

**WALLER COUNTY, TX**  
State of Community Report 2016



## Background

In 1993 the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning in the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University, initiated the Texas Target Communities program (TTC) to provide technical assistance to small towns on issues related to land use planning and economic development. Today TTC, in partnership with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, also works with rural counties and marginalized communities across Texas to provide technical support in keeping with Texas A&M's mission as a land grant university. At the same time it serves as a "real world" learning laboratory for graduate students within coursework on campus. Students gain valuable planning experience while targeted communities receive valuable assistance they could not access otherwise and results in a positive difference in the quality of life for its residents. Communities are chosen for participation in TTC based on demonstrated need and their commitment to the planning process.

The Waller County Strategic Planning Committee (WCSPC), with connections through Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU), contacted The Texas Target Communities (TTC) program at Texas A&M University to develop the Waller County State of Community Report 2016 in anticipation of the development of a county strategic plan. In order to support the strategic planning efforts of Waller County, TTC program associates gathered data from a variety of disciplines related to the present state of the County. The TTC team then analyzed the data to identify potential areas for growth and development.

### TTC Staff:

John Cooper, Director and Associate Professor of the Practice

Jaimie Hicks Masterson, Program Coordinator

Jeewasmi Thapa, Program Coordinator

Gopika Nair, Student Intern

### LAUP Faculty:

Dr. Wei Li, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of MUP

### LAUP Students:

Qazi Aniqua Zahra

Vrushali Sathaye

Xinhe Ruan

Wayne Day

Qikun Chen

Tamanna Tasnum

Manasvini Thiagarajan

Garrett English

Kelly Trietsch

## Executive Summary

Waller County is on the northwest side of Harris County. It offers the best of a rural lifestyle and a short commute to the nation's fourth largest city. Citizens of Waller County enjoy access to many social and economic opportunities already and the outlook for expanding access to opportunities is positive. Waller is set to grow ahead of the state and H-GAC 8 by 2050. The County expects an increasing Hispanic population, a trend seen throughout Texas. Approximately 34% of the population in Waller is college educated and 46% of residents are enrolled in schools and colleges. Waller County is a home to PVAMU and four (4) independent school districts (Hempstead, Royal, Katy and Waller).

Proximity to Houston plays an important role in the economy of the County. Manufacturing and agriculture sectors lead the economy. These sectors are more specialized in the County in comparison to Texas. Education services follow in level of impact, due to the presence of many school districts and PVAMU. Employment 'by place of residence' has increased significantly by 40%, from 2004 to 2014. Texas in comparison increased by 25% over that span and the nation only increased by 13%.

Roughly, 19% of people in Waller County are living under poverty. Of those in poverty, the City of Prairie View has the most due to the student population at PVAMU. The County does not have many affordable housing units, but 40% of all homes are under \$100,000. The City of Houston is rapidly encroaching upon Waller County, threatening to disrupt the rural lifestyle many County residents enjoy. As Houston expands, there will be an increase in impervious surface cover, which will increase the risk of flooding.

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction.....                           | 6  |
| 2. History.....                                | 7  |
| 3. Population.....                             | 9  |
| 3.1. Population Density .....                  | 9  |
| 3.2. Population Estimates and Projections..... | 10 |
| 4. Race .....                                  | 12 |
| 5. Age Pyramid.....                            | 14 |
| 6. Education .....                             | 16 |
| 7. Employment.....                             | 18 |
| 7.1. Overview.....                             | 18 |
| 7.2. Unemployment Rate .....                   | 19 |
| 8. Economy.....                                | 21 |
| 8.1. Economic Structure.....                   | 21 |
| 8.2. Characteristics of Regional Economy ..... | 22 |
| 8.3. Economic Growth.....                      | 24 |
| 8.4. Job Density and Inflow/ Outflow .....     | 27 |
| 8.5. Leakage/ Surplus Factor .....             | 30 |
| 8.6. Income Distribution .....                 | 31 |
| 8.7. Poverty .....                             | 33 |
| 9. Housing.....                                | 34 |
| 9.1. Housing Types .....                       | 34 |
| 9.2. Renters Vs. Owners .....                  | 35 |
| 9.3. Home Value.....                           | 36 |
| 9.4. Monthly Rental Rates.....                 | 38 |
| 10. House Vacancy and Unaffordability .....    | 39 |
| 10.1. Vacant Housing.....                      | 39 |
| 10.2. Mortgage Status and Affordability .....  | 40 |
| 10.3. Monthly Rental Rates.....                | 43 |
| 10.4. Affordable Housing Programs.....         | 46 |

11. Environmental Factors .....48

    11.1. Most Recent Natural Disasters: .....48

    11.2. Floods, Historical Tornados, and Watersheds..... 49

    11.3. Land Cover .....52

    11.4. Soil .....53

12. Infrastructure .....54

    12.1. Transportation .....54

    12.2. Facilities .....56

    12.3. County Independent School Districts: .....57

13. S.W.O.T Analysis .....58

## 1. Introduction

Waller is a rural county bounded on the east by Harris County and the west by the Brazos River. It is situated in the lower plain of southeast Texas, with 513 sq. miles of land and 4.4 sq. miles of water. The county is bordered by Grimes County to the north, Montgomery County to the northeast, Fort Bend County to the south, Austin County to the west and Washington County to the northwest.

The County's climate is temperate, characterized by warm and mild winters. The average temperature in July is 95°F and 39° F in January. The average annual rainfall in the county is 42 inches. Cities in the County include Hempstead, Prairie View, Brookshire, Waller, Pine Island and part of Katy, which also has territory in Harris and Fort Bend County. The County's economy is mainly dependent on farming, cattle, forest products, construction and manufacturing. PVAMU is a major university and a part of the Texas A&M University system.

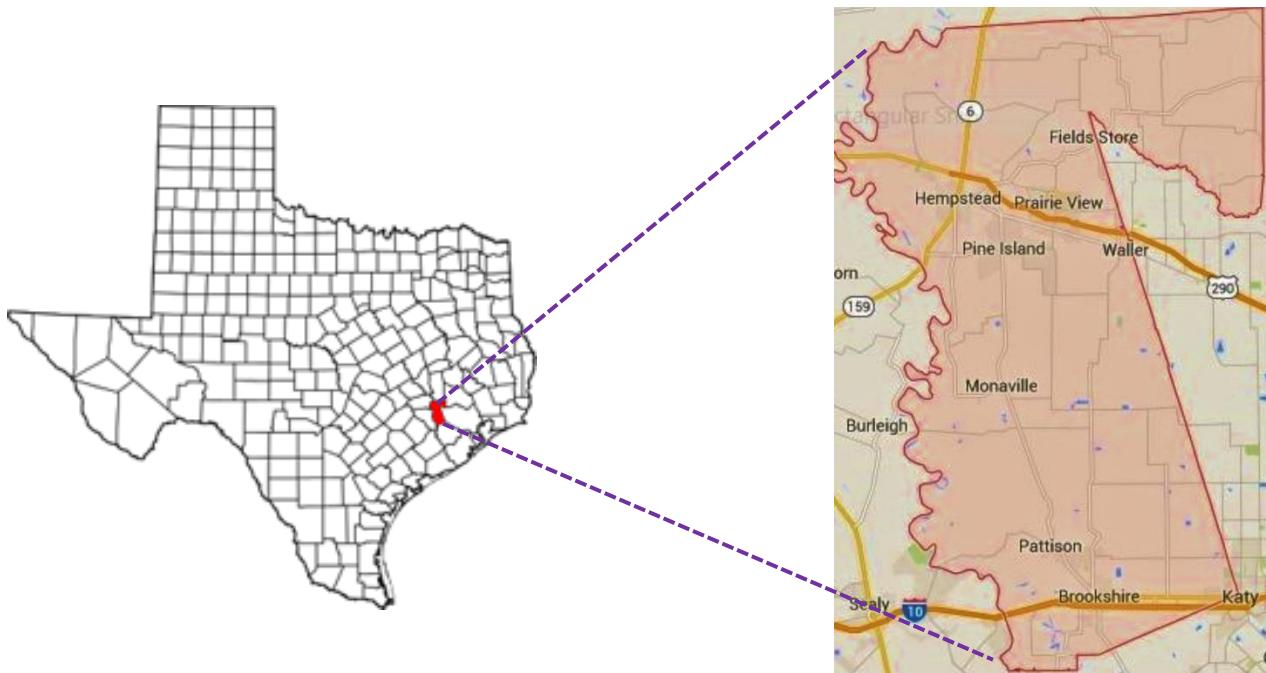


Figure 1.1: Location Waller County, TX

## 2. History

Waller County was established in 1873. The County began to develop in the late nineteenth century with the implementation of the Houston and Texas Central Railway. The county seat (Hempstead) was developed by the railway companies. The Town of Brookshire began to emerge as a center of activity after the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railways passed through the city from Houston in 1893. Today, both railways are property of the Union Pacific Railway network.



Figure 2.1: Courthouse, Hempstead  
Source: courthousehistory.com

In the late 1800's, cotton was the major product in the county's economy, along with cattle. Waller County was home to one of the first plantations in the southern part of the country.

The cotton-based economy introduced African-Americans to Waller County as slaves. After emancipation however, many stayed in the area. The 1880 census reported 65% of its population as being African Americans. Today the African-American population in Waller County is 26%.

The participation of African Americans in politics increased and they were elected to county as well as to state offices. Cultural diversity enhanced with immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, Ireland and Italy arriving in late nineteenth century, together with Germans, Polish and Czech immigrants arriving in the beginning of the twentieth Century.



Figure 2.2: Waller County Courthouse  
Source: courthousehistory.com



Figure 2.3: I-10 and I-45

Source: Google Maps, 2016

If the railway helped to develop the area in the beginning of the century, the highways have the same function today. The anticipated, and then actual, construction of the new Highway 290 by-pass from Houston spurred a blossoming population and expansion in the eastern part of Waller County that affected both the Waller Independent School District and the City of Waller. In addition to US 290, Interstate 10 cuts through the Waller County near its southern border. Waller County's position on Interstate 10 (which connects Houston to San Antonio) makes Waller an important piece in the region's economy, and raises the value of advanced planning for county development.



### 3. Population

#### 3.1. Population Density

The population of Waller County (44,825)<sup>1</sup> is mostly rural with a population density less than 100 people per square mile (Figure 3. 1). The population of Waller County is clustered around the five cities: the City of Hempstead, Prairie View Brookshire, Pine Island and the portion of Katy.<sup>2</sup> The population density of Waller County (87 per sq. mile) is less than the Texas average (99.9 per sq. mile).<sup>3</sup>

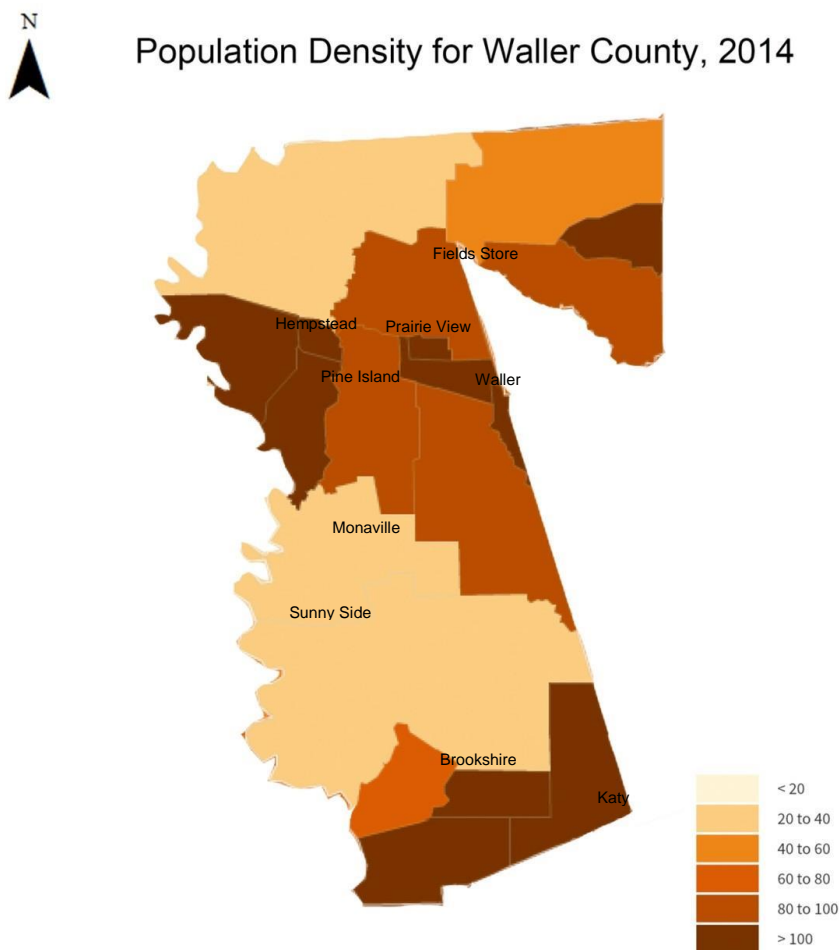


Figure 3. 1: Population Density for Waller County, 2014

Source: 2014 Data from the Social Explorer

<sup>1</sup> 2014 ACS 5- year estimates

<sup>2</sup> The city of Katy crosses Waller, Harris, and Fort Bend county boundaries

<sup>3</sup> Waller County : 87 per sq. mile, Texas: 99.9 per sq. mile (American community Survey, 2010-2014)

### 3.2. Population Estimates and Projections

In 2014, there were 44,825 people residing in Waller County, increasing from 32,663 people in 2000 and 43,205 people in 2010. The major population centers include portions of Katy (15,071), Hempstead (6,197), Prairie View (5,890), Brookshire (4,804), and Waller<sup>4</sup> (1,956). Waller grew faster than the Houston- Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) and Texas from 2000 to 2010 and faster than Texas over the entire 2000 to 2014 time period.

Population projections for Waller County obtained from the Office of the State Demographer (OSD) and from H-GAC 8.<sup>5</sup> are biennial population projections for the state and the County by age, sex, and race/ethnicity. Population projections account for special populations, fertility rates, mortality rates, and residual migration rates each year from 2015 to 2050.<sup>6</sup>

H-GAC also provides projections for 2010 to 2040, which are updated every quarter. These projections include population, employment and land use.

|                | Estimates  |            | Projections |            |            |            | Source |
|----------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
|                | 2000       | 2010       | 2020        | 2030       | 2040       | 2050       |        |
| <b>Waller</b>  | 32,663     | 43,205     | 52,133      | 62,492     | 74,071     | 86,862     | OSD    |
|                |            |            | 46,114      | 87,675     | 1,09,334   | -          | H-GAC  |
| <b>H-GAC 8</b> | 4,669,571  | 5,891,999  | 6,865,178   | 7,886,965  | 8,921,141  | 9,955,782  | OSD    |
|                |            |            | 7,221,595   | 8,632,761  | 10,018,623 | -          | H-GAC  |
| <b>Texas</b>   | 20,851,820 | 25,145,561 | 28,813,282  | 32,680,217 | 36,550,595 | 40,502,749 | OSD    |

*Table 3.1: Population Estimates and Projections for Waller County, H-GAC 8, and Texas (number of persons)*

Source: OSD and H-GAC

<sup>4</sup> The city of Waller crosses Waller and Harris county boundaries

<sup>5</sup> The H-GAC 8 consists of the following counties: Brazoria, Chambers, Fort-Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller.

<sup>6</sup> Three migration scenarios are used to estimate projections. The first, zero (0.0) migration scenario, assumes that immigration and outmigration are equal resulting in natural growth. The second, one-half (0.5) scenario, assumes a growth rate averaging the zero migration scenario and the growth rate experienced from 2000 to 2010. This third (1.0) scenario assumes that the 2000 to 2010 trends in age, sex and race/ethnicity net migration will continue into the future. The Office of the Demographer suggests that the one-half scenario be used for long-term planning purposes.

|         | Estimates<br>(% change) | Projections (% change) |              |              |              | Source |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
|         | 2000 to<br>2010         | 2010 to<br>2020        | 2020 to 2030 | 2030 to 2040 | 2040 to 2050 |        |
| Waller  | 32.2                    | 20.7                   | 19.9         | 18.5         | 17.3         | OSD    |
|         | 34                      | 17                     | 90           | 25           | -            | H-GAC  |
| H-GAC 8 | 26.2                    | 16.5                   | 14.9         | 13.1         | 11.6         | OSD    |
|         | 27                      | 24                     | 20           | 16           | -            | H-GAC  |
| Texas   | 20.6                    | 14.6                   | 13.4         | 11.8         | 10.8         | OSD    |

Table 3.2: Population Estimates and Projections for Waller County, H-GAC 8, and Texas (percentage change)

Source: OSD and H-GAC Forecast (2016)

For the most part, Waller is set to grow at a faster pace than the H-GAC 8 and the state as a whole, for each decade through 2050. The H-GAC projection for Waller is highly aggressive for the 2020 to 2030 time period than the OSD 0.5 scenario projections.<sup>7</sup> Estimates from the 2000 and 2010 Census are presented with projections from both the OSD 0.5 scenario and the H-GAC.

