



Project Description

Project Name:

Hidalgo County Public Health Education Center

Project Number:

ARPA-24-340-357

Program Name:

Hidalgo County Health Center Improvements Project will be a part of the Hidalgo County American Rescue Plan Act Expanding Access to Healthcare Program.

Department Name:

Hidalgo County Health Department

ARPA Expenditure Category:

1: Public Health

ARPA Eligibility Category:

1.14: Other Public Health Services^

Project Description:

The COVID Pandemic greatly impacted us nationwide; however, the impact in Hidalgo County hospitals and healthcare systems was significant.¹ The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases is over 284,000 individuals, resulting in 33% of Hidalgo County residents that have contracted COVID-19 in correlation to U.S. Census data. These COVID-19 related fatality rates are among some of the highest in the nation² ³and unfortunately continue to affect our residents.⁴ The pandemic has caused a greater crisis, the reduction in vaccination rates among our school age children and important updated vaccination for our adult population. In a study posted by the National Library of Medicine, the distrust people have of drug manufacturers, the government, and the media have contributed to significant vaccine hesitancy and decreased vaccine confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine, especially by those in groups at lower risk of serious

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<https://fordhamobserver.com/51190/opinions/why-covid-19-continues-to-devastate-my-rgv-community-on-the-border/>

2

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/08/24/coronavirus-texas-rio-grande-valley/>

3

<https://www.texasmonthly.com/news-politics/rio-grande-valley-texas-coronavirus-hot-spot/>

4

<https://www.valleycentral.com/news/local-news/covid-19-deaths-impacting-the-rio-grande-valley/>



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COVID-19 related health complications (middle-aged, young adults, and adolescents).⁵ There is no long-term solution, due to the ever-changing public health and environmental threats, i.e., COVID-19 other virus, bacterial, environmental risks, and potential exposures. However, there is the capacity to train, intervene, respond, and contain any future threat. The empowerment of our residents to take the lead in improving their lifestyle and health outcomes is the path to a better future and a possible solution to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. Hidalgo County Health and Human Services is ready to take the lead in promoting a healthier community and encouraging economic growth by developing a healthier population and better trained healthcare workforce by developing a training center for sharing knowledge and awareness. The Public Health Education Center (PHEC) will be located at 3105 E. Richardson Rd., Edinburg, TX, 78539.

In the final rule, Treasury considered maintaining the provisions in the interim final rule or expanding allowable capital expenditures to provide recipients greater flexibility to pursue other capital investments that are responsive to the public health emergency and its negative economic impacts. Expanding allowable capital expenditures would likely help fill critical gaps in recipients' response to the pandemic and provide equipment and facilities that generate benefits beyond SLFRF's period of performance.⁶ In the final rule, to further decrease administrative burden and enhance recipient flexibility, Treasury is allowing recipients to also presume that low-income households were disproportionately impacted. Treasury anticipates that adding low-income households as a presumed eligible population will maintain targeting of funds to populations and communities most likely to have experienced severe pandemic impacts, while providing a more flexible approach for recipients.⁷

Fiscal Impact:

Estimated Budget: \$2,230,586.00

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<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9702767/#:~:text=In%20our%20study%20t,he%20distrust,middle%20aged%20young%20adults%20>

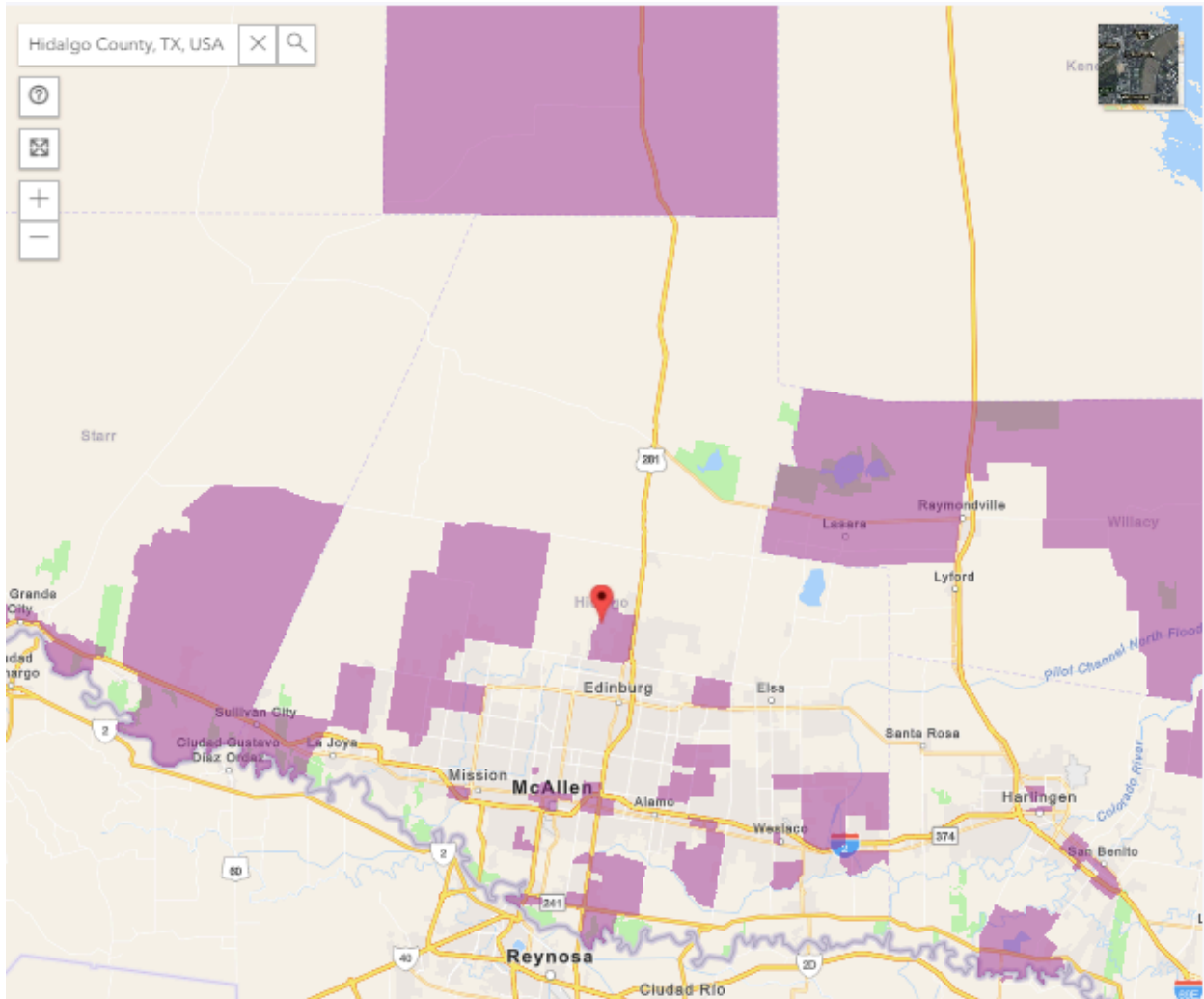
⁶ Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4442

⁷ Department of the Treasury. (2022). Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. *Federal Register*, 87(18), p. 4441



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^Below is the Qualified Census Tract Analysis for Hidalgo County.



Source: [Office of Policy Development and Research 2023 and 2024 Small Difficult Development Areas \(DDAs\) and Qualified Census Tracts \(QCTs\)](#)