


GEDP

# GALVESTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT & EXPO
## OCTOBER 29, 2026

# SET YOUR SITES ON GALVESTON ISLAND



## THE CITY IS PAVING THE WAY FOR YOUR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

**The City of Galveston continues its focus on strategic reinvestment in a number of core infrastructure and facility projects spanning all across the island, boosting investor confidence, ensuring resiliency and preparing for future development opportunities.**

**The City is planning for over $943 million in infrastructure projects and programs:**

- **Drainage programs - $535.4 m**
- **Water Infrastructure projects - $223.3 m**
- **Sanitary Sewer projects - $213.3 m**
- **Street Paving & Traffic projects - $300.1 m**
- **Upgrades to City Facilities and Parks - $67.6 m**
- **Airport Improvement projects - $18.7 m**

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS A PRIORITY FOR THE CITY OF GALVESTON

**The City of Galveston has dedicated staff to assist with major development projects. The Economic Development Coordinator assists prospective developers with site selection and acts as an ombudsman to ensure projects move swiftly and smoothly through the development process.**

## THE ATTRACTION TO GALVESTON GOES BEYOND THE BEACH

While Galveston is known for its 32-miles of beaches, Galveston offers so much more – Quality of Life, Quality of Place and Business Development Opportunities

**Galveston attracts Businesses** – There are over 3,500 businesses in Galveston. The major employers are from Education & Healthcare, Emerging Technology, Maritime, and Tourism & Hospitality industries.

**Galveston attracts Workers** – In a city with a population of 53,000, more than 38,000 employees are working in Galveston businesses. Galveston's commuting workforce accounts for over 65% of the jobs, making the island the employment center for Galveston County.

**Galveston attracts Visitors** – Over 8.9 million visitors come to Galveston annually- to visit the beach, set sail on a cruise vacation, explore the islands' rich historical and cultural attractions, to take advantage of an abundance of outdoor activities or to celebrate during one of our festivals or special events.

**Galveston attracts Students** – Nearly 10,000 students attend one of three higher level learning institution on Galveston Island. Galveston College, Texas A&M University at Galveston and University of Texas Medical Branch provide excellent educational opportunities for residents and non-residents alike.

**Galveston attracts Secondary Residents** – With its close proximity to Houston and an increase in the number of remote working opportunities, over 75% of Galveston's west end is populated by folks claiming Galveston as their second home. The island's East End and Midtown are also experiencing an increase in second homeowners.

**Galveston attracts Residents** – Over 53,000 residents call Galveston home. Galveston has the amenities of a big city, yet maintains a small-town feeling.

***LIVING ON "ISLAND TIME" IS AN EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER.***

***For information on developing a project or bringing your business to Galveston, please contact the City of Galveston's Economic Development Coordinator:***

***409.797.3695 • MHay@GalvestonTX.gov • WorkInGalveston.com***

# WELCOME TO THE 2026 GALVESTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT AND EXPO



**Joshua Owens**
*Executive Director*
Galveston Economic
Development Partnership

It is my great honor to welcome you to the 14th Annual GEDP Economic Development Summit & Expo. It is hard for me to believe how much growth has come to Galveston since I attended my first Summit two years ago. I came to the GEDP knowing that Galveston had unmet economic potential; it has been very gratifying to see prospects from around the globe recognizing that potential and actively seeking to invest in Galveston. The GEDP will continue to leverage Galveston's locational assets to attract additional investment and spread the word about Galveston.

The GEDP is positioning Galveston as a strategic home for America's military industrial base and the revival of U.S. shipbuilding. With a deepwater harbor, direct Gulf access, more than a century of maritime heritage, and access to the nation's fifth-largest labor pool, the region is an ideal location for the industry. Galveston College, Galveston ISD, and regional workforce partners are building the skilled talent pipeline the industry needs.

Galveston has an exceptional history of innovation, resilience, and economic strength. Through the support, dedication, and excellence of our members and regional partners, Galveston is poised for even greater future success. We look forward to the coming year and our plans to bring further investment to Galveston while offering more benefit for your GEDP membership.

*Thank you for being here today! -Josh*

As Chairman of the GEDP I would like to thank each of you for being here and participating in the 2026 version of our Economic Summit & Expo. Organizations such as the GEDP require a great deal of support from the community, and we are thrilled to welcome back many familiar faces as well as many new ones.

My businesses are currently GEDP members, because in 2013 (when we were not members) GEDP helped stabilize/save our primary business, Zero/Six Consulting. I absolutely know the value of having a friend in the business when one might be more "y'all street" than "Wall Street". GEDP was that friend for me and has silently been a resource for many others for over twenty-seven years now…some of those companies are much larger than Zero/Six.

Galveston is full of people that are passionate about Galveston. Many of us have our businesses here for no other reason than we just love Galveston. GEDP is here to help establish the infrastructure that supports passionate thinking and responsible development. If you want to get more involved in shaping Galveston's future, talk to me about getting more involved in the GEDP.

*Welcome to the Summit – Billy*



**Billy Coltzer**
*Chair*
Galveston Economic
Development Partnership
*President*
Zero/Six Consulting and WH
Coltzer International

**Cover:** TS Lone Star State at dock at Texas A&M Galveston, a $325 million new 524 foot-long purpose-built vessel for training. Courtsey and Copyright of Robert Mihovil of Mihovil Photography who has supplied every cover for the GEDP Summit Program for the past 14 years. Thank you for your service to Galveston and execellent work Robert! You can find him at www.mihovil.com

# Shaping the Future of Health

**Driving discovery, educating the future healthcare workforce, powering growth and improving lives across the Gulf Coast and beyond.**











**For 135 years,** The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) has helped improve lives through education, clinical care and scientific discovery. Today, UTMB is also helping shape the future of the Gulf Coast region by developing a highly skilled workforce, advancing biomedical innovation and expanding access to world-class healthcare.

From preventive care and early detection to highly specialized treatment and long-term disease management, UTMB is helping people live longer, healthier and more productive lives. This continuum of care supports the well-being of the region's residents and workforce while helping communities and businesses thrive.

As Texas' first academic health science center, UTMB is leading efforts to address some of society's most pressing health challenges, including brain health, healthy aging, cardiovascular disease and cancer. Through strategic investments in research, clinical excellence and innovation, UTMB is improving quality of life for residents while strengthening the economic vitality of Galveston and the surrounding region.

## A Strategic Asset for Regional Growth

Few institutions have a greater impact on the region's future than UTMB. As an anchor institution, UTMB attracts top physicians, scientists, educators, students and entrepreneurs from around the world. It serves as a catalyst for job creation, workforce development and investment while providing the advanced healthcare infrastructure that employers, employees and families depend upon.

The institution's integrated model, combining education, research, patient care and innovation, creates opportunities that extend far beyond healthcare, helping position the Gulf Coast as a destination for talent, discovery and growth.

UTMB
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH

**www.utmb.edu**




# SUMMIT AGENDA

| | |
|---|---|
| **8:00 AM** | Coffee and Networking (Registration and Exhibit Hall Opens) |
| **9:00 AM** | Summit Opening |
| **9:10 AM** | Market Update: Victoria Greene, G-Squared Private Wealth |
| **9:45 AM** | The Lone Star Showdown: Col. Mike Fossum, Texas A&M Galveston; Jochen Reiser, UTMB; |
| **10:15 AM** | Regional Economic Development Update: Craig Rhodes, Greater Houston Partnership; Brian Freedman, Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership; Joshua Owens, GEDP |
| **10:45 AM** | Breakout Session One: Banking and Finance; Small Business and Entrepreneurship; Island Commercial Real Estate |
| **11:30 AM** | Breakout Session Two: The Creative Economy; Community Development; Mainland Commercial Real Estate |
| **12:15 PM** | State of the City Lunch: JP Listowski, Brian Maxwell, City of Galveston |
| **12:45 PM** | Keynote Address- The Future of US Shipbuilding: Philip Burns-O'Brien, Davie Defense, USA; Christopher Lloyd, McGuire Woods; Larry McManus, Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office |
| **1:30 PM** | Breakout Session Three: State of the Maritime Sector; Downtown Development; Workforce Development |
| **2:00 PM** | Networking Reception in the Exhibit Hall |




# Purpose Drives Discovery. Passion Advances Care.

A historic **$180 million commitment** from **The Sealy & Smith Foundation** expands the **Sealy Heart & Vascular Institute at The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)**, redefining the future of cardiovascular care, research, and education.

Representing the largest investment in the Foundation's history and the largest gift ever received by UTMB, this historic support marks a new chapter in a partnership that has shaped healthcare for generations. Building on an initial $50 million commitment that launched the Sealy Heart & Vascular Institute in 2025, the additional $130 million will accelerate groundbreaking discoveries, educate future healthcare leaders and improve patient outcomes in Galveston, across Texas and beyond. Since its founding in 1922, the Foundation has contributed more than $1.2 billion to UTMB, helping transform lives through education, research and clinical care.

