



# 3-5 Year Strategic Plan

This document includes Narrative Responses to specific questions that grantees of the Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership, Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS and Emergency Shelter Grants Programs must respond to in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations.

## GENERAL

### Executive Summary

**The Executive Summary is required. Include the objectives and outcomes identified in the plan and an evaluation of past performance.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Executive Summary:**

The City of Laredo is the lead agency in the development and submission of the 5-Year Consolidated Plan. The purpose of the Plan is to determine the City's housing and community needs in order to identify and establish priorities and goals to meet that need. The Plan also gives the City a tool with which to assess its progress so that it can take the appropriate action needed to annually address any deficiencies identified in its performance.

The data noted in the Community Profile serves as a reference point for setting and assigning housing and non-housing priorities for housing assistance and local community development efforts. Of top priority is the need to provide affordable housing opportunities for individuals/families whose incomes fall within the following categories: Very low-income (0%-30% Housing Area Median Family Income (HAMFI); Low-Income (31%-50% HAMFI); and Low –Moderate income (51% - 80% HAMFI). The City is proposing to meet the need for safe, decent, and affordable housing by continuing to utilize programs that have proven to be successful where Federal, State and local funds were utilized. In the process of preparing its last 5-Year Plan submission, the City conducted a housing survey to determine the condition of the City's housing stock. It was found, as a result of the survey, that 24% of the City's housing units were substandard and in need of rehabilitation. The City, through its Housing Rehabilitation program has addressed this problem by rehabilitating 199 of these units over the past 5 years and has implemented a reconstruction program to address homes that have either been destroyed in a fire or that have deteriorated beyond repair. However, many of the homes not addressed through the program have continued to deteriorate, and others are now in need of this assistance. As such, the need to continue to offer rehabilitation opportunities to low and moderate income individuals and/or families continues to be of high priority. The City proposes to continue to offer rehabilitation assistance through zero interest loans, forgivable loans, or as grants.

The current cost of housing and the difficulties lower income homebuyers are facing in today's volatile housing market substantiates the need for the City to continue give high priority to providing homebuyer assistance. With the recent upheaval in the housing market, qualification rules have become more stringent and it has

become more difficult for lower income homebuyers to obtain mortgage financing. Through the City's HOME Investments Partnerships program, the City will continue to provide downpayment assistance to qualifying individuals/families earning equal to or less than 80% of HAMFI. The City will continue to build partnerships with local financial institutions and mortgage companies in order to facilitate this assistance. The City's HOME program will also work with local financial institutions, non-profit agencies, and public and private entities to provide affordable housing opportunities to very-low to moderate income individuals/families. Planned activities that are proposed to be undertaken during the next five years through the City's HOME program include downpayment assistance, tenant-based rental assistance, and the provision of funds to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) for the development of affordable housing through the 15% set-aside in HOME funds. The City is also proposing to assist in the development of additional transitional housing units by providing funding to an established homeless shelter for the creation of an additional 9 much needed units. (For more details regarding these activities, please refer to the narratives portion of this plan.)

Another component of the Plan was the need to address issues regarding homelessness and special needs. The City anticipates being able to address this issue utilizing Emergency Shelter Grant funds for Homeless Prevention, Essential Services, Operation, and rehabilitation of homeless shelters. In addition, the City will also continue to utilize its Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) funds to address this need. Also, with the implementation of the HEARTH ACT, the City anticipates being able to address an even greater number of its homeless population and preventing and possibly ending homelessness. (Additional information regarding the provision of these activities and services can be found in the ESG narratives portion of the Plan).

In addition to addressing the housing needs of the community, the City proposes to address non-housing community needs and quality of life issues through the use of CDBG funds. During the planning process for the Consolidated Plan, the City requested citizen's input regarding what was of greatest need in the community. One method of obtaining this input was through the completion of a community needs survey. Results of the survey indicated that the need to address concerns such as road and drainage construction and improvements, construction of community facilities, infrastructure improvements, the elimination of slum and blighting influences, economic development activities, and the provision of public services continue to be of high priority. During the next five years, the City anticipates addressing these priorities by allocating CDBG funds for the new construction and improvement of parks and recreational facilities/centers, construction of senior and other service centers, demolition of substandard structures, Code Enforcement, Graffiti Removal, construction of sidewalks, Section 108 Loan Repayment, acquisition and relocation activities, Infrastructure improvements such as drainage, sewer, and street paving) and the construction of public facilities.

The City proposes to undertake all of the above-outlined initiatives in order to address the housing and non-housing needs of the community. These activities are proposed for the period beginning October 1, 2010 and ending September 30, 2015, contingent upon the award of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds.

## Strategic Plan

**Due every three, four, or five years (length of period is at the grantee's discretion) no less than 45 days prior to the start of the grantee's program year start date. HUD does not accept plans between August 15 and November 15.**

**Mission:** The Department of Community Development's function is to provide for a better quality of life for very low, low and moderate income citizens of the City of Laredo by creating housing and economic development opportunities, facilitating public improvements, and promoting a clean, healthy, and safe environment. The intent of the compilation of the Consolidated Plan is to determine the needs of the community and how those needs can best be met through the use of available local, state, and federal funds.

## General Questions

- 1. Describe the geographic areas of the jurisdiction (including areas of low income families and/ or racial/ minority concentration) in which assistance will be directed.**
- 2. Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA) (91.215(a)(1)) and the basis for assigning the priority (including the relative priority, where required) given to each category of priority needs (91.215(a)(2)). Where appropriate, the jurisdiction should estimate the percentage of funds the jurisdiction plans to dedicate to target areas.**
- 3. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs (91.215(a)(3)).**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan General Questions response:**

1. Laredo is located in the southern region of the State of Texas, and shares the Rio Grande River with its sister city, Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. The predominant characteristic of the city is its international bridges, which promote commerce and tourism for residents of both countries. Laredo currently has four international bridges.

The South Texas region, including Webb County, is one of the state's fastest growing regions. Oil and gas, ranching, agricultural business, and cross border commerce have historically been the mainstays of the region's economy. Along with this growth has been a sharp increase in demand for education, health, and social services. In turn, this has given a strong boost to the construction industry, as additional schools, hospitals, and homes have been built to accommodate demand.

In past years, expanding trade, investment, and commerce with Mexico has resulted in the City's growth. However, the City of Laredo has not been immune to the effects of the economic downturn that now plagues the nation. The City is experiencing a decrease in commerce and investment, thus creating a decrease in the number of available jobs, construction, and home purchases. Laredo's economy remains in recession but the latest figures show that the recession is easing somewhat.

The Port of Laredo is the largest port of entry on the U.S. - Mexico border and the third largest inland port. The Port of Laredo handles approximately 40% of U.S.-Mexico trade on the U.S. Southern Border. According to data provided by the Texas Center at Texas A & M International University, pedestrian crossings dropped by 7.45 percent in 2009. There were 8.7 million pedestrian crossings in 2009, which are 700,000 fewer pedestrian crossings that occurred in 2009 than in 2008. Vehicle crossings remained flat at its 2009 level of 9.8 million crossings, and truck crossings dropped to 2.8 million crossings in 2009. International Bridge revenues dropped 8.5 percent in 2009.

Air cargo declined during 2008 and 2009 as a result of the global economic recession, and in particular, decline in auto production. However, starting in August 2009 air cargo volumes started a recovery and the overall decline in 2009 was approximately 7.0 percent. First quarter 2010 air cargo is up 35.0 percent. The top three air cargo carriers, Air Transport International, Federal Express, and UPS Cargo, transport 70% of the cargo to Laredo. Presently, there are a total of 22 cargo carriers that serve the Laredo community. Passenger enplanement activity for 2009 was down slightly at less than 2.0 percent.

During the past 15 years, the City of Laredo and the Federal Aviation Administration have invested in excess of \$ 164.0 million in upgrading airport infrastructure. In 2009, Laredo International Airport accomplished a significant milestone when it completed reconstruction of its three runways. Reconstruction of its apron now enables the airport the capacity to simultaneously park approximately 30 large cargo aircrafts the size of a Boeing 757. These improvements have resulted in Laredo International Airport having excess capacity to service long-term growth of aeronautical activities. (Source: Laredo International Airport)

#### **Demographics:**

Laredo has almost doubled in population over the past two decades. The U.S. Census Bureau Population Division released population estimates for 2009 and Laredo MSA was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> for the State of Texas. It is estimated that Laredo's population grew an additional 21.8% from 194,556 in 2000, to 241,438 in 2009. Statistics released in 2009 from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that Laredo's growth has increased 2.3% between July 1, 2008 and July 1, 2009, with a population change of 235,937 in 2008 to 241,438 in 2009; a difference of 5,501 people.

In terms of race, Laredo's population is 93.1% White, 2% Black or African American, 2% American Indian and Alaska Native, 6% Asian, 3% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and 5.1% some other race, and .5% two or more races. (2008 American Community Survey) Of the total population, 94.7% are of Hispanic ethnicity, and the remaining 5.3% are of other ethnic origins (2007 American Community Survey). Because Laredo's ethnic population is 94.7% Hispanic, every area of the city is considered an area of minority concentration.

Certain areas of the City continue to have a high concentration of low-income residents. Census Tracts with populations of 51% or more of low and moderate income persons include parts of: 1.01, 2, 9.01, 10.02, 11.02, 15.01, 16.00, 17.04, 17.05, and 18.04, and all of 1.03, 1.04, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.02, 10.02, 12, 13, 14, 15.02, 18.01; these tracts are located in west, south, and central sections of the City. Census Tracts 1.03, 1.04, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9.02, 12, 13, 14, and 18.04 represent areas in which 70% or more of the residents are of low and moderate incomes.

**2.** The basis for allocating resources geographically within the jurisdiction for the next five years include factors such as substandard housing, land prices, and input received from non-profit entities and the general public regarding community needs.

One rationale for assigning a high priority to affordable housing is the quality of available housing throughout the City. The U.S. Census Bureau reported over 3,700 households lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, or do not have telephone service. Because so many homes have been found to be in such substandard condition, the need to offer rehabilitation opportunities to low and moderate income individuals and/or families remains a high priority. In addition, a total of 68% of the respondents to a Community Needs Survey conducted by the City indicated that there is a great need for housing rehabilitation of owner/occupied units. The Housing Rehabilitation Program, one of the only programs within the City that offers repairs of the entire home, continues to be needed in order to improve the living condition of owner occupants. Through this program, owner-occupants, consisting of small and large families, whose incomes range from very-low to moderate, will be assisted in making necessary repairs to their dwellings. The low income families receiving assistance through the program reside in all areas of the City and are not confined to a particular area. As such, this assistance will be provided Citywide.

Given that Laredo's land is very high priced, most families' financial status doesn't allow for investment toward the purchase of a home. As a result, families are living in overcrowded conditions. By providing assistance through the HOME program, the City provides an opportunity to make housing more affordable by providing low to moderate income first-time homebuyers with down payment assistance loans. As with the Housing Rehabilitation Program, those families seeking assistance through the HOME downpayment assistance program will be provided the opportunity to purchase homes citywide.

Yet another rationale for assigning priorities to projects is feedback from service providers and the public regarding community needs. As service providers were consulted, they provided information such as what their needs and goals are and how the City could assist in accomplishing their goals. With the information provided, the City was able to identify what the public feels is most in need in order to make the community more livable. Feedback was obtained at the various public meetings held throughout the City, through a Community Needs Survey collected by the City, and through a public meeting where citizens voiced how the City could assist them in providing for those needs. (see Citizen Participation for details) As explained in section 1 of this response under "demographics", the City has high concentrations of low income areas throughout the community and this was a major determining factor for the allocation of funds in these areas.

**3.** Obstacles to meeting underserved needs include factors such as unemployment, poverty, and lack of resources.

**Employment:**

Historically, because Laredo is a border-city with Mexico, and because a majority of the workforce capacity was dependent on the health of the Mexican economy, a significant portion of the jobs in Laredo were dependent on the U.S. and Mexico trade factor. Hence, when Mexico's national currency (the peso) was stable, jobs were secure, and when the peso devalued compared to the U.S dollar, Laredo's unemployment rates were negatively affected. This dependency on the Mexican

economy is still evident in the makeup of jobs for the City. Based on the 2008 American Community Survey, Laredo's top industries consist of: 1) educational services, health care, and social assistance at 24.1%, 2) transportation and warehousing at 14.8%, and retail trade at 14.2%.

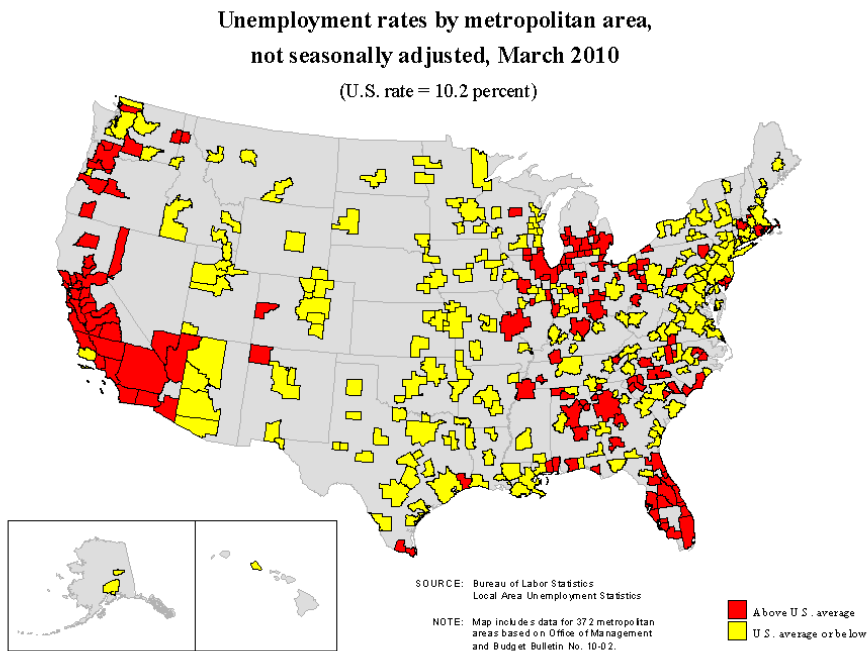
There are now new factors that have come into play that have affected employment in Laredo. With the recent overall decline in the economy throughout the nation, Laredo's citizens have been even further challenged to find employment and make ends meet. Many low income families that were already struggling to meet their financial obligations are now facing additional loss of employment. Another issue affecting employment is the lack of value added jobs. Hourly pay rates remain within minimum or just above minimum wage, and employees are not provided benefits.

Yet another factor contributing to the loss of employment has been reduced tourism to Mexico. For approximately the last two years, tourists have been issued travel advisories against travel into Mexico due to border violence. The violence has escalated in recent months and this has seriously affected many of the City's industries such as the service, and retail industry, not to mention bridge traffic revenues due to reduced crossing to and from Mexico. Travelers who might have come through Laredo to travel into Mexico are now seeking what they may consider to be safer destinations. Further compounding the problem is the fear of "spillover violence". Tourism to Laredo itself has also been affected.

**Poverty:**

In March 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 9.2 percent of Laredo's workforce was unemployed compared to the States' rate of 8.2 percent and the United States at 10.2 percent.

Even though Laredo's employment economic forecast is better than that of the U.S., poverty is not a new face in Laredo. The U.S. Census estimated that in 2008, 27 percent of people were in poverty. Thirty-six percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 24 percent of people 65 years old and over. Twenty-two (22%) percent of all families and 43 percent of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.



## **Managing the Process (91.200 (b))**

- 1. Lead Agency. Identify the lead agency or entity for overseeing the development of the plan and the major public and private agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the consolidated plan.**
- 2. Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.**
- 3. Describe the jurisdiction's consultations with housing, social service agencies, and other entities, including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/ AIDS and their families, and homeless persons.**

**\* Note: HOPWA grantees must consult broadly to develop a metropolitan-wide strategy and other jurisdictions must assist in the preparation of the HOPWA submission.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Managing the Process response:**

- 1. The City's Community Development Department acts as the lead agency responsible for administering the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs covered in the Consolidated Plan.**

Other public and private agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the Consolidated Plan include:



Asociación Pro Servicios Sociales, Inc. /Centro Aztlan  
 Azteca Economic Development and Preservation Corporation  
 Border Region MHMR Community Center  
 Bethany House, Inc.  
 Casa de Misericordia  
 Catholic Social Services of Laredo, Inc.  
 City of Laredo Health Department HIV Program  
 Children's Advocacy Center of Laredo - Webb County  
 Habitat for Humanity of Laredo, Inc.  
 Laredo Community College  
 Laredo Development Foundation  
 Laredo Homeless Coalition  
 Laredo Housing Authority  
 Laredo Independent School District  
 Laredo Municipal Housing Corporation  
 Laredo Small Business Development Center  
 Laredo Webb County Community Action Agency  
 Laredo-Webb Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.  
 LULAC Haven, Inc.  
 Metro Affordable Housing Corporation  
 Sacred Heart Children's Home  
 Serving Children and Adolescents in Need, Inc.  
 South Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
 St. Vincent de Paul Society  
 Texas A & M International University ( main campus)  
 Texas A & M International University Small Business Development Center  
 Texas Department of Health and Human Services  
 Texas Migrant Council  
 Calvary Center

**2.** Information for the Plan was obtained from Community Housing Organizations, non-profit organizations, housing developers, social service providers, private financial institutions, other City departments, and from citizens' input for the compilation of this plan through interviews, feedback, surveys, and through the scheduled public meetings. Additional information was retrieved through researching the U.S. Census Bureau, the Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Center at Texas A&M International University, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**3.** In order to enhance coordination between public and private housing, health, and social service agencies, the City has, and will continue to meet with agencies throughout the funding period. For instance, members of City staff meet on a monthly basis with the Laredo Homeless Coalition in order to discuss and resolve issues related to the homeless population. The City of Laredo has, and will continue to make referrals and receive referrals from the various agencies. Additionally, the City will provide a copy of the Consolidated Plan (upon request) for participating entities. Lastly, if the City cannot provide funding for a particular agency, it will direct entities towards other sources of funds, as they become available.

## **Citizen Participation (91.200 (b))**

**Provide a summary of the citizen participation process.**



- 1. Provide a summary of the citizens participation process.**
- 2. Provide a summary of citizen comments or views on the plan.**
- 3. Provide a summary of efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the consolidated plan, including outreach to minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities.**
- 4. Provide a written explanation of comments not accepted and the reasons why these comments were not accepted.**

**\* Please note that Citizen Comments and Responses may be included as additional files within the CPMP Tool.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Citizen Participation response:**

1. As required, the citizen participation process included a series of public notices, public meetings, public hearings, a community needs survey, a comment period, and citizen inquiries through phone calls, regular mail, and e-mails. All comments, questions, and concerns were welcomed and taken into consideration when projects were being considered for funding.

A majority of the citizen comments were received during the public meetings that were held from March 30 through April 17, 2010. The comments received at the public meetings, the public hearing, and during the 30-day comment period have been made part of the 2010 One Year Action Plan.

This year's public meetings were held at the following locations:

Laredo Public Library  
East Hachar Recreation Center  
Cigarroa Recreation Center  
Prada Elementary School  
Lilia Perez Senior Center  
Daiches Elementary School  
San Francisco Javier Church  
Laredo Housing Authority

In addition to the public meetings, staff took surveys regarding needs in the community at the City of Laredo's Health Department courtyard and during the public meetings. A total of 97 surveys were completed.

A public hearing was also held on April 5, 2010 in the City Council Chambers of City Hall located at 1110 Houston during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting beginning at 5:30 p.m. During the public hearing, the president of the board of directors at Bethany House stated that they were in the process of raising monies for their Center for Hope. Bethany House owns and operates both a food kitchen and an emergency shelter. They hope to expand the existing shelter and construct nine larger transitional housing units at the shelter. They stated that they had experienced a 45% increase in the number of applications for transitional housing.

A second public hearing was held during the 30-day comment period. On July 6, 2010 no comments were received.

## **2. CITIZEN COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS:**

Cigarroa Recreation Center  
Tuesday, March 30, 2010

Recommendations:

- No attendees at this meeting

East Hachar Recreation Center  
Wednesday, March 31, 2010

Recommendations:

- Repair of sidewalks along the 3300 block of Guadalupe St. as sidewalks are deteriorated.
- General repairs requested at the East Hachar Recreation Center.
- A parking lot is needed at East Hachar Recreation Center. Presently cars park on the streets and block traffic. (Note: Funding had been allocated to this activity, however the City was unable to acquire the property needed for the parking lot)
- The Villa Del Sol Park needs improvements and maintenance.
- Police patrolling is requested in the intersection of Guadalupe St. and Ejido Ave. Stop sign is always disregarded.
- Additional parks are needed in the area.
- Security lighting requested at 3200 Chihuahua. Illegal dumping in this area needs to be addressed.
- Speed bumps are needed on the street leading to East Hachar Recreation Center.
- Businesses are without parking along Larga Vista and Fiesta subdivisions.
- Restrooms are needed at Villa Del Sol Park.
- Splash parks requested at the Villa Del Sol neighborhood.
- Shade structure requested for the Villa Del Sol Park basketball court.
- Community facilities needed by Fiesta Subdivision along Hwy 359.

