

TEXOMA MADE

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

8:00 AM—4:00 PM

REGIONAL RESILIENT ECONOMY CONFERENCE



TexomaMadeConference.com

Mabee Banquet Hall
Wright Campus Center
Austin College
1301 E. Brockett St, Sherman

**Resilient Economic &
Community Tools**

Keynote Speakers
Regional Chambers
Collaboration
Local Leaders
Big Impact

Small Business & Network
Partnering for Success
AI Powers Small Business
North Texas
Southern Oklahoma



*Powerhouse
Strategic Sessions
Keynote Speakers*

**COMMUNITY
PLANNING**

ROI TOOL

*Big Impact
Expert-led Panels
Local Leaders*

**REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
PANEL**

**RURAL
INFRASTRUCTURE
READINESS**


11.05.2025 CONFERENCE
**TEXOMA
MADE**
BUILT IN TEXOMA
MADE FOR AMERICA

**WORKFORCE
SOLUTION
READINESS
PANEL**

**REGIONAL
CHAMBERS OF
COMMERCE**

**CITY
FUNDING**

AI TOOL

**SMALL
BUSINESS**

TOURISM

*Networking
Strengthening Regional Partnership
Resilient Economic & Community Tools*

*Turning Resilience lesson
into real progress*



*Across-border Collaboration
North Texas
Southern Oklahoma*



REGIONAL RESILIENT ECONOMY CONFERENCE

BUILT IN TEXOMA, MADE IN AMERICA

PURPOSE & AUDIENCE

Event Overview

The Texoma Made Conference, set for November 5, 2025, at Austin College in Sherman, Texas, is a regional summit focused on advancing economic development, innovation, and cross-border collaboration across northern Texas and southern Oklahoma. As the Texoma region experiences significant growth in manufacturing, business development, and job creation, the conference provides a timely platform to address key infrastructure and workforce challenges critical to sustaining this momentum.

Through a full day of expert-led panels, keynote discussions, and strategic sessions, attendees will explore practical approaches to building stronger communities, supporting small business growth, enhancing connectivity, and strengthening regional partnerships. Local governments and stakeholders from counties in both states will come together to share insights, align priorities, and co-develop solutions for long-term regional resilience.

With breakfast and lunch provided, the event also offers meaningful networking opportunities designed to foster collaboration across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Texoma Made is more than a conference—it's a catalyst for uniting the region around a shared vision for a more connected, resilient, and prosperous future.

Who should attend?

Texoma Made is both a regional summit and a high-impact networking event—bringing together leaders, innovators, and community champions to exchange ideas, forge connections, and inspire action.

- **Public Sector & Regional Leaders** City and county officials, planners, EDCs, and Chamber leaders looking to collaborate on infrastructure, policy, and regional strategy.
- **Business & Industry Professionals** Entrepreneurs, small business owners, developers, investors, and executives in manufacturing, logistics, and real estate seeking growth opportunities and partnerships.
- **Workforce & Education** Educators, workforce boards, training providers, students, and job seekers focused on the future of work and regional talent development.
- **Nonprofits & Community Advocates** Organizations supporting housing, tourism, equity, arts, and revitalization efforts across Texoma.

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from keynote speakers, join meaningful conversations, and build lasting connections with fellow change-makers shaping the future of North Texas and Southern Oklahoma.

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REGIONAL RESILIENT ECONOMY CONFERENCE

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MARKETING SOLUTIONS



Antero Group



SILVER



AGENDA

8:00-8:45 AM: Conference Registration & Advance Networking (Mabee Banquet Hall)

8:45-9:00 AM: Welcome-Remark —Speaker: *Eric Bridges*, Executive Director, TCOG (Mabee Banquet Hall)

9:00-10:00 AM: Concurrent Sessions (20 mins each session + Q&A)