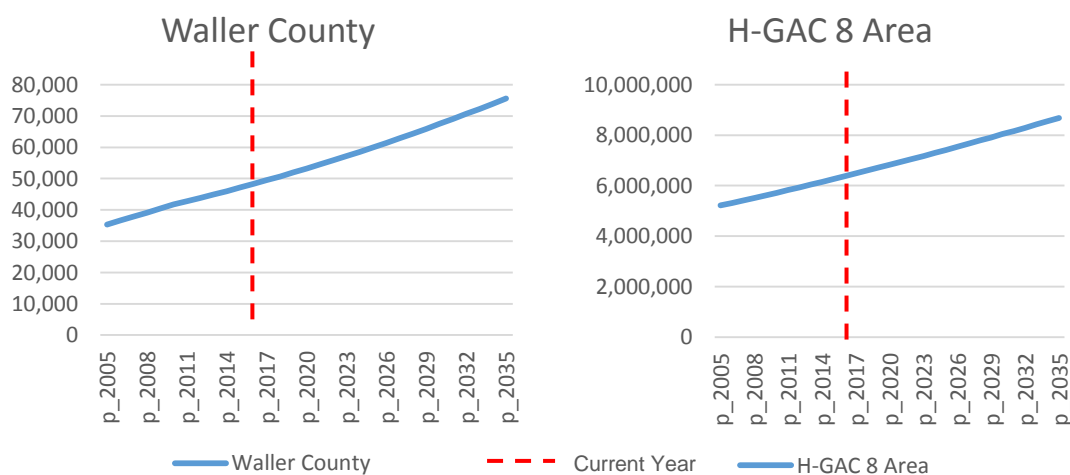
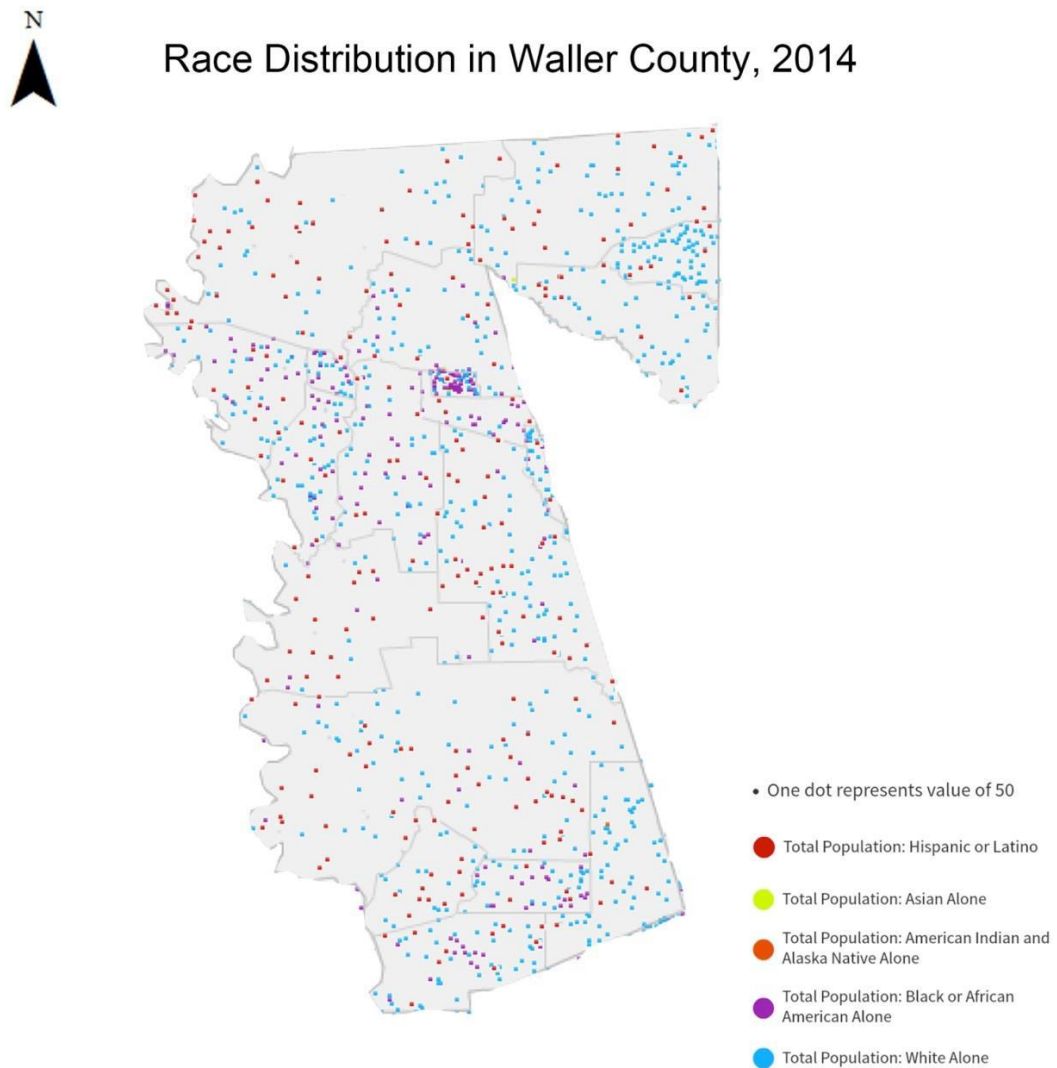


Figure 3.2: Population Projections

<sup>7</sup> Only during the 2010 to 2020 period does the H-GAC project a substantially lower growth rate for Waller County than for the H-GAC 8.

## 4. Race

Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of people by race throughout the County. The races are relatively dispersed, though African-Americans are clustered around the larger cities, particularly Prairie View. There are few if any African-Americans in the north-eastern portion of the County.



**Figure 4.1: Race Dot Map for Waller County, 2014**

Source: 2014 Data from the Social Explorer

According to the US Census, Waller County’s population is 45% of White, compared to Texas at 44% (Figure 4.2). Waller County has a larger proportion of African-Americans than Texas and smaller proportion of Asian. Although Texas has greater proportion of Hispanics than Waller County. However, by 2050 the County’s Hispanic population is projected to be over 50%, which is a consistent trend in Texas.

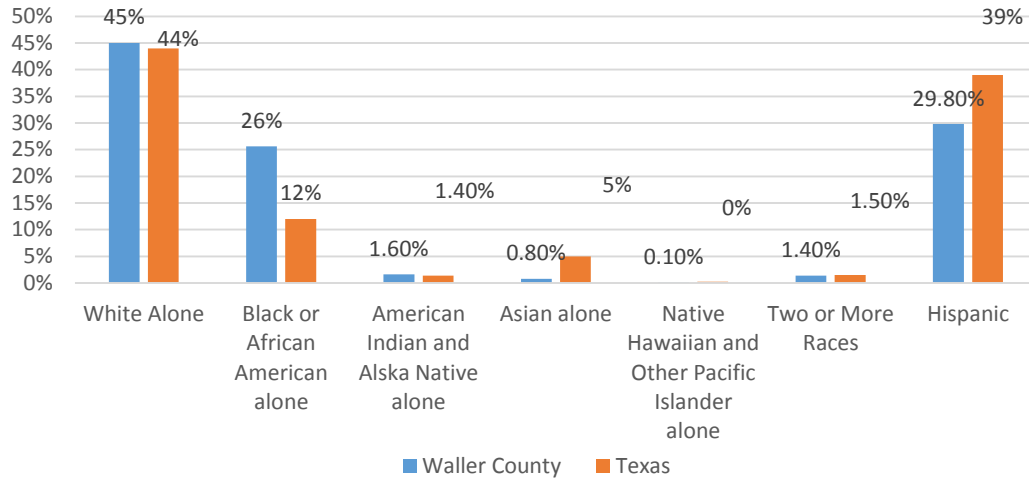


Figure 4.2: Race and Ethnicity by Waller County and Texas

Source: U.S. Census

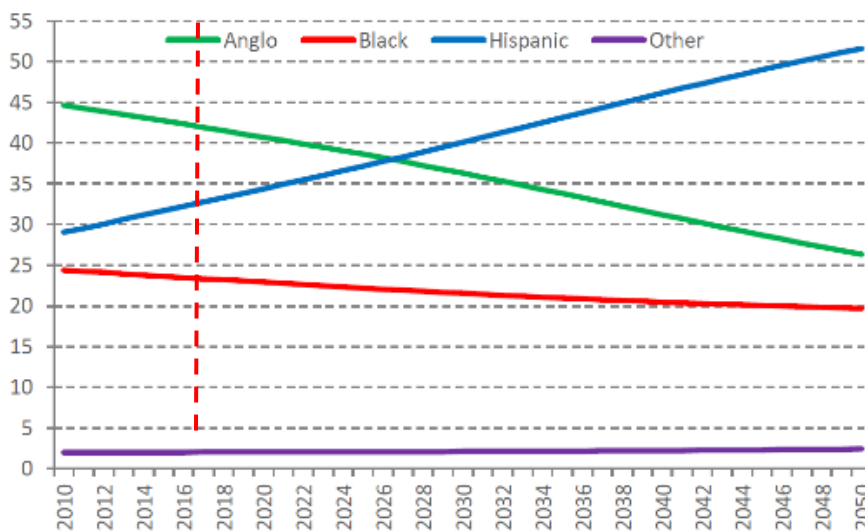


Figure 4.3: Population Projection by Race as a % of Total Population for Waller County

Source: OSD

## 5. Age Pyramid

The age pyramid for Waller County is shown in Figure 5.1. Waller County has the largest population of recent high school graduates (20 to 24 year olds) compared to surrounding counties likely due to the presence of PVAMU. Waller County also has a large population of children and young people, and a greater proportion of people from 45 to 60 years old when compared to other age groups in the County. There is a much larger proportion of those ages 25 to 44 in Texas than Waller County. The age pyramid for Texas in 2015 is displayed in Figure 5.2.

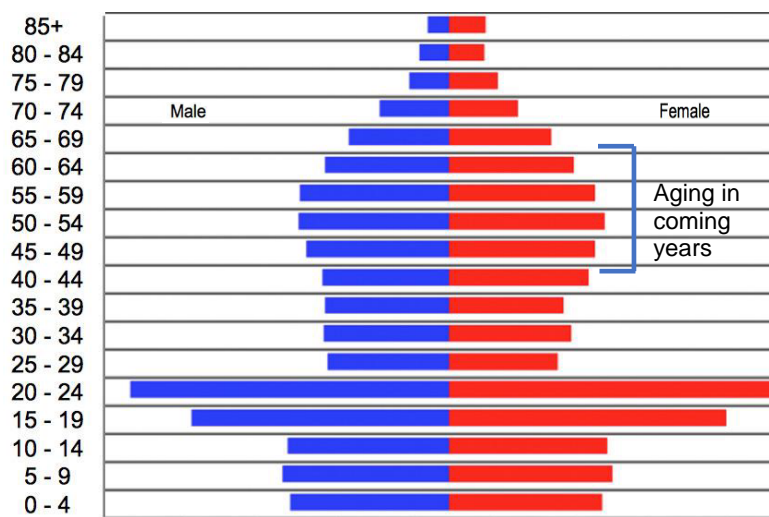


Figure 5.1: Age Distribution in Waller County

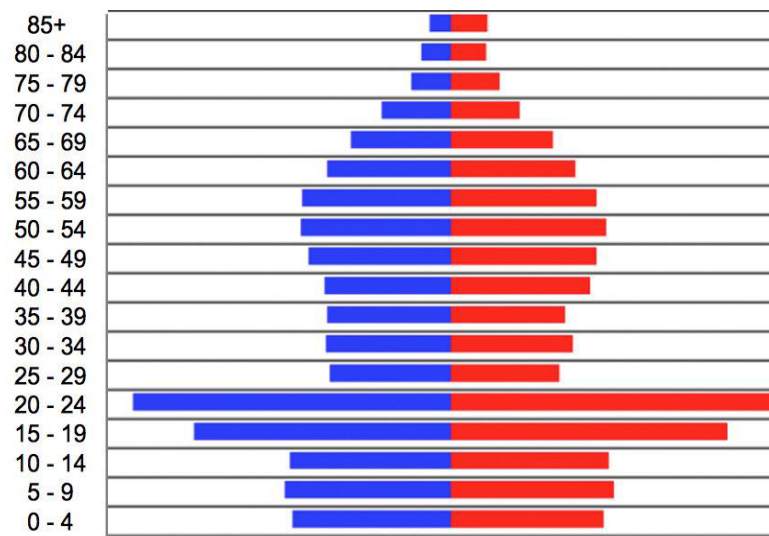


Figure 5.2: Age Distribution in Texas

Source: U.S. Census

Waller County’s age and sex distribution slightly resembles a cup shape, which means an aging society. Based on population projections, there will be proportionally more people ages 45 to 64 and 65-plus in the next 20 years—or more mid-career residents, retirees, and elderly. The less than 18, and 25 to 44 age groups will remain relatively stable for the next few years while the 18 to 24 age group is expected to decline. This could be a negative sign as the County will lose its younger population (Figure 5.3).

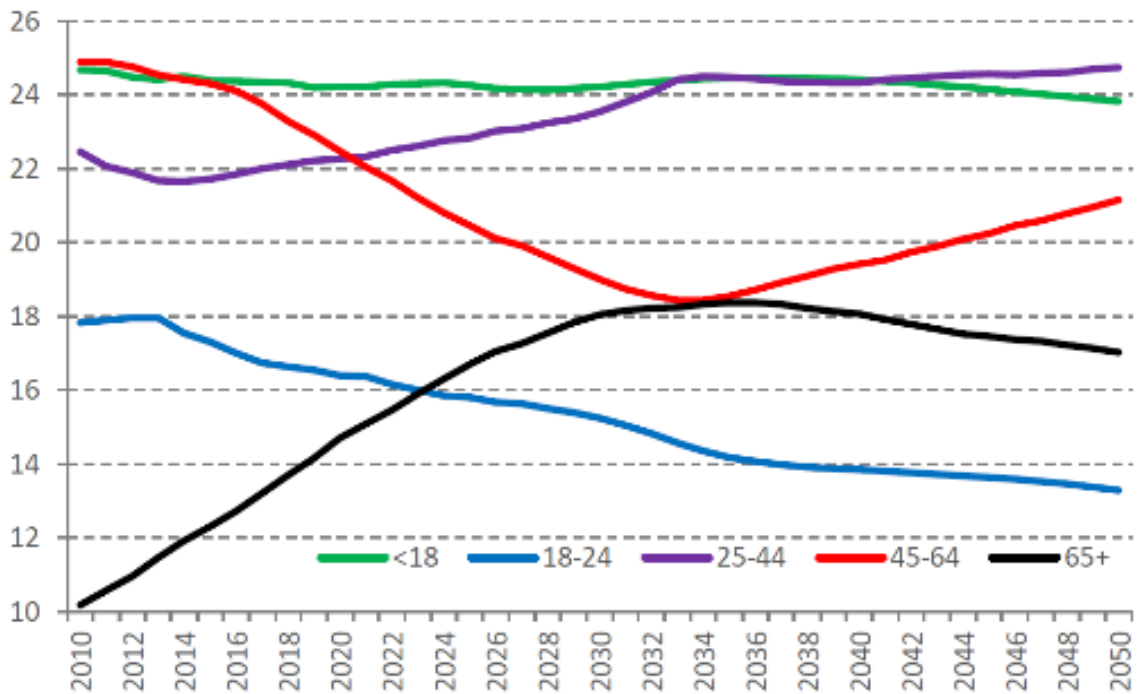


Figure 5.3: Population projections by Age Group (Percentage of Total)

Source: OSD

## 6. Education

While more (34%) residents have a high school education in Waller than in Texas and the US, Waller falls slightly short of Texas and the U.S. with regard to college attainment. The lower levels of attainment for associate, bachelor and graduate degrees is surprising considering the presence and prominence of PVAMU (see Figure 6. 1).

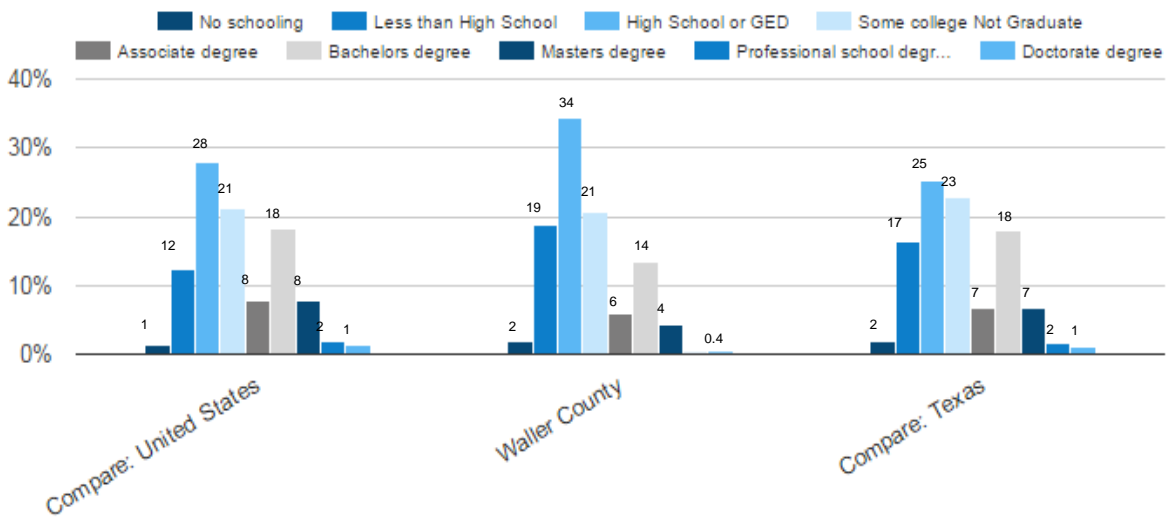


Figure 6. 1: Education; Attainment Detailed Comparison (Age 25+)

### Waller County Cities School Enrollment by Aggregate Categories

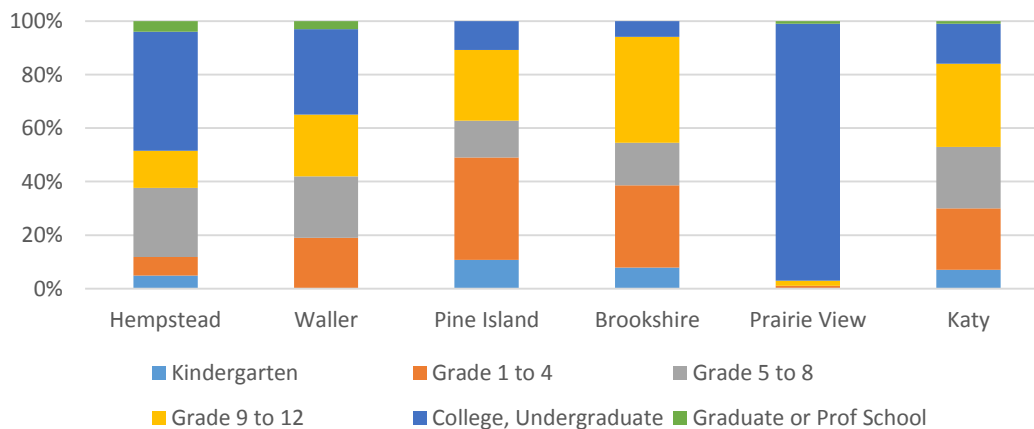


Figure 6.2: Waller County; School Enrollment by Aggregate Categories

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014. www.towncharts.com



As observed in Figure 6.2, eighty percent of person's age 25 or older in Waller County are high school graduates. Also, 46% of residents are enrolled in undergraduate programs, which is higher than all neighboring counties: Austin, Washington, Grimes, Harris and Fort Bend. Not surprising, the City of Prairie View, due to the presence of PVAMU has a college population equal to about 95% of all students in school. Other cities have a decent population of school going children between the ages 1-12.

## 7. Employment

### 7.1. Overview

As of 2014 there were 23,038 people employed in Waller County, including 17,984 wage and salary employees. Personal income per capita for the county was \$34,078, which has grown by \$10,000 from 2004 to 2014.<sup>8</sup> Total Employment has increased by 22.7 percent and 43.3 percent since 2009 and 2004, respectively.

|                                   | 2004     | 2009     | 2014     |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Total Employment</b>           | 16,078   | 18,773   | 23,038   |
| <b>Wage and Salary Employment</b> | 12,594   | 14,550   | 17,984   |
| <b>Proprietor Employment</b>      | 3,484    | 4,223    | 5,054    |
| <b>Waller County PIPC</b>         | \$24,683 | \$28,869 | \$34,078 |
| <b>Texas PIPC</b>                 | \$31,077 | \$37,037 | \$45,669 |
| <b>United States PIPC</b>         | \$34,316 | \$39,376 | \$46,049 |

*Table 7.1: Employment Totals and Personal Income Per Capita (PIPC)*

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Major employers in the county include.<sup>9</sup>

- Briarwood- Brookwood Inc.
- Creekside Nursery
- Hempstead ISD
- Igloo
- PBS of Central Florida
- Prairie View A&M University
- Royal ISD
- Waller ISD
- Wal-Mart associates Inc.