UTMB and The Sealy & Smith Foundation are helping build a future where more patients have access to the care they need, the expertise they deserve, and the hope that comes with every new breakthrough.

## The Sealy Heart & Vascular Institute at UTMB

Transforming cardiovascular care through *excellence, innovation and discovery*.

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UTMB
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH
Sealy Heart and Vascular Institute

**Learn More: utmb.us/gcb**





# EXPO AGENDA

| | |
|---|---|
| **8:00 AM** | Coffee and Networking (Registration and Exhibit Hall Opens) |
| **9:10 AM** | Market Update (Summit Simulcast)- Victoria Greene, G-Squared Private Wealth |
| **9:45 AM** | Galveston Island Developments- Steven Biegel, PLACE Architects |
| **10:15 AM** | UTMB Projects and Procurement- Colin Hartwell, Tarek Thomas, UTMB |
| **10:30 AM** | Galveston ISD/The Interlocal Purchasing System- Jeffery Martello, GISD |
| **11:00 AM** | Cooperative Purchasing: HGACBuy- James Glover, Brian Denzel, HGACBuy |
| **11:30 AM** | City of Galveston Procurement- Paola Allen |
| **11:45 AM** | Expo Keynote: Project Seawolf LNG- Bix Rathburn, Austin Terry, Power LNG |
| **12:15 PM** | State of the City (Summit Simulcast): JP Listowski, Brian Maxwell, City of Galveston |
| **12:45 PM** | Keynote Address (Summit Simulcast)- The Future of US Shipbuilding: Philip Burns-O'Brien, Davie Defense, USA; Christopher Lloyd, McGuire Woods; Larry McManus, Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office |
| **1:30 PM** | Texas A&M Galveston Projects and Procurement- Grant Shallenberger, Todd Sutherland, Texas A&M University Galveston |
| **1:45 PM** | Davie Defense/Gulf Copper Projects and Procurement- Jonathan Hale, Gulf Copper |
| **2:00 PM** | Networking Reception in the Exhibit Hall Opens |
| **2:15 PM** | Sullivan Brothers Companies Procurment- Christopher DeSlatte, Sullivan Brothers Companies |
| **3:00 PM** | Summit Close and Exhibitor Move-Out |



## Building a stronger, more resilient grid in Galveston

At CenterPoint Energy, we continue working hard every day to build the most resilient coastal grid in the country, ensuring we're prepared to deliver the reliable service our communities need, when they need it most. We are committed to powering your business and supporting its day-to-day operations, while improving the electric infrastructure to support the island's economic growth.

Throughout Galveston we are installing more storm-resilient poles to help withstand hurricane-level wind speeds, trimming trees and vegetation, deploying new automation devices and strategically undergrounding power lines - all to help reduce the number and length of outages and to help us restore power more quickly after significant weather events.

Learn more about our reliability and resiliency commitment throughout the region by visiting **CenterPointEnergy.com/TakingAction**.

GALVESTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
GROWING GALVESTON'S ECONOMY

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# 2026 GALVESTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT SESSIONS

## 2026 MARKET OUTLOOK

9:10 AM BALLROOM



**Victoria Greene**
*Founding Partner*
G-Squared Private Wealth

Back by popular demand, Victoria Green returns with her no-nonsense look at the national markets and the economy. Victoria explains why markets care less about where we are today and more about whether things are getting better or worse. She'll cover the forces behind corporate earnings, how AI and technology are reshaping business efficiency, what consumer spending trends mean for local businesses, and the risks worth watching heading into the new year. Expect sharp analysis, practical takeaways, and always a good dose of wit.

Victoria Greene is a Founding Partner of G Squared Private Wealth, where she designs and manages client portfolios and oversees four proprietary equity strategies for high-net-worth individuals, families, and business owners. A CFA charterholder and graduate of Texas A&M's Mays Business School, she sits on the advisory board for Mays' Master of Finance program. She is also a founder of 6 Degrees Wealth, a startup built by advisors, for advisors. Victoria has volunteered with Women's Resource of Houston to promote financial literacy and served on the board of the Aggieland Humane Society. In her free time, she enjoys polo and horseback riding.

## THE LONE STAR SHOWDOWN

9:45 AM BALLROOM



**Jochen Reiser, MD, PhD**
*CEO, Health System*
UTMB



**Col. Michael Fossum**
*COO*,
Texas A&M University
Galveston

Panelists: Dr. Tracee Watts, Galveston College; Dr. Jochen Reiser, UTMB; Col. Michael Fossum, TAMUG;

The Lone Star Showdown comes to Galveston Island. In this friendly, Texas-sized rivalry, Dr. Jochen Reiser of UTMB and Col. Michael Fossum of Texas A&M University at Galveston face off over one question: what do their institutions do for the local economy? With Dr. Tracee Watts of Galveston College as referee, the panelists will make their case on jobs, research, workforce development, talent pipelines, and the ripple effects their campuses send through the region's economy. Expect plenty of school pride and a closer look at how the island's anchor institutions are driving growth across Galveston and the region.

**Dr. Jochen Reiser** is president of The University of Texas Medical Branch, a role he has held since 2023. A world-renowned leader in healthcare, innovation, and research, he previously chaired the Department of Internal Medicine at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. There he helped manage about 1,000 physicians and led system-wide clinical and quality improvements. He also directed an NIH-funded lab developing new therapies for kidney disease. Earlier, he held leadership roles at the University of Miami and Harvard Medical School. He earned his medical degree from Heidelberg University in Germany.

**Col. Michael Fossum** leads Texas A&M University at Galveston and the Texas A&M Maritime Academy. He joined the campus in 2017 after a distinguished career at NASA. A veteran of three space flights, he spent more than 194 days in space, completed seven spacewalks, and commanded the International Space Station in 2011. A graduate of Texas A&M and the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School, he holds two master's degrees. Raised in McAllen, he and his wife, Melanie '80, have four children and eight grandchildren. He is a lifelong Scouting volunteer.

*Continued on next page.*

# BASSETT

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Our family business continues to grow and prosper and we owe our success to you, our customers.

S U P P O R T  L O C A L

## THE LONE STAR SHOWDOWN

9:45 AM BALLROOM

*Continued*

**Dr. Tracee Watts** became the ninth president of Galveston College on July 1, 2026. She leads the college's academic, workforce, student services, and community engagement efforts. She brings more than two decades of higher education experience. Most recently, she served as senior vice president of student success and advancement at Brazosport College in Lake Jackson. There, she provided executive leadership for student success, enrollment, advancement, marketing, dual enrollment, and external and legislative relations. Dr. Watts holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Evangel University and a doctorate in education from Kansas State University.



**Tracee Watts, Ed. D.**
*President*
Galveston College

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

10:15 AM BALLROOM

Panelists: Joshua Owens, GEDP; Brian Freedman, BAHEP; Craig Rhodes, GHP;

Three of the region's economic development professional take the pulse of the Upper Texas Gulf Coast. Joshua Owens of the GEDP, Craig Rhodes of the Greater Houston Partnership, and Brian Freedman of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership will share the latest on job growth, business investment, major projects, and the industries shaping the region. From the Port and the medical center to aerospace, energy, and tourism, the panel will explore how Galveston, Bay Area Houston, and Greater Houston compete nationally, collaborate regionally, and grow together. They will also look at the opportunities and challenges ahead for 2027. Attendees will walk away with a clear picture of where the regional economy stands and where it's headed.



**Craig Rhodes**
*Senior Vice President*
*Economic Development*
Greater Houston Partnership

**Craig Rhodes** is senior vice president of economic development at the Greater Houston Partnership (GHP). He leads the team that works with companies across the U.S. and around the world to attract jobs and capital investment to the 12-county Houston region. He has 20 years of economic and community development experience, including 14 years with GHP and six on CenterPoint Energy's economic development team. A Certified Economic Developer since 2015, he serves on the board of the Texas Economic Development Council. Craig is a graduate of the University of Texas. He and his wife, Kristi, have three children.



**Brian Freedman**
*President*
Bay Area Houston
Economic Partnership



**Joshua Owens**
*Executive Director*
Galveston Economic
Development Partnership

**Brian D. Freedman** is president of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership (BAHEP), a membership-driven organization dedicated to growing jobs and economic development across the Houston–Bay Area region. He leads BAHEP's regional economic development efforts, advocates for regional priorities, and directs its team of professionals. He previously served as senior manager of State and Local Government Operations, Southwest Region, for Boeing and led Legislative Affairs at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Freedman holds a bachelor's degree in management from Mississippi State University, an MBA from Colorado State University, and an executive certificate in strategy and innovation from MIT.

