Ciudad Nueva
Comprehensive Qualitative Community Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach is located in the community of Alexander Heights Historic District in central El Paso. According to the mission and vision of Ciudad Nueva, Spanish for “New City,” it “advances the renewal and development of inner city El Paso through the transformation and empowerment of its residents.” This organization is located a short distance from the U.S. – Mexico border and is home to a large number of low-income, first generation Hispanic immigrants. Ciudad Nueva faces many challenges within the Alexander Heights community. Some of the major challenges include unemployment, poverty, domestic violence, child abuse and abandonment, gangs, drug abuse, and drug distribution.

In 2005, in order to provide support to members of the community, Ciudad Nueva launched several community initiatives, which included community dinners, sessions on parenting and positive discipline, in collaboration with the Child Crisis Center. In 2006, the first initiative for the youth of the community was made available. The Launch Pad Center for Youth Development, an after-school mentoring program, provides long-term mentoring to students from the third grade through the fifth grade.

In Spring 2006, Ciudad Nueva began its second community initiative with the S.T.E.P. Center. S.T.E.P. (Strategies To Empower People) is a resource center that will provide community residents with access to faith-based, community and government resources, with the goal of preventing the duplication of services within the community. With this initiative, Dr. Kip Coggins, Associate Professor and Director of the Social Work Program at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), agreed to place eleven senior-level social work students in the community of Alexander Heights, with the expressed goal of producing a Comprehensive Qualitative Community Assessment for the Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach. This
assessment will not only provide useful information, it will be instrumental in Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach’s ability to apply for grants for future initiatives.

**DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

The focus of this community assessment is the area of Alexander Heights in central El Paso, which the organization Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach is attempting to rejuvenate through empowering its citizens. The demographic information collected for this particular locality was taken from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, using U.S. Census Tracts 22.01 and 22.02 and will include comparison statistics with city of El Paso and the state of Texas. Therefore, for the purpose of simplifying this assessment, the community of Alexander Heights will, from time to time, be referred to as Ciudad Nueva. The demographic profile of the community will include: 1) age and gender, 2) race and ethnicity, 3) citizenship and place of birth, 4) major language(s) spoken, 5) education, 6) income, 7) poverty, 8) housing characteristics, and 9) domestic and family violence statistics.

**Age and Gender**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total population for the area of Alexander Heights is 9,064 and residents under the age of 20 comprise 2,726 or 30% of the total population; of which 725 or 8% are children under 5 years of age, 681 or 7.5% are 5-9 years of age, 643 or 7% are 10-14 years of age, and 677 or 7.5% are 15-19 years of age. The remaining age groups are as follows: 668 or 7.4% are 20-24 years of age, 25-34 years of age with 1,227 or 13.5%, 35-44 years of age with 1,149 or 12.7%, 45-54 years of age with 998 or 10.9%, 55-59 years of age with 406 or 4.5% of the total population, and 60-64 years of age with 333 or 3.7% (U.S. Census, 2000). Senior citizens, age 65 years and over comprise 1,567 or 17.3% of the total population, of
which 716 or 7.9% are 65-74 years, 573 or 6.3% are 75-84 years, and 278 or 3.1% are 85 years and over (U.S. Census, 2000).

Ciudad Nueva is considered a community of middle-aged people. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median age for Census Tract 22.01 is 38.1 and the median age for Census Tract 22.02 is 31.8; while the median ages for the city of El Paso is 31.1 years and the state of Texas is 32.3 years.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total population is 9,064, of which 4,238 or 46.8% are male and 4,826 or 53.2% are female. The total population age 18 and over is 6,581, of which and 2,966 or 32.7% are male and 3,615 or 39.9% are female (U.S. Census, 2000). In addition, of those age 65 years and over, 579 or 6.4% are male and 988 or 10.9% are female (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, of the total population, in the city of El Paso 47.5% are male and 52.5% are female and in Texas 49.6% are male and 50.4% are female; while of the total population age and over, in El Paso 31.7% are male and 37.3% are female and in Texas 35.2% are male and 36.6% are female; and of those age 65 years and over, in the city 4.4% are male and 6.3% are female and in the state 4.1% are male and 5.8% are female (U.S. Census, 2000).

**Race and Ethnicity**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 8,752 or 96.6% of residents identify with only one race, of which 7,154 or 78.9% are White, 88 or 1% are Black or African American, 71 or 0.8% are American Indian and Alaska Native, 25 or 0.3% are Asian, and 8 or 0.1% are Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander; while 1,406 or 15.5% are some other race, and 312 or 3.4% are two or more races (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, for the city of El Paso 73.3% are White, 3.1% are Black or African American, 0.8% are American Indian, 1.1% are Asian, 0.1%
are Native Hawaiian, 18.2% are some other race, and 3.4% are two or more races; while for the state of Texas 71% are White, 11.5% are Black or African American, 10.6% are American Indian, 2.7% are Asian, 0.1% are Native Hawaiian, 11.7% are some other race, and 2.5% are two or more races (U.S. Census, 2000).

The area of Alexander Heights has a large Hispanic or Latino population. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that for the two census tracts, 8,051 or 88.8% of the total population are Hispanic or Latino, of which 7,115 or 78.5% are Mexican, 13 or 0.14% are Puerto Rican, 3 or 0.03% are Cuban, and 920 or 10.2% are other Hispanic or Latino. The remaining 1,013 or 11.2% are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 877 or 9.7% are White alone (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, in the city of El Paso 76.6% are Hispanic or Latino, of which 63.8% are Mexican and 18.3% are White only, not Hispanic; while in the state of Texas 32% are Hispanic or Latino, of which 24.3% are Mexican and 52.4% are White only, not Hispanic (U.S. Census, 2000).

**Citizenship and Place of Birth**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, of the total population of 9,064 in Alexander Heights, 5,332 or 58.8% are native born and 3,732 or 41.2% are foreign born. Of the 5,332 native born, 5,222 or 57.6% were born in the United States, of which 4,176 or 46.1% were born in the state of Texas and 1,046 or 11.5% were born in a different state (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, in the city of El Paso 73.9% are native born and in the state of Texas 86.1% are native born (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Alexander Heights, of the 3,732 foreign born, 1,028 or 11.3% are naturalized citizens and 2,704 or 29.8% are not U.S. citizens, while 3,707 or 99.3% were born in Latin America (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, in El Paso, of the 26.1% foreign born, 11.5% are naturalized citizens and 14.6% are not citizens, while 91.7% were born in Latin America and in Texas, of the
13.9% foreign born, 4.4% are naturalized citizens and 9.5% are not citizens, while 74.9% were born in Latin America (U.S. Census, 2000).

**Major Language(s) Spoken**

As in many parts of El Paso, Spanish is the most prevalent language spoken at home in Alexander Heights, with the majority of the population living in that area speaking Spanish and more than half of the population speaks English less than “very well.” According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total population age five years and over is 8,361, of which 6,851 or 81.9% speak Spanish and 4,272 or 51.1% speak English less than “very well.” In comparison, in the city of El Paso, 68.9% speak Spanish at home and 29.9% speak English less than “very well,” and in the state of Texas, 27% speak Spanish at home and 12.3% speak English less than “very well” (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Alexander Heights, 1,474 or 17.6% speak English only at home and only 17 or 0.5% of the population speak another language (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, in El Paso 28.7% speak English only at home and 2.1% speak another language, and in Texas 68.8% speak English only at home and 3.8% speak another language.

**Education**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total population age three years and over enrolled in school is 2,557, of which 92 or 3.6% are in nursing school and preschool, 155 or 6.1% are in kindergarten, 1,114 or 43.5% are in elementary school (grades 1-8), 640 or 25% are in high school (grades 9-12), and 556 or 21.7% are in college or graduate school. In El Paso, 5.2% are in nursing school and preschool, 6% are in kindergarten, 43.9% are in elementary school, 22.7% are in high school, and 22.2% are in college or graduate school; while in Texas, 6.6% are in
nursing school and preschool, 5.9% are in kindergarten, 45.5% are in elementary school, 21.9% are in high school, and 20.2% are in college or graduate school (U.S. Census, 2000).

Ciudad Nueva’s total population 25 years and over is 5,641; of which, 2,020 or 35.8% have attained less than a 9th grade education, 847 or 15% have a 9th to 12th grade education, but no diploma, 1,082 or 19.2% are high school graduates (includes equivalency), 907 or 16.1% have some college, but no degree, 141 or 2.5% have an Associate’s degree, 430 or 7.6% have a Bachelor’s degree, and 214 or 3.8% have a graduate or professional degree (US Census, 2000). In the community of Ciudad Nueva, a total of 2,867 or 50.8% have less than a 12th grade education, with no diploma or equivalent. In comparison, in El Paso 31.4% and in Texas 24.3% have less than a 12th grade education, with no diploma or equivalent (U.S. Census, 2000).

**Income**

According to 2000 U.S. Census, in the community of Ciudad Nueva, the per capita income for Census Tract 22.01 is $11,570 and for Census Tract 22.02 is $8,647; while in the city of El Paso the per capita income is $14,388 and in the state of Texas the per capita income is $19,617.

