



Community Needs Assessment

2018

Webb County Community Action Agency

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I. Executive Summary

Webb County Community Action Agency (WCCAA) last performed a Community Assessment back in 2015. Under the umbrella of WCCAA are the following programs: Self Help Center, Elderly Nutrition Program, Meals on Wheels, El Aguila Rural Transportation, Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and Community Service Block Grant (CSBG).

Self Help Center, El Aguila Rural Transportation and Meals on Wheels are independent programs. However, CEAP and CSBG have four community centers and their administrative offices are located in downtown Laredo, TX.

Since 2015, WCCAA underwent a new administration and a relocation of administrative offices. On or about March 2017, the WCCAA administrative offices were temporarily moved from the present location to the Webb County Purchasing Department, in which offices were located in the same building. This move negatively affected morale, thus impacting the program's numbers as evidenced by having less customers applying for energy assistance.

On or about July 2017, WCCAA offices were relocated to Fernando Salinas Community Center. This center is located in Central Laredo, adjacent to the City of Laredo Health Department. It is located within two to three blocks from an elementary school. More importantly, the new location offers activities for the elderly and on specific days offers food for the indigent population. The new offices are found in an old neighborhood (barrio), making it more accessible to customers.

When WCCAA moved to its new home, within days, the Executive Director resigned, along with the Program Manager. These resignations again resulted in low morale and indirectly affected the population of the program; there were fewer customers seeking services. Perhaps this was the outcome of a program relocating two times in a less than seven month.

Although WCCAA was assigned an Interim Executive Director, it is evident that the lack of permanent leadership resulted in a lack of direction and a lack of long term planning. WCCAA failed to take a proactive approach to ensure that services were being provided to its primary population. One of the programs under Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) is the Transition Out of Poverty (TOP) program. It failed to meet its population thresholds. Furthermore, allotted funds for the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) were not being depleted on a timely manner. For this reason, CEAP funds for Calendar Year 2016 were carried over to Calendar Year 2017.

On November 6, 2017, WCCAA hired a new Executive Director. Under new leadership, WCCAA established Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with agencies within the community who also work with the indigent population. These MOUs allowed staff to be a network and collaborate with local community coalitions members who share the same goals and objectives as WCCAA.

In December 2017, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) conducted a program audit. The results of the audit showed there were no significant findings.

In February 2018, staff attended training on how to conduct a community needs assessment and strategic planning. On this same month, the Executive Director attended TACAA training.

In March 2018, three staff members attended "Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) training.

Since November 2017, there have been numerous staff development trainings. Some of the benefits of these trainings include: improved customer service skills by addressing organization standards; developed relationships with TDHCA staff; positive skills building; productive Advisory Board Meetings; successful subcommittee meetings; and proper skills on the planning and implementation of WCCAA Community Needs Assessment. Productivity workload measures and metric were established for case managers. This new tools serve as performance indicators for staff so that they can have monthly customer contact goals established in efforts to meet metrics each month.

It is critical to acknowledge that by strengthening community relationships with other social service agencies it has made a positive impact on staff, thus empowering them of their abilities and skills to enhance their perspective programs. Furthermore, identifying vocational or technical schools and partnering with them has been a treasure find for WCCAA.

The enclosed surveys, interviews with mental health professionals, health care administrators and other active players in the community has serve to identify the needs and reinforce the point that there are hardships in our community.

Below are the top five (5) needs as identified by our survey.

1. Health care/wellness
2. Family life skills
3. Affordable housing
4. Education
5. Employment.

It is with much pride that Webb County Community Action Agency submits its community assessment. Webb County Community Action Agency anticipates our findings will lead to improved planning, program implementation, and enhance our abilities to transition individuals out of poverty.

Appendixes are available upon request.

II. Requirements on Community Needs Assessment

Webb County Community Action Agency (WCCAA) receives funding for the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG). Under CSBG, WCCAA is required by law to conduct a community needs assessment. This law was passed by Congress in 1998. The requirements are that a need assessment be conducted every 3 years. The purpose of conducting a community needs assessment every 3 years is to identify if there are any significant changes in the community that may be affecting low income families. Overall, the outcome of this assessment leads to better planning and program implement for low income families.

WCCAA elected to utilize Texas Department of Housing Community Affairs (TDHCA) survey. WCCAA made minor adjustments to the survey that is available both in English and Spanish. The survey is user friendly; the page layout is designed front and back with one side being in English and the other in Spanish. Feedback from staff was requested and taken into consideration for this survey. In addition, the survey was made available electronically utilizing Survey Planet.

III. Organizational Profile

Webb County Community Action Agency (WCCAA) has been in existence since the War on Poverty began in the 1960s. At one time Webb County Head Start Program was under the Community Action Agency; however, this program was given an opportunity to independently be under the Governing Body of the Webb County Commissioners Court.

WCCAA has El Aguila Rural Transportation Program. This program is federally funded and provides transportation to citizens living in rural communities such as Rio Bravo, Oilton, El Cenizo, Bruni, Mirando and Aguilares. Citizens living in Colonias are eligible for transportation and frequently use El Aguila's services. El Aguila transports citizens to downtown Laredo, medical appointments, job sites and local colleges. It provides curbside service on demand for those who are handicapped and require wheelchair transportation. There is a fee for a one way or round trip.

Meals on Wheels is another federally funded program. It provides meals to senior citizens age sixty and above. However, these individuals must be Medicaid recipients. Meals are provided year round and are delivered via drivers. Meals on Wheels provides nutritional meals to participants who attend community centers. These meals are provided Mondays through Friday and it's an opportunity for them to receive a hot to warm meal. Nutritional meals are served to five community centers in Webb County.

Self Help Centers were established by the Texas Legislature in 1995. The goal of the Self Help Centers is to assist families on transforming their community into conventional neighborhoods. This is accomplished by supporting families on getting their home rehabilitated or in some instances provide families with the construction of a new home.

WCCAA has its social services, as well. It provides energy assistance via Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and Community Service Block Grant (CSBG). Both CEAP and CSBG staff are housed in community centers, making them accessible to families who reside in the Barrios.

WCCAA Self Help Center, CEAP and CSBG programs receive funds via TDHCA and must adhere to their rules and regulations.

WCCAA has its own governing board, Webb County Commissioners Court and an Advisory Board made up of individuals representing Commissioners Court, social service agencies and those elected by residents who reside in the same neighborhoods.

IV. Community Needs Assessment Results Overview

The graph below shows the total for each domain. Health and Social Behavioral Development, had the highest count with 1,928, followed by Housing with 1,530; third place is Assistance with 1,375.

Domain/ Category	Unanswered	Don't Know	Not Needed	Rarely Needed	Needed	Very Needed
Assistance	72	385	691	304	1478	1375
Employment	49	259	591	145	714	825
Education	52	350	752	205	1000	1085
Housing	76	464	764	286	1185	1530
Health and Social/ Behavioral Development	120	494	982	241	1401	1928
Income & Asset Building	26	177	314	120	497	588

A more in-depth review on the survey results (found on the following page), show

1. Health Insurance/Medical Care had a count of 340
2. Help finding a job with a living wage had 317
3. English as a Second Language had 294
4. Affordable Housing had 333
5. Assistance for elderly and disabled persons with chronic health conditions 341
6. Help with applying for Social Security, WIC and TANF had a total of 297

Selected above were the highest score from each domain, however, there are subsets within each domain that are common. For example, identified subsets with commonalities are services for the elderly; family counseling for adults and/or children; community needs such as affordable housing; and educational skills and employment.

The community needs mentioned above are reinforced by community stakeholders. Individuals interviewed were asked what they identified as being their biggest needs in their respective agencies. Needs identified were categorized by health care, education, employment, nutrition, housing, utility assistance and transportation.

A review of WCCAA's client satisfaction survey suggests that customers gave staff a high mark. They rated staff a 3.96, with a 4 being "extremely satisfied." There were no recommendations made by customers. The survey count was 232 ranging from January through April 2018.

Below is a copy of WCCAA's Needs Assessment instrument and scores for each subset.

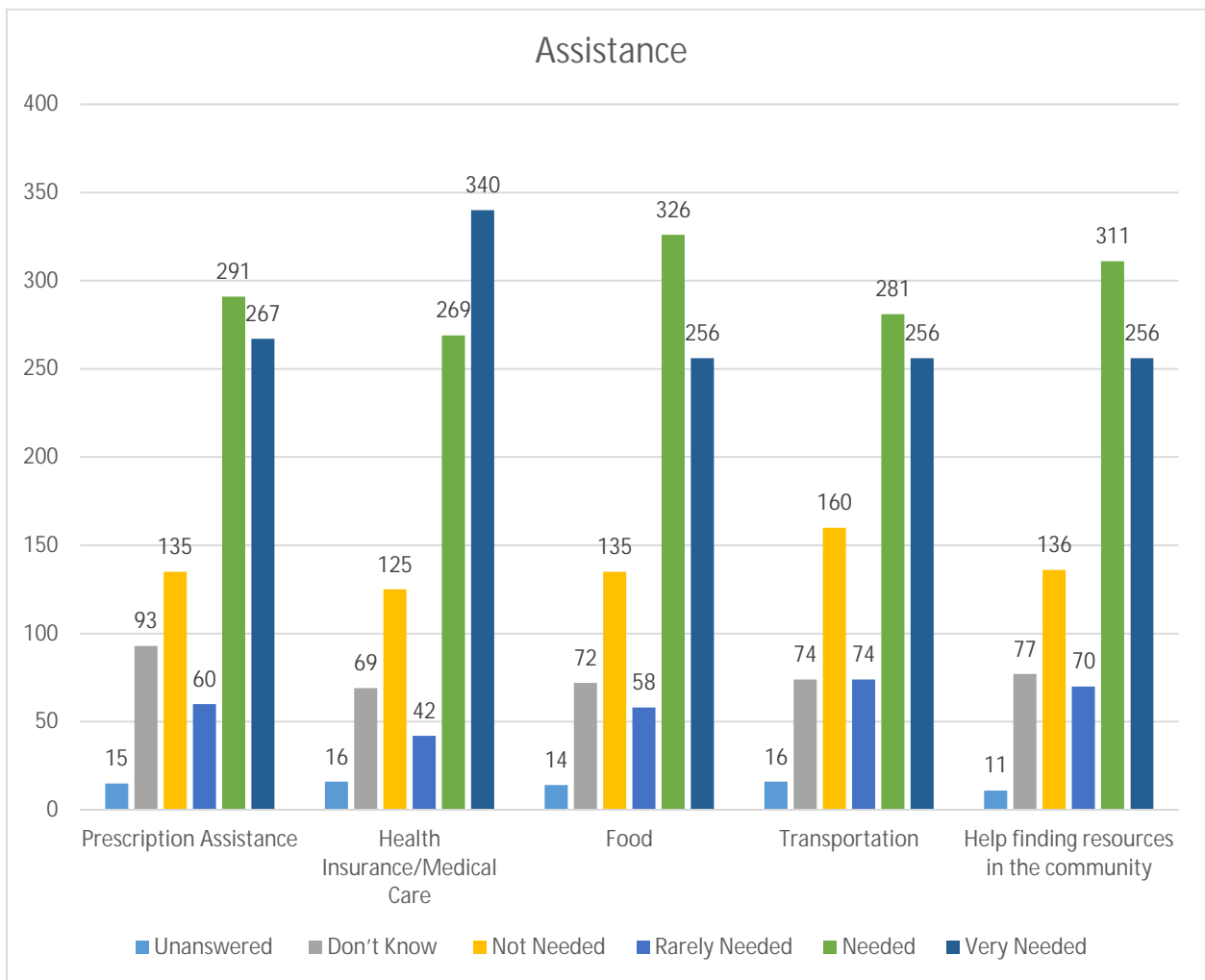
Official	Customer	Board Member	Unanswered	Resident	Other
12	233	7	57	371	181

