- Granite Mesa assisted living (supported infrastructure)
- CTC college credit
- Career technology and training partnerships
- Attraction of Gibraltar into the business park

**4. Please rate the following on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest priority for the EDC.**



**5. Are there specific industries or companies that you would like to see pursued by the EDC?**

- Retail, especially at the 281/71 intersection
- Small, tourist-related businesses downtown, including high-end things like spas
- Light manufacturing for the industrial park
- Businesses will follow the natural growth Marble Falls is currently experiencing
- More year-round tourism is needed
- Attract more retirees
- Get businesses owners to live in Marble Falls
- There are a lot of candle manufacturers in the area – grow this industry
- Health care – support businesses spinning out of the hospital
- National retail – sporting goods, clothing, restaurants
- Businesses that can utilize rail – there is an open access point in the area
- Attract big box retail but have them to the sides with high-end retail downtown
- Green technology
- Acid manufacturing already exists in Burnett and may have potential
- Internet-based sales companies
- Anything that requires semi-skilled workers
- Financial services to cater to retirees
- Supply chain businesses for Austin
- Call centers
- Pharmaceuticals
- Back office operations
- Career development centers
- Primary industries

## 6. What can the EDC do to further assist existing businesses?

- Façade and sign low-interest loans
- Sponsorship of beautification awards and other events to improve the look of Marble Falls
- Implement a needs study of existing businesses to find out how the EDC can help them
- Support a shop local campaign
- Increase tourism
- Partner with the Chamber
- Marketing and promotion to get more traffic into Marble Falls
- Create a manufacturing trade association
- Access to capital is a challenge
- Help develop business plans for entrepreneurs
- Support filling the vacant spaces in the downtown
- Lots of talent in the community
- Promote and support vocational training
- Create policies to implement when a business considers leaving
- EDC needs to play a supporting role here
- Attend ICSI, tourism, business trade shows, etc.
- Tie the river system into the downtown to make a riverwalk-type environment
- Create a non-voting advisory board
- Create an evaluation process for projects
- Need people coming to Marble Falls for more than just events (e.g., boat races) – every day tourism like Fredericksburg
- Training on business management
- Needs to create an expedited process to enable expansion
- Provide training seminars in hospitality and how to compete in a global economy
- Small business grants

**7. How can the EDC best utilize its limited resources to move the community forward and improve the economic quality of life for all citizens?**

- Market the community for small businesses
- Market the downtown to attract more tourism-related businesses
- Develop a plan the community can support
- Leverage other funds as well as EDC funds to achieve results
- Don't spend all its resources on only a few projects
- Grow the tax base
- The EDC needs some quick wins to build stronger community support
- Had no plan historically – “plan the work and work the plan”
- Get the Huber plant relocated to open up that space and save 2<sup>nd</sup> street from such heavy traffic
- Undeveloped space west of Main is an untapped asset
- Keep the small-town community feel
- The EDC needs to educate the community on economic development
- Get the hotels to coordinate to provide accommodations for events
- Increase regional partnerships
- Reach out to the Hispanic population
- Parks and community improvements
- Support moderately-priced housing and public amenities
- Need to get tourists to stay here longer
- Continually support continuing ed programs (Texas Tech) – engage businesses to support them
- Create a live/work/play environment

**8. Are there any other issues relating to any aspect of economic development that you would like to discuss?**

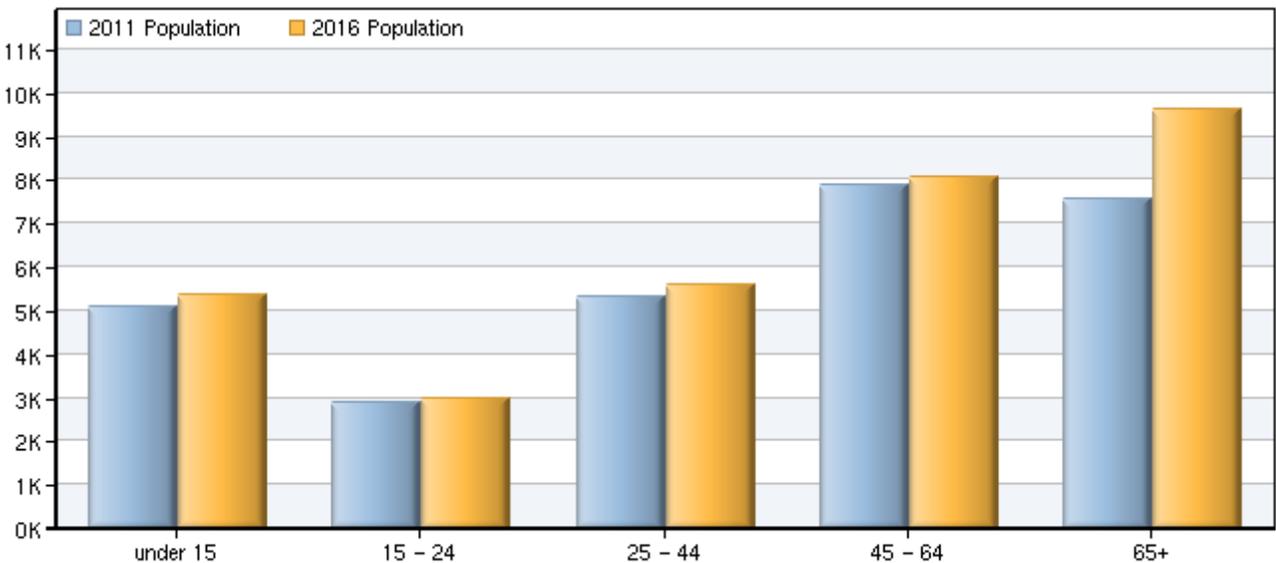
- The EDC should consider creating an incentives program, but it would have to be structured to not give newcomers a competitive advantage over existing local businesses; it would also need clawbacks
- Incentives should be for public infrastructure only and for businesses that will thrive rather than ones already struggling
- Consider supporting the addition of a sports complex
- Consider supporting the development of a conference/convention center
- Develop a solution for the tech park; it currently doesn't work
- Sell the building at Cold Circle
- Run the steam train to Marble Falls
- Marble Falls needs to be turned into a destination
- Need strong partnerships with local groups, especially the Chamber and City
- The EDC needs to focus on getting the City's economic engine started
- Remember that the ultimate goal is to improve citizen quality of life
- There is high turnover and the City is spending too much on police
- The EDC needs to bring transparency to its activities
- Improve hospitality abilities of retail/service workers
- There is a lack of basic business education in the City
- Don't just do economic development on Main Street; there are other areas
- Does EDC have a mission statement? If so, it's not well known
- Improve marketing of local retail
- Marble Falls needs meeting space
- Create protocols for each EDC endeavor
- Improve web presence and pay to get Marble Falls to the top of search results
- Turn the concrete structure outside the Hampton Inn by the water into a water fall as a icon for the City
- Need to keep the downtown thriving for tourism
- Need to bridge the division between Burnet and Marble Falls
- Building a strong community image is essential
- There are areas in the community prime for redevelopment, which would likely be less expensive than developing green fields since infrastructure already exists
- Workforce and housing are the two biggest issues
- Marble Falls should be the county ED leader but is hasn't engaged the region
- Take advantage of TWC and other state and federal agencies for support and funding
- Stop just talking and start doing

## Demographics

Expect the Marble Falls area to grow over the next five years, especially in retirees. The number of residents 65 or older is forecasted to grow nearly 30 percent, nearly six times the next closest age group. People over the age of 65 will become the biggest age cohort by 2016, surpassing the 45-64 age group and only 4,000 people more than all working age citizens (25-64) combined. At this rate, there will be less than 17 people working for every 10 people of retirement age in the Marble Falls ZIP Code by 2016.

