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Pharr
Economic Development
Corporation

ECONOMIC TIMES

Pharr Celebrates 2019 State of the City Address



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 1st Quarter Edition of the 2019 Economic Times Newsletter!

On behalf of our board, staff, and members at the Pharr EDC, I am pleased to share with you the many exciting things we have been working on during the 1st Quarter of 2019.

During this quarter our economic indicators showed an increase of 43.68% in Pharr's sales tax growth, a number we are extremely proud of given our investment in expanding commerce throughout the city. Additionally, we saw the opening of many new businesses, groundbreaking, and worked with our regional, state, federal, and international partners to host events, create new programs, and advocate for funding and resources.

The City of Pharr continues to grow, and as we do our EDC doors are always open to discuss new business ventures, partnerships, programs and to help our Pharr community in any way we can. On behalf of the Pharr EDC, we thank you for your business.

Sincerely,

Victor Perez

Victor Perez, Executive Director
Pharr Economic Development Corporation



Pharr City Manager Alex Meade, Texas Workforce Commissioner Representing the Public Robert D. Thomas, Pharr Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D., and Texas Workforce Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez.

Hundreds of local leaders, business partners, and other community organizations were in attendance as Pharr Mayor, Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez, hosted the third annual State of the City Address on January 17, 2019. Hernandez, a pediatric surgeon by trade, began his address by proudly announcing that, as Pharr's primary care provider, "the diagnosis of the state of the city of Pharr is healthy, vibrant and flourishing," and that "its prognosis is excellent and expected to move forward on a continued path of success."

During his remarks, Hernandez highlighted significant accomplishments for the previous year and discussed many new projects on the horizon for 2019, including Pharr's goal of becoming a "smart city" and aspirations to achieve the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award – the nation's highest

presidential honor for performance excellence.

Following a tradition that began in the inaugural State of the City, Hernandez presented the "Polo Palacios Service Award" to a Pharr citizen who embodied the legacy of service set forth by the award's namesake. This year's recipient was Dr. Daniel P. King, Superintendent of Schools for Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (PSJA) ISD. According to Hernandez, Dr. King was selected for his legacy of transformational work in the field of education and the impact it has had on the lives of students and families across PSJA ISD.

With excess proceeds from the sponsor-funded event, Hernandez also presented three local nonprofit organizations each with a \$5,000 donation. Organizations recognized included Valley Interfaith,

Team Mario, and the Knights of Columbus Council #9791.

Hernandez ended the event by inviting Texas Workforce Commissioner Representing Labor, Julian Alvarez onstage for a special announcement. Commissioner Alvarez awarded Dr. King and the PSJA ISD School Board of Trustees with a \$280,630 Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) grant. The JET grant program allocates \$10 million each biennium to defray start-up costs associated with the development of career and technical education programs to public community and technical colleges and independent school districts.

The City of Pharr and Mayor Hernandez thank everyone for helping make Pharr's State of the City Address a success. Working together, let's continue to imagine!

Pharr EDC Hosts
Texas Secretary of State

David Whitley



The Pharr EDC invited local dignitaries, elected officials, and regional partners to a reception welcoming Commissioner Whitley to the RGV.

During his South Texas Tour, Secretary of State David Whitley stopped by the Pharr EDC for a welcome reception. Mr. Whitley shared his vision for Texas with city officials, guests, and dignitaries from throughout the Rio Grande Valley. Mr. Whitley also had the opportunity to receive a personal tour of the Pharr international Bridge, where he was able to gain valuable insight on the important economic impact trade plays within our community.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Pharr Leads Sales Tax Growth in the RGV!

The sales tax allocation report for February 2019 showed that Pharr received \$2.46 million for the month of December 2018. This amount reflects a substantial increase - 43.68% - from the same reporting period in December 2017. This sales tax growth was one of the largest in Hidalgo County for this reporting period.

"As city leaders, we are grateful that our state supports economic development programs that allow local governments and communities to be competitive to attract and retain businesses and

“ We have many more exciting projects in the work and look forward to future growth and continued positive economic trends for our city as we begin to experience our return on investment. ”

- Victor Perez,
Pharr EDC Executive Director

attractions that will yield a great return on Pharr's investment," said Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D.

