



Produced by: GLOBAL MEDIA POST

www.gmipost.com

JAPANESE PARTNERSHIPS BOOST STATE’S ECONOMY

A huge wave of excitement and optimism swept through Texas’ business community after Japanese automaker Toyota Motor Corp. announced that it would move its North American headquarters to the Lone Star State last year.

“The time for Texas has arrived,” said **Bexar County Economic Development Director David Marquez**. Bexar County, in San Antonio, welcomed the state’s first major Japanese investment courtesy of then-mayor Henry Cisneros when Toyota chose the area for the assembly plant of its Tundra pickup trucks.

Since then, Japanese investments in Texas have diversified into high-value-added manufacturing and assembly, most especially in the automotive, semiconductor and chemical industries.

“The way that Japanese companies conduct business and invest in Texas is evolving. For over half a century, the Japanese presence in Texas, represented by the large Japanese trading companies, mainly revolved around the state’s wealth in oil and the energy sector,” said **Honorary Consul General of Japan in Dallas John Stich**.

Mitsui & Co. (U.S.A.) was one of the first Japanese trading houses to set down its roots in the resource-rich state. Initially focused on procuring resources needed to fuel Japan’s rapid industrialization in the 1950s, Mitsui has remained financially committed to Texas, more specifically in the burgeoning shale gas industry through the Eagleford field.

“As Texas grows, we also grow,” said **Mitsui & Co. (U.S.A.) Senior Vice President Yasushi Kokaze**, who also heads the firm’s Houston headquarters.

Lately, Texas has become a preferred destination of Japanese companies in the United States to set up their regional headquarters. While the trend may have been driven by the decision of Japanese manufacturers, like Daikin and Kubota, there are several other factors that have sustained this development.

“The central location of Texas means that executives based here can fly to either of the coasts in the morning and be back in Texas by dinner time. Japanese businesses in Texas also have easier access to Mexico’s large market and people,” Stich said.

Once focused on energy and semiconductors, the second-largest economy of the United States has also nurtured fast-growing sectors, such as life sciences, education, health care, information and communications technology, professional services, aerospace and defense, tourism and hospitality, logistics, construction and engineering, as well as real estate.

Because of this rapid growth in employment opportunities, Texas has experienced a net increase in its working-age population. According to The Dallas News, on average, 1,000 people move to Texas every day.

“To continuously attract new investors, Texas offers zero percent corporate tax and other tax incentives. And helping to achieve this objective are several well-run economic development corporations and chambers of commerce that promote the state’s advantages,” stressed **Japanese Consul General in**

Houston Tetsuro Amano.

A sign of its growing importance to the Japanese business, the state was chosen to host the second summit of the U.S.-Japan Business Council, held in Houston from May 7–9.

Within Texas itself are dynamic growth centers for incoming businesses — large companies and startups alike. The state’s largest metropolitan areas of Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston each have their success stories to share.

Houston has remained the state’s oil and gas capital. Despite the periodic slumps in the industry, the city maintains a strong Japanese presence with the arrival of Japanese trading companies, Mitsui & Co. (U.S.A.) and Sumitomo Corp., in 1968.

Since then, other Japanese companies, like Chubu Energy and TEPCO, have established offices in the city to access U.S. oil and liquefied natural gas.

Houston’s George Bush Intercontinental Airport has reported record passenger growth from Asia, with a significant number of executives in the oil and energy sectors.

“We are confident that passenger traffic will rise further. Passengers can expect the best customer service and convenience once they land in Houston,” said **Molly Waits, director of Air Services for the Houston Airport System**.

Meanwhile, with around 8 million people, the Dallas-Fort Worth area has remained the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the United States after New York, Los Angeles and Chicago.

“The DFW area is home to about 215 Japanese companies. We are optimistic that the number will grow in the near future because we are prepared to provide Japanese investors with access to talent and skill,” said **Dallas Regional Chamber Vice President Sarah Carabias-Rush**.

As far as Japanese foreign direct investment is concerned, one of Dallas-Fort Worth’s recent success stories is the City of Grapevine, which in 2015, was selected by Japanese tractor and machine manufacturer Kubota for the location of its North American headquarters.

