



PASADENA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Pre-Board Meeting

April 2, 2026, 3:01 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present:

Rick Lord, President
Marilyn Wilkins, Vice President
Salvador Serrano, Jr., Treasurer
Ernesto Paredes, Secretary
Angela West

Members Absent:

Efren Arjona

Others Present:

Jeff Moore, Brown & Hofmeister, LLP (via Zoom)
Arturo Marquez, PEDC Director
Karina Tomlinson, PEDC Manager
Julianne Echavarria, PEDC Marketing Manager
Dr. Jo Anne Estrada, Visit Pasadena Manager
Yolanda Vegas de Eaves, Sr. Office Assistant

Call to order:

The Pre-Board meeting for the April 2, 2026, Pasadena Economic Development Corporation was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Board President, Rick Lord.

Rick Lord read through the items on the agenda stopping at the below.

Agenda Item Seven: Board Actions- Resolutions

a. Pasadena Loves Local & BRE Partnership - Erin Webb, VP, Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, stepped forward to provide the Board a brief presentation with slides. 2025 was a great year for the BRE and Pasadena Loves Local programs. Four workshops and one job fair were hosted, connecting us with nine hundred and fifty individuals. Started off with “Big Marketing on a Small budget”, we brought a panel of four small business owners as a resource; “Discover Your Future” job fair, continues to grow every year. We have included volunteers and employers that speak Spanish. The “Small Business Resource” fair is a very successful program that teaches small businesses how to connect with larger corporations. Due to the World Cup, we were able to bring a FIFA representative to speak about upcoming opportunities. We ended the year with a Google seminar with AI-powered tools, since this is a hot topic. Some of the initiatives being worked on are: sharing small business wins, creating recap videos, and obtaining data to find out the challenges business owners face; engaging in area workforce initiatives, partnering with colleges, staffing firms, Harris County PCT 2, and Workforce Solutions to better prepare job seekers; we are looking for ways to improve for the Spanish speaking audience. We secured airtime with Telemundo and other local media

partners to promote the job fair. We supported the launch of Visit Pasadena, its manager Jo Estrada was invited to attend the BRE visits last year. The chamber shared Visit Pasadena initiatives across its social media and platforms. The next slide showed a list of thirty businesses where visits were completed last year, along with some photos of the events. Some of the challenges they shared during those meetings refer to the shortage of certified workers for technical jobs, lack of resources for marketing, city permitting process, rising operational costs, shipping delays out of the Port of Houston, and businesses along 225 experience lack of walk-in traffic due to parking issues and security in the area. For the future, the ongoing work focuses on ordinance revisions for parking, signage and landscaping, Pasadena Loves Local workshops, BRE program. Pasadena was selected to host the Governor's Small Business Summit, on June 25th. This will be in partnership with the EDC and SJC. Erin Webb concluded her presentation with a recap of data collection to plan the remaining workshops in 2026, the use of media partnerships to continue program exposure, and the plans with the EDC's team to set up focus on BRE visits for the rest of the year. Cristina Womack, CEO & President of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, added that these programs are tied to EDC's Strategic Plan. The beauty of this contract is that it gives freedom each year to align. The visits and the focus on which businesses they need to be meeting, is something the EDC establishes each year. The Chamber looks forward to working with Arturo Marquez and Mayor Schoenbein, on what the focus needs to be in relation to businesses' challenges which impact the issues taken to Council that need to be worked on. She concluded, thanking everyone for their support. *S. Serrano added that he is very excited. He remembers when the program started, and he was the chairman of this program at the Chamber of Commerce. They had all these ideas, and now they had come to fruition. It keeps on growing, he likes the Spanish marketing, and the visits with small business owners. When it first started, some businesses felt left out but now with the EDC, city government, and the Chamber, this is what it is all about. He congratulated everybody at the Chamber on their work. M. Wilkins added that as business owner, on the north side of Pasadena for over thirty years, that entire time the comment about lack of parking in that area is something that has never come off the plate. Hopefully with this initiative and the city's focus, at some point somebody is going to grab the problem and figure out creative solutions.* Cristina responded that the team is working on revisions and pushing creative solutions. A. Marquez added that when the chamber comes back to renew the contract next year, they will bring recommendations. The thirty businesses visited will provide data which will enable us to identify issues and through that we will make suggestions of where to allocate funding to solve those issues. It is a good thing that we do this each and every year, because there might always be something different. Once the contract is up for renewal, there will be a couple of items: the suggestion of making programs and suggestions to the city council to revise ordinances.