Pharr is reaping the benefits of hundreds of new jobs, a boost in economic activity for our area, and an improvement in the quality of life for our Pharr families and visitors.

"The Pharr EDC is committed to growth, financial stability, and providing opportunities for our community to be workforce prepared," stated Victor Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director.

SALES TAX ALLOCATION



The Pharr Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is the primary economic development agency for the City of Pharr.

In Pharr, our goal is to facilitate business attraction and retention, local investments, tourism development, and marketing strategy for our city. By fostering long-term relationships with government officials, industry leaders, and stakeholders in our community, the Pharr EDC examines potential opportunities to develop key industries and promote future economic growth. We also support community development and promote Pharr's thriving economy and superior quality of life.

Pharr Ranks Amongst Safest Cities to Live

The City of Pharr was recently ranked among the safest places to live in Texas! A new study by Safehome.org released its rankings of all the safest cities in the United States with populations above 50,000 based on crime types and trends. Pharr earned a top spot as the 25th safest city in the state and is among the highest ranked in the Rio Grande Valley.

"We are committed to working with our law enforcement partners to ensure that our Pharr families are safe and secure," said Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. "Pharr has an outstanding public safety department and partnerships with our local agencies which help us not only create a safe environment for our citizens but also foster a positive relationship within our community," he added. "The entire Pharr City Commission is proud of this recognition and we thank all our city, local, state, and federal law enforcement partners for helping contribute to this recognition."

According to the study, Pharr ranked as the 25th safest city in Texas out of the top 60 ranked, with six cities from the Rio Grande Valley also making the list. The study indicates that Texas is home to many of the safest cities in the United States.



BOARD of DIRECTORS

Pharr EDC obtains leadership and guidance through its board of directors, which represents an array of successful industry professionals who volunteer their expertise to ensure that the Pharr EDC meets the highest standard of excellence.



MAYOR
Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D.
President



COMMISSIONER
Eleazar Guajardo
Vice President



Mario Lizcano
Treasurer



COMMISSIONER
Ricardo Medina
Secretary



COMMISSIONER
Ramiro Caballero, M.D.
Board Member



Reynaldo Perez
Board Member



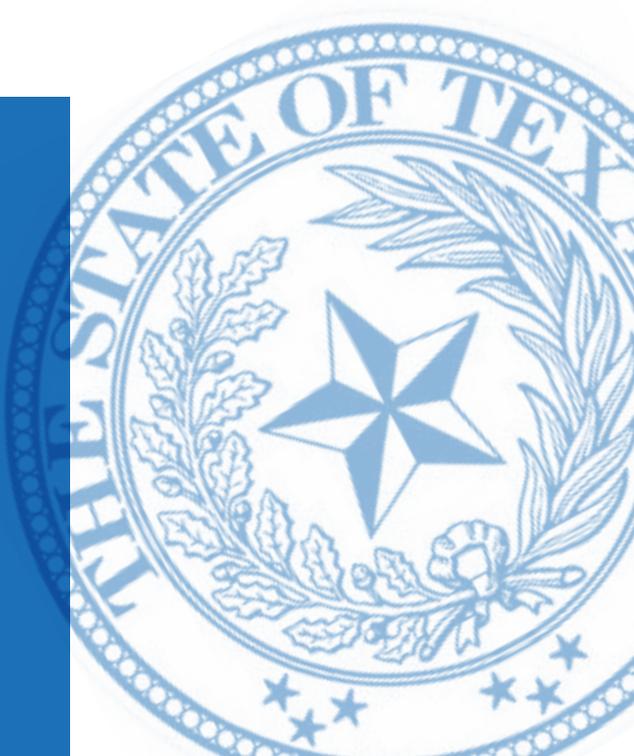
Efrain Matamoras
Board Member



Pharr Ranks #1 in Home Affordability in Texas

A recent report from HomeArea.com, a real estate and neighborhood resource for consumers and researchers, ranks the City of Pharr as the #1 choice for home price affordability of 59 cities in Texas with populations of 60,000 or more.