In the community of Ciudad Nueva, the median household income for Census Tract 22.01 is of $18,764 and for Census Tract 22.02 is $15,526; while in El Paso the median household income is $32,124 and in the state of Texas the median household income is $39,927 (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, for Census Tract 22.01, the median earnings for male full-time/year-round workers is $18,807 and for female full-time/year-round workers is $15,549; while in Census Tract 22.02 is the median earnings for male full-time/year-round workers is $16,964 and for female full-time/year-round workers is $17,904. While in El Paso the median
earnings for this group is $28,989 for males and $21,540 for females and in Texas the median earnings for this group is $34,925 for males and $26,168 for females (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in the community of Ciudad Nueva, the mean retirement income for Census Tract 22.01 is $15,899 and for Census Tract 22.02 is $10,322; while the city of El Paso the mean retirement income is $17,626 and in Texas the mean retirement income is $18,437.

**Poverty**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in the community of Ciudad Nueva there are total of 2,028 families; of which 874 or 43.1% are families below poverty level. Of the total of 1,256 families, with related children under 18 years, 711 or 56.6% are families, with related children under 18 years below poverty level, and of the total of 570 families, with related children under 5 years, 395 or 69.3% are families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level.

In comparison, in El Paso, 19% are families below poverty level, 25.2 % are families, with related children under 18 years below poverty level, and 29.1% are families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level; while in Texas, 12% are families below poverty level, 16.6% are families, with related children under 18 years below poverty level, and 20.7% are families, with children under 5 years below poverty level (U.S. Census, 2000).

The breakdown of income levels of all individuals below poverty level as reported in the 2000 U.S. Census is as follows; for the combined census tracts of the community of Ciudad Nueva, El Paso County, and the State of Texas:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Ciudad Nueva</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>City of El Paso</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>State of Texas</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income below poverty level:</td>
<td>8,741</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>558,932</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>20,287,300</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years and under</td>
<td>4,157</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>124,281</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>3,117,609</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 11 years</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>17,409</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>425,138</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 17 years</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>18,201</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>410,796</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 64 years</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>16,335</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>354,001</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and over</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>61,888</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1,676,502</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Income at or above poverty level: | 4,584 | 52.4 | 434,651 | 77.8 | 17,169,691 | 84.6 |
| 5 years and under | 260 | 2.9 | 39,002 | 6.9 | 1,485,222 | 7.3 |
| 6 to 11 years | 332 | 3.8 | 41,379 | 7.4 | 1,564,647 | 7.7 |
| 12 to 17 years | 275 | 3.1 | 40,358 | 7.2 | 1,557,399 | 7.7 |
| 18 to 64 years | 2,702 | 30.9 | 265,283 | 47.5 | 10,847,323 | 53.5 |
| 65 years and over | 1,015 | 11.6 | 48,629 | 8.7 | 1,715,100 | 8.5 |

Household Characteristics

According to the U. S. Census Bureau, a housing unit is

“a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible.”

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total housing units for both Census Tracts 22.01 and 22.02 are 3,493, of which 1,331 or 38.1% are located in Census Tract 22.01 and 2,161 or 61.9% are located in Census Tract 22.02. Of the total 3,493 housing units, 3,106 or 88.9% are occupied housing units, of which 969 or 31.2% are owner-occupied and 2,137 or 68.8% are renter-occupied (U.S. Census 2000). In comparison, in the city of El Paso of the total 94% occupied housing units, 61.4% are owner-occupied and 38.6% are renter-occupied; while in the
state of Texas of the total 90.6% occupied housing units, 63.8% are owner-occupied and 36.2% are renter-occupied (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Ciudad Nueva, of the total 837 “specified owner-occupied units,” 215 or 25.7% pay more than 35% of their total household income toward selected monthly owner costs. In comparison, in the city of El Paso, 15.7% pay more than 35% of their total household income; while in the state of Texas, 13.6% pay more than 35% of their total household income toward selected monthly owner costs (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Ciudad Nueva, of the total 2,142 “specified renter-occupied units,” 893 or 41.7% pay more than 35% of their total household income toward the gross rent. In comparison, in the city of El Paso, 32% pay more than 35% of their total household income; while in the state of Texas, 27.1% pay more than 35% of their total household income toward gross rent (U.S. Census, 2000).

**Housing Construction**

The 2000 U.S. Census reported a total of 3,493 housing units in Ciudad Nueva with the year the structure was built as follows: 1999 to March 2000 with 13 or 0.4% units, 1995-1998 with 39 or 1.1% units, 1990-1994 with 100 or 2.9% units, 1980-1989 with 216 or 6.2% units, 1970-1979 with 362 or 10.4% units, 1960-1969 with 442 or 12.7% units, 1940-1959 with 968 or 27.7% units, and 1939 or earlier with 1,353 or 38.7% units. Of the 3,493 total housing units in this community, 3,125 or 89.5% were built prior to 1979. This is an important factor due to the fact that maintenance of buildings and refurbishing existing buildings is expensive. In comparison, in El Paso 63.5% of structures were built before 1979; while in Texas 56.7% of structures were built before 1979 (U.S. Census, 2000).
Housing Property Values

Please note that only “specified owner-occupied units” totaling 837 units were reported on the 2000 U.S. Census for the community of Alexander Heights. Properties with values under $50,000 totaled 220 or 26.3% of units. Those with values of $50,000-$99,999 totaled 453 or 54.1% of units. Those with values of $100,000-$149,999 totaled 61 or 7.3% of units. Those with values of $150,000-$199,999 totaled 70 or 8.4% of units. Those with values of $200,000-$299,999 totaled 9 or 1% of units. Those with values of $300,000-$499,999 totaled 16 or 1.9% of units. Finally, those with values over $500,000 totaled 8 or 1% of units.

These findings show that the majority of the 837 specified owner-occupied units, 453 or 54.1% have an assessed value of $50,000-$100,000 (U.S. Census 2000). Of the 61 units at $100,000-$149,999, 51 are in Census Tract 22.01, and of the 70 units $150,000-$199,999, 61 are in Census Tract 22.01, and all “specified owner-occupied units” over $200,000 are in Census Tract 22.01. Therefore, of the total 164 “specified owner-occupied units” with a value of $100,000 and over, 145 are in Census Tract 22.01.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median value of homes in Census Tract 22.01 is $67,800 and in Census Tract 22.02 it is $56,000; while the median value of homes in El Paso $71,300 and in Texas it is $82,500.

Domestic and Family Violence

According to the Center Against Family Violence (CAFV),

“Domestic violence is considered an act, whether physical, verbal or emotional, by a member of a family or household member against another member of the family or household that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or sexual assault or that is a threat reasonably placing the member in fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or sexual assault, but does not include defensive measures to protect oneself.”
According to Brian Hellar, the Research Assistant for the El Paso Police Department at the Headquarters location, statistics on domestic and family violence are not kept for the specific areas of El Paso. Crime data for 2005 will not be available until October 2006. The following are 2004 statistics for the city of El Paso derived from the El Paso Police Department website:

**El Paso City Limits Statistics**

- The number of domestic violence calls the El Paso Police Department receives per month was 2,500
- In 2004, the number of domestic violence calls dispatched was 29,045
- In 2004, the number of arrests made for violations of protective orders was 113
- In 2004, the number of adult homicides that were domestic violence related was 3

In addition, the number of actual domestic violence cases has increased in the year 2004. During the month of January 2004, the number of actual domestic violence cases was 453 compared to 845 cases during the month of August 2004. This is a significant increase, which reflects the increase in family and domestic violence cases in the area of Alexander Heights.

Aaron Hernandez from the Center Against Family Violence (CAFV) also stated that the only statistics available are for the entire city of El Paso. The Family Resource Center (FRC) is a non-residential facility that provides programs and services for families referred by the shelter and anyone in the region facing domestic violence issues (CAFV, 2006).

FRC Statistics for the year 2004-2005 are as follows:

- A total of 1,526 survivors of domestic violence were provided with 10,301 hours of service
- A total of 2,320.5 hours of therapy were provided for persons in this same group

Mr. Hernandez, a lifelong resident of Alexander Heights, does not believe that the number of residents seeking services from CAFV is significantly higher than other areas of El Paso. However, it is important to note that only one in ten cases of domestic and family violence
cases are reported. Therefore, Mr. Hernandez feels there probably exists a much higher number of cases involving domestic violence that we are not aware of.

**COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS PROFILE**

Methods for creating the community characteristics section were based upon observation, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews of people living and/or working in the community, which according to Bernard (1988) are important in order to assess a community. The entire area of the community was observed including homes, businesses, parks and community residents. The community was observed using various methods, such as participant observation, interviews, extended research on crime statistics, and certain points of history of the community. This particular portion of the community assessment focuses on the physical layout of the community, including the community size and physical appearance, conditions of homes and apartments, conditions of streets and sidewalks, community life, and the presence of parks.

The Alexander Heights Community is a large area located in the central part of the city of El Paso and is designated one of the city’s Historic Districts. The community’s boundaries extend from Schuster to Interstate-10 (I-10) and from Mesa Street to Cotton Street. The community is laid out in grids and several busy main streets run through it. One of the major streets is Montana Street, where there are many beautiful historical homes. Montana Street is also where many of the community residents and the entire city gather to enjoy the Annual Sun Bowl Parade, which has become a Thanksgiving tradition for the city of El Paso.

This area is now zoned as a business commercial area. Therefore, many of these renovated and restored homes are now being used as professional offices. The majority of the professional businesses in the community are located on Montana or Mesa. On Montana, most of the businesses are law offices, although other businesses in the area include, but are not limited
to, medical facilities, insurance and title companies, accountat offices, cafes, restaurants and/or bars, daycare centers, flower shops, grocery stores, bakeries, beauty salons and/or barber shops, gas stations, and automotive shops.

