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PRESS RELEASE

Fort Bend County Announces Historic Community and Economic Development Agreement

(FORT BEND, TX) — Fort Bend County Judge KP George, along with area nonprofits, today announced a groundbreaking Community and Economic Development Agreement aimed at strengthening under-resourced communities through affordable housing, education, and revitalization initiatives. This historic agreement represents a significant milestone in the county's ongoing commitment to addressing the challenges faced by vulnerable populations.

Since December of 2022, Fort Bend County Judge KP George has been actively engaging in discussions with various area nonprofit organizations, including Brandon Baca, Chief Executive Officer of Attack Poverty, and Shannan Stavinoha, Executive Director of Parks Youth Ranch, among others. The primary focus of these discussions was to address the needs of the county's at-risk homeless population and explore collaborative solutions to improve their quality of life.

As a result of these constructive dialogues, the Commissioner's Court unanimously approved a budget allocation of \$2.5 million on Tuesday for an affordable housing program. This funding will provide critical support and assistance to homeless individuals, helping them secure safe and stable housing. By investing in affordable housing initiatives.

"This Community and Economic Development Agreement is a testament to Fort Bend County's dedication to addressing the needs of our most vulnerable community members," said Judge KP George. "We believe that everyone deserves access to safe and affordable housing, quality education, and opportunities for revitalization. By collaborating with local nonprofit organizations, we can make a lasting impact on our community and uplift those in need."

Joining Judge George for this announcement were State Representative Ron Reynolds (HD27), Fulshear Mayor and Vice President of Attack Poverty Aaron Groff, Fort Bend County Precinct 4 Commissioner Dexter McCoy, Brandon Baca, Chief Executive Officer of Attack Poverty, and Shannan Stavinoha, Executive Director of Parks Youth Ranch, Fort Bend County Economic Development Director Carlos Guzman, Fort Bend County Director of Behavior Services Connie Almeida, and Fort Bend Family Promise Jim Uschkrat.

The Community and Economic Development Agreement is focused on encouraging local economic development by stimulating, promoting, and developing business locations and commercial activity in Fort Bend County to:

1. Strengthening under-resourced communities through education, revitalization;
2. Meet the critical need to match those that are unemployed or underemployed with the varied job openings that exist to meet employer demand, and to ensure individuals have opportunities to meet their basic needs;
3. Ensure that an adequate workforce is available to meet the needs of local businesses and provides a foundation for families and individuals to thrive economically and socially;
4. Ensure that residents can easily access necessities such as education, healthy food, employment, and health services.
5. Provide additional community development services such as:
 - a. Onsite and after-school programs that focus on at-risk children that target reading and math development alongside school district performance standards;
 - b. Adult education that focuses on learning English as a second language, obtaining a high school equivalency certificate (GED), technical school training, financial literacy, and computer literacy;
 - c. Job readiness courses that support soft skills development to obtain employment;
 - d. Skill development through on-the-job training through employment onsite and certificate acquisition for trade skills;
 - e. Workforce development programs designed to meet local needs;
 - f. Job creation through part-time entry-level opportunities accessible onsite; and
 - g. Development of CDC and management of Social Enterprise Initiatives

The Fort Bend County Attorney's Office has played an instrumental role in ensuring the successful execution of this significant economic development initiative and paved the way for a fruitful project.

The Community and Economic Development Agreement represents a significant step towards creating a more equitable and prosperous future for all its residents.

***Pictured L to R: Fort Bend Family Promise Jim Uschkrat, Shannan Stavinoha, Executive Director of Parks Youth Ranch, Fulshear Mayor and Vice President of Attack Poverty Aaron Groff, Fort Bend County Judge KP George, Fort Bend County Commissioner Precinct 4 Dexter McCoy, and State Representative (HD27) Ron Reynolds, Chief Executive Officer of Attack Poverty Brandon Baca, Fort Bend County Director of Behavior Services Connie Almeida, and Fort Bend County Economic Development Director Carlos Guzman.**

