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ECONOMIC TIMES

Pharr Hosts 2nd Annual International Trucking Expo



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 3rd Quarter Edition of the 2019 Pharr Economic Times Newsletter!

On behalf of our board, staff, and members at the Pharr EDC, we thank you for your continued support and business. It has been another successful and busy quarter, and we are excited to share our many exciting economic development projects and news with you.

Highlights from this newsletter include our 2nd Annual Pharr International Trucking Expo, the 5th Annual RGV Job Fair, a grant announcement from Texas Workforce Commission, business development workshops, and much more. We have also included a few invitations to upcoming holiday events. Be sure to mark your calendars and save the date!

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



Pictured above (l to r): Mirta Tijerina, Pharr EDC International Communication & Relations Coordinator, Luis Bazan, Pharr Bridge Director, Ricardo Medina, City Commissioner, Bob Vackar, Victor Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director, Aviel Barrera, Presidente de la Asociación de Agentes Aduanales de Reynosa, and Rebecca Arizmendi, Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce President.



CAPA

Congratulations to Concrete Asphalt Pipe Aggregates, CAPA, winner of the "Best by Pharr" Truck Award at the Pharr International Trucking Expo!

Pharr held its 2nd Annual International Trucking Expo in September and once again the event was a great success! This "First in Pharr" event hosted over 50 exhibitors, providing attendees an opportunity to network and create business connections with over 1,000 guests. Companies in the trucking and transportation industry from both Mexico and the United States offered services, products, and jobs, as well as financing

for the purchase of trucks, parts, and equipment. The Expo kicked off with an educational workshop presented by the Texas Department of Public Safety - Texas Highway Patrol Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division relaying information regarding Basic Weight Enforcement (State & Federal laws referring to weight) and Axle Configuration Weight Limitations. Throughout the event, attendees were able to gain transportation solutions and had



access to multiple door prizes donated by the participating exhibitors and sponsors. The transportation industry continues to be a gateway for new markets, making it a vital industry in our local, regional and national economy. The Pharr EDC encourages all trucking industry partners to start making plans to join us next year at the 3rd Annual Pharr International Trucking Expo - Where Transportation has no Boundaries!

Pharr EDC & PSJA ISD Awarded High Demand Job Training Grant

The Pharr Economic Development Corporation was recently awarded with the Texas Workforce Commission's High Demand Job Training Grant in partnership with PSJA ISD. Our investment will secure a permanent and self-sustaining training program for PSJA ISD's Career and Technology Education students. Upon graduation, the training will lead students to receive an industry recognized, nationally portable NCCER level 1 and level 2 certifications in core, carpentry, construction technology, electrical, HVAC, and plumbing.

The Pharr EDC and PSJA ISD will both contribute funding to match or supersede the awarded amount of \$19,362.00 for a total investment of \$58,924.00. We thank our partners at Workforce Solutions for continuously working with us in our efforts to provide workforce development opportunities for our residents!



Pictured (l to r): Eduardo Garcia, Workforce Solutions Board Member, Sonia Falcon, Workforce Solutions Board Member, Anabel Chavez, Workforce Solutions Board Member, Karina Lopez, Pharr EDC Business Retention & Expansion Manager, Julian Alvarez, Texas Workforce Commissioner Representing Labor, Victor Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director, Lorissa Luna, Workforce Solutions Board Member, and Shelly Sanchez, Deputy Director of Community Engagement for Workforce Solutions.

ECONOMIC TRENDS



PHARR CONTINUES POSITIVE GROWTH SEP 2019



City of Pharr Economic Overview: End of Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Over the past year, the City of Pharr has continued its trend towards growth and development. With a population just shy of 80,000, Pharr has welcomed new homes and businesses to the community, increased job opportunities, and grown its sales tax collections during the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

During the fiscal year, the City approved the construction of 219 new residences as well as numerous residential additions and remodeling projects. The total estimated

value of these residential improvements was over \$24 million. The City also approved the construction of 21 new commercial projects, 14 additions, and 124 remodels with a total estimated value of more than \$41 million.

