

Montgomery Economic Development Corporation
AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: June 17, 2025	Budgeted Amount:
Department: MEDC	Prepared By: Stephanie Johnson

Subject

Update on ISCS event

Recommendation

Discussion only

Discussion

May 18–20 / Las Vegas Convention Center

I had an amazing experience—walking over 30 miles across three days as I explored the show floor and connected with countless industry professionals. I had the opportunity to meet many fellow Economic Development Directors from our region and beyond, visiting as many booths as possible to gather ideas, forge new connections, and collect a wide range of creative swag that sparked inspiration for potential trademark and branding concepts.

What stood out most was the genuine kindness and willingness to help expressed by nearly everyone I met. Whether at booths or networking at the workshops, people in the industry were eager to offer support.

In the evenings, I attended two private networking social events, which provided a more relaxed setting to engage with key players in the industry. Notable connections included:

- Retail Strategies
- Holder Properties
- City of Magnolia
- East Montgomery County
- Port Aransas
- As well as directors from numerous other cities and regions

The energy, insights, and relationships developed at ICSC 2025 will be incredibly valuable as we continue advancing our economic development mission.

Key Themes and Takeaways

1. Robust Deal-Making Amid Economic Uncertainty

Despite challenges such as tariffs and interest rate volatility, leasing activity remained strong, particularly in open-air shopping centers.

2. Strategic Retail Expansion

Retailers are not retreating but reoptimizing their portfolios, focusing on long-term growth strategies.

3. Redevelopment Over New Construction

High construction costs and financing challenges have limited new retail development. As a result, redevelopment and repositioning of existing spaces have become central to growth strategies, with former tenant spaces being repurposed for new uses.

4. Emphasis on Experiential Retail

Retail is evolving beyond merchandise to focus on creating memorable experiences. Brands are integrating fitness, wellness, and interactive concepts to attract younger demographics, particularly Gen Z and millennials.

5. Integration of Technology and AI

Technology, especially AI, is playing an increasingly significant role. Companies are leveraging AI for location intelligence, predictive modeling, and enhancing customer experiences.

6. Focus on Community and Connection

Keynote speaker Kendra Scott emphasized the importance of creating retail spaces that foster community and connection. This aligns with a broader industry trend of prioritizing people-first cultures and customer engagement

Approved By

City Secretary & Director of Administrative Services Riby Beaven
Interim City Administrator & Police Chief Anthony Soloman

Date:
06/09/2025
06/09/2025