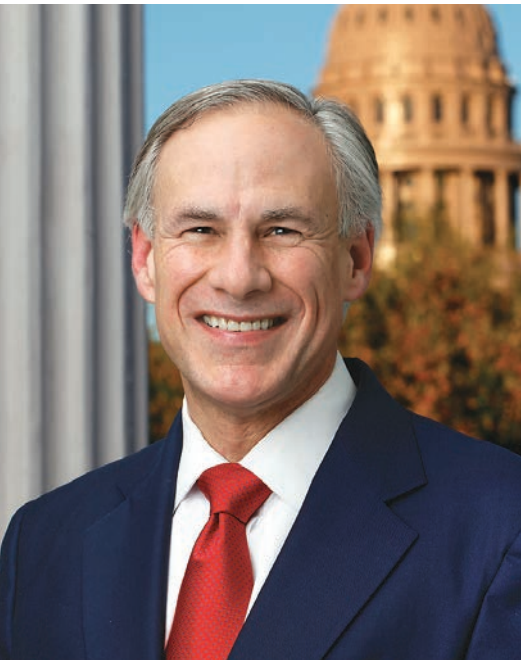
“While we are at the heart of a very dynamic mega-region, the city’s cost of living is considerably lower and we have easy access to talent. The City of Grapevine is honored to be the home of Kubota,” said **City of Grapevine Director of Economic Development Bob Farley**.

Meanwhile, **Kubota Americas CEO Masato Yoshikawa** cites another advantage: “Being in Texas means we are closer to our customers than ever before. Texas is not only a gateway to Latin America, which is an important and growing market for us, but it is also a launchpad for the Midwest, America’s breadbasket and industrial heartland.”

And the wide variety of restaurants, groceries, and Japanese schools has made Dallas-Fort Worth a desirable area for Japanese expatriates.

“The infrastructure for the Japanese lifestyle is set up and well established. Parents can send their children to schools with curricula accredited by the Japanese government,” **NEC America Chairman Shin Takahashi** said.

The area is also known for top-notch universities, such as Southern Methodist University



Gov. Gregory Abbott of Texas



Japanese Consul General in Houston Tetsuro Amano

(SMU) and the University of Texas in Dallas (UTD), which have extensive partnerships with Japanese universities and companies.

Through its Star and Stripe Program, SMU invites prominent Japanese and American politicians to talk about U.S.-Japan relations. UTD, meanwhile, arranges internships in Japanese companies for its MBA students.

The Lone Star State has also distinguished itself as a leading center in life sciences. The University of Texas in Austin and

University of Texas in Arlington are pioneers in the field of regenerative sciences, a field that has attracted much Japanese interest and investment.

Avazzia, a medical device manufacturer that specializes in wound-care rehabilitation, has attributed its success to the talent and expertise found within the walls of those two universities.

“Avazzia draws from a large talent pool all across the state. As a medical device company, Texas

is a good place to be successful because we are filled with eager people who want to contribute to society and be part of something bigger,” said **Avazzia CEO Tim Smith**.

Perhaps the most recognized event held in the Texan capital Austin is South by South West, or SXSW, which showcases the latest technology innovations and has been attracting an increasing number of entrepreneurs, venture capital funds, startups, and large companies every year. ■

THE GROWING TIES BETWEEN TEXAS & JAPAN



(L-R) Cole Chemical CEO and USJC Board Member and Summit Chair Donna Cole, Aichi Prefecture Governor Hideaki Ohmura, USJC President Irene Hirano Inouye, CityView Founder and Chairman Henry Cisneros, who was once mayor of San Antonio and a former HUD secretary, during the Japan-Texas Economic Summit

In May 2018, the U.S.-Japan Council (USJC) held the first ever Japan-Texas Economic Summit (JTES) in Houston, Texas. Aimed at strengthening Japan-Texas relations, the event brought together more than 400 government and private sector leaders from nearly 50 cities and organizations from Houston and Japan.

Texas has quickly become one of Japan’s top destinations for foreign direct investment. As of 2016, total exports and imports exceeded \$6.1 billion and \$4.9 billion respectively. Additionally, over 400 Japanese companies have created more than 50,000 jobs in the state.

Texas Secretary of State Rolando Pablos is optimistic about the enormous potential for closer collaboration and growth in the years ahead. “We are honored that Texas is home to one of the first U.S.-Japan Council regional summits that underscores the importance of Japan’s partnership with the Lone Star State,” he said.