The community is made up of both homes and businesses and is a rather large community. There are a large number of homes, apartments, and businesses that occupy this area. On Montana there are two major strip malls, Monterrey Shopping Center and Montana Village. Both of these provide ample off-the-street parking lots. These two centers offer the residents a variety of smaller retail stores. A few blocks from these centers is a Quality Food Mart, which is smaller than a national-type of grocery store, but much larger than your neighborhood corner store. Although, it does not have the selection of Wal-Mart or Albertson, it does provide greater variety and some savings over the smaller neighborhood grocery stores.

There are a many neighborhood grocery stores, such as C&P Grocery, Rio Grande Grocery, Mi Tiendita Favorita, Barron’s Grocery, and Moon Grocery, all within a few blocks of each other, where community residents can purchase daily necessities, such as bread, milk, and tortillas. Some of these stores open their doors at 7:00 AM, while others open at 8:00 AM and stay open until 6:00 PM. Although, some customers stated that items at the neighborhood grocery stores were somewhat expensive, they appreciated the convenience and the welcoming atmosphere.

Many of the signs on most of the businesses were in English; however, the small businesses throughout the community were in both English and Spanish. Almost all of the people walking around the community spoke Spanish. Spanish appeared to be the main language spoken throughout the community and it was obvious that many of residents felt more comfortable speaking Spanish.
One of the most famous businesses in the entire city of El Paso is found in the community of Alexander Heights. The H & H Car Wash and Coffee Shop on Yandell has been an El Paso fixture since 1958. This business washes your car, while you enjoy some of the restaurant’s signature Tex-Mex cuisine, such as made-from-scratch chile rellenos burritos, crispy tacos, and red enchiladas. Many El Pasoans believe H & H serves the best cup of coffee in all of El Paso.

Most of the roads in the community are paved, but in need of repair. The cracks have been filled in with tar or something other asphalt-type of material. There is a great deal of activity in the community in terms of automobile traffic because the community contains many major streets. There are many traffic lights and pedestrian crossing signals at major intersections, which help to protect the residents from the busy traffic. There is a great deal of traffic, not only on the main streets, but on side streets, as well. Although there are clearly posted speed limit signs on many of these streets, most cars have a tendency to go above the speed limit.

The only major source of public transportation seems to be the city bus. There were many bus stops located throughout the community and many busses were observed driving through the community. Buses pass approximately every twenty minutes and several people were observed waiting at the bus stops at different hours of the day. For many residents in this community, this is their main form of transportation.

Some neighborhood sidewalks are run down and in need of repair. Some are cracked and no longer flat, as if the earth moved them up to form a small mound with grass or weeds growing between the cracks. The sidewalks appeared to have some levels higher than others, which made tripping or falling more likely to occur when walking along the sidewalks. This would make walking difficult for any person with a physical disability or the elderly. Also, several homes and
apartment complexes, which were higher than street level, had sidewalks and staircases that appeared in need of repair. Many of the staircases were cracked, while some were not level and appeared to be higher in one part than in another.

The houses in the community are a variety of older historical houses that are mixed in with newer or remodeled homes. As previously stated, the homes located along Montana Street are large majestic homes that have been restored to their original style and beauty and are now professional office spaces. The community has many homes, including government homes and low-income apartments, which appeared to be tiny and “stuck together.” Some homes were set up high, so that the front yards were approximately five feet above street level. The foundations were made of brick and/or cinder blocks and covered with stucco. Some homes were falling apart and appeared to be spilling onto the streets that were only five feet away.

Other homes around the area are smaller homes that are in need of both cosmetic and structural repairs. It was observed that some of the houses had a variety of problems, including rotting window sills, broken windows, broken paneling, cracks in the stucco, and exterior paint that is peeling. Some homes have shutters on their windows that are falling off, while some had repaired cracks on the window with masking tape. Some homes appear to have roofs with holes, while some have been patched. Most of the houses located near the streets of Yandell, Virginia, and Ange appeared to be in poor shape, while some had deteriorated. Several homes had support walls for the foundation of the house that appeared to be buckling outward.

Most homes do not have gardens or grass in their front yards, but instead their front yards were mostly dirt, gravel, or well-maintained xeri-scape. Some lots around the area are empty and resemble a dumping ground. Some of the front yards were full of weeds, empty beer cans, non-functioning cars and refrigerators, and even old furniture, such as dressers. The same is true for
many of the back yards. Most homes have a very small front and back yards and do not have much room for the children to play in.

One house, in particular, had a balcony that appeared to be on an unstable foundation. The wrought-iron bars on the balcony were broken and rusted, there were clothes hanging on rusted bars, and broken toys lay all over the balcony floor. The roof above the balcony had shingles that were broken and discolored, while some were stained and others were mismatched. The roof looked as though it could cave in at any second and the balcony appeared to be unsafe to walk on. Several of the houses and apartments in the community had a similar appearance.

Some of the houses observed in the community were already being repaired and renovated. There were several homes that were being repaired during the observation. The homes had bricks and other building materials laid out on the driveway, with construction workers going in and out of the homes carrying large boards and cinder blocks, while other workers were observed cutting boards or cutting tiles.

In addition to the number of homes, there are a large number of apartments found throughout the community. Many of the apartment complexes in the community were once large homes, which were turned into apartments. These converted homes are located on almost every street of the community. On some streets there are some portions of the street dedicated to large clusters of these little houses that are used as small apartment complexes. On some blocks almost all the homes have been turned into small apartment units where everyone uses the same front entrance and once inside, the hallway is lined with several doors each leading to individual apartments. Many of these units are in need of repair, have extremely dim lighting, and have a musty smell to them. Some of the homes even had small housing units in their backyards that have the appearance of a small shed and are basically rented as studio apartments.
Some apartments looked like large two story homes and appeared more protected than others, because their doors were secured with buzzers and locks. There were some that appeared to be in worse shape than others because they contained windows with broken glass and had no door to shield the lobby from the outside. Many of these apartments contained “for rent” or “rooms for rent” signs on the outside with various rent prices. Most of the apartments with lower rent prices appeared vacant or abandoned.

Strong ties to Catholic religious beliefs are easily observed throughout the community. Many of the homes and apartments display pictures of their favorite saint, such as the Virgin Mary or the Virgen de Guadalupe, in their home windows. Some people even have small religious statues displayed in the front of their homes with artificial, silk flowers around them. Centro de Salud Clinica La Fe had a large intricate mural of La Virgen de Guadalupe, the most prominent Mexican saint, painted on its wall. Some homes have dried palm branches, in shapes of crosses, taped in their front windows or at the top of the front door entrance. Also, some cars parked in driveways had pictures of saints in their car windows.

Some of the buildings and rock walls in the community are marked with graffiti. There is also graffiti on some of the older homes that appeared to be abandoned. Regardless of the appearance of gang activity, some community residents stated gangs are a problem, while others mentioned that there was hardly any gang activity that they knew of and that the neighborhood seemed peaceful, quiet, and safe to them.

It was observed on different days of the week, that many of the residents in the community that did not work outside the home followed some type of pattern. Many were observed coming out of their homes at around 10:30AM and doing housework, as some elderly women hung up clothes, while others were observed throwing water on the front porches and
sweeping them. Other residents sat on their front porches and read the newspaper and others sat on their front steps watching toddlers. Several female residents, between the ages of forty and sixty, stated that they did not work outside their homes, but instead, stayed home to care for their grandchildren, while their children either worked or attended school.

The community has two parks, Houston Park and Lower Tom Lea Park. During the week, both parks look deserted. Aside from the fact that this is probably because the children are in school, several women stated that Houston Park was too far from their homes and that it was dangerous having to care for several children and trying to get them to the park while attempting to cross many busy streets.

Houston Park, which is located on Montana and Ange, takes up a whole city block, but there is hardly anything in the park. The park has only one small jungle gym, with no swings or any other source of recreational equipment for the children. This playground area is surrounded by a rock wall enclosure, about two feet high. There were no basketball courts or any other type of recreational equipment for the youth in the community. There were a lot of trees in the park and the landscaping was fairly well maintained, with some patches of sand and dirt. There were no public restrooms available. The park did have approximately six benches located throughout the interior of the park. There were benches around the outside perimeter of the park, along the sidewalk, but those were for the bus stops. This park was very clean, and there were about eight large barrel-type trash containers available. There was a fenced-in building on the grounds, but this was for the City Parks and Recreation Maintenance Department.

The second park is Lower Tom Lea Park, located on Schuster and Brown, across from a 7-11 Convenient Store. Although it is a small park, it is larger than Houston Park. The park has very little to offer the community in terms of recreation. It has only one large jungle gym, with
four slides for the children. There were no basketball or tennis courts, or any other types of recreational equipment for the youth in the community. There were a few trees, approximately 27, however the landscaping was fairly well maintained, as there was much more grass than dirt. There were two trash containers available. The only bench available was actually the bus stop bench. There were no public restrooms available.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES PROFILE**

In examining the role of institutions, such as schools, churches, human services providers, and medical facilities in meeting the needs of people who live within the community, the availability, accessibility, and adequacy of health services were reviewed. The services profile will highlight the 1) educational resources, 2) disability and mental health resources, 3) family planning resources, 4) family resources, 5) senior resources, 6) employment/business opportunity resources, and 7) religious resources.