The industry sectors with the largest employment are Manufacturing (3,281), Educational Services (2,688), and Construction (1,364).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2014). Waller County, TX; Employment figures represent Employment and Personal Income Per Capita by place of residence.

<sup>9</sup> County profile prepared by the H-GAC as part of "Our Great Region 2040"

<sup>10</sup> LODES; employment by place of work.

## 7.2. Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in Waller County has gone down since 2010, which is a good indicator of the economic growth. As we see in Figure 7.2.1, Texas and Waller County have similar trends. Since 2010 unemployment has dropped from approximately 8% to 4.5% in Waller and 4.7% in Texas.<sup>11</sup>

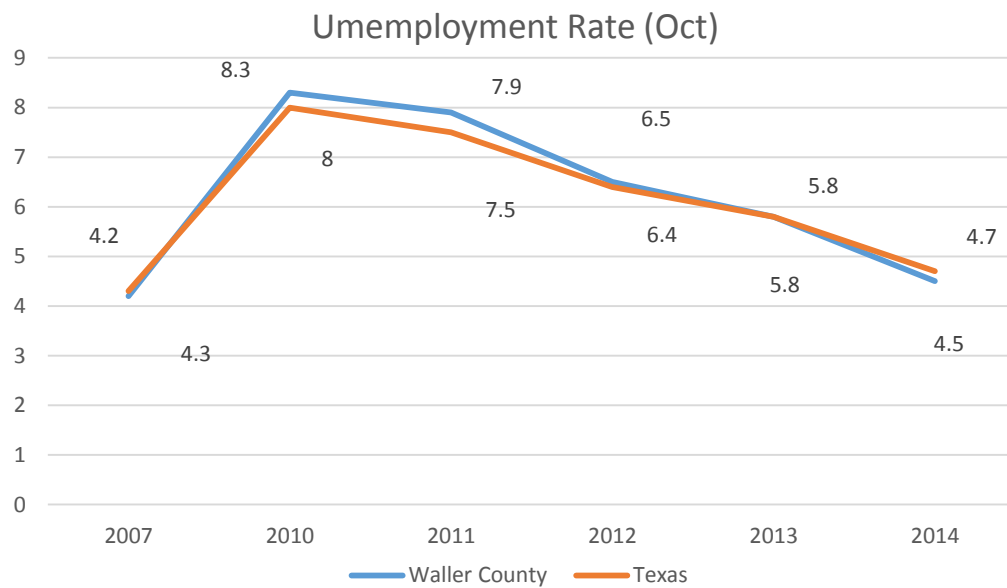


Figure 7.2.1: Trend of Unemployment Rate

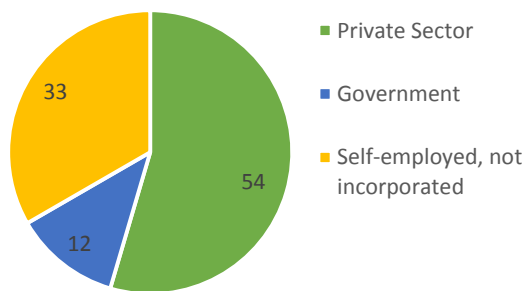
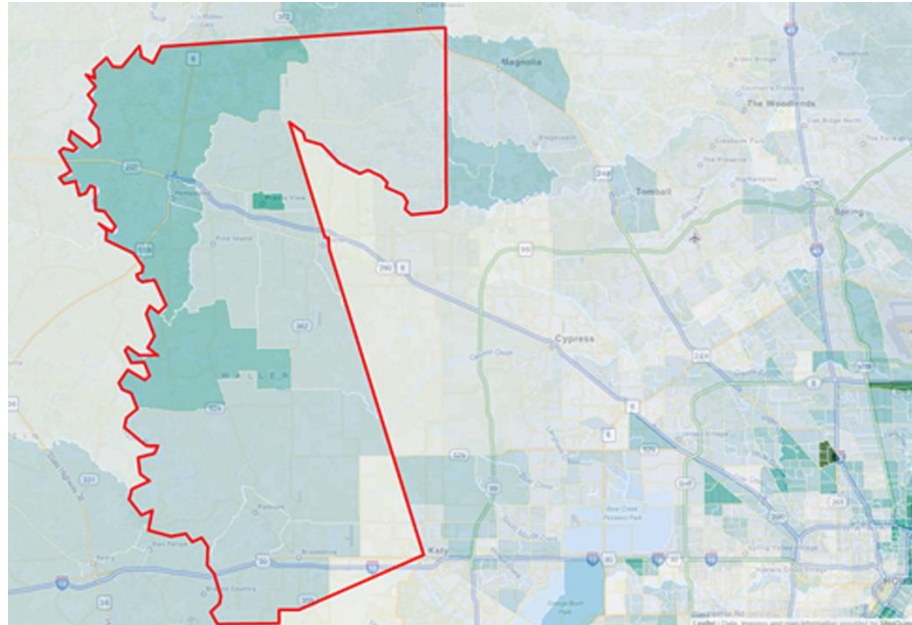


Figure 7.2.2: Types of Workers

In addition, as indicated in Figure 7.2.2, most working people in the County are either self-employed or work for a private company (Figure 7.2.2).

<sup>11</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014



**Figure 7.2.3: Unemployment Rate (%)**

Source: [http://www.city-data.com/county/Waller\\_County-TX.html](http://www.city-data.com/county/Waller_County-TX.html)

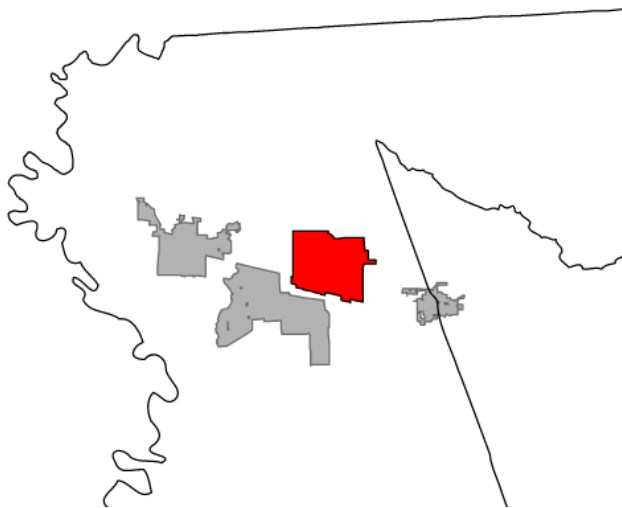


Figure 7.2.3 above indicates that most of the people in the county are employed. Most of the unemployment is concentrated around Prairie View A&M University (Figure 7.2.4) likely due to the presence of students.

**Figure 7.2.4: Prairie View A&M Campus**

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prairie\\_View,\\_Texas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prairie_View,_Texas)

## 8. Economy

### 8.1. Economic Structure

As shown in Figure 8.1.1, five industry sectors provide over 50% of the industry employment shares in Waller County:

- Health Care and Social Assistance,
- Educational Services,
- Retail trade,
- Manufacturing
- Construction.

Among the five, the Manufacturing, Construction and Educational Services have a larger relative percentage of employment shares than Texas.

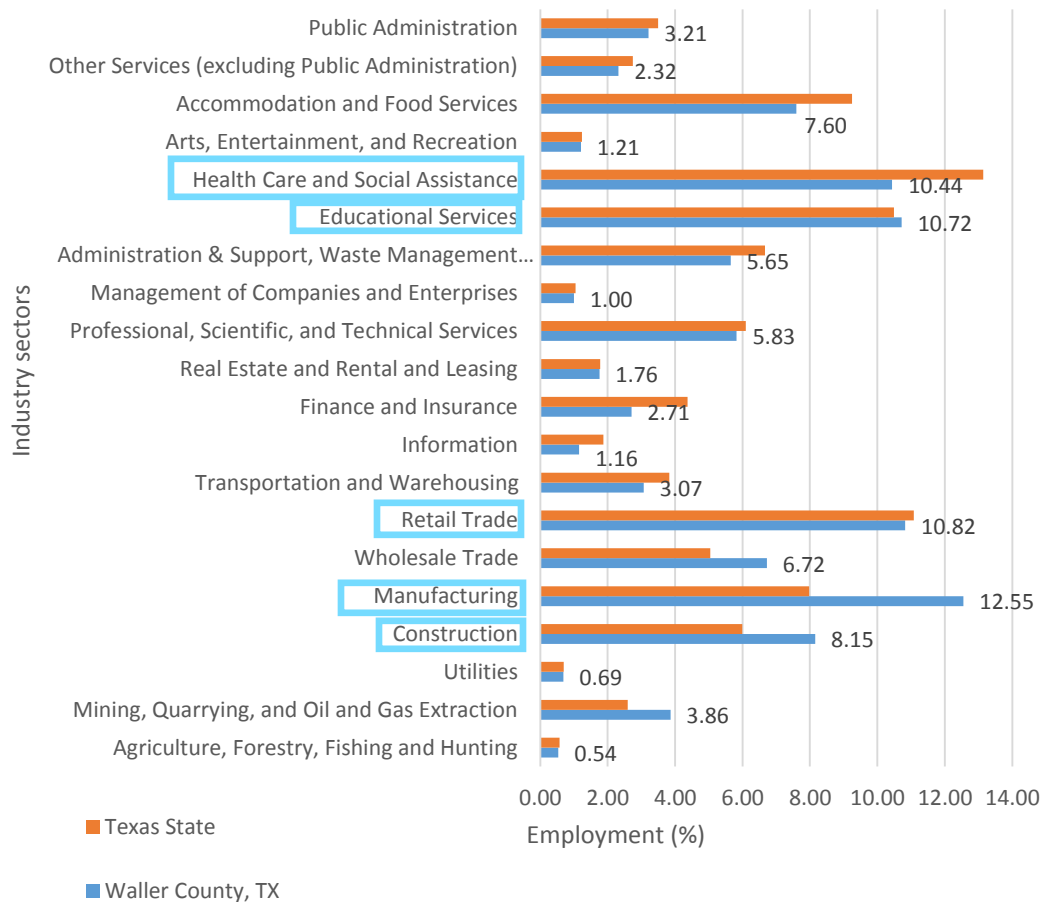


Figure 8.1.1: Employment Shares in Waller County and Texas

## 8.2. Characteristics of Regional Economy

A location quotient (LQ) is a method to quantify how concentrated a particular industry is in a region as compared to a larger region, such as Texas. A location quotient value greater than 1.0 means that the industry sector is a specialized area compared to the larger region.

| NAICS Title                                      | By Place of Work         |                       | By Place of Residence    |                       |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
|  | LQ 2014<br>Waller- Texas | LQ 2014<br>Waller- US | LQ 2014<br>Waller- Texas | LQ 2014<br>Waller- US |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting       | 1.95                     | 1.19                  | 0.95                     | 0.63                  |
| Mining   | 1.32                     | 5.96                  | 1.49                     | 6.51                  |
| Utilities  | 0.38                     | 0.45                  | 0.99                     | 1.17                  |
| Construction                                     | 1.59                     | 2.09                  | 1.36                     | 1.79                  |
| Manufacturing                                    | 2.88                     | 2.52                  | 1.57                     | 1.38                  |
| Wholesale Trade                                  | 1.52                     | 1.78                  | 1.33                     | 1.55                  |
| Retail Trade                                     | 0.7                      | 0.7                   | 0.98                     | 0.97                  |
| Transportation and Warehousing                   | 0.78                     | 0.85                  | 0.8                      | 0.88                  |
| Information                                      | 0.1                      | 0.08                  | 0.62                     | 0.52                  |
| Finance and Insurance                            | 0.19                     | 0.2                   | 0.62                     | 0.64                  |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing               | 0.71                     | 0.82                  | 0.99                     | 1.14                  |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 0.41                     | 0.39                  | 0.96                     | 0.93                  |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises          | 0.03                     | 0.02                  | 0.96                     | 0.59                  |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Mgmt        | 0.4                      | 0.43                  | 0.85                     | 0.9                   |
| Educational Services                             | 1.79                     | 1.97                  | 1.02                     | 1.13                  |
| Health Care and Social Assistance                | 0.6                      | 0.53                  | 0.79                     | 0.71                  |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation              | 1.09                     | 0.77                  | 0.98                     | 0.7                   |
| Accommodation and Food Services                  | 0.64                     | 0.64                  | 0.82                     | 0.83                  |
| Other Services(except Public Administration)     | 0.5                      | 0.44                  | 0.84                     | 0.73                  |
| Public Administration                            | 0.46                     | 0.34                  | 0.92                     | 0.67                  |

**Table 8.2. 1: Location Quotient by NAICS Industry Codes**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment

Conversely, a value less than 1.0 demonstrates a weakness in the industry sector. The LQ was calculated by dividing the percentage of economic activity in Waller County by the percentage of economic activity of Texas.

Employment by 'place of work' demonstrates the jobs that are available in the county. Alternatively, employment by 'place of residence' indicates the types of jobs residents have, although the jobs are in another county.

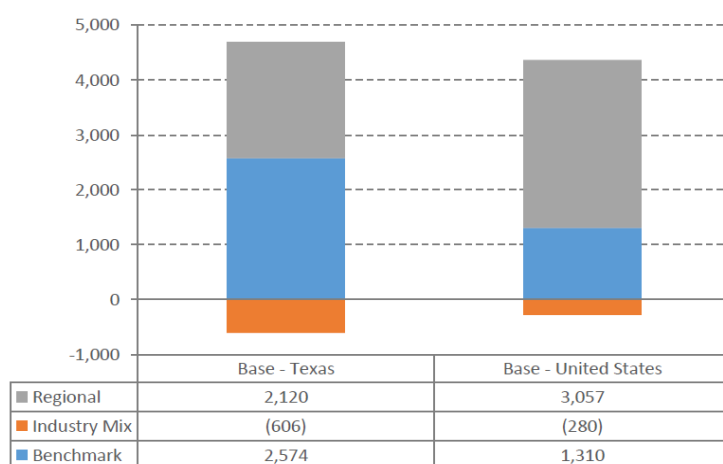
Manufacturing boasts the greatest LQ at 2.88 when compared to Texas. Agriculture et al. follows behind at 1.95 and 1.19 when compared to the Texas and the US respectively. Not surprisingly, Education Services has a LQ of 1.79 due to influence of Prairie A&M. Mining is relatively large when compared to the US at 5.96 but not as large when compared to the Mining specialized in Texas. Nonetheless, Waller County has a higher proportion of Mining Jobs than Texas. Other industries Waller specializes in include Construction (1.59) and Wholesale Trade (1.52). All told, Waller County has many specializations pointing to a strong economy.

Of the industrial sectors with an LQ less than one, the most notable industry is Management of Companies and Enterprises (0.03). Most likely, these types of jobs are hosted by nearby Houston, often dubbed the oil capitol of the US. Along with corporate jobs in mining, Houston likely attracts most if not all of the white-collar jobs. Other sectors including Information (0.10) and Finance and Insurance (0.19) are also likely to be stronger Houston.

### 8.3. Economic Growth

Waller County has benefited from the overall growth in Texas. Shift-share analysis is a tool which complements LQ and economic base analysis. The purpose is to indicate the relative economic growth rate of the region’s industries compared to national trends and to determine regional comparative advantages. It determines how much of regional job growth can be attributed to national trends compared to local economic conditions.

In Waller County, employment levels compare exceptionally well to state and national benchmarks. Total employment ‘by place of residence’ increased by 4,092 or 39.96% from 2004 to 2014. Comparatively, Texas increased by 2,27,109 or 25.14% and the U.S. increased by 15,319,082 or 12.80%.



**Figure 8.3.1: Shift-Share Analysis for Waller County, 2004-2014**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment

The energy and chemical industries appear to be emerging and dominant in Waller County (Figure 8.3.2). Manufacturing was concentrated in the County as well, in comparison to the nation. Additionally, manufacturing is export-oriented with a base multiplier value of 2.17.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Base Multiplier, is the ratio of the total employment in year to the base employment in that year. Base multipliers are powerful tools in analyzing and forecasting regional economic activity. A higher economic base multiplier implies a larger effect of the basic job creator on the total number of jobs.