Business leaders, investors, state and local officials, and economic development organizations played an integral role in the launch of the summit. Aside from Pablos, high-profile organizers included Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono, Japan External Trade Organization’s Executive Vice President Shigeki Maeda and Aichi Prefecture Gov.

Hideaki Ohmura. Additionally, the heads of companies, such as Toyota Motor Corp., Ito En Ltd. and Cole Chemical, gave keynote addresses regarding the latest industry developments, including topics and sectors such as innovation, workforce development, energy, medicine, manufacturing, transportation, finance and national security.

Donna Cole, founder and CEO of Cole Chemical and a board member of the USJC, chaired the event. “My involvement with the USJC inspired me to be proud of my Japanese and American heritage and to develop personal business relationships. Building these kinds of people-to-people relationships was a big driving factor for the summit, as was discussing best business practices to foster economic growth on both ends,” Cole said.

“I continue to receive congratulatory notes on the success of the JTES. I have reached out to most of the high-caliber speakers from the event to assist them in finding mutual business connections. Personally, I have had several meetings to increase Cole Chemical’s business with our enhanced hydrocarbon recovery products and have referred dozens of people with shared business interests,” Cole said. ■
→ www.colechem.com

CITY OF CEDAR HILL: DIVERSE, FLEXIBLE, AND OPEN

Located at the highest point of Dallas County and just 20 minutes from the city center, **Cedar Hill** is situated in one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas of the United States, replete with tremendous potential and opportunities.

Culturally, economically and geographically, Cedar Hill’s appeal is broad and palpable.

“Its prime location within the metro area is a key strength, as well as its easy access to major thoroughfares, the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, and International Inland Port of Dallas. It provides businesses with a competitive advantage with regards to logistics, as well as various transit options for locals and visitors,” said **Mayor Rob Franke**, who also heads the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Transportation Council.

With its low cost of doing business, ample workforce, low-risk location and attractive quality of life, Cedar Hill is experiencing an influx of both startups

and established companies. Setting up a branch in the city could yield handsome dividends for young companies looking to expand in the United States and for multinationals pursuing long-term, global growth.

Cedar Hill provides a fresh, natural approach to development and welcomes any Japanese company looking for a place to call home in Texas. ■

→ www.CedarHillEDC.com



A panoramic view of The Hills of Lake Ridge, a residential development at Cedar Hill

POST-GRADUATE EDUCATION WITH INTERNATIONAL RELEVANCE

Engineering a solar-powered supercomputer; discovering the role of “slow-motion” earthquakes in triggering tsunamis; and preserving the archives of Japanese-born British author Kazuo Ishiguro. Those impressive achievements became possible only through international collaboration led by the graduate programs of the University of Texas at Austin.

International partnerships have played an important role at UT Austin that has five programs ranked No. 1 and 49 schools and specialties ranked among the nation’s top 10, according to the latest ranking by U.S. News & World Report. The school’s ties with Japan are especially close.

UT Austin President Gregory Fenves conducted a research sabbatical as a visiting professor at Kyoto University in 2008, while Satoshi Kashima, the lead designer and engineer of the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, the world’s longest suspension bridge, received his master’s and doctoral degrees in civil engineering from the university.

During the 2017–2018 academic year, the school hosted more than 40 scholars and researchers from Japan. And in the last three years,



Students interact on campus at the university’s iconic South Mall.

its faculty members and graduate students co-authored more than 600 journal articles with Japanese scholars.

“The university’s premier graduate programs, field-defining research and academic culture attract graduate students from across the globe. The city of Austin is also an international hub for science and technology companies, including Facebook, Google, Apple, Dell and IBM that provide excellent opportunities for careers and collaboration,” **Graduate School Dean Mark Smith** said.

“The engineering sense and project management skills cultivated at the University of Texas were very useful to me in the work for the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge in Japan. Anyone interested in acquiring a world-class education with international relevance should consider UT Austin,” Kashima said. ■
→ www.utexas.edu

DALLAS DOES BUSINESS RIGHT



Dallas is the most populous city in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and the fourth-largest, population-wise, in the United States. Because of market size, the local economy is ripe for various business investments. Companies have set up their

head offices in Dallas, located between the West and the East coasts, in order to be at the center of the United States.