**Joshua Owens** is executive director of the Galveston Economic Development Partnership (GEDP), the public-private partnership working to grow Galveston's economy. He works with regional allies to drive investment to Galveston and the surrounding region. Before joining GEDP, he worked in regional economic development with the Houston-Galveston Area Council's Gulf Coast Economic Development District and served as Executive Director for Wharton EDC. He holds bachelors from Pepperdine University and a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Tech.

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BANK Locally

# BREAKOUT SESSION ONE

## BANKING AND FINANCE PANEL: WHAT NEXT FOR MONEY ON THE COAST

10:45 AM GALLEON ONE

Panelists: Allan Rasmussen, HomeTown Bank; Brent Cockerham, Moody Bank; Stephen Maxwell, Frost Bank; and Steffen Lund, Texas First Bank

Rates, regulations, and technology are reshaping how businesses borrow, save, and grow. In this session, leaders from four banks serving Galveston County discuss the latest trends in banking and finance, and what they mean for local businesses and the region's economy. Topics include the interest rate outlook, credit and lending conditions, commercial real estate and small business financing, deposit competition, and how AI, digital banking, and fraud prevention are changing the customer experience.



**Allan Rasmussen Jr.**
*President and CEO, HomeTown Bank*
Allan Rasmussen Jr. is president and CEO of HomeTown Bank, where he began in 1999, and president of HomeTown Bancshares. He is treasurer of the Galveston Economic Development Partnership. A Texas A&M graduate with an MBA from UH–Clear Lake, he lives in Friendswood with his wife, Aimee, and three children.



**Brent Cockerham**
*Executive Vice President and Chief Lending Officer, Moody Bank*
Brent Cockerham, a commercial banker since 2005, is executive vice president and chief lending officer at Moody Bank. A Clemson graduate with an MBA from Boston University, he lives in Friendswood, volunteers as a firefighter, and serves on the boards of Bay Area Council and Economic Alliance Houston Port Region.



**Stephen Maxell**
*Senior Vice President and Relationship Manager, Frost Bank*
Stephen Maxwell has been with Frost since 2008. A Galveston native, he manages comprehensive banking, insurance, and investment portfolios for commercial clients. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Texas A&M University. He resides in Galveston with his wife, Jessica, and their three sons.



**Steffen Lund**
*Assistant Vice President, Texas First Bank*
Steffan Lund was born and raised in Galveston. He attended K-12 through GISD and moved to Oslo, Norway in 2010 to obtain a BBA with a minor in Finance from BI Norwegian School of Management. He moved back to Texas and started working at Texas First Bank in 2018 and has been a Relationship Manager since 2024. He is happily married and father of one child.

## SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BUILDING SUCCESS IN GALVESTON

10:45 AM GALLEON TWO

Panelists: Amy Reid, Small Business Development Center; Gina Spagnola, Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce; Kristin Edwards, City of Texas City; Candy Hattingh, VISION Galveston

Small businesses are the backbone of Galveston County's economy, and the resources to help them grow have never been more important. In this session, leaders from four organizations that support local entrepreneurs share what it takes to start, sustain, and scale a business on the Gulf Coast today. They'll discuss access to capital, workforce challenges, technology and AI tools, business resilience and disaster preparedness, and the partnerships and programs available to help. Whether you're launching a startup or growing an established company, you'll leave with practical advice and a clear picture of where to turn for support.



**Amy Reid**
*Director, Small Business Development Center*
Amy Reid directs the Galveston County and San Jacinto College Small Business Development Center. An entrepreneur with 20-plus years in small business ownership, advising, and operations, she led the Texas Gulf Coast Network's 2024 AI initiative and contributed to America's SBDC's first AI curriculum. She is an active community leader and speaker.



**Gina Spagnola,**
*President and CEO, Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce*
Gina Spagnola has served as president and CEO of the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce, Texas' oldest chamber, since 2004. She founded the Galveston Women's Conference and has led recovery efforts after Hurricane Ike and other disasters. In 2025, the Galveston County Daily News named her Citizen of the Year.

*Continued on next page.*

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# Thank you, Galveston.

We're grateful for every chance to work with the people and organizations who make this place what it is.



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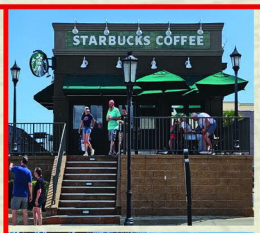
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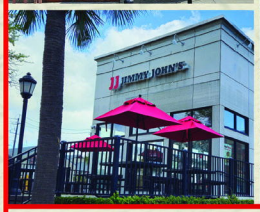
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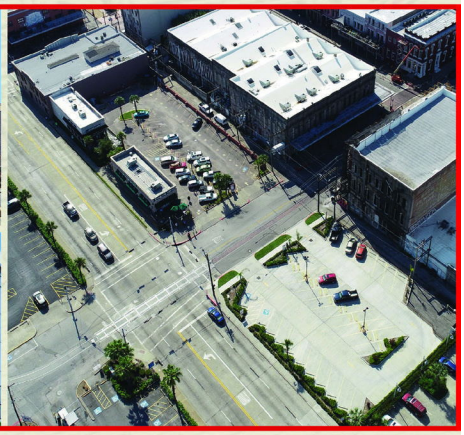
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# BREAKOUT SESSION ONE

## SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BUILDING SUCCESS IN GALVESTON

10:45 AM GALLEON TWO

*Continued*



**Kristin Edwards**
*Economic Development Director, City of Texas City*
Kristin Edwards is Economic Development Director for the City of Texas City. With 17-plus years in municipal government, she works with major industry partners and Shoal Point prospects, manages the EDC grant program, and supports workforce development. She holds a communications degree and an MPA from Sam Houston State University.



**Candy Hattingh,**
*Director of Operations and Incubate Galveston, VISION Galveston*
Candy Hattingh is making entrepreneurship more accessible and a little less "figure it out yourself." In 2026, she became the first person in the Galveston-Houston region to earn the Economic Development Professional credential. Yes, Galveston-Houston. Galveston is used to being first.

## ISLAND COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE: BUILDING GALVESTON'S NEXT CHAPTER

10:45 AM GALLEON THREE

Panelists: VJ Tramonte, Joe Tramonte Realty; Brian Schwenk, Coldwell Banker TGRE; Steven Biegel, PLACE Designers

From historic downtown storefronts to new mixed-use and hospitality projects, Galveston's commercial real estate market is changing fast. In this session, brokers and design professionals who work on the island every day share their take on where the market stands and where it's headed. Topics include leasing and sales trends, development opportunities, the cost of building and insuring on the coast, historic preservation and redevelopment, and how design is shaping the island's next generation of projects. Investors, developers, business owners, and anyone curious about the island's growth will leave with an insider's view of the opportunities and challenges in Galveston real estate.



**VJ Tramonte**
*Broker/Owner, Joe Tramonte Realty*
VJ Tramonte is the owner of Joe Tramonte Realty, the Galveston firm founded in 1968, and has held his broker's license since 1982. A Galveston native and attorney, he is past chairman of the Galveston Chamber of Commerce, past president of the Galveston Association of Realtors, and a past president of the Galveston Economic Development Partnership.



**Steven Biegel, AIA**
*Director of Architecture, PLACE Designers*
Steven Biegel, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, is an architect with PLACE Designers, which he joined in 2018 as architecture department director. Practicing since 1980, he has designed or directed more than 600 buildings nationwide, including the Pentagon renovation and high-rise condominiums along the Gulf Coast. He graduated from Syracuse University.



**Brian Schwenk**
*Owner and Associate Broker, Coldwell Banker TGRE*
Brian Schwenk is owner and associate broker of Coldwell Banker TGRE, leading a 16-person office on Galveston Island. A former commercial construction project manager, he brings deep expertise in construction, development, and historic preservation, including rehabilitating his own 1886 raised cottage. He holds a construction management degree from Philadelphia University.

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# BREAKOUT SESSION TWO

## THE CREATIVE ECONOMY: HOW ARTS AND CULTURE DRIVE GROWTH

11:15 AM GALLEON ONE

Panelists: Antoinette Lynch, City of Galveston; Maureen Patton, The Grand 1894 Opera House; Sarah Piel, Galveston's Historic Downtown Cultural Arts District; Will Wright, Galveston Historical Foundation

Galveston's historic architecture, live performances, galleries, and festivals do more than define Galveston's character. They power its economy. In this session, leaders from the city, the arts, and historic preservation explore how the creative economy attracts visitors, supports small businesses and jobs, revitalizes downtown, and makes Galveston a place where people want to live and invest. The panel will discuss cultural tourism, public-private partnerships, funding for the arts, preservation as an economic development tool, and how creative placemaking can keep the island's economy growing.



