PRESS RELEASE

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Crater Planning District Commission Awarded EDA Grant
(Funding will allow economic development initiatives)

The U. S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) recently announced that the Crater Planning District Commission will receive a $70,000 economic development grant award to be matched with $17,500 in Commission funds, to enable the Commission to continue important economic development initiatives in the region.

The Planning District was originally designated an Economic Development District in 1985. It’s current 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) identifies four focus areas that will strengthen the District’s economic base: Technology Expansion, Workforce Development, Small Business Growth and Infrastructure Improvements.

Commission efforts are focused on major initiatives that have come out of the CEDS planning process.

- **Logistics** – Through the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Logistics Systems (CCALS), there is a collaboration among Fort Lee (Logistics Capital of the Army), five Virginia universities, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the Port of Virginia and logistics companies, focused upon capitalizing on the region’s excellent location, transportation network, proximity to the Port of Virginia, logistics expertise in the universities and talent at Fort Lee to position this region for growth in logistics.

- **Advanced Manufacturing/Workforce Development** – The Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) has a workforce development component that will grow to be the Advanced Manufacturing Apprentice Academy to prepare workers for jobs in 21st century advanced manufacturing companies. Currently CCAM is training soldiers exiting the military for in-demand jobs in advanced manufacturing. A new class will enter the program this fall. CCAM is an applied research center that provides production-ready advance manufacturing solutions to member companies across the globe.
• **Tourism** – The PDC continues to administer Petersburg Area Regional Tourism (PART), as well as support other jurisdictions pursuing initiatives to grow tourism. According to the latest U. S. Travel Association (USTA) tourism survey results, visitor expenditures in the Crater District totaled $430 million and $364 million in the PART region. Local governments in the Planning District received $34+ million in local tax revenues from tourism and 4,300 jobs in the region are associated with tourism. Thus, tourism spending in the region is a growing important contributor to the region’s economy.

• **Infrastructure Improvements** – EDA recently announced the preliminary selection of a $3.15 million funding package to the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) to support the construction of the Advanced Manufacturing Apprentice Academy (AMAA) on CCAM’s campus. The AMAA will be a “game-changer” for the Crater region as well as the Commonwealth as it will deliver qualified workers with industry-directed skills and credentials for advanced manufacturing high-demand jobs in machining, welding and mechatronics. The AMAA will also provide for the upskilling of incumbent workers who are seeking career advancement.

For additional information, visit [www.craterpdc.org](http://www.craterpdc.org) or call (804) 861-1666.