Young people generally prefer places that are energetic, provide opportunities and feel diverse. Marble Falls' strong Hispanic presence increases the region's diversity, making it more attractive to young professionals looking for small to mid-sized cities to start out in. Increasing diversity and creating additional job opportunities will only increase the attractiveness of the community to young workers. Over the next five years, most races are expected to grow faster than whites within the ZIP Code, increasing the location's appeal.

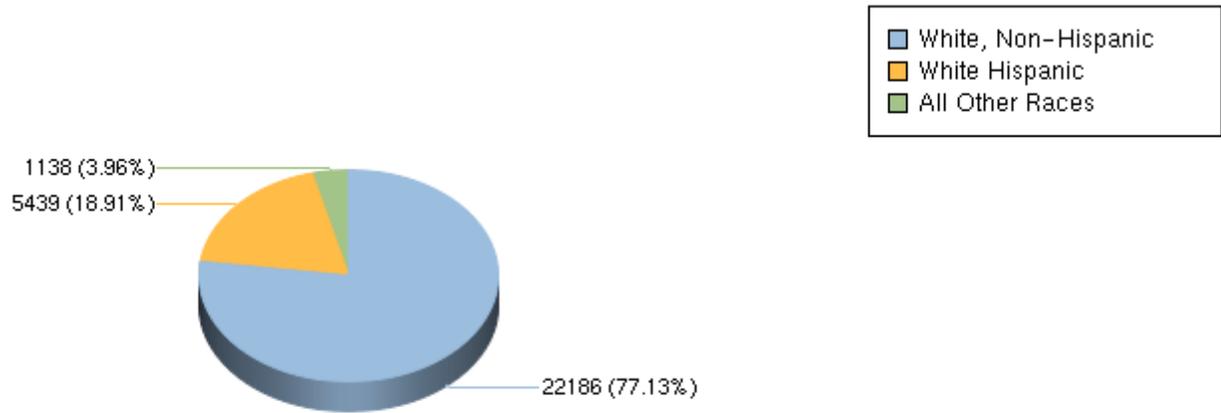
### 2011 - 2016 Age Size and Growth – 78654 ZIP Code



Age	2011 Population	2016 Population	Change	% Change
under 15	5,106	5,359	253	5%
15 - 24	2,904	2,986	82	3%
25 - 44	5,310	5,572	262	5%
45 - 64	7,874	8,059	185	2%
65+	7,570	9,614	2,044	27%
Total	28,764	31,590	2,826	10%

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

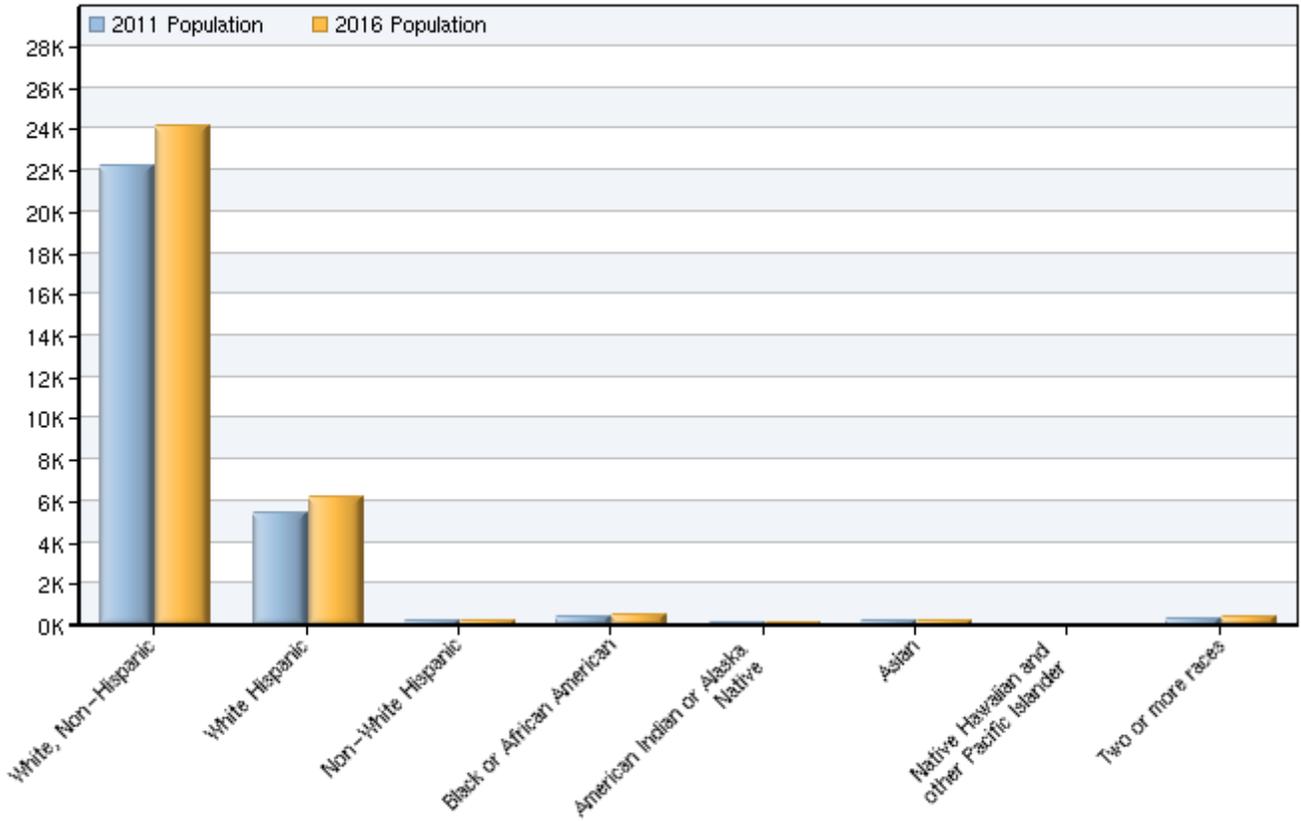
**2011 Race/Ethnicity Breakdown – 78654 ZIP Code**



<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2011 Population</b>	<b>% of Region</b>
White, Non-Hispanic	22,186	77.13%
White Hispanic	5,439	18.91%
Non-White Hispanic	151	0.52%
Black or African American	431	1.50%
American Indian or Alaska Native	91	0.32%
Asian	150	0.52%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	11	0.04%
Two or more races	304	1.06%

