

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY OF HUMAN SERVICES
FOR THE CITY OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS**

Draft v. 4

CENTER FOR SOCIAL INQUIRY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN MARCOS, TEXAS

DR. JOSEPH A. KOTARBA, Department of Sociology
Principal Investigator

DR. KYONG HEE CHEE, Department of Sociology
Project Manager

DR. YVONNE LOZANO, School of Health Administration

DR. GLORIA MARTINEZ-RAMOS, Department of Sociology

DR. AMY RUSSELL, School of Social Work

January 25, 2013

Please direct all comments and questions to:

Dr. Joseph A. Kotarba

jk54@txstate.edu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Human Services Advisory Board, the City of San Marcos

Participants in the Service Provider Survey

Participants in the Resident Survey

Participants in the focus group interviews

Steve Parker, City of San Marcos

Jordan Law, Texas State University

Jonafa H. Banbury, Texas State University

Kellen Begin, Texas State University

Lessye J. DeMoss, Texas State University

Nick LaLone, Texas State University

SYNOPSIS

The City of San Marcos annually distributes over \$400,000 to approximately 20 social service agencies. The City Council has commissioned the Human Services Advisory Board (HSAB) to receive and review applications for these funds. The HSAB is composed of eight residents who volunteer their services. In February 2012, the City Council allocated \$35,000 for a formal study of social service needs in the growing San Marcos community. On June 15, 2012, the HSAB agreed to a contract with the Center for Social Inquiry (CSI) at Texas State University-San Marcos to conduct this study.

Under the direction of Dr. Joseph A. Kotarba (Principal Investigator) and Dr. Kyong Hee Chee (Project Manager), a team consisting of three additional faculty members from Texas State and two graduate student assistants conducted a multi-method study of agency administrators and social services clients. Data were collected through formal questionnaires distributed to all social service agency directors and a broad sample of agency clientele; and focus group interviews conducted with clients. The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at Texas State University-San Marcos approved this study. The primary research questions were:

- What is the socio-demographic profile of San Marcos?
- How do changes in the population of San Marcos affect the need for and distribution of social services?
- What are agencies' perceptions of human needs in San Marcos?
- What are residents' perceptions of human needs in San Marcos?
- Is there significant duplication of social services?
- How can the delivery of social services be improved?
- How can the City of San Marcos continuously monitor the impact of its funding on the delivery of social services?

The following is the organization of the report:

- Demographic profile of residents
 - by need
 - by work
 - by age, race household status and sex
 - crime trends
- Agency concerns
- Resident concerns
- Program evaluation
- Recommendations for change
- Next steps
- Methodology
- Appendices

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESIDENTS.....	1
Crime in San Marcos.....	8
AGENCY CONCERNS.....	9
RESIDENTS' CONCERNS.....	19
PROGRAM EVALUATION.....	35
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE.....	42
NEXT STEPS.....	45
METHODOLOGY.....	46
APPENDICES.....	52
Appendix 1. Service Provider Survey Questionnaire	
Appendix 2. Service Provider Survey Consent Form	
Appendix 3. Principal Investigator's Letter to Agency Directors	
Appendix 4. Resident Survey Questionnaire	
Appendix 5. Resident Survey Consent Form	
Appendix 6. Focus Group Interview Guide	
Appendix 7. Focus Group Consent Form	

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESIDENTS

Summary

The purpose of the demographic analysis is to establish growth trends across the state, county, and these comparative differences within the City of San Marcos in order to best allocate funds for growing and in-need populations in the City. Primary findings of the demographic trends and needs analyses are that San Marcos is unique when compared to Hays County and the state in these particular areas, thus revealing both growth in these populations and increased need as residents in the City of San Marcos: City residents who are Hispanic/Latino, especially of Mexican heritage, are experiencing higher growth in the City community; compounded by minimal or unknown support to become naturalized citizens, which is very high proportionately in the City; unemployment rate is higher within the city; residents make less median income comparatively, and this is evident in the majority percentages of San Marcos workers in seasonal, temporary, and lower paying work types, such as retail, service industry, education, and health and social services. The majority of San Marcos residents are younger, renting, and unmarried, perhaps needing job training, placement, and assistance in tax deductions, asset building, and credit support. San Marcos residents are not less educated, but very close in educational attainment to Hays County and higher than the state percentages. Poverty is an overt issue in the City, higher than both state and county, and specific persons in the City who are living in poverty are families with children under 18 years old, women-headed households without a husband present, and households with children who have disabilities ages 5-20 years old.

Age Group Growth Trends and Public Assistance

U.S. Census data presented below (Table 1) reveal the City of San Marcos needs, contrasted to state and county, showing where funding needs to be directed in terms of certain growing and marginalized populations living within the city. Table 1 shows age group growth trends and public assistance, noticeable difference between San Marcos, the state of Texas, and Hays County. In San Marcos, compared to the county and state, children in households are decreasing, seniors in households are decreasing, unemployment is higher, median income is much lower, food stamp usage is higher, and poverty is higher. This compels the question regarding the origin of persons moving into the city. After analysis of work class and types, these reveal persons in the city are in seasonal and more unstable jobs, such as retail and construction, and in education, such as the university. The next variables for comparison, which can help explain growth trends, are: marital status, race, work status, health insurance, income, work type, poverty specifics, household specifics, and age. For city need, overall residents in San Marcos make less income and have higher poverty; however, their receiving public assistance is less than the state and county, implying that residents in need in the City are not receiving funding or services to increase their quality of life. Poverty is higher and income lower, but San Marcos residents are not proportionately receiving increased public assistance. Poverty in San Marcos is a significant issue at 18.5%, higher than state and county, 13.0% and 6.7% respectively.

Table 1. Demographic variables: Age group growth and public assistance

Demographic characteristics	Texas 2000	Hays County 2000	San Marcos 2000	Texas 2010	Hays County 2010	San Marcos 2010
Households 1+ under 18, related	41.4%	37.1%	19.2%	39.3%	34.6%	16.8%
Households 1+ 65 and over, related	26.4%	15.4%	13.3%	20.4%	16.7%	12.4%
Spoken in home: Spanish	27.0%	21.2%	25.5%	29.2%	21.0%	N/A
Unemployed	3.8%	4.4%	6.0%	4.6%	4.3%	5.1%
Median income	39,927	45,006	25,809	49,646	56,353	26,304
Social Security	21.6%	17.5%	16.1%	23.3%	18.5%	14.0%
SSI	3.9%	1.7%	2.3%	3.7%	1.9%	2.4%
Public assistance	3.2%	1.4%	1.7%	1.6%	1.1%	1.0%
Food Stamps/ SNAP	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.4%	5.0%	8.2%
Poverty, all families	N/A	6.4%	13.8%	13.0%	6.7%	18.5%

Additionally, bivariate correlation was run on the above variables. Across all three factors, Texas, County, City, significant relationships are revealed in: unemployment and children in the household, SSI recipients and Spanish speaking, public assistance recipients and 65 and older in households, and food stamp recipients and Spanish speakers. Spanish speakers, children with unemployed caretakers, seniors, and cash recipients present a population of need in all three areas.

Educational Attainment, Veterans, and Disability

A set of variables in Table 2 shows educational attainment, civilian veterans, and disability, noticeable differences for San Marcos; primary contrasts are found in children with disabilities have increased, while 18-64 year old adults with disabilities have decreased, civilian veteran residents have decreased, and more persons in San Marcos have either a less than 9th grade education or have attained their high school diploma, compared to state and county percentages. Of interesting note, San Marcos, although having smaller percentages, is in step with the educational attainment of Hays County as a whole, even more so in higher educational degrees such as graduate and bachelor degrees. San Marcos presents diversity in educational attainment more so than the state or county, and is not necessarily less educated. The University may be a factor, but it also reveals if so, these persons are not necessarily moving out of the City and into Hays County. Also, children with disabilities, as a population, present an overt trend and need for the City in social service delivery.

Table 2. Educational attainment, veterans, and disability

Demographic characteristics	Texas 2000	Hays County 2000	San Marcos 2000	Texas 2010	Hays County 2010	San Marcos 2010
School Enrollment: 3+ years	5,948,260	35,718	17,244	6,836,694	50,069	23,271
Education: Less than 9th grade	11.5%	7.3%	11.3%	10.0%	5.5%	7.2%
HSD	24.8%	15.7%	23.9%	26.0%	23.1%	27.1%
Some college, no degree	22.4%	25.6%	23.1%	22.0%	23.8%	23.3%
Associate's degree	5.2%	4.8%	3.6%	6.3%	6.3%	4.8%
Bachelor's degree	15.6%	20.4%	17.9%	17.3%	24.0%	22.5%
Graduate/Professional degree	7.6%	11.0%	11.0%	8.5%	10.9%	9.4%
Civilian veterans	11.8%	11.3%	7.6%	9.3%	9.0%	5.2%
Disability status: 5-20 years old	7.9%	8.8%	7.8%	N/A	N/A	8.4%
	(under 18)		(5-20)			(under 18)
21-64 years old	44.8%	14.0%	13.9%	N/A	N/A	6.6%
	(18-64)		(21-64)			(18-64)

A bivariate correlation was run on the above variables. Across all three factors, Texas, County, City, significant relationships are revealed in: the less persons reporting that they have high school diplomas is inversely related to attaining some college credit (they do go on to get some college education), a negative relationship between the number of persons enrolled in school over age three and persons holding a graduate or professional degree (having children in school may limit attaining graduate and professional degrees), and a negative relationship between having less than a ninth grade education and a bachelors degree (more persons reporting a Bachelor's degree mirrors less persons with education beyond 9th grade).

Citizenship, Employment, Poverty, and Housing

Table 3 shows variables of citizenship, poverty, and home ownership with contrasts highlighted for San Marcos. Citizenship and home ownership, not necessarily income, are definitely affecting need in the City. Although all census data variables are not collected across 2000 and 2010 reports, there is a majority portion of foreign-born residents in San Marcos that have been unable to become citizens, which is a major need since it affects poverty. Additionally, children under 18 years old in families living in poverty is on the rise and higher than state and county averages, as are families headed by women living in poverty. The most glaring difference is in a more-than-likely scenario of the University affecting housing; these numbers are inverted compared to state and county and home ownership does affect not only tax liability and deductions, but poverty as well.

Table 3. Citizenship, employment, poverty, and housing

Demographic characteristics	Texas 2000	Hays County 2000	San Marcos 2000	Texas 2010	Hays County 2010	San Marcos 2010
Citizen status: foreign-born/naturalized	N/A/ 4.4%	5.6%/ 1.9%	4.9%/ 1.9%	N/A/ 35.0%	N/A/ 31.8%	N/A/ 29.0%
Not a citizen	9.5%	3.7%	3.0%	31.8%	3.8%	71.0%
Employment: in labor force	63.6%	70.2%	68.9%	65.6%	66.7%	66.7%
Unemployed	3.8%	4.4%	6.0%	4.6%	4.3%	4.3%
Not in labor force	36.4%	29.8%	31.1%	34.4%	33.3%	33.3%
Poverty: with related children under 18	N/A	8.3%	18.1%	19.1%	9.0%	24.3%
Poverty: families with female householder- no husband	N/A	21.6%	31.2%	32.8%	20.0%	39.6%
Housing: owner-occupied	63.8%	64.8%	30.2%	64.8%	67.8%	26.3%
Renter-occupied	36.2%	35.2%	69.8%	35.2%	32.3%	73.7%

A bivariate correlation was run on the above variables. Across all three factors, Texas, County, City, significant relationships are revealed in: being in the labor force and being a U.S. citizen, not being in the labor force related to not being a U.S. citizen, and single mother headed households with children under 18 years old experiencing significant poverty. It should be noted that this is higher than in the State of Texas and in Hays County

Occupational Classification

Work classification through occupation and industry show differences in San Marcos compared to Hays county and the state (Table 4). More noticeable differences are the higher percentages of residents in San Marcos working in service, retail, education, arts and food service. Not only are these percentages higher in the City, but also rose over the past decade. These job types reveal seasonal, less-skilled, and temporary employment, which may affect the median income of San Marcos residents, which is lower than the county or state. Additionally, while educational occupation types consists of jobs at the University, these are also nine month contracts for many employees, and this category also includes health and social service workers, of which the majority makes lower wages compared to private and profit sectors. Service is second highest in occupation type in the City, second to managerial and professional, separate by 1.2%.

Table 4. Occupational classification

Demographic characteristics	Texas 2000	Hays County 2000	San Marcos 2000	Texas 2010	Hays County 2010	San Marcos 2010
Occupation: management and professional	33.3%	36.0%	30.4%	33.7%	38.6%	31.0%
Service	14.6%	15.3%	21.5%	16.9%	16.7%	29.8%
Sales and office	27.2%	28.7%	32.4%	25.7%	26.6%	25.1%
Industry: retail	12.0%	12.1%	15.7%	11.5%	13.7%	16.5%
Education, health, and social services	19.3%	24.0%	29.2%	20.8%	23.0%	30.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	7.3%	9.7%	16.8%	8.2%	9.4%	19.5%

A bivariate correlation was run on the above variables. Across all three factors, Texas, County, City, significant relationships are revealed in: persons in health, education and social services as an industry are service occupation workers, as well as persons who are in the retail industry, and persons in the health, education and social service industry are also in the retail industry.

Age, Sex, Household Type, and Race/Ethnicity

Table 5 shows variables of interest for age, sex, household type, and race/ethnicity for state, county, and city. Median age in the City shows a much younger population that is unmarried and living in nonfamily households, compacted by University residents. Whether students, nontraditional families, or otherwise, these residents have less tax credits and deductions than married families. Additionally, the City has experienced a higher percentage increase in population of persons of Hispanic and/or Latino ethnicity, specifically persons with a Mexican heritage. This growth percentage is almost double that of Hays county in the past decade. A bivariate correlation was run on these variables. Across all three factors, Texas, County, City, significant relationships are revealed in: a positive association between male and female median ages and persons living in married households, and a negative association between median male and female age and living in nonfamily households. The older persons are, the increased relationship in their being married; and the younger persons are, the increased relationships they are not married. In this grouping of variables, there were no significant associations in ethnicity and race.

Table 5. Age, sex, race, household type, and race/ethnicity

Demographic characteristics	Texas 2000	Hays County 2000	San Marcos 2000	Texas 2010	Hays County 2010	San Marcos 2010
Male: median age/percent	31.3/ 49.6%	27.7/ 50.3%	23.5/ 49.2%	32.6/ 49.6%	29.7/ 49.7%	23.1/ 49.7%
Female: median age/percent	33.4/ 50.4%	29.2/ 49.7%	22.7/ 50.8%	34.6/ 50.4%	31.1/ 50.3%	22.7/ 50.3%
Married-couple households	54.0%	53.1%	27.9%	51.4%	51.9%	23.8%
Nonfamily households	29.0%	33.7%	57.5%	29.8%	35.0%	59.9%
White, non-Hispanic	71.0%	78.9%	75.0%	72.0%	74.4%	78.5%
Black or African American	11.5%	3.7%	5.5%	11.8%	3.7%	6.4%
Hispanic/Latino	32.0%	29.6%	36.5%	36.7%	34.2%	37.8%
Mexican American	24.3%	21.8%	26.1%	31.7%	17.4%	31.4%

Demographic Trends and Needs

Analysis of percentages from U.S. Census data from 2000 and 2010 shows population growth trends comparatively for the state, Hays County, and the City of San Marcos. These trends reveal need for San Marcos residents specifically, and suggestions for targeting specific groups in the City based on these numbers follows. Overall contrasts in the City show that persons who are Hispanic/Latino, especially of Mexican heritage, are experiencing higher growth in the City community, and as such, increased need. This is especially compounded by persons who do not have means or support to become naturalized citizens, which is very high proportionately in the City. Also higher than county and state frequencies is the unemployment rate within the city; residents make less median income comparatively, and this is evident in the majority percentages of San Marcos workers in seasonal, temporary, and lower paying work types, such as retail, service industry, education, and health and social services. The majority of San Marcos residents are younger, renting, and unmarried, perhaps needing job training, placement, and assistance in tax deductions, asset building, and credit support.