- ▶ **DOWNTOWN CORE THRIVING** Combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces creates a vibrant, sustainable hub for economic growth and community engagement. This preservation-based effort earned the City of Denison the 2025 Great American Main Street Award —*Speaker: Renee Waggoner*, Assistant City Manager, City of Denison. (Room A)
- ▶ **LAND USE & ZONING** Address housing needs and downtown revitalization through strategic land use plans and zoning ordinances, promote sustainable growth—*Speaker: Mary Tate*, Director of Development Services, City of Denison. (Room A)
- ▶ **DRIVING BUSINESS GROWTH** The Chamber of Commerce plays a pivotal role in building and strengthening the local economy from within by connecting and supporting small businesses—*Speaker: Diana Theall*, President & CEO, Denison Chamber of Commerce. (Mabee Banquet Hall)
- ▶ **PARTNERING FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS** The Chamber of Commerce strengthens the local economy from within by building community partnerships—connecting leaders, resources, and small businesses to support local growth and resilience.—*Speaker: Sandy Rehkopf*, President & CEO, Sherman Chamber of Commerce. (Mabee Banquet Hall)
- ▶ **TRANSPORTATION** By improving connectivity, creating jobs, expanding housing options, and opening markets, these efforts build sustainable economic resilience for rural communities—*Speaker: Clay Barnett*, Vice President of Huitt-Zollars. (Room B)
- ▶ **BROADBAND** Reliable wireless service supports communities in tracking progress and making informed decisions to strengthen economic resilience—*Speaker: Paul Narro*, Policy Director, TekWav. (Room B)

10:10-11:10 AM: Concurrent Sessions (20 mins each session + Q&A)

- ▶ **MODAL TXDOT** Modal programs boost connectivity and growth. Multimodal transportation offers flexible, cost-efficient access to markets and jobs, attracting investment and supporting rural economic development—*Speaker: Caroline Mays*, Director of Planning and Modal Programs, TxDOT. (Room A)
- ▶ **AFFORDABLE HOUSING: DEVELOPER-GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP** Examples of successful collaborations between developers and local governments highlight key strategies communities can use to address housing affordability challenges and help Texoma municipalities prepare for future growth while ensuring housing remains attainable—*Speaker: Maggie J Parker*, Founder, Innovan Neighborhoods. (Room A)
- ▶ **SBDC + SBA PANEL** SBDC and SBA support small businesses with counseling, capital, training, and recovery—driving innovation, diversification, and long-term economic resilience —*Speakers Panel: Dr. Karen Stidham*, Director of SBDC Grayson, Cooke & Fannin Counties, *Bridget Moon*, Economic Development Specialist, SBA. (Mabee Banquet Hall)
- ▶ **TOURISM PANEL** Discover how tourism from DFW to McKinney, to Texoma and Southern Oklahoma helps connect communities through cultural trails, local businesses, and shared stories. These regional efforts boost rural resilience by diversifying economies, creating jobs, and showcasing the unique assets that make our region thrive —*Speakers Panel: Aaron Werner*, President and CEO, Visit McKinney, *Brandi Burkhalter*, Executive Director, Lake Texoma Association, *Steve Smith*, Board Chair of Trinity Coalition, Visit DFW. (Mabee Banquet Hall)
- ▶ **NAVIGATING THE ALPHABET SOUP OF DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AND SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS** (40 mins) A variety of Infrastructure & Capital Funding Tools, such as MUDs, PIPs, TIFs, and TRZs, will be explored to highlight the different approaches available for supporting community development and resilience—*Speaker: Joey Grisham*, Economic Development Director, City of Anna. (Room B)



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11:12-12:20 PM: Concurrent Sessions (20 mins each session + Q&A)