b. CIP Project Closure - A. Marquez asked Ana Espinoza to elaborate on this item. This project design began in September 2019; it has been dormant for about five years. Nestle was the primary beneficiary for the lift station. There were a lot of easements they had to cross, causing the cost to rise. If it ever comes up again, we can always reactivate the project. There is \$371,000. remaining for design that can be released.

Agenda Item Eight: Report by Arturo Marquez, Director

Arturo Marquez started his presentation talking about Marketing. The staff has been working hard with new initiatives. The EDC is starting a recruitment process to find out what retail-related businesses the community would like to see in Pasadena. A survey was created, and it is now in circulation throughout different channels. A slide showed a capture of the survey with a QR code; the Board members were invited to participate. Obtaining as much public feedback as possible is necessary to identify the types of businesses to attract in preparation for the recruitment efforts of the upcoming ICSC conference in May. Up next is the "Façade Forward" program. The program has been in existence for a while now. The EDC has not been able to utilize the allocated funds all the way through. Administrative changes have been made to attract applicants. The four changes are: no change to budget of \$250,000.00 for 2026, the reimbursable amount goes from \$20K to \$50K, to reflect more in the construction cost; removed the requirement that businesses must be in operation at least 6 months; removed the certificate of occupancy

in the application; decreased the number of years a business owner must wait to complete another application for funds from 5 years down to 2 years. No retroactive applications can be approved. The available budget is approximately \$240,000.00, hopefully by the end of the year we will allocate most of it.

A. West asked if the program is implemented citywide or for a specific area in Pasadena. A. Marquez responded that it is citywide. Once we start seeing a reduction in the available funds and if we start noticing patterns around specific areas, at that point we would come to the Board to ask either for more funding or funding for specific streets. Julianne stepped forward to give some updates as well. The program's original name was "Business Enhancement Program". It was decided to rename it with a more integrated marketing name like "Façade Forward Program". A slide was shown where Arturo and Julianne were visiting businesses along Strawberry Rd., Scott with the Pasadena Channel went along to film a video giving the business owners publicity time, as well. The city through its TV channel is assisting with video and photography to raise awareness of the program. From now on, any chance possible, starting at the chamber's events, we will talk and promote this program and the EDC through marketing presentations. The application and guidelines are bilingual in English and Spanish. The Board was given a packet with the façade program and flyers for the Economic Vision Survey and were asked to spread the word.

E. Paredes asked if the people that work at home can apply for this program. A. Marquez responded that home businesses don't qualify because that would be like a home improvement. The façade forward is based on improvements made to a brick-and-mortar building.

E. Paredes asked if someone wants to have a business location, would the EDC be able to guide them. A. Marquez responded that it's the reason the certificate of occupancy was removed; part of the incentive is to get those specific people out of their homes into a brick-and-mortar building.

A. West asked if it applies to landscaping and parking lots. A. Marquez responded, yes to some extent. For parking lots as long as it is patchwork, it can be approved. Once they start looking at removing what they have, it turns into permitting requirements.

R. Lord asked about resurfacing. A. Marquez responded that as long as it doesn't require a full permit, they can do patchwork.

R. Lord asked Julianne if the visits are made to a particular area. Julianne responded that the visits will be made at some point during the day, starting with Strawberry Rd and working their way to other areas.

R. Lord asked if there was any feedback. A. Marquez responded that the feedback was very good. The businesses they visited didn't know about the program, and they were very receptive.

S. Serrano added the program was offered before and the Hispanic community wanted nothing to do with the government because they were afraid, they would be charged money afterwards. It is all about the education of the program. A. Marquez responded that the reason for doing the walk with Julianne is to change the perception of government.

