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U.S. Department of Commerce Invests to Help Expand Victoria College Industrial Workforce Training Program

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced that the Department’s **Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding a \$3.8 million grant to the Victoria County Junior College District of Victoria, Texas, to support the expansion of the College’s industrial workforce training program.** The EDA grant, to be located near a [Tax Cuts and Jobs Act](#) designated [Opportunity Zone](#), will be matched with \$950,000 in local investment and is expected to help create or retain more than 1,670 jobs.

“The Trump Administration is working aggressively helping areas impacted by natural disasters to rebuild, both in terms of infrastructure and the local workforce,” **said Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross.** “This project for Victoria College will help buttress the workforce and prepare the local community for future jobs.”

“To ensure the Texas economy continues to expand, we must invest in training programs that give our workers the skills they need to compete and win in the 21st century economy,” **said Governor Abbott.** “I am grateful to Secretary Ross and the EDA for this investment in Victoria and will continue to work with them as create an even brighter future for all Texans.”

“With the help of community, resilience, and sheer hard work, Texans have come a long way since Hurricane Harvey hit two years ago, but scars of its devastation still show throughout our state,” **said Senator Cornyn.** “I’m thankful to the Trump Administration for providing this federal grant to Victoria to enhance local workforce training and create local jobs.”

“Victoria has come a long way since Hurricane Harvey, and a continued recovery depends on economic development and rebuilding our local industries,” **said Representative Cloud.** “The expansion of the workforce training program gives our community more educational opportunities and creates jobs. I’m looking forward to seeing the resulting economic growth.”

The project strengthens the regional economy with new training and a better-skilled workforce as the area works to recover from the damage of Hurricane Harvey. This project was made possible by the regional planning efforts led by Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (RPC). EDA funds Golden Crescent RPC to bring together the public and private sectors to create an

economic development roadmap that strengthens the regional economy, supports private capital investment, and creates jobs.

This project is funded under the [Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 \(PL 115-123\) \(PDF\)](#), in which Congress appropriated to EDA \$600 million in additional [Economic Adjustment Assistance \(EAA\) Program \(PDF\)](#) funds for disaster relief and recovery as a result of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, wildfires, and other calendar year 2017 natural disasters under the [Stafford Act](#).

The funding announced today will serve a designated Opportunity Zone, created by President Donald J. Trump's [Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017](#) to spur economic development by giving tax incentives to investors in economically-distressed communities nationwide. In June 2019, EDA added Opportunity Zones as an [Investment Priority](#), which increases the number of catalytic Opportunity Zone-related projects that EDA can fund to fuel greater public investment in these areas. To learn more about the Opportunity Zone program, see the Treasury Department resources page [here](#). To learn more about the Commerce Department's work in Opportunity Zones, please visit EDA's Opportunity Zones [webpage](#).

About the U.S. Economic Development Administration (www.eda.gov)

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA makes investments in economically distressed communities in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.