

2024

# Community Needs Assessment



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## **I. FORWARD – LETTER FROM BOARD PRESIDENT**

June 2024

What a great and exciting time it is to be a part of the Webb County Community Action Agency Board!

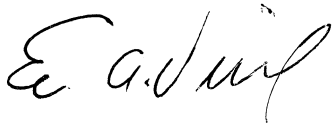
As a board member for the Webb County CAA since 2007, I can say with all certainty that we are in a transitional period of growth and improvement all of which will result in better opportunities for the community of Webb County.

Perhaps the biggest symbol of this comes in the form of a 15,000 square foot building that will be the permanent home to the Webb County Community Action Agency. This modern, newly constructed building, boasts a generous space for Meals on Wheels, Social Services, and CAA Administration; as well as an auditorium that will be used to elevate the quality of services provided by CAA staff. With an approximate value of over 4.5 million dollars, this investment into the WCCAA is testament to the dedication and support that comes from the Webb County Judge and Commissioner's Court. This building does more than provide a permanent home to Webb County CAA, it opens up the possibility for so much growth and so much more opportunities for the Webb County community.

Another symbol of success of the Webb County CAA is the makeup and participation of the governing board. Over the last six months, the WCCAA board has undergone a transformation in terms of representation and participation. The makeup of the tripartite board is balanced and consists of some very knowledgeable members of the community. The board consists of community advocates, retired citizens, high school educators, college administrators, mental/behavior health administrators, and public servants all coming together with a genuine interest in participating and making a difference in the community. This may be one of the best boards I have ever been a part of.

Finally, the new Community Action Agency Director, Guillermo Walls, is a veteran of public service. As a retired public health administrator, he displays the genuine concern for the community as well as the means to ensure success. Under his leadership, I foresee a great future for the WCCAA.

I am eager to be part of the future of the Webb County Community Action Agency. There is a new sense of motivation and growth in the staff and I am certain that this will result in an increase in the quality of services provided. The Webb County CAA is poised to continue the promise of changing people's lives, embodying the spirit of hope, improving communities, and making Webb County a better place to live.



Erasmo A. Villarreal

Webb County Community Action Agency Advisory Board Interim President

## **II. Executive Summary**

The Webb County Community Action Agency (WCCAA) is presenting its 2024 Community Needs Assessment (CNA.) This Community Needs Assessment establishes a profile of the community, reflecting both needs and community resources. With this study, the WCCAA can determine the needs that can be addressed and the population that will be most impacted. Both qualitative and quantitative data was utilized to identify the needs and through this process the present outcome was determined.

Under the umbrella of the WCCAA are the following lines of service: Self Help Center, Meals on Wheels, El Aguila Rural Transportation and Community Social Services. Self Help Center, El Aguila Rural Transportation and Meals on Wheels are independent lines of service. However, Community Social Services is established at four community centers and their Administrative Offices are located at the Fernando Salinas Community Center.

In October 2023, a new director was appointed for the WCCAA. This appointment separated the Economic Development Department and the Community Action Agency. Additionally, this new department would benefit from an onsite Director and Deputy Director housed in the same Administrative Offices as Community Social Services.

With new leadership, the WCCAA has the goals of being more visible in the community, increasing the level of customer service, and establishing additional partnerships with other community agencies who serve our county. It is our goal to serve our community clients in a complete manner to build strong and resilient communities.

WCCAA has made significant strides in enhancing its audit processes to better serve the needs of our community. Through diligent evaluation, the agency has implemented robust improvements aimed at ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficiency in financial management. By conducting regular audits and adopting best practices, including thorough documentation and reporting mechanisms, the agency has not only met regulatory standards but also fostered trust among stakeholders. These efforts have resulted in clearer insights into resource allocation and enhanced strategic planning capabilities, ultimately enabling the agency to better address the evolving needs of Webb County residents with targeted and impactful programs and services.

The agency has demonstrated progress in enhancing staff capabilities through ongoing training initiatives. By implementing monthly staff trainings and monthly management sessions, the agency underscores its commitment to professional development and service excellence. These sessions are tailored to address emerging community needs, regulatory updates, and best practices in social services delivery. Through such proactive measures, staff members are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively respond to the diverse challenges faced by our community. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and skill refinement, the agency not only strengthens internal capacity but also enhances its ability to provide responsive and high-quality services that positively impact the lives of Webb County residents.

Furthermore, the Webb County Community Action Agency has made substantial progress in leveraging its advisory board to enhance governance and community engagement. As mandated by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs Community Service Block Grant Service Program, the agency conducts bi-monthly advisory board meetings focused on program and budget performance updates. Through these meetings, the agency fosters transparency and accountability, ensuring that board members are well-informed and actively contribute to strategic decision-making. Additionally, efforts to recruit active and dedicated board members have further strengthened the advisory board's effectiveness in providing valuable insights and guidance. This proactive approach not only aligns with regulatory requirements but also reinforces the agency's commitment to maximizing community impact and meeting the evolving needs of Webb County residents effectively.

The enclosed surveys, interviews with active players in the community, forums with the public and support information from data sources such as: US Census, US Department of Labor, US Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Education Statistics, among others have served to identify the needs and reinforce the point that there are hardships within our community.

In this cycle of time, the world experienced a global pandemic increasing the needs of the community and limiting the resources available. The data available only reflects the beginning of these difficult times. The true impact of the pandemic has yet to be measured. It is with much pride that the Webb County Community Action Agency submits the Community Needs Assessment. Through our research, we identified the following top five needs in our community: 1) health insurance, 2) food, 3) help finding resources in the community, 4) employment, 5) child care assistance. WCCAA anticipates that our findings will only lead to improved planning, program implementation, and will enhance our abilities to transition individuals out of poverty.

### **III. 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 to conduct a Community Needs Assessment 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 implementation for low-income families.

WCCAA elected to utilize the Texas Department of Housing Community Affairs (TDHCA) survey. WCCAA made minor adjustments to the survey that made it available both in English and Spanish. This survey was made available on paper, via a link to survey monkey sent through email, via a link to survey monkey sent through text, and by QR code on posters and flyers available throughout the community. The survey is user friendly; the page layout is designed front and back with one side being in the English and the other in Spanish. Feedback from staff and our WCCAA Board members was requested and taken into consideration for this survey.

## **IV. Organizational Profile**

The 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 Commissioner's Court. As previously mentioned, the WCCAA has four lines of service for Webb County. They are as follows:

1. The El Aguila Rural Transportation Program has two transportation options for our clients; Rural Scheduled Routes and On Demand. These programs are federally funded and provide transportation to citizens living in rural communities such as Rio Bravo, Oilton, El Cenizo, Bruni, Mirando and Aguilares. Citizens living in Colonias are also 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 curb-side service on demand for those who are handicap and require wheelchair transportation. There is a fee for a one-way trip or round trip.
2. Meals on Wheels/Elderly Nutrition Program is another federally funded program. This division has two services, home based delivery and community center-based meals. The home-based delivery provides meals to senior citizens ages sixty and above. However, these individuals must be Medicaid recipients. Meals are provided year-round and are delivered via drivers. In addition, the Meals on Wheels Program provides nutritional meals to participants who attend community centers. These meals are provided weekdays from Monday through Friday and it's an opportunity for them to receive a hot to warm meal. Additionally, through the Elderly Nutritional Program, nutritional congregate meals are served at 11 community centers in Webb County. This allows for the elderly and disabled to participate in activities such as Zumba classes and playing "loteria" games.
3. Self Help Centers were established by the Texas Legislature in 1997 by Senate Bill 1509. The goal of the Self-Help Centers is to assist families in transforming their community into conventional neighborhoods. This is accomplished by supporting families on getting their home rehabilitated or in some instances providing families with the construction of a new home.
4. Community Social Services provides energy assistance via Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and skills training via 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.

## V. Community Needs Assessment Results Overview

The graph below shows the total for each domain. Overall, the top needs are Healthcare/Behavioral Development followed by Housing, Education, and Employment.

| Domain/ Category                            | Total Responses |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Employment                                  | 413             |
| Education                                   | 452             |
| Income & Asset Building                     | 60              |
| Housing                                     | 499             |
| Healthcare/<br>Behavioral Development       | 990             |
| Civic Engagement &<br>Community Involvement | 57              |
| Emergency Assistance                        | 279             |

A more in-depth review on the survey results (found on the following page), show the top 5 needs (Note: there was a tie for top 5<sup>th</sup> need, both are shown below):

1. Employment
  - a. Help finding a living-wage job - 167
2. Education
  - a. Assistance to attend college or technical/trade school - 163
3. Housing
  - a. Affordable housing - 147
4. Healthcare/Behavioral Development
  - a. Access to affordable health care – 142
5. Employment
  - a. Job or skills training that will lead to better pay – 141
6. Healthcare/Behavioral Development
  - a. Access to affordable food – 141

The above-mentioned needs/domains provide an excellent snapshot into what resources the community desires. 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 employment, education, income and asset building, housing, health and social/behavioral development, civic engagement/community involvement and emergency assistance.

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



## Webb County Community Action Agency

### Community Needs Survey

Every 3 years, our Webb County Community Action Agency conducts a survey of our community. The results help our agency determine where we should focus our time and resources to best meet the needs of our community. Thank you for taking the time to help us make Webb County a better place to live, work, and grow.

How would you best describe your position? Circle one.