- **FISCAL STRATEGIES** (40 mins) These strategies help cities plan, manage, and align funding with community priorities—supporting infrastructure, services, and sustainable economic growth —**Speaker: Renee Waggoner**, Assistant City Manager, City of Denison. **(Room A)**
- **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR DRINKING WATER, WASTEWATER, & FLOOD MITIGATION** Water Financing. Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) offers funding for water-related projects to improve infrastructure and promote economic resilience—**Speaker: Scott Galaway**, Outreach Specialist, Texas Water Development Board. **(Room B)**
- **TURNING DATA INTO ACTION: ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGIES FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES (SECO/SPEER)** Explores how local governments can use energy data to reduce costs, boost efficiency, and build resilience. We'll cover practical tools, available funding, and policy mechanisms that help turn every insights into action for stronger communities—**Speaker: Shaun Auckland**, Senior Manager, Government and Community Engagement, The South Central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER). **(Room B)**
- **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACT MODEL** (40 mins) Learn how this tool can help communities evaluate the return on investment of for new residential projects and estimate break-even timelines for recovering public costs—**Speaker: Paul Scheuren**, Managing Partner & Economist, Impact Data Source, LLC. **(Room C)**

12:30-1:30 PM: Lunch **(Mabee Banquet Hall)**

1:45-2:45 PM: Economic Development Panel (45 mins each session + Q&A) **(Mabee Banquet Hall)**

- **REGIONAL ED PANEL** Join leaders from the Big 5 EDCs and Southern Oklahoma to discuss lessons learned, What is the current economic impact across our region, and where are we most vulnerable? how we build resilience, and why a diversified economic ecosystem is key to sustainable regional growth —**Speakers Panel: Kent Sharp**, President, EDC Sherman, **Tony Kaai**, President, EDC Denison, **Sean Pate**, City Manager, Bonham City, **David Ellis**, Executive Director, EDC of Van Alstyne, **Pam Polk**, City Manager, Durant City, OK.

3:00-4:00: Concurrent Sessions (45 mins each session + Q&A)

- **WORKFORCE SOLUTION PANEL** Explore programs and strategies that support current sectors and prepare for future growth. We'll discuss key messages to share and which school districts offer relevant workforce readiness programs. Learn how these efforts drive sustainable economic growth in the region —**Speakers Panel: Janie Bates**, Executive Director of Texoma WFS, **Lisa Holloway**, Director of Corporate Foundation and Government Relation, Austin College, **Dr. Jeremy McMillen**, President, Grayson College, **Dr. G. Brent Wallace**, Chancellor/CEO, NCTC Foundation College, **Elizabeth Clayton**, Coordinator of Career, Military and Workforce Development, Sherman ISD, **Dustin Anderson**, CTE Director, Denison ISD. **(Mabee Banquet Hall)**
- **SMARTER, NOT HARDER: INTEGRATING AI INTO YOUR SMALL BUSINESS OPERATIONS** Discover how artificial intelligence solutions can streamline operations, boost productivity, and drive innovation—empowering your business to grow efficiently and stay competitive in today's market—**Speaker: Amy May**, Owner of May Media. **(Room A)**
- **FINANCING THE FUTURE: HOW TX-PACE UNLOCKS PRIVATE CAPITAL FOR REGIONAL GROWTH** Economic growth in Texoma depends on attracting investment and modernizing communities. TX-PACE financing enables property owners to fund energy-efficient and building improvements without upfront costs, lowering operating expenses and increasing property value. It supports commercial investment, small business growth, and redevelopment, serving as a practical tool for long-term regional prosperity —**Speaker: Dr. Teresa Smith**, Director of PACE Transactions, Texas PACE Authority. **(Room C)**

