
City Hires New Economic Development Director

By LeeAnn Richardson

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San Angelo, Texas (January 21, 2010) –

The City of San Angelo has hired veteran economic developer Fran Owens as the City's new director of economic development. Owens will be an integral part of the community's economic development team, which includes various stakeholders who work to recruit and retain businesses and create jobs for San Angelo.

Owens has served as the executive director of the Forney (Texas) Economic Development Corporation since June 2005. He replaces Kathy Keane, who retired in June after 31 years of service with the City of San Angelo. Owens said San Angelo's location in Texas provides opportunities that a larger metroplex with a conglomeration of communities can't match. "San Angelo has a unique history and a unique opportunity for the future because of that sense of place," he said.

In his new role, Owens will direct the San Angelo Development Corporation, which is the economic development arm of the City and administers half-cent sales tax funds that promote economic growth and sustainability for San Angelo and the region.

Owens was responsible for managing the half-cent sales tax funds in Forney.

As the City's economic development director, Fran will work with our economic development partners to attract new businesses to our community, create jobs and help existing businesses succeed," said City Manager Harold Dominguez. "His experience working in economic development at municipalities, including administering the half-cent sales tax in Forney, will be invaluable to our efforts in San Angelo."

Owens' experience also includes 14 years as the economic development director for the City of Blue Springs, Mo., a suburb of Kansas City.; manager of economic development for the St. Joseph (Missouri) Chamber of Commerce from 1985-90; director of economic development for the City of Clinton (Missouri) from 1982-85; grants coordinator for the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority from 1980-82; and community development director/economic development specialist for the City of Sedalia (Missouri) from 1978-80.

"I've had 30 years of experience in a variety of different circumstances and variety of sizes of communities," he said. "Economic development has been my entire career."

Owens, a certified economic developer, served in the U.S. Air Force and earned his bachelor's degree from Central Missouri State University. He will move to San Angelo with his wife, Paula, and begin his new job on Feb. 15.