

CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM

AGENDA DATE: March 1, 2022
PUBLIC HEARING DATE: N/A

CONTACT PERSON(S) NAME AND PHONE NUMBER: Elizabeth K Triggs, TriggsEK@elpasotexas.gov,
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DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All

STRATEGIC GOAL: No. 1: Create an Environment Conducive to Strong, Sustainable Economic Development.

SUBGOAL: No. 1.1: Stabilize and expand El Paso's tax base.

SUBJECT:

Discussion and action requesting City Council support for submission of the application entitled "Reclaiming Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Dominance through Frontier Technologies" to Phase II of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Build Back Better Regional Challenge by the West Texas Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Coalition, led by the University of Texas at El Paso's Aerospace Center and of which the City of El Paso is a part.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

On March 11, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed the American Recovery Plan Act into law and appropriated \$3 billion in supplemental funding to assist communities nationwide in their efforts to build back better by accelerating economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and building local economies that will be resilient to future shocks. Funding became available across six programs, including the \$1 billion Build Back Better Regional Challenge. The Challenge is designed as a two-phase competition to (1) help regions develop transformational economic development strategies and (2) fund the implementation of those strategies that will create and grow regional growth clusters through a collection of collaborative, aligned projects designed to grow new industries and scale existing ones.

In mid-October, City Council supported the City's participation in the West Texas Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Coalition led by UTEP's Aerospace Center, and the submission of the Coalition's application, title "Reclaiming Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Dominance through Frontier Technologies" to Phase I of the Build Back Better Regional Challenge. The application seeks to reinvent West Texas' historical roots in manufacturing to help close America's gap in aerospace and defense manufacturing capabilities by bringing new competitive U.S. entrants into the defense industrial ecosystem and by building design teams and manufacturing skills critical to reclaiming America's aerospace and defense manufacturing dominance. One of the component projects that the City will take the lead on developing is the El Paso Makes Advanced Manufacturing District, a 250-acre area that will be dedicated and master planned by the City to co-locate aerospace, defense, and advanced manufacturing activities at the El Paso International Airport.

On December 13, 2021, from a pool of 529 applicants, the U.S. Department of Commerce and Economic Development Administration announced the West Texas Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Coalition was selected as one of 60 coalitions nationwide awarded Phase I funding under the Economic Development Administration's Build Back Better Challenge. The City was sub-awarded \$240,000 to facilitate pre-construction activities for the Innovation Factory and Advanced Manufacturing Campus to be located at the El Paso International Airport. This presentation provides an update on those planning activities and seeks City Council approval for submission of the Phase II application to secure funding for construction of the planned projects, including the Innovation Factory and Advanced Manufacturing Campus. The EDA will award 20 to 30 of the selected 60 regional coalitions up to \$100 million to implement 3 to 7 projects to support growth of the chosen regional industry cluster.

Revised 04/09/2021

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

On October 12, 2021, City Council unanimously voted to approve the City’s participation as a member of the West Texas Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Coalition, led by the University of Texas at El Paso’s Aerospace Center and providing support for the Coalition’s submission of its application, “Reclaiming Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Dominance through Frontier Technologies to Phase I of the U.S. Economic Development Administration’s Build Back Better Regional Challenge.

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

HAVE ALL AFFECTED DEPARTMENTS BEEN NOTIFIED? YES NO

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT: Economic & International Development

SECONDARY DEPARTMENT: El Paso International Airport

*******REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*******

DEPARTMENT HEAD:



Elizabeth Triggs,
Interim Director, Economic & International Development