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1215 S. Cage Blvd. Pharr, TX. 78577

pharredc.com

(956) 402-4332

Pharr
Economic Development
Corporation

ECONOMIC TIMES

Historical RGV MPO Forms, Providing Millions in Funding Opportunities for the Region



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2nd Quarter Edition of the 2019 Economic Times Newsletter!

On behalf of our board, staff, and members at the Pharr EDC, I am excited to share with you the many exciting economic development opportunities and projects we have been working on during this quarter.

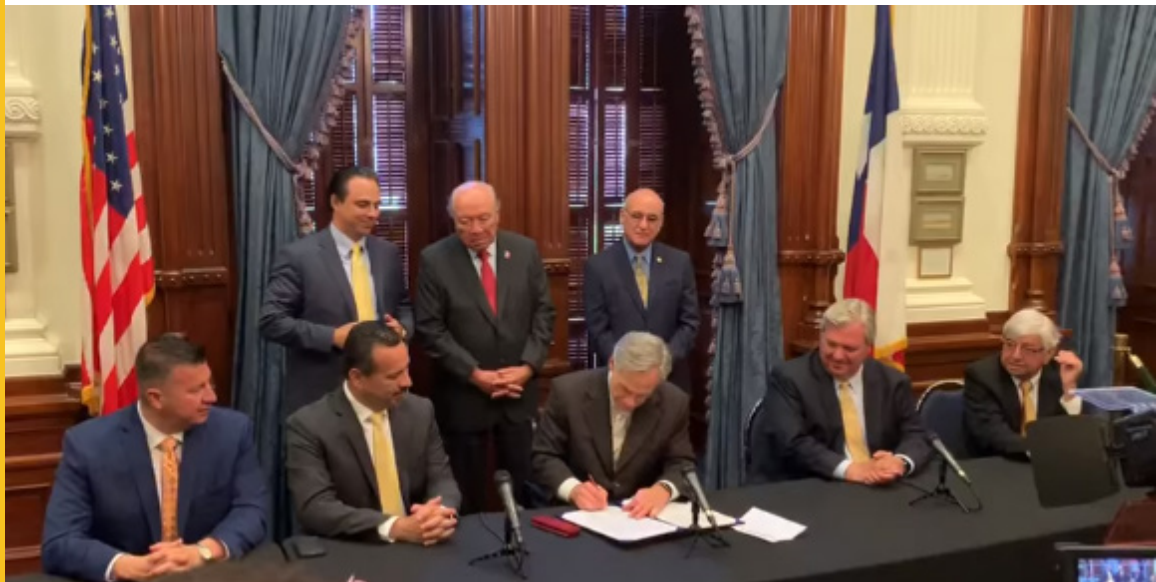
Pharr has celebrated many huge economic accomplishments over the past few months including the merger of the Rio Grande Valley's MPOs into one, the beginning of the construction phase for the Pharr Interchange, preliminary negotiations for the UTRGV Sports Medicine Institute in Pharr, and many other exciting announcements you will read about throughout this issue.

The Pharr EDC is proud to continue our tradition of pro-business, friendly, and high-quality customer service as we support our city's business ventures, partnerships, programs and help our partners 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



Mayor Hernandez joins Governor Greg Abbott, Mayors Richard Molina, Chris Boswell, and Tony Martinez, Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, and Representatives Terry Canales and Bobby Guerra for the official signing of the merger at the Texas Capitol.

Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. and the Pharr City Commission marked a momentous occasion in late April as they approved a resolution in support of the re-designation agreement and bylaws for the proposed Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGV MPO) merger. Andrew Canon, Hidalgo County MPO Director, was present to accept the resolution and said, "We have come together collectively and will now be able to see an increase in discretionary funds that are available at TxDOT for many projects that will impact the entire region and everyone in our communities." He added, "I just want to say what a momentous occasion this is and it's in great

part because of the due diligence of Mayor Hernandez and his work as our Hidalgo County MPO Chairman in working with the other elected officials to be able to get all of them together to work towards this merger, which will have many positive outcomes for our region." The merger will allow the Rio Grande Valley to compete for millions more in transportation funding at both the state and federal levels. "This approval was the culmination of hard work, dedication, and commitment from our Hidalgo and Cameron county and city leaders to combine the three South Texas MPOs into the proposed Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization," stated Mayor Hernandez.

