



U.S. Small Business  
Administration

# Strategic Alliance Memorandum

*between the*

**United States Small Business Administration**

*and*

**Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development**

## **I. PURPOSE**

The United States Small Business Administration (SBA) and **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** (each a “Party” or, collectively the “Parties”) are joined by a common mission; **helping start, maintain, and expand small businesses**. The Parties will work together in the spirit of cooperation and open communications, consistent with law, with the primary goal of meeting the needs of the small business community.

Located in the Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area, Fort Bend County is one of the fastest growing counties in Texas. The Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity & Development Department spearheads financially and socially sustainable economic development that promotes business attraction, redevelopment, workforce development, and other initiatives. It aims to create business and workforce opportunities, develop, and implement policies and programs to ensure the continued outlook of Fort Bend County as a highly sought-after place to live and do business.

The mission of the SBA is to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business by providing financial, contractual and business development assistance and advocating on their behalf within the government. SBA district offices deliver SBA programs and services to the public. Each Party has separate services and resources which, when delivered in coordination with each other, will provide maximum benefits to the small business communities served.

The purpose of this Strategic Alliance Memorandum (SAM) is to develop and foster mutual understanding and a working relationship between the SBA and **Fort Bend**

**County Economic Opportunity and Development** in order to strengthen and expand small business development in the local area.

The Parties acknowledge that beyond the information sharing contemplated under this SAM, any specific joint training and outreach activities will require a separate signed agreement developed pursuant to SBA's Cosponsorship Authority.

In order to further their common goals, the Parties agree to the following:

## **II. SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **SBA Undertakings:**

Within the limits of its available and/or appropriated resources, the SBA through its **Houston District Office** will:

- Provide **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** with up-to-date information about SBA's programs and services.
- Make available, upon request, information regarding SBA's resource partners, including but not limited to, the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), SCORE, and the Women's Business Centers (WBCs) (collectively, "SBA's Resource Partners").
- Make available, upon request and subject to their availability, SBA pamphlets, brochures, and other publications.
- Advise **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** of events that may impact its mission.
- Provide speakers, consistent with SBA rules and policy, to participate in **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** workshops, conferences, seminars and other activities to discuss SBA financing, government contracting and other business topics.
- Invite **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development's** clients/members to attend local SBA-sponsored events and offer SBA-sponsored training at **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development's** location when appropriate.
- Provide a text-only hyperlink from SBA's website to **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development's** website pursuant to SBA's linking policies.
- Provide information to **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development's** staff on SBA programs and services available to local small businesses.
- Assign a local point of contact to serve as liaison between SBA and **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development**.

**Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development Undertakings:**  
Within the limits of its available resources, the **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** will:

- Cooperate with SBA's Resource Partners to provide information to its clients/members about business development services to small businesses when appropriate.
- Keep abreast of and disseminate up-to-date information provided by SBA when appropriate.
- Make available to its clients/members SBA pamphlets, brochures, and other publications.
- Inform **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development's** small business clients/members of SBA's programs and services including referrals to SBA's Resource Partners when appropriate.
- Upon request, provide speakers for SBA-sponsored events when appropriate.
- Provide a text-only hyperlink from **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development's** website to SBA's website.
- Assign a local point of contact to serve as liaison between **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** and SBA.

**III. USE OF SBA NAME AND LOGO**

All materials bearing the SBA name or logo must be approved in advance by SBA's Responsible Program Official. Use of SBA's logo must be accompanied by the following statement: "Use of the SBA logo is authorized by a Strategic Alliance Memorandum. Reference to SBA is not an endorsement of the views, opinions, products or services of any person or entity." The SBA logo may only be used to promote SBA and/or its programs, activities, and services. SBA's logo cannot be used in a way that suggests the Agency is endorsing any individual, organization, product, or service or in a way which implies that an improper relationship exists between SBA and an outside party. SBA's logo also must not be used in any manner that is liable to bring the Agency into a negative light, such as in connection with any products or services related to alcohol, gambling or adult entertainment industries. Further, SBA's logo must not be used in connection with any political activities, lobbying efforts, or in conjunction with any religious activity.

The "U.S. Small Business Administration" name shall be used only in a factual manner, consistent with applicable law, and shall not promote or endorse any products or services of any entity including but not limited to **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development**. Nothing in this SAM

permits **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** to use the SBA official seal.

**IV. TERM**

Cooperation under this SAM will commence upon signing by both Parties and will continue for a period of two years from date of signature unless otherwise terminated by one or both Parties as per paragraph VI below.

**V. AMENDMENT**

The Parties agree to consult each other on any amendment, modification or clarification to the provisions of this SAM. This SAM may only be amended or modified in writing and shall be consistent with applicable laws, regulations and SBA policy.

**VI. TERMINATION**

Either Party may discontinue its participation under this SAM at any time, with or without cause, upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other Party.

**VII. RELATIONSHIP**

This SAM does not authorize the expenditure of any funds. Accordingly, this SAM shall not be interpreted as creating any binding legal obligations between the Parties nor shall it limit either Party from participating in similar activities or arrangements with other entities. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to create any association, partnership, joint venture or relation of principal or agent or employer and employee with respect to **Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development** and SBA.

**VIII. RESPONSIBLE PROGRAM OFFICIAL**

The SBA Responsible Program Official for this Strategic Alliance Memorandum is **Timothy D. Jeffcoat**.

**IX. POINTS OF CONTACT**

The points of contact for administrative matters pertaining to this SAM are:

**Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development:**

Carlos Guzman  
Director  
401 Jackson Street, Richmond, TX 77469  
[carlos.guzman@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:carlos.guzman@fortbendcountytexas.gov)

**U.S. Small Business Administration:**

Valerie Maher  
Lead Economic Development Specialist  
8701 S Gessner, Suite 1200, Houston, TX 77074  
[valerie.maher@sba.gov](mailto:valerie.maher@sba.gov)

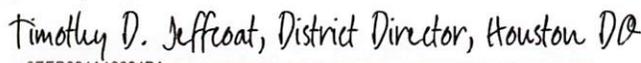
**X. SIGNATURES**

The signatories below represent that they have the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their respective organization. This SAM may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to be an original, but all of which, taken together, shall constitute one and the same agreement.

**U.S. Small Business Administration:**

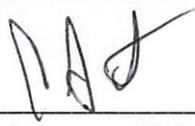
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Stephen Morris, (A) Director of Strategic Alliance

4/6/23  
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Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Timothy D. Jeffcoat, District Director  
Houston District Office

4/7/2023  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Fort Bend County Economic Opportunity and Development:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carlos Guzman, Director

4/11/23  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date