



Texas Economic Development Commission

QUARTERLY NEWS

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Economic development efforts in Valley get new look with Pan American's help

Economic development in the Lower Rio Grande Valley has a new look, and activity has increased dramatically in the last nine months.

Although a large number of individuals and groups have been engaged in efforts to stimulate economic growth and create jobs, the newest efforts in this area are being led by Pan American University's School of Business Administration.

Pan American has the nation's only fully accredited business school with a predominantly Hispanic enrollment. With the successful accreditation of the school's master's program in May 1985, University President Miguel Nevarez decided that the business school could be a major force in the economic development of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Nevarez directed the school to "get more involved with economic development work in the community." Administrators and faculty members got to work.

With a small grant from the Texas Department of Community Affairs, the school formed the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) on July 1. The center attempts to help area businessmen, prospective entrepreneurs, and financially troubled businesses address a wide variety of problems.

The nature of the center's operations is strictly "hands-on" help to the business community, with a strong emphasis on the prospective entrepreneur who wishes to start a new business operation and the existing small business owner who wishes to expand operations. The center provides both technical

expertise and counseling services to these clients in an effort to remove obstacles standing in the way of starting or expanding business operations.

In its first nine months of operation the center has worked with 103 new start-up businesses and more than 70 existing businesses. The new businesses that the center has worked with represent more than 400 new jobs. Sixty percent of the businesses served by the SBDC are owned by Hispanics owners.

But most significant is the cost effectiveness of the center, and the impact it is having on job creation in the community. The SBDC has helped create more than 400 new jobs — jobs that are badly needed by the area's unemployed — at a cost of only \$112 per job created.

One of the long-term strategies of the center is to prepare business owners to avoid problem areas that lead to business dissolution and loss of jobs.

The university's newest center, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CEED), is also dedicated to the pursuit of economic development activities, but has a different strategy.

The CEED, headed by Michael Patrick, is serving as a catalyst for economic growth by:

- Stimulating the creation of new businesses by systematically identifying prospective new entrepreneurs and providing them with appropriate technical assistance prior to initiating business operations,

- Encouraging the expansion of existing businesses through the identification of anti-expansion problem areas, and providing counseling and assistance in developing solutions to these problems,
- Stimulating job creation through the establishment of new businesses in the expansion of existing businesses,
- Building broad-based economic development capability by conducting seminars, workshops, and programs on specific economic development activities for staff members of local government agencies and business development organizations, such as chambers of commerce and industrial development boards,
- Creating an information network and data base to support the cooperative economic development efforts of individuals and organizations in the public and private sectors; and
- Conducting research projects to analyze the strengths of the area economy, assess its potential for growth, and develop action programs for implementation through the joint efforts of the public and private sectors.

The CEED seeks to ensure the greatest possible employment and development impact by coordinating its activities with other entrepreneurial and economic development agencies in the area. The CEED works with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, the Valley Chamber of Commerce, individual

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INSIDE TEDC



Local involvement vital in development

Texas cities, more than ever before, must be directly involved in local economic development activities to ensure their own economic futures and support the overall growth of the State. This requirement stems from several changes in the ways businesses make location, expansion, or investment decisions.

Most important among these is the shift in attitude by firms related to location incentives. Recent studies indicate that businesses that are looking to expand or locate in a community are much more interested in the level and quality of public services available in support of the firm's operations. No longer can a city lure businesses solely through the offering of an attracting financing package or tax abatement. Of particular interest to businesses are educational programs and facilities, police and fire protection, the availability of adequate water and wastewater capacity, and other quality of life aspects.

The availability of quality infrastructure and public services becomes even more important in light of recent trends by businesses to move more quickly with investment decisions. In past years, it was not uncommon for firms to provide a two to three year lead time before starting operations of a new facility. Now that timetable is sometimes as short as six to nine months. Under these circumstances localities cannot simply react to identified prospects and potential investors. Local development programs must be pro-active, anticipating the categories of services and infrastructure that firms most likely to invest in the community will need.

