



The Insider

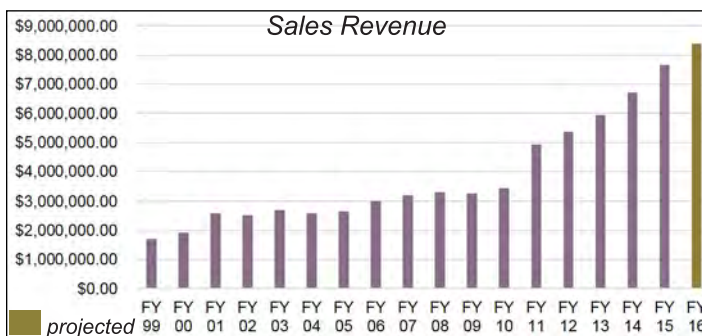
A Strong History, a Bright Tomorrow



Brenda Webb
Chairman of the Board

There have been many changes in the last 15 years in East Montgomery County, and I am so proud and honored to be part of the team that has been instrumental in bringing these successful changes to our community. There are approximately 80,000 residents within the East Montgomery County Improvement District's boundaries, which encompass 158 square miles and include the New Caney and Splendora school districts.

In 1999, at the end of EMCID's first full fiscal year, the revenue received from sales tax dollars was a little over \$1.7 million. By 2011, revenue had increased by 159 percent to \$4.4 million. Last year, sales tax revenue equaled more than \$7.6 million, an increase of 73 percent in five years—and a 350 percent increase since 1999.



Growth drives opportunity, and five years ago, there were 748 businesses within the District. That number has grown to 964, and we continue to see construction—a promise of continued growth and jobs. Each of the businesses that EMCID has recruited to either expand or move into our district required additional employees, and each company agreed that a significant number of the new hires would be residents of East Montgomery County, thereby creating new employment opportunities for our residents. Since 2011, EMCID's efforts have created more than 750 jobs, with another 650 anticipated through current contracted agreements.

The Walmart Distribution Center, in 2002, was the first business to open in EMCID's 500-acre Industrial Park, located on Gene Campbell Road, between FM 1314 and

FM 1485. Since that time, EMCID has grown the number of businesses in the park to 15.

The Board has approved new projects, including Martin Marietta Materials in New Caney and Randall Reed Planet Ford's Quick Lane Tire and Auto Center in Porter. Existing companies approved for expansion projects include Royal Purple in Porter and Keysteel in the Industrial Park.

A major factor that will enhance development at the Industrial Park and other areas of the community is the Grand Parkway. EMCID's Board of Directors and CEO led the effort to keep it situated along its current path, intersecting U.S. Highway 59 at Community Drive. There had been a push by outside entities to move the segment to Highway 242, which would have shut down the Valley Ranch Town Center project, a development EMCID had been working on for the past 10 years with The Signorelli Company, and our area would have lost hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars of future sales tax revenue.

At 1.8 million square feet, the Town Center is one of the largest retail developments currently underway in Texas. The first of many retail stores—Kroger Marketplace, Sam's Club and Academy—are currently under design and construction and are scheduled to open beginning late Fall. In addition to plenty of shopping and dining options, there will be parks, lakes, hiking trails and many other amenities for your family to enjoy.

Your EMCID Board made it a priority in 2015 to be involved in a large community project. After a careful demographic analysis and consideration of the Board's criteria, there will be three splash pad parks built—two in 2016. One will be located in Splendora and the other in Roman Forest; a third park will be built at a later time, likely in the Valley Ranch Town Center, once the area is construction-ready.

The Board's priority is also that of your safety. In 2012, we implemented the Safe Shopper Program to allow for extra patrols at shopping centers. Shoplifting during the holiday season is down 42 percent. (See page 2.)

As you can see, creating jobs, improving the way of life for you and your family and the safety of our community are extremely important to your Board, and the reason we do what you have entrusted us to do. We mail out over 32,000 newsletters every 3 months, which keep you updated and informed on what is happening in your community. Thank you for your comments and suggestions, as your involvement is a vital part of the continued success of improving our community.