**Educational Resources**

In Alexander Heights, there are a total of eleven schools located in the community, of which three are public, six are private, and two are schools of higher education. All the schools in the community seem very busy and all have a large number of children on the outside hurrying to their vehicles or playing outside. During the research in this community assessment, it was discovered that many schools and organizations provide services to the communities of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez.

**Public Schools**

The three schools in the El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) that serve the Alexander Heights community are Lamar Elementary School located on 1440 East Cliff, Wiggs Middle School located on 1300 Circle Drive, and El Paso High School located on 800 East
Schuster. Lamar Elementary School is pre-kindergarten to fifth grade, Wiggs Middle School is sixth through eighth grade, and El Paso High School is ninth to twelfth grade. These schools are only available for students that live within the district and proof of residency, such as any utility bill, is required.

All three schools in EPISD have social workers and school counselors on campus. Communities In Schools (CIS) is an area-wide program that provides bachelor-level and master-level social workers for the schools. The CIS program social workers work with the principal and teachers in the schools to provide a helping network for the at-risk students and connect students and their families with community resources and services. Each social worker will tailor specific programs to fit the needs of the students and their families, the school, and the community.

According to their website, CIS provides the “Five Basics,” which includes: 1) a personal relationship with a caring adult, through mentors, tutors, and parental involvement programs, 2) a safe place, with after-school and extended-hours programs, 3) a healthy start, with counseling, family initiatives, drug and alcohol education, help for teen parents, among others, 4) a marketable skill, with technology training for the future, college preparation, and career counseling, and 5) a chance to give back, through community service and Junior ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corp) programs.

Lamar Elementary School
1440 East Cliff
Telephone: 915/351-3200

Lamar Elementary School is for students in kindergarten through 5th grade. This school was built in 1962 and was named for Mirabeau B. Lamar, the second president of the Republic of Texas (1836-1841). According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2004-2005 Annual Report Card, this school’s 2005 Accountability Rating is “Academically Acceptable.”
Lamar Elementary is 98% Hispanic and less than 1% is Black/non-Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and White/non-Hispanic (TEA, 2004-2005). Lamar Elementary administration were not able to provide the 2005-2006 academic year ethnicity breakdown, however, based on observations at the school, it appears that these are still an accurate reflection of the current ethnic makeup of the student population.

The following information is from the EPISD annual report entitled, Characteristics of the Schools, 2004-2005: Research, Evaluation, Planning, and Accountability, released November 2005 and shows student percentages in the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Minority</th>
<th>Percent of Economically Disadvantaged</th>
<th>Percent of Limited English Proficiency</th>
<th>Percent At-Risk</th>
<th>Percent in Special/Deaf Education</th>
<th>Percent in Bilingual Education/ESL</th>
<th>Percent in Gifted Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>99%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economically disadvantaged students are those eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program, which is the traditional indicator of socioeconomic status in Texas schools. Each school determined the Limited English proficiency using the Language Proficiency Assessment according to the state criteria. At-risk students are those individuals identified as “at-risk” of dropping out of school before receiving a high school diploma.

According to the TEA, the average class sizes at Lamar Elementary is Kindergarten with 18 students, grade one with 19 students, grade two with 15 students, grade three with 16 students, grade four with 11 students, and grade five with 20 students, which is slightly below the state averages of 19-22 students. The attendance rate for Lamar is 97%, which is slightly higher than the state average of 96%.
In 2006, Ciudad Nueva, along with the assistance of Lamar Elementary School
counselors are working toward the success of Ciudad Nueva’s first initiative for the youth of the
community. The Launch Pad Center for Youth Development, an after-school mentoring
program, provides long-term mentoring to students from the third grade through the fifth grade.
Lamar Elementary School counselors select 10 entering third-graders, that are nominated by
their second grade teachers, based on three criteria: behavior problems, reclusive tendencies, and
undeveloped talent. With the assistance from the Launch Pad Center, Ciudad Nueva Community
Outreach hopes to empower the students and instill in them the value of education.

Wiggs Middle School
1300 Circle Drive
Telephone: 915/231-2100

Wiggs Middle School is for students 6th through 8th grade. This school was built in 1987
and was named for Harold Wiggs, school board member and president (1970-1984). According
to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2004-2005 Annual Report Card, this school’s 2005
Accountability Rating is “Academically Acceptable.”

Wiggs Middle is 93% Hispanic, 6% White/non-Hispanic, 2% is Black/non-Hispanic, and
less than 1% Asian/Pacific Islander (TEA, 2004-2005). According to an EPISD – Ethnicity
Count Report for the 2005-2006 academic year provided by Ms. Socorro Martinez, the Registrar
at Wiggs Middle School, the composition of the students is relatively unchanged, with 93.2%
Hispanic, 5% White/non-Hispanic, 1.2% Black, not Hispanic, and the remaining 0.5% American
Indian/Alaskan Native and Asian/Pacific Islander (personal communication, April 2006).

The following information is from the EPISD annual report entitled, Characteristics of
the Schools, 2004-2005: Research, Evaluation, Planning, and Accountability, released November
2005 and shows student percentages in the following areas:
According to the TEA, the average class sizes at Wiggs Middle for grade six is 22 students, of which 18 students are in English class, 21 students are in Foreign Language class, 20 students are in Math class, 23 students are in Science class, and 18 students are in Social Studies Class, which is in line with the state averages of 21-23 students. The attendance rate for Wiggs is 96%, which is identical with the state average of 96%.

El Paso High School  
800 East Schuster  
Telephone: 915/496-8300

This school is for students in 9th through 12th grade. Built in 1916, El Paso High School is the oldest high school in the city of El Paso. The Roman-style architecture is prominent in the auditorium and in the Corinthian-style porch. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2004-2005 Annual Report Card, this school’s 2005 Accountability Rating is “Academically Acceptable.”

El Paso High is 92% Hispanic, 7% White/non-Hispanic, 1% is Black/non-Hispanic, and less than 1% Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaskan Native (TEA, 2004-2005). According to an EPISD – Ethnicity Count Report for the 2005-2006 academic year provided by Juan De Santiago, a computer specialist at El Paso High School, the composition of the students is relatively unchanged, with 92% Hispanic, 6.4% White/non-Hispanic, 1.3% Black/non-Hispanic, and the remaining 0.3% Asian/Pacific Islander (personal communication, April 2006).

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the TEA, the average class size at El Paso High is 21 students in English class, 21 students in Foreign Language class, 20 students in Math class, 22 students in Science class, and 20 students in Social Studies class, which is in line with the state averages of 21-23 students. The attendance rate for El Paso High is 95%, which is slightly lower than the state average of 96%.

**Private Schools**

The six private schools include St. Clements Nursery School and St. Clements Episcopal School, St. Patrick’s Cathedral, El Paso Bridges Academy, El Paso Country Day School, and Cathedral High School. The private schools also have large playground areas for the children and youth, as well as nicely manicured lawns.

**St. Clements Nursery School**  
810 North Campbell  
Telephone: 915/521-2952

This nursing school is available for half days and full days, five days a week. For full days, the amount is $350 a month, while half days are $175 a month. There is a $15 registration fee and a $45 supply fee, for all art and school supplies. Nursery students are also required to attend mass everyday. In speaking with Lupe, she stated the majority of the children at the nursery school are from west El Paso and the rest from other areas.
St. Clements Episcopal School
810 North Campbell
Telephone: 915/533-4248

This is a co-educational (co-ed – male and female student population) school, for students in kindergarten through 8th grade. Tuition is $7,250 per year and a $90 placement exam is required, as well as a $300 one-time new student fee. Students are offered extracurricular activities and tutoring is available if needed. Students are required to attend mass daily.

St. Patrick’s Cathedral School
1111 North Stanton
Telephone: 915/532-4142

This is a co-ed school, for students in kindergarten through 8th grade. Tuition is $245 a month, which is a flat rate for all students, and does not include books. The cost of books can range from $100-$150. The school does not have a working cafeteria, so students are required to bring lunch or they have the option to purchase prepared meals from a local catering company for $3.00 a day. Parent Diana Reyes, who lives on the east side and has a child attending St. Patrick’s, stated that she believes approximately 65% of the students are from Ciudad Juarez and the remainder from the El Paso area.

El Paso Bridges Academy
901 Arizona
Telephone: 915/532-6647

This is a co-ed school, for students in 1st through 9th grade. Bridges Academy focuses on helping students who have learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, and attention-deficit and disruptive behavior disorders, such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Tuition rates range from $200 to $850. Tuition is based on income and proof of income is required. If parents are undocumented, no tax return is
available, parents are required to bring their last two paycheck stubs. There is no working
cafe
teria in the school, so students are required to bring lunch.

El Paso Country Day School
220 East Cliff
Telephone: 915/533-4492

This is a co-ed school, for students in Pre-school through 12th grade. Tuition is $6,800 per
year and the school offers two payment plans, of 4 monthly installments or 10 monthly
installments. Country Day offers advanced placement (AP) courses, dual college credits, college
preparatory, small classes and low student/teacher ratio. Sylvia, who works in the attendance
office at Country Day, stated approximately 90% of students are from the west El Paso, 7% are
from other areas of the city, and 3% are from Ciudad Juarez. No social worker is available on
campus.