In Texas, the importance of strong local development programs is multiplied by the number and diversity of localities across the State. No single entity, whether it be the the Texas Economic Development Commission or the allies (e.g., utility companies, banks, local development corporations, etc.) that support and promote development efforts within their service areas, can guarantee the constant and intense level of assistance and effort that is required for a strong local development program. Furthermore, it is the residents and businesses within each community that understand best that locality's opportunities for growth.

One of Texas' strengths in the economic development arena is that diversity of its cities. Regardless of the locational requirements of a particular business, those needs can be met by at least one, and often more, of our communities. Therefore, the Texas Economic Development Commission encourages cities to be different from one another, to exploit assets that are unique in that area, whether geographic location, natural resources, or financial resources that may be available.

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Business retention/expansion program in SE Texas adopted as pilot program

The Texas Economic Development Commission has adopted a Business Retention and Expansion Program in Southeast Texas as a pilot program for potential Statewide use.

The program was developed at the John Gray Institute, Lamar University's center for economic research, instruction and problemsolving. TEDC will use the institute's staff to provide training in the program at workshops of the Texas Cities for Economic Leadership program.

The Business Retention and Expansion Program is based on estimates that more than 70 percent of new jobs created in Texas during the next five years will come from existing businesses.

"At the same time," said TEDC Commissioner George McLaughlin, "Texas companies have become prime targets for recruitment by other states. For Texas to retain existing businesses, it is essential that we develop sound retention and expansion programs at the local level." McLaughlin is chancellor of the Lamar University System and acting

executive director of the institute, which is located on Lamar's Beaumont campus.

Because most areas lack the resources to launch comprehensive programs, the design of the program allows chambers of commerce and economic development groups to leverage volunteer involvement. For the pilot program in Southeast Texas institute leaders hope to link with primary economic development groups in the area of actual program delivery, with the institute providing research and training.

"The program is excellent," says Harry Wood, board chairman of SET, Inc., a regional economic development organization. "A significant retention and expansion effort produces more jobs, given the same time period, than an effort to recruit employers."

The program begins with a comprehensive survey of existing businesses, targeting those industries showing the most potential for dramatic growth or decline. Companies considering shut-downs or expansion are flagged for

immediate attention.

The program offers technical assistance by forming training and finance packages, and by targeting venture capital and grant sources. It also poses creative solutions such as revolving loan funds and business incubators.

There is another benefit to be derived from the program. Products shown in the survey to be imported in large volumes from outside the area might suggest the viability of a local production effort to supply area market needs.

"Success with the pilot program could mean that TEDC would want to market the program statewide to economic development officials in every area," McLaughlin said.

Christopher Cook

Christopher Cook is an information specialist for the John Gray Institute, Beaumont.

Report cites Texas' positive aspects for attracting Japanese investments

Texas has many positive aspects which make the State an attractive place for Japanese investment, according to the summary of findings by the Keidanren Investment Expansion Mission, which visited the Austin-San Antonio corridor in March.

Keidanren, the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations, is Japan's most influential business group. The federation sent a 23-member delegation to Texas at the invitation of Governor Mark White and the Greater Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council. During their five-day visit, the delegates toured several Central Texas cities and met with local officials to discuss economic conditions and investment opportunities in the communities.

The delegation also met with Governor White and Texas Economic Development Commissioners William Crook and Hector Gutierrez in Austin. The Keidanren team was briefed on economic opportunities in Texas by TEDC staff.

"Signs of development in bio-engineering and fifth generation computers are everywhere," the report states. The area "embraces many medical science institutions and various laboratories and is expected to develop into a major biomedical center of the United States. The National Science Foundation also sees this area as the most promising site for bio-technological development."

The report continues: "Fifteen universities and colleges with heavy research in computer science and microelectronics,

including the University of Texas, provides an academic foundation for industrial development. The cooperation seen between industry, government and academia suggest a lesson for us to learn. Japanese industries, whether they intend to locate there or not, can profit from cooperation with such efforts.

"There are no corporate income or individual income taxes. The State is further improving the investment environment and is expanding investment opportunities. Texas ranks first in the U.S. in terms of the number of free trade zones. Texas also ranked first in the number of factories newly constructed in 1984, second in manufactured shipments, and second in manufacturing employment increase over the past ten years."