Just another reason why the City of Pharr is a great place to call home!



The Top 3



1 Pharr, Texas

Median Home Value of \$83,100

2 Brownsville, Texas

Median Home Value of \$93,300

3 Harlingen, Texas

Median Home Value of \$95,100

PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY

City of Pharr meets with State of Tamaulipas



Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D., and Pharr city officials meet with dignitaries and officials from the State of Tamaulipas, Mexico.

Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D., hosted a cordial meeting alongside special guests from the State of Tamaulipas to continue fostering a dynamic partnership with the City of Pharr. Topics of conversation included economic development and tourism initiatives that would benefit both entities. Mayor Hernandez emphasized that the city of Pharr is a firm supporter

of Mexican culture and values and recognizes that both parties play a vital role in each other's economy. The city of Altamira, Tamaulipas exports all their perishables, products, and livestock to the United States via the Pharr International Bridge.

"Pharr shares a great international partnership with our trading partners

in Mexico and we will continue to work with them to ensure that our consumers, producers, clients, and businesses on both sides of the border remain successful," said Mayor Hernandez. "Our relationship is very important, and we are committed to keeping our economies thriving," he added.

The meeting was attended by Alex Meade, Pharr City Manager, Victor Perez,

Executive Director of the Pharr EDC, Luis Bazan, Pharr Bridge Director, Mirta Tijerina, Gonzalo Aleman, Secretario de Economía de Altamira, Alejandro Monge, Gerente de COMAPA Altamira, Jose Alberto Guzman, Secretario Particular Gubernamental, Laura Amaparan, Alcaldesa de Altamira Tamaulipas, and Alma, Mtro. Fernando Olvera, Secretario de Turismo del Estado de Tamaulipas.



Pharr International Bridge Signs MOU with City of Apaseo El Grande Guanajuato, Mexico



Pharr International Bridge Signs MOU with City of Apaseo- Luis Bazan, Pharr Bridge Director shakes hands with El Grande Mayor Moises Guerrero Lara after signing the MOU.

“We are proud to continue strengthening partnerships with our neighbors to the south, to work together on mutually beneficial projects that will promote trade and economic activity for both our communities.”

- Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D.
Mayor, City of Pharr

Representatives from the City of Pharr, Texas, USA, and the municipality of Apaseo El Grande, Guanajuato, Mexico, met for a ceremony to sign a memorandum of understanding to establish the "Global Cities Economic Partnership Pharr-Apaseo El Grande." In attendance at the ceremony were Pharr International Bridge Director Luis

Bazan and Apaseo El Grande Mayor Moises Guerrero Lara, among other representatives from both communities.

The partnership's objective is to formalize a bilateral relationship to promote growth and expand economic opportunities in both cities through joint initiatives in trade, investment, innovation, and knowledge

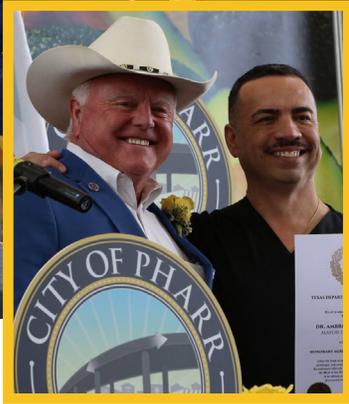
transfer. The parties will conduct these initiatives to increase business opportunities and strengthen the cultural, historic, and economic ties between the cities.

"The Pharr International Bridge continues to lay the ground-work for sustained economic opportunities in partnership with industrial hubs in major cities across Mexico," said

Bridge Director Luis Bazan. "Our new friends, strategic partners and trade allies in Apaseo EGrande, Guanajuato understand the importance Pharr plays in their logistical plans and are now forming a committee consisting of members from their industrial association to start fomenting the use of the Pharr Bridge," he continued.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sworn-In at Pharr International Bridge

Sid Miller



Commissioner Sid Miller was joined by Mayor Hernandez, city officials, and FFA students.

At a ceremony held at the Pharr International Bridge on January 14, 2019, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller was officially sworn-in for his second term in office by Texas Supreme Court Justice Eva Guzman.