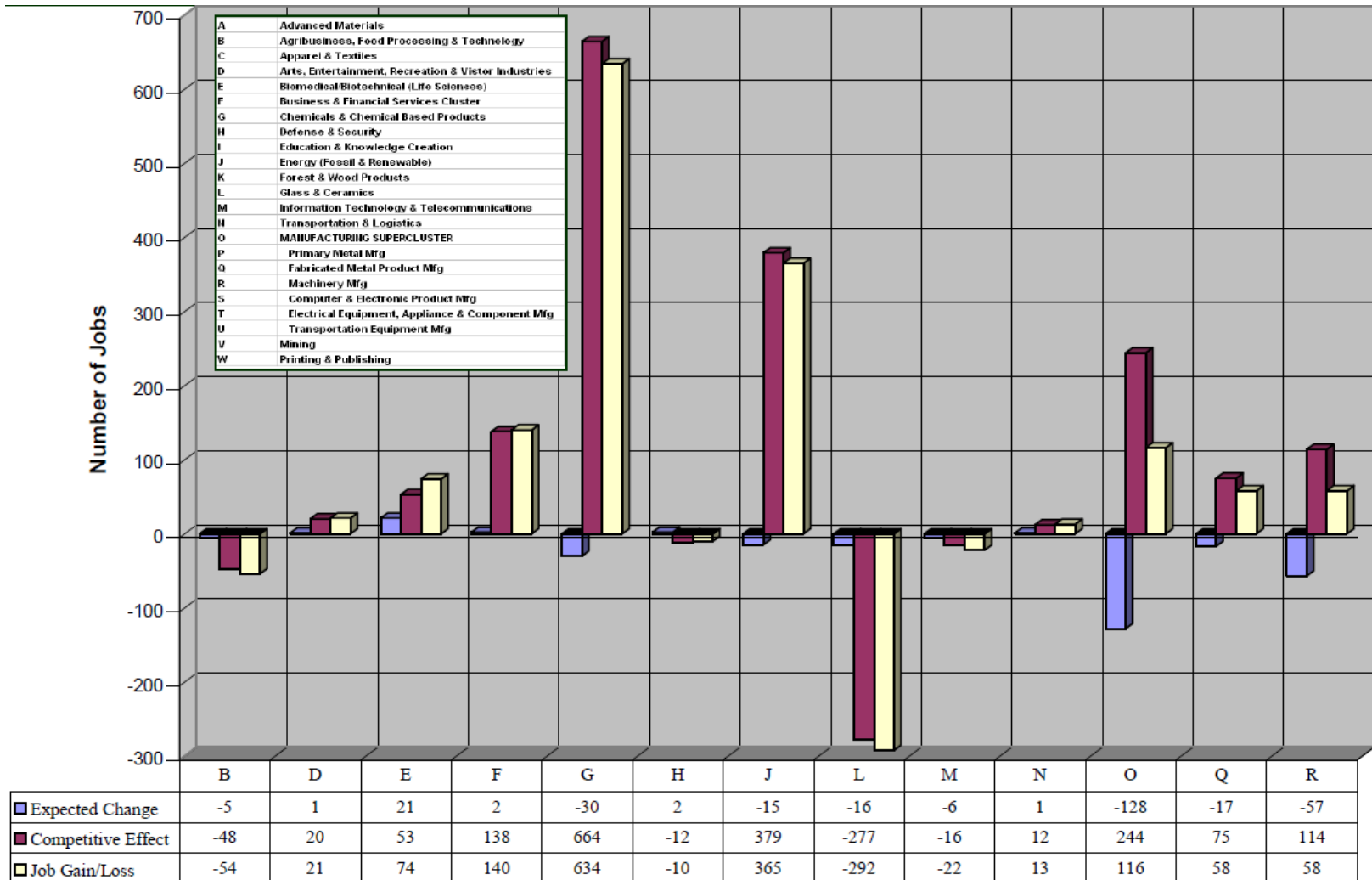


Figure 8.3.2: Shift- Share Analysis of Waller County Industry Clusters as Compared to Texas

Source: [https://www.h-gac.com/community/community/publications/regional\\_industry\\_cluster\\_analysis.pdf](https://www.h-gac.com/community/community/publications/regional_industry_cluster_analysis.pdf)

|        | Downward  | Stable  | Upward           |
|--------|-----------|---|------------------|
| Poor   |           |   |                  |
| Medium | Matagorda | Liberty, Waller, Wharton                                  | Colorado, Walker |
| Good   |           | Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris, Montgomery | Fort Bend        |

*Table 8.3.1: Distribution of GCEDD Counties Across Nine Types of Economic Performance*

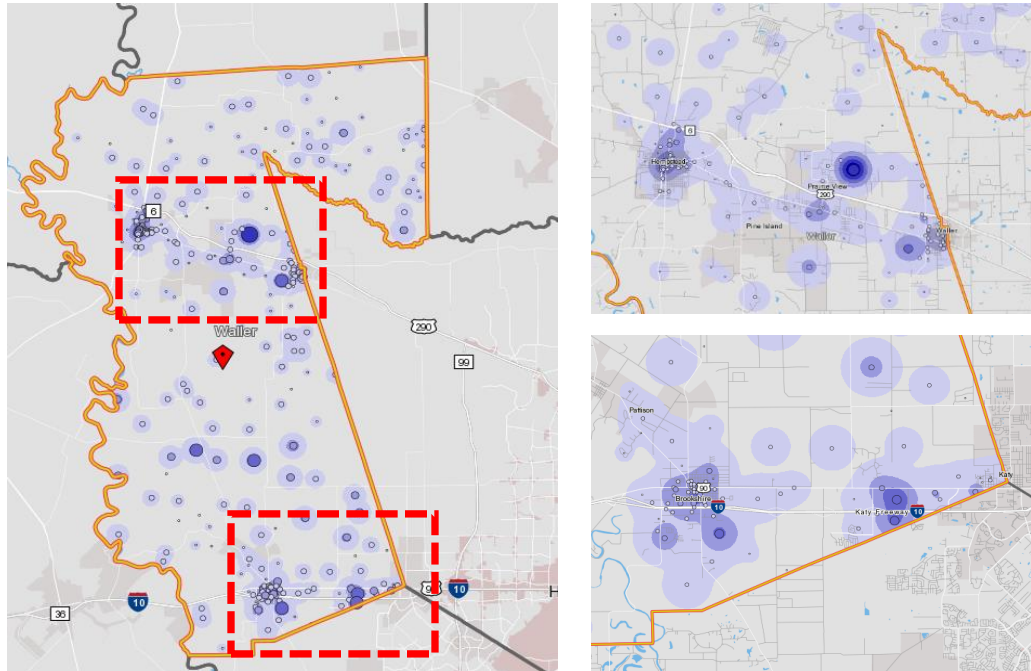
Source: [https://www.h-gac.com/community/community/publications/regional\\_industry\\_cluster\\_analysis.pdf](https://www.h-gac.com/community/community/publications/regional_industry_cluster_analysis.pdf)

The categories in Table 8.3.1 are defined using five variables that measure economic change. Economic performance in Waller and surrounding counties is measured with indicators, such as median household income, average annual wage, unemployment rate, and poverty rate.<sup>13</sup> Median household income, which includes transfer payments, wages and investment income, measures the economic well-being of a household. Average annual wage on the other hand, indicates compensation levels. The unemployment rate is utilized to assess labor availability information; whereas, poverty rate quantifies the proportion of the population whose family income is below a certain threshold. In addition to the four variables mentioned above, five other indicators are used to measure the economic well-being of a county: average annual change since 2001 for the four indicators mentioned above, plus change in total covered employment from 2001 to 2005. The economic performance analysis indicates that most of the counties in the region with the exception of Matagorda County are performing well. The County should use these indicators to monitor improvements overtime.

<sup>13</sup> GCEDD: Gulf Coast Economic Development District; [https://www.h-gac.com/community/community/publications/regional\\_industry\\_cluster\\_analysis.pdf](https://www.h-gac.com/community/community/publications/regional_industry_cluster_analysis.pdf)

## 8.4. Job Density and Inflow/ Outflow

Employment sectors were concentrated in the six cities (Prairie View, Pine Island, Hempstead, Waller, Brookshire and a part of Katy) (Figure 8.4.1).

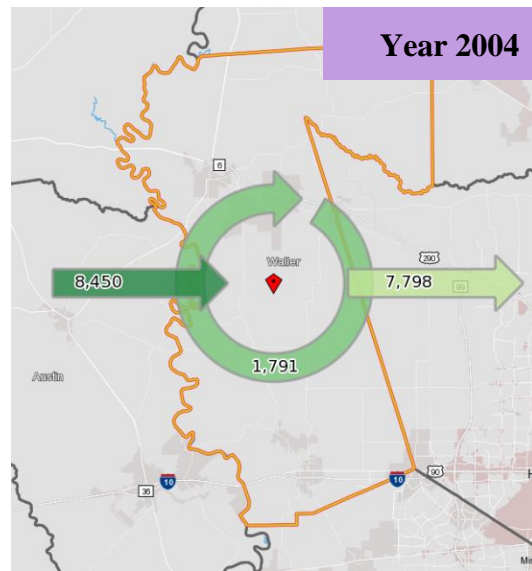


**Figure 8.4.1: Major Employment provision areas in Waller County**

Source: <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

While the discussion thus far has focused on the jobs available inside Waller County, it is also important to understand the inflow and outflow of employees. In addition, there are three categories of employees (Figure 8.4.1):

- 1) Live and work in Waller,
- 2) Live in Waller and work outside of Waller,
- 3) Live outside of Waller and commute to Waller to work.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

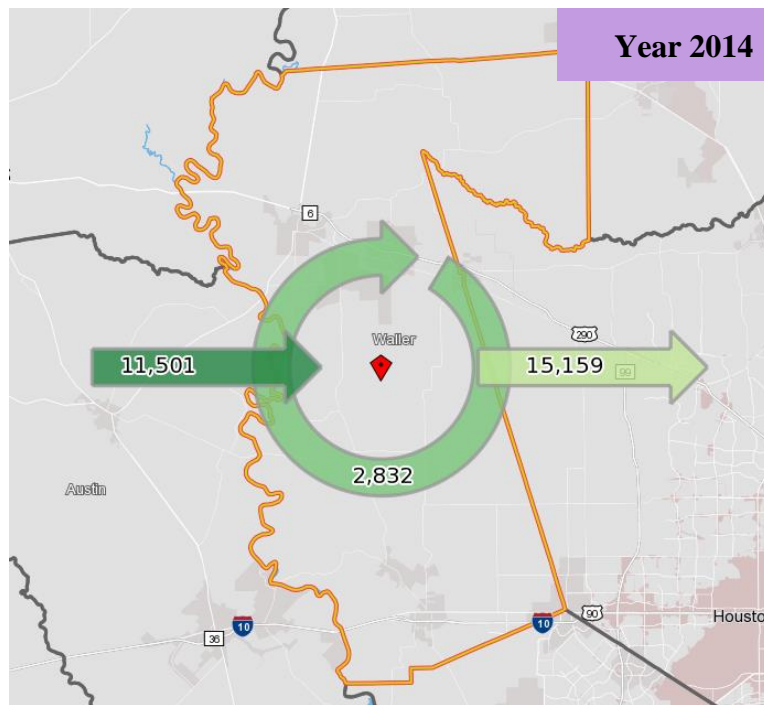
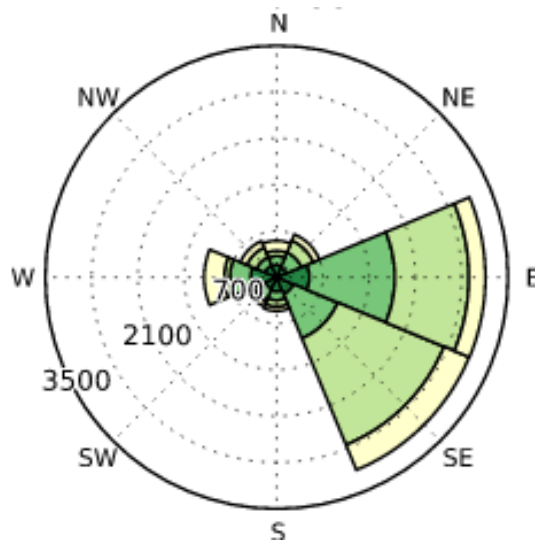


Figure 8.4.2: Job Inflow/ Outflow

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

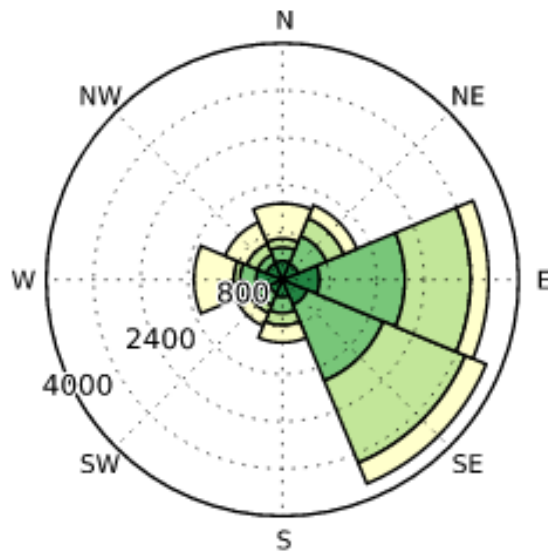
From 2004 to 2014, Waller experienced a slight reduction in the proportion of workers that live and work in Waller County. Nearby Harris County, anchored by Houston, attracts a majority of the employment leaving the county. Figure 8.4.3 depicts employment flow from Waller County for 2004 and 2014.



**Year 2004**

**Jobs by Distance - Work Census Block to Home Census Block**

|                       | 2004   |        |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|
|                       | Count  | Share  |
| Total All Jobs        | 10,241 | 100.0% |
| Less than 10 miles    | 2,111  | 20.6%  |
| 10 to 24 miles        | 3,160  | 30.9%  |
| 25 to 50 miles        | 3,518  | 34.4%  |
| Greater than 50 miles | 1,452  | 14.2%  |



**Year 2014**

**Jobs by Distance - Work Census Block to Home Census Block**

|                       | 2014   |        |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|
|                       | Count  | Share  |
| Total All Jobs        | 14,333 | 100.0% |
| Less than 10 miles    | 3,002  | 20.9%  |
| 10 to 24 miles        | 4,483  | 31.3%  |
| 25 to 50 miles        | 3,740  | 26.1%  |
| Greater than 50 miles | 3,108  | 21.7%  |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

**Figure 8.4.3: Distance and Direction from Home Census Block to Work Census Block**

### 8.5. Leakage/ Surplus Factor

A leakage represents an industry sector where the volume of local retail sales generated by local retail businesses do not meet the volume of retail potential of local household spending – essentially, when demand exceeds supply. A leakage presents an opportunity to keep household spending within the county rather than lose it to markets outside of Waller County. A surplus on the other hand represents a situation where supply exceeds local demand, but it is possible that the excess supply is attracting consumption from outside the Waller market area.

From Figure 8.5.1 we can see that vending machine operators, shoe and accessory stores and stationary stores fall under leakages. Vending machines are very common and important, especially at places like bus stops, school canteens, office canteens, community halls, stadiums, gas stations etc. There are very few sectors which are surplus in the County. Also, we understand that the County primarily depends on the neighboring cities like Houston for jobs, entertainment and shopping centers.

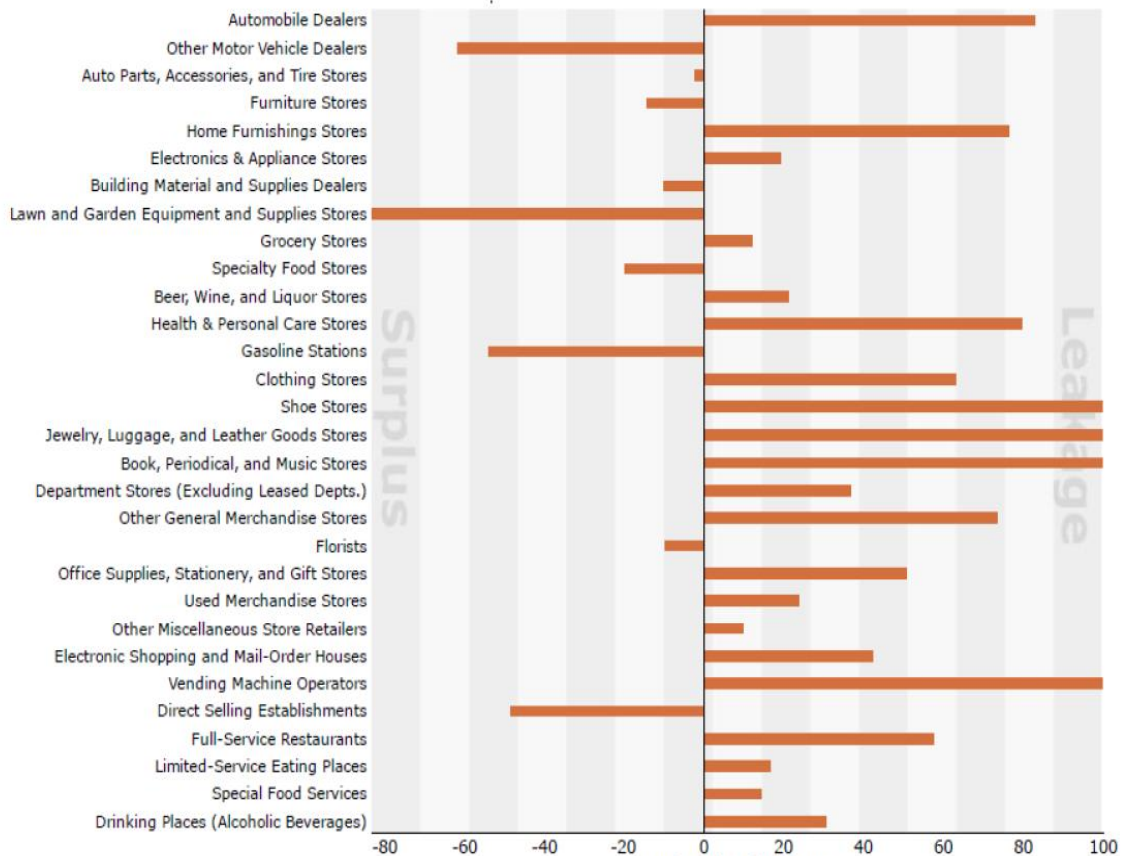


Figure 8.5.1: Leakage/ Surplus Factor by Industry Group

Source: Esri and Infogroup

## 8.6. Income Distribution

The per capita income of Waller County is \$34,078 (BEA 2014) and median household income is \$50,889.<sup>14</sup> The distribution of median income of the county shows that the Katy area has the highest median income and the Pattison area has the lowest (Figure 8.6.2). In Waller County 29.07% of the African-American population lives below poverty line, followed by 22.76% of the Hispanic population and 21.22% of the White or Anglo population.<sup>15</sup>

On an average, White citizens earn more than other races or ethnicities. Figure 8.6.1 shows the wage disparity between the 5 most common occupations.<sup>16</sup>

Highest Average Salary: White; \$43,572 ± \$3,317

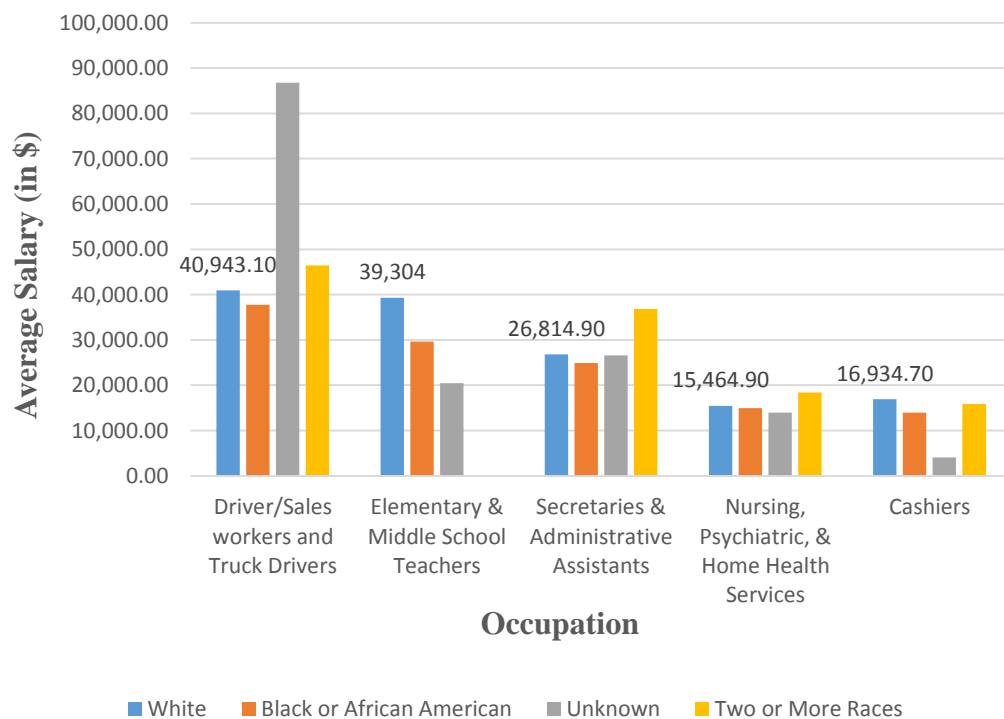


Figure 8.6.1: Wage by Race & Ethnicity

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2014

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2014

<sup>16</sup> Dataset: 2014 ACS PUMS 5- year Estimates; Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