San Marcos residents are not less educated, but very close in educational attainment to Hays County and higher than the state percentages. The percentage of residents with a less than 9th grade decreased over the past decade, while residents with high school diplomas have risen. Poverty is an overt issue in the City, higher than both state and county, and specific persons in the City who are living in poverty are families with children under 18 years old, women-headed households without a husband present, and households with children who have disabilities ages 5-20 years old. A primary suggestion from this analysis is to prioritize these targeted and growing populations through the various social services offered in the City.

The demographic analyses of significant trends and variable grouping correlations across the state, county, and city were conducted to reveal growth that affects the City and those in need who are residents of San Marcos. Persons who are unemployed in state, county, and city frequencies have children and may not be U.S. citizens. Persons experiencing poverty are female single-headed households with children under 18 years old, are Spanish speaking and receiving SSI, are above 65 years old and receiving public assistance, and are Spanish speaking and receiving food stamps. Persons who have children in school may not return for graduate or professional degrees, and reflecting the findings that City residents are almost as educated as the county, fewer persons reporting only high school diplomas and less than 9th grade attainment reveals more frequencies in persons getting some college and attaining a Bachelor's degree. Also, age variables reveal that the older residents are is related to their being married, and the younger residents are, they are living in nonfamily households. The more persons are U.S. citizens, the higher relationship in employment. However, if in health, education and social services industry, they considered themselves service workers. They also report retail occupations in relation to service, meaning they may hold more than one job if in health, education, and social services. Children in school and under 18 years old can affect poverty, as well as single-headed households for women, as well as speaking Spanish for residents, being above age 65, and lack of U.S. citizenship. Education and industry/occupation are also primary factors in addressing need across state, county, and city trends.

Residents in need include single women with children, Spanish-speakers, non-U.S. citizens, persons of Mexican heritage, the unemployed, seasonal workers, service workers, households with disabled children, senior citizens, and persons receiving public assistance. Continued educational attainment of the city should be the target area.

Crime in San Marcos

As is the case with all growing cities, crime is a concern among leaders and residents alike in San Marcos. Table 6 displays crime statistics at three points in time (2008, 2009, and 2010). Comparisons are made between crime in Sam Marcos and in the remainder of Hays County. The top five crime types, in terms of incidence, are listed below.

Table 6. Number of top 5 crime types, 2008, 2009, and 2010 – City of San Marcos vs. Hays County

Top 5 crime type	San Marcos 2008	San Marcos 2009	San Marcos 2010	Hays County 2008	Hays County 2009	Hays County 2010
Property crime	1,682	1,702	1,726	1,119	1,313	1,165
Larceny theft	1,293	1,317	1,390	760	924	760
Burglary	278	300	263	332	371	401
Aggravated assault			104	102	102	167
Motor vehicle theft	111	85	73	37	18	
Robbery	34	46				7

Source: FBI (2010, June 1). Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Statistics.
<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats>. Retrieved October 11, 2012.

Note: Hays County references only areas within the county line. The Hays County data, therefore, excludes the City of San Marcos statistics.

Property crime and larceny theft in San Marcos have steadily increased. We can likely attribute this increase largely to population growth. Burglary rates have fluctuated. Interestingly, aggravated assault has replaced robbery as a top five crime in 2010. We can likely attribute this to population growth as well as improved crime reporting. The decrease in motor vehicle theft can be largely attributed to improved driver-owner precautions and the now pervasive existence of automobile alarm systems.

Summary

Crime in San Marcos is not unusually high for a city its size. In addition, we would expect crime to increase as the presence of Texas State University also increases. The established increase in police patrol, surveillance, and enforcement should clearly be continued, especially in concert with the Texas State University police.

The interview and survey data, however, indicate the perception among residents of serious crime growth in San Marcos. In terms of social services, educational programs on crime prevention would be a good investment for the City. The prime target audiences for this instruction would be the elderly, single-parent families and university students. Crime control should be a joint effort of social service agencies, the university and the police.

AGENCY CONCERNS

Summary

Representatives of 19 agencies participated in the Service Provider Survey by submitting their responses online to SurveyMonkey. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted to find out about these agencies in the aggregate and their leaders' views on the service system in San Marcos. The service areas of the agencies are typically Hays County including San Marcos, as well as counties surrounding the city--Caldwell, Guadalupe, and Travis in particular. Collectively, they offer a number of services including education and information services, advocacy work, counseling services, and transportation services. The number of clients served by them varies greatly, with the smallest of 60 clients a year to the largest of 170 clients a day. The agency leaders tend to think that the current service system in San Marcos is somewhat effective in consideration of its strengths such as interagency collaborations, public sector support, long-tenured services, and committed staff and volunteers. Challenges are the lack of funding, problems with service accessibility, human resource, and client's attitudes and circumstances. Agency leaders ranked transportation as the most important issue for service accessibility, and outreach presentations and the Internet websites as the first and second most effective outreach strategies, respectively. They recommended improvement in service coordination, human services capacities, particularly in housing and homelessness, and mental health, the community awareness of services, and outreach to underserved groups with greater needs.

Service Areas

The agencies that participated in the survey typically serve in Hays County including San Marcos, as well as counties surrounding San Marcos. When asked to indicate their service areas among the choices of San Marcos, Hays County, and Other, 8 (42%) of the agencies indicated San Marcos only, 16 (84%) in Hays County, and 11 (58%) in other areas including SMCISD boundaries and Caldwell, Comal, Guadalupe, Travis, Wilson, and Williamson counties. This does not mean that only 8 participating agencies serve in San Marcos. Rather, the service areas of other agencies are broader, extending beyond the city limit.

Services Offered

As summarized in Table 7 below, a large variety of services are being offered to the residents of San Marcos by the 19 agencies. Survey participants were allowed to check all in the response categories that apply to them and elaborate on other services that they offer if any. According to their responses, a majority of the agencies provide education and information services, and nearly half of them do advocacy work. More than a third of them offer counseling services, and one fifth of them transportation services. Other kinds of services that the survey participants also described are:

- Provision of food, not meals
- Assistance with prescription and utility
- Prevention and intervention services to at-risk families
- Developmental services, case management, physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, specialized skills training, family education, nutrition, hypnotherapy, etc.
- Fall prevention, home safety repairs, and wheelchair ramps

- Home renovations
- Weatherization
- Legal advocacy
- Resolution of disputes for low-income individuals
- Volunteer placement services and senior advocacy
- Veterinary services, humane education, and pet food pantry
- Financial support for agencies providing other direct services

Table 7. Services provided by the participating agencies (N=19)

Service	Count	Percent
Education/ Information	11	57.9%
Advocacy	9	47.4%
Counseling	7	36.8%
Transportation	5	26.3%
Financial assistance	4	21.1%
Emergency shelter	3	15.8%
Meals	3	15.8%
Safety planning	3	15.8%
Medical/ Health care	2	10.5%
Mental health services	2	10.5%
Housing	1	5.3%
Alcohol and drug	1	5.3%
Other	13	68.4%

Clients Served

When asked to estimate the number of their clients that they serve in a year, the responses from 16 agencies ranged from 60 clients a year to 170 clients a day, which would be roughly equivalent to 44,200 clients a year.

A small proportion of the clients served by these agencies appear to be students from Texas State University at San Marcos although 2 out of 17 respondents reported “unknown.” The other responses are sorted as follows:

Their clients are referred to their agency in a variety of ways. Their responses are listed below with minimal edits for brevity and uniformity:

- DFPS/CPS, County and JP Courts, SMPD, San Marcos Legal Department, Animal Control, Texas State University and local nonprofits, referrals from local attorneys, and directly from the parties when they hear about the service from others who have used it before or from advertisements
- Self-referrals, website, word-of-mouth; referrals from SNAP, WIC and other organizations; many from word of mouth
- Social service agencies, schools, counselors, website inquiries, social workers, current residents, walk-ins and other self-referrals

- Most self-refer to the adult programs; law enforcement agencies and/or Child Protective Services must refer to the children's advocacy center for a victim of child abuse to receive services; referrals from all local social services agencies
- Criminal Justice System, schools, other social service agencies, self referrals
- Food Bank, Salvation Army, Community Action, other agencies in town
- Referrals from Pediatricians, day care providers, Parents self-referrals, Head Start, other medical professionals, Foster Agencies, CPS/DFPS, Local Education Agencies, etc.
- Self referrals, other social service organizations, churches, health care providers, city and county employees
- From anywhere: self, home health agency, friends, family, neighbors, state agencies
- Hospital social service departments, home health organizations, hospice, senior centers, faith communities, and self-referrals
- Volunteer Match (on line) helps recruit volunteers, especially Texas State students; partner agencies help; existing volunteers also help recruit more older volunteers
- Self referral, attorney general, THCD Government office
- The Child Protection Court and District Judges appoint CASA to the children we serve; others may request CASA services (Child Protective Services, Assistant District Attorney, Attorneys ad Litem, and parents); CASA itself may also request involvement
- Refer by the Judge
- The organization is widely known; referrals from a number of organizations and agencies
- School personnel, law enforcement, child protective services, judges, juvenile probation, parents and youth
- Special PALS phone line in place, clients referred via food bank, billboard, animal services department, word-of-mouth, veterinarians, bilingual literature, website, Facebook, and Twitter

The Current Service System

Agency leaders participating in the survey listed numerous strengths of the overall system for providing services to residents of San Marcos (see Table 8). The aspects on which they said they could build include collaborative relationships with other service agencies, support from the public sector, the variety of quality services that have been available for a while, and dedicated staff and volunteers.

In rating the effectiveness of the service system in San Marcos, a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being “Not effective at all,” 5 being “Somewhat effective,” and 10 being “Very effective,” the respondents’ scores converged between “Somewhat effective and “Very effective,” with a weighted average of 6.75. This room for improvement is partly attributable to the challenges that they face in providing services to San Marcos residents (see Table 9). The majority of the respondents mentioned the lack of funding and resources, with many also reporting issues involved with service accessibility such as community awareness about the available services and transportation. Other challenges cited relate to human

resource issues including difficulties with staffing and volunteer recruitment. Another kind of challenges revolves around client issues (e.g., isolation, reluctance to seek help, lack of time, and language barrier).

Table 8. Strengths of the current service system in San Marcos (N=14)

Strength 1	Strength 2	Strength 3
An effective public (City of San Marcos)/private (non-profit) partnership in service provision	Dedicated, long-tenured non-profit leaders delivering quality services	All major needs are covered by proficient programs
Partnering with agencies who provide services to same clientele	Our ability to set up public sites for clients to receive food	The commitment and dedication of our staff and core volunteers
Social service agencies work well together	Relatively low staff turnover in social service nonprofits	Commitment to funding from city
Peer communication	Social Services cooperating with each other	City/county cooperation
Collaboration among service providers	Experience and longevity of providers	Broad eligibility requirements for service
Variety and quality of available services	Community spirit (sense of community and progressive attitudes)	Community diversity
Quality Services	Compassionate providers	Satisfied clients
Support from the city and county	Dedicated volunteers	
Public transportation in San Marcos	Social service agencies in San Marcos work closely together	A variety of services to assist people
Service Learning at Texas State University	United Way	Faith communities
United Way works effectively	Committed staff at many non-profits	Texas AgriLife Extension provides an array of information services
CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocate -	Roxanne's House	Housing Authority
Our ability to conduct home visits	Our low overhead (one-third of one percent); we have no paid staff, only volunteers	Even though we are an independent entity, our facilities are provided by St John's Church
Long history, we are fairly well known in the communities we serve	Word of mouth referrals is high	Good location

The issues of service accessibility are analyzed further through a question that asked agency leaders to rank among 9 issues (see Table 10). For example, transportation was ranked as the most important issue by 6 of the 17 respondents, as the second most important issue by 3, the third most important by 4, the fourth most important by 3, and as the fifth most important by 1. Physical limitation was ranked by 13 of the 17 respondents as the least important among the 9

issues listed in the questionnaire, as the eighth most important by 1 respondent, and as the third most important by 2.

Table 9. Challenges for providing services to San Marcos residents (N=17)

Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
Lack of funding for service coordination	Lack of funding for service coordination administration	Accessibility (lack of transportation to access services)
Lack of funding to provide service levels needed	Recruiting quality professionals	Lack of community awareness of our program
Not enough resources, especially money	Transportation	Clients not knowing about us
Limited resources (funding)	Isolation of potential clients	Pride, reluctant to seek assistance
Residents are hesitant to acknowledge that they have a substance abuse issue	Residents are unsure if they can afford services	Residents are unaware that HCCADA exists
Tremendous growth in demand for services	Lack of resources including significant cuts in government funding requiring cuts in staffing	Lack of resources in the community needed for clients to move forward with their plans to live violence-free
Lack of funds	Limited resources	Clients not turning in required information
Funding	Inclusion of our alternative dispute resolution programs in main stream conflict handling procedures like the courts	Staffing
Having enough volunteers to deliver meals and help package them	Reaching the clients that really need our services	Making the public aware of our services and the financially struggle we are experiencing
Having a permanent location to service clients	Sufficient volunteers to help process food and drive out	Food donations which ebb and flow during the year
Staff to concentrate on RSVP for Hays County	Community awareness	Volunteer recruitment
Need more volunteers	Difficult, emotional work	Need more funding
Mental Health	Transportation	Language Barriers
Our ability to help the poor and needy is limited mostly by the amount of money we have available.	The resources available to the homeless are very limited, especially single men and women.	The community's ability to provide rent assistance is very limited.
Finances	Transportation	Time and resources
Funding	Volunteers	Transportation and time of clients

Table 10. Important issues for service accessibility in San Marcos (N=17)

Issue	Rank
Transportation	1
Finances	2
Reluctance to seek help	3
Lack of knowledge	4
Language barriers	5
Isolation	6
Mental health	7
Chemical dependency	8
Physical limitation	9

Concerning various outreach strategies, two thirds of the agency leaders surveyed here consider outreach presentations to be effective (see Table 11) whereas more than approximately a third of them regard the use of websites and local newspapers to be effective. Other strategies mentioned include outreach through family advocates school-aged children who could deliver information home.

Table 11. Effective outreach strategies (N=16)

Strategy	Count	Percent
Outreach presentations	10	62.5%
Internet websites	6	37.5%
Local newspapers	5	31.3%
Word of mouth	4	25.0%
TV	1	6.3%
Radio	1	6.3%
Brochures	1	6.3%
Other	4	25.0%

Note: Respondents were asked to select top two strategies.

Despite the knowledge of these effective strategies, major challenges for outreach seem to remain as illustrated by the remarks of the agency leaders who stated the three greatest challenges or barriers for reaching out to San Marcos residents from the viewpoint of the agency (see Table 12). Community-level problems such as the lack of general awareness of the services, segmented populations, and the lack of multiple outlets or means for publicity appear to be the biggest barrier for outreach. The next major barrier was perceived to be clients' situations including their lack of resources such as a phone, a computer, or transportation. Also cited were their attitudes such as resistance to change, pride, mistrust, a language barrier, and the lack of knowledge about existing services. Another outreach barrier resides in the agencies themselves. Agencies may lack resources such as time and people to reach out, space to serve more clients, budget for outreach strategies, or capability for intensive outreach efforts.

Areas for Improvement

Agency leaders participating in the survey also identified three areas for improvement in the overall service system of the City of San Marcos (see Table 13). Broader themes that emerge from their responses point to need for improvements in the following areas:

- Interagency collaborations for the better coordination of services;
- Human services capacities, particularly in housing and homelessness, and mental health;
- Community awareness of available services; and
- Outreach to different population segments with greater, unmet needs for services.

When asked to identify top three priorities for action, agency leaders addressed a number of major systemic changes beginning with the development of a vision and action plans of high quality service structure at the city level, the citywide coordination of all services, and the expansion of financial resources to help agencies fulfill their missions (see Table 14).