Cathedral High School
1309 North Stanton
Telephone: 915/532-3238

Cathedral High School is in a very tall building, which resembles the church, and has a
university-like appearance. Some parts of the high school campus are gated. This is a Catholic
school for boys in 9th through 12th grades. Tuition is $5,150 per year, excluding the cost for
books. The cost of books can range from $130-$180. Student must take a placement exam before
being accepted to the school. Cathedral offers extracurricular activities, such as sports, speech,
debate, and theater. Tutoring is available if needed. College preparatory courses are available.
Students are encouraged to be active Catholics by attending mass daily and by doing volunteer
work in the community. A student enrolled in Cathedral, who wished to remain anonymous,
stated that he is from Ciudad Juarez and commutes daily. He also stated, approximately 60% of
the students were from Juarez and the remaining 40% are from El Paso, of which 30% are from
the west side and 10% are from other areas of the city. No social workers are available on campus.

**Colleges/Universities**

**Computer Career Centers (CCC)**  
6101 Montana  
Telephone: 915/779-8031

CCC provides students with the choice of obtaining an Associates degree in one of three fields: applied science, business management, or as a medical assistant. This school assists with job placement after completion of the degree. Day and night classes are available and financial aid is offered to students who qualify.

**El Paso Community College (EPCC)**  
Rio Grande Campus  
100 West Rio Grande  
Telephone: 915/831-4000

EPCC offers dual programs for high school students that wish to enroll in coursework that counts as college credit. EPCC offers Associates degrees and certifications in a variety of disciplines and fields. EPCC also offers many students a lower-cost option of attending college and receiving college course credit that can then be transferred to UTEP. Financial aid is offered to those who qualify.

**Health Resources**

Although the majority of these agencies do not provide services solely for the residents of the Cuidad Nueva area, it is important to list them and the services they provide. Within the Cuidad Nueva area, there are various agencies and organizations that provide many different services, with many different eligibility requirements that could meet the needs of the area’s residents.
**Thomason Hospital**
4815 Alameda
Telephone: 915/521-7690
Fax: 915/521-7457

Thomason Hospital is El Paso’s only not-for-profit, community-owned hospital and health care provider. This hospital refers patients who are in need of specialty care to other facilities. Thomason Hospital offers the same services as for-profit, private hospitals. Because Thomason is not-for-profit, people with no insurance are admitted to the hospital.

**Las Palmas Medical Center**
300 Waymore Drive
Telephone: 915/521-1200
Fax: 915/544-5203

Las Palmas Medical Center is a 294-bed hospital. It is an acute care facility that specializes in Cardiology, Women’s Services, Labor and Delivery, Children’s Services, Oncology Services, Emergency Medicine, and Treatment of Diabetes. The other for-profit hospitals, Providence and South Western General, near the Alexander Heights community offers the same services as Las Palmas Medical Center. However, the for-profit hospitals in the area only accept patients that have insurance.

**SCCI Hospital**
1740 Curie Drive
Telephone: 915/351-9044

SCCI is a 33-bed specialty acute care hospital for the critically ill and medically complex patient. The hospital’s specialty is to provide patients with focused, intensive, and concentrated acute hospital care. The medical staff consists of medical/surgical nurses, full time respiratory therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, speech pathology therapists, pharmacists, dietitians, wound care specialist, and daily physician visits.
Mesa Hills Specialty Hospital (MHSH)
2311 North Oregon Street
Telephone: 915/545-1823
Fax: 915/545-2138

Mesa Hills Specialty Hospital is a long-term acute care facility. MHSH specializes in wound care, infections diseases, respiratory failure, multiple traumas, and others. The services that it offers are feeding tubes, IV therapy, dialysis, pain management, therapeutic dietary management, and comprehensive family education. The interdisciplinary team members are: physicians, nurses, certified wound, ostomy, continence nurse, pharmacists, social worker, speech/language pathologists, therapeutic dieticians, and case manager. To be admitted to this facility the patient has to meet medical criteria as well as financial.

Centro De Salud Familiar La Fe, Inc.
700 South Ochoa
Telephone: 915/545-4550

Centro De Salud Familiar La Fe serves people of El Paso County. The clinic provides services, such as WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), nutritional counseling, social services, family planning, HIV/AIDS testing and counseling, health education, mental health counseling, and transportation assistance. It also offers a full service family dental center, a laboratory, radiology services, and a pharmacy.

Davita, Inc.
600 Newman Street
Telephone: 915/351-2010

Davita is a dialysis clinic that offers services to anyone living in El Paso and with insurance.
Mesa Vista Dialysis
2400 North Oregon Street, Suite C
Telephone: 915/532-5598

Mesa Vista Dialysis is a hemodialysis clinic that offers services to anyone living in El Paso and with insurance.

Disability and Mental Health Resources

El Paso Rehabilitation Center
1101 E. Schuster
Telephone: 915/544-8484

The El Paso Rehabilitation Center provides several services to assist both children and adults who have either a physical or cognitive disability.

Early Childhood Intervention Program

This program provides services for children with significant developmental delays. Delays can be in learning, movement, ability to talk, and ability to process language. The program provides services for both the children with developmental delays and their parents.

Eligibility: Children are eligible if it has been determined by a professional that their development is atypical or if medical conditions have led to developmental delays. In addition, children have to be between the ages of 0-3 to receive services. The program is free of charge and there are no income requirements.

Services to child:
- Physical, speech and occupational therapy
- Nutritional services
- Special instruction
- Activities to help social and emotional development

Services for family:
- Education about child’s development
- Support groups
- Referral to social and health services
El Papalote Inclusive Daycare

The Papalote Daycare is an inclusive daycare that helps children with special health care needs meet their mental and physical potential. The daycare also accepts children who do not have special health needs, so that the children who do have special needs may learn and model age-appropriate behavior through observation.

Services:
- Daycare from 7am to 6pm
- Financial assistance
- Foster Grandparents who provide additional love and support

United Cerebral Palsy

Assistive Technology Project is aimed at including both children and adults in the community with the help of assistive technology.

Eligibility: Any person with a disability is welcome and the services are provided at no cost.

Services:
- Advocacy
- Workshops to empower parents who have children with disabilities
- Assistive technology lending library

Home of Your Own (HOYO)

HOYO helps people with disabilities purchase a home. For people who have difficulty purchasing a home because of income barriers.

Eligibility: Any person with a disability is eligible and there is no cost for the application process.

Services:
- Down payment and closing cost assistance
- Assistance with modifications to the home
- Pre-and post-purchase counseling and education
- Assistance with budget preparation and credit counseling
Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MH/MR)
1600 Montana
Telephone: 915/887-3410

MH/MR offers 24-hour crisis intervention. Many clients are suffering from suicidal or homicidal episodes and need immediate assistance.

Eligibility: Individuals who are looking for crisis intervention through MH/MR need to be diagnosed a mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression. Income documentation is required and any benefits that a client may receive are taken into consideration. If a client cannot afford to pay for services and they do not have insurance, the agency will help people apply for Medicaid. Clients also needed to be residents of the El Paso area.

Services:
- Assessments
- Outpatients services
- Referral to El Paso Psychiatric Center for inpatient therapy

STARS (Sexual Trauma & Assault Response Services)
710 North Campbell
Telephone: 915/533-7700

This non-profit organization provides counseling to rape victims and their families in all areas of El Paso. They serve male and female victims 12 years and older. If the victim is younger than 12 years of age, they refer them to the Child Guidance Center for Children.

Center Against Family Violence
2212 East Yandell
Telephone: 915/593-1000

This center serves families that have been victims of abuse. They offer shelter services and crisis intervention.

Advocacy Center for Children
1100 East Cliff
Telephone: 915/545-5400

This center provides counseling to all children that have suffered from any kind of abuse.
El Paso Child Guidance Center
2701 East Yandell
Telephone: 915/562-1999

This center offers counseling to all children who have been victims of any type of abuse. They specialize in counseling children under the age of 12. The center uses a sliding scale for payment purposes, but prefers private insurance.

Family Planning Resources

Planned Parenthood
2817 East Yandell
Telephone: 915/566-6707

Planned Parenthood offers reproductive services for women and also provides services for males. Although this clinic falls outside of the Cuidad Nueva boundaries, many of their clients do reside in the area.

Eligibility: Fees for the clinic are based on a sliding scale and are determined by income and family size. Possible clients are asked to bring in their two last paycheck stubs. They are also required to bring in a utility bill as proof of address, and an ID. Currently there are no funds for male services and they are required to pay full price for services.

Services for women:
- Gynecological exams
- Birth control
- Pregnancy tests
- HIV testing and counseling

Services for males:
- STD checks
- General wellness check
- Vasectomy
Adoption Affiliates/ Reproductive Services
730 East Yandell
Telephone: 915/544-2861 or 1-800/303-9169.
If calling from Mexico, the telephone number is 001-800-010-1378.

Adoption Affiliates is a clinic that offers various services to everyone living in El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico. This agency offers services to all pregnant women and they assist undocumented women who are having a baby in the U.S. They also provide pregnancy options, including the termination of pregnancy, and assist with maternity expenses. Women who do not have insurance can get a pap smear and birth control. The clinic accepts major credit cards, cash, money orders and traveler’s checks. Services are provided in English and Spanish.

Women who are pregnant and do not want to keep their child can go to this agency and put the child up for adoption. They provide a program called “Keep in Touch,” which helps mothers who have chosen adoption to have the chance to keep in touch with the child and the child’s adoptive family. They offer STD tests and pap smears at a flat rate of $75 they may also prescribe birth control pills. Gerry Laster, the administrator, stated the clients they serve are from all parts of the Paso del Norte region and that there is no particular area that has a higher rate of need.