Local Official   Volunteer   Community Member   School Official   Student   Other

Please select what you consider are the top five (5) needs in our community.

| Rank | Responses | Healthcare/Behavioral Development                                  |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6    | 141       | Access to affordable food                                          |
|      |           | Help applying for social security, WIC, SNAP (food stamps), etc.   |
| 14   | 73        | Substance use counseling                                           |
| 16   | 67        | Substance use counseling                                           |
| 4    | 142       | Access to affordable health care                                   |
|      |           | Independent living home improvements (ramps, shower handles, etc.) |
| 23   | 58        |                                                                    |
| 12   | 83        | Mental or behavioral health counseling/classes                     |
| 20   | 60        | Nutrition education or healthy eating workshops                    |
| 30   | 44        | Parenting classes                                                  |
| 17   | 64        | Updates to public parks & facilities                               |
| 21   | 60        | Programs and activities for seniors                                |
| 19   | 62        | Programs and activities for youth aged 8-18                        |
| 28   | 50        | Help affording prescriptions and/or medical equipment              |
| 11   | 86        | Neighborhood cleanup efforts                                       |
|      | 990       |                                                                    |

| Rank | Responses | Housing                                               |
|------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 3    | 147       | Affordable housing                                    |
|      |           | Heating and cooling repairs (furnace/air conditioner) |
| 22   | 60        |                                                       |
| 13   | 76        | Help paying rent or mortgage                          |
|      |           | Help to make my home more energy efficient            |
| 32   | 37        | Help paying utility bills                             |
| 7    | 127       | Help paying utility bills                             |
| 27   | 52        | Temporary/emergency shelter for homeless persons      |
|      | 499       |                                                       |

| Rank | Responses | Income & Asset Building                                 |
|------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 29   | 50        | Financial education/budgeting classes/credit counseling |
| 36   | 10        | Affordable tax preparation                              |
|      | 60        |                                                         |

| Rank | Responses | Education                                              |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 2    | 163       | Assistance to attend college or technical/trade school |
|      |           | Computer skills training                               |
| 10   | 90        |                                                        |
| 8    | 108       | English as a second language classes                   |
| 9    | 91        | Help getting a GED                                     |
|      | 452       |                                                        |

| Rank | Responses | Employment                                          |
|------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 18   | 62        | Assistance with goal setting and self-sufficiency   |
| 31   | 43        | Employment supplies such as uniforms or tools       |
| 1    | 167       | Help finding a living-wage job                      |
| 5    | 141       | Job or skills training that will lead to better pay |
|      | 413       |                                                     |

| Rank | Responses | Emergency/Support Services                                                 |
|------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25   | 57        | Affordable transportation                                                  |
| 26   | 56        | Child care assistance                                                      |
|      |           | Help obtaining documents such as license, birth certificate, SS card, etc. |
| 35   | 25        |                                                                            |
| 33   | 34        | Access to legal services                                                   |
|      |           | Programs for crime prevention or to avoid reentry into justice system      |
| 34   | 34        |                                                                            |
| 15   | 73        | Help finding resources in the community                                    |
|      | 279       |                                                                            |

| Rank | Responses | Civic                            |
|------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 24   | 57        | Voter education and registration |
|      | 57        |                                  |

What do these needs look like in your community? \*

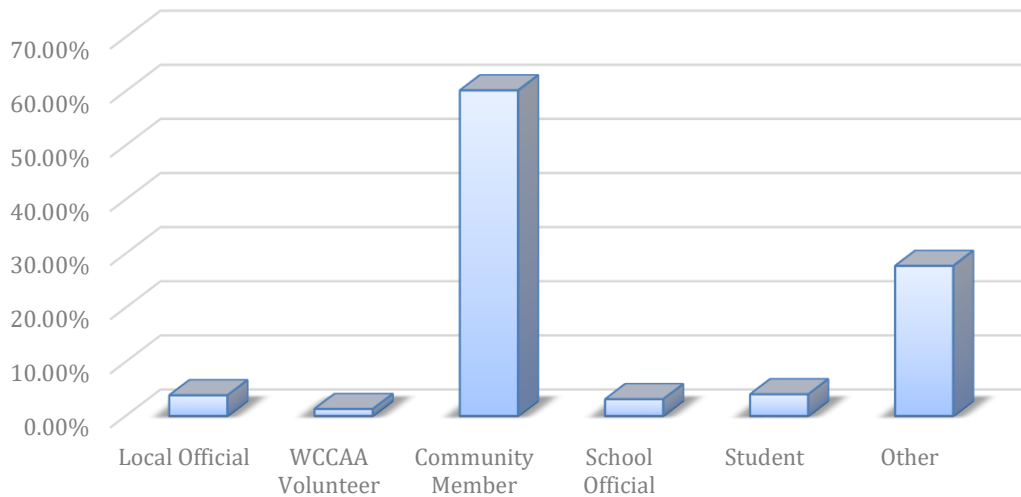
For your top 5 needs, please tell us what those needs look like in your community. For example, if you selected "Affordable transportation", is the need for cheaper bus passes, shorter routes, a bus stop closer to your home, etc.? This information helps us to narrow down exactly what the need is which lets us determine how we can help.

What do you feel are the biggest obstacles families in our community face in obtaining their goals? \*

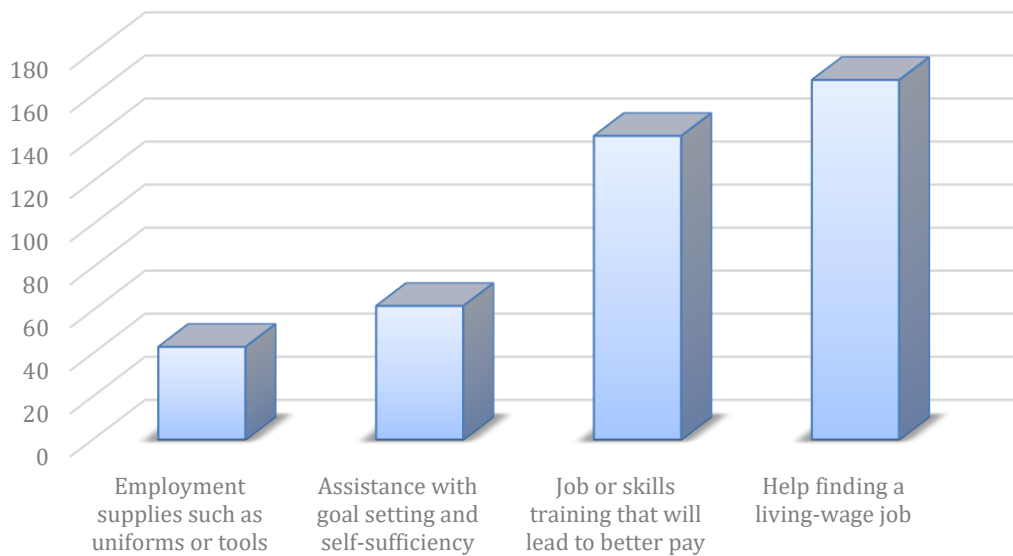
Webb County Community Action Agency (WCCAA) made all efforts to capture the average customer who comes through our doors. In addition, we collaborated with agencies who serve low-income families as well as were visible throughout the county.

There was a total of 550 participants for the surveys. Below are the graphs for each domain.

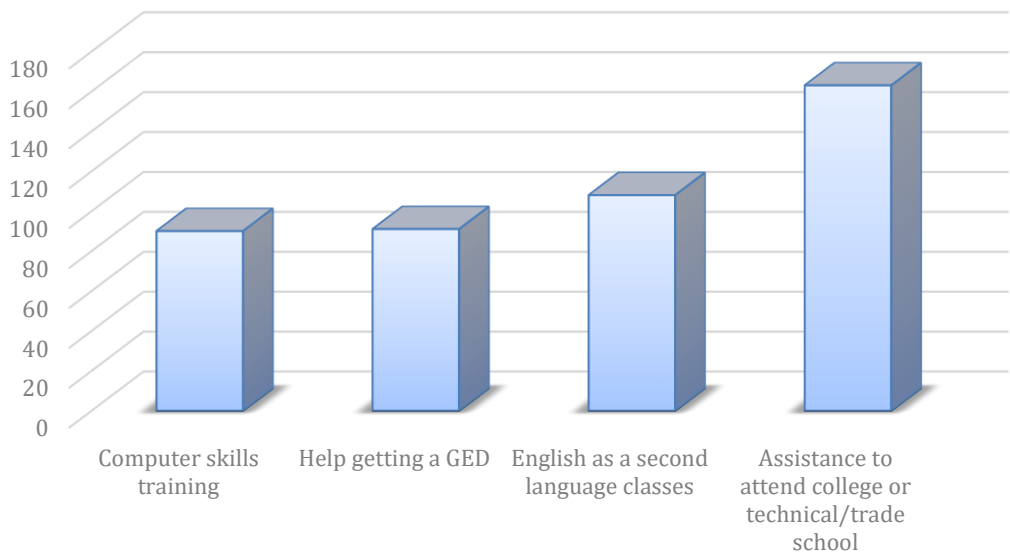
## How would you best describe your position?



