

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



AGENDA

MEETING OF THE LRGVDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Notice is hereby provided that the LRGVDC Board of Directors will hold a
Regular IN-PERSON Meeting at 301 W. Railroad St. Weslaco, Texas

WEDNESDAY, October 28, 2026 at 12:00 P.M

Provide the public with the ability to view the meeting via the

Internet Live streaming at: [LRGVDC COG](#)

Presiding: Judge Aurelio Guerra, President

Item #1: Call to Order

- A. Roll Call
- B. Invocation
- C. Pledge of Allegiance

Item #2: Consideration and **ACTION** to Approve Meeting Minutes August 26, 2026 President

Item #3: Public Comment

Item #4: Administration Manuel Cruz
Executive Director

- 1. Presentation of Award to Jim Darling in Recognition of His Years of Dedicated Service and Contributions to the LRGVDC.
- 2. Consideration and **ACTION** to Adopt Annual Investment Policy & Accept Quarterly Investment Report.....Crystal Balboa
Director of Finance

B.Executive Director Reports

- 1. Introduction of New Staff Members
- 2. 2027 LRGVDC State of the COG Address: Event Announcement and Regional Recognition Award Nomination Process.
- 3. Updates on Regional News, Funding Opportunities, Training, and Legislation

Item #5: Department Reports

A. Community & Economic Development Melisa Gonzalez-Rosas
Director

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) Term Sheet Template.

Program Status Reports

- Economic Development Administration
- Regional Small Cities Coalition
- Community & Economic Development Assistance Fund
- Air Quality
- South Texas Clean Cities & Communities Coalition (STC4)
- Solid Waste Management Program
- Water Quality Program
- Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee
- Rio Grand Regional Water Planning Group (Region M)
- Reservoir Levels

B. Health & Human Services Margarita Lopez
Director

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve the following Membership Application for the Citizens Advisory Council.
Stephanie Champion Hidalgo County Under the Service Providers Category.

Program Status Reports

- Direct Consumer Services
- Care Coordination Services
- Senior Subrecipient & Senior Center Operations
- Home Delivered and Congregate Meal Program
- Special Services
- Care Transition Program
- Ombudsman Program
- Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Special Initiatives Report & Information Referral and Assistance

C. Public Safety

C1A. Emergency Services, Criminal Justice & Homeland Security Cesar Merla
Director

Program Status Reports

- Local Emergency Safety & Planning Meeting within Cameron and Hidalgo Counties.
- Communication with Regional Preparedness with State Counterparts.

C1B. Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District Cesar Merla
Director

Program Status Reports

- GIS Division
- 9-1-1 Information Technology
- Community Engagement Division

C. 2. Police Academy Program Javier Solis
Director

1. Consideration and **ACTION** to ratify the Appointment of Deputy Rafael Rodriguez from the Hidalgo county Constable Precinct 2 office to the LRGV Academy Advisory Board as a Police Instructor Representative.
2. Consideration and **ACTION** to ratify the approval of the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline program Handbook as recommended by the LRGV Academy Advisory Board.
3. Consideration and **ACTION** to ratify the LRGV Academy Advisory Board's approval of the amendment to the Basic County Corrections Course Curriculum for the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program.

Program Status Reports

- Officers Certified
- Courses Taught
- Contact Hours

D. Transportation

Valley Metro Dr. Sandra Carrizales
Director

1. Consideration and **ACTION** to authorize termination of the construction contract with Araiza General Construction. LLC for the Edinburg Transit Terminal First-Floor Finish-Out Project.
2. Consideration and **ACTION** to approve fare-free Valley metro bus service on Election Day, November 3, 2026

Program Status Reports

- Ridership Report

Rio Grande Valley MPO Michael Medina
Executive Director

Program Status Reports

Item #6: New & Unfinished Business

Item #7: Adjourn

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

**Next Meeting
December 9, 2026**

Agenda items may be considered, deliberated, and/or acted upon in a different order than those numbered above. The Board of Directors of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council reserves the right to adjourn into an Executive (Closed) session at any time during this meeting to discuss any of the items listed on this agenda as authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapters 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, and 551.075, Texas Government Code. No final action will be taken in the Executive Session.

PUBLIC INPUT POLICY:

At the beginning of each LRGVDC meeting, the LRGVDC will allow for an open public forum/comment period. This comment period shall not exceed one-half (1/2) hour, and each speaker will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to speak. All individuals desiring to address the LRGVDC must sign up to do so, before the open comment period. The purpose of this comment period is to provide the public with an opportunity to address issues or topics under the jurisdiction of the LRGVDC. For issues or topics that are not otherwise part of the posted agenda for the meeting, LRGVDC members may direct staff to investigate the issue or topic further. No action or discussion shall be taken on issues or topics which are not part of the agenda posted for the meeting. Members of the public may be recognized on the posted agenda as items deemed appropriate by the Chair as these items are considered, and the same 3mins.

ITEM #2

**MEETING
MINUTES**

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE
LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY
DEVELOPMENTCOUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING

12:00PM Wednesday September 30, 2026

HELD IN-PERSON AND BROADCAST VIA YOUTUBE VIDEO CONFERENCE
INITIATED AND CHAIRED FROM LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS
301 W. RAILROAD STREET, WESLACO, TEXAS BUILDING B,
KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: Judge Aurelio Guerra

Judge Aurelio Guerra called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken, and as of 12:05 p.m quorum was attained.

Present: Judge Aurelio Guerra

Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza, City of Mission
Commissioner Ellie Torres, Hidalgo County
Councilman Rene Pena, City of Sullivan City
Mayor Pro-Tem Ruben Saldana, City of Mercedes
Councilwoman Aarin Hartwell City of South Padre Island
Commissioner Edward Gonzales, City of Raymondville
Mayor Pete Galvan, City of San Benito
Mr. Ron Garza, UTRGV
Mr. Paul Hernandez, South Texas College
Mr. Luke Lucio, TSTC
Mr. Jim Darling, Member-at-Large
Mr. Troy Allen, Delta Lake
Mr. Ernesto Cavazos, Willacy Co, Navigation District
Mr. Oscar Garcia, Member-at-Large
Mr. Andres Chavez, Member-at-Large
Ms. Lupita Sanchez Martinez, Grassroots Org

Absent:

Mayor Omar Ochoa, City of Edinburg
Mayor John Cowen, City of Brownsville
Mayor Norma Sepulveda, City of Harlingen
Mayor Pro Tem Pete Garcia, City of Weslaco
Commissioner Joey Lopez, Cameron County
Mayor Pablo Morales, City of Lyford
Mayor David Moreno, City of Donna
Mayor Javier Villalobos, City of McAllen
Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez City of Pharr
Commissioner Marco Villegas, City of San Juan

Mr. Cruz stated that before we move on to item two, Mr. President, with legal counsel's consent and approval, I would like to pause the meeting briefly to discuss a situation that we were just made aware of, if that is okay with legal counsel. No action will be taken on this matter.

Let me begin by saying that September has certainly not been an easy month for the LRGVDC. We have received some unfortunate news, but one of the most significant is that one of our members will soon be departing.

Mr. Jim Darling, as many of you know, has shared with me that he will be moving to San Antonio. I only learned of this last week, so unfortunately, he did not give us enough time to properly prepare a service award for him. However, we hope Jim can join us next month so that we can give him the proper send-off and recognize you with the service award you deserve.

Mr. Darling has been a dedicated member of the LRGVDC for 15 years. His service with the Council began in 2011, when he was serving as a commissioner for the City of McAllen. Jim took up the mantle and represented the City of McAllen on the LRGVDC Board. As you may recall, Jim was elected Mayor of the City of McAllen in 2013 and served in that position until 2022. Since 2022, Jim has continued to serve as a member-at-large and has remained a strong champion for the COG.

Jim also holds numerous leadership and committee positions. Quite frankly, I have lost count of how many committees you have served on. Another one is as President of Region M.

It is truly difficult to see you leave this region, especially because we are losing the wealth of knowledge and experience that you bring to the table. On behalf of the LRGVDC, on behalf of myself personally, and on behalf of our entire staff, I want to sincerely thank you for your many years of dedicated service.

I know Jim and I have had many conversations. Not only here in the region, but also at various events and venues where I have represented the LRGVDC through the Texas Association of Regional Councils. Through all of those experiences, I have seen firsthand the commitment and dedication you have always shown to the COG.

Whether you were serving as a commissioner, as Mayor of the City of McAllen, or as a member-at-large, you were always there for the COG. You consistently did what was best for the organization and for this region. You volunteered your time and expertise for countless committees and initiatives, and you never hesitated to step up when your service was needed. And, of course, your involvement with the COG goes back even further, including your work as legal counsel with the 911 program.

So, Mr. President and members of the Board, while it is certainly sad to see Jim leave, we want to take this opportunity to recognize him and, most importantly, thank him. Jim, on behalf of the LRGVDC, our staff, and this entire region, thank you for your years of dedicated service, your leadership, your commitment, and for always being a champion for the Council. We wish you and your family nothing but the very best in this next chapter, and we look forward to properly recognizing you next month.

Judge Aurelio Guerra also shared a few words, he stated that we certainly echo those sentiments, Mayor, and we appreciate everything you have done for this region. You have represented people and communities throughout the entire region, and your service and dedication have made a lasting impact. In addition to your service with the LRGVDC, you have also served as the attorney for the Willacy County Hospital District, further demonstrating your commitment to the people of this region.

We are all going to miss you, but fortunately, this is not goodbye just yet. There is still more to come. So, on behalf of the Executive Board, and with the support and permission of the Board members, I would like to ask you to take over the gavel today and preside over the remainder of this meeting.

Jim Darling also said a few words; By the way, Willacy County is my last client. I closed my law practice a number of years ago, and they told me that the only way I could get rid of them was to pass away. So, as long as I am still around, I guess I will continue making my way to Willacy County. They are great people out there.

It has truly been a great career. While as the COG's president every time I became president, we seemed to get a new Executive Director. So, I hope that is not going to happen today!

But, in all seriousness, the LRGVDC is a great organization. The reason I originally became involved with the COG was because, at the time, I felt like the COG was taking programs away from the cities and bringing them into regional programs. One of those programs was 9-1-1, which was certainly one of the big ones. I remember thinking, "If you can't beat them, join them." So, I did and I am actually very glad that I did. It has truly been a labor of love, and I am grateful for the many years I have been able to be a part of this organization and serve alongside so many great people throughout the region.

Item #2 Consideration and ACTION to approve meeting Minutes August 26, 2026. ***Mr. Paul Hernandez made a motion to approve the August 26, 2026 meeting minutes. Mr. Ernesto Cavazos seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

Item #3: Public Comment – there being none, president then moved on to item #4.

Item #4: Administration

4.1. Presentation on Texas Demographic Center. Mr. Cruz started by saying, as you know, the Census is right around the corner, and it is never too early to get engaged and begin preparing for what we need to do to ensure that everyone in our region is counted. The Census has a significant impact on our region, particularly when it comes to federal funding, resources, and the services provided to our communities. With the possibility of changes under the new administration, we want to make sure we are ahead of the game, proactive, and prepared to participate in any way, shape, or form that we can. Our goal is to ensure that we achieve the most accurate count possible for the Rio Grande Valley. By increasing participation and making sure our residents are counted, we can hopefully maximize the funding allocations that come back to our region for the many programs and services that we provide to your constituents. It is important that we begin that work now and continue working together to make sure the Rio Grande Valley is accurately represented and receives the resources it deserves.

Mrs. Monica Cruz with the Texas State Data Center started the presentation with; Good morning, everyone. I am honored to be here with all of you today. I am especially proud to say that I am a product of the Rio Grande Valley. I was born in Brownsville and raised in Los Fresnos before leaving the Valley to pursue my education in San Antonio and at The University of Texas at Austin. It is truly a privilege and an honor to be back here with all of you.

I am with the Texas Demographic Center, which is part of the Office of the State Demographer, Dr. Lloyd Potter. We are housed at the University of Texas at San Antonio. One of our major responsibilities is producing population estimates for the state, counties, and cities throughout Texas, as well as biennial population projections for the state and all Texas counties.

We work very closely with the U.S. Census Bureau. Several of us, including myself, serve on national steering committees where we regularly meet with staff from the Census Bureau. We are not Census Bureau employees,

nor do we receive funding from the Census Bureau, but we work very collaboratively with them. We are also part of the State Data Center Network. Despite the name, this is not the type of data center you may be thinking of. The network has actually been around for several decades, and I serve as the lead coordinator for the Texas Demographic Center.

Texas Population Growth

I want to share a few highlights regarding population growth. According to the most recent population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, Texas has now reached a population of approximately 31.7 million people. Between 2024 and 2025, Texas added approximately 391,000 residents, representing about a 1.2% increase.

While Texas continues to grow, this represents a smaller increase than we experienced in previous years. We have seen population growth nationally begin to slow down somewhat. We are still growing, but not at the same rate we have seen in the past. The map you see here provides a graphical representation of population growth across Texas counties between 2024 and 2025. The darker-shaded counties experienced the greatest population growth, while the lighter-shaded counties experienced more modest growth. Some counties actually experienced population declines.

We also continue to refer to the Texas Triangle, where we see some of the greatest population density in the state from the Dallas Fort Worth area to Bexar County and San Antonio, and then to Harris County and Houston. To give you another perspective on population distribution in Texas, approximately 87% of the state's population resides on or east of Interstate 35, which runs from Webb County and Laredo through Central Texas and into North Texas. That really illustrates how Texas continues to grow and where much of that population growth is concentrated.

Population Growth in the Rio Grande Valley

I also want to share a few data points regarding population growth in Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy counties. Since 2020, we have seen considerable and continued growth, particularly in Cameron and Hidalgo counties, while Willacy County has remained relatively stable.

As shown on the previous map, Hidalgo County continues to demonstrate significant population growth, particularly over the past year. We also have data showing population growth within individual cities. I know the map is a little difficult to see, but the darker-shaded areas represent the cities experiencing the greatest growth.

Some of the areas that stand out include Hidalgo and Weslaco, as well as portions of La Joya. Laguna Vista and Bayview have also experienced growth. Overall, the majority of cities throughout the Lower Rio Grande Valley continue to grow, with some exceptions, particularly in portions of Willacy County where populations have remained more stable.

Population Projections

As I mentioned earlier, we also produce population projections for the state and its counties. Organizations such as the Texas Water Development Board, the Texas Department of Transportation, and other state agencies use our population data when planning for the future.

The projections shown here illustrate expected population growth between now and 2060. It is important to note that we update our population projections every two years. The projections shown here are based on our 2024 data. We are currently working on the next set of population projections and analyzing current growth patterns.

We anticipate releasing our updated population projections toward the end of this year or early next year. As a result, some of the projections shown here may shift as new population data becomes available.

Preparing for the 2030 Census

I also want to talk briefly about something that I discussed with Mr. Cruz: We are already preparing for the 2030 Census. Between 2010 and 2020, Texas experienced greater numeric population growth than any other state.

However, following every decennial Census, the Census Bureau conducts what is called a Post-Enumeration Survey. This process evaluates how accurately the Census counted the population. As we all know, 2020 was a very complicated year. There were significant operational challenges associated with conducting the Census, particularly because the official Census Day was April 1, 2020, and the COVID-19 pandemic began affecting communities just weeks before that date.

Following the 2020 Census, the Census Bureau determined that Texas was one of six states where there was likely an undercount. The estimated undercount for Texas was approximately 500,000 people. The Census Bureau does not conduct that same analysis at the county or local level, but we know traditionally that certain populations and geographic areas are more likely to be undercounted for a variety of reasons.

Regardless, undercounts can have a significant impact on population data and, ultimately, on the resources and funding available to communities.

Local Update of Census Addresses — LUCA

The Census Bureau is already planning for the 2030 Census, including testing operations in states such as Alabama and South Carolina. One of the most important operations leading up to the 2030 Census is the Local Update of Census Addresses, commonly referred to as LUCA.

I want to spend some time discussing LUCA because it is extremely important for local governments. Before I get into the details, I want to explain why having accurate population data matters.

The Project on Government Oversight, an organization based in Washington, D.C., recently examined federal funding coming into Texas. Looking at data from 2023, they determined that Texas received more than \$152 billion in what is considered census-guided federal assistance. This includes federal funding associated with health care, transportation, infrastructure, and many other programs and services.

The important point is that federal funding is often distributed based on population data. If we do not have accurate population data, our communities could potentially receive less funding than they deserve. That is why making sure everyone, and every community is accurately represented is so important.

What Is LUCA?

LUCA is a voluntary, once-a-decade opportunity for local governments to review and update the Census Bureau's residential address list before the decennial Census. The Census Bureau uses this residential address list as part of its Master Address File for the 2030 Census.

Having accurate residential address information is critical. LUCA provides one of the most direct opportunities for local governments to help ensure that the Census Bureau's address information is accurate and complete. We know there are areas throughout the Rio Grande Valley that are growing rapidly. Local governments and staff work hard to maintain accurate address information, particularly through systems such as 9-1-1.

The Census Bureau can use 9-1-1 information, but it is specifically interested in residential addresses—not commercial addresses. This is another reason why maintaining accurate residential address information is so important. Unfortunately, participation in LUCA has historically been low.

Looking at the LUCA operation prior to the 2020 Census, which occurred around 2017, only about 20% of local governmental entities in Texas participated. We are here today to provide information and encourage local governments to participate as we prepare for 2030.

Hidalgo County Example

I want to share an example from Hidalgo County that demonstrates why LUCA can make a real difference. One of our partners, the Texas Census Institute, is a nonprofit organization that is also working to improve LUCA participation throughout the state.

Through their research, they identified an example in Hidalgo County where strong local participation and collaboration resulted in significant improvements to address data. Before the 2020 Census, community organizations reported that certain neighborhoods were not being adequately reached by 9-1-1 services. Those concerns were brought to the regional council responsible for maintaining the address information.

Local partners then offered to help update parcel and address information for areas such as Pueblo de Las Palmas. That updated address information was shared with Hidalgo County planning officials and ultimately incorporated into the county's LUCA submission.

There was fieldwork, collaboration, and coordination among local organizations and government officials to make sure the address information was accurate. As a result, when LUCA addresses in a sample area of Pueblo de Las Palmas were compared with the Census Bureau's existing address records, Hidalgo County had added 199 new addresses to its address file.

More than 70% of those 199 addresses were likely included in the Census enumeration because of the county's LUCA submission. That is a great example of how local efforts can make a real difference.

You know your communities better than anyone. You know where the new subdivisions are, where development is occurring, and where new residential areas are being established. That is why local participation in LUCA is so important.

2027–2028 LUCA Timeline

I want to make sure local leaders are aware of the upcoming timeline. Beginning in 2027, the highest elected officials of eligible governments including governors, county judges, and mayors will be invited to participate in LUCA. We anticipate that the Census Bureau's letters and notifications will be sent sometime around late April or early May of 2027. Once a mayor or county judge receives the notification, they can designate a liaison to participate in the process. That individual could be a planner, GIS professional, or another staff member with the appropriate knowledge and technical skills.

The designated liaison will be able to access the Census Bureau's address inventory and review the residential addresses listed for their jurisdiction. This will give local governments an opportunity to identify missing subdivisions, residential developments, unincorporated areas, or other addresses that may not be included in the Census Bureau's records.

There will be a pre-planning period during which local governments can gather their information and prepare their submissions. The formal LUCA submission period is expected to take place from October 2027 through March 2028, with March 31, 2028, serving as the deadline for final submissions. LUCA is voluntary, but we strongly encourage local governments throughout the Rio Grande Valley to participate.

Support and Next Steps

The Census Bureau also has a dedicated 2030 LUCA website that provides technical information and resources for local governments and staff. At the Texas Demographic Center, we are also looking at ways to coordinate training sessions and webinars. We want to work with our partners at the state level and with Councils of Governments to provide as much assistance as possible to communities that want to participate.

Our goal is to make sure local leaders understand the importance of this process and have the tools and information they need to participate successfully. I know you all have many important items to cover today, so I will conclude by simply saying thank you for the opportunity to be here. It has been a pleasure and an honor to speak with you, especially as someone who was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley. Thank you for your time, your partnership, and your continued commitment to making sure our communities are accurately represented and receive the resources they need.

4.2. Consideration and ACTION to approve a Washington Cooperative Contract Usage Agreement with state of Washington Department of Enterprise Services and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Agreement. This would provide another valuable tool in our toolbox, giving us an additional resource to utilize when purchasing equipment such as buses and other necessary assets. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve the Washington Cooperative Contract Usage Agreement with state of Washington Department of Enterprise Services and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Agreement. Mr. Paul Hernandez seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

4.3. Consideration and ACTION to approve an Interlocal Agreement with the Harris County Department of Education for participation in the Choice Partners Cooperative Purchasing and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Agreement. This action item is for the same purpose as previous item. ***Commissioner Edward Gonzales made a motion to approve Interlocal Agreement with the Harris County Department of Education for participation in the Choice Partners Cooperative Purchasing and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Agreement. Mr. Andres Chavez seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

4.4. Consideration and ACTION approve Resolution #2026-19 Authorizing the LRGVDC Executive Director to Execute a resolution appointing and alternate, Crystal Balboa. Director to the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board. While this is not based on the RGVMPO's bylaws and is not necessarily required, we want to ensure we have coverage. Also, situations do arise when either Mr. Dominguez or I may not be available. We want to ensure that we have three representatives in place so that at least one of them can represent the LRGVDC as a non-voting member on the MPO Policy Board. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve Resolution #2026-19 Authorizing the LRGVDC Executive Director to Execute a resolution appointing and alternate, Crystal Balboa. Director to the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board, Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

B. Executive Director Reports – Mr. Cruz started off with the following

1. Introducing all New Staff Members. Mr. Cruz introduced all new staff members. Mr. Cruz then moved on to two.

2. 2027 LRGVDC State of the COG Address: Event Announcement and Regional Recognition Award Nomination Process. I want to make everyone aware and formally invite you to the State of the COG Address. We have already begun working on event and this year's event will be held on January 7, 2027, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. We will once again be hosting the event at the Knapp Medical Center, since we have outgrown the capacity of our current facility and can no longer accommodate the number of attendees we expect. We were very pleased with the increased participation last year, and we hope to see that continued growth this year. I also want to announce that, as part of the State of the COG Address, we will once again be soliciting nominations for our Regionalism Award. We are asking each of the three counties to submit one nomination for a well-recognized individual from their respective city or county who has demonstrated a strong commitment to regionalism and the work of the LRGVDC.

Each county may submit one individual. The nominations will be reviewed, and we will select the candidate who best meets the qualifications and demonstrates a meaningful connection to the LRGVDC and regionalism. The selected individual will then be recognized and presented with the Regionalism Award during the event. This is also a great opportunity for us to strengthen our connections with city and county staff and elected officials. It helps introduce the LRGVDC to individuals who may not be familiar with everything we do, and it allows us to continue building awareness of the services and resources we provide throughout the region. In many ways, it is an opportunity for us to showcase the LRGVDC and the important work we do across the Rio Grande Valley.

Updates on regional News, Funding Opportunities, Training and Legislation: Mr. Cruz mentioned that the remainder of my report was provided to you in advance.

Item #5 Department Reports

A. Community & Economic Development – Ms. Melisa Gonzales-Rosas started off with her action items on the Agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) for the Air Quality Program between LRGVDC and the City of San Benito. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) for the Air Quality Program between LRGVDC and the City of San Benito, Mr. Paul Hernandez seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and ACTION to Approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Air Quality Program between LRGVDC and the Delta Lake Irrigation District. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Air Quality Program between LRGVDC and the Delta Lake Irrigation District. Mr. Paul Hernandez seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Status Reports: Melisa Gonzalez-Rosas had a couple of announcements. First, I just want to remind everyone that if your city has not yet adopted our Regional Tire Ordinance, I strongly encourage you to consider doing so. We will also begin reaching out to your solid waste representatives to encourage adoption and help provide any information or assistance they may need.

Second, I want to remind everyone that if you have any upcoming community events, please let us know. We have a great outreach team member who enjoys being out in the community and promoting the work and services of the LRGVDC. We would be happy to participate in your events and help promote our organization and the

resources we have available to your communities. So, please don't hesitate to reach out and let us know about any upcoming events. I also want to add a quick comment regarding LUCA and what Ms. Cruz was discussing earlier.

I was with the City of Alamo when we began working through this process back in 2010, and I can tell you that it does require quite a bit of work. However, it is extremely important. If new subdivisions and developments are not included in the Census address system, they may not be counted. Ultimately, it is up to our local governments and our planning staff to make sure that any new subdivisions, developments, and residential areas within our jurisdictions are properly submitted through the LUCA process.

I strongly encourage our planners and local staff to stay involved and make sure this information is updated. By doing so, we can help the Census Bureau maintain accurate information and, most importantly, ensure that our communities receive an accurate population count.

Lastly, I would like to take a moment to present a special recognition award to Luke in appreciation of his contributions to the LRGVDC. Luke joined us as an intern in February and worked with us through the end of June. During his time here, he was tasked with putting together our full application for the South Texas Clean Cities Coalition. This was a significant undertaking, and Luke worked diligently to bring the application to the finish line.

Although we are still awaiting a response from the Department of Energy regarding any potential corrections or revisions, Luke has completed his internship with us, and I am truly grateful for all the hard work and dedication he contributed to this project. I am sad to see him go, but before we do, I want to take this opportunity to recognize him and thank him for everything he has done for our organization.

Mayor and Mr. Cruz, I would like to invite you to come forward so we can present Luke with this award and take a picture together. Luke, on behalf of the LRGVDC, please accept this award as a small token of our appreciation for your hard work, commitment, and contributions. We truly appreciate everything you have done for us. I had hoped to include the new South Texas Clean Cities Coalition logo on the award, which you designed, but we will have to wait until the Department of Energy approves it.

Thank you again, Luke, for your outstanding work. We wish you the very best in your future endeavors.

B. Health & Human Services Ms. Margarita Lopez started off with Action items she had on agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve the continued services of Maria Connie Garza as Chairperson and Kendra Stine as Vice Chairperson of the Citizens Advisory council, in accordance with Article VI (Officers) and Article V, Section 4 of the Rules of function. *Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve the continued services of Maria Connie Garza as Chairperson and Kendra Stine as Vice Chairperson of the Citizens Advisory council, in accordance with Article VI (Officers) and Article V, Section 4 of the Rules of function, Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.*

2. Consideration and ACTION to approve an Amendment to Article VI (officers) of the Citizens Advisory Council Rules of function to change the term of office for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from one (1) year to two (2) years. *Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve an Amendment to Article VI (officers) of the Citizens Advisory Council Rules of function to change the term of office for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from one (1) year to two (2) years. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.*

Status Reports: I have several important updates to share with everyone today.

First, our Regional Area Plan for 2027–2029. Tomorrow marks the kickoff of our new Regional Area Plan for 2027 through 2029. The plan was approved without any corrections, and I want to extend my sincere gratitude on behalf of our entire team and the communities we serve throughout Willacy, Hidalgo, and Cameron counties. We appreciate everyone's support and collaboration, and we are excited to begin implementing the plan tomorrow.

Second, our Annual Vet Fest. This year, Vet Fest is coming to Mission! I want to extend a special thank-you to Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza for helping us locate and secure access to Leo Peña Placita Park, which will serve as our venue. The event will take place on November 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We have already gathered a variety of items to distribute to veterans and their caregivers, including individual space heaters, blankets, flashlights, solar-powered banks, fans, and 72-hour emergency preparedness backpacks. We will also be providing caregiver kits that include Amazon Echo devices, commonly known as Alexas, as well as indoor and outdoor smart battery-powered cameras, smart plug packs, gun-cleaning mats, weapon cable locks, and other items we are continuing to collect for the event. As always, Vet Fest will include food and a variety of community services and resources—not only for our veterans but also for their caregivers. Our goal is to ensure that veterans and their families have access to the support, supplies, and information they need.

Third, Medicare Open Enrollment. This is one of the most important updates I want to emphasize. Medicare Open Enrollment runs from October 15 through December 7.