For each item below, check the column that reflects your opinion on the community's need.

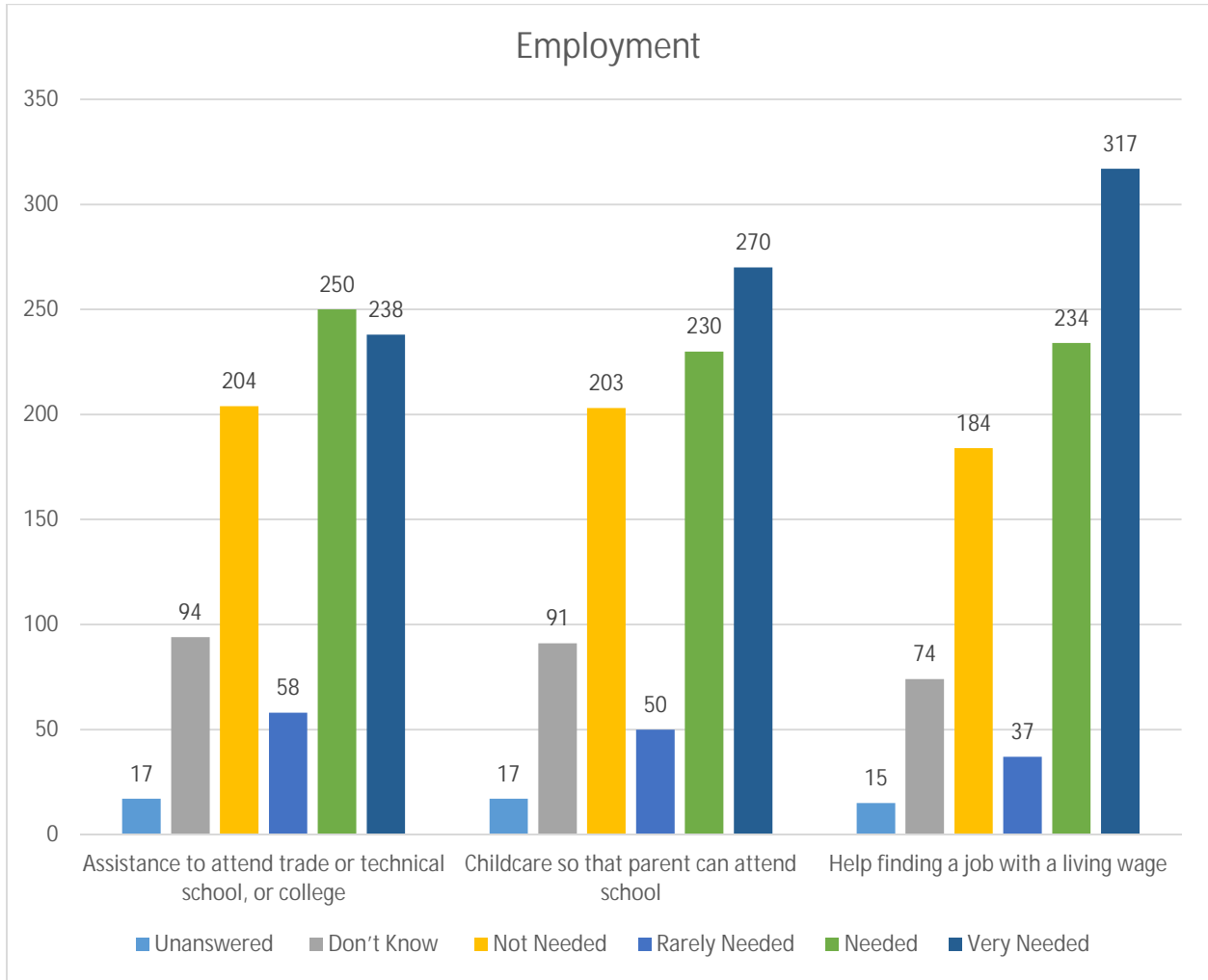
Domain/Category	Needs	Unanswered	Don't Know	Not Needed	Rarely Needed	Needed	Very Needed
Assistance	Prescription Assistance	15	93	135	60	291	267
	Health Insurance/Medical Care	16	69	125	42	269	340
	Food	14	72	135	58	326	256
	Transportation	16	74	160	74	281	256
	Help finding resources in the community	11	77	136	70	311	256
Employment	Assistance to attend trade or technical school, or college	17	94	204	58	250	238
	Childcare so that parent can attend school	17	91	203	50	230	270
	Help finding a job with a living wage	15	74	184	37	234	317
Education	GED classes	13	103	186	54	266	239
	English as a Second Language Classes	8	80	189	51	239	294
	Adult Education or Night School	14	94	202	50	231	270
	Computer Skills Training	17	73	175	50	264	282
Housing	Assistance with temporary shelter for homeless persons	19	108	191	35	219	289
	Affordable Housing	17	93	154	37	227	333
	Help paying rent	12	93	163	69	233	291
	Help with utility bills	13	82	124	71	251	320
	Help to make my home energy efficient (weatherization)	15	88	132	74	255	297
Health and Social/ Behavioral Development	Nutrition for children	18	82	174	40	235	312
	Nutrition for elderly	22	79	153	33	254	320
	Counseling for children	14	85	173	40	225	324
	Counseling for adults	24	78	171	45	222	321
	Programs and Activities for Seniors	20	85	162	41	243	310
	Assistance for elderly and disabled persons with chronic health conditions	22	85	149	42	222	341
Income & Asset Building	Financial Education/Budgeting Classes/Credit Counseling	17	91	154	58	250	291
	Help with applying for Social Security, WIC, TANF, etc.	9	86	160	62	247	297

Webb County Community Action Agency (WCCAA) made all efforts to capture the average customer who comes through our doors. In some instances, collaborating with agencies who serve low income families. The average person who participated in our survey defined themselves as residents of Webb County (371); customers of WCCAA (233); some individuals, for an unknown reasons, checked the Other (181) column. Individuals checking of "other" may have been college students, since we partner with our local university, who also participated in this survey. Results suggests that we had 57 persons who elected not to identify themselves. Lastly, we had 12 elected officials and seven Board Members participating in the survey, as well.

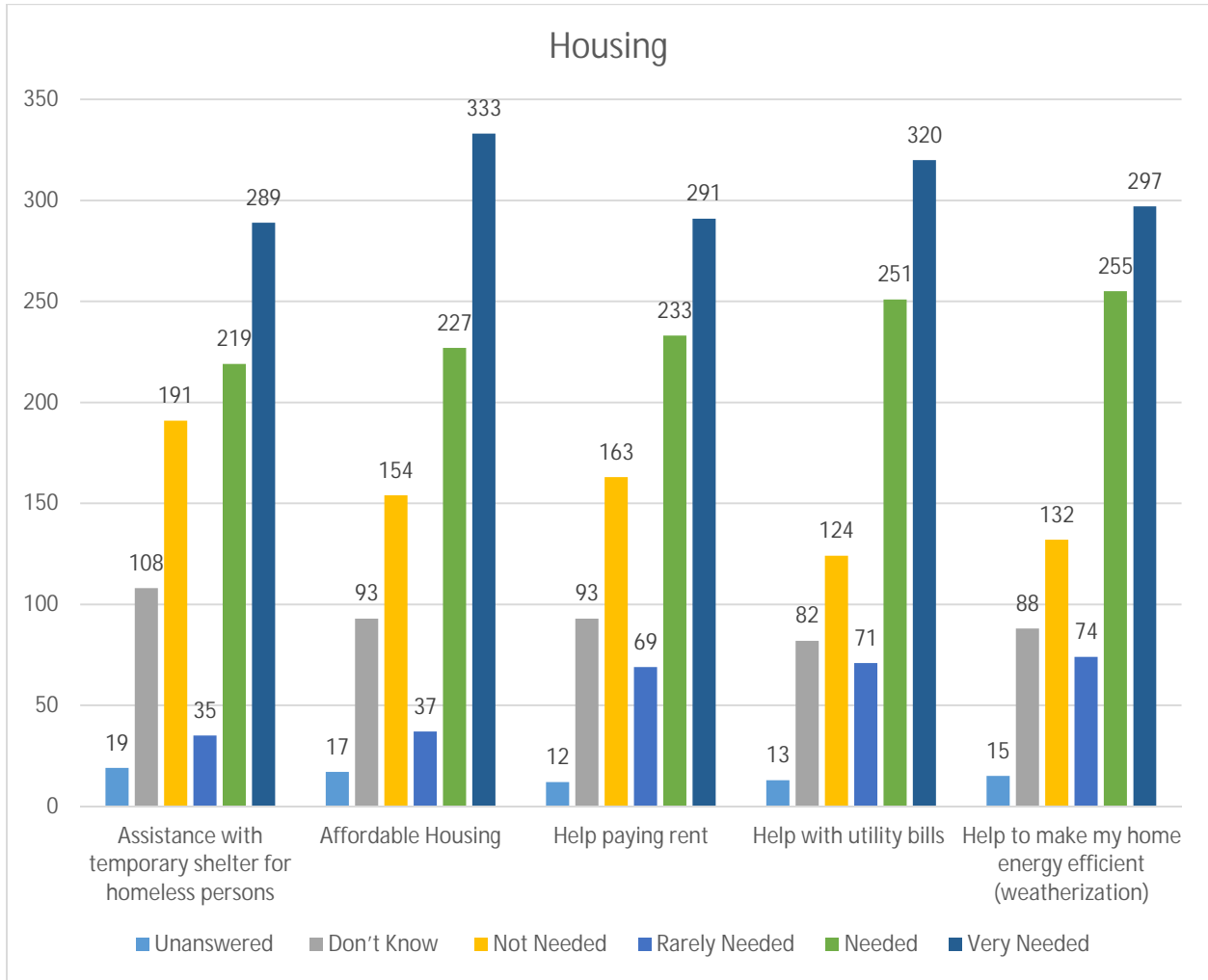
In total, WCCAA had 861 participants in our survey. Below are graphs for each Domain. These graphs represent a visual picture of our survey results.