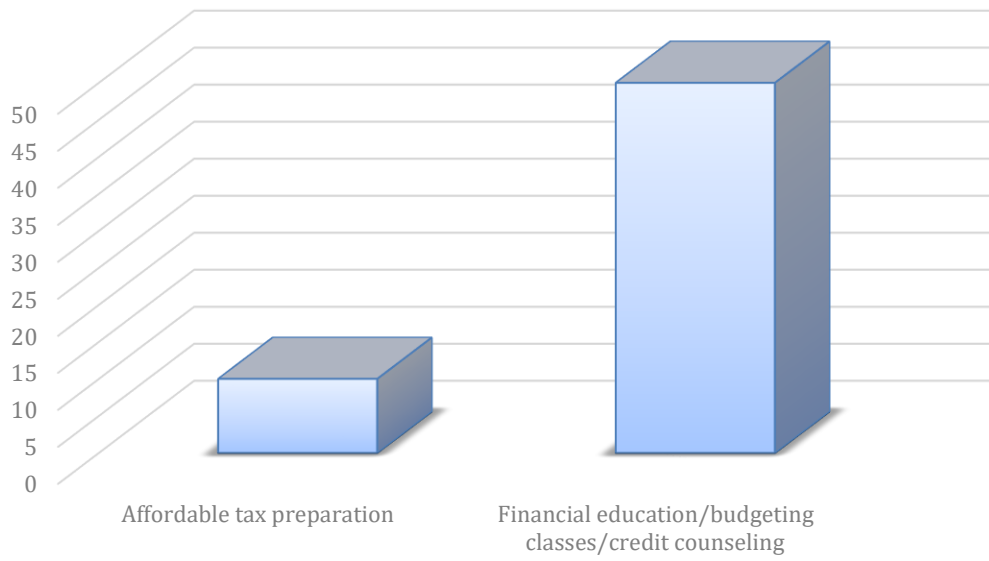
## Employment

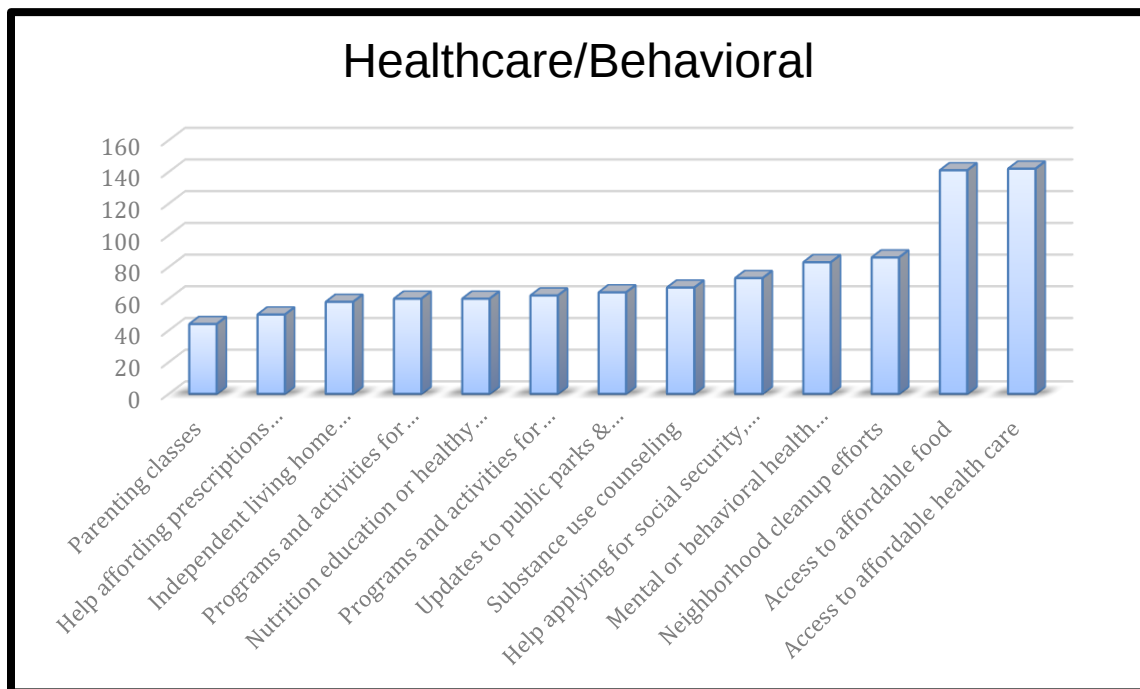
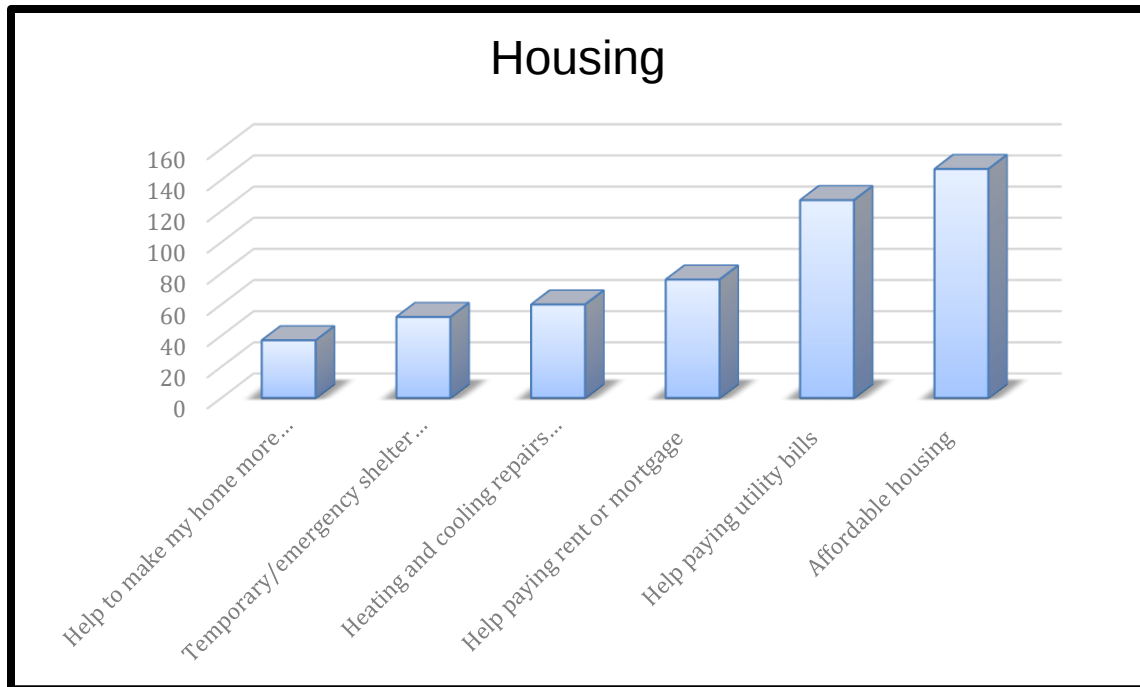


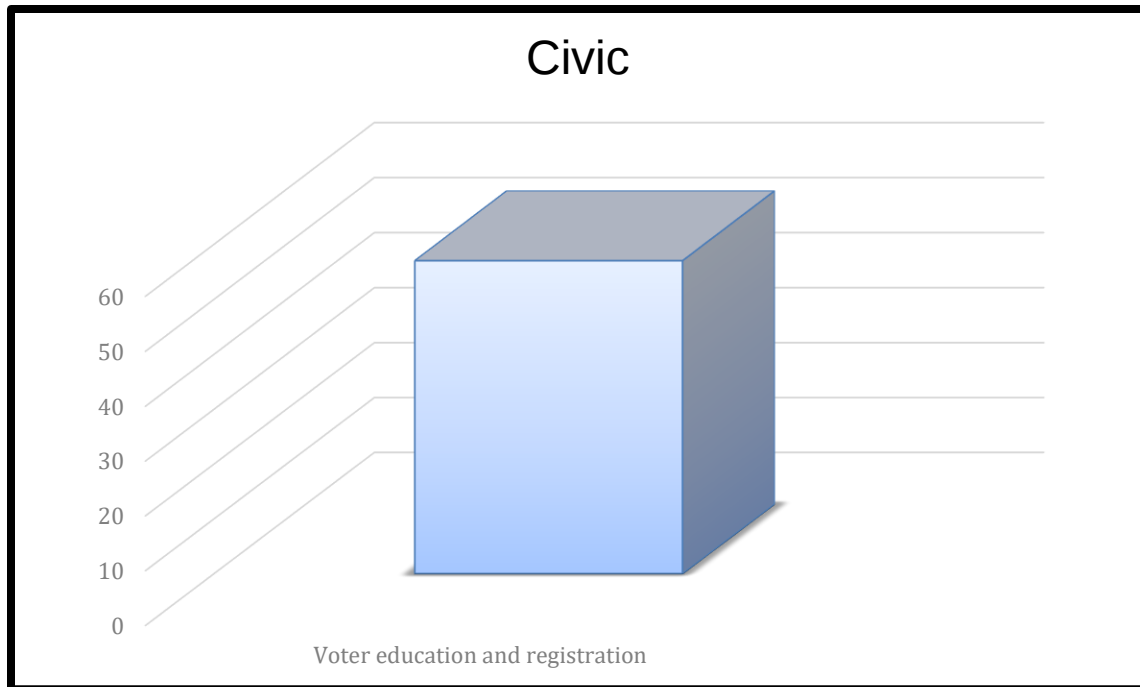
# Education



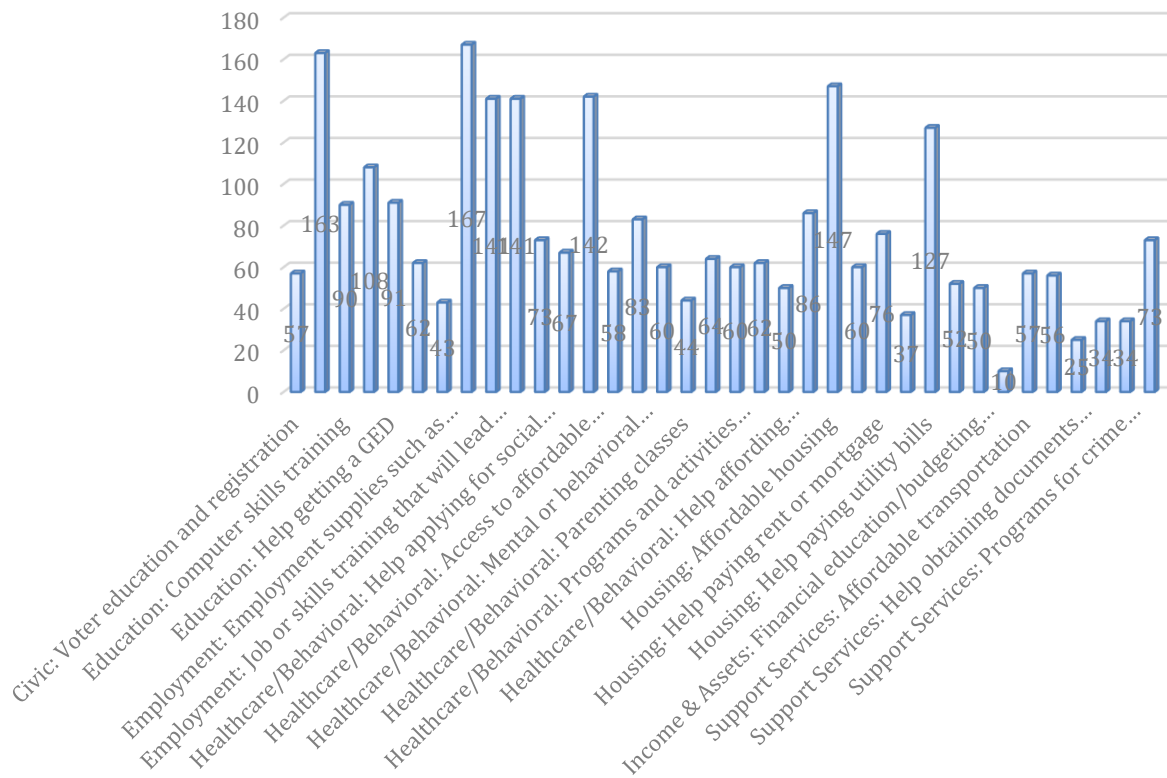
# Income and Assets







Please select what you consider are the top five (5) needs in our community.