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Cities start TEXCEL readiness track

Nearly 40 small and medium-sized cities from across Texas are participating in the Readiness Track of TEDC's Cities for Economic Leadership Program (TEXCEL).

TEXCEL is a two-phase program, cosponsored by the Texas Municipal League and the Texas Industrial Development Council. The readiness phase is an intensive technical assistance program led by TEDC staff members and other economic development professionals. Topics covered include: the local economic development organization and its functions; community assessment and the formulation of a local economic development strategy; establishing an

economic development budget to support the strategy; ways to attract new industries; working with existing businesses; and industrial finance. The program also includes individual sessions with participants, and is expected to take 12 to 16 months to complete.

TEXCEL's second phase, certification, recognizes cities that meet economic development readiness standards geared to each individual community. Certification is open to cities that complete the readiness track, as well as those localities which currently meet the standards.

More than 20 of the cities participating have fewer than 10,000

residents. The greatest concentration of participants is in the Gulf Coast region.

Participants in the first cycle of the Readiness Program include Levelland, Pampa, Tulia, Childress, Post, Friona, Littlefield, Hereford, Burleson, Allen, Mansfield, Weatherford, Keller, Wharton, Robstown, Pearland, West Columbia, Aransas Pass, Bay City, Beeville, Edna, La Marque, Port Lavaca, Yoakum, Portland, Cleveland, Eagle Lake, Copperas Cove, Burnet, Robinson/Hewitt, Floresville, Hondo, Uvalde, Missouri City, Paris, Premont, and Canadian. The Randolph Metrocom Chamber of Commerce, which serves several cities near San Antonio, is also participating.

Valley development gets new look

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chambers of commerce, the Small Business Administration (SBA), county and municipal officials, local economic development organizations, and Pan American's SBDC.

CEED does not compete with SBDC, nor duplicate its services. In fact, CEED and SBDC have made several cross-referrals that have resulted in both centers being able to better meet their particular goals while achieving their mutual goal of promoting economic development in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

In just three months of operation, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Development has counseled 94 clients, developed five comprehensive business plans, referred 11 clients to the SBDC for technical services, and undertaken five major research projects dealing with economic development.

But of greater importance is the emerging recognition of Pan American's business school as a major factor in the leadership of economic development

activity in the Lower Rio Grande Valley area. That recognition is based on the commitment of the University to economic development activities, the apolitical orientation of the University and the business school, the presence of technical expertise in a breadth of academic disciplines related to economic development, and the broad-based experience in economic development work represented in Dietz, Patrick, and their respective center staffs.

It is difficult to predict how successful the Lower Rio Grande Valley will be in long-term economic development, but it is already clear that there are a number of actions which could be taken to contribute to maximum economic growth and job creation. These include:

- The development of an integrated plan for the economic development of the border area in Texas;
- The emergence of an appropriate entity to coordinate the various economic development activities currently being conducted by

chambers of commerce, private industry councils, cities and municipalities, the SBA, and other local and regional economic development organizations;

- The commitment of funds to create small business investment corporations, revolving loan funds, and similar financing and investment corporations to supply much-needed venture and equity capital for new and expanding businesses; and
- The commitment of funds to support research projects which identify unique border economic phenomena, relationships, and courses of action which promote economic development.

F. J. Brewerton

F. J. Brewerton is dean of the School of Business Administration at Pan American University, Edinburg.

High-tech survey responses coming in

Responses to one of the nation's most extensive state-sponsored surveys of advanced technology companies are being tabulated at TEDC. The survey is part of a studied effort to develop the potential of technology to expand the base of the Texas economy.

Questionnaires were mailed to more than 2,000 firms in large and small cities across the State, ranging from Welfare (population 36) in South Central Texas to the major metropolitan areas. Firms surveyed include Shell Oil, DuPont, IBM and Control Data, as well as hundreds of smaller operations.

Data gathered from the responses will give rise to a variety of studies which will provide clearer insight into the intensity

of research and development efforts and the status of technology application and commercialization in Texas.

