

WINTER CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 26-28, 2025

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AGENDA

Wednesday, February 26th

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|-------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 8:00 AM | Registration Open | <i>Texas Ballroom Foyer</i> |
| 10:30–11:15 AM | TEDC Conference Committee Meeting (Open to All) | <i>Hill Country A-B</i> |
| 10:30–11:15 AM | TEDC Forward Planning Committee Meeting (Open to All) | <i>Hill Country C-D</i> |
| 11:15 AM–12:45 PM | Lunch on your own | |
| 11:15 AM–12:30 PM | TEDC Executive Committee Meeting (Executive Committee Members Only) | |
| 12:45 PM | Welcome and Introductions
Kent Sharp , President, Sherman Economic Development Corporation and 2025 TEDC Board Chair | <i>Texas Ballroom 5-7</i> |
| 12:45–1:45 PM | Peer Panel: Building Effective Relationships With Your Elected Officials and Community Leaders
<i>Moderator: Adrian Cannady</i> , President & CEO, Temple Economic Development Corporation
<i>Panelists: Kris Collins</i> , EVP–Economic Development, Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce; <i>Teclo Garcia</i> , CEO, Mission Economic Development Corporation; <i>Christian Kurtz, CECD</i> , Executive Director, Liberty Hill Economic Development Corporation

Join your colleagues and peers for a discussion on strategies to build effective relationships with elected officials at all levels of government to best support your economic development efforts. | <i>Texas Ballroom 5-7</i> |
| 1:45–2:45 PM | Building an Innovation Economy in Texas Through Academic and Industry Partnerships
John Karras , VP–Business Development, TIP Strategies, Inc.

Partnerships between research universities and economic development organizations are essential for building a strong innovation economy. Learn about the recently completed Technology Innovation and Commercialization Plan for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as well as similar efforts across the US. | <i>Texas Ballroom 5-7</i> |
| 2:45–3:00 PM | Networking Break Sponsored by: Decatur Economic Development Corporation, TIP Strategies, Inc., Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce | |
| 3:00–4:00 PM | Catalyzing Local Economies: Making Entrepreneurship Accessible to All Texans
Donna Harris , CEO and Co-Founder, Builders + Backers

Innovative entrepreneurial programs can easily be leveraged to drive economic growth across the state and address regional challenges. This session will highlight the importance of public-private partnerships in fostering these entrepreneurial networks, demonstrating how government entities can play a pivotal role in supporting grassroots economic development, job creation, and community resilience. | <i>Texas Ballroom 5-7</i> |
| 3:15–4:00 PM | TEDC Workforce Committee Meeting (Open to All) | <i>Hill Country A-B</i> |
| 4:00–5:00 PM | Effective Succession Planning for Economic Developers: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Growth
Aaron Brossoit , CEO, Golden Shovel Agency

Learn strategies for maintaining leadership continuity, including how to develop effective succession plans, identify and nurture future leaders, and implement recruitment and leadership development strategies. This session also covers how to engage your board in preparing for upcoming leadership changes to secure long-term growth and success. | <i>Texas Ballroom 5-7</i> |

AGENDA

Wednesday, February 26th

- 5:00–5:15 PM **Meet in Hotel Lobby for Transportation to Offsite Reception**
- 5:30–7:00 PM **Legislative Networking Reception** **Sponsored by: Opportunity Austin**
The reception will be at the Texas Bankers Association, 9th floor, 203 W. 10th Street, Austin, TX