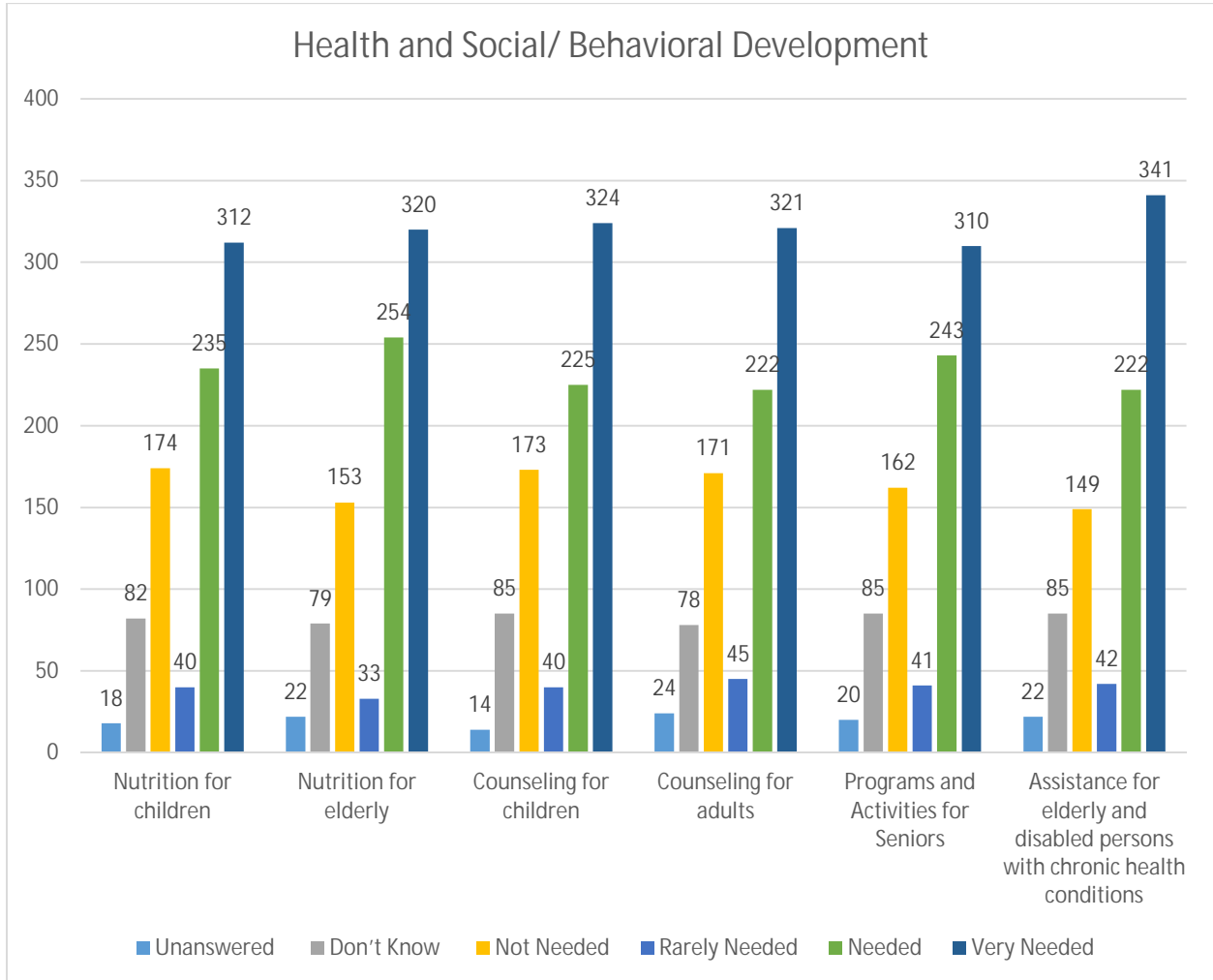
Continuation of WCCAA domains



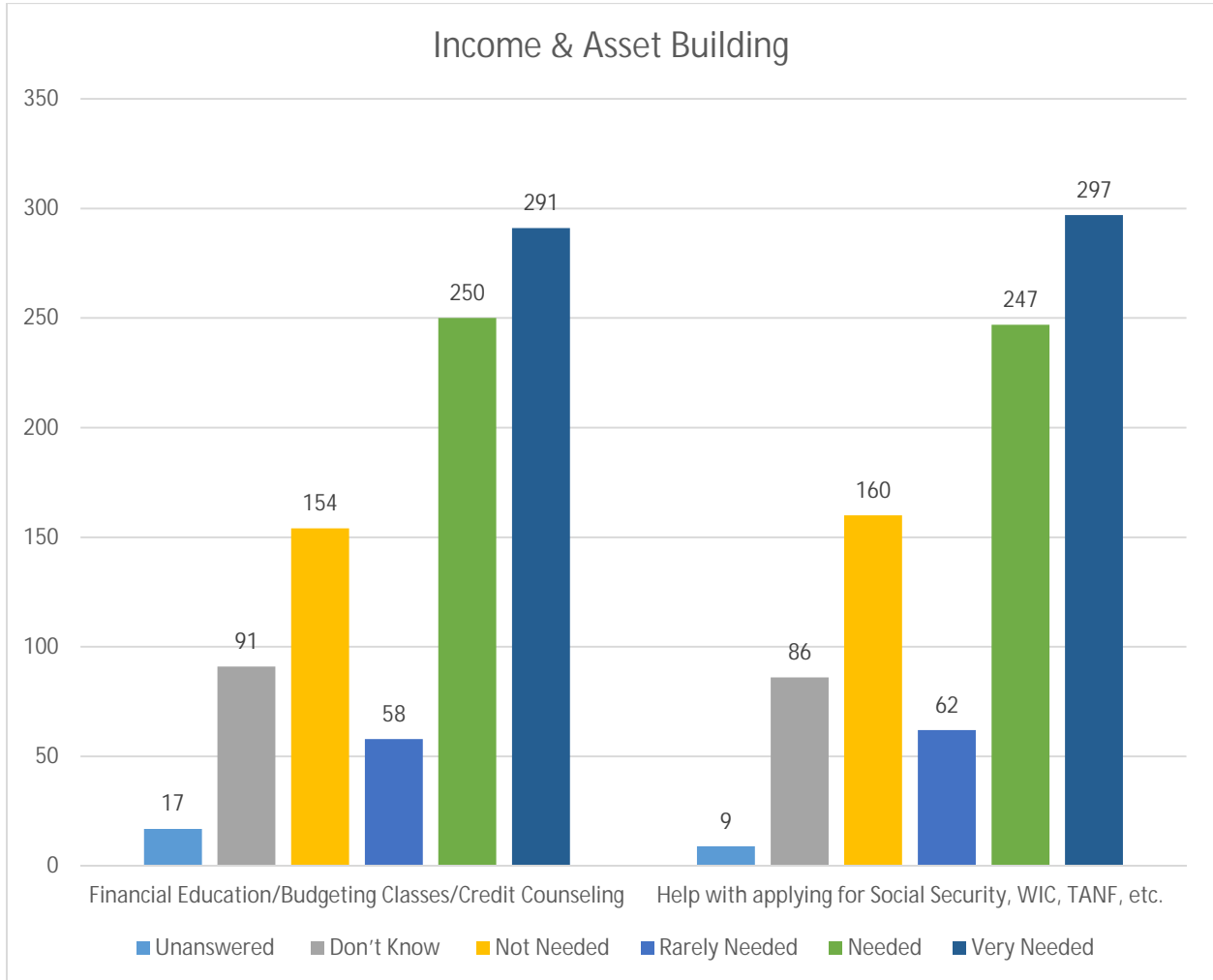
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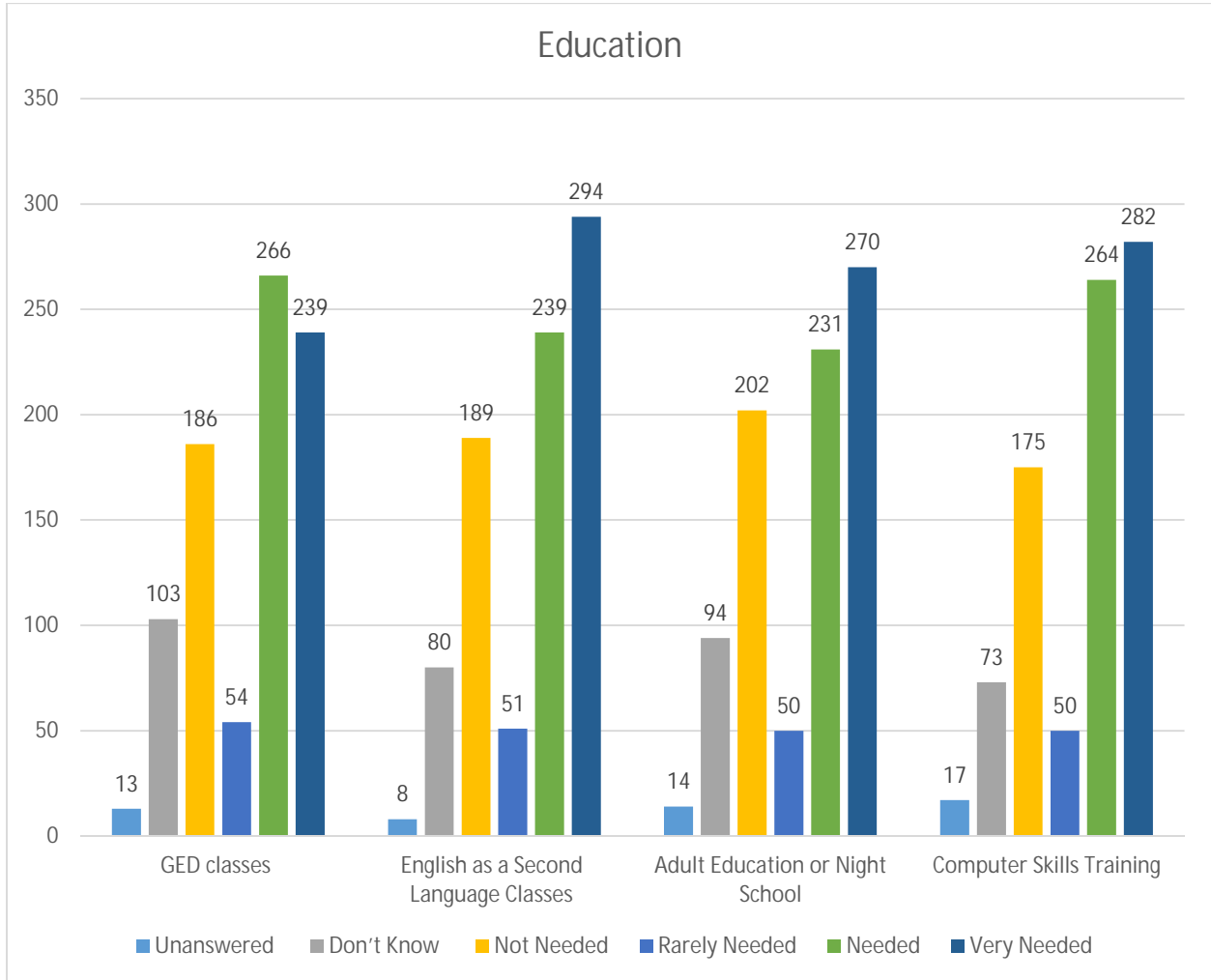
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Continuation of Domains