"While we know from statistics released by the National Science Foundation that Texas leads the South in company funding of research and development," said TEDC Chairman Dan S. Petty, "there is a need to examine the state of the State in technology to plan the future development of technology-based business in Texas. The response of the technology-oriented business community to this survey is critical to the success of our efforts. We need to assess our present direction so we may sharpen our technological competitive

edge for tomorrow."

The agency will attempt to explore current and proposed research and development activities and to identify problems these firms are encountering. The information will be used to formulate state assistance programs and to inform community leaders about the types of assistance they can provide to existing and potential technology-oriented businesses.

Data from a site location portion of the questionnaire will be analyzed to produce a location study that outlines and compares location factors which are important to both research-intensive firms and technology-based manufacturing firms.

Cresline opens plant in Corsicana

Cresline Plastic Pipe Company, one of the nation's leading manufacturers of plastic pipe, formally opened its new production plant and regional sales office April 22 in Corsicana.

The plant manufactures polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe and fittings. The facility employs about 60 workers, with an annual payroll of more than \$1 million.

"Cresline Plastic Pipe Company is delighted to have chosen the State of Texas and the Corsicana area as the site of its newest production plant," said John Schroeder, Cresline president. "We look forward to many years of successful growth as a member of the local corporate community."

"We are delighted to have Cresline as part of our community," said Corsicana Mayor Jim Gill. "We believe that they will be a very positive factor for us, and make a valuable contribution to our community." Gill added that Cresline's contribution to the Corsicana economy would be multiplied throughout the community, stimulating the economy and indirectly creating more jobs.

Richard Schroeder, Cresline executive vice president, said the Corsicana site was

chosen for a number of reasons, including geographic considerations, transportation availability, the local labor market and community support. "The most important thing for us is the people we find in the community," Schroeder said. "We had excellent support from the Chamber of Commerce and the Corsicana Industrial Foundation. We've been very satisfied so far."

The Texas Employment Commission worked with Cresline to staff the plant, providing initial screening and referrals of applicants. "We couldn't be more pleased with our employees," said Gary Richmond, Cresline vice president of manufacturing. Eventual expansion may bring the total work force up to 100.

The \$5 million facility serves Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Mississippi. In addition to PVC pipe, the facility also sells and ships ABS, CPVC and polyethylene pipe and fittings to plumbing and hardware wholesalers. The company has corporate offices in Evansville, Indiana, with additional production facilities in Henderson, Kentucky, Council Bluffs, Iowa and Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

Japanese investments

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The report also calls attention to the possibility of establishing maquiladora plants along the border with Mexico. "The need was keenly felt to take adjacent economic areas into consideration in siting of factories for the long-term interest of investment," the report states. It notes that as of September 1985 there were more than 750 maquiladora plants involved in the production of electric appliances, electronic equipment, transport equipment and textiles.

The mission was led by Yoh Kurosawa, deputy president of the Industrial Bank of Japan, Japan's oldest and largest long-term credit bank. The mission was coordinated by Kazuo Nukazawa, director of international economic affairs for Keidanren.

Keidanren is a private, non-profit economic organization representing virtually all branches of economic activity in Japan. The organization's goal is to find practical solutions to economic problems and contribute to the sound development of the economies of Japan and countries around the world.

Keidanren was established in 1946 through the merger of several economic and industrial organizations. As of April 1985 the organization had 119 association and 856 corporate members.

Finance workshops begin in July

Development financing is the topic of two intensive workshops that TEDC will conduct in July. The courses are designed to help economic development professionals learn to use public sector finance tools, analyze business credit and package loans. These skills will enable communities to assist healthy small and medium-sized businesses with their expansions, creating permanent private sector jobs and increasing the local tax base.

The first workshop, Economic Development Finance, will be held July 14 through 18 at the John Gray Institute in Beaumont. It will equip local economic development professionals with nuts-and-bolts knowledge of how to establish a public/ private sector partner-

ship; to initiate an aggressive marketing program; to screen, analyze, structure, and package investment proposals; to enlist the support of the private sector lenders; to utilize public sector tax incentives and loan programs; and to properly set performance goals, monitor progress and identify problems.