### Median Income Distribution in Waller County

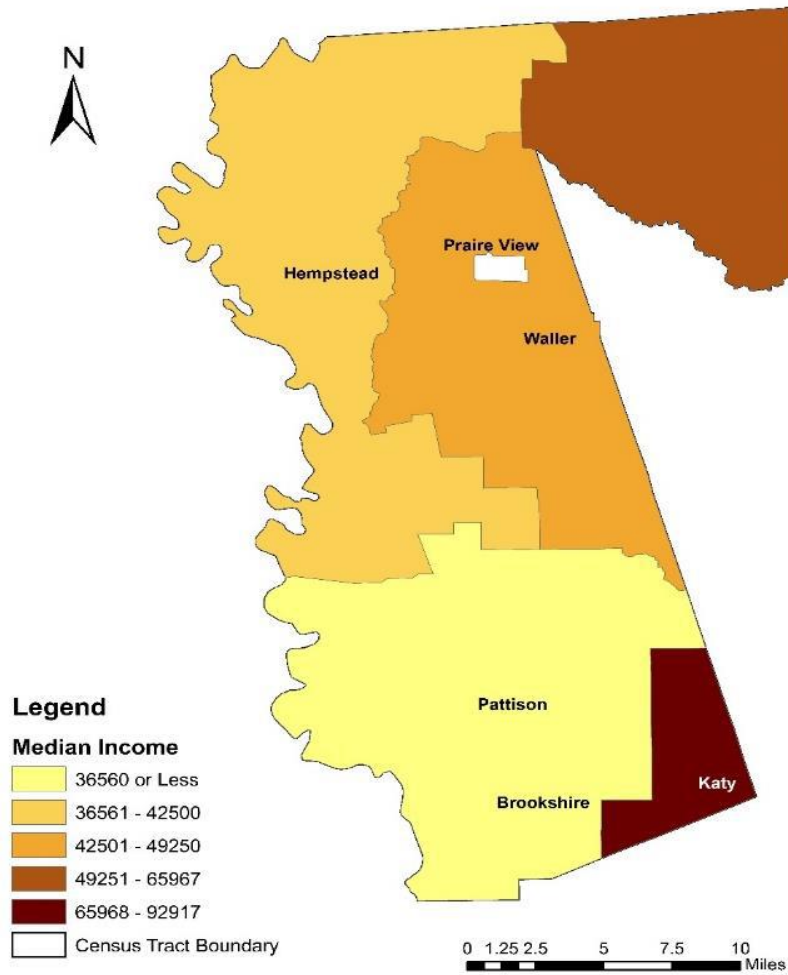


Figure 8.6.2: Distribution of Median Income

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014



## 8.7. Poverty

Roughly 19% of the population in the US live below the poverty level, which is a little more than Texas (17%).<sup>17</sup> In Waller County, Prairie View has the highest percentage of people living below poverty. This may be due to the high student population (Figure 8.7.1). According to the US Census Bureau (see Figure 8.7.2), 36% of the population are in poverty and not in the labor force.

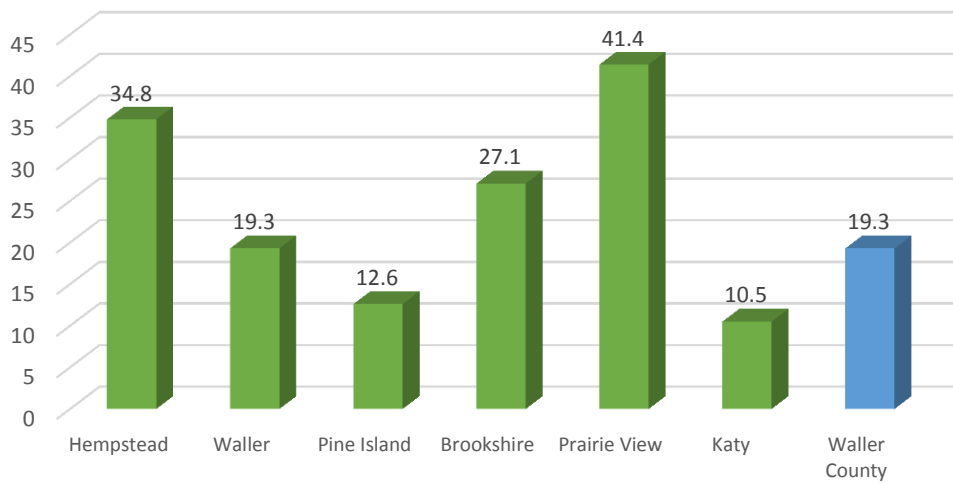


Figure 8.7.1: Population in Poverty (%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

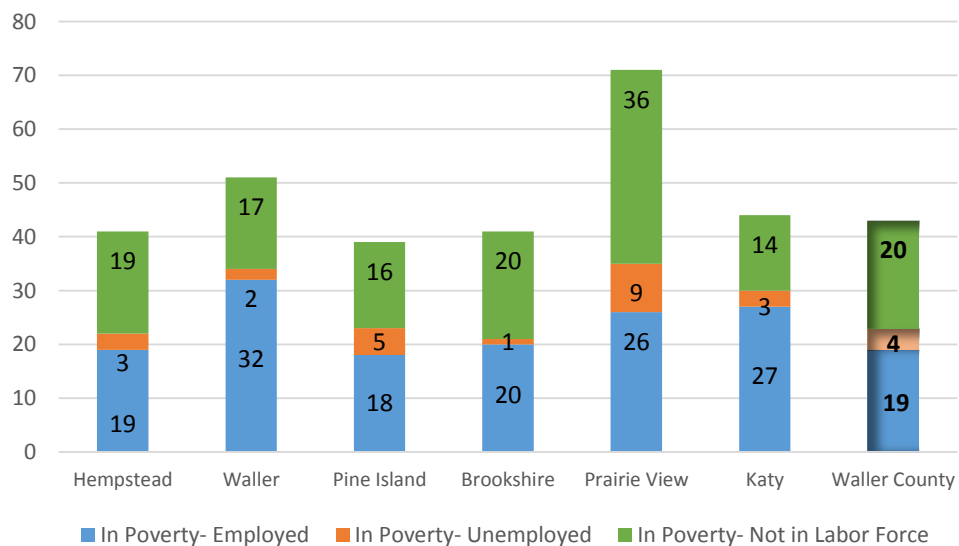


Figure 8.7.2: Population in Poverty and Working Status (%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

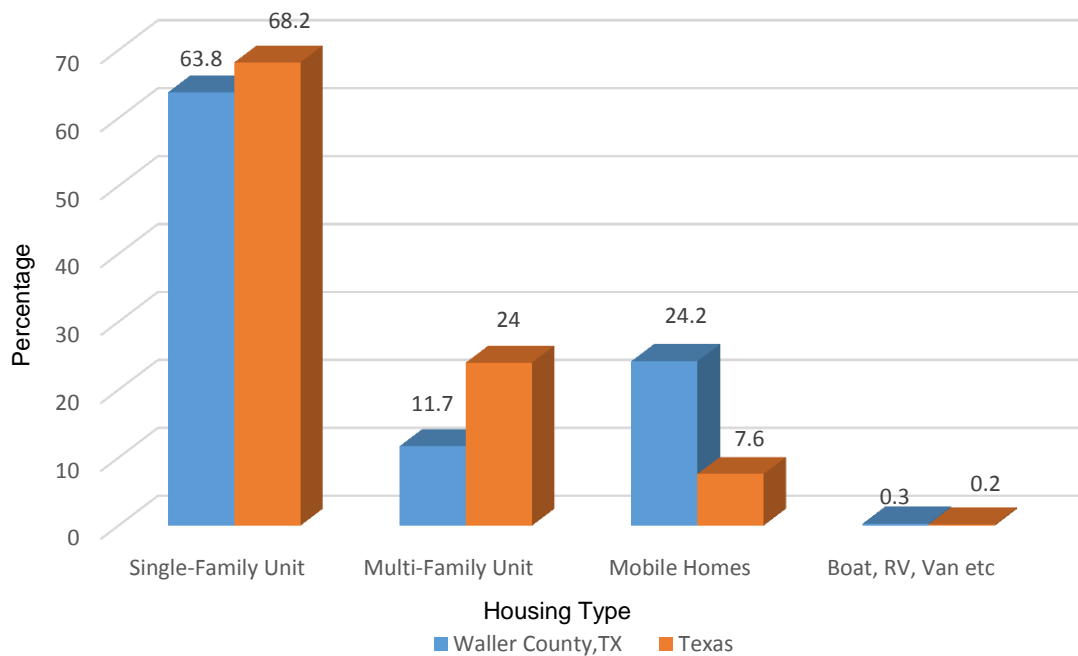
<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2014

## 9. Housing

### 9.1. Housing Types

The majority of the homes in Waller County are single family, multi-family, and mobile homes. There are 15,839 total housing units with an average household size of 2.81 and family size of 3.29.<sup>18</sup> By 2035, 10,000 additional housing units are needed to meet population projections referenced earlier in this document. Roughly, 9,482 are owner occupied units and just over half (51.5%) of the owner occupied units carry mortgage.

Waller County has a larger percentage of mobile homes than Texas. The County has 24% of housing stock as mobile homes which is common in rural areas (Figure 9.1.1).



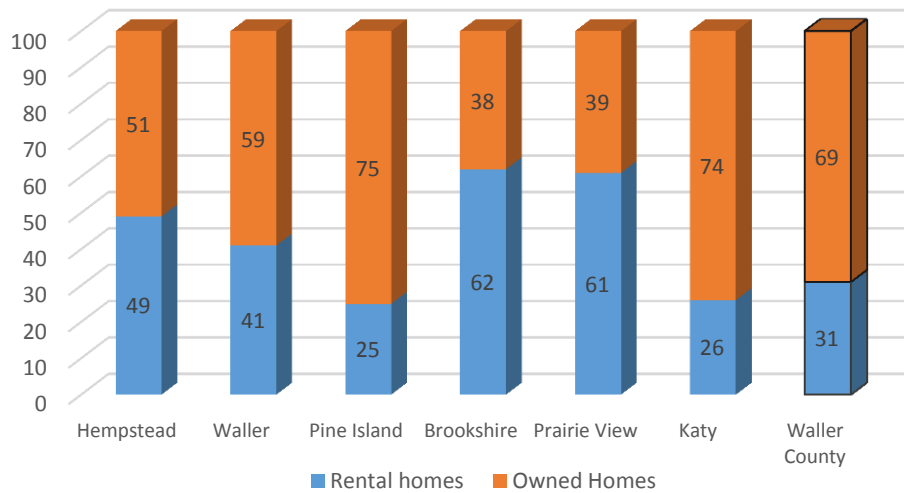
**Figure 9.1.1: Comparison of Housing Type (%)**

Source: Our Great Region 2040: H-GAC

<sup>18</sup> American FactFinder; U.S. Census Bureau 2014

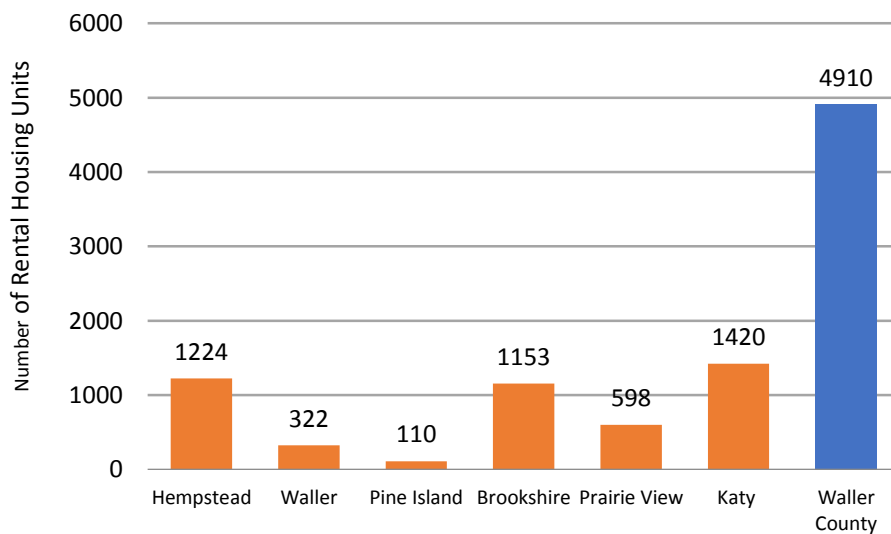
## 9.2. Renters Vs. Owners

Texas has 35% rental and 65% owned homes. Overall, Waller County is similar to Texas, though city by city we see a different picture (Figure 9.2.1). A higher percentage of rental homes in Prairie View is likely due to the presence of Prairie View A&M. Pine Island and Katy have the high share of owned homes in the county (Figure 9.2.1). The overall number of rental units are in Table 9.2.2.



**Figure 9.2.1: Percentage of Owned and Rental Homes**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

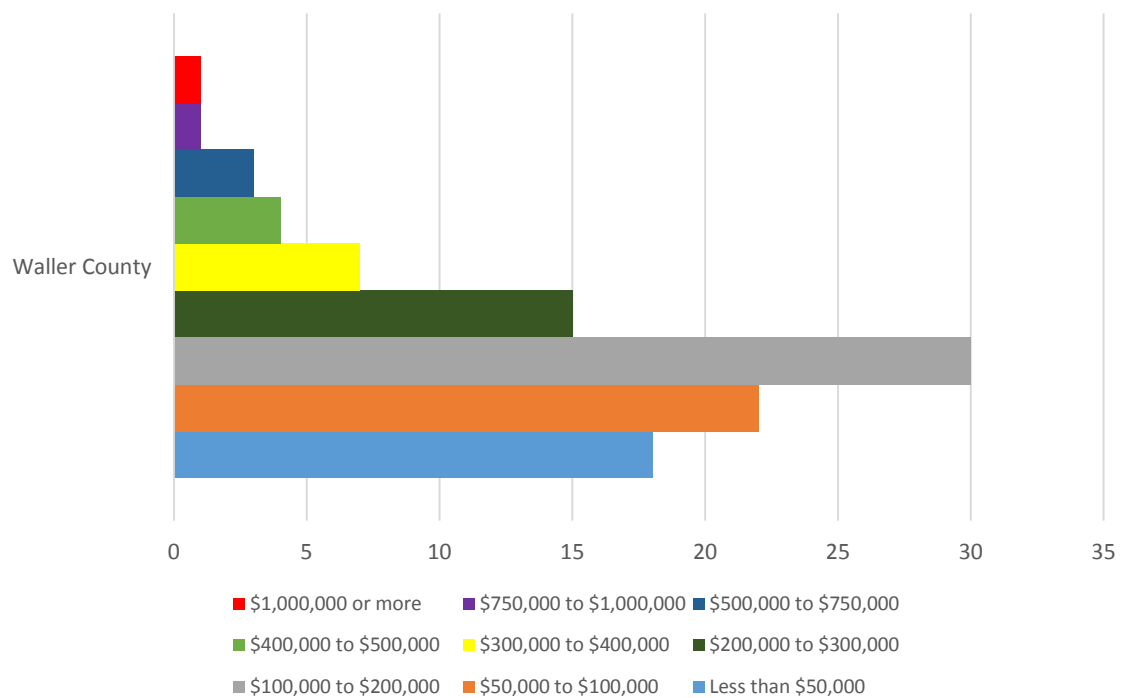


**Figure 9.2.2: Number of Rental Housing Units**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

### 9.3. Home Value

About 18% of the homes in Waller County are worth less than \$50,000 (Figure 9.3.1). It also has one of the largest proportions of home values between \$50,000 and \$100,000 or 21% of all homes (Harris County - 25%, Grimes County - 27%). Roughly 40% of all homes are less than \$100,000 in value and 70% of all homes are less than \$200,000 in value. Figure 9.3.2 offers a closer at the individual cities, Brookshire and Hempstead have a large proportion of homes valued less than \$50,000, 45% and 40% respectively.



**Figure 9.3.1: Home Value Distribution (%)**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

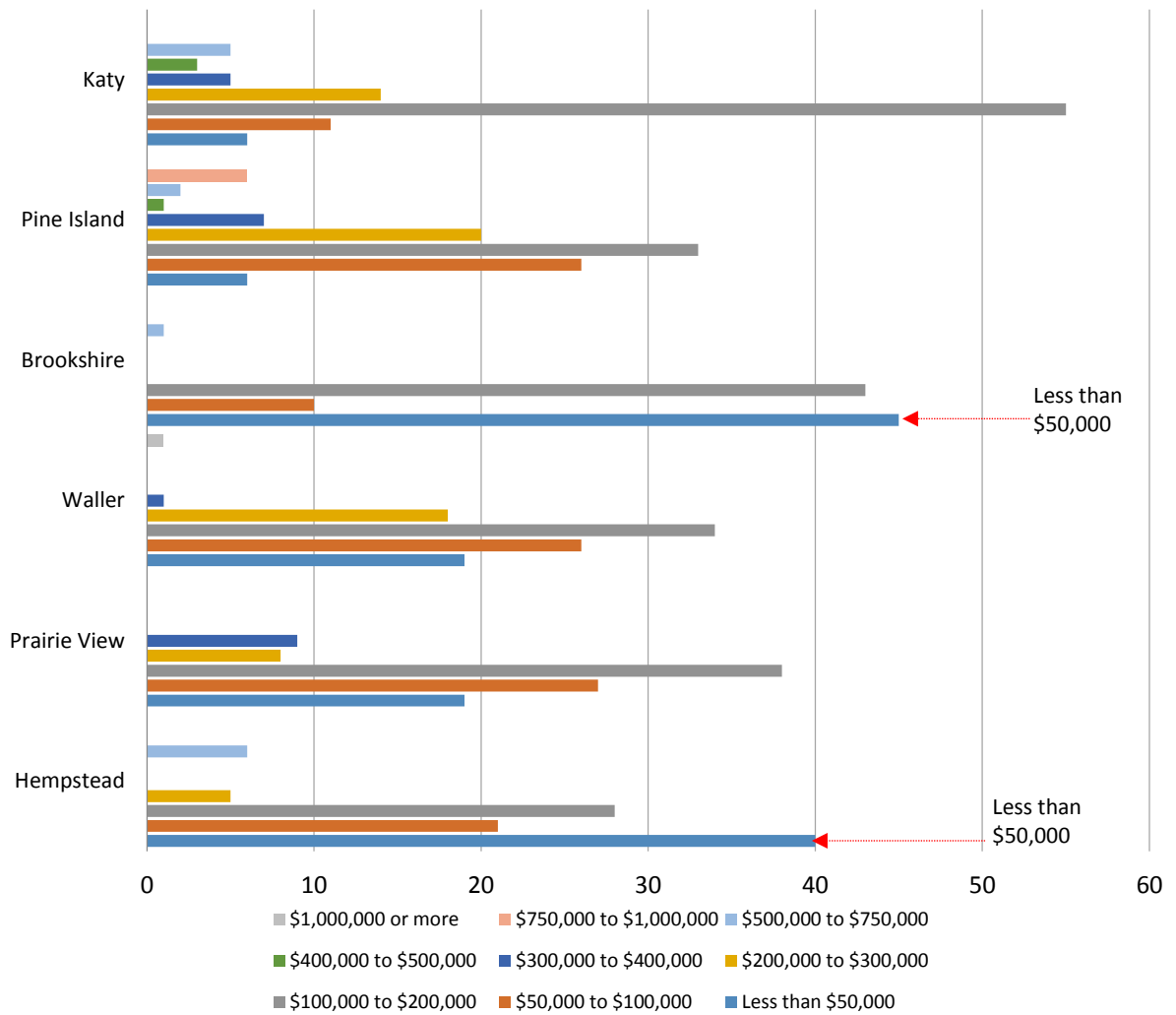


Figure 9.3.2: Home Value Distribution (%) by City

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014

### 9.4. Monthly Rental Rates

With regard to rental rates, most (33%) pay between \$500 and \$750 in Waller County (see Figure 9.4.2). Prairie View has a good mix rent levels, and inn Hempstead, most rental housing is less than \$1000 in rent.