During this period, individuals enrolled in Medicare have the opportunity to review their current coverage and make changes to their plans to ensure their benefits meet their needs for the upcoming year. We strongly encourage everyone to schedule an appointment with our Benefit Counseling Department during this enrollment period. Once the December 7 deadline passes, individuals may have limited opportunities to make changes, depending on their circumstances and eligibility for other enrollment periods. Our Benefit Counseling Department provides services that are completely free and unbiased. Our counselors help individuals understand their options so they can make informed decisions about their Medicare coverage. It is especially important that our older adults receive reliable guidance when choosing their plans. Without the proper information, individuals may enroll in coverage that does not adequately meet their needs.

For that reason, we encourage you to share this information with your constituents, family members, and anyone else who may benefit from these services. Please encourage them to schedule an appointment with our team.

Fourth, advanced directives and emergency preparedness. We are also promoting an initiative to encourage everyone involved in emergency preparedness planning to incorporate advance directives into their preparations.

When we think about emergency preparedness, we often focus on essential supplies such as water, food, and other necessities. However, it is equally important to ensure that our personal and medical wishes are documented and accessible in the event of an emergency. You will find additional information about advance directives in the black information packets provided to you today. These materials explain the types of advanced directives our Benefit Counseling Department can assist individuals with preparing.

Once again, these services are provided free of charge, and our department also offers free notarization of these documents. I encourage each of you to share this information with your communities and help raise awareness about the importance of having these documents prepared before an emergency occurs.

Finally, as part of our emergency preparedness initiative, each of you has received a solar power bank in the white box provided. This device can help keep your essential electronics powered during an emergency and also functions as a flashlight. We hope these resources will be useful to you and serve as a reminder that emergency preparedness involves more than supplies alone. It also means planning ahead, knowing what resources are available, and ensuring that we and our families are prepared.

Mayor from San Benito then had a question for Ms. Lopez, I noticed that an additional 72 residents were assisted. Could you please clarify if that number is for the current fiscal year? Ms. Lopez responds that is just for the month. Ms. Lopez then continued with the Raffle.

Jim Darling then had a few words; I've been involved with AAA for a long time, and under your leadership, even though some difficult times with federal reimbursements, you have continued to do an outstanding job serving our older adults. Thank you very much for all that you do. There are a few of us in the room who may be seeing you again soon, Ms. Lopez had a few words, I also want to thank you for two important lessons you taught me when I first came on board. You may not remember, but I certainly do. During my first year, you told me, Margarita, it's okay to relax when conducting business. You don't always have to be so serious. You can smile and relax. I've carried that advice with me. The second lesson came during a conversation about the challenges facing the Older Americans Act and the services we provide. As we discussed how to navigate those challenges and work with everyone involved, Mr. Darling said something that has always stayed with me: Just remember, we don't take political sides; we stand by what's right. Thank you both for the leadership, guidance, and lessons you've shared. They have made a lasting impression on me.

C. Public Safety

C.1.A. Emergency Services, Criminal Justice & Homeland Security – Mr. Cesar Merla started off with his 4 action items on the Agenda. All Board Members decided to do all at once and then vote after.

- 1.** Consideration and ACTION to Approve Resolution for FY 2027-28 Non-Profit Security Grant application titled regional Planning and Security.
- 2.** Consideration and ACTION to approve Resolution for FY 2027-28 Homeland Security program Grant application titled Regional Planning.
- 3.** Consideration and ACTION to approve Resolution for FY 2027-28 State Homeland Security program Grant Application titled Regional Fire Academy Training Coordinator.
- 4.** Consideration and ACTION to approve resolution for FY 2027-28 Criminal Justice Assistance Program Grant Application titled regional Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres approves all 4 action items above; Mr. Andres Chavez seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

Status Reports: Mr. Cesar Merla started off with Our Criminal Justice and Homeland Security Program continues to serve the region and monitor grant activity. The additional report before you provides a brief update on the pending mutual aid agreements that have been distributed to all jurisdictions. As of the date listed in the report, September 18, additional cities have already signed the agreements, while others have placed them on their meeting agendas for consideration.

This report is being provided for informational purposes only. On Monday, our internal staff will send out additional reminders encouraging jurisdictions to submit their agreements. We intentionally did not establish a strict deadline because we understand that some jurisdictions may need additional time to review the agreements and conduct their due diligence. We encourage that process and want each jurisdiction to feel comfortable with its participation. As long as we continue to make progress, we are in good shape.

C.1.B. Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District – Mr. Cesar Merla stated that Our Addressing Division continues to serve the region, focusing on Hidalgo and Willacy counties while also addressing new developments and residential areas within those counties. We remain on track to conduct our internal audit and will continue reaching out to all jurisdictions regularly to ensure we are capturing new addresses and newly developed residential areas. There is an established process for coordinating information between our internal staff and the planning departments of each city and county. However, we also conduct additional checks to ensure accuracy. Occasionally, a developer may begin a project without immediately notifying the appropriate departments, so we do our best to stay ahead of new developments and ensure that all addresses are properly accounted for.

Our IT Division also has a standard report to share. Yesterday, we conducted audits of all backup generators at our Public Safety Answering Points. All generators are scheduled to be refueled by the end of today and tomorrow to ensure they are ready to support continued operations in the event of a power outage at any of these locations. This preparation helps ensure that emergency services can continue operating when they are needed most. We are also preparing for the upcoming weather. In my opinion, the Rio Grande Valley is one of the most resilient regions when it comes to responding to these challenges, and we are taking the necessary steps to ensure we are ready. Our Public Education team has also been very active over the past couple of months and continues to move forward with its outreach efforts. As you can see in the report before you, the team has provided a comprehensive list of completed activities, along with upcoming events and initiatives scheduled for the next several weeks.

Finally, our upcoming Public Safety and Emergency Communications Conference will take place at the South Padre Island Convention Centre. I would like to extend a special thank you to Judge Guerra for participating and to Councilwoman Hartwell for joining us as a special guest during the opening ceremonies. The conference will include a half-day program, and we will also have a special boat tour scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, October 14. If you are interested in participating, please let us know so we can reserve your spot. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

C.2 Lower Rio Grande Police Academy Program- Mr. Solis stated that he would be going through all the Action items he had on Agenda and get them all approved at once.

- 1.** Consideration and ACTION to approve the renewal of an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Alton, Texas and LRGV Academy for the Purpose of reporting training for Alton Police Department.
- 2.** Consideration and ACTION to approve the renewal of an Interlocal Agreement between the County of Hidalgo, Texas and the LRGV Academy for the purpose of reporting training for the Hidalgo County Constable Precinct 2 office.
- 3.** Consideration and ACTION to approve the renewal of an Interlocal Agreement between the LRGV Academy and the City of La Joya, Texas for the usage of La Joya Police Department's shooting Range.
- 4.** Consideration and ACTION to approve the renewal of an Interlocal Between the LRGV Academy and the City of Donna, Texas for the usage of the Donna Police Department's shooting Range.

Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve all 4 action items above; Mr. Paul Hernandez seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Status Reports: Mr. Solis started off with, During the past month, we conducted five in-service training courses for local police departments, serving a total of 61 students and providing 736 contact hours of instruction.

Last month, we also launched our newest Police Academy in partnership with the Mission Police Department. That academy is currently in session. We are also approaching the completion of our Rio Grande City Police Academy, with graduation expected in November. The cadets are now in the final phase of their training, with firearms training scheduled for next week. They are getting close to completing the program and preparing to serve in the field.

In addition, we are currently accepting applications and conducting entrance exams and physical fitness assessments for our next academies, which are scheduled to begin in January. We are working to build a strong pool of qualified candidates for both upcoming academies.

Finally, I have spoken with Mr. Cruz about an exciting initiative that we hope to share with you in the next month to six weeks. We are working on creating opportunities for high school students to establish a pathway into law enforcement. We look forward to bringing you more information soon and sharing how this initiative can help prepare the next generation of law enforcement professionals.

D. Transportation Valley Metro - Mr. Rene Garza started off with all action items on agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve Software Subscription Renewal for LRGVDC Valley Metro of the Genfare LLC, software subscription to maintain continued access to fare-collection data, reporting, system management and related services. This is for the annual renewal of our Genfer software collection for an additional year, in the amount of \$34,709.

2. Consideration and ACTION to approve the repair of UNIT 2203, exceeding procurement threshold.

3. Consideration and ACTION to Authorize LRGVDC Valley Metro's participation as a partner with Hidalgo County Community Service Agency (HCCSA) in its Community Rides Grant application for funding of up to \$100,000 including authorization to Execute a Letter of Commitment.

Commissioner Edward Gonzalez made a motion to approve all 3 Valley Metro Action items; Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Status Reports: We closed out the fiscal year with a total ridership of 914,607 passengers, representing an increase of just over 34% compared to the previous fiscal year. We came very close to reaching one million passengers! With your continued support, encouragement, and help in educating our citizens about the services we provide, we hope to continue to increase our ridership. Our service covers the entire five to six county region, extending all the way to Laredo. With everyone's continued efforts, we are hopeful that we will reach one million passengers by the next fiscal year.

Rio Grande Valley MPO – No reports at this time.

Item #6: New & Unfinished Business - Jim Darling expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work alongside the region's outstanding leaders over the years. He reflected on the value of learning and growing together, noting that it had been a privilege to serve and lead in such a wonderful region. He also shared his gratitude for everyone's contributions and support, emphasizing that he will always cherish the many great memories he has made throughout his time working with the organization.

Item #7 Adjourn - President called meeting at 1:05 pm

President Judge Aurelio Guerra

ATTEST :

Liza Alfaro, Recording Secretary

ITEM #3

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

ITEM #4.

ADMINISTRATION

ITEM #4.1.

ADMINISTRATION

**INVESTMENT
POLICY &
ACCEPT
QUATERLY
REPORT**



Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council

Judge Aurelio Guerra, Willacy County President
Mayor John Cowen, City of Brownsville 1st Vice President
Mayor Norma Sepulveda, City of Harlingen 2nd Vice President
Mayor Omar Ochoa, City of Edinburg Secretary
Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza, City of Mission Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Adrian Gonzalez
Mayor, Weslaco

Joey Lopez
Commissioner, Cameron County

Ellie Torres
Commissioner, Hidalgo County

Pablo Morales
Mayor, Lyford

David Moreno
Mayor, Donna

Sylvia Castillo
Mayor, Sullivan City

Oscar Montoya
Mayor, Mercedes

Javier Villalobos
Mayor, McAllen

Aarin Hartwell
Councilwoman, SPI

Ambrosio "Amos" Hernández
Mayor, Pharr

Edward Gonzales
Commissioner, Raymondville

Pete Galvan
Mayor, San Benito

Marco "Markie" Villegas
Commissioner, San Juan

Veronica Gonzales
UT Rio Grande Valley

Paul Hernandez
South Texas College

Luke Lucio
Texas State Technical College

Troy Allen
Delta Lake Irrigation District

Ernesto "Lefty" Cavazos
Willacy County Navigation Dis.

Jim Darling
Member-at-Large

Oscar Garcia
Member-at-Large

Andres Chavez
Member-at-Large

Lupita Sanchez Martinez
Grassroots Organizations

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Manuel "Manny" Cruz

MEMORANDUM

TO: LRGVDC Board Members

FROM: Crystal Balboa, Director of Finance

DATE: October 28, 2026

SUBJECT: LRGVDC Investment Policy

In accordance with statutory requirements and organizational best practices, it is time for the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council's annual review and consideration of its Investment Policy.

Staff has completed its annual assessment and is recommending re-adoption of the current Investment Policy as presented, with no revisions proposed at this time.

A full copy of the LRGVDC Investment Policy is available for your review on the LRGVDC meetings webpage at:
<http://www.lrgvdc.org/meetings.html>

We respectfully request the Board's approval of the policy as part of the upcoming meeting agenda. Should you have any questions or require additional information prior to the meeting, please feel free to contact me or Manuel Cruz.

Thank you for your attention and continued support.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT
JULY 1, 2026 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

This quarterly report of pooled fund investments fully complies with the written investment policy and investment strategy approved by the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Board of Directors. It fully complies with the relevant portions of the Public Funds Investment Act.

Investments in TexPool Prime:	Beginning Balance	Deposits	Withdrawals	Interest	Ending Balance
Water Plan	67,278.73	-	(5,988.40)	623.29	61,913.62
RGV 911 District	10,507,684.62	-	-	102,117.39	10,609,802.01
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	153,543.27	-	(21,945.73)	1,380.26	132,977.80
Transit	915,300.20	-	(300,000.00)	6,200.43	621,500.63
Texas Water Development Board	-	-	-	-	-
GLO - Closing Costs	166,402.86	-	-	1,617.20	168,020.06
Kari's Law	62,651.92	-	(3,016.21)	593.49	60,229.20
Tire Project	27,243.74	-	-	264.76	27,508.50
Hidalgo County Active Mobility Plan - Local	118,305.05	-	(60.80)	1,149.41	119,393.66
AAA - Local	19,321.82	23,800.81	-	329.14	43,451.77
EDA - Administration	86,233.09	-	-	838.07	87,071.16
RGV Explorer	47,330.10	-	(350.00)	458.18	47,438.28
TOTAL	12,171,295.40	23,800.81	(331,361.14)	115,571.62	11,979,306.69

TexPool Prime Rate as of September 30, 2026 - 4.0042%

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
 QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT
 JULY 1, 2026 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

Investments in TexPool:	Beginning Balance	Deposits	Withdrawals	Interest	Ending Balance
FIF - TWDB - Escrow Account	4,361,959.42	-	(1,498,604.51)	31,953.90	2,895,308.81
FIF - TWDB	301,126.62	1,498,604.51	(1,363,971.39)	2,975.63	438,735.37
TOTAL	4,663,086.04	1,498,604.51	(2,862,575.90)	34,929.53	3,334,044.18
GRAND TOTAL	16,834,381.44	1,522,405.32	(3,193,937.04)	150,501.15	15,313,350.87

TexPool Rate as of September 30, 2026 - 3.8706%

Crystal Balboa
 Director of Finance

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

INVESTMENT POLICY

I. Scope

This investment policy applies to any advance funds received by the LRGVDC for future expenditures. These funds are accounted for in the LRGVDC's Annual Financial Report.

II. Objectives

The LRGVDC shall manage and invest its cash with four objectives listed in order of priority: Safety, Liquidity, Yield, and Public Trust. The safety of the principal invested always remains the primary objective. All investments shall be designed and managed in a manner responsive to the public trust and consistent with State and Local law.

Safety – The Primary objective of the LRGVDC's investment activity is the preservation of capital. Each investment transaction shall be conducted in a manner to avoid capital losses.

Liquidity – The LRGVDC's investment portfolio shall be structured such that the LRGVDC is able to meet all obligations in a timely manner. This shall be achieved by matching investment maturities with forecasted cash flow requirements.

Yield – The yield will be the current yield available on certificates of deposit.

Public Trust – All participants in the LRGVDC's investment process shall seek to act responsible as custodians of the public trust. Investment officials shall avoid any transaction which might impair public confidence in the LRGVDC.

III. Responsibility and Control

Investment Committee – An Investment Committee, consisting of the Executive Director and Director Finance shall meet quarterly to determine operational strategies and to monitor results.

Delegation of Authority and Training – Authority to manage the LRGVDC's investment program is derived from a resolution of the Board of Directors. The Director of Finance is designated as investment officer of the LRGVDC and is responsible for investment decisions and activities. The Director of Finance shall establish written procedures for the operations of the investment program, consistent with this investment policy. The investment officer shall attend at least one training session relating to the officer's responsibility under the Act every two years and receive 10 hours of training.

Internal Controls – The Director of Finance is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of the entity are protected from loss, theft or misuse. The internal control structure shall be designed to provide reasonable assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived; and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

Accordingly, the Director of Finance shall establish a process for annual independent review by an independent auditor to assure compliance with policies and procedures. The internal controls shall address the following points:

- a. Control of collusion.
- b. Separation of transaction authority from accounting and record keeping.
- c. Custodial safekeeping.
- d. Clear delegation of authority to subordinate staff members.

Prudence – The standard of prudence to be applied by the investment officer shall be the “prudent investor” rule, which states: “Investments shall be made with judgement and care, under circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the probable safety of their capital as well as the probable income to be derived.” In determining whether an investment officer has exercised prudence with respect to an investment decision, the determination shall be made taking into consideration:

- a. The investment of all funds, or funds under the LRGVDC’s control, over which the officer had responsibility rather than a consideration as to the prudence of a single investment.
- b. Whether the investment decision was consistent with the written investment policy of the LRGVDC.

The investment officer, acting in accordance with written procedures and exercising due diligence, shall not be held personally responsible.

Ethics and conflict of Interest – The LRGVDC staff involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with proper execution of the investment program, or which could impair the ability to make impartial investment decisions.

IV. Reporting

The Director of Finance shall submit a signed quarterly investment report to the LRGVDC Board of Directors. Additionally, within 30 days of the end of the year, the Director of Finance shall submit an annual report showing the certificate of deposits purchased by banks and total interest earned to date.

V. Investment Portfolio

The only investments available to the LRGVDC will be:

- a. Investments in TexPool and TexPool Prime
- b. Certificate of Deposits purchased from the local banks in the three-county area – Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties.

VI. Safekeeping and Custody

- A. Investments in TexPool and TexPool Prime: The LRGVDC has executed a Participation Agreement adopting TexPool’s Investment Policy. (Attachment A&B)
- B. Certificate of Deposits purchased from the local banks in the three-county area:

Insurance or Collateral – All deposits and investments of the LRGVDC funds shall be secured by pledged collateral. In order to anticipate market changes and provide a level of security for all funds, the collateralization level will be 102% of market value of principal and accrued interest on the deposits or investments less an amount insured by the FDIC or FSLIC. Evidence of the pledged collateral shall be maintained by the Director of Finance. Collateral shall be reviewed monthly to assure that the market value of the pledged securities is adequate.

Safekeeping Agreement – Collateral pledged to secure deposits of the LRGVDC shall be held by a safekeeping institution in accordance with a Safekeeping Agreement which clearly defines the procedural steps for gaining access to the collateral should the LRGVDC determine that the LRGVDC's funds are in jeopardy. The safekeeping institution, or Trustee, shall be an institution not affiliated with the firm pledging the collateral. The safekeeping agreement shall include the signatures of authorized representatives of the LRGVDC, the firm pledging the collateral, and the Trustee, if applicable.

Collateral Defined – The LRGVDC shall accept only the following securities as collateral:

- a. FDIC and FSLIC insurance coverage.
- b. A bond, certificate of indebtedness, of Treasury Note of the United States, or other evidence of indebtedness of the United States that is guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States.

VII. Investment Policy Adoption

The LRGVDC investment policy shall be adopted by resolution of the Board of Directors. The policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Investment Committee and any modifications will be recommended for approval to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall review these investment policies not less than annually.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the LRGVDC this 28th day of October 2026.

LRGVDC Board President

ITEM #4.B

ADMINISTRATION

EXECUTIVE

REPORT

ADMINISTRATION

NEW HIRES

New Hires & Promotions

New Hire Start Date: October 12, 2026

Marco A. Bandala
Fleet Fueler/Detailer
Transportation Valley Metro



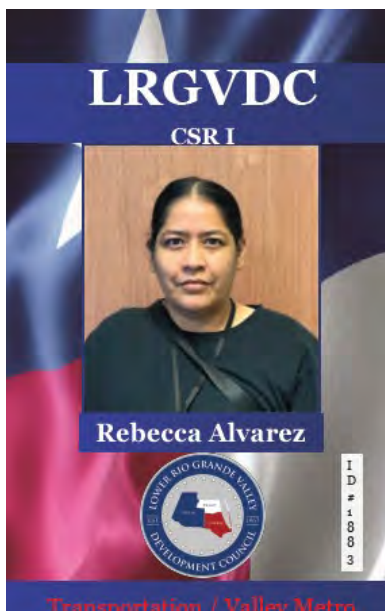
New Hire Start Date October 12, 2026

Melissa Longoria
Administrative Assistant II
Transportation Valley Metro



Promotion Start Date: October 12, 2026

Rebecca Alvarez
CSR I
Transportation / Valley Metro



Promotion Start Date: October 12, 2026

Siomara Martinez
Case Manager II
Health & Human Services/AAoA



ITEM #5. A.

**COMMUNITY
&
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5 Department Action Item

A. Community & Economic Development.....Melisa Gonzales- Rosas
Director

1. Consideration and **ACTION** to approve Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) term sheet template.

The primary focus is to finalize a regional CBA term sheet to support negotiations with developers of artificial intelligence (AI) and hyperscale data center infrastructure projects.

A Community Benefit Agreement is a legally binding contract between a community and a developer that defines specific commitments to ensure that local residents and communities receive tangible benefits from proposed data center developments. These benefits may include workforce training opportunities, infrastructure improvements, and expanded fiber connectivity. The purpose of this term sheet template is to equip the region to proactively engage with data center developers and negotiate agreements that support responsible development and deliver long-term community advantages.

Texas Rio Grande Valley AI Data Center Community Benefit Agreement Term Sheet Draft, Fall 2026

*prepared by RGV Community Members and RGV Broadband Coalition (RGVBC)
for elected officials, economic development staff,
Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council*

Whereas, [Name of AI Data Center Company] (“Data Center”) and [Name of City or County] (“City” or “County”) enter into this term Sheet on [Date];

Whereas, Data Center is a [type of corporate entity; organized under the laws of the State of [Name of State] with authority to do business in the State of Texas pursuant to [State License or Registration];

Whereas, Data Center wishes to develop a hyperscale data center located at [address] consisting of [number] acres subject to the permitting authority of [List City or County] and expected to include [Description of Data Center];

Whereas, Data Center is expected to have a load capacity of [Number] megawatts (“MW”) per month which will be initially provided by a fleet of [Number] onsite gas generators operating 24/7/365 days per year and supported by a fleet of [Number] onsite emergency diesel generators operating as needed until such time as [Name of Local Electric Distribution Company] can provide the required electric capacity; and,

Whereas, Data Center is expected to require [number] gallons of water per month using a closed loop water system [or similar water conservation technology]; and,

Whereas, the parties acknowledge that operation of the Data Center will have environmental, economic, quality of life, and resource impacts on the RGV Community, and commit to act with transparency and to minimize negative impacts and incentivize positive outcomes by working together to implement win-win solutions.

Now, therefore, the parties enter into this Term Sheet and a subsequent Community Benefit Agreement and agree on the following:

I. Energy, Water, and Wildlife Resources

A. Energy Resources

1. Emissions from Onsite Generation. To minimize environmental emissions from onsite generation, Data Center shall ensure that onsite gas generators and onsite emergency generators submit air emission applications to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (“TCEQ”) under the same address and otherwise ensure that air emissions from

both types of generators are evaluated by TCEQ as being emitted from the same single location. Onsite generators shall include emissions technology that captures hazardous air emissions to minimize negative impacts on air quality in the region.

2. Temporary Nature of Onsite Generation. The parties acknowledge that under Texas law, Data Center may contract with a third-party to construct and operate onsite generators to provide electricity for Data Center operations until such time as [Name of local electric distribution company] can provide the requested electric service. Therefore, Data Center will decommission and remove the fleet of onsite gas generators upon [Name of local electric distribution Company] providing the requested electric service. This provision does not affect the continued operation of onsite emergency generators.
3. Onsite Emergency Generation. Data Center shall ensure that onsite emergency generators include emissions technology that captures hazardous air emissions to minimize negative impacts on air quality in the region.
4. Balance Electric Load. Data Center shall install onsite emergency generation, including battery resources and microgrid technology to continuously balance its electric load and support the local grid during times of energy constraints on the grid.
5. Renewable Energy Resources. [The RGV Broadband Coalition supports responsible use of renewable energy—be specific.]

B. Water Resources

1. Water Conservation. The consumption of water by Data Center shall not come at the expense of water reserves for the long-term benefit of the local and regional community. Therefore, Data Center will work with the appropriate water authorities and financially support new sources of water necessary to meet the Data Center and community needs, including investment in desalination plants and other types of facilities. This can also include support for projects underway by water utilities and local university R & D. In addition, Data Center shall implement a closed loop water system for all its facilities, including for water needed for onsite power generation.

C. Noise Pollution

1. Require noise pollution mitigation technology to address the constant hum of the machines that may impact area residents, businesses, ranches, farms.

D. Telecommunications Resources

1. Fiber Infrastructure. The parties understand that Data Center will have to make a substantial investment in fiber infrastructure necessary to support artificial intelligence (“AI”) workload calculations with redundant service. In order to assist the RGV region in closing the digital divide, Data Center agrees to require telecom company or long-haul provider contracted to build the network for Data Center to also install a separate conduit along the same fiber route serving the Data Center (dig once principle) to be owned and operated by [Name of Entity] for the development or enhancement of a middle mile fiber network to lease at an affordable rate to other regional ISPs to serve communities, including colonias, on the route (within a minimum 10 mile radius) with reliable service with a starting minimum of 100/100 mbps (recommended minimum for telehealth appointments) and a long-term low-income subscription option.

E. Wildlife Resources

1. Wildlife Impact Study. Data Center shall conduct a wildlife impact study associated with the proposed construction of the Data Center to determine the impact on wildlife resources and solutions to minimize negative impacts on wildlife resources, including potential remediation of habitat to affected species. Data Center shall provide a copy of the wildlife impact study at least six months prior to any Data Center construction. The parties agree to meet to discuss the wildlife impact study, including the implementation of any proposed mitigation or remediation solutions. This should include a dark sky lighting requirement to protect migratory birds and other light pollution mitigation.

II. Workforce Development

- A. Support for Local Workforce. The parties understand that construction and operation of the Data Center will require a specialized workforce spanning several areas of expertise. The RGV Community has been working for some time on local programs to develop this workforce. Data Center agrees to support and invest in workforce development as follows:
 1. Data Center Short-Term Construction Jobs. May include fiber optic technicians, electrical craftsmen, construction, network engineers, other. [Data center can inform on the number of short-term jobs and

titles/descriptions, as well as the salary ranges. This can happen during the diagnostic questions at the start or pre-negotiation stage.] Data Center shall ensure that at least [number] percent of workers engaged in the construction of the Data Center are local residents and local construction businesses (that are interested and qualified) are contracted.

2. Data Center Long-Term Jobs. Data Center shall ensure that the local workforce will be hired for [number/percentage] of permanent or long-term positions (may include Fiber Optic Technicians, electrical craftsmen, cybersecurity staff, network engineers, other). [Data center can inform on the number of long-term jobs and titles/descriptions, as well as the salary ranges. This can happen during the diagnostic questions at the start or pre-negotiation stage.] For supporting the local workforce, see also “Important Notes for Negotiators, #3 below,” regarding relevant labor unions.
3. Buy Local. Data Center shall ensure that at least [Number] percent of construction materials, heavy equipment rentals, and services are procured from local businesses headquartered or having a local office in the RGV region.
4. Contribute [\$5 million] at signing of the contract and [2 percent] of annual revenue to create an endowment with [local foundation such as Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation] with a community advisory board. The fund will be to support the workforce, closing the digital divide, the emerging tech ecosystem, telehealth expansion programs, and other related programs. Workforce programs, such as the *regional* Fiber Optic Tech Corps industry credential program with Pharr and members of the RGVBC is one example that may receive annual funding. Funding can support the cost of using the mobile RV hands-on classroom lab for cohorts in rural areas, paid internships, and job placement. Additionally, the endowment can fund regional electrician, welding, AI upskilling, Smart City IOT training of the Pharr and Brownsville AI Labs, IT and cybersecurity programs, especially paid internships and apprenticeships for work-based learning. (The paid internships and apprenticeships can be included as part of what the endowment can fund or listed separately.)
5. Data Center, on an ongoing basis, will support [number] of paid internships and [number] of apprenticeship programs for local certification/degree programs for fiber optic technicians, electricians, and cybersecurity programs recommended by RGV community colleges,

UTRGV, the Workforce Solutions Boards, Project VIDA, and the RGV Fiber Technician Corps training program-Pharr and RGVBC partners. Data Center will also serve as an “employer partner” and host at least [Number] paid internships and [Number] paid apprenticeships each year.

