

D

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A MONTHLY BRIEFING

In this issue of *D Economy* learn about the grand opening of Mercantile Place on Main (page 2) and about the city's stable unemployment rate (page 3). Also, read about Dallas' rankings as a top city for job growth in the nation (page 4).

CITY PLANS FOR FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS

The intent of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) passed on February 17, 2009 is to provide quick relief to individuals and families who are suffering from the current economic crisis. With the goal of creating jobs, ARRA provides a total of \$501 billion in local, state and federal fiscal relief and spending programs, in addition to \$288 billion in tax relief. The City of Dallas is participating in the program and potentially stands to receive hundreds of millions of dollars.

The ARRA provides funds to localities in two ways: by a formula that entitles them to the money or by competitive grants. The city's formula funds total \$86.8 million, and though the final number is still in flux, the city intends to apply for several hundred million in grants.

City staff has proposed projects for the \$86.8 million allocation the city already knows it will receive. Transportation projects will receive the bulk of the total, at \$54.4 million. The Woodall Rodgers Deck Park will receive \$16.7 million (Figure 1), \$15.5 million will go towards reconstructing and widening Industrial Blvd. from Cadiz to Continental, and \$10.6 million will be used to widen and reconstruct the Sylvan Avenue bridge.

Most of the \$12.8 million the city will receive for energy efficiency and conservation will be used for major maintenance, repair and upgrade of city-owned or -operated facilities. Homes in the city's five Neighborhood Investment Program Areas will receive \$2.4 million for weatherization/minor repairs, and about \$1 million will go towards the city's green building programs.

The remainder of the \$86.8 million will be split between Community Development Block Grant projects, homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing, the Internet Crimes Against Children Initiative, and justice assistance grants.

The Office of Economic Development estimates that with the formula funds alone, about 1,000 temporary jobs will be created and \$131 million will be pumped into the city's economy. Spin-off spending could bring almost \$1 million in new revenue to the city.

Currently, less is known about the competitive funds, as federal agencies have not developed guidelines for all the available grants. In the meantime, the city has

been creating a list of proposed projects to be submitted as federal agencies make announcements for grant applications.

The city will also be working with other Dallas organizations receiving ARRA funds to maximize the benefit for the entire Dallas community. Possibilities include a joint application by the city and DART for funds for alternative fueling stations and coordinating with the Dallas County Community College District to apply for Broadband grants.

The stimulus funds have great potential to put Dallas residents back to work. Another benefit is an alleviation of some of the pressure on the city's budget during this time of economic trouble. The city is dedicated to complying with the transparency and accountability requirements of the funds and will make this information available to the public on the city's web site.



Figure 1. Rendering of Woodall Rodgers Deck Park

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City of Dallas

OFFICE OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Center City News

- The Arts Community Alliance, TACA, is moving into One Arts Plaza downtown (Council District 14). TACA provides funding for performances in the Dallas area, many in the Arts District. One Arts Plaza's developer, Billingsley Co., is funding a portion of TACA's lease. SOURCE: DALLAS BUSINESS JOURNAL, APRIL 2, 2009.
- The Texas Tree Foundation is coordinating plans for an entirely privately funded new seven-acre park in the northeast corner of downtown (Council District 14). Gateway Forest Park will have trees, pedestrian walkways, an amphitheater and a dog park. Connecting Uptown to the Arts District, the \$3 M park will bring more walkability to the center city, and it will add much needed greenspace. Supporters hope to complete the park in 2011. SOURCE: DALLAS MORNING NEWS, APRIL 8, 2009.
- *Travel + Leisure* magazine has named Tei An one of the best new restaurants in the U.S. in 2009, coming in at number 37 out of 50 restaurants across the U.S. Tei An, housed at One Arts Plaza, is a Japanese soba noodle house (Council District 14). SOURCE: DALLAS BUSINESS JOURNAL, APRIL 14, 2009.
- The grand opening of Mercantile Place on Main, which is comprised of The Merc, The Element and The Wilson, was held recently (Council District 14). The three apartment buildings have modern, luxury amenities in the midst of an historic downtown neighborhood. During the grand opening, Mercantile officials announced the addition of a new restaurant to be located on the ground floor of The Element. Jean Michel's will be a modern French restaurant serving modestly priced French and European cuisine. It will serve breakfast, lunch and dinner and will have a full-service wine bar. The new restaurant will overlook the under-construction Main Street Garden Park. Both the park and restaurant are scheduled to be complete this fall. SOURCE: PEGASUSNEWS.COM, APRIL 17, 2009.
- Reunion Sports Group LLC and Oak Cliff developer Richard Seib have purchased 60 acres on Industrial Boulevard near Cadiz Street with plans to build a minor league baseball park by May 2010 (Council District 2). Other projects, such as a water park, hotel, apartments, retail and restaurants are also possible. The owners say that location of the project, close to downtown, the convention center and South Side on Lamar, make it a good spot for a minor league baseball park. SOURCE: DALLAS MORNING NEWS, APRIL 23, 2009.