**Antoinette Lynch**
*Arts & Culture Coordinator, City of Galveston*
Antoinette Perry Lynch is strengthening the island's creative economy through public art, cultural tourism, and arts funding. After coordinating the NEA grant behind the City's Cultural Arts Master Plan, she leads its implementation with the Arts Development Commission and community partners.



**Maureen Patton**
*Executive Director, The Grand 1894 Opera House*
Maureen Mezzino Patton, a Galveston native, has served The Grand 1894 Opera House since 1981 and leads it as executive director. She guided the theater's reopening less than 100 days after Hurricane Ike. In 2026, she received the national Excellence in Presenting the Performing Arts award from NAPAMA and APAP.



**Sarah Piel**
*Executive Director, ARTS Downtown GTX*
Sarah Piel is executive director of ARTS Downtown GTX, Galveston's Historic Downtown Cultural Arts District, where she champions the arts as a catalyst for economic growth and cultural tourism. Formerly director of education and resource development at The Grand 1894 Opera House, she brings 14 plus years of nonprofit arts leadership.



**Will Wright**
*Interim Executive Director,*
*Galveston Historical Foundation*
Previously GHF's chief creative officer, Will has been with GHF since 2011. He draws on a background in communication design and public engagement to connect its historic sites, programs, and maritime heritage with audiences. He holds an MFA from Texas State University.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING A GALVESTON FOR ALL

11:15 AM GALLEON TWO

Panelists: Craig Kovacevich, UTMB; Christine Bryant, VISION Galveston; Danica Premirelli, Blue Zones Project Galveston; Gina Spagnola, Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce

Small businesses are the backbone of Galveston County's economy, and the resources to help them grow have never been more important. In this session, leaders from four organizations that support local entrepreneurs share what it takes to start, sustain, and scale a business on the Gulf Coast today. They'll discuss access to capital, workforce challenges, technology and AI tools, business resilience and disaster preparedness, and the partnerships and programs available to help. Whether you're launching a startup or growing an established company, you'll leave with practical advice and a clear picture of where to turn for support.



**Craig Kovacevich**
*Vice President, Strategic Community Impact, UTMB*
Craig Kovacevich is vice president of strategic community impact at UTMB and executive director of UTMB HealthCare Systems. He advances UTMB's community partnerships, oversees the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and chairs the Blue Zones Project Galveston steering committee. A Galveston native, he was 2024–2025 president of the Knights of Momus.



**Gina Spagnola,**
*President and CEO,*
*Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce*
Gina Spagnola has served as president and CEO of the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce, Texas' oldest chamber, since 2004. She founded the Galveston Women's Conference and has led recovery efforts after Hurricane Ike and other disasters. In 2025, the Galveston County Daily News named her Citizen of the Year.

*Continued on next page.*

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# BREAKOUT SESSION TWO

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING A GALVESTON FOR ALL

11:15 AM GALLEON TWO

*Continued*



**Danica Premirelli**
*Executive Director, Blue Zones Project Galveston*
Danica Premirelli is leading the effort with UTMB to make Galveston a certified Blue Zones community. A registered dietitian with nearly 20 years of business strategy experience, she connects longevity science with workforce well-being and quality of life. She teaches nutrition at Galveston College.



**Christine Bryant, CEcD**
*CEO, VISION Galveston*
Christine Bryant brings 20 plus years of economic development, public affairs, and community-building experience. She previously led existing industry and regional development at the Corpus Christi Regional EDC, where she created the Coastal Bend Opportunity Zones Summit. She graduated from Missouri State University.

## MAINLAND COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE: BUILDING GALVESTON'S NEXT CHAPTER

11:15 AM GALLEON THREE

Panelists: Barbara Cutsinger, Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership; James Brockway, Brockway Commercial

Galveston County's mainland is one of the fastest-growing parts of the Houston region, with new rooftops, retail centers, industrial parks, and major employers reshaping communities from League City to Texas City. In this session, an economic development leader and a commercial real estate broker discuss the trends driving mainland growth. They'll cover industrial and logistics demand, retail and mixed-use development, site selection, infrastructure, and how the mainland and the island can grow together. Developers, investors, business owners, and community leaders will leave with a clear view of where the opportunities are and what's next for commercial real estate in Galveston County.



**Barbara Cutsinger**
*Marketing Manager of Real Estate and Facilities, Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership*
Barbara Cutsinger is marketing manager of real estate and facilities for the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership, which she joined in 2003. She tracks regional real estate activity, manages commercial, healthcare, and industrial projects, and markets the region to brokers and developers.



**James Brockway**
*Owner/Broker, Brockway Commercial*
James Brockway is owner/broker of Brockway Commercial, Brockway Realty, and Grand Oak Development Company. A CPA, former CFO, and broker for 20-plus years, he has brokered over $150 million in shopping center, warehouse, and land sales across Texas. A Texas native, he graduated cum laude from Stephen F. Austin State University.

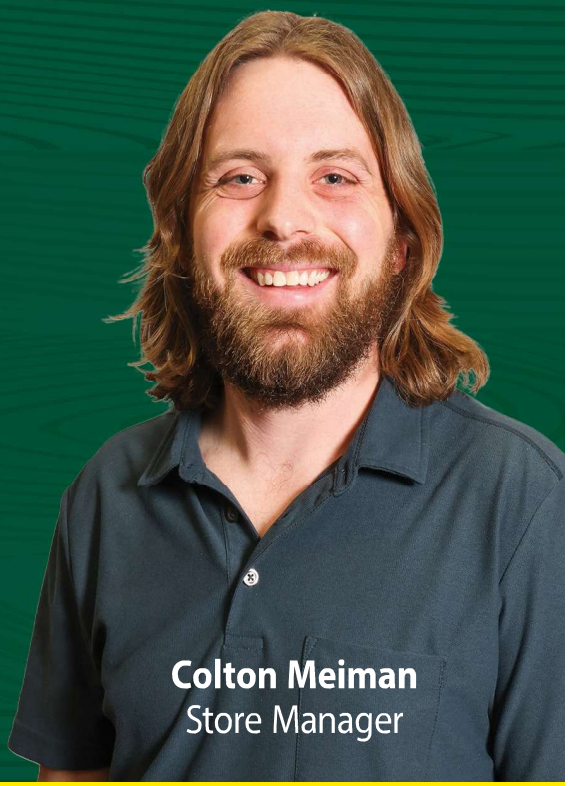
# LUNCH

12:00 PM - BALLROOM

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# LUNCH

## STATE OF THE CITY

12:15 AM BALLROOM

Panelists: John Paul Listowski, Mayor, City of Galveston; Brian Maxwell, City Manager, City of Galveston;

Galveston stands open for new business, and in his first State of the City since taking office in July, Mayor JP Listowski joins City Manager Brian Maxwell to share where the island stands, where Galveston is headed, and how the City is making it easier to invest and build here. They'll cover the City's top priorities for the year ahead, including their plans to prioritize a business-friendly approach that supports new projects, investment in infrastructure and drainage, major upgrades to roads, utilities, flood protection housing, tourism, and public safety;  all that it takes to keep Galveston on a growth trajectory for residents and visitors. The conversation will also explore how the City balances growth with protecting the island's character, and how partnerships with state, federal, and regional agencies are bringing new resources to Galveston. Developers, business owners, residents, and community partners will learn how the City is working with the private sector to keep Galveston a great place to live, work, and do business.

**Mayor John Paul Listowski** brings a practical, hands-on approach to Galveston's economic development. Owning and operating a local construction company on the island gives him a clear understanding of the real-world permitting, regulatory, and logistical hurdles companies face when building or expanding here. Listowski spent more than a decade in local government and civic leadership before taking office as mayor in 2026. During his three terms on the Galveston City Council, he focused on upgrading critical infrastructure, attracting new industries, and keeping city spending disciplined. A lifelong Galvestonian, Listowski graduated from O'Connell High School and earned his degree in Construction Science from Texas A&M University. He lives in Galveston with his wife and their three children.



**John Paul Listowski**
*Mayor*
City of Galveston

**Brian Maxwell** has served as City Manager since 2014. In that role, he leads Galveston's municipal operations with a focus on fostering local economic growth and sustainable development. Serving as a bridge between the public and private sectors, Brian has prioritized streamlining municipal processes and removing regulatory hurdles to make doing business in Galveston as seamless as possible. Under his leadership, Galveston has modernized infrastructure, strengthened regional partnerships, and secured critical funding to support long-term economic stability. Maxwell's approach builds on decades of experience across construction, insurance, and municipal management, including six years as Director of County Affairs for UTMB and twelve years managing planning and infrastructure for Galveston County. A fifth-generation BOI (Born On the Island), Maxwell graduated from O'Connell High School and earned a degree in Maritime Administration and Management from Texas A&M University at Galveston. He lives in Galveston with his wife, Katherine, and has two adult daughters.