Reiterated were critical needs for more housing and housing-related services, transportation,

healthcare, mental health services, and food services. Additional priorities include early intervention, communication, networking and partnerships, outreach, and education

Table 12. Barriers to outreach (N=17)

Outreach Barrier 1	Outreach Barrier 2	Outreach Barrier 3
Lack of community awareness of our program	Interagency collaboration	Medical professionals under-referring our services - it is difficult to compete with private therapy clinics with funds for public outreach programs
Clients not knowing of the services we provide	Clients "too proud" to ask for services	Access to services, i.e. no phone, computer, or transportation
How to make them aware of the type of services we provide	Lack of trust (they are scared of losing what they have)	Finances
Knowledge barrier	Consistent publicity	Language barrier
Unaware of the services we provide	Don't want to seek help or afraid to	Transportation
Public awareness of mediation services and what it is	Funding	Inclusion of our programs into mainstream conflict handling procedures; becoming more widely accepted as an acceptable means of resolving conflict
Lack of awareness about interpersonal violence and the effects	Lack of awareness that help is available for their problems	Unwillingness to make a change from that with is familiar (even if it is destructive)
Lack of time for our community relations coordinator	Budget limitations for more intensive outreach	Lack of space currently to serve more clients
Lack of local radio/ television broadcast stations	Cost of alternative outreach (flyers, ads in local media)	
Finding new ways to recruit older volunteers	Identifying groups who are interested in being educated about RSVP	Reaching the "baby boomers"
Two populations – city residents and subset students		
Segmented communities	Lack of knowledge	Single-local media outlet - print
Size of county	Rural areas of county	Transportation
Limited advertising/ communication outlets to recruit volunteers	Few licensed foster and adoptive homes for children for safe, home-like settings in same community	Limited public transportation for parents' access to help
Our inability to provide more rent assistance	We need a greater capability to provide financial counseling (something we are working on)	Meeting the needs of the homeless
Need agencies to make referrals	Need volunteers to go door-to-door	Newspaper is not well used
We ALWAYS have people coming here, so I don't feel like we really have a problem with this		

Table 13. Areas that need improvement in San Marcos (N=15)

Improvement 1	Improvement 2	Improvement 3
More networking opportunities for agency staff	More presentation opportunities for outreach	New ways to reach isolated people
Interagency collaborations	Recruitment and retention	Coordination of services
A vision for San Marcos to provide the highest quality of social services	More licensed foster and adoptive homes for children	More services for seniors/ elderly
Increase in funding for social services	Centralized location for social service organizations	Increase awareness of services that we can provide
Neighborhood youth centers/services to teens	Increased funding to meet community growth	Expansion of public transit system
Gaps in services to specific age groups	Ease of access	Prioritization of human services
A larger building to store food to handle the increase of clients each year	More core volunteers and vehicle drivers	Expanded staff to provide nutrition educations to our clients and greater collaboration with other social service providers
Create a homeless population task force	A user-friendly and updated website through the city that residents can visit for current information on services	
The ability to provide more rent assistance	The ability to provide more assistance to the homeless, especially to those with children.	The ability to provide more financial counseling
Knowledge of landlord/ tenant laws	Find assistance for rent	Transportation
More services for the mentally ill – severely impacted by cuts in funding	More affordable housing	Adequate public transportation accessible to those outside of the university population
Mental Health	Transportation	Housing
Health care coordination	Elder and disability care	Wellness
More awareness of the meals program	Interagency meetings to let agencies know what is available for clients through each agency	
City website does not show our organization as a partner	City to help with transport and funding	City animal control to go door-to-door offering our free services

Table 14. Top priorities for action in a new strategic plan (N=14)

1st Priority	2nd Priority	3rd Priority
Developing a vision of high quality social service structure throughout the city	Strong coordination and communication of plans	Alignment/partnership with Hays County and other cities
Analyze and integrate local action plans (e.g., CDBG Consolidated Plan, CSBG Local Plan, etc.)	Secure additional funding	Develop a system that includes more public participation in the decision-making process
Early intervention	Coordinate all services citywide	Cohesive message
Informal meetings for agency staff to network and discuss their needs	Focus on how to reach isolated people	How to increase financial resources to assist agencies to carry out their missions
Increased funding	Better transportation system	Consolidation of services
Health care services	Wellness and nutrition	Literacy
Mental health services	Inpatient substance abuse services	Homeless population services
Mental Health	Housing	Transportation
Housing: rental, owner, support services	Housing: rental, owner, support services	Housing: rental, owner, support services
Affordable housing	Transportation	Job readiness
Rental assistance.	More public housing.	More services to the homeless, especially to families with children.
Larger building of about 5000-7000 sq ft to store food inventory	Education of clients	More financial support from corporations and foundations for necessary increases in expenses
Outreach	Transportation	
Knowledgeable resource to identify providers of needed help	Reducing reliance on the Courts	Increasing community relations through cooperative dispute resolution

RESIDENTS' CONCERNS

Summary

Resident Survey

A survey design was used to collect information on needs for human services and service use patterns among the present and potential clients of the agencies offering such services in San Marcos and surrounding areas, with the assistance of 18 agencies applying for funds from the City of San Marcos and 7 focus groups comprised of 63 community residents. Responses from 207 respondents were organized and analyzed with software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The typical respondent is Hispanic, middle-aged, a woman, and from a lower-income household. Quantitative and qualitative analyses reveal greatest service needs in health and dental care, public facilities, parks and recreation, and food and hunger. The majority of health and dental care needs were not met. In general, most services do not seem to be easily accessible, often owing to inability to pay for the service, the lack of information on services, and a long wait. A large proportion of the resident respondents are found to have used a computer and to use the Internet frequently, substantiating the use of websites as an effective outreach strategy. Findings also suggest that a majority of the respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of healthcare in the area although a sizeable minority reported their dissatisfaction with the quality. Interestingly but not surprisingly, the notion of a healthy community seems to encompass a strong sense of community as well as the availability of good healthcare services in the area.

Focus Groups

In addition, seven focus group interviews were conducted with San Marcos community residents during the month of July 2012 on behalf of City of San Marcos. This qualitative study of focus group discussion sessions is one of components of the research effort. The goal of conducting the focus groups is to put a local human face on the statistics and data, and assists in checking for accuracy of any and all assumptions, and gaining more in depth knowledge about issues regarding the current utilization, and duplication of human service programs in San Marcos, Texas. This included utilization experiences, knowledge of services, access and service needs, and identification of any duplication of services exist. Organizations were targeted according to specific target audiences who may utilize services within the City of San Marcos. Participants represented a diverse group of families with children, both men and women; including older and young residents of San Marcos. Ultimately, 63 residents participated in focus groups. The focus group data was organized by transcribing the tape recordings into written text and researcher's focus group notes. Patterns and themes across all groups were noted and resident quotes were identified for use in this report. Participants of the focus group were drawn from the following community organizations: Community Action, Inc., Georgia Street Senior Center; El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos; San Marcos Housing Authority, CM Allen Homes; Las Comadres (A Community Advocacy Group); and Jackson Chapel. Participants were drawn from San Marcos diverse population, including African Americans, Hispanics, Caucasian, English and Spanish speaking residents.

The findings from the seven focus group sessions provide valued direction for identifying the key challenges and opportunities that the City of San Marcos face in improving human service utilization of San Marcos residents. Participants identified the following as San Marcos's community strengths: Texas State University, San Marcos; Central Texas Medical Center; The San Marcos River; Parks, San Marcos Independent School District; Cultural and Social Activities; The Senior Nutrition Program; El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos; The Purple Bus (Free Food and Nutrition Program); Fun N Fit at Texas State University, San Marcos Activity Center; volunteerism and seniors helping seniors; rehabilitation services, and transportation. Although the following were identified as strengths, residents perceived that was the lack of access due to the following barriers: (1) not having information about the availability of the resource; (2) not knowing who to contact to access a needed resource, (3) lack of access to transportation, (4) inability to afford to pay for the cost of the resource; (5) language barriers. Respondents emphasized that although San Marcos has these strengths there is a need improve and expand after-school social and cultural recreation and leisure activities and throughout the summer vacation for children and youth that is affordable for low-income families. Respondents had difficulty in accessing information regarding needed services especially for those who do not have access to the internet and Spanish-speaking residents were reported encountering language barriers. There is a concern that there are people who are recent immigrants in the San Marcos community who need services but who are not coming forward and asking for help when they need it.

Currently, there are no formal or informal coordination of services for immigrants and how to access them. Key findings regarding transportation issues were: (1) Public transportation not available on weekends; (2) Public transportation not available after 6pm; (3) Public transportation (bus stop) does not provide shaded area; (4) Need for expanded assisted transportation system with more buses. Respondents highlighted lack of affordable dental care and problems related to accessing health and dental care and knowing where to seek information about health and dental care in San Marcos: Respondent's discussed some groups are underserved especially, low-income families and children, seniors, Spanish speakers, and persons who are sick or disabled. Many seniors reported the following needs: affordable and safe housing, transportation, health care, prescription and over-the counter drugs, in-home support and home health care.

The insights from these diverse qualitative sessions provide an important foundation for enhancing human services programs. These findings indicate that there is a willingness of residents of San Marcos to become involved in improving human service utilization. Furthermore, the city's commitment to improving services is critical to the success of this project, and further review of these findings can provide insight on the perceived barriers that keep residents from utilizing services as needed.

Resident Survey

Service Needs and Use

Resident survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they or their family have needed services in 24 different areas. For each needed service area, respondents were asked to report if they were able to successfully access/receive services. As summarized in Table 15, sizeable proportions of respondents reported various service needs and significant proportions of those in need for services reported not having been served. More than half of the respondents indicated need for services in three areas: 1) health and dental care, 2) public facilities, parks and recreation, and 3) food and hunger. Most of the respondents reporting needs in the latter two services also reported having received services in those areas. Noteworthy is the fact that 7 out of every 10 respondents needed health and dental care but more than 3 out of every 7 respondents in need of the service did not receive it. Other areas where less than 1 of the 2 respondents in need were served are: small business assistance, English as a Second Language programs, immigration services, crime prevention, substance and alcohol abuse services, victim services, housing for special needs population, emergency shelter, violence prevention services, homeless shelter services, and legal services.

Table 15. Respondents who needed service and respondents who needed service but did not receive it (N=207)

Services	Needed count (%)	Not Received count (%)
Senior services	71 (37.2%)	24 (33.8%)
Handicapped services	65 (34.8%)	25 (38.5%)
Youth services	75 (41.0%)	25 (33.3%)
Services for victims of domestic violence	48 (25.4%)	18 (37.5%)
Substance and alcohol abuse services	39 (20.6%)	24 (61.5%)
Child care	69 (36.5%)	33 (47.8%)
Health and dental care	136 (71.2%)	59 (43.4%)
Mental health services	75 (40.3%)	32 (42.7%)
Legal services	72 (39.3%)	39 (54.2%)
Immigration services	32 (17.0%)	21 (65.6%)
Transportation services	88 (45.8%)	38 (43.2%)
Violence prevention services	36 (19.5%)	20 (55.6%)
Employment services	95 (49.0%)	38 (40.0%)
Housing	93 (47.7%)	31 (33.3%)
Emergency shelter	48 (25.7%)	27 (56.3%)
Youth programs	70 (37.6%)	29 (41.4%)
Homeless shelter/services	44 (23.5%)	24 (54.5%)
Victim services	47 (25.0%)	28 (59.6%)
Food and hunger	96 (50.0%)	27 (28.1%)
Small business assistance	45 (24.3%)	32 (71.1%)
Public facilities, parks and recreation	96 (50.8%)	29 (30.2%)
English as a Second Language programs	46 (24.5%)	31 (67.4%)
Crime prevention	50 (26.7%)	32 (64.0%)
Housing for special needs population	44 (23.5%)	26 (59.1%)

When asked to explain needs in services not listed in the questionnaire, respondents pointed out more specific services targeting particular groups. Written-in comments included needs such

as tutoring for children, testing children for learning disabilities, services for single parent homes, shelters for singles, single males, and older adults, services for undocumented immigrants, and legal counseling for senior citizens.

Respondents also provided information on underserved groups. The groups frequently mentioned are senior/elderly citizens (e.g., disabled, low-income, abuse victims), people without health insurance, and veterans, but also noted are people with a criminal background, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer), and adults with behavioral and mental disorders.

Service Accessibility

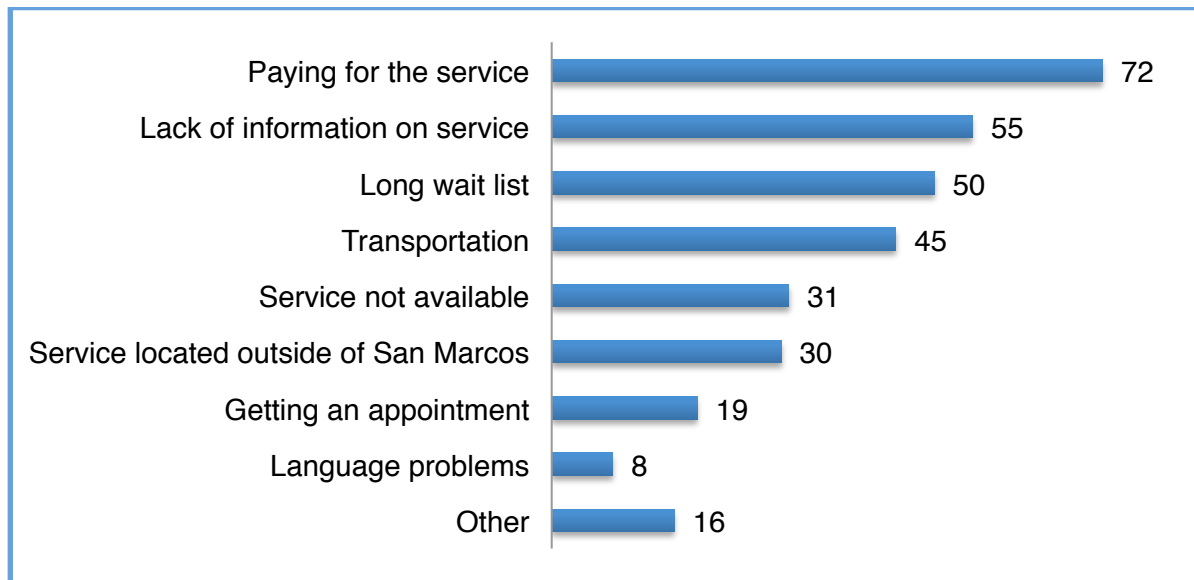
Resident survey respondents rated how accessible each service is to them and to their family on a 4-point scale. Responses are reversed-coded so that the larger number would represent greater accessibility (4 = Very accessible; 3 = Somewhat accessible; 2 = Not very accessible; and 1 = Not accessible at all). Results show that only 3 services had average scores equal or higher than 3, suggesting that most respondents considered those services at least somewhat accessible: they are services in 1) food and hunger, 2) public facilities, parks and recreation, and 3) senior services (Table 16). Given the average scores ranging from 2.3 (immigration services) to 3.1 (food and hunger), most of the services seem to be barely accessible to residents in the San Marcos area.

Table 16. Respondents' rating of service accessibility

Services	Average Score (4-point scale)
Senior services	3.0
Handicapped services	2.9
Youth services	2.9
Services for victims of domestic violence	2.9
Substance and alcohol abuse services	2.8
Child care	2.8
Health and dental care	2.7
Mental health services	2.7
Legal services	2.5
Immigration services	2.3
Transportation services	2.9
Violence prevention services	2.7
Employment services	2.9
Housing	2.8
Emergency shelter	2.7
Youth programs	2.9
Homeless shelter/services	2.6
Victim services	2.7
Food and hunger	3.1
Small business assistance	2.4
Public facilities, parks and recreation	3.1
English as a Second Language programs	2.7
Crime prevention	2.6
Housing for special needs population	2.6

Reasons for being unable to access services are illustrated in Figure 1. Respondents were allowed to check all that applied to them. Approximately a third of them (72) attributed inaccessibility to being unable to paying for the service, and a quarter of them to the lack of information on services and to a long wait list. Whereas agency leaders thought transportation as the most critical issue for service accessibility according the other survey results, it was the fourth most commonly mentioned reason among resident respondents.

Figure 1: Reasons for not being able to access services (# of respondents)



Internet Access

Agency leaders reported in the other survey that the use of the Internet websites could be one of the more effective strategies for outreach. Indeed, 8 out of every 10 respondents reported that they had used a computer, and approximately a third of the respondents used it at home. Moreover, almost three quarters of the resident survey participants were found to use the Internet, with one out of every four respondents using it more than once a day (Figure 2). These data validate the potential effectiveness of the websites for outreach even though it is crucial to keep in mind the significant divide in Internet use on the basis of age groups and educational attainment.