Information in this agenda is subject to change



Caroline Mays, AICP
Director of Planning and
Modal Programs, TXDOT



Renee Waggoner
Assistant City Manager
City of Denison



Mary Tate
Director of Development
Services, City of Denison



Maggie J Parker
Managing Partner & Founder,
Innovan Neighborhoods

COMMUNITY PLANNING



Diana Theall, IOM
President & CEO,
Denison Chamber



Sandy Rehkopf, IOM
President & CEO,
Sherman Chamber

SMALL BUSINESS



Clay Barnett, PE, CFM
Vice President,
Huitt-Zollars



Paul Narro
Policy Director, TekWav



Scott Galaway
Outreach Specialist, TWDB



Shaun Auckland
Senior Manager, Government &
Community Engagement, SPEER

RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE READINESS



AI TOOL
Amy May
Founder & Owner, May Media



Joey Grisham
Economic Development Director,
Anna City



Renee Waggoner
Assistant City Manager,
City of Denison



Dr. Teresa Smith
Director of PACE Transactions,
TX-PACE Authority

CITY FUNDING



Kent Sharp
President,
Sherman EDC



Tony Kaai
President,
Denison EDC



Sean Pate
City Manager
Bonham City



David Ellis
Executive Director
Van Alstyne



Pam Polk
City Manager
Duran City

Join Our Texoma's Big 5 EDCs and Southern Oklahoma ED leaders to discuss regional economic impacts, vulnerabilities, resilience strategies, and the value of a diversified economy.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PANEL (NORTH TEXAS & SOUTHERN OK)

FEATURING PRESENTATION



TOURISM PANEL

Aaron Werner
President & CEO
Visit McKinney

Brandi Burkhalter
Executive Director
Lake Texoma Association

Steve Smith
Board Chair of Trinity
Coalition, Visit DFW



SBDC + SBA PANEL

Dr. Karen Stidham
Executive Director of
SBDC, Grayson, Cooke
& Fannin Counties

Bridget Moon
Economic Development
Specialist,
SBA-DFW



ROI

Paul Scheuren
Managing Partner & Economist
Impact Data Source, LLC.



Janie Bates
Executive Director
Texoma WFS

Lisa Holloway
Director of Corporate Founda-
tion & Government Relations
Austin College

Dr. Jeremy McMillen
President.
Grayson College

Dr. G. Brent Wallace
Chancellor/ CEO of
NCTC Foundation
College

Elizabeth Clayton
Coordinator of
Career, Military and WFD,
Sherman ISD

Dustin Anderson
CTE Director,
Denison ISD

Explore strategies to strengthen current sectors, prepare for growth, and align school workforce programs to drive regional economic success.

WFS READINESS PANEL

Dustin Anderson



Dustin Anderson is the Career & Technical Education (CTE) Director for Denison ISD in Texas. With over a decade of experience in public education, he has served as principal, assistant principal, and CTE administrator. He leads program development, curriculum alignment, advisory committees, and funding strategies across multiple career clusters, focusing on high-quality pathways that prepare students for high-wage, high-demand careers. Dustin is pursuing an Ed.D. in School Improvement at the University of Texas at Tyler, where his research focuses on equitable access and completion in rural CTE programs. He is passionate about building strong partnerships among K-12 schools, higher education, and industry to drive regional economic growth and ensure all students graduate prepared for college, careers, or military pathways.

Shaun Auckland



Shaun Auckland is Senior Manager of Government and Community Engagement, SPEER, helping public-sector partners advance sustainability, energy efficiency, and climate resilience. She uses data-driven solutions to tackle issues like microplastics and building energy use, turning complex challenges into real-world impact. Passionate about collaboration, Shaun works with government and community leaders to promote equitable, sustainable practices. A lifelong learner, she draws inspiration from exploring Texas trails by bike, kayak, or on foot. Shaun blends technical expertise with dedication to building resilient, sustainable communities.

Clay Barnett



Clay Barnett is Vice President and Principal at Huitt-Zollars, leading infrastructure project management and business development across North Texas from the Sherman office. With over 27 years of civil engineering experience, he has overseen projects in street maintenance, traffic operations, drainage, solid waste, parks, and airport improvements. Clay's public sector career includes Director of Public Works and Engineering for Sherman, County Engineer / Director of Development Services for Grayson County, and Director of the Grayson County Metropolitan Planning Organization. He holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University and an MBA from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Janie Bates



Janie Bates is Executive Director of Workforce Solutions Texoma, providing workforce development, training, and childcare services across Cooke, Grayson, and Fannin Counties. She chairs the Sherman Economic Development Corporation and was instrumental in creating the Texoma Tech Hub, a catalyst for regional innovation. Janie's leadership spans workforce training, advanced manufacturing education, and community collaboration. Recognized with the Sherman Chamber Athena Award, she has helped establish key partnerships between education and industry to build a skilled workforce essential for economic growth in Texoma.