Continuation of Domains



V. Community Needs Assessment Process Overview

On Thursday, February 15, 2018, a Program Mangers meeting was held. One of the agenda topics was the discussion and implementation of WCCAA’s Needs Assessment. The survey was discussed and assignments were given to Program Managers.

Below is a timeline on how decisions were made and deadlines agreed on.

Timeline	Dates	Activity
2 Weeks	February 19 th – March 4 th	Planning, developing forms, community outreach
4 Weeks	March 5 th – April 1 st	Collecting data (quantitative data, surveying, interviews, forums, focus groups)
3 Weeks	April 2 nd – April 22 nd	Analyzing Data
	May 3 rd	Planning Committee Review and Approval
	May 16 th	Advisory Board Review and Approval
2 Weeks	April 23 rd – May 20 th	Preparing Report
	May 21 st – May 23 rd	Present Report to Board for approval
11 Weeks	February 19 th – May 20 th	Due to TDHCA June 1 st
	May 29 th	Governing Board Review and Approval
	June 1 st – June 30 th	Publicize results of CNA

VI. Data Collection Methods

Once the survey was designed, it was introduced to the Advisory Board during our March 2018 meeting. After board approval a Planning Committee was proposed and created. The Planning Committee facilitated the planning process and served as a bridge between WCCAA and the Board.

Domains used for the survey were: Emergency Assistance, Employment, Education, Housing, Health and Social Services and Income and Asset Building. Each domain had subheadings and each question was assigned a value; these answered are: Don't Know (0), Not Needed (1), Rarely Needed (2), Needed (3) and Very Needed (4).

The decision was made to distribute the survey to the following social services agencies: SCAN, (Stop Child Abuse and Neglect), Catholic Social Services, Self Help Center, Meals on Wheels, El Aguila Rural Transportation, Border Region Behavioral Health Center for Adult and Children Mental Health services, WCCAA staff and their families, customers seeking services at WCCAA, Texas A&M International University, and WCCAA Advisory Board. The survey was emailed to all Webb County Employees, including elected officials and was placed in the Webb County's Facebook page. The email was sent by our Public Information Officer. In addition, WCCAA actively belongs to numerous coalitions and staff attending meetings distributed surveys to the coalition attendees. Further, community outreach was provided by making a presentation to Border Region Behavioral Health Center Family Support Group who also participated in the survey.

A timeline to collect all surveys was established with a date of Friday, April 6, 2018. Interviews were scheduled and held with Executive Directors of Gateway Community Health Clinic, a medical clinic for indigent patients, Chambers of Commerce, local Food Banks, City of Laredo Health Department and Bethany House for the homeless.

To further research the needs of our population, Webb County Head Start Program and Border Region Behavioral Health Center shared statistical information gathered for their Needs Assessment and grant proposal for transportation services, respectively. WCCAA staff worked together as a team in the preparation of the Community Needs Assessment. As this project was unfolding, board members were kept abreast of the project's progress. Simultaneously, the board approved a Planning Committee, composed of four board members. The Planning Committed played a major role in reviewing and providing valuable feedback on the Needs Assessment design, implementation, and final product.

In addition, professional and personal investment with community agency directors was fruitful. Making them a part of this project, sharing WCCAA's Community Needs Assessment goal and requesting their collaboration in the distribution and the collection of surveys established a prosperous working relationship with other community agencies. Final product results will be shared with collaborative agencies. A total of 30 documented mobilized staff hours were needed to conclude the WCCAA's survey project. These hours are classified as volunteer hours.

On Monday, April 9, 2018, WCCAA began compiling the results of the survey using Survey Planet.

VII. Community Profile

Webb County, Texas is the sixth largest county in Texas. It is located on the border between Mexico and the United States. The Rio Grande River serves as the boundary between the two countries.

Webb County seat of government is Laredo, TX. There are rural communities such as Rio Bravo, El Cenizo, Oilton, Mirando, Aguilares and Bruni surrounding Laredo, TX.

Laredo, TX experienced a strong growth in its middle class during the 1980. This growth is attributed to the construction of Texas A & M International University (TAMIU). TAMIU specializes in international trade; Students from surrounding communities are attracted to TAMIU. Just to name a few, TAMIU has Graduate Programs for Nurse Practitioner, License Professional Counselor, and educational instructions.

Besides TAMIU, Laredo has a community college known as Laredo Community College (LCC). Some of the associate degrees offered at LCC are Registered Nurse (RN), Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), and trades. In and around Laredo are two vocational schools, Brightwood College and South Texas Training Center. These two vocational schools offer certificates on Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Patient Care Technician, Billing, Nurse Aide/Home Health Aide and Nurse Aide/Home Health Aide/Rebab Tech.

In 2013, both Laredo school districts, United Independent School District (UISD) and Laredo Independent School Districts (LISD) passed a combined bond packages totaling half a billion dollars. These funds were designated for the construction of new elementary, middle and high schools. Older schools were renovated, or torn down and new ones were built.

After the construction of said schools, came permanent jobs such as teachers and supporting personnel. These new schools meant many more student would enroll at TAMIU and upon their graduation would make the decision to stay in Laredo and join the local workforce. To augment and secure the border, the federal government employs hundreds of law enforcement officers, including and not limited to Border Patrol, Immigration, Customs Enforcement (ICE), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), Federal Courts, Federal Judges, Federal Probation Officers and its supporting personnel.

Laredo has four international bridges between Mexico and the United States. Due to the export and import between Texas, the United States and Mexico, Laredo is known as the biggest inland port in America. A follow-up discussion with Mario Maldonado, Executive

Director of Transportation for the City of Laredo, verified there is an average of fifteen-thousand (15,000) trucks, per day, crossing into the United States from Mexico. The trucking

business has had an enormous positive impact on the employment of drivers and support staff.

Along Mines Road, on the Western part of Laredo, there's been a gigantic growth in new warehouses construction for trucks and products imported to the United States. The growth along this part of the City of Laredo can be attributed to the construction of the World Trade Bridge between Mexico and the United States. The bridge construction began in 1998 and was completed by April 2000. Over 60 percent of all trucks crossing from Mexico to Laredo, Texas, use the World Trade Bridge. Utilization of this bridge allow easy access to nearby warehouses and Interstate Highway I-35 North.

Products and materials imported to the United States await to be transported into North America. More importantly, The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is and will continue to be a major player on employment for Laredo.

Job creations in Laredo has led to massive construction of new homes and multi-family apartment complexes. Laredo's growth expands to South East Laredo, along Loop 20, Texas Highway 359, Texas Highway 59, and North Laredo. Growth on North West Laredo has been limited due to the warehouse construction and trucking businesses monopolizing Mines Road.