S. Serrano asked if renters could apply. A. Marquez responded, yes.

E. Paredes asked if this is a matching program. A. Marquez responded, yes; it is a match of 50-50 reimbursement based, after approval from the Board.

E. Paredes asked if the staff is ready to go to a location to do a presentation instead of going door to door. A. Marquez responded, yes; Julianne is trying to find as many opportunities as possible to spread the news.

E. Paredes added that just as people don't want the government to be involved in their business, it is the same reason why they want help in an environment where they are comfortable, not everybody can access the website, and this is something the staff can bring to them. Julianne had some marketing news ads to share with the Board: an ad for the Gulf Coast Initiative Forum publication, advertisement in the Houstonia Magazine highlighting Pasadena as tourist destination, and Houston Business Journal, highlighting workforce in Pasadena and what the city has to offer for the upcoming World Cup. Next, A. Marquez moved on to speak about Visit Pasadena. The 'Texas Jeep Takeover' took place in Pasadena this past weekend and was a great success. A. Marquez introduced software called Placer.ai, which compiled data from this event. This software showed the transit of visitors throughout the city with cellphone data, where they are coming from and where they are going, which is valuable information to start determining focus on development. Jo Estrada stepped forward to give a recap of the event. It was the first event of its kind here in Pasadena. The city had the most assembled Jeeps at a convention, beating the city of Dallas. After the event, data results from Placer.ai showed that 478 visitors out of 1800 shopped in Pasadena, and the local hotel revenue was about \$6,000.

There are other events coming up. On April 7th, a representative from the Governor's office will be present at City Council meeting to award Pasadena with the Tourism Friendly Designation, the Strawberry Festival, coming up in May, will celebrate the for the first time a Heritage Day with a Charreada, a Hispanic type of Rodeo. We will also have the "Picking for Play Time" event, it has been moved from Pearland to Pasadena. It will be held at The Silver Sycamore. Visit Pasadena is courting a national martial arts convention called the Wushu. They reached out to Jo through Visit Pasadena website, asking for help to find a location and support hotel room blocks for the competition, which will be held here in Pasadena. The competition will bring a large number of visitors and competitors from all over the USA. Using Placer.ai, we can create a geo fence around this event to compile valuable tourism data. Jo invited everyone to attend the award ceremony for the Tourism Friendly Designation on April 7th and to stay for coffee and cookies at the office. A. West asked if all these events are track by cell phone usage. A. Marquez responded, yes. It not only collects cellular data but credit card location/origin as well. He explained that Placer.ai was brought up by the Board because the Staff wants to take this item into consideration next month. It will be very effective for our marketing and recruitment technics. E. Paredes asked who in the area is using this software. A. Marquez responded, La Porte and other cities. A. Marquez moved on to the Economic Development report. The EDC is working on different strategies for revenue to fund the Convention Center renovations. Recently, the EDC traveled with the Chamber of Commerce to Washington DC to establish partnerships in preparation for an EDA grant application. Continuing with Economic Development report there was a report on Little Vince Bayou, by Karina Tomlinson, EDC Manager. Back in October Clark Condon was present to give an update, the project started back in 2022, design phase started in 2023, and permitting phase took about 18 months. The plan is to post an RFP/Notice to Bidders release, it will be posted in the local newspaper, on EDC's website, and on social media. The bid submission deadline is May 4th, and the bid opening is May 5th, followed by contract award on May 28th Board meeting. Moving on to other updates, A. Marquez spoke about upcoming items for the meeting on April 23rd. The item concerning Placer.ai will be presented to the Board for consideration and approval. The overall price is \$50K and a detailed breakdown will be given next month. We want to move forward with Owners Representation regarding the Convention Center, this time around we want to have a representative with an architectural background that will help us review the current ongoing design, the cost would be about \$24,000. The EDC has an account with \$2.4M available that we want to utilize to hire a firm to design a Downtown Master Plan. Unlike many other cities, Pasadena does not have a defined Downtown. Conversations started with the mall owner, and this could be a great project. However, as we create and develop it needs to be done in an orderly fashion. For the Convention Center, we recently had conversations with the Pasadena Livestock & Rodeo and the Strawberry Festival. They do have plans for expansion. We want to revisit the conversations about hotels development in the area. We want to make sure that the development of the whole area is done in an orderly fashion. There will be an item for next month's meeting to consider redeveloping a previous master plan. One of the Board members has resigned; the last item refers to an application process for future Board Members. It is live on EDC's website, it will close on May 1st, and anyone interested can apply. The goal is to submit a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council for the May 19th meeting.