Health Care Services

To reiterate, the largest number and proportion of resident respondents indicated need in the area of health and dental care services, but 43% of those in such need reported that their needs were not served. Respondents also did not think the health and dental care services were easily accessible. When asked how satisfied they were with the overall quality of the healthcare available in this area, almost 6 out of every 10 respondents reported being satisfied (Figure 3), regardless of gender, annual household income, age group, or ethnicity/race.

Figure 2. Use of the Internet during a typical week

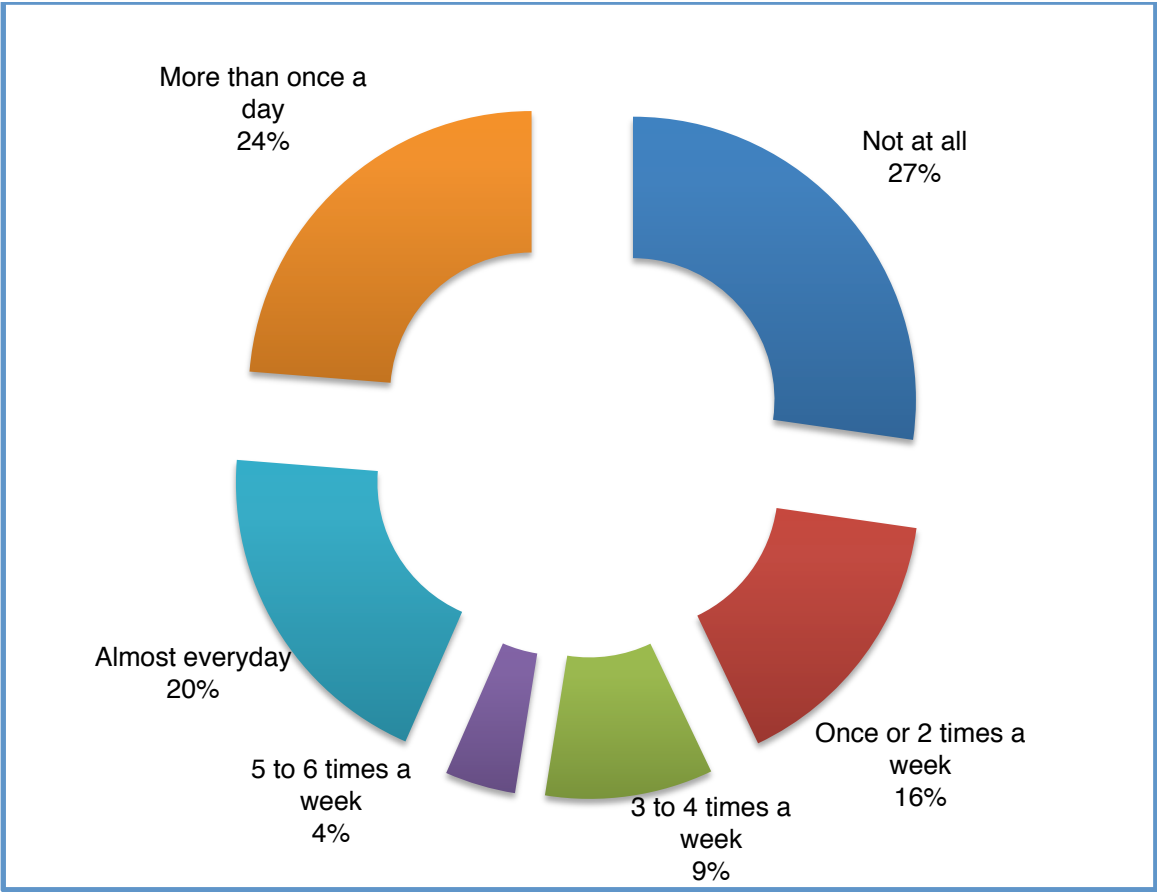
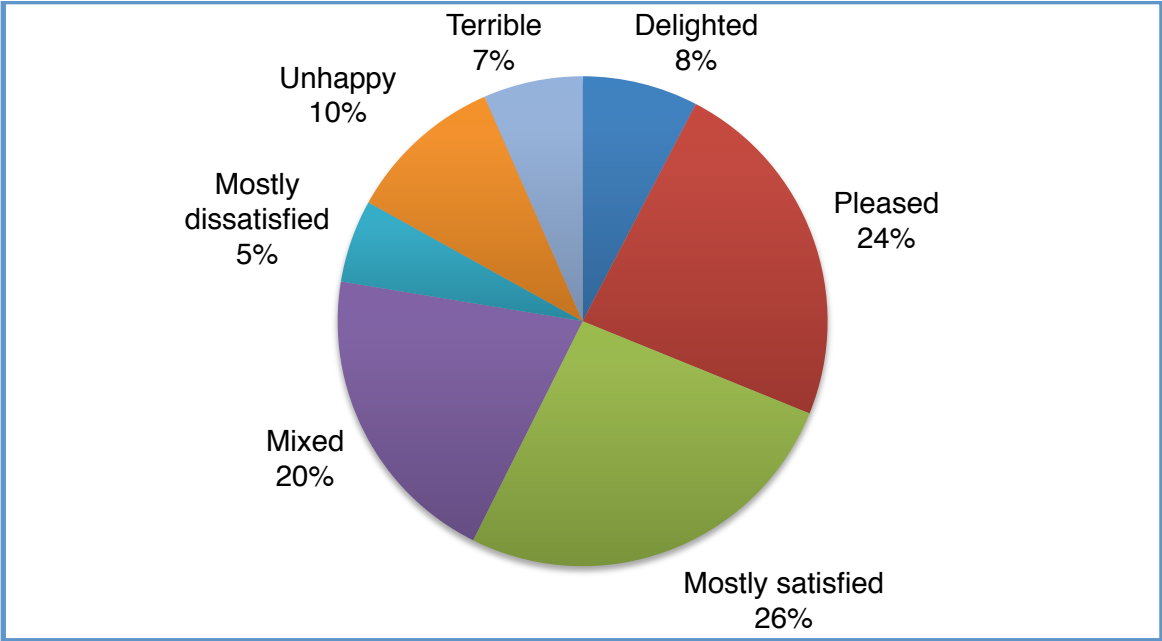


Figure 3. Satisfaction with the overall quality of healthcare in the area



What Makes a Healthy Community?

Following the issue of healthcare quality, an open-ended question sought resident respondents' opinions on "What do you think makes a healthy community?" Below are a few quotes that capture some of the recurring themes in the responses:

- A community that comes together
- Avudandonos con otros (Help each other out)
- One that cares about its people
- Services for all
- Doctors and facilities that are easily accessible
- Good paying jobs to be able to provide healthy foods for our children
- Access to education
- Citywide communication
- Limpio y bonito (Clean and pretty)
- A community that is safe

These quotes and others similar to them articulate resident respondents' wish for a strong sense of community as well as a place where their needs for survival, wellbeing, and healthcare are well met.

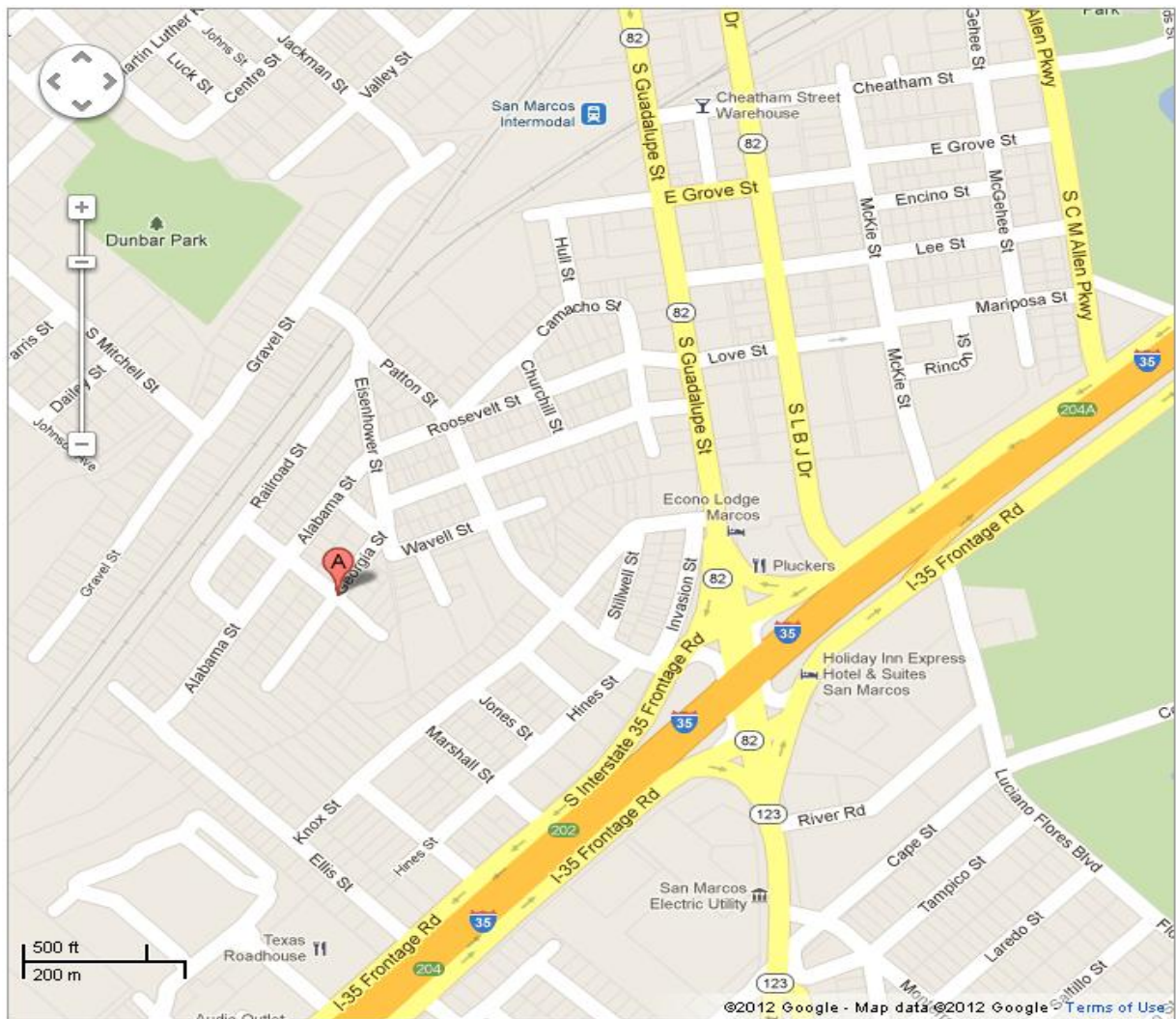
Focus Groups

The Center for Social Inquiry conducted seven focus groups with San Marcos community residents during the month of July 2012 on behalf of the City of San Marcos. This qualitative round of discussion sessions was one of components of the research effort. These focus groups were particularly important, as they engaged members of the community and provided "real life" accounts of findings and conclusions drawn from the survey and statistics. In addition, focus group gave the invaluable local and neighborhood context for issues that may play out differently. The purpose of these carefully designed focus groups was to explore and learn more about issues regarding the current utilization of human service programs in San Marcos, Texas. This included utilization experiences, knowledge of services, access and service needs. More specifically, a set of five semi-structure open ended questions were designed to explore utilization of current human service programs in San Marcos, each focus group was recorded, questions were facilitated by a researcher (in both English and Spanish), and a second researcher documented significant comments from participants.

Focus Group Interview Locations

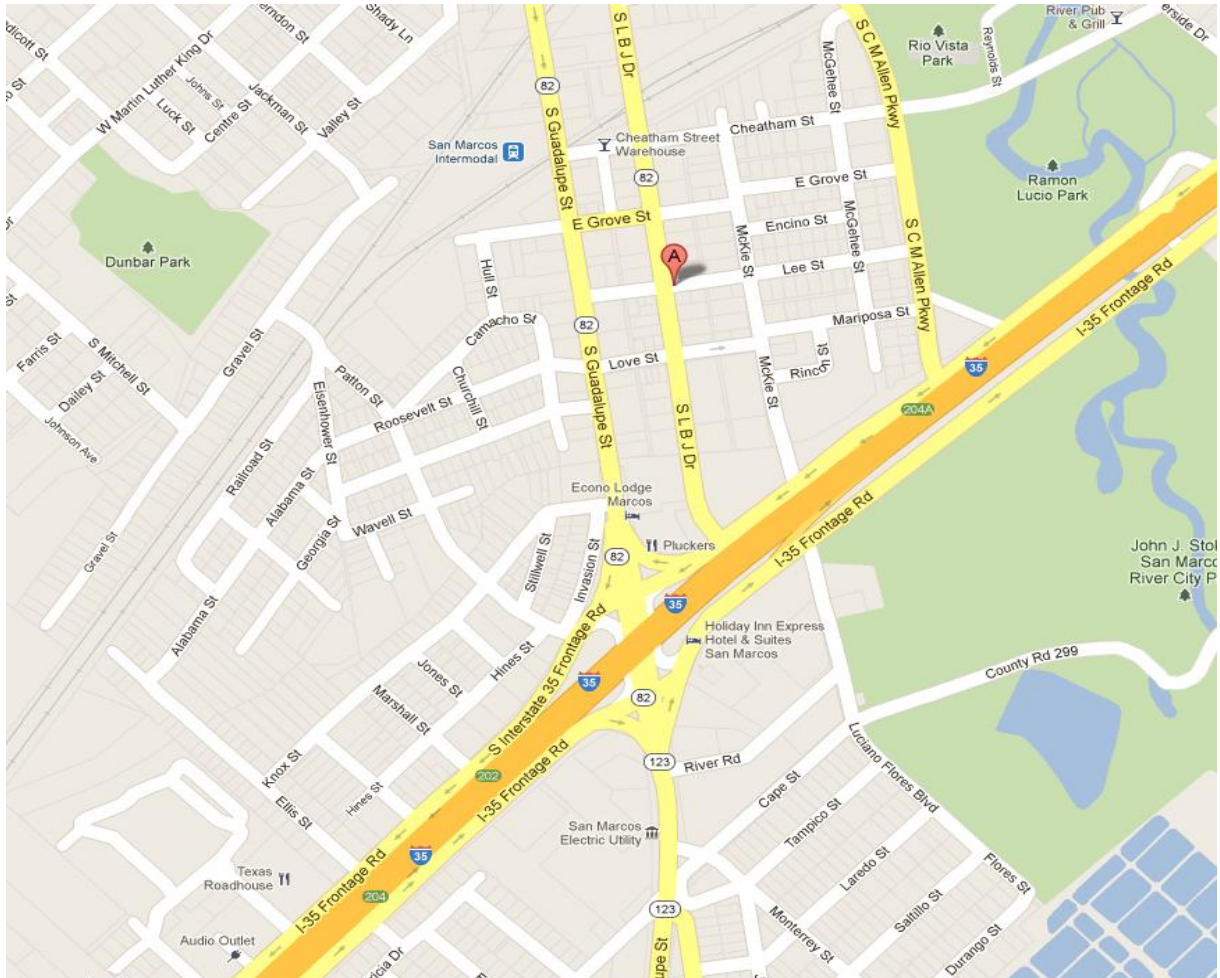
Community Action Inc. “Senior Citizens facilities in San Marcos and Blanco provide senior citizens with opportunities to pursue mutual interests and participate in recreational activities that enhance quality of life, support independence and encourage continued involvement in and with the community. Services include field trips, arts and crafts activities, health screenings, a low-impact aerobic exercise program, information and referral to other social services agencies, and assistance in completing government forms and applications. In addition, individuals enjoy a nutritious noon meal in the company of friends.” (Community Action, Inc., 2012)