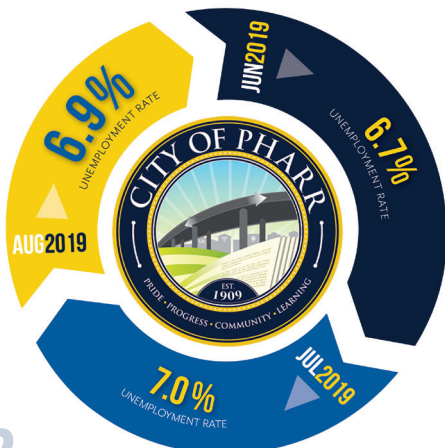
Business growth in the City of Pharr has resulted in a year-over-year decrease in our unemployment rate. Based on the most recent data, the City of Pharr reported a Civilian Labor Force of 31,243 and an unemployment rate of 7.0%, an improvement of 8 basis

points from the same period the prior year. The increases in households, jobs, and businesses have all contributed to a 15% year-over-year increase in sales tax collections, the largest growth rate in the area when compared to other neighboring cities.

The City of Pharr remains committed to improving citizens' quality of life and is focused on continuing the positive financial and economic growth it has experienced over the past year.

Pharr Unemployment Rate Continues to Decline

A Sign of Growth and Job Stability



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!

Commercial & Residential Permits



COMMERCIAL PERMITS

3rd Quarter - 45
Fiscal Year - 171

Total Valuation of \$144,460,749.01

RESIDENTIAL PERMITS

3rd Quarter - 132
Fiscal Year - 574

Texas HB 2155 Aims to Keep Produce Fresh, Expedite Inspections



Our team of dedicated staff and city leaders has successfully continued to advocate for our needs in Pharr.

Throughout the year we have met with key legislators in Washington and Austin to further promote economic prosperity, international trade, transportation, and to shine a light on the needs and issues affecting our city and the Rio Grande Valley. As a result of all our efforts, Governor Abbott has signed Texas House Bill 2155 into law! The bill aims to speed up the inspection process for trucks carrying fresh produce across ports-of-entries along the Texas-Mexico border.

"It is important that we efficiently and safely move perishable goods through our ports of entry to keep the cost of produce low for Texans while boosting the economy by encouraging trade with Mexico," said State Rep. Bobby Guerra, (D-McAllen), who authored and helped pass the bill."

Texas House Bill 2155, which goes into effect September 1, reauthorizes a 2015 program allowing the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to award grants totaling \$750,000 over the next two years to select organizations to pay for the hiring and overtime of U.S. Customs and Border

Protection (CBP) officers performing inspections on fresh produce imports from Mexico.

"The City of Pharr is thankful to all our federal and state partners and elected officials for working with us to make great things happen for our city and constituents," said Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. "We have been able to advocate for our needs and work with our legislators to pass key bills such as this one," he added. "As the largest port in the U.S. for produce imports, Pharr's economy depends on the efficient and effective transportation of goods through our bridge," he continued.

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

TxDOT Approves Historic Funding for Rio Grande Valley

The Texas Transportation Commission has unanimously approved funding for its 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP), which proposes more than \$76 billion toward Texas roadways over the next 10 years. This includes over \$2.1 billion for projects specifically in the Rio Grande Valley, according to State Representative and House Transportation Committee Chair Terry Canales. That is great news for our region! Included in the plan is funding for Hidalgo County RMA Project 365 and Cameron County RMA Project 550, two critical regional transportation projects for which I testified and advocated for as Chair of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization.



Pictured (l to r): Joe Torres, BTI Inc., Pedro Alvarez, P.E., TxDOT Pharr District Engineer, Eleazar Guajardo, Pharr City Commissioner, David Torres, City of Edinburg Councilmember, Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez, Mayor of Pharr, and Andrew Canon, RGVMPPO.

"This is a significant amount of funding for our region and we were able to get this amount as a result of the merger of our regional MPO's," said Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, M.D. "This new regional partnership has allowed us to advocate for the transportation needs of our communities, enabling us to get the funding we need to ensure that much-needed projects are able to be addressed. We will continue to advocate for our fair share of funding to address our regional needs," he continued.

