

# **REAGAN COUNTY**

## **Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan**

*Concho Valley Workforce Development Board  
Texas Workforce Center of the Concho Valley  
March 2003*

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## **Introduction**

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The community audit and service delivery plan for Reagan County has been developed in coordination with local employers, economic development entities, civic leaders, business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, churches, social services agencies and private citizens in an effort to better understand Reagan County's workforce. Meetings with community partners and members were conducted to explain the Community Audit Demonstration Project Grant, the importance for community involvement, and to update the community on the status of the community audit activities. The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board collected and has interpreted the county's labor market information. The Consortium (Concho Valley Workforce Development Board and the Texas Workforce Centers of the Concho Valley) and community have built consensus and partnerships to implement skills enhancement training services that are tailored to the unique needs of the employers in the business sector. Through mapping of assets, existing programs and providers who are presently serving clients were identified, which reduces duplication of services, along with identifying gaps in services.

This document presents both short and long-term goals and objectives, local demographics, the scope of existing training/support programs and linkages with the business community, faith-based organizations, services providers and educational institutions.

The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board utilizes labor market information to plan services for the present and for future needs. Employer input allows the Concho Valley Workforce Development Board to effectively plan services, designate funds, and formalize policies and procedures in advance of needs. Employer input allows the Board to effectively maximize the shortage of education and training dollars, develop strategies to implement short-term industry specific training, and provide for current worker training that meets both the needs of the employer and the worker. Along with self-assessment tools, the Board and the business community can rapidly move to identify current skilled workers and potential employees with the aptitude to succeed and tailor training for career advancement.

The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board conducted a local labor market analysis specific to providing skills enhancement and training services in Reagan County from November 2002 to January 2003.

The goals of the local labor market analysis were to:

- Gather primary information on economic and labor market trends
- Address critical information gaps in the regional economy
- Develop informed strategies to respond to employer and worker needs
- Establish linkages between employers and educational institutions to ensure responsiveness to labor market needs

The purpose of conducting the local labor market analysis was to obtain current information that accurately identifies skill shortages, which allows the Consortium and community partners/members to respond to technological change and a tight labor market. The community audit and service delivery plan will assist the community and individuals with up-to-date information on good job and career opportunities, provide employers with assistance in finding employees with the right sets of skills, assist service and training providers with information to design appropriate workforce development interventions, obtain timely information on the supply and demand sides of the labor market, and identify business trends that allow us to respond to employers needs prior to any adverse actions. In a geographically isolated rural area, it is critical for the Concho Valley Workforce Development Board and workforce system partners to include quantitative analysis of both the demand and supply side of the labor market, along with identifying funding sources and providers for labor exchange, training, and support services.

Primary sector/cluster analysis was conducted through surveys and interviews to identify industries and business clusters that are critical to maintain in the local economy. Survey and interview instruments were tailored specifically to employers and workers. The Business/Civic Organization Coordinator, in conjunction with the Consortium, conducted the surveys and interviews. The Business/Civic Organization Coordinator collected data on the number of building permits for new or expanded business facilities; and obtained data from Economic Development and the

Chamber of Commerce on what kinds of businesses are scouting the area for commercial space by industry sector and size. The Business/Civic Organization Coordinator collected data and compiled survey, interview, and resource results. Concho Valley Workforce Development Board staff, Texas Workforce Center staff, and Child Care Services staff conducted community meetings.

The Consortium and community partners conducted local labor market analysis to provide insight into broad occupational trends that can be related to skill trends by gathering primary information on the demand and supply sides of the labor market and the employment and training resource base. The basic profile of the geographic area was created with quantitative data utilizing the following sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics; and Texas Workforce Commission-Labor Market Information. The quantitative data, along with the primary research, will ensure timely responses to the rapidly changing economy and build upon the employment and training resource base.

## **Geographic Scope**

Reagan County is located in the Concho Valley region, and the county seat is Big Lake. Big Lake derived its name from a rain-created lake formed in a large natural land depression. This lake is now considered to be the largest dry bed lake in Texas (Big Lake Economic Development Corporation, <http://www.biglaketx.com>). Mining is a major industry along with agriculture (Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, <http://www.twc.state.tx.us>). The population of Reagan County dramatically decreased 26.3% from 4,514 persons in 1990 to 3,326 persons in 2000, according to Census 2000, U. S. Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov>).