With so many homes being built, UISD experienced an increase in its student population. According to figures provided by UISD, they have twenty-nine thousand-seven hundred-eight-five student (29,785) from Kindergarten to middle school and thirteen-thousand-two-hundred-thirteen (13,213) students in high school.

LISD experienced a drop in their student population. It has eighteen-thousand-six-hundred four (18,604) student from kindergarten to middle school. It has six-thousand-one-hundred-twenty (6,129) student in high school.

Webb County and the City of Laredo are expected to grow in population. According to U.S. Census, Webb County population grew to 263,251 by 2015, as compare to its 2010 population of 236,091; Webb County's population is anticipated to grow to 317,773 by 2020, with the majority of the population residing in Laredo.

With so many businesses offering employment, Laredo has a low unemployment rate. In September 2017, the unemployment rate was at 3.6%, for October it was at 3.2%, for November it was at 3.4%, and for December it was at 3.4%. However, the unemployment rate grew slightly in January 2018, to 3.9% and it remained the same, at 3.9% for February 2018.

Below is a graph from Community Commons indicating Webb County's unemployment rate is at 3.9%. According to the graph, Texas and Webb County have a lower rate than the rest of the United States, which is at 4.4%.

Employment

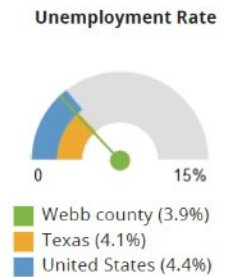
Current Unemployment

Labor force, employment, and unemployment data for each county in the report area is provided in the table below. Overall, the report area experienced an average 3.9% percent unemployment rate in February 2018.

Report Area	Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Webb county	116,583	112,007	4,576	3.9%
Texas	13,811,924	13,241,913	570,011	4.1%
United States	162,581,545	155,381,962	7,199,583	4.4%

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average.

Data Source: US Department of Labor, [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). 2018 - February. Source geography: County



VIII. Conditions of Poverty

The poverty rate for all ages in Webb County, according to Community Commons, is 30.5%. A more in-depth inspection into age brackets shows the poverty rate is greater among individuals between the ages of Zero months (0) to Seventeen (17). The rate for this age group is 41.9%. The rate between the ages of five (5) to seventeen (17) years of age remains, more or less, the same, at 38.6%. According to U.S. Census figures, Webb County saw an increase of 2.8% of poverty rate from 2000 to 2015.

Children living in poverty foster the notion of poor developmental cognitive skills and behavioral problems. Poverty contributes to low self-esteem that leads to unemployment skills. According to Community Commons, 46.4% of married couples live below the poverty line. When one reviews female only as head of household, the poverty rate is at 45.1%

Poverty is alive in Webb County.

A breakdown on children by gender shows there are more females, 19,443 or 44.18%, between the ages of zero months to seventeen years of age that live in poverty. Young males living in poverty are 18,855, or 41.59%. These males fall between the ages of zero months to seventeen years old.

Even though Webb County experienced a growth in population, jobs, schools, trade school, college or university, poverty exist in pockets throughout. This signifies that families living in poverty, cannot afford shelter, food and provide a strong support system so their children can prosper. Children face the reality of having to drop out of school in order to provide for the family, thus ensuring the cycle of poverty for his/her family remains perpetual. Living paycheck to paycheck means families might be employed but are not employed in jobs that allow them a fair and just living wage.

Another major indicator that will jeopardize opportunities for gainful employment is the school dropouts. Records for Webb County show there are 34.76% of individuals, age 25 and over, that do not have either a high school diploma or GED. The lack of high school diploma or GED leads to poor literacy skills. Webb County studies show that there are 48% of persons who lack literacy skills.

Families living in poverty would benefit from programs like Transition Out of Poverty (TOP). For example, this program provides families an opportunity to attend a vocational school where

they can learn new skills and at the same time find employment that offers them a living wage for him/her and his/her family.

Unhealthy or poor living conditions serve as barriers for children living in poverty. These children become more vulnerable to sickness, poor nutrition, and poor access to health care and in some cases, face safety issues regarding their emotional and physical well-being.

Laredo has seen a boom on the construction of multi-family apartment complexes. However, these new apartments are expensive for the average family.

A follow up discussion with Ms. Michelle Garcia, Administrator for Multi Listing Services, and a member of Laredo Association of Realtors, said, "new apartments range in price from \$950-\$1,200 per month. This is for a two bedroom, two bath and new updates included. The range for a one bedroom apartment is listed from \$800 to \$875 per month. These means while apartments are available for working families, new complexes are unaffordable for low income families with two, three or four children.

Children and families living in poverty or well below the Federal Guidelines on Poverty remain invisible. They go to school, eat breakfast and lunch in school. They wear their school uniforms, but the common denominator amongst them is not living in a home that affords those opportunities to experience personal growth, safety, emotional and physical well-being.

Seniors living in Webb County suffer from poverty as well. Webb County has 22,426, or 24.9% of seniors, defined as those ages 65 and over, living in poverty. These individuals rely on a fixed income composed of Supplement Security Income (SSI) and/or Medicare and Social Security benefits. Their income is limited to less than one-thousand dollars a month. In cases where a senior is SSI and Medicaid only, their income is less than eight-hundred dollars per month. These seniors suffer from poor nutrition, home deterioration, inadequate housing, or unaffordable housing; they have poor access to health care, unreliable transportation and not enough funds to purchase their medications. In some cases they have poor support systems or do not have family members checking up on their health/safety.

Below is a graph demonstrating the number and percentage of seniors in Webb County living in poverty.

Seniors in Poverty

Poverty rates for seniors (persons age 65 and over) are shown below. According to American Community Survey estimates, there were 5,574 seniors, or 24.9% percent, living in poverty within the report area.

Report Area	Ages 65 and Up Total Population	Ages 65 and Up In Poverty	Ages 65 and Up Poverty Rate
Webb county	22,426	5,574	24.9%
Texas	3,008,037	326,261	10.8%
United States	44,874,586	4,195,427	9.3%

Ages 65 and Up Poverty Rate



■ Webb county (24.9%)
■ Texas (10.8%)
■ United States (9.3%)

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#), 2012-16. Source geography: county

Children and seniors living in poverty remain an invisible population. To the credit of both School Districts, UISD and LISD, they do their best to provide hot meals to children in the community, including schools, during the summer months. Seniors have limited access to programs that provide them with a hot meal or in some cases there are no programs available for seniors. Webb County’s Meals on Wheels has a considerable waiting list of seniors. These seniors on the waiting list cannot be served because of limited funding provided to the program.

Causes of poverty and conditions of poverty were also identified through a review of a grant proposal, a review of a needs assessment and interviews with major players in the community.

A review of Webb County’s Head Start/Early Head Start 2016, Community Assessment reinforced the findings of WCCAA on the causes of poverty. It demonstrated how children are affected when they live in poverty and limits their ability to succeed in their early development, in school and in life.

Border Region Behavioral Health Center wrote a grant proposal for transportation. Their grant focused on how not having reliable transportation leads to no-shows for adult mental health consumers. The grant identified no shows resulted in an increase in “inpatient hospitalizations, crisis services and overall detriment in treatments.” Their greatest area of concern, besides ensuring their consumers’ well-being, is the lack of reliable transportation. A consumer’s lack of transportation serves as a barrier to their recovery.

Interviews were held with several key players in the community. The result of their interview reinforces the causes and conditions of poverty in Webb County.

Ms. Laura Palomo and Ms. Jackie Lopez, Program Directors for Border Region Behavioral Health Adult Services and Children’s Services, respectively indicate that they viewed education, employment, nutrition, housing and transportation as the main obstacles facing individuals and families served.

Interview with Mr. Elmo Lopez, Executive Director for Gateway Community Health Clinic, a clinic for individual lacking insurance stated that the program is open Mondays through Fridays and closes at 9pm. There are two clinics in Laredo, one in Central Laredo and a second clinic in South Laredo. Both clinics provide medical, dental and pharmaceutical services. Mr. Lopez's greatest concerns for his clients were transportation, health care access, education, nutrition and housing.

An interview with Mr. Miguel Conchas, Executive Director for Laredo Chambers of Commerce, echoes the same concerns for citizens of Laredo. He viewed education, access to health care, helping person transition out of poverty, nutrition and housing as the greatest needs.

Ms. Peggy Duncan, Executive Director for United Way, was interviewed, as well. She reported her biggest concerns for the citizens of Webb County as, rental assistance, housing, food pantries, utility assistance and medical transportation.

Dr. Gonzalez, Executive Director for City of Laredo Health Department viewed the following domains as the most needed: they are: Food, housing, jobs, education and behavioral health.

An interview with Ms. Alma Bouble, Executive Director-South Texas Food Bank, indicated she viewed food/nutrition, education, job training and linking low income families to community resources as her top four most needed in the community.

An article in the Laredo Morning Times, titled, "Duval County ranked last in health, length of life," dated Monday, April 2, 2018, stated, that in Webb County, "In spite of a much lower unemployment rate, a greater percentage of children, 43%, are living in poverty...." The findings came from a study conducted by "County Health Ranking & Roadmap Study." This study is conducted annually by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

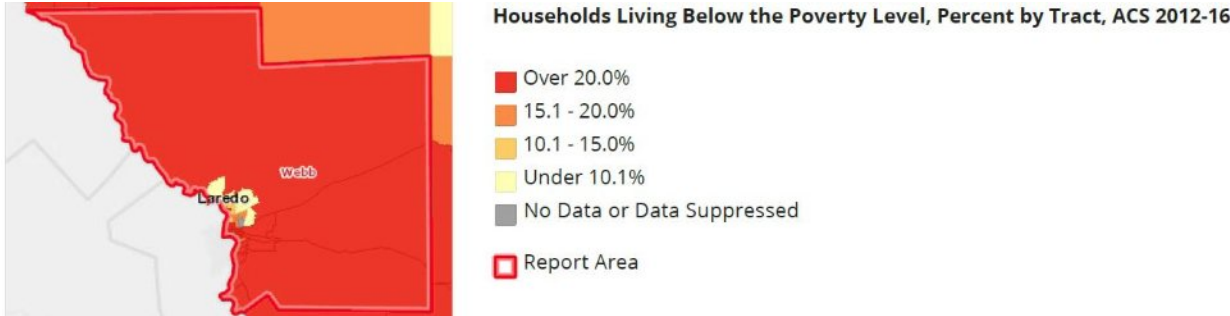
Combinations of concerns from key executive directors in the community suggest that poverty is seen in a different manner, but the end results are the same. Meaning without an education, without adequate or affordable housing, poor nutrition and without assistance for rent and utilities, unemployment, underemployed or not having a job that pays a living wage makes it difficult for family's to live by. Their psychosocial stressors, plus barriers families face on a daily basis keeps them from being successful.