The city has established several incentive programs to encourage businesses to relocate from other states or start new enterprises. To gain a competitive advantage and lower operational costs, Dallas offers tax abatements, upgraded infrastructure and set up free-trade zones.

Why are companies thinking of setting up shop in Dallas? “For one thing, the cost of doing business in Dallas is reported to be below the U.S. average. This makes the city more attractive for startup companies and major corporations outside of Texas to

move from their current cities to Dallas,” **Director of Economic Development Courtney Pogue** said.

Compared to other cities across the United States, Dallas also has lower labor costs and rental rates, making it easier for upper management to relocate, recruit quality employees and find the right office space.

“Dallas has thrived since the 2008 recession, far better than other major U.S. cities. Overall, Texas is one state that is on top of driving economic growth and attracting new businesses. This is because of DFW’s strong business culture and quintessential Texan drive to do more and be more,” Pogue said. ■
→ www.dallasecdev.org



AVAZZIATM
Innovation in Health & Wellness Technology



OKI[®]



TOP
「人材は人財」
INFO@TOP-ASIA.CO.JP

TOP-US.COM
TOP-ASIA.CO.JP
TOPLATINOAMERICA.COM

BOOSTING
HUMAN POTENTIAL

TOP
RECRUITING

NEW YORK • SAN FRANCISCO • LOS ANGELES • HOUSTON • MEXICO CITY • LEON • MONTREALEY • LIMA • TOKYO



LONE STAR COLLEGE
Lone Star College
welcomed more than 3,200
International Students
in 2017.



LoneStar.edu

CITY OF GRAPEVINE GETS BOOST FROM KUBOTA

Mayor William D. Tate is proud of his city and rightly so.

"Grapevine is at the center of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex and at the center of the United States. Geographically, we have an advantage. We have no corporate income tax. We have an airport with an international route, nine major highways that come together here and commuter rails from Dallas and Fort Worth that'll be joined here," Tate explained.

"We also have a quality of life that is urban. But we also have a lot of walking trails and good air quality. We've got good education, and people want to live where their kids can get the best education," he added.

Grapevine's many advantages, as well as its reputation as one of the best cities in America to live and work in, is apparently what convinced Japanese tractor maker Kubota to move its offices here, all the way from California.



"Kubota was pretty much sold with the community and the region. We also found that the Japanese correspond with other Japanese companies that they depend on. They put their facts together. They know what they're dealing with before they make any decisions," Tate said.

Kubota is the second Fortune 500 company to relocate to Grapevine. It has given back so much to our community in terms of publicity. According to the mayor, the company has also expressed how much it enjoys the city because of its proud heritage and how it has evolved, much like its own growth and evolution.

Thankful for Kubota's presence, Grapevine invites more Japanese companies to invest in the city, which is committed to improving the business environment and overall quality of life. ■

→ www.grapevinetexas.gov



Mayor William D. Tate of Grapevine, Texas

OKI DATA AMERICAS: POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE

In its 46th year of operation, OKI Data Americas has earned its reputation as a manufacturer of cutting-edge printing technologies and leading provider of high-quality, cost-effective digital printing solutions for today's ever-changing business climate.

Backed by Tokyo-based parent company OKI Electric Industry, a \$4 billion publicly-traded multinational corporation with operations in more than 100 countries, OKI serves the diverse needs of customers in key vertical markets throughout North, Central and South America. News organization Thomson Reuters recently recognized OKI in its list of "Top 100 Global Technology Leaders."

A leader in the design and development of impact printing solutions since 1972, OKI is recognized for pioneering next generation

LED technology for color critical applications. It continues to invest in game-changing designs to improve LED performance, most recently enabling white toner text and graphics printing on dark and colored media, including envelopes.

OKI's best-in-class customized solutions are synonymous with quality, efficiency and profitability – from highly-specialized short-runs (such as specialty invitations, restaurant menus, tent cards and shelf tags) to vibrant, colorful vehicle wraps and a variety of indoor and outdoor applications. Also, OKI's textile digital transfer capabilities deliver long-lasting images on various garments and hard goods.

"Print technology is evolving at an incredible speed and OKI remains committed to providing cutting-edge print solutions for its

customers across a vast array of industries and business models. Each of OKI's newest print innovations are rooted in the same tradition of dependable engineering that has made our products the print industry's commercial-grade choice for more than four decades," OKI Data Americas President and CEO Kiyoshi Kurimoto said.