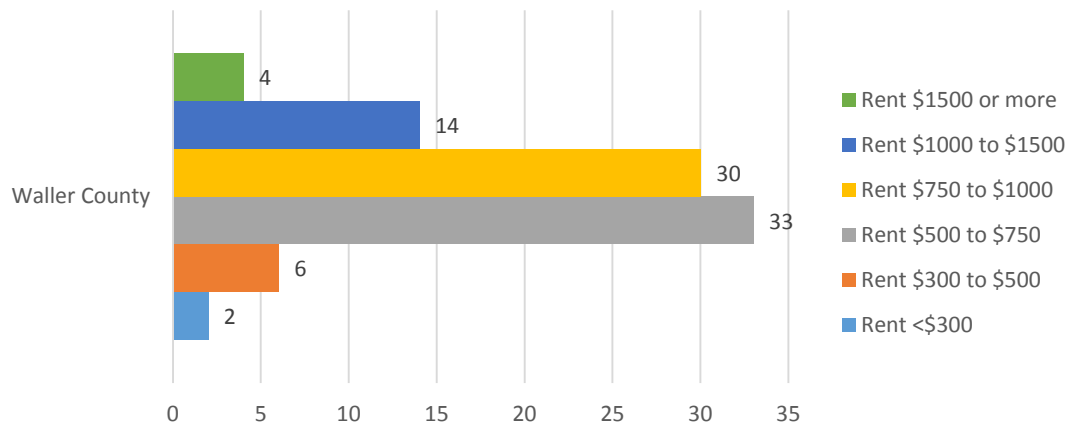


Figure 9.4.1: Monthly Rental rates for the County (%)

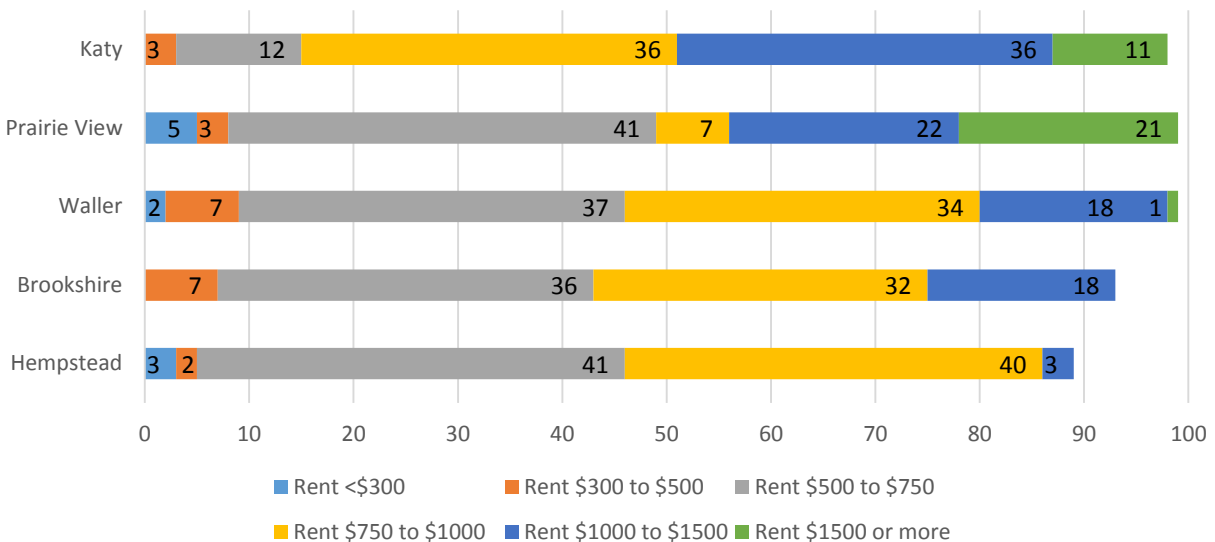


Figure 9.4.2: Monthly Rental Rates Cities(%)

Source: <http://www.towncharts.com/Texas/Housing/Waller-County-TX-Housing-data.html>, U.S. Census Bureau

## 10. House Vacancy and Unaffordability

### 10.1. Vacant Housing

Vacant and abandoned properties are often attributed to larger economic forces at work in the community; and they often associated or at least perceived to be associated with higher levels of crime, increased risk to health and welfare, plunging property values, and escalating municipal costs, which exacerbates overall community decline and disinvestment.<sup>19</sup>

Out of the total housing units (15,839), roughly 11.5% are vacant. Of vacant units, 2.77% are for rent and 1.29% are for sale (Figure 10.1.2).

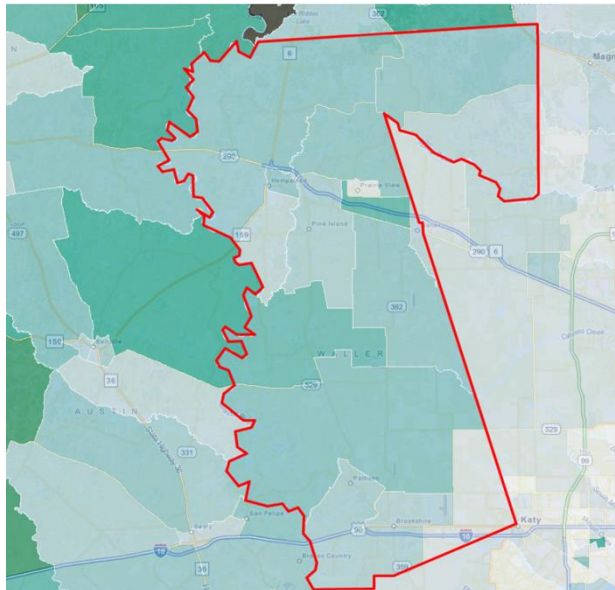


Figure 10.1. 1: Vacant Housing Units (%)

Source: [http://www.city-data.com/county/Waller\\_County-](http://www.city-data.com/county/Waller_County-)

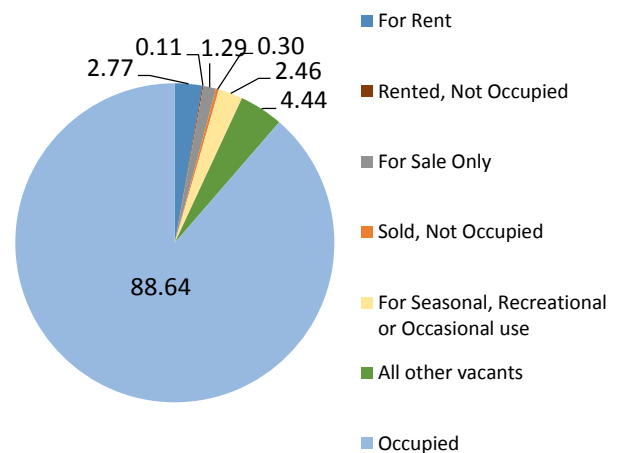


Figure 10.1.2: Housing Availability (%)

Source: ASC, 2014

<sup>19</sup> John Accordino and Gary T. Johnson. 2000. "Addressing the Vacant and Abandoned Property Problem," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 22:3, 302–3.

## 10.2. Mortgage Status and Affordability

Roughly 51% of housing units in Waller County have a mortgage payment (Texas: 61%).<sup>20</sup> As Figure 10.2.1 indicates, Pine Island has comparatively fewer housing units with a mortgage payment (at 30% of houses). In addition, there are 60 units in Hempstead (13.2%) and 9 (11.1%) units in Pine Island that pay more than \$3,000 or more as a mortgage payment. Most of the units in Hempstead and the City of Waller pay a mortgage of over \$1,000.

Housing units without a mortgage payment typically pay a minimum amount for maintenance purposes even after the mortgage has been paid off and are ‘free and clear’. The cities of Hempstead, Waller, Pine Island and Prairie View have more than 50% of homes without a mortgage payment (Table 10.2 2.2). There are 822 units in the County (59 in the City of Waller, 31 in Pine Island, and the remaining in unincorporated areas of the county), paying \$700 or more even without a mortgage. These data can be used in the development of housing programs aimed to meet the needs of people at different economic levels.

---

<sup>20</sup> American FactFinder; U.S. Census Bureau 2014; housing units with mortgage include the loan amount plus the money for maintenance



|                                | Texas     | Waller County | Brookshire | Hempstead | Pine Island | Prairie View | Waller city | Katy  |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------|
| Total (Owner Occupied Units)   | 5,652,542 | 9,482         | 601        | 1,014     | 273         | 291          | 405         | 3,915 |
| Housing units with a mortgage: | 3,423,338 | 4,882         | 406        | 452       | 81          | 139          | 166         | 2,530 |
| Less than \$200                | 1,212     | 0             | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0            | 0           | 0     |
| \$200 to \$299                 | 3,843     | 6             | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0            | 0           | 6     |
| \$300 to \$399                 | 10,835    | 0             | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0            | 0           | 0     |
| \$400 to \$499                 | 29,536    | 33            | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0            | 0           | 0     |
| \$500 to \$599                 | 57,921    | 69            | 23         | 25        | 0           | 20           | 0           | 0     |
| \$600 to \$699                 | 95,797    | 140           | 42         | 0         | 0           | 0            | 0           | 16    |
| \$700 to \$799                 | 133,467   | 192           | 18         | 57        | 0           | 13           | 13          | 0     |
| \$800 to \$899                 | 171,467   | 222           | 0          | 41        | 0           | 0            | 0           | 49    |
| \$900 to \$999                 | 198,129   | 155           | 31         | 0         | 1           | 0            | 0           | 122   |
| \$1,000 to \$1,249             | 578,005   | 937           | 171        | 129       | 30          | 30           | 65          | 393   |
| \$1,250 to \$1,499             | 558,475   | 844           | 24         | 120       | 12          | 31           | 68          | 550   |
| \$1,500 to \$1,999             | 771,459   | 1,147         | 55         | 20        | 11          | 45           | 15          | 709   |
| \$2,000 to \$2,499             | 373,440   | 503           | 42         | 0         | 8           | 0            | 5           | 348   |
| \$2,500 to \$2,999             | 189,801   | 357           | 0          | 0         | 10          | 0            | 0           | 82    |
| \$3,000 or more                | 249,951   | 277           | 0          | 60        | 9           | 0            | 0           | 255   |

**Table 10.2.1: Selected Monthly Home Owner Cost - Housing Units with Mortgage**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

|                                   | Texas     | Waller County | Brookshire | Hempstead | Pine Island | Prairie View | Waller city | Katy  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------|
| Total (Owner Occupied Units)      | 5,652,542 | 9,482         | 601        | 1,014     | 273         | 291          | 405         | 3,915 |
| Housing units without a mortgage: | 2,229,204 | 4,600         | 195        | 562       | 192         | 152          | 239         | 1,385 |
| Less than \$100                   | 23,734    | 13            | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0            | 0           | 0     |
| \$100 to \$149                    | 51,478    | 9             | 0          | 0         | 2           | 0            | 0           | 8     |
| \$150 to \$199                    | 102,411   | 141           | 0          | 15        | 0           | 0            | 0           | 8     |
| \$200 to \$249                    | 149,251   | 263           | 0          | 49        | 3           | 0            | 32          | 68    |
| \$250 to \$299                    | 180,968   | 424           | 0          | 70        | 20          | 18           | 9           | 43    |
| \$300 to \$349                    | 197,016   | 479           | 0          | 125       | 6           | 9            | 32          | 25    |
| \$350 to \$399                    | 199,842   | 484           | 62         | 99        | 14          | 0            | 17          | 38    |
| \$400 to \$499                    | 360,308   | 756           | 104        | 57        | 43          | 55           | 62          | 188   |
| \$500 to \$599                    | 285,788   | 675           | 8          | 116       | 43          | 27           | 23          | 196   |
| \$600 to \$699                    | 206,468   | 534           | 21         | 31        | 30          | 24           | 5           | 212   |
| \$700 or more                     | 471,940   | 822           | 0          | 0         | 31          | 19           | 59          | 599   |

**Table 10.2 2: Selected Monthly Home Owner Cost - Housing Units without Mortgage**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

### 10.3. Monthly Rental Rates<sup>21</sup>

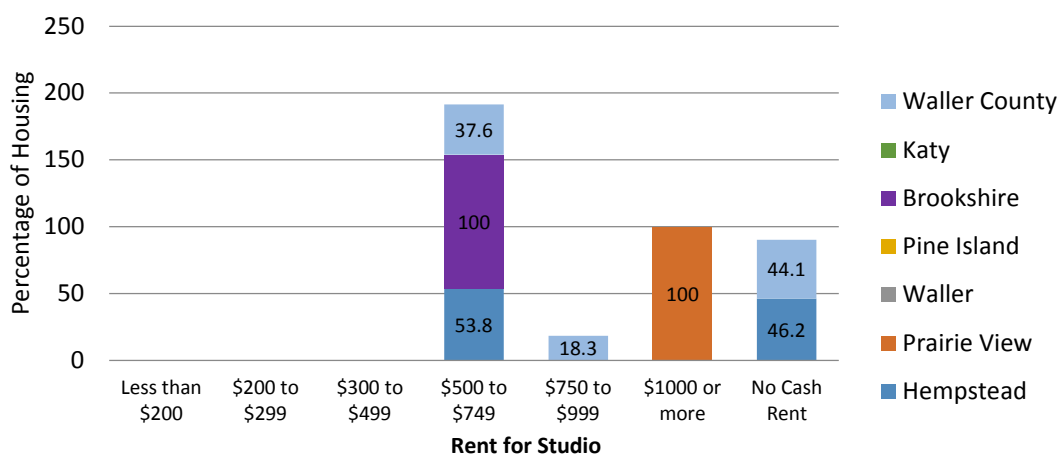


Figure 10.3. 1: Rental Characteristics for Studio - No Bedroom Units

There are 44% of studio apartments available for rent in the County, although none are available in the City of Waller, Pine Island and Katy. In Prairie View all the studio apartments are \$1000 or more. Additionally, 45% of apartments in Hempstead and Waller County overall are on ‘rent without any cash’.<sup>22</sup>

As for one-bedroom rental units, most range from \$500-\$749 per month but Katy has majority of units costing more than \$750 per month.

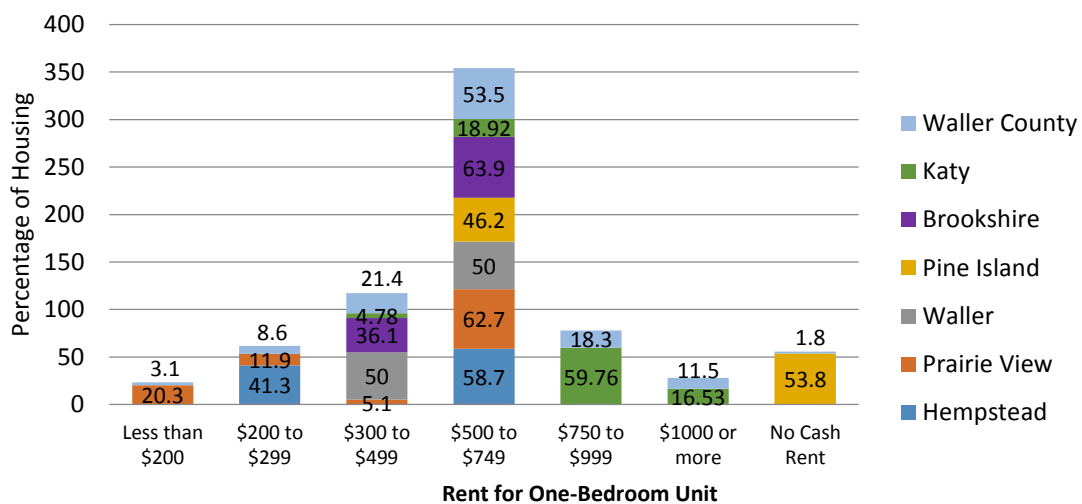


Figure 10.3.2: Rental Characteristics for One-Bedroom Units

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2014

<sup>22</sup> No cash rent are provided free by friends or relatives or in exchange for services such as resident manager, caretaker, minister, or tenant farmer; also military bases.

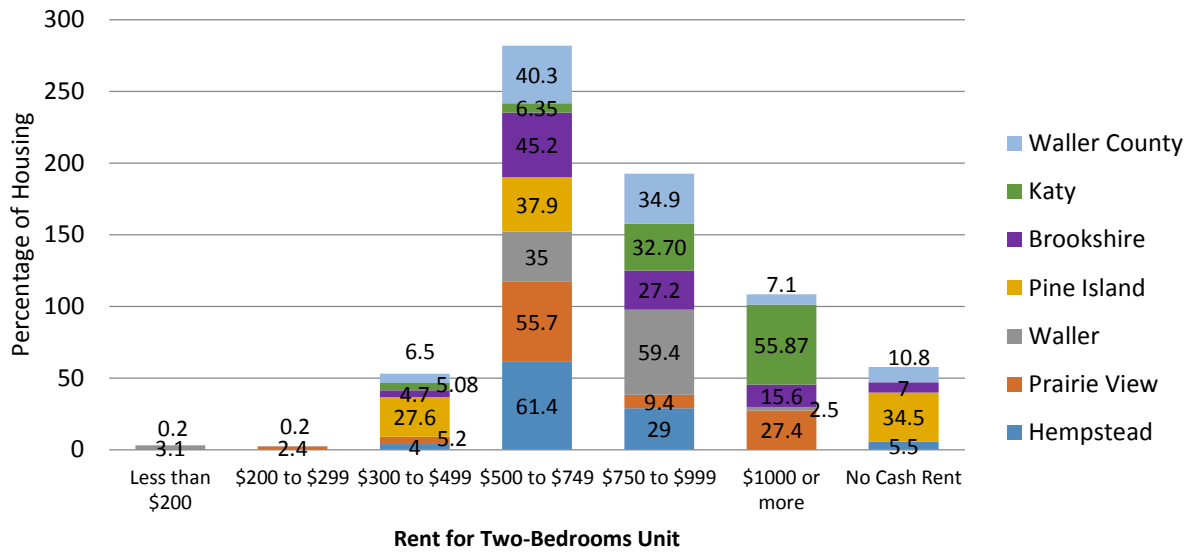


Figure 10.3.3: Rental Characteristics for Two-Bedrooms Units

Two bedroom apartments are available in most of the cities in all price ranges, though the County average ranges from \$500-\$1000 (Figure 10.3.3).