The projected 2002 population for Reagan County is noted in the following chart:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b># of Persons</b>	<b>% of Projected 2002 Population</b>
Age 0	50	1.47%
Age 1-5	264	7.76%
Age 6-17	744	21.88%
Age 18-64	1,957	57.56%
Age 65+	385	11.32%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Health and Human Services Commission, Projected 2002 Texas Population by County & Selected Age Groups, April 4, 2002, [www.hhsc.state.tx.us](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us))

This 2002 projection indicates a slight increase in total population (2.2%) compared to the total population of 2000.

## **Income and Wages**

Reagan County's annual per capita income was \$17,451, which is \$10,301 lower than the annual per capita income of \$27,752 for the State of Texas in 2000. The average weekly wage, as reported by the Texas Workforce Commission in the 1st Quarter of 2002, was \$514, which is \$196 below the state average weekly wage of \$710. (Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, <http://www.twc.state.tx.us>)

## **Major Firms**

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Major industries in the county are listed below with the related number of employees under covered employment:

<b>Industry</b>	<b>2001 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr.</b>	<b>2001 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr.</b>	<b>2001 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr.</b>	<b>2002 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr.</b>
Natural Resources/Mining	346	358	355	341
Construction	36	36	43	40
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	210	214	216	210
Financial Activities	-	-	-	40
Professional/Business Services	10	10	9	6
Education/Health Services	24	25	22	20
Leisure/Hospitality	73	64	72	72
Other Services	22	23	27	24
*Non-classifiable	66	65	65	15
Federal Government	14	15	14	15
State Government	14	14	13	13
Local Government	357	380	387	323

(Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, 2001 & 2002, <http://www.twc.state.tx.us>)

\*The Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Department clarifies Non-classifiable as a classification when somebody starts filing their tax reports has not been assigned an industry classification. They are new to the system and eventually will be reclassified as more information is obtained about their business for identification in an industry. The Financial Activities industry has dashes in it until the first quarter of 2002 when the business or businesses were reclassified. The dashes in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of 2001 indicate information is considered confidential. If an industry in a geographical area has less than three employers or one employer has 80% or more of the employees, the information is considered confidential. This confidential information is then combined and put into the unclassified industry category.

### **Analysis**

The number of employees from the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2001 to the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2002 has decreased in Natural Resources/Mining, Professional/Business Services, Education/Health Services, and Local Government. Construction,

Trade, Transportation and Utilities, Leisure/Hospitality, Federal Government, State Government and Other Services have remained fairly steady. The largest decline in employment for Reagan County was in Professional/Businesses Services with a 40% decrease. The largest employment base is found in the Natural Resources/Mining, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, and Local Government.

## **Labor Force, Employment, Unemployment**

The county seat is the community of Big Lake and the largest employers are Reagan County Independent School District, Reagan County Hospital, Pool Production Services and Globe Well Service.

The civilian labor force has increased 2.8% from November 2001 to December 2002. The unemployment rate has decreased from 2.6% in November 2001 to 2.4% in December 2002. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, the civilian labor force increased from 1,702 in November 2001 to 1,750 in December 2002. Reagan County's unemployment rate in June and July 2002 were respectively 4.1% and 4%, which were at the highest, compared to the state's average unemployment rate of 5.9% (Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market Information, <http://www.twc.state.tx.us>). The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board did not receive any reported layoffs in 2001 or 2002 from Reagan County employers (Concho Valley Workforce Development Board, Employer Services, Rapid Response Report).

## **Building Permits**

The Texas Workforce Commission's Labor Market Information did not have any listings for building permits for new or expanded business facilities (<http://www.twc.state.tx.us>). The Big Lake City Office issued three building permits from January 2001 to December 2001. Two were for concession stand buildings and one for a masonry building added to the hospital. The City Office did not issue any building permits from January 2002 to December 2002. In addition, a home-based answering service is remodeling and plans to hire a part-time employee in the beginning of this year.

Big Lake Economic Development Corporation reported a retail store is scouting the area for possible buildings, but the number of possible



employees was not known. They also report four new businesses have recently opened or are in the process of opening. The businesses include a candle factory with 2 employees and 3 more by the beginning of 2004, an antique store with no employees, a satellite law office with no employees, and a concrete company with 4 employees. A tourism business, with one part-time employee, has also recently opened.

## **Transportation**

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000, workers commuting to work (age 16 and older) total 1,397 with a mean travel time to work in minutes as 18.8. There is not a public transportation system in Reagan County. Thunderbird Transit operates Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and transports individuals to San Angelo on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month. The following table shows a breakdown of transportation related information:

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Vehicles Available</b>		
None	25	2.3%
1	422	38.1%
2	435	39.3%
3 or more	225	20.3%
Drove Alone	1,046	74.9%
Carpooled	263	18.8%
Walked	30	2.1%
Other means	21	1.5%
Worked at home	37	2.6%

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000, Table DP-3 & Table DP-4. Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000, Reagan County.