Below is a graph from Community Commons indicating the poverty rate for all ages in Webb County, at 31.8%. The rate of poverty increases in children between the ages of zero months to seventeen (17) years old. The rate of poverty for his group is 43.3%. When one analyzes the rate of poverty between the ages of five years (5) to seventeen (17) years old it is at 40.7%. The 40.4% rate of poverty is much higher in Webb County compared to the United States (17.95%) and Texas (21.53%)

Report Area	All Ages No of Persons	All Ages Poverty Rate	Age 0-17 No of Persons	Age 0-17 Poverty Rate	Age 5-17 No of Persons	Age 5-17 Poverty Rate
Webb county	85,150	31.8%	39,336	43.3%	25,971	40.7%
Texas	8,522,584	15.81%	3,232,172	22.66%	2,222,978	21.53%
United States	44,268,996	13.90%	14,115,713	19.18%	9,648,486	17.95%

Conditions of Poverty affect everyone living in the same household. These conditions range from a single parent raising her family, to several generations of men living in the same home or in an over crowded household.

Below is a color coded graph from Community Commons. It shows a majority of households in and around Laredo live in poverty. These households fall in the range of over 20% to 10% who live in poverty.



Poverty does not discriminate.

Below is another graph from Community Commons. It shows 34.2% of females in Webb County live in poverty. Males in Webb County or a total of 29.85% also live in poverty. A difference between the two, however, is women might be raising a family while a male might live alone or with relatives.

Population in Poverty by Gender

Report Area	Total Male	Total Female	Percent Male	Percent Female
Webb county	37,904	46,230	29.85%	34.2%
Texas	1,966,846	2,430,461	15.17%	18.18%
United States	21,012,839	25,919,386	13.82%	16.34%

Being married or single and in charge of a household affects families. Their marital status does not impact, in a positive manner, whether a family lives in poverty or not. Below is a graph from Community Commons. It shows married couples or 46.2% in Webb County live in poverty. If you are male and in charge of household, the percentage is lower or 8.2%. But being female and in charge of your home, the rate of poverty dramatically increases to 45.6%.

Report Area	Poverty Rate All Types	Percent of Poverty Married Couples	Percent of Poverty Male Householder	Percent of Poverty Female Householder
Webb county	28.1%	46.2%	8.2%	45.6%
Texas	13%	40.8%	9%	50.3%
United States	11%	36.3%	10.7%	53%

As mentioned earlier, one’s level of education and ability to read and write has a huge bearing on finding and sustaining gainful employment. Not having an educated workforce impacts the types of industries Webb County/Laredo attract.

Below are two graphs indicating educational attainment and adult literacy. Educational attainment or persons without a high school diploma in Webb County is at 34.32%. Reading and writing or a percentage of persons lacking literacy skills in Webb County is at 48%

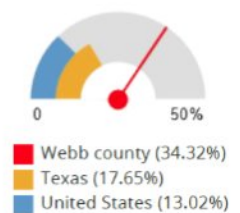
Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment shows the distribution of educational attainment levels in the report area. Educational attainment is calculated for persons over 25, and is an estimated average for the period from 2012 to 2016.

Report Area	Percent No High School Diploma	Percent High School Only	Percent Some College	Percent Associates Degree	Percent Bachelors Degree	Percent Graduate or Professional Degree
Webb county	34.32%	25.6%	16.4%	6.2%	12.3%	5.2%
Texas	17.65%	25.1%	22.4%	6.8%	18.5%	9.6%
United States	13.02%	27.5%	21%	8.2%	18.8%	11.5%

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average.
Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*. 2012-16. Source geography: County

Percent Population with No High School Diploma



Adult Literacy

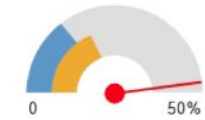
The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) produces estimates for adult literacy based on educational attainment, poverty, and other factors in each county.

Report Area	Estimated Population over 16	Percent Lacking Literacy Skills
Webb county	137,700	48%
Texas	15,936,279	19%
United States	219,016,209	14.64%

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average.

Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, [NCES - Estimates of Low Literacy](#). Source geography: County

Percentage of Adults Lacking Literacy Skills



- Webb county (48%)
- Texas (19%)
- United States (14.64%)

Below are two graphs from Community Commons. These graphs are about Veterans living in Webb County. The first graph shows Webb County has a high number of male veterans (4,978). A total of 329 are female veterans living in Webb County.

The second graph provides more of an insight on veterans' age living in Webb County. Webb County has 2,294 veterans age 65 and over. This population is a reflection of WW II, Korean Conflict and Viet-Nam Veterans. There are 1,085 veterans between the ages of 35-54 years of age. These population is younger.

Veterans, Age and Gender Demographics

Veterans, Age and Gender Demographics show the number of veterans living in the report area. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), 3.03% of the adult population in the report area are veterans, which is less than the national average of 8.01%.

Report Area	Veterans Total	Veterans Male	Veterans Female	% Pop over 18 Total	% Pop over 18 Males	% Pop over 18 Females
Webb county	5,307	4,978	329	3.03%	5.96%	0.36%
Texas	1,513,294	1,364,615	148,679	7.67%	14.13%	1.48%
United States	19,535,341	17,948,822	1,586,519	8.01%	15.17%	1.26%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2012-16. Source geography: County

Veterans by Age

Report Area	Veteran Age Males 18-34	Veteran Age Females 18-34	Veteran Age Males 35-54	Veteran Age Females 35-54	Veteran Age Males 55-64	Veteran Age Females 55-64	Veteran Age Males Over 65	Veteran Age Females Over 65
Webb county	648	128	1,085	140	951	30	2,294	31
Texas	147,192	35,288	354,117	66,225	264,981	28,163	598,325	19,003
United States	1,366,074	313,688	4,027,254	673,532	3,464,291	320,832	9,091,203	278,467

Community Commons does not have information on how many or what percentage of veterans live in poverty in Webb County. Even though Community Commons does not provide the number of veterans living in poverty, one can construe under the graph on seniors age 65 and over, that there are 22,426, seniors age 65 and over. The graph shows out of the 22,426, population, 5,574 live in poverty. The figure 5,574 represents 24.9% of seniors living in poverty and one can foresee a high percentage of these individuals are probably United States Veterans.

A meeting with David Garza, Veteran Service Officer (Accredited) for Webb County showed, according to figures from United States Department of Veterans Administration (VA), there are approximately 10,000 veterans residing in Webb County. Out of the 10,000, veterans, there are approximately 7,000 veterans who received compensation and pension from the VA.

Out of the 7,000 veterans who receive some type of benefit from the VA, there are 3,000 veterans who do not receive any compensation, pension or services from the local Laredo VA Outpatient Clinic.

Data on conditions of poverty in Webb County demonstrates families, seniors and children live in poverty.

IX. Webb County Profile

Laredo/Webb County is a thriving and diverse community. According to Community Commons, Webb County experienced a positive growth in population of 37.74% from 2000 to 2016. Below is a graph from Community Commons showing the growth pattern, A review of Webb County's growth pattern shows it is greater than that of the State of Texas or of the United States.

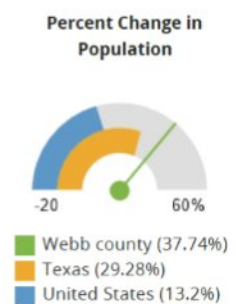
Population Change

Population change within the report area from 2000-2016 is shown below. During the fourteen-year period, total population estimates for the report area grew by 37.74 percent, increasing from 193,117 persons in 2000 to 266,006 persons in 2016.

Report Area	Total Population, 2016 ACS	Total Population, 2000 Census	Population Change from 2000-2016 Census/ACS	Percent Change from 2000-2016 Census/ACS
Webb county	266,006	193,117	72,889	37.74%
Texas	26,956,435	20,851,820	6,104,615	29.28%
United States	318,558,162	281,421,906	37,136,256	13.2%

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). US Census Bureau, [Decennial Census](#). 2012-16. Source geography: County



The positive growth can be attributed to several factors. These factors are: students enrolling at our local community college or university; upon graduation, students decide to stay; due to Laredo bordering Mexico, there has been an increase in law enforcement personnel; Laredo's import and export businesses and the explosion of the trucking business means more jobs and others relocating to Laredo in order to work in this field; more schools are being built and it could mean teachers from around Texas are relocating to Laredo.

Another factor affecting Webb County's growths in population are births. According to the City of Laredo Health Department, Laredo/Webb County experiences a growth in its birth rate year after year. Below is a brief history on the number of births versus deaths from 2000 to 2017.

Year	Births	Deaths
2000	6,252	1,191
2001	6,409	1,068
2002	6,386	1,033
2003	6,406	1,067
2004	6,534	953
2005	6,456	1,154
2006	6,521	1,046
2007	6,811	1,140
2008	6,614	1,142
2009	6,448	1,120
2010	6,139	1,208
2011	6,041	1,191
2012	6,066	1,277
2013	6,182	1,233
2014	6,139	1,302
2015	6,020	1,322
2016	5,814	1,356
2017	5,356	1,280

It is apparent births out number death by an average of 5,000 per year. But, out of the total number of births, it is unknown if the infant's mother is an undocumented alien. Once she gives birth, the mother returns to Mexico.