## VI. Community Needs Assessment Process Overview

The establishment of the Community Needs Assessment Committee at the Webb County Community Action Agency marked a significant step towards fostering comprehensive and inclusive community engagement. The preliminary meeting for the committee was held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. Comprised of WCCAA staff, management, and advisory board members, the committee convened to establish meeting timelines and reporting requirements aimed at systematically identifying and addressing community needs. Discussions centered on creating a structured approach wherein the committee would regularly arrange to assess progress, assign tasks, and establish clear deadlines. By leveraging the collective expertise and perspectives of its members, the committee aims to enhance the agency's responsiveness to community challenges and priorities, ensuring that resources are effectively allocated to maximize positive outcomes for Webb County residents. This proactive initiative underscores the agency's commitment to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement in its service delivery efforts.

The table below is the timeline followed to meet reporting deadlines.

| Date Frame              | Milestone Title           | Activity                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 03/06/2024 - 04/03/2024 | Planning                  | Planning, developing forms, community outreach                                                                                                              |
| 04/05/2024 - 05/31/2024 | Collect Qualitative Data  | Distribution of surveys, and conducting interviews/forums/focus groups                                                                                      |
| 05/24/2024 - 06/14/2024 | Collect Quantitative Data | Gathering and summarizing data                                                                                                                              |
| 06/17/2024 -06/24/2024  | Analyzing Data            | Identify the needs, gaps, barriers, and trends<br>Ranking the needs based on data analysis<br>Determining top 5 needs<br>Categorizing by level of each need |

## VII. Data Collection Methods

The surveys used and the interview formats were provided by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. All surveys provided to the community included a brief description of the reason for the survey. The reason was provided orally or as part of an email.

*“Every three years, the **Webb County Community Action Agency** conducts a **Community Needs Survey** to understand the needs of our community. Your input helps us prioritize our efforts and allocate resources effectively. We would appreciate you taking the time to participate and contribute to making Webb County a better place to live, work, and grow.*

*By conducting this assessment, we aim to identify the needs within our community and the groups most affected, ensuring our actions are targeted and impactful.*

*After completing this survey, please share this link with other staff, work contacts, friends, and family.”*

Domains used for the survey included: Employment

- Education
- Income and Asset Building
- Housing
- Health and Social/Behavioral Development
- Civic Engagement
- Community Involvement

Individuals completing the surveys were asked to select their needs in one column and rank from their top 5 needs from 1 to 5.

The survey was distributed to the following service agencies: AAMA Paso Libre, American Electric Power, Azteca Development Preservation, Area Health Education Center of the Mid Rio Grande Border Area of Texas, United Independent School District, Border Region Behavioral Center, Boys and Girls Club of Laredo, Communities In Schools of Laredo, Inc., City of Laredo Environmental Services Department, City of Laredo Health Department, City of Laredo Parks & Leisure Services Department, City of Laredo Public Information Office, Department of State Health Services Laredo Office, Driscoll Health Plan, DSHS Office of Border Health, ECI Project Niño’s, Farmers Market, Gateway Community Health Center, Habitat for Humanity of Laredo, Hachar Media, Holding Institute, Infinito Home Care, Laredo Job Corps, Laredo Fire Department, Laredo ISD, Laredo Medical Center, Laredo Public Library, Laredo Specialty Hospital/Laredo Rehabilitation Hospital, Laredo Sports Medicine Clinic, Laredo Stroke Support Group, Mercy Ministries of Laredo, Methodist Healthcare Ministries, Mexican Consulate in Laredo, MHP Salud, Molina Healthcare, PAD Specialists, PILLAR, Rio Grande International Study Center, Ruthe B. Cowl Rehabilitation Center, SCAN Inc, South Texas Development Council, South Texas Food Bank, Texas A&M International University, Target Stores, Texas A&M University Colonias Program, Texas Department of Transportation Laredo Office, Touchstone Communities Las Alturas/LNR, United Healthcare, United

Independent School District, University Health, UTHealth Laredo Office, Webb County Departments (all departments), Wellness Equity Alliance, Westcare Texas, Workforce Solutions for South Texas, Mayor Victor D. Trevino, MD, City of Laredo City Council, Webb County Judge Tano Tijerina, Webb County Commissioners, and Webb County Elected Officials.

In addition, community stakeholders were interviewed. These individuals cooperated by allowing their employees to take the survey including the individuals who solicit their services. One focus group was also conducted online.

The deadline to collect all surveys was set for Friday May 31, 2024.

As a real benefit, in the process of collecting the Community Needs Assessment, WCCAA leadership were able to reconnect and renew the sense of collaboration with other community agencies directors and staff. The professional working relationships that CAA enjoys with their counterparts were strengthened and various plans for future collaborations have been initiated.

In addition, the mission of the Community Action Agency was reinforced by the one-to-one dialogues, the presentations, and the opportunity that was given to the Webb County residents on voicing their opinions and recommendations for future CAA projects and programs. It is the opinion of this committee that the professional and personal investment that was made with stakeholders, residents, and government officials will enhance the working relationships established.

## VIII. Community Profile

Webb County, located on the banks of the Rio Grande River on the Texas/Mexico border, is considered an urban county and it is the sixth largest county covering 3361.5 square miles with most of its population residing within the city of Laredo, the county seat. The county includes the metropolitan city of Laredo, Rio Bravo, El Cenizo, as well as census-designated communities of Bruni, Oilton, Mirando City and 45 smaller unincorporated communities. According to the United States Census Bureau, the population estimate for Webb County was 269,148 (July 1, 2023). Across the river, its sister city, Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, is home to an estimated 500,000 people, making this a joint community of close to a million people. It is not uncommon for residents of both cities to cross the international bridge on a daily basis for health care, trade, recreation and shopping.

The majority of the population of Webb County is Hispanic (95.3%). Laredo and Webb County continue to rank as one of the poorest areas in the nation. Even though the region continues to experience enormous population and economic growth since the 1990's, it is estimated that three out of ten individuals live in poverty (20.9%).

The population of Laredo is poor, with a median household income of \$59,984 compared to the State's median household income of \$73,035. The total persons living below poverty level, is 20.9% while the state percentage is 14.0%; showing a real disparity. The medically underserved and the uninsured/underinsured is also more than the average for the State of Texas declaring Laredo Medically underserved area. Laredo's economy is such that it supports low paying or blue-collar jobs that provide limited or no health insurance, thus leaving out even a greater number of working poor. Total persons without health care coverage is 29.7% almost double the state average of 18.9%; this accounts for the dependence on an array of public entities.

Due to its geographic location, Laredo is the number one largest in-land port of any border town in the United States. Its economy is deeply integrated into five employer sectors: trade/transportation/utilities, government entities, private education/health services, leisure/hospitality, and professional business services. In 2022, the Port of Laredo handled more than \$248.5 billion dollars in two-way trade. The top five Port Laredo exports are: motor vehicle parts, diesel engines, gasoline (other fuels), plastics, and corn. The top three trade partners for Port Laredo are Mexico (\$242.8 billion or 97.73%), China (\$1.4 billion or .59%), and Japan (\$608 million or .25%). Despite the significant growth in population and employment in South Texas, Webb County continues to lag economically behind Texas and the U.S.

In terms of education Webb County has three school districts, Laredo Independent School District, United Independent School District, and Webb County Consolidated School District. Laredo ISD is a land-locked district sprawling more than thirteen square miles. The district is made up of thirty-three educational institutions: twenty elementary schools, four middle schools, six high schools, and 3 specialty schools. The district has a yearly average of 25,000 students and 4,500 employees.

United ISD is the second largest school district in Region One and the 24<sup>th</sup> largest in the state. The district serves 43,000 students in thirty elementary schools, thirteen middle schools, and nine

high school campuses situated throughout the county. UISD was one of the first districts in the nation to teach Spanish speakers English and English speakers Spanish.

Webb County Consolidated School District is based in Bruni, a community in unincorporated Webb County Texas. WCCISD serves the unincorporated communities of Bruni, Aguilares, Mirando City, and Oilton. The district serves 259 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student ratio of 9 to 1. According to state test scores, 37% of students are at least proficient in Math and 42% in reading.

TANF- The Texas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, formally Aid to families with Children (AFDC), is a support service for Texas families. The purpose of TANF is to provide financial and medical assistance to needy dependent children and the parents or relatives with whom they are living.

#### **Texas TANF**

**March 2024 Data**

| <b>County Name</b> | <b>Number of Cases</b> | <b>Recipients</b> | <b>Children</b> | <b>Adults</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Webb</b>        | 107                    | 286               | 269             | 16            |
| <b>State Total</b> | <b>6,883</b>           | <b>16,208</b>     | <b>13,567</b>   | <b>2,640</b>  |

Texas SNAP- the Supplemental Assistance Program helps people buy the food they need for good health. SNAP food benefits are put on the Lone Star Card and can be used like a credit card at any store that accepts SNAP.

#### **Texas SNAP**

**May 2024 Data**

| <b>County Name</b> | <b>Number of</b> | <b>Number of</b> | <b>Individuals:</b> | <b>Individuals:</b> | <b>Individuals:</b> | <b>Individuals:</b> | <b>Individuals:</b> |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Webb</b>        | 24,798           | 61,908           | 9,040               | 24,980              | 19,350              | 1,544               | 6,994               |
| <b>State Total</b> | <b>1,490,162</b> | <b>3,224,934</b> | <b>450,762</b>      | <b>1,138,828</b>    | <b>1,125,472</b>    | <b>136,740</b>      | <b>373,132</b>      |

Laredo has the following medical and health facilities:

Laredo Medical Center, a community health care provider; a 326-bed, acute care facility with over 49 specialties and subspecialties, including cardiology, oncology, neurology, obstetrics, orthopedics, urology, wound care, emergency medicine, and bariatrics.

Doctor's Hospital, is a 183-bed acute care facility that offers a range of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, weight-loss surgery, wound care, hyperbaric medicine, and comprehensive women's health services.

Laredo Specialty Hospital, provides long term acute care to patients who are recovering from serious illnesses or injuries and require additional critical care services for medical complex conditions such as trauma, infectious diseases, wound healing, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and amputation.

Gateway Community Health Center, provides the following services: Adult primary care, obstetric care, family planning, STI testing, dental services, urgent care clinic, diabetes self-management courses, behavioral health services, gynecological care, breast and cervical cancer services, laboratory services, pharmacy services, prosthodontic, periodontal care, and nutritional therapy.

