



News Release

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TX EDC Honors Cities with Community Economic Development Awards

FORT WORTH, TX - The Texas Economic Development Council today announced the recipients of its annual Community Economic Development Awards (CEDA) for 2018.

The awards were presented at a special awards luncheon held today, Thursday, October 18th, at the Texas EDC's Annual Conference at the Worthington Renaissance Hotel in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Community Economic Development Award program recognizes exceptional contributions of Texas EDC member cities toward the economic vitality of their communities and the state of Texas through creativity, leadership, and partnership in the achievement of business retention, business recruitment, and community improvement.

The CEDA committee received twenty-five applications this year. Nominees were judged on five criteria: innovativeness, transferability, community commitment and leverage, measured objectives, and secondary benefits.

The 2018 CEDA recipients are:

Population Less than 10,000:
Population 10,001 to 20,000:
Population 20,001 to 50,000:

Development Corporation of Haskell
Sulphur Springs Economic Development Corporation
Greenville Economic Development Corporation

Population 50,001 to 100,000: Waller County
Population 100,001 to 250,000: Lindale EDC-Mineola EDC-Tyler EDC
Population 250,001 and Above: San Antonio EDF

“Our Community Economic Development Award is one of the ways in which our organization honors the excellent work done by our communities, their leaders, and their economic development professionals,” noted Tom Long, 2018 Chair of the Texas Economic Development Council. “Each community nominated achieved excellence in economic development and substantially improved the economic base of their respective regions. The recipient communities in each population category were recognized for extraordinary accomplishments in meeting the criteria set forth in the nomination process.”

The Texas EDC provides information, education and legislative services to its members to foster the expansion of existing businesses, the location of new firms, and the development of strategies that promote a positive business climate in Texas. With 850 members, the Texas EDC is the largest state economic development association in the nation.

The Sanderson Farms project was selected by the state economic development association as the Community Economic Development Award recipient for populations between 100,001 and 250,000 and was submitted by the regional coalition made up of the cities of Lindale, Mineola and Tyler, and Smith and Wood counties. Representatives from these jurisdictions and Sanderson Farms were present at the awards luncheon.

Bob “Pic” Billingsley, Director of Development & Engineering, spoke for Sanderson Farms at the awards luncheon. He thanked the Texas EDC for the recognition and expressed his appreciation to the local government and economic development organizations for their efforts in coordinating this large and complex project.

Sanderson Farms is currently constructing three facilities in Smith and Wood Counties and will invest \$200 million and create 1,700 jobs. In addition, 80 contract growers will invest \$135 million and employ an additional 160.

This is the fourth production operation in Texas. Bryan-College Station, Waco and Palestine are where the other Texas operations are located. This is the 13th processing facility in the U.S. for Sanderson Farms, which is a 70-year-old family-run business headquartered in Laurel, Mississippi.

Mayor Martin Heines accepted the award for Tyler and thanked Sanderson Farms for choosing the Tyler, Lindale, Mineola area for this large investment.

Smith County Judge and Tyler EDC board member, Nathaniel Moran, agreed that the investment by Sanderson Farms will have a large multiplier effect on Northeast (Winona) and Northwest (Lindale) Smith County.

Shannon Dacus, Chair of the Tyler Economic Development Council, stated, “This project required a high level of cooperation among city, county and economic development officials along the I-20 and US 80 corridors and will have a significant impact on the region’s economy.”

Tom Mullins, President/CEO of the Tyler EDC, said “Sanderson Farms is a quality company that will provide competitive wages with an attractive fringe/medical package and will improve per capita and household incomes for the 1,700 plus families impacted by this project.”

Lindale Mayor, Jeff Daugherty, accepted the award for Lindale, and said, “We are proud of the collaborative work that occurred to make this project a reality for East Texas and look forward to welcoming Sanderson Farms, our newest corporate citizen to the Lindale Industrial Park.”

City of Mineola Mayor, Kevin White, accepted the award for Mineola, and said “On behalf of the citizens of Mineola and the surrounding area, I would like to thank all the individuals and Sanderson Farms, who worked together to bring this tremendous economic opportunity to both Smith and Wood counties.”

Mineola City Manager and EDC Executive Director, Mercy Rushing, stated, “As an economic developer and city manager, I was proud and honored to be a part of a team that jointly and collectively worked to produce an economic impact that benefits our East Texas region for countless years to come.”

Jerry Gaskill, Wood County Commissioner, responded to the award: “I think this award is very well-deserving for Mercy Rushing and the City of Mineola and Wood County, and like I’ve said, if you want to get something done, get Mercy to work on it.”

“We welcome Sanderson Farms to Wood County and anticipate a profitable partnership to all concerned. Strong accolades go to out to all those involved in bringing this development to Wood County”, Wood County Judge Bryan Jeanes.

An independent economic study conducted by Impact Data Source in Austin, TX, estimated the Sanderson Farms project will have a \$1.45 billion impact on the East Texas region over a ten-year period.

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