"Thanks to all who made this possible for your commitment to advancing our communities through one voice and as one region! Our entire South Texas community will soon see the many positive results of this merger through improved transportation infrastructure, economic development, and quality of life!" Cities throughout the Rio Grande Valley will soon follow suit with similar resolutions up for consideration over the next few weeks. Surrounded by mayors, leaders, and officials from the Rio Grande Valley, including Pharr Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D., Governor Greg Abbott signed the merger into law on June 14, 2019.

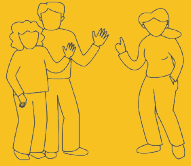
Pharr EDC Promotes US Census 2020 Initiatives

Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. and the Pharr City Commission approved a resolution creating a 2020 Census Committee. The purpose of the Complete Count Committee is to plan and conduct local educational initiatives, publicity, and promotional activities to increase community awareness and participation in Census 2020. Accurate census information is critical to planning for future

growth, development, and the social needs of the City of Pharr through the disbursement of federal dollars, which are distributed based on population. Additionally, data collected by the census determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and in the state legislature. Pharr has experienced phenomenal growth over the last ten years and encourages

all citizens to fully participate in the 2020 Census. The Complete Count Committee is comprised of city staff, local businesses, faith-based organizations, and community organizations. The Pharr EDC will work alongside the city in promoting Census efforts which aim to ensure that every person is counted. This is important to enhance funding and economic development opportunities for the city.

Census data are being used all around you.



Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.



Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness.



Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, which create jobs.



Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.



For more information and employment opportunities visit www.census.gov

Why Your Company Should Become a 2020 Census Official Partner

The 2020 Census' detailed demographic information holds exceptional value for your company—they help inform your decisions to expand, develop products, market, hire, mitigate risk, and increase return on investment. The U.S. Census Bureau partners with corporations to get the word out to clients, customers, and employees.

How does my company benefit from being a partner?

During the 2020 Census, you benefit by fulfilling your CSR goals, accessing our personalized data training and information services, networking with other businesses you otherwise wouldn't encounter, and engaging with your customers and employees around a civic duty. The 2020 Census data will help provide valuable information on your customer base (income level, household size, homeownership status) and enhance your hiring practices.

ECONOMIC TRENDS



PHARR CONTINUES POSITIVE GROWTH

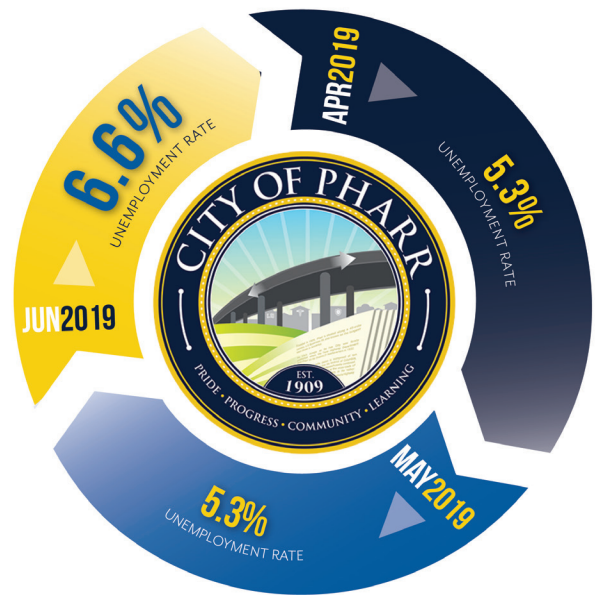
JULY 2019



Sales tax activity for the City of Pharr as of the month of July 2019 continues to show a positive upward trend, demonstrating a steady increase in sales activity. This report is the tenth month of the City's fiscal year and represents sales activity for the month of May 2019. The report showed an overall positive trend in sales tax growth in the amount of \$2,195,293, an increase of 15.06% for this time period. City sales tax collections also saw an increase of 5.33% (\$1,760,677) compared to last July 2018 (\$1,671,537). Pharr continues to rank first in collections year-to-date.