Community

Safe Shopper Program Making Impact on Shoplifting, Misdemeanors

Shoplifters and other criminals have gotten the message: East Montgomery County doesn't tolerate them. EMCID and the Constable's office teamed up for a fourth year to provide additional security at high traffic shopping areas during the holiday shopping season, from October 15, 2015 to January 15, 2016, as part of the Safe Shopper Program. The Board approved \$50,000 for extra patrols and the purchase of two patrol bicycles.

Deputies arrested 42 shoplifters, 40 people on misdemeanor charges and 46 people for felonies over the 93-day period. In the first year of the program, over a 29-day period in 2012, deputies arrested 26 shoplifters, 36 people on misdemeanors and 12 people for felonies. When averaged out over a similar time period, that equals a 42 percent decrease in overall arrests.

"When we started this program four years ago, the idea was to provide a safe place for our residents to shop," said Frank McCrady, EMCID President/CEO. "The numbers don't lie. Shoplifting arrests are down 46 percent. Misdemeanor arrests are down 63 percent. The Board is very pleased with the outcome—a safer place to shop, dine and raise a family."

The Constable's office reports that the people committing the crimes and being arrested aren't from the community, so word has gotten out about the program and the efforts are apparently working.

"I'm pleased that for the fourth year in a row, the Safe Shopper Program has seen a reduction in crime," said Montgomery County Precinct 4 Constable Kenneth "Rowdy" Hayden. "This is not only good for the residents of East Montgomery County, but also for the store owners, employees and those



EMCID has provided more than \$18,000,000 in fu

\$153,527.78 in Grants Awarded to Organizations in Fall 2015

Boy Scouts of America Cub Scout Pack 911 - \$1,303.00
Pinewood Derby Track and software to be used for the annual Pinewood Derby race

Friends of R.B. Tullis Library - \$6,000.00
Books, e-books, books on CD and videos for the children's, young adults and adult programs

New Caney ISD Education Foundation - \$25,000.00
Grants ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 for teachers

New Caney ISD White Oak Middle School Applied Skills Classroom - \$3,543.74
Educational materials in reading, science, social studies and math, hands-on manipulatives

Roman Forest Police Department - \$680.05
Marijuana Simulation Kit

Roman Forest Special Events Committee - \$9,032.94
Automatic firing system for staging and firing fireworks

Splendora ISD Elementary Robotics Program - \$6,962.82
Fully fund several teams for the Robotics Programs and the purchase of Lego EV3 kits and software to be used in education and competitions

Splendora ISD Police Department - \$4,891.00
Create and purchase 1,000 *Handbooks for Success* books and posters, designed to inspire and to enable students to improve their lives and their community



Cub Scout Pack 911



Splendora ISD Elementary Robotics Program

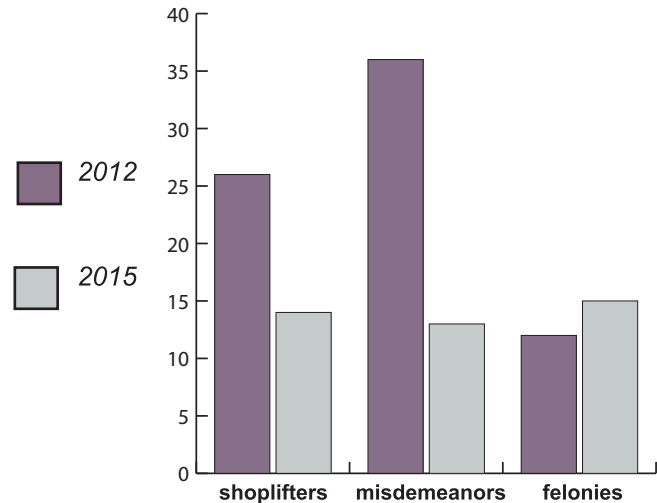
Splendora Youth Baseball Association - \$39,529.38
Playground equipment at the Sports Complex in Splendora

VFW Piney Woods #4816 - \$39,362.50
Repair and resurface the existing parking lot

Woodbranch Police Department - \$17,222.35
New in-car camera system for three vehicles to replace the current video system which, at times, is non-functioning.

Community

Safe Shopper Program Arrests 2012 vs 2015



who visit the area.”