Mercy Ministries of Laredo, provides primary healthcare services to the neediest residents of Webb County who need a medical home. Mercy's doctors focus on prevention and control of chronic illness through education and patient compliance. Patients are coached to become advocates of their own health. Services include: advocacy, adult dental care, cancer program, diabetes center, general medicine, health education, medication assistance, mobile clinic, outreach and education, social services, and women's health services.

City of Laredo Health Department, Laredo's community health department is open to residents of Laredo and Webb County. Through its various locations it provides the following services: Environmental Health & Food Management (food handlers training and licensing as well as preparation inspections), Patient Care Services (Primary care services, maternal and child health services, TB screening and elimination, Nurse family partnership, Juntos for better health primary care and mental health services, and Assisted Outpatient Treatment community based mental health treatment, Disease Control and Epidemiology, Public Health Preparedness, Laredo Education and Testing Services for HIV/AIDS & STD prevention, Behavioral Health Services, Vaccine Preventable Disease Control & Immunization, Laboratory Services, Healthy Living Viviendo Mejor Diabetes Empowerment Program, Buena Vida Disease Prevention, Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies, COVID 19 Capacity Promotion, and WIC Program.

Border Region Behavioral Health Center is a non-profit, tax-exempt contract agency of the state of Texas that is governed by a nine-member board of trustees appointed by the county commissioner courts of Webb, Zapata, Jim Hogg, and Starr Counties. The Center employs 360 people to serve 9313 clients with a budget of 28 million dollars. Border Region Behavioral Health Center is designated as a Local Mental Health Authority and a Mental Retardation Authority. Border Region Behavioral Health Center, provides the following services: Adult Mental Health through the Adult Behavioral Health Services Unit provides an array of services to adults 18 years of age or older who suffer from schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, severe major depression or any other severely disabling mental disorders which require support and treatment. Children's Mental Health, the Child, Adolescent and Parent Services Program (CAPS) serves children ages 3 through 17 with a diagnosis of mental illness who may experience emotional disturbance, behavioral problems, prior in-patient psychiatric hospitalization, and/or at risk of expulsion from school. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Program offers an array of services specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals diagnosed with intellectual/cognitive, pervasive developmental disorder and/or related conditions. Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program offers brief individual,

group counseling, educational and supportive contacts from crisis counselors and several other licensed professionals to assist individuals from a young age of 3 years old and on.

Webb County also has PILLAR. People with Ideas of Love, Liberty, Acceptance and Respect (PILLAR) continues to expand its capability to serve members of our community and the surrounding areas as a non-profit Certified Community Behavioral Health Center, Licensed Substance Abuse Treatment Facility, and Primary and Family Medical Care entity. PILLAR has been offering its services since 2010, in the form of integrated and colocated behavioral health, substance abuse, and 24-hour crisis intervention services. As recently as 2021, PILLAR has also been rendering in-person psychiatric care as well as primary and family medical care services. PILLAR's services, rendered by a multidisciplinary team of clinical, medical and professional staff made up of a Physician, Family Nurse Practitioner, Psychiatric Care providers, Navigators/Case Managers, Licensed Professional Counselors, Substance Abuse Counselors, Psychiatric nurse practitioners, and health educators, are for all community and surrounding area individuals ages 5 and up that are dealing with situational or organic behavioral health and/or substance use issues as well as any physiological ailments that tend to compromise our physical health.

In addition, the Laredo Housing Authority leads the way in providing housing for low-income families and individuals. The Laredo Housing Authority is the local housing agency that manages the housing for low-income residents at rents they can afford. LHA owns and manages 994 safe, decent, and affordable public housing units in 8 locations and administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program for 1,390 families in the private housing sector in Laredo, Zapata, and Asherton. Through supportive services and self-sufficiency classes, LHA fortifies residents' knowledge and skills necessary to improve their quality of life.

## IX. Conditions of Poverty

Conditions of poverty refer to the various circumstances and challenges that individuals or communities experience due to limited financial resources and socio-economic disadvantages. These conditions typically include inadequate access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, healthcare, and education. Poverty may also manifest in limited opportunities for employment, low wages, lack of social services, and insufficient infrastructure. Moreover, conditions of poverty often lead to heightened vulnerability to social exclusion, poor living conditions, higher rates of illness and mortality, and reduced overall quality of life.

The 2019 U.S. Census Bureau reports that 74,142 people (28.08%) of all ages in Webb County live below the poverty level. Among those aged 5-17, 17,151 individuals (27.6%) are living in poverty. For residents aged 65 and older, 6,056 (23.7%) are below the poverty line. In the 0-17 age group, 24,081 children (28.5%) are affected by poverty. Gender data shows that 31,324 females (23.46%) and 25,147 males (19.27%) live in poverty.

Educational attainment and adult literacy significantly impact poverty levels. In Webb County, 30.9% of the population does not have a high school diploma. Additionally, an estimated 52.8% of residents over the age of 16, totaling 94,161 individuals, lack basic literacy skills.

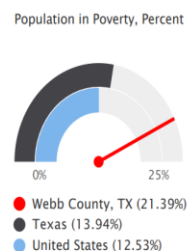
According to the 2021-2022 TEA Accountability Report, Laredo ISD has a student population of 20,932, with 69.9% identified as at-risk, compared to 53.5% at the state level. Economically disadvantaged students make up 67.3% of Laredo ISD's population, compared to 60% statewide. United ISD reports a student population of 41,381, with 47.3% at-risk and 75.5% economically disadvantaged. Webb County ISD has 269 students, with 48.1% at-risk and 54.5% economically disadvantaged.

Education is a powerful tool for ending poverty. Basic education empowers parents to care for themselves and their families, leading to healthier children and lifestyle changes. Education opens opportunities for career and personal growth, especially for minority students. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty.

Below is a graph illustrating the poverty rate in Webb County, Texas, and the U.S., based on data from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)) and the American Community Survey (2018-2022).

| Report Area     | Total Population | Population in Poverty | Population in Poverty, Percent |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 264,040          | 56,471                | 21.39%                         |
| Texas           | 28,615,931       | 3,990,326             | 13.94%                         |
| United States   | 323,275,448      | 40,521,584            | 12.53%                         |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.  
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018-22.

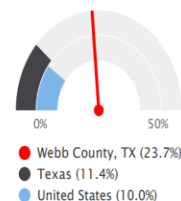


Below is a graph demonstrating the number and percentage of seniors (65 and older) living in poverty in Webb County.

| Report Area     | Ages 65 and Up<br>Total Population | Ages 65 and Up<br>In Poverty | Ages 65 and Up<br>Poverty Rate |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 25,563                             | 6,056                        | <b>23.7%</b>                   |
| Texas           | 3,678,837                          | 419,915                      | 11.4%                          |
| United States   | 53,352,363                         | 5,309,452                    | 10.0%                          |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.  
Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*, 2018-22.

Ages 65 and Up Poverty Rate

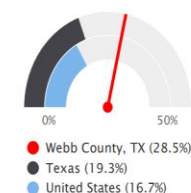


Below is a graph from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)), using data from the U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (2018), indicating that the overall poverty rate in Webb County is 21.39%. The rate of poverty increases among children aged 0 to 17 years to 28.7%.

| Report Area     | Ages 0-17<br>Total Population | Ages 0-17<br>In Poverty | Ages 0-17<br>Poverty Rate |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 84,356                        | 24,081                  | <b>28.5%</b>              |
| Texas           | 7,306,011                     | 1,413,013               | 19.3%                     |
| United States   | 72,035,358                    | 12,002,351              | 16.7%                     |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.  
Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*, 2018-22.

Ages 0-17 Poverty Rate

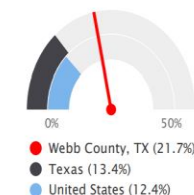


The following graph illustrates how conditions of poverty impact everyone living in a household, based on data from the American Community Survey (2018-2022) and sourced from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)).

| Report Area     | Total Households | Households<br>in Poverty | Percent Households<br>in Poverty |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 77,797           | 16,878                   | <b>21.7%</b>                     |
| Texas           | 10,490,553       | 1,401,789                | 13.4%                            |
| United States   | 125,736,353      | 15,616,265               | 12.4%                            |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.  
Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*, 2018-22.

Percent Households  
in Poverty



The graph below shows that 23.46% of females in Webb County live in poverty, compared to 19.27% of males, according to data from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)).

| Report Area     | Male       | Female     | Male, Percent | Female, Percent |
|-----------------|------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Webb County, TX | 25,147     | 31,324     | 19.27%        | 23.46%          |
| Texas           | 1,786,413  | 2,203,913  | 12.56%        | 15.31%          |
| United States   | 18,109,332 | 22,412,252 | 11.34%        | 13.70%          |

Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*, 2018-22.

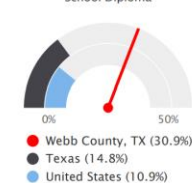
Below are two graphs indicating educational attainment and adult literacy rates, sourced from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)). The information was gathered from the American Community Survey (2018-2022) and NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) estimates of low literacy at or below Level 1.

| Report Area     | No High School Diploma | High School Only | Some College | Associate's Degree | Bachelor's Degree | Graduate or Professional Degree |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 30.9%                  | 21.9%            | 18.8%        | 7.8%               | 14.7%             | 5.9%                            |
| Texas           | 14.8%                  | 24.5%            | 20.9%        | 7.6%               | 20.7%             | 11.5%                           |
| United States   | 10.9%                  | 26.4%            | 19.7%        | 8.7%               | 20.9%             | 13.4%                           |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*, 2018-22.

Percent Population with No High School Diploma

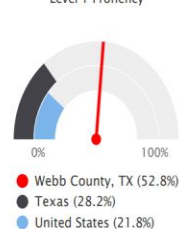


| Report Area     | Population Ages 16-74 | Total At or Below Level 1 | At or Below Level 1 | Total Lower Credible Interval | Lower Credible Interval | Total Upper Credible Interval | Upper Credible Interval |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 178,336               | 94,161                    | 52.8%               | 82,926                        | 46.5%                   | 105,575                       | 59.2%                   |
| Texas           | 19,698,538            | 5,554,327                 | 28.2%               | 4,772,938                     | 24.2%                   | 6,315,947                     | 32.1%                   |
| United States   | 235,567,157           | 51,401,095                | 21.8%               | 42,569,858                    | 18.1%                   | 60,378,678                    | 25.6%                   |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *NCES - Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies*, 2017.