Prada Elementary School – Gymnasium  
Thursday, April 1, 2010

Recommendations:

- No attendees at this meeting.

Lilia Perez Senior Center  
Tuesday, April 6, 2010

Recommendations:

- Code Enforcement needed in the area around the 2000 block of Victoria St.
- Animal Control needed by Rio Vista St. and Markley.

- There are homeless people living under Laredo Community College bridge overpass.
- Train obstructs entrance/exit at Santa Maria Ave. and Scott St.
- Code Enforcement needed in the area of the 100 block of Grant and the 1400 block of Calle Del Norte.
- Owner of a property on Lyon Street has Lead-Based paint in her house and needs Housing Rehab assistance.
- Comment pertains to Laredo Housing Authority, not CDBG: Client needs assistance in painting her unit.
- Request that more than 100 people at one time be assisted under HOME's Tenant Base Rental Assistance.
- Sidewalks are needed along Calton Rd. and Marcella St.
- Community facilities needed at North Laredo.
- Transportation needed for disabled persons.
- Requested maintenance of water hydrants, some of them need to be repaired.
- More parks are needed in the area of the Senior Center, but need supervision.
- More activities were requested at the Senior Center and for hot meals to be cooked at the Center.
- Speed bumps are needed along the area, lighting, and more police supervision.
- The City needs more transitional housing for homeless residents.
- More parks and playgrounds are needed in West Laredo and downtown.

Laredo Public Library  
Wednesday, April 7, 2010

#### Recommendations:

- Street Paving needed along Wyoming St. and McPherson to Dakota.
- Sidewalks needed on Hillside from Missouri to McPherson St.
- Wyoming St. needs easement along creek and needs plants and trees.
- Downtown streets are in need of repairs and cleaning; many buildings are deteriorated.
- More publicity for City programs is needed.
- Encourage tourism to the downtown area.
- City needs to cooperate with residents to beautify the easements within the neighborhood – plant trees, fencing, etc.
- Curfew needs to be enforced at Andy Ramos Park.
- Playing soccer on grassy areas should not be allowed.
- Graffiti along Hillside Creek around Recreation Center.
- Speed bumps are needed along E. Eistetter starting at the 600 block and ending in Alma Pierce Elementary School.

City of Laredo Health Dept. – Courtyard  
Tuesday, April 13, 2010

#### Recommendations:

- Requested a water park

- Repair of water fountains at Zacate Creek Park construct restrooms.
- More facilities and assistance for handicap (deaf) citizens.
- Entertainment for children who are handicapped.
- More police patrolling around abandoned house by area school.
- Construction of sidewalks in South Laredo.
- More Public Libraries where students can access computers.
- Requested a park at South Laredo, Los Obispos Subdivision; children play on the streets.
- Need roads and drainage on Gustavus St., Stewart St. from Meadow to Stewart St. These two streets are overdue for repaving.
- Street lighting needed along Santa Maria Ave. to Coke St.
- Construct sidewalks and improve drainage structures between India St. and Mier St.
- Speed bumps needed along Mier St.
- More parks on K. Tarver by Taylor Ave.
- Street lighting needed along Bruni St.
- Construct sidewalks in Paseo Del Norte Subdivision in west Laredo.
- Graffiti removal in Paseo Del Norte under Lafayette Bridge overpass.
- Speed bumps needed by 2900 San Ignacio St.
- Recreation Center requested on Meadow St.

Daiches Elementary School – Gymnasium  
Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Recommendations:

- Sidewalks needed along 600-700 S. Meadow.
- More operation clean-ups in neighborhood.
- Homeless assistance needed.
- Speed bumps needed on 600 block of Meadow Ave. before Chacon St.

San Francisco Javier Church  
Thursday, April 15, 2010

Recommendations:

- Sidewalks are needed in the area of the 2400 block of Ventura.
- Code Enforcement needed in the area of the 2400 block of Ventura.
- Need more police patrolling.
- Wilhem St. used to have a park area-now is fenced and overgrown.
- A park is needed along Pedregal St.
- Neighborhood is in need of cleaning.
- Requested a baseball park, skate park, swings, and playground area.
- Shades and benches are needed at bus stops.
- Need a park by Ventura and Eagle Pass.
- Walking and bike trails are needed.
- Street paving needed at the 2400 block of Ventura.

- Other Community Facilities needed in District VIII.
- Requested demolition of substandard building in the area of the 2400 block of Ventura.
- Code Enforcement in the area of the 2400 block of Pedregal.
- Requested a splash park, baseball field, and a police substation.
- Sidewalks needed along Water St., Ventura St., Wilhem, and Headen.
- Park and playground needed by San Francisco Javier Church area.

Laredo Housing Authority – Community Room  
Saturday, April 17, 2010

#### Recommendations:

- Sidewalks needed along Lyon St. and Tilden.
- Traffic signal lights needed by Springfield Ave.
- Community Center needed at Colonia Russell Terrace.
- Demolition of substandard building needed by Plum and Cedar.
- Code Enforcement needed in Colonia Russell Terrace.
- Need Low-price summer programs for kids.
- Park and playground and speed bumps needed near Perez Elementary School.
- Drainage structures needed at Sierra Vista and Zapata Hwy.
- Requested water fountains in parks.
- Speed bumps needed along Circle Dr. and Frankfort Dr.
- Splash Park needed in District VII.
- Police substation and patrolling needed along downtown area and Santa Isabel.
- Comment pertains to Laredo Housing Authority, not CDBG: Suggested new buildings for Laredo Housing Authority to assist low-income citizens.
- Ramps are needed in sidewalks along LHA.
- Operation Clean-up needed in Colonia Russell Terrace 500 Richter Dr.
- School zone flashing traffic light needed in front of Sanchez-Ochoa Elementary.
- Sanchez/Ochoa Park needs major improvements.
- Suggested ADA ramps at Colonia Russell Terrace.

All comments listed were obtained from private citizens attending the various public meetings and the information provided above identifies the locations where these comments were voiced. All comments received were taken into consideration during the preparation of the Plan and the projects considered for funding for the 2010-2011 action year.

**3.** In an effort to broaden public participation in the development of this Plan and heighten community awareness, the City advertised through various means in English and Spanish including: public notices in the Laredo Morning Times (local newspaper with the greatest circulation); and televised information regarding times and dates of the meetings on the local Public Access Channel. Additional ways the City used to broaden public participation included handing out fliers in various neighborhoods, recreational centers, libraries, churches, at the City's Health Department, the Laredo Housing Authority, and to City employees. E-mails were also sent to all City Staff and to other agencies to encourage their participation in the planning process.

The list of public meetings (listed above), substantiates the City's determination and initiative to meet with citizens in various neighborhoods throughout the CDBG area. The City made a concerted effort to accommodate citizens in regard to accessibility to the public meetings in order to obtain their feedback. To accommodate employed individuals and to allow them time to attend to their families' needs after the meeting, the City held these meeting in the evening at 6:30. An additional meeting was held on a Saturday morning. Additionally, meetings were held at convenient locations such as recreational facilities, schools, and elderly centers located in residential neighborhoods, thereby providing access to the meetings to persons with limited means of transportation.

4. All comments were heard, read, and accepted, however, several comments received during the public meetings were in regard to concerns that could not be addressed through CDBG, ESG, or HOME funding, such as those regarding increased police patrol, repairs to streets. Other requests to meet a need are currently being addressed through other resources. All such comments were forwarded to the appropriate agencies, and City of Laredo departments.

### **Institutional Structure (91.215 (i))**

- 1. Explain the institutional structure through which the jurisdiction will carry out its consolidated plan, including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions.**
- 2. Assess the strengths and gaps in the delivery system.**
- 3. Assess the strengths and gaps in the delivery system for public housing, including a description of the organizational relationship between the jurisdiction and the public housing agency, including the appointing authority for the commissioners or board of housing agency, relationship regarding hiring, contracting and procurement; provision of services funded by the jurisdiction; review by the jurisdiction of proposed capital improvements as well as proposed development, demolition or disposition of public housing developments.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Institutional Structure response:**

1. In continuing to meet the needs of the city, the City will work closely with private and public organizations and agencies in identifying needs and resources. The City will work with all organizations doing their part to address the social, housing, economic, and educational needs of the community. The ability of the City and other organizations to promote affordable housing will be greatly impacted by its working relationship with local financial institutions and their support of non-housing initiatives. The City will work with the following agencies to address social, housing, economic, and educational needs within the community:

Asociacion Pro Servicios Sociales, Inc./Centro Aztlan  
Azteca Economic Development and Preservation Corp.  
Border Region MHMR  
Bethany House, Inc.  
Casa de Misericordia  
Catholic Social Services of Laredo, inc.

City of Laredo health Department HIV Program  
 Children's Advocacy Center of Laredo, Inc.  
 Laredo community College  
 Laredo Development Foundation  
 Laredo Family Economic Success Coalition  
 Laredo Homeless Coalition  
 Laredo Independent School District  
 Laredo Municipal Housing Corporation  
 Laredo Webb County Community Action Agency  
 Laredo Webb Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.  
 LULAC Haven, Inc.  
 METRO Affordable Housing Corporation  
 Sacred Heart Children's Home  
 Serving Children and Adolescents in Need, Inc.  
 South Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
 St. Vincent de Paul Society  
 Texas A & M International University  
 Texas A & M International University – Small Business Development Center  
 Texas Dept. of Health and Human Services  
 Texas Migrant Council  
 Calvary Center

The City continually works to maintain a strong delivery system between itself and private industries, non-profit organizations, and public institutions in order to prevent gaps in the delivery of programs and services to the community. A major factor that enables the City ensure that services are being provided to community residents is the open line of communication that it maintains with these organizations. Communication plays a vital role in that system. This is especially true when residents are in dire need of service and time is of the essence. Part of that process is making sure that residents are not sent from agency to agency in order to receive the appropriate service. City staff stays informed of programs and services that are available throughout the community so that it can properly inform residents of where they may obtain these services.

In addition, on October 22, 2007, Webb County entered into an inter-local agreement with the City of Laredo for the creation of a Non-Emergency 311 Call Center servicing Webb County and City of Laredo areas. The call center provides an easy to remember number for access to valuable city and county resources, information, and services.

The idea behind the adoption of 3-1-1 was to simplify the steps needed for citizens to gain information about County and City events, programs, or to request County/City services. This entailed two years of research and development from county and city staff.

Information that can be obtained through 3-1-1 includes the following:

- General Information for Webb County and City of Laredo
- County/City Phone Numbers
- Public Meeting Schedules
- County and City Services: Garbage Collection, Non-Emergency Sheriff & Police,
- Fire, Business Permits, Street Maintenance
- Countywide Events



When citizens want to submit a question or concern in regard to a particular City department, the 311 operators input this data into the TRACKS system. The department is given a specific length of time to respond to the concern and provide a response through the system.

The City also refers residents to 2-1-1 Texas, a program of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission that helps citizens connect with the services they need. This service is provided either by phone or internet and provides accurate, well-organized and easy-to-find information for state and local health and human services programs.

In order to prevent a gap in the delivery of services to the homeless, the City ensures that all agencies receiving funding from the City for homelessness prevention or for the operation of their shelters maintain client information in the HMIS system. This facilitates services to the client and prevents an overlap in effort by the participating agencies.

The biggest obstacle to the delivery of services has been, and continues to be the availability of resources. Historically, this has prevented community residents from obtaining much needed housing and other services. The need far exceeds available funding, and even more so since the economic downturn and the increased number of unemployed and of home foreclosures. In continuing to meet the needs of the city, the City will work closely with private and public organizations and agencies in identifying needs and resources. The City has initiated a system in which it forwards grant opportunities to the various City departments so that they may be reviewed and a determination made as to whether the City is eligible to apply for this funding. If not, then the information is forwarded to other public organizations, and agencies for their consideration. Assistance is provided, when possible, to other organizations with the submission of their funding applications. The City also consults with other public organizations to ensure that there is not a duplication of effort or any conflicts.

The City has developed and maintained a very strong, active and supportive relationship with the Laredo Housing Authority (LHA). The City's Mayor appoints the Board of Commissioners who approves all actions by the LHA. The Board meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act and are posted with the City Secretary.

One way in which the City supports the LHA is by maintaining a contract agreement with them for the purchase of gasoline from the City for LHA vehicles. This contract allows for the purchase of fuel at a reduced cost which provides a savings to the LHA. The City is also currently working with the LHA to weatherize several housing projects through a grant received by the City from 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds provided through the State. The City also assists the LHA with their environmental review processes.

The City remains committed to assisting LHA as much as possible and will continue to provide this aid when needed in order to improve services to residents, clients, landlords, and LHA staff. In the same manner, LHA continues to work with the City to address the housing needs of the low and moderate income residents of the City. LHA's Comprehensive Plan coincides with the City's goal to provide decent, safe, and affordable rental housing for individuals/families of low-moderate income that reside within the City.

The LHA does file a copy of its plan with the City which outlines its proposed capital improvements as well proposed development and/or demolition of any units as may be applicable

## **Monitoring (91.230)**

- 1. Describe the standards and procedures the jurisdiction will use to monitor its housing and community development projects and ensure long-term compliance with program requirements and comprehensive planning requirements.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Monitoring response:**

1. The City of Laredo will ensure that all local applications for program funding to the Department of Housing and Urban Development are in compliance with the Consolidated Plan submitted and approved for this jurisdiction, as applicable. Public agencies and non-profit organizations will be advised of the necessity to secure a letter of project support from the City before submitting an application for HUD funding. In addition, City staff will meet with representatives of the various organizations and public agencies which implement housing programs to ascertain program accomplishments, and continued community-housing needs.

The City of Laredo, as a recipient of the Community Development Block Grant, Home Investments Partnerships Program, Emergency Shelter Grant, and other HUD funds will ensure that all funded activities are carried out in accordance with program regulations. The City's Community Development program staff will closely monitor adherence. Program compliance will be further monitored on a regular basis (at least annually) by the City's Internal Auditor and/or by an independent auditing firm, as may be applicable. Sub-recipients will be monitored in the same manner.

In regard to monitoring sub-recipients of Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds, the City conducts either off-site or on-site monitoring at least once during the contract period. More frequent on-site visits may be necessary if there are known problems, such as previous monitoring findings, audit findings, or lack of progress in the expenditure of funds. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure compliance with ESG regulations and to ensure that files are complete. Areas for monitoring and oversight include, but are not limited to, ensuring that activities funded through ESG, benefit homeless persons, the sub-recipients are providing specific sources and amounts of program match, and that procurement procedures are in place. Monitoring also includes ensuring that homeless shelters are in compliance with building and habitability standards.

Effective monitoring of HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds helps determine whether or not housing and housing-related services are being delivered in accordance with HOME requirements. The City will regularly monitor its own activities and those of its partners (at least annually) to ensure compliance with HOME regulations and consistency with the City's Consolidated Plan. Areas monitored in the HOME Program include, but are not limited to, record keeping, participant and property eligibility, property standards, eligible costs, loan processing and servicing, resale/recapture options, and written agreements. Monitoring of HOME funds targeted for TBRA activities includes compliance with tenant occupancy and income requirements, unit and rent standards, and administrative performance. CHDO contracts are monitored for compliance with HOME program regulations.

In response to the demand for more internal/external accountability, the City has developed a Performance Measurement tool to properly evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's Administration, Code Enforcement Division, Housing Rehabilitation Division, Graffiti Removal Program, all of which are funded through CDBG funds, as well as its Emergency Shelter Grant Programs, and HOME Investment Partnership Programs. Greater attention is being given to outcome measures that can be directly related to goals. These measures are used to evaluate progress toward targeted goals and to help staff make policy, program, or operational changes to improve performance. The Performance Measurement System is reviewed and updated during the annual budget process.

## **Priority Needs Analysis and Strategies (91.215 (a))**

- 1. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.**
- 2. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Priority Needs Analysis and Strategies response:**

1. Each category of need was assigned a priority based on the goal, the resources available to accomplish that goal, and on the time needed to accomplishing the goal in a timely manner. Other factors taken into consideration were current need, and projected need, gaps in services, and gaps in resources.

One rationale for assigning a high priority to affordable housing is the quality of housing throughout the city. As stated previously, it had been determined that 24% of residential home owners were experiencing housing problems. Because so many of the City's homes have been identified to be in such substandard condition, the need to offer housing rehabilitation assistance opportunities to the low to moderate income residents of the community remains a high priority. The City proposes to continue to operate the Housing Rehabilitation program in order to improve the living condition of owner-occupants of residential units needing repair, thereby maintaining the unit as affordable. The program will continue to offer assistance through zero interest loans, forgivable loans, or as grants, as deemed appropriate and will modify its program as necessary in order to best meet the needs of its target population.

The provision of affordable rental housing has also been assigned a high priority. The City is offering tenant-based rental assistance to elderly residents through its HOME program in the City's downtown area. This is one indicator of the lack of decent and affordable rental units, not only in this area of the City, but throughout the City as a whole. As such, the City is proposing to continue to offer tenant-based rental assistance through its HOME program. Also through its HOME program, the City will continue to work with local CHDO's to increase the number of affordable homes which will be made available for rent to low to moderate income individuals/families.

Given that Laredo's property values continue to be high, and development costs are on the rise, most family's financial status doesn't allow for investment toward the purchase of a home. As a result, many families are living in overcrowded conditions. By providing assistance through the HOME program, the City creates an opportunity

to make housing more affordable for low-moderate first-time homebuyers by providing potential homebuyers with downpayment assistance loans.

In addition, the need to increase the number of decent affordable homes through the construction of new homes remains a high priority. The City proposes to address this need by providing assistance through its HOME CHDO funds for the development and construction of new homes for sale to low-income residents by working with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and Laredo Neighborhood Housing Services.

Another area of priority was the construction of transitional housing units for the homeless and the provision of services to those on the verge of becoming homeless. The City will address this need by providing assistance to homeless providers in the community.

Yet another rational for assigning priorities to projects is feedback from the public and other public, private, and non-profit organizations. During the planning process, agencies provided information in regard to their needs and goals. With the information provided, the City was able to complete various portions of the needs tables and determine what activities/projects were in need in the community to be considered future funding. The general public also provided feedback at the various public meetings conducted during the planning process (see Citizen Participation) and voiced how the City could assist them with any needs they had identified. Some of those needs included the removal of slum and blighting influences, quality of life issues such as the construction of parks and recreational facilities, infrastructure improvements, the need for public services, roads and drainage, economic development (job creation), and actions to address homelessness. As such, these activities are also considered as high priority and will be considered for funding as it becomes available.

**2. Obstacles to meeting underserved need are numerous and include factors such as unemployment, poverty, and again, lack of resources.**

As a border City, the majority of the workforce capacity is dependent on the Mexican economy. This dependency continues to affect the makeup of jobs in the City. Employment is usually based on hourly pay at minimum or just above minimum wage with few or no benefits. In past years, expanding trade, investment, and commerce with Mexico had resulted in the City's growth. However, the City of Laredo has been experiencing a decrease in commerce and investment, thus creating a decrease in the number of available jobs.

As far as its utilization of available resources, the City utilizes these resources to maximum capacity, allocating funds for activities/projects that it deems will establish and create decent, safe, and affordable housing, and improve the quality of life for the very low to moderate income individuals/families of the community. Resources have remained insufficient to undertake many of the activities that it has identified as high priority, which prevents the City from providing services and/or assistance in its many declining neighborhoods.

Actions that will take place to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs include submitting applications for competitive funding as may become available in support of housing and non-housing priorities. These funds would be in addition to allocations anticipated to be received from HUD. Additionally, the City will allocate

resources to needs based on its ability to sell bonds to fund Capital Improvement Projects.

### **Lead-based Paint (91.215 (g))**

- 1. Estimate the number of housing units that contain lead-based paint hazards, as defined in section 1004 of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, and are occupied by extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families.**
- 2. Outline actions proposed or being taken to evaluate and reduce lead-based paint hazards and describe how lead based paint hazards will be integrated into housing policies and programs, and how the plan for the reduction of lead-based hazards is related to the extent of lead poisoning and hazards.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Lead-based Paint response:**

1. According to the Census 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, there are a total of 64,490 housing units in Laredo. Of those, approximately 24,207, or 38% were built prior to 1978. Based on the homes tested for lead based paint since the implementation of the lead-based paint requirements for its Housing Rehabilitation program, the City has found that approximately 10 percent of the homes tested have been identified as containing lead paint. The City estimates that approximately 2,402 housing units may potentially contain lead paint. Staff also found that of those that were identified as containing lead paint, very small amounts were found in those units, and migration measures were minimal. This is attributed to the belief that many low-income home owners could not afford the more expensive paints which contained lead.