6. UTRGV and City joint Innovation Centers, such as the eBridge Center. Data Center agrees to make available as annual nonprofit contribution [number] server rack space and data center functionality to [Name of entity] to support innovation centers for startups to test new digital business models. The goal is to develop an ecosystem of new digital companies and suppliers for the AI data center industry.

III. **Closing the Digital Divide**

1. Support a subscription program for high-speed internet for low-and moderate-income households in colonias, for older adults, and other low-income residents.
2. See 1D above, Telecommunications Resources. Provide conduit for a middle-mile fiber network, on the route the Data Center is contracting to build its redundant fiber. The best practice of “Digging once” and installing extra conduit is critical for lowering future cost of fiber network deployment, since the greatest cost is the trenching. This savings can be passed on to reduce regional ISP cap ex, expand affordable internet access for colonias, rural areas, and/or LMI communities and businesses, and possibly generate local lease revenue.
3. Annual contribution for regional Digital Skills Training, Digital Navigator/Ambassador training programs, computer distribution, i.e., digital adoption programs (can be part of the endowed fund). Organizations in the RGV with Digital Adoption programs include: La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE); Come Dream | Come Build; Brownsville Housing Authority; IDRA-ARISE Digital Ambassador Program (currently operating in Hidalgo County) and IDRA TechXperts (currently offered in three Brownsville middle schools) to expand regionally; Dr. Hector P. Garcia Memorial Public Library in Mercedes; Pharr digital adoption programs; AHEC, Proyecto Juan Diego, Region One ESC Digital Skills/adoption programs for students and parents; and others (see RGVBC website). The Starr County Industrial Foundation has also expressed the goal for Digital skills and adoption programs for Rio Grande City, Roma, and Starr County. Willacy county is developing telehealth

and digital adoption programs for its new Willacy County Heritage and Wellness Center.

IV. Telehealth and Healthcare

1. Telehealth funding including connectivity programs, digital skills training and devices for low-and-moderate Income patients to access telehealth.
2. Support Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and university safety net community clinics with sustaining telehealth platforms that integrate with their Electronic Medical Records,
3. Support Digital Navigator staff positions for FQHCs for working with patients to expand use of telehealth services through broadband adoption programs: affordable service, computers/devices, and digital skills training and technical assistance programs. The Digital Navigator certified/skilled pipeline is provided by local nonprofits from “III. Closing the Digital Divide-#4” above.
4. Support Community Health Worker Programs in FQHCs and Community Clinics to train and serve as Digital Navigators
5. Support for mobile health clinics (be specific)

V. Governance and Accountability

1. Public Dashboard that documents the CBA commitments/timeline for implementation with real-time recording of commitment milestones completed, underway, or missed and requiring attention.
2. A local resident board for accountability in meeting the CBA commitments, including organizations that are members of the Coalition, and other organizations with deep roots in advocating for infrastructure, housing, workforce opportunities and protections, educational attainment for colonias and other underserved communities. Members of the RGV Broadband Coalition, other non-profits involved in serving the community, and residents should be included on the community board.
3. Local governments and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) are responsible by law for emissions/pollution monitoring and mitigation. Support a local watchdog group, that includes members of [local non-profit organization or school] to keep track of and conduct/oversee testing for emissions and help ensure enforcement. This could be part of a hands-on science program for youth and/or communities.

Important Notes for Negotiators:

1. A multiparty negotiation can also include the RGV Broadband Coalition, and the broader community coalition that formed to prepare these recommended Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) commitments and strategy.
2. The AI Data Center CBA commitments are a good fit with the pillars of the regional “RGV Broadband and Digital Opportunity Plan” because they represent mutually beneficial programs with great potential for win-win outcomes, <https://connecthumanity.fund/rio-grande-valley-broadband-digital-opportunity-plan/>, published in February, 2025 and incorporated into the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
3. Data Center Fiber Optic technicians, and facility workers can be represented by major labor unions, such as the AFL-CIO, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) (electrical and facilities construction and maintenance), and the Communications Workers of America (CWA) (telecommunications/IT infrastructure). These organizations advocate for worker rights and long-term commitment to their salaries, careers, and safety/well-being. Determine which unions are active in the region and cooperate with them.
4. RGV negotiators may agree to include as many of these recommended commitments as possible and can customize by substituting programs important to their specific communities. For example, (for the Water section) drainage is an important issue in the RGV. What drainage projects do you need supported? For the “Energy Resources,” what renewables will be used? The key is to be specific and think long-term and regional in scope (such as regional workforce programs that prepare residents for tech and data center jobs), since the agreements impact the entire region, regardless of the specific county or city where the AI data center is seeking to locate.
5. Negotiators should determine their bottom line or BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). Many of the residents in the workshops that developed this term sheet expressed that the environmental commitments above are the bottom line, or baseline for deciding whether to accept or reject an offer.
6. Understand what State tax abatements the company has been offered. Decide whether it is necessary to agree to local tax abatements and under what conditions. It will be important to know who the owner of the data center is and/or who their tenants will be.

For more information please contact:

Jordana Barton-Garcia

Director, RGV Broadband Coalition, Connect Humanity

jordana@connecthumanity.fund, mobile: 512-731-7223

For more resources on AI Data Centers and Community Benefit Agreements, please visit,

<https://connecthumanity.fund/rio-grande-valley-broadband-coalition/>

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5: Department Reports

A. Community & Economic Development

Program Status Reports

- **Economic Development Administration**

Community Benefit Agreement Workshop – September 29, 2026

This meeting was part of a series of workshops facilitated by Jordana Barton-Garcia of Connect Humanity. Attendees included members of the RGV Economic Development Advisory Committee, Economic Development Corporations, city and county governments, and non-governmental organizations. The primary focus of the meeting was to finalize a regional Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) term sheet to support negotiations with developers of artificial intelligence (AI) and hyperscale data center infrastructure projects.

A Community Benefit Agreement is a legally binding agreement between a community and a developer that establishes specific commitments intended to ensure communities and its residents benefit from proposed data center infrastructure. These commitments may include local workforce training, infrastructure improvements, and expanded fiber connectivity. The workshop emphasized the importance of preparing the region to engage proactively with data center developers and negotiating agreements that promote responsible development and long-term benefits to local communities.

During the meeting, Jordana Barton-Garcia of Connect Humanity requested that attendees provide additional feedback on the CBA term sheet by October 14, 2026.

The feedback will be compiled and incorporated into the updated term sheet prepared by Connect Humanity. The goal is to present the term sheet for consideration at the LRGVDC Board of Directors meeting on October 28, 2026, before distributing it to cities throughout the region for further review and consideration.



C&ED continues to issue letters of support and maintains close collaboration with city officials, EDCs, EDOs, and other economic development partners to identify and advance potential projects. These collaborative efforts strengthen applications and help ensure that letters of support align with our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). If you need a letter of support for a potential project, please contact Mrs. Melisa Gonzales-Rosas for guidance on the requirements and process.

Total # of Letter of Support (LOS) as of October 13 th , 2026:	# of LOS Issued as of September 13 th – October 13 th , 2026:
17	2

Our team continues to provide technical assistance, project development, and grant administration for EDA proposals and serves as the designated regional point of contact. We also coordinate with governmental entities to maximize project benefits and avoid duplication of resources. For more information on EDA funding opportunities, please contact the Community & Economic Development Department or visit, <https://sfgrants.eda.gov/s/>.

Disaster Supplemental Funding: This funding is available exclusively to communities affected by natural disasters that received a FEMA Disaster Declaration in 2023 or 2024. For more information about this opportunity, please visit the website linked below. <https://www.eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/disaster-recovery/supplemental/2025>

- **Texas Regional Broadband Program**

A new Broadband Specialist has joined the C&ED team to support this project. The new Broadband Specialist has initiated activities to support the regional broadband plans for the LRGVDC and South Texas Development Council (STDC). These activities include the following: introductions to broadband organizations and partners, researching broadband data and information on service availability, developing a regional action plan, including goals and strategies for STDC, researched sample Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for broadband consulting services for STDC, participated in meetings on broadband-related events, and submitted quarterly reporting documents to the Texas Association of Regional Council (TARC) for both LRGVDC and STDC regions.

This Program Specialist has immediately began coordinating initial tasks, including regional outreach, data collection, and organizing foundational planning activities for the program. The TRBP's goal is to build strong regional collaboration and long-term partnerships that position communities to secure funding, deploy broadband solutions, and address persistent digital access barriers in alignment with statewide priorities.

As part of this effort, the LRGVDC received supplemental funding to assist the South Texas Development Council (STDC) in developing broadband and digital opportunity plans for Jim Hogg, Webb, and Zapata Counties, with Starr County already covered under the existing Rio Grande Valley Broadband and Digital Opportunity Plan.

- **Regional Small Cities Coalition (RSCC)**

The LRGVDC continues to collaborate with small communities to determine which cities currently have an adopted strategic plan. We are in the process of gathering information to identify how many communities remain without a strategic plan or capital improvement plan. This assessment will help us pinpoint potential funding opportunities to support the development of these foundational planning documents. Once gaps are clearly identified, we intend to prepare a grant application to secure the necessary resources to assist these communities in moving forward.

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.
For any questions regarding RSCC, reach out to Brenda Salinas, bsalinas@lrgvdc.org.

- **Community & Economic Development Assistance Fund**

The LRGVDC supports regional initiatives by disseminating information from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), conducting outreach to promote fair housing objectives, and organizing regional meetings to share updates and information regarding Texas Community Development Block Grant (TXCDBG) projects.

Texas Department of Agriculture is pleased to announce the release of two new grant opportunities for the upcoming Program Year 2027:

Community Development Fund (2027-2028)

Purpose: The Community Development Fund is the largest fund category in the TxCDBG program. This fund is available on a biennial basis for funding through a competition in each of the 24 state planning regions. Although most funds are used for public facilities (water/wastewater infrastructure, street and drainage improvements and housing activities), there are numerous other activities for which these funds may be used.

- Maximum Grant Amount: \$750,000
- Community Application Deadline: November 19, 2026
- Link to [CDV landing page](#), including the Application Guide

2027 Colonia Fund Construction Program (CFC)

Purpose: The Colonia Fund - Construction program provides eligible applicants with grants to fund water and wastewater improvements, housing rehabilitation for low- to moderate-income households, and similar basic needs for colonia residents. The term “colonia” means any identifiable unincorporated community that is determined to be a colonia on the basis of objective criteria, including lack of potable water supply, lack of adequate sewage systems, and lack of decent, safe, and sanitary housing; and was in existence as a colonia before the date of the enactment of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (November 28, 1990). The colonia must be located within 150 miles of the Texas-Mexico border to be eligible for CFC funding.

- Maximum Grant Amount: \$1,000,000
- Community Application Deadline: November 19, 2026
- Link to [CFC landing page](#), including the Application Guide

For more information and resources on the TDA funding opportunities, program announcements, and TDA webinars, visit our Community Development webpage at <http://www.lrgvdc.org/community.html>, under the CDBG Rural for Texas tab and TXCDBG Program Announcements.

- **Air Quality Program**

To support site selection for the installation of two new air monitoring systems, staff continue communication with the Delta Lake Irrigation District and the City of San Benito. Staff and the project consultant, ALL4, met with designated personnel to provide an overview of the planned work and equipment and to address any questions or concerns raised by each entity. Staff then finalized a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between LRGVDC and both participating entities to clearly establish the roles and responsibilities of all parties. The MOAs have since been approved by the LRGVDC Board of Directors and fully executed by both entities. With these agreements in place, the consultant will begin coordinating with each entity in the coming weeks to schedule installation dates for the stations.

Staff participated in the October monthly project call with TCEQ, during which they received detailed updates on ongoing activities, progress milestones, budget updates and reporting. The team used the session to ask clarifying questions, gather essential information, and maintain alignment with project objectives and timelines.

- **South Texas Clean Cities & Communities Coalition (STC4)**

The CED department is pending approval on the STC4 draft application submitted to the National Renewable Laboratory (NRL) for initial review and feedback. A virtual meeting with NRL and DOT was held to obtain feedback on the STC4 apprenticeship application. The team will incorporate the recommended revisions into the application before presenting the updated version to the STC4 committee for final review and approval.

- **Solid Waste Management Program**

The Solid Waste projects for FY 2026 provided project status updates at the Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting held on September 29th, at 10:00 am. Mr. Roel Mendiola from the City of Mission mentioned that Mission's recycling facility improvements for the 2026–2027 solid waste cycle. Construction and upgrades will begin October 1st, with materials ready and initial delays resolved. Additional funding from Leadership Mission (about \$13,000) and an upcoming donation from Keep Mission Beautiful will allow the program to expand beyond its original scope. Recycling participation has nearly doubled, increasing from 40,000–45,000 tons per month last year to almost 100,000 tons, driven by stronger outreach and engagement efforts. Cardboard and paper have seen the largest growth in collection. The city aims to finish facility upgrades by late October and is planning a grand opening, weather permitting. City of Mission is also exploring curbside recycling and expanding environmental education in schools.

Mr. Marco Ortiz from the City of Weslaco provided an update on their project. He mentioned that the city will install a mixed recyclables compactor at the Southside Recycling Center to improve efficiency and cut down on transportation needs. Early delays stemmed from electrical plan requirements, which led the city to consult Mavis

Maintenance Services for a professional assessment and detailed specifications. The project includes building a 20-by-40-foot concrete pad, installing the compactor, and completing electrical connections. Once operational, the compactor will reduce hauling trips to partners like the McAllen Recycling Center, lowering fuel and operating costs. Concrete quotes are in hand, electrical plans are nearly complete, and the project is progressing on schedule.

The next SWAC meeting will be held in person at the LRGVDC Ken Jones Executive Board room on December 02, 2026, at 10:00 am. Staff continue to provide technical assistance, outreach, and monitoring for all Solid Waste Projects. Information about the Solid Waste program is available at www.lrgvdc.org/solidwaste.html.

- **Solid Waste Infrastructure of Recycling (SWIFR) Program**

Region One Education Service Center provided the CED Department with sample prints of the Texas Edition composting curriculum. After reviewing the options, staff determined that the spiral-bound version best meets program needs and has requested a quote from Region One to produce approximately 60 to 65 copies. Once the quote is received, staff will proceed with printing and distribute the curriculum to participating school districts.

Staff will continue coordinating with schools as they prepare to implement hands-on learning activities that promote the collection of food scraps for composting and help reduce the volume of organic waste sent to landfills. The Teacher's Edition of the digital composting curriculum is now finalized and available for download on the LRGVDC website under the Solid Waste section, ensuring access for educators across the region. The Curriculum can be found on the following link: www.lrgvdc.org/solidwaste.html.

We look forward to seeing how teachers integrate this enhanced curriculum into their instruction to strengthen students' understanding of environmental stewardship and sustainable waste-management practices.

- **Water Quality Program**

Public Outreach Events Attended – October 2026

National Night Out – Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office | October 6, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office National Night Out in Mercedes. Planning activities included organizing Kari's Law awareness materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality educational information to engage families and promote emergency communication safety, proper waste disposal, and pollution prevention.





Fire Prevention Fest – City of Alamo | October 7, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the City of Alamo Fire Prevention Fest. Outreach planning included preparing Kari's Law educational brochures, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality information to engage families and promote emergency preparedness, environmental responsibility, and community safety.



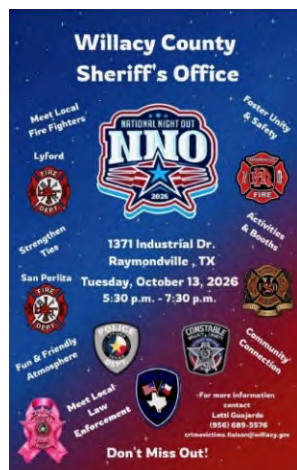
Domestic Violence Awareness Resource Fair – Rio Grande Valley District Attorney Coalition | October 9, 2026

Participated in the Rio Grande Valley District Attorney Coalition's Domestic Violence Awareness Resource Fair held at the Community Safe Room in Raymondville, Texas. Represented the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) Community & Economic Development (C&ED) Department by setting up and staffing an informational outreach table. Distributed Kari's Law educational materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality resources to attendees. Engaged with community members and participating organizations to raise awareness about emergency preparedness, public safety, environmental protection, and available community resources. This outreach opportunity also supported regional partnerships and community engagement during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.



National Night Out – Willacy County Sheriff's Office | October 13, 2026

Coordinated outreach participation for the Willacy County Sheriff's Office National Night Out in Raymondville. Planning activities included organizing Kari's Law educational materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality resources to increase public awareness of emergency calling requirements, litter prevention, proper waste management, and protection of local waterways.



Fall Festival & National Night Out – City of Palm Valley | October 16, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the City of Palm Valley Fall Festival and National Night Out. Planning activities included preparing Kari's Law informational brochures, Solid Waste educational promotional items, and Water Quality resources to engage community members and promote public safety and environmental awareness.

32nd Annual Rio Reforestation – Pharr | October 17, 2026

As part of LRGVDC C&ED's commitment to community engagement and environmental stewardship, Crystal Valdez represented the organization through volunteer participation in the 32nd Annual Rio Reforestation event, organized by American Forests and scheduled for October 17, 2026, at the Milagro Tract in Pharr, Texas. The annual conservation initiative aims to plant 10,000 native tree seedlings at the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge to restore native habitats, support wildlife and migratory bird populations, and promote long-term ecosystem conservation.

Staff's participation provided an opportunity to collaborate with local organizations, conservation partners, and community volunteers while supporting environmental restoration efforts throughout the region. This activity complements LRGVDC's water quality and environmental education initiatives by promoting conservation awareness, responsible environmental stewardship, and community involvement in protecting the Lower Rio Grande Valley's natural resources.

National Night Out – City of Palmhurst | October 20, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for community outreach at the City of Palmhurst's 15th Annual National Night Out. Activities included organizing Kari's Law educational materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality information to engage residents and families while promoting emergency communication awareness, proper waste disposal, and pollution prevention.

National Night Out – City of Donna | October 21, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the City of Donna National Night Out. Planning activities included preparing Kari's Law informational brochures, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality educational resources to promote emergency calling safety, environmental stewardship, and responsible waste management practices.

National Night Out – City of Alton | October 22, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for community outreach at the City of Alton National Night Out at Sylvia Vela Park. Planning activities included organizing Kari's Law educational brochures, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality resources to engage families and increase awareness of emergency communication safety, litter prevention, and water quality protection.

Spooktacular 2026 – City of Edinburg | October 23, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the City of Edinburg Spooktacular event at the Edinburg World Birding Center. Outreach planning included preparing Kari's Law informational materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality educational resources to engage families and promote public safety, environmental awareness, and pollution prevention.

National Night Out – Town of Laguna Vista | October 24, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for community outreach at the Town of Laguna Vista National Night Out. Planning activities included organizing Kari's Law educational materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality information to promote emergency calling awareness, responsible waste disposal, and protection of local water resources.

National Night Out Fall Festival – Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo, Hacienda San Miguel | October 26, 2026

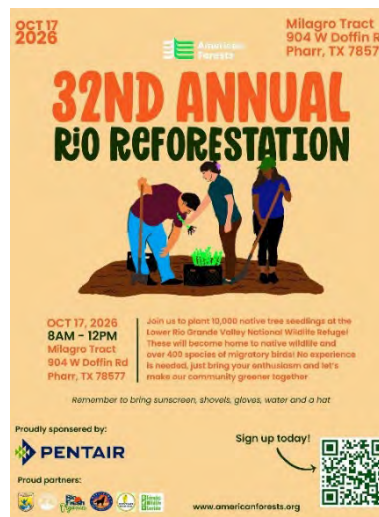
Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo's National Night Out Fall Festival in Donna. Planning activities included preparing Kari's Law educational brochures, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality informational resources to engage residents and families while promoting emergency communication safety and environmental responsibility.

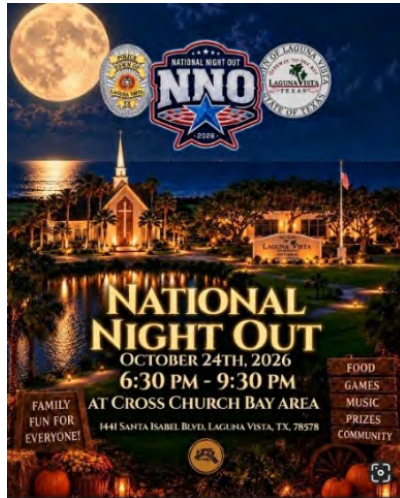
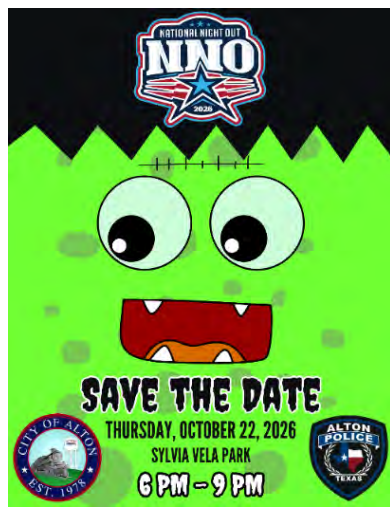
National Night Out Halloween Edition – Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo | October 27, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for community outreach at the Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo's National Night Out Halloween Edition in Weslaco. Outreach planning included organizing Kari's Law informational materials, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality educational resources to engage residents and families through community-based public education.

Trunk or Treat – Palmview Police Department | October 29, 2026

Coordinated and prepared for outreach participation at the Palmview Police Department's Annual Trunk or Treat event. Planning activities included preparing Kari's Law educational brochures, Solid Waste promotional items, and Water Quality information to engage children and families while promoting emergency communication awareness, proper waste disposal, litter prevention, and environmental stewardship.





Throughout October 2026, the Community & Economic Development (C&ED) team focused on increasing public awareness through educational Facebook posts highlighting Water Quality, Solid Waste Management, and Kari's Law. Monthly themes included ****Fall into Clean Water, Drinking Water Protection, E-Waste and Electronics Recycling, and Emergency Calling Safety****. These posts were designed to provide residents with valuable, easy-to-understand information while encouraging community engagement through likes, comments, and shares. By promoting practical environmental practices and public safety awareness, the C&ED Facebook page continues to educate residents, strengthen community connections, and encourage responsible actions that help protect our water resources and communities.





Outreach Planning and Coordination Activities – Water Quality Monitoring, Watershed Education & Partnership Coordination - October 2026

Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership & Partnership Coordination and Community Engagement

During October 2026, C&ED staff continued collaborating with Samantha Colunga, Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator with the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI), to support upcoming environmental education programs and community engagement opportunities. Coordination activities included assisting with vendor recruitment, contacting community partners, sharing event information, and encouraging participation from local organizations and residents.

The department also helped promote opportunities featured in October 2026 Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Update, including environmental workshops, volunteer cleanups, reforestation activities, conservation programs, and educational events throughout the Rio Grande Valley. These efforts support continued collaboration among regional organizations while strengthening environmental education, community participation, and water quality protection initiatives.

Water Quality Monitoring and Staff Certification

C&ED representatives Crystal Valdez and Sydney Ribera completed the Texas Stream Team Core Water Quality Community Scientist Training, preparing them to conduct water quality monitoring activities throughout Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties. The department also coordinated the procurement of three Texas Stream Team water quality monitoring kits to support future field testing, reactivate inactive monitoring sites, address monitoring gaps, and contribute additional water quality data to regional watershed protection efforts.

Watershed Education and Outreach Equipment

The department also advanced the acquisition of an EnviroScape Watershed/Nonpoint Source Model to expand environmental education during community outreach events, school presentations, workshops, and meetings. This hands-on educational tool will demonstrate how stormwater runoff transports pollutants into local waterways and help participants understand nonpoint source pollution, watershed protection, and everyday pollution prevention practices.

Law Enforcement Partnerships & Community Event Coordination

2026 RGV K-9 Competition – Alton | December 5, 2026

During October 2026, Crystal Valdez, representing LRGVDC C&ED, assisted the Lower Rio Grande Valley Police Academy with outreach and coordination efforts for the upcoming 2026 RGV K-9 Competition, scheduled for December 5, 2026, at the Alton Parks & Recreation Center in Alton, Texas.

Planning and coordination activities included contacting local businesses, distributing promotional materials, assisting with vendor recruitment, and seeking donations and sponsorship opportunities to support participating law enforcement agencies, K-9 handlers, and their canine partners. As part of these efforts, Crystal conducted in-person business outreach, including a visit to The Home Depot, to share event information, establish community connections, and explore potential contributions. Through these coordination efforts, LRGVDC continues strengthening regional partnerships and supporting community engagement and public safety initiatives.

- **Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC)**

Data Literacy & Live WQ Data Training – South Texas EcoTourism Center | October 6, 2026

The Program Specialist I - Water Quality will be attending this series of workshops hosted by RATES Research designed to educate the community on the operations of Real-Time Hydrologic System (RTHS) stations and how to read live data.

Partnership & Regional Coordination – South Texas EcoTourism Center | October 27, 2026

This event is the second part of the RTHS workshop series hosted by RATES, focused on connecting with regional partners responsible for water monitoring and providing opportunities for data-sharing and co-funding.



RTHS Operation & Maintenance Workshop – LRGVDC, Ken Jones Board Room | October 29, 2026

The LRGVDC will be hosting a RTHS Operation & Maintenance Workshop in the Ken Jones led by RATES Research to prepare county and city connections on future adoption of RTHS stations in their jurisdictions.



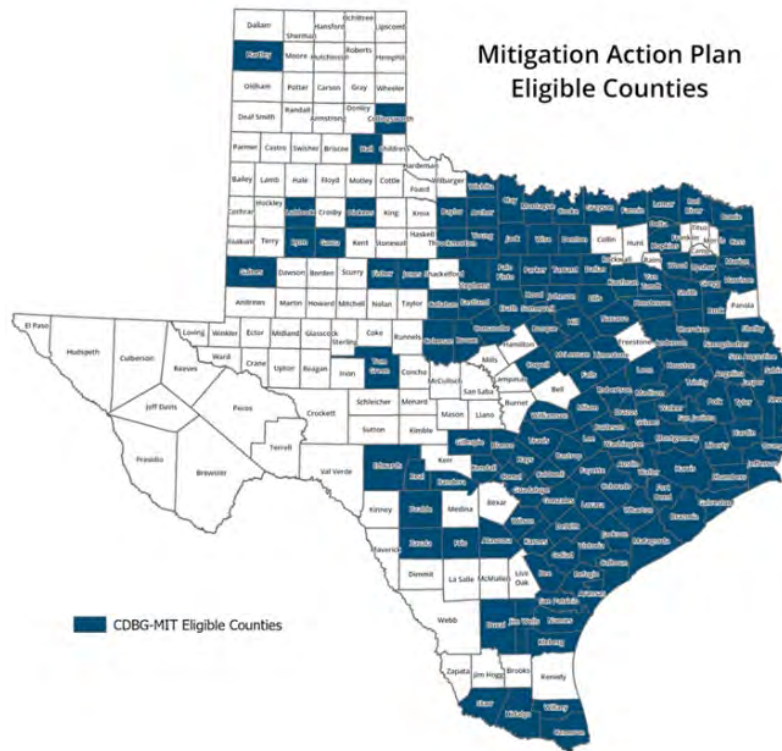
GLO Announcement – Program Information:

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) has opened a call for eligible projects through the launch of the Mitigation Reallocation Program (MRP). The Mitigation Reallocation Program (MRP), a strategic effort to ensure \$92 million in available funding continues to strengthen Texas communities. Through the MRP, communities will be able to apply for funding for mitigation activities such as flood and drainage improvements, water system improvements, wastewater improvements, street improvements and permanently affixed emergency communications equipment that reduce the impacts of future hurricanes, storms and flooding.

Eligible entities include units of local government (cities and counties), Indian Tribes and special purpose districts in CDBG-MIT eligible counties. Each may submit up to three (3) projects and will be considered based on the criteria identified in the action plan. Each project must be between \$2.5 million and \$10 million and does not require a tie-back to a disaster.

HUD has set deadlines for the expenditure and closeout of the CDBG-MIT grant. Failure to complete the projects and finalize HUD's closeout process will result in HUD initiating the recapture process, which means any funds used towards incomplete projects must be repaid to HUD. Due to the gravity of the deadlines, the GLO will only consider projects that can be completed in enough time to allow for the close out process.