About 82% of rental properties in Prairie View and 70% in Katy are more than \$1,000 per month for a three bedroom unit.

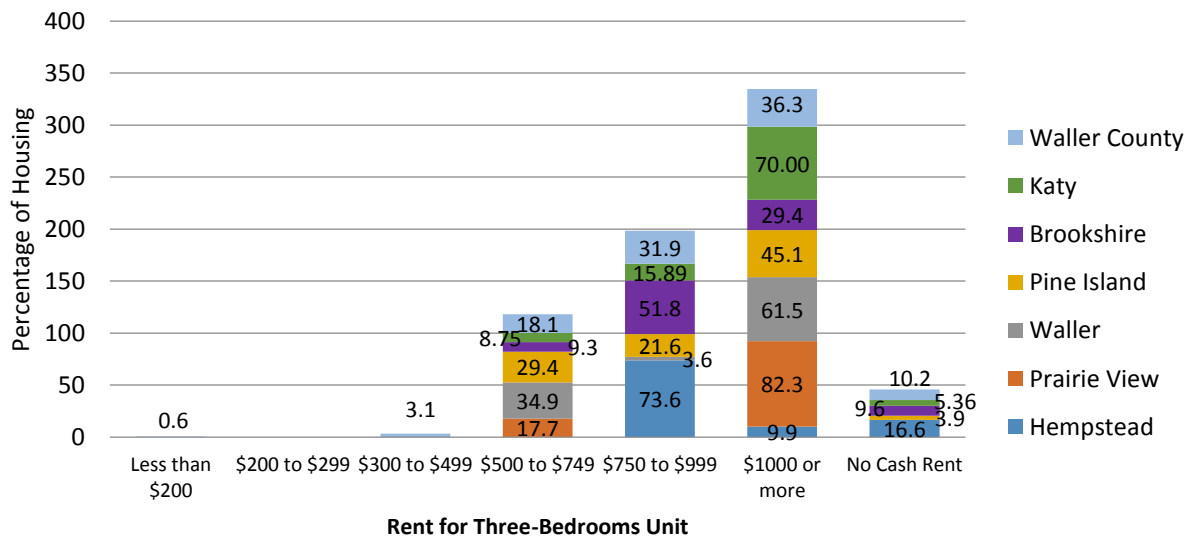
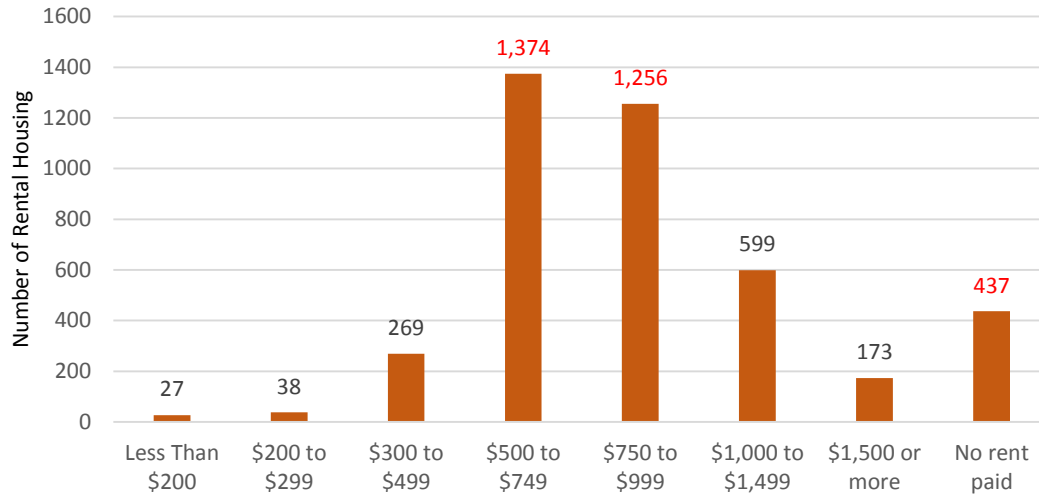


Figure 10.3.4: Rental Characteristics for Three-Bedrooms Units



*Figure 10.3.5: Number of Rental Housing Units by Price in Waller County*

The Figure 10.3.5 above indicates the number of rental housing units at various price ranges in Waller County. Most of the rental units fall within the \$500 – \$900 range. There around 440 units which take no rent from renters.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> No cash rent are provided free by friends or relatives or in exchange for services such as resident manager, caretaker, minister, or tenant farmer; also military bases.

## 10.4. Affordable Housing Programs

Waller County's federally assisted affordable rental housing stock includes 16 properties and 754 units financed through Section 8, LIHTC and RD 515.<sup>24</sup> Units provide some form of rental assistance to make them more affordable for very low income population. The largest federally assisted affordable rental community in the county is the Park at Clear Creek (76 units) while the smallest is Donald Sowell (1 unit). Two apartment properties provide senior housing totaling 90 units.

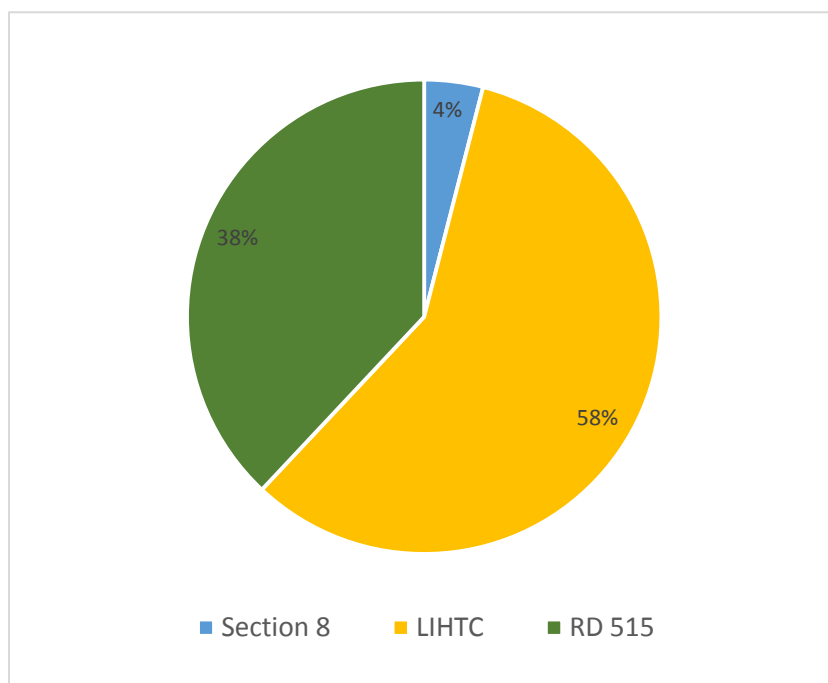


Figure 10.4. 1: % of Federally Assisted Affordable Housing in Waller County

Source: [www.affordablehousingonline.com](http://www.affordablehousingonline.com)

<sup>24</sup> The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (**LIHTC**) is the federal government's primary program for encouraging the investment of private equity in the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households.

**Section 8:** The housing choice voucher program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments.

**RD 515:** Rural Rental Housing Loans are direct, competitive mortgage loans made to provide affordable multifamily rental housing for very low-, moderate-income families, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. This is primarily a direct housing mortgage program; its funds may also be used to buy and improve land and to provide necessary facilities such as water and waste disposal systems.

[www.affordablehousingonline.com](http://www.affordablehousingonline.com)

Cities with Federally Assisted Projects in Waller County

| City         | Properties | Units |
|--------------|------------|-------|
| Heampstead   | 7          | 399   |
| Prairie View | 5          | 133   |
| Brookshire   | 2          | 92    |

| Program   | Properties | Units |
|-----------|------------|-------|
| Section 8 | 1          | 44    |
| LIHTC     | 13         | 641   |
| RD 515    | 9          | 415   |
| Total     | 16         | 754   |

Note: The total does not necessarily equal the sum of each program as some properties may participate in multiple funding programs

## 11. Environmental Factors

### 11.1. Most Recent Natural Disasters:<sup>25</sup>

There have been a number of federally declared disasters since 1995 in Waller County (13), six hurricanes, four fires, three floods, three storms, and two tornadoes (Table 11.1.1). To date, Waller County has been granted about \$6,218,085.26 in FEMA Public Assistance.

| Name  | Incident Period                         | Emergency Declared | FEMA Id      | Natural Disaster Type |
|---|---|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Texas Hurricane Ike                         | September 7, 2008 – September 26, 2008  | September 10, 2008 | FEMA-EM-3294 | Hurricane             |
| Texas Hurricane Ike                         | September 7, 2008 – October 2, 2008     | September 13, 2008 | FEMA-DR-1791 | Hurricane             |
| Texas Hurricane Gustav                      | August 27, 2008 - September 7, 2008     | August 29, 2008    | FEMA-EM-3290 | Hurricane             |
| Texas Wildfires                             | March 14, 2008 - September 1, 2008,     | March 14, 2008     | FEMA-EM-3284 | Fire                  |
| Texas Hurricane Rita                        | September 23, 2005 - October 14, 2005   | September 24, 2005 | FEMA-DR-1606 | Hurricane             |
| Texas Hurricane Rita                        | September 20, 2005 to October 14, 2005  | September 21, 2005 | FEMA-EM-3261 | Hurricane             |
| Texas Hurricane Katrina                     | August 29, 2005 to October 1, 2005      | September 2, 2005  | FEMA-EM-3216 | Hurricane             |
| Texas Extreme Fire Hazards                  | August 1, 1999 to December 10, 1999     | September 1, 1999  | FEMA-EM-3142 | Fire                  |
| Texas Severe Storms, Flooding and Tornadoes | October 17, 1998 to November 15, 1998   | October 21, 1998   | FEMA-DR-1257 | Storm, Tornado, Flood |
| Texas Fire Emergency                        | February 23, 1996 to September 19, 1996 | February 23, 1996  | FEMA-EM-3117 | Fire                  |

Table 11.1. 1: History of Natural Disaster

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.city-data.com/county/Waller\\_County-TX.html#ixzz4AwE2PeUH](http://www.city-data.com/county/Waller_County-TX.html#ixzz4AwE2PeUH) ;



## 11.2. Floods, Historical Tornadoes<sup>26</sup>, and Watersheds

Most of Waller County has been affected by tornadoes of scale F0- F2 at some point in its history. The eastern side of the County is more prone to flooding due to the presence of the Brazos River.

Watershed planning is a common practice for flood mitigation and ecological sustainability. If we look at the county by watershed, eastern Waller County (in purple) drains towards Houston and western Waller County (in white) drains toward the Brazos River (Figure 11.2.2). Development and increased impervious surfaces in the County will likely impact drainage and flooding in the Houston area. Eastern Waller County development will impact the Addicks Reservoir, while western Waller County development will impact communities along the Brazos River, such as Richmond, Rosenberg, and Sugar Land.

---

<sup>26</sup> (In) 100 Year- Floodplain- 1% probability of occurring in any given year.  
(Out) 500 Year- Floodplain- 0.2% probability of occurring in any given year  
Fujita Scale  
F0- Light Damage  
F1- Moderate Damage  
F2- Significant Damage  
F3- Severe Damage

[www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov), [www.h-gac.com](http://www.h-gac.com)

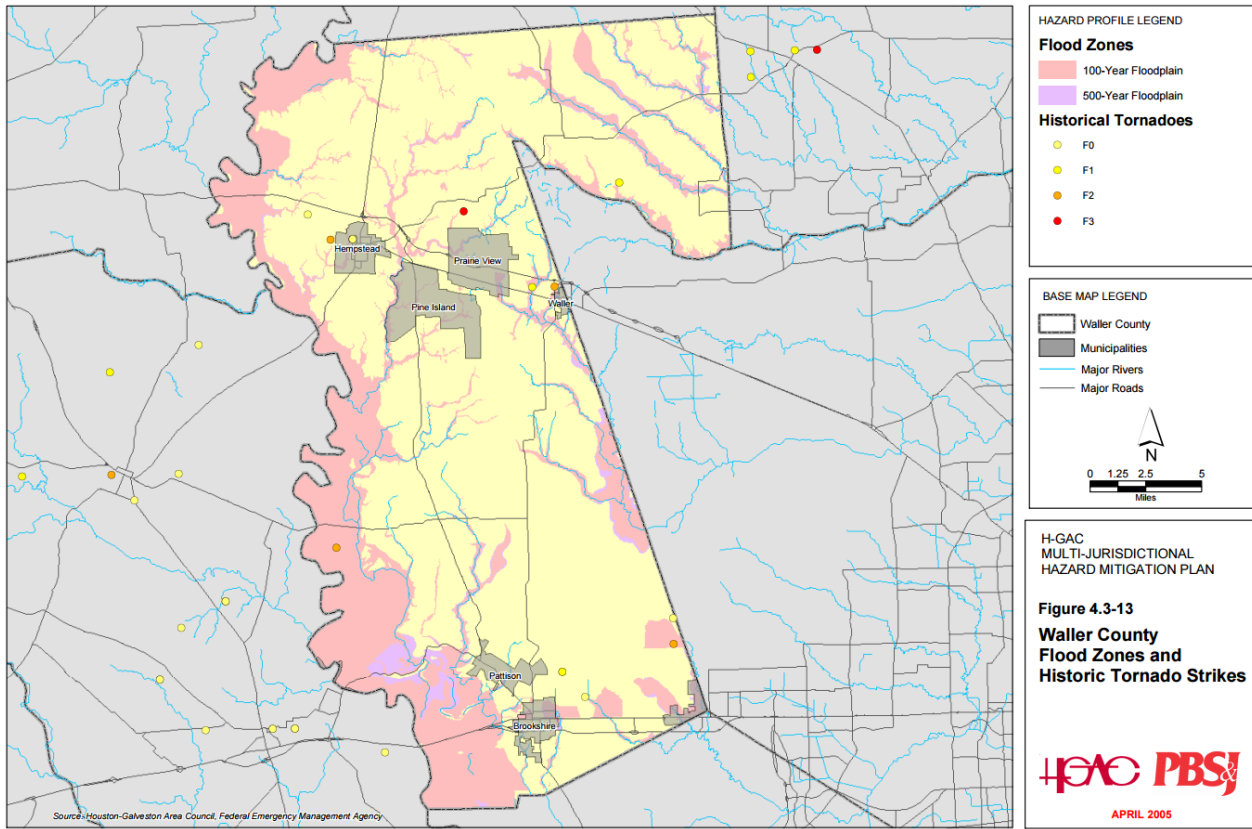


Figure 11.2.1: Flood Zones Map 2006

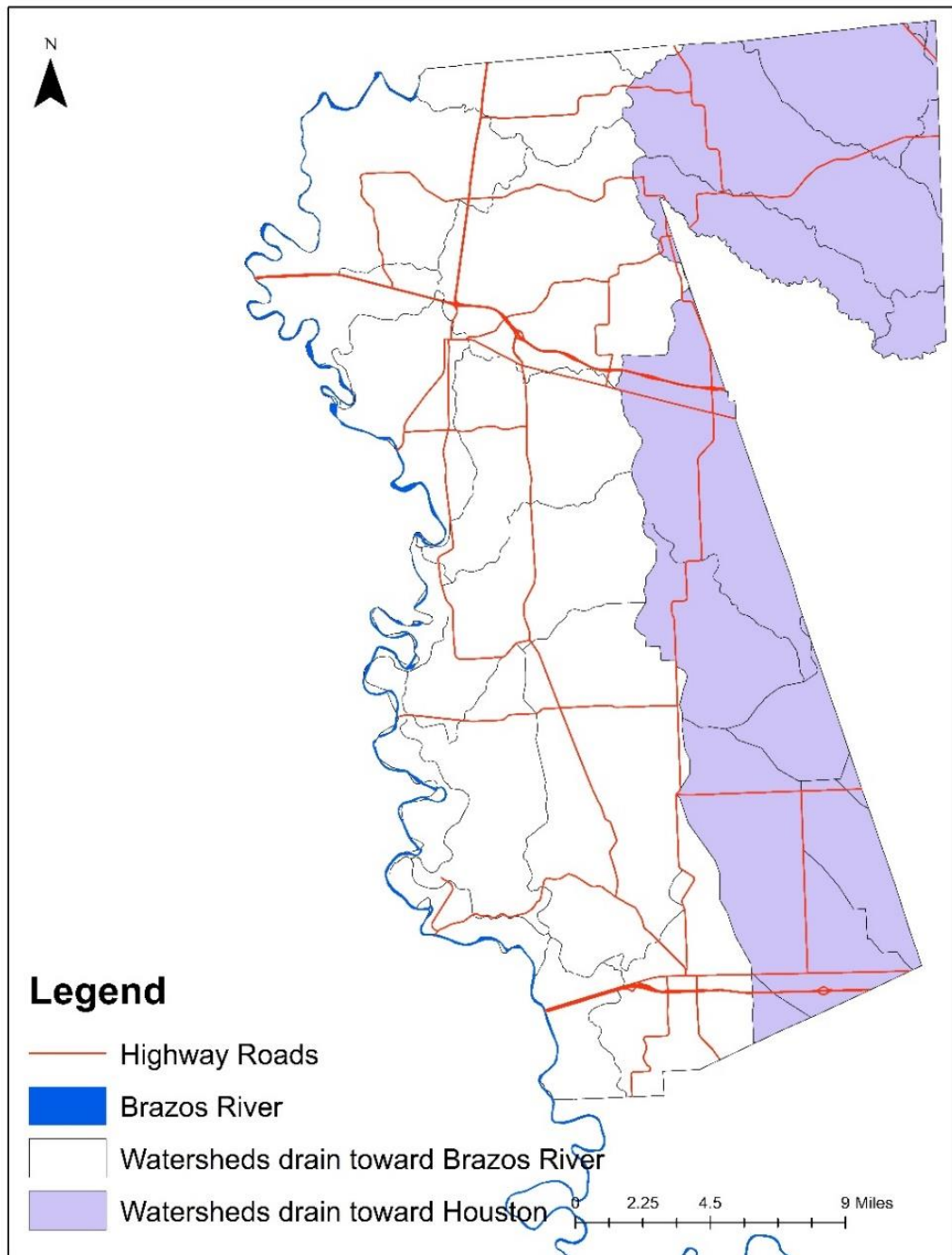


Figure 11.2.2: Watershed Map

### 11.3. Land Cover

As seen in Figure 11.3.1 the majority of the County is agricultural land, with dense forested areas to the north. As the County grows, development is anticipated along the 290 corridor, in the already established cities of Waller, Prairie View, and Hempstead. Development is also anticipated along the I-10 corridor near Brookshire to Katy area. Thoughtful consideration of the environment, flooding impacts, and soils types will yield a county positioned for a prosperous future.

