

Director's Message

As the President & CEO of the Pharr



Economic Development Corporation, I would like to thank you for your continued partnership, business, and investment in our great city. We have experienced tremendous growth over the years and in Pharr, your business is "our business"! At the Pharr EDC we work hard to ensure you have every tool to be successful and thriving in the market, that is why we are proud to announce the launch of our new Pharr EDC "Economic Times Newsletter" which will help keep you abreast of all current EDC projects and events occurring in the community and beyond. Our priority at the Pharr EDC is the success of our businesses and companies, continued growth of our city, quality of life of our residents, and capitalizing on our unique global marketplace. We hope this will serve as a useful resource in highlighting our regional, state, and international economic development projects!

Sincerely,
Victor Perez

CONTACT

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Topgolf Coming to Pharr

City of Pharr officials and the Pharr Economic Development Corporation are proud to announce that Topgolf, a global sports entertainment leader, has selected Pharr as its first location in the Rio Grande Valley. The 15-acre property will be located along the southeast corner of U.S. Highway 2 and East Frontage Road. Construction on the 55,000-square-foot venue will begin later this year, with an expected opening in winter 2018.



"Here in Pharr, we are constantly looking at ways to improve the quality of life for our families and visitors," said PEDC Executive Director Victor Perez. "Topgolf will spur economic activity and employment in the City of Pharr, and provide hours of enjoyment for all," he continued.

According to Topgolf, the Pharr location will create 350 full- and part-time jobs at this location. The new three-level venue will feature 1,975 square feet of private event space for corporate and social gatherings plus 72 climate-controlled hitting bays that can host up to six players at one time. Topgolf estimates it will serve approximately 300,000 visitors in its first year of operation.

"As a family-friendly, fun and engaging venue, Topgolf is a trailblazing attraction that meets the entertainment needs of a broad demographic," said Pharr Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez. "The location is superb, the climate is ideal, and this venue is a perfect fit for Pharr - I am proud that our great city was selected as the ideal site for Topgolf's expansion to South Texas."

Fiesta Mexicana - Celebrating Diez y Seis

Executive Director Victor Perez alongside Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez and city officials hosted a dinner in commemoration of the 207th anniversary of Mexico's Independence. Mr. Perez had the privilege of honoring the City of Reynosa's Madam Mayor Dr. Maki Ortiz. In addition, Mexican authorities and representatives from Chambers from both sides of the border attended as well. The attendees enjoyed traditional Mexican cuisine and insightful conversations that solidified the bond between the City of Pharr and our sister city of Reynosa.

Viva Mexico!



Fiesta Mexicana – Image (L to R) : Mario Villalpardo, City of Reynosa EDC Director, Eleazar Guajardo, Commissioner Place 1, Carlos Peña, Dra. Maki Esther Ortiz Dominguez, City of Reynosa Madam Mayor, Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez, Mayor, Ramiro Caballero, Commissioner Place 3, Daniel Chavez, Commissioner Place 4, Victor Perez, EDC Director.

RGV Careers

The City of Pharr continues to grow and so do our businesses! RGV College has relocated to a bigger building in North Pharr and will continue to provide higher education options for medical and technical professional degrees through their vocational programs.



Established in 2008, RGV College was the vision of educators and entrepreneurs whom have guided the institution's growth into one of the most sought after vocational schools in the Rio Grande Valley for its A+ grade level education. With its new building in Pharr, the college will continue to expand opportunities for its students and provide more hands-on training, being that it is now located near the medical hub of the county. Programs offered include: Vocational Nursing, Nurse's Aide, Pharmacy Technician, Medical Assistant, and Medical Billing & Coding Specialist. The Vocational Nursing Program boasts a 98% passing rate and the college, as a whole, has maintained the highest NCLEX pass rate in the Rio Grande Valley for the past three years. RGV College offers the latest education, training, and job skills to meet the demands of the ever-growing healthcare field in the Rio Grande Valley!