Real Estate News

- Restaurateur Ed Bailey plans to open a Bailey's Prime Plus in the Park Lane development, among other Dallas-Fort Worth locations (Council District 13). The Bailey's Prime Plus menu will have smaller portions to appeal to women. SOURCE: GLOBEST.COM, APRIL 2, 2009.
- American National Bank plans to build a new two story office building on the site of a parking lot on the corner of Oak Lawn Avenue and Brown Street. About half of the 17,000-square-foot building will be leased to other businesses. SOURCE: DALLAS MORNING NEWS, APRIL 10, 2009.
- Viverae, a corporate wellness management software company, is moving its headquarters and tripling its office size by leasing 21,000 square feet in Search Plaza along Central Expressway (Council District 14). The company plans to expand by 30 employees in the next year, bringing the total to 110. SOURCE: DALLAS BUSINESS JOURNAL, APRIL 17, 2009.

Southern Dallas News

- Groundbreaking for a new playground at Miller Family Park located at 2814 Persimmon Road was held on April 11 (Council District 8). The land where the park sits was bought by John Miller in 1874 and was part of a 600-acre farming community made up of former slaves. SOURCE: DALLAS MORNING NEWS, APRIL 12, 2009.
- The city has officially opened Phase 1 of the Coombs Creek Trail in East Kessler Park (Council District 3). Phase 1 is a 1.4-mile trail from Junior Drive to Sylvan Avenue. Four more segments are planned, including one that connects Coombs Creek to Chalk Hill Trail, which is part of Dallas' Master Trail Plan. SOURCE: OAK CLIFF PEOPLE, APRIL 17, 2009.
- Bombardier Customer Services has opened a new component repair and overhaul center for commercial aircraft to provide service for customers in the U.S. and Central and South America. The center is 50,000 square feet and is located at the Pinnacle Industrial Center, employing 16 currently and up to 60 in the next five years (Council District 3). SOURCE: MARKETWIRE, APRIL 22, 2009.

Employment

The unemployment rate for the city remained constant at 7.3 percent for the month of March. The DFW MSA, Texas and the U.S. all increased by 0.1 percentage points over the same period. The MSA and state increased from 6.9 percent to 7.0 percent and from 6.6 percent to 6.7 percent, respectively. The March rate for the city, the DFW MSA and the state remain well below the national unemployment rate of 9.0. (Table 1).

For the fourteenth consecutive month Dallas has matched or beat the national unemployment rate. The city outperformed the nation by a 1.7 percentage point positive gap in March (Figure 2).

The number of Dallas residents employed in March was 543,880 (Figure 3). This number continues to be lower than the July 2008 high value of 574,118.

There was a slight decrease in the number of unemployed in March, with 96 fewer unemployed in the city over the previous month. The number of persons unemployed declined by 96 over the previous month. The labor force also had a small decrease of 245 persons (Table 2).

Jobs in the Dallas city limits increased marginally. Initial Office of Economic Development estimates show payroll employment increased in March to approximately 1.057 million, which is essentially flat compared to February. Trade, Transportation and Utilities had the largest job growth (1,596 jobs), while Natural Resources, Mining and Construction experienced the largest decrease in jobs with a total of 1,620.

