



October 28, 2013

For Immediate release

Waller County Economic Development Partnership Wins Prestigious Texas Economic Development Award

On October 17, 2013 representatives from Waller County and the Waller County Economic Development Partnership (WCEDP) were in San Antonio for the presentation of the annual Community Economic Development Awards for excellence in economic development. The awards are given annually by the Texas Economic Development Council (TEDC). Participants are divided into five competing categories based on population. This year the WCEDP received the award for their population category.

The Community Economic Development Awards program recognizes exceptional contributions of TEDC members 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 applications from 39 member communities. Nominees were then judged on five criteria: innovativeness, transferability, community commitment and leverage, measured objectives, and secondary benefits.

Lorie Vincent of Stratford, 2013 TEDC Chair noted, "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."

"These awards are like the Academy Awards of Texas economic development," commented Vince Yokom, Executive Director of the WCEDP. "I am very proud of our public partners, county leadership, and board of directors. Our organization couldn't do the work we do without them."

The project submission was for Weatherford's new award-winning manufacturing operations facility located just west of Katy. Lean manufacturing techniques and a modular approach were

used in designing the process flow, while allowing for the addition of machinery to meet customer demand. State-of-the-art technology increases the efficiency of the facility's manufacturing operations, which includes machining, fabrication, painting and assembly, and is facilitated by an engineering and support staff, as well as training facilities.

Designed for growth, the 354,000-square-foot facility currently employs 85 people, and is projected to employ 335 people with current investment. It is capable of facilitating 500 employees and operating on a 24-hour basis, with a maximum capacity of 600 pumping units per month.

"This facility gives Weatherford a competitive edge in allowing us to provide a USA-monogrammed unit to the market," said Ernest Dunn, Vice President of Production Systems for Weatherford. "The state-of-the-art robotics and technologies incorporated in this facility continue to support our high quality standards while providing our employees a safe place to work."



Pictured is an aerial photo of the new Weatherford facility located just west of Katy.

Weatherford is also working with the Katy Area Economic Development Council to support the community through local education groups, such as community colleges and high schools. Alton Frailey, Katy ISD Superintendent, commented, "We are fortunate to have quality organizations

here in the Katy area that are committed to working together to bring business and industry to the region. Each time a company relocates within Katy ISD, they not only bring opportunities for our workforce and community, but it also sends a signal to other businesses that this is a place to do business. Ultimately, this benefits Katy ISD as the economic growth adds value to our community and helps us to be able to enrich the learning experiences for our students.”

Yokom acknowledged the role of others working on the project. “I want to also mention our development partners Clay Development and Construction. They had been working on the site for a long time before Weatherford expressed an interest. They did an incredible job in preparing for such an opportunity. They really went the extra mile to meet the project demands. Also, I want to recognize the efforts by Katy ISD, Moak Casey and Associates, Allen Boone Humphries Robinson, LP, and CenterPoint Energy who all worked to support the project.”

“In addition,” Yokom added, “I want to recognize the Brookshire Katy Drainage District for their efforts to facilitate the fast-paced development schedule.” Charles Kalkomey, drainage district engineer, commented, “The District worked with Clay Development throughout the site design and construction to achieve the desired goals of adequate drainage without negatively impacting surrounding properties in the area. The final design achieved these goals and at the same time provided for the necessary drainage for the extension of Schlipff Road.”

“Projects like this don’t just happen without good county leadership,” said Wallace Everitt, WCEDP Board President. “We want to also thank our County Judge and Commissioners. Over the years Waller County has been creating a business-friendly environment in which projects like this can be successful.”

Waller County Judge, Glenn Beckendorff commented, “We are proud of this award. Our economic development team and partners work hard to build value in the community and bring new jobs. It is an honor to be a part of this recognition and humbling to have been chosen.”



Above: Waller County representatives and TEDC members at the award luncheon, San Antonio Texas, October 17, 2013

L-R: Karen Gregory, TEDC award committee chair, Waller County Commissioner Stan Kitzman, Stephanie Wiggins, CenterPoint Energy, Vince Yokom, Executive Director of the WCEDP, Robin Yokom, Wallace Everitt, WCEDP Board President, Lorie Vincent, 2013 TEDC Board Chair, Waller County Judge Glenn Beckendorff, and John Isom, the city of Waller EDC

To learn more about the WCEDP, you can visit www.wallercounty.org. To learn more about the Texas Economic Development Council, visit www.texasedc.org. And, to learn more about Weatherford International, visit www.weatherford.com.