

America's Central Port Wins \$630,000 From DCEO For Opportunity Zone Development

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America's Central Port is proud to announce a \$630,000 grant award from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) under its Opportunity Zone Program. The program bolsters the competitiveness of the state's Opportunity Zones by providing matching funds for infrastructure investments and site readiness activities to help attract Opportunity Zone investment.

Under the leadership of past Board Chairman Mayor John Hamm III of Madison, IL, the Port's submission will realign and reconstruct West Fourth Street in the Port's Warehouse District. The realignment and reconstruction of this street will move it further away from the warehouses it serves, allowing for more effective truck circulation and improving last mile efficiencies for both future prospects and current manufacturing tenants looking to grow.

With the potential for new development on the 60-acres of undeveloped and rail-served land adjacent to this street, this particular infrastructure investment is ideally poised to attract private investment and employment opportunities to this Opportunity Zone

census tract. (The proposed project is located in census tract 17119400200, a designated Opportunity Zone.)

In addition to the capacity for new businesses, a current tenant adjacent to W. Fourth Street is considering expansion of their facility. The expansion would entail an estimated \$3 million investment and the retention of 19 jobs, with the potential to create an additional 15 jobs over the next five years. Stating that reliable and efficient last-mile logistics is required to remain competitive in their industry, the construction of this road will be a significant advantage for their operation.

The reconstruction and realignment of West Fourth Street will take approximately 13 months. Detailed design has already begun, and documents will be ready for bidding later this year. The project is projected to be completed by June, 2021.

The total estimated cost of the Fourth Street reconstruction is approximately \$1.4 million.

We'd like to thank the City of Madison, St. Louis Regional Freightway, Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois, and Southwestern Illinois Metropolitan and Regional Planning Commission for providing letters of recommendation to help secure this grant.