Business Highlight: Big River Brewery

Locally owned and operated by Esteban and Bertha Padilla, Big River Brewery opened in April of 2017, catering to microbrewery aficionados throughout the Rio Grande Valley. Drawn to the science behind the brewing process, Esteban began to experiment with different recipes as a home brewer, eventually turning his passion for brewing into a successful business. Big River Brewery is currently the only microbrewery in Hidalgo County, offering locally manufactured beer. The on-site brew house allows for manufacturing and distribution capacity for all levels of the brewing process: grain milling, brewing, fermentation, and storage. Make sure to stop on by and support this local business that has a welcoming atmosphere and is family and pet friendly!

"Our goal is to consistently produce great tasting beer using our state of the art brewery equipment and quality ingredients. Whether you're a seasoned craft beer drinker or newcomer, we have a beer for you. If you're curious about the brewery or interested in a private tour of the facility, just drop us a line at info@bigriverbrewery.net."

Big River Brewery
505 West Nolana Loop
Pharr, Texas 78577
(956) 961-4979

Hours of Operation
Monday – Thursday: 4pm to 10pm
Friday: 4 pm to 12am
Saturday: 12 pm to 12 am
Sunday: 12 pm to 6 pm



Partnering with the Community UTRGV Creates PSA for Job Fair



The Pharr Economic Development Corporation and Workforce Solutions partnered with students from a broadcast journalism class at UTRGV - The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley on a project to create a promotional video for the RGV Job Fair. Pharr EDC Executive Director Victor Perez and staff recently hosted the winning group at our offices to congratulate them on their public service announcement, "You're My Hero," which was a professional, quality-produced promotional video that aired on Pharr TV and on Pharr social media accounts. Thank you to Professor Nick Taylor and the broadcast journalism students for their assistance in helping to promote the job fair and contributing towards its success!

EDC Provides Disaster Relief for Victims of Mexico Earthquake

In response to the devastating tragedy in Mexico City, the Pharr Economic Development Corporation set up as a donation center from September 27-29, 2017.

The public was invited to donate non-perishable food items, hygiene essentials, and cleaning materials to aid in disaster relief. With the help from PSJA and the community, we were able to compile over 15 pallets of 800 gallons of purified water, 2,000 lbs of nonperishable foods, 1,500 baby diapers and over 1,000 personal hygiene items.

Executive Director, Victor Perez, alongside Chairman Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez and the PEDC Board of Directors, would like to extend their gratitude to everyone who donated!



RGV Job Fair

The Pharr Economic Development Corporation and Workforce Solutions joined forces again this year to host a job fair to help interested jobseekers make connections with local employers, learn about the wide variety of employment opportunities available to them, and ultimately, gain meaningful employment.



"We are excited to partner with Workforce Solutions and industry partners to promote opportunities for employment success for area residents," said Pharr Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Victor Perez. "Finding individuals meaningful employment leads to economic success, gets employees contributing to the local and regional economy, and benefits our entire region," Perez continued.

More than 2,000 job seekers attended the job fair. More than 70 employers from Pharr and the surrounding areas were on hand to discuss job openings, describe the application process, and interview prospective employees for their respective companies. Representatives from industries including government, healthcare, banking, retail, hospitality, food services, and more, met with interested job seekers from all ages, all educational backgrounds, and all levels of experience.

Pharr receives A+ Rating

To add to Pharr's positive economic outlook, earlier this year, S&P Global Ratings, a division of Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC, assigned its 'A+' rating to the City of Pharr, Texas' series 2017 combination tax and revenue refunding bonds. At the same time, S&P Global Ratings affirmed its 'A+' rating on the city's general obligation (GO) debt outstanding.

New Director Set to Revamp the Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce

Rebecca Arizmendi is the President for The Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce. Rebecca graduated with Bachelor of Science from the University of Houston and earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.



