

Back in early 2000's the McAllen MSA and Reynosa, Mexico metroplex underwent what some may consider a sudden industrial revolution. In a span of six years, this metroplex saw a modest industrial market boom to house over 200 domestic and international manufacturers and logistics companies. Now, this area includes over 40 million square feet of industrial space and exhibits over 250 industrial residents from all over the world. However, as any boom has shown, the aftershock is usually followed by a drastic halt.

Although our binational area continues to show growth from our existing companies, the influx of new operations has decreased considerably.

At the end of October of this year, McAllen Economic Development Corporation set out to find new opportunities for our area at the International Big "R" Show in Las Vegas. President and CEO, Keith Patridge, Vice President of Business Development in Mexico, Ralph Garcia, and Marketing Director, Carlos Telles, represented our area in this business recruiting trip. The International Big "R" Show is one of the largest and most comprehensive trade fairs of automotive diesel engine & small parts remanufacturers from all over the world. As the only economic development group in the trade fair, McAllen EDC had the opportunity to visit with many of these companies to explain the unique set of advantages that our area offers any operation.

After three days of exhibiting and networking at the International Big "R" Show, McAllen EDC repeated its efforts at the AAPEX Show, also in Las Vegas. AAPEX, or Automotive Aftermarket Products Expo, is a premier show in the automotive industry that exhibits new technologies and products. Automotive wholesalers, importers, exporters, processors, manufacturers, suppliers of raw materials, auto part makers and designers were all present at this show. With over 115,000 professionals in the automotive industry present at the AAPEX show, McAllen EDC had another three day window to present the specialized opportunities that our established industrial community offers.

Overall, the two trade shows in which McAllen EDC was able to participate offered legitimate prospects for our area. It is this type of proactive move that is required in today's competitive business world. Although we may know our industrial community is second to none in skilled and low-cost labor, low operational costs, state of the art industrial facilities with fully implemented infrastructure, and superb city and state incentives on both sides of the border, we have to take an assertive role in relaying this message to the world. Our strategic distribution routes, abundant source of existing Fortune 1,000 companies, and specialized educational centers for rapid response and advanced manufacturing make our cross-border region the premier site selection. Showcasing these advantages to companies outside our area is where our focus needs to be in order to revitalize the thriving industrial hub we initiated not too long ago.