

PRESS RELEASE

Commissioner George P. Bush announces Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Study Survey and Virtual Summit

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AUSTIN — The Texas General Land Office (GLO) is currently conducting an Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Study covering the nine counties of Aransas, Bee, Calhoun, Goliad, Jim Wells, Nueces, Refugio, San Patricio, and Victoria. The study is designed to assess how to make the region's economy more robust and able to withstand a variety of shocks and stresses, such as hurricanes or other disasters. The study examines areas including workforce, infrastructure, education, and housing. In conjunction with the study, the GLO will host an Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Virtual Summit for local officials and community leaders Sept. 16 and 17, 2020.

"Economic resilience and diversification are powerful factors in helping communities recover quicker from disasters such as hurricanes," said Land Commissioner George P. Bush. "Focusing on diverse industries and professions, the outcomes and recommendations resulting from the Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Study will provide valuable input on how to expand the region's job base and to build sustainable, resilient economies."

Each day at 9:00 a.m. the summit will open with an overview session that is open to the general public and news media. These sessions are open to the public and will take place on both Sept. 16 and 17. These sessions can be accessed on the study's [webpage](#). The opening session will include an overview of the planning process and a preview of the data and trends examined to date. Preliminary goals, objectives, and priorities that will help inform the overall regional Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Study's mission and vision will be presented.

Following the opening sessions, there will then be breakout sessions for local leaders from county and local governments, councils of governments, colleges/universities, port authorities, school districts, chambers of commerce and other economic development entities, transportation entities, water districts and authorities, nonprofits, conservation organizations, and more. These sessions will be limited to better facilitate open discussion. The programming will be identical on each day to enable breakout sessions to remain small and best accommodate the schedules of the local officials.

Although initially designed for extensive in-person interaction, to keep the study moving forward while maintaining safety precautions, the GLO adapted information gathering efforts to virtual formats. Through surveys, teleconferencing, and virtual focus groups, the project has made substantial progress.

In anticipation of the summit, feedback is also being collected through a [survey](#) available on the GLO's Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Study [webpage](#). The survey aims to get input on the goals, objectives and strategies developed based on the findings of the first phase of the study. Feedback is encouraged not only from summit participants but also from stakeholders throughout the nine counties in the study area.

Visit the GLO website for more information and study updates: <https://recovery.texas.gov/local-government/resources/planning/economic-development-study/index.html>. To join the GLO's Economic Development Strategy and Diversification Study mailing list, receive updates, or to request to participate in the breakout sessions, please email: texaseconomicstudy@recovery.texas.gov.