

Donna announces new leaders for international bridge, EDC

By **Ena Capucion** - January 11, 2017



DONNA, RGV – Ernesto Silva, interim city manager of Donna, announced Marga Lopez will be the bridge director of the Donna-Rio Bravo International Bridge and Lyle Garza will be the executive director of the Donna Economic Development Corporation.

Silva said he expects both of them to “make an immediate and positive impact” for the city. Lopez graduated from one of UT-Rio Grande Valley’s legacy universities, the University of Texas Pan-American (UTPA) with a Bachelor’s of Business Administration in Marketing. According to a press release from Donna, her interest in city government came after working as a liaison between AEP and municipalities such as Laredo, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Cotulla, Uvalde and others.

“Lopez brings [30 years] of experience having worked both in the private and public sector. She has also been a catalyst in the recent economic growth in our community,” Silva said in a press release.

For the last two years, Lopez was the executive director of the Donna Economic Development Corporation (EDC). She also has five years of experience as a bridge director for the City of Eagle Pass. Lopez said the bridge added 25 to 27 percent of revenue into the city’s budget; which in turn, increased services to residents.

Garza will take Lopez’s place as executive director for the Donna EDC. He graduated from UTRGV’s other legacy university, the University of Texas Brownsville (UTB) with a bachelor’s degree and has 25 years of work experience in private and public sector capacities.

He has previous experience with the Harlingen EDC as the Commercial Development Manager. According to the press release, Garza was directly responsible for the recruitment and retention of commercial related business; such as retail, restaurant, health, call-center and hotel development for the City of Harlingen.

“I’ve always been fascinated with what makes a community unique and how economies grow,” Garza said. “At its heart, economic development is about building healthy economic development in order to have fruitful communities. The City of Donna is primed more than ever in its history to be the central hub of the RGV for international commerce, for industry and business development, and more importantly, for growing and raising families. I am honored and excited to join this excellent team of leaders and progressive thinkers who are dedicated and passionate about growing this community.”

Garza also held a position as marketing director for the Harlingen EDC. Here, he developed and implemented the EDC marketing plan and budget to promote the city’s economic growth.

“[Garza] brings a different perspective having worked with a larger city recruiting businesses and helping move that community forward. He also has the insight of having served as an elected official and understands the pressures placed on elected officials to provide better services and better quality of life.”

Both Lopez and Garza intend work towards continued success of Donna along with the surrounding areas.

“With over 50 years of experience combined, the City of Donna is excited to have Lopez and Garza on board and we are expecting both of them to make an immediate and positive impact on the City’s Economic Recovery Plan,” Silva said. “The plan includes having commercial vehicles crossing at the Donna-Rio Bravo International Bridge and the recruitment of new retail and entertainment development.”