For more information or to submit projects, please visit recovery.texas.gov/mrp. The mitigation action plan outlining the scoring criteria is available at <https://recovery.texas.gov/action-plans>.



• **TWDB Announcements**

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) has released a draft study, as directed by Senate Bill 7 (SB 7) of the 89th Texas Legislature, to evaluate the potential incorporation of wastewater planning into the state water planning process. The draft is now available for public review and input, and comments can be received through Friday, October 30.

The Texas Water Development Board is accepting applications for the Texas Water Supply Corporation Grants (TWSCG) opportunity, established through the Texas Water Fund. Full applications are due by Wednesday, January 13, 2027. With this one-time grant funding opportunity, there is up to \$50 million available to eligible Water Supply Corporations through the Rural Water Assistance Fund (RWAFF) and the Water Loss Assistance Fund (WLAFF).

TWDB Funding Opportunities

- State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT)
- Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF)
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)
- Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)
- Texas Water Development Fund (DFund)
- Texas Water Fund (TWF)

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me or Mrs. Melisa Gonzales-Rosas, or Ms. Enriqueta Caballero, TWDB Outreach Specialist and Program Administrator, at enriqueta.caballero@twdb.texas.gov or by phone at 512-435-9071.

Visit, <https://www.lrgvdc.org/water.html>, for water resource information. For any RWRAC questions, please contact Sydney Ribera, sribera@lrgvdc.org

• **Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (Region M)**

The next Region M meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2026, at 9:30 AM. Meeting details will be placed on the LRGVDC Events Calendar webpage and the Region M website, <http://riograndewaterplan.org> or <https://www.lrgvdc.org/>

NOTICE OF MEETING
Region M Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group
Wednesday, November 4, 2026, 9:30 AM

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
301 W. Railroad, Weslaco, TX 78596

Meeting may also be attended virtually via GoToMeeting:
Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone
<https://meet.goto.com/409786581>

You can also dial in using your phone
Access Code: 409-786-581
United States: +1 (571) 317-3112

The Region M Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (RGRWPG) will hold a Pre-Planning Public Input Meeting as part of their regularly scheduled meeting on November 4, 2026, at the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, 301 W. Railroad, Weslaco, TX 78596, Ken Jones Board Room, beginning at 9:30 AM. Interested participants may also attend online via GoToMeeting or utilize the call-in phone number (details above).

The RGRWPG was established by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) as one of sixteen Regional Water Planning Groups across the state following the 75th Texas Legislature's passage of Senate Bill 1 in 1997. The primary responsibility of the RGRWPG is the development of a Regional Water Plan on a five-year planning cycle that takes into consideration water availability, usage, conservation, and economic viability. Region M consists of 8 Texas counties including: Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Maverick, Starr, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata.

The purpose of the Pre-Planning Public Input Meeting is to provide background on the formation of the Regional Water Planning Groups and the water planning process with the primary goal of gathering suggestions as to issues, provisions, projects, and strategies that should be considered in the development of the 2031 Regional Water Plan and 2032 State Water Plan.

The public will have an opportunity to provide written and oral comments during the Pre-Planning Public Input Meeting. Individuals may also submit written public comments prior

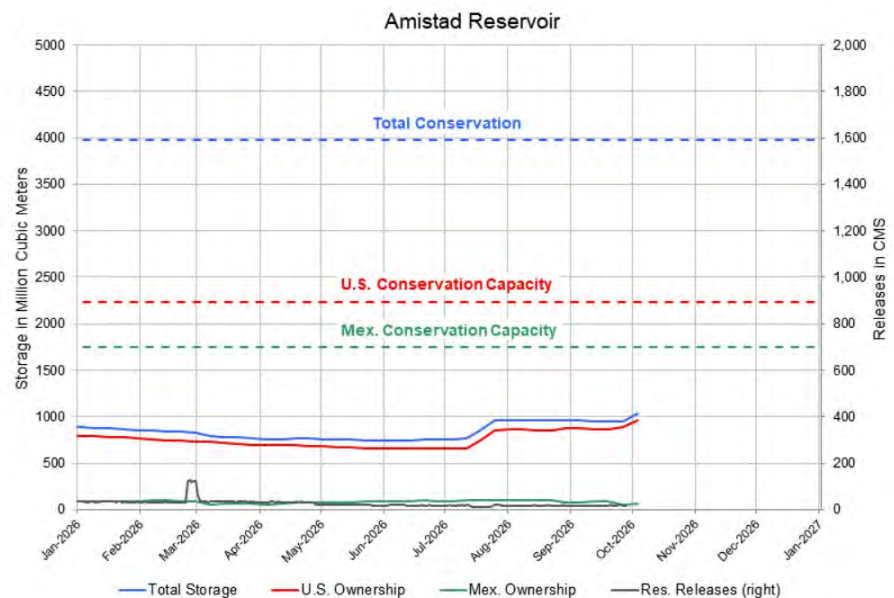
to this meeting online to, Mr. Jim Darling, Chairman – RGRWPG Region M, 301 W. Railroad Street, Weslaco, TX 78596. Immediately following the Public Meeting, the RWPG will hold a Regular Meeting to address routine items including but not limited to: approval of minutes, updates regarding liaison duties, and discussions regarding the Seventh Cycle of Regional Water Planning. The agenda for that meeting will be filed no later than October 28, 2026.

Notice of meeting and agenda are available for public review at www.riograndewaterplan.org and in the Texas Secretary of State Website. For more information please contact: Melisa Gonzales-Rosas, LRGVDC Director of Community & Economic Development Department, 301 W. Railroad, Weslaco, TX 78596; (956) 682-3481; melisa.gonzales@lrgvdc.org and 'cc vramos@lrgvdc.org

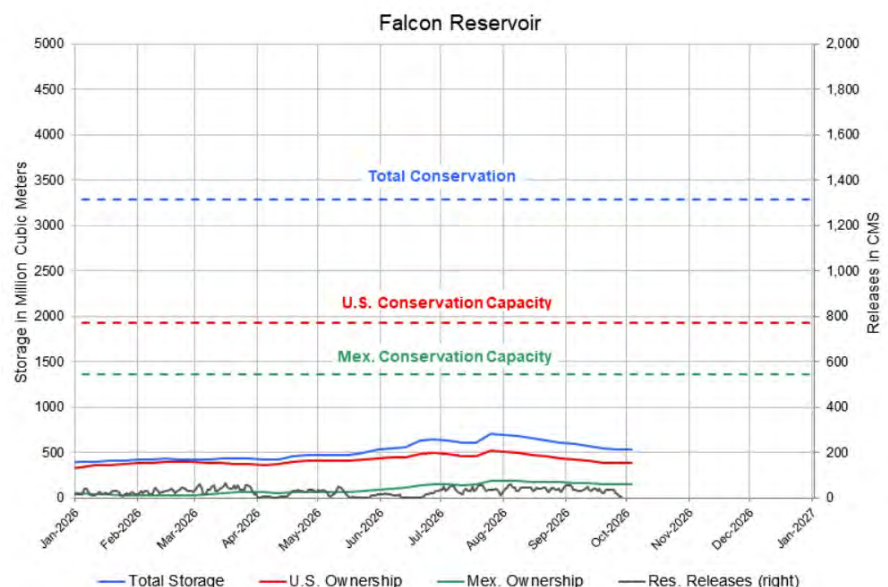
For any other Region M information, you may contact Mrs. Melisa-Gonzales Rosas at (956)682-3481 ext.163 or melisa.gonzales@lrgvdc.org;

- **Reservoir Levels as of October 15, 2026 (www.IBWC.gov)**

AMISTAD RESEVOIR



FALCON RESEVOIR



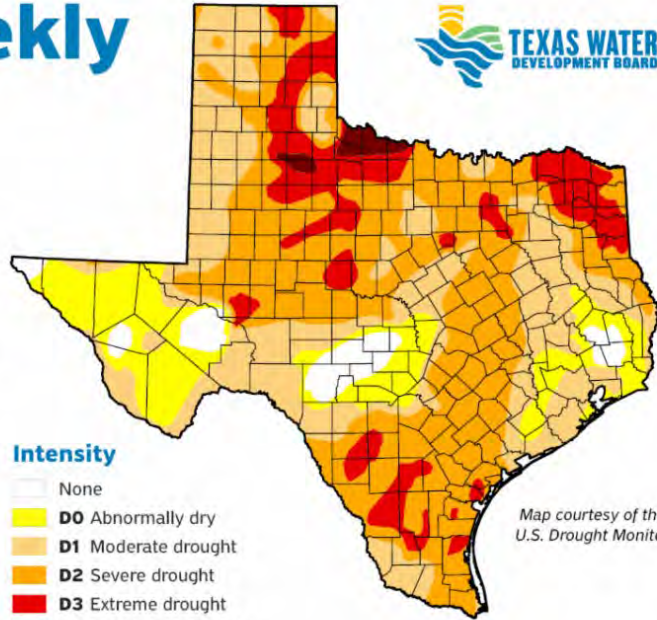
Water Weekly

For the week of 10/12/26



Water conditions

The latest drought map for conditions as of October 6 shows the first weekly contraction of drought in 11 weeks. Conditions degraded in scattered areas of Central and South Texas over the last week, but much larger areas across the state saw at least one class of improvement.

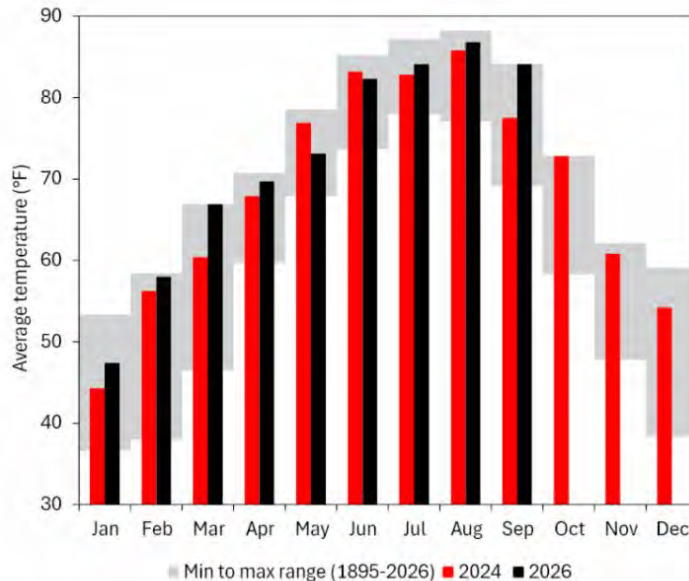


Drought conditions

82% now
92% a week ago
31% three months ago
26% a year ago

Intensity

- None
- D0** Abnormally dry
- D1** Moderate drought
- D2** Severe drought
- D3** Extreme drought
- D4** Exceptional drought



Statewide temperature

2024 was the hottest year for Texas in data going back to 1895 and also recorded the hottest October. 2026 is on pace to be even hotter. Monthly temperatures in 2026 have set new records for March and September and have exceeded those from 2024 for seven of nine months.

Data courtesy of NOAA

By Dr. Mark Wentzel, Hydrologist, Office of Water Science and Conservation
Fritz Reinig, Government Relations | Fritz.Reinig@twdb.texas.gov | 512-463-7159
Media Relations | MediaRelations@twdb.texas.gov | 512-463-5129

www.twdb.texas.gov



ITEM # 5. B.

HEALTH

&

HUMAN SERVICES

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Item #5: Department Action Item

B. Health & Human Services.....Margarita Lopez
Director

1. Consideration and **ACTION** to Approve the following Membership Application for the Citizens Advisory Council.

- Stephanie Champion – Hidalgo County, Under the “Service Providers” Category

The appointment will span a duration of three (3) years, as per the Citizens Advisory Council Rules of Function Article V Membership – Section 4.

Stephanie Champion, M.S., LPC, CTP, C-DBT, is the Director of Sage Healing Counseling and a Licensed Professional Counselor in Texas. She holds a B.S. in Rehabilitation Services and an M.S. in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling and is completing her dissertation for a PhD in Rehabilitation Counseling at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. She is a Certified Trauma Professional, is certified in Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and serves as a Committee Chair for the Texas Counseling Association. In her counseling practice, she has supported older adults through grief, life transitions, and mental health needs. Ms. Champion seeks to contribute to the Citizens Advisory Council by bringing a mental health perspective, helping identify gaps in local services, and advocating for accessible, culturally responsive support that preserves older adults’ independence and dignity.

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

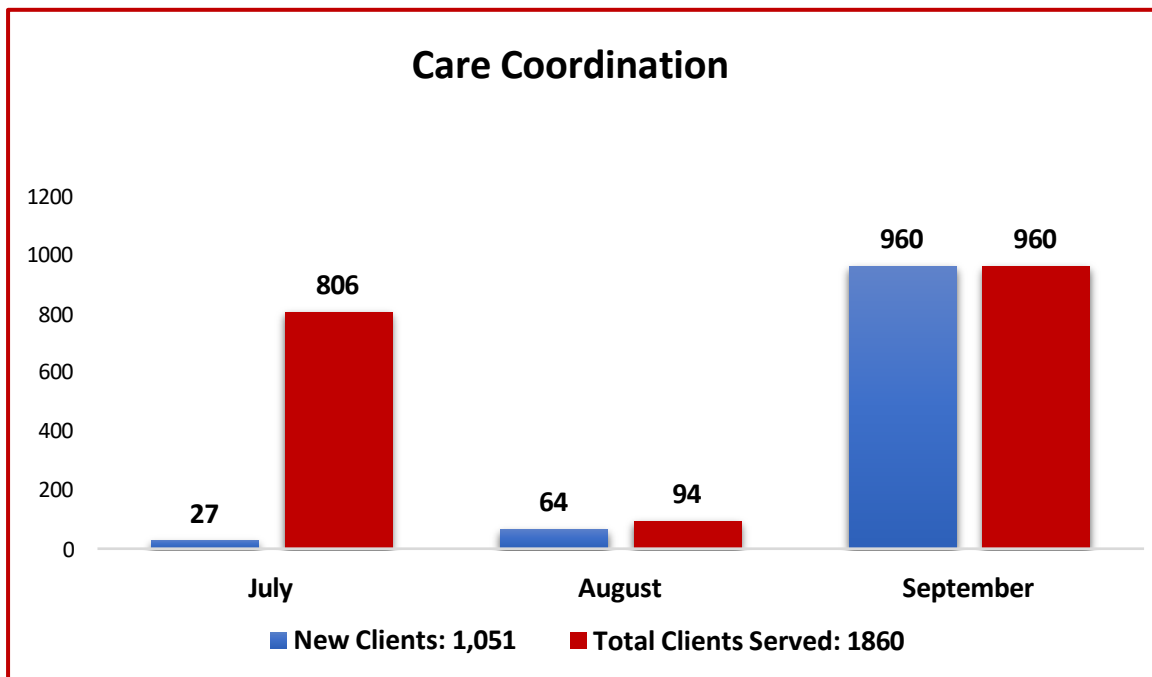
Item #5: Department Reports

B. Health & Human Services

Program Status Reports

- **Direct Consumer Services Report – Care Coordination Programs**

- ✓ The Care Coordination Program serviced a total of 1,051 new clients.
- ✓ A total of 1,860 individuals were provided with case management assistance.

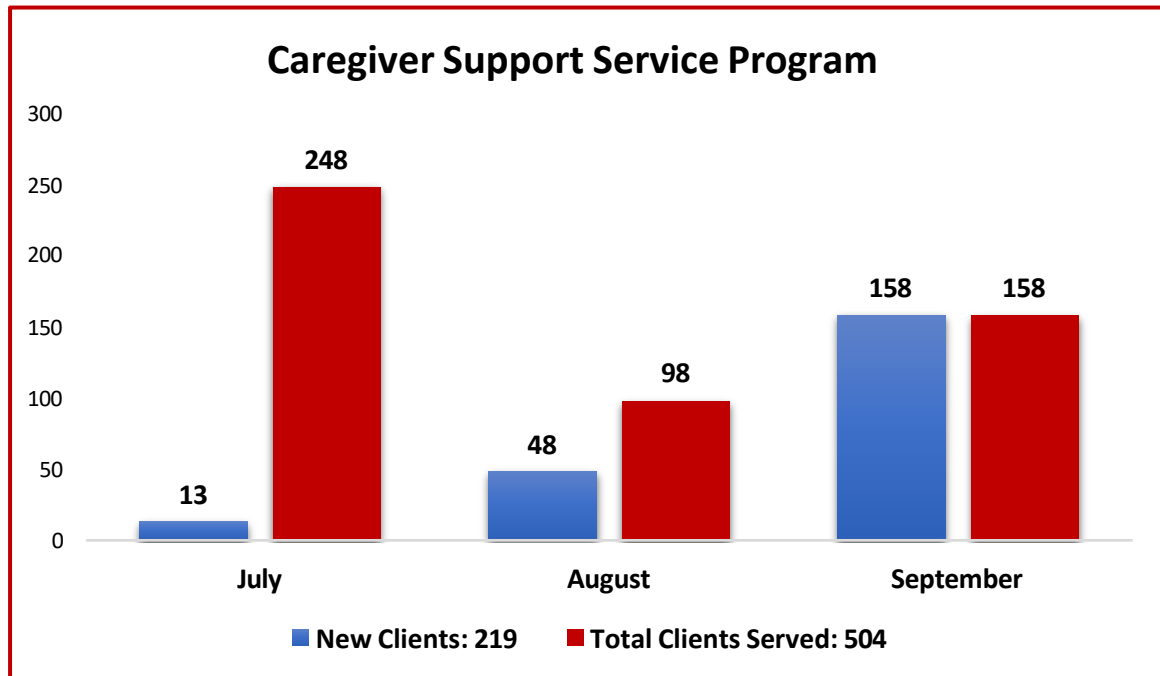


- **Direct Consumer Services Report – Care Coordination Services**

- ✓ As of this reporting period, a total of 1,149 individuals are currently enrolled and awaiting Care Coordination services. These services include health maintenance, homemaker assistance, transportation, and residential repair support. The agency continues to maintain contact and monitor the needs of these individuals while awaiting final budget approval. Once funding is authorized, services will be promptly initiated to address the growing demand and ensure timely support for our clients.

- **Direct Consumer Services Report – Caregiver Support Services Program**

- ✓ The Caregiver Support Services Program serviced a total of 219 new clients.
- ✓ A total of 504 individuals were provided with assistance.



- **Direct Consumer Services Report – Caregiver Support Services**

- ✓ The **Caregiver Support Program** currently has **108 individuals awaiting respite services**. These services provide essential relief and support to family caregivers who dedicate their time and energy to caring for older adults and individuals with disabilities. The agency is prepared to initiate services **immediately upon budget approval**, ensuring caregivers receive timely assistance that promotes their well-being and sustainability in their caregiving roles.

- **Direct Consumer Report - Community Development Block Grant**

- ✓ All Area Agency on Aging CDBG funds exhausted.
- ✓ FY 2026 CDBG activities have been completed. Awaiting approval and funding awards for FY 2027.

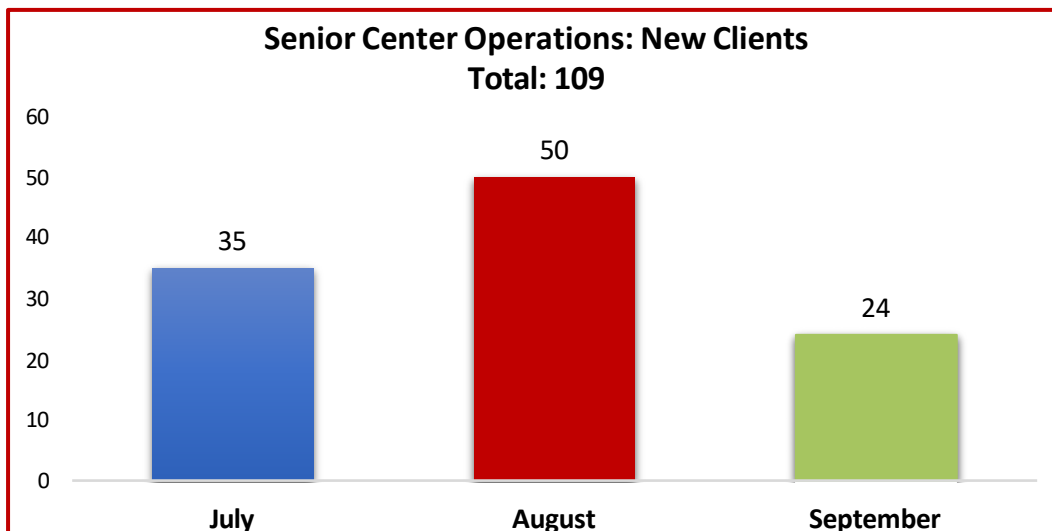
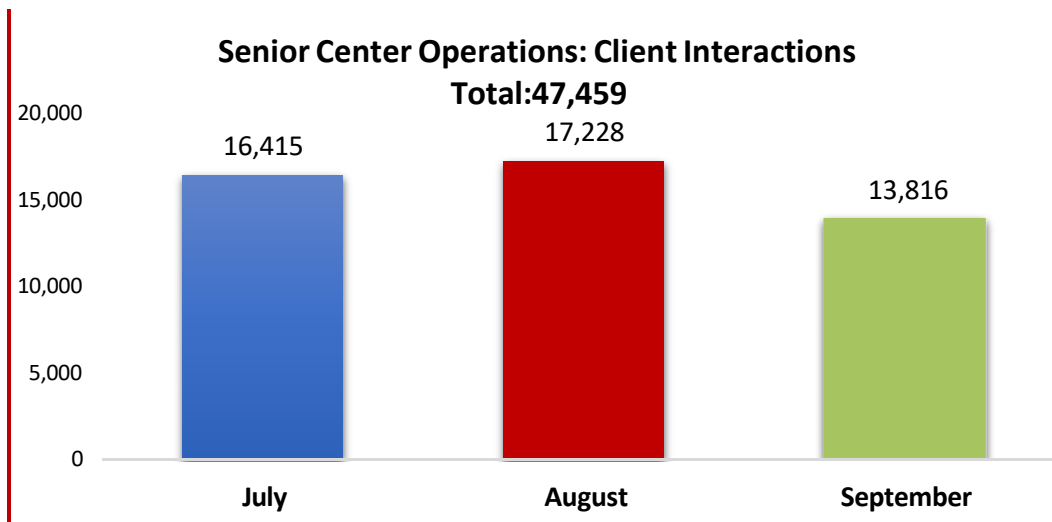
- **Direct Consumer Services – Interest List**

- ✓ As of October 1st, 2026, A total of **1,263** individuals has expressed interest in our services through the Area Agency on Aging. The increased demand is attributed to ongoing outreach and collaborative efforts across the Rio Grande Valley.

Direct Consumer Services Interest List	
Care Coordination Services	1,149
Caregiver Support Services	114
Grand Total	1,263

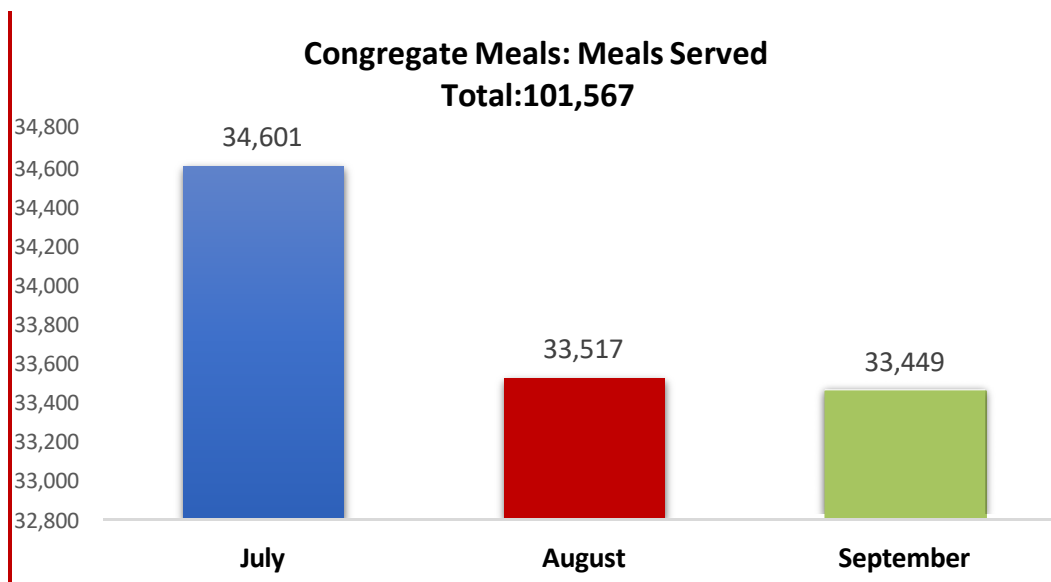
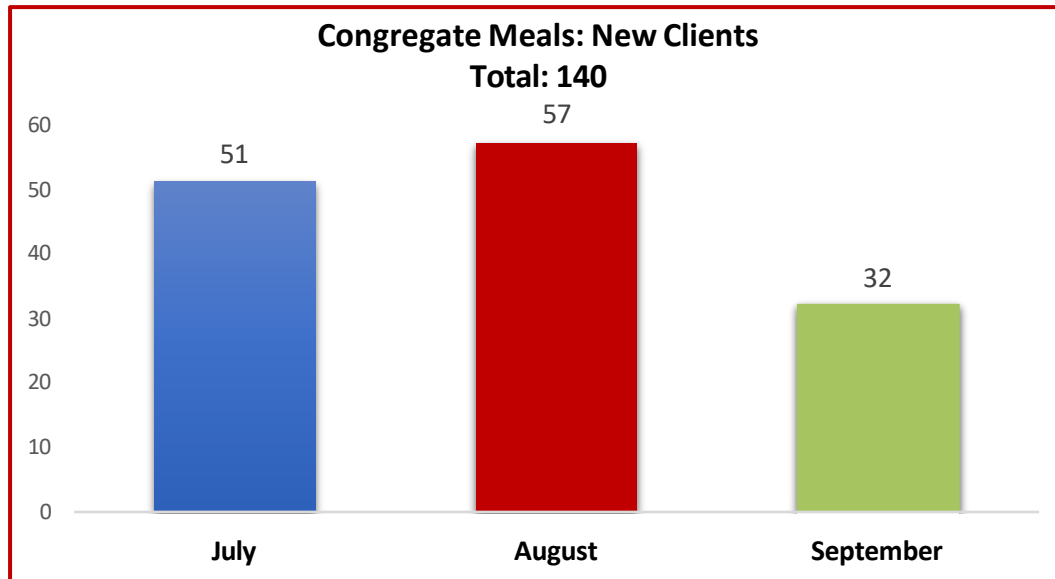
- **Senior Center Operations Report**

- ✓ Program successfully enrolled 109 new clients.
- ✓ Senior Centers conducted 47,459 activities with their clients.