San Martin House of Hope
619 Arizona
Telephone: 915/351-7643

House of Hope is a faith-based pregnancy resource center that offers services to women who are dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. The agency does not provide information on terminating a pregnancy, but instead focus on pro-life decisions.

Eligibility: House of Hope provides services free of charge to any women who are dealing with an unplanned pregnancy.
Services:
- Pregnancy tests
- Pregnancy verification forms for Medicaid
- Information on abortion procedures and the risks
- Information on adoption

**Hilltop Family Planning**  
500 East Schuster  
Telephone: 915/542-2801

Hilltop Family Planning offers services to women.

Eligibility: At Hilltop no form of insurance is accepted and there are no income requirements. Every client has to pay the same flat rate for services.

Services:
- Abortions
- Pap smears
- Counseling

**Birthright Pregnancy Center**  
812 North Virginia, Suite 210  
Telephone: 915/533-1818 or 1-800/550-4900.

They provide free pregnancy tests and confidential aid. They also provide counseling to women who are going through an unexpected pregnancy and provide information on terminating a pregnancy.

**Family Resources**

**AVANCE**  
720 Arizona  
Telephone: 915/351-2419

The primary focus of AVANCE is to prepare children for school by educating their parents. AVANCE has several programs that provide services for parents and one program targets people living in the Ciudad Nueva area.
Core Program

This program provides comprehensive parenting classes and on-site early childhood development activities.

Eligibility: Parents need to be considered low-income and the children need to be from the age of birth to 4 years. This program works in collaboration with several schools, which are Lee Elementary, El Paso County Self-Help Center, St. Pious Church, Robert F. Kennedy Pre-K, Borrego Elementary, and Davenport Elementary.

Services: offered half a day a week, for 9 months
- Education of childhood illnesses
- Educational toys made from simple materials
- Behavior and discipline strategies
- Social and emotional needs of children

Even Start Family Literacy Program

This program helps parents who want to learn English so that they may complete their high school education by receiving a general equivalency diploma (GED). This allows parents to be their children’s first teachers.

Eligibility: Parents need to have children from the ages of birth to seven, and they cannot have a high school diploma of GED. This program works in collaboration with Burleson and Lamar Elementary Schools.

Services:
- Parenting classes
- Early child development for pre-school age children
- Adult literacy classes to learn English

Ronald McDonald House
300 East California
Telephone: 915/542-4933 and 915/542-1522

The Ronald McDonald House in El Paso offers different programs and resources to help families in need of financial and housing assistance. This home provides service to families that have children who are in the hospital for long periods of time. They provide food and shelter and offer supportive counseling to family members if needed. Children’s families are referred from
hospitals and the children must be 21 years and under. There is a $10 fee per night, per family and there is a four-person limit per family room.

“Home Away From Home”

“Home Away From Home” is the perfect motto of the Ronald McDonald House’s program, which provides a home setting for parents of ill children. Parents who have children with cancer and are seeking treatment in El Paso are welcomed to stay at the house. The Ronald McDonald House tries to make families feel at home, with many different accommodations. The house has several bedrooms, a laundry room, and a kitchen with four stoves and refrigerators. Each family is allowed to use all the accommodations. Up to 10 families can stay at a single time and each family usually stays about 30 days.

Eligibility: Families must pay ten dollars a night for their stay, however Medicaid is accepted. A child of the family must be receiving cancer treatment in order to be eligible.

Services:
- Housing
- Food pantry
- Nursing services
- Referrals made for counseling services

Lee & Beulah Moor Children’s Home
1100 East Cliff
Telephone: 915/544-8777

This children’s home serves the children of El Paso. They place children 10 years and under in foster homes and all children 10 years and over are allowed visits with the maternal parent twice a week. Their services depend on family’s income and number of people in household. Children and parents or legal guardian have to be U.S. citizens and residents of El Paso. The home also provides counseling for pregnant women, birth parent assistance, and medical care referrals.
**Big Brothers/Big Sisters**
1724 Wyoming
Telephone: 915/544-4203

This non-profit agency serves the community of El Paso. This program was created to assist young children who do not have a positive role model. This program assigns young children with a responsible adult. Together the child and the adult engage in activities to help create a bond and maintain a friendship. Their services are not available to those that are undocumented immigrants.

**El Paso Human Services, Inc.**
1001 Montana
Telephone: 915/534-7227

This is a private non-profit agency that serves the community of El Paso. This agency provides case-management services to clients who have been referred by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), formally Child Protective Services.

**Cradles and Crayon**
1104 Wyoming
Telephone: 915/532-7662

This daycare center, works with Child Protective Services to provide assistance to mothers who are working and attending school, although there is a limited number that can utilize this service during any given period. This daycare center sets up a private paying plan, depending on age and situation. Their only requirement is that you need to be a legal citizen or resident of the U.S.

**Creative Kids**
800 Montana
Telephone: 915/533-9575

They offer arts and crafts classes for children. There is a $20 fee for the cost of supplies. Classes are offered Monday-Thursday and Saturday from 1-4 PM.
**YWCA (Young Women’s Christian Association)**  
1600 Brown Street  
Telephone: 915/533-7475

The YWCA provides after-school care for elementary children from 2-6 PM. They also offer a drop-in rate of $6.00 per day for students who only need occasional after-school care. All children must pay a $30 monthly membership, plus pay a $26 weekly fee. The children are provided snacks, such as fruit and juice.

**Senior Resources**

**Bateman Senior Meals**  
2215 Murchison  
Telephone: 915/351-1174

Bateman provides meals at noontime so that elderly individuals can meet at least one-third of their daily dietary needs.

**Eligibility:** Elderly individuals need to be at least 60 years or older to receive services and they must be low-income. Clients, who are frail, homebound, or handicapped, can receive their meals at home. There is no charge for food services.

**Services:**
- Meals delivered to the home
- Meals available at location

**Palisades**  
1831 Murchison  
Telephone: 915/351-5524

Palisades offers assisted or retirement living services for elderly individuals.

**Eligibility:** Clients do not have to meet requirement needs. Clients pay for services with social security, Medicaid, or Medicare. Retirement living starts at $1,000 a month and assisted living starts at $1,600 a month.

**Services:**
- Own-apartments for retirement living or assisted living
- Short-term/respite care, nursing services
- Free transportation
- Meals
- Activities
Employment/Business Opportunity Resources

**Empowerment Zone**
201 East Main
Telephone: 915/351-1680

The Empowerment Zone provides assistance to businesses through the Border Opportunity Fund, which provides loans for businesses that are either starting up in or relocating to an Empowerment Zone. There are several Empowerment Zones throughout El Paso and one happens to be in the El Paso High School community of Alexander Heights.

Eligibility: Only retail, wholesale, manufacturing, and services business, are eligible for the Border Opportunity Fund. The loan requirements are that the business must be located inside an Empowerment Zone and meet the 51/35% rule. This rule stipulates that 51% of the business’ sales/services has to benefit residents from the Empowerment Zone or 35% of the business’ employees must reside in the Empowerment Zone. Individuals looking for assistance from the Empowerment Zone must submit a business plan and answer a business assessment questionnaire that will be reviewed and considered for investment. Individuals who are applying for a loan must pay a $35 application fee and after the loan is approved a $400 processing fee is also required.

Services:
- Loans ranging from $25,000 to one million dollars
- Low interest rates, 4%-8%

**Religious Resources**

With so many churches and religious organizations, religion seems to be an important part of the community. Even though the community has strong Catholic ties, there are many different churches in the community, each within a few blocks of the other. There seems to be one for every major Christian denomination; St. Patricks’ Cathedral, St. Clements Episcopal Church, Trinity First United Methodist Church, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, First Christian Church, First Baptist Church, and Cristo Rey Iglesia Luterana, just to name a few.

Two of the larger churches are St. Patrick’s Cathedral and St. Clements Episcopal Church. Many of the churches resemble the larger cathedrals. As fitting with the Alexander
Heights Historic District, many of the churches are older buildings and the exteriors have an older authentic feel, with cracks in the brick and discoloration of the paint on the outside walls.

**St. Patrick’s Cathedral**  
1118 North Mesa  
Telephone: 915/532-8761

St. Patrick’s Catholic Cathedral has a congregation of approximately 473 members, the majority of which are Hispanic. Church services are held on Saturday and Sundays. The majority of the services are conducted in English, but there are two services conducted in Spanish.

St. Patrick’s Cathedral prepares sandwiches every day and gives them out to people who are hungry and do not have the means to buy themselves food. People with economic, health, employment, or family problems are referred to other places that are able to help them with their specific situations.

**Pro Cathedral Church of St. Clements**  
**St. Clement’s Episcopal Church**  
810 North Campbell  
Telephone: 915/533-4915

At St. Clements Episcopal Church, the monthly average is approximately 550 members. The church members are a mixture of both Hispanic and Anglo-Americans. A small percentage of the church members live in the community, while others live throughout the El Paso area. Church services are on Sundays at 8:30AM and at 11:00AM and both services are conducted in English. Pro Cathedral Church of St. Clements also offers services in Spanish at 3:00 PM in the McKee Chapel.

St. Clements Church has an English Speaking Center that is dedicated to teaching the English language. The purpose of the center is to reach out from the Church of St. Cement to adults in the El Paso area who want to learn how to speak, read, and write in English. Volunteer teachers are devoted to immerse the students in the English language within a Christian
atmosphere. The centers’ mission is to help the students enter the mainstream of American life. The volunteer teachers come from throughout the community.