## **Poverty**

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, poverty status in 1999 for families with female householder, with no husband present, was at 25.4% below poverty level. Female householders', with no husband present and with related children under 18 years of age, were 27.1% below poverty level.

## **Demand Side of the Labor Market**

The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board conducted employer surveys in Reagan County from November 2002 to January 2003 to gather primary information on the demand side of the labor market. The number of businesses identified to participate was 240. This number was determined by utilizing infoUSA's database of local businesses, which is based upon taxpayer identification numbers, and the identification of new businesses or businesses not listed in the database. Of those 240 businesses, 117 were unable to participate for the following reasons: out of business/going out of business in this county, bad address/phone number, unable to make contact, business with no employees, business/club no longer in county, duplicate entry of business, federal office, seasonal business, private civic club, business refused to participate, employer is retiring, not a Reagan County business, employer is ill, and employer thought the survey did not pertain to his business. The following table outlines the results of the recent employer surveys:

Inability to participate (117)	48.8%
Employer surveys not returned (59)	48.0%
New Businesses or Unlisted Businesses Identified (29)	13.7%
Businesses Surveyed (123)	51.25%
Number of Surveys Returned (64) from those employers that had the opportunity to participate (123)	52.03%

Based on survey results, the Concho Valley Workforce Development Board tabulated the numbers of current full-time and part-time employees and projected full-time and part-time employees as outlined in the table below:

	<b>Service Sector</b>	<b>Service Sector</b>	<b>Goods Sector</b>	<b>Goods Sector</b>	<b>Goods &amp; Service</b>	<b>Goods &amp; Service</b>
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
<b>Current</b>	407	95	58	8	59	19
<b>Projected</b>	35	11	16	4	21	16

## Analysis

Employer projected labor needs were based on turnover rates noted on the surveys. Employers indicated that turnover ranged anywhere from “no turnover” to “150%,” with the majority noting no turnover.

Job positions reported to experience the largest turnover were: field foreman, roustabout laborer, roustabout pusher, backhoe operator, gang pusher, bookkeeper, secretary, clerical, office tech, office assistant, electrician, maintenance tech, maintenance supervisor, restaurant manger, kitchen manager, waitress, teller, new accounts, loan secretary, managerial, labor, code enforcement officer, project director, victim’s assistant coordinator, checker/clerk, stocker, deli, meat cutter, meat wrapper, shop and helpers, truck driver, field work, swamper, administrative, supervisor, fire chief, fire department EMT, plant operator, mechanic, field operator, warehouseman, store manager, propane truck driver, and service technician.

Indicators of labor market problems evidenced from the employer surveys are listed below:

Survey	# of Answers	% of Responses
Responses	150	100%
Poor work history/references	31	20.67%
Lack of skills	30	20%
Lack of experience	27	18%
Work ethic	25	16.67%
Lack of proper education/training	24	16%
Lack of preparation	8	5.33%
Not applicable	3	2%
Other	2	1.33%

## Analysis

The survey results indicate that “poor work history/references,” “lack of skills,” “lack of experience,” “work ethic,” and “lack of proper education/training” are the greatest issues related to workers that are not hired, which indicates the need to inform and educate job seekers on: how to complete applications and resumes, how to utilize references, how to utilize labor

market information, services available through the Texas Workforce Centers, and resources available to meet employment and educational needs. “Work ethic” issues may best be addressed through employer job descriptions and written policies and/or through job search training that addresses issues such as: attendance, attitude, integrity, effort, productivity, communication, customer service, team work, problem solving, organization and time management skills.

Based on the survey and responses, the table below documents what entities are contacted for workforce training:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Responses	113	100%
On-the-job	51	45.13%
Professional Organizations	19	16.81%
Video	15	13.27%
Educational/Training Institutions	14	12.39%
No one/Not applicable	13	11.50%
Texas Workforce Centers	1	0.88%

Skills required by survey respondents in relation to job positions were noted as:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Responses	1,097	100%
Communication skills	161	14.68%
Listening skills	159	14.49%
Time management skills	148	13.49%
Problem solving skills	144	13.13%
Customer service skills	132	12.03%
Interpersonal skills	125	11.39%
Technical skills	115	10.48%
Computer skills	94	8.57%
Other	19	1.73%

“Other” includes use of hand tools, light and heavy equipment vehicle repairs, mechanical, safety management, medical field skills, use of typewriter, calculator and radio, and firefighting skills.

**Analysis**

The number of responses (1,097) in relation to employer surveys returned (64) indicates that employers require more “soft” skills than “hard” or tactile skills.