Savvy business leaders rely on OKI's commercial-grade equipment and personalization capabilities to unlock new revenue streams, attract more customers and increase their margins. OKI's vertical market focus, legacy of technology leadership and application development, combined with our commitment to customer service excellence, are the driving forces that will fuel its growth for years to come. ■

→ www.oki.com/us



OKI Data Americas President and CEO Kiyoshi Kurimoto



The headquarters of OKI Data Americas in Irving, Texas

LONE STAR COLLEGE: A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTOR TO HOUSTON

Houston, Texas, is often recognized as one of the most diverse cities in America. Located in the northern part of this city is Lone Star College (LSC), one of the fastest-growing community colleges in the country. Founded in 1972, LSC provides more than 170 study programs to over 99,000 students.

"We are proud to welcome all students. Having students from around the world exposes them, as well as the students who live here, to different cultures and beliefs," said LSC Chancellor Stephen Head.

Reflecting that diversity, the school welcomed more than 3,200 international students from over 100 countries last fall.

Simultaneously, LSC offers its students the opportunity to study abroad through scholarships at the Honors College. Through this program, high-achieving students are able to experience a unique and challenging curriculum with international exposure outside LSC. This year, several students were given a chance to study in various countries, including Italy, Greece and Ireland.

Well-known for its exemplary on-the-job training, LSC has been ranked among the top colleges for its associate degree programs. Its students receive certifications for work in specialized industries, such as health care and drilling.

In 2016, it became the first community college in the na-



Lone Star College Chancellor Stephen C. Head, Ph.D.

tion to gain gateway accreditation for its Oil & Gas Drilling Floorhand-Roustabout program by the International Association of Drilling Contractors, which has represented the global oil and gas industry since 1940.

"Receiving this gateway program accreditation is only one validation that Lone Star College students have industry-developed, competency-based instruction with the most up-to-date and complete training possible," Head said.

LSC remains committed to the success of its students and the growth of Houston's workforce. ■

→ www.lonestar.edu

KUBOTA TRACTOR MOVES TO DALLAS-FORT WORTH AREA

As Texas emerges as a center of innovation for several industries such as agriculture, computer science, and energy, Japan-based Kubota Tractor Corp. moved its U.S. headquarters from California to the Dallas-Fort Worth area as part of its growth and diversification plan.

"Communication has become more complicated. The different types of resources we need and the number of employees are increasing. So even if we built our own facility in California, it wouldn't be large enough and we would have to relocate somewhere," explained President and CEO Masato Yoshikawa.

Kubota's most important objective was to get closer to its customers.

"Almost 90 percent of our business lies in the area between the East Coast and the Rockies. Originally, California was a big market for us, but, as of today Texas, New England, Florida and Georgia are major parts of our business. To reach our customers, we need to locate ourselves much closer to our customers so that we can have better

communication," Yoshikawa said.

While the states on the West Coast are still very important, Texas is located at the center of Kubota's client network.

"We should locate ourselves in the center of the United States so that we can reach major cities within a two to three-hour ride. That is also very beneficial because the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport is a hub of a major airline. We can easily fly to any city we want," he said.

Another objective was to access a bigger talent pool. Kubota needed more employees as part of its expansion and Texas possessed many young and talented workers.

While Kubota's decision is based on an aggressive growth plan, the company is also stepping up efforts to build a sustainable business, which will see it implement effective resource management, contribute to materials recycling and lessen the output of harmful chemicals, among other things. ■

→ www.kubotausa.com



Kubota Tractor Corp. Masato Yoshikawa

AVAZZIA: WORKING HARD TO RESTORE YOUR WELLNESS, NATURALLY



Avazzia CEO Tim Smith

Incorporated in 2004, medical device manufacturer Avazzia has been pioneering innovative health care in Texas. The company offers a wide range of solutions for pain relief, beauty restoration and animal health, among others.

Avazzia's products are most noted for their bioelectric stimulation technology (BEST™). Developed by CEO Tim Smith, BEST produces noninvasive, neuro-stimulation devices that allow patients to take control of their own pain management. The devices feature a unique High Voltage Pulsed Current (HVPC) technology that produces microcurrents of electric impulses transmitted through the skin to the body's nervous system and is controlled through an easy-to-use, hand-held device.

