

PROYECTO AZTECA



TO: The Honorable County Judge Ramon Garcia and Honorable County Commissioners, David Fuentes-Pct. 1, Eduardo Cantu-Pct. 2, Joe Flores-Pct. 3 and Joseph Palacios- Pct. 4

FROM: Proyecto Azteca
P.O. Box 27 San Juan, TX 78589

SUBJECT: Request for Pharr Original Townsite to be Declared as a Colonia for USDA RD Purposes

Esteemed Judge and Commissioners:

Proyecto Azteca is requesting that the Hidalgo County designate the Pharr Original Townsite a colonia to benefit the individuals of that area with USDA Rural Development grant program opportunities. Proyecto Azteca receives USDA Rural Development funds to construct or reconstruct homes for low and very low-income families. However, Proyecto Azteca cannot use USDA RD funds in areas that are not designated as colonias or rural areas.

A colonia has one or more of the following characteristics for counties and areas along the U.S and Mexico Border as defined by USDA Rural Development:

- “Any Identifiable community designated in writing by the State or county in which is located [shall be] determined to be a colonia on the basis of objective criteria including lack of potable water supply, lack of adequate sewage systems, and lack of decent, safe and sanitary housing, inadequate roads and drainage; and existed and was generally recognized as a colonia before October 1, 1989.” (HB-1-3550, Appendix 8)

Pharr’s Original Townsite is located within the boundaries of the City of Pharr and therefore the County of Hidalgo, Precinct 2; this subdivision has criteria meeting the characteristics to designate it as a colonia. The Pharr Original Townsite began development in the early 1900s; many of the homes built during that time still stand and as a result the area lacks decent, safe and sanitary housing. As is stated in a Consolidated Plan Executive Summary submitted to USDA for the City of Pharr to receive CDBG HOME funding, “About 18% of housing units in the City of Pharr were classified as substandard in 1990. Additionally, the report highlights that Affordable Housing the, “lack of affordable housing is one of the most critical housing problems in Pharr.” (page 3, USDA Consolidated Plan Executive Summary for the City of Pharr).

Last year, we reconstructed two homes in the Pharr Original Townsite, but could not count those two homes under our current USDA RD 523 grant cycle because the area is not currently designated as a colonia. Yet, in the past, Proyecto Azteca has been able to construct or reconstruct homes in closely surrounding areas, within the Pharr Original Townsite subdivision and we were able to use those units to meet grant deliverables.



Building a better world.



PROYECTO AZTECA



With a grant deadline quickly approaching, a grant application under review and the need for decent and affordable housing for low to very low-income families growing daily (our waiting list has grown to over four-thousand families), we respectfully ask that Hidalgo County designate the Pharr Original Townsite a colonia and help families residing in the area to have the opportunity to benefit from USDA Rural Development's housing grant program(s) that Proyecto Azteca needs and utilizes annually.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Amber Arriaga-Salinas', written in a cursive style.

Amber Arriaga- Salinas
Assistant Executive Director



Building a better world.