Pharr's Unemployment Rate for Second Quarter of 2019



The Pharr EDC is committed to economic excellence! Through our strategic partnerships, we are committed to helping our area residents get connected with the proper resources that aid in job attainment and growth. More importantly, we are focused on enhancing entrepreneurship and business growth in our city by hosting workshops, providing skills and resource trainings, and partnering with our state and federal partners to enhance job opportunities. We are proud to connect our local businesses with employees from our area who are qualified, skilled, and ready to work!



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.

PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY

May 6-11 Designated as Economic Development Week



Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D., and Pharr City Commissioners designate May 6-11, 2019, as Economic Development Week in Pharr. The goal of Economic Development Week (EDW) is to increase awareness for local programs that create jobs, advance career development opportunities and increase the quality of life in communities everywhere. Pharr EDC Executive Director

Victor Perez and Karina Lopez, Business Retention and Expansion Manager, accepted the proclamation. "The city is doing very well, we are prospering, our sales tax continues to increase, and we are attracting more businesses to our city," said Mayor Hernandez. "We are thankful for the vision and leadership of our Pharr EDC Board and Executive Director Victor Perez and his team."

Pharr Joins STC in Historic Partnership with FLETC



On April 24, 2019, Pharr celebrated a historic new partnership with South Texas College and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security agencies that will benefit our students, law enforcement, and public safety personnel throughout the Rio Grande Valley for future generations.

"As Mayor of Pharr, I am honored to be part of this momentous partnership with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC), the nation's largest provider of law enforcement training to provide more workforce opportunities to the men and women of our region," said Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez. "Today, more than ever, we

need a highly trained and skilled public safety and law enforcement workforce," he continued. "I am proud to say that is now an option, here in Pharr, Texas, through STC's Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence."

The City of Pharr and Pharr EDC would like to thank Dr. Reed and, the STC Board, Congressman Cuellar, Senator Cornyn, Dr. King and PSJA ISD, and officials from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) for working together with us to make today's agreement ceremony and partnership a reality!

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



Mario Lizcano
Vice-President



COMMISSIONER
Eleazar Guajardo
Treasurer



Reynaldo Perez
Secretary



COMMISSIONER
Ricardo Medina
Board Member



COMMISSIONER
Ramiro Caballero, M.D.
Board Member



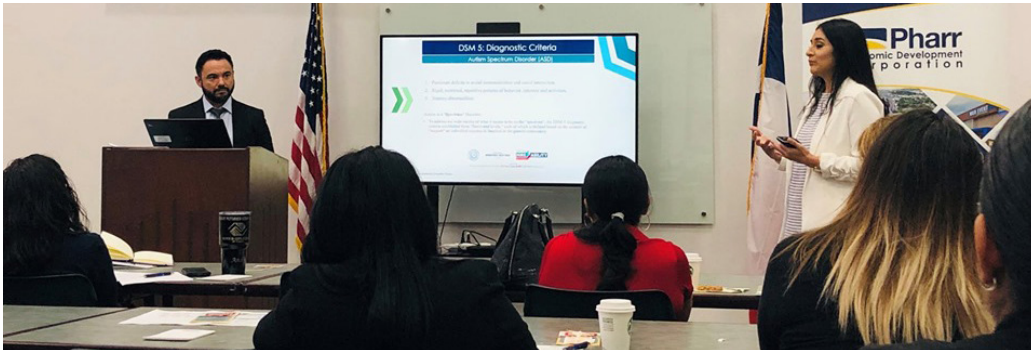
Efrain Matamoros
Board Member

Pharr EDC Hosts SBDC SMART START



The Pharr EDC collaborated with UTRGV's Small Business Development Center to host the interactive Smart Start Workshop presentation for aspiring entrepreneurs in both English and Spanish. Attendees were educated on business ownership, how to take their business idea to the next level, and what items and steps to consider when taking that first step. Starting a business might seem difficult or overwhelming if you're unaware of the process, and this workshop addressed those concerns. Guests received an opportunity to follow up with UTRGV's business advisors for additional guidance. For more information on upcoming workshops, follow us on Facebook @PHARREDC.

