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**NEWS
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El Paso City Council Receives Update on Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Regional Plan Aims to Drive Economic Growth, Resilience, and Investment Over the Next Five Years

EL PASO, Texas—The City of El Paso’s Economic and International Development Department presented an update to City Council today, Monday, February 24, 2025, on the progress of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2025-2030—a regional roadmap designed to drive economic growth, attract investment, and enhance resilience over the next five years.

Developed by the City of El Paso, in collaboration with the Rio Grande Council of Governments and funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), the CEDS aligns regional priorities with federal funding opportunities to support strategic economic initiatives. The plan serves as a guiding framework for local governments, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofits, and community organizations to coordinate efforts and implement targeted development projects.

“A strong economic strategy is essential for long-term prosperity,” said Karina Bragalla, Director of Economic and International Development. “The CEDS provides a structured, forward-thinking approach that ensures we are not only attracting funding but also investing in projects that drive sustainable growth, create jobs, and enhance our region’s resilience.”

A Collaborative, Binational Approach

The CEDS is informed by input from over 50 regional stakeholders, including representatives from local governments, major employers, workforce agencies, higher education institutions, nonprofits, and community organizations.

Additionally, for the first time, the CEDS incorporates binational collaboration with insights from Ciudad Juárez stakeholders, including its municipal economic development department, business representatives, and binational affairs officials.

“El Paso’s economy is deeply connected to that of our neighbors in Ciudad Juárez, and this plan ensures that we are working together to strengthen our entire region,” said Mayor Renard Johnson. “By fostering binational collaboration, we create new opportunities for businesses, expand our workforce, and enhance our competitiveness on a global scale. The CEDS is an investment in a stronger, more resilient future for both sides of the border.”

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Key Regional Focus Areas

The CEDS strategy prioritizes economic growth and resilience across urban centers such as El Paso and Las Cruces, as well as historic and emerging communities across Hudspeth, Culberson, Jeff Davis, Presidio, and Brewster counties in Texas and Doña Ana County in New Mexico. The plan outlines strategic goals and investment priorities in several key areas, including:

- **Infrastructure & Industrial Development** – Enhancing transportation, utilities, and industrial parks.
- **Workforce Development** – Expanding training programs to meet industry demands.
- **Small Business & Entrepreneurship** – Supporting local businesses and startup ecosystems.
- **Housing & Community Development** – Addressing housing needs to support workforce retention.
- **Technology & Targeted Industries** – Strengthening innovation and technology sectors.
- **Cultural & Heritage Assets** – Leveraging tourism and historic sites for economic impact.
- **Economic Resilience** – Preparing for and mitigating disruptions from natural disasters or economic downturns.

Driving Investment and Economic Growth

The CEDS serves as a critical tool for securing federal and state funding.

Since 2012, the City's Economic Development Department has leveraged over \$40 million in EDA funding to support infrastructure projects, innovation centers, and business incubators. A key initiative under this strategy includes the \$25 million Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant, awarded by the EDA, which is fueling advanced manufacturing, workforce development, and supply chain innovation.

By aligning regional efforts with federal investment priorities, the CEDS strengthens El Paso's ability to secure grants, attract businesses, and support long-term economic stability.

The next steps in the CEDS process include continued public engagement, finalizing priority projects through a Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA), and submitting the final plan to the U.S. Economic Development Administration in December 2025.

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