The second workshop, Business Credit Analysis, will be held October 20-24, in Austin. It is an extensive bank credit course focusing on analysis of balance sheet, profit and loss, and cash flow statements. By the end of the course the participants will be able to identify financing problems, correctly interpret trends, determine cash flow available for

debt service, calculate the necessary level of working capital to sustain growth, and analyze the impact of financing and growth on the company's ability to survive. The participants will analyze their own projects and develop the skills necessary to present a proposal to a lender or investor.

Instructors for these courses are finance experts from the National Development Council, a non-profit corporation which specializes in creating innovative economic development finance programs for communities throughout the country. Each course costs \$350. Registration materials and further information are available from Carol Lerch at TEDC, (512) 472-5059.

LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

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However, there are two areas in which the Commission has and will continue to give policy direction to local economic development efforts. The first relates to the importance of working with existing businesses within the community. Localities must ensure that those firms currently operating within the community are provided with the assistance and support that allows them to maintain or expand their current economic activity. Too often we shower our attention on the newest corporate residents of the community. We must keep in mind that the existing firm that adds 20 new jobs through product diversification or plant modernization is no less important than a new firm with 20 jobs.

The second is the need to overcome parochialism in local economic development activities. Resources available for local economic development are too scarce not to consider the advantages of shared costs and joint ventures between localities. The economic benefits that are derived from the location or expansion

of a business always transcend the borders of the jurisdiction in which the enterprise is located. The increased payroll provides additional buying power for the region from which all merchants and service providers will benefit. Additionally, the location of one firm may serve as a magnet for future investment in the region.

The Texas economy is changing. It started to change long before the recent decline in oil prices. "Diversification" is not a new word in the Texas vocabulary. The transition period will not be without some pain and uncertainty. However, it is already clear that Texas cities and their residents view this change as a challenge and have made the commitment to meet the challenge head on. The Texas Economic Development Commission looks forward to a partnership with Texas cities and all the other development interests in the State, both public and private, that stand ready to meet this challenge.

Dan S. Petty

Plant to produce livestock equipment

More than \$188,000 from TEDC's Rural Loan Fund will be used to partially finance the establishment in Eden of a plant to produce livestock feeding equipment after the closing March 13 of a loan to the Eden Industrial Foundation.

The Rural Loan Fund provides money for rural areas to use to attract business. Under the program, the State lends up to 40 percent of a project's cost to a private, non-profit industrial foundation. The foundation provides 10 percent of the project's cost, with the remaining costs financed through other sources.

Macsteel plans to employ up to 30 workers at the plant, and expects to generate \$900,000 in sales in the first year of operation. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$472,000. Funds from the Rural Loan Fund will be used to purchase equipment for the facility.

The move to Eden represents an expansion for Macsteel, which is adding new product lines. The company will continue to manufacture livestock feeding equipment in Brady.

Valley twin plants to employ 1,300

Trico Products Corporation's decision to open twin manufacturing plants in Brownsville and its sister city Matamoros will provide a much-needed boost to the depressed economy of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Governor Mark White and Texas Economic Development Commission Chairman Dan S. Petty said February 18.

Trico President Richard L. Wolf announced plans in Brownsville to employ 1,300 people at the plants, which will manufacture windshield wiper systems. About 450 employees will work at the Brownsville facility, with another 850 working at the Matamoros plant. Trico, based in Buffalo, New York, is the nation's leading manufacturer of wiper systems for domestic automobiles.

"I am delighted that Trico is bringing jobs to the Brownsville area," White

said. "Texas is a land of opportunity — a great place to do business. I am very pleased that Trico has chosen to be a part of our future. Texas has some of the most productive workers in the country, and offers many innovative ways to do business. Trico is good for Brownsville and Texas — and Texas will be good for Trico."

"Our efforts to locate the Saturn and Toyota projects are beginning to pay off," Petty said. "Our Saturn and Toyota efforts let the auto industry know that Texas is a great place for manufacturing. This location of a major supplier to the auto industry shows that our message got through."