Below is a graphs from Community Commons. It shows Age and Gender Demographics. This graph shows Webb County has a young population. A total of columns ages zero months to seventeen years of age, males and female included, showed there are a combined total of 90,863 young people living in Webb County.

Age and Gender Demographics

Population by gender within the report area is shown below. According to ACS 2012-2016 5 year population estimates for the report area, the female population comprised 51.46% of the report area, while the male population represented 48.54%.

Report Area	0 to 4 Male	0 to 4 Female	5 to 17 Male	5 to 17 Female	18 to 64 Male	18 to 64 Female	Over 64 Male	Over 64 Female
Webb county	13,625	13,032	32,459	31,747	73,921	78,387	8,676	13,252
Texas	1,006,680	964,006	2,632,451	2,529,339	8,369,723	8,357,669	1,249,200	1,726,256
United States	10,154,024	9,712,936	27,455,869	26,289,609	98,851,301	99,913,791	18,244,716	25,876,504

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#), 2012-16. Source geography: County

To promote the idea that Webb County has a young population, a review of the graph below titled, Adult Ages (18-65) shows the following. A combined total of males and females, from ages 18 to 34, shows there are 66,124. This total is greater if you combine the total from age 35 to 44, which is 64,656.

If one adds the totals from zero months to age 34, it amounts to 156,987. This figure is important as it shows a young population who attends school and upon graduation from either high school or college, or for those who drop out of school, are in need of gainful employment.

Adult Ages (18 - 65)

Report Area	18 to 24 Male	18 to 24 Female	25 to 34 Male	25 to 34 Female	35 to 44 Male	35 to 44 Female	45 to 54 Male	45 to 54 Female	55 to 64 Male	55 to 64 Female
Webb county	15,326	15,053	17,714	18,031	17,090	18,275	13,861	15,428	9,930	11,6
Texas	1,414,319	1,324,512	1,984,745	1,931,029	1,817,289	1,825,174	1,721,481	1,750,108	1,431,889	1,526.8
United States	16,044,240	15,252,337	21,899,150	21,498,757	20,182,692	20,365,708	21,415,016	22,045,450	19,310,203	20,751.5

Due to Webb County’s proximity to the Mexican border, it is expected it would have a high Hispanic population. This is true. Below are two graphs from Community Commons. The first graph titled, “Hispanic Ages, (Males and Females Combined), show Webb County’s population from zero months to age 65 and over. The total Hispanic population is 223.697.

Hispanic Ages (Male and Female Combined)

Report Area	0 to 4	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	Over 65
Webb county	25,844	62,175	29,461	33,920	33,650	27,711	20,063	21,158
Texas	990,706	2,510,491	1,219,379	1,612,112	1,468,221	1,157,924	778,371	675,946
United States	5,130,570	12,816,191	6,585,748	8,818,195	7,972,885	6,284,817	4,052,919	3,537,782

When race is taken as a factor, it shows Webb County has a majority of Whites. It is an accepted fact Hispanics classify themselves as White when the question of race is asked. Below

is a graph titled, "Race Demographics." It shows 252,215 classified themselves as Whites with a small population of Blacks, American Indian, Asian and Hawaiian. These small pockets of other races can be attributed to the local workforce.

Race Demographics

Population by gender within the report area is shown below. According to ACS 2012-2016 5 year population estimates, the white population comprised 98.2% of the report area, black population represented 0.41%, and other races combined were 1.39%. Persons identifying themselves as mixed race made up 0.62% of the population.

Report Area	White Total	Black Total	American Indian Total	Asian Total	Native Hawaiian Total	Mixed Race Total
Webb county	252,215	1,045	547	1,427	22	1,580
Texas	20,174,403	3,221,133	128,145	1,175,423	22,248	673,400
United States	233,657,078	40,241,818	2,597,817	16,614,625	560,021	9,752,947

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2012-16. Source geography: County

A more detail breakdown per male and female, as per Race shows the following. The first graph below, titled, "Race Demographics-Male," show Whites vastly out number any of the other races combined.

Race Demographics - Male

Report Area	White Male	Black Male	American Indian Male	Asian Total	Native Hawaiian Male	Mixed Race Male
Webb county	122,384	526	276	645	6	755
Texas	10,032,028	1,558,763	65,771	570,827	10,910	334,616
United States	115,461,098	19,220,550	1,288,198	7,882,217	279,671	4,862,948

Another graph titled, "Ethnicity Demographics-Male," showed Webb County has a 95.09% of Hispanic males. Being closed to the Border between the United States and Mexico, it is expected Hispanics would predominately out number any other Ethnicity.

Ethnicity Demographics - Male

Report Area	Total Males Hispanic / Latino	Total Males Not Hispanic / Latino	Percent Males Hispanic / Latino	Percent Males Not Hispanic / Latino
Webb county	123,229	6,359	95.09%	4.91%
Texas	5,236,312	8,142,853	39.14%	60.86%
United States	27,904,147	128,861,175	17.8%	82.2%

The same is true when one examines race per female. Below is a graph titled, "Race Demographics-Female" It too shows White females out number any other races in Laredo.

Race Demographics - Female

Report Area	White Female	Black Female	American Indian Female	Asian Female	Native Hawaiian Female	Mixed Race Female
Webb county	129,831	519	271	782	16	825
Texas	10,142,375	1,662,370	62,374	604,596	11,338	338,784
United States	118,195,980	21,021,268	1,309,619	8,732,408	280,350	4,889,999

Below is graph, titled, "Ethnicity Demographics-Female." It too shows female Hispanics out number any other ethnicity in Webb County. The rate of Hispanic females in Webb County is 95.85% of the total population.

Ethnicity Demographics - Female

Report Area	Total Females Hispanic / Latino	Total Females Not Hispanic / Latino	Percent Females Hispanic / Latino	Percent Females Not Hispanic / Latino
Webb county	130,753	5,665	95.85%	4.15%
Texas	5,176,838	8,400,432	38.13%	61.87%
United States	27,294,960	134,497,880	16.87%	83.13%

While Webb County is a reflection on the type of Race and Ethnicity found along the Texas-Mexico Border.

1. Economic and Social Indicators

Webb County's location along the Texas-Mexico Border has been a benefit. There are four international bridges along the Rio Grande River, between Laredo and its sister city, Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. The vehicle and pedestrian traffic between the U.S and Mexico bring jobs; these jobs are blue and white collar and they are permanent. The university is another positive indicator for future employment. There are three vocational colleges in Laredo, Brightwood College, South Texas Training Center and Laredo Community College. These schools open a path for those seeking to learn a trade that will pay them a living wage.

The boom in construction such as in schools, homes, businesses and warehouses represent jobs. More important, Webb County has being able to retain jobs in retail; Webb County attracts hundreds of visitors from the interior of Mexico. These visitors come to Laredo to shop

for clothes and in some instance purchase homes, land, automobiles and other high price items.

Webb County has lands in where oil and natural gas is to be found. There’s an active exploration for gas and oil. These companies bring stable jobs, as well as create additional jobs for local merchants since companies have to purchase items to keep their staff fully supplied.

Below is a graph indicating the unemployment rate for Webb County. As of April 2018, the unemployment rate is at 3.9%, a much better rate than that of the State of Texas and the United States.

Employment

Current Unemployment

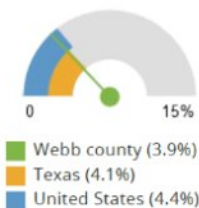
Labor force, employment, and unemployment data for each county in the report area is provided in the table below. Overall, the report area experienced an average 3.9% percent unemployment rate in February 2018.

Report Area	Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Webb county	116,583	112,007	4,576	3.9%
Texas	13,811,924	13,241,913	570,011	4.1%
United States	162,581,545	155,381,962	7,199,583	4.4%

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average.

Data Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018 - February. Source geography: County

Unemployment Rate



While the unemployment rate is low for Webb County, it still has a high rate of persons without a high school diploma, a high incident rate of poor literacy skills and families living in poverty. Many families live pay check to pay check. They might be under-employed or have no marketing skills. These families would benefit from programs that teach them to learn new trades, thus assisting families to transition out of poverty.

Below is a graph titled, “Household Income” The graph shows Webb County with a median household income of \$36,718.

Household Income

Median annual household incomes in the report area for 2016 are shown in the table below. Since this reports a median amount, a "Report Area" value is not able to be calculated.

Report Area	Median Household Income
Webb county	\$36,718
Texas	\$56,583
United States	\$57,617

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates](#), 2016. Source geography: County

2. Community Strengths and Assets

Webb County's community strengths is its diverse population, a young population and a high number of children enrolled in elementary, middle and high school; young adults including males and females. Webb County has the resources that offer a high school graduate to continue their higher education and even obtain their master's degree. For those who find themselves being unable to attend college, Webb County has vocational schools that offer trainings and a certifications in the different fields such as in billings, nurse's aide, medical assistant, patient care technician and pharmaceutical technician.

Webb County has a strong middle class composed of professionals employed in law enforcement, teachers, school administrators, and support staff, federal personnel in District Courts and City of Laredo and Webb County employees. There's also a strong workforce in retail, construction, import and export, and transportation via eighteen wheelers transporting products into the interior of the United States.

Trade between Texas and Mexico and Mexico and the United States is strong. This type of relationships between Mexico and the United States and Texas is a fixture that translates to permanent jobs. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is supportive of many jobs in Webb County and its surrounding communities.

There was a time when Webb County relied solely on the retail business for its sales tax. The retail business relied on the Mexican shoppers travelling to the United States, stopping in Laredo and doing most of their shopping. However, with new school, a four year university, a

high presences of federal law enforcement and import and export businesses, Webb County has not had to rely on the Mexican shopper travelling to Laredo/Webb County.