Pharr EDC Hosts SEAL Employer Workshop



The Pharr EDC has joined forces once again with Texas Workforce Commission and Workforce Solutions to host the Annual Summer Earn and Learn Employer Workshop. This statewide work-based learning initiative provides paid work experience and internship opportunities to students with disabilities. If your business is interested in becoming a future host site, contact us for more information at (956) 402-4332 or visit <https://twc.texas.gov/partners/board-vr-requirements/summer-earn-and-learn>.

Pharr EDC Continues to Strengthen Partnerships



The Pharr EDC is proud to continue strengthening partnerships that promote business-training and advising services to improve the success of local businesses and entrepreneurs. We recognize the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's Small Business Development Center as we officially renewed our Memorandum of Understanding, allowing us to keep providing value added resources and services for our community.

City of Pharr, Consulate of Mexico and PSJA ISD Partner to host the Plaza Comunitaria



"The city of Pharr is committed to supporting programs and partnerships that provide educational opportunities, resources and services for our Pharr residents and families, and we are proud to support this Plaza Comunitaria Work Program," Pharr Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez said in a news release. "We congratulate all partners on this project that will enhance literacy and training programs in our area," he added. Through the Plaza Comunitaria initiative, immigrant adults throughout the Pharr community are able to receive free educational trainings and opportunities to finish or begin their elementary or secondary education.

PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY



Pharr EDC Hosts Hidalgo County Leaders

The Pharr EDC had the pleasure of hosting Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez and staff as they held a gathering with area City Mayors and City Managers to discuss the importance of regional partnerships and emphasize on key initiatives for economic growth in the Rio Grande Valley.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Pharr Acclaimed for its Pro-Business & Friendly Approach to Economic Development Partnerships



Andres Zuniga, the president of Zuko Industrial Construction, has praised Pharr for their commitment to ensuring businesses thrive in the city. With the recent completion of Mexico's Mazatlán to Matamoros superhighway, the Carretera Interoceánica (Interoceanic Highway), the Pharr International Bridge has become the favored route for trucking companies bringing fresh produce from Mexico to the United States.

Zuniga said Pharr is the ideal location for his company. "With its proximity to the international bridge and access to major thoroughfares, we have seen our company grow and are excited to see what the future holds as we lay down roots."

Zuniga said he would like to thank the City of Pharr administration for being pro-business.

"Since Mayor Hernandez and the new administration came in, we have seen a turn for the better, particularly in the south of Pharr. They are building these industrial parks. They are putting the infrastructure in place. I am very thankful. Large companies are coming, thanks to the administration, offering a lot of employment."

CARMAX is Open for Business

1300 East, I-2, Pharr, TX 78577

We welcome CARMAX to our community and look forward to their ongoing success.

Supporting local investment continues to be a key role that supports the City of Pharr's economy, which allows us to facilitate business attraction with companies such as Carmax. In addition to economic growth, this great company also provided an abundance of workforce opportunities with over 80 full-time and part-time positions at competitive wages. Carmax is recognized under Forbes America's Best Employers 2019 and Best Employers for Diversity 2019. We welcome CarMax to our community and look forward to their ongoing success!

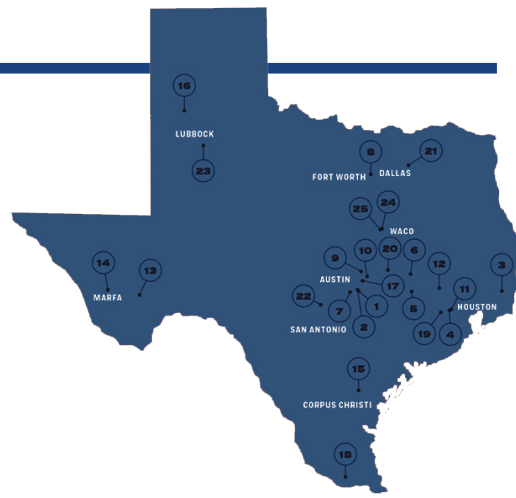


BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Texas Monthly Names **SMOKIN' MOON BBQ & BEER GARDEN** Among the Top New BBQ Joints in Texas