The Pharr EDC would like to thank the Texas Transportation Commission and our state leaders, including TxDOT Commission Chairman Bugg and his board, State Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, House Transportation Committee Chair State Rep. Terry Canales, and our entire South Texas delegation, for their support of our regional efforts to improve and expand road infrastructure projects that benefit our regional economy.

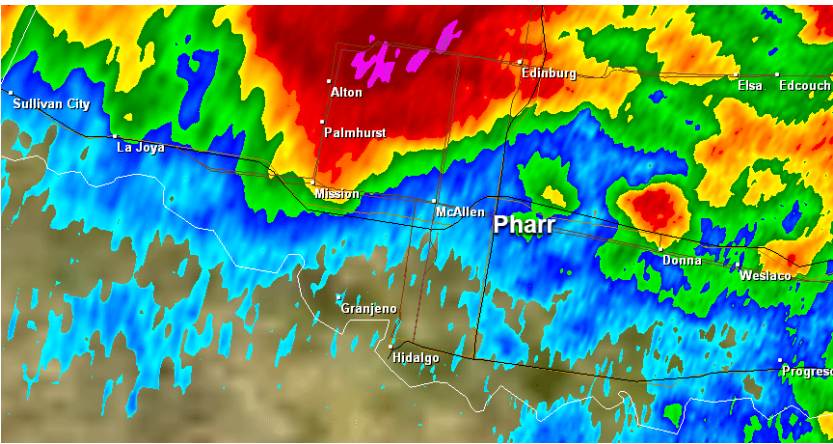
"I would also like to thank Hidalgo County RMA Chair David De Anda and other representatives from both Hidalgo and Cameron counties for helping to demonstrate a truly unified partnership in supporting and advocating for these regional projects," added Hernandez.

We are committed to continue advocating for and bringing attention to the needs of our area, and we congratulate everyone involved on a job well done!

PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY



Pharr's *Emergency* Notification System



Every second counts during an emergency! The City of Pharr wants you to know that we have the perfect app, CodeRED, to keep our citizens informed during emergency events. Make sure to sign up today to receive alerts by visiting <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/BFC0957A6618>.

Once you sign up and enroll, you will be notified anytime the City of Pharr issues an emergency alert.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

5th Annual RGV Job Fair a Huge Success!



Pictured (l to r): Efrain Matamoros, Pharr EDC Board Member, Reynaldo Perez, Pharr EDC Board Member, Daniel Chavez, City of Pharr Commissioner, Victor Perez, Pharr EDC Executive Director, Karina Lopez, Pharr EDC Business Retention & Expansion Manager, Roberto Mora, WFS Business Solutions Representative, Joshua Vasquez, WFS Business Relations Representative, Mike Willis, WFS Business Relations Supervisor, Rolando X. Perez, WFS Business Solutions Manager, & Omar Trevino, WFS Deputy Director of Operations.



The 5th Annual RGV Job Fair in partnership with Workforce Solutions and the City of Pharr took place at the Pharr Events Center on July 18th. This successful initiative targets the unemployed in our community, bringing multiple employers and job seekers together all under one roof. This year, over 70 employers had an opportunity to connect with more than 1,500 attendees. As the City of Pharr and surrounding region continues to grow, we pride ourselves in making workforce opportunities more accessible for our community and business partners.

Learn about the local labor market, resources, and employment opportunities by visiting: <https://www.wfsolutions.org/>.



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.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Pharr EDC Hosts Workforce Preparedness **Workshops**



In anticipation of the 5th Annual RGV Job Fair, the Pharr EDC partnered with Workforce Solutions to provide workshops and reference material for individuals working towards new employment and career opportunities. The free workshops educated attendees on how to structure a targeted resume, informed them about what employers seek when hiring, and provided them with information regarding best practices on how to conduct themselves in the most effective way for an interview. Information on employment assistance and resources is available at your local Workforce Solutions, contact (956) 928-5000 to find your nearest location.