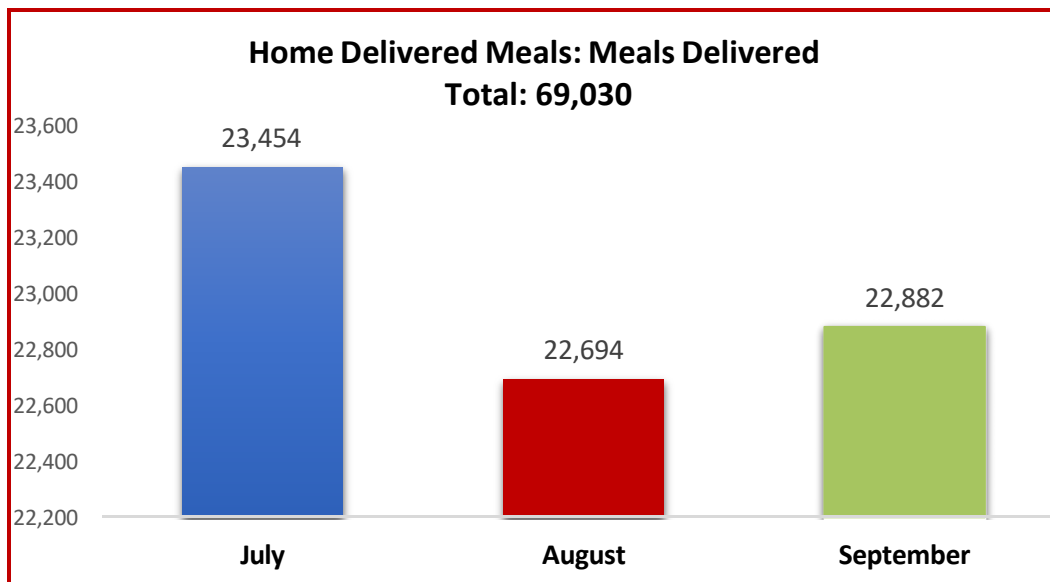
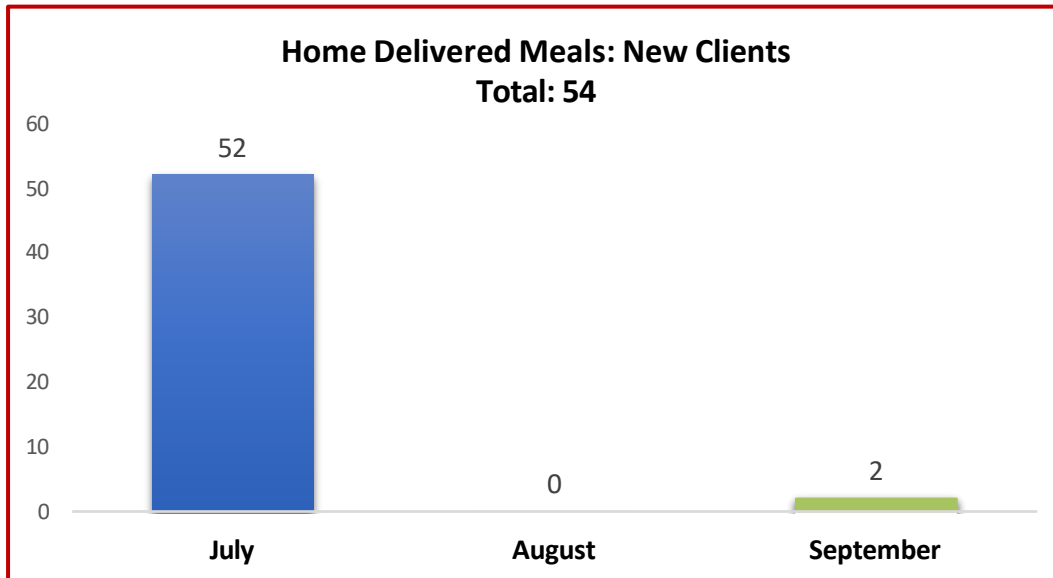
- **Nutrition Program Report – Congregate Meals**

- ✓ Program successfully enrolled 140 new clients into the Congregate Meals program.
- ✓ Program successfully served 101,567 Congregate meals.



- **Nutrition Program Report – Home Delivered Meals**

- ✓ Successfully enrolled 54 new clients into the Home Delivered Meals program.
- ✓ Successfully delivered 69,030 Home Delivered meals.

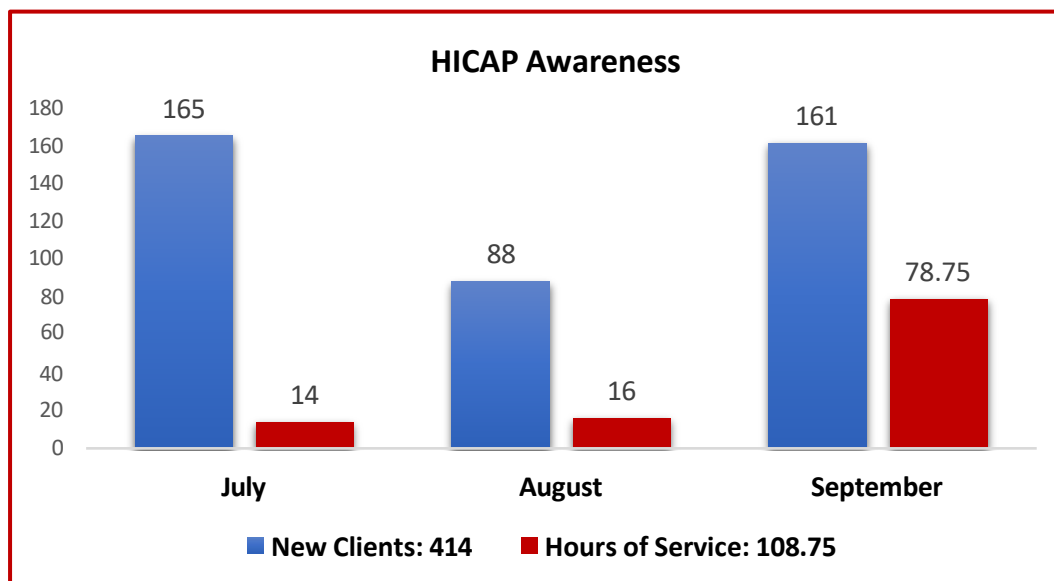
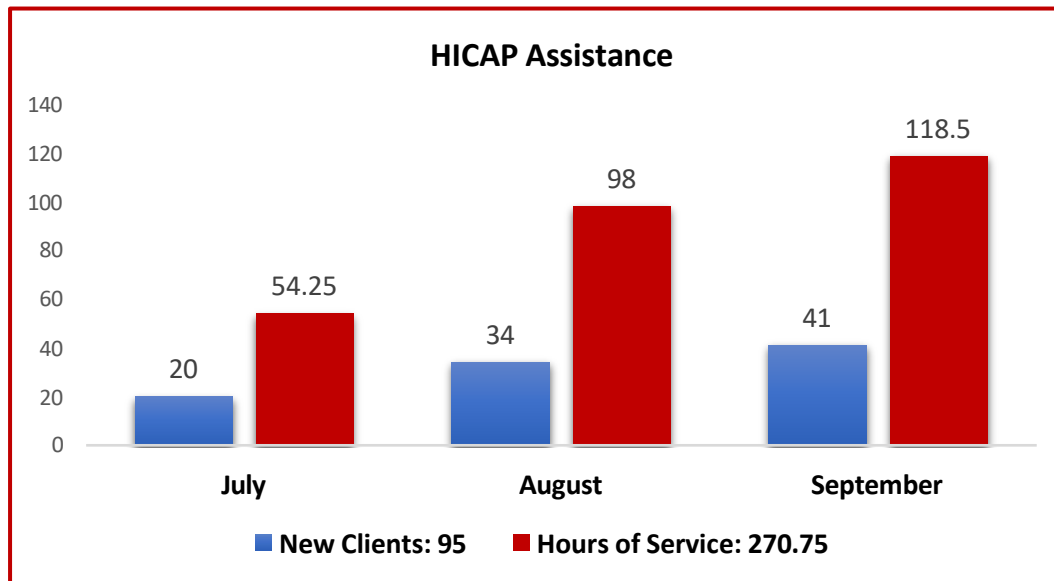


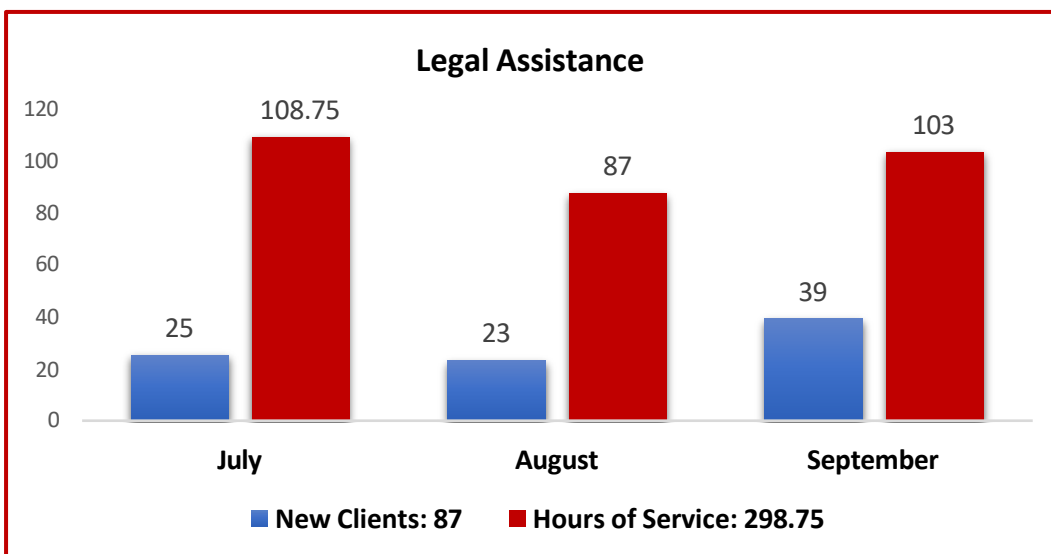
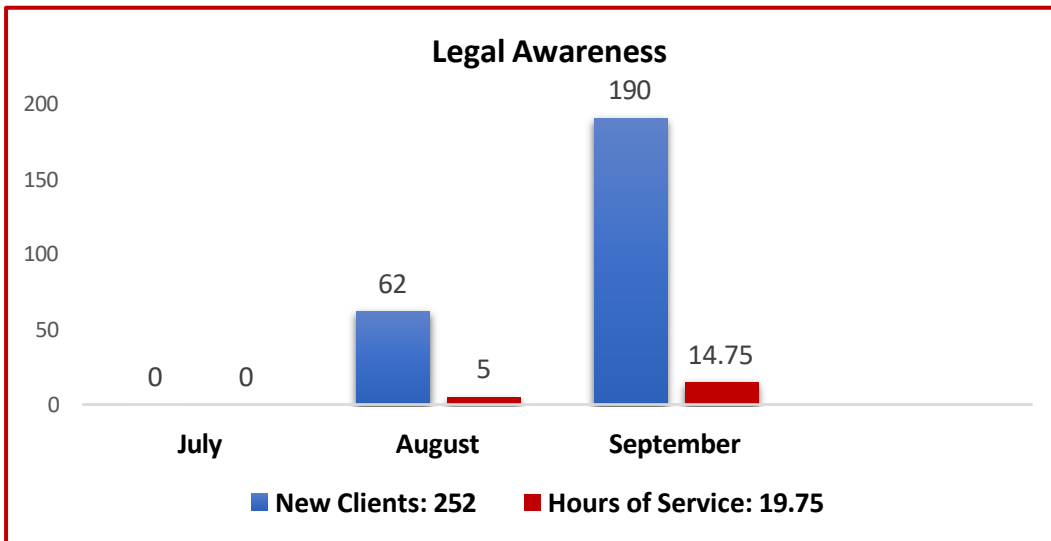
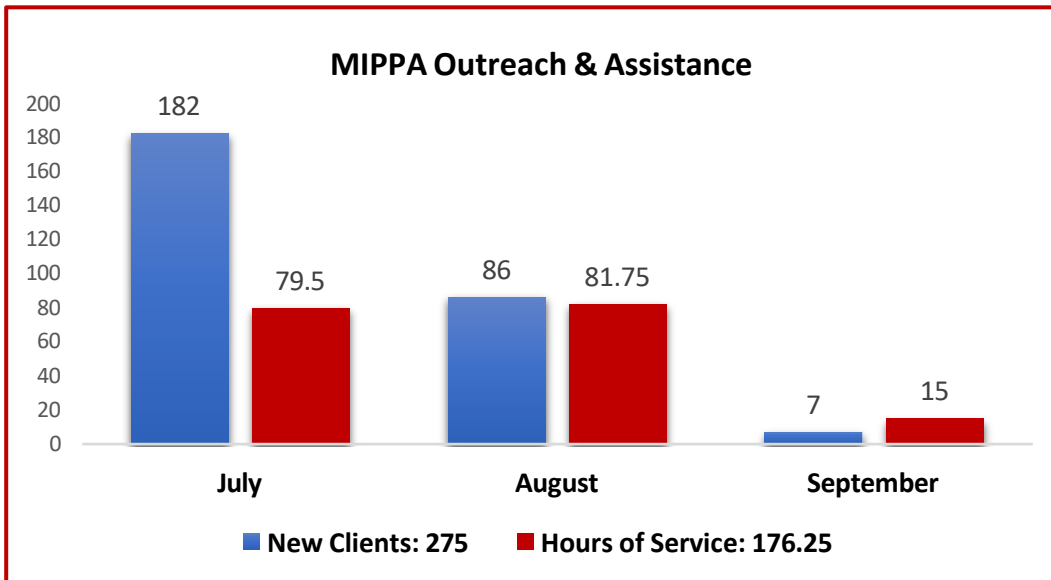
- **Billing Department Operations Report**

- ✓ The Billing Department conducted six billing and training sessions in the Ken Jones Executive Board Room for all newly approved FY 2026 - 2027 Board approved vendors. During these sessions, vendors received training on billing procedures, required documentation, submission requirements, and program expectations. All participating vendors also reviewed and signed their FY 2026 - 2027 contracts.

- **Special Services Report – Benefit Counselors Program**

- ✓ Achieved the enrollment of 1,123 new clients and established 874.25 hours of service through outreach activities and one-on-one assistance.





* Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)

*Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)

- **Care Transition Intervention (CTI) Report**

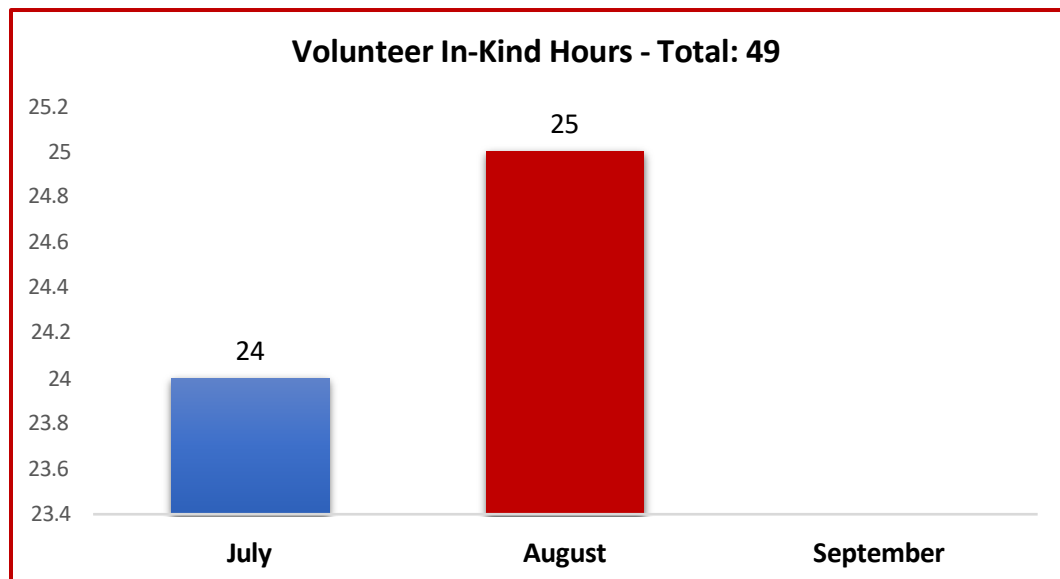
- ✓ The program has hired one new staff member, who has already begun the required training. Recruitment for the remaining vacant position is ongoing, and the program is currently screening candidates to fill it as expeditiously as possible. Once training and credentialing are complete, staff will fully resume program activities. The program remains committed to restoring full-service delivery and reporting capacity as efficiently as possible.

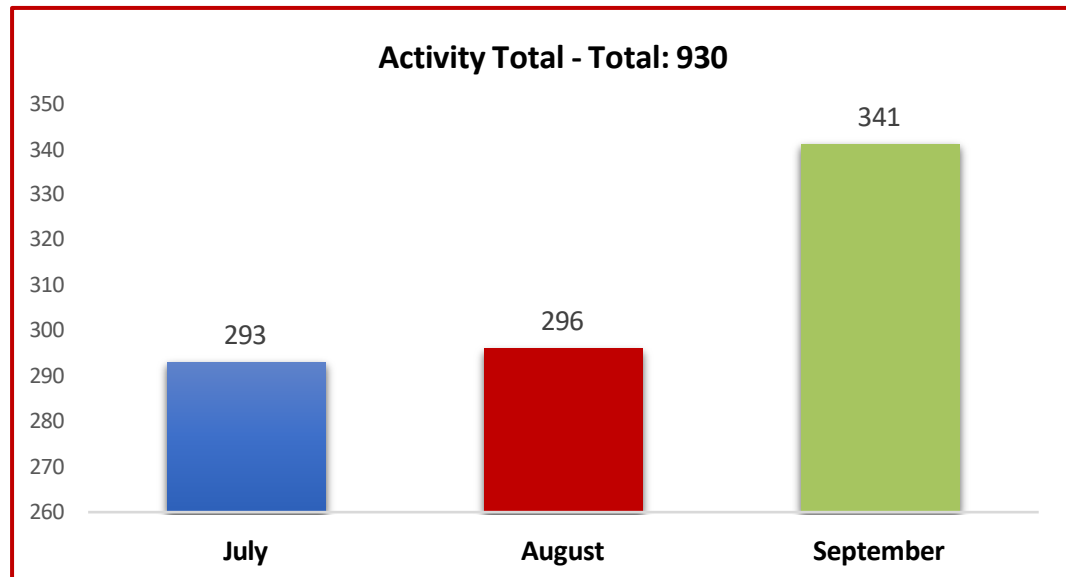
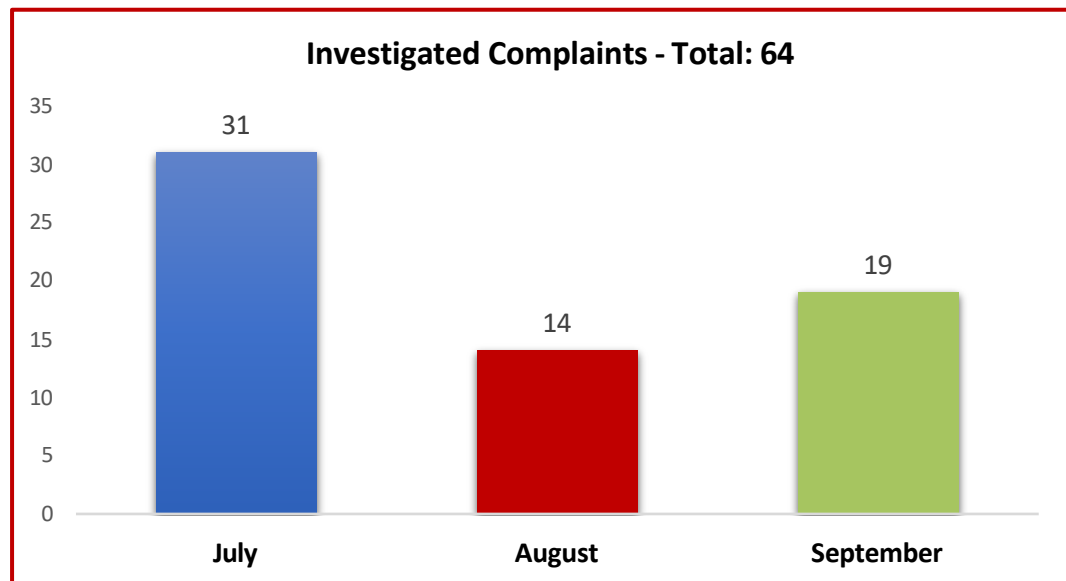
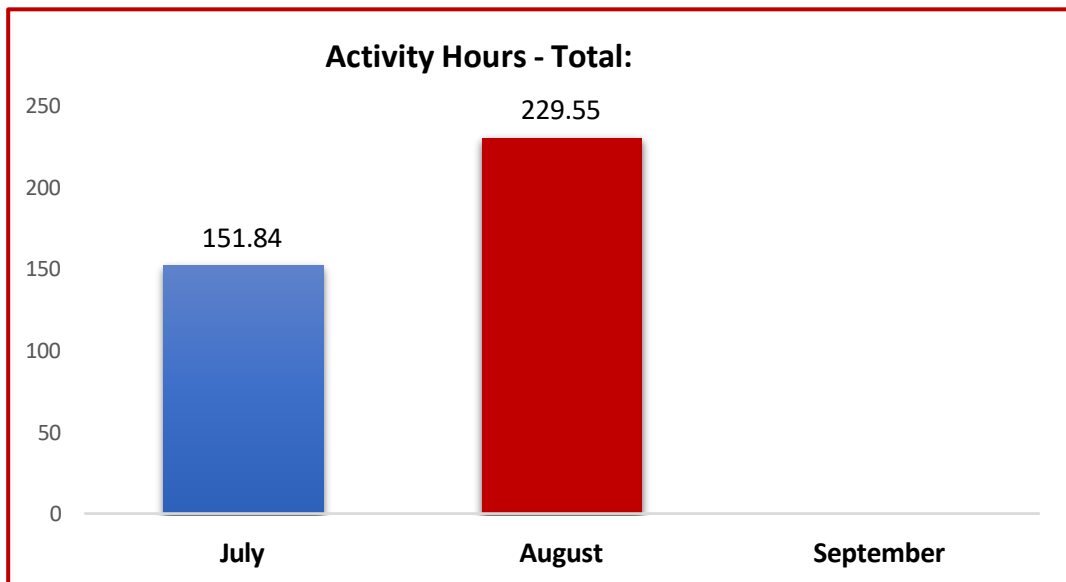
- **Benjamin Rose Institute Care Consultant Report**

- ✓ The recruitment process remains ongoing. The program is committed to filling the vacant positions as expeditiously as possible. Upon hiring, new staff will complete the required hospital-based training and credentialing process before fully resuming program activities. The program remains committed to restoring full-service delivery and reporting capacity as efficiently as possible.

- **Special Services Report – Ombudsman Program**

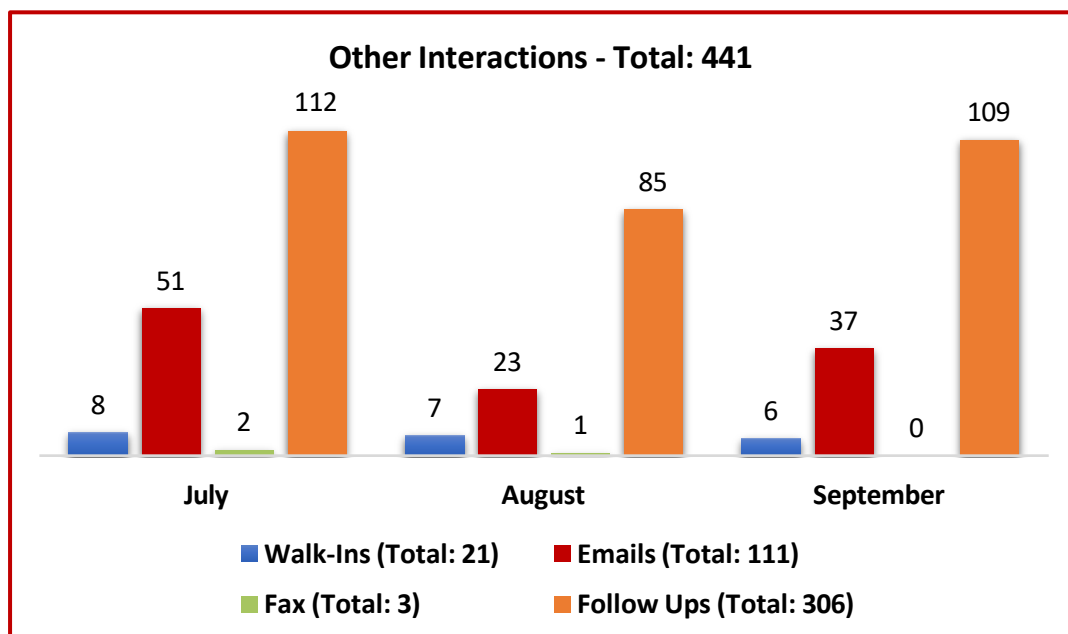
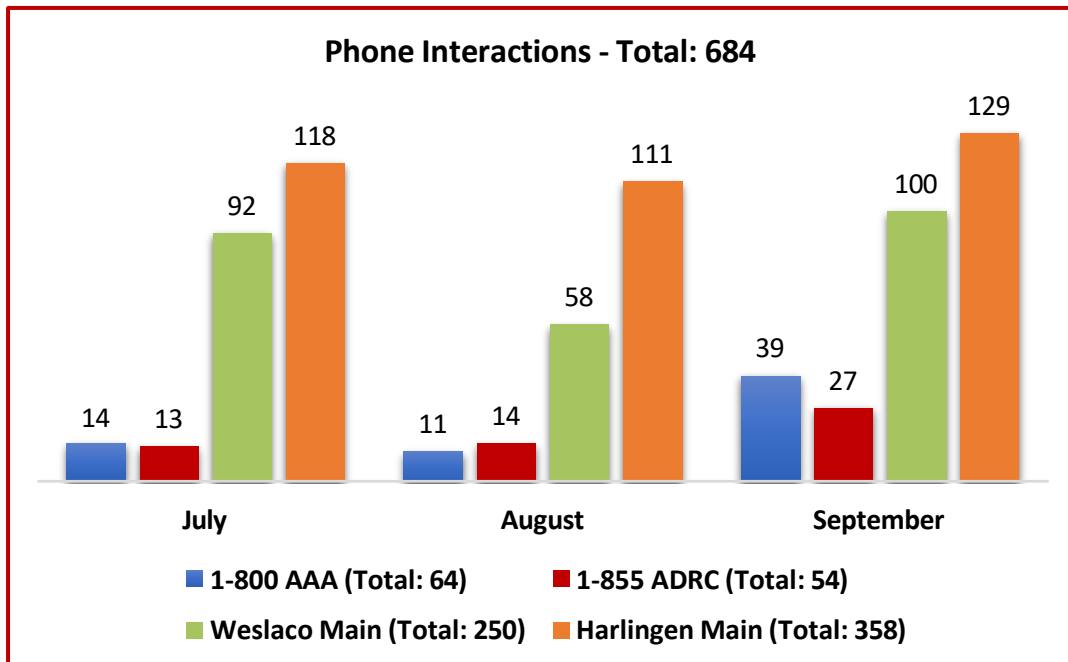
- ✓ The Ombudsman handled 64 complaints.
- ✓ They dedicated 930 activity hours.
- ✓ The volunteers collectively contributed 49 in-kind hours.
 - (September data had not been consolidated at the time of report submission)

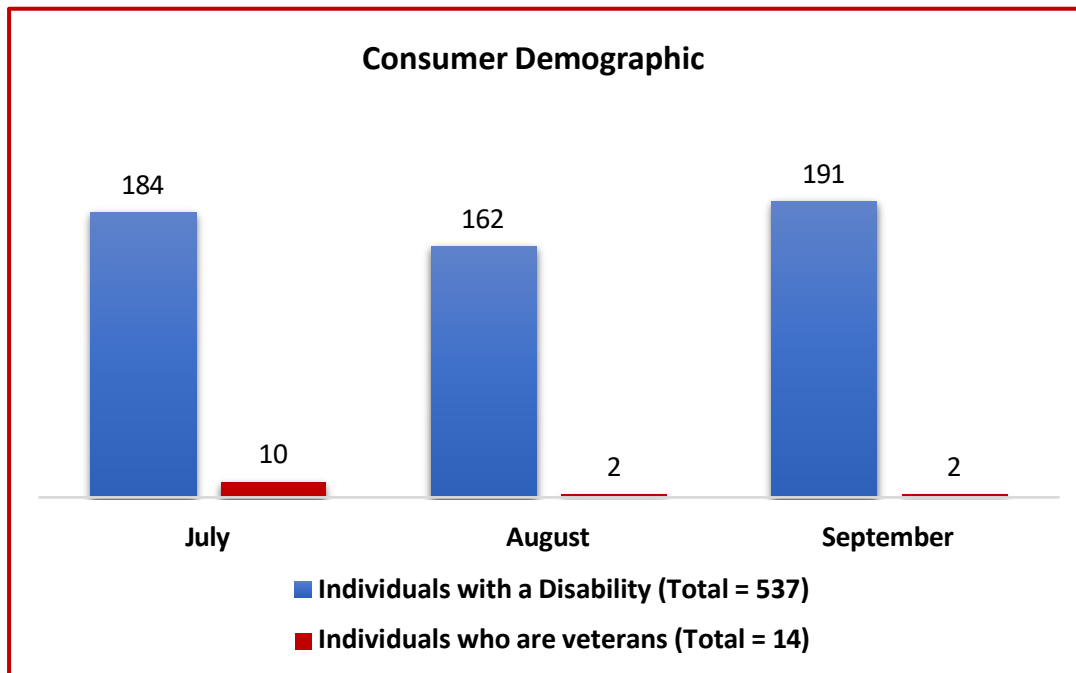
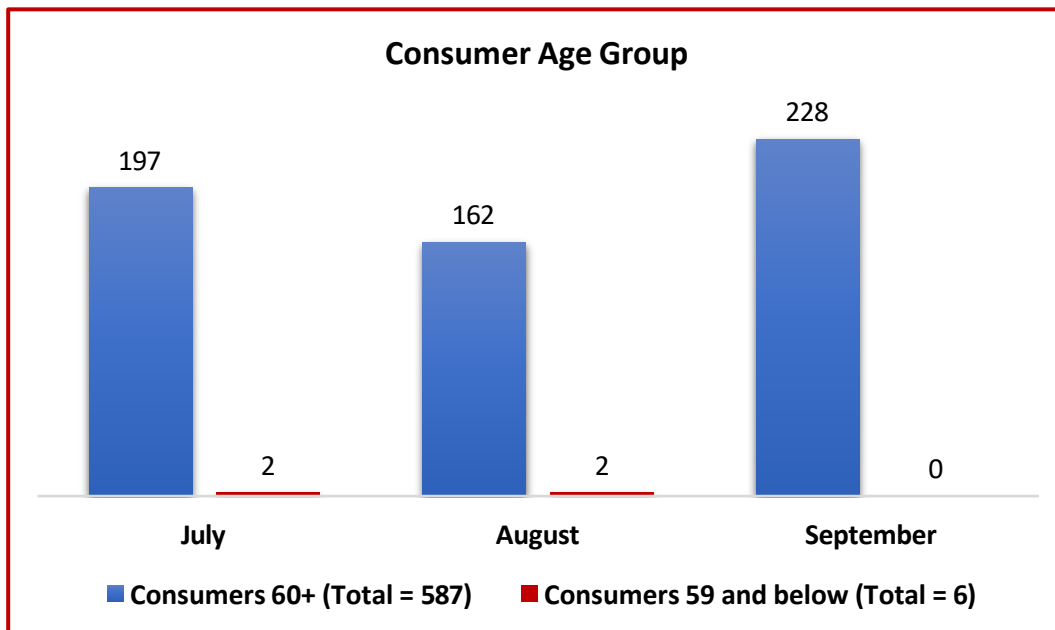




o Information Referral and Assistance

- ✓ The intake team had a total of 441 interactions via phone lines, walk-ins, emails, and faxes.