Because crime and arrests are down, deputies are making more building checks, or walking the perimeters of local businesses. Building checks increased by 448 percent, when adjusted for the difference in program lengths, from 71 in 2012 to 1,168 in 2015. The Constable’s office says the businesses love the deputies’ presence; it gives the businesses and their employees a sense of safety and keeps the criminal activity at bay.

** Because the 2012 and 2015 programs were based on a 29-day and 93-day cycle, respectively, evaluative criteria is based on a program weighted average.*

ending to community organizations since 1998.



Board Introduces New Mini-Grant and Changes to Existing Grant Program

EMCID’s Board of Directors approved the implementation of a new “mini-grant” and made changes to its existing Community Development Grant program at the Board’s January 14 meeting. Non-profit organizations and government entities requesting \$5,000 or less can apply for funds using the new one-page mini-grant application. Applicants do not need to have matching funds.

Changes to the regular grant application include a maximum request of \$30,000. Taxing entities are required to have 50 percent in matching funds; the required match for non-profit organizations is 33 percent.

Both applications can be found at www.emctx.com/services/community-development. Submissions must be received no later than Monday, March 28 at 5 p.m.



Friends of the R.B. Tullis Library



New Caney ISD Education Foundation



New Caney ISD White Oak Middle School



Roman Forest Police Department



Roman Forest Special Events Committee



Splendora ISD Police Department



Splendora Youth Baseball Association



VFW Piney Woods #4816



Woodbranch Police Department

Community

East Texas Fire & Ice Festival Provided Snow, Music and Memories



Community

Cook Honored as Outstanding Citizen



The Board of Directors took the public opportunity at the East Texas Fire & Ice Festival in January to present its first Outstanding Citizen Award to Therlyn Cook. The award was created by the Board to recognize individuals whose contributions have had a significant impact on the economy, community or education.

Cook is a life-long resident of Porter with deep roots, serving and supporting the area for more than 70 years. Director Scott Hesson nominated Cook, stating he is a family man and business owner, a Christian, a philanthropist, Mason and a Shriner. He described Cook as a leader, a giver, one of service, dedicated and loyal.



Cook worked as a sacker and loaded feed at Mayer's Feed and Grocery before graduating from high school and then attending the University of Houston. Following employment at Utex Industries, he opened up his own company, Tryco Machine Works.

He's a big believer in helping out the youth of the community. Over the years he's sponsored his fair share of baseball teams, yearbooks, posters, youth camps and clubs, school trips, 4H and FFA. He's supported hundreds of students at the Montgomery County and East Montgomery County Fairs, buying artwork, baked goods, crafts and Grand Champion animals.

He was also a volunteer fireman during the start-up days of the Porter Fire Department and has been a Board Member of ESD #6 for numerous years. He is currently the vice president.

He's married to Susan, his wife of nearly 55 years. They have three children and five grandchildren who all live in the area.



Receive Money for College Through EMCID and the EMC Scholarship Foundation!



\$750 Work Study Program

This paid internship consists of a 10-week work study program, beginning on or about September 1, 2016 that is available to three students — one each from New Caney, Porter and Splendora high schools — who are interested in learning how EMCID's economic, community and educational development programs impact the community and want to advance their knowledge and skills in business, communications or event planning.

Criteria:

- Completed application received by August 1, 2016.
- Must have passed the 11th grade but not graduated prior to September 1, 2016.
- Previous knowledge of and desire to advance skills in accounting, business, communications, festival and event planning, general office, journalism, photography, public relations or travel and tourism
- Must have reliable transportation.

www.emctx.com/scholarships/work-study-program to download an application.



\$1,000 Scholarship

This scholarship is for high school or home-schooled graduates and GED recipients. To be eligible, the applicant must:

- Have graduated or received a GED from New Caney, Porter or Splendora high schools, a private institution or a home schooling program within the EMCID boundaries
- Use the scholarship within 2 years of graduation or receipt of GED

www.emctx.com/scholarships/applications to find instructions for how to receive a financial credit at any Lone Star College campus or how to be reimbursed for tuition and fees at any other educational institution.

