



## **THE HONDO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, (HEDC)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Type of Meeting: Regular Meeting  
Date and Time: Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026 7:00 a.m.  
Location: South Texas Regional Airport Board Room  
700 Vandenberg Road, Hondo, TX 78861

#### **1. Determination of Quorum**

- 1.1 Call to Order: Chair J. Gruber, Vice-Chair Ronnie Miller, Secretary Ashley Lowe, Treasurer Brett Riff, Rachel Ramirez & Rose Mary Mares.

Absent: Roger Hernandez

*“President J. Gruber called the meeting to order at 7:01 a.m.”*

2. **Public Forum:** *Upon recognition by the Chair, persons desiring to address the Board may speak on any topic not to exceed three (3) minutes in length. Board Members are prohibited from deliberating on any item presented but may recommend placement on a future agenda for discussion.*

*No comments were made by a visitor.*

3. **Consent Agenda:** *All consent items are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. If requested by a Board Member, any item may be taken off the Consent Agenda by the Chair for individual consideration.*

- 3.1 Approval of August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026 regular meeting minutes.

*“Ronnie Miller made the motion to approve the consent agenda items. Rose Mary Mares seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0”*

#### **4. Consider Items: Consider and take any action necessary**

- 4.1 Discussion of possible offer - 1708 Ave M. Hondo, TX 78861

Staff provided an update regarding the potential purchase of 1708 Ave. M. The property is currently listed at approximately \$249,000 and was recently appraised at \$233,000. Staff noted that the EDC cannot offer more than the appraised value.

Staff reported that the property’s water and electric utilities have been disconnected since February 2025. Due to the extended period without electrical service, the City requires a certified electrician to inspect the electrical system before service can be restored. The electrician has completed the required review and provided Development Services with documentation indicating that the electrical system appeared suitable for reconnection. The property owner is currently working to satisfy the utility deposit requirement, either through payment of the deposit or a letter of credit, before water and electric service can be restored.

Once utilities are restored, the EDC intends to proceed with a property inspection to identify any necessary repairs, remediation, or other issues that could affect the property's suitability and value. The Board discussed whether an offer should be submitted before the inspection in order to demonstrate the EDC's interest in the property and establish an extended feasibility period. Staff explained that, as a governmental entity, the EDC must complete the required statutory and approval procedures, including the previously completed 60-day public notice and public hearing, followed by an EDC resolution establishing the final purchase amount and two readings before City Council.

Board members discussed the benefits of completing the inspection before making an offer. The Board also discussed the property's prior use as office space and potential inspection-related issues, including possible remediation or other building conditions.

Following discussion, the Board expressed consensus to **continue moving forward with the current process and complete the inspection after utilities are restored, rather than making an offer at this time**. Staff will continue coordinating with the listing agent and property owner regarding restoration of utilities and will provide the Board with an update following the inspection.

***"No action was taken"***

## **5. Discussion Items: Discuss with no formal action to be taken**

### **5.1 Housing – Hondo in Context: A Data Story**

The Executive Director presented the Board with the findings of the **"Hondo in Context: A Data Story"** housing analysis, a 25-page report developed from Census, American Community Survey (ACS), Texas Education Agency, and other publicly available data. The analysis was intended to provide a data-driven understanding of Hondo's housing market and population trends rather than relying solely on assumptions or anecdotal observations. The analysis focused on data that met a 90% confidence level, while other relevant but statistically non-significant findings were also considered.

The presentation highlighted several key findings:

- **Population and household trends:** When institutionalized/group-quarter populations are removed, Hondo's 2020 residential population was approximately 6,400. The analysis showed that the number of households remained relatively stable from 2010 to 2020, while average household size declined by approximately 0.16 persons. The reduction in household size accounts for much of the change in residential population.
- **Housing supply:** Hondo added only approximately 24 housing units between the 2010 and 2020 Census periods, with roughly 3% of the housing stock identified as available after accounting for other vacant units. Approximately 56% of Hondo's housing stock was built before 1980, with a median construction year of approximately 1975. Development Services data indicated approximately 45 new housing units had been constructed in Hondo since 2020.

- **Housing affordability and age:** The analysis identified a gap in housing inventory and product for younger, working-age households. Approximately 38.5% of Hondo residents ages 25–54 were homeowners, compared with significantly higher ownership rates among older residents. The analysis identified housing in the low-\$200,000 range as a potential price point for addressing demand among younger households.
- **Workforce and housing:** The analysis showed that approximately 73% of jobs located in Hondo are held by individuals who do not live within the city. The Executive Director noted that many workers commute from surrounding communities and that capturing even a portion of those workers as Hondo residents could have broader impacts on local retail, restaurants, property taxes, and community activity.
- **Regional growth:** While Medina County has experienced substantial student and population growth in surrounding communities, Hondo's school enrollment and housing growth have not followed the same trajectory. Board discussion noted the potential connection between limited housing availability and the movement of working-age households to locations outside the city.