**Brian Maxwell**
*City Manager*
City of Galveston



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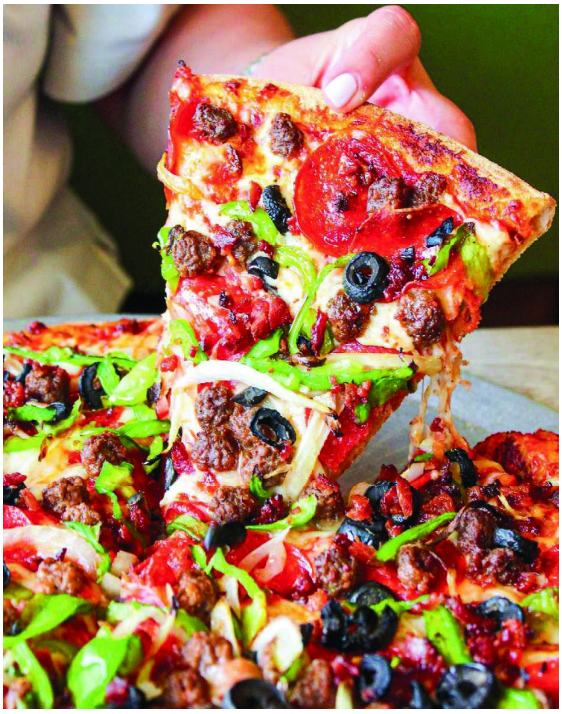
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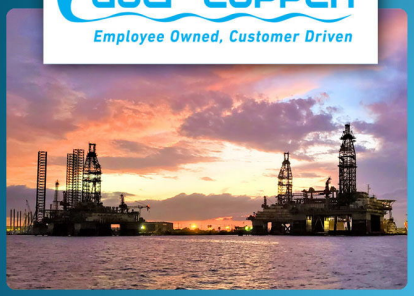
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# KEYNOTE: THE FUTURE OF U.S. SHIPBUILDING




## KEYNOTE

12:45 AM BALLROOM

Speakers: Philip Burns-O'Brien, Davie Defense; Christopher Lloyd, McGuireWoods; Larry McManus, Office of the Governor

America is working to rebuild its shipbuilding industry, and Galveston is at the center of it. In June 2026, Davie Defense broke ground on a $1 billion modernization of the Gulf Copper shipyards to build U.S. Coast Guard icebreakers. The project is turning a Galveston repair yard into a major shipbuilder. This keynote brings together leaders from industry, law and policy, and state government to discuss what the shipbuilding revival means for Texas and the Gulf Coast. Larry will discuss the Texas advantage and the State's role in attracting maritime and defense investment. Philip will cover Davie Defense's plans for the shipyard, the icebreaker program, and the federal push to expand domestic shipbuilding. Attendees will hear how this investment could reshape the island's maritime future and create new opportunities for businesses and workers across the region. Christopher will tie it togehter with how increased defense spending fits in the national economic development landscape, and what cities need to do to stay competative.



**Philip Burns-O'Brien**
*CEO*
Davie Defense

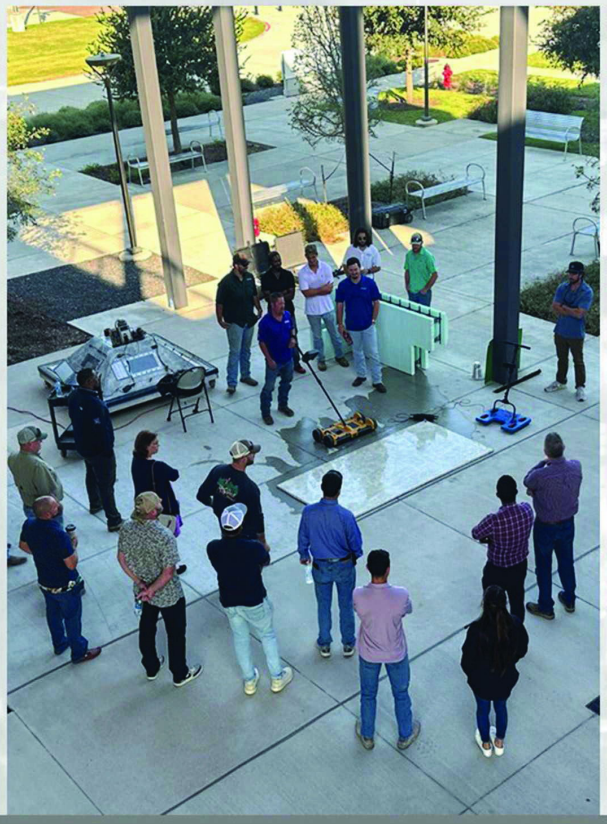
**Philip Burns-O'Brien** joined the Davie team in 2023, playing a key role in acquiring the Finnish Helsinki Shipyard, defining Davie as a global leader in Arctic shipbuilding. Prior to joining Davie, Philip held senior positions at Babcock International Group for over two decades. There, he led organizational changes and business transformations worldwide. Philip also served as the Global Director, Aerial FireFighting (AFF), and led business development for the aviation and marine sectors in North America. A chartered engineer, Philip holds a master's degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. In March of 2026, he was named Chief Executive Officer of Davie Defense and the following month was named Chief Growth Officer at Inocea Group, an international marine, defense, and industrial investment group led by co-founders Alex Vicefield and James Davies.

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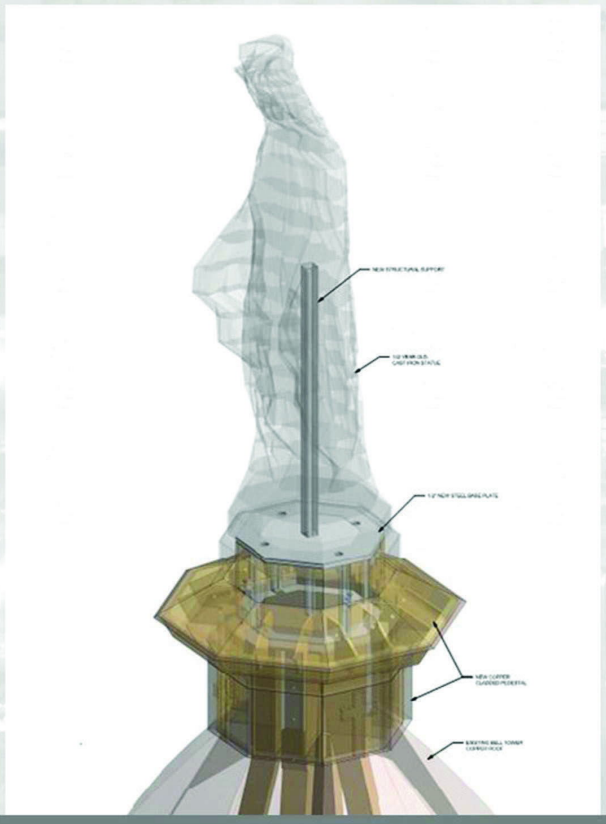
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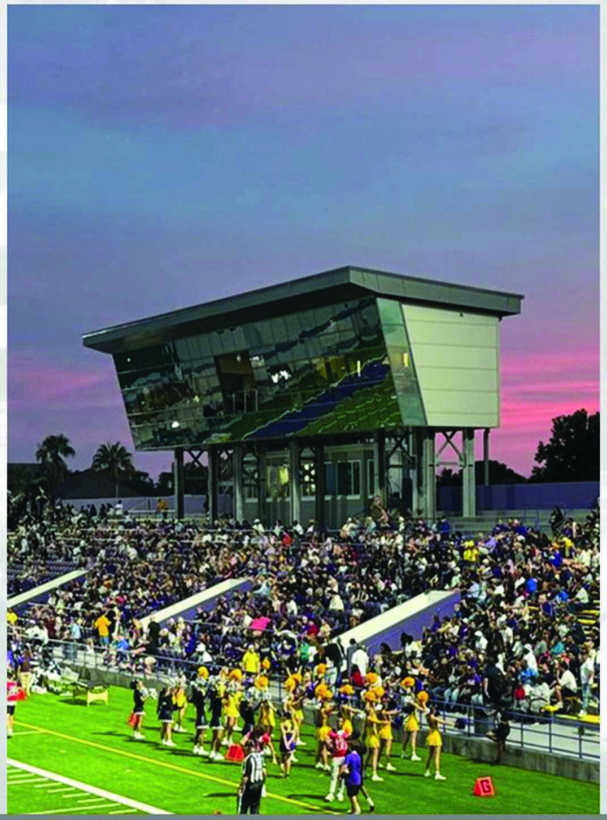