When asked how the Texas Workforce Centers can help with workforce needs, survey respondents noted:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Responses	86	100%
Provide information	25	29.07%
Provide training	22	25.58%
Don't know	21	24.42%
Provide skilled workers	15	17.44%
Can't help	2	2.33%
Other	1	1.16%

**Analysis:**

A correlation could be drawn between the labor market problems and the fact that only 0.88% of the business respondents contact the Texas Workforce Centers to help with them with their workforce needs and 11.50% feel it is not applicable to contact anyone for workforce training. Survey responses indicate the need to promote the Texas Workforce Centers and the services available to meet business and employer needs in obtaining and training employees with the required skill sets. Survey responses indicate opportunities to partner and share resources with professional organizations, educational and training institutions, and employers who utilize on-the-job training.

The 3 most important attributes that an employer looks for in employees are:

1. Honesty (23.21%)
2. Hard Worker (16.96%)
3. Ability to Learn (16.07%)

### Analysis

These are qualities or characteristics that are not easily discernible during a job interview and would require in-depth assessment to identify potential employees capable of these attributes. These qualities or characteristics are more discernible with current employees who have been on the job and have exhibited these attributes.

The responses to the average cost to train one employee in his/her position in relation to dollars were ranked as follows:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Answers</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Not Applicable	14	22.22%
\$100 or less	7	11.11%
\$500 or less	10	15.87%
\$1,000 or less	13	20.63%
\$5,000 or less	12	19.05%
\$10,000 or less	6	9.52%
\$50,000 or less	1	1.59%

The average time to train one employee in his/her position is ranked as follows:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Answers</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Not applicable	2	3.13%
One day or less	1	1.56%
One week or less	8	12.50%
One month or less	17	26.56%
One year or less	26	40.63%
Over one year	10	15.63%

## Analysis

Due to the high response of “Not Applicable or Undeterminable,” it is difficult to project a typical cost. Based on the remaining responses, the majority of responses indicate the cost to train an employee typically falls between \$100 to \$10,000 or less. Based on the majority of responses, the average time it takes to train one employee is indicated from “one year or less” to “one month or less.”

The following is a listing, ranked in order, of issues related to present or currently employed workers as identified by employer responses:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Answers</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Total Responses	130	100%
Training	24	18.46%
Skills	21	16.15%
Salary	18	13.85%
Work Ethic	17	13.08%
None/Not applicable	15	11.54%
Turnover	14	10.77%
Benefits	11	8.46%
Understaffed	9	6.92%
Other	1	0.77%

When asked how more skills training and increased skills affect their business, the responses were:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Answers</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Responses	176	100%
Increase employee efficiency	45	25.57%
Add value to your product or service	33	18.75%
Increase production	30	17.05%
Help decrease training time	25	14.20%
Make your company more competitive	18	10.23%
Help to retain employees	14	7.95%
Not applicable	11	6.25%

Pay increases, in relation to skill development, would be supported by 57.81% of the respondents compared to 42.19% of the remaining businesses responding “no” or “not applicable”. Noted from those responding “no,” skill development could make an employee more competitive in a bid for promotion. Most businesses responded that the typical pay increase that could be expected would range from: 5% or less (27.50%), 10% or less (42.50%), and 25% or less (20%). Employee benefits are provided by 68.25% of the 63 respondents in comparison to 31.75% of respondents that do not provide any employee benefits.

The majority of the firms in Reagan County require some specific credential or level of education, which employers may use as a screening protocol. Survey respondents listed credentials or levels of education that would be required as depicted in the table below:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Answers</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Responses	248	100%
High School Diploma	112	45.16%
GED	46	18.55%
None	35	14.11%
Certificate or License	31	12.50%
Other	12	4.84%
Bachelor’s Degree	7	2.82%
Associate’s Degree	5	2.02%

“Other” responses include reading, writing, math, at least 30 semester hours of college, basic advocacy training, oilwell downhole knowledge, knowledge of electrical industry, technical school or college hours for refrigeration, and Masters in Agriculture within 7 years. The answers given may be duplicated in some categories because the specific requirement was a high school or general equivalency diploma or degree plus a certificate or license. The majority of Associate’s degree, Bachelor’s degree, and certificate or license responses related to job positions of Bus Driver, Insurance Service Representative, Certified Pharmacy Tech, Teacher, Teacher’s Assistant, Fire Chief, Fire Department EMT, Mechanic, Certified Nurse Aide, Certified Medication Aide, Licensed Vocational Nurse, Registered Nurse, Lab, X-ray, Warehouseman, Store Manager, Maintenance Tech, District Sales, Propane Truck Driver, Service Technician, Community



Supervision Officer, Chief Appraiser, Truck Driver, Field Superintendent, Bartender, Managerial, Game Warden, Agriculture/Natural Resources, Code Enforcement Officer, and Water and Sewer/Gas/Street Maintenance.