Figure 4. Community Action, Inc. San Marcos Senior Center



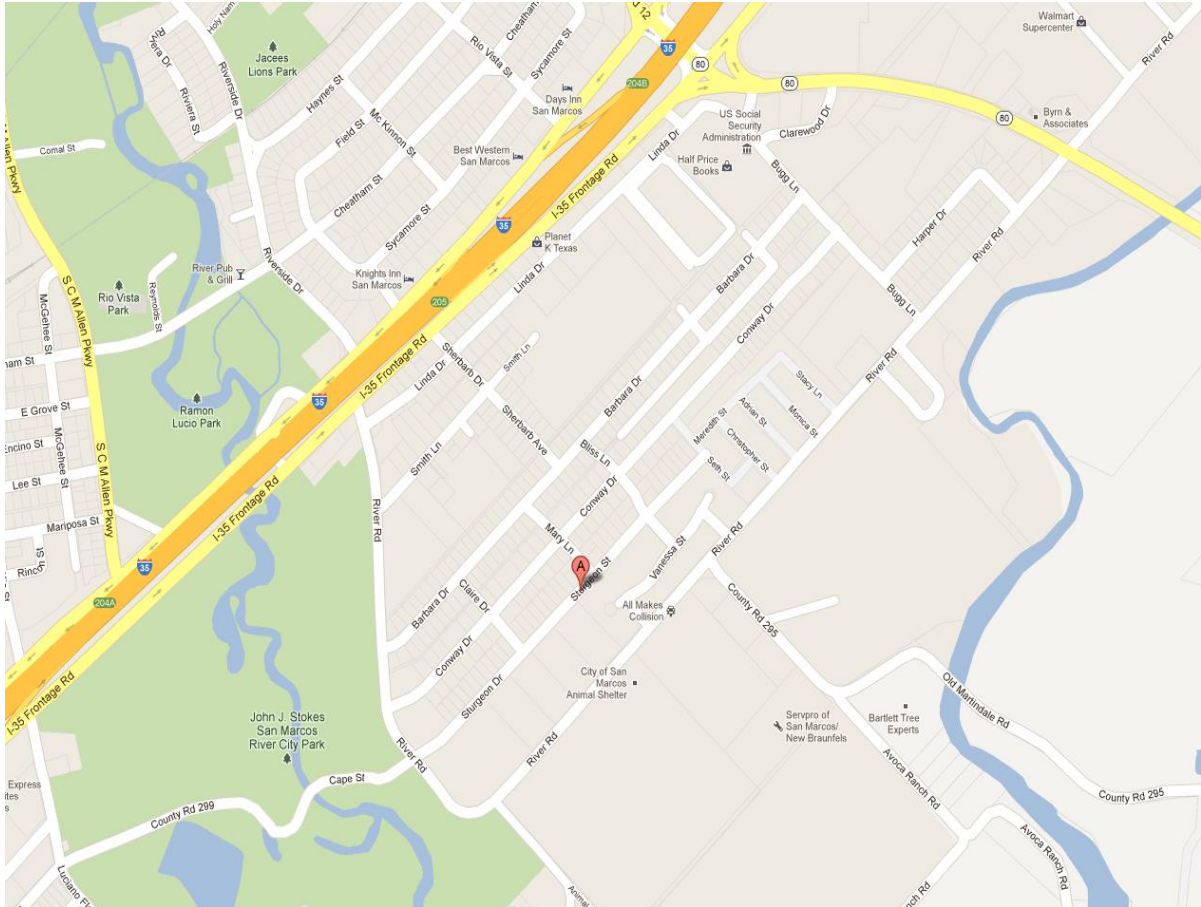
Centro Cultural Hispano De San Marcos. “The Mission of Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos (CCHSM) is to serve as a community beacon for the preservation, development, promotion and celebration of the Hispanic arts, culture, heritage and values. The Centro's programs and educational curriculum include the areas of visual art, theater, dance, literature, music, multi-media and the culinary arts. These vibrant educational classes and interactive events for children, adults, families and diverse audiences take place throughout the year.” (<http://sanmarcoscentro.org/index.html>)

Figure 5. Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos



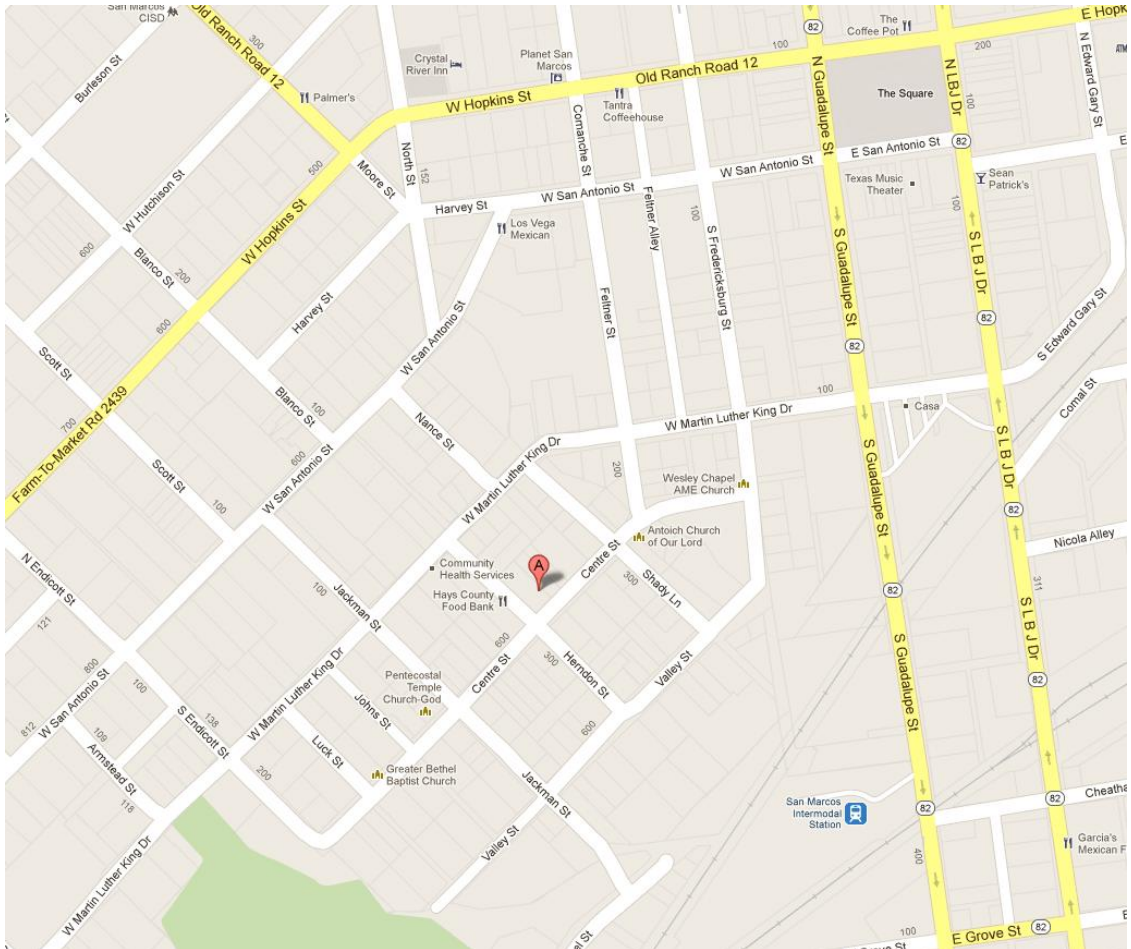
San Marcos Housing Authority-Cm Allen Homes. “The San Marcos Housing Authority is an Equal Opportunity Housing provider and has provided quality housing options and supportive services to the citizens of San Marcos since 1950.” (<http://www.smpa.org/node/1>)

Figure 6. San Marcos Housing Authority-CM Allen Homes



Las Comadres. “Comadres Para Las Americas, a 501(c)(3) organization is an informal internet-based group that meets monthly in many US cities to build connections and community with other Latinas.” (<http://www.lascomadres.org/lco/lco-eng/index.html>)

Figure 7. Jackson Chapel-San Marcos



The findings from the seven focus group sessions provide valued direction for identifying the key challenges and opportunities that the City of San Marcos face in improving human service utilization of San Marcos residents. The insights from these diverse qualitative sessions provide an important foundation for enhancing human services programs. Including but not limited to, outreach, access, and reducing perceived barriers.

The outcome of the focus group process is a collection of insightful life experiences that reflect the day to day challenges faced by those whose need for health and human services is clearly articulated. key issues to arise included barriers to access and availability of services, the lack of affordable recreational activities for youth, limited transportation services, the high cost of healthcare, the need for outreach services, and a need for a centralized location of services.

Focus group participants were asked to identify community strengths and most identified a variety of recreational activities, community, and healthcare services. Although the following were identified as strengths, a common concern was the lack of access to most recreational activities. Participant's identified the primary barrier of access related to transportation and cost prohibitive.

Community's Strengths

Participants in the focus group interviews identified the strengths of the San Marcos community as follows:

- College
- Hospital
- River
- Parks
- School district
- Social and cultural activities
- Senior nutrition program
- El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos
- The Purple Bus
- Fun N Fit at Texas State University
- San Marcos Activity Center
- Senior helping seniors
- Rehabilitation services
- Transportation

Participants said:

“The college, but the college is really set up for the college students. But, San Marcos needs to be more family oriented.”

“The hospital offers workshops, screenings and information concerning health issues.”

“If I wanted to go to the park that's fine, that's good. They've given us the castle, the Playscape, new water rapids on the river and some BBQ area for family members to go to, free programs live movies in the park. There are some small things for the families to do.”

“The center has exposed my son to the traditions of the Hispanic culture but it's also given him extra education that is not given by the school systems like Spanish, math or reading.”

Experiences with Human Service Providers

As participants discussed their personal experiences with human services providers, the following categories emerged as perceptions of key barriers experienced by residents. These categories were common themes in all seven focus groups. Residents reported and expressed that these barriers often discouraged utilization of needed services. Overall, across the focus

groups discussions residents reported that they were not fully aware of services offered by the City of San Marcos. Furthermore, when asked to identify services utilized in the San Marcos area participants commented on key organizations located in their neighborhood that was readily available in their geographic location. Overall, residents stated that they lacked information, and knowledge of how to seek assistance. The key issues identified by focus group participants are:

- Transportation
- No health insurance
- Underinsured
- No one available to speak Spanish
- Service cost (too high)
- Difficult to find information

When asked about how easy it is for them to access services in San Marcos when they need the services, residents responded:

“You can’t access services if you don’t know that they exist.”

“Swimming pool fees are too high for a large family and daily fees need to be lowered.”

“On the weekends you cannot go out on the bus. No after hours too.”

“Services exist but the working poor don’t receive free only the very poor. Out-of-pocket is too expensive.”

Community Services

Respondents discussed a number of support, and help available to meet their needs within the San Marcos community. But, some groups still encounter barriers, especially, seniors, Spanish speakers, and persons who are sick or disabled. Participants identified the following San Marcos services:

- Housing
- Rehabilitation Services
- School District
- Senior Center
- Cultural and Performing Arts

Transportation Services. Key findings regarding transportation issues were frequently mentioned and noted during focus group interviews. These are noted below:

- Public transportation not available on weekends
- Public transportation not available after 6pm
- Public transportation (bus stop) does not provide shaded area

- Need for expanded assisted transportation system with more buses and routes

Focus group participants said:

“It is difficult for people who do not have transportation to get around. Many of us do not have a car, and need to ride the bus. This makes getting services difficult, and this adds to our problems.”

“Transportation is especially difficult for senior citizens. It is not easy for us to get out and do things.”

Health Services. Key findings for healthcare primarily focused on lack of affordable dental care.

- Reimbursement rates for dental care are insufficient to cover costs.
- Specialized care is available in other cities-Kyle
- High cost of prescription drugs
- Lack of transportation to appointments and lab
- Minimal choice of specialist (primarily for children)
- Long waiting lists for counseling
- Need for affordable legal representation -(living wills, advance directives)

Study participants said:

“We barely make ends meet but yet we don’t qualify for Medicaid. We are in a bind. If we have an emergency we take our kids to the hospital. There are no clinics out there that if you don’t have insurance you are not going to be seen. I don’t qualify to get Medicaid because I make a little over. I have not seen that there exists in the community such assistance for us.”

“Services exist but the working poor don’t receive free only the very poor. Out-of-pocket is too expensive. Co-pays are too expensive because they have more than one child.”

“We need someone to explain the Affordable Health Care Act because some people are confused.”

“Yes, there is a dentist from Communicare for low income. There are private doctors. If you go to Communicare you need to go to Kyle. We need a dental service for low income persons here in San Marcos.”

Senior Services. Many seniors reported a need to provide information and having needs such as: senior housing, transportation, health care, prescription and over-the counter drugs, in-home support, safety, and housing were all among the issues among residents. Many seniors rely on CART as the primary source of transportation and requested that this service be extended to include after 6 pm and on weekends and from Senior Centers to the San Marcos Activity Center. As people living long and remain in their home in San Marcos, there is an increasing concern about seniors becoming isolated with growing needs without recognizing their need for assistance or not know who to contact to help them. Key findings for senior services are:

- Outreach needed for homebound seniors
- Social isolation can exacerbate mental and physical health
- Minimal transportation
- No shelter for abused elders
- Lack of education on Elder Abuse
- Medications are expensive
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of caregiver support

Focus group members remarked:

“I work with elderly people and I have seen that they receive help at a particular time of day but during the evening/night they are alone with no one to help them or someone to visit.”

“We need affordable housing and help with medications.”

“It is very sunny at the CARTs bus stop and she takes certain medications that she cannot be out in the sun and it does affect her because she has diabetes.”

“I’ve been coming to this place for over 5 years and no one has ever come to speak about elder abuse, we need to know what to look out for.”

Lack of Information and Knowledge

Residents are not aware of various services and lack of information and knowledge of where to seek assistance.

- Unaware of where to seek help for services
- Information difficult to attain
- Minimal information in Spanish
- Difficult to access information regarding services
- Information is available online (Many seniors do not have internet service)
- Waiting list too long

Focus group interviewees reported that it is difficult to navigate San Marcos without speaking English. A disconnect exist between services and residents whose primary language is Spanish. Spanish speaking residents reported encountering language barriers to accessing information and accessing needed services. There is a concern that there are people who are recent immigrants in the San Marcos community who need services but who are not coming forward and asking for help when they need it. Participant's felt one issue may be lack of internet service, and a lack of service material in Spanish. Furthermore, participants expressed a need for a central location of information and access to services. This location would provide a "one stop-shopping" for residents to easily navigate through the system. There are no formal or informal coordination of services for immigrants and how to access them more outreach to this community is needed.

Interviewees elaborated:

"You can't access services if you don't know they exist."

"The information is hard to get and you get frustrated. But when you do find the number you are put on hold. You never get a person you get transferred from one person to another to another."

"There is little information in Spanish."

"Information is online, not many of us have internet."

Conclusions from the Focus Group Interviews

Overall, results discussed regarding focus groups address concerns related to human services utilization in the City of San Marcos. Most commonly identified gaps and barriers related to transportation, access to services and outreach to underserved communities.

- Public transportation limitation presents a significant barrier to residents seeking human services. Transportation costs, times and routes are barriers to seniors, working residents and families with children.
- Outreach to underserved communities is an issue. It is often difficult to measure outreach success to underserved communities. Outreach was a common theme in all focus groups and a noted barrier.
- Access to services is another issue. Inability to access services involved a variety of perceived barriers, including lack of funding, under insured, language barriers, isolation, transportation, and knowledge of programs.
- More senior services are needed. Lacking within the community are services needed by seniors who have become frail and increasingly vulnerable: senior centers, elder abuse shelter, advocates for seniors and affordable long term care options.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Summary

The purpose of the program evaluation is to examine the effectiveness of analyzed social service funding from the Human Services Advisory Board, in order to make suggestions regarding how to best utilize the strengths of the Board's allocations across the City. Primary findings and suggestions resultant from the program evaluation are: duplication in funding is minimal, the same populations may be targeted but receiving different, specialized services; HSAB is reaching an optimal number of persons with restricted financial resources; considering the unique needs (poverty and unemployment higher, income lower) and demographic trends in the City of San Marcos; it is suggested that these groups continue to be served or targeted to be served by HSAB funded social services; prioritize sustainability and multi-level impact, such as agencies that directly serve clients as well as train advocates, volunteers, and mentors, which HSAB is doing at present; require grantees to designate funds for San Marcos residents only to ensure the City population needs are met; rank and/or rate on a numerical system for priority funding to increase precision and objectivity in monies granted; consider what is 'essential' for the residents of San Marcos in their quality of life and rank these types of services as priority in funding, i.e. services that provide food, shelter, safety, education, job training, means out of poverty, etc.; because poverty and immigration are unique needs and documented trends seen in the City of San Marcos and speak to increased funding for these populations in areas of cash assistance, industry and occupational infrastructure, citizenship and naturalization to help lift these persons out of poverty and increase their quality of life. This portion of the needs assessment is concluded with recommendations and suggestions, including aftercare and ranking criteria for increased ease and precision in funding decisions.