FREE MONTHLY BUSINESS WEBINARS

Offered by SBA & SCORE

SBA WEBINAR *Wednesdays*

Did you know the Small Business Administration offers **FREE** webinars for small business owners or aspiring entrepreneurs in the convenience of their home or business?

These live webinars are broadcast by SBA's Dallas/Fort Worth District Office each Wednesday at 2:30 pm and are free to entrepreneurs and those contemplating business ownership.

Check out their upcoming webinars, and sign up today
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/webinar-wednesday-series-presented-live-each-wednesday-230-pm-tickets-62508803514>.

UPCOMING WEBINARS:

Launch Your Business

OCTOBER 23 - Business Insurance and Why It Matters

OCTOBER 30 - What's Your End Game?

Manage Your Business

NOVEMBER 6 - Manage Your Finances - Financial Statements, Ratios, Accounting & Business Credit

NOVEMBER 13 - Hiring and Managing Employees

NOVEMBER 20 - Preparing for Emergencies

NOVEMBER 27 - Buying Assets and Equipment

Grow Your Business

DECEMBER 4 - Get More Funding

DECEMBER 11 - Expand to New Locations

DECEMBER 18 - The Federal Government as Your Customer

Lunch Break to Educate: Payroll Obligations & Retirement for Businesses Workshop



The Pharr Economic Development Corporation hosted a free workshop sponsored and presented by New York Life and RDZ Accounting & Tax Services. Small business owners and future entrepreneurs in attendance learned about employee payroll obligations, quarterly reports, business owner retirement options, IRA accounts, 401k's, and related topics.

Follow us on Facebook to learn about future workshops @PharrEDC.

BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Matt's Cash & Carry Building Materials Celebrates 50th Anniversary in Pharr

Celebrating
50 YEARS

**MATT'S
BUILDING MATERIALS**

Support local business and stop by: 404 E. Expressway 83, Pharr

Danny &
Diana Smith



Congratulations Danny Smith, former Pharr EDC Board Member, and Smith family on Matt's Cash & Carry Building Materials, Inc.'s 50th Anniversary. What began as a small storefront has now expanded to a total of three locations, employing more than 175 professionals. Your success has helped fuel not only the City of Pharr's economy, but the surrounding region as well. We applaud you for your commitment to continuously improve the company in this ever-changing business climate. Best of wishes on another fifty years of achievement and thank you for choosing the City of Pharr for your place of business.

International Culinary Institute Sugar Awarded ACFEF Quality Program Certification!

ICI SUGAR is the only post-secondary institution in the Rio Grande Valley dedicated exclusively to culinary arts training and education. Founded in 2010, the Pharr campus is the third campus to be owned and operated by Susana Garcia and the first to be founded in the United States under her signature name, Sugar.

ACF, a nationally recognized certifying body for professional chefs and culinary programs, praised ICI for "delivering high standards in culinary arts education" upon issuing its certification to the school's administrative staff and owners.

Are you interested in a culinary career?

Contact the International Culinary Institute Sugar at (956) 787-1221 or visit them at 800 W. Sam Houston Blvd. in Pharr.



International Culinary
Institute

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Pharr EDC Proudly
Sponsors Empty Bowls
2019 Hosted By The
Food Bank RGV

**2019 Empty Bowls
Valley Lemon
SPONSOR**




UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN US FOR
Caminata de la Paz
"WALKING TOGETHER TO PROMOTE PEACE & ACCEPTANCE"

• SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2019
Basilica Of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle

SAVE THE DATE!

Pharr EDC
*Jingle & Mingle
Holiday Mixer*

Thursday, December 12, 2019
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM
1215 S. Cage Blvd.
Pharr, Texas

ECONOMIC TIMES **7**

RIBBON CUTTINGS

Planet Fitness

1300 E. Business Hwy 83



Fire Station #4

10801 S. International Dr.



Pharr Municipal Court Rededication

1900 S. Cage Blvd.



Alejandro's Café

508 West, I-2 Suite 12



WellMed

1701 S. Cage Blvd., Ste. 116



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.

GROUNDBREAKINGS

Destiny Through Christ Church

1302 W. Nolana Loop