With over 10 years of experience in public service, Rebecca is knowledgeable in various areas of municipal and county government, higher education, community service, and public affairs. She has been welcomed by the Pharr Economic Development Corporation and is honored to be part of an already established ambassador program. Through collaboration and multiple partnerships, Rebecca feels that the Greater Pharr Chamber will be a great asset for local businesses and the community.

"Although the Chamber still has a long way to go, I couldn't have asked for a better group of individuals to help make this Chamber successful. We have ambassadors from various industries to be great advocates for our businesses, and I look forward to the things we'll be able to achieve together."

Pharr Leaders Visit with Federal and State Legislators

In July, the City of Pharr and the Pharr Economic Development Corporation partnered on a visit to Washington D.C. to meet with Congressional leaders and present the federal priorities for the city during the 115th Congressional Session. The visit was focused on critical areas affecting the city and its international port of entry involving trade & commerce, border security, and infrastructure.

While in Washington, the group was able to meet with 12 members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, they included: Senator John Cornyn (TX), Congressman Jeb Hensarling (TX), Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX), Congressman Filemon Vela (TX), Congressman Vicente Gonzalez (TX), Congresswoman Lucille Robyal Allard (CA), Congressman Mike Conaway (TX), Congressman Will Hurd (TX), Congresswoman Marcia Fudge (OH), Congressman Frank Pallone (NJ), Senator Heidi Heitkamp (ND), and Congressman John Carter (TX).



Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator John Cornyn (TX) met with a delegation from the City of Pharr, including Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, to discuss trade, economic development, and other issues important to the region.

In August, while the state was wrapping up the 85th Special Session, the City of Pharr along with the Pharr Economic Development Corporation met with members of the Rio Grande Valley Legislative Delegation in Austin. The Pharr delegation continued ongoing discussions of potential new funding mechanisms that fell within the city's 85th Legislative Priorities, discussed plans for future projects, and provided input on legislation that was proposed during the special session. Key meetings were held with Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (Vice Chair of Finance), Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (Chairman of Intergovernmental Relations), Representative Oscar Longoria (Vice Chairman of Appropriations), and Representative Armando "Mando" Martinez (Vice Chairman of Transportation).



Pharr EDC Texas Legislative Appreciation Brunch - The Pharr EDC hosted a Legislative Appreciation brunch to thank the Texas State Legislature for their hard work and dedication, present at the event were Senator Eddie Lucio Jr. and Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa.

Pharr's Economy Remains Strong

The City of Pharr continues to enjoy steady growth in sales tax activity, thanks to its retail, restaurant, and entertainment activity, among others.



The most recent data released by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts on September 7, 2017, indicates that Pharr's total sales tax for the prior month amounted to approximately \$1.368 million, an increase in more than \$37,500, or 2.82%, from the previous year's sales tax of \$1.330 million collected for the same period. Year-to-date numbers show that the City of Pharr has collected nearly \$12.8 million in 2017, an increase of approximately \$90,000, or 0.71%. Congratulations to all our local businesses who are keeping Pharr's economy strong!

Pharr Produce Park is Open for Business

The Pharr Produce District held its first official business groundbreaking ceremony earlier this year for Index Fresh, an avocado ripening and distribution facility.



Five lots are still available for purchase at the Produce District, and any interested produce businesses are encouraged to contact the Pharr EDC at 956-402-4332.

The Pharr Produce District held its first official business groundbreaking ceremony earlier this year for Index Fresh, an avocado ripening and distribution facility. As of September 2017, the 31-lot development property has reached a milestone of nearly 80% capacity, and two cold storage companies, Index Fresh (60,000 sq. ft.) and Fresh Global (25,000 sq. ft.), have been issued permits totaling to \$5.8 million in building permit valuations. Furthermore, Pharr has retired its outstanding debt on the land, ahead of schedule, making the produce park's ability to generate revenue to go right back to the city's coffers, instead of paying down its debt.