St. Clements’ English Speaking Center was opened in the fall of 1980 with only six students. Last year there were over ninety students in six levels. Classes are held every Monday and Wednesday from 9:00-11:00 AM. The school year begins in September and it ends in May. On Sundays, nursery care is provided for the infants and toddlers from 7:45 AM to 12:30 PM. On Wednesdays there is also nursery care available and a children’s program, which begins at 6:15- 8:00 PM. The children’s program is for kids who are in pre-k through fifth grade.

**Trinity First United Methodist Church**
801 North Mesa  
Telephone: 915/533-2674

Trinity First United Methodist Church offers services to English and Spanish speakers. English service is offered on Sunday from 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM. Spanish service is offered on the same day, but at 9:45 AM in the Chapel. The church has a nursery available that provides childcare for all worship services and all church wide events. Childcare is also provided for small group meetings such as, choir practice and Bible studies. Reservations need to be made in advance. At the nursery, children are cared for in a loving atmosphere that promotes Christian values.

The church has a program called Parents’ Night Out – Trinity. This program gives parents of young children the opportunity to enjoy a night out once a month while leaving their children in a secure place. Parents’ Night Out is scheduled for the second Friday of every month from 6:00 PM to 10:30 PM. The children enjoy crafts, recreation, games and snacks. Reservations have to be made in advance and parents have to pay a nominal fee.
**St. Paul’s Lutheran Church**  
1000 Montana  
Telephone: 915/533-0201  

St. Paul’s Lutheran offers two types of worship to the congregation on Sundays, blended services are at 8:30AM and contemporary services are at 11:15AM. Also, on Sundays, the church offers Bible Study for all ages at 10:00AM.

The church has a program called “Drive a Meal,” in which volunteers from the church go to hospitals pick up prepared trays of foods and then deliver the food to former patients that are immobile and bed-ridden. Different area churches are asked to participate during different months. Another program this church offers is in conjunction with the Opportunity Center. Through donations, volunteers collect various items and prepare “hygiene/toiletry bags” and deliver the prepared bags to the center. The church also assists several groups, such as Compassionate Friends, which helps parents deal with the loss of a child, and Community Partners, which helps recognize and prevent child abuse.

**First Presbyterian Church**  
1340 Murchison Drive  
Telephone: 915/533-7551  

At First Presbyterian Church, members total about 240 members, of which approximately 205 church members are Anglo-American and the remaining 35 members are Hispanic. The staff member also stated that the majority of church members did not live in the surrounding community. Church service is on Sundays at 10:15AM and is conducted in English.

The First Presbyterian Church offers the Church Grandparent Program. In this program, families with children sign up to be coupled with “church grandparents.” The program gives children without grandparents the opportunity to experience the grandchild/grandparent relationship.
Parent’s Night Out is another program where the second Friday of every month is reserved for the parents. The hours are from 5:00-10:00 PM. There is a $10 fee per child. Nursery is also available.

**First Baptist Church**  
805 Montana  
Telephone: 915/533-1465

The First Baptist Church offers services for all family members. This church sponsors the Daycare Junction, which is a licensed through the state of Texas. This daycare center provides professional quality care for infants and children through pre-kindergarten.

Borderlands Missions is a partnership mission, in which volunteers cross into the colonias of Juarez to work with the Mission of Principe de Paz (Prince of Peace) Community Outreach. Assistance is provided to the people living in the colonias to paint and build houses, along with general neighborhood clean-ups. This church also has a food pantry, which is open to community members that are in need.

**First Christian Church**  
901 Arizona  
Telephone: 915/533-6819

Worship services are offered Sunday at 10:45AM-noon. The church provides Sunday School on Sunday at 9:30-10:30 AM. This church provides one of the centers that offer aid to the homeless within the community of Alexander Heights. They offer temporary housing, food, church services, a narcotics anonymous group, and a pastoral counseling center.

**Cristo Rey Iglesia Luterana**  
1010 East Yandell  
Telephone: 915/544-6545

Cristo Rey Iglesia Luterana offers worship services in both English and Spanish. The percentage of people attending worship is higher among Latino/Hispanics than any other group.
This Lutheran church ministers to people on both sides of the El Paso/Juarez international border. As a congregation, they strive to grow spiritually, love their neighbors, serve others, educate people about other cultures as well as their own, and help with economic development in the community.

The church has a program called Despues De Escuela or the After-School Program. Children enrolled in the after school program receive tutoring, homework help, study skills, life skills, and a safe and supervised environment. This program was designed for those kids who go to an empty home after school because their parents are at work. The After-School program is from four to six p.m. five days a week. During the summer there is a Summer Recreation Program that provides the same kids with opportunities for games, music, arts and crafts.

The church has another program called Border Immersion Experience (BIE). The Border Immersion Experience gives church members the opportunity to learn about the issues that affect the lives of people living on the border. After learning about the issues, they volunteer to help the people living in the colonias here in El Paso and in Ciudad Juarez.

**STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES PROFILE**

**Community Strengths Profile**

The community of Alexander Heights in central El Paso is one of the oldest communities within the city of El Paso. Because many of the homes in the community of Alexander Heights were the first to be built in the city, many residents have looked toward preserving these historical buildings and a surge in the revitalization within the community has occurred. The community of Alexander Heights, along with the several key resources and organizations, has the ability to build a stronger community for their families. Some of strengths within this
community are the 1) grassroots organizations, 2) importance of religion within the community, and 3) multi-generational ties to the community.

Grassroots Organizations

The community of Alexander Heights is in a strong position to benefit from the Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach, which is a faith-based organization. According to Sami DiPasquale, Executive Director of Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach, through funding from St. Clements Episcopal Church, this outreach organization is working at being a place that will “transform and empower its residents” (Personal Interview, January 19, 2006).

With the various programs offered to the community in 2005, this organization has begun to establish a trusting and positive relationship within the community. With the success of the 2005 community programs Ciudad Nueva started its first initiative for 2006. In collaboration with Lamar Elementary School and Wiggs Middle School, Ciudad Nueva developed the Launch Pad Center for Youth Development. This after-school mentoring program has set long-range goals for the at-risk students in the community, which will instill in these children the importance of education.

Also, in the spring of 2006, Ciudad Nueva, in collaboration with Dr. Kip Coggins the Director of the Social Work Program at the University of Texas at El Paso, worked to produce a community assessment for the Alexander Heights community that will be instrumental in applying for grants for future initiatives. Ultimately, Ciudad Nueva wants to provide community residents with access to faith-based, community and government resources, with the goal of preventing the duplication of services within the community.
Importance of Religion Within the Community

This community is home to many churches of all denominations, all within a few blocks of each other. Strong ties to religion, especially the Roman Catholic faith, are seen throughout many of the homes and apartments, with pictures and statues of favorite saints and icons, such as the Virgin Mary or the Virgen de Guadalupe. A few homes have large religious murals painted on their walls. These are indications both the importance of and the prevalence of religion within the community of Alexander Heights. Because of the deeply rooted religious beliefs and the respect and value placed on religion within the community, the residents may be more inclined to accept the help from and work with various faith-based organizations, such as Ciudad Nueva.

Within the various churches in the community, there is a strong sense of serving the needs of the community. Many of the churches not only offer spiritual services, but provide many non-spiritual services, as well. For example, St. Clements Episcopal Church has provided funding to the Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach. This will enable this outreach organization to expand the scope of the programs that assist the community. Also, many of the churches provide nursery and childcare services, after-school tutoring and mentoring programs, grandparents program, parents’ night out, summer recreational programs, and English immersion classes.

Multi-Generational Ties to the Community

This community has strong cultural values and beliefs and, thus, many residents have strong ties to the community. Many people were born and raised in this community and continue to reside in the area. Many of the students that are currently enrolled at El Paso High School remark that this is the same school their parents (and for some, their grandparents) attended and graduated from. It was observed within the community, that several generations live in the same
household with the older generation of women helping to take care of their grandchildren while their children either work or attend school. In interviews with some community members, it was revealed that some of the homes were passed down from one family member to another, usually from parents to children.

Also, some of the businesses in the Alexander Heights Community are family-owned and even these have been owned and operated by a family for several generations. Barron’s Grocery Store has been in business for nineteen years and gives the community residents a sense of security by providing much needed services and employment to the area. Also, because many residents and their families have lived within the community for their entire lives, they view this community as a safe neighborhood, in spite of visible signs of gang activity.

Community Challenges Profile

Because the Alexander Heights community is an older community, it has multiple challenges that it must overcome in order to provide adequate services to the residents. A major challenge for this community is the poverty and related issues that go hand-in-hand, along with the community’s lack of economic and political power. Also, there are a number of marginalized and oppressed groups that are in this community. This is host to other poverty-related issues, including unemployment, gang-related problems for youth, child abuse and abandonment, domestic violence, drug abuse and distribution, and inadequate housing. This section of the challenges profile will focus on the issues related to the 1) poverty, 2) marginalized and oppressed populations, 3) financial and political power, and 4) the lack of affordable recreational resources for the youth.
Poverty

Poverty is not a single issue, with one simple answer. Sami DiPasquali stated the level of poverty within this community sets the stage for other related issues to become intertwined, with the necessity for multiple solutions. This community has multiple income and poverty issues, among them the fact that the per capita income, for the two census tracts in Alexander Heights, is $11,570 and $8,647, which is far below the city and state averages. This community also has 43.1% of families and 47.6% of individuals living below the poverty level (U.S. Census, 2000). Add to this the fact that 38.8% of the population ages 25 years and over have less than a 9th grade education and another 15% are not high school graduates (U.S. Census, 2000).