2. The City of Laredo has integrated Federal lead-based paint requirements into the local rehabilitation programs that are funded through HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development. Currently, lead-based paint testing is being conducted on all local dwelling units built prior to 1978 that may potentially be in need of rehabilitation or have been identified for purchase with Community Development program funds.

The evaluation process involves a visual inspection of all painted surfaces in the subject home by a state licensed and certified Lead-Based Paint Risk Assessor. The City currently has one Lead Risk Assessor with the Department of Community Development's Housing Rehab Division and two Lead Risk Assessors with the Health Department. The Department of Community Development owns its own x-ray fluorescence analyzer.

In order to reduce lead-based paint hazards, citizens are being educated regarding lead-based paint poisoning. The City informs residents, through its Housing Rehabilitation Program and also through the Health Department, of the sources of lead-based paint, the symptoms associated with lead poisoning, and precautions to take to prevent lead-based paint poisoning. Guidance is provided to homeowners regarding homeowner maintenance and treatment of lead-based paint. The Lead Risk Assessor evaluates the condition of the paint in the subject home/structure and forms an opinion as to the level of lead-based paint hazard using

guidelines established by HUD and the EPA. If the Lead Risk Assessor determines there is a lead-based risk hazard in the subject property, the Lead Risk Assessor, following established federal guidelines, determines what, if any, lead hazard control/abatement must be done. The Lead Risk Assessor's duties include conducting detailed plans, evaluating project activities, implementing workplace safety specifications, and coordinating the housing rehabilitation process. These are all integral parts of the lead-based risk assessment process to help identify and eliminate lead-based paint health hazards in homes participating in the City's Housing Rehabilitation Program and HOME programs.

The EPA has issued new rules for home improvement contractors and maintenance professionals that renovate or repair pre-1978 housing. Under the new rules, workers must follow lead-safe work practice standards to reduce potential exposure to occupants from dangerous levels of lead resulting from renovation and repair activities. As of April 2010, federal law requires contractors to be certified, and homeowners have also been required to sign a pre-renovation disclosure form. In addition, as per the new rules, beginning December 2008, the City has been providing owners of homes to be rehabilitated with a lead hazard information pamphlet before work is begun on their home. In conjunction with the Community Development Department, the Health Department also complies with the federal lead-based paint requirements. The City of Laredo Health Department's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) is continually improving the case management of patients ages 1-6 with elevated blood lead levels (EBLL). The communication reporting system enables staff to receive laboratory data indicating an EBLL and input it into a database where it is followed with case past history and planning for follow-up activities by two staff Lead Risk Assessors. The CLPPP program receives laboratory data from Department of State Health Services Region 11, DSHS Austin Lead Branch, hospitals, clinics, and outlying physician's offices. When an EBLL is sent to CLPPP staff, a prompt phone call or visit to the physician's office allows staff to gather more patient information and to review the physician's standing order for the EBLL.

Proper intervention and case management of clients who test 10ug/dl or more include appropriate follow-up care with their primary health care provider, nutritional health education by the Lead Health Educator, and in cases involving children with 15 ug/dl or above an environmental assessment is conducted immediately. Nutritional information, counseling, and proper hygiene on how to eliminate or control lead exposure in the environment is provided to all clients and their families. Proper awareness and prevention about lead is implemented by teaching families to avoid kitchen cookware and utensils including clay pottery that contain lead or are glazed with lead. The use of herbal teas is strongly not recommended for children as medical remedies due to the fact that they contain or may contain lead. TDH and CDC pamphlets on lead poisoning and other educational reading materials are also given to the client and their families in both English and Spanish and are explained to the primary care giver in detail by the Lead Health Educator. Furthermore, while case managing clients who have an EBLL or 15mg/dl, an environmental lead risk assessment is done to identify certain lead exposures in the child's everyday environment. Follow-up visits are made to all children with EBLL's in order to monitor and ensure that there is a continual reduction in the client's EBLL. Presently there are 5 cases of children with 10 ug/dl -14 ug/dl and 1 case with 15 ug/dl and over. The number of children tested in Laredo yearly is over 5,000.



Staff will continue to be trained on the use of the “STELLAR” software to enhance its reporting system. Everyday active surveillance allows providers, hospitals, and community health services to address the lead exposure and to reduce potential harmful effects towards children. Through prevention and intervention, the City of Laredo Health Department’s CLPPP Program is enhancing case management efforts and is working together with neighborhood associations, parent groups, and schools and implementing outreach programs to ensure that children live a healthy, disease-free life.

## HOUSING

### Housing Needs (91.205)

**\* Please also refer to the Housing Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook**

- 1. Describe the estimated housing needs projected for the next five year period for the following categories of persons: extremely low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families, renters and owners, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, including persons with HIV/ AIDS and their families, single persons, large families, public housing residents, victims of domestic violence, families on the public housing and section 8 tenant-based waiting list, and discuss specific housing problems, including: cost-burden, severe cost- burden, substandard housing, and overcrowding (especially large families).**
- 2. To the extent that any racial or ethnic group has a disproportionately greater need for any income category in comparison to the needs of that category as a whole, the jurisdiction must complete an assessment of that specific need. For this purpose, disproportionately greater need exists when the percentage of persons in a category of need who are members of a particular racial or ethnic group is at least ten percentage points higher than the percentage of persons in the category as a whole.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Housing Needs response:**

1. Over the next five years, the City will continue to address housing needs that may be funded utilizing CDBG and HOME funds as deemed necessary. The City will continue to work with the Laredo Housing Authority to assist families (small and large) and/or individuals with public housing and section 8 vouchers. Below is statistical information categorized by incomes for both renters and owners.

#### **Extremely Low-Income Households:**

Families qualifying under extremely low-income households are those who earn 0-30% HAMFI. Based on data released by HUD on May 14, 2010, Laredo’s median income is \$38,000. Any household receiving less than \$13,950 annually is considered extremely low-income. Based on 2008 Census data, approximately 12,532, or 19% of the City’s households fall under that category. The following are statistics based on the CHAS and the Housing Needs Table for elderly, small related, and large related families.

Elderly:



The CHAS table shows that the elderly renters have a 66.5% housing burden > 30%, but only 32% have a housing burden > 50%. The total number of households for elderly renters is 865. For elderly owners, there is a higher rate of housing problems with 65.5% having burden > 30% and 32.0% having a burden > 50%.

**Small Related:**

2000 CHAS data shows that a small related family renters group of 2-4 members has the highest number of housing problems with 79.3% of which 66.9% has a cost burden > 30% and 51.4% has a cost burden > 50%. Much like the elderly, small related owners also have an increase of cost burden; 74.3% of households have a burden > 30%, while 61.4% have a burden > 50%.

**Large Related:**

2000 CHAS data indicates that 75.3 % of large related family renters are paying > 30%, but < 50% of their income for rent and utilities. For large related family owners, 75.6% were paying > 30% and 60.1% were paying > 50% of their income towards those expenses.

The above mentioned residents are eligible to receive assistance through the Laredo Housing Authority's Section 8 Voucher program due to their incomes. According to the most recent Census data (2008), 27.8% of the people residing in the community live in poverty compared to 15.8 for the State and 13.2 for the nation. Based on information obtained from the Laredo Housing Authority, As of December, 2009 there are 969 families on the waiting list for assistance through the Laredo Housing Authority.

**Low-Income Households:**

Families qualifying under Low-Income Households are those who earn 31-50% HAMFI. Based on current 2010 data released by HUD, a family income at or below \$23,250.00 is considered low-income. Based on 2008 Census data, of the 64,490 households in the community, approximately 9,356 or 15% of households are considered low income. Below is a breakdown of how elderly, small and large related are classified under low income.

**Elderly:**

The CHAS table shows that the elderly renters of low-income have a 51.3% housing burden > 30% while 20.7% have a housing burden > 50%. The total number of households for elderly renters is 429. For elderly owners (856), there is a lower rate of housing problems with 43.2% having burden > 30% and 16.7% having a burden of > 50%.

**Small Related:**

2000 CHAS report shows that small related families have persistently higher percentages of cost burden. For low-income small related renter families, 75.2% have a cost burden > 30% and 17.8% have a cost burden > 50%. Owners have a lower cost burden of > 30% (65.55) than renters, but have a dramatic increase (40%) of cost burden > 50%.

**Large Related:**

For Large Related household renters (1,017), cost burdens were seemingly lower than owners (1,183). There were 47.4% with a cost burden > 30% for renters compared to 61.5% for owners. The cost burden for extremely low renters > 50% is

only at 4.9%, while owners continue to have more difficulty with a cost burden of 34.4%.

### **Low-Moderate Income:**

Households with incomes greater than or equal to 51% HAMFI, but less than 80% HAMFI are considered to be of low-moderate income. Based on current 2010 data released by HUD, a family income at or below \$37,200.00 is considered low-moderate income. As per 2008 US Census data, approx 8,000 household or 12% fall within that range and are classified as being of low-moderate income. Below is a statistical breakdown of elderly and small and large related households:

#### **Elderly:**

Elderly households whose incomes range between 51% and 80% incomes (1,294) have higher cost burden as owners than as do renters. As per CHAS statistics, elderly renters consist of 37.9 % having cost burden > 30% while 3.5% have a cost burden > 50%. Elderly owners show that 26.8% have a cost burden > 30% while 12.6% have a cost burden > 50%.

#### **Small Related:**

Much like the elderly, small related households who are owners have a higher cost burden than do renters. CHAS statistics show as follows: 23.9% of renter households have a cost burden > 30% while 1.6% of renter households have a cost burden > 50%. For owners, 42.3% of households have a cost burden > 30% and 15.1% have a cost burden > 50%.

#### **Large Related:**

Of the 3,265 related households of low-moderate income, 1,112 are renters and 2,153 are owners. Renters under this particular category have less cost burden than do owners. CHAS shows that 10.5% of large related renter households have a cost burden > 30% while 1.3% of large related rents households have a cost burden > 50%. A higher percentage, 34.4% of owners of large related low-moderate income have a cost burden > 30% and 7.3% have a cost burden > 50%.

The City strives to continually assess needs in the community and as new 2010 CHAS Census data becomes available, the City will re-assess cost burden within the specified categories and plan accordingly. Based on the available data, there is a continued need to assist families within these income categories. They remain at higher risk of becoming homeless which would be detrimental to their health and safety. Families living in poverty may ultimately lead to blight and deteriorating neighborhoods as they cannot afford to make needed repairs or for the general upkeep of their homes and in some instances, families lose their homes to foreclosure and the homes are abandoned. As a means of addressing this need, the City will continue to assist families through its Housing Rehabilitation program, the Downpayment Assistance program for the resale of these foreclosed homes, and the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance program. In addition, the City will continue to work with the Laredo Housing Authority to assist households who may qualify for Public Housing and/or Section 8. Furthermore, it will make referrals for assistance through the Laredo Municipal Housing Corporation and through Section 202.

The City recognizes the difficulty first-time homebuyers face saving money for the downpayment towards the purchase of a home. This is especially true given the current cost of housing and financing. The City is rated as having one of the lowest

per capita incomes in the State, and in the Nation. In 2008, Laredo had a per capita personal income of \$22,831. Laredo ranked 364th in the United States. In response to this, the City's HOME program will continue to build partnerships with local financial institutions and mortgage companies to provide downpayment assistance to qualifying households earning equal to or less than 80% of HAMFI.

Another form of providing affordable housing to residents with high cost burden is through the City's Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program. Rental assistance is provided to 100 qualifying elderly residents (60 or older) of the City who reside in the downtown area of the City. Residents must pay 30% of their adjusted monthly income for their rent. The remainder of the rent is paid through the TBRA program.

2. To the extent that any racial or ethnic group has a disproportionately greater need for any income category in comparison to the needs of that category as a whole is non-applicable. Because the City of Laredo has a predominantly large Hispanic population, the need to assist the Hispanic population of the City remains a priority in all categories.

As per the data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, Laredo's population is 94.7 % Hispanic, and as stated previously in this Plan, Laredo has one of the lowest per capita incomes in the Nation. Laredo also has 22.2% of all its families living in poverty. (2008 AMC) With few exceptions, the entire community can be considered to be in great need, and as such, the City will continue to rate housing need as a high priority for its Hispanic population. The City intends to accomplish this through its various programs, and through those provided by other organizations within the community.

### **Priority Housing Needs (91.215 (b))**

1. **Identify the priority housing needs and activities in accordance with the categories specified in the Housing Needs Table (formerly Table 2A). These categories correspond with special tabulations of U.S. census data provided by HUD for the preparation of the Consolidated Plan.**
2. **Provide an analysis of how the characteristics of the housing market and the severity of housing problems and needs of each category of residents provided the basis for determining the relative priority of each priority housing need category.**

**Note:** Family and income types may be grouped in the case of closely related categories of residents where the analysis would apply to more than one family or income type.

3. **Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.**
4. **Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Priority Housing Needs response:**

1. Based on a needs assessment prepared by the City it is estimated that:

- approximately 1219 households will be in need of housing rehabilitation assistance

- approximately 600 households will be in need of rental housing subsidies
- approximately 550 households will be in need of direct homeownership assistance
- approximately 14 transitional housing units need to be constructed
- approximately 6 supportive housing units need to be constructed to meet the needs of the chronically homeless
- there is also a need to increase the number of homeless shelters to provide an additional 33 shelter beds for the homeless in our community
- approximately 1232 sidewalks will need to be constructed to provide safe access for residents and to provide ADA accessibility
- approximately 66 parks/ recreational facilities need to be constructed to improve the livability of the community
- approximately 23 drainage improvements are in need of construction to prevent flooding
- approximately 13 youth and an additional 13 neighborhood facilities need to be constructed to keep our children safe and to provide educational opportunities
- a minimum of 17 Fire Stations are in need of construction with fire equipment to protect the safety of our citizens
- approximately 10 health facilities need to be constructed to adequately meet the health needs of our community residents
- approximately 7 Senior Centers need to be constructed to provide for health and nutritional needs of our seniors
- approximately 8 parking facilities need to be constructed
- the provision of public services for the prevention of slum and blighting influences will need to continue
- acquisition of property for future parkland development is will be needed

The City proposed to meet these needs by continuing to move forward with already successful programs in which federal, state, and local funds will be utilized.

**2.** The basis for listing affordable housing as a high priority is due to the limited number of affordable homes available for sale. Housing prices have increased substantially, making homeownership for lower income residents an unattainable dream. The high costs of land and its development have driven housing prices up. Also, the poor condition of the City's housing stock and the availability of decent affordable housing are other major determining factors for identifying affordable housing as a priority for funding in upcoming years. As stated earlier in the Plan, the last Housing Survey conducted in 2005 indicated that 24% of the City's owners of housing units were experiencing housing problems. Given the number of homes that were found to be in substandard condition, the need to continue to offer housing rehabilitation opportunities to low and moderate income individuals and/or families as zero interest loans, forgivable loans, and as grants continues to be of high importance. While the City has addressed some of the homes through its programs, there remain a large number of homes that are still in need of assistance. As Laredo's homes become yet older, and its low-income owners remain unable to invest needed monies for their repair, the City's housing stock continues to deteriorate.

In addition, the City recognizes that many lower income first-time homebuyers are unable to save the monies needed to provide the downpayment for the purchase on a home. This is especially true now that stricter guidelines have been established by lending institutions and mortgage companies as a result of the recent fall of the housing market. As a result, the City, through its HOME program, proposes to

continue to offer downpayment assistance to low-moderate income first-time homebuyers, and will continue to require that they attend housing counseling to insure that they are well prepared for their homeownership experience. The assistance will be provided to qualifying individuals/families earning equal to or less than 80% of Household Adjusted Median Family Income (HAMFI). Furthermore, the City will continue to work in partnership with local financial institutions and mortgage companies to facilitate this assistance.

**3.** As stated, the basis for assigning priority to the various programs was based on the need as determined by the needs assessment table.

**4.** Obstacles to meeting underserved need include factors such as resources, zoning, limited and stricter financing requirements, and land prices.

Resources, or the lack there of, have always been, and continue to be a major contributing factor to the City's inability to meet the underserved need. Funds do not meet demand. While the City has always maximized the use of available funds, costs continue to rise while funding dwindles, forcing the City to leave many of those in need without adequate assistance.

Other obstacles are the City's zoning restrictions. While these are in place for the betterment of the community, in some instances, for low-income first-time homebuyers, zoning restrictions such as property size, housing unit size, and association fees may make certain homes unaffordable in some areas of the City for this population.

Due to the recent upheaval in the housing market and the increased number of foreclosures, mortgage companies and other financial institutions are now imposing stricter financing requirements or are limiting assistance, especially to lower income households.

Still another obstacle is the continuing rise in land prices. Because prospective homebuyers are locked out of purchasing a home due to increased property (land) prices, which further increases the cost to purchase a home, they have no other recourse but to rent.

## **Housing Market Analysis (91.210)**

**\* Please also refer to the Housing Market Analysis Table in the Needs.xls workbook**

- 1. Based on information available to the jurisdiction, describe the significant characteristics of the housing market in terms of supply, demand, condition, and the cost of housing; the housing stock available to serve persons with disabilities; and to serve persons with HIV/ AIDS and their families. Data on the housing market should include, to the extent information is available, an estimate of the number of vacant or abandoned buildings and whether units in these buildings are suitable for rehabilitation.**
- 2. Describe the number and targeting (income level and type of household served) of units currently assisted by local, state, or federally funded programs, and an assessment of whether any such units are expected to**

**be lost from the assisted housing inventory for any reason, (i.e. expiration of Section 8 contracts).**

- 3. Indicate how the characteristics of the housing market will influence the use of funds made available for rental assistance, production of new units, rehabilitation of old units, or acquisition of existing units. Please note, the goal of affordable housing is not met by beds in nursing homes.**

**Year Strategic Plan Housing Market Analysis responses:**

1. Based on information available to the City, the characteristics of the housing market in terms of supply, demand, condition, and the cost of housing; the housing stock available to serve persons with disabilities; and to serve persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, housing continues to be in short supply. Data to estimate the number of vacant or abandoned buildings and to determine whether units in these buildings are suitable for rehabilitation was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau and through a survey conducted by the City. A synopsis of the housing market was prepared in terms of inventory in general, renter occupied housing, and owner occupied housing.

As per the 2008 U.S. Census American Community Survey, there were a total of 70,710 housing units in the City. Of those, 42,280 (64.9%) were owner occupied, and 22,831 (35.1%) were occupied by renters. Approximately 75% of the housing units in the City are more than 20 years old. There are 5,999 vacant units. The City's Code Enforcement Inspectors, along with Building Code Inspectors performed a windshield inspection of the condition of vacant housing units throughout the City. It is estimated that of the total number of vacant units identified, approximately 60% could possibly be rehabilitated and the remaining 40% would be considered beyond repair and in need of demolition.

The City further believes that there is an insufficient number of decent, affordable rental housing units throughout the City, as suggested by the large number of households on various waiting lists for rental housing throughout the City. Currently, there are 969 families on the waiting list for public housing and for Section 8 tenant-based assistance. (For more details on Public Housing, please refer to the Public Housing Section of this plan). In addition, there are 236 households on the waiting list at Laredo Municipal Housing. Furthermore, there are a total of 30 on the waiting lists at the Tanis Valdez, Father Ed Kircher and Villa San Luis, Section 202 housing projects, which provide housing to elderly and handicapped individuals. At Lulac Haven, which provides subsidized housing for elderly and handicapped, there are 12. There are also 40 households on the waiting list for a project-based Section 8 housing apartment complex operated by the Azteca Affordable Housing Corporation. Metro Affordable Housing Corporation has 30 households on its waiting list. The City of Laredo also has 117 on its waiting list for assistance through its tenant-based rental assistance program. Overall, there are a total of 1,482 low-income households on waiting lists for rental housing.

In addition to rental housing, there is a list of households waiting to purchase a home through Habitat for Humanity. This year alone over 400 households applied to Habitat for assistance to purchase an affordable home. Of those, Habitat maintains a list of 25-40 households that are approved for assistance and are waiting for homes to be constructed as funds become available.



2. The City's target market for assisted housing are those households whose incomes range from 0-80% of AMFI; the target income for first-time homebuyers is between 50-80% of AMFI. For those elderly assisted with rental assistance, target income is between 30-50%, while public housing assists families earning between 0-80% of AMFI. The target income for housing with Habitat is 25-60% AMFI. As per the U.S Census, the rounded average household size per housing unit is 4, which expresses a plausible factor of overcrowding in efficiency units and 1 and 2 bedroom units. Currently, no housing units are expected to be lost for any reason, however, that may change as funding continues to be cut. Currently there are 1797 assisted housing units in the community: none are expected to be lost.

3. The current state of the housing characteristics has influenced the City's decision to provide rental assistance for the elderly, who are at higher risk of becoming homeless. Low-income elderly who are interested in living in the downtown area may apply for HOME program tenant-based rental assistance which helps with portions of their rent. Federal, State, and local funds will be also be allocated for programs such as housing rehabilitation, and downpayment assistance. Owner-occupants of substandard homes may apply for housing rehabilitation loans or grants. Through this assistance, the housing unit is brought to City Building Code or removes an immediate danger to the health and safety of the residents. Qualifying low-income first-time homebuyers may also apply for down payment assistance which is provided through the City's HOME program in order to make the home more affordable.

### **Specific Housing Objectives (91.215 (b))**

- 1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve over a specified time period.**
- 2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the strategic plan.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Specific Housing Objectives response:**

1. The City plans to increase the availability of housing as supported through private, state, and federal funding during the next five years. The Housing priorities for the City of Laredo continue to be the provision of rental assistance, rehabilitation of existing housing stock, new construction of owner occupied and rental housing units, homebuyer assistance, and assistance to persons who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, and who have special needs.

Very low and low income renters continue to experience a high cost burden. The provision of rental assistance continues to be a high priority. Within the next five years, it is estimated that 500 elderly persons will be provided tenant based rental assistance through the City's Home Program; 1,362 will be provided Section 8 voucher assistance through the Laredo Housing Authority; and approximately 1000 households through existing local Section 202 Projects

Given that at least 24% of the homes in Laredo have been found to be in substandard condition, the need to offer rehabilitation opportunities to low and moderate income homeowners is a high priority. It is proposed that 225 owner occupied housing units will be rehabilitated within the next 5 years.



It is proposed that in partnership with local Community Housing Development Organizations and other non profit housing development organizations, constructed will be 45 single family housing units for homeownership and approximately 170 multifamily rental units will be constructed within the next 5 years.

The City recognizes the difficulty first-time homebuyers face saving money for the down payment on the purchase of a home. In response to this, the City's HOME program will continue to build partnerships with local financial institutions and mortgage companies to provide down payment assistance to qualifying individuals or families earning equal to or less than 80% of Household Adjusted Median Family Income (HAMFI). It is proposed that 205 low and moderate income households will be assisted with down payment assistance within the next 5 years.

It is further proposed that approximately 4000 persons / 600 families who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless and/or have a special need will be assisted within the next years through collaborative community efforts and as assisted with federal funds.

**2.** The City will work with Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources to address needs for the period covered by this Plan. For the upcoming year, the City anticipates receiving a total of \$1,381,796 in funds for the HOME Program. HOME funds will be allocated for the following activities that will be undertaken in the planning period: Down Payment Assistance (DPA) \$516,347; and Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) \$340,000 Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) \$207,270. Additionally, HOME funds will be used for Administrative purposes (\$138,179) and Program Income totaling approximately \$20,000 is expected to be utilized for Down Payment Assistance. The City has identified providing housing and housing assistance as a high priority and anticipates continuing to fund these activities as funds become available through 2015.

The following narratives describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Plan.

## **RENTAL ASSISTANCE**

### **The City of Laredo:**

The City, through its HOME Program, is providing Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) to low-income elderly individuals who choose to reside in the downtown area. The City proposes to allocate \$340,000 for the TBRA program, which is a rental subsidy that allows eligible tenants to receive assistance in market-rate rental units, provided the units meet basic program requirements. TBRA is designed to assist the elderly citizens of the City with their rental payments; qualifying residents are required to pay 30% of their gross adjusted income towards rent. The City currently assists 100 residents at any given time with the remainder of the rent balance. Tenant-based Rental Assistance pays the difference between the renter's share and the rent standard. As of the end of May, 2010 there were approximately 117 elderly citizens on the waiting list to participate in the TBRA program.

Under the City's TBRA Program, persons who are elderly are considered to be 60 years of age or older. Prospective elderly residents must not exceed the 60% of AMFI. Participants will go through an annual recertification to ensure qualification of

their income status (not to exceed 60% HAMFI). The City anticipates providing TBRA assistance during the next five years contingent on the availability of funds.

**Laredo Housing Authority (LHA):**

LHA will continue to assist families and individuals of very-low income to secure safe, decent, and sanitary housing. During the next fiscal year, the LHA anticipates providing assistance through the Section 8 Voucher Program, Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Program, and Azteca Rental Housing operated by Riverfront Housing L.P. Assisted families are responsible for making rent co-payments, as applicable, and as per the requirements of HUD, depending on each assisted family's anticipated income. The LHA will continue to work with the private sector in identifying available and suitable rental properties. For 2010, annual contributions for Section 8 Assistance totaled \$7,071,814. As stated previously, LHA will continue to provide assistance as funds become available; currently provides 1,362 Section 8 vouchers to households of very low, low, and low and moderate income.

**LULAC Haven Inc.:**

LULAC Council 624 operates a 48-unit housing project located in census tract 0017.03 for the elderly and handicapped. Approximately 48 elderly households will benefit from their services this year. LULAC receives \$320,328 or 70% annually in rent subsidies from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the remaining 30% comes from rental income. Lulac Haven will continue to provide rent subsidies as funds become available during the next five years.

**St. Vincent De Paul Society:**

St. Vincent will continue to administer the Tanis Valdez Village, Father Ed Kircher, and Villa San Luis, Section 202 housing projects, to provide housing to elderly and handicapped individuals. A total of 212 units are made available through these 3 housing projects which are located in Census Tracts 12, 15, and 17.03. St. Vincent's budget for FY2010-11 is derived from HUD Section 8 housing assistance payments of \$820,000 with which they hope to assist over 230 individuals. St. Vincent anticipates continuing to administer these housing projects during the upcoming years.

**REHABILITATION**

**The City of Laredo:**

The City's Department of Community Development will continue to administer its Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Program funded through the Community Development Block Grant Program and Revolving Loan funds. Through this program, owner-occupants consisting of small and large families whose incomes range from very-low to low-moderate will be assisted in making necessary repairs to their dwellings. In 2008, the City amended its Housing Rehabilitation Policy and Procedures Manual. The new manual modified its current programs by: 1) increasing the amount of assistance made available to each household under the housing rehabilitation loan program due to increased material and labor costs, 2) eliminating the Fire Rehab Loan program, and replacing it with the Reconstruction Loan Program, and 3) eliminating the sewer connection grant, emergency repair grant, and paint grant, and combined them to form a Livability Grant which addresses all the home deficiencies, as well as ADA issues. This was done to better serve the low-income residents of our community, and better address rehabilitation needs that could not be addressed through the previous programs. Under the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program (HRL), qualifying low-moderate owner-occupants will be provided with 0% interest loans at a maximum of \$35,000 in order for their homes

to be rehabilitated and brought up to housing standard condition. Of the total loan amount, 57% will be paid back in 120 monthly installments over a 10-year period. The remaining 43% will be provided in the form of a forgivable loan which will be forgiven at 1/120th for each month that the owner continues to reside in the assisted unit. Elderly and disabled households of very-low income (60% or less of HAMFI) are eligible to receive a 100% forgivable loan for the life of the loan, as long as the owner continues to reside in the assisted unit. Under the new Reconstruction Loan Program (RL), qualifying owner-occupants will be provided interest-free loans whose amounts will be determined on a case by case basis. Unlike the HRL, which allows for rehabilitation only, the new RL will allow for the demolition and reconstruction of an existing unit that has been severely damaged by fire or which is dilapidated beyond repair. As with the HRL, of the total loan amount, 57% will be paid back in monthly installments, however, homeowners will be allowed to repay the loan over a 10-15 year period. The amount of the payment will be determined by the loan term. The remaining 43% will be provided in the form of a forgivable loan which will be forgiven for each month, for the life of the loan that the owner continues to reside in the assisted unit. Elderly and disabled households of very-low income (60% or less of HAMFI) are eligible to receive a 100% forgivable loan, for the life of the loan, as long as the owner continues to reside in the assisted unit. Under the new Livability Grant Program (LG), grants of up to \$8,000 will be provided to address life-threatening hazards or hardships such as roofing, electrical, and plumbing repairs. Modifications will also be made to homes to address handicapped accessibility issues.

In June of 2009, the City of Laredo made an application to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for Texas Weatherization Assistance Program funds made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 by the U.S. Department of Energy. The City received \$3,271,636 in program funds and will be required to assist a minimum of 381 households. The City received an award for the first half of the funds and will be awarded the remaining funds based on its performance.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is designed to increase the energy efficiency of dwellings owned or occupied by low-income persons to reduce their total residential expenditure and improve their health and safety. Targeted to be assisted are low income persons who are particularly vulnerable such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, families with young children, high residential energy uses, and households with high energy burden. Typical weatherization work includes the installation of attic and wall insulation, caulking, weather stripping, repair or replacement of inefficient appliances, doors, windows, and minor energy-related repairs. The type of weatherization that a household may receive is contingent upon a household's income eligibility and a comprehensive assessment of the household's energy use. Assisted households must earn no more than 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The maximum amount of assistance per housing unit cannot exceed \$6,500. The City anticipates completing its goal of weatherizing 381 units by August of 2011.

**Laredo-Webb County Community Action Agency (CAA):**

It is the mission of the CAA to operate programs and/or activities which eliminate and/or ameliorate causes and conditions of poverty. It also has as its mission, the eradication of barriers to equal opportunities in housing, education, health, transportation, and employment. CAA's Weatherization Program allows for minor repairs to be done to homes determined eligible under their program guidelines. The

Weatherization program also allows for the replacement of energy deficient, or below health and safety standard appliances. It is anticipated that 105 units will be assisted under this program. CAA will continue to seek funding for this program as they become available.

**Laredo Municipal Housing Corporation (LMHC):**

LMHC owns and operates 146 units at the Jose A. Flores Apartments consisting of 73 duplexes and owns and operates 64 apartment units at the Tomas A. Flores Apartments. LMHC proposes to continue undertaking capital improvements to include re-roofing, replacement of doors and windows, and other improvements as may be identified. LMHC operates as an enterprise fund and as such revenues collected provide for the operation and maintenance of all units.

The Airport Noise Compatibility Program involves allowing owner-occupants the opportunity to move out of the Noise Abatement Project area by selling their homes to the City. As homes are acquired, these properties are placed on the market for lease. Soundproofing and other repairs are made to the homes. To date there are a total of 254 properties that are managed and maintained by LMHC. This number consists of 118 single family residential units, 91 apartments, and 45 vacant lots. As additional units are purchased through the Noise Program, they will be soundproofed and offered for lease through LMHC. Airport Noise Compatibility Grant Program funds made available through the Federal Aviation Administration are utilized to undertake the improvements.

**Laredo Housing Authority (LHA):**

During the next fiscal year, the LHA will, through funding from different capital grants, continue to increase the availability of safe, decent, and sanitary housing in its communities; ensure equal opportunity in housing; promote self-sufficiency and asset development of families and individuals; improve the quality of life and economic viability; and provide high-quality client services. In addition, LHA will continue to improve the physical condition of its 994 units in the various housing developments, develop and collaborate with community partners, and upgrade management and its operations. The LHA plans to improve the physical condition of their housing through renovation or modernization of their units including windows, doors, electrical upgrades, sewer lines, lavatories, parking lots, and other needed items utilizing a total of \$1,659,424 from the Public Housing Capital Fund. LHA anticipates that there will be no reduction in the number of units.

LHA is proposing to apply for additional rental vouchers, and leverage private or other public funds. LHA is planning on improving the quality of assisted housing by improving public housing management, increasing customer satisfaction, renovating public housing units, and concentrating on efforts to improve program compliance, quality control, staff training, and modern technology. LHA wants to increase housing choices by providing voucher mobility counseling, conducting outreach efforts to potential voucher landlords, increasing voucher payment standards, and implementing public housing or other programs.

LHA will also monitor administrative costs for programs, provide mandatory resident training, and maximize funding for overall operations. LHA will also create a provision for maintenance, where maintenance repairs will be done by using Operations and/or Capital Funds to ensure compliance by residents to maintain their own homes and property.

## **NEW CONSTRUCTION**

### **Homeownership**

#### **Habitat for Humanity, Inc. (Habitat):**

Habitat for Humanity, Inc. is a locally recognized Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). Habitat for Humanity volunteers will continue constructing new homes and make them available for homeownership. Habitat's primary mission is to eliminate substandard/overcrowded housing by building simple, decent and affordable homes for qualified applicants who are at 25% to 60% of area median income. The families are given 0% interest mortgages for up to 30 years. Families are also mentored by the Family Support Committee, which provides furniture and household items to assist homeowners. Additional services include providing budget and credit counseling, training in construction, homeownership classes, home maintenance workshops, parenting classes and other training topics offered by volunteers. New partnerships with Webb County Self Help Center will allow families who live in the new Tierra Prometida development an opportunity for enrichment classes including computer literacy, English language courses and G.E.D. classes in the near future.

Services are funded through a variety of sources, both public and private, and partnerships with other area nonprofit service organizations. Some of those entities include the City's HOME set-aside funds, HUD RHED Hwy 359 land development grant, Collegiate Challenge fees charged per student to participate, private builders, Federal Home loan Bank, ConocoPhillips, and Webb County 3rd Party Funding and Miscellaneous donors.

Habitat's partners contribute a minimum of \$45,000 per home plus volunteer hours towards the construction of a home. Other contributions include in-kind engineering work, road construction work, and donations of materials and labor.

Habitat for Humanity of Laredo, Inc. plans to construct a minimum of 16 new homes and renovate 3 homes in City of Laredo fiscal year 2010 to 2011. Potential homebuyers of these homes will be issued a mortgage at 0% interest with a mortgage payment, including principal, taxes, and insurance, that does not exceed 30% of the homebuyer's monthly income. Habitat submitted a proposal for 2010 CHDO funds from the City of Laredo for the construction of 9 of the homes at the Tierra Prometida project on Hwy 359 and anticipates receiving \$207,270 from the City. Habitat also anticipates receiving the following in 2010-2011 and during the next five years.

#### **Rental Construction**

**Azteca Economic Development and Preservation Corporation (AEDPC):**

In accordance with the City's mandate, the HOME Program reserved 15% of its FY2009-2010 HOME CHDO Set-Aside Entitlement Grant totaling \$ 208,438 for investment in housing to be developed, sponsored/owned by a local CHDO. The City awarded the 2009 CHDO set-aside totaling \$208,438 to the Azteca Economic Development & Preservation Corporation. These funds will be used to acquire a lot and construct 3 apartments, 2 (one) bedroom units and one (two) bedroom unit which will be built and owned by Azteca Economic Development & Preservation Corporation. The beneficiaries of these three apartments would be elderly residents living in substandard or overcrowding housing in Laredo whose incomes are at or below 60% AMFI and the units would be available to Laredo residents who meet the

HOME guidelines. Azteca is in the process of obtaining the lot for the construction of the units.

**The Laredo Webb Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS):**

NHS continues to operate 10 duplex rental units located at the 2500 Block of Boston St., which were previously assisted with HOME CHDO funds. The 20 units (4 of which were HOME assisted) are comprised of 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with air conditioning, heating, washer and dryer hookups. These units are made available to individuals who are under the 80% AMFI. Presently, these units house 19 families comprising of 39 adults and 74 children.

NHS is in the process of formulating a strategic plan for the next five years. They would like to increase the rental unit division to 100 units within the next 24 months and begin a financial literacy program that will help the Laredo community become more fiscally responsible. The proposes to work in partnership with NHS to complete the development of the Cardinal Point Project, previously assisted with HOME CHDO funds, to create new rental housing opportunities for persons of low income.

NHS anticipates receiving the following during the next fiscal year.

FISCAL YEAR	LOCAL FUNDING	FEDERAL FUNDING (Other than HUD Entitlement)	OTHER FUNDING	TOTAL FUNDING
2010-2011	\$30,000	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$630,000

**METRO Affordable Housing:**

Metro currently manages and will continue to manage 56 units at Garden Apartments and 160 units at Clark Crossing Apartments.

**Low-income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC):**

The LIHTC program is an indirect federal subsidy use to finance the construction and rehabilitation of low income affordable rental housing. This serves as an incentive for private developers and investors to provide more low income housing. Without this incentive, affordable rental housing projects would not generate sufficient profit to warrant the investment. Any projects financed through the LIHTC program must meet eligibility requirements for at least 30 years after the project completion. The City of Laredo will support efforts to construct/renovate affordable rental housing as may be made possible through the provision of LIHTC.

In January of 2010 the NRP Group, LLC submitted a pre-application for \$1,714,465 in LIHTC for the construction of La Terraza at Lomas de Sur, a 128 unit multi-family rental housing development to house low-income residents. The development will include a community center and business center with computer availability. The residents would be income qualified at 30%, 50% and 60% of area median income. The LIHTC project will be located on the East side of Ejido Blvd. (approx 2000 ft. south of the intersection of Ejido Blvd. and Wormser Rd.) The development would include security gates at entrances and exits and be constructed using green development standards. The NRP Group anticipates receiving notification of the LIHTC by mid-year of 2010, and proposes to complete construction within 18 months. The City proposes to partner with NRP Group by providing HOME Funds of \$1.2 million in support of this project.



It will be the responsibility of the owner to keep the units rent restricted and available only to low income tenants. Then, at the end of the period, the properties will remain under the control of the owner.

In recent years, due to the restrictions to the Qualified Census Tracts (QCT), there had been few applicants for the LIHTC program in the City of Laredo. However, now due to recent changes to the QCT, it is anticipated that more private developers or investors will apply for the LIHTC program.

## **HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE**

### **The City of Laredo:**

The City will continue to assist qualifying participants with down payment assistance through the HOME Program and anticipated HOME Program Income to facilitate homeownership for first-time, low-income, homebuyers. All loans will be provided at 0% interest and paid back after the first lien is paid. It is anticipated that this program will generate approximately \$6.8 million in private sector financing.

The City's HOME Program provides down payment assistance of up to \$9,000 to households at 80% HAMFI income, with up to \$12,000 to households at 70% HAMFI and up to \$15,000 to households at 60% HAMFI. The amount of assistance is based on the amount needed to make the home affordable to the prospective homebuyer. The City coordinates closely with the mortgage company and the prospective homebuyer to facilitate this assistance. It is the intent of this program to assist low-income, first-time homebuyers with down payment assistance for the purchase of a new or existing home. Through the down payment program, the City proposes to expend over \$2 million to assist approximately 205 low-income, first-time homebuyers. The City proposes to continue offering this program as funds become available and as needs continue.

The City will implement various outreach efforts including the distribution of fliers detailing program guidelines to the residents and tenants of public housing to ensure that assistance is provided to such residents, tenants, and families. In addition, the City will work with private lending institutions, advising them of the availability of these funds. Funds will be used to target low-income families who are residents or tenants of manufactured housing. In order to ensure the suitability of the families receiving DPA assistance, the City will require that homeowner(s) take homebuyer counseling courses and provide the City with a certificate of completion.

### **Laredo-Webb Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. (NHS)**

The NHS is a charter member of Neighbor Works America, a national organization created by Congress to provide financial support, technical assistance, and training for community-based non-profit housing agencies. The NHS offers, through local donations, state and federal grants, homebuyer education courses, homeownership counseling at no cost, down payment/closing cost low interest loans, affordable homes for people with special needs and rehabilitation/reconstruction of homes for low income families.

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP1)**

In July of 2009, The City of Laredo made an application and received an award for Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP1) funds totaling \$2,127,102 provided



under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 and made available through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA).

The NSP provides funds to stabilize neighborhoods whose viability has been and continues to be damaged by the economic effects of properties that have been foreclosed upon and abandoned. The City is in the process of utilizing a major portion of these funds to acquire, and rehabilitate 19 foreclosed/abandoned properties in the City of Laredo. More specifically, the City is proposing to do the following:

Purchase and rehabilitate homes and residential properties that have been abandoned or foreclosed upon, in order to sell such homes and properties to low income households.

In support of the purchase and rehabilitation of foreclosed homes and residential properties, work with TDHCA to provide permanent mortgage financing to qualifying households, provide gap financing and closing cost assistance in the form of forgivable loans in varying amounts, not to exceed \$30,000, to ensure that the assisted homebuyers' house payment does not exceed 30% of the family gross income.

The City also requested the maximum 10% allowable from NSP funding for administrative and carrying costs associated with the program. Households directly assisted with NSP funds are required to be at or below 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI), as defined by HUD. The City is proposing that 100% of those assisted under the program will be at or below 50% of AMI.

### **Assistance to persons who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless and Non Homeless who have Special Needs**

Homelessness is a growing problem in our community. Resources to address this need are detailed in the Homeless Needs section of this 5 year strategy.

### **Needs of Public Housing (91.210 (b))**

**In cooperation with the public housing agency or agencies located within its boundaries, describe the needs of public housing, including the number of public housing units in the jurisdiction, the physical condition of such units, the restoration and revitalization needs of public housing projects within the jurisdiction, and other factors, including the number of families on public housing and tenant-based waiting lists and results from the Section 504 needs assessment of public housing projects located within its boundaries (i.e. assessment of needs of tenants and applicants on waiting list for accessible units as required by 24 CFR 8.25). The public housing agency and jurisdiction can use the optional Priority Public Housing Needs Table (formerly Table 4) of the Consolidated Plan to identify priority public housing needs to assist in this process.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Needs of Public Housing response:**

Laredo Housing Authority (LHA)'s mission is to serve the diverse housing needs of families within PHA jurisdiction and to 1) increase the availability of decent, safe, affordable housing in its communities; 2) ensure equal opportunity in housing; 3)

promote self-sufficiency and asset development of families and individuals; 4) improve the quality of life and economic viability; and 5) provide high quality client services. Some of the important challenges to be met by LHA include: implementing all tasks in Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Corrective Action Plan; preserve and improve the public housing stock through the Capital Funds Activities; continue to assist families and individuals who are of very-low income to secure safe, decent, and affordable housing; train staff and commissioners to fully understand and take advantage of opportunities in the new law and regulations to better serve its residents and the community; and identify, develop, and leverage services to enable low-income families to become self-sufficient. Public Housing needs include increasing the number of units and providing more Section 8 vouchers. While there are currently 994 families being served in public housing, there is a waiting list of 218 families of which 87.16% have extremely low-income (0-30% HAMFI). Another 12.84% earn 30-50% HAMFI. Of the 218 families on the waiting list, 64.22% have children while 35.78% are elderly families. Due to the City's proximity to the border of the U.S. and Mexico, 99.54% of the families on the waiting list are Hispanic. There continues to be a high demand for public housing units, and the waiting list is currently closed until further notice.

## **Public Housing Strategy (91.210)**

- 1. Describe the public housing agency's strategy to serve the needs of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families residing in the jurisdiction served by the public housing agency (including families on the public housing and section 8 tenant-based waiting list), the public housing agency's strategy for addressing the revitalization and restoration needs of public housing projects within the jurisdiction and improving the management and operation of such public housing, and the public housing agency's strategy for improving the living environment of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate families residing in public housing.**
- 2. Describe the manner in which the plan of the jurisdiction will help address the needs of public housing and activities it will undertake to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership. (NAHA Sec. 105 (b)(11) and (91.215 (k))**
- 3. If the public housing agency is designated as "troubled" by HUD or otherwise is performing poorly, the jurisdiction shall describe the manner in which it will provide financial or other assistance in improving its operations to remove such designation. (NAHA Sec. 105 (g))**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Public Housing Strategy response:**

#### **Laredo Housing Authority (LHA):**

The Laredo Housing Authority (LHA) is a public housing agency committed to providing decent, affordable rental housing for persons of low income, improving the quality of life of the public housing residents, and providing assistance necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. LHA has 10 housing developments consisting of: Colonia Guadalupe, Russell Terrace, Carlos Richter Courts, Senior Citizens' Home, Lozano Development, Meadow Acres and Meadow Elderly (both made up of 3 phases), and South Laredo (2 phases). A total of 994 units, located throughout the City, are

available to provide low-income families with a safe, decent, and sanitary housing unit. LHA also provides rehabilitation improvements to the current public housing units. Most of these improvements support modernization efforts and provide betterment to the current existing housing stock and LHA offices. In addition, LHA assists families and individuals of very low income through the Section 8 Certificate Voucher Program, Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Program, and Section 8 New Construction Program. These activities are reported in LHA's Comprehensive Plan for Modernization and Annual Statement/Performance and Evaluation Report and are funded through the Capital Fund Program.

LHA has a Special Projects Division which provides services to its residents, known as Resident Initiatives. These initiatives include: Community Services, Elderly and Disabled Supportive Service Program, After School Program, Kids Café Program, Drug Education For Youth Program (DEFY), Wildlife Education and Outdoor Exploration Program, and Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS).

As stated, eight of LHA's developments have Resident Council's (RC), who coordinate and sponsor Community Services for their housing residents. The RC's meet on a monthly basis and participate in presentations covering an array of topics such as health care, job opportunities, education, nutrition, AIDS awareness, drug and alcohol abuse and awareness, and domestic violence. Job searching opportunities are provided through a partnership with the Texas Workforce Center. In addition, LHA has implemented the Weed and Seed program, which includes law enforcement and youth gang, gun, and drug prevention efforts in a designated target area in central Laredo.

LHA's Elderly and Disabled Supportive Service Program, operated by the Elderly Coordinator, provide supportive services throughout the year. Some of these services include assistance with daily living, coordination of recreational activities, scheduling of social gatherings, and coordination with social service providers. Through the coordination of the Elderly Coordinator, the LHA is able to offer numerous other services. For instance, the Border Area Nutrition Council provides hot meals daily at the Senior Citizen's Home.

LHA will pursue the development of mixed income housing and plans to identify the land/property during this fiscal year to achieve this. Public housing residents who are interested in moving out of public housing and into the private rental marketplace will be provided counseling to achieve this.

The LHA has not been designated by HUD as troubled.

## **Barriers to Affordable Housing (91.210 (e) and 91.215 (f))**

- 1. Explain whether the cost of housing or the incentives to develop, maintain, or improve affordable housing are affected by public policies, particularly those of the local jurisdiction. Such policies include tax policy affecting land and other property, land use controls, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limits, and policies that affect the return on residential investment.**
- 2. Describe the strategy to remove or ameliorate negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing, except that, if a State requires a unit of general local government to submit a regulatory barrier assessment that is substantially equivalent to the information**

**required under this part, as determined by HUD, the unit of general local government may submit that assessment to HUD and it shall be considered to have complied with this requirement.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Barriers to Affordable Housing response:**

**1.** The City of Laredo does not maintain any public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing, nor does it implement any excessive building fees or charges. The City will continue to work closely with individuals and private contractors to develop residential areas, in coordination and compliance with the City's Zoning Ordinances.

**2.** The City and/or other organizations will continue to undertake efforts to eliminate affordable housing barriers which include, but are not limited to:

- Making available down payment assistance to facilitate homeownership by individuals and families of low income.
- Working with the private sector to promote the construction of affordable housing by not implementing any restrictive building fees.
- Assisting CHDO's in the purchase of lots on which to construct affordable housing.
- Working with the private sector, including local banks and Fannie Mae to bring forth programs that help address the local foreclosure crisis through the buy down of interest payments, reduction of principal, and /or other combinations of mortgage financing programs and utilize funding from HUD or other funding sources as it becomes available.
- Making available tenant-based rental assistance for the elderly.
- Keeping informed of innovative methods of construction, which help keep the cost of construction low.
- Providing homebuyer-counseling services.

## **HOMELESS**

### **Homeless Needs (91.205 (b) and 91.215 (c))**

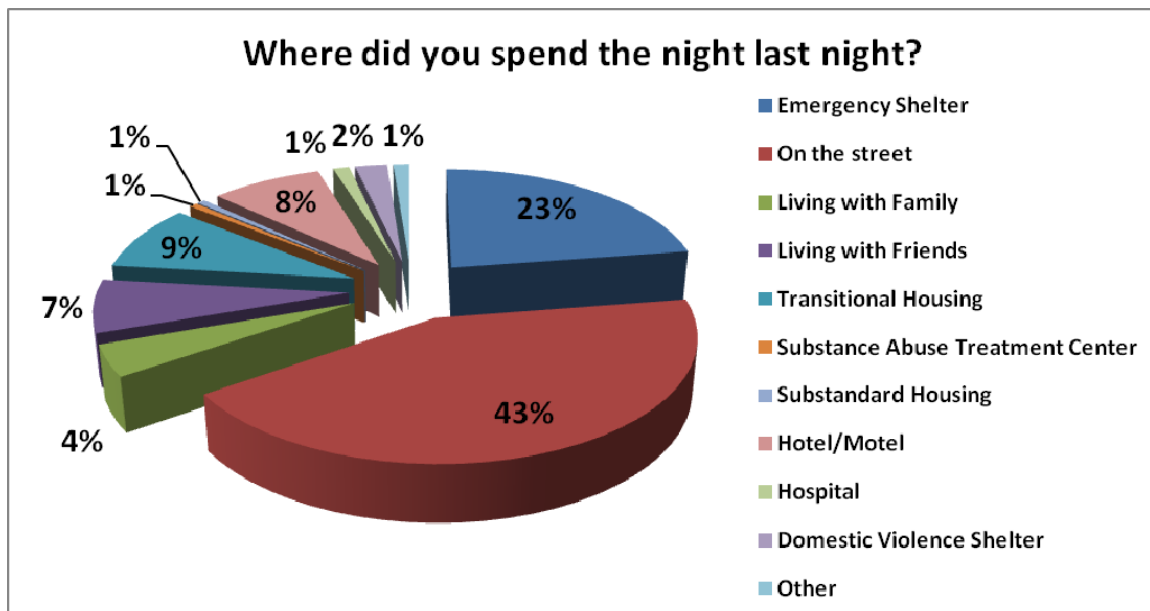
**\* Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook**

**Homeless Needs— The jurisdiction must provide a concise summary of the nature and extent of homelessness in the jurisdiction, (including rural homelessness and chronic homelessness where applicable), addressing separately the need for facilities and services for homeless persons and homeless families with children, both sheltered and unsheltered, and homeless subpopulations, in accordance with Table 1 A. The summary must include the characteristics and needs of low-income individuals and children, (especially extremely low-income) who are currently housed but are at imminent risk of either residing in shelters or becoming unsheltered.**

In addition, to the extent information is available, the plan must include a description of the nature and extent of homelessness by racial and ethnic group. A quantitative analysis is not required. If a jurisdiction provides estimates of the at-risk population(s), it should also include a description of the operational definition of the at-risk group and the methodology used to generate the estimates.

### 3-5 Year Strategic Plan Homeless Needs response:

According to a point-in-time survey conducted by Bethany House in January of 2010, in conjunction with members of the Laredo Homeless Coalition, a total of 168 sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals live in our community. Of those counted, 24 were homeless with children. Subpopulations of the homeless that were counted included 24 that were severely mentally ill, 21 chronic substance abusers, 20 veterans, 6 persons with HIV/AIDS, 8 victims of domestic violence, and 12 youth under 18. It was estimated that 71.9% of those that are homeless are men and 27.5% are female, and .6% are transgender. In addition 95.3% of those that responded were White, while 74.9 of those were Hispanic. Furthermore, 79% were single, and the median age was 43. The graph below, provided by Bethany House from its point in time count, illustrates the different categories of homelessness.



There is presently only one (1) shelter whose main function is to assist battered women and their children; Casa De Misericordia. Sacred Heart Children's home is the only shelter for children, while SCAN provides the only shelter for youth ages 6-17. The Salvation Army provides emergency shelter for men only. Constructed in 2006, the Bethany House Shelter Complex is the only facility that houses homeless men and also has 8 transitional housing units for families. Bethany House recently purchased a property that is situated between the existing shelter and its food kitchen. It is already in the process of fundraising for the expansion of the shelter to include quarters for 20 women and 9 additional transitional units. They have currently received commitments and donations of \$1.1 million of the \$2.7 million needed to complete the facility. Based on a survey conducted on the extent of homelessness at the National Conference of Cities, there is a need to increase the

number of homeless shelters for individuals by at least 23%, and 32% for families. Bethany House reported that they had experienced a 45% increase in the number of requests for assistance for transitional housing. Bethany continues to allow homeless men to sleep in their courtyard due to lack of sufficient beds for them.

## **Priority Homeless Needs**

- 1. Using the results of the Continuum of Care planning process, identify the jurisdiction's homeless and homeless prevention priorities specified in Table 1 A, the Homeless and Special Needs Populations Chart. The description of the jurisdiction's choice of priority needs and allocation priorities must be based on reliable data meeting HUD standards and should reflect the required consultation with homeless assistance providers, homeless persons, and other concerned citizens regarding the needs of homeless families with children and individuals. The jurisdiction must provide an analysis of how the needs of each category of residents provided the basis for determining the relative priority of each priority homeless need category. A separate brief narrative should be directed to addressing gaps in services and housing for the sheltered and unsheltered chronic homeless.**
- 2. A community should give a high priority to chronically homeless persons, where the jurisdiction identifies sheltered and unsheltered chronic homeless persons in its Homeless Needs Table - Homeless Populations and Subpopulations.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Priority Homeless Needs response:**

1. As noted in the Continuum of Care, Homeless and Special Needs Populations Chart, there exists a need for shelter and supportive services for both individuals and homeless families; however there exists a greater disparity in resources available to homeless families as compared to that of homeless individuals. Priorities for assisting the homeless are as follows:
2. A top priority remains expanding shelter and transitional housing for families. Currently, facilities can only address the transitional housing needs of approximately 23% of the total homeless families in our community at any one time and none of the emergency shelter needs. There continues to be a hidden homelessness, in which families move in with family and/or friends creating overcrowding conditions. A second priority continues to be providing emergency and transitional housing to homeless individuals.

There continues to be a need for case management and the provision of supportive services to help individuals and families transition from homelessness to finally self-sufficiency.

In some cases, individuals are unable to become self sufficient and require permanent supportive services to function. The City needs to develop shelter plus care housing for those individuals who suffer from mental illness.

The Chronically Homeless who choose not be sheltered in a facility, require temporary haven to shower and eat and take refuge during inclement weather.

Maintaining current emergency facilities as well as creating innovative staging areas to serve the homeless is necessary and requires continued funding.

## **Homeless Inventory (91.210 (c))**

**The jurisdiction shall provide a concise summary of the existing facilities and services (including a brief inventory) that assist homeless persons and families with children and subpopulations identified in Table 1A. These include outreach and assessment, emergency shelters and services, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, access to permanent housing, and activities to prevent low-income individuals and families with children (especially extremely low-income) from becoming homeless. The jurisdiction can use the optional Continuum of Care Housing Activity Chart and Service Activity Chart to meet this requirement.**

### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Homeless Inventory response:**

As stated in the homeless need portion of the Plan, there is presently only one (1) shelter whose main function is to assist battered women and their children: Casa De Misericordia. Sacred Heart Children's home is the only shelter for children, while Serving Children and Adolescents in Need (SCAN) provides the only shelter for youth ages 6-17. The Salvation Army provides emergency shelter for men only. The Bethany House Shelter Complex is the only facility that houses homeless men and also has eight (8) transitional housing units for families. Bethany House recently purchased a property that is situated between the existing shelter and its food kitchen. Bethany is already in the process of fundraising for the expansion of the shelter to include quarters for women (20 beds) and nine (9) additional transitional housing units. The City currently provides funding to Bethany House from the ESG to provide essential services for those who come to the shelter. They are assessed and their data is entered into the Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) in order to facilitate the provision of services and to prevent overlap. Under the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP), case managers are required to perform an initial assessment for those requesting assistance and then review their status every 3 months if they continue to receive assistance for the maximum 18 months. The idea is that they will be able to become self-sustaining and be able to remain in housing after the assistance is terminated.

## **Homeless Strategic Plan (91.215 (c))**

- 1. Homelessness— Describe the jurisdiction's strategy for developing a system to address homelessness and the priority needs of homeless persons and families (including the subpopulations identified in the needs section). The jurisdiction's strategy must consider the housing and supportive services needed in each stage of the process which includes preventing homelessness, outreach/ assessment, emergency shelters and services, transitional housing, and helping homeless persons (especially any persons that are chronically homeless) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. The jurisdiction must also describe its strategy for helping extremely low- and low-income individuals and families who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless.**



- 2. Chronic homelessness—Describe the jurisdiction’s strategy for eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. This should include the strategy for helping homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. This strategy should, to the maximum extent feasible, be coordinated with the strategy presented Exhibit 1 of the Continuum of Care (CoC) application and any other strategy or plan to eliminate chronic homelessness. Also describe, in a narrative, relationships and efforts to coordinate the Conplan, CoC, and any other strategy or plan to address chronic homelessness.**
- 3. Homelessness Prevention—Describe the jurisdiction’s strategy to help prevent homelessness for individuals and families with children who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless.**
- 4. Institutional Structure—Briefly describe the institutional structure, including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions, through which the jurisdiction will carry out its homelessness strategy.**
- 5. Discharge Coordination Policy—Every jurisdiction receiving McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), Supportive Housing, Shelter Plus Care, or Section 8 SRO Program funds must develop and implement a Discharge Coordination Policy, to the maximum extent practicable. Such a policy should include “policies and protocols for the discharge of persons from publicly funded institutions or systems of care (such as health care facilities, foster care or other youth facilities, or correction programs and institutions) in order to prevent such discharge from immediately resulting in homelessness for such persons.” The jurisdiction should describe its planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how the community will move toward such a policy.**

### **3-5 Year Homeless Strategic Plan response:**

The homeless population is not a new epidemic that has just surfaced in the City. It is, however, a topic of concern that needs to be looked at more closely. This is especially true now that so many families are facing the loss of their homes due to increasing home foreclosures. There are many problematic issues underlining this population, including the lack of a safe environment (permanent housing), lack of medical care, and other related issues. In order to address the specific objective of the Strategic Plan and the priority needs identified, which are to increase the number of shelters, transitional units and shelter beds, and to provide needed services, the City will continue to provide funding, as it becomes available, in support of the operation of homeless shelters and for the provision of essential services to the homeless. The City will also continue to contract with local non-profit agencies for the provision of homeless prevention assistance for those on the verge of becoming homeless.

In addition, the City will ensure that agencies applying for federal funding to address the homeless conform to the requirement of compliance with the Consolidated Plan. Two of the main obstacles to this endeavor are the lack of understanding and support from the general public regarding homelessness, and the lack of funding needed to address homeless issues. The need to address homelessness issues is

greater than the resources available, now, more than ever, with the declining economy and the increased cost of living.

In support of the priorities identified to address homelessness and at risk populations, the City together with homeless service providers in our community will utilize available local, state, and federal resources as noted below:

1. The City anticipates receiving an Emergency Shelter Grant allocation of \$159,618 for the 2010 program year and anticipates receiving future funding through the Emergency Solutions Grant. The City will, as in the past, solicit proposals for funding from local homeless service providers to fund those activities deemed eligible under the grant. Award(s) to qualifying agencies will be made upon availability of funds and approval by City Council. A match which equals the amount allocated by HUD, will be generated through in-kind, volunteer, and/or donated contributions by the City or its sub-recipient(s).

**The Laredo Homeless Coalition (LHC):**

LHC will continue to perform the work of encouraging and developing community partnerships to advocate and expand services for the homeless population. The mission of the LHC is to create awareness of homelessness and related issues/needs while maintaining and fostering the coordination/continuum of care of services for homeless and at-risk homeless persons. The LHC and Bethany House of Laredo (homeless services provider) continue to coordinate and leverage resources for the construction of a women's shelter (10 beds), additional transitional housing units (9), and the expansion of the resource center. Bethany House purchased an adjacent property in the fall of 2007 for the purposed of expanding the shelter and supportive services to homeless clients. Fundraising for the expansion project is expected to be completed this year.

The LHC continues to play a critical role in facilitating and coordinating advocacy and networking roles between homeless serving agencies. The coalition holds monthly meetings and has an average attendance of 25 participants.

For the 5-Year plan, the LHC will maintain its advocacy and collaborative service role, although the LHC expects to increase its awareness by developing and maintaining a website that will provide members and the public access to agency and program information, as well as on-line supportive services and resources.

**Bethany House of Laredo, Inc. (Bethany):**

Bethany House was founded for the purpose to "feed the hungry and shelter the homeless." Meals are served to the homeless, indigent, veterans, needy, elderly, and disabled of Laredo. Meals are also delivered to the homebound and to various children's programs. Non-perishable food items, clothing items, food, emergency shelter and/or basic life amenities are provided for the homeless and anyone in need. For 2010, Bethany House anticipates that more than 150,000 individuals will receive services.

Bethany House prepares more than 2000 meals daily and on holidays. Bethany House also provides meal delivery service of over 600 meals in West, South and North Laredo five days a week and includes both breakfast and lunch. More than 150 plated dinners are delivered to the homeless in north Laredo. During the summer and on Saturdays throughout the year, meals are prepared for children participating in the summer "*Luz de Esperanza*" program. Other children's meal preparations

include the "*Kids Cafe*" Program at seven public housing community centers where 1000 hot meals are prepared weekly for after-school projects throughout the year. Bethany House's Learning Center provides 50 children breakfast and lunch each Saturday throughout the year. Volunteers provide basic tutoring assistance and/or cultural enrichment demonstrations or tours to other art or music programs and exhibits for approximately 50 students. More than 44,200 children's meals are prepared during the year.

Bethany House also serves as a distribution center for daily requests for nonperishable food and beverage items as needed from the BH Food Pantry and for the "Good Sam" Program. Recipients receive a 30-lb bag of nonperishable food items once a month. In addition, Bethany House also provides clothing and household items free of charge for the homeless, as well as families in crisis and indigent school children as requested by agencies, doctors, pastors and/or from school officials. Twice a year Bethany House partners with more than 25 other non-profit and government agencies to hold a community health fair where anyone can receive medical services, mental health, legal assistance or advice, housing and social services free of charge. Participants also receive 30-lb. bags of non-perishable food and beverage items.

In December of 2008, transition of the McNaboe Shelter Complex operations from the Laredo Homeless Coalition to Bethany House took effect. The Shelter Complex houses a Resource Center for basic life amenities and case management programs, Emergency Shelter for 28 males and eight Transitional Housing units for individuals and families working to improve their job and life skills. An outdoor grassy patio serves as a Safe Haven for individuals who prefer to sleep outdoors or when the shelter is over capacity. Meals are served from the daily dining facility and at the shelter for weekend meals.

At the Shelter Complex new programs include the "Job Ready" Plus program, which provides assistance for job searches and transportation for interviews and to employment and a "Legal Aid Clinic" once a month. Twice a month free shampoos and haircuts are offered to the homeless, elderly and indigent. Bethany House anticipates receiving a total of \$1,027,778 in funding from local, state and federal sources. Bethany House hopes to continue with its mission to feed and house the homeless.

#### **Catholic Social Services of Laredo (CSSL):**

CSSL provides a variety of social services. The Emergency and Poverty Assistance program provides assistance to families and individuals to prevent homelessness. The agency provides payments either in full or with subsidy to individuals that are arrears in their basic utilities and rent. Clients needing to acquire these services will be provided support with security deposits. CSSL's Emergency and Poverty Assistance Program will assist individuals and families who need relocation and are considered homeless. The program provides the case management to secure housing and utilities.

Funding for CSSL's 2010-11 Emergency and Poverty Assistance Program are from the following sources:

FEMA Assistance Program funds \$18,429 which assists individuals or families with rent and utility assistance. Clients will also receive referrals to agencies, employment information, education information, consumer planning, and financial management.

United Way of Laredo funds \$10,000 and provides funding to assist clients directly in need of utility, rent, documents, prescription, and transportation. Homeless Prevention and Relocation Housing Program 3 year funding of \$609,792 provides individual and family assistance with homeless prevention services such as utility and rental assistance or assists with the relocation of families or individuals into a home (apartment or house).

The Diocese of Laredo funds \$30,000 to staff the Emergency and Poverty Assistance Program from the Diocese of Laredo. Catholic Social Services CSSL proposes to continue to provide services to prevent homelessness as funded through grant applications and through monies provided by the Diocese.

**Casa de Misericordia (CASA):**

The purpose of CASA is to provide a safe, clean, non-threatening and confidential refuge for families experiencing domestic violence. At CASA, battered women and their children can receive comprehensive, holistic services, and consistent long-term support. CASA provides year-round multi-service programs of safety planning, support, advocacy, 24 hour crisis hotline, referrals to appropriate agencies when necessary, counseling, support groups, court accompaniment, assistance with Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) applications, and assistance with first month's rent and/or utility bills and transportation (bus tickets). CASA's Lamar Bruni Vergara Education Center provides the necessary skills required to become self-sufficient to not only women and children staying at the shelter, but to victims of domestic violence in the community as well. Classes provided at the center include computer, English as a Second Language, sewing, and haircutting classes. Women and school age children receive homework assistance and tutoring as well as enrichment learning activities. During FY 2009, CASA expanded its shelter facility in order to accommodate more families. CASA has 40 beds in which to receive victims of domestic violence and will continue to provide three meals a day, laundry facilities, and telephone services. For 2010-2011 CASA projects to assist 1,569 individuals with the Crisis Hotline, 217 Women, 468 Children, and 56 Support Groups. They project to receive funding from the following sources: Canseco Foundation - \$15,000\*, Caritas - \$25,000, City of Laredo 3rd Party Funding - \$20,000\*, Emergency Shelter Grant Funds - \$25,000\*, HHSC - \$279,455, Matias de Llano Foundation - \$30,000\*, United Way - \$75,000\*, General Victims Assistance Grant-CJD - \$44,707\*, Webb County 3rd Party Funding - \$25,000\*, Women's City Club - \$4,000\*, Laredo Area Community Foundation - \$5,000\*, The Prairie Foundation - \$10,000\*, and the Kennedy Memorial Foundation - \$35,000\* (\* pending award). CASA will strive to continue to work with the community to promote awareness and will continue to provide services with available funding.

**Serving Children and Adolescents in Need, Inc. (SCAN)**

SCAN is a community-based, non-profit organization that administers comprehensive, culturally relevant, and developmentally appropriate services to children, adolescents, adults and their families. The agency has 25 programs that provide prevention, intervention, substance abuse treatment outpatient and residential treatment, emergency shelter services, victim assistance, and outreach services. The programs cover the continuum of services, which include prevention, intervention, treatment and after-care. SCAN operates an Emergency Youth Shelter for children ages 7 to 17 who are victims of child abuse, runaways, homeless youth, or at-risk youth.

The facility can house up to 16 youth and provides basic needs of food, shelter, safety and protection in a structured, homelike environment. Counseling services, case management and referral services are also provided to those staying at the shelter. SCAN provides transitional living services for homeless youth ages 17 through 21 through the Arco Iris Transitional Living Program. This program provides residential services for 6 female and 6 male homeless youth. Youth are provided with life skills training, case management services, referral services and assistance to further their education and or to find permanent employment so that they can become self-sufficient.

During the next five year period, it is anticipated that SCAN will provide services to more than 20, 000 children, youth, adults and families. Additionally, SCAN provides residential drug treatment services for adolescents through Youth Recovery Home and Esperanza Recovery Home and for adults through the Serenidad Recovery Home Program and Serenidad Women's Recovery Home Program. Outpatient treatment services are provided for adolescents through the STAND Outpatient Program services are provided for adults through the Border Enhancement Project, Futuros Sin Limitaciones Program, Hogar Para Todos Program and C-STAR Program. Hogar Para Todos Program specifically assists homeless individuals that have a diagnosis of substance dependence.

SCAN anticipates receiving an average of \$7,879,480 annually for the next five years from various local, state and federal agencies. Funding sources include \$3,087,004 from the Texas Department of State Health Services Substance Abuse Services, \$3,389,653 from Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration Centers for Substance Abuse Treatment, the Center for Mental Health Services and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, \$544,832 from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, \$88,340 from Office of the Attorney General for the Sexual Assault and Information program, \$426,500 from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children & Families, \$128,085 from Northrop Grumman, \$ 53,066 from San Antonio Area Foundation, \$100,000 from the Marguerite Casey Foundation, \$20,000 from United Way of Laredo, and \$25,000 from United Way of South Texas. SCAN also anticipates receiving \$13,500 from the City's third-party funds and \$3,750 from Webb County.

#### **Sacred Heart Children's Home (Sacred Heart) :**

Sacred Heart Children's Home provides long term basic child care in accordance with all the requirements mandated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, for boys 5 -10 years of age and girls from 5-18 years of age. If the young ladies reach their 18th birthday and choose to continue with their education, they are allowed to remain at the home. In addition to providing the children with an education and basic survival needs, the home provides them with morality and spirituality guidance. Interaction with the children's legal guardian or relatives is frequently done in the hope of developing a positive relationship to prepare them for the day that the children will return home; or at times, help the guardian/relatives through their hardships. There is also continued contact and aid for ex-residents who continue to be in need of guidance and moral support. For next five years Sacred Heart anticipates assisting 56-80 children per year at the home. Funding contributors include the United Way, local government agencies, private donations, investment income, and other miscellaneous revenue.

## **2. Chronic Homelessness:**

A 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness, coordinated by the City's Department of Community Development, was developed through the cooperation of many different entities. In March 2004, Resolution No. 2004-R-033 was passed by City Council approving the production of a 10-Year Plan to end chronic homelessness in the City in order to increase access to safe, decent, and affordable housing for individuals of this population. The plan was completed in September of 2006.

The development and implementation of a 10-Year Plan was imperative to relieving the social, medical and educational disparity among the homeless population. To develop the Plan, the City initiated several meetings involving various entities including schools, banks, housing developers, non-profit organizations, state agencies, housing authorities, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, parish outreach providers, and transportation providers. The objective of this coalition is to eliminate the homeless population in the City by assisting the homeless to obtain affordable housing. The coalition further seeks to prevent individuals/families from becoming homeless by helping them acquire the skills and resources that they need in order to remain in their current homes.

In addition, during the next fiscal year, the coalition will continue to implement the 10-year plan by using existing resources to end homelessness, and continue to monitor its effectiveness. The ultimate goal is to provide homeless individuals/families access to a safe, decent, affordable housing and give them the opportunity to utilize resources and the support needed to avoid becoming homeless.

### **3. Homeless Prevention:**

As stated, the City will continue to contract with local homeless provider agencies for the provision of homeless prevention assistance as it relates to payments for mortgage, rent, first month's rent and deposit, and to prevent termination of utility services. The City will also provide referrals to those seeking assistance to other agencies that provide services for the homeless such as Laredo-Webb County Community Action Agency, the South Texas Development Council, and Border Region Mental Health Mental Retardation (MHMR) and the City's HIV programs.

The City will also continue to ensure that funds received through the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) be utilized by the awarded agencies to stem the incidence of homelessness through the provision of rent, utilities, security deposits, rent deposits, motel costs, legal services, and other related homelessness prevention measures.

**5. Discharge Coordination Policy** Border Region Mental Health Mental Retardation (MHMR) has a policy in place to assist consumers being discharged from their institution. The local correctional institution also has a halfway house to assist inmates make the transition from institutionalized living to independence through a work-release program.

## **Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG)**

**(States only) Describe the process for awarding grants to State recipients, and a description of how the allocation will be made available to units of local government.**

**3-5 Year Strategic Plan ESG response:**



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Community Development (91.215 (e))

\* Please also refer to the Community Development Table in the Needs.xls workbook

1. Identify the jurisdiction's priority non-housing community development needs eligible for assistance by CDBG eligibility category specified in the Community Development Needs Table (formerly Table 2B), – i.e., public facilities, public improvements, public services and economic development.
2. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs
3. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.
4. Identify specific long-term and short-term community development objectives (including economic development activities that create jobs), developed in accordance with the statutory goals described in section 24 CFR 91.1 and the primary objective of the CDBG program to provide decent housing and a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

**NOTE:** Each specific objective developed to address a priority need, must be identified by number and contain proposed accomplishments, the time period (i.e., one, two, three, or more years), and annual program year numeric goals the jurisdiction hopes to achieve in quantitative terms, or in other measurable terms as identified and defined by the jurisdiction.

#### 1. Year Strategic Plan Community Development response:

The City of Laredo anticipates to receive Community Development Block Grant Funds during the next five years, totaling approximately 19 million dollars. The objectives to be carried out by the CDBG program are required to meet the national objectives of the program which are 1.) to provide a low and moderate income benefit, 2.) to prevent and/or eliminate slum and blight, and 3.) to address an urgent need in the community. While the use of CDBG funds is contingent upon the award of HUD and the approval of Laredo's City Council, it is proposed that CDBG funds be used in support of the following non-housing community development needs, identified in the City's Capital Improvement Plan and voiced as necessary by citizens.

- Public Improvements: Infrastructure development within low and moderate income areas is of the greatest need. Funds under this category would be used to finance construction of sidewalks, handicap accessibility, traffic signalization, street, drainage, water and sewer improvements and other projects to address the community's basic health and safety needs.



- Public Facilities: The construction and enhancement of public facilities such as recreational parks, community centers, police substations and structures in areas of low and moderate income will be pursued to provide a more suitable living environment for community residents.
- Code Enforcement: The City anticipates allocating funds to the Code Enforcement Program, which will continue to provide public services that eliminate slums and blighting influences that are detrimental to public health, safety, and welfare. This program responds to citizens' complaints by providing inspections of private and/or commercial properties located in CDBG target areas. Code Enforcement inspectors conduct inspections and address numerous City Code violations with property owners, which include, but are not limited to, weeded lots, junked vehicles, illegal dumping, nuisances, and abandoned tires. The Code Enforcement division will strictly adhere to City of Laredo ordinances and issue citations to property owners for failure to maintain their properties.
- Public Services: One public service that will continue is the City's Graffiti Removal Program. The City provides the manpower and materials to remove graffiti from public facilities, such as parks, sidewalks, bridges, underpasses, and creeks that are located in CDBG eligible areas. Other public services as may be identified to address an urgent need and/or future needs may also be provided as deemed necessary.
- Acquisition/ Acquisition and Relocation: Many of the projects to be carried out in support of public improvements, public facilities, and housing require the acquisition of land.
- Demolition: In support of the elimination of slum and blighted areas, demolition and clearance of abandoned and dilapidated structures will be undertaken in low income areas of the city as deemed necessary.
- Economic Development: The importance of creating job opportunities has come to the forefront given the rise in unemployment rates and the community's high poverty rate. The City will work with local businesses in developing programs that create as well as retain jobs for persons of low income.

2. The basis for assigning priority community needs, again, was based on information obtained from the public and other agencies regarding needs in the community, the poor condition of the City's housing stock, and the high costs related to the purchase and rental of decent and safe housing.

3. Obstacles to meeting underserved needs include unemployment, poverty, and lack of resources.

#### Unemployment:

In past years, expanding trade, investment, and commerce with Mexico has resulted in the City's growth. However, the City of Laredo has not been immune to the effects of the economic downturn that now plagues the nation. The City is experiencing a decrease in commerce and investment, thus creating a decrease in the number of available jobs, construction, and home purchases. Laredo's economy remains in recession but the latest figures show that the recession is easing somewhat.

The City's unemployment rate is persistently higher than other cities in Texas and in the nation. As of April, 2010, with an unemployment rate of 8.8%, it has the 5th highest unemployment rate in the State. In April 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 8.8 percent of Laredo's workforce was unemployed compared to the States' rate of 8.2 percent and the United States at 10.2 percent.

#### Poverty:

Even though Laredo's employment economic forecast is better than that of the U.S., poverty continues to exist in Laredo. The U.S. Census estimated that in 2008, 27 percent of people were in poverty. Thirty-six percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 24 percent of people 65 years old and over. Twenty-two percent of all families and 43 percent of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

#### Lack of Resources:

The City utilizes its resources to its maximum ability, allocating monies for various projects to help establish and create decent affordable housing and improve the quality of life for very low to moderate-income persons. Resources, though, are insufficient, which prevents the City from providing additional services and/or assistance in declining neighborhoods.

To overcome some of these obstacles, the City intends to submit applications for competitive funding as may become available in support of the housing and non-housing priorities identified in the City of Laredo's Consolidated Plan. The monies received through these programs would be in addition to the amounts anticipated to be received by HUD.

**4.** As a long term objective, the City intends to take significant steps toward promoting economic development activities that would create jobs throughout the community. Infrastructure development plays a major role in attracting and maintaining industry. The City remains committed to meeting the need for improved infrastructure through planned capital improvement projects and financing strategies made available through local, state and/or federal efforts. As part of its Capital Improvement projects, over the next five years, the City projects initiating numerous drainage projects throughout the City which will strengthen the underlying infrastructure for new development, and help to alleviate many of the City's flooding problems. In addition, the construction of several City parking lots, numerous street improvements, the installation of traffic signalization, the installation of a substantial number of water and sewer lines, and the expansion of the landfill and the material recovery facility are projects planned in upcoming years by the City. The City also broke ground in January for the expansion of its World Trade Bridge to add 7 more commercial traffic lanes; a \$4.62 million project. The intent is to get more trucks from across Mexico into Texas by shortening wait times across the border and attract more business to this region instead of other parts of the nation.

The City will also continue to support agencies such as Acción Texas which provides loans (from \$500 to \$50,000) to microenterprise and small business clients who cannot obtain loans from banks. These loans help create jobs, promote income stability, and long term economic stability. As of December 2009, Acción Texas had dispersed \$2,002,336 for 165 loans.

In addition to promoting economic development opportunities to encourage job creation, the City continually reviews its own goals and objectives, as described in the Performance Measures, to ensure that the City increases the quality of life for persons of low to moderate income. As part of its goals, the City plans to establish and create decent and affordable housing for persons of very-low to moderate income, such as the enhancement of community services for residents; and provision

of assistance in declining neighborhoods. In order to meet their goals, the City's objectives include:

- Plan, implement and administer infrastructure projects in areas of low income as funded by HUD
- Seek, identify and apply for federal, state and/or local funding to provide much needed infrastructure improvements and services
- Enforce City Codes of Ordinances pertaining to weeds, junk vehicles and nuisance
- Monitor applicable federal, state and local funded projects to ensure compliance with program rules and regulations
- Assist with direct or indirect job creation

### **Antipoverty Strategy (91.215 (h))**

- 1. Describe the jurisdiction's goals, programs, and policies for reducing the number of poverty level families (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually). In consultation with other appropriate public and private agencies, (i.e. TANF agency) state how the jurisdiction's goals, programs, and policies for producing and preserving affordable housing set forth in the housing component of the consolidated plan will be coordinated with other programs and services for which the jurisdiction is responsible.**
- 2. Identify the extent to which this strategy will reduce (or assist in reducing) the number of poverty level families, taking into consideration factors over which the jurisdiction has control.**

#### **3-5 Year Strategic Plan Antipoverty Strategy response:**

1. The City recognizes the importance of adequately educating and training Laredo's labor force; therefore it will support efforts that help further this objective. The following narratives describe the contributions that various private organizations are making toward the education, support, and training of Laredo's citizens.

#### **Laredo Community College (LCC):**

Laredo Community College is the city's oldest and largest institute of higher education, created in 1947 to train returning World War II veterans for the workforce. Today, LCC is a beautiful two-campus college district serving more than 16,000 students each year. The college is committed to providing comprehensive educational services that focus on the dynamic requirements and needs of its local, regional and international community.

LCC strives to empower students to fulfill their educational goals through the learning process and leads the way in creating a learning environment with commitment to educational excellence and student success. LCC seeks to implement its educational philosophy by offering academic programs, occupational programs, transfer curricula, adult and continuing education, developmental education, student development services, and community services.

With two convenient locations – downtown Laredo and South Laredo – LCC offers students more than 120 certificate and degree programs. As one of the fastest growing community colleges in Texas, the college continually adds programs and student support services to accomplish its mission of making education accessible to all. LCC conducts annual reviews of its existing services and adjusts its curriculum as needed.

LCC added new programs for physically and mentally challenged students and expanded its services through a new Academic Advisement and Recruitment Center. The Economic Development Center also launched the newly created Light Manufacturing Institute, a U.S. Department of Labor funded investment known as Wired in the Rio South Texas region, through a consortium called the NAAMREI - North American Advanced Manufacturing Research & Education Initiative. Through the LMI, these groups are developing a coherent strategic plan integrating workforce, innovation and economic development to provide the building blocks to globally compete in the advanced manufacturing sector.

Laredo Community College is a member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and affiliated with the 50 community colleges in Texas and many entities and agencies to carry out its mission and goals in the community.

**Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) -Main Campus:**

TAMIU is a primarily Hispanic-serving, state-assisted institution that is part of The Texas A&M University System. It offers 70-plus undergraduate, graduate or doctoral programs in the liberal arts and sciences, education and business and maintains a special focus on developing an international academic agenda for the State of Texas. Through spirited collaboration, it provides additional research and outreach activities throughout a regional service area.

TAMIU Spring 2009 enrollment was 6,090, up 9.5% from last spring's 5,558 students. Full-time students comprised 53% (3,274) of the combined spring undergraduate/graduate enrollment while 46% (2,816) were part-time. The most popular undergraduate majors were early childhood (education), criminal justice and nursing. The most popular graduate programs were educational administration, school counseling and special education. Minority enrollment is 90% Hispanic, .80% Black and .67% Asian. Ninety-five percent of TAMIU students are In-State residents, but 3.7% of the University's combined undergraduate and graduate enrollment is international. Twenty-five different countries were represented in the University's total Spring 2009 enrollment.

TAMIU has completed its expanded Kinesiology Wellness Recreation Center and Center for the Fine and Performing Arts Theatre. It is currently completing the Helen Richter Watson Gallery in the Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library and its University Success Center, opening this summer and Fall respectively. The Early College High School on campus, a collaboration with the Laredo Independent School District, will continue to expand. TAMIU will continue seeking opportunities for partnership and collaboration to most effectively deliver its higher education mission.

The latest addition to the academic program includes a Bachelor of Science in Communication Disorders. Planned additions in the next five years include development of Bachelor of Science and Master of Science offerings in Systems Engineering with course offerings currently underway.

**United Independent School District (UISD):**

The United ISD Department for Curriculum and Instruction is organized into five instructional branches: Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Special Education, Instructional Accountability and Campus Intervention. Each branch is led by an Executive Director. Together the instructional team guides and empowers all instructional directors, coordinators, and support staff ensuring effective, efficient, instructional support to all U.I.S.D. campuses.

The department is committed to the continuous improvement of the PK-12th grade TEKS based, learner centered, aligned scope and sequence for all core areas. It will seek the attainment of the following instructional goal: Provide consistent quality TEKS based instruction and/or an alternative curriculum for all students, resulting in improved student achievement. To ensure consistent quality instruction in every U.I.S.D. classroom all teacher staff development will focus on instructional accountability/meeting the needs of diverse learners.

In addition, the following U.I.S.D. goals increase participation in advanced academic courses/dual credit courses with successful completion and increase the number of advanced placement exams with qualifying scores of three or above and to increase the participation at SAT preparation opportunities resulting in increased average SAT/ACT scores will focus on encouraging students to achieve at their maximum potential. A comprehensive Apex Review and Sure Score Plan will prepare students through integrated classroom instruction and zero hour/Saturday PSAT/SAT/AP preparatory opportunities.

U.I.S.D. will renew its commitment to creating responsive learning environments. It will put Reading First in every PK-12 classroom by explicitly teaching phonological and phonemic awareness, decoding and word recognition, fluency, academic vocabulary, and comprehension.

U.I.S.D. had six exemplary campuses, Amparo Gutierrez Elementary, Col. Santos Benavides Elementary, Juarez-Lincoln Elementary, Malakoff Elementary, Trautmann Elementary, U.D.D. Hachar Elementary. The District also had eighteen recognized campuses, Alexander High School, Arndt Elementary, Bonnie Garcia Elementary, Borchers Elementary, Centeno Elementary, Clark Elementary, Cuellar Elementary, de Llano Elementary, Fasken Elementary, Finley Elementary, Kazen Elementary, Kennedy-Zapata Elementary, Killam Elementary, Muller Elementary, Newman Elementary, Nye Elementary, Perez Elementary and United High School.

The District's revenues are divided into those provided by outside parties who share the cost of some programs such as tuition received for students from outside the District and grants provided by the U.S. Department of Education to assist children with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds (program revenues) and revenues provided by the tax payers or by TEA in equalization funding process (general revenues).

**Laredo Independent School District (LISD):**

The Laredo Independent School District is made up of 31 educational institutions: 21 elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools, three magnet schools, and the Early College High School. The District's goals are to create an innovative system of learning to empower students to realize their talents while meeting or exceeding Federal, State and local academic mandates. By 2014, LISD plans to be

recognized for promoting a safe and secure, drug-free learning environment; its collaborative partnerships with parents, community institutions, business entities, and other schools. They also plan to create a plan of action for the recruitment, development, retention, and support of faculty and staff.

**The Laredo Development Foundation (LDF):**

The Laredo Development Foundation (LDF), a private non-profit corporation, is dedicated to fostering the economic and industrial development of Laredo, TX and Webb County. The LDF is one of 22 accredited (AEDO) economic development organizations in the United States that are certified by the International Economic Development Council. The LDF is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of private business representatives and elected leaders of our community.

The LDF promotes industrial and business attraction, expansion, and retention which ultimately creates jobs and increases the tax base. The LDF has three divisions: Industrial Attraction, Administrative, and Special Projects. As a private non-profit organization, the LDF is able to handle prospects in a confidential manner and work on their behalf and marshal the necessary resources to be sure their project is successful.

The LDF organizes local and State level incentive packages to the benefit of the client/prospects in addition to supporting workforce development. The LDF is funded through the City of Laredo, memberships, Webb County, and special projects.

As part of the five year plan, the LDF looks to continue to support the Central and South America trade initiatives which promote the Port of Laredo as an alternative port of entry for goods exported to the central United States from Central and South America. This initiative began in 2009 and continues gaining momentum as infrastructure is planned which not only supports these initiatives, but helps support Mexico trade. This new infrastructure helps make the Port of Laredo a more viable option for refrigerated, frozen and temperature sensitive products imported into the U.S.

In working with the business community representatives and City leaders, the LDF is focused on three target industries: manufacturing/assembly, warehouse/distribution, and back room/call center businesses. While the LDF knows that the Laredo logistics companies are the worldwide experts in their industry, they recognize that there is a huge potential for manufacturing companies to leverage the Laredo advantages in supply chain management which will ultimately help manufacturing companies become more profitable in Laredo

Beginning in 2007, the LDF recognized that in order to promote and attract outside investment, it was important to build relationships with Site Selectors. Site Selectors are the representatives who work confidential business development projects on behalf of businesses looking to expand, consolidate, etc. Since 2007, the LDF has participated in more than a dozen Site Selector visits including Earnst & Young, CB Richard Ellis, and Delloite & Touche. In 2009, the LDF joined TexasOne. TexasOne is a partnership with the private sector and the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism whose goal is to directly enable strategic economic development outreach at the State Level. The LDF is beginning to see the results of this work, but the LDF is committed to building these relationships, all while promoting the Port of Laredo.



For the next five years, the LDF will continue working with its Sister City, Nuevo Laredo and organizations such as the Instituto para la Competitividad y el Comercio Exterior de Nuevo Laredo (ICCE) and Nuevo Laredo Industrial Development Committee (CODEIN). In 2007 and 2008, the LDF and CODEIN along with the Mayor of Laredo and the Nuevo Laredo Mayor worked to form the industrial promotional effort known as Region Laredo. Region Laredo has a logo and is used by the LDF as it markets Los Dos Laredos to industrial prospects considering Laredo's Region. As the LDF recognizes, any maquiladora or warehouse that set up in Nuevo Laredo, ultimately benefit Laredo and Webb County. An example of the collaborative LDF/Nuevo Laredo effort was the 2010, 200,000 sq. ft. expansion of Medline and the 2008 Rheem expansion which saw them building a new 400,000 sq. ft. water heater manufacturing plant in the Oradel Industrial Park. The Rheem expansion continues to bring benefits to Los Dos Laredos in the way of 5 new suppliers to Region Laredo. A long-term goal of the LDF is to continue working with Laredo Community College and Texas A&M International University to be sure they continue to train the Laredo workforce of the future. The LDF will continue to collaborate with the City to develop more effective funding mechanisms for economic development which will help make Laredo more competitive.

**Texas A&M International University Small Business Development Center (TAMIU SBDC):**

Established in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration to assist new and existing entrepreneurs with their business needs, SBDC leads the economic development planning and delivery of highly effective counseling and training services to small businesses in Webb, Zapata, and Jim Hogg Counties. Staff is professionally trained to work closely with small business owners and to provide services that help such businesses achieve long-term growth and profitability. Some services include: accounting, bookkeeping, business planning, capital acquisition, franchising, financial analysis, human resources, international trade, innovated research, marketing and advertising, minority enterprise development, OSHA/workplace safety, SBA loan programs, strategic planning, tax issues, and workforce development.

**Teaching and Mentoring Communities (formerly known as Texas Migrant Council, Inc (TMC):**

TMC, headquartered in Laredo, Texas, administers human services programs in 8 states: Texas, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, New Mexico, Iowa, Oklahoma and Nevada. The mission of TMC is to help children and families in emerging communities by creating opportunities for advancement through education, training and other resources in collaboration with public and private partners.

In Laredo, TMC operates a Migrant Seasonal Head Start program for the education of the children of migrant workers, administers the Texas Early Education Model in partnership with the community and administers the Healthy Marriage Development Program which consists of eight education workshops throughout the community and manages the Laredo-Webb County Safe Haven program. Also, TMC honors the future of the nation, its children, every April 30<sup>th</sup> by hosting Dia de los Niños events in the communities it services, with Laredo holding the largest celebration each year. TMC has numerous project partners within the Laredo service area which include Laredo Independent School District, United Independent School District, Laredo Community College, Texas A&M International University, and private child care centers. These partners contribute classroom space, expertise in curriculum, recruitment of teachers to participate in and supplies for the TEEM program. Also,



the Webb County judiciary community, which includes the District Courts, the District Attorney, the Justice of the Peace Courts, the County Attorney and the Webb County Sheriff plus the County Judge and the Mayor of Laredo serve as the Safe Haven programs strongest allies. Through the various programs, TMC expects to assist 100,000 adults and children annually for the next five years.

In an effort to reduce the incidence of poverty, the City will continue to support, contingent on the availability of funding, the efforts of the Laredo Development Foundation, the Downtown Merchants Association, the Visitors and Convention Bureau and other third party agencies, to promote the City of Laredo and encourage commercial and industrial development

Implement infrastructure projects and other public improvements that serve to attract and maintain industry.

Make applications to the Economic Development Administration as well as other state and federal agencies in support of projects which help promote commercial and residential development in presently underdeveloped areas of the City.

Support a minority outreach program and utilize minority small business contractors as deemed possible in the award of all infrastructure and housing construction and rehabilitation contracts

Adhere with the Section 3 requirements of the CDBG program.

Support the efforts of the Laredo Family Economic Success Coalition. The Coalition provides outreach services such as financial literacy/education, free income tax assistance, asset building, workforce development, and promotion of Federal tax benefits. These services are recognized ways of fighting poverty and starting families toward self sufficiency, becoming home owners, and obtaining financial well-being.

The goal of the Laredo Family Economic Success Coalition's (LFESC) is to help low-income residents build assets and become financially independent by the promotion of asset development and financial literacy initiatives. One of the primary asset development initiatives the coalition promotes is the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. LFESC members include the Azteca Economic Development and Preservation Corporation, the city of Laredo Community Development Department, U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Laredo Area Community Foundation, Laredo Independent School District, the Laredo Public Library, the Workforce Solutions for South Texas Board, Texas A&M International University, United Independent School District, Laredo Community College, Laredo Federal Credit Union, and Goodwill Industries. The LFESC is a nonprofit coalition and has obtained grant funds to help enhance its initiatives.

1. In order to successfully address the housing needs of the community, it is imperative that the City maintain a positive working relationship with other public and private agencies and institutions. To this end, the City will continue to maintain an open door policy to encourage, as well as strengthen lines of communication between the various entities. Ensuring that local and national objectives are being met involves not only effective monitoring practices, but also collaboration with community partners. The City collaborates with a complex and diverse network of partners for the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs. These partners, a majority of whom carry out the activities proposed in the Plan, include Community Development

Housing Organizations, non-profit organizations, housing developers, social service providers, and private financial institutions. The City recognizes collaborative efforts as one of the cornerstones of successful community development.

### **Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Coordination (91.315 (k))**

- 1. (States only) Describe the strategy to coordinate the Low-income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) with the development of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income families.**

**3-5 Year Strategic Plan LIHTC Coordination response:**

**N/ A**

### **NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS**

#### **Specific Special Needs Objectives (91.215)**

- 1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve over a specified time period.**
- 2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the strategic plan.**

**3-5 Year Non-homeless Special Needs Analysis response:**

- 1. Listed below are the priorities identified and specific objectives which the City of Laredo hopes to pursue within the next 5 years.**
  - a. Expand accessible housing and non-housing opportunities for persons with disabilities**
    - 1.) Rehab of housing.** A priority for the City of Laredo is to create a barrier free environment for its special needs population, and this can be accomplished, in part, through modifying, renovating, and retrofitting their current living environments. As explained earlier, the City is taking steps toward this end through the changes it has made to its Housing Rehabilitation Policies and Procedures Manual. One of the changes included the initiation of a Livability Grant, which modifies homes for handicapped accessibility. These modifications include, but are not limited to the conversion of restrooms with bath tubs into shower stalls with grab bars, the installation of ADA approved commodes, the installation of wider doors to accommodate wheelchairs, and the installation of ramps to the homes for ease of access. Another measure that the City proposes to undertake is the construction of ADA accessible sidewalks in CDBG eligible areas. These improvements would help increase the mobility of the elderly and handicapped population. It is anticipated that 25 housing units will be rehabbed/retrofitted within the next 5 years.

- 2.) Public improvements. The City will reconstruct sidewalks to make them accessible to persons with physical disabilities. It is proposed that 50 sidewalks will be reconstructed to provide for handicap ramps and removal of obstructions. In addition, the City will design and construct recreational centers/parks to meet the need of individuals who are visually/hearing impaired, autistic, confined to a wheelchair, and or elderly. It is anticipated that 2 new recreation centers will be completed within the next 5 years.
- 3.) Support, design, implement, and maintain programs and services which impact special needs populations including those who are elderly, test positive for HIV, suffer from mental illness and/or mental retardation and other special needs as may be identified in cooperation with local special need providers as identified below.

2. The following narratives describe how local private sector resources will be utilized to address the special needs of non-homeless residents of our community. Some of the service agencies, among other things, will continue to be providing services in regard to drug and alcohol abuse. They will also be providing opportunities for recent parolees to transition into the work environment, and be providing services for our youth, elderly, and handicapped person's health, welfare, and nutritional needs.

**Asociación Pro Servicios Sociales, Inc. / Centro Aztlan:**

For 35 years, APSS, Inc. /Centro Aztlan have, and continue to provide a myriad of social services to the Laredo area community in the form of immigration counseling and form completion. Through this project the consumer receives answers to his/her questions related to immigration. Approximately 3,500 individuals annually will benefit from the combined services offered through APSS, Inc. /Centro Aztlan. service.

**Azteca Economic Development and Preservation Corporation (AEDPC):**

AEDPC refers tenants for services to agencies such as: MHMR, STACADA, Legal Aid, the Salvation Army, and El Concilio, depending on their needs. Services rendered by these agencies include: marriage counseling, alcohol/drug abuse, and financial counseling for payment of utilities. AEDPC is currently disseminating financial information. Brochures include contact information and guidance on establishing good credit, bankruptcy, identity theft prevention, credit repair, and other basic financial information.

**Border Region Community Center (MHMR):**

MHMR is funded by both the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) and The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and will continue to operate several programs that provide temporary housing and support services to persons who are mentally challenged. MHMR serves approximately 3,100 clients (adults and children) per year. MHMR is allocated an estimated annual budget of approximately \$13.4 million. Their funding for Mental Retardation is received from DADS (approximately \$2.2 million) and funding for Mental Health Services is received from the DSHS (approximately \$5.1 million). Additional funding comes from: the Federal General Revenue Fund (\$742,047), Medicaid Earned Revenue (\$4.4 million), Medicare Part B (\$152,000), and other revenues. MHMR was awarded a PATH grant through the Texas Homeless Network for \$126,292 to provide outreach services to mentally ill, homeless persons. MHMR will seek further funding to continue the provision of services.

**Bethany House of Laredo, Inc. (Bethany):**

Bethany House serves meals to the indigent, veterans, needy, elderly, and disabled of Laredo. They also provide a meal delivery service to the homebound.

Nonperishable food items, clothing items, food, emergency shelter and/or basic life amenities are provided for anyone in need. Bethany House anticipates that more than 150,000 individuals will receive services on an annual basis.

Bethany House prepares more than 2000 meals daily and on holidays. Bethany House also provides meal delivery service of over 600 meals in West, South and North Laredo five days a week and includes both breakfast and lunch. During the summer and on Saturdays throughout the year, meals are prepared for children participating in the "*Luz de Esperanza*" program. Other children's meal preparations include the "*Kids Cafe*" Program at seven public housing community centers, where 1000 hot meals are prepared weekly for after-school projects throughout the year. Bethany House's Learning Center provides 50 children's breakfast and lunch each Saturday throughout the year. Volunteers provide basic tutoring assistance and/or cultural enrichment demonstrations or tours to other art or music programs and exhibits for approximately 50 students. More than 44,200 children's meals are prepared during the year.

Bethany House serves as a distribution center for daily requests for nonperishable food and beverage items as needed from the BH Food Pantry and also serves as a site for the "*Good Sam*" Program. Recipients receive a 30-lb bag of food items once a month. The Bethany House also provides clothing and household items free of charge for families in crisis and indigent school children as requested by agencies, pastors and/or school officials. Twice a year Bethany House partners with more than 25 other nonprofit and government agencies to hold a community health service fair where anyone can receive medical services, mental health, legal, housing and social services free of charge. Participants also receive 30-lb. bags of nonperishable food and beverage items. Free haircuts are offered.

New programs which are free include "School Uniforms" and "School Shoes" Programs to provide school uniforms and school shoes for indigent school children as requested by principals, counselors and/or school nurses

**Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Laredo-Webb County:**

The Mission of the CAC is to break the cycle of child abuse through intervention in a child-sensitive environment. With community support, this goal is accomplished through a collaborative partnership of CAC Staff, child protective services, legal, law enforcement, medical and other private sector organizations.

The CAC, a non-profit organization, was established to keep child victims of sexual and physical abuse from being re-victimized by the system. The Center provides services to the City, both Webb and Zapata Counties, and other areas, as necessary. All services are provided on a referral system and children 3 to 17 years of age can be served.

CAC programs include: Forensic Interviews -conducted by a specialized trained professional to capture facts about an alleged abuse on video; the Multidisciplinary Review Team (MDT) - consisting of law enforcement, child protective services, CAC staff, medical and psychiatric service providers, and County Attorney as well as District Attorney. The MDT reviews cases for charges and prosecution; Medical Referrals - scheduled for children needing care due to an alleged abuse;

Psychological Assessment and Therapy - provided to children and their non-offending family members; Victims Services -providing assistance in completing and submitting a victim's compensation application for cost reimbursements on crime related expenses; Child Advocacy and Court School Training Services - providing support and accompaniment to children who must appear in court due to the alleged crime against the victim.

In addition to the above mentioned services, CAC also has a Domestic Violence Program which provides counseling and therapy to mothers and children that have been victimized, and a community outreach program which provides information and training on child abuse issues as well as CAC programs and services to community and civic groups such as first responders as school principals, teachers, counselors, and law enforcement officers. Additional therapy programs include the following: play therapy, art therapy, and pet therapy for the child victims and regularly scheduled parent support sessions for the non-offending adult family members. Approximately 1,000 children and parents will benefit from services provided at CAC.

For FY's 10-15 the CAC is anticipating funding in the following amounts:

Fiscal Year	Local Funding	State Funding	Federal Funding (Other than HUD Entitlement)	Other Funding	Total Funding
2010-2011	\$168,300	\$136,780	\$174,525	\$220,131	\$699,736
2011-2012	\$171,666	\$139,516	\$178,015	\$224,494	\$713,691
2012-2013	\$175,099	\$142,306	\$181,576	\$228,944	\$727,924
2013-2014	\$178,601	\$145,152	\$185,207	\$233,482	\$742,443
2014-2015	\$182,173	\$148,055	\$188,911	\$238,112	\$757,252

#### **HIV Infected Individuals:**

The City's Health Department HIV/AIDS/STD Program is now known as the Laredo Education Testing Services (LETS) Program in order to protect the privacy of infected individuals and for those seeking HIV/AIDS/STD related services. LETS operates the following programs/services: Evidence-Based Interventions, Protocol Based Counseling (PBC), Client Risk Counseling Services (CRCS), Early Intervention Services (Ryan White Title II & State Services grants), Ryan White Title IV, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). These programs/services are funded through the Department of State Health Sources and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). In July of 2008, an STD Clinic was established within the program. The STD clinic is the only service that is funded 100% with local funds.

Evidence-Based Interventions include individual or community level interventions primarily targeting high-risk populations such as intravenous drug users (IDU), men who have sex with men (MSM) and high risk female/male heterosexuals (FMH). These interventions are provided by HIV health educators and outreach workers

whose focus is to reduce specific risk behaviors and provide opportunities to practice relevant skills.

The Protocol Based Counseling approach to HIV testing was a pilot-project the City embarked on during Fiscal year 2003-2004. The City, among other cities like McAllen, Dallas, and Ft. Worth were selected to test the program, which was then mandated to become implemented throughout Texas. PBC provides individual HIV/STD/Hepatitis C counseling sessions. These sessions are provided by the HIV Risk Reduction Specialists and address specific client risk factors. Their staff also administers HIV tests. A new service offered under the PBC component is HIV Rapid testing. HIV Rapid testing services allow for staff to provide HIV results within 15 minutes versus the standard two week period under the more traditional method. Client Risk Counseling Services consist of individual counseling session(s) targeting the same populations mentioned above. These sessions are provided by an HIV case manager to promote the adoption and maintenance of behaviors by clients with multiple, complex problems and risk-reduction needs. These sessions are intensive direct interventions.

The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program is designed to meet the housing needs of low-income individuals with HIV/AIDS related disease. Services provided include short-term and long-term tenant-based rental assistance, assistance with shared housing arrangements, mortgage payments, and utility payments. These services are provided by HIV caseworkers.

The STD Clinic is designed to screen, test and provide treatment for sexually transmitted diseases (STD). The service is provided by a registered nurse, nurse practitioner and is under the supervision of a physician.

A total of 6,861 individuals are projected to benefit from the LETS program in FY 2009-2010 and a total of 34,305 are expected to benefit from the LETS program in FY's 2010-2015.