ITEM # 5. C.

PUBLIC SAFETY

ITEM # 5. C.1.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES
CRIMINAL JUSTICE &
HOMELAND SECURITY**

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Item #5: Department Reports

C. Public Safety... Cesar Merla
Director

Criminal Justice Program

- On October 7, 2026, staff hosted the October Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) Meeting.
- On October 14-16, 2026, hosted RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference (RGV PSECC) in Margaritaville Resort at South Padre Island, TX

Homeland Security Program

- On September 30, 2026, staff participated in “Lunch and Learn for Public Safety Agencies” presented by EF Johnson and Tri-County Communications in Pharr, TX
- On September 30, 2026, staff participated in a webinar Making Recovery More Resilient: Building the Partnership That Strengthen Communities Before, During, and After Disaster.
- On October 1, 2026, staff participated in a webinar from Texas Council on Family Violence: Texas Town Hall on Domestic Violence Awareness.
- October 1, 2026, staff members participated in the webinar on, Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO) Local Government Monthly Roundtable.
- On October 1, 2026, staff hosted the October Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) Meeting
- October 7, 2026, staff participated in a webinar from TechHalo Technology for the next Generation of Investigations.
- On October 8, 2026, staff member participated in the monthly Texas Public Safety Office Preparedness Call with other councils of government to discuss State Homeland Security Grant updates and other preparedness initiatives.

- On October 8th, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “Texas Cybersecurity Partnership” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- On October 13, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “Identity Protection” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- On October 14-16, 2026, staff hosted RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference (RGV PSECC) in Margaritaville Resort at South Padre Island, TX
- On October 15, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “Credential Hygiene & MFA Adoption” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- On October 20, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “AI-Driven Threats & Deepfakes” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- On October 21, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “Preventing Targeted Workplace Violence: A U.S. Secret Service Guide to Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- October 22, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “Quantum Computing and the future of Cybersecurity” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- On October 23, 2026, staff participated in the webinar Critical Infrastructure & Operational Technology” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)
- On October 27, 2026, staff participated in the webinar “Strengthening Statewide Cyber Resilience” from the Texas Cyber Command’s 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month campaign (TXCC)



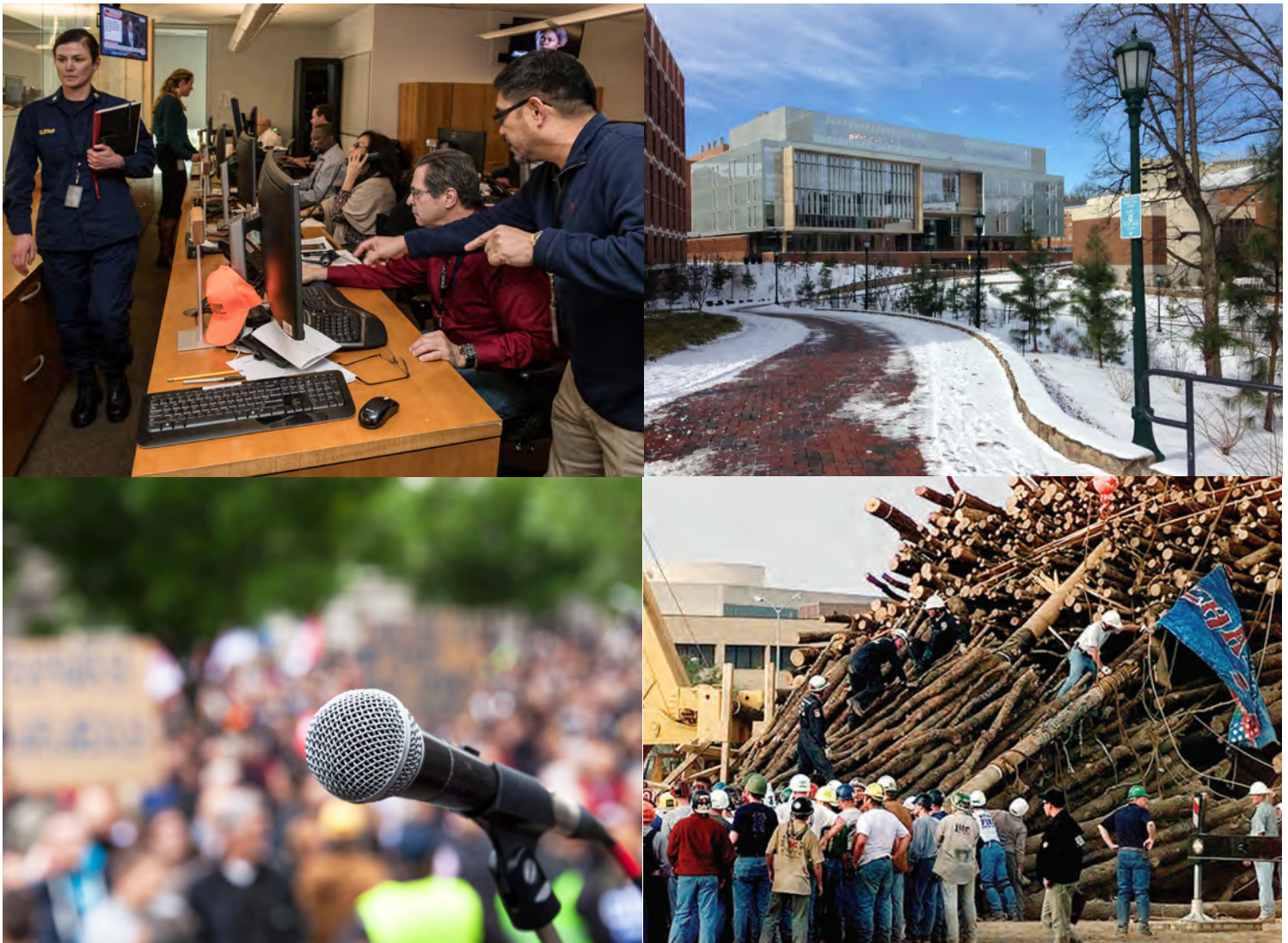
CRISIS MANAGEMENT AFFECTING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY APPROACH

MGT-361

January 20-21, 2027 at 301 W. Railroad, St, Weslaco, Texas 78596

Class begins at 8am: <https://my.teex.org/TeexPortal/?MO=mExtLogin>

DHS/FEMA-funded course



FEMA



CRISIS MANAGEMENT AFFECTING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY APPROACH MGT-361

Is your campus prepared? This course trains higher education campus and community members, and others involved in crisis management duties and responsibilities to effectively manage a crisis by applying a whole community approach. Risk management strategies, effective crisis communication, and a series of well-developed plans as described in the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) are emphasized. The course utilizes case studies and activities to aid participants in recognizing potential gaps in their current crisis management program and concludes with a practical application, simulated role-play exercise.

For law enforcement in Texas, this course meets Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) requirements for MGT361 Managing Critical Incidents Higher Education Course #78402.

Topics

- Events and Incidents at Institutions of Higher Education
- Challenges to Stakeholder Relationships at Institutions of Higher Education
- Prevention and Protection at Institutions of Higher Education
- Recognizing Risk affecting Institutions of Higher Education
- Mitigation at Institutions of Higher Education
- Crisis Communication
- Managing the Response
- Recovery at Institutions of Higher Education
- Simulated Incident Management Team at an Institution of Higher Education

Prerequisites

FEMA / SID Number

Students must register and bring a copy of their SID number to class. Register online:

cdp.dhs.gov/femasid

Recommendations

- IS-700.B: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System
- IS-800.D: National Response Framework, An Introduction
- IS-100.C: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100
- IS-200.C: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response

Course Length

Two days (16 hours)

Class Size

30-40 participants

Venue

College Campus /
 Community

CE Credits

IACET – 1.6 CEUs

Participants

- Campus administration, infrastructure, and emergency management teams
- Stakeholders that host, surround, or neighbor higher education institutions
- Governmental agencies that would respond to an incident

For more information, contact:

TEXAS A&M ENGINEERING EXTENSION SERVICE

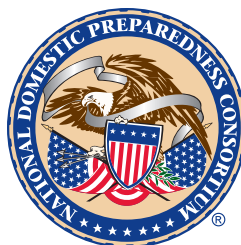
200 Technology Way

College Station, TX 77845-3424

979.845.6677 or 800.423.8433 (toll free)

ILEPSE@teex.tamu.edu

TEEX.org/nerrtc



Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Item #5: Department Reports

C. Public Safety

Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District Status Report

- 9-1-1 | GIS Division

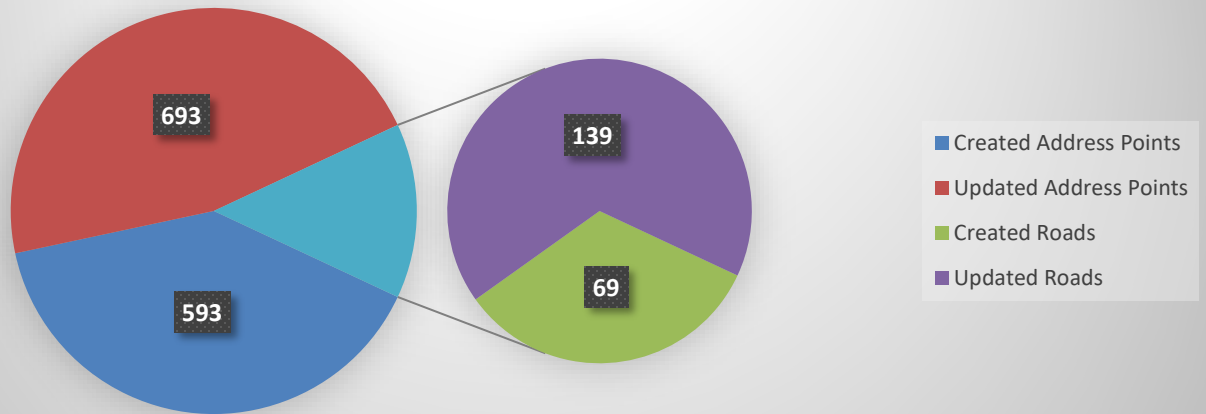
In October, the RGV911 GIS Division continued implementing its Annual Work Plan, advancing the ongoing subdivision audit and launching a new 3D building footprint project to support improved emergency call location information.

Building on the subdivision audit introduced in September, GIS Division staff requested copies of available subdivision plats from all responding agencies within the service area. As responses are received, staff will systematically review the plats against existing subdivision and addressing records to identify discrepancies and determine necessary updates to the RGV911 District's 9-1-1 mapping database.

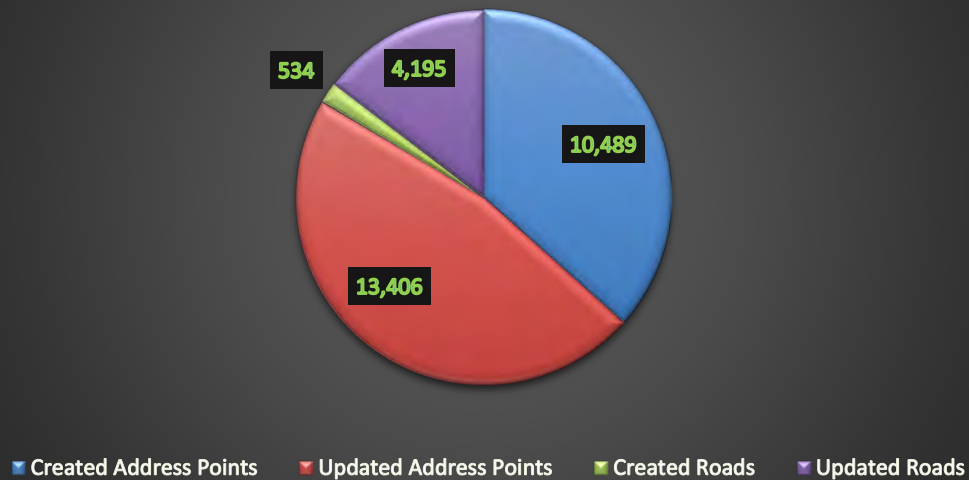
In addition, a 3D building footprint project was launched in coordination with Lyford ISD Police Chief Jesse Orozco. This new initiative will serve as a testing platform for emerging 9-1-1 call location technology, with an initial focus on emergency calls originating within school facilities. By developing and evaluating detailed building data, the project aims to help telecommunicators identify callers' locations more precisely and provide responding agencies with improved location information during school-related emergencies.

These efforts reflect the District's continued commitment to strengthening geographic data accuracy and evaluating technologies that support timely, effective emergency response. Through collaboration with local agencies, the GIS Division is enhancing the mapping resources available to telecommunicators and emergency responders throughout the District's service area.

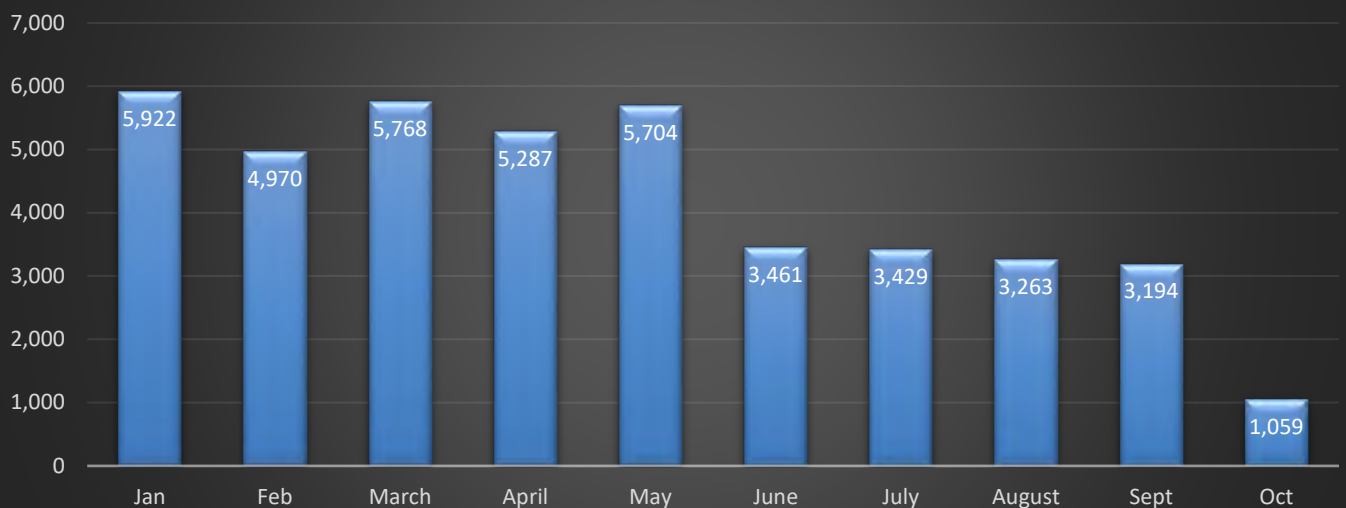
September - October 2026 Mapping Features



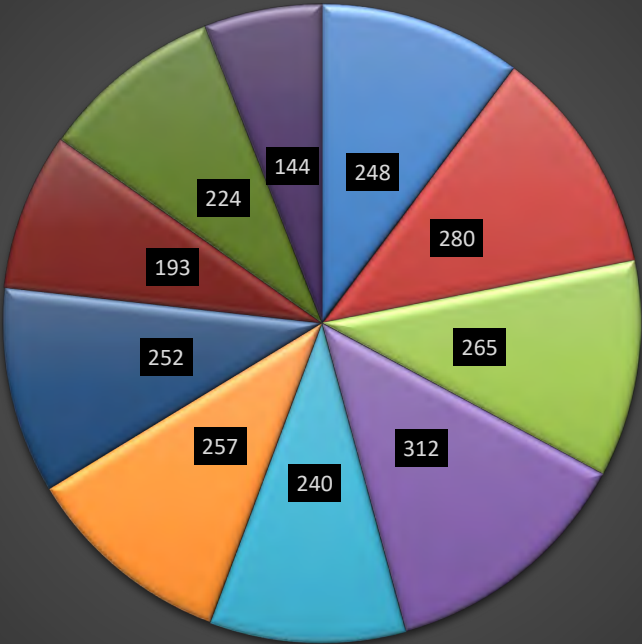
2026 Total Production : GIS



RGV911.org Pageviews 2026 Total

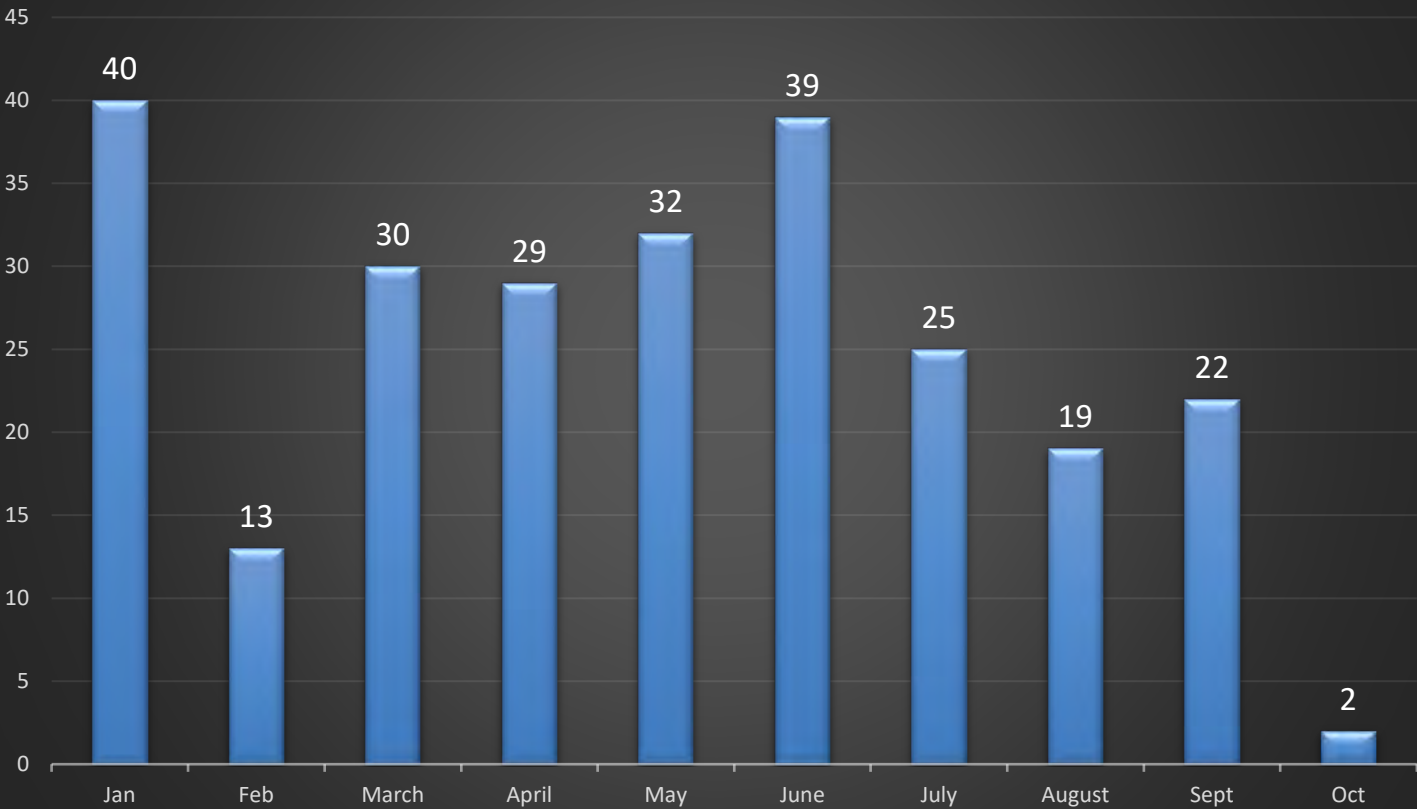


2026 Address Tickets Totals



Jan Feb March April May June July August Sept Oct

Subdivision Requests 2026



- 9-1-1 | Information Technology Division

The RGV911 Information Technology Division continued advancing telecommunicator training, backup power improvements, FirstNet implementation, and headquarters network upgrades to strengthen the reliability, resilience, and security of the District's 9-1-1 operations. These initiatives support continuity of emergency communications and enhance operational readiness throughout the District's service area.

Training was provided to Raymondville Police Department personnel on September 11, covering call-handling procedures, mapping tools, and the use of teletypewriters and telecommunications devices for the deaf (TTY/TDD) to support accessible emergency communications for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities. This instruction reinforced telecommunicators' technical skills and their ability to provide accessible emergency communications.

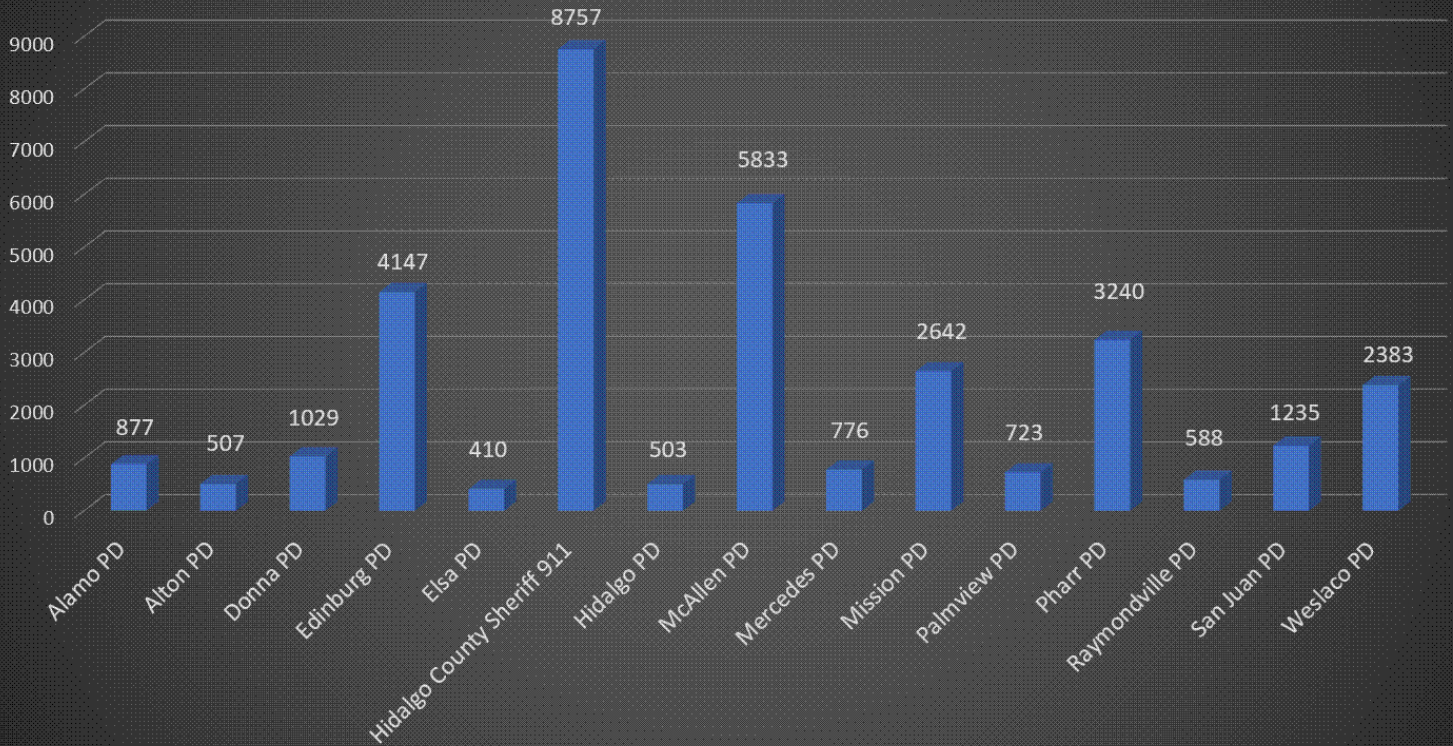
Building on previously reported generator replacement planning, the Division began a phased effort that includes three Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) locations in the initial phase. Staff are obtaining proposals from local electricians for installation services, including an automatic transfer switch at one site. Generator delivery is anticipated in late January 2027, followed by installation in February 2027. These improvements will strengthen backup power reliability and help sustain 9-1-1 operations during commercial power outages.

Preventive service for the MACC generator is also scheduled for October 6 and October 23 under the previously secured maintenance agreement. This service will help identify potential issues, reduce the risk of unexpected equipment failures, and maintain the MACC's readiness for deployment.