"We are honored that Commissioner Miller chose the Pharr International Bridge, which has evolved into the largest land port for fruits and vegetables in the nation, crossing 60% of all the fresh produce coming from Mexico through Texas land ports of entry, and

contributing significantly to the regional, state, national, and international economy as the location to take his oath of office," exclaimed Mayor Hernandez.

Commissioner Miller has been an advocate for Pharr, visiting with our local industry and

international leaders, and bridge personnel as we work to improve our systems, grow our infrastructure, and focus on border security and international trade. The Pharr EDC looks forward to our continued partnership during his second term in office.

Pharr EDC Proclaims the month of February as Career and Technical Education Month



Pharr city officials, in partnership with community leaders and members from PSJA ISD, proclaimed February 2019 as Career and Technical Education Month.

Through continued partnerships, the Pharr EDC and city of Pharr strive to support PSJA ISD in countless initiatives geared towards preparing our future workforce. Together we ensure that our students graduate with the necessary tools to compete in a rapid growing and competitive market. For this reason, we proclaimed February as Career and Technical Education Month.

The Pharr – San Juan – Alamo ISD Career and Technical Education program strives to fill the gap of high demand industries in the workforce such as healthcare, automotive, computer support, electrical, construction, and welding. Career and Technical Education courses provide marketable skills that prepare students to succeed in college and in the workforce.

Texas Forum in Monterrey



Myrta Turgeon, Tourism Manger, continues to advocate for the city of Pharr as a destination city during the Texas Forum Monterrey, Mexico Roadshow 2019. A formal presentation to business investors was made targeting potential business ventures, shopping and leisure activities found within the city.

PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY

Pharr EDC Recognized by PSJA ISD for CTE Initiatives



PSJA ISD Recognizes CTE Partners (L TO R): Carlos G. Villegas, Jr., PSJA ISD School Board Member, Karina Lopez, Pharr EDC Business Retention and Expansion Manager, Griselda Quintanilla, PSJA CTE Director, Victor Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director and PSJA ISD School Board Member, Rene Villarreal, former San Juan EDC Executive Director, Alex Meade, Pharr City Manager, Jesus "Jesse" Vela, Jr., PSJA ISD School Board, and Jorge "George" Palacios, PSJA ISD School Board Member.

In celebration of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month, PSJA ISD held an appreciation event to celebrate all the achievements accomplished by their staff and supporting partners who contribute in the development of the students within the industry. Pharr EDC alongside neighboring

economic developments were presented with an official framed proclamation by PSJA ISD officials and students.

"We are very proud to partner with our local educational institutions to help prepare our students for the workforce," said Victor

Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director. "CTE Programs help expand student's knowledge in different fields of the workforce, as well as prepare them with hands-on learning and real-life experiences."

The Pharr EDC has worked with PSJA ISD,

UTRGV, Workforce Solutions and industry partners to design and implement programs to benefit students and prepare them for workforce pathways. Economic development starts with students, the Pharr EDC recognizes this and is committed to working with all partners to improve CTE programs in our community.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

CARMAX Opening in Pharr, Set to Boost Workforce with 75 Openings

Pharr continues to grow, expanding business and workforce opportunities for our Pharr families and RGV community!

In March, CarMax, Inc. (NYSE: KMX), the nation's largest retailer of used cars, announced that it is hiring to fill approximately 75 positions for the company's first store in Pharr. According to a press release issued by the company, the Pharr store is slated to open in late May 2019 and will be located at 1300 E I-2. CarMax currently has 19 stores in the state of Texas.

"We welcome Carmax and encourage anyone looking for a job to apply online at jobs.carmax.com," said Victor Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director. "This is a great company with a long history and we look forward to our partnership and the economic and workforce opportunities this will provide our community," he continued.