Funding Outcomes

The purpose of the program evaluation portion of the San Marcos needs assessment is to investigate outcome measurement of funding expenditures for the over 20 agencies supported by the City of San Marcos. Table 17 shows summative numbers for agencies funded by HSAB in 2012 and the totals of clients served. This is compared to 2013 estimates, if all agencies were funded for the upcoming cycle. San Marcos clients are those persons reporting city residency and receiving social services from funded agencies, yearly clients are all persons served through indirect and direct contact, inside and outside city limits, and direct clients are persons receiving face-to-face tangible services inside and outside city limits. Percentage increases for City of San Marcos residents from 2012 to 2013 estimates is up by 5%, yearly decreased by 45%, and direct client recipients decreased by 30%. Comparing percentages, the decrease for direct clients estimates is of concern and would denote information is needed from the funded social services; however, the increase in 5% of San Marcos residents only, which although an increase, is minimal, and can be considered a deficit, especially of the City is seeking to increase the total of San Marcos residents served. This may also reflect a focus on yearly and direct clients served, even though these percentages decreased, and may be evident of a focus on serving San Marcos residents. These percentage decreases in yearly and direct clients serviced, as well as the minimal increase in San Marcos residents served, may be

attempts to strengthen quality of direct service, expanding their service quantity, or are compensating for reduced budgets and funding experienced by all Texas social services over the past decade.

Table 17. 2012 funding vs. 2013 requests: Client recipients

2012 funded clients served			2013 estimates clients to be served		
San Marcos only	Yearly	Direct	San Marcos only	Yearly	Direct
38,307	189,218	101,996	40,280	103,788	71,877

Service Duplication

Table 18 shows financial and application reports of unduplicated services for 2012 funded agencies and grant-requests for the 2013 funding cycle. Numbers of unduplicated individuals receiving services who were San Marcos residents decreased from 2012 to the 2013 request for funding estimates (27%), as did unduplicated services for total individuals (3%). According to 2012 social service funding and 2013 requests estimations, there are notable changes in service delivery, the primary one being that San Marcos residents receiving unduplicated services may decrease (if all agency estimations hold true and are correct) from 77% of total service delivered to 44%, a 33% decrease in services to San Marcos residents. Also, service delivery according to the same estimations by grant requestors would increase from 26% to 58%, a 32% difference. The conclusion is that if the majority of grants are funded as defined in current 2013 requests, a large percentage of social service delivery would leave the City, including San Marcos residents.

Table 18. Reported unduplicated services 2012 funded and 2013 requests: Percentage comparisons of clients served

Unduplicated services	2012 funded	% of total	2013 requested	% of total
San Marcos	33,260	77%	19,225	40%
Kyle	4,598	10%	4,688	10%
Wimberley	396	1%	1,124	3%
Outside Hays Co.	12,730	26%	27,797	58%
Dripping Springs	457	1%	462	1%
Buda	1,519	4%	1,750	4%
Other	1,301	3%	1,570	4%
Total	49,771	*duplicated client reporting = 122%	48,229	*duplicated client reporting = 120%

Service Cost

Some examples of service cost within the funded agencies are as follows. Nosotros la Gente has a .44 increase in their service from 2012 funding to their 2013 request, providing foot wear to children in need in winter months. This assumes a rise in living/product cost increase that is minimal. Compare this funding request to Community Action, Inc.'s Prescription Assistance Program cost for service recipient of \$245 in 2012, decreasing to \$153 in their 2013 funding request. In their application, they reveal additional pharmaceutical company support and have increased outreach and results in their program to decrease cost of a high priced item, prescription medication, as well as the senior citizen's center. Both services are essential and both reveal measures to either account for living and cost increases and/or finding sustainable ways to decrease their cost of service. In addition, consider Greater San Marcos Youth Council's cost per service recipient, which may appear high at \$1,200; however, this agency is providing essential intervention and prevention services (food, shelter, safety, youth court mediation) directly to San Marcos residents (or persons in the area in need) in two separate programs, the children's homeless shelter and STAR program. Considering cost of mediation and food and shelter, this is a cost-effective expenditure for the HSAB.

Table 19. Cost per service recipient 2012 funding and 2013 requests

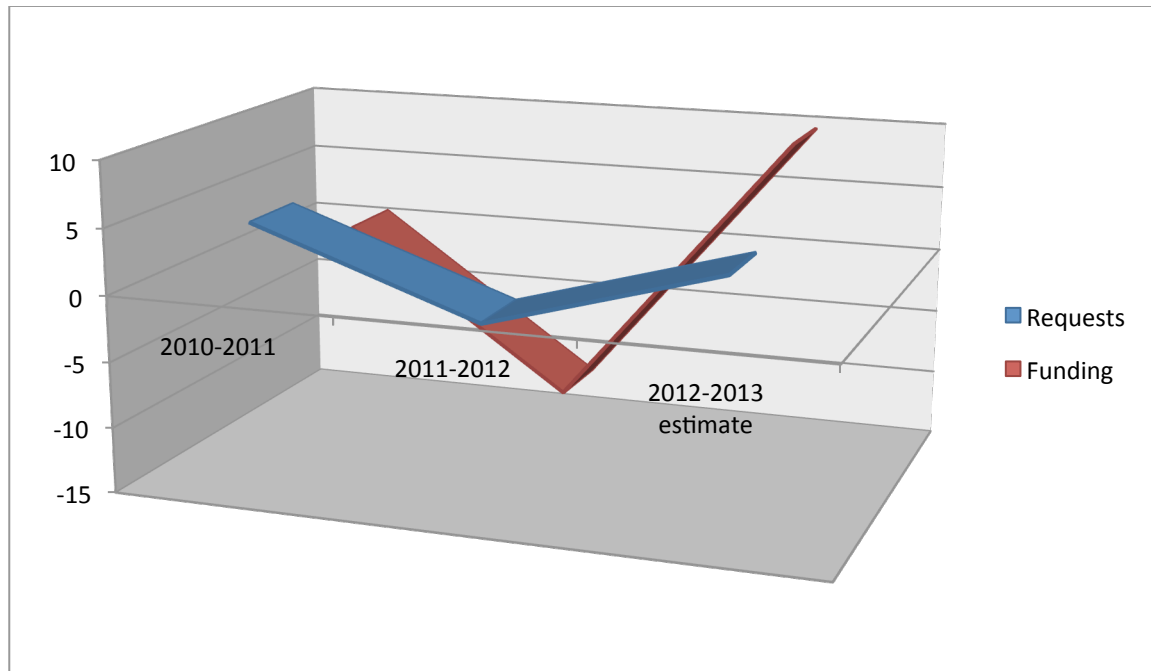
Agency	2012 funded	2013 requested
Hays County Area Food Bank	4.08	3.74
San Marcos Housing Authority	25.80	48.04
San Marcos Youth Service Bureau	64.75	104.98
Southside Community Center: Homeless Shelter	.49	1.86
Hays Caldwell Women's Center: Family Violence Program	135.62	143.32
Texas State University: Safe at Home	57.00	176.70
SMCISD PEP Program	16.07	25.61
Combined Community Action	26.56	37.15
Scheib Opportunity Center	18.00	15.97
Retired/Senior Volunteer Center	12.07	20.41
Hays County Homespun	167.65	149.19
Nosotros La Gente	4.00	4.44
Greater San Marcos Youth Council	64.79	1200.00
Boys & Girls Club of South Central	180.00	640.00
Society of St. Vincent de Paul	18.63	20.87
E CAFÉ'	11.66	N/A
Casa of Central Texas, Inc.	270.00	595.24
Community Action: Prescription Assistance & Senior center	245.45	152.67
Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse	98.44	70.42
Goodwill Industries of Central Texas	N/A	36.81
Pet Prevent a Litter	17.75	11.36
Greater San Marcos Seniors Association	00.18	N/A
Samaritan Counseling Center	N/A	714.29
Hays County Dispute Resolution Center	N/A	33.07
Austin Tenants Council	N/A	270.83

For fiscal year 2012, The City of San Marcos funded 20 agencies for \$401,142 at an average of \$20,057 per agency (maximum- Hays Count Area Food Bank at \$40,500; minimum- Greater San Marcos Seniors Association at \$900). The City reveals an ability to spread funding across diverse social service provision, especially well in budget restricted operations. For 2013 requested funding, there is a 4% increase in requests from 2012 to 2013, if all 24 agencies are funded.

Funding Expenditures

When estimating an average change in City funding for 2013 requests (\$445,713), the average cost per agency would be \$18,571 for 2013. Figure 8 below shows percentage changes in requests and funding from 2010 to 2013. With the 2013 estimate, funding increased by 10% based on the 2011-2012 comprehensive expenditures; funding requests increased by 4% for 2012-2013.

Figure 8. Changes in funding expenditure percentages

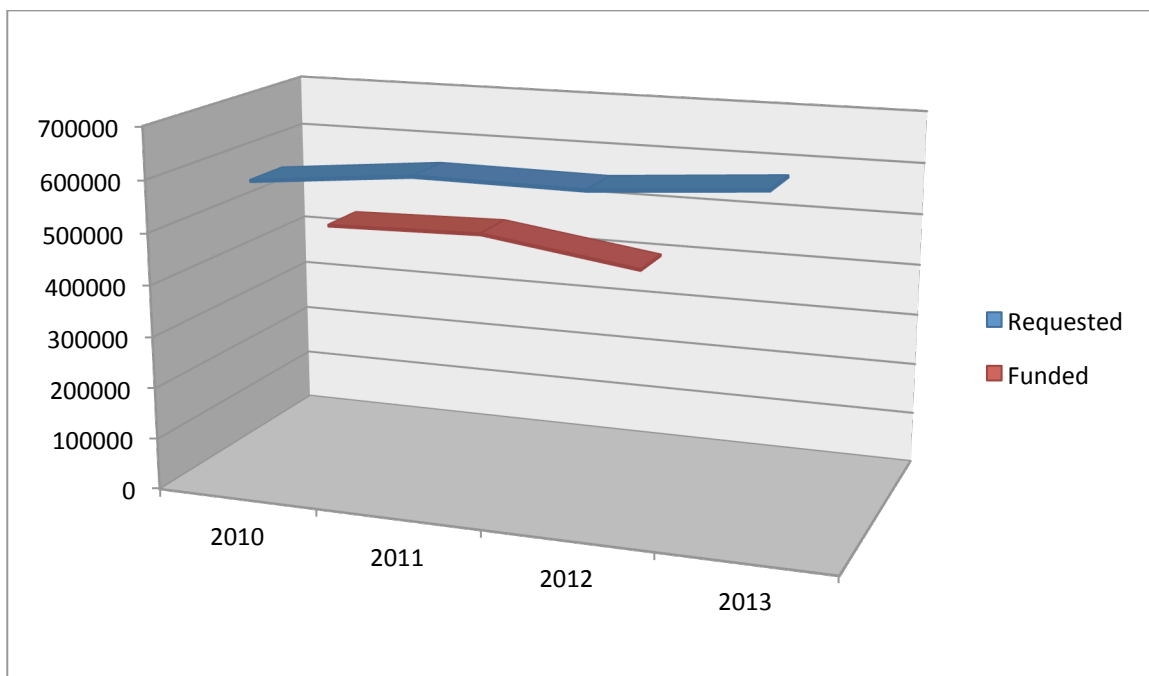


Changes in expenditures in dollar amounts across the funded 20 agencies (24 requests for 2013) are shown in Figure 9 below. Requests for funding have fluctuated. Funding for 2013 is not reported. Requests for funding have increased from 2010 by 21 agencies to 24 agencies in 2013, a 14% increase.

In conclusion, primary program evaluation outcomes from statistical analyses reveal that: a minimal 5% increase is seen in the 2013 estimated service to San Marcos residents from 2012 funded social services and is as well a small proportion of the total number of clients served yearly (21% for 2012) and directly (38% for 2012); numbers in yearly and direct clients in the 2013 estimates for funding requests have decreased. In the analyses of unduplicated services, and according to 2012 social service funding and 2013 requests estimations, there are notable

changes in service delivery, the primary one being that San Marcos residents receiving unduplicated services may decrease (if all agency estimations hold true and are correct) from 77% of total service delivered to 44%, a 33% decrease in services to San Marcos residents. Also, service delivery according to the same estimations by grant requestors would increase from 26% to 58%, a 32% difference. The conclusion is that if the majority of grants are funded as defined in current 2013 requests, a large percentage of social service delivery would leave the City, including San Marcos residents. HSAB is spending more money on higher cost services, less on lower cost services, thus revealing cost efficiency; funding requests increased in 2013 proportionately due to HSAB funding decreases in 2012, which were an average of \$20,000 per funded agency, compared to \$18,500 per requesting agency in 2013; in 2012 funding requests increased by 10%, in 2013, only 4%; HSAB funding has fluctuated over the past three years at 14%.

Figure 9. Changes in funding expenditure amounts



Conclusions

The following findings and recommendations are based on the aforementioned demographic trends, statistical analyses, examination and data entry of all financials and applications of social services funded up to 2012 and applying in the 2013 cycle, and program evaluation analyses of service expenditures, costs, products, and grant quality and improvements.

- Duplication in funding is minimal: Same populations are targeted but receiving different, specialized services.
- HSAB is reaching an optimal number of persons with restricted financial resources.
- Considering the unique needs (poverty and unemployment higher, income lower) and demographics trends in the City of San Marcos, it is suggested that these groups continue to be served or are targeted to be served by HSAB funded social services:

single women with children, Spanish-speakers, non-U.S. citizens, persons of Mexican heritage, the unemployed, seasonal workers, service workers, households with disabled children, senior citizens, persons receiving public assistance, continued educational attainment of residents.

- Prioritize sustainability and multi-level impact, such as agencies that directly serve clients as well as train advocates, volunteers, and mentors, which HSAB is doing at present
- Assist grantees in outcome measurement and grant writing, as well as seeking outside funding to create sustainability for social service delivery in the city.
- Require grantees to designate funds for San Marcos residents only. Table 6 reveals that although proportions are increasing in estimates of San Marcos residents served, this is smaller in comparison to other percentages. This may reflect a need to contract for grant monies for services that serve San Marcos residents only. Additionally, Table 8 reveals, over the past funding cycle in comparison to 2013 estimates in grantee requests, that monies are being spent at high percentages outside the City.
- Require grantees to provide outcome measures to HSAB in end-of-the-fiscal-year reports for use in future grant applications as well as for accountability measures.
- Rank and/or rate on a numerical system for priority funding to increase precision and objectivity in monies awarded. See Appendix A for suggested routes to this measurement.
- Consider what is ‘essential’ for the residents of San Marcos in their quality of life and rank these types of services as priority in funding, i.e. services that provide food, shelter, safety, education, job training, means out of poverty, etc. This is an item that can be added/considered in the measurement in Appendix A.
- Consideration and/or ranking the delivery products that increase a residents’ or families’ sustainability (home improvement, cash assistance, prescriptions) compared to direct contact that increases skills and can be both intervening and preventative (job training, mentorship, counseling) and are equally viable and efficacious social services that are being funded by the HSAB.
- Poverty and immigration are unique needs and documented trends seen in the City of San Marcos and speak to increased funding for these populations in areas of cash assistance, industry and occupational infrastructure, citizenship and naturalization to help lift these persons out of poverty and increase their quality of life.