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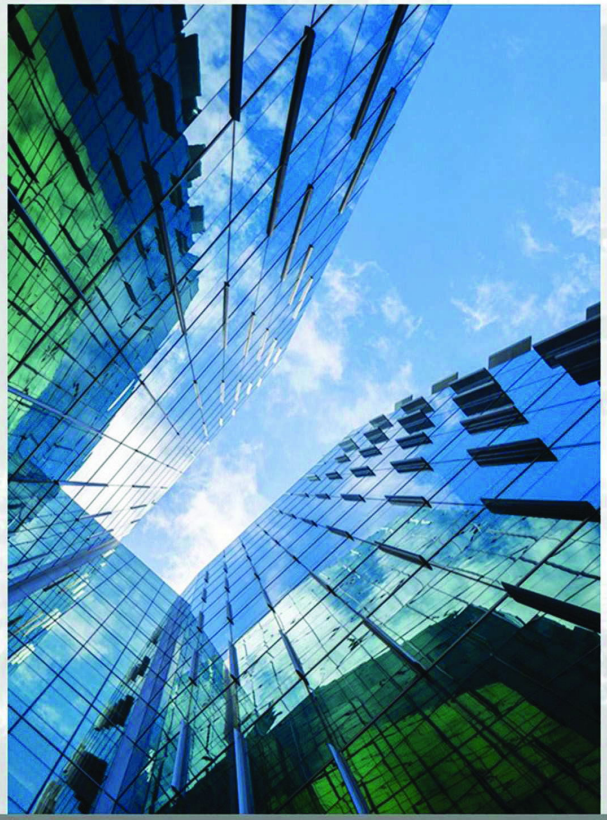


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# KEYNOTE: THE FUTURE OF U.S. SHIPBUILDING

## KEYNOTE

12:45 AM BALLROOM

Continued



**Christopher Lloyd**
*Director, Infrastructure & Economic Development*

**Chris Lloyd** leads the McGuireWoods Consulting infrastructure and economic development team where he specializes in site selection and economic development incentives negotiations. Since 1998, Chris has provided holistic site selection and incentives negotiation services to dozens of high profile, corporate expansions and relocations across the country. Chris has also been the principal architect of state public-private partnership legislation now used around the country to speed infrastructure development as well as authored successful legislation to modernize state economic development agencies. As a result of this work, Chris is a frequent speaker on the intersection of economic development best practices and policy. Prior to joining McGuireWoods Consulting, Chris served for nearly five years in the Office of the Secretary of Commerce and Trade under Virginia Governors Allen and Wilder. In this position, he was responsible for legislative, budgetary, and regulatory coordination and development within that Secretariat which managed the state's economic development programs. Former Chairman of the Site Selectors Guild, Chris graduated from the College of William & Mary in 1993. He lives in Richmond with his wife, Megan, and two children.



**Larry McManus**
*Director for Business Development*
Office of the Governor
Economic Development and Tourism

**Larry McManus** is responsible for the management of the Office's Business & Industry Recruitment Activities, Small Business, International, Marketing, Research, and Community Relations initiatives. He is appointed to the Texas Task Force on Modernizing Manufacturing. McManus has nearly 33 years of economic development experience with the State of Texas. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Texas at El Paso and is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma.

# BREAKOUT SESSION THREE

## THE STATE OF THE MARITIME SECTOR

1:30 PM BALLROOM

Panelists: Brett Milutin, Port of Galveston; Robert Sakowitz, Hazak Corporation; Ben Turpen, BlueForge Alliance; Chad Burke, Economic Alliance Houston Port Region

The maritime industry is one of the Gulf Coast's biggest economic engines, and it's changing fast. From cruise and cargo growth to the national push to rebuild American shipbuilding, the Galveston-Houston region is well positioned to lead. In this session, leaders from industry, workforce development, and the region's ports take stock of where the sector stands and what's ahead. The panel will discuss cruise, cargo, and infrastructure investments at the Port of Galveston and across the Houston port region, as well as how the revival of the U.S. maritime industrial base is creating new opportunities on the Gulf Coast. They'll also explore how to build the pipeline of skilled workers the industry needs and what the sector's expansion means for local businesses and suppliers. Attendees will leave with a clear picture of the maritime sector's momentum and how Galveston and the region can capture its next wave of growth.



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Pelican Island facilities are hubs for ship and rig repair, liquid bulk, and offshore exploration and production. We also have 307 acres of waterfront land for development on Pelican Island.

### COMMERCIAL

Our commercial area, with its restaurants, hotel and other attractions, offers visitors a front-row seat to our working port. It’s adjacent to Galveston’s historic downtown with blocks of fine and casual restaurants, shops, historical architecture and museums.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

From improving air quality to reducing waste, we are identifying impactful ways to make long-term changes to improve the environment. Guided by Green Marine, a voluntary environmental program for North America’s maritime industry, the port is researching, planning and implementing a number of environmental programs.

# BREAKOUT SESSION THREE



**Brett Milutin**
*COO, Port of Galveston*
Brett Milutin is Executive Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of Galveston Wharves, where he began as a port police officer in 2001. A former harbormaster, he also serves as the port's representative to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and has received two U.S. Coast Guard public service commendations.



**Ben Turpen**
*Senior Adviser, BlueForge Alliance*
Ben is experienced in budget and appropriations, and focused on defense and civil space at BlueForge Alliance, which he joined in December 2024. BlueForge Alliance is a nonprofit working to strengthen the U.S. Navy's submarine industrial base by growing the supply chain and skilled workforce behind America's maritime defense.



**Robert Sakowitz**
*CEO, Hazak Corporation*
With the Hazak Corporation of Houston, Texas Robert works as a multi-industry and multi-national corporate consultant. Robert has served on numerous local, national and international business, civic, cultural and not-for-profit boards of directors for over fifty years.



**Chad Burke**
*CEO, Economic Alliance Houston Port Region*
Chad Burke has served since 2009 as president and CEO of Economic Alliance Houston Port Region, the economic development corporation for the Houston Ship Channel. The Alliance has helped create 4,725 jobs and $19.5 billion in investment. A Texas A&M economics graduate, Chad is a beekeeper and youth football coach.

## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT: KEEPING DOWNTOWN BOOMING

1:30 PM GALLEON ONE

Panelists: David Landriault, Historic Downtown Galveston Alliance; Mayor JP Listowski, City of Galveston; Trey Click, Historic Downtown Galveston Partnership; Kristin Edwards, City of Texas City

Downtown is the heart of the community home to one of the nation's finest collections of Victorian commercial architecture and a growing mix of shops, restaurants, residences, and cultural venues. In this session, city and downtown leaders share their vision for the district's next chapter and the work underway to bring more people, businesses, and investment downtown. The panel will discuss redevelopment of historic buildings, new residential and mixed-use projects, streetscape and infrastructure improvements, parking and walkability, and how the City and downtown organizations are working together to support property owners and small businesses. Kristin Edwards, of the City of Texas City, will give her vision for 6th Street revitalization and how their work in Texas City's downtown is progressing.



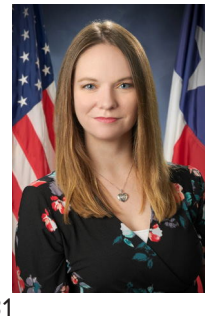
**John Paul Listowski**
*Mayor, City of Galveston*
Mayor John Paul Listowski, a lifelong Galvestonian and owner of a local construction company, took office in 2026 after three terms on City Council and service as Planning Commission chairman. He has focused on infrastructure, attracting new industries, and disciplined spending. He holds a construction science degree from Texas A&M.



**Trey Click**
*Historic Downtown Galveston Partnership*
Trey Click is a Galveston native, community leader, and executive director of the Historic Downtown Galveston Partnership. A dedicated preservationist, he serves as the primary conduit between downtown merchants and City Hall. Click championed the Galveston Island Trolley revival and received the inaugural Golden Sneaker Award in 2026 for his civic impact.



**David Landriault**
*Historic Downtown Galveston Alliance*
David Landriault co-founded Falcontail Marketing & Design in 2012 and works in marketing strategy, design, and media production. His bylines focus on Galveston civic life, development, business, and culture. He is also co-founder, publisher, and editor of The 1839.



**Kristin Edwards**
*Economic Development Director, City of Texas City*
Kristin Edwards is economic development director for the City of Texas City. With 17-plus years in municipal government, she works with major industry partners and Shoal Point prospects, manages the EDC grant program, and supports workforce development. She holds a communications degree and an MPA from Sam Houston State University.

