MINUTES
San Luis Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting
San Luis Council Chambers
1090 E. Union Street
San Luis, AZ 85349
Thursday, July 16, 2026
4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION WILL ATTEND EITHER IN PERSON, TELEPHONE, OR VIDEO CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION.

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**
   Yigal Duarte called the San Luis Economic Development Commission meeting to order at approximately 4:04 p.m.

   ROLL CALL

   PRESENT: Abraham Andrade, Commission Member
   Oscar Franco, Commission Member
   Mary Carmen Lopez, Commission Member
   Linda Padilla, Commission Member
   Octavio Ramirez, Commission Member

   OTHERS PRESENT: Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development & Government Affairs
   Yigal Duarte, Economic Development Assistant
   Jose Antonio Maldonado, Video Production Specialist
   Albert Moreno, I.T. Technician
   Rogelio Martinez, Administrative Coordinator for Economic Development

   ABSENT: Jesus Carrillo, Chairman
   Salma Pasillas, Vice Chair

   In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the meeting was called to order by Economic Development Assistant Duarte, who turned the floor over to Director Esparza to request nominations for a temporary presiding officer. Commission Member Franco was nominated to serve as Chair Pro Tem. On motion duly made and seconded, Member Franco was unanimously elected as Chair Pro Tem and assumed the chair.

   The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Franco.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- Regular San Luis Economic Development Commission meeting held on February 04, 2026.

MOTION: Commission Member Lopez called for a motion to recommend the approval of the regular San Luis Economic Development Commission meeting held on February 04, 2026. Commission Member Andrade second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

4.A. Discussion and possible action on any and all matters regarding the election of a Chair for the San Luis Economic Development Commission. **(Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development)**

Mr. Esparza addressed Commission Members by mentioning that the San Luis Economic Development Commission (SLEDC) bylaws state that every June, the Commission will host an annual meeting where a new Chairman will be elected. The elected Chairman is able to serve for two consecutive years. Mr. Esparza informed that Chairman Carrillo has already served two consecutive years since the SLEDC was reactivated.

Mr. Esparza stated that it is time to elect a new Chairman for the SLEDC and mentioned the duties and responsibilities for this role. Mr. Esparza requested action by SLEDC Members to nominate amongst them a new Chairman to serve for the upcoming year.

Commission Member Padilla called for a motion to nominate Commission Member Franco as the new Chairman for the SLEDC. Commission Member Lopez second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

4.B. Discussion on any and all matters regarding the election of a Vice-Chair for the San Luis Economic Development Commission. **(Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development)**

Mr. Esparza stated that Chairman Franco will serve as Chairmen for a one-year term.

Mr. Esparza presented the duties and responsibilities for the Vice Chair role and requested action to nominate a new Vice Chair for the SLEDC.

Commission Member Andrade called for a motion to nominate Commission Member Lopez as the new Vice Chair for the SLEDC. Commission Member Padilla second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

Mr. Esparza acknowledged Chairman Franco and Vice Chair Lopez in their new roles for the SLEDC and requested the change of seats.

4.C. Discussion and possible action on any and all matters regarding recommendations for the City of San Luis Approved Artist List for the Public Art Program. **(Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development)**

Mr. Esparza provided a summary of reasons why this project is taking place and a review of three potential locations for public art to be placed. These include: 1) Main Street & B Street Gateway Mural, 2) APS Utility Box Art Program, and 3) Well Site No.1 Heritage Mural. Mr. Esparza informed that Well Site No.1 Heritage Mural could potentially be carried to the next fiscal year.

Mr. Esparza explained the Request For Qualifications (RFQ), where the City of San Luis issued RFQ No. 2026-PIR-00000010 to establish the approved artist list. Mr. Esparza informed that 17 artist submissions were received from local, regional, and national artists. Mr. Esparza mentioned that 9 evaluators participated in the review of the submissions, where 11 were approved.

Mr. Esparza explained the evaluation process and the criteria that was followed to review each submission. Mr. Esparza opened the floor for questions from Commission Members before moving forward with a motion.

Vice Chair Lopez inquired about information and the availability of a timeline of when the artists will begin working on these projects and how the projects will be moving forward. Mr. Esparza replied by stating that progress will be dependent of several factors, for example, ongoing street improvements, weather conditions, and seasonal timelines, and the awarding process once an artist is selected for a project.

Commission Member Andrade mentioned he noticed the names of several local artists that are included on the list and recommended that they receive priority in the selection process as this will grant them knowledge and experience when working in these types of projects. Mr. Esparza replied by stating that the City is willing to provide the artists with several services such as guidance or counseling if they need to establish their businesses or on other matters where assistance can be provided.

Vice Chair Lopez inquired about the timeframe that will be assigned to each artist to be able to complete a project. Mr. Esparza responded that this information will be included within the planning portion of the contract.

Commission Member Ramirez asked if the list that is being presented is the final list or if it was the result of a screening process. Mr. Esparza confirmed that this is the final list for this year. Mr. Esparza informed that depending on the results from the first year, changes to the list will be considered.

Chairman Franco acknowledge the quality of the information presented to them during the review and expressed his joy to see the names of several local artists in the final list. Chairman Franco expressed confidence on the positive effects these projects will have on creating opportunities for the rising local talent.