"There were two founding objectives. The first was to engineer products that would help the body deal with chronic pain without the need for drugs and surgery. We have achieved that," Smith said. "The second was to come up with electronic technology that, when applied to the feet, could do things to reverse

peripheral neuropathy and accelerate the healing of diabetic ulcers. We have studies that say we have achieved this as well."

Now, more patients and health care providers use Avazzia devices for a variety of pain management purposes. Aside from diabetes, Avazzia technology is also used for back, neck, shoulder, foot, muscle, joint and other pains, while athletes use them for injury rehabilitation. Acupuncture professionals employ them to augment their practice as well.

Avazzia and its technology have been well received in many parts of the world, including Canada, Asia, South Asia and the United Kingdom. Over the years, the company has partnered with several research and academic institutions in Malaysia, India and the United States to conduct clinical studies and develop new products.

"I've had fun at work every day for over 50 years, and this is all due to the true and sincere human relationships that were built through the years," Smith said. ■

→ www.avazzia.com

CROSSING BORDERS TO SPOT TOP TALENT

As the Japanese economy continues to grow, domestic companies have spent more money and time improving their business practices to match global standards and trends. Smaller firms, in particular, have begun paying closer attention to building a talented workforce.

For more than 25 years, TOP Group has connected executives and companies across the Pacific. It specializes not only in employee-employer matching, but also in building relationships, navigating cultural differences and resolving conflicts from differing business styles.

"We may be a small company, but we are borderless," said Founder and President Noriko Tabata.

TOP has offices in nine cities and matches people and companies from Japan, the United States, Mexico and Peru.

"We opened our office in Tokyo in 2016 to answer a need for global talent brought about by Japan's population problem. I serve as the provider of international talent in this regard. Around the world, there is amazing talent that

is wasted because their countries cannot support them. Japan is in need of this international talent and has the means to support them," Tabata explained.

As for recruitment trends in the United States, Tabata pointed out that her Japanese clients prefer local hires over native Japanese-speaking workers.

"This has been one of the biggest changes in the industry over the last three years. So, there still remains a lack of diversity and equality in the workforce. Top talent comes in many forms and we make sure to find them regardless of background," she stressed.

One of TOP's goals is also to create a platform for all individuals — particularly women, immigrants and the LGBT community — to access equal opportunity and recognition. Tabata has made it her life mission to increase diversity in the workforce and provide clients with top talent with no bias against gender, race or sexual orientation. ■

→ <https://top-us.com>



TOP Group Founder and President Noriko Tabata



ONE GREAT CITY, TWO FOUR-STAR AIRPORTS

In the most recent rankings released by Skytrax, recognized as a leading global air transport rating organization, the Houston Airport System now boasts two four-star rated airports — the George Bush Intercontinental Airport and William P. Hobby Airport. Houston is now the only city in the Western Hemisphere with two four-star rated airports. Only Tokyo, with Narita and Haneda airports, can boast the same level of airport service excellence.

Its dedication to excellent customer service, world-class amenities and growing international service played a huge role in earning the Houston airports this distinction. Bush and Hobby airports connect Houston to the world, serving nearly 55 million passengers overall in 2017, including more than 11.2 million international passengers.

A big factor of that steady growth in international traffic is the expanded connections to Japan and the Asian markets. In 2017, with nonstop flights offered by All Nippon Airways and United Airlines, Bush airport saw more than 300,000 international passengers to and from Japan. Since 2012, Bush airport has seen significant air service expansion to Asia overall and traffic has increased by 170 percent for the region.

This connection helps expand Houston's global profile, establishing this diverse city as a hub for international culture and commerce. ■

→ www.fly2houston.com

Grapevine, TX

- Voted #19 in Top 100 BEST Places to Live by MONEY Magazine
- Centrally Located Between Dallas & Fort Worth
- Home to DFW International Airport - 3rd Busiest Airport Globally
- Commuter Rail Service Rolling in to Grapevine with Direct Access to DFW International Airport & Fort Worth - Late 2018
- Award-Winning Festivals
- One of the Lowest Tax Rates in Texas

For Earth, For Life

FOOD WATER ENVIRONMENT

Giving to the Future of Earth

Food, water, the environment and their various issues. We at Kubota are committed to solving each one of them to support a better way of living for all people. And for the future of our Earth.

KUBOTA Corporation