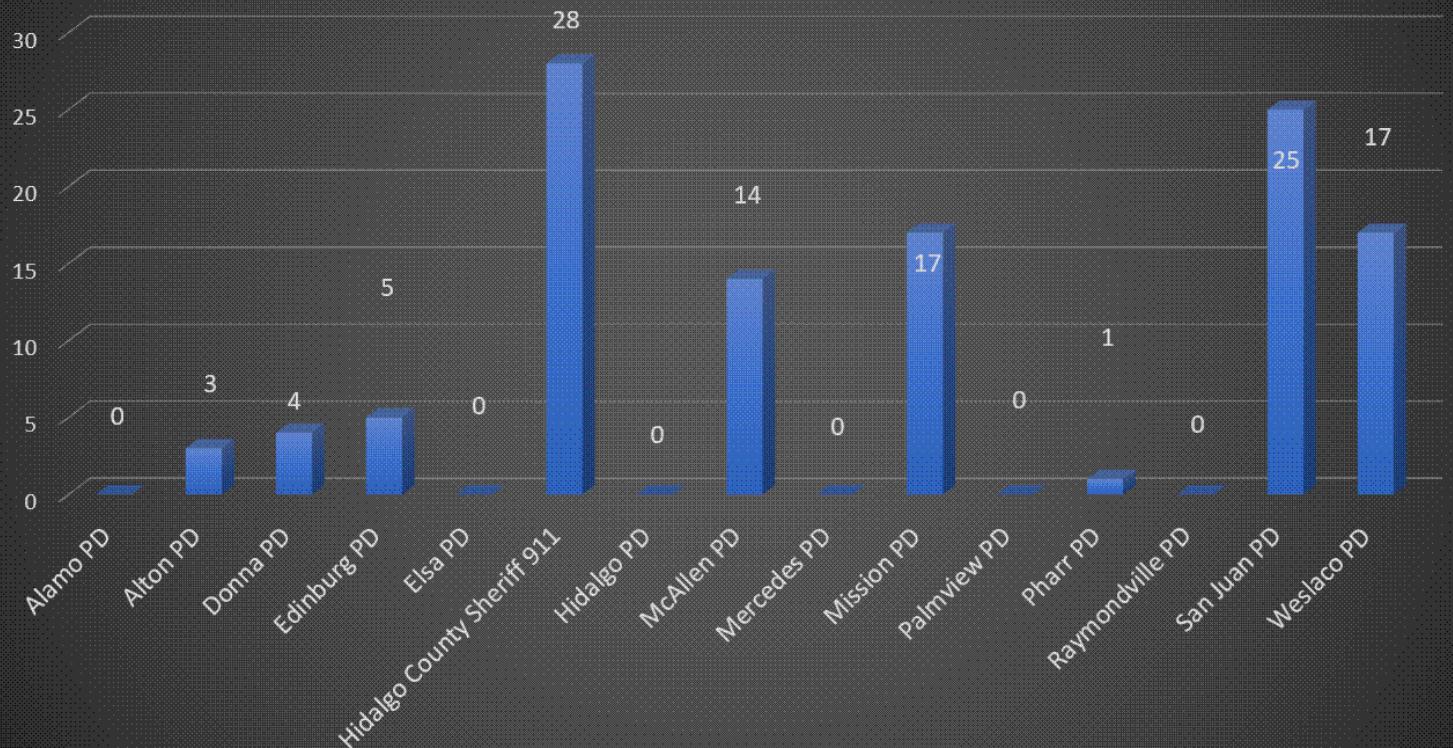
FirstNet implementation also moved forward, with IT Division staff coordinating with AT&T to establish an additional connection within the PSAP 9-1-1 network. Equipment has been received, and installations at participating PSAPs are being scheduled. Installation and router configuration are targeted for completion by late November, followed by testing and activation during the first two weeks of December. The additional connection will strengthen network redundancy and support service continuity during connectivity disruptions.

At District headquarters, replacement network switches have been received and are scheduled for installation for October 23. The new switches will replace aging hardware and provide updated software and security features to improve network reliability, strengthen security, and support daily operations.

Call Summary September 2026



Text to 9-1-1 September 2026



- 9-1-1 | Community Engagement Division

During September, the RGV911 Public Education Team advanced community outreach and strengthened local partnerships through school career days, 9-1-1 education and awareness activities across the region, and participation in National Night Out events alongside local police departments. These efforts highlighted the importance of 9-1-1 services and reinforced the RGV911 District's commitment to public education and community engagement. The RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference (PSECC), held October 14–16 at South Padre Island, will further support these goals by bringing together public safety and emergency communications professionals for training, education, and collaboration.

Delta Independent Living LLC, City of Weslaco, September 17, 2026.

Hosted by Delta Independent Living LLC., the Public Education team, together with Cell Phone Sally, provided an engaging 9-1-1 safety presentation focused on how, when, and what to say when dialing 9-1-1, including how to recognize an emergency and what important information to provide to a 9-1-1 telecommunicator.

National Night Out, City of Weslaco, September 19, 2026. Hosted by the Weslaco Police Department, the Public Education team, Cell Phone Sally, and the MACC had a great time at the event. Cell Phone Sally joined the fun with a mascot dance-off and showed off her dance moves. Community members also had the opportunity to tour the MACC and learn more about 9-1-1.

Lyford CISD College and Career Fair, City of Lyford, September 22, 2026. Hosted by Lyford CISD, the Public Education team had a great time visiting Lyford CISD and connecting with middle and high school students. The Public Education team shared information about the many career opportunities and roles within the 911 district and provided students with a look at how they can make a difference in public safety. Students also had the opportunity to tour the MACC and learned more about the technology and teamwork behind 911.

Mid-Autumn Night at Café Ngon Community Event, City of Pharr, September 26, 2026. Hosted by Tết Trung Thu Café, the Public Education team emphasized the importance of knowing and accurately communicating a physical 9-1-1 address to help emergency responders locate those in need and provide timely assistance.

Beat Heart Disease Symposium, City of McAllen, September 29, 2026.

Hosted by Prominence Health, the Public Education team participated in an event focused on heart health education, prevention, and community wellness. The event provided an opportunity to connect with healthcare professionals and community partners, strengthening relationships that support shared efforts to promote healthier communities.

Alton Fire Department Event, City of Alton, October 6, 2026. Hosted by the Alton Fire Department, Cell Phone Sally and the Public Education team taught attendees when and how to call 9-1-1 and reinforced essential fire safety practices, including proper fire extinguisher use, smoke detector installation and maintenance, and developing a family evacuation plan.

Fire Prevention Fest, City of Alamo, October 7, 2026. Hosted by Alamo Fire Department, the Public Education team enjoyed a fun evening filled with safety education, games, food, music, and community engagement. Public Education team shared the importance of Text-to-911 and educated residents on knowing when and how to contact 9-1-1 during an emergency.

RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference, October 14-16, 2026, hosted by RGV911 and Homeland Security. The RGV Public Safety and Emergency Communication Conference (PSECC) brought together public safety professionals, 911 telecommunicators, first responders, and community partners for training, education, networking, and professional development. The conference provided valuable opportunities to strengthen collaboration among agencies, enhance emergency communication skills, promote telecommunicator wellness, and share resources to improve emergency response throughout the Rio Grande Valley. The event also recognized the dedication and service of 911 telecommunicators who play a vital role in keeping our communities safe.

Upcoming Community Engagement Programs and Events:

- Donna Police Department National Night Out, October 21, 2026, hosted by the Donna Police Department.
- Alton Police Department 9th National Night Out, October 22, 2026, hosted by the Alton Police Department.
- 4th Annual Halloween Trunk or Treat, October 26, 2026, hosted by Lerma's Notary Public I & II, hosted by Lerma's Notary, in the city of Donna.
- Hidalgo County Housing Authority National Night Out & Trunk or Treat, October 28, 2026, hosted by the Hidalgo County Housing Authority, in the City of McAllen.
- World Stroke Symposium, October 29, 2026, hosted by Prominence Health, in the city of McAllen.



**Delta Independent Living LLC, 911
Presentation with Cell Phone Sally,
September 17, 2026, hosted by Delta
Independent Living LLC**



**Weslaco Nation Night Out,
September 19, 2026, hosted by
the Weslaco Police Department.**



**Lyford CISD College and
Career Fair, September 22,
2026, hosted by Lyford CISD.**



**Mid-Autumn Night at Café Ngon
Community Event, September 26,
2026, hosted by Têt Trung Thu Café,
in the City of Pharr.**



**Beat Heart Disease Symposium,
September 29, 2026, hosted by
Prominence Health.**



**Alton Fire Department Event,
October 6, 2026, hosted by Alton
Fire Department.**



**Fire Prevention Fest, October 7,
2026, hosted by Alamo Fire
Department.**

2026 RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference (PSECC)



2026 RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference (PSECC)



2026 RGV Public Safety & Emergency Communication Conference (PSECC)



RGV911 911 Telecommunicators Awards



ITEM # 5.C.2

PUBLIC

SAFETY

**LOWER RIO
GRANDE VALLEY**

ACADEMY

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5 Department Action Item

C.2. LRGV Police Academy Program.....Javier Solis
Director

1. Consideration and **ACTION** to ratify the appointment of Deputy Rafael Rodriguez from the Hidalgo County Constable Precinct 2 Office to the LRGV Academy Advisory Board as a Police Instructor Representative.

Background

The LRGV Academy Advisory Board convened on October 7, 2026, and voted to appoint Deputy Instructor Rafael Rodriguez of the Hidalgo County Constable Precinct 4 Office to serve as the Police Instructor Representative on the Board.

Deputy Instructor Rodriguez brings 24 years of law enforcement experience and an extensive background in the instruction, training, and professional development of law enforcement personnel. His experience and expertise will contribute valuable insight to the Board's continued efforts to support law enforcement training and professional standards.

RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ

LAW ENFORCEMENT INSTRUCTOR | INVESTIGATIONS | PUBLIC SAFETY

Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office



PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Law enforcement professional and academy instructor with more than 20 years of service with the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office. Experienced across detention operations, patrol, criminal investigations, emergency response, and law enforcement training. Skilled in developing lesson plans, coordinating practical exercises, and delivering firearms, active-shooter, baton, and first-responder medical instruction. Holds multiple TCOLE and ALERRT instructor credentials.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Law Enforcement Instruction • Curriculum & Lesson Planning • Firearms Training • Active-Shooter Response • Emergency Response Drills • Criminal Investigations • Patrol & Traffic Enforcement • Detention Operations • First-Responder Medical Training • Safety Compliance

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Academy Instructor | July 2017 – Present

Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office Training Academy

- Develop and author lesson plans that support effective, standards-aligned law enforcement training.
- Coordinate and facilitate practical training drills focused on emergency response and officer readiness.
- Deliver instruction in firearms, baton, active-shooter response, and first-responder medical topics.
- Teach TCOLE-mandated courses for intermediate, advanced, and master peace officer licensing levels.
- Maintain instructor qualifications across most ALERRT courses, in addition to firearms instruction.

Investigator | May 2013 – July 2017

Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office – Juvenile Crimes Division

- Reviewed preliminary offense reports and conducted comprehensive investigations into reported incidents.
- Interviewed victims, witnesses, and suspects to establish facts and assess probable cause for arrest.
- Reviewed and interpreted applicable state and federal statutes and case law to support proper application of criminal law.

Deputy Sheriff | October 2009 – May 2013

Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office

- Conducted patrols in assigned areas to promote public safety and enforce traffic laws.
- Responded to calls for service throughout Hidalgo County and prepared corresponding incident and offense reports.

Detention Officer | September 2002 – October 2009

Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office – Adult Detention Center

- Maintained the custody, care, and control of individuals housed in the detention facility.
- Transported inmates to court appearances, medical appointments, and other TDCJ facilities.
- Provided SCBA training to detention staff and inspected safety equipment, including SCBA units and fire extinguishers.
- Served on the Special Emergency Response Team (SERT) and as a safety compliance officer.

EDUCATION

South Texas College | McAllen, Texas

Associate Degree, Electronic and Computer Maintenance Technology • Completed July 2001

CERTIFICATIONS & INSTRUCTOR CREDENTIALS

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| • TCOLE Basic Instructor | • TCOLE Firearms Instructor | • Court Security Specialist |
| • ALERRT Active Shooter Level 1 Instructor | • ALERRT ERASE Instructor | • Advanced Jailer License |
| • ALERRT AAIR Instructor | • ALERRT First Responder Medical Instructor | • Master Peace Officer License |
| • ALERRT SORD Instructor | • ALERRT Patrol Breaching Instructor | • Emergency Vehicle Operations Instructor |
| • ALERRT CRCC Instructor | • ASP Baton Instructor | |
| • SIG Sauer P320 Armorer | • SIG Sauer M400 Armorer | |

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5 Department Action Item

C.2.LRGV Police Academy.....Javier Solis
Director

2. Consideration and **ACTION** to ratify the approval of the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program Handbook as recommended by the LRGV Academy Advisory Board.

Background

The Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) Academy, in collaboration with the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) and the La Feria Independent School District (LFISD), is working to offer the newly established High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program for eligible high school seniors.

Through this program, eligible students may enroll in either the Basic County Corrections Course or the Emergency Telecommunicator's Course during the spring semester of their senior year. Students who successfully complete the program will become eligible for state licensing upon graduation from high school.

The program is designed to establish an early pathway to careers in criminal justice and public safety for graduating seniors while helping address the statewide need for licensed County Corrections Officers and 911 Telecommunicators throughout Texas.

The newly developed High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program Handbook provides guidance on the rules, standards, and operating procedures governing the program. It was developed with the assistance of the LRGV Academy Advisory Board, which voted to approve the handbook during its annual meeting on October 7, 2026.

Through this initiative, the LRGV Academy and its partners aim to expand career opportunities for students, strengthen the public safety workforce, and support the development of qualified professionals serving communities throughout the State of Texas.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY ACADEMY



HIGH SCHOOL CRIMINAL JUSTICE PIPELINE PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK





ACADEMY OVERVIEW & INTRODUCTION



Academy Overview

THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (LRGVDC) OPERATES THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY ACADEMY WITH OVER 50 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE ADMINISTERING TRAINING RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALIFIED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION.

THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (LRGVDC) OFFERS SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS INCLUDING QUALITY OF LIFE PROJECTS BENEFITING THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY AND SURROUNDING REGION. FORMED IN 1967 THROUGH A MERGER OF THE TEXAS SOUTHMOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AND THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, THE LRGVDC IS ONE OF TWENTY-FOUR (24) STATE PLANNING REGIONS CODIFIED PURSUANT TO THE TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, CHAPTER 391. THE DESIGNATED GEOGRAPHICAL SERVICE AREA IS COMPRISED OF THE 3,643 SQUARE MILES WHICH INCLUDE THE COUNTIES OF CAMERON, HIDALGO, AND WILLACY. THE LRGVDC IS ACTIVE IN THE FIELDS OF ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, HOMELAND SECURITY, CRIMINAL JUSTICE, LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING, TRANSPORTATION PLANNING, TRANSIT SERVICES, SOLID WASTE PLANNING, WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY PLANNING, SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, HEALTH, EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION, REGIONAL TRAINING, AND DISASTER RECOVERY. FUNDING TO SUPPORT THESE PROGRAMS IS OBTAINED FROM LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL SOURCES.

THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY ACADEMY (ACADEMY) PROGRAM WITHIN THE PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERS TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT (TCOLE) LICENSING COURSES.

High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program Overview

THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT HAS ESTABLISHED A PROGRAM SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS. THE HIGH SCHOOL CRIMINAL JUSTICE PIPELINE PROGRAM PREPARES STUDENTS TO OBTAIN LICENSURE AS EITHER A BASIC COUNTY CORRECTIONS OFFICER OR BASIC TELECOMMUNICATOR IN THE STATE OF TEXAS.

THE TRAINING CURRICULUM MUST BE DELIVERED BY A LICENSED TRAINING PROVIDER APPROVED BY THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT. THE COMMISSION HAS SANCTIONED PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT'S AND LICENSED TRAINING PROVIDERS TO FACILITATE THE DELIVERY OF BOTH LICENSING COURSES.

UPON COMPLETING THE PROGRAM AND GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, STUDENTS WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THE STATE LICENSING EXAMINATION TO BECOME LICENSED AS A TEXAS COUNTY CORRECTIONS OFFICERS OR BASIC TELECOMMUNICATORS.

LRGV Academy Introduction

THIS DOCUMENT OUTLINES THE RULES, REGULATIONS, AND EXPECTATIONS FOR LRGV ACADEMY STUDENT'S ENROLLED IN THE HIGH SCHOOL CRIMINAL JUSTICE PIPELINE PROGRAM. IT ENCOMPASSES THE STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY BOTH THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY ACADEMY AND THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO ADHERE TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS, AND EXPECTATIONS DETAILED IN THIS MANUAL. FAILURE TO COMPLY MAY RESULT IN THE STUDENT'S REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM.

ADDITIONALLY, STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM MUST ALSO FOLLOW THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT HANDBOOK PROVIDED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS DOCUMENT EXCLUSIVELY ADDRESSES THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE LRGV ACADEMY.

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PROCEDURE 1.0 - STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

1.1 **CITIZENSHIP**

All applicants must be a United States Citizen. The following are acceptable forms for proof of citizenship;

- a. *Birth Certificate*
- b. *Active U.S. Passport; or*
- c. *Naturalization Certificate*

1.2 **AGE REQUIREMENTS**

All applicants must be 18 years of age by the time they attempt the state licensing exam. An applicant who is younger than 18 years of age may enroll in the program with the explicit written consent of their legal guardian or custodian.

Note: These rules are subject to change. It is the responsibility of the applicant to understand and comply with TCOLE regulations, which take precedence over academy rules once the state exam is undertaken.

1.3 **EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

All applicants must show successful completion of the program and must have a high school diploma or a GED equivalent by the time they attempt the state licensing exam.

1.4 **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND REQUIREMENTS**

1. All applicants will be required to complete a fingerprint process and obtain a DPS Driving Record (Type AR) to verify the following criteria:
 - a. The applicant is not currently charged for any criminal offense that would preclude licensure.
 - b. The applicant has never been placed on court-ordered community supervision or probation for any criminal offense above the grade of Class B misdemeanor.
 - c. The applicant has never been convicted of any offense above the grade of a Class B misdemeanor.
 - d. The applicant has never been convicted of, or placed on community supervision for, any offense involving family violence as defined under Chapter 71 of the Texas Family Code.
 - e. The applicant is not prohibited by state or federal law from operating a motor vehicle.
2. Applicants will be required to submit a TCOLE approved Personal History Statement.
3. Applicants under 18 years of age must provide explicit written consent from their legal guardian or custodian to be subjected for fingerprinting.

The results of the fingerprinting process are determined solely based on the applicant's criminal history records and are not influenced by the academy. If court documents are required, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact the relevant court and provide the necessary documentation to the TCOLE representative in a timely manner. The fingerprint results are final and cannot be altered in any way by the Academy.

1.5 **MEDICAL [L2] & PSYCHOLOGICAL [L3] PAPERWORK**

Students enrolled in the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program are not required to submit to an L2 (Medical Evaluation) and an L3 (Psychological Evaluation) at the time of enrollment.

The required L2 & L3 evaluations shall be deferred to individual hiring agencies after the student successfully completes the state licensing exam.

Hiring agencies shall be responsible for coordinating these evaluations as per TCOLE requirements.

PROCEDURE 1.0 - STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

1.6 | **DISQUALIFIERS**

Candidates must exhibit qualities of maturity, dependability, integrity, and a commendable work ethic. Applicants shall face disqualification for the following reasons;

1. If previously employed, the applicants work history must not reveal instances of instability, including excessive tardiness or absenteeism, inefficiency, failure to adhere to directions, policies, and regulations, poor working relationships, or negligent work habits.
2. Applicants must not have been terminated, asked to resign, or have resigned from any prior employment due to inappropriate or unlawful conduct, which includes, but is not limited to:
(a.) Assault (b.) Discriminatory or retaliatory acts (c.) Disorderly conduct or other breaches of peace (d.) Sex crimes (e.) Sexual harassment (f.) Theft (g.) Threats (h.) Any felony offense, and (i.) Any offense involving acts of moral turpitude.
3. Applicants must not have engaged in any occupation deemed illegal by state or federal law.
4. Applicants shall find themselves disqualified if they are discovered to have concealed significant information or have engaged in deception or fraudulent practices within their application.
5. Applicants will be disqualified for any history of illicit drug use.
6. Applicants will be disqualified for any history of criminal activity.
7. Applicants who are not in good standing with their school district's policies and procedures may be disqualified or removed from the program.

LRGV Academy shall have the final discretion regarding admissions based on the totality of the circumstances regarding an applicant's background.

PROCEDURE 2:0 - APPLICATION PROCESS

2.1 | **STUDENT ENROLLMENT APPLICATION**

Applicants must submit an application to the LRGV Academy prior to enrollment. The application can be found at the LRGV Academy website.

Website: <https://www.lrgvdc.org/academy.html>

2.2 | **STUDENT BACKGROUND APPLICATION**

Applicants approved for enrollment shall be provided the TCOLE approved Personal History Statement by LRGV Academy staff upon acceptance. The Personal History Statement shall be utilized to conduct the background investigation.

Applicants younger than 18 years of age may need to provide explicit written consent from their legal guardian or custodian for certain sections of the application and personal history statement.

2.3 | **STUDENT APPLICATION PACKET DEADLINE**

Final entry paperwork is due by the specified date set by the LRGV Academy staff.

PROCEDURE 3:0 - LRGV ACADEMY TUITION

3.1 | **TERMS OF PAYMENT**

The terms regarding the tuition amount and payment method will be determined through a separate memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the LRGV Academy and the school district of the enrolled student. Enrolled students will not be required to make direct payments to the LRGV Academy.

4.1 **GENERAL SCHEDULE**

In compliance with the regulations established by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) the licensing courses must meet the minimum training hours specified by the TCOLE curriculum. This requirement also applies to any additional courses that may be introduced based on recommendations from the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee.

The daily course schedule will be implemented into the student's standard school week, typically Monday - Friday. It is important to note that occasional adjustments to the schedule may occur due to unforeseen circumstances. Consequently, all academy schedules are subject to change.

The LRGV Academy will coordinate with the school district representatives to determine the scheduled times for the pipeline program. Once identified, the LRGV Academy will provide enrolled students with a detailed course schedule. Make-up sessions for missed instructional time(s) shall also be coordinated and provided to the students once available.

4.2 **PROGRAM CALENDAR**

Students will be provided with a calendar detailing the dates, times, and scheduled topics of instruction. It is essential to note that the calendar may be subject to modifications. In the event of any schedule changes, students will be promptly informed. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of each student to remain aware of these adjustments and to prepare accordingly. Live calendar shall be available on the LRGV Academy website.

4.3 **CLASS START TIME**

Classes will commence punctually at the designated date, time, and location as outlined in the calendar.

4.4 **TARDINESS**

Tardiness exceeding 15 minutes will be recorded as one missed hour in relation to attendance standards. Repeated or habitual tardiness, regardless of duration, may lead to appropriate disciplinary measures including dismissal of the program.

4.5 **MANDATORY IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT - TCOLE COMPLIANCE**

The LRGV Academy follows the guidelines established by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) which requires 100% in-person instructional training during the entire active academy session. This in-person training is a prerequisite for eligibility to take the state licensing examination.

4.6 **ATTENDANCE ABSENCE, RECORDS & REPORTING**

The program instructor will report any absence to the LRGV Academy Director as soon as possible. The class instructor will document any absences or missed instructional time and will submit an absentee form along with the daily TCOLE sign-in roster. The absentee form will be divided into two sections.

Section 1 shall include the following:

1. the student's name
2. the student's PID number
3. the date(s) and time(s) when the absence occurred
4. the total amount of missed instructional time
5. the curriculum chapter(s) or the instructional topic
6. the date and time the LRGV Academy Coordinator was notified
7. the instructor's name and PID number submitting the form

Section 2 shall include the following:

1. the student's name
2. the student's PID number
3. the date(s) and time(s) the instructional make-up session took place
4. the curriculum chapter or instructional topic covered
5. the instructor's name and PID number instructing the make up session(s)

PROCEDURE 4.0 - ATTENDANCE POLICY

4.6 **ATTENDANCE ABSENCE, RECORDS & REPORTING**

Time will be allocated throughout the semester to make up the missed instruction time, on a minute per minute basis. This may include blocked period throughout the week, before or after school sessions, and Saturday sessions. The student will be required to sign in on a separate TCOLE sign in roster(s) to document the make-up time. All make up sessions must be in-person.

Make up instructional time must cover the lesson objectives and curriculum missed during the student's absence. The instructor will submit a copy of the absentee form with section 2 of the form filled out along with the make up session(s) roster.

The LRGV Academy Training Coordinator shall be responsible for ensuring that all students have received the minimum mandated training time required by TCOLE prior to submitting a final endorsement for TCOLE Licensure.

Any student not completing the minimum mandated training hours and curriculum by the end of the course shall not be given an endorsement for state licensure.

PROCEDURE 5.0 - ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The LRGV Academy upholds rigorous standards of achievement. The law enforcement profession necessitates a high level of knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are essential for maintaining an officer's pride, proficiency, and personal safety throughout their career. Failure to meet the minimum acceptable performance standards in any area may result in termination from the Academy. The licensing curriculum at LRGV Academy is governed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. Students must successfully complete all components of the individual licensing courses, and no credit will be granted for prior education before enrollment.

5.1 **GRADE POINT AVERAGE**

To remain in the program, students must achieve a minimum score of 80 or higher on all examinations to uphold the academic standards.

Content proficiency will be assessed through the following criteria:

- Individual Chapter Exams
- One (1) Comprehensive Final Exam
- Participation in Physical Training
- Engagement in Reality-Based Training

5.2 **CHAPTER EXAM**

Topics included in the curriculum are independent, functional areas. An examination will be given at the conclusion of each chapter that will cover all functional areas within that chapter. This may include a written exam, practical exam, and/or combination.

5.3 **FINAL EXAM**

A Comprehensive Final Exam will be administered at the conclusion of the program, encompassing topics addressed throughout the entire duration of the program.

5.4 **RETEST POLICY**

- a. All examinations are assessed on a scale of 1 to 100. students must achieve a minimum score of 80% on each exam to be considered passing. The Academy does not round up scores.
- b. students are permitted a total of three (3) retest attempts for Individual Chapter Exams.
- c. If a student exhausts all retest attempts, they will be dismissed for academic failure from the program after the fourth unsuccessful Individual Chapter Exam.
- d. students are allowed only one (1) retest opportunity for the Comprehensive Final Exam.
- e. Failure on the retest for the Comprehensive Final Exam will result in immediate dismissal due to academic failure of the program.

PROCEDURE 5.0 – ACADEMIC STANDARDS

5.5 **PHYSICAL TRAINING PARTICIPATION**

Physical fitness programs may be implemented to aid students in reducing stress levels, enhancing endurance and strength, and fostering teamwork. Participation in physical training may be required for all students.

5.6 **REALITY BASED TRAINING**

Practical skill assessments will be administered to evaluate each student's ability to demonstrate the skills acquired throughout the course. Students will be required to perform in various simulated scenarios, during which they will be closely monitored and assessed. A student who fails to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency may not meet the minimum standards for successful completion of the program.

Defensive Tactics [For Basic County Corrections Course Only]

The capacity of a student to effectively engage in defensive tactics under controlled conditions is critical. This aspect of training allows students to showcase their ability to defend themselves and others against unarmed assailants. Inadequate performance during an unarmed confrontation suggests that the student may not be capable of fulfilling responsibilities effectively. Students who do not succeed in defensive tactics will be granted an opportunity to participate in a supplementary drill. The policy of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy stipulates that ongoing failure in defensive tactics is indicative of a student's inability or unwillingness to perform law enforcement duties properly and may result in dismissal from the program.

CPR/First Aid [All licensing courses]

Students are required to maintain current CPR/First Aid certification. The academy will provide an initial opportunity for students to obtain this certification. Should a student fail to pass the first CPR/First Aid course, they will be financially responsible for enrolling in a second class. Failure to achieve CPR/First Aid certification will be grounds for dismissal from the program. Students who are already certified at the time of enrollment, and whose certification does not expire before graduation, will have the option to renew their existing CPR/First Aid certification.

5.7 **EXPOSURES [For Basic County Corrections Course Only]**

Students may be required to obtain multiple certifications for the authorized use of nonlethal weapons. Specifically, they must be certified in the use of OC Spray, and ASP Baton. It is imperative that students receive thorough training in the use and maintenance of all authorized less-lethal tools. Each student must demonstrate the ability to properly utilize, maintain, and meet safety qualifications for these tools. Should a student fail the OC Spray Certification or ASP Baton Certification, they will have the opportunity to rectify the failure by participating in an additional practical assessment. Failure to meet the standards for any of these certifications may result in dismissal from the program. Furthermore, a refusal to complete any of the required certifications will signal a student's inability to perform essential law enforcement tasks and will also constitute grounds for dismissal from the program.