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

2011 - 2016 Race/Ethnicity Size and Growth – 78654 ZIP Code



Race/Ethnicity	2011 Population	2016 Population	Change	% Change
White, Non-Hispanic	22,186	24,147	1,961	9%
White Hispanic	5,439	6,144	705	13%
Non-White Hispanic	151	170	19	13%
Black or African American	431	508	77	18%
American Indian or Alaska Native	91	96	5	5%
Asian	150	173	23	15%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	11	13	2	18%
Two or more races	304	338	34	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,764</b>	<b>31,590</b>	<b>2,826</b>	<b>10%</b>

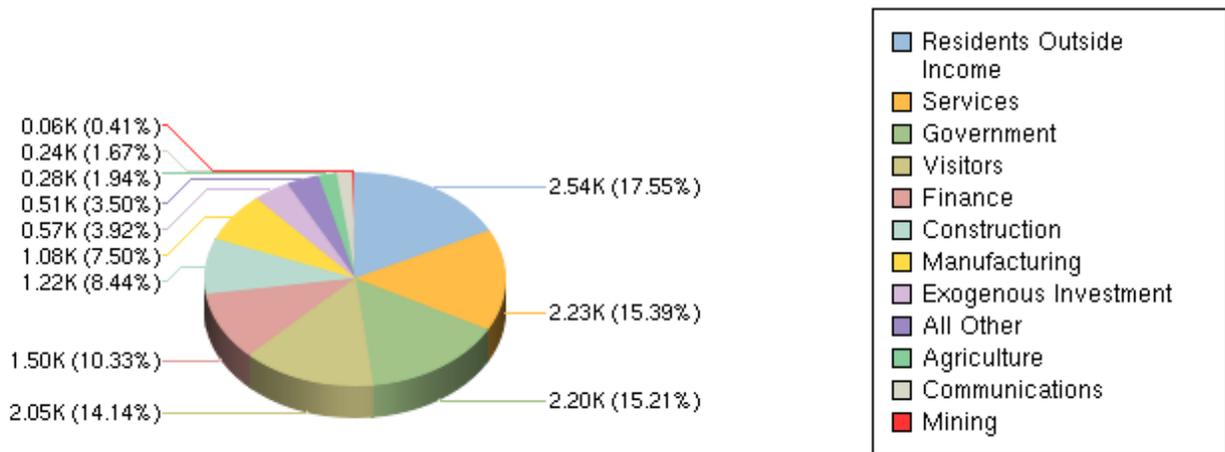
Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

## Economy

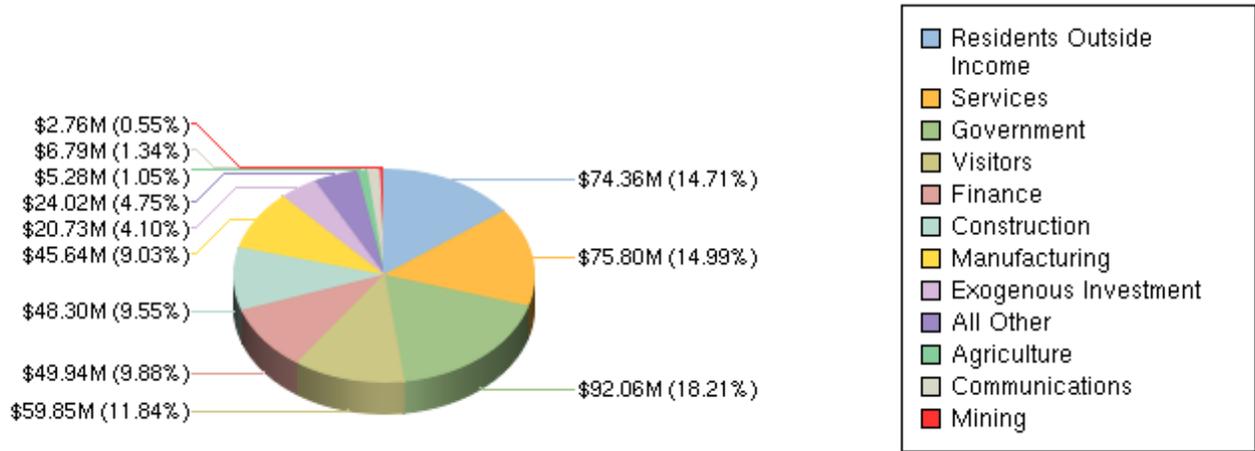
The vast majority of jobs are in Services, Government, Visitors (tourism) and finance. Nearly 18 percent of jobs for people in the Marble Falls ZIP take place outside the area. Even though these jobs account for nearly 18 percent of employment, they supply less than 15 percent of the earnings into the region. This difference is likely due to the traditionally lower pay found in more rural, lower cost geographies outside of cities.

With so many retirees moving into the area, finance and investment services is likely to be a strong growth industry within Marble Falls. These new residents will also need housing, retail services and medical access, creating additional growth opportunities. Many of the most concentrate industries within the region fall in very niche categories, such as Marble Falls granite foundry, which relies on unique geologic aspects of the area for its success. These niche industries are not very scalable for additional job creation due to their dependence on natural resources.