Pre-Board adjourned at 3:54pm.

PASADENA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Board Meeting
April 2, 2026, 3:54 p.m.
Minutes

Agenda Item One: Call to order

The Board meeting on April 2, 2026, for Pasadena Economic Development Corporation was called to order at 3:54 pm by Board President, Rick Lord.

Agenda Item Two: Invocation

Invocation given by: Salvador Serrano, Jr. Board Treasurer.

Agenda Item Three: Pledges

Pledges led by: Rick Lord, Board President.

Agenda Item Four: Public Comments

No comments made by attendees.

Agenda Item Five: Financial Standing Report by EDC Director

This item was not presented.

Agenda Item Six: Approval of Minutes from February 26, 2026

Rick Lord called for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on February 26, 2026. Marilyn Wilkins moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ernesto Paredes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUS.

Agenda Item Seven: Board Actions – Resolutions

- a. **PEDC RESOLUTION 26-006** – Consideration to authorize Staff to negotiate and execute an agreement with the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce to promote, engage and support the Pasadena Loves Local initiative in the amount of \$50,000.00.

Ernesto Paredes made a motion, seconded by Salvador Serrano, Jr. that PEDC Resolution 26-006 be passed, approved and adopted. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUS.

- b. **PEDC RESOLUTION 26-007** – Consideration and possible action regarding a Resolution to formally abandon and release the balance of appropriated funding for the following project and authorize removal of the project from active status for financial reporting and accounting purposes:

- i. EDCWW063- Bay Area Industrial Park Wastewater Lift Station Facility/Facility Management.

Salvador Serrano, Jr. made a motion, seconded by Ernesto Paredes that PEDC Resolution 26-007 be passed, approved and adopted. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUS.

Agenda Item Eight: Report by Director of Economic Development

Report was given during the Pre-Board meeting.

Agenda Item Nine: Comments by Board Members.

Salvador Serrano – He wished everyone a Happy Easter and reminded them not to forget Its meaning. He thanked all the city employees, from Mayor Schoenbein to custodians, everyone plays a key part to keep things flowing. He also thanked Cristina and Erin for their leadership.

Marilyn Wilkins – She is a church musician and will be playing at her church for the holiday, she wished Happy Easter and asked everyone to find a place to worship if they don't have one.

Ernesto Paredes – He congratulated Arturo, he has everyone running. Good pace, good direction, hopefully we will all be able to get on board.

Angela West – She wished Happy Easter and added that Arturo has been busy. She thanks him for the report, and all the things to think about.

Rick Lord – He wished Happy Easter, as well. He appreciates Arturo, the staff, and all the things everyone is doing. Things are back on track.

Agenda Item Ten: Executive Session

****NOTE** 3:59 PM** - At this time, Board Vice President Marilyn Wilkins announced that the Board would be “going behind closed doors” for an Executive Session.

- a. Convene in executive session pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code in accordance with the authority contained in Section 551.071, regarding pending or contemplated litigation concerning the Design-Build agreement with Way-Tech, Inc., a Texas corporation.

Agenda Item Eleven: Reconvene into Regular Session

****NOTE* 4:38 PM** - At this time, Board Vice President Marilyn Wilkins reconvened the Regular Board Meeting.

The Board will reconvene into Regular Session, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, to take any action necessary regarding the Executive Session:

- a. Deliberation regarding pending or contemplated litigation concerning the Design-Build agreement with Way-Tech, Inc., a Texas corporation.
 - There was no deliberation on this item.

Agenda Item Twelve: Adjournment

Board President, Rick Lord called for a motion to adjourn the April 2, 2026, meeting at 4:39pm. Angela West moved, seconded by Ernesto Paredes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUS.