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Subject: Film is Fort Worth's next 'great industry,' mayor says during State of the City
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Film is Fort Worth's next 'great industry,' mayor says during State of the City

Fort Worth Report

by Drew Shaw

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 Fort Worth

Mayor Mattie Parker, who was elected in 2021, speaks during the State of the City on Oct. 16, 2025.


(Maria Crane | Fort Worth Report/CatchLight Local/Report for America)

Fort Worth was ahead of the curve in attracting film producers to Texas, Mayor Mattie Parker said, and the city is planning to keep it that way.

With big-name television productions and a larger studio on the way, film is Fort Worth's next "great industry," Parker says.

At her fifth State of the City address, Parker on Thursday said efforts to attract producers to Fort Worth will continue to expand — which then will benefit businesses, workforce and the broader economy.

"Just like [cattle, railroads, energy, manufacturing and defense](#), (film) will become a part of the enduring [economic development story](#) that defines our city's future," Parker said, standing over a crowd of more than 100 business owners, community leaders and local elected officials that attended the event at Dickies Arena.

 Business and community leaders listen to Fort Worth's State of the City hosted by the chamber of commerce on Oct. 16, 2025, at Dickies Arena.

(Maria Crane | Fort Worth Report/CatchLight Local/Report for America)

Parker used film as a central example of how Fort Worth is evolving into its status as one of the nation's major cities.


With a population that [recently surpassed 1 million](#), Fort Worth may even be the 10th largest city in the nation according to unofficial estimates, said Steve Montgomery, President and CEO of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, during his remarks opening the event.

The mayor emphasized that the growing film industry has benefited residents with more than 50,000 jobs and nearly a billion dollar impact on businesses.

Since 2020, the city has notably become the planned headquarters of director Taylor Sheridan's 101 Studios. Known for shows like "[Yellowstone](#)," "[Landman](#)" and "[Lioness](#)," [the studio in August partnered](#) with Hillwood and Paramount Television to develop [Texas' largest production studio](#) in far North Fort Worth at AllianceTexas.

Hillwood and 101 Studios are planning a production studio five to eight times the current 450,000-square-foot one in AllianceTexas, said David Glasser, CEO of 101 Studios, in a sit-down conversation with Parker at the State of the City.

"I've probably moved 15% of my staff here," Glasser said. "They come here, they love it. They can get houses for a great price. Their kids are getting a great education."

 David Glasser speaks with Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker during the State of the City on Oct. 16, 2025.

(Maria Crane | Fort Worth Report/CatchLight Local/Report for America)

The city has also attracted productions such as [The Chosen](#), [12 Mighty Orphans](#) and [Miss Juneteenth](#).

Parker traced the city's advancements in the film industry to the [Fort Worth Film Commission](#), which was formed in 2015 to help sell the city to prospective producers. Since then, Texas lawmakers have rolled out tax incentives for producers to film in the state, most recently [committing \\$1.5 billion to the efforts](#) over the next decade.

"We knew that if we wanted to be competitive in Texas — this was before (state) incentives were where they are now — we had to be really strong, and we also needed

to be the very best in Texas,” she said.

101 Studios have also [partnered with Tarrant Community College](#) to grow students who can work in the film industry.

Parker compared Fort Worth saying “yes” to the film industry to the city’s [welcoming of General Dynamics](#) in the 1940s. The corporation would grow and later merge with Lockheed Martin, acting as a boon to [Fort Worth’s now thriving aircraft manufacturing and defence industry](#).

“This isn’t just about blockbuster movies and stardom,” Parker said. “It’s about telling stories that reflect who we are, creating jobs and opportunity and higher education pathways for our residents and our businesses.”

How Fort Worth is addressing education, homelessness, polarization

Parker also devoted time to other city issues commonly discussed in City Hall, including rising homelessness and [Fort Worth ISD’s education struggles](#).

She said the city is bracing for an [impending state takeover of Fort Worth ISD](#), triggered by multiple years of the school district’s struggle to meet Texas expectations on standardized testing.

While the city should be ready for the takeover, Parker said, it should also be proud of progress made on tests over the past year, which she attributed to the district’s [new superintendent](#) and FWISD’s partnership with the city [to turnaround declining literacy rates](#).

“(The) decision on potential state intervention is imminent, but our role as a community is clear: that no matter the outcome, we have to stand ready to rally around whatever the decision is,” she said.

 Audience

members listen to Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker during the State of the City on Oct. 16, 2025.

(Maria Crane | Fort Worth Report/CatchLight Local/Report for America)

Discussing homelessness, she highlighted the city’s [High ImpACT](#) program, which launched in 2024. The program focuses on reaching out to longtime homeless residents and offering them shelter and counseling services. Since its launch, 76 previously

homeless individuals have been housed, Parker said.

She also pointed to the city's [newly launched ambulance services](#) within the fire department as an example of how Fort Worth is evolving with its growth. Parker said the in-house services, which took over the role of longtime third-party provider MedStar, is expected to bring faster emergency response times and be more financially sustainable.

The services [increased the city's budget by about \\$89.2 million](#) for Fiscal Year 2026. About 63% of that is expected to be covered by expected income from patients. The city will foot the outstanding bill of about \$20.1 million.

After the speech, when asked by reporters about [increased polarization in the City Council](#), Parker said she was focused on keeping the speech's message positive.

"Contentious issues are totally normal in large cities where you're grappling with really important policy issues," Parker said. "But when you stop talking about policy, and you're talking about personalities and you're talking about [personal attacks](#), we've got to get back from that, and that's my focus."

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