Evaluation Post-Assessment and Aftercare

The HSAB is doing an exceptional job at spreading its resources to diverse and essential services within the City. The HSAB funds services at comparable cost, meaning higher-priced goods and services are receiving the most funding. For example, mediation costs are expensive and are being funded at a higher rate than goods or services that are less expensive, such as volunteerism and mentorship. Additionally, cost per client reveals this as well. The HSAB is funding many varied agencies, some targeting similar population groups, but with different demographics, hence duplication is minimal at most. For example, cash assistance is provided by more than one agency, but these programs target different groups that are in need. Especially any social services offering cash assistance and in-kind services are definitively needed in the city due to poverty. The primary assessment and suggestion to the HSAB is to

expand present service funding to those most in need in the city, as presented in the demographic trends and need in the previous section. The HSAB is serving these groups already (Southside Community Center, Hays Caldwell Women's Center, Community Action, Inc., to name only a few); however, expanding funding and increasing accountability would serve the city well due to issues with poverty, unemployment, and lower median incomes. To be exact in tracking duplicated services would require names and identifiers of all persons receiving services, then with a tracking system within a master database across all services funded by HSAB; this may not be feasible for the City in terms of cost and personnel.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

1. Coordinate services among service providers, community leaders, and residents by encouraging positive networking and planning among service providers. This can be accomplished with a human resource fair sponsored by the City of San Marcos.
2. Develop an updated directory of human resource services available in the community. These efforts will let the community know about the organizations and groups that exist in the community and allow groups to share information and encourage them to work together. The directory should highlight specific human services that target special populations. This will also prevent duplication of efforts.
3. Disseminate information in a manner that is accessible beyond using the internet technology and telephone as many low-income and rural communities in San Marcos do not have access to these resources.
4. To improve efficiencies in services one mechanism to encourage partnerships among agencies through the grant process.
5. Expand efforts in house and home assistance and safety for seniors and moderate to low-income families.
6. Facilitate the development of a network of service providers who serve special populations such as youth and seniors to communicate and cooperate well. For example, bring youth services providers, including the San Marcos School District together for collaboration and discussion of services.
7. Support the development of affordable childcare and pre-school educational experiences for low-income families to existing service agencies. This can be facilitated by providing scholarships children, youth and families to cover the cost or fees to participate in the program.
8. Build human capacity and leadership development. City of San Marcos can develop a youth council that includes local youth leaders from the local community and service providers to work towards finding ways to develop new initiatives in response to the community's changing conditions in the community.
9. Provide information in Spanish and in English. Encourage and support service providers to provide services that are culturally competent and linguistically appropriate to a growing Spanish speaking immigrant population in San Marcos.
10. Expand low-cost or free recreation, leisure, and cultural arts programs for youth that is accessible to children and youth. This can be facilitated by providing scholarships children, youth and families to cover the cost or fees to participate in the programs and providing transportation for youth.

Grant Application Criteria and Ranking with Formula Suggestions

- The primary suggestion for increasing ease, precision, and objectivity is to create a HSAB-specific ranking system of grant applications. Suggestions for the ranking items are listed below, based on the current applications and grantees' social services funded by the HSAB.
- Essential services provided by the agency. These would be services that include basic needs to help lift residents out of poverty, such as cash assistance, housing, food, etc.
- Multi-level impact. This would include agencies that perform outreach in volunteer services that provide services at low cost or for free. This would include mentorship, which not only assists the mentee, but the mentor.
- Outcomes measurement and accountability to HSAB after annual funding cycles. This would include program evaluation and service delivery statistics to ensure HSAB monies are spent as agreed.
- Quality of the application. This would include any expansion, improvement, and enhancements as noted by the applying agency.
- Sustainability. Agencies revealing sustainability would reveal increases in volunteer services, external and varied funding applications or grant writing endeavors that seek monies beyond those received by the HSAB.
- Targeting demographic populations that are living in poverty or have high-risk need in the city, such as single mothers, disabled children, seniors, persons and families living in poverty, Spanish-speakers, persons receiving government assistance (SSI), Spanishspeakers, immigrants, etc.
- Accountability. Agencies that have a funding history with the HSAB would show quality improvements and accountability to the HSAB in their annual reports in outcomes measures and improvements in their programming. They would also be specific and unique in their reporting of service delivery, including budgeting.
- Expansion of Services. This would include capacity to increase client service delivery and innovation in times of limited funding.
- Feasibility. Agencies applying for funding would consider increases in cost, living wages if requesting salary, and the potential of serving their client population. This item ranking is best described by capacity an agency has to deliver what they are proposing. This includes conducting outcome evaluation when it is the least disruptive.
- Utility. Agencies would show the social service they are proposing to deliver, or do deliver, is serving the needs of those most at risk in the City of San Marcos. This includes providing useful data when reporting evaluation outcomes.

The simplest formula for objective scoring on grant applications would be on a 100 point scale, delimiting items to be ranked to 10 areas. These 10 areas would be ranked on a 1 to 10 scale, 10 being highest quality. Summing the 10 items, priority funding can be decided from highest to a lowest cut-off, perhaps at 70 points, depending on the amount of applications received and reviewed by the HSAB. For example, based on the above suggestions for ranking criteria, if an agency application received a ranking of '10' for each of the 10 ranking areas, then the summative rank for this agency service would equal '100', the highest score. If there additional agencies with '100', these would be rated in order as determined by the HSAB. If an agency service received '7' on all 10 of the ranking areas, this would equal a '70' summative
7
score, and if a cut-off score were predetermined by the HSAB at '70', this application would not be considered in the final considerations for funding.

NEXT STEPS

We are offering additional resources beyond this needs assessment and evaluation to increase the ease in funding decisions as well as to offer aftercare and training to the agencies they fund. Some of these activities were discussed during the assessment team's presentation to the HSAB on August 14th, 2012.

- A workshop on this study for agency administrators before the application deadline. This workshop would be conducted in January 2013.
- Grant writing workshops for funded social services to increase quality of applications, to seek other funding sources to increase their sustainability outside of the City's funding, and to reveal enhancements and improvements in their services.
- Outcome measures workshops and/or individual assistance in program evaluation research. One recommendation to the HSAB is to require this as an accountability measure. This program evaluator would be pleased to provide this service to the HSAB funded agencies either through her services or her advanced graduate research class held each fall that conducts community program evaluation gratis. Beginning this semester, this evaluator has instructed her students to target the HSAB funded social service entities for solicitation in this evaluation research.
- Program evaluation and/or scale/survey/outcome measurement development. To best measure program outcomes, a measurement tool is required. This is an offer and resource to the funded agencies through this evaluator and her fall advanced graduate research course.

METHODOLOGY

Demographic Analysis (by Amy Russell)

Data sources used to reveal growth trends and originate from the United State Census data sets from 2000 and 2010. These data sources are used to keep variables constant and reliable between state, county, and city analyses. Data is managed through an excel database and the inputted into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for statistical analyses of descriptive and correlation statistics to best summarize and analyze the census data for the needs assessment purposes. Data is analyzed quantitatively to establish growth trends and population needs in the City of San Marcos. U.S. Census data along several spectrums of related variables are analyzed statistically for significant correlations among variables.

Agency Study (by Kyong Hee Chee)

A survey questionnaire was developed to obtain the perspectives of the local agencies applying for funding from the Human Service Advisory Board of the City of San Marco for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The survey instrument included questions on their services, the current system of human services, the issues of service accessibility and outreach, and areas for improvement. The questionnaire was administered with the use of SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>).

On July 20, 2012, a link to the online survey and a consent form were emailed to the email addresses of the contact persons of the 24 agencies as indicated in their funding application forms. This occurred a couple of days after a letter from the Principal Investigator of this needs assessment project was emailed to each agency, explaining the purpose of the study. A reminder message was sent out on August 2, 2012 via email. As a result, a total of 19 agency representatives submitted their responses electronically by August 7, 2012, with a 79% response rate (see Table 20). In order to obtain honest responses, participation in the survey was voluntary and survey participants were not asked to identify themselves.

Table 20. Agencies participating in the Service Provider Survey

Agency
CASA of Central Texas
Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas
Greater San Marcos Youth Council
Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Hays-Caldwell Women's Center
Hays County Dispute Resolution Center
Hays County Food Bank
Hays County Homespun
Pet Prevent A Litter (PALS) of Central Texas
Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
Safe at Home, Texas State University
Samaritan Counseling Center
San Marcos Housing Authority Resident Services
Southside Community Center
United Way of Hays County
4 anonymous agencies

SurveyMonkey was used for the analysis of the aggregated quantitative data although all of the raw data including open-ended responses were downloaded to Excel for further data analysis. A qualitative approach was also adopted to analyze themes that emerged from open-ended responses.

Resident Study

Resident Survey (by Kyong Hee Chee)

For purposes of identifying the extent of residents' needs for various services and find out if those needs are being met with services and how accessible the services are, a survey questionnaire was developed and administered to the clients of the local agencies applying for funding from the Human Service Advisory Board of the City of San Marco for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The same survey was also administered to the focus group participants, and not all of these respondents represented the clients of these agencies.

Table 21. Agencies that administered the Resident Survey (N=18)

Agency	Number of completed surveys
Austin Tenants' Council	10
CASA of Central Texas	4
Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas	13
Goodwill Industries of Central Texas	13
Greater San Marcos Youth Council	5
Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse	7
Hays-Caldwell Women's Center	12
Hays County Food Bank	12
Hays County Homespun	4
Pet Prevent A Litter (PALS) of Central Texas	7
Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	6
Samaritan Counseling Center	4
San Marcos Housing Authority Resident Services	16
San Marcos Youth Service Bureau	6
Scheib Opportunity Center	20
SMCISD PEP Program	7
Society of St. Vincent de Paul	7
Southside Community Center	4

A bilingual translator was hired to complete the Spanish translations of the questionnaire and other documents. The English and Spanish questionnaires are attached to this report. During the period between late July and late August 2012, a graduate student assistant (Jordan Law) for the project team contacted all of the 24 agencies that applied for funding to the city and subsequently delivered copies of the survey and consent forms in both English and Spanish, together with envelopes to seal completed surveys, flyers in English and Spanish, and written instructions for administering the surveys. For each of the 18 agencies that participated in this data collection process, 20 copies of the survey (including 7 Spanish surveys) were dropped off, and 157 of the 360 surveys delivered were completed and returned with a response rate of 43.6% (see Table 21). Of the 157 returned surveys, 20 were in Spanish. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. Survey participants identified themselves separately in

a sign-in sheet in order to enter a raffle for a Kindle Fire. A total of 5 Kindle Fires were given out to the 5 randomly selected survey participants, except for the focus group participants who received a grocery store gift card worth \$25. Responses were manually entered in a data file of the software called Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS). Four surveys completed by non-adults (younger than 18 years), and five surveys completed by agency staff were excluded. With the 60 surveys completed by focus group participants, the total number of surveys used is 207.

As shown in Table 22, the sample is predominantly women, middle-aged, Hispanic, and lower-income (median household income of \$10,000 - \$20,000), more or less representing a typical or potential client of human service providers, rather than a typical resident, in the San Marcos area. Using reports from these respondents are unlikely to overestimate service use in that they may receive only one kind of service from one agency and may not receive services for other needs – suggested by the results of data analysis as shown in Table 22. Because some of the agencies where study participants were recruited serve outside of San Marcos, a few respondents live outside the city or Hays County (e.g., Kyle, Martindale, Redwood, New Braunfels).

Table 22. Respondent characteristics (N=207)

Respondent characteristics	Count	Percent
Sex:		
Females	137	74.5%
Males	47	25.5%
Age group:		
18-23 years	19	10.4%
24-44 years	73	39.9%
45-64 years	61	33.3%
65 years or over	30	16.4%
Ethnicity/Race:		
Hispanic	114	57.3%
White/Caucasian	57	28.6%
Black/African American	19	9.5%
Native American	3	1.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	.5%
Other	5	2.5%
Educational Attainment:		
Less than high school	24	13.2%
High school diploma or GED	66	36.3%
Some college	47	25.8%
Graduate from college	45	24.7%
Employment (Some with multiple statuses):		
Employed full-time	45	25.1%
Employed part-time/seasonal	30	16.8%
Unemployed/Not working	47	26.3%
In job training/school	9	5.0%
Retired	22	12.3%
Full-time homemaker	11	6.1%
Disabled	26	14.5%

Table 22. Respondent characteristics (N=207) (Continued)

Respondent characteristics	Count	Percent
2011 Household Income:		
\$5,000 or less	37	21.6%
\$5,001 - \$10,000	30	17.5%
\$10,000 - \$20,000	48	28.1%
\$20,001 - \$30,000	27	15.8%
\$30,001 - \$40,000	15	8.8%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	4	2.3%
\$50,001 - \$60,000	2	1.2%
\$60,001 - \$70,000	2	1.2%
Over \$70,000	6	3.5%
Living Arrangement:		
Homeowner	54	29.8%
Rent a house	32	17.7%
Rent an apartment	53	29.3%
Living with family or friends	29	16.0%
Other	13	7.2%
Household Size:		
1	23	15.9%
2	44	30.3%
3	26	17.9%
4	20	13.8%
5	16	11.0%
6	9	6.2%
7	4	2.8%
8	3	2.1%

Focus Group Interviews (by Gloria Martinez-Ramos and Yvonne Lozano)

The intent in recruiting participants for these sessions was to represent current residents of San Marcos who may or may not utilize current human services. Researcher contacted each agency/organization to facilitate time and date of focus groups. Organizations were targeted according to specific target audiences who may utilize services within the City of San Marcos. More specifically, participants represented a diverse group of families with children, both men and women; including older and young residents of San Marcos. Each session included seven to twelve respondents, with each person signing a voluntary agreement of participation. Sessions lasted approximately one to one and half hours, refreshments were provided and each participant was provided with a 25.00 HEB gift card for their participation. This methodology was designed to provide an informal and an insightful setting in which to approach each topic, including issues that some considered personal in nature. Ultimately, 63 residents participated in focus groups. Local residents, representative of the community's growing diversity, were asked to share their perceptions about living in San Marcos, their views on the benefits of human service programs and issues that concern them. These focus groups were predominantly important, as they involved members of the community who are unlikely to be captured through the survey process. The focus groups with service providers engaged those working with San Marcos residents in order to find out whether and exactly how they felt their experiences regarding human services provided the necessary support.

The data were organized by transcribing the tape recordings into written text and researchers' focus group notes. The dialogue from each focus group was studied and structured. Using the identified categories the information was then organized and characterized into common themes. Patterns and themes across all groups were noted and quotes were identified for use in this report. As the following table illustrates (Table 23), participants were drawn from San Marcos diverse population, including African Americans, Hispanics, Caucasian, English and Spanish speaking residents.

Table 23. Focus group interview participants

Organization	Participants
Community Action, Inc. San Marcos Senior Center	12
Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos	20
San Marcos Housing Authority-CM Allen Homes	19
Las Comadre's (Community Group)	5
Jackson Chapel-San Marcos	7
Total number of participants	63

Program Evaluation (by Amy Russell)

Data sources originate for the program evaluation portion of this needs assessment are directly taken from the City of San Marcos' Human Services Advisory Board's 2010 through 2013 financials and grant applications from local social services that have requested funding (2013 are applications only). Data management was conducted 1) through data entry of all financials into an Excel spreadsheet with consideration to primary variables of interest (available to the HSAB for future use) and 2) statistical analysis through SPSS database. Data analysis was primarily through descriptive statistics to establish program evaluation outcomes and to investigate cost-efficiency in a more user-friendly and for stakeholder comprehension.

Outcomes analyses and reports can be adjusted as needed by the City through the use of the Excel spreadsheet. This final report contains cost-benefit outcomes of individual agencies funded with the understanding that the HSAB weighs content of service delivery of each individual agency and the HSAB funding priorities. Projections and recommendations are quantitative figures only to assist in objectivity and potential ranking of target populations and essential services for future funding cycles and are more efficient when considered in contexts of the City's priorities. Statistical analyses of spending, efficiency, and benefits for social service type and program-specific services are more effective when viewed in concert with the HSAB's mission for City social services.

APPENDICES

The following are all the documents used during this study. All protocols, surveys and informed consent forms were translated to Spanish as appropriate.

