

Photo Cut Line: U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Regional Director Jorge Ayala (right) is presented with an aerial photo of the two new water storage tanks the City of San Augustine constructed with an EDA Grant. Presenting the photo is San Augustine Mayor Leroy Hughes (center) and San Augustine City Manager John Camp (left).



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For Immediate Release

Regional EDA Head Receives Thanks from City of San Augustine

Lufkin, TX – San Augustine Mayor Leroy Hughes recently presented U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Regional Director Jorge Ayala with a framed aerial photo of the city's two new water storage tanks. Ayala played a key role in the city securing the funding for the tanks.

"Not only did Jorge assist us in getting the initial grant in the first place, but he played a major role in helping us re-assign the funds when the original project fell through," said Mayor Hughes. The initial grant was to be used to extend water and sewer lines out south Highway 96 to a commercial park.

"About the time the initial project became unworkable, we became aware of problems with the one water storage tank that served the City. We had Jorge come in for a meeting where we made a pitch to switch the money over for us to use in building new water storage tanks and he said he'd help us do it," continued Hughes. Shortly after that Ayala was named the Director of the Austin Region of the Economic Development Administration.

It took a lot of work by the city staff, project engineers and the grant administrator to switch the funds to pay for the new tanks. "No funding agency just hands you a check for nearly a million dollars without a lot of dotting the "I's" and crossing the "T's". Changing the project made for much more work, but everyone pulled together and we got it done," said San Augustine City Manager John Camp.

The Economic Development Administration is a division of the United States Department of Commerce. Its main focus is on assisting local governments in job creation as well as economic innovation and sustainability.

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