Alexander Heights is a small community with limited resources. This is a growing problem that needs to be addressed. With the help of organizations and their programs, such as after-school programs sponsored by local churches and other non-profits, this is opening a door to change. Although, parents are trying to address the educational issues, the children must be encouraged to stay in school, work toward graduating from high school, and go on to college. This will give them more marketable skills to get better jobs and, in turn, help them to earn higher incomes to support and meet the needs of their families.

First, with limited financial resources, a majority of the housing units in the community are renter-occupied. Home ownership is an important factor when considering the revitalization of a community. “Renters,” who make up 68.8% of the community residents, are less likely to invest in a community in which they have no tangible ownership of property. Pride of ownership will allow for continued redevelopment and revitalization of the area. Remembering to take their income levels into consideration, one has to promote the value of property ownership. Also, city
programs that promote home ownership need to be made more responsive and accessible to the community.

Second, limited financial resources prevent current homeowners from repairing and maintaining their homes. Whether it is major home repairs or simple cosmetic repairs, limited resources can make these repairs impossible tasks to undertake. Thus, many of the residents in this community live in inadequate housing. The community has many larger homes that were turned into small “affordable” apartments. There are also government and low-income apartments. Many of the homes and apartment housing units appear to be tiny and “stuck together,” resembling tenement-style housing in need of major repairs.

Because the property values of the housing in this community is on average lower, approximately $5,000-$20,000 than the value of housing in the city and of the state, local monies are not generated to support the services necessary for this community. Although, the streets in this community are paved, it is obvious that the city has only made cosmetic repairs. Also, the sidewalks are run down, and in some case in serious disrepair, with many sidewalks no longer flat, with grass or weeds growing between the cracks. This only adds to the deteriorated appearance of the community.

Finally, the Alexander Heights community is located within the “Empowerment Zone” in the Central Planning District of El Paso. Although, on the surface this may appear to be a strength, this has the potential to be more of a challenge for the community of Alexander Heights. The Empowerment Zone loan requirements must meet the 51/35% rule, which stipulates that 51% of the business’ sales/services have to benefit residents from the Empowerment Zone or 35% of the business’ employees must reside in the Empowerment Zone. Many businesses look to the amount of disposable income and purchasing power any would-be
consumer has to spend on their product and what the “wants” are in relation to what are the “needs.” In this community, their wants are overshadowed by their struggle to provide themselves and their families with the very basic needs. Another factor is that 35.8% of residents in Alexander Heights have less than a 9th grade education and an additional 15% are not high school graduates, with no diploma or equivalency. If these loans depend on the community to provide 35% of the workforce, then the potential employers need to take into consideration the lower levels of both education and skill found in this community. Unfortunately, the low-paying jobs that would match employment skills in this area would do little to support families within this community in a manner that would lift them out of poverty.

Marginalized and Oppressed Populations

Ciudad Nueva can be described as a close community, as most of the residents in have known each other and their families for many years. The community has, as stated above in the strengths section, many multi-generational families. Although, there seems to be a strong loyalty within the neighborhoods of the Alexander Heights area, there are those populations that are considered marginalized and oppressed, such as the homeless, economically disadvantaged, documented and undocumented immigrants, senior citizens, and even the youth.

According to First Christian Church, this region has quite a few homeless people, of all ethnic backgrounds, living in this area. Some transient people stay here temporarily and utilize the services offered in the community. This population usually has little or no money and cannot afford food, clothing, or housing. Because they are homeless, it is hard for them to find employment. Even though they may be eligible to receive some types of assistance and services, without a permanent address they cannot apply. Some become ill and have no means of finding or paying for medical assistance. First Christian Church works with other shelters and churches,
the YWCA, the Opportunity Center, and the Homeless Mission, to provide free paper sack lunches on a regular basis to this population.

Many of the poorest in this community are first generation immigrants from Mexico, many with limited education. In Mexico, the standard at which they rate literacy is far below the U.S. standard. According to the 2000 Mexican Census, in order to be considered literate, one has to be able to read and write a message. Add to this fact that the 2000 U.S. Census reported that within this community 35.8% have less than a 9th grade education. These are contributing factors to the lower income levels and their inability to apply for better paying jobs.

Because some of these immigrants may be undocumented, they live in fear that they may be identified and sent back their country of origin where they will live in more extreme poverty than in the U.S. So, they remain silent and are afraid to apply for services, they live in inadequate housing, many times asking their children to leave school in order to help provide for the family. This contributes to the lower levels of education and the cycle of lower paying jobs continues. According to the U.S. Census, in Alexander Heights 29.8% of those foreign born are not citizens. Because the U.S. Census cannot provide exact numbers of undocumented immigrants, these percentages may not reflect the actual population within this community.

The elderly are another marginalized group within the community of Alexander Heights. According to the U.S. Census, the mean retirement income, for the two census tracts, are $15,899 and $10,322, which are much lower than the $17,626 for the city and the $18,437 for the state. The majority of the elderly live month-to-month, which means that there may be times that they simply “do without” until the next month. They ration everything from food to their prescription medication. Another factor for the elderly is the poor maintenance of some of the
sidewalks. Some of the sidewalks are difficult for the elderly to navigate. They could fall and be seriously injured.

Another oppressed group are the economically disadvantaged. In Alexander Heights, 56.6% are families with related children under 18 years and 47.6% are individuals living below the poverty level. Some are youth that dropped out of school, with fewer prospects for a decent paying job. Some are single mothers trying to take care of their family, hold down a job, and maybe thinking about returning to school. Others are young adults that grew up in foster homes and are no longer eligible for assistance, that are on their own, have no place to live, and have few job or higher education prospects. The Opportunity Center offers the “On My Own” Program, which provides assistance and services, such as housing and medical care. Like the elderly, many that receive assistance live month-to-month.

Financial and Political Power

The community of Ciudad Nueva is a mix of residential, industrial, and commercial areas. Many businesses are homes that were renovated into professional establishments, such as law firms, accounting firms, engineering, architect, and physician offices. According to the Empowerment Zone, Montana is a major location of financial and legal services, as well as being the location for more than half of the office space in this part of the city. Most of the financial flow within this community is due to business owners and workers that generate revenues by frequenting local establishments in the community during/after business hours. Many of these businesses, include stores, restaurants, or service establishments, such as auto mechanic shops. There are also family-owned businesses that have been able to remain open for many years and are seen as a permanent part of the community. These include a variety of small grocery stores, bakeries, and restaurants. Most of the business owners do not live within the community.
Alexander Heights is represented by two City Council Representatives – Representative Susie Byrd – District Two and Representative Beto O’Rourke – District 8, County Commissioner Betti Flores, and Justice of The Peace Guadalupe Aponte. The City Council members and the county commissioners have key roles involved in planning changes within the community. If Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach plans to rejuvenate this community and empower the residents to make positive changes within their community, they will need to support of the City Council Representatives, and other elected officials, along with the assistance and guidance of the Empowerment Zone. Combined, these entities hold the financial and political power to make change within this community.

For example, this area has many historic buildings, which are used for artistic, tourism, and educational purposes. Presently there is an issue with Sid Abraham, the owner of the historic Fall House. This home has deteriorated over the years and has recently been condemned by the city. Although, Mr. Abraham has made several attempts to renovate this home over numerous years, problems of one sort or another have continually surfaced which have significantly delayed the process. Through a series of miscommunications between the owner and the city, the city is now trying to claim eminent domain, take possession of the home, restore it, open it up to the community as a museum, and thereby, put an end to this seemingly never-ending delay in the restoration process.

Lack of Recreational Resources for the Youth

Through the observation of this community, it was noted that there are only two parks in Alexander Heights. Although, both parks have adequately maintained grassy areas, enough trees to provide shade, and some playground equipment, neither park has other essentials, such as restrooms, picnic tables, and adequate benches. For example, Lower Tom Lea Park is considered
by some of the residents with small children a difficult park to enjoy. Many do not utilize the park because of the danger they feel with trying to cross a major road, Schuster, with high traffic volume. Although, the playground equipment is set back in the park, many parents do not like the fact that the only bench in this park is the bus stop bench.

Neither park in the community has any type of recreational equipment, such as basketball or tennis courts, for the older youth of the community. Although, some organizations, such as the YWCA and churches, offer after-school activities and programs for the youth, many times there are fees associated with these services, which create a financial barrier to those that cannot afford the fees. The community of Alexander Heights is lacking in recreational services for the youth, leaving the young people with nothing to do. Many times the youth become truant from school, hang out on the streets with friends, and get into trouble. This sets up conditions for them to get involved with gangs and/or drugs and alcohol. Although Ciudad Nueva and several of the churches in the area provide some recreational activities for the youth, these are being underutilized by the youth. These types of recreational services need to find a way to reach out to youth to foster a sense of pride in “their” community.

**Conclusion**

The Alexander Heights community is comprised of several historic districts in the city of El Paso. Because it is located near other historical districts, such as Sunset Heights, this community needs to set itself apart from the others. This community is home to many historical buildings and El Paso High School. This community has to recognize and embrace its own long and rich history. With the assistance of Ciudad Nueva and with the involvement of the residents, this community has the potential to be a prosperous and cohesive community that fosters pride in its residents and hope for future generations.
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