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# BREAKOUT SESSION THREE

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING GALVESTON'S TALENT PIPELINE

1:30 PM GALLEON TWO

Panelists: Dr. Cissy Matthews, Galveston College; Jennifer Edenfield, Galveston ISD; and Traci Nolen, Workforce Solutions

A strong workforce is one of the most important tools for attracting and keeping businesses. In this session, leaders from K-12 education, higher education, and the regional workforce system discuss how Galveston is preparing students and workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The panel will discuss career and technical education, dual credit and industry certifications, apprenticeships and on-the-job training, and how schools and employers are working together to close skills gaps in fields like healthcare, maritime, construction, and hospitality. They'll also share the resources available to help businesses recruit, train, and retain talent. Attendees will leave with a clear picture of Galveston's talent pipeline and practical ways to get involved.



**Dr. Cissy Matthews**
*Vice President of Instruction, Galveston College*
Dr. Cissy Matthews, Vice President of Instruction at Galveston College since 2012, oversees academic, workforce, and dual credit programs. Under her leadership, the college added three bachelor's degrees and workforce programs, and dual credit grew to over 30% of enrollment. She holds a doctorate from the University of Houston.



**Jennifer Edenfield**
*Director of CTE, Galveston ISD*
Jennifer Edenfield is director of CTE, CCMR, and advanced academics for Galveston ISD, where she has expanded career pathways and industry partnerships since 2022. GISD offers 20 career programs, with about 92% of high school students in CTE courses. She is a two-time Region IV CTE Administrator of the Year.



**Traci Nolen**
*Principal Industry Liaison,*
*Gulf Coast Workforce Board*
Traci Nolen is principal industry liaison with the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, helping employers align talent strategies with labor market needs. A former Texas Workforce Commission apprenticeship specialist, she has 20-plus years of workforce experience in Kentucky and Texas, including retraining coal miners as coders and supporting Hurricane Harvey recovery.

## NETWORKING BREAK

2:00 PM - EXPO HALL

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# Local Business, Local Family, Local Banking




Nicolas A. Gaido is Chairman of the HomeTown Bank Board of Directors and President of Gaido's Seafood Restaurant.

As a member of the fifth generation in our family business, I feel a great responsibility to honor the generations before us and build something to pass on to those who follow.

Over the years, I have learned that a financial partner who understands your business, knows the community, and is accessible when you need them is incredibly valuable.

As President of Gaido's and Chairman of HomeTown Bank, I have the opportunity to see that relationship from both perspectives. For a business owner, being able to sit across the table from people who are making decisions in an open, honest conversation creates trust and accountability that is difficult to replace.

Strong local businesses and strong local financial institutions go hand in hand. When local businesses and local banks support one another, more of that investment remains in our community, creating more opportunities and building a stronger Galveston for future generations.

To me, HomeTown's commitment to Galveston means being truly invested in the long-term success of this community. We are not simply a bank doing business here. We are part of Galveston. Our customers are our friends, neighbors, and fellow business owners, and their success matters to us.

Having spent my life in a family business calling Galveston home for over a century, I understand the importance of relationships, loyalty, and long-term commitment.

I am proud to be part of a bank that shares those same values and is committed to helping Galveston and its people prosper for generations to come. ***Nick Gaido***

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## 9:10 AM **2026 MARKET OUTLOOK SIMULCAST**

Speaker: Victoria Greene, Founding Partner, G Squared Private Wealth

## 9:45 AM **BEACHFRONT DEVELOPMENT**

Speaker: Steven Biegel, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, PLACE Designers

Galveston's coastline is in the middle of a building boom, with new condominiums, resorts, and residential communities changing the island's skyline and drawing new residents, visitors, and investment. In this session, take a closer look at the projects driving that growth, including Tiara on the Beach, Sachs on the Seawall, Solaris Condos, Ocean Club Resort, Discovery Sands, Whitecap NPI, Lively Beach, and The Residences at Tiki Island. The discussion will cover what it takes to bring a coastal project from concept to completion. Topics include designing for hurricanes and wind loads, meeting coastal building codes and permitting requirements, managing insurance and construction costs, and creating developments that complement the island's character. Attendees will also hear where the beachfront market is headed and what new waterfront development means for Galveston's tax base, tourism, and local economy. Developers, investors, contractors, and community leaders will leave with an insider's view of how Galveston's coastal skyline is being built.

## 10:15 AM **UTMB PROJECTS & PROCUREMENT**

Speakers: Colin Hartwell, Tarek Thomas, UTMB

As one of Galveston's largest employers and economic engines, UTMB invests heavily in construction, facilities, goods, and services each year. In this session, UTMB leaders give an inside look at the institution's upcoming capital projects and explain how local businesses can compete for that work. The speakers will walk through UTMB's procurement process, from finding and responding to bid opportunities to meeting vendor registration and compliance requirements. They'll also cover subcontracting opportunities on major projects, and share tips for building a successful partnership with the university. Whether you're a contractor, supplier, or professional services firm, you'll leave knowing where to find opportunities and how to position your business to win them.

## 10:30 AM **GALVESTON ISD/THE INTERLOCAL PURCHASING SYSTEM**

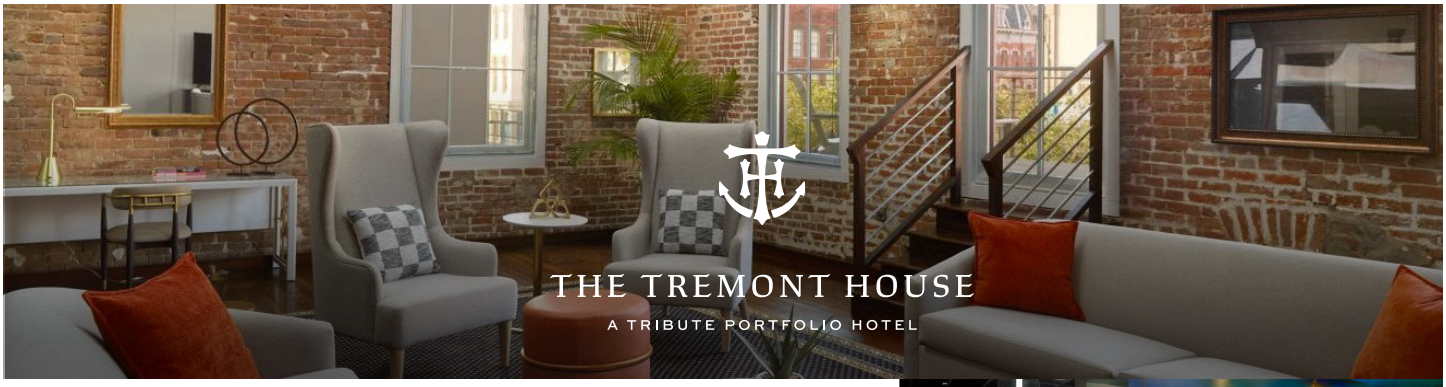
Speakers: Jeffrey Martello, CFO, Galveston ISD; Steve Guerrero, Program Manager, The Interlocal Purchasing System;

Public entities spend billions each year on goods, services, and construction, and cooperative purchasing is one of the most efficient ways for businesses to reach them. In this session, Galveston ISD and TIPS explain how local vendors can tap into those opportunities. Jeffrey Martello will share how Galveston ISD buys goods and services and what the district looks for in vendors and contractors. Steve Guerrero will explain how TIPS works as a national cooperative purchasing program. Once a business is awarded a TIPS contract, school districts, cities, counties, and other public agencies can buy from it without going through a separate bid process. The speakers will cover how to respond to solicitations, what it takes to become an awarded vendor, and tips for growing your business through public-sector contracts.

## 11:00 AM **HGACBUY PURCHASING AND PROCUREMENT**

Speakers: James Glover, Supervisor; Brian Denzel, Manager; HGACBuy

HGACBuy, the cooperative purchasing program of the Houston-Galveston Area Council, connects businesses with public agencies across the country. Cities, counties, school districts, and other government entities use HGACBuy contracts to buy vehicles, equipment, technology, and services without running their own bid process. For awarded vendors, that means access to a nationwide public-sector market through a single contract. In this session, HGACBuy leaders explain how the program works and how businesses can take part. They'll cover how contracts are solicited and awarded, what vendors need to know to submit a competitive response, and what to expect after an award, including reporting and compliance requirements.




# A TIMELESS TEXAS NARRATIVE

Rooted in Galveston Island's rich history and shaped by its distinctly Texas spirit, we bring the past and present together in a place where every stay reveals something new to discover. Set in the heart of The Strand, we pair three elevated dine & drink venues with elegant accommodations including apartment-style extended stays with our Suites Collection, The Lofts, and The Quarters, and all of downtown just steps away.