### 2011 Jobs – 78654 ZIP Code



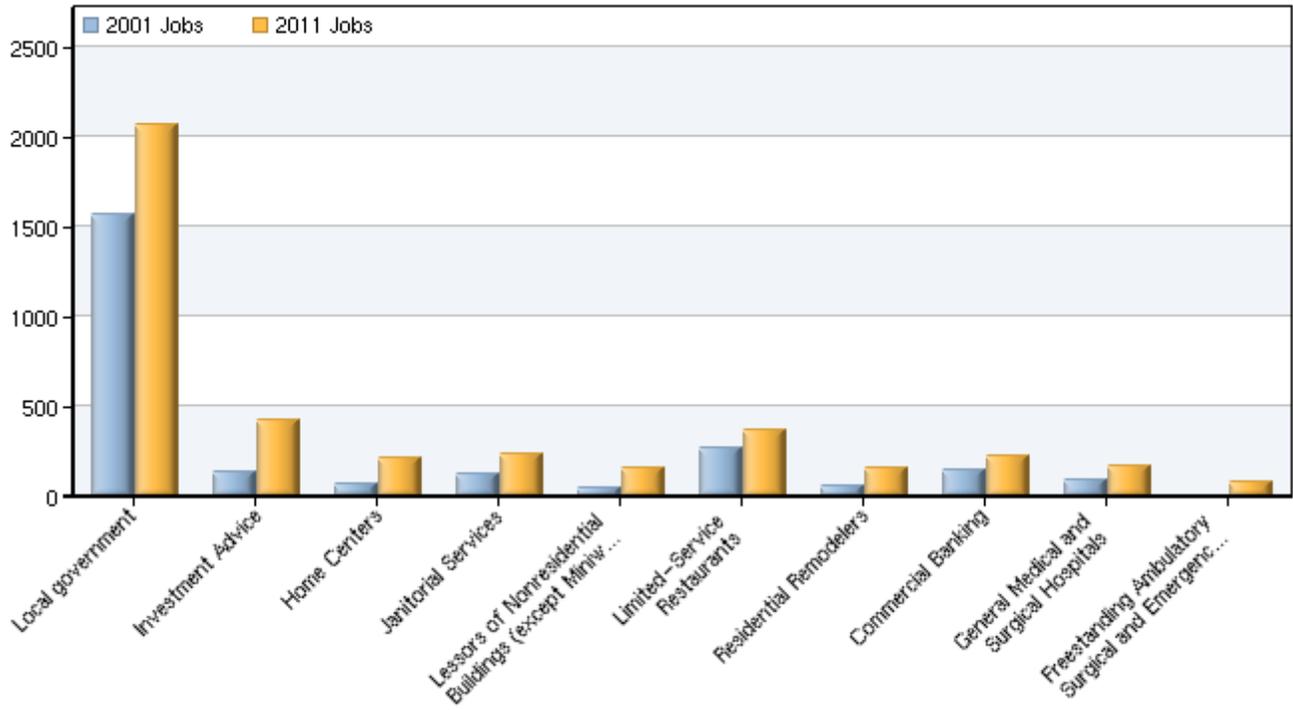
2011 Earnings – 78654 ZIP Code



Sector	Jobs	Earnings(K)	Jobs %	Earnings %	EPW(K)
Residents Outside Income	2,539	\$74,363	18%	15%	\$29
Services	2,228	\$75,799	15%	15%	\$34
Government	2,201	\$92,056	15%	18%	\$42
Visitors	2,046	\$59,853	14%	12%	\$29
Finance	1,495	\$49,944	10%	10%	\$33
Construction	1,221	\$48,299	8%	10%	\$40
Manufacturing	1,085	\$45,639	7%	9%	\$42
Exogenous Investment	568	\$20,728	4%	4%	\$37
All Other	506	\$24,017	3%	5%	\$47
Agriculture	281	\$5,285	2%	1%	\$19
Communications	242	\$6,785	2%	1%	\$28
Mining	59	\$2,757	0%	1%	\$47

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

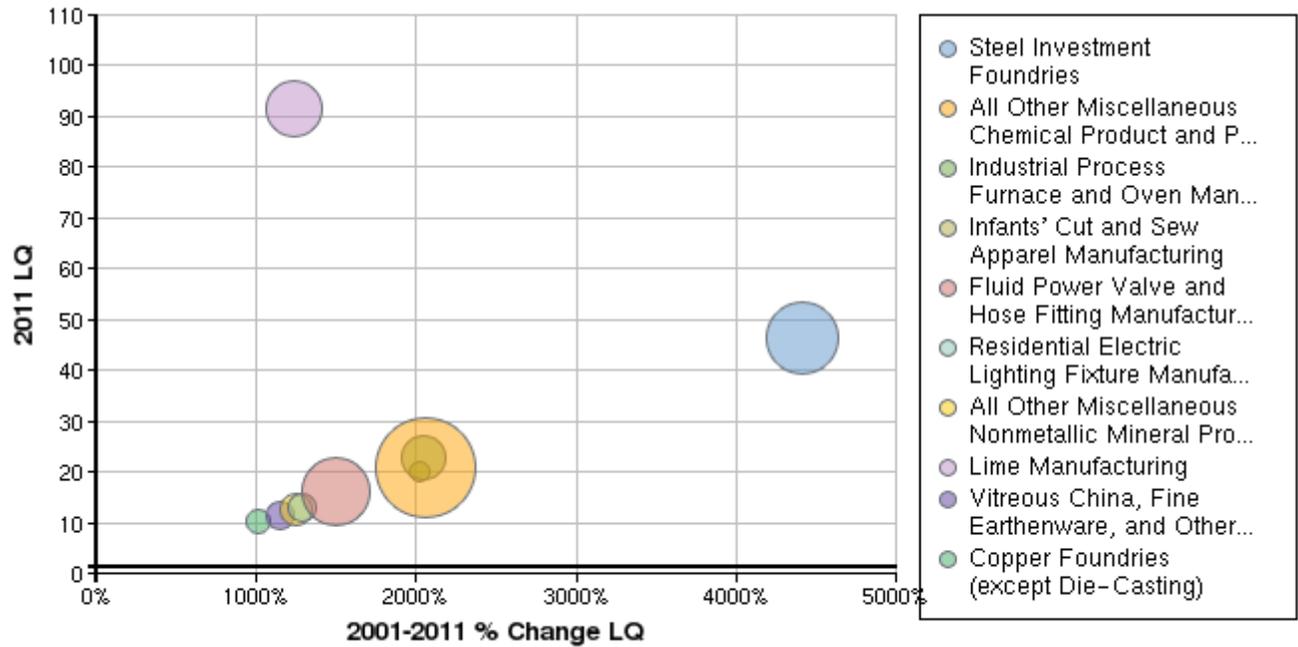
2011 Fastest Growing Industries – 78654 ZIP Code



NAICS Code	Description	2001 Jobs	2011 Jobs	Growth	Growth %
930000	Local government	1,566	2,071	505	32%
523930	Investment Advice	128	421	293	229%
444110	Home Centers	72	210	138	192%
561720	Janitorial Services	119	233	114	96%
531120	Lessors of Nonresidential Buildings (except Miniwarehouses)	47	160	113	240%
722211	Limited-Service Restaurants	261	364	103	39%
236118	Residential Remodelers	61	153	92	151%
522110	Commercial Banking	141	223	82	58%
622110	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	90	171	81	90%
621493	Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical and Emergency Centers	0	75	75	--