Level 1 Proficiency



Below is a graph demonstrating poverty by household type. Graph taken from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)) with the information taken from the American Community Survey (2018-2022).

| Report Area     | Total Families | Families in Poverty Total | Families in Poverty Married Couples | Families in Poverty Male Householder | Families in Poverty Female Householder |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 62,267         | 11,894                    | 4,673                               | 1,027                                | 6,194                                  |
| Texas           | 7,173,843      | 765,437                   | 308,422                             | 71,232                               | 385,783                                |
| United States   | 81,432,908     | 7,151,167                 | 2,666,469                           | 783,254                              | 3,701,444                              |

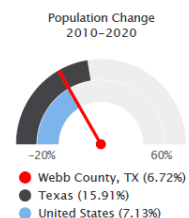
Data Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*, 2018-22.

## X. Webb County Profile

Webb County boasts a thriving population that has experienced a notable growth of 6.72% as indicated by data from the 2020 U.S. Census, sourced from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)). However, compared to both Texas and the United States as a whole, Webb County's population growth pattern shows a more moderate trajectory.

| Report Area     | Total Population,<br>2010 Census | Total Population,<br>2020 Census | Population Change,<br>2010-2020 | Population Change,<br>2010-2020, Percent |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 250,304                          | 267,114                          | 16,810                          | 6.72%                                    |
| Texas           | 25,145,557                       | 29,145,505                       | 3,999,948                       | 15.91%                                   |
| United States   | 312,471,161                      | 334,735,155                      | 22,263,994                      | 7.13%                                    |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.  
Data Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020.



The relatively modest population change observed in Webb County reflects broader trends evident across Texas and the United States. Comparing growth rates over different time frames provides context: Texas experienced significant growth of 35.53% from 2000 to 2019, whereas from 2010 to 2020, this rate decreased to 15.91%. Similarly, the United States saw a population change of 15.38% from 2000 to 2019, decreasing to 7.13% from 2010 to 2020. These trends suggest a general slowdown in population growth nationwide and within Texas over recent years, influenced by factors such as economic fluctuations, demographic shifts, and varying regional development patterns. In Webb County, as in other regions, understanding these dynamics helps inform strategies for sustainable development and community planning amidst evolving population trends.

According to U.S. Census data from 2000 to 2016, Webb County experienced a significant increase in its child population, growing by 20,218 children, which represents a 29% increase. This growth rate outpaced the statewide increase in Texas, which stood at 24% over the same period. Despite this growth, projections indicate a potential decline in the number of children in Webb County by 2050, with an anticipated decrease of 14%. This projection underscores shifting demographic trends and potential challenges such as changes in birth rates, migration patterns, and socio-economic factors impacting family dynamics. Understanding these trends is crucial for local policymakers and community stakeholders to anticipate future needs in education, healthcare, and social services, ensuring effective planning and resource allocation to support the well-being of children and families in Webb County.

The demographic profile depicted in the table below highlights Webb County's youthful population, with a total of 85,117 individuals aged 0 months to 17 years. This data, sourced from the American Community Survey (2018-2022) and available on Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)), underscores the county's relatively high proportion of young residents. This youthful demographic can influence various aspects of community planning and service provision, including education, healthcare, and recreational facilities. Understanding the distribution and needs of this demographic is crucial for local policymakers and stakeholders to effectively allocate resources and develop targeted programs that support the growth, development, and well-being of children and adolescents in Webb County. By leveraging this

demographic insight, communities can better address current challenges and prepare for future opportunities associated with a dynamic and evolving population structure.

| Report Area     | Age 0-4    | Age 5-17   | Age 18-24  | Age 25-34  | Age 35-44  | Age 45-54  | Age 55-64  | Age 65+    |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Webb County, TX | 22,590     | 62,527     | 31,635     | 36,310     | 33,525     | 31,288     | 23,452     | 25,955     |
| Texas           | 1,923,422  | 5,472,706  | 2,936,266  | 4,224,194  | 4,046,302  | 3,597,088  | 3,274,387  | 3,768,977  |
| United States   | 19,004,925 | 54,208,780 | 31,282,896 | 45,388,153 | 42,810,359 | 41,087,357 | 42,577,475 | 54,737,648 |

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018-22.

The analysis of the graph reveals that Webb County has a significant adult population aged 18-64, totaling 156,210 individuals. Interestingly, the combined total of individuals aged 0 months to 34 years amounts to 153,062, indicating a substantial cohort of young residents. This demographic insight underscores the county's dynamic composition, where a large portion of the population is either attending school or transitioning into the workforce after completing their education. This transition phase is crucial as it highlights the need for accessible educational opportunities, job training programs, and employment opportunities tailored to meet the needs of young adults in Webb County.

Webb County boasts a substantial Hispanic population, comprising 255,095 individuals (see table below), which represents a significant majority within the county's demographic landscape. This demographic insight underscores the rich cultural diversity and heritage that characterizes Webb County. The Hispanic community plays a vital role in shaping the county's social fabric, contributing to its vibrant traditions, language diversity, and cultural identity. Understanding the demographic composition, particularly the prevalence of Hispanic residents, is crucial for local policymakers, community organizations, and service providers to effectively address the unique needs and preferences of this population segment. By embracing and celebrating its Hispanic heritage, Webb County can foster inclusivity, strengthen community cohesion, and promote initiatives that enhance the overall well-being and prosperity of all residents.

#### Hispanic Population by Age Group

| Report Area     | Age 0-4   | Age 5-17   | Age 18-24 | Age 25-34 | Age 35-44 | Age 45-54 | Age 55-64 | Age 65+   |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Webb County, TX | 22,089    | 60,537     | 30,579    | 34,649    | 31,612    | 30,012    | 21,992    | 23,625    |
| Texas           | 945,946   | 2,688,704  | 1,389,973 | 1,765,830 | 1,645,462 | 1,357,383 | 979,881   | 892,101   |
| United States   | 4,937,753 | 13,784,955 | 7,240,764 | 9,504,815 | 8,871,503 | 7,337,888 | 5,291,724 | 4,786,464 |

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018-22.

Webb County serves as a scale for the rich diversity of race and ethnicity prevalent along the Texas-Mexico border. With its demographic makeup prominently shaped by its geographical location, Webb County exemplifies the cultural fusion and heritage that define border communities. The county's population reflects a mosaic of races and ethnicities, with a significant representation of Hispanic, Latino, and other diverse communities. This diversity is not only a reflection of historical ties and migration patterns but also underscores the county's unique socio-economic dynamics and cultural vibrancy. Understanding and acknowledging this diversity is crucial for fostering inclusivity, promoting cultural awareness, and implementing policies that cater to the needs and aspirations of all residents in Webb County. By embracing its diverse racial and ethnic tapestry, Webb County can celebrate its multicultural identity and

strengthen community bonds, contributing to a more inclusive and harmonious society along the Texas-Mexico border.

## 1. Economic and Social Indicators

Webb County's strategic location along the Texas-Mexico border has been a significant economic asset. The presence of four international bridges spanning the Rio Grande River between Laredo and Nuevo Laredo facilitates robust vehicle and pedestrian traffic, generating a diverse array of permanent jobs across blue-collar and white-collar sectors. Additionally, the presence of educational institutions such as Laredo College, Texas A&M University, and eleven vocational colleges—including specialized schools like the Health Career Institute and Laredo Dental Assistant School—provides pathways for residents to gain valuable skills and qualifications essential for securing well-paying jobs.

The county has also experienced a construction boom, with ongoing projects ranging from schools and homes to businesses and warehouses, creating further employment opportunities. Importantly, Webb County has successfully retained jobs in retail and continues to attract millions of visitors annually from Mexico's interior. These visitors contribute significantly to the local economy by shopping for goods and occasionally investing in real estate and high-value items.

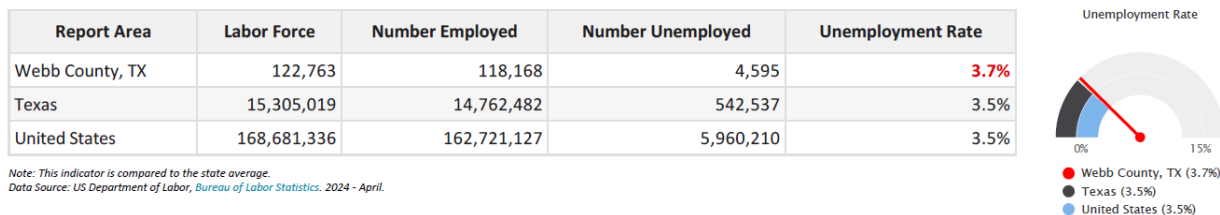
Moreover, Webb County's natural resources, including lands suitable for oil and natural gas exploration, have attracted companies that bring stable employment opportunities. These ventures not only provide jobs but also boost local businesses through procurement activities. As evidenced by data from the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (see table below), the county has seen an increase in median household income compared to 2019, reflecting its economic vitality and efforts to enhance prosperity for residents.

Overall, Webb County's strategic location, diverse economic activities, educational opportunities, and natural resources collectively contribute to its dynamic economic landscape and position it for continued growth and development in the future.

| Report Area     | Estimated Population | Median Household Income |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 263,751              | \$56,289                |
| Texas           | 29,420,371           | \$72,279                |
| United States   | 325,012,887          | \$74,755                |

Data Source: US Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. 2022.

The graph below illustrates Webb County's unemployment rate trends. As of April 2024, the unemployment rate stands at 3.7%, marking a notable decrease from the 6.7% recorded in April 2021.



The graphs sourced from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)) provide insights into the veteran population in Webb County. Specifically, they show that there are 4,693 male veterans and 248 female veterans residing in the county. These figures underscore the contributions and demographic makeup of the veteran community within Webb County, as documented by the American Community Survey (ACS).

In addition to highlighting the demographics, it's crucial to note the socio-economic challenges faced by some veterans. According to the U.S. Census data, 17.6% of veterans in Webb County live below the poverty level. This statistic underscores the importance of targeted support and resources aimed at improving economic stability and quality of life for veterans in the community. By understanding and addressing these challenges, local organizations and policymakers can better advocate for and implement initiatives that enhance the well-being and opportunities for veterans in Webb County.