Economy

Wellspring Midwifery Care & Birth Center: Offering a Return to Personalized Care

It wasn't until the 20th century that doctor-assisted hospital births began to take hold in the United States, reducing the number of midwife-delivered births to half in 1900 and to just 15 percent by the 1940s. But the country has seen a recent resurgence in the demand for midwifery, home births and a return to "natural" care.

"I think women are realizing that they can take charge of their healthcare and there are things they're not happy about in a hospital. They feel like a number a lot of times," said Ashley Musil, who is a Licensed Midwife and Certified Professional Midwife and owner of Wellspring Midwifery Care & Birth Center in Kingwood. "With midwifery care it's much more customized, much more individualized care. So women are very pleased with that."

Musil opened the center with her mother Karla Mercieca, who is the business administrator for the facility at 794A Russell Palmer Drive, after determining the area would benefit from having a hub of natural services. The greater Houston area has nine birthing centers, while Dallas/Fort Worth has 22.

The process is very similar to seeing a doctor, with prenatal and post-delivery appointments, but Musil says wait times are shorter and appointment times are much longer, some lasting up to an hour.

Delivery can be done at home or at the center, whichever is most comfortable for the mother. The center currently has two rooms with adjoining bathrooms that can be used for water births, or what Musil and other midwives refer to as "aquadurals."



"The buoyancy of the water helps relieve some of the pressure and pain," she said. Musil, who has experienced a water birth for the delivery of her own child, says pushing is easier, and the transition for the baby is much smoother.

Musil currently averages about three clients per month, but she expects that number to grow to eight to ten a month within the next two years, based off of what other birthing centers in Houston are experiencing.

Aside from direct care, the center offers classes on infant CPR, childbirth, nutrition, baby wearing and cloth diapering. It also offers classes for health providers.

Mercieca encourages anyone interested in taking a class to go to wellspringmidwife.com or [facebook.com/midwifemusil](https://www.facebook.com/midwifemusil).

The center is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and by appointment on Wednesday and Friday. Musil and Mercieca can be reached at 832-510-6362.

Kroger Marketplace at Valley Ranch Town Center Slated for Late Fall Opening

Construction is currently underway at the new 123,000 square foot Kroger Marketplace Store and Fuel Center, located in the Valley Ranch Center at the Grand Parkway and U.S. Highway 59. The Marketplace store is projected to open in the late Fall of 2016.

Dani Murphy-Cannella, public affairs specialist with Kroger, says the new store will offer customers a food-centric shopping experience with a variety of chef-prepared items, locally-grown fruits and vegetables, wines, craft beer, premium-cut meats, fresh seafood, organic and all-natural products, Starbucks, specialty cheese shop, apparel, home goods, pet needs, a baby world, a full-service pharmacy and a fuel station.

EMCID, The Signorelli Company, and The Kroger Company broke ground October 29. "We've heard nothing but excitement, anticipation and positive comments from our residents about the arrival of the Kroger Marketplace to the



Town Center as an additional shopping option as well as an opportunity for jobs in East Montgomery County," said Frank McCrady, President and CEO of EMCID. "EMCID looks forward to the progress of the Valley Ranch Town Center development and its capability of changing the landscape of this area for the better."

Inside the East Montgomery County Improvement District



Frank McCrady
President & CEO



McCrady Elected Western Region Director of Southern Economic Development Council

Frank McCrady, the President and CEO of the East Montgomery County Improvement District (EMCID), will lend a strong voice for economic leadership to Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas as the newly elected Western Region Director of the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC), the oldest and largest regional economic development association in North America. The SEDC is comprised of 17 states in the southern United States and the District of Columbia. McCrady assumed the role January

oversees committees on education, the SEDC's annual conference, and consulting.

With nearly 30 years of experience in economic development and banking, McCrady has spent nearly 14 of those years as EMCID's chief strategic planner, elevating East Montgomery County to a community ready for growth. Under his leadership, development has soared and sales tax revenue for the 158-square mile improvement district has increased by more than 200 percent, from \$2.5 million in 2002 to \$7.7 million in 2015. Current retail and entertainment projects underway stand to further financial success for the District and the community in the form of job creation, additional business recruiting tools, expanded services, community grants and scholarships for local youth.