Pharr EDC Business Partner BBQ Appreciation



The Pharr EDC hosted a recognition event in appreciation of our business partners in the transportation/logistics, manufacturing, and cold storage community. As the City of Pharr is home to one of the major land port of entries in the United States, the Pharr International Bridge, these industries play a vital role in both our local and national economy. Our goal is to maintain an open dialogue to provide resource and support services for current and future Pharr businesses as well as promote business investment, development, and expansion within the City of Pharr.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Pharr International Bridge hosts monthly Bridge Connect

The Pharr International Bridge is the 7th largest commercial land port of entry in the United States and averages 2,500 northbound and 2,300 southbound daily truck crossings. As an added service to the industry community, the Pharr International Bridge hosts monthly informational sessions on a variety of topics affecting the import/export, transportation and logistical companies.

Session information and live broadcasting can be found at pharrbridge.com

5th Annual RGV Job Fair

The Pharr EDC is partnering once again with Workforce Solutions to host the 5th Annual RGV Job Fair. This community event connects local employers with direct access to skilled workers for employment opportunities in a variety of industries. Resources that aid in job attainment will also be available at no cost to patrons attending this free event.

SAVE THE DATE 5th ANNUAL RGV JOB FAIR

Connect with local employers & find your next career!

Thursday, July 18, 2019

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Pharr Events Center, 3000 N. Cage Blvd., Pharr, TX 78577

Employer opportunities, contact Karina Lopez:
karina.lopez@pharr-tx.gov or (956)402-4332



Businesses in Action: Caring for Our Community

The Pharr EDC is appreciative and thankful for our local business partners who were generous enough to provide FREE meals to furloughed federal employees during the government shutdown. In Pharr, we are family and our local businesses truly showed that! Thank you for helping sustain our workforce.

We would like to recognize the following businesses for their generosity:

STEFANO'S PIZZA • FAZOLI'S • DELIA'S TAMALES • ON THE GRILL RESTAURANT

The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce

We appreciate our WINTER TEXANS



Bingo Nights

The City of Pharr and Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce hosted three Bingo events for a few of our Winter Texan RV Parks - Tip O' Texas, Texas Trails, and Tropic Star. Each event was very special for our Winter Texan community and highlighted the appreciation our City Leaders have for our northern visitors. Each night was filled with delicious food from Carmen's Catering, door prizes sponsored by Lone Star National Bank, Doctor's Hospital of Renaissance, and Welcome Home, as well as tons of laughter and meaningful conversation. We loved visiting with our Winter Texan family and look forward to doing again next year!



Appreciation Golf Tournament

The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce hosted a Winter Texan Appreciation Golf Tournament on March 4, 2019 at the Tierra del Sol Golf Course in Pharr, Texas. With over 120 players, the day was filled with fun, laughter, and beautiful weather! We'd like to thank our numerous sponsors that helped make this event a success - Rudy's BBQ, Eddie's Tacos, Starbucks, Fazoli's, Lone Star National Bank, and so many more! This tournament is held each year to thank our Winter Texan community and to recognize the significant economic impact these individuals bring to the Rio Grande Valley and the great city of Pharr. The RGV is truly their home away from home!

The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce

1215 S. Cage Blvd. Pharr, TX. 78577

(956) 402-4332

The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for local businesses and helps to promote and highlight key industries in Pharr.

The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to helping our local businesses expand, thrive, and succeed in our community. From helping plan ribbon cuttings and groundbreakings to hosting monthly events and mixers, the Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce is committed to promoting our local industries and stimulating economic growth.

RIBBON CUTTINGS

BPL Plasma
1300 US Highway 83



Pharr Boys & Girls Club Gym Remodel
302 E. Las Milpas Rd.



Mariscos El Capitan
6619 S. Jackson Rd.



Victor Garcia Skate Park
205 W. Polk Ave.



GROUNDBREAKINGS



PSJA ISD Agricultural Science Facility

The City of Pharr was proud to join PSJA ISD to officially break ground on a new Agricultural Science Facility – one of many city-school partnerships that the city of Pharr and PSJA ISD have undertaken together. Agriculture plays a very important role in our region and has been a source of economic pride and way-of-life throughout our city's history. This state-of-the-art facility will provide every amenity and resource our students will need as they learn about agriculture science. We look forward to this facility serving our community for generations and the long-lasting educational impact it will have on our students.

Happy Birthday



City of Pharr Celebrated
110th Anniversary
on January 17th