### Veterans: Age and Gender Demographic

| Report Area     | Veterans Total | Veterans Male | Veterans Female | % Pop over 18 Total | % Pop over 18 Males | % Pop over 18 Females |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 4,941          | 4,693         | 248             | 2.71%               | 5.26%               | 0.27%                 |
| Texas           | 1,416,973      | 1,253,865     | 163,108         | 6.52%               | 11.66%              | 1.49%                 |
| United States   | 17,038,807     | 15,393,807    | 1,645,000       | 6.64%               | 12.25%              | 1.26%                 |

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

### Veterans by Age Graph

| 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, TX | 265                     | 86                        | 1,489                   | 49                        | 920                     | 45                        | 2,019                     | 68                          |
| Texas           | 134,229                 | 31,275                    | 355,275                 | 69,145                    | 212,305                 | 33,759                    | 552,056                   | 28,929                      |
| United States   | 1,202,922               | 263,508                   | 3,414,333               | 635,083                   | 2,725,774               | 394,399                   | 8,050,778                 | 352,010                     |

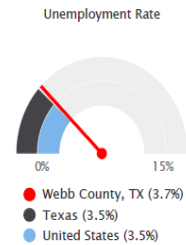
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

The employment graph below depicts Webb County's unemployment rate as of April 2024, which stands at 3.7% according to the Community Action Partnership Report. This data, sourced from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)), provides a clear snapshot of the

county's current labor market conditions, highlighting a favorable decrease in unemployment compared to previous periods.

| Report Area     | Labor Force | Number Employed | Number Unemployed | Unemployment Rate |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Webb County, TX | 122,763     | 118,168         | 4,595             | 3.7%              |
| Texas           | 15,305,019  | 14,762,482      | 542,537           | 3.5%              |
| United States   | 168,681,336 | 162,721,127     | 5,960,210         | 3.5%              |

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.  
Data Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2024 - April.



The graph sourced from Community Commons ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)) compares the median household income and per capita income in Webb County with state and national averages, based on data from the American Community Survey (2018-2022). It highlights notable disparities between Webb County and broader benchmarks. Despite these disparities, the graph also indicates a positive trend with an increase in median household income over the specified period. This upward trajectory suggests improving economic conditions within the county, reflecting efforts to enhance income levels and potentially narrow the income gap relative to state and national averages.

| Report Area     | Median Household Income | Per Capita Income |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Webb County, TX | \$59,984                | \$23,446.50       |
| Texas           | \$73,035                | \$37,513.59       |
| United States   | \$75,149                | \$41,261.47       |

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2018-22.

Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders representing diverse sectors including governance, public health/mental health, commerce, labor, housing, emergency food assistance, veteran services, public education, higher education, social services, nutrition, head-start, and public services. These interviews aimed to gather comprehensive insights into various facets of community life and service delivery in Webb County. By engaging with a broad spectrum of community leaders and experts, the assessment sought to understand current challenges, identify opportunities for collaboration, and develop informed strategies to address the evolving needs of residents across these critical sectors.

Tano Tijerina, Webb County Judge, along with Webb County Commissioners, the Mayor of the City of Laredo, City Council Members, and other elected officials were interviewed, all emphasizing the urgent need to address critical issues such as healthcare assistance, affordable housing, emergency support, food security, education, and transportation within Webb County. Their consensus underscores the multifaceted challenges facing the community and the collaborative approach required to tackle them effectively.

In addition, Mr. Erasmo Villarreal, President of the Community Action Agency Board, and sixteen other board members provided valuable insights during their interviews. They highlighted pressing concerns including food insecurity, the need for affordable housing, access to healthcare services, emergency assistance, transportation accessibility, and equitable resource distribution to rural communities. These perspectives underscore the broad scope of issues impacting residents across

Webb County, guiding efforts to prioritize and implement initiatives that address immediate needs and foster long-term community resilience and well-being.

## **2. Community Strengths and Assets**

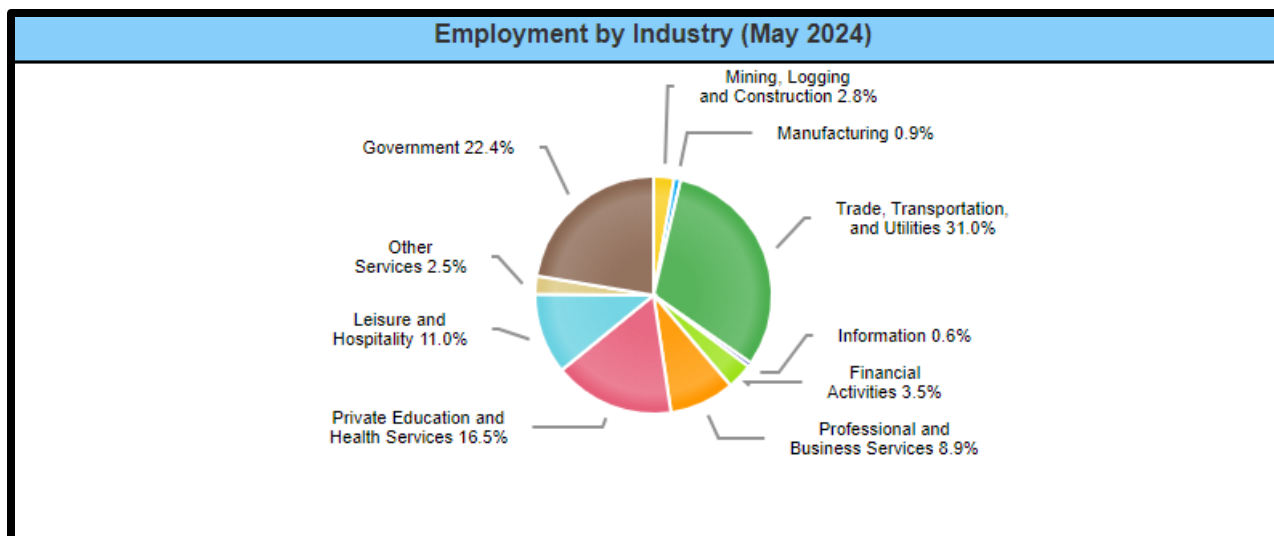
Webb County's strengths are its strong work ethic, a culture that embraces family unity and a vibrant religious community that drives the spirit of conviction. In our community, families are close knit and it is not uncommon that within a household you can find multiple generations of relatives working and caring for one another. Families in Webb County are traditional Hispanic families who pride themselves on the moral responsibility of helping other family members in need by offering money, food, clothing, or shelter. The idea of offering their house as a place to live, or taking care of a sick person is very common in our community.

The average Webb County family encourages children to be educated. Roughly 44% of Hispanics in college are first generation college students. Upon successful completion of high school or a comparable equivalent, Laredo students have their choice of two campuses of higher education; Laredo College or Texas A&M International University. Laredo College prepares students for transfer, educated students for careers in the health sciences and technical fields; and provides customized training to business and industry. Within its two campuses, Laredo College has more than 35 programs associate and certificate degree programs as well as continuing education opportunities to help students realize their educational and professional goals. For those who prefer flexibility in scheduling, Laredo College offers eLearning & an Instructional Innovation Center that offers courses and programs that can be completed online from start to finish.

As another option, students may also utilize Texas A&M International University. A Member of The Texas A&M University System, TAMIU provides over 8,400 students with a learning environment anchored by the highest quality programs built on a solid academic foundation in the arts and sciences. To fulfill its mission, the University offers a range of baccalaureate and masters programs and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in International Business and the Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice. Programs focus on developing undergraduate and graduate offerings with a progressive international agenda for global study and understanding across all disciplines.

Webb County's economy has a consistent unemployment rate of 3.9-4.2% over the last twelve months. Looking at month to month difference, Webb County's unemployment rate increased .5% from May 2023 to May 2024. As reported in the last assessment, Webb County's Employment by industry is the same. The top five categories are as follows:

- Trade, Transportation, & utilities
- Government
- Education & Health
- Leisure and Hospitality
- Professional & Business Services



According to the May 2023 Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Laredo and Webb County have about 104,590 reported employees in all industry sectors. These estimates are calculated with data collected from employers in all industry sectors in Laredo, TX, a metropolitan statistical area in Texas.

| Occupation Title                                           | Employment     | Mean Hourly Wage |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations              | 15,810         | \$17.67          |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations             | 15,300         | \$19.79          |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations           | 10,740         | \$12.38          |
| Sales and Related Occupations                              | 9,360          | \$17.64          |
| Healthcare Support Occupations                             | 9,330          | \$11.61          |
| Educational Instruction and Library Occupations            | 8,390          | \$24.68          |
| Management Occupations                                     | 6,720          | \$44.95          |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations         | 4,500          | \$37.81          |
| Business and Financial Operations Occupations              | 4,440          | \$32.34          |
| Protective Service Occupations                             | 4,120          | \$32.00          |
| Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations          | 3,780          | \$20.87          |
| Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations  | 2,280          | \$13.31          |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations                    | 2,230          | \$20.57          |
| Production Occupations                                     | 1,860          | \$16.47          |
| Personal Care and Service Occupations                      | 1,450          | \$13.53          |
| Community and Social Service Occupations                   | 1,280          | \$22.98          |
| Computer and Mathematical Occupations                      | 1,040          | \$34.50          |
| Architecture and Engineering Occupations                   | 580            | \$37.09          |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations | 560            | \$22.12          |
| Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations             | 470            | \$31.48          |
| Legal Occupations                                          | 350            | \$48.12          |
| <b>All Occupations</b>                                     | <b>104,590</b> |                  |

Note: It should be remembered that the table above reflects reported hourly wages for all staff in the listed occupations. In reality, those numbers do not reflect the lowest salaries of staff employed. Furthermore, the hourly rate may be a gross pay and does not reflect take home pay.

As of February of 2024, The Laredo Economic Development Corporation identified the major employers in Laredo. In the private sector they listed:

- Walmart
- HEB
- McDonald's Restaurants
- Laredo Medical Center
- Concentrix
- Doctor's Hospital
- IBC
- Core Civic Detention Centers (Corrections Corporation of America)
- Fedex Freight
- Sames Auto Group
- Taco Palenque
- Retama Manor Nursing Centers
- Medline Industries
- Stripes Convenience Stores
- Falcon International Bank
- Sam's Club

In the public sector:

- UISD
- Laredo ISD
- City of Laredo
- Webb County
- Border Patrol Laredo Sector
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- Texas A&M International University
- Laredo College
- Gateway Community Health Center (276)
- Border Region Behavioral Health Center

Webb County also supports a strong working relationship with the city government. It is evident by the communication and collaboration on several projects. Both the City of Laredo and Webb County offer third party grants to non-profit organizations.