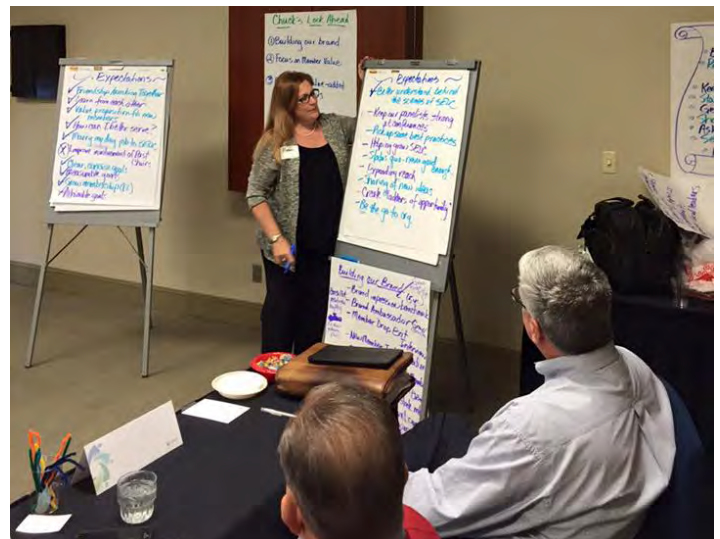
Prior to taking over the leadership position at EMCID, McCrady served as the Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development for Salt Lake City, the Executive Director of the Tulsa Economic Development Corporation and as Operations Manager of Riggs National Bank in Washington, D.C. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserve and retired as a lieutenant colonel after 28 years.

McCrady graduated from the University of Arkansas with a BS in Finance and Banking. He received his MBA from Webster University in St. Louis, MO. McCrady also attended the United States Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, KS and took the Advanced Operations and Warfighter course, completed studies at the United States Army War College in Pennsylvania, and he took on additional coursework at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C.

1. The directors representing each of the aforementioned states elected McCrady, who is the Texas director, at the organization's Fall Board Planning Retreat held in Dallas this past November.

"It's truly an honor to be elected by my peers in the western region of the SEDC to serve in this capacity," said McCrady. "The position provides additional opportunities for me to make an impact on the economic development profession in the areas of training, leadership and Young Professionals development."

In addition to the regional directorship, McCrady will serve as Chair of the Professional Development Division, which



McCrady stays busy locally keeping the community informed of retail and industrial development within East Montgomery County. He also travels nationally, recruiting additional businesses to the area and receiving additional training in economic development. (Left) McCrady spoke to local business leaders at The Observer Newspapers & Greater East Montgomery County Chamber Networking Luncheon at Homewood Suites in Kingwood January 13. (Right) McCrady attends a training session in Dallas in November hosted by the Southern Economic Development Council.



*****ECRWSS****

Local
Postal Customer

PRST STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail



emctx.com
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East Montgomery County Improvement District 21575 U.S. Highway 59, Ste. 200, New Caney, TX 77357 281.354.4419

Important Dates

March 2016 - May 2016

Texas Primary Election Day	March 1	7 - 7 p.m.	Various Locations
Deadline to Submit Merit Scholarship Applications	March 1	5 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon	March 2	11:30 a.m.	EMCID Complex
EMC Scholarship Foundation Meeting	*March 10	12 p.m.	EMCID Complex
EMC Economic Development Corporation Meeting	*March 10	1:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
EMCID Regular Meeting	*March 10	6:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Daylight Saving Time Begins	March 13	2 a.m.	
Good Friday Holiday	March 25	Closed	
Easter	March 27		
Deadline to Submit Grant Applications	March 28	5 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon	April 6	11:30 a.m.	EMCID Complex
EMCID Regular Meeting	*April 14	6:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Free Children's Immunizations	April 26	9:30 - 1:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon	May 4	11:30 a.m.	EMCID Complex
Local Election Day	May 7	7 - 7 p.m.	Various Locations
EMCID Regular Meeting	*May 12	6:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Memorial Day Holiday	May 30	Closed	

**Dates subject to change*

Please visit www.emctx.com/calendar for an up-to-date listing of events.

The Insider is a quarterly newsletter produced by the East Montgomery County Improvement District. Please direct questions or comments to: Kelley Mattlage, Director of Communications, kmattlage@emctx.com.