TEDC is preparing a program of job training assistance for the project. The agency worked closely for six months

with the company's site selection team, providing detailed business information and guiding tours of potential sites.

TEDC Senior Business Development Consultant Eduardo Nunez, who spearheaded the agency's efforts, said the Trico operation will be especially beneficial to Brownsville. "Usually in twin-plant operations, the vast majority of the jobs are on the Mexican side," Nunez said. "Trico will have 450 employees working right in Brownsville. This means that Brownsville — and Texas — will see an even greater benefit than usual from this plant."

The plants will begin production in January 1987, and are expected to produce 100,000 windshield wiper arms, 140,000 wiper blades, and 30,000 linkages per day.

Facility to have \$10 million impact

North American Plastics Corporation's decision to establish a manufacturing facility in Longview will have an annual economic impact on the State of more than \$10 million, according to TEDC's economic impact analysis.

North American executives announced plans March 12 to build a 15,000-square-foot facility in Longview to produce plastic bags and plastic sheeting for commercial, agricultural and gardening use. North American, a leading producer

of trash and lawn bags for consumer use, is expanding its operations, which are based in Aurora, Illinois.

The facility will employ up to 20 workers when operations start in June, with as many as 50 more employees to be hired a few months later. TEDC's study projects that the facility will indirectly create another 55 jobs in the community, and generate more than \$70,000 per year in state and local taxes.

TEDC has been working with North American and development officials from

Longview since August 1985, performing economic analysis and location factor comparisons, community and site analysis and utility coordination.

"We welcome North American to Longview and Texas," said David V. Brandon, TEDC executive director. "Texas is a great place to do business. Our workers are among the most productive in the nation, and the Texas business climate is second to none. I'm happy that North American is joining us."

Borden dedicates plant in Gainesville

Governor Mark White and TEDC Executive Director David V. Brandon joined Borden Chemical May 13 in dedicating the company's new \$13 million industrial facility in Gainesville.

The 113,000-square-foot facility will manufacture linear low-density polyethylene pallet wraps, a product used in packaging goods for shipping. The plant currently employs about 50 workers, with employment expected to double when the plant reaches full operation. Expansions projected for the facility

could triple the size of the plant over the next five years and increase employment to 300, representing a capital investment of more than \$50 million.

"We're delighted that they're here," said Gainesville Mayor Harry Roark. "The plant is going to furnish employment for a number of employees, which is of tremendous value to us. And it's going to assist us in getting other industry."

"They're a real asset to us, and we hope that we'll be an asset to them," he said.

"This adds more than \$12 million to our tax base, and \$1 million to \$1.5 million in payroll," said Carl F. Smith, executive vice president of the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce. "And that's what we're looking for: new jobs and added tax base."

Borden Chemical is a division of Borden, Inc., with corporate offices in New York. The company has similar facilities in Massachusetts, California and Georgia.

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INSIDE

New look for Valley

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TEXCEL cities get ready

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'Signs of development everywhere'

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Almanac available

The 1986-87 edition of the *Texas Almanac*, published by *The Dallas Morning News*, is now available at bookstores, newsstands, and by mail. The 768-page Sesquicentennial Edition offers information on Texas environment, recreation, counties, education, culture, business, industry, agriculture, politics, and government.

Highlights include a brief Texas history; biographies of the 25 most important figures in Texas history; selected in cooperation with the Texas State Historical Association; the five "Days of Destiny" in Texas history, and a section on notable Texas women, past and present.

The *Almanac*, published since 1857, is available for \$14.95 in hardback and \$8.95 in paperback. Discounts apply for orders of 25 or more. It can also be ordered by mail from *The Dallas Morning News*, Communications Center, Dallas, Texas 75265, (214) 977-8393. Prices do not include tax and postage.

TIPS in July

The next Texas Industrial Planning Seminar (TIPS) will be held July 16 and 17 at the Austin South Plaza Hotel in Austin. The registration fee is \$50 per person. Further information is available by calling Leeta Murphy at (512) 472-5059.