

Dept. of Transportation: Gov. Evers congratulates West Bend for opening new business road

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Governor Tony Evers, together with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), today congratulated the city of West Bend for completion of Forge Place, a new road funded in part by a \$250,000 Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) grant. The road, which had a total project cost of \$2.1 million, will provide access to a new Milwaukee Tool manufacturing plant that will create 50 new jobs.

“We’ve worked hard over the last three years to fix more than 1,770 miles of highways and more than 1,250 bridges across our state, and the completion of Forge Place will continue to improve and expand Wisconsin’s infrastructure,” said Gov. Evers. “This is a great example of how we can connect the dots in our state, making strategic investments to bolster our economy and support our communities. Milwaukee Tool has a rich history in Wisconsin and is known worldwide as a maker of high-quality products, so we’re glad that we could help make this project happen in West Bend.”

Forge Place runs east from the existing South River Road and Rail Way intersection to Milwaukee Tool’s 94,700-square-foot facility. The company’s West Bend manufacturing facility will be expandable up to 185,000 square feet to accommodate future growth.

“WisDOT’s support, through its TEA grant, made a significant impact on our ability to provide the critical transportation infrastructure needed to support Milwaukee Tool’s project,” said Christophe E. Jenkins, City of West Bend Mayor. “Forge Place

will also serve future developments in the newly-created West Bend Manufacturing Center.”

“The TEA program is about creating partnerships between the state, local communities to fund rail and road improvements that are needed to create new private capital investment and jobs,” said WisDOT Secretary Craig Thompson.

Milwaukee Tool is investing \$10 million to construct the plant, which will open in 2022, and another \$12 million in specialized equipment to make hand tools for professional electricians and utility linemen. Construction of the new facility is complete and production equipment is being installed. The plant is expected to be operational this spring.

Since the beginning of 2020, Wisconsin’s TEA program has awarded 15 grants totaling \$7.1 million to support transportation improvements linked to business development projects that will create 1,367 new jobs and retain more than 700 jobs in Wisconsin.

The TEA program provides financial assistance to communities to support transportation infrastructure improvements that will help attract new employers or encourage existing employers to expand. A municipal or county unit of government must sponsor a TEA application. The project must have the local government’s endorsement, and it must benefit the public.