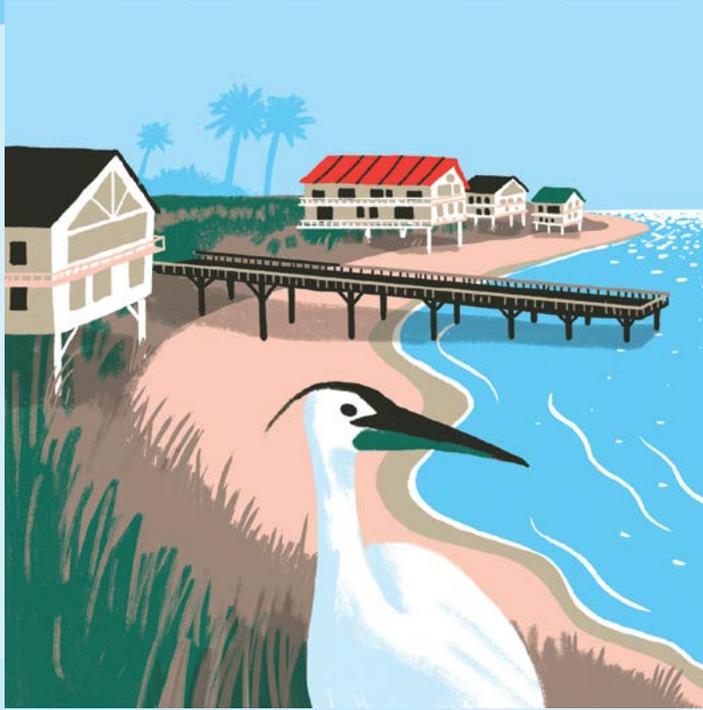


Regional Forecast: South Texas

The issues, projects, and trends that will impact Corpus Christi in 2026.

**BY SOUTH TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER
AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI**





by **South Texas Economic Development Center at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

What issues, projects, or policies will significantly impact the local economy in 2026?

The Coastal Bend's economy will continue to be shaped by a highly concentrated yet relatively stable industrial structure anchored in energy, manufacturing, port activity, and construction. Manufacturing, led by petroleum refining, chemical production, and fabricated metals, accounts for just over 40 percent of total regional output, while real estate and construction together contribute nearly 14 percent, reflecting strong linkages between industrial expansion and property demand.

The Port of Corpus Christi continues to play a significant role. As the largest crude oil export gateway in the U.S. and a major exporter of refined petroleum and liquefied natural gas (LNG) products, port throughput and infrastructure investment support industrial growth, logistics activity, and commercial real estate development. Ongoing LNG expansions are expected to generate both short-term construction employment and long-term operational jobs, reinforcing demand for industrial sites and workforce housing.

Water availability remains a growing constraint. Persistent drought conditions and rising industrial demands have elevated water security from environmental concern to a core economic and development issue, particularly for water-intensive industries and future site selection.

Will the local economy perform better, about the same, or worse in 2026 compared to 2025?

The economy is expected to perform slightly better in 2026, though growth is likely to remain moderate. Energy

markets are stabilizing, with crude oil prices supporting refinery margins without triggering sharp declines in drilling activity. Refinery closures elsewhere in the U.S. are expected to sustain demand for local refining output, supporting production and employment.

Health care, government, education, and construction provide an important stabilizing influence, particularly in the urban core. Mortgage rates are expected to ease modestly into early 2026, improving financing conditions, though inflation may continue to limit real income gains.

What are some key trends to look for in local real estate markets in 2026?

Residential real estate is expected to remain relatively stable. Housing inventory currently exceeds eight months of supply, well above both state and national averages, signaling a more balanced, buyer-leaning market environment in some segments. Elevated inventory levels are likely to constrain near-term price appreciation.

Median home prices have averaged around \$280,000 over the past year and are expected to remain relatively stable in early 2026. Stable housing demand is supported by the region's diversified employment base, particularly public-sector, health care, and service employment that provides steady demand for both owner-occupied and rental housing.

On the commercial side, industrial, logistics, and port-adjacent properties are expected to remain the strongest segments, while water availability and infrastructure capacity increasingly shape development decisions.

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