**Laredo Housing Authority (LHA):**

LHA plans to continue promoting self-sufficiency of our families and individuals. The purpose of the program is to reduce the dependency of low-income families on welfare assistance or any Federal, State, local, rent or home ownership subsidies. LHA will provide or attract supportive services that include child care, transportation, education, job training and employment counseling, substance/alcohol abuse treatment/counseling, household skills training, employment survival skill training and money management. This topics help to improve a recipients' employability, increase independence for the elderly and for families with members suffering from a disability. LHA will continue working with current partners LHA through their executed inter-agency agreements and new partners will be recruited.

**Laredo-Webb County Community Action Agency (CAA):**

The Webb County Community Action Agency works to better focus available local, state, private, and federal resources to assist low-to-moderate income individuals and families in acquiring useful skills, knowledge, and to gain access to new opportunities, and ultimately achieve some level of self-sufficiency. WCCAA has two Nutrition Programs. The Elderly Nutrition Program provides warm nutritious meals to persons 55 years or older who meet low-income eligibility requirements, and who attend and participate in activities at the different neighborhood centers/"concilios". The Meals-On-Wheels Program services clients who are screened and qualified by the



Texas Department of Aging (TXDADS). Their program delivers warm noon meals to homebound elderly, disabled, and handicapped persons. Meals are served 7 days of the week. Through the home delivery service, homebound clients are assured of a nutritious meal, plus there is an added benefit of contact with the client in order to minimize isolation.

The Webb County Community Action Agency also provides Social Services Programs. The Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) is essentially a utility assistance program which involves client Case Management, Co-pay Assistance, Energy Crisis Assistance, Elderly /Disabled Assistance for light bills, and Heating and Cooling Assistance. Activities involve the payment of a client's bills, propane gas, filling up of propane tanks, and replacing and/or retro-fitting heating and cooling appliances that may be old and hence are creating a high energy cost for a client. The objective of the program is to help the client achieve a comfortable level of energy efficiency. The clients must meet certain eligibility requirements as per State/Federal Guidelines. Documentation required is to obtain income statements from clients, as well as other ID and residency criteria.

**Serving Children and Adolescents in Need, Inc. (SCAN):**

SCAN administers a total of 23 different programs in Webb County, with most geared towards substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment, and services for youth in at-risk situations. SCAN operates the only Emergency Youth Shelter in a hundred and fifty mile radius for runaways and homeless youth. This shelter provides temporary residential services for up to 90 days for 16 children and adolescents who are in crisis because they are victims of abuse or neglect, domestic violence, running away from home, homelessness, or at imminent risk of homelessness. The shelter provides a safe, structured environment and counseling services.

SCAN also operates a 24-hour hotline for at-risk youths. Youth at SCAN Emergency Youth Shelter receive additional services through the following SCAN programs: Runaway and Homeless Youth Program and the Corazon Street Outreach Program addresses the issues affecting homeless youth by conducting street-based outreach services in the evenings and weekends and providing residential services for homeless youth. SCAN operates the only transitional living program called Arco Iris Transitional Living Program in a hundred and fifty mile radius for homeless youth. This facility provides residential services for 12 youth between the ages of 16 through 23 for up to eighteen months. The STAR Program provides youth and families with guidance and support through the provision of free counseling, case management, and education services. Eligible participants include youth between the ages of 7 to 17 who are first time offenders, runaways, and youth experiencing family conflicts. The Sexual Assault and Information Program (SASI) provides crisis intervention services to victims of rape or sexual assault. The Border Trauma Program provides intensive counseling to address trauma issues with these youth. STAND Outpatient Program provides substance abuse treatment for those youth that are substance abusers. Youth Recovery Home Program and Esperanza Recovery Home provide residential drug treatment for those youth that are chemically dependent. The C-STAR Program provides evidence based outpatient substance abuse treatment for transitioning youth between the ages of 17-24. El Hogar Para Todos Program provides evidence based outpatient substance abuse treatment and HIV prevention for homeless adults. Futuros Sin Limitacion Program provides evidence based outpatient substance abuse treatment for reentry populations. BEEP Program provides evidence based outpatient substance abuse treatment and HIV prevention services for adults. Futuros Saludables Peer to Peer Recovery Program



provides peer-to-peer recovery support services to promote recovery, reduce relapse, and intervene early when relapse occurs for adults and adolescents. Serenidad Recovery Home Program and Serenidad Women's Recovery Home Program provided evidence based residential substance abuse treatment for those adults that are chemically dependent. Llave al Futuro Program provides integrated substance abuse, HIV, and hepatitis prevention and related services to minority populations in Webb County including adult and adolescent reentry populations and at-risk youth. FASD Program provides comprehensive fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) prevention services to adolescent and adult female participants in selected SCAN drug intervention and treatment programs. PACT Program provides early drug prevention services to students at selected elementary schools, utilizing the PATHS Curriculum to help students develop social and emotional competencies and to reduce aggression and behavioral problems. Adult relatives of students are provided the opportunity to participate in prevention education sessions. Webb County Community Coalition provides community-wide substance abuse prevention services. Futuros Sin Barreras provides evidence based drug prevention services to youth between the ages of 10 to 17 who have experienced traumatic life events such as child abuse; domestic, school or community violence; the loss of a loved one; imprisonment of a family member; a family breakup; etc. by using *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)*. Juntos Podemos Program provides comprehensive substance abuse and HIV prevention and related services to adult Hispanic females. Services consist of evidence-based substance abuse and HIV prevention education, prevention counseling, case management, and referrals to community resources.

**The South Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (STCADA):**

The South Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse is a community-based, non-profit outpatient and referral agency providing substance abuse prevention, intervention, education, and treatment services to the general population of Laredo and Catchment Area 3 of South Texas (part of Public Health Region 11). The organization was established as the local state authority on substance abuse for screening and assessment and treatment services in December of 1990. On December 5, 2010 STCADA will celebrating 20 years of service to the community.

The present STCADA budget is \$3.4 million a year. Substance Abuse Treatment Programs include the Outpatient Counseling Services for adults and adolescents, *Mi Tierra*, a specialized program for women with children, , Webb County Drug Court (406<sup>th</sup> District Court), Federal Probation Pre-Trial and Probationers, Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Outpatient Counseling, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services – Child Protective Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Counseling, Family Counseling, and Parenting Classes.

Other programs include *Voces Fronterizas*, a program providing education, prevention and intervention services about HIV/AIDS, and HEI (HIV Early Intervention) programs.

In addition, STCADA offers a variety of Substance Abuse Prevention Programs. These are youth programs that provide prevention and intervention services in schools and at community agencies such as Job Corps and local community centers in the Laredo Housing Authority project areas.

STCADA also provides the opportunity to work with staff on professional state licensure through its Clinical Training Institute-a state issued license. Since inception, STCADA has strived to bring research-proven effectiveness to agency services and programs. Our goal is to expand these community services and keep them on the

cutting edge of prevention and treatment expertise in order to provide the most effective intervention and to maintain cooperative relationships with all social service agencies.

**Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC):**

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) oversees the operations of the health and human services system, provides administrative oversight of Texas health and human services programs, and provides direct administration of some programs. HHSC operates with an annual budget of \$30 billion and 9,300 employees. HHSC oversees the Texas health and human services system, which is composed of five agencies: Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

The programs administered by HHSC include: Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Stamps and Nutritional Programs, Family Violence Services, Refugee Services, and Disaster Assistance.

HHSC functions include: Eligibility Determination, System Planning and Evaluation Policy Development and Rule-making, Fraud and Abuse Prevention and Detection Border Affairs, Early Childhood Coordination, and Ombudsman Services.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>FY 2009 Funding</b>	<b>Increase</b>
HHSC	\$30 billion (\$11.7 billion GR)	2.5 percent all funds
DADS	\$11.3 billion (\$4.5 billion GR)	6.9 percent all funds
DSHS	\$5.2 billion (\$2.6 billion GR)	3.6 percent all funds
DFPS	\$2.6 billion (\$1 billion GR)	17.2 percent all funds
DARS	\$1.2 billion (\$215 million GR)	11.5 percent all funds

The Strategic plan for 2009-2013 is located on their website.

**Non-homeless Special Needs (91.205 (d) and 91.210 (d))  
Analysis (including HOPWA)**

\* Please also refer to the Non-homeless Special Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

- 1. Estimate, to the extent practicable, the number of persons in various subpopulations that are not homeless but may require housing or supportive services, including the elderly, frail elderly, persons with disabilities (mental, physical, developmental, persons with HIV/ AIDS and their families), persons with alcohol or other drug addiction, victims of domestic violence, and any other categories the jurisdiction may specify and describe their supportive housing needs. The jurisdiction can use the Non-Homeless Special Needs Table (formerly Table 1B) of**

**their Consolidated Plan to help identify these needs.**

**\* Note: HOPWA recipients must identify the size and characteristics of the population with HIV/ AIDS and their families that will be served in the metropolitan area.**

- 2. Identify the priority housing and supportive service needs of persons who are not homeless but may or may not require supportive housing, i.e., elderly, frail elderly, persons with disabilities (mental, physical, developmental, persons with HIV/ AIDS and their families), persons with alcohol or other drug addiction by using the Non-homeless Special Needs Table.**
- 3. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.**
- 4. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.**
- 5. To the extent information is available, describe the facilities and services that assist persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, and programs for ensuring that persons returning from mental and physical health institutions receive appropriate supportive housing.**
- 6. If the jurisdiction plans to use HOME or other tenant based rental assistance to assist one or more of these subpopulations, it must justify the need for such assistance in the plan.**

**3-5 Year Non-homeless Special Needs Analysis response:**

- 1. Please refer to the Non-homeless Special Needs Table. Estimated needs for the number of persons in various subpopulations that are not homeless but may require housing or supportive services was obtained from various sources, including the South Texas Development Council (STDC) and Border Region MHMR Community Center (MHMR).**
- 2. The priority housing and supportive service needs of persons who are not homeless but may or may not require supportive housing are noted below:**
  - a. Affordable rental housing for all sub populations of Special Need is a top priority.**
  - b. Affordable housing for persons with physical disabilities.**
  - c. Group and supervised housing for persons with alcohol and other drug addictions.**
  - d. Supportive housing for persons with severe mental illness.**
  - e. Affordable, supportive housing for elderly persons.**
- 3. Priorities were set based on the number of facilities and services available in the community and estimated need as reported by local service providers.**
- 4. Obstacles to meeting underserved needs center on the following:**
  - a. Oftentimes, the Special Needs Populations go un-identified and/or un reported.**
  - b. Resources both public and private to address the needs of Special Needs populations are limited and often times provided through a competitive application process. Non-profit organizations and other private sector entities**

may not have the grant writing ability and/or resources to successfully compete for funds.

5. The City will continue to work with organization whose facilities provide services that assist persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, and programs to ensure that persons returning from mental and physical health institutions receive appropriate supportive housing as entities listed below:

**Serving Children and Adolescents in Need, Inc. (SCAN)**

SCAN is a community-based, non-profit organization that administers comprehensive, culturally relevant, and developmentally appropriate services to children, adolescents, adults and their families. The agency has 25 programs that provide prevention, intervention, substance abuse treatment outpatient and residential treatment, emergency shelter services, victim assistance, and outreach services. The programs cover the continuum of services, which include prevention, intervention, treatment and after-care. SCAN operates an Emergency Youth Shelter for children ages 7 to 17 who are victims of child abuse, runaways, homeless youth, or at-risk youth.

The facility can house up to 16 youth and provides basic needs of food, shelter, safety and protection in a structured, homelike environment. Counseling services, case management and referral services are also provided to those staying at the shelter. SCAN provides transitional living services for homeless youth ages 17 through 21 through the Arco Iris Transitional Living Program. This program provides residential services for 6 female and 6 male homeless youth. Youth are provided with life skills training, case management services, referral services and assistance to further their education and or to find permanent employment so that they can become self-sufficient.

For FY2010-11, SCAN will provide services to more than 4,000 children, youth, adults and families. Additionally, SCAN provides residential drug treatment services for adolescents through Youth Recovery Home and Esperanza Recovery Home and for adults through the Serenidad Recovery Home Program and Serenidad Women's Recovery Home Program. Outpatient treatment services are provided for adolescents through the STAND Outpatient Program services are provided for adults through the Border Enhancement Project, Futuros Sin Limitaciones Program, Hogar Para Todos Program and C-STAR Program. Hogar Para Todos Program specifically assists homeless individuals that have a diagnosis of substance dependence.

**Children's Advocacy Center of Laredo - Webb County (CAC):**

The CAC, a non-profit organization, was established to keep child victims of sexual and physical abuse from being re-victimized by the system. The Center provides services to the City, both Webb and Zapata Counties, and other areas, as necessary. All services are provided on a referral system and children 3 to 17 years of age can be served.

CAC programs include: Forensic Interviews -conducted by a specialized trained professional to capture facts about an alleged abuse on video; the Multidisciplinary Review Team (MDT) - consisting of law enforcement, child protective services, CAC staff, medical and psychiatric service providers, and County Attorney as well as District Attorney. The MDT reviews cases for charges and prosecution; Medical Referrals - scheduled for children needing care due to an alleged abuse; Psychological Assessment and Therapy - provided to children and their non-offending

family members; Victims Services -providing assistance in completing and submitting a victim's compensation application for cost reimbursements on crime related expenses; Child Advocacy and Court School Training Services - providing support and accompaniment to children who must appear in court due to the alleged crime against the victim.

In addition to the above mentioned services, CAC also has a Domestic Violence Program which provides counseling and therapy to mothers and children that have been victimized, and a community outreach program which provides information and training on child abuse issues as well as CAC programs and services to community and civic groups as well as such first responders as school principals, teachers, counselors, and law enforcement officers. Additional therapy programs include the following: play therapy, and art therapy for the child victims and regularly scheduled parent support sessions for the non-offending adult family members. Approximately 1,000 children and parents will benefit from services provided at CAC.

**Centro de Servicios Sociales Aztlan (Centro Aztlan):**

For 35 years, APSS, Inc. /Centro Aztlan has, and continues to provide, a myriad of social services to the Laredo area community in the form of immigration counseling and form completion. Through this project the consumer receives answers to his/her questions related to immigration. Approximately 3,500 individuals will benefit from the combined services offered through APSS, Inc. /Centro Aztlan, this year alone. Anticipated revenue for 2010-2011 from bingo fundraisers is \$95,000, approximately \$30,000 from donations. A slight increase in donations of \$3000.00 per year is projected for the immigration program. It does not anticipate any preceived change in the revenue from the Bingo fundraisers

**St. Vincent De Paul Society (St. Vincent):**

St. Vincent will continue to administer the Tanis Valdez Village, Father Ed Kircher, and Villa San Luis, Section 202 housing projects, to provide housing to elderly and handicapped individuals. A total of 212 units are made available through these 3 housing projects located in Census Tracts 12, 15, and 17.03. St. Vincent's budget for is derived from HUD Section 8 housing assistance payments.

**LULAC Haven, Inc. (LULAC):**

LULAC Council 624 will continue to operate LULAC, a 48-unit housing project located in Census Tract 17.03. Of the 48 units available, 2 units are ADA accessible. All the units are made available to the elderly (62 years+) or to handicapped individuals. Residents are required to pay 30% of their incomes in rent.

**Border Region MHMR Community Center (MHMR):**

MHMR is funded by both the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) and The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and will continue to operate several programs that provide temporary housing and support services to persons who are mentally challenged. MHMR serves approximately 3,100 clients (adults and children) per year. For FY2010-2011, a budget of approximately \$13.4 million has been allocated to MHMR. Their funding for Mental Retardation is received from DADS (approximately \$2.2 million) and funding for Mental Health Services is received from the DSHS (approximately \$5.1 million). Additional funding comes from: the Federal General Revenue Fund (\$742,047), Medicaid Earned Revenue (\$4.4 million), Medicare Part B (\$152,000), and other revenues. MHMR was awarded a PATH grant through the Texas Homeless Network for \$126,292 to provide outreach services to mentally ill, homeless persons. MHMR was also awarded a grant

for FY2009-10 from the Texas Commission of Offenders with Mental Impairments for \$81,944; this grant assists parolees to access needed mental health services.

**Bethany House of Laredo, Inc. (Bethany House):**

Bethany House serves meals to the indigent, veterans, needy, elderly, and disabled of Laredo. They also provide a meal delivery service to the homebound, nonperishable food items, clothing items, food, emergency shelter and/or basic life amenities are provided for anyone in need. For 2010, Bethany House anticipates that more than 150,000 individuals will receive services. Over the next five years, Bethany House hopes to expand on the services that they already provide by increasing the number of meals provided at their site, and through their delivery service.

**Texas Health & Human Services Commission (HHSC):**

HHSC provides various programs to families and individuals of low-income. HHSC's benefits including Medicaid, Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Children's Health Insurance, and nursing home care and other services for people who are elderly or have disabilities.

These programs are state and federally funded.

- The Food Stamp Program helps low-income people buy food and groceries for good health. Qualified applicants must receive low wages, be unemployed, work a part-time job, receive welfare or another source of public assistance, be elderly or disabled, live on a small income, or be homeless.
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) provides assistance to families with dependent children or pregnant women to purchase any items other than just food. TANF has federal-time limits; assistance cannot be provided for more than 60 months.
- The Medicaid Program provides medical assistance to low-income citizens. Assistance is based on the age and income limits although the majority assisted are children, pregnant women, and the elderly or disabled.

**HIV Infected Individuals:**

The City's Health Department HIV/AIDS/STD Program operates the following programs/services: Evidence-Based Interventions, Protocol Based Counseling (PBC), Client Risk Counseling Services (CRCS), Early Intervention Services (Ryan White Title II & State Services grants), Ryan White Title IV, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). A more detailed description of services is providing in the Non homeless Special Needs Analysis Section.

**Dismas Charities, Inc. (Dismas):**

Dismas, a community corrections facility, is actively involved in alcohol and drug treatment, job training, homelessness, domestic violence intervention, early childhood development, mentoring to at-risk adolescents, and a vast array of other programs and services. Dismas Charities has the capacity to house males and females and length of stay ranges from 3 months to 1 1/2 years. They serve approximately 300 residents on a yearly basis. Residents take part in a work- release program. Camp Dismas allows incarcerated mothers to spend one weekend a month with their children, building and maintaining positive relationships between mother and child. Dismas also contracts with other agencies to provide HIV training at their facility. Dismas Charities is funded by the Bureau of Prisons. Over the next 5 years,



Dismas estimates that they will increase their capacity to house an additional 24 males. Their estimates are based on the increase of the U.S. Federal pre-trial court caseloads.

At this time, the City does not plan to use any HOME funds to assist the subpopulations in the plan.

## **Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)**

**\* Please also refer to the HOPWA Table in the Needs.xls workbook.**

- 1. The Plan includes a description of the activities to be undertaken with its HOPWA Program funds to address priority unmet housing needs for the eligible population. Activities will assist persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, such as efforts to prevent low-income individuals and families from becoming homeless and may address the housing needs of persons who are homeless in order to help homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. The plan would identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs and summarize the priorities and specific objectives, describing how funds made available will be used to address identified needs.**
- 2. The Plan must establish annual HOPWA output goals for the planned number of households to be assisted during the year in: (1) short-term rent, mortgage and utility payments to avoid homelessness; (2) rental assistance programs; and (3) in housing facilities, such as community residences and SRO dwellings, where funds are used to develop and/ or operate these facilities. The plan can also describe the special features or needs being addressed, such as support for persons who are homeless or chronically homeless. These outputs are to be used in connection with an assessment of client outcomes for achieving housing stability, reduced risks of homelessness and improved access to care.**
- 3. For housing facility projects being developed, a target date for the completion of each development activity must be included and information on the continued use of these units for the eligible population based on their stewardship requirements (e.g. within the ten-year use periods for projects involving acquisition, new construction or substantial rehabilitation).**
- 4. The Plan includes an explanation of how the funds will be allocated including a description of the geographic area in which assistance will be directed and the rationale for these geographic allocations and priorities. Include the name of each project sponsor, the zip code for the primary area(s) of planned activities, amounts committed to that sponsor, and whether the sponsor is a faith-based and/ or grassroots organization.**
- 5. The Plan describes the role of the lead jurisdiction in the eligible metropolitan statistical area (EMSA), involving (a) consultation to develop a metropolitan-wide strategy for addressing the needs of persons with HIV/ AIDS and their families living throughout the EMSA with the other jurisdictions within the EMSA; (b) the standards and procedures to be used to monitor HOPWA Program activities in order to**



**ensure compliance by project sponsors of the requirements of the program.**

**6. The Plan includes the certifications relevant to the HOPWA Program.**

**3-5 Year Strategic Plan HOPWA response:**

**N/ A** The City of Laredo does not receive HOPWA funds.

### **Specific HOPWA Objectives**

**1. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the strategic plan.**

**3-5 Year Specific HOPWA Objectives response:**

**N/ A** The City of Laredo does not receive HOPWA funds.

## **OTHER NARRATIVE**

**Include any Strategic Plan information that was not covered by a narrative in any other section.**