Vice Chair Lopez made an observation about a recent event she attended where young talent presented their art and inquired if it was possible for a younger audience to be part of these projects. Mr. Esparza responded by mentioning that a request was received from an organization that teaches them how to remedy areas affected by graffiti and explained how dependent on the artist that is selected for a project, perhaps the artist could work together with other organizations to include the aid of young talent.

Mr. Esparza requested a motion to recommend that each artist individually addressed in the list be included in the approved artist list for the Public Art Program.

Chairman Franco moved to read the names of the recommended artists and called for a motion to recommend that they be included in the City of San Luis' list of approved artists. Commission Member Andrade second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Vice Chair Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

4.D. Discussion and possible action on any and all matters regarding proposed updates to the San Luis Business Incubator Program Policies and Procedures. **(Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development)**

Mr. Esparza provided an update on the updates made to the San Luis Business Incubator policies, procedures, and goals that align with Economic Development activities. Mr. Esparza stated that the SLEDC bylaws state that the SLEDC serves as an advisory board to the Business Incubator program.

Mr. Esparza requested that the Commission move this item for the next regular Commission meeting as items are pending review.

Commission Member Padilla moved to motion that item 4.D. be moved to the next regular Commission meeting. Vice Chair Lopez second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Vice Chair Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

4.E. Discussion and possible action on any and all matters regarding updates from the Economic Development Director, followed by discussion among San Luis Economic Development Commission (SLEDC) members. **(Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development)**

Mr. Esparza informed that the Economic Development department is working with a consultant from Tucson, Arizona, on the creation of a six-week cohort program for entrepreneurs that will be hosted at the San Luis Business Incubator. Mr. Esparza stated that promotion and recruitment for this program is expected to take place in Fall 2026, with a launch date of Spring 2027. Mr. Esparza informed that additional information and curriculum will be presented to the Commission at the next regular Commission meeting.

Mr. Esparza moved to present information about the Historic Revitalization Initiative. Mr. Esparza informed that outreach will take approximately 18-months to be completed. Mr. Esparza stated that once the outreach work is completed, funding avenues and federal tax credits will open to be able to address the physical redevelopments and upgrades needed to serve both districts.

Mr. Esparza concluded by presenting the final initiative that involves the creation of an organization that would be assigned to focus on all initiatives addressing the downtown area. Mr. Esparza mentioned that research is being conducted to search for different avenues to fund these activities in the future, such as the use taxes for future hotel development and tourism related activities, and the creation of a business improvement district that would provide services additional to what the City already offers, such as marketing or parking services. Mr. Esparza requested that the Commission vote on creating an item to address this initiative on a future regular Commission meeting.

Chairman Franco asked for additional information on the need for a group or institution to oversee these responsibilities. Mr. Esparza responded by saying that it will depend on the complexity of the activities but the suggestion made comes from the need to learn about the process required to manage and operate such an entity.

Commission Member Padilla moved to motion the addition of an item to address the Downtown San Luis Partnership Organization Concept at a future SLEDC agenda for further discussion. Commission Member Andrade second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Vice Chair Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

Chairman Franco informed that no further agenda items will be discussed and opened the floor for open discussion.

Commission Member Ramirez asked if City of Yuma has an entity that oversees their Downtown area. Mr. Esparza responded that a group of business owners created the Downtown Merchants Association and provided similar examples from other cities in Arizona that have designated similar associations. Mr. Esparza clarified that for rural areas, merchant associations are common. Mr. Esparza explained that the San Luis Downtown area is different from others as it is considered urban due to the small-size parcels along the area, versus those from larger cities that only focus on a section of their main street. Mr. Esparza added that the review, recommendations, and research would be what the creation of an entity would entail.

Vice Chair Lopez suggested reaching out to the owners of the businesses located along the downtown area for feedback and ask them if they would like to be part of this new entity or group. Mr. Esparza agreed and mentioned that meetings will be scheduled with the property owners to address this project in further detail and include any needs they may have that need to be addressed.

Commission Member Padilla suggested that a meeting be scheduled to review Robert's Rule of Order to serve as a refresher of the procedures to follow before the next regular Commission meeting. Mr. Esparza agreed and mentioned that the department will work together with the City Clerks office to schedule a training and that he is also reviewing the option to hold future meetings at a different location.

Vice Chair Lopez inquired about the open seats available for people to apply and join the SLEDC. Mr. Esparza answered that according to the terms set in the SLEDC bylaws, three seats are open but that the current assigned Commission Members have submitted a letter of interest to continue their terms. Mr. Esparza added that the open seats will be opened to the public to follow the direction from City Council, however, suggestions will be made to City Council from those Commission Members who submitted letters of interest to continue their terms.

Chairman Franco asked about the renewal dates for this current Commission. Mr. Esparza concluded by clarifying that the memberships to the Commission do not expire but rather City Council appoints a new member to the SLEDC.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commission Member Padilla called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:48p.m. Commission Member Ramirez second it. Motion passed unanimously.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Franco	Aye
Vice Chair Lopez	Aye
Commission Member Padilla	Aye
Commission Member Andrade	Aye
Commission Member Ramirez	Aye

APPROVED:

_____
Oscar Franco, Chairman

ATTEST:

_____
Yigal Duarte, Economic Development Assistant

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the San Luis Economic Development Commission meeting of the City of San Luis, Arizona, held on April 16, 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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Yigal Duarte, Economic Development Assistant