Thursday, February 27th

- 7:15–8:15 AM **Breakfast and Networking** *Marker 10, Lobby Level*
- 8:15–9:15 AM **Insights into the 89th Texas Legislative Session** *Texas Ballroom 5-7*
Moderator: Matt Abel, VP–Government Relations, Texas Economic Development Council
Panelists: Representative Angie Chen Button (R–Garland); **Representative Claudia Ordaz**, (D–El Paso)
- 9:15–9:30 AM **Coffee Break**
- 9:30–10:30 AM **Unlocking Gen Z+ Potential: Future-Proofing Your Workforce for Innovation and Growth** *Texas Ballroom 5-7*
Luke Goetting, Future of Work Expert
The Future of Work will be led by Gen Z+ – it’s time to get ready! Discover data-driven insights and actionable strategies to attract, engage and retain this critical talent pool. Learn how to unlock the competitive advantage of a future-proofed workforce.
- 10:30–11:30 AM **New Year, New President, What This Means for Retail in 2025 and Beyond** *Texas Ballroom 5-7*
Aaron Farmer, President, The Retail Coach
All signs point to a strong period of retail growth in Texas over the next few years. Join Aaron as he shares what to expect from a retail development standpoint during this period and how you can position your community to take advantage of these opportunities.
- 10:30–11:30 AM **Leading the Charge: Workforce Development as Economic Development** *Hill Country Ballroom*
Steven Pedigo, Partner, Civic Solutions Partnership and **Laura Huffman**, Partner, Civic Solutions Partnership
In this session we will dive into the critical role of workforce development in shaping vibrant local Texas economies, with a spotlight on the Austin Infrastructure Academy’s approach to addressing mobility workforce gaps. Learn how economic development organizations can lead through innovative talent and workforce initiatives, navigate challenges, and implement a step-by-step playbook to build resilient, opportunity-rich communities.
- 11:30 AM–1:00 PM **Lunch on your own**
- 1:00–2:00 PM **Texas Life Sciences: Building the Innovations of Tomorrow** *Texas Ballroom 5-7*
Victoria Ford, President & CEO, Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute
Texas has a robust and growing life science and biotech industry, thriving not only in the major markets but also across the state. This session will provide an insider’s look into the breadth and scope of the industry, highlighting many of the key partnerships and collaborative efforts that are building bridges of progress for this industry long into the future.

AGENDA

Thursday, February 27th

- 1:00–2:00 PM **Community Economic Development Success Stories (2024)** *Hill Country Ballroom*
 Moderator: **Ashton Bellows**, CFO, Sherman Economic Development Corporation
 Panelists: **Ramiro Aleman**, Director of Economic Development, Cameron County;
Kris Collins, EVP–Economic Development, Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce;
Maureen Hammond, Executive Director, Paris Economic Development Corporation;
Stewart McGregor, CEcD, Executive Director, Kaufman Economic Development Corporation
- Join your peers and colleagues to learn about their award-winning projects that received the prestigious TEDC’s 2024 Community Economic Development Award. The panelists will share details on project from start to finish and its impact on their communities.
- 2:00–3:00 PM **The US–Mexico Bilateral Relationship in the Trump Era** *Texas Ballroom 5–7*
Ildelfonso Guajardo, Economist, Secretary of the Economy of Mexico (2012–2018), Chief Negotiator of the USMCA for Mexico.
- What is the future of North American economic integration? Are we witnessing the end of the USMCA? How should Mexico handle the three issues that matter most to the new administration in Washington: fentanyl trafficking, migration, and economic relations with China?
- 3:00–3:30 PM **Networking Break** *Sponsored by: Hays Caldwell Economic Development Partnership, Lone Star Economic Alliance, City of Manor*
- 3:00–3:30 PM **TEDC Office Hours** *Padre Island Room*
- 3:30–4:30 PM **The Changing Electrification of Texas to Support Future Growth** *Texas Ballroom 5–7*
 Moderator: **Dale Fowler, CEcD**, Economic and Business Development Manager, AEP Texas
 Panelists: **Chad Burnet**, VP–Regulatory and Finance, AEP; **Liz Jones**, VP–Regulatory Affairs, Oncor; **Cam Yearty, AICP**, Economic Development Lead, CenterPoint Energy; **Emily Jolly**, Deputy General Counsel, Regulatory Affairs, LCRA
- As Texas experiences a surge in electricity demand, ERCOT reported a peak demand of approximately 85 GW in 2024, with projections indicating it could exceed 150 GW by 2030. This growth is largely driven by the influx of large-scale projects, including AI-related data centers, advanced manufacturing facilities, and innovative green energy initiatives. Join us for a discussion where we will explore the challenges and solutions necessary for Texas to maintain its leadership in energy and the critical need for new electric transmission infrastructure to support this unprecedented growth.
- 4:30–5:30 PM **"Bigger. Better. Texas.": NEW Statewide Economic Development Strategic Plan** *Texas Ballroom 5–7*
 Moderator: **Adriana Cruz**, Executive Director, Office of the Governor–Economic Development & Tourism
 Panelists: **Aaron Demerson**, President & CEO, Texas Economic Development Corporation; **Glenn Hamer**, President & CEO, Texas Association of Business; **Erin Hutchins**, Partner, State and Local Government, Guidehouse
- Texas is a recognized global economic powerhouse. But we must plan effectively in order to maintain our competitive edge. This panel will discuss the new statewide economic development strategic that provides a vision that all our economic development partners and organizations across the state can rally around, identifies new target industry sectors, and provides data on regional strengths. We will work together to execute and implement this new plan for a stronger Texas for generations to come!
- 6:00 PM **TEDC Supper Club** (Dinner at your own expense)
 Sign up to dine and network with your colleagues. Visit TEDC’s registration desk.