-Moses Pologne

Table 1.
ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

	2009 Mar	2009 Feb	Point Change
City of Dallas	7.3	7.3	0.0
DFW MSA	7.0	6.9	0.1
Texas	6.7	6.6	0.1
U.S.	9.0	8.9	0.1
Largest U.S. Cities Avg.*		10.4	

Table 2.
CITY OF DALLAS LABOR FORCE (PERSONS)

	Unem-ployed	Labor Force
2008 Mar	42,796	586,676
2008 Feb	42,892	586,921
Change	-96	-245
% Change	-0.2	0.0

SOURCE: TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION, U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, VALUES NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED.
* LARGEST U.S. CITIES EXCLUDING DALLAS ARE: NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, CHICAGO, HOUSTON, PHOENIX, PHILADELPHIA, SAN ANTONIO, SAN DIEGO, SAN JOSE AND DETROIT.

Figure 2.
CITY OF DALLAS—U.S. UNEMPLOYMENT GAP

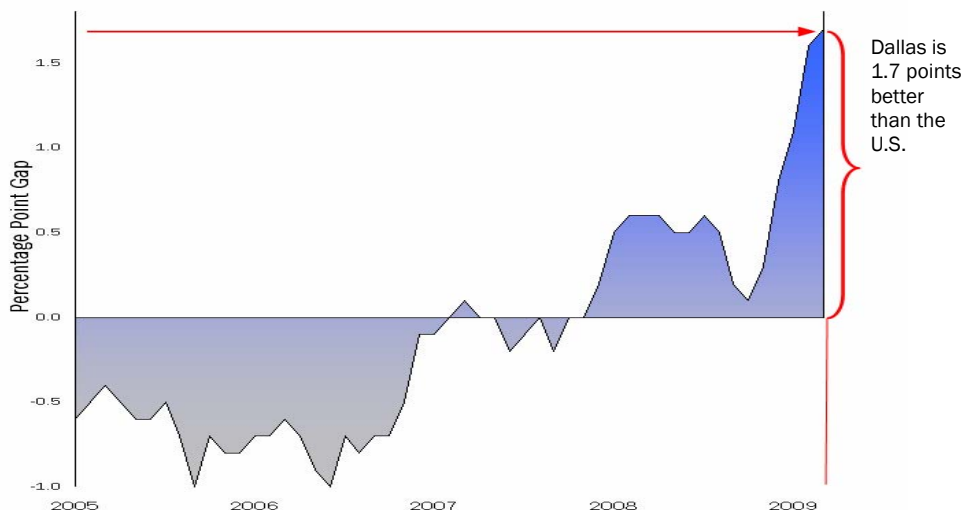


Figure 3.
CITY OF DALLAS EMPLOYMENT



DALLAS RANKED 5TH AMONG LARGE CITIES FOR JOB GROWTH

New Geography has released its 2009 rankings for the Best Cities for Job Growth, placing Dallas in the number five spot for large cities and number 32 among all cities.

In this period of slow economic growth, 46 cities fell more than 100 places in the rankings. Dallas, however, rose seven spots in the rankings for large cities and 25 spots for overall cities. Large cities are those with a current nonfarm employment base of at least 450,000 jobs.

The state of Texas ranked very highly for job growth, securing all the top five ranks for large cities. Texas accounted for 32 percent of the top 50 cities in the all cities ranking.

Dallas and Houston also were the only cities among the top ten most populous cities in the nation to make the top ten job growth list for large cities.

New Geography examined monthly employment data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics to devise its rankings, looking at three-month rolling averages of "state and area" unadjusted employment data reported from November 1998 to January 2009.

Four measures of growth were used to rank all areas from the past 10 years:

- the area's recent growth trend: (two points);
- mid-term growth: (two points);
- long-term trend: (two points); and
- current year growth (one point).

-Anna Howe

2009 Large City Rank		2009 Weighted Index	2008 Nonfarm Employment (In thousands)	Size Movement	Overall Rank 2009
1	Austin-Round Rock, TX	87.7	778.5	1	6
2	Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	85.4	2,609.6	2	9
3	San Antonio, TX	82.0	849.8	4	20
4	Fort Worth-Arlington, TX Metropolitan Division	78.3	877.5	5	30
5	Dallas-Plano-Irving, TX Metropolitan Division	78.0	2,102.1	7	32
6	Seattle-Bellevue-Everett, WA Metropolitan Division	77.2	1,457.8	4	34
7	Salt Lake City, UT	76.5	640.2	-4	36
8	Raleigh-Cary, NC	74.6	513.5	-7	38
9	Oklahoma City, OK	72.9	576.8	21	44
10	Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA	70.0	1,020.8	1	55