

# Cenla Port gets multi-million dollar grant



[Jeff Matthews](#), [jmatthews@thetowntalk.com](mailto:jmatthews@thetowntalk.com), (318) 487-6380 7:14 p.m. CDT July 15, 2016

## Projects to boost capacity total more than \$2 million

The Central Louisiana Regional Port received a \$1.4 million grant. (Photo: Melinda Martinez/[mmartinez@thetowntalk.com](mailto:mmartinez@thetowntalk.com))

296 CONNECT [TWEET](#) [LINKEDIN](#) [COMMENT](#) [EMAIL](#) [MORE](#)

The Central Louisiana Regional Port has received a \$1.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration.

The money will be used for the expansion of a transit warehouse, expansion of transportation infrastructure and acquisition of property at the current port site. With matching funds from the Red River Waterway Commission, more than \$2 million will be invested in the projects.

**READ MORE:** [New port director sees 'real opportunity'](#)

Blake Cooper, the port's executive director, said "the project will address economic resiliency and competitiveness of the region by upgrading the transportation and transit infrastructure to minimize disruptions in commerce and advance global connections."

"The Central Louisiana Regional Port is delighted to hear about this grant award," said Bryon Salazar, president of the CLRP Commission. "These particular site enhancements help grow our capabilities at the current port site as we look for additional industrial tenants who desire river access."

"These multi-modal improvements will enhance opportunities for existing business and influence industry to come, serving the entire region," said Heather Smoak Urena, executive director of Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning & Development District.

The project includes additional expansion of the warehouse by approximately 15,000 square feet; increasing bridge crane service; upgrading and expanding transit (roadway) infrastructure; and acquisition and related development of adjacent property for truck and container staging. The improvements will also include grading and drainage work, as well as the installation of a limestone roadway for a staging area.

"As the Central Louisiana Regional Port continues to grow, we remain evermore committed in our work with all of the key entities along the Red River to achieve a better quality of living for all residents in Central Louisiana," said Ken Guidry, executive director of the Red River Waterway Commission.

"Waterway commerce is vitally important not only for my district and Central Louisiana, but also for the state as a whole," said U.S. Rep. Ralph Abraham, R-Alto. "This grant provides a great opportunity for the Central Louisiana Regional Port to further enhance its facilities, which will bring new economic opportunities."