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

2011 Fastest Growing Location Quotients – 78654 ZIP Code



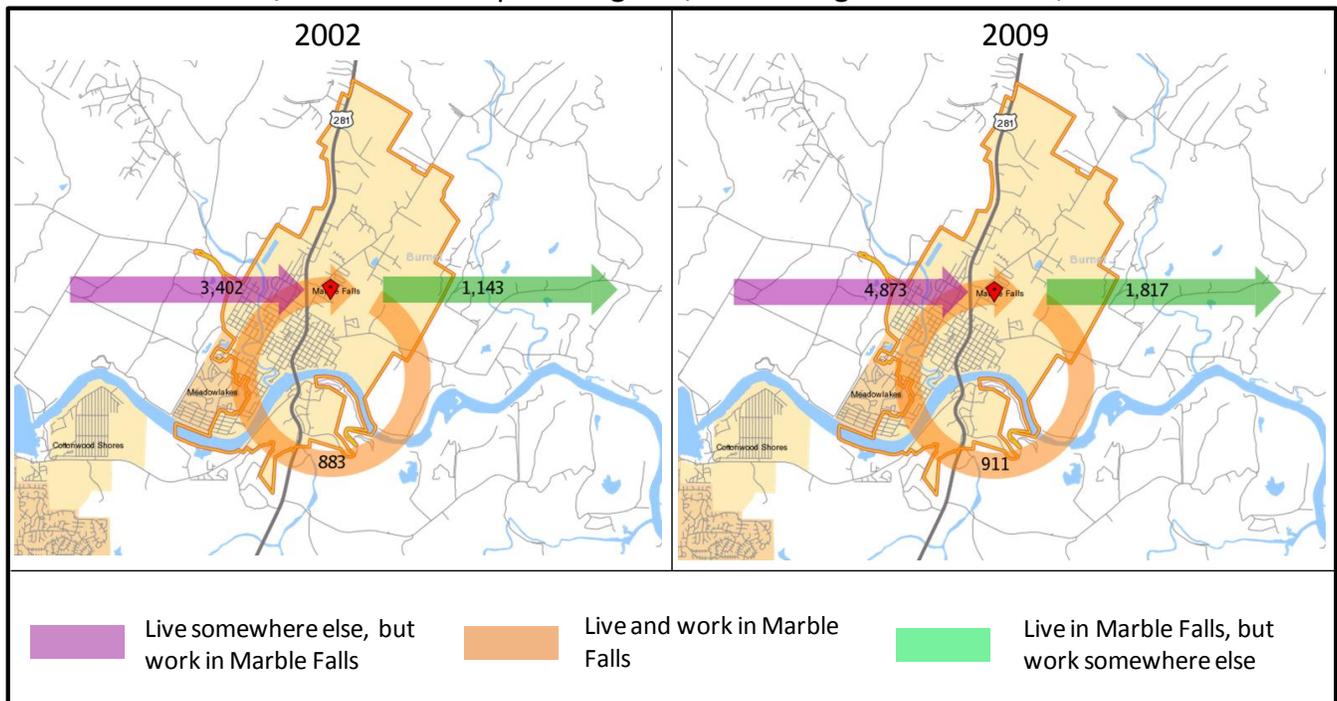
NAICS Code	Description	Size (Jobs)	10 Yr % Change LQ	Current LQ
331512	Steel Investment Foundries	45	4,413%	46.34
325998	All Other Miscellaneous Chemical Product and Preparation Manufacturing	67	2,058%	20.71
333994	Industrial Process Furnace and Oven Manufacturing	20	2,039%	22.74
315291	Infants' Cut and Sew Apparel Manufacturing	<10	--	--
332912	Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing	43	1,499%	16.05
335121	Residential Electric Lighting Fixture Manufacturing	<10	--	--
327999	All Other Miscellaneous Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	12	1,246%	12.61
327410	Lime Manufacturing	33	1,236%	91.56
327112	Vitreous China, Fine Earthenware, and Other Pottery Product Manufacturing	<10	--	--
331525	Copper Foundries (except Die-Casting)	<10	--	--

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

## Workforce

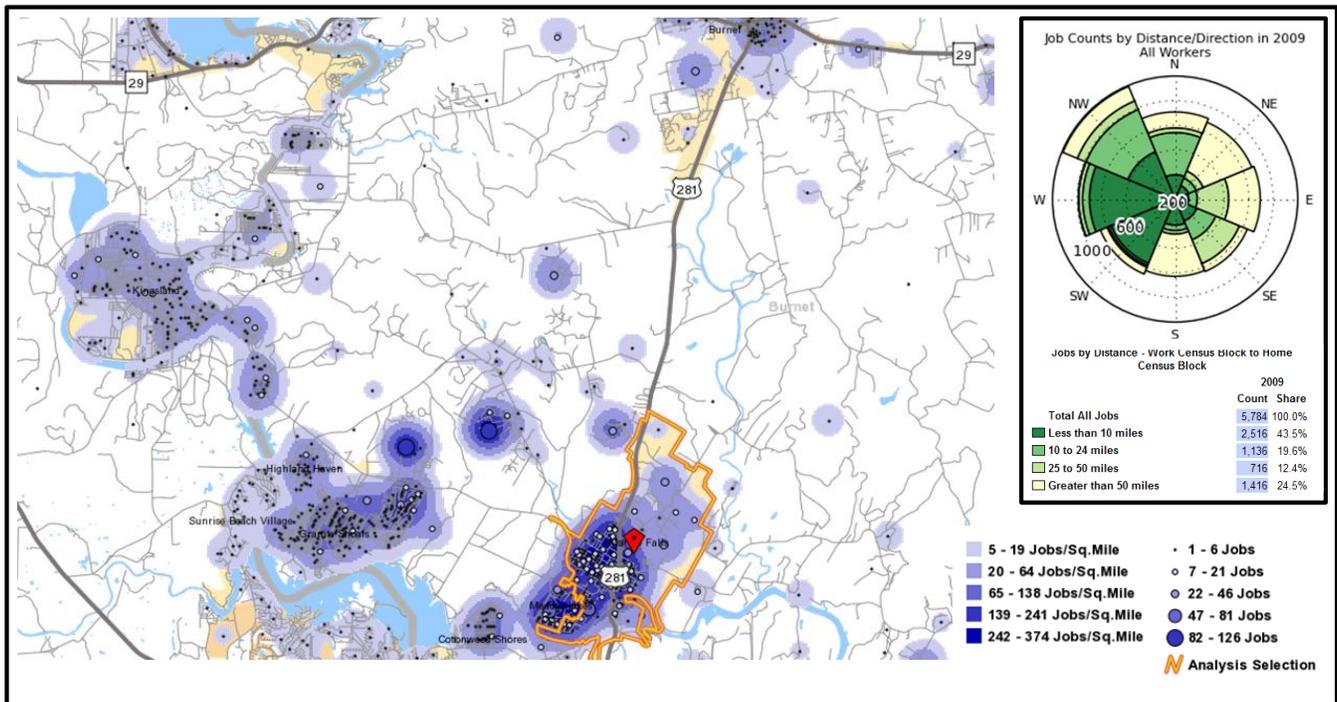
The City of Marble Falls attracts more jobs into it than it loses on a daily commute. In some ways, this is positive. Marble Falls has a strong employment base that attracts people to it. This in turn improves its retail base (people buying groceries or dinner on their way home). However, it also demonstrates a lost opportunity in residents. These commuters could be attracted to live in Marble Falls, increasing residential demand, which would include housing and services. This increases the positive impact of these jobs by capturing more of the economic activity of commuters. In fact, most of the net gain in jobs comes from strong, middle class jobs in education and health care, which would have an especially strong economic impact. Most commuters leaving Marble Falls go west to communities such as Granite Shoals and Kingsland.

Job Inflows/Outflows – People Living and/or Working in Marble Falls, 2002-2009



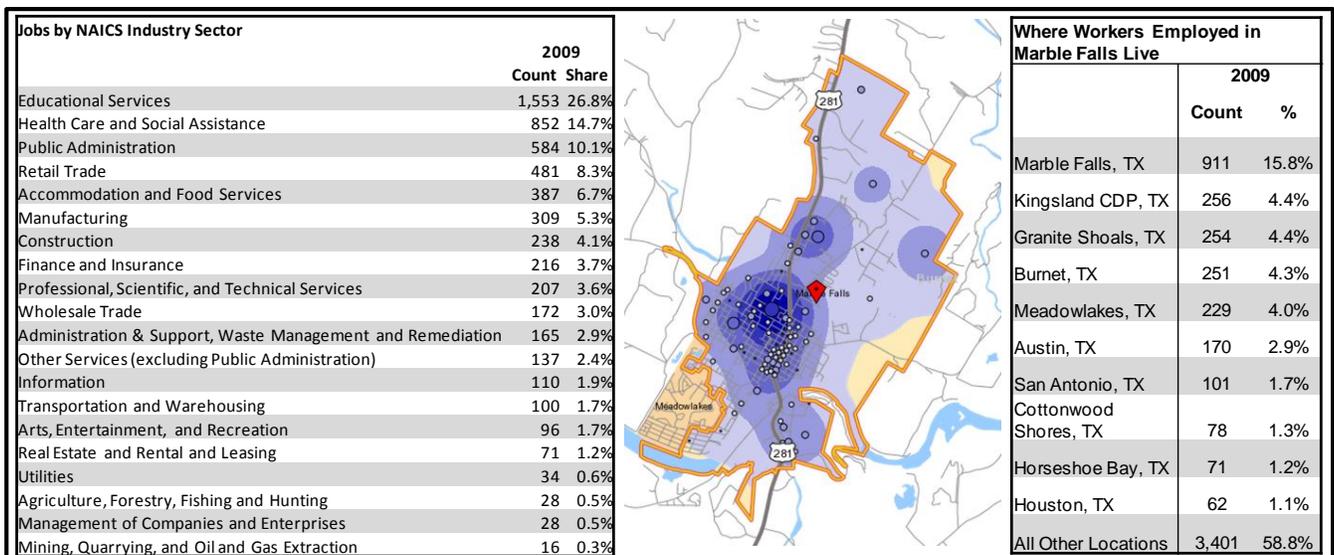
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2002-2009)

## Where Marble Falls Residents Work, 2009



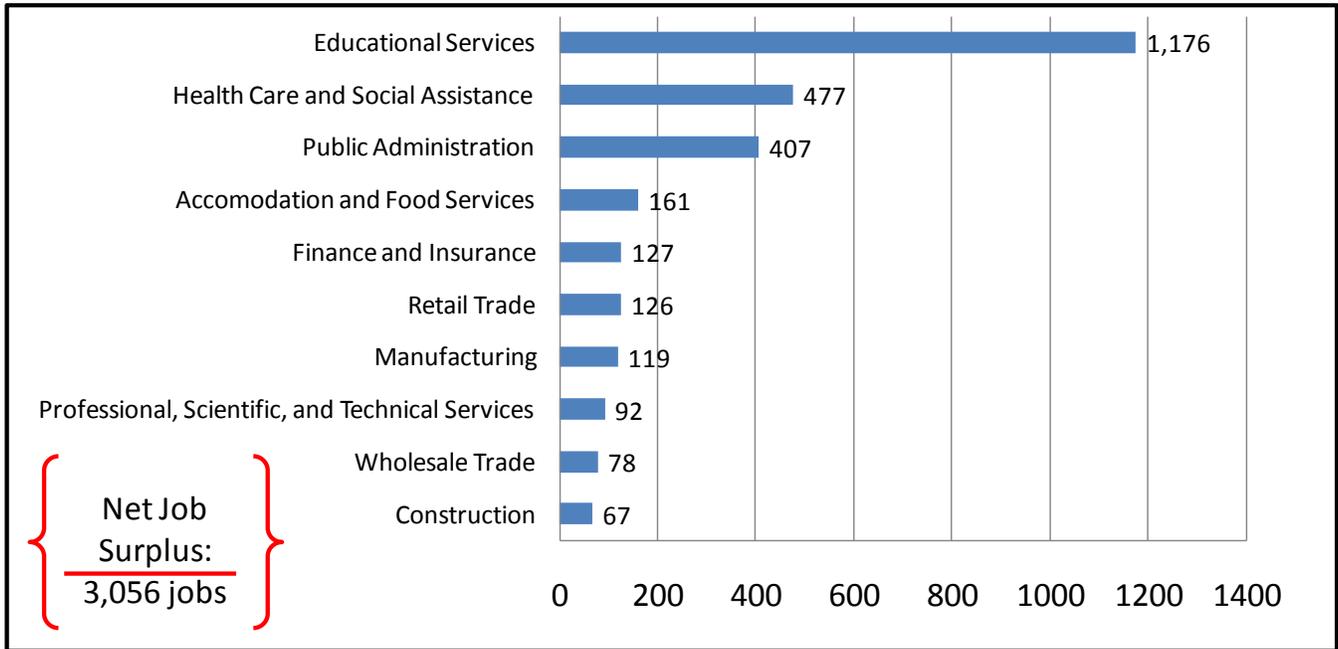
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2009)

## Location of Jobs Within Marble Falls, 2009



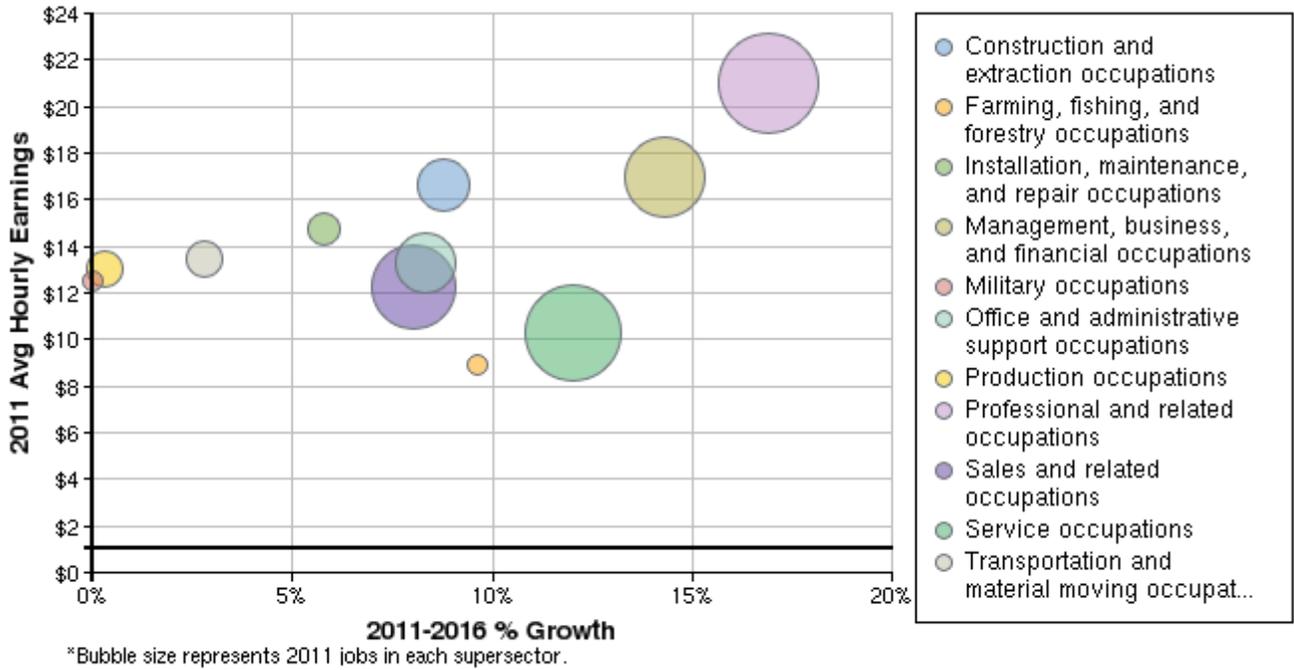
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2009)

### Net Number of Workers Commuting Into Marble Falls for Work, by Top 10 Industries, 2009



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2009)

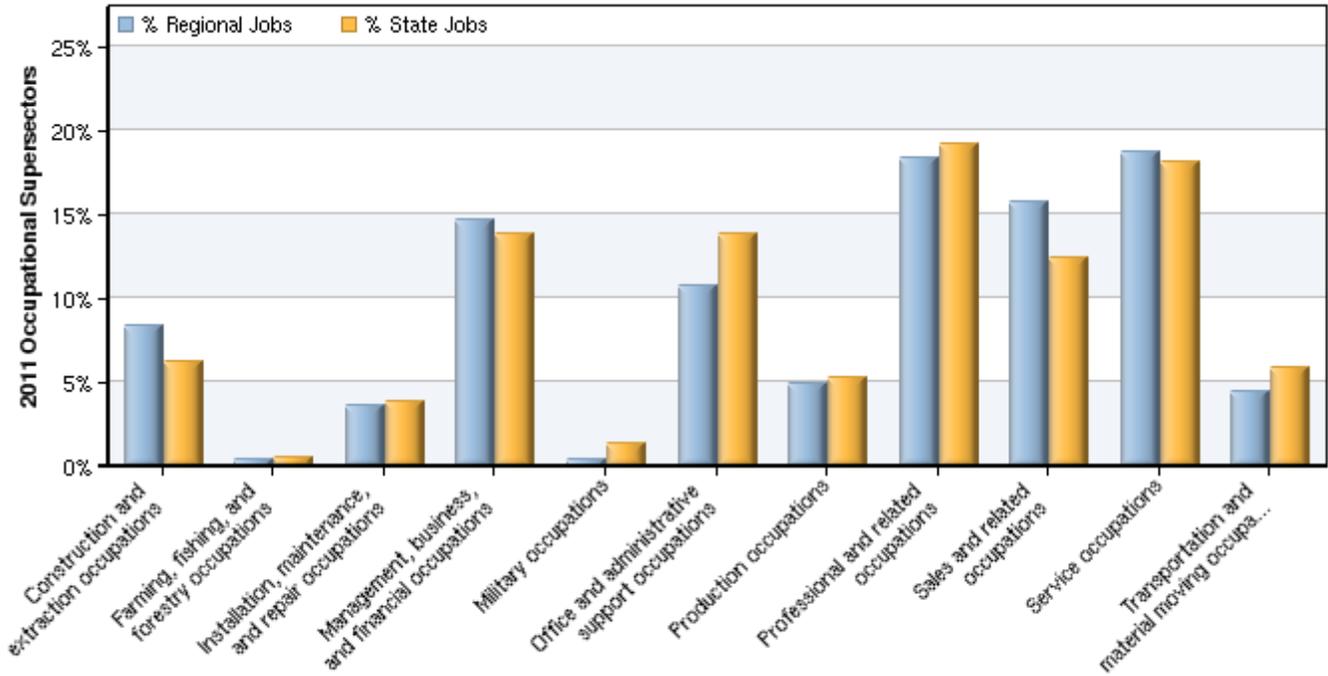
2011 - 2016 Size and Growth – 78654 ZIP Code



Description	2011 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Growth	% Growth	2011 Avg Hourly Earnings
Construction and extraction occupations	1,205	1,311	106	9%	\$16.62
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	52	57	5	10%	\$8.93
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	517	547	30	6%	\$14.72
Management, business, and financial occupations	2,112	2,414	302	14%	\$17.00
Military occupations	56	56	0	0%	\$12.51
Office and administrative support occupations	1,558	1,688	130	8%	\$13.30
Production occupations	707	709	2	0%	\$13.04
Professional and related occupations	2,647	3,094	447	17%	\$21.01
Sales and related occupations	2,272	2,454	182	8%	\$12.23
Service occupations	2,703	3,028	325	12%	\$10.31
Transportation and material moving occupations	644	662	18	3%	\$13.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,472</b>	<b>16,019</b>	<b>1,547</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>\$14.83</b>

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

2011 Occupational Makeup – 78654 ZIP Code



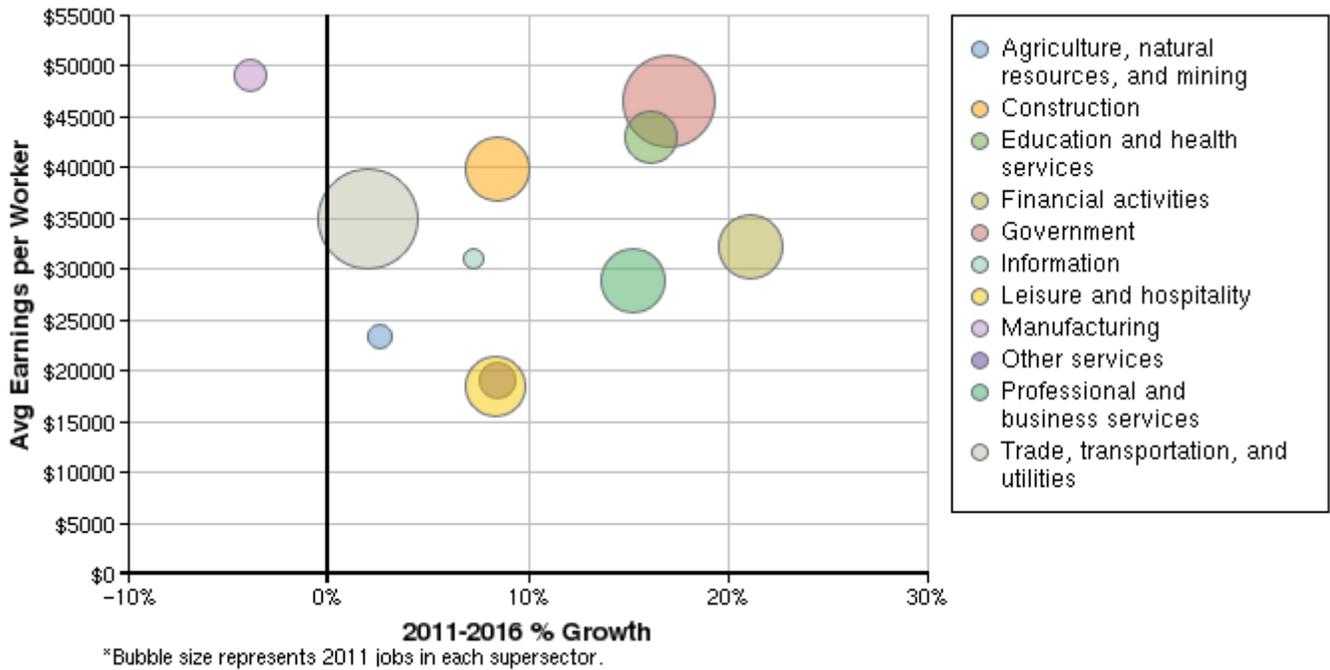
Description	2011 Regional Jobs	% Regional Jobs	2011 State Jobs	% State Jobs
Construction and extraction occupations	1,205	8.3%	870,035	6.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	52	0.4%	64,583	0.5%
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	517	3.6%	530,728	3.8%
Management, business, and financial occupations	2,112	14.6%	1,949,007	13.8%
Military occupations	56	0.4%	184,223	1.3%
Office and administrative support occupations	1,558	10.8%	1,952,566	13.8%
Production occupations	707	4.9%	732,543	5.2%
Professional and related occupations	2,647	18.3%	2,699,780	19.1%
Sales and related occupations	2,272	15.7%	1,744,130	12.4%
Service occupations	2,703	18.7%	2,557,702	18.1%
Transportation and material moving occupations	644	4.5%	821,575	5.8%

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

## Industry

The most significant industries that are also growing the fastest include Financial Activities, Government, Education and Health Services, and Professional and Business Services. This closely aligns with national trends, especially in recent years as private sector job growth was negative in the time of recession. Two notable exceptions were in Construction and Leisure and Hospitality, which both are predicted to have a larger percentage of the local economy employed than one observes at the state level. These two strengths may be potential areas of additional growth.