Webb County's assets are the excellent working relationship between the County and City Government. Both the City of Laredo and Webb County offer third party grants to non-profit organizations who provide services to low income families. Other assets are the university, community college, and numerous organizations who work with low income families. The majority of Webb County residents identify with Laredo/Webb County. It is this type of identification and commitment that transforms our community into a vibrant, diverse and an all in the family type of attitude, meaning everyone doing their best on helping each other and in cases of disasters, lending out a helping hand.

Webb County in collaboration with Texas Department of Transportation, is expanding its infrastructure. There is a loop around Laredo, allowing one to travel from South Laredo to North Laredo. Very soon, the mega traffic jams along Mines Road will be alleviated with the plan construction of the Hachar Roadway. The Hachar Roadway will allow citizens a secondary exit to I-35 North, circumvent traffic along Mines Road.

One of Webb County's best assets are the philanthropists who offer their foundation monies for the betterment of others.

3. Gaps in Services and Barriers

As mentioned earlier, Webb County is the sixth largest county in Texas. It is composed of 3,376 square miles. Laredo is the County seat of Government and it is where the majority of Webb County's population reside.

Webb County was created in 1847, and since its inception it was known as a ranch and cattle community. In the 1900s, along with cattle raising, agriculture began to take hold with many vegetables being grown and harvest. .

Webb County did not begin to experience growth in population and different industries until the 1970-1990. Homes began to take over farm fields and zoning laws passed that lead to better planning and city growth.

As Webb County continues to experience growth in population, with different businesses cropping up throughout the city, there are still a vast amount of empty lands, in and around Laredo.

Data for Webb County on the conditions and causes of poverty, show there's an abundance of poverty scattered throughout Laredo/Webb County. With so many families in need of basic services, faith bases and non-profit agencies do their best to meet the needs of low income families. Nevertheless, gaps in services continue to exist.

Some of the major gaps in services are:

1. Lack of and/or reduce funding for social service agencies
2. Affordable housing for low income families
3. Insurance for low income families, to include dental and pharmaceutical services
4. Reliable transportation for low income families living within the city boundaries as well for those who live on the outskirts
5. Food pantries for low income families
6. Access to personal hygiene products for low income families
7. Nutritional services for the elderly and disable
8. Utility assistance programs, that can assist low income families pay for their electric bill, rent, and in emergency cases, their water bills
9. Affordable vocational programs for low income families that allows them to learn a new trade, so they can secure gainful employment and earn a living wage
10. Affordable child care
11. Affordable after school day care programs for single parents
12. After school day care programs for working parents
13. Inpatient program for drug addicts
14. Mobile crisis units for mental health services, to include adults, seniors and children
15. Literacy and educational programs and making them accessible for low income families
16. Home reconstruction programs

Barriers facing low income families are as follows:

1. Lack of reliable transportation
2. A high incident rate of children dropping out of school
3. Children living in poverty, leading to poor cognitive skills and behavioral problems
4. A high incident rate of illiterate
5. Being unemployed or underemployed
6. Not earning a living wage
7. Not having access to affordable housing
8. Not having access to insurance, including dental and pharmaceutical services.
9. Affordable housing for low income families

To Webb County/Laredo's credit, elected officials do their best to plan and meet the needs of all citizens, especially low income families.

4. Trends for Webb County

Figures and data can be misleading. For example, Webb County's unemployment rate is at 3.9%. It offers a bright picture. But the question is, "do jobs offer a living wage?"

Based on the figures and data presented as part of this document, the answer is, "No." The answer is no because figures and data from Community Commons show children and seniors live below the established "Federal Poverty Guidelines of 125%." For children living in poverty it is 43% and seniors it is 24%. Families living in poverty is greater when one looks at households headed by females. The poverty for these families is 45.6%.

To add to the recipe of poverty, Webb County has a high percentage of adults without a high school diploma and poor literacy skills or the lack of.

Inclinations or trends for Webb County indicate its citizens, infants, toddlers, teens, young adults, families headed by single females and seniors represent a segment of the population that live in poverty.

5. Research Methodologies and Conclusions Drawn from Analysis of Data

WCCAA staff attended a training, conducted by TDHCA, on how to conduct a needs assessment along with strategic planning in February 2018. Additionally, WCCAA was provided with information on how to explore data from Community Commons, a website with information about any county in the United States.

WCCAA staff met with directors from other social service agencies who work with low income families and requested their assistance on the distribution of our survey in which in two instances copies of their grants were provided. One grant was about the need for transportation and the second document was from Webb County Early/Head Start Program. Interviews were scheduled and held with key players in the community who work with low income families.

WCCAA held meetings with staff and Advisory Board. The Advisory Board created a Planning Committee and the committee was provided with copies of the proposed survey. The survey is from the TDHCA but Webb County made minor changes to it, including translating it to Spanish. The survey contained six domains; the domains are: Assistance, Employment, Education, Housing, Health and Social/Behavioral Development and Income & Asset Building. The survey and its totals can be found in this document.

Once the survey was approved, it was distributed to Border Region Behavioral Health Center, their staff, parents groups, and coalition members, Webb County employees via e-mail, and Head Start Program's staff and families. Surveys were also distributed to students from Texas

A&M International University, Catholic Social Services, members from Kidney Foundation of Laredo, WCCAA staff, families, participants from Meals on Wheels, riders who utilize El Aguila Transportation Program, participants from Self Help Center, elected officials, Board Members and customers seeking CEAP program services. Customer satisfactions surveys were used to compile data.

Survey Planet, a website from the internet was utilized to compile data and turn the data into totals. WCCAA staff gathered data to create digital graphs.

Once the totals were compiled, WCCAA discovered each domain, along with its subset to come up with the top 5 Needs per CSBG Service Area.

The top 5 needs are identified as:

1. Health care/Wellness
2. Family Life Skills
3. Affordable Housing
4. Education
5. Employment

Conclusions drawn are:

1. Needs for Health Insurance/Medical Care
2. Assistance with programs on finding a job with a living wage
3. Classes for English as a second language
4. Assistance to pay utility bills
5. Assistance for elderly and disable person with chronic health conditions, and
6. Assistance on applying for Social Security benefits

The findings in our survey, coupled with information obtained from Community Commons, such as demographic data, family data, and race/ethnicity, age and gender data strongly denote that conditions of poverty do not discriminate; poverty levels are common and scattered throughout the county of Webb.

WCCAA is committed to program design, program implementation, program evaluation, and utilization of ROMA principles to ensure that the needs for our low income families are met.

X. Webb County Community Action Agency Top Five Needs for the Service Area Categorized by Domain

Webb County Community Action Agency analyzed the results received from the surveys distributed within the community. When categorizing the results of the Very Needed option from highest to lowest, the top ten categories are (table can be found on page 6):

1. Health and Social Behavioral Development: Assistance for elderly and disabled person with chronic health conditions.
2. Assistance: Health Insurance/Medical Care
3. Housing: Affordable Housing
4. Health and Social/Behavioral Development: Counseling for children
5. Health and Social/Behavioral Development: Counseling for adults
6. Housing: Help with utility bills
7. Health and Social/Behavioral Development: Nutrition for elderly
8. Employment: Help finding a job with a living wage
9. Health and Social/Behavioral Development: Nutrition for children
10. Health and Social/Behavioral Development: Programs and activities for seniors

Health and Social/Behavioral Development can be found to be the greatest need selected with a focus on the elderly population. The findings can further be grouped to determine the top five needs as followed:

1. Health and Social Behavioral Development: Elderly need wellness programs

2. Health and Social Behavioral Development: Families need life skills providing counseling for children and adults
3. Housing: The community needs affordable housing
4. Education: Individuals need further education to improve their employment
5. Employment: Individuals need a living wage employment

XI. Webb County Community Action Agency Organizational Strengths, Assets, and Challenges

Webb County Community Action Agency strengths are its Governing Body and Advisory Board. Both are committed to programs, agency staff and low income families. Both bodies strive for the betterment of low income families and seek programs that alleviate the suffering of children and elderly. Most importantly, WCCAA's Governing Body and Advisory Board believe in the leadership of the Executive Director. Important to note is that the Executive Director and staff have established and maintained a healthy working relationships with other social services agencies. These relationships are founded through collaboration and networking within the community, activities such as coalitions, community outreach, program presentations, and sharing program data such as the community needs assessment and most importantly, maintaining and nurturing these relationships on a regular basis are dependent on WCCAA's success.

An asset that WCCAA has is employee retention; staffs at WCCAA are tenured staffs. There are four Program Managers who oversee the supervision of their respective programs, Meals on Wheels, Self Help Center, El Aguila Rural Transportation and CEAP and CSBG Programs. Their combined number of years employed with WCCAA is a total of fifty-five (55) years, meaning each Program Manager has an average of thirteen (13.75) years of experience working with our target population.

WCCAA continues to do better. Recently, the Executive Director, CEAP and CSBG Program Manager and a Case Manager Program Specialist are enrolled as Results Oriented Management

and Accountability (ROMA) implementers. By becoming ROMA implementers, staff will have developed a framework of continuous growth and improvement; this will allow staff to successfully conduct program reviews, analyze the success of their programs and implement and changes needed for the betterment of the programs.

There are challenges facing WCCAA. There is the dire need to provide more meals to the elderly and the disabled population. Limited funding for this program has resulted in a waiting list for qualified elderly in need of this service. Self Help Center, located in the Colonias has the potential to provide more housing construction to qualified families, however, the reduction of funding during the last 8 years has made this challenging for individuals to receive this much needed benefit. El Aguila Rural Transportation Program provides partial services to Webb County. It provides services only to South and South East Webb County. An increase in funding for additional staff and buses would allow the program to cover more geographical area, so that the program is able to provide more ridership to low income families.

Other challenges facing CEAP is the process for family enrollment into the program; more outreach needs to be done to make CEAP more accessible to families. This is a challenge that is affecting WCCAA throughout the state of Texas.

CSBG program would benefit from increase funding. The added funds are necessary so others programs can be funded with CSBG funds.

WCCAA leadership wishes to thank its staff and everyone who participated on contributing to its Community Needs Assessment. WCCAA prays and hopes our low income families stand to benefit from improved program identification, implementation, evaluation and reassessment.