AGENDA

Friday, February 28th

- 7:15–8:30 AM **Breakfast and Networking** *Marker 10, Lobby Level*
- 8:30–9:30 AM **Community Engagement Strategies to Facilitate Energy and Infrastructure Projects**
Moderator: Sara Muhammad Malik, Senior Director, Global Energy Transition, Greater Houston Partnership
Panelists: Chad Burke, President & CEO, Economic Alliance Houston Port Region; **Sophia Cunningham**, Vice President, Houston Energy Transition Initiative, Greater Houston Partnership, **Scott Livingston, CEcD**, Director of Economic Development, League City Economic Development Corporation
- Discover how effective community engagement drives success in energy and infrastructure projects. Experts will share and discuss strategies for addressing community concerns, overcoming challenges, and generate impactful project outcomes. Hear innovative approaches, real-world success stories, and lessons learned that demonstrate how collaboration and proactive engagement can inspire your next project and create sustainable growth in your community.
- 9:30–9:45 AM **Coffee Break**
- 9:45–10:45 AM **JETI: 313/403 Where Are We Now ?** *Texas Ballroom 5-7*
Moderator: Matt Abel, VP-Government Relations, Texas Economic Development Council
Panelists: Kent Sharp, President & CEO, Sherman Economic Development Corporation; **John Villarreal**, Community Liaison and Director of Government Relations, Circuit of the Americas; **Robert Wood**, Senior Advisor, McGuire Woods Consulting
- The panel will review the current rules and application process of the Jobs, Energy, Technology and Innovation Act (former Chapter 313, now Chapter 403). They will also discuss the status of current JETI applications as well as desired changes to the Act that may be introduced during the 89th Texas Legislative Session.
- 10:45–11:45 AM **TEDC Board of Directors Meeting (Open to All)** *Foothills II, 17th Floor*



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This event is recognized by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) as a professional development training that counts toward the recertification of Certified Economic Developers (CEcD).

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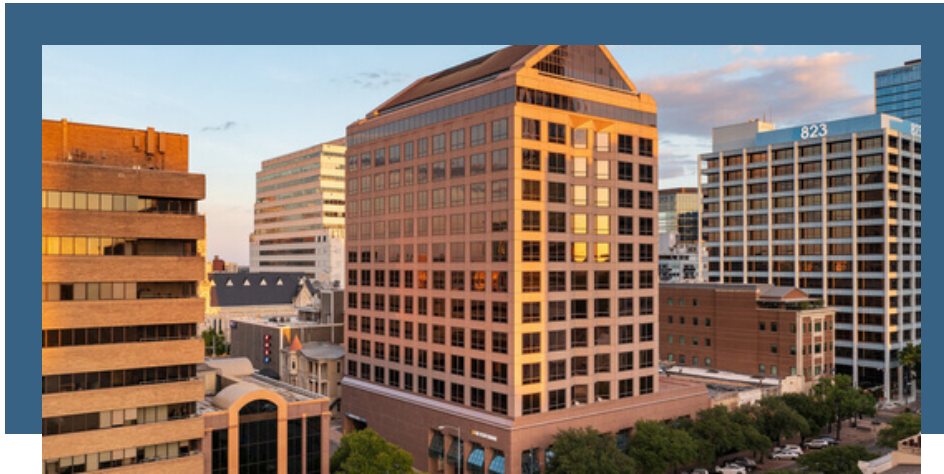
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FUTURE CONFERENCES DATES AND LOCATIONS

2025 Mid-Year Conference

June 18-20, 2025
Hilton
Rockwall, TX

2025 Annual Conference

October 29-31, 2025
Marriott Rivercenter
San Antonio, TX

2026 Winter Conference

February 25-27, 2026
Hotel Paseo Del Norte
El Paso, TX

2026 Mid-Year Conference

June 17-19, 2026
Hilton Granite Park
Plano, TX

2026 Annual Conference

October 14-16, 2026
Royal Sonesta
Houston, TX

2027 Winter Conference

February 24-26, 2027
Downright Austin Renaissance
Austin, TX

2027 Annual Conference

October 20-22, 2027
Hilton Lincoln Centre
Dallas, TX