Appendix 1. Service Provider Survey Questionnaire

CITY OF SAN MARCOS SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY

1. What is the name of your organization?
2. What type of organization is it? *(select all that are applicable)*
 - a. Health
 - b. Human Services
 - c. Public/Home Health
 - d. Non-profit
 - e. Senior Center
 - f. Housing/Assisted Living
 - g. Hospice
 - h. Religious Organization (e.g. Church)
 - i. Advocacy and Protective Services
 - j. Shelter services
 - k. Other (please state) _____
3. What is the service area that your organization covers?
 - a. San Marcos
 - b. Hays County
 - c. Other (please state) _____
4. What services do you provide for residents of San Marcos *(select all that are applicable)*
 - a. Transportation
 - b. Counseling
 - c. Financial Assistance
 - d. Education/Information
 - e. Housing
 - f. Emergency Shelter
 - g. Safety Planning
 - h. Advocacy
 - i. Legal Assistance
 - j. Medical/Health Care
 - k. Meals
 - l. Mental Health Services

- m. Alcohol and Drug
- n. Other (please state) _____

5. If you chose “Education/Information” as one of the options in question 4, what type of education/information does your organization provide for Elders? *(If you did not select this option, please check “not applicable”)*
- a. Not applicable
 - b. Abuse in Later Life Education
 - c. Housing/Shelter Alternatives
 - d. Financial Programs
 - e. Legal Resources
 - f. Resourced Available in the Community
 - g. Other (please state) _____
6. How do clients typically referred to your agency (e.g. who refers them to you, are there self referrals)?
7. What do you see as the three greatest challenges/barriers to providing services to residents of San Marcos (i.e. from the point-of-view of your organization)? *Please rank the challenges in order of significance*
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
8. What do you see as the three greatest challenges/barriers to outreach of residents of San Marcos (i.e. from the point-of-view of your organization)? *Please rank the challenges in order of significance*
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
9. Would you please rank order what you perceive as the most important issues for residents of San Marcos in accessing services. For example, if you think “Transportation” is the top issue, you would click the First button; if you think “finances” is the third most important issue, click the Third button; and so forth until all the issues are ranked
- a. Transportation

- b. Finances
- c. Reluctance to Seek Help
- d. Lack of Knowledge
- e. Language Barriers
- f. Isolation
- g. Mental Health
- h. Chemical Dependency
- i. Physical Limitations

10. If you review the overall system for providing SERVICES to residents of San Marcos, what three aspects can you identify as currently working well (i.e. strengths on which to build)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

11. Again, if you review the overall system, what three things would you like to see improved (e.g. gaps in service provision, coordination of services)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

12. What is most effective in reaching potential residents who require services in San Marcos? Please list your top two.

- a. Outreach Presentation at Local Community based Organizations
- b. Brochures
- c. TV
- d. Radio
- e. Local Newspapers
- f. Internet Websites
- g. Other Ideas _____

13. Looking ahead to the development and implementation of a strategic plan to improve services, to resident of San Marcos what do you think should be the top three priorities for action?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

14. Overall, how effective is the system in providing services to residents of San Marcos?

(if known)

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Not at all Effective

Somewhat Effective

Very Effective

15. Is there anything else you would like to add at this “needs assessment” stage of developing a Community Response?

Thank you for your time and valuable input

Appendix 2. Service Provider Survey Consent Form

Subject: You are invited to a research survey for the San Marcos Needs Assessment

Dear -----

You are invited to participate in a research study titled “San Marcos Needs Assessment.” This study is being conducted by Dr. Joseph A. Kotarba and his colleagues at The Center for Social Inquiry at Texas State University-San Marcos. The purpose of this study is to understand the human services needs in the San Marcos community as well as the success of the City’s efforts to help provide those services.

In this study, you will be asked to complete an electronic survey. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time. The survey should take only 10-15 minutes to complete.

This survey has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Texas State University. There are no risks associated with participating in this study. The survey collects no identifying information of any respondent. All of the response in the survey will be recorded anonymously. While you will not experience any direct benefits from participation, information collected in this study will help the City of San Marcos meet its citizens’ needs.

If you have any questions regarding the survey or this research project in general, please contact Dr. Kotarba directly (email: jkotarba@txstate.edu; cell: 512-657-4570). If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, please contact Ms. Becky Northcut, Office of Research Compliance, Texas State University (512-245-2314).

By completing and submitting this survey, you are indicating your consent to participate in the study. Your participation is appreciated.

Please click on the survey link below and provide us with your feedback no later than July, 31, 2012

LINK HERE

Appendix 3. Principal Investigator's Letter to Agency Directors

Center for Social Inquiry
Department of Sociology
Texas State University-San Marcos
San Marcos, TX 78666

Dear AGENCY DIRECTOR:

On behalf of the Center for Social Inquiry and the City of San Marcos, I invite you to join us in an important research project. The City Council and the Human Services Advisory Board have commissioned the Center to conduct a needs assessment of human services delivery in San Marcos. The objectives of our study are:

1. To survey all groups currently funded by the City to assess their perceptions of their needs as well as the needs of other groups in San Marcos;
2. To describe the existing distribution of services in order to assess efficiency and effectiveness;
3. To pinpoint possible duplication of services, while proposing policy to eliminate duplication;
4. To integrate the suggestions and concerns of community members and agency leaders;
5. To design research instruments and procedures to be used in future, regular and periodic needs assessment studies; and
6. To help design human services delivery systems that are culturally and demographically sensitive to the citizenry.

We are asking you to assist us and to participate the following ways:

1. In several days, Ms. Jordan Law, a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Texas State, will deliver a packet of questionnaires we would like for you or your staff to distribute to clients. Ms. Law will give you all the simple instructions you need to do this.
2. Ms. Law will collect the completed questionnaires in about ten days.
3. You will receive a brief survey via email in several days. We ask that you complete this survey online at your earliest convenience.

All data collected during our study will be kept in the strictest confidence. At the conclusion of our study in September, we will invite you to attend a meeting at City Hall where we will present our findings and lead a discussion on the future of human services delivery in San Marcos.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions about the study. Thanking you in advance for your dedication to the welfare of our residents and your cooperation with our important

study, I remain

Respectfully,

Joseph A. Kotarba, Ph.D.

Professor of Sociology and

Director, Center for Social Inquiry

Texas State University-San Marcos

Email: jk54@txstate.edu

Office: 512-245-8905

Cell: 512-657-4570

Appendix 4. Resident Survey Questionnaire

CITY OF SAN MARCOS SERVICES

Resident Survey

Please circle the letter or the number that matches your answer.

1. Below, we have listed a number of services that are sometimes needed by residents of San Marcos. First, please circle 1 or 2 to indicate whether you and/or your family have needed these services. For each item that you "Needed Services," please circle 1 or 2 to show if you were able to successfully access/receive the services.

	<u>Needed Services?</u>			<u>Did You Receive Services?</u>	
Services	Yes	No	→	Yes	No
Senior Services	1	2	→	1	2
Handicapped Services	1	2	→	1	2
Youth Services	1	2	→	1	2
Services for Victims of Domestic Violence	1	2	→	1	2
Substance and Alcohol Abuse Services	1	2	→	1	2
Child Care	1	2	→	1	2
Health and Dental Care	1	2	→	1	2
Mental Health Services	1	2	→	1	2
Legal Services	1	2	→	1	2

Immigration Services	1	2	→	1	2
Transportation Services	1	2	→	1	2
Violence Prevention Services	1	2	→	1	2
Employment Services	1	2	→	1	2
Housing	1	2	→	1	2
Emergency Shelter	1	2	→	1	2
Youth Programs	1	2	→	1	2
Homeless Shelter/ Services	1	2	→	1	2
Victims Services	1	2	→	1	2
Food and Hunger	1	2	→	1	2
Small Business Assistance	1	2	→	1	2
Public Facilities, Park and Recreation	1	2	→	1	2
English as a Second Language programs	1	2	→	1	2
Crime Prevention	1	2	→	1	2
Housing for Special Needs Populations	1	2	→	1	2

2. In general, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of the healthcare available in this area?

- a. Delighted
- b. Pleased
- c. Mostly Satisfied
- d. Mixed or Equally Satisfied and Dissatisfied
- e. Mostly Dissatisfied
- f. Unhappy
- g. Terrible
- h. Never Thought about it

3. What do you think makes a healthy community?

4. Have you ever used a computer?

- a. Yes
- b. No

5. Where do you use the Internet?

- a. I Do Not Use the Internet
- b. At the Library
- c. At Work
- d. At Home
- e. Both at Work and Home

6. How many times do you believe you use the Internet during a typical week?

- a. Not at All
- b. Once or Two Times a Week
- c. Three or Four Times a Week
- d. Five or Six times a Week
- e. Almost Everyday
- f. More Than Once a Day

7. Below, we have listed a number of services that are sometimes needed by residents of San Marcos. Please indicate how accessible each is for you and your family.

Services	Very Accessible	Somewhat Accessible	Not Very Accessible	Not Accessible at All
Senior Services	1	2	3	4
Handicapped Services	1	2	3	4
Youth Services	1	2	3	4
Services for Victims of Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4
Substance and Alcohol Abuse Services	1	2	3	4
Child Care	1	2	3	4
Health and Dental Care	1	2	3	4
Mental health Services	1	2	3	4
Legal Services	1	2	3	4
Immigration Services	1	2	3	4
Transportation Services	1	2	3	4
Violence Prevention Services	1	2	3	4
Employment Services	1	2	3	4
Housing	1	2	3	4
Emergency Shelter	1	2	3	4
Youth Programs	1	2	3	4
Homeless Shelter/ Services	1	2	3	4

Victims Services	1	2	3	4
Food and Hunger	1	2	3	4
Small Business Assistance	1	2	3	4
Public Facilities, Park and Recreation	1	2	3	4
English as a Second Language Programs	1	2	3	4
Crime Prevention	1	2	3	4
Housing for Special Needs Populations	1	2	3	4

8. Are there any particular problems or service needs individuals and families have that are not listed in the charts above and not currently being addressed or met?

9. Are there any particular special populations or group of individuals that are not currently being served?

10. If you were unable to access services, indicate the reason. (Choose all that apply)?

- a. Transportation to or from the service
- b. Paying for the service
- c. Problems with language
- d. Lack of information on the service
- e. Getting an appointment

- f. Service located outside of San Marcos
- g. Long wait list
- h. Service not available
- i. Other, please specify: _____

Next, we would like you to provide some information about you that will help us analyze the data from this survey. We are not asking for your name, and your identity and answers will be **confidential**.

a. Sex: Male _____ Female _____

b. *Age group* (check only one):

17 or under	_____
18 – 23	_____
24 – 44	_____
45 – 64	_____
65 or over	_____

c. *Ethnicity/Race* (check all that apply):

Hispanic	_____
Asian/Pacific Islander	_____
Black/African American	_____
Native American	_____
White/Caucasian	_____
Other:	_____

d. *Marital status* (check only one):

Married	_____
Divorced/Separated	_____
Widowed	_____
Never Married	_____
Engaged	_____
Other :	_____

e. What is the highest level of *education* you have attained? (check only one)

Less than high school _____
High school diploma or GED _____
Some college _____
Graduated from college _____

f. What is your current *employment* status? (check all that apply)

Employed full-time _____
Unemployed/not working _____
Employed part-time/seasonal _____
Disabled _____
Retired _____
Full time homemaker _____
In job training/school _____
Other _____

g. What *community/neighborhood* do you live in?

h. What was your *annual household income* in 2011? (check only one)

\$5,000 or less _____	\$30,001 - \$40,000 _____
\$5,001 - \$10,000 _____	\$40,001 - \$50,000 _____
\$10,000 - \$20,000 _____	\$50,001 - \$60,000 _____

\$20,001 - \$30,000 _____

\$60,001 - \$70,000 _____

Over \$70,000 _____

i. Which of the following best describes your current *living situation*? (check only one)

Homeowner _____

Rent an apartment _____

Rent a house _____

Live with family or friends _____

Other _____

j. What is the total number of *people* living in your household? _____

How many of these are children 5 years old or younger? _____

How many of these are children between 6 and 17? _____

How many of these are adults between 18 and 60? _____

How many of these are adults over 60 years old? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Appendix 5. Resident Survey Consent Form

Informed Consent Form – Resident Survey

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose, benefits and risks of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of Study: San Marcos Needs Assessment

Principal Investigator: Dr. Joseph A. Kotarba, Director of the Center for Social Inquiry, Department of Sociology, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

Purpose of the Study: You are being asked to participate in a study commissioned by the City of San Marcos in order to decide on which human service programs to fund. This researcher will seek to increase knowledge and understanding regarding various unmet needs of community residents in San Marcos.

Study Procedures: You will be asked to complete a survey that will take about 10 minutes of your time.

Foreseeable Risks: No foreseeable risks are involved in this study.

Benefits to the Subjects or Others: We expect the project to benefit you by helping the City of San Marcos officials to increase their understanding of the needs of community residents and how effectively and efficiently different services and programs are meeting those needs.

Compensation for Participants: Upon completion of this survey, you will have a chance to win a Kindle Fire through a raffle in which five participants will be randomly selected. Please record your name and contact information (email address and/or phone number) on a separate sign-in sheet.

Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality of Research Records: The confidentiality of your individual information will be maintained in any publications or presentations regarding this project.

Questions about the Study: If you have any questions about the study, please contact the Principal Investigator by emailing him at jk54@txstate.edu or call him in his office at (512) 245-8905.

Review for the Protection of Participants: This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Texas State University (IRB#: _____). Ms. Becky Northcut, the Director of the Office of Research Compliance can be contacted at (512) 245-2102 with any questions regarding the rights of research subjects.

Research Participants' Rights:

Your signature below indicates that you have read or have had read to you all of the above and that you confirm all of the following:

- The researcher has explained the study to you and answered all of your questions. You have been told the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study.
- You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits. The study personnel may choose to stop your participation at any time.
- You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.
- You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to participate in this study.
- You have been told you will keep a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

For the Principal Investigator or Designee:

I certify that I have reviewed the contents of this form with the subject signing above. I have explained the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study. It is my opinion that the participant understood the explanation.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

CITY OF SAN MARCOS SERVICE

Focus Group Interview Guide

1. What would you say are some of this community's strengths?
2. Have you ever had a personal experience with any issues that led you to seek assistance from a local service provider? Was the issue resolved to your satisfaction?
3. What kinds of help and support are available to meet the needs of residents of San Marcos?
4. How easy do you think it is for people in San Marcos to connect with services when they need them?
 - a. Is the barrier:
 - i. Transportation
 - ii. Health
 - iii. Language
 - iv. Lack of Knowledge
 - v. Anything else? Please describe: _____
5. Given that there will never be enough resources to meet all the service needs of a community are there ways that existing resources might be redirected? For instance, are there service areas where you think there is duplication or populations that are provided more than sufficient services?
6. Are there any issues that we have not talked about today that you think are important to service delivery in this community?
 - a. What do you think will be the key issues you and your community will be facing in five years?

We appreciate the time you've devoted today. We value your input in this process and will use the information from the discussion to map the service needs and service gaps for your community. Thank you again for your participation.

Informed Consent Form – Focus Group Interview

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose, benefits and risks of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of Study: San Marcos Needs Assessment

Principal Investigator: Dr. Joseph A. Kotarba, Director of the Center for Social Inquiry, Department of Sociology, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

Purpose of the Study: You are being asked to participate in a study commissioned by the City of San Marcos in order to decide on which human service programs to fund.

This researcher will seek to increase knowledge and understanding regarding various unmet needs of community residents in San Marcos.

Study Procedures: You will be asked to (1) complete a survey that will take about 10 minutes of your time; (2) participate in a group interview that will take about an hour of your time. The interview may be digitally recorded.

Foreseeable Risks: No foreseeable risks are involved in this study.

Benefits to the Subjects or Others: We expect the project to benefit you by helping the City of San Marcos officials to increase their understanding of the needs of community residents and how effectively and efficiently different services and programs are meeting those needs.

Compensation for Participants: You will receive a HEB gift card worth \$25.00 for your participation in this focus group interview.

Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality of Research Records: The confidentiality of your individual information will be maintained in any publications or presentations regarding this project.

Questions about the Study: If you have any questions about the study, please contact the Principal Investigator by emailing him at jk54@txstate.edu or call him in his office at (512) 245-8905.

Review for the Protection of Participants: This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Texas State University (IRB#: _____). Ms. Becky Northcut, the Director of

the Office of Research Compliance can be contacted at (512) 245-2102 with any questions regarding the rights of research subjects.

Research Participants' Rights:

Your signature below indicates that you have read or have had read to you all of the above and that you confirm all of the following:

- The researcher has explained the study to you and answered all of your questions. You have been told the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study.
- You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits. The study personnel may choose to stop your participation at any time.
- You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.
- You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to participate in this study.
- You have been told you will keep a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

For the Principal Investigator or Designee:

I certify that I have reviewed the contents of this form with the subject signing above. I have explained the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study. It is my opinion that the participant understood the explanation.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date