

Article 5: The Impact of Commercial Valuation on Lifestyle

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In Article 4 I discussed the importance of planning. In Article 1, I discussed the idea that economic development supports a quality lifestyle by providing jobs. In this article I will bring these two together a bit. One outcome of planning, is to create a foundation for a quality lifestyle, however you choose to define that. In this article I want to discuss how the commercial tax base supports our rural lifestyle.

Many of us enjoy reduced valuation for agricultural usage on land. Without this, many small farms and ranches would not be sustainable. In addition, homestead exemptions also help to reduce the tax

“Without the balance of commercial valuation, the level of county services would be reduced.”

burden for our homes. But what would this look like without the contribution of commercial values?

In researching the current tax base with the appraisal district I was given

the following valuations:

Taxable Com/Industrial	\$ 1,021,902,420.00
Residential Market	\$ 5,438,555,553.00
Residential Exemptions	\$ 2,229,949,826.00
Residential Taxable	\$ 3,208,605,727.00
Total Taxable	\$ 4,230,508,147.00
Com/Ind % of Total Taxable	0.24
Com/Ind % of Res Exemptions	0.46

Based on the available information at that time, commercial valuations are equal to 24% of the total taxable value, and 46% of the residential exemptions. This is significant in that without the commercial

valuation to support exemptions, the level of service provided by the county will be diminished, or we may all have to pay higher property taxes to make up for the difference in taxable value needed to maintain the current level of service. The commercial tax base has a significant positive impact on our quality of life. In fact, the reason Waller County has mostly paved county roads (unlike many rural counties) is due, in large part, to the economic benefit of the Katy gas fields.

In short, business makes a substantial contribution to our lifestyle. Quietly working in the background, business not only provides jobs, but help by diversifying the tax base. Their tax contributions also provide needed relief when local communities pass bonds for projects like new schools. Without the business base, the bond tax burden on residence would be significantly higher.

Stay tuned for the next part in this series on economic development. If you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to email me at vyokom@wallercounty.org.

About the Waller County Economic Development Partnership (WCEDP): The WCEDP is a Texas non-profit corporation with an IRS 501 (C) 6 tax designation. We are non-political and have a 24-member board, which includes representation from every community in Waller County that has an economic development program. To learn more, visit www.wallercounty.org.

Mission: The WCEDP is organized to operate a charitable service center to foster increased, environmentally balanced business commerce, positive growth, and overall cooperation and coordination for all communities throughout Waller County, Texas.