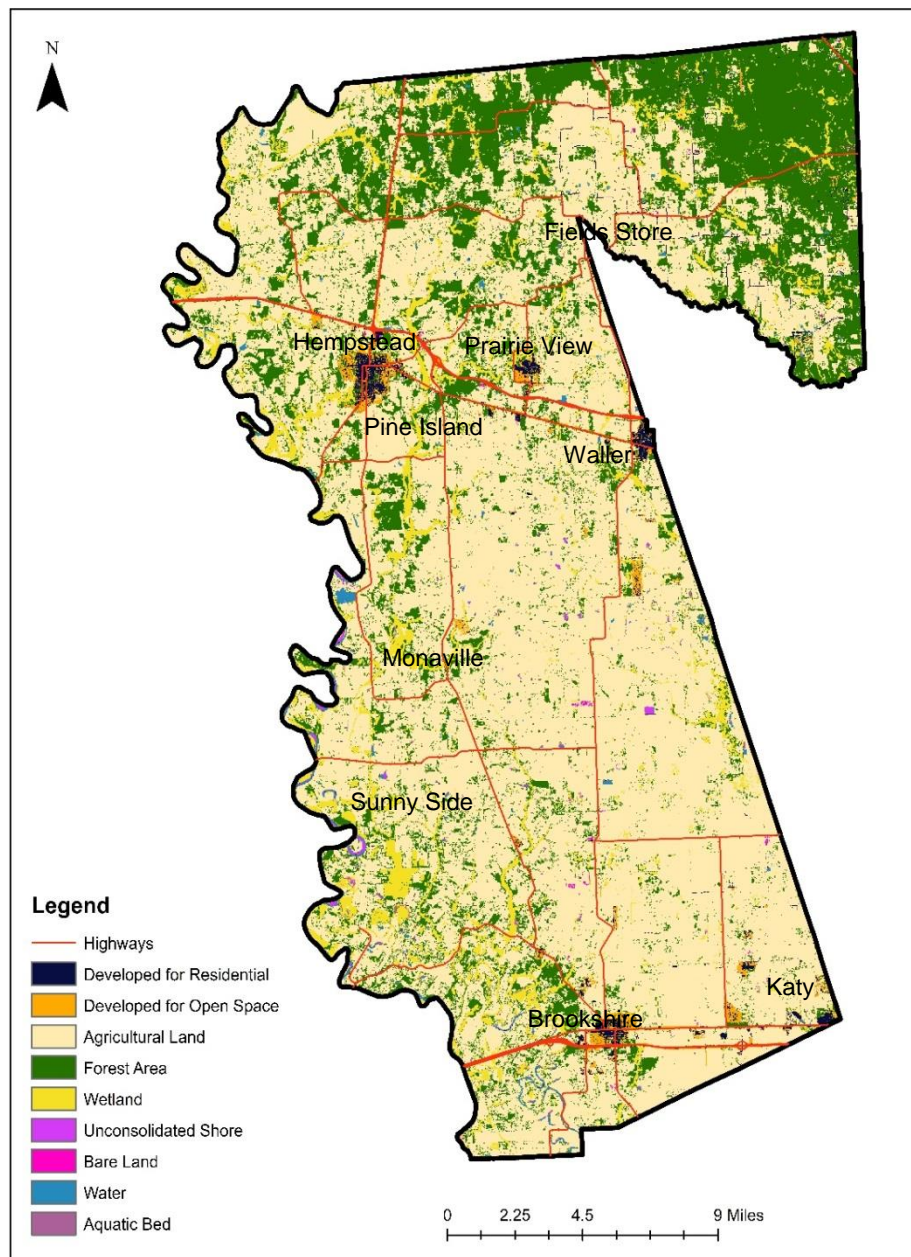


Figure 11.3.1: Land Cover change 1996-2010

## 11.4. Soil

Looking at the soils in Waller County, there is an abundance of ‘prime farmland’ (Figure 11.4.1). Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources.

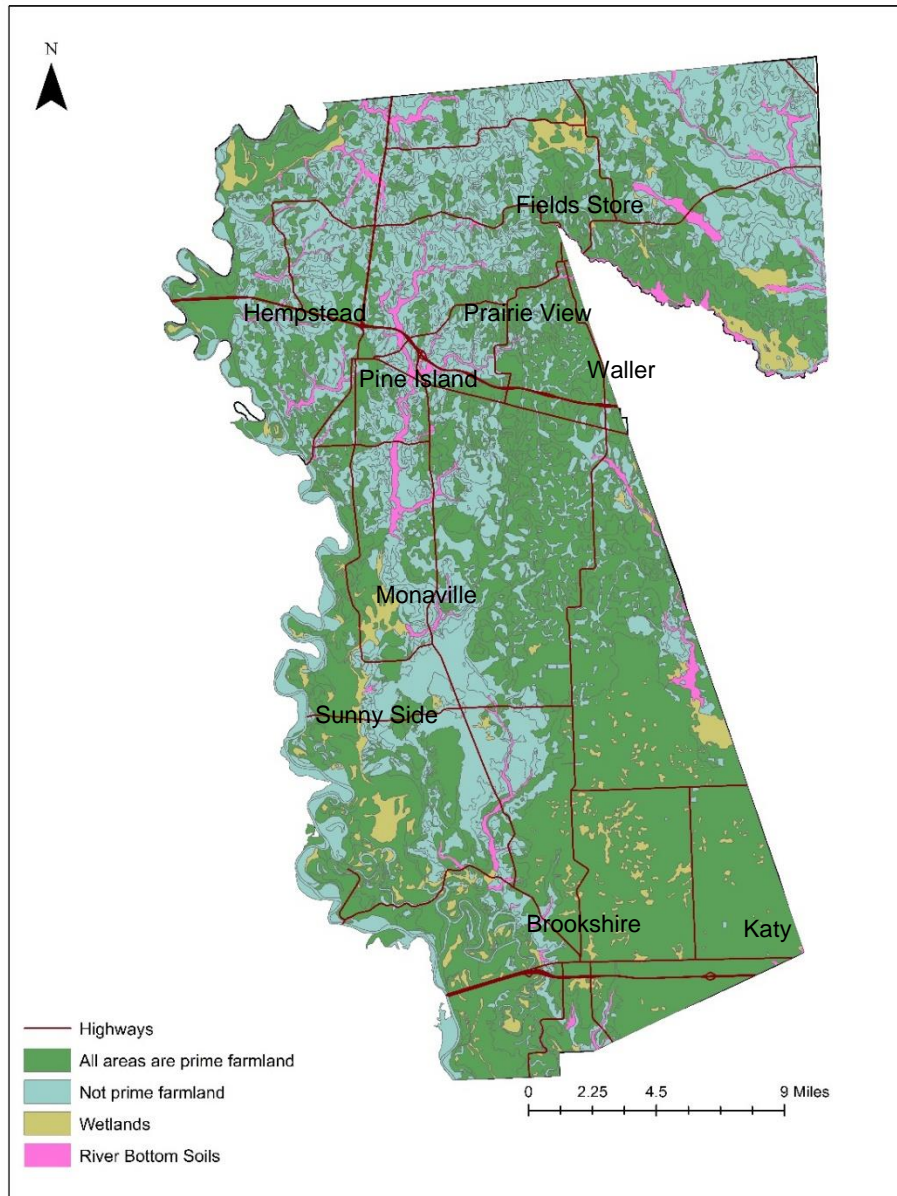


Figure 11.4.1: Land Suitability

## 12. Infrastructure

### 12.1. Transportation

Waller County contains two important transportation connections, US highway 290 in the north and Interstate 10 in the south. Both roads are two of the three primary routes into the City of Houston, positioning the County for development opportunities. (Figure 12.1.1).

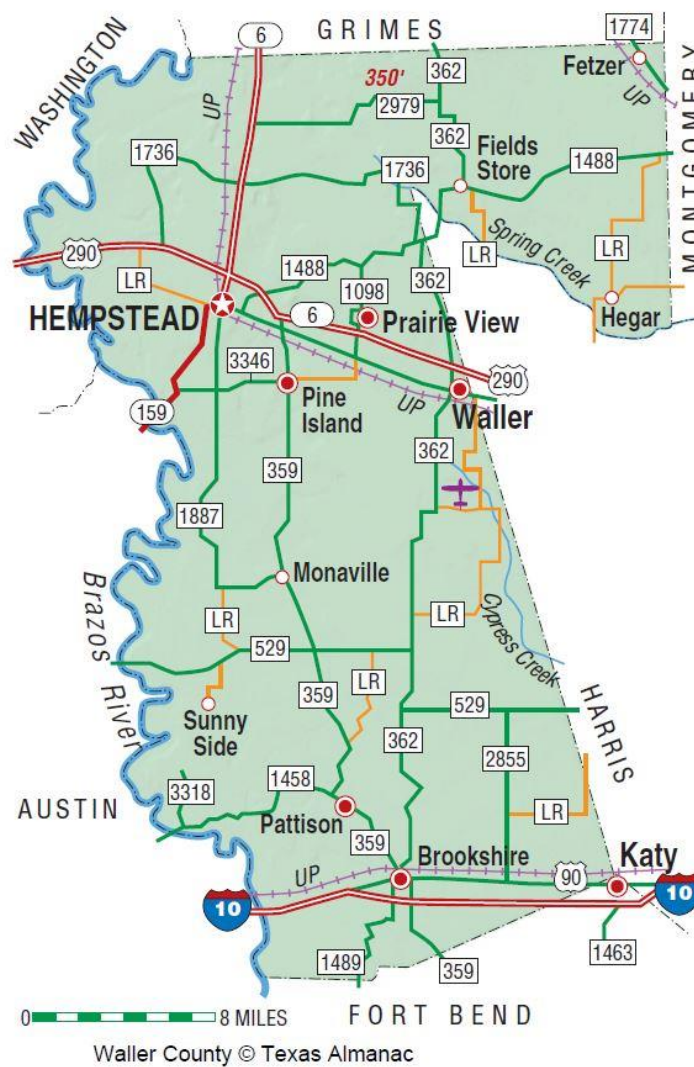


Figure 12.1.1: Road/ Rail Connection

Currently 17% of residents car pool to work and 9% walk, take a bus or work at home (Figure 12.1.2). Because of the high volume routes of Highway 290 and I-10, there are opportunities for alternative transportation options commuting to Houston. According to H-GAC Regional Travel Demand Model calculated in 2008, Weekday Peak Period Ridership is more than 6900 vehicles along Highway 290. Figure 12.1.13 shows possible commuter rail opportunities in the Houston area, one of which is the 290- Eureka rail route. It has the potential commute time of 20 minutes from downtown Houston to Waller County during the peak hour. This option would provide additional access to schools, workplace, and service providers (including medical clinics, daycare and various social service providers).

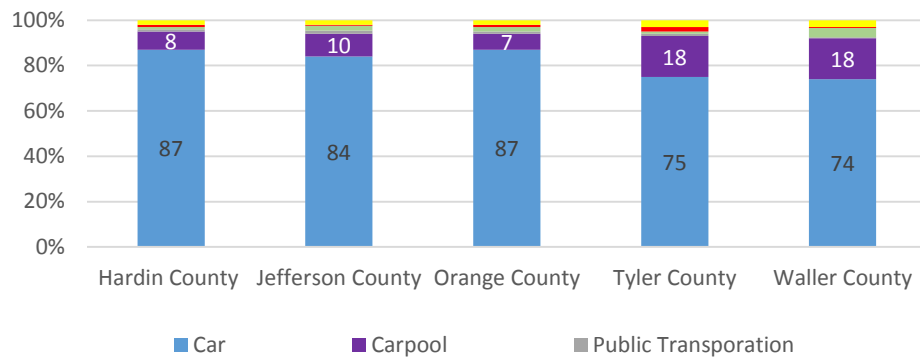


Figure 12.1.2: Transportation Mode Choice to Work- Comparing

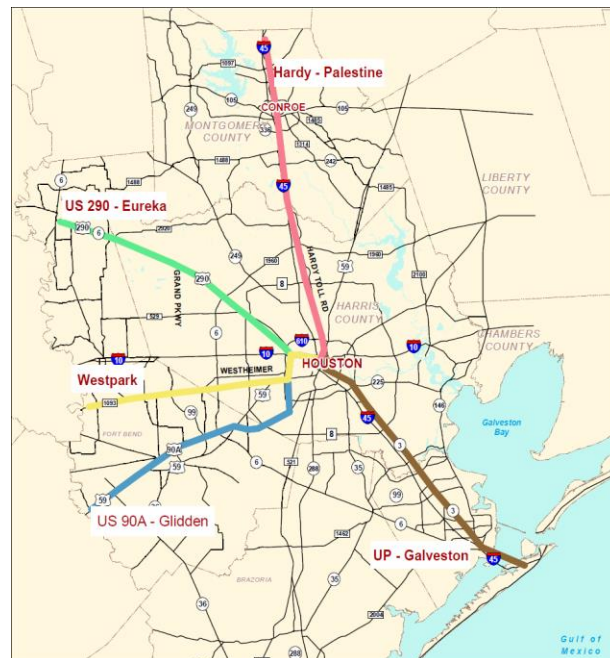


Figure 12.1.3: Proposed Rail route H-GAC

Source: <http://www.txdot.gov/>

## 12.2. Facilities

Figure 12.2.1 displays the location of police stations, fire stations, schools, healthcare, airports and parks throughout the County. The county has one hospital located in Prairie View but other major hospitals are relatively close:

- Tomball Regional Medical Center
- North Cypress Medical Center
- Methodist West Houston Hospital, Cypress Fairbanks Medical Center
- Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital, Christus St Catherine Hospital

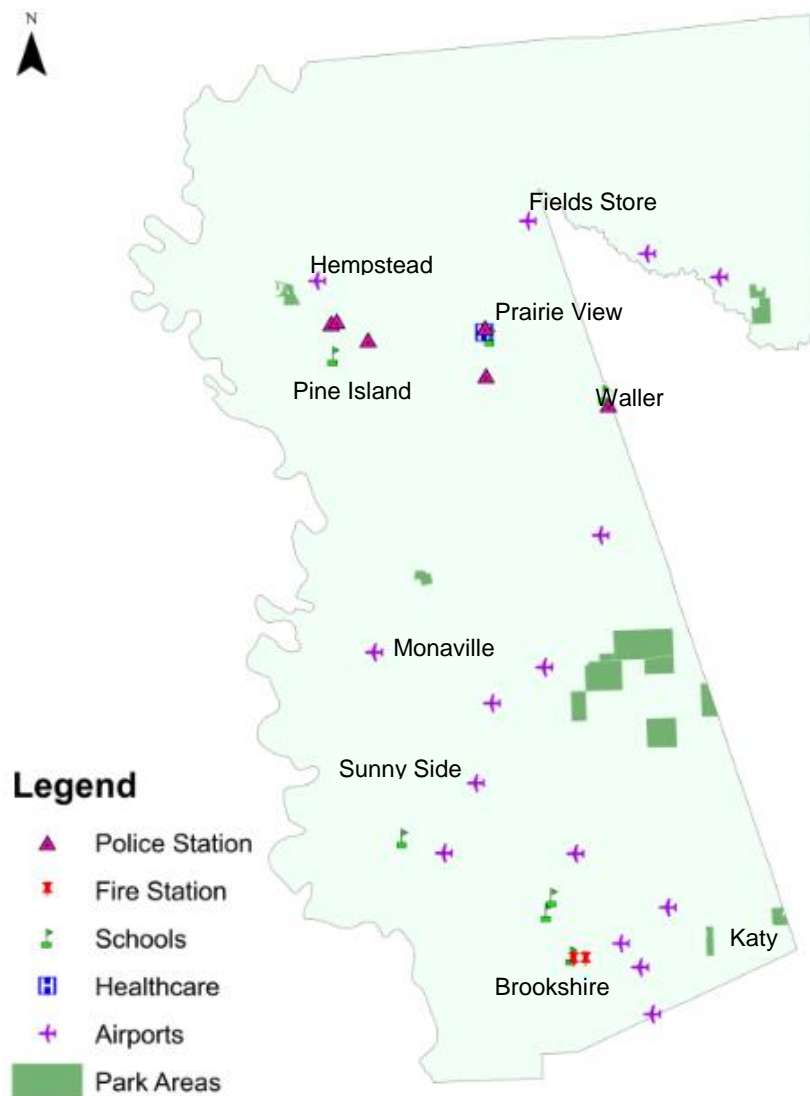


Figure 12.2.1: Facilities Map



### 12.3. County Independent School Districts:

#### Waller I.S.D.

The Waller Independent School District, serves the communities of Hockley, Prairie View and Waller. In April 1989, the district was revisited by an accreditation team from the Texas Education Agency and maintained full accreditation as a result of the visit. It has one elementary school, three middle schools, and two high schools.

#### Hempstead I.S.D.

The Hempstead School District has one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school and with the passage of a bond issue in 1996, the district has undertaken an aggressive building and renovation program. A new middle school was completed in the summer of 1997 and extensive renovations to the high school and elementary school were completed the following year. A new track facility was also completed in 1998 and current planning is underway for a new athletic stadium.

#### Royal I.S.D.

The Royal Independent School District is located in southern Waller County and serves the communities of Brookshire, Pattison, Sunnyside and surrounding areas. In 2009, the school district was rated “academically acceptable” by the Texas Education Agency. It has two elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools.

#### Katy I.S.D.

The Katy Independent School District is located in southeast corner of the Waller County in the city of Katy. A small portion of the Katy ISD serves the county. The school district has been recognized by the Texas Education Agency.

### 13. S.W.O.T Analysis

#### Strength

- Proximity to Houston
- Important transportation routes to Houston, by way of Highway 290 and I-10
- Abundant rich soils considered ‘prime farmland’
- Prairie View A&M University brings opportunity for higher education and research endeavors
- Low cost of living
- Rural and country lifestyle
- Strong industries in Mining, Construction, Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade
- Low unemployment
- High population projections through 2050
- Growth and development in the City of Katy, expanding westward annexing parts of the county.

#### Opportunities

- Facilitate anticipated future development growth along Highway 290 and I-10, residential and economic development
- Expand alternative transportation options and commuter rail to Houston
- Develop in a resilient way to reduce flood impacts for County residents and those in surrounding areas
- Diversify housing options, including housing values above \$200,000
- Preserve ecologically rich areas, including north Waller County and market for eco-tourism
- Capture weekend urbanites promote eco-tourism and the ‘rural playground’ of Waller County (i.e., cyclists, agri-tourism, etc.)
- Expand relationship with Prairie View A&M University and the Texas A&M University System as it is prime location between Houston area executives and Texas A&M University.
- Shore up leakages in household purchases