The Pharr EDC congratulates our very own SMOKIN' MOON BBQ & BEER GARDEN for being named as Texas Monthly's Top 25 New BBQ Joints in Texas! According to the article written by Daniel Vaughn he encourages everyone to try El Chili Sueno, a brisket, chili, jalapeno, spare ribs, and don't forget the cobbler! Stop by for some delicious BBQ and visit the Beer Garden located at 1617 W. Polk Avenue in Pharr.



- 1 / LEROY AND LEWIS BARBECUE
- 2 / LORO
- 3 / CHARLIE'S BAR-B-QUE
- 4 / BLOOD BROS. BBQ
- 5 / L.J.'S BBQ
- 6 / 1775 TEXAS PIT BBQ
- 7 / THE SWITCH
- 8 / PANTHER CITY BBQ
- 9 / JOHN MUELLER BLACK BOX BARBECUE
- 10 / PUSTKA FAMILY BARBECUE
- 11 / FEDES BBQ
- 12 / REVELLE BARBECUE CO.
- 13 / BRICK VAULT BREWERY & BARBECUE
- 14 / CONVENIENCE WEST
- 15 / BUTTER'S BBQ
- 16 / REJINO BARBECUE
- 17 / BROTHERTON'S BLACK IRON BARBECUE
- 18 / **SMOKIN' MOON BBQ & BEER GARDEN**
- 19 / HARLEM ROAD TEXAS BBQ
- 20 / BRETT'S BACKYARD BAR-B-QUE
- 21 / SMOKE SESSIONS BARBECUE
- 22 / BLACK BOARD BAR-B-Q
- 23 / PITFORKS AND SMOKERIES BBQ
- 24 / GUESS FAMILY BARBECUE
- 25 / HELBERG BARBECUE

Source: Photo courtesy of Texas Monthly

Pharr International Bridge

Pharr Bridge Launches Pilot Program, Announces Updated Hours of Operation

The Pharr International Bridge announces updated hours of operation to the temporary pilot programs designed to relieve congestion, increase truck throughput, and reduce border wait times at Pharr's international land port of entry. These pilot programs are being implemented as a result of the reduced Customs and Border Protection personnel at the port and deployed to the Southern border as mandated by the federal government.

In an effort to keep the public aware and informed, the Bridge announces the following new hours of operation, effective July 4, 2019.

The primary change to the schedule is that priority will be given to commercial traffic during regular business hours (Monday - Friday). Cars and passenger vehicle lanes will be closed for cars to give priority to commercial trucks. All cars and passenger vehicles will only be allowed to cross northbound on Saturday and Sunday from 4 pm to 11:59 pm.

For more information contact (956) 402-4660.

THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE APPLIES DURING THE TEMPORARY PILOT PROGRAM PERIOD:

SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC (TO MEXICO)

Hours of service remain the same

Cars & Passenger Vehicles

Monday - Sunday (6 am to 11:50 pm)

Commercial Trucks

Monday - Friday (7 am to 11 pm)
Saturday - Sunday (7 am to 4 pm)

NORTHBOUND TRAFFIC (FROM MEXICO)

Commercial Trucks

Monday - Friday (7 am to 10 pm)
Saturday - Sunday (8 am to 4 pm)

Small empty trucks and short trucks (no trailers) are authorized to cross through Car/Passenger Vehicle Lane (Estimated relief: 250 - 300 trucks daily)

Monday - Friday (8 am - 8 pm)

Empty Tanker Trailer Trucks are authorized to cross through Car/Passenger Vehicle Lane (Estimated relief: 250 - 300 trucks daily)

Monday - Friday (8 am - 8 pm)

Cars and Passenger Vehicle Lane is closed for cars, giving priority to commercial trucks

CLOSED Monday - Friday (6 am to 11:59 pm)

OPEN ONLY Saturday and Sunday (4 pm to 11:59 pm)

This schedule will remain in effect indefinitely. All pilot programs will be reviewed by Bridge staff, trade partners, and relevant stakeholders to discuss feedback regarding the programs, make adjustments if necessary, and possibly plan for other contingencies. Bridge officials will continue to keep the public aware and informed as the pilot programs progress.

