



NEWS

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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State awards Val Verde County \$1.2 million for Colonia Self Help Center operations

(AUSTIN) — The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and State Representative Pete Gallego today announced a \$1.2 million contract to Val Verde County to fund operations of the county's Colonia Self Help Center (SHC), which promotes homeownership and self-reliance to residents living in five area colonias.

The award was made through TDHCA's Colonia SHC Program and will provide a wide variety of technical and consumer assistance to an estimated 5,923 residents living in Val Verde Park Estates, Villarreal Addition, Ceinegas Terrace Subdivision, Chaparral Hills, and Brewer (Owens I and II, Payment) colonias. This assistance supports the efforts of colonia residents in improving their own living standards while making the most of limited state housing funds.

"The Val Verde Self-Help Center is one of the county's most valuable resources for enhancing housing opportunities and the overall quality of life for colonia residents who are an important part in the community," said Representative Gallego in making the announcement. "I welcome this award and strongly encourage TDHCA's continued support of its colonia housing programs and the folks they serve."

"Many colonia residents must overcome enormous obstacles just to meet the most basic of housing needs," noted Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. "The self help nature of this program reflects the 'can-do' spirit of the people and region, as well as helping maximize the state's resources. TDHCA recognizes the unique challenges found in the region, and we are committed to working with the county to help colonia residents help themselves."

County officials have subcontracted with the Del Rio Housing Authority to operate the center and provide services to colonia residents. Under the contract, the housing authority will among other activities help repair or rehabilitate 62 homes, provide homebuyer assistance to four households, conduct 15 classes on homeownership, carry out 20 construction skills training classes, and provide 15 classes on accessing new technology.

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Funds for the Colonia SHC Program come from the state's allocation of federal Community Development Block Grant funds and are designed to benefit households earning no more than 60 percent of the area median family income. For Val Verde County, this equals an annual income of \$27,360 for a family of four.

About The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is the state agency responsible for affordable housing, community services, energy assistance, colonia housing programs, and disaster recovery housing programs. It currently administers \$2 billion through for-profit, nonprofit, and local government partnerships to deliver local housing and community-based opportunities and assistance to Texans in need.