Any student younger than 18 years of age must provide explicit written consent from their legal guardian or custodian to participate in the exposures.

5.8 **INJURIES**

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy does not provide medical insurance for students in training. As such, the LRGV Academy will not be held liable for any injuries sustained by students during their training. Although the LRGV Academy has an excellent record of minimizing injuries, it is recommended that students obtain short-term medical coverage if they do not already possess a medical policy. All students are required to report any injuries, regardless of severity, to their classroom chain of command.

5.9 | ADMINISTRATION TESTING PROCEDURES

The Academy upholds academic integrity through the careful maintenance and security of testing materials and examination documents. Each exam site will be assigned a testing proctor, who will be present for the duration of all examinations, including retests. Retest examinations will be scheduled at a time and location convenient for staff and must be coordinated with prior notice.

To prevent academic dishonesty, the following procedures are established for examination:

- a. Personal belongings will not be permitted in the classroom during the examination.
- b. Students will take their assigned seats once instructed to enter the classroom.
- c. Once the exam has commenced, students will not be allowed to leave the classroom for any reason.
- d. Students may leave the classroom only after completing the exam and placing their testing materials on the desk or turning them in as directed by the exam proctor.

5.10 | CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION & NOTETAKING

Students are expected to engage fully in all lessons and are encouraged to ask questions when necessary. Study groups may be assigned to enhance understanding of chapter material and improve academic performance. Consistent study habits are essential; therefore, non-academic time should be dedicated to reviewing class materials or reference resources.

Students are required to take meticulous notes during all lectures. Students must maintain a permanent notebook (three-ring binder) for organizing handouts and notes.

5.11 | LICENSING EXAM ENDORSEMENT

Endorsement for the State Licensing Examination will be granted to the following:

- Students who maintain an average grade of 80%
- Students who complete the required classroom hours
- Students who participate in the essential practical, physical, and reality-based training

Students who do not meet the standards shall not be granted an endorsement for state licensure.

5.12 | RETENTION OF RECORDS & GRADES

LRGV Academy maintains hard copies of all student records, including grades, for a duration of five years. It is important to note that LRGV Academy does not issue transcripts. All relevant educational information is recorded in TCLEEDS, a statewide database managed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

Each student receives a copy of their TCLEEDS personal service record, which includes a comprehensive history of their training and education. These personal history records serve as a substitute for transcripts when seeking academic credit at other institutions. After five years, all hard copies of student records are securely destroyed.

PROCEDURE 6.0 - STUDENT PERSONAL APPEARANCE

6.1 | DRESS CODE POLICY

Students enrolled in the program are to abide by their grooming and appearance standards set forth by their individual school district handbook. Students must also abide by their individual school district's dress code policy.

6.2 | JEWELRY & PERSONAL ACCESSORIES

Standard wristwatches are permitted; however, smartwatches are prohibited in the classroom during examinations. Watches equipped with alarm tones must be silenced or set to vibrate during instructional hours. Classroom Instructors retain the authority to restrict students from possessing any electronic devices in the classroom if deemed necessary. Students may not wear any jewelry that may hinder training or may cause injury while training.

PROCEDURE 6.0 - STUDENT PERSONAL APPEARANCE

6.3 BODY ART

Students are required to cover any tattoos or inappropriate body art that fall within the classifications outlined below for the duration of their time in the program. Noncompliance with this regulation may result in dismissal from the program.

Inappropriate body art shall be defined as:

- Body art that is obscene or offensive [example: nudity]
- Body art that depicts or advocates discrimination based on sex, age, race, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Body art that depicts or advocates gang affiliation, supremacist or extremist groups, or illegal drug use.
- Tattoos that are visible or cannot be covered on the head, face, neck, and hand area.
- Inappropriate body art may be considered a potential disqualifier. Final approval will be made by the LRGV Academy Director.

PROCEDURE 7.0 - STUDENT PERSONAL CONDUCT

As a student of the LRGV Academy, you are recognized as a public servant. Students are subject to public scrutiny and must avoid questionable behavior both on and off duty. It is imperative that students uphold the same ethical standards expected of law enforcement professionals. Any violations of the student personal conduct policy may lead to disciplinary measures including termination from the program.

7.1 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

1. Students are required to address all instructors as “Sir” or “Ma’am”. Additionally, students should refer to staff and instructors using their appropriate titles and names.
2. Students are prohibited from speaking or responding in class unless they have been acknowledged by the instructor.
3. Students are expected to promptly adhere to all instructions, directions, orders, and assignments issued by staff members and instructors. Any failure to comply will be regarded as insubordination and may result in termination from the program.
4. Cellular phones and all personal communication devices are strictly prohibited in the classroom.
5. Students are required to remain vigilant and attentive throughout the duration of the class. They should focus exclusively on program-related tasks and refrain from engaging in any unrelated reading materials or activities.
6. Students are required to attend and actively participate in all assigned practical training exercises, field training exercises, physical fitness sessions, and homework assignments. All homework must be completed and submitted to the instructor by the specified deadline.
7. Any students who experiences physical illness, injury, or requires medical attention during training must notify the on-site instructor.
8. The LRGV Academy Training Coordinator, or their designated representative, holds the authority to determine appropriate consequences for specific violations.
9. The improper or negligent use of any program property is strictly prohibited. Access to classroom facilities and equipment is permitted only with prior approval from an instructor.
10. Students possess no official authority beyond that of an ordinary citizen.
11. Students who are involved in a police officer-related incident are required to notify the program instructor within 24 hours of the event regardless of the reason for the encounter.
12. Students are expected to uphold a standard of courtesy and professional integrity at all times. Any form of discourtesy, rudeness, or vulgarity exhibited by students towards fellow students, citizens, staff, external agencies, or law enforcement officers will not be tolerated. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action, which could include dismissal from the academy.

PROCEDURE 7.0 - STUDENT PERSONAL CONDUCT

7.1 **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

CONT

13. Students are prohibited from participating in fundraising activities or soliciting donations intended to generate revenue for, or in association with, the LRGV Academy training without authorization.
14. Students are prohibited from posting videos, images, or photographs related to official Academy training activities on social media platforms. Furthermore, students and training site locations are not permitted to establish a dedicated social media page.
15. Students are prohibited from commenting on or representing the LRGV Academy to media outlets.
16. The use or possession of any items classified as weapons is strictly prohibited. The possession of these items constitutes a Class II offense. Exceptions are for weapons provided to the students by instructors for the purposes of law enforcement training.
17. Students are prohibited from consuming intoxicants or illicit substances while enrolled in the program. Any usage of such items will constitute an immediate dismissal from the program.
18. The usage of Tobacco and Vaping products by students is prohibited. Tobacco products may include but are not limited to cigarettes, chewing tobacco, dip, snuff, etc. Vaping products may include but are not limited to e-cigarettes, vape pens, or any other form of electronic cartridge device designed for the inhalation of vapor like substances. This policy extends to all satellite sites. Students shall refrain from using Tobacco or Vaping products while in direct contact with the public.

7.2 **ETHICAL CONDUCT POLICY**

All students at the LRGV Academy must adhere to our core guiding values:

- We treat everyone with respect.
- We are committed to honesty, integrity, and professionalism.
- We serve our community and organization.
- We strive for excellence as a team.

7.3 **HARASSMENT, BIAS & INTIMIDATION**

The Academy is dedicated to cultivating an educational environment that is free from harassment, bias, and intimidation. This policy encompasses all forms of harassment targeting individuals based on their gender, sexual orientation, race, national origin, religion, age, or disability. All students are required to comply with this policy, and any violations may result in disciplinary actions, including possible dismissal.

Students who believe they have experienced harassment, bias, or intimidation are encouraged to report these incidents to their instructor and the LRGV Academy director. If the harassment involves a supervisor, the student should directly contact the LRGV Academy director. The director will promptly investigate the incident and take appropriate corrective measures.

It is crucial to emphasize that retaliation or reprisal against any student for reporting harassment or discrimination is illegal and will not be tolerated.

7.4 **NON-FRATERNIZATION POLICY**

Students are prohibited from engaging in unprofessional relationships with staff, instructors, employees of the LRGVDC, or any staff or employees of the school district. Noncompliance with this policy will result in disciplinary measures, including potential dismissal from the program.

PROCEDURE 8.0 - DISCIPLINARY POLICY

The Academy staff is committed to safeguarding the rights of each student while upholding a disciplinary system that emphasizes notice, fairness, equity, and due process. Students can therefore expect reasonable clarity regarding this procedure. Disciplinary incidents will be addressed in accordance with the following guidelines to the greatest extent practicable.

The LRGV Academy categorizes offenses into Class I and Class II categories, each with its own specific disciplinary procedures.

PROCEDURE 8:0 - DISCIPLINARY POLICY

8.1 CLASS I OFFENSES

Class I offenses consist of minor to moderate infractions that present opportunities for learning and corrective action. Examples of Class I offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Tardiness
- Failure to adhere to personal appearance standards (fewer than five occurrences).
- Noncompliance with specific student behavior standards (fewer than five occurrences).
- Insubordination (first offense).
- Minor acts of negligence or inefficiency.

Additionally, any other acts or omissions that align with the aforementioned criteria may also be classified as Class I offenses.

8.2 CLASS II OFFENSES

Class II Offenses consist of serious violations that may jeopardize continued participation in the program. Such offenses are grounds for immediate termination. Examples of Class II offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Accumulation of three Class I offenses.
- Acts of gross negligence regarding efficiency or competence.
- Criminal actions resulting in charges classified as Class B misdemeanors or higher.
- Consumption of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Commission of assault, theft, or making terroristic threats.
- Dishonesty.*
- Cheating on examinations.
- Repeated failure to meet specific student behavior standards (more than three instances).
- Fraternization.
- Grossly discourteous conduct.*
- Gross insubordination
- Insubordination
- Improper use of authority.
- Intentional or reckless conduct that endangers the health or safety of oneself or others.
- Failure to report incidents or behaviors that do not align with the values, policies, and procedures of the LRGV Academy.
- Violations of safety rules.
- Patterns of misconduct.
- Excessive tardiness.
- Use or possession of any items that could be considered weapons.
- Publicly endorsing political candidates by any means while acting under LRGVDC representation.

DEFINITION OF CLASS II OFFENSES:

Dishonesty is defined as any deceptive act that may lead to embarrassment, distrust, or discredit for the LRGV Academy or the law enforcement profession. Such acts of dishonesty encompass, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery or acceptance of bribes, destruction of property, theft, and concealment. Cheating also includes assisting others in cheating or failing to report observed incidents of cheating. This encompasses cheating on quizzes or retests.

Gross Discourteous Conduct: This term refers to behavior, whether through action or inaction, that is disrespectful and has the potential to adversely affect the learning environment. Examples of gross discourteous conduct include, but are not limited to, sleeping or exhibiting disruptive behavior during class, as well as the use of abusive or obscene language, gestures, or actions.

Insubordination: Insubordination is defined as the willful disregard or disobedience of a lawful and ethical order or directive issued by any individual in a position of authority over the student.

8.3 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The following process outlines a fair and equitable course of progressive action designed to ensure a clear understanding of the remedies for unacceptable behavior. As it is not feasible to address every possible scenario within these guidelines, any disciplinary cases not explicitly covered will be subject to the discretion of the LRGV Academy Director.

PROCEDURE 8.0 - DISCIPLINARY POLICY

8.4 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS FOR CLASS I OFFENSES

The following process delineates a fair and equitable framework for addressing unacceptable behavior through progressive action, aimed at ensuring clarity regarding the remedies available. Given that it is impractical to account for every possible scenario within these guidelines, any disciplinary matters not explicitly addressed will be at the discretion of the LRGV Academy Director, who will determine the appropriate resolution for each case.

1. Academy instructors and/or other personnel will promptly address any violations with a student upon observation or notification.
2. The Academy instructor and/or other personnel will engage in a one-on-one performance coaching session with the student to discuss the violation and appropriate corrective actions.
3. The following steps outline the progression of discipline for Class I offenses:
 - o ****1st Offense:**** Written reprimand and coaching session
 - o ****2nd Offense:**** Written reprimand and disciplinary probation
 - o ****3rd Offense:**** Dismissal from the academy

8.5

DISCIPLINARY PROCESS FOR CLASS II OFFENSES (OR REPEAT OF CLASS I OFFENSE)

1. Academy instructors and/or other program personnel are required to promptly report any Class II violations to the LRGV Academy Director upon observation or notification.
2. The LRGV Academy Director will conduct a comprehensive investigation into the offense, ensuring full disclosure and inquiry into the facts and circumstances surrounding the violation.
 - o ***Note:**** During the investigation of a Class II offense, the student involved may be temporarily removed from LRGV Academy training activities until the investigation is concluded and a final determination is made.
3. Given the serious nature of Class II offenses, disciplinary actions may range from probation to immediate dismissal from the program. Investigations into Class II offenses will utilize a comprehensive approach, considering the totality of circumstances.
4. If it is determined that the student may continue in the program, the LRGV Academy Director will discuss the violation directly with the student and conduct a one-on-one coaching session focused on the disciplinary issues and necessary corrective actions.
5. Once a student is placed on probationary status, any subsequent infractions may lead to immediate dismissal from the program. ***Note: *** If reinstated, any absences resulting from temporary removal will be managed in accordance with the attendance policy

8.6

DISCIPLINARY ACTION APPEAL

Any student wishing to file an appeal regarding a disciplinary action must submit a written request directly to the LRGV Academy Director as soon as possible, and no later than five (5) calendar days following notification of the disciplinary action.

The written appeal request must include the following:

1. A detailed account of the incident; (2) Witness statements (if applicable); (3) Identification of substantive or procedural errors; and/or (4) Newly discovered or relevant information that was not available to the staff making the disciplinary decision.

The LRGV Academy Director will respond to the appeal within five (5) calendar days of receiving the request.

8.7 REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

The final course of action involves submitting a request for an administrative hearing directly to the Executive Director of the LRGVDC. Any student wishing to initiate this process must submit their request in writing promptly, but no later than five (5) calendar days following the notification of the appeal response. Upon receipt of the written request, an administrative hearing may be scheduled, or a final decision response letter will be issued within five (5) calendar days.

Please note: If reinstated, any absences resulting from temporary removal will be addressed according to the attendance policy.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



301 W. RAILROAD ST.
WESLACO, TX 78596

PHONE: 956-682-3481

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[HTTPS://WWW.LRGVDC.ORG/ACADEMY.HTML](https://WWW.LRGVDC.ORG/ACADEMY.HTML)

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5 Department Action Item

C.2.LRGV Police Academy.....Javier Solis
Director

3. Consideration and **ACTION** to ratify the LRGV Academy Advisory Board’s approval of the amendment to the Basic County Corrections Course curriculum for the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program.

Background

On October 7, 2026, the LRGV Academy Advisory Board met and approved an amendment to the Basic County Corrections Course curriculum for implementation within the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program.

In addition to the 120 minimum training hours required by the State of Texas, the current curriculum includes training in the use of batons, less-lethal chemical munitions (OC spray), and less-lethal electronic weapons (Tasers).

Following discussion and careful consideration, the LRGV Academy Advisory Board voted to amend the curriculum requirements for students enrolled in the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program. Under this amendment, the required 120 hours of training will include instruction in the use of batons and less-lethal chemical munitions (OC spray). Training in the use of less lethal electronic weapons (Tasers) will no longer be included as a requirement for students enrolled in this program.

This amendment applies exclusively to the Basic County Corrections Course offered through the High School Criminal Justice Pipeline Program. All Basic County Corrections courses offered outside of this program will continue to follow the existing curriculum, including training in batons, less-lethal chemical munitions (OC spray), and less-lethal electronic weapons (Tasers).

ITEM #5. D

**TRANSPORTATION
VALLEY METRO**

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5: Department Action Item

D. Transportation.....Dr. Sandra Carrizales
Valley Metro Director

1. Consideration and **ACTION** to authorize termination of the construction contract with Araiza General Construction, LLC for the Edinburg Transit Terminal First-Floor Finish-Out Project.

The original contract completion date was December 22, 2025, and substantial completion was established June 1, 2026. Despite ongoing coordination among LRGVDC Valley Metro, the Edinburg Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), Milnet Architectural Services, and AGC, punch-list and corrective work has remained outstanding. An August 13, 2026 checklist identified 28 items incomplete or requiring verification. AGC previously committed to August 31, 2026 for completion, but outstanding work persisted.

An ADA inspection report was provided September 18, 2026, identifying additional corrective items. Milnet previously communicated an October 12 completion expectation; EEDC reported no work observed by that date and indicated that some items represented as complete were not completed or verified. LRGVDC notified AGC that October 19, 2026 is the final date for outstanding work to be completed and available for verification, without extending the original contract deadline or waiving contractual rights.

Milnet has advised that it can prepare a Certificate of Termination for Board consideration. Milnet also cautioned that termination requires consultation with the owner's legal counsel and that issuance of a certificate does not itself require termination. Following October 19, Milnet and EEDC are expected to verify the outstanding items. Any completion cost estimate would be obtained from the bonding company or a contractor engaged to complete the remaining work.



MILNET ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES
608 S. 12TH ST.
McALLEN, TX 78501
O: 956-688-5656, F: 956-687-9289

October 20, 2026

Felipe Lopez, Jr.
Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
301 W. Railroad, Building "A"
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Re: LRGVDC Valley Metro Edinburg Transit Terminal Office Building 1st Floor Finish-Out,
Certificate of Termination

Mr. Felipe Lopez,

After carefully reviewing the issues concerning Araiza's performance on the LRGVDC Valley Metro Edinburg Transit Terminal Office Building 1st Floor Finish-Out project, we find sufficient grounds to terminate Araiza as the contractor. EEDC staff and we have repeatedly requested updated schedules for the outstanding work. After issuing Memorandum No. 2, the contractor identified October 17–18 as target dates to complete most punch-list items; however, the contractor did not provide a completion date for the entire project. In any event, the contractor did not meet these target dates.

Araiza has not provided sufficient personnel to adequately staff the project throughout the construction phase. As of today, Araiza has not confirmed that it has ordered the solid-surface countertops, creating uncertainty about procurement and delivery. Despite multiple Owner-Architect-Contractor meetings, Araiza has not yet provided a revised project schedule with specific, actionable dates. This lack of staffing, procurement confirmation, and a reliable schedule continues to hinder effective project planning and coordination.

Payment issues have also impacted subcontractors, several of whom have filed liens against the owner. We have received inquiries from subcontractors seeking confirmation that the contractor has received payment.

The following timeline illustrates the extent of the project delay. The Notice of Award was issued on May 1, 2025, and the Notice to Proceed, dated June 23, 2025, established July 3, 2025, as the official start date. The contract set December 22, 2025, as the Substantial Completion date and January 26, 2026, as the Final Completion deadline. At this stage, it would be preferable to complete the project with a new contractor.

At this time, we believe Araiza is in an uncured material breach of contract because it failed to take appropriate action in response to our written seven-day notice. However, termination is a legal matter, and the owner should consult legal counsel before taking any action to terminate the



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contract. Certification does not require termination. The LRGVDC may also have a common-law right to terminate the contract for cause and, if applicable, a contractual right to terminate for convenience. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rodolfo Molina'.

Rodolfo Molina, A.I.A.
Principal

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday October 28, 2026

Item #5: Department Action Item

D. Transportation.....Dr. Sandra Carrizales
Valley Metro Director

2. Consideration and **ACTION** to approve fare-free Valley Metro bus service on Election Day, November 3, 2026.

Valley Metro seeks Board approval to provide fare-free bus transportation on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, in support of accessible transportation and civic participation. The initiative is intended to reduce transportation barriers for community members traveling to polling locations and other destinations served by existing Valley Metro routes.

Passengers who present their voter registration card to the bus operator may ride Valley Metro services at no charge on Election Day during regularly scheduled service hours. Service will operate on existing routes and schedules, subject to normal operating conditions. Staff will communicate the temporary fare-free service through existing agency communication channels.

VALLEY METRO

SEPTEMBER 2026 Ridership Snapshot

System Overview

Agency	Metrics	SEPTEMBER 2025	SEPTEMBER 2026	YoY % Change
	Routes – Total Passenger Trips	32,048	31,173	-2.73%
McAllen Express	10,12,14,15,16's,17,20,30,31's.32 RL 1, RL2, Orange Line	20,744	20,656	.42%
Harlingen – San Benito	31.2 40,41,42,44,45's, BL54	5017	4759	-5.14%
LRGVDC Motor Bus	GL1, 50's,60,61,62	5221	4,608	-12%
LRGVDC Demand Response	Willacy, Starr, Zapata	831	809	-0.9%
LRGVDC – Commuter Bus	Willacy Express & Zapata Express	235	341	45%

Executive Summary: Overall, total system ridership experienced a slight decline of 2.73%, moving from 32,048 trips last year to 31,173 this year.

Ridership Trend

Month	FY 25-26	FY 26-27	%
September	32,048	31,173	-2.73%
YTD Ridership	32,048	31,173	-2.73%

Routes with Year – Over - Year Monthly Growth

Route	August Ridership	YOY Change
Route 10 Edinburg - McAllen	1,952	21%
Route 16.1 Court House Circulator	2,491	29%
Route 16.2 Court House Circulator	2,719	14%
Route Purple Line Route Weslaco – Pharr - McAllen	427	44%
Route 312 Bus 83	1,165	24%
Route 313 Bus 83	1,549	6%
Route 45.1	785	10%
Route Red Line 3	449	45%
Route Willacy Express	205	43%
Route Zapata Express	136	48%
Route Green Line 1	542	10%
Route Zapata DR	196	16%

•Even though overall ridership in September 2026 decreased by 2.73% compared to 2025, several key routes showed strong year-over-year improvement. Notable increases include Route 10 (+21%), the Courthouse Circulators 16.1 and 16.2 (+29% + 14%), the Purple Line (+44%), Red Line 3 (+45%), Willacy Express(+43%), Zapata Express (+48%), and additional steady gains across Routes 312,313,45.1, Green Line 1,and Zapata DR.

LRGVDC Five-Year Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) Update

Project Status RPTCP Quarterly Review (July – September 2026)

The Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan project is progressing as scheduled. During the third quarter of 2026, the RPTCP continued to make steady progress in completing core technical assessments, stakeholder review phases, and interim plan approval.

Technical Assessments:

- Completed the Geographic Area Assessment, including regional transit mapping, key project identification, and a methodology-backed inventory of major trip generators to pinpoint regional connectivity needs.
- Completed the Demographic Area Assessment, establishing baseline population trends and equity-focused demographic insights.
- Finalized provider profiles covering fleets, tech, and finances while evaluating existing coordination, mobility management programs, and service gaps.
- Finalized the transportation needs survey, the Needs Index, and gap mapping to identify network coverage deficiencies.

Deliverables, Agency Approval & Next Steps:

- Delivered Technical Memorandum No. 1 and Outreach Summary by KFH Group, which was subsequently reviewed by Valley Metro staff.
- Conducted Workshop #1 to review KFH's findings synthesized from the public outreach input and collected data.
- Received the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) interim plan draft, which underwent internal review to incorporate preliminary comments and observations.
- Transmitted the updated draft to the Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) and TxDOT for review.
- Achieved formal approval of the Draft Interim Plan by TxDOT, , marking the project's official transition into its second phase.
- Shifted focus to drafting the final chapters (Chapters 7, 8, and 9) focusing in goals and strategies and consolidating the complete draft final plan.

Regional Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP) Activity:

Meeting date: September 22, 2026 Next Meeting: September 22, 2026
Subcommittee Meeting: October 22, 2026

1. Valley Metro Updates

The shelter placement and design RFP has reached its final stage of internal review. Systemwide route feasibility analysis is currently underway, including a focused review of routing needs for STC Cosmetology.

2. Brownsville Metro Updates

The transition from TransLoc to ETA is currently underway, with all required vendor documents submitted. A recent job fair was successfully completed, resulting in the hiring of five full-time operators and three part-time BTX Connect operators. Additionally, six new hybrid-electric buses are expected to launch in September, further enhancing system efficiency and sustainability.

3. Metro McAllen Updates

A new commuter service from McAllen Central Station to the Hidalgo International Bridge is scheduled to launch on August 31, with final details and the operating schedule still being completed. The downtown circulator continues to operate Friday through Saturday, and a ridership review is currently pending. Island Metro Updates.

4. South Texas College (STC) Updates

Trip Shot fully launched; drivers utilizing tablets for schedules and passenger counts. Data collection ongoing; reporting review planned as more

5. Regional Coordination & Recommendations

Claudia reviewed progress on regional connectivity goals including:

- Synchronization of route and schedule changes.
- Real-time tracking and technology upgrades. Seasonal demand adjustments.
- Frequency improvements and reduced transfer delays.

6. TNC/Private Provider Coordination

Metro McAllen shared details on its microtransit overflow partnership with RideCo and Uber, which helps maintain service reliability during peak demand. Under this approach, Uber trips are used as a backup option when RideCo is unable to meet requested time windows, with associated costs subsidized to ensure continued accessibility for riders.

RGV METRO EXPRESS UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RGV Metro Express provides a true regional connection across the Rio Grande Valley, linking communities, major transit terminals, educational destinations and employment and shopping opportunities. Yet this regional benefit depends on shared regional responsibility. Current stakeholder participation and payment commitments are not dependable enough to support the existing service model over the long term. Without renewed financial commitments, Metro Express may have to operate in a substantially reduced form or ultimately cease operations.

THE FINANCIAL REALITY

Metro Express relies on financial participation from regional stakeholders to sustain operations. For FY 2026, the required contribution was approximately \$50,099 per stakeholder, with the projected FY 2027 contribution increasing to approximately \$70,809 per stakeholder, based on the current funding model. While several partners have consistently fulfilled their financial commitments, continued participation from the Cities of Brownsville and Edinburg remains unknown. However, staff continue to engage in discussions on potential options. As a true regional service connecting communities across the Rio Grande Valley, Metro Express cannot remain sustainable without shared financial responsibility. Without renewed stakeholder commitments and dependable local funding, Valley Metro may be forced to significantly reduce service levels, eliminate routes, or potentially discontinue Metro Express altogether. Continued regional connectivity requires continued regional investment.

The operating and preventive maintenance projection for 2026 is approximately \$1.06 million. A regional service of this scale cannot be sustained indefinitely by assuming that noncommitted stakeholders will eventually participate.

These funding challenges are not isolated to the current fiscal year but reflect ongoing concerns spanning multiple years, highlighting the need for greater accountability and long-term stakeholder commitment.

WHY THIS MATTERS

FY 2025–2026 ridership totals 40,550 passenger trips: Red Line 1 (18,220), Red Line 2 (17,490), Orange Line (3,361) and Blue Line (1,479). The Red Lines account for about 88% of recorded trips, reinforcing the importance of preserving core regional connectivity where funding permits.

WHAT METRO EXPRESS MAY LOOK LIKE NEXT

- **Reduced regional footprint:** Fewer terminal stops, consolidated transfer locations, shorter service spans and fewer trips to lower costs.
- **Blue Line reassessment:** Evaluate eliminating the Sunday Blue Line unless a sustainable local funding or transfer arrangement can be secured.
- **Orange Line realignment:** Explore a more UTRGV-focused service and corresponding financial arrangement while protecting essential connections.
- **Red Line preservation:** Prioritize the highest-use regional corridors but evaluate shorter alignments or reduced frequency if Brownsville or other major partners withdraw or are unable to commit.

RECOMMENDED BOARD DIRECTION

Staff recommends initiating formal stakeholder discussions and requiring written funding commitments for the next service period; preparing service-reduction scenarios based on ridership, operating costs and fleet needs; and returning to the Board with a proposed sustainable service plan. Any significant service changes would follow applicable contractual, public participation and civil rights requirements before implementation.

BOTTOM LINE

The question is no longer whether Metro Express provides regional value, we know it does with over 41k riders annually. The question is whether regional partners will share the responsibility to sustain it. Without that commitment, the service the Valley knows today may look very different very soon or may not continue at all.

ITEM #5.D.2

RGVMPO