Scott Galaway



Scott is an Outreach Specialist with the Texas Water Development Board. He promotes TWDB's state and federal financial assistance programs and helps utilities and communities find options for financing water-related infrastructure.

Scott has over three decades of experience with utility infrastructure operations and management, including water resources planning, capital improvement programs, construction, and project management. He holds a Bachelor of Science from Texas State University and is a licensed water and wastewater Operator.

Joey Grisham



Joey Grisham is a long-time community and economic development professional, currently serving as the City of Anna Economic Development Director. Joey has recruited and facilitated multiple deals including mixed-use developments, retail, medical, and industrial projects. He previously served as Director of the Bonham EDC, Asst. Director of Economic Development Director in Rowlett & Director of Business Recruitment for the Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce. He holds a BA degree in Political Science from the University of Mississippi, a Master of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Memphis, & a Master of Science degree in Economic Development from the University of Southern Mississippi. *D CEO Magazine* also named him to the 2023 edition of the Dallas 500, a list of the most influential leaders in the DFW Metroplex.

Lisa Holloway



Lisa Holloway is the Director of Corporate Foundation and Government Relations at Austin College, leading strategic partnerships that advance the college's mission. She focuses on securing funding and fostering collaboration with corporate partners, foundations, and government agencies to support educational programs, scholarships, and community initiatives. Lisa's expertise in grant management and relationship building expands Austin College's resources and impact through regional initiatives such as the Texoma Semiconductor Tech Hub and the NSF Logistics Innovation Engine. Her leadership strengthens connections with key stakeholders, creating opportunities that benefit students, faculty, and the broader community.

Tony Kaai



Tony Kaai has served as President of the Denison Development Alliance and Denison Development Foundation since 2000, with over 40 years in economic development. He earned Certified Economic Developer status in 1993 and previously led the Oklahoma Economic Development Council, where he was named 1994 Professional of the Year. In Texas, Tony has served on the Texas Economic Development Council board. Under his leadership, Denison has earned multiple statewide awards. Recognized in 2017 as a top 50 U.S. economic development professional, he has expertise in recruiting diverse industries.

SPEAKER PROFILES

Eric Bridges



Eric Bridges is the Executive Director of the Texoma Council of Governments (TCOG) headquartered in Sherman, TX. He and his dedicated staff develop and implement numerous human-based, social service, community and economic development and public safety programs all geared toward improving the quality of life for the people of Texoma. He has served as TCOG's Executive Director since September 2018. From 2006 to 2018, he served as the Executive Director of the North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission in Ridgway, PA. Eric received both his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice and Master's Degree in Community Services Administration from Alfred University.

Brandi Burkhalter



Brandi Burkhalter has been with the Lake Texoma Association since 2016, serving first as Assistant Director and later as Director of Membership & Events before becoming Executive Director in July 2019. She previously worked as a program coordinator and holds a master's degree in Native American Leadership from South-eastern Oklahoma State University. Brandi is active in regional tourism and economic development, serving on multiple boards including the Denison CVB, Denison Chamber, Durant Area Chamber, Marshall County Tourism, Chickasaw Country Marketing Association, and OTIA. She recently completed a certification in Sustainable Tourism and is married with two daughters.

Elizabeth Clayton



Elizabeth Clayton is the Coordinator of College, Career & Military Development for Sherman ISD. A licensed Texas attorney since 1998, she has spent 15 years as an educator and administrator in Career & Technical Education. She collaborates with colleges and industry partners to expand opportunities that prepare students for the workforce and for college, career, and military pathways. Elizabeth serves on the Texoma Regional Pathway Network leadership team with WFS Texoma and the Women in STEM Committee with the Sherman EDC. She also helped launch the Electronic Engineering Technology Program at Sherman High School, preparing students for semiconductor careers.