COMING SOON

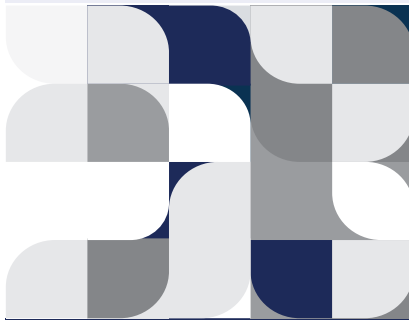
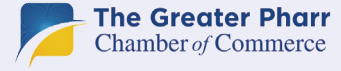
UTRGV Sports Medicine Institute

In May, the University of Texas System Board of Regents authorized UTRGV to accept a conditional gift of an approximately 10.5-acre tract of land located near the northwest corner of I-69C and Sioux Road in Pharr, from the City of Pharr for future programmed campus expansion, including a sports medicine institute. The Regents also authorized the university to enter into a license agreement, as licensee, with the City of Pharr for use of a to-be-built aquatic center on a tract of land adjacent to the 10.5-acre tract of land. "Plans are moving forward for the UTRGV Satellite Campus, which propose to include a Multi-Specialty Clinical Campus and a Sports Medicine Institute and Aquatic Center. These projects will enhance educational, health care and athletic opportunities, as well as contribute to having a significant economic impact in our area," stated Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. during his Pharr State of the City Address in January. "Thank you to UTRGV for your continued partnership as we work to advance educational opportunities in the Rio Grande Valley, and especially, in Pharr."

Pharr Interchange Project Enters Final Stages

In June, the Texas Transportation Commission met to select the project designer, the last step before construction. The \$303 million Pharr Interchange Project is set to begin construction in August 2019 with an expected completion date of late 2022. The Pharr Interchange Project has been one of Pharr's key priorities under the leadership of Mayor Hernandez, who stated after the meeting, "I could not be more thankful, excited, and grateful as this project, considered one of the largest investments in our region, prepares to begin construction." The Pharr Interchange has long overgrown its capacity due to massive growth in population and vehicular traffic. "We are grateful that our state leaders in Austin have worked with us to make this project a priority," added Hernandez. As a vital lifeline for our region, the Pharr Interchange is crucial for commerce, trade, commuter, and international traffic, and also serves as an evacuation route for our area. Thank you to all our partners for making this much-needed investment in our region and in our city, which will improve our transportation capacity!

Pharr to Host 2nd Annual International Trucking Expo



PHARR INTERNATIONAL TRUCKING EXPO

WHERE TRANSPORTATION HAS NO BOUNDARIES.



SAVE THE DATE

SEPTEMBER 21ST
FROM 10AM - 5PM

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

The expo will feature a variety of vendors that offer goods and services to the trucking industry and will also highlight and recognize members of the trucking industry upon which our economies rely.

For more information contact Myrta Tijerina at (956) 638-1555.

The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce

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

1215 S. Cage Blvd. Pharr, TX. 78577

(956) 402-4332

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

Livewell Medical Center • 216 E. Interstate 2, Ste. G



Sol Therapy • 208 W. Ferguson, Unit 3



Freight Dispatch • 1000 W. Anaya Rd.



Pharr Recycling Center • 1900 S. Cage Blvd.



Toothfairy Dentistry • 1701 S. Cage Blvd., Ste 100



UNIMEX • 700 W Anaya Rd.



GROUNDBREAKINGS



A Portus Freight Forwarding Services

10724 S. Sugar Rd.



Pharr Bridge Administration Building Expansion

9900 S. Cage Blvd.