The Board discussed the implications of the findings, including the limited availability of housing, the age of Hondo's existing housing stock, the lack of attainable housing options for younger households, and the large number of employees who commute into Hondo from outside the city. Members also discussed the potential economic impact of converting some of those commuters into Hondo residents, including increased local spending and a stronger residential property-tax base.

The Executive Director concluded that the data suggests Hondo's housing challenge is less about a lack of people wanting to work in or around Hondo and more about the availability of housing products that allow working-age households to live within the city. The presentation will serve as a data-based foundation for continued discussion of housing needs and potential economic development strategies.

## **6. Standing Reports**

### **6.1 Executive Director Report – Update on budget, sales tax, marketing & approved programs**

The Executive Director provided an update on the HEDC budget, sales tax performance, marketing activities, and approved programs.

**Sales Tax & Retail:** August sales tax collections increased **12.47% over the prior year**, with the increase attributed in significant part to activity along Highway 90. Fiscal year-to-date sales tax collections were reported to be **13.7% above the prior year**, continuing the positive growth trend of the past two years. The Executive Director noted that the strength of Highway 90 activity continues to support Hondo's sales tax performance and highlighted the need for additional development and real estate along the corridor.



The Executive Director reviewed information from the Retail Coach analysis, including Hondo's approximately **21,000-person primary trade area** and retailer demographic, population-density, and traffic-count requirements. Several national retailers have indicated that Hondo does not currently meet their market thresholds. The Board discussed how additional housing could increase the local population and help strengthen the market for future retail recruitment.

The Executive Director also provided updates on current retail recruitment conversations. Bush's Chicken has expressed interest in Hondo, with the former Church's Chicken location identified as a potential site. Bealls has also expressed interest, although the viability of the potential location is dependent upon improvements to the property, including parking and HVAC. Other retailers discussed included Mr. Gatti's, Popeyes, Waffle House & Panda Express.

**Open Rewards:** The Executive Director reported that the latest Open Rewards program has launched and is performing strongly. Monthly purchases during the current program exceeded the total monthly purchase activity from the previous quarter in which the program was offered.

**Marketing & Business Development Programs:** Kaitlynn Jensen provided an update on HEDC's business programming. The most recent Morning Sips event featured a beginner-level Canva workshop at the Community Center and attracted approximately **20 attendees**, the highest attendance to date for the program. Participant feedback was reported as fully positive, with attendees particularly valuing the hands-on format and opportunity to work collaboratively on their businesses.

In addition, Kaitlynn Jensen announced the upcoming **Lunch B.I.T.E.S.** event scheduled for October 7, featuring business owners from Floresville who will discuss their 36 years of business experience and downtown investments. Kaitlynn also introduced **GLOW**, a new women-in-business networking initiative being developed in partnership with the Hondo Downtown Business Association. A preliminary survey received 55 responses, including 34 business owners, with 85 respondents indicating interest in participating in the program.

The Executive Director also noted continued retail and downtown development activity, including renovation of space associated with the Armstrong Hotel for a new German restaurant concept.

The Board received the report and continued discussion regarding the relationship between housing availability, population growth, retail recruitment, and the overall economic development strategy for Hondo.

7. **Executive Session:** *As authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Section 551.001, the Board may enter into a closed Executive Session at any time concerning any and all subjects and for any and all purposes permitted by the Act, including, but not limited to, the following:*

- 8.1 Section 551.071 - Consultation with the Board's attorney
- 8.2 Section 551.072 - Deliberation regarding the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property
- 8.3 Section 551.074 - Deliberation on personnel matters
- 8.4 Section 551.087 - Deliberation regarding economic development negotiations

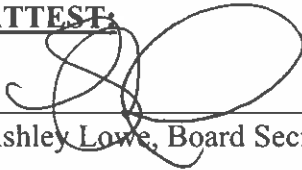
8. **Actions Resulting from Executive Session**

*"No action was taken"*

9. **Adjournment**

*"Rose Mary Mares made a motion to adjourn, and Brett Riff seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 a.m."*

**ATTEST:**



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Ashley Lowe, Board Secretary

On 10-15-2024