David Ellis



David Ellis is the Executive Director of Van Alstyne Community and Economic Development. There, he leads programs to attract and retain commercial investment and support redevelopment of the historic downtown. Previously, he served as the assistant Director of the Allen EDC for 10 years. He also worked with the Site Selection Group and Plano Economic Development.

He is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma and a Certified Economic Developer (CEd). David is an outdoor enthusiast. He values commercial developments that integrate with nature to produce a higher return on investment while improving quality of life. He is married with two teen daughters.

Dr. McMillen



Dr. Jeremy McMillen has served as the fifth president of Grayson College since July 2012. A Bonham native, he began his career supporting first-generation students through Educational Talent Search at Paris Junior College. He later advanced in leadership roles at East Texas A&M University and Trinity Valley Community College before joining Grayson. Active locally and nationally, Dr. McMillen serves on community boards, the Texas Association of Community Colleges Executive Committee, and the SACSCOC Board of Directors. He holds bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from East Texas A&M University. He and his wife, Toni, reside in Denison with their son, Gabe.

Caroline Mays, AICP



Caroline Mays is Director of Planning and Modal Programs at TxDOT, overseeing Aviation, Maritime, Public Transportation, Rail, and Planning divisions. A national leader in multimodal transportation with 20+ years' experience, she advanced Texas freight infrastructure, including the first Freight Mobility Plan and Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan. Previously, she led freight planning in Atlanta and transit planning in New York. Caroline holds urban planning degrees from the University of Waterloo and University of Toronto and actively contributes to national and international transportation policy.

Amy May



Amy May is founder and owner of May Media, a creative marketing and digital media company in Denison, Texas. She specializes in storytelling, brand development, social media strategy, video production, graphic design, and content creation, helping Texoma businesses craft authentic digital content. Passionate about supporting local businesses, Amy leads May Media in delivering innovative, results-driven marketing solutions. She is active in community initiatives and mentors young creatives, making her a trusted partner for businesses aiming to grow and connect with their audiences.

Bridget Moon



Bridget Moon has 28 years with the US Small Business Administration, currently serving as Economic Development Specialist, SCORE Liaison, and Veteran Business Development Officer for Texas's Northern 72 counties. She began as an SBA Disaster Loan Officer and advanced to Supervisory Loan Officer. With a degree in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management, Bridget's entrepreneurial experience spans 30+ years. She is dedicated to mentoring entrepreneurs, guiding business plans, and fostering economic growth through collaboration and empowerment.

Paul Narro



Paul Narro is Director of Public Policy for Texoma Communications, leading advocacy and public policy at federal, state, and local levels. He partners with the Texoma Council of Governments, schools, and libraries to secure broadband funding and support infrastructure projects. With over a decade of experience, Paul co-founded Connect2Educate, a nonprofit focused on rural broadband advocacy. He has helped advance Texas broadband policy, including HB 5, and played a key role in forming the Grayson County Broadband Coalition to promote regional broadband expansion.

Maggie J Parker



Maggie Parker is the Managing Partner and Founder of Innovan Neighborhoods, a community-focused development and consulting firm with 10+ years in community development, real estate, and capacity building. Innovan partners with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and neighborhood associations to strengthen neighborhoods through affordable housing and phased development projects. Since 2019, Innovan has built a \$100M pipeline and helped partners secure \$15M+ for DFW revitalization. Maggie also launched the Community Developers Roundtable to support community-oriented developers in Dallas and Fort Worth. She serves on boards including Housing Forward, Texas Mezzanine Fund, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Sean Pate



Sean Pate is the City Manager for Bonham, Texas, the county seat of Fannin County and a growing hub for commerce, history, and community life. As Chief Administrative Officer, he oversees daily operations, leads a team of 100+ employees, and manages the annual budget to deliver essential services. With over two decades of city management experience, Sean holds degrees in Public Administration and Organizational Leadership. His expertise in economic development, grant management, public works, and long-term planning helps guide Bonham's growth while preserving its small-town charm and improving quality of life for all.

Pam Polk



Pam Polk serves as the City Manager of Durant, Oklahoma, joining the city in April 2024 after 19 years as City Manager of Collinsville. She is the recipient of the Gerald Wilkins Award for City Manager of the Year and was named 2022 Woman of the Year by the Oklahoma Municipal League. Pam is the first and only female city manager in Oklahoma to earn ICMA's Certified City Manager accreditation. Her office provides centralized leadership, guiding municipal operations and coordinating all city departments under the direction of the City Council.

Steve Smith



Steve began his career as a rocket scientist in the Neil Armstrong lunar landing program before founding Smith Group Asset Management, specializing in identifying companies poised for above-expected growth and delivering value to clients. An avid outdoorsman, he earned the Boy Scouts of America's highest honor, Eagle Scout, and volunteered for five summers at BSA camps. His passion for nature has driven service with numerous nonprofits, including Groundwork Dallas, Friends of Reverchon Park, and Audubon Texas. He currently chairs the board of the Trinity Coalition.

Dr. Karen Stidham



Karen Stidham has been the Director of the Small Business Development Center at Grayson College in Denison, TX, since 1997. She previously taught in public schools, served as Assistant Professor at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, spent nine years with Texas A&M University System, and owned and operated a small business. A Whitewright High School graduate, she holds a B.S. from Harding University, an M.S. from Lamar University, and a Ph.D. from Texas Woman's University. Karen is a Certified Business Development Specialist and recognized trainer for FranklinCovey, FastTrac, and ProfitMastery programs. She and her husband live in Grayson County with their two sons, daughters-in-law, and seven grandchildren.

Mary Tate



Mary Tate is the Director of Development Services for Denison, Texas, leading planning, zoning, building, and neighborhood services efforts. She helps to facilitate Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones and other financing tools that support infrastructure and economic growth. Mary manages the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to ensure effective use of federal funds. She also serves as the Historic Preservation Officer, ensuring the protection of Denison's architectural heritage. Her leadership balances sustainable growth and historic preservation, playing a key role in the city's revitalization and long-term development.

Diana Theall, IOM



Diana Theall serves as President & CEO of the Denison Area Chamber of Commerce, where she leads initiatives to support local businesses and drive regional economic growth. She holds the Institute for Organization Management (IOM) designation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, showcasing her commitment to professional excellence in chamber leadership. Under her leadership, the Denison Chamber remains an accredited member of the Better Business Bureau, upholding high standards of trust, integrity, and service to the community.

SPEAKER PROFILES

Sandy Rehkopf, IOM



The President/CEO of the Sherman Chamber, Sandy Rehkopf, is a community leader with a diverse background in business ownership, public education, & nonprofit development. Her entrepreneurial roots and cross-sector experience fuel her commitment to building strong, resilient business ecosystems.

A member of Texas A&M Class of 1995, Sandy is a seasoned Chamber executive active in many state and national associations. Earning the respect of her peers, she is often invited to share her expertise with peers across the country. Sandy promotes strategy with action and the importance of Chambers being relevant partners for their communities.

Paul Scheuren



Paul Scheuren is Principal Economist at Impact Data-Source, providing economic and fiscal impact analysis for economic development organizations and public agencies. He has conducted hundreds of studies on projects including manufacturing, commercial, tourism, and public investments. Paul developed Impact DashBoard, a web-based platform used by 80+ Texas EDCs, cities, and counties to evaluate commercial and residential development impacts. With a strong economics background, he blends technical expertise and collaboration to help communities understand and communicate the value of development opportunities.

Kent Sharp



Kent Sharp has been CEO of the Sherman Economic Development Corporation since January 2019. With 33 years of Texas economic development experience, he previously led five municipal economic development organizations, including Shamrock, Stamford, Big Spring, Gainesville, and Abilene. Kent earned a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Texas Christian University in 1991. He was twice elected to independent school district boards in Big Spring and Gainesville. Kent currently serves as Chairman of the Texas Economic Development Council and is a member of both the Texas Economic Development Corporation and the International Economic Development Council.

Dr. Teresa Smith



Dr. Teresa Smith serves as the Director of PACE Transactions at the Texas PACE Authority (TPA), bringing over 30 years of commercial financing experience, including 13 years focused on Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) administration and project management. Since joining TPA in July of 2024, she leads the development and completion of TX-PACE projects across Texas, ensuring compliance with state and statutory best practices. Her responsibilities include reviewing engineering reports, underwriting criteria, contracts, and lien filings. Dr. Smith actively promotes PACE financing at industry events, including moderating "Sustainable Buildings Start Here: The Power of PACE & the CARE Tool" in San Antonio.

Renee Waggoner



Renee Waggoner serves as Assistant City Manager for Denison, Texas, working closely with the City Manager to oversee daily operations, implement council's vision and policies, and ensure effective service delivery to its residents and overall community... leading city departments, monitoring budgets and providing strategic direction to support Denison's growth and development. Committed to public service and community engagement, serving the City of Denison for over 23 years, Ms. Waggoner plays a pivotal role in helping shape the city's future. Renee holds a BAAS from Midwestern State University, serves on multiple boards and is a member of ICMA, TCMA, GFOA and GFOAT and was recognized as a Leadership Fellow in May 2022 from TML.

Dr. G. Brent Wallace



Dr. Brent Wallace has served as the 11th President and first Chancellor of North Central Texas College since 2014. He is Chair of the Texas Association of Community Colleges and serves on multiple statewide education and local boards, including the Gainesville Economic Development Board. With expertise in conflict resolution and strategic planning, Dr. Wallace has presented nationally. He holds a BBA from Hardin-Simmons University, an MA and Graduate Certificate from Abilene Christian University, and a PhD from Texas Tech University.

Aaron Werner



Aaron Werner is the Executive Director of Visit McKinney, leading tourism development and marketing for McKinney, Texas. He began his public service career in 2014 with the McKinney Performing Arts Center and Main Street program, later serving as Director of Leisure Services and Managing Director of Communications and Engagement for the City of Denison. Returning to McKinney in 2022, Werner holds a Master's in Public Administration from UT Arlington. He focuses on strategic tourism, data-driven planning, and partnerships, and serves on the boards of TACVB and the Texas Travel Alliance.

PROJECT PARTNERS



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Tickets are now available at
TexomaMadeConference.com

11.05.2025

8:00 AM—4:00 PM

Wright Campus Center, Mabey Banquet Hall, Austin College | 1301 E. Brockett St, Sherman, TX



Join us for an Epic One-Day Event of Ideas, Innovation & Impact

19 TOPICS | 4 POWER PANELS | 8 STRATEGIC THEMES DRIVING GROWTH | 35 SPEAKERS

THRIVING DOWNTOWNS

How mixed-use design is reshaping Main Street

HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Partnerships that make homes affordable

TXDOT MODAL MAGIC

Multimodal access fueling growth

ZONING SECRETS

Unlock housing solutions & downtown revival

WATER WORKS

Flood, wastewater & drinking water funding revealed

ENERGY EDGE

Data-driven savings for resilient communities

BROADBAND BREAKTHROUGHS

The hidden key to rural resilience

REGIONAL ED PANEL

Leaders reveal what's next for Texoma

WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

Schools + programs shaping future talent

HOUSING (RDIM) ROI

Models that prove when growth pays back

FINANCING UNLOCKED

Creative tools to fund big projects

SMART CITY BUDGETS

Fiscal strategies that actually work

TX-PACE FUNDING

Private capital fueling local prosperity

FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION

Jobs, housing, and markets on the move

AI ADVANTAGE

Smart tech making small biz unstoppable

STRONGER TOGETHER

Chambers driving community resilience

BUSINESS GROWTH HACKS

Chambers powering small business success

SMALL BIZ POWER

SBDC + SBA tools every entrepreneur needs

TOURISM BOOM

DFW, McKinney, Texoma & Oklahoma on the map

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