Webb County also is committed to its collaboration with the Texas Department of Transportation as it works together on infrastructure projects to help with traffic congestion especially on the Mines Road which is the main road to the majority the warehouse and the transportation businesses.

### **3. Gaps in Services and Barriers**

As Webb County and principally Laredo continues to experience growth in population, the 2022 U.S. Census Bureau Data shows a total of 20.1% of all persons of all ages living below the poverty level in Webb County. Senior citizens over the age of 65 are overly represented in the age level coming in at 25.7%. Individual interviews and concerns and opinions noted during the forum presentations and focus groups discussions points to the gaps in services and barriers.

This data indicates that there is an abundance of poverty and need for services and resources scattered throughout Laredo/Webb County.

Some of the major gaps in services as indicated in the assessment are:

1. Affordable housing for low-income families and individuals
2. Affordable healthcare and dental services
3. Affordable food for all families
4. Utility assistance programs
5. Medical Services
6. Mental Health services

Barriers facing low income families are as follows:

1. Low paying jobs
2. Affordable housing
3. Unemployment
4. Insufficient funds to assist with utility bills
5. Language barriers
6. Education

Efforts by Webb County Social programs and city social programs are being overburdened by the number of applicants seeking assistance. It must be recognized that these social programs do their best with availability of funds to run these programs and meet the needs of low-income families and individuals.

#### **4. Trends for Webb County**

Webb County continues to trend as a higher rate of unemployment than the rest of the state. As of January of 2024, the unemployment rate of Webb County was 4.2% compared to the Texas average of 3.9%.

To add to the recipe of poverty, Webb County has a high percentage of adults without a high school diploma and poor literacy skills. Adding to this trend is the large amount of low paying jobs which in turn increases the demand for affordable housing.

Based on our interviews and discussions with the community presented as part of this document, another trend in Webb County is the lack of quality healthcare. 25.7% of all residents live without healthcare coverage. Webb County continues to be a medically underserved community with top community health needs identified as the demand for primary and specialty care services exceeds that of available medical physicians in these areas, existing behavioral health services resources are insufficient to meet the current population needs, many individuals in South Texas suffer from chronic diseases, need for patient navigation and coordination, and need for specialized children's health needs. Finally, the biggest emerging trend is the rate of suicide related deaths in our community.

Webb County continues to have a significant percentage of individuals who find it difficult to navigate the various avenues for obtaining information for health services, employment programs, and other opportunities. Finally, Webb County has 34.8% of its households listed as single parent households with children.

## **5. Research Methodologies and Conclusions Drawn from Analysis of Data**

Research methodologies taken for this Community Needs Assessment (CNA) by the agency were inclusive of all types of mediums for communication. It was our goal to make this project as easy for the community, partners, and any other party interested in participating as possible. Our The assessment tool offers subrecipients access to data indicators for the targeted community.

With the guidance provided by TDHCA, WCCAA was able to move forward with the survey distribution to the community. Besides having a paper format survey in both English and Spanish, the agency created an electronic survey using Survey Monkey. Links to the electronic survey were posted in the agency's social media platforms, sent by text messages to community partners, emailed to various distribution lists, and distributed to a variety organization within the community. Copies of the survey were provided for distributions to directors from other social service agencies who work with low-income families.

As previously mentioned, surveys were distributed to the following service agencies: AAMA Paso Libre, American Electric Power, Azteca Development Preservation, Area Health Education Center of the Mid Rio Grande Border Area of Texas, United Independent School District, Border Region Behavioral Center, Boys and Girls Club of Laredo, Communities In Schools of Laredo, Inc., City of Laredo Environmental Services Department, City of Laredo Health Department, City of Laredo Parks & Leisure Services Department, City of Laredo Public Information Office, Department of State Health Services Laredo Office, Driscoll Health Plan, DSHS Office of Border Health, ECI Project Niño's, Farmers Market, Gateway Community Health Center, Habitat for Humanity of Laredo, Hachar Media, Holding Institute, Infinito Home Care, Laredo Job Corps, Laredo Fire Department, Laredo ISD, Laredo Medical Center, Laredo Public Library, Laredo Specialty Hospital/Laredo Rehabilitation Hospital, Laredo Sports Medicine Clinic, Laredo Stroke Support Group, Mercy Ministries of Laredo, Methodist Healthcare Ministries, Mexican Consulate in Laredo, MHP Salud, Molina Healthcare, PAD Specialists, PILLAR, Rio Grande International Study Center, Ruthe B. Cowl Rehabilitation Center, SCAN Inc, South Texas Development Council, South Texas Food Bank, Texas A&M International University, Target Stores, Texas A&M University Colonias Program, Texas Department of Transportation Laredo Office, Touchstone Communities Las Alturas/LNR, United Healthcare, United Independent School District, University Health, UTHealth Laredo Office, Webb County Departments (all departments), Wellness Equity Alliance, Westcare Texas, Workforce Solutions for South Texas, Mayor Victor D. Trevino, MD, City of Laredo City Council, Webb County Judge Tano Tijerina, Webb County Commissioners, and Webb County Elected Officials as well as all clients of the Webb County Community Action Agency as well as board members.

In addition to with the Community Needs Assessment Surveys, we distributed Customer Satisfaction Surveys to our clients. Once gathered, the surveys were analyzed to compile data,

totals, and create the digital graphs. The survey findings were coupled with information obtained from demographic data from Community Commons, interviews, forums and focus groups. This allowed WCCAA to categorize the findings by domain along with its subset to identify the top 5 Needs per CSBG Service Area.

The top 5 needs domains are identified as:

1. Employment
2. Education
3. Housing
4. Health and Social/Behavioral Development
5. Health and Social/Behavioral Development

Conclusions drawn for the community needs are:

1. Clients desire assistance to find a living-wage job
2. Many residents feel the need to attend college or technical trade school but do not have the knowledge or resources.
3. Affordable Housing
4. Access to affordable healthcare
5. Job or skills training that will lead to better pay
6. Access to affordable food.

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.

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

The Webb County Community Action Agency has thoroughly analyzed the survey responses collected from the community. Upon categorizing these responses from highest to lowest priority, the top ten categories identified are :

| Rank | Category              | Need                                                   | Total |
|------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1.   | Employment            | Help finding a living-wage job                         | 167   |
| 2.   | Education             | Assistance to attend college or technical/trade school | 163   |
| 3.   | Housing               | Affordable housing                                     | 147   |
| 4.   | Healthcare/Behavioral | Access to affordable health care                       | 142   |
| 5.   | Employment            | Job or skills training that will lead to better pay    | 141   |
| 6.   | Healthcare/Behavioral | Access to affordable food                              | 141   |
| 7.   | Housing               | Help paying utility bills                              | 127   |
| 8.   | Education             | English as a second language classes                   | 108   |
| 9.   | Education             | Help getting a GED                                     | 91    |
| 10.  | Education             | Computer skills training                               | 90    |

The findings can further be grouped to determine the top five needs as followed:

1. **Employment:** Assistance in obtaining a living-wage employment.
2. **Education:** Assistance in obtaining a recognized credential, certificate, or degree relating to the achievement of educational or vocational skills.
3. **Housing:** Assistance in obtaining safe and affordable housing.
4. **Support Services:** Assistance in finding other resources in the community.
5. **\*Health/Behavioral Development:** Assistance in improving health and social and/or behavioral development.
6. **\*Support Services:** Assistance in obtaining emergency assistance such as food, medical, and child care.

\*TOP needs identified 5 and 6 results were tied.

## **XII. Webb County Community Action Agency Organizational Strengths, Assets, and Challenges**

The Webb County Community Action Agency is a county department that is driven by the mission of helping people and changing lives. Focusing on underprivileged clients such as the elderly, disabled, and low-income county residents, Webb County CAA uses its four service lines to assist clients who are experiencing financial difficulties and short-comings to pay their utility bills, address transportation issues, transition out of poverty, address food insecurity, improve their home, and provide referrals to community resources.

### **Strengths:**

Obvious strengths would be a knowledgeable, experienced, and empathetic staff who are dedicated to the community that they serve. Staff understand that they are a part of the Community Action Agency to help the public and they embrace this duty. Webb County Community Action Agency leadership focus on organizational compliance as well as consistent training to encourage resourcefulness and teamwork among employees to better serve the needs of their clients.

Furthermore, the Webb County Community Action Agency overseen by a governing board that is very supportive and an advisory board with extensive experience in public policy, social services, education, programmatic innovation and community leadership. CAA organization strengths have been identified by administration and are systematically being refined and supported by administration, supervising staff, and line staff. These strengths remain the backbone of CAA. Administration continuously cultivate team-work, communication, success-oriented attitudes and flexibility. It is an attribute to these organizational strengths that have propelled staff to maintain their level of productivity.

### **Assets:**

Perhaps the greatest asset of the Webb County Community Action Agency is being part of the Webb County family. Webb County, the umbrella agency, has provided a number of resources as in kind donations to the overall mission of the CAA. Whether through auditor's office who verify all expenditures, building maintenance services who clean our facilities, business office who ensure budgeting compliance, human resources/risk management who handle staffing and risk issues, information technology who ensure that all computer systems work as needed, purchasing department who assist with procurement of supplies and services, treasures office who ensure payment to vendors, and Webb County Administration/Civil Legal who provide administrative and legal support, Webb County provides a significant amount of assistance to our agency.

In addition, CAA continues to build its reputation as a community resource. It has developed and maintained a productive working relationship with other social and health agencies. These relationships have facilitated successful linking of clients to other agencies who can provide them with other necessary services they need to improve their quality of life.

### Challenges:

The challenges encountered by the CAA are funding limitations vs. need in the community. As funding is limited, choices have been made as to what and how many serves could be provided to the county community. In short, we want to do more, but cannot. Furthermore, salaries of staff show a disparity when compared to equivalent jobs in the community and other social service agency salaries. It is the aspiration of administration that at some point salaries can become competitive to retain quality employees.