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# EXPO SESSIONS

## 11:30 AM CITY OF GALVESTON PURCHASING AND PROCUREMENT

Speakers: Paola Allen, Purchasing Manager, City of Galveston

The City of Galveston buys a wide range of goods, services, and construction every year, from infrastructure and facility projects to professional services and everyday supplies. In this session, learn how local businesses can compete for that work. Paola Allen will walk through the City's purchasing process, including how to register as a vendor, where to find current bid and proposal opportunities, and how to submit a strong, compliant response.

## 11:45 AM EXPO KEYNOTE: PROJECT SEAWOLF LNG

Speakers: Austin Terry, Founder & CEO; Bix Rathburn, CIO; Power LNG

Power LNG is developing Project Seawolf, a planned LNG liquefaction and marine bunkering facility on a 30-acre site on Pelican Island. The facility will include a 3-million-gallon storage tank, a pier for fueling ships and bunker vessels, and an underground natural gas pipeline. In this session, Power LNG leadership will give an overview of the project and explain how local businesses can take part. They'll cover upcoming construction and supply needs and how to get on the company's vendor list, along with opportunities for contractors, fabricators, equipment suppliers, and service providers.

## 12:15 PM STATE OF THE CITY SIMULCAST

Speakers: John Paul Listowski, Mayor; Brian Maxwell, City Manager; City of Galveston

## 12:45 PM KEYNOTE ADDRESS SIMULCAST: THE FUTURE OF US SHIPBUILDING

Speakers: Philip Burns-O'Brien, CEO, Davie Defense, USA; Christopher Lloyd, Director, Infrastructure & Economic Development McGuire Woods; Larry McManus, Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office

## 1:30 PM TEXAS A&M GALVESTON PROJECTS AND PROCUREMENT

Speakers: Grant Shallenberger, Associate Vice President for Administration and Auxiliary Services; Todd Sutherland, Chief of Staff; Texas A&M Galveston

Texas A&M University at Galveston is growing, and with that growth comes demand for construction, facilities, goods, and services. In this session, campus leaders share an inside look at upcoming projects on the Pelican Island campus and explain how local businesses can compete for that work. The speakers will walk through how the university buys goods and services, including vendor registration, finding bid opportunities, and meeting state and Texas A&M System requirements.

## 1:45 PM DAVIE DEFENSE/GULF COPPER PROJECTS AND PROCUREMENT

Speakers: Jonathan Hale, Gulf Copper

Davie Defense's $1 billion modernization of the Gulf Copper shipyards is turning Galveston into a hub for U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker construction, and it will take a strong network of local suppliers and contractors to get there. In this session, learn how your business can be part of one of the largest maritime investments in the region's history. Jonathan Hale will share an overview of the shipyard modernization and upcoming projects, then explain how Davie Defense and Gulf Copper source goods and services.

## 2:15 PM SULLIVAN BROTHERS FAMILY OF COMPANIES PROCUREMENT

Speakers: Christopher Deslatte, Supply Chain Manager; Texas International Refining Company

The Sullivan Brothers Family of Companies operates across Galveston's energy, industrial, and maritime sectors, and keeping those operations running takes a dependable network of suppliers, contractors, and service providers. In this session, learn how your business can become one of them. Christopher Deslatte will cover how to get set up as an approved vendor and what safety, insurance, and quality standards suppliers must meet.

# GEDP LEADERSHIP

## Officers



CHAIR:
**Billy Coltzer**
Zero/Six Consulting



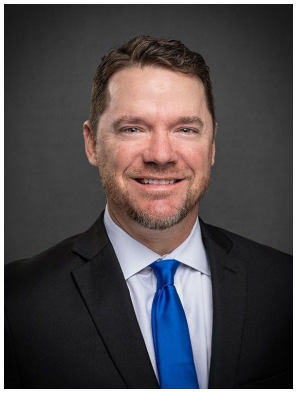
VICE CHAIR:
**Jonathan Hale**
Gulf Copper



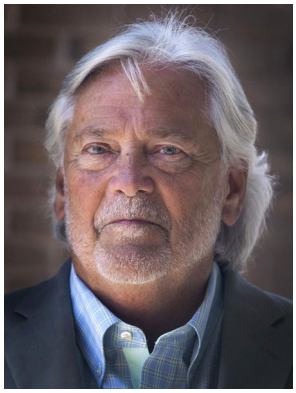
AT LARGE:
**Michelle Robinson**
Galveston County Daily News



SECRETARY:
**Joseph Rozier**
Mitchell Historic Properties



TREASURER:
**Allan Rasmussen**
HomeTown Bank



AT LARGE:
**Marty Miles**
Galveston Park Board

## Executive Committee

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| **Gale Burkett** | GB Tech |
| **Dr. Darrell Carney** | Chrysalis Bio Therapeutics |
| **Maureen Patton** | The Grand 1894 Opera House |
| **Vic Pierson** | Moody National Bank |
| **Fred Raschke** | Mills Shirley, LLP |
| **Marie Robb** | Coastal Solutions, Inc |
| **Todd Scott** | Great Scott Enterprises |
| **Johnny Smecca** | Galveston Restaurant Group |
| **Todd Sullivan** | Sullivan Brothers Family of Cos. |
| **Ryan Duggan** | CenterPoint Energy |
| **Keith Gray** | Galveston Regional Chamber |
| **John Paul Listowski** | City of Galveston |
| **Col. Michael Fossum** | Texas A&M University Galveston |
| **Brian Maxwell** | City of Galveston |
| **Dr. Matthew Neighbors** | Galveston ISD |
| **Dr. Jochen Reiser** | UTMB |
| **Rodger Rees** | Port of Galveston |
| **Gina Spagnola** | Galveston Regional Chamber |
| **V. J. Tramonte** | Joe Tramonte Realty |

# GEDP WORKPLAN

The GEDP's workplan is directly tied to its mission of growing Galveston's economy. The GEDP does this through three primary strategies: business retention and expansion, marketing and attraction, and technical assistance. The Galveston Center for Innovation and Transformation (GCIT), the GEDP's non-profit, charitable, sister organization, engages in public-benefit economic development activities such as workforce development and quality of place initiatives. By engaging in its core strengths, the GEDP and GCIT seek to accelerate the pace of investment into Galveston's economy.

## Business Retention and Expansion

Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) is a fundamental function of economic development organizations. The GEDP maintains proactive relationships with existing businesses to understand their needs, address challenges, and connect them to resources that facilitate their growth and expansion. It is far more cost effective to provide technical and other assistance to a business already operating to enable them to stay or expand their operations and employment in Galveston than to attract new businesses.

## Marketing and Attraction

The GEDP has honed its communication strategy to effectively promote Galveston as the ideal location for businesses looking to take advantage of the "Texas miracle" on the Gulf Coast. We work with corporations, site selection consultants, and investors to inform them about opportunities in Galveston. The GEDP works locally, regionally, and nationally to highlight Galveston's locational advantages, particularly in its key sectors: maritime, healthcare, education, hospitality, and emerging technology. The GEDP promotes Galveston's unique assets, such as a favorable business climate, available workforce, and deep-water port to a target audience of decision makers. By bringing new investment to Galveston, the GEDP fulfills its mission to grow the economy and create jobs.

## Technical Assistance

The GEDP provides technical assistance to address challenges a business locating or operating in Galveston might face. From navigating zoning issues to identifying investment capital, the GEDP can develop innovative solutions to complex business challenges. The GEDP provides data analysis, workforce demographics, infrastructure capacity, and comparative business costs to aid businesses in maximizing their returns. The GEDP has analytical capabilities to provide a business with the answers it needs to thrive.

## Quality of Place

With its recreational opportunities, along with its proximity to everything that the Greater Houston Region has to offer, Galveston offers an enviable quality of place (quality of place differs from quality of life in that it is a set of objective factors such as crime rates, school quality, or proximity to services). By analyzing the same statistics site selections consultants use to analyze potential sites, the GCIT can view Galveston through their lens and identify the "low-hanging fruit" that can improve its rating, increasing our ability to attract projects.

## Workforce Development

Workforce development is perhaps the most important function of any economic development organization; labor is the most expensive and crucial element of most businesses. With its membership, including Galveston College, the Galveston Independent School District, and the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce, the GCIT is seeking to strengthen the school-to-jobs pipeline. Students need awareness of career opportunities and companies need skilled workers, the GCIT is working to connect them seamlessly. Our workforce, along with Galveston's ability to draw employees from the region, is our primary attraction.

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# THANK YOU GEDP MEMBERS

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