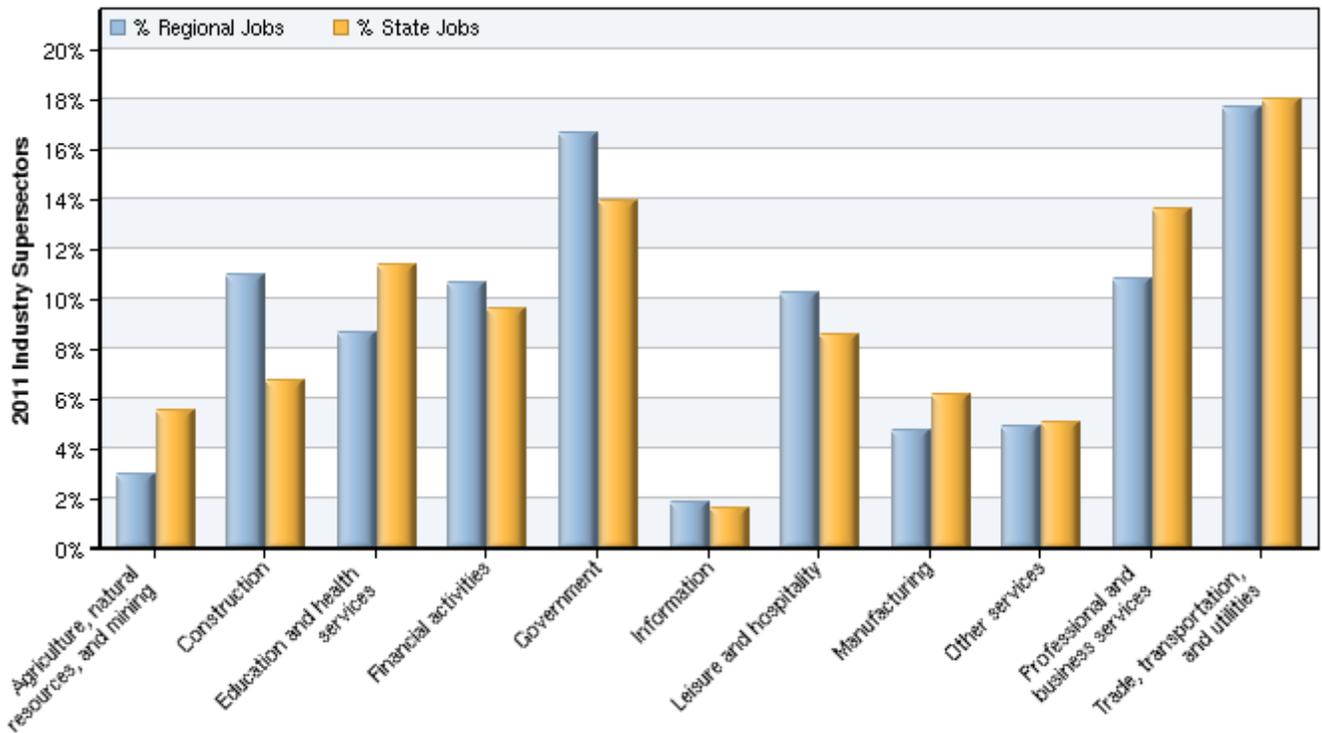
### 2011 - 2016 Size and Growth – 78654 ZIP Code



Description	2011 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Growth	% Growth	2011 EPW
Agriculture, natural resources, and mining	431	442	11	3%	\$23,468
Construction	1,591	1,726	135	8%	\$39,846
Education and health services	1,251	1,453	202	16%	\$42,940
Financial activities	1,542	1,867	325	21%	\$32,214
Government	2,409	2,820	411	17%	\$46,493
Information	262	281	19	7%	\$31,101
Leisure and hospitality	1,478	1,602	124	8%	\$18,369
Manufacturing	686	659	-27	-4%	\$49,016
Other services	702	761	59	8%	\$18,975
Professional and business services	1,560	1,798	238	15%	\$28,834
Trade, transportation, and utilities	2,559	2,610	51	2%	\$34,928
Total	14,472	16,019	1,547	11%	\$34,932

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

2011 Industrial Makeup – 78654 ZIP Code



Description	2011 Regional Jobs	% Regional Jobs	2011 State Jobs	% State Jobs
Agriculture, natural resources, and mining	431	3.0%	783,159	5.6%
Construction	1,591	11.0%	947,150	6.7%
Education and health services	1,251	8.6%	1,597,284	11.3%
Financial activities	1,542	10.7%	1,350,934	9.6%
Government	2,409	16.6%	1,963,041	13.9%
Information	262	1.8%	229,846	1.6%
Leisure and hospitality	1,478	10.2%	1,204,016	8.5%
Manufacturing	686	4.7%	868,385	6.2%
Other services	702	4.9%	715,230	5.1%
Professional and business services	1,560	10.8%	1,913,398	13.6%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	2,559	17.7%	2,534,430	18.0%

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2011.2

## Data Sources & Methodology

### Input-Output Data

The input-output model in this report is created using the national Input-Output matrix provided by the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis. This is combined with the national Total Gross Output, the regional Total Gross Output, the land area of the subject region, regional DIRT data and regional in/out commuter patterns in order to calculate regional requirements, imports and exports. After using matrix algebra to calculate the regional multiplier, the resulting matrix is multiplied by the sales vector and converted back to jobs or earnings. Specifically, this data comes from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Industry Economic Accounts: Benchmark & Annual Input-Output (I-O) Accounts.

### Industry Data

In order to capture a complete picture of industry employment, EMSI basically combines covered employment data from Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) produced by the Department of Labor with total employment data in Regional Economic Information System (REIS) published by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), augmented with County Business Patterns (CBP) and Nonemployer Statistics (NES) published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Projections are based on the latest available EMSI industry data, 15-year past local trends in each industry, growth rates in statewide and (where available) sub-state area industry projections published by individual state agencies, and (in part) growth rates in national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### Shift Share

Shift share is a standard regional analysis method that attempts to determine how much of regional job growth can be attributed to national trends and how much is due to unique regional factors.

### Location Quotient

Location quotient (LQ) is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a particular region unique in comparison to the national average.

### State Data Sources

This report uses state data from the following agencies: Texas Workforce Commission.