

Midland, Texas

Originally named “Midway”, Midland, Texas has been the historical way-station for travel and trade between Dallas and El Paso. This feature became definitive when the Texas-Pacific Railroad was built across Texas. The original drivers of the local economy were cattle and agriculture (primarily cotton farming).

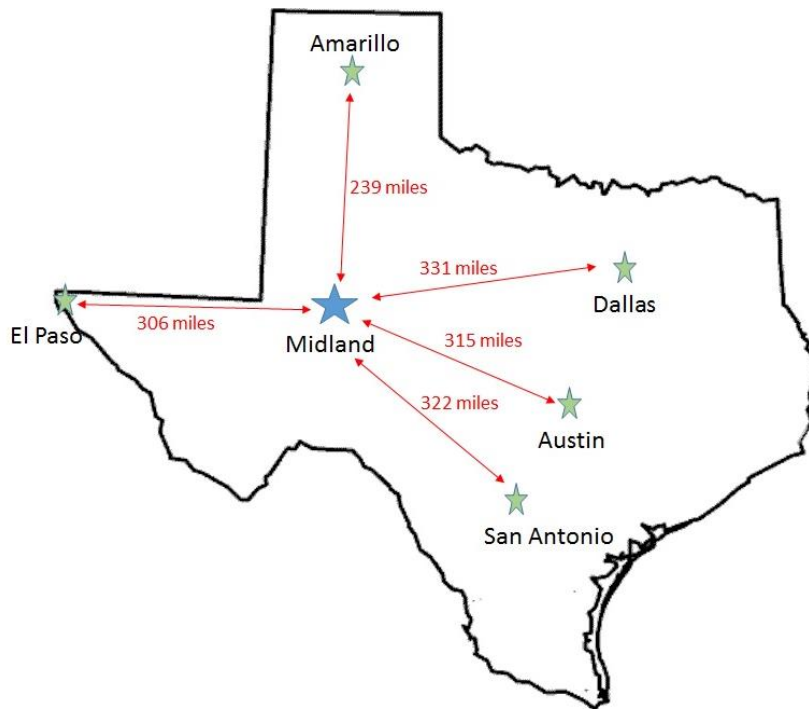


Figure 1. Distances of Major Metropolitan Cities to Midland

In the 1920's a large, extended series of oil reservoirs were discovered in the area and termed the “Permian Basin” after the geological era in which they were formed. Oil production has been the predominant industry in the area ever since. The Permian Basin has been one of the most prolific oil producing areas ever. The city of Midland has served as the unofficial capital of oil production in the Permian Basin since the 1940's when many of the major oil companies set up their regional offices here. New technologies in oil production continue to make the Midland area a vital hub in the energy sector. Midland has a (est.) population of 150,000 and its sister city, Odessa, also has a (est.) population of 150,000.

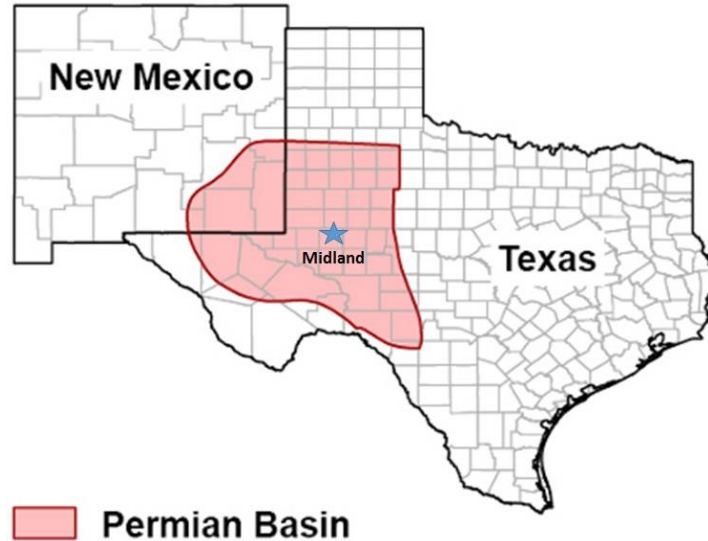


Figure 2. Map of the Permian Basin

The city has a variety of cultural attractions including Midland-Odessa Symphony and Chorale, the Petroleum Museum, the Commemorative Air Force Museum, and the Museum of the Southwest (with planetarium) to name a few.

Midland International Airport has been a vital conduit of travel for the oil industry. It is now one of nine FAA licensed space ports in the U.S, and one of three licensed spaceports in Texas. Midland International Airport is the only public commercial space port in Texas (the other two being the private *Space X* launch site in South Texas and the private *Blue Origin* launch site near Van Horn, Texas).

Combined, the Midland and its sister city Odessa have a (est.) population of 300,000 people which support a myriad of arts and cultural endeavors such as the annual Midland Blues Festival, the annual Rock-the-Desert Christian rock festival, and the Midland Community Theater. The Wagner-Noel Concert Hall hosts many touring performers such as Rod Stewart, Celtic Women, and the 65-year-old Midland-Odessa Symphony Orchestra. There are several museums of note including the Petroleum Museum, the Commemorative Air Force Museum, and the Museum of the Southwest (with planetarium) to name a few.

The city has a minor league baseball team, the Midland Rockhounds, which are the AA farm team for the Oakland A's that compete in the historic Texas League. There is a wide selection of retail and restaurants in the city.



Figure 3. Rock hounds Stadium in Midland

Midland College was formed in 1972 as a 2-year community college to serve the regional population. With an enrollment population of 6,000 students, the college's service area of 12,008 square miles encompasses 5 counties and is larger than the state of Rhode Island. Beyond the West Texas region, Midland College offers many of its science courses on-line and via video-conferencing which make its courses available world-wide. Part of its mission is to offer the premier opportunity in STEM education for freshman/sophomore curricula that can be had. Toward that end, Midland College has invested in science facilities and faculty that promote ongoing undergraduate research in Geology, Engineering, Chemistry, Biology, and Marine Science. Articulation agreements are in place for the transfer of academic credits to universities in the University of Texas System, the Texas A&M system, the Texas Tech University system, and the Texas State University system as well as private colleges and universities. The college reflects the diverse population that it serves and is proud to be designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).



Figure 1: Aerial View of the Midland College Campus



(a)



(b)

Figure 2. (a) The carillon and (b) The Marie Hall complex on the Midland College campus.

Travel

Midland International Air & Space Port (MAF) is easily accessible via commercial airlines as *Southwest Airlines* has direct flights from Dallas Love Field (DAL) & Houston Hobby (HOU) airports. *United Airlines* has direct flights to Houston International Airport (IAH). *American Eagle* has direct flights to Dallas-Fort Worth Airport (DFW). Connecting flights to and from Midland are easily accessible via the airports listed above.