**Analysis**

A large number of employers (81.05%) require education levels at or above a high school diploma. Almost thirteen percent (13%) of the employers surveyed require licensing or certification, which indicates some trade and/or technical skills training may benefit the area. A majority of positions require not only a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma but also require a specific license or certification. This indicates that workers not only need a high school education, but some post-secondary education that results in trade and/or technical skills with licensure or certification.

The typical beginning salary paid in Reagan County per survey respondents is listed below:

<b>Answers Given</b>	<b># of Answers</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Responses	159	100%
\$5.15 an hour	8	5.03%
\$5.16 - \$5.75/hour	6	3.77%
\$5.76 - \$6.75/hour	20	12.58%
\$6.76 - \$7.75/hour	17	10.69%
\$7.76 - \$9.75/hour	47	29.56%
\$9.76 - \$12.75/hour	34	21.38%
\$12.76 - \$15.00/hour	12	7.55%
\$15.01/hour or more	13	8.18%
Varies according to skills & experience	2	1.26%

**Analysis**

The correlation of the level of education to the associated wage levels in Reagan County are predominantly in the range of \$5.76 an hour to \$9.75 an hour with basic reading and writing skills, high school or general equivalency diploma, specific license/certificate or associate’s degree. The wage levels indicated from \$7.76 an hour to \$12.75 an hour were predominantly noted for those positions requiring basic reading, writing and

math skills, high school or general equivalency diploma, specific license/certificate, some college, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, industry specific knowledge or technical training/schooling. Wage levels above \$12.75 an hour typically require a high school education plus a specific license/certificate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree and/or specific technical training.

## **Supply Side of the Labor Market**

The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board conducted worker interviews, with the approval of the employer, in Reagan County from November 2002 to January 2003 to gather primary information on the supply side of the labor market.

Based on the 2000 U. S. Census, Reagan County's 3,326 total population break down by age, as it might relate to an available workforce, is depicted below:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
15-19 yrs.	338	10.2%
20-24 yrs.	158	4.8%
25-34 yrs.	399	12.0%
35-44 yrs.	534	16.1%
45-54 yrs.	427	12.8%
55-59 yrs.	118	3.5%
60-64 yrs.	117	3.5%
65-74 yrs.	192	5.8%
<b>Median Age (years)</b>	<b>32.4</b>	N/A

U.S. Census Bureau, Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Persons under the age of 18 in Reagan County comprise 34.2% of the population in 2000. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin consist of 1,646 (49.5%) of the population in 2000 as compared to 1,941 (43.0%) of the population in 1990; even though this indicates an increase in percentage, the Hispanic or Latino population actually has decreased 15.2% due to the total loss of population in Reagan County.

### **Analysis**

Reagan County's available workforce is atypical to the nation as a whole. While the median age in years of the nation's population is projected to increase, Reagan County's median age of 32.4 is low and the number of persons under the age of 18 is fairly high. This indicates that Reagan County may have the opportunity to an accessible and available workforce dependent upon worker shortages nationwide.

According to the U. S. Census 1999 Poverty Estimates (model-based estimate), the following chart shows the break down in numbers and percentage of population:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
People of all ages in poverty	479	14.6%
People age 0-17 in poverty	215	18.9%
Related children age 5-17 in families in poverty	147	17.3%
Median Household Income	\$33,231	

Poverty is a condition under which individuals, or entire families, do not have sufficient economic resources, or money income, to pay for their basic needs of food, shelter, utilities, health care, transportation, and clothing.

According to the Health and Human Services Commission, the percent of people below poverty in the State of Texas in 2000 is listed below:

Ages 0 – 6

Below 100% of Poverty	21.76%
Below 150% of Poverty	35.06%
Below 200% of Poverty	49.45%

Ages 0 – 17

Below 100% of Poverty	20.52%
Below 150% of Poverty	32.41%
Below 200% of Poverty	44.81%

All Ages

Below 100% of Poverty	14.68%
Below 150% of Poverty	24.72%
Below 200% of Poverty	35.11%

The 2003 Poverty Guidelines, along with Percent of Poverty, are outlined in the following chart:

<b>Size of Family</b>	<b>Poverty Guideline-100%</b>	<b>150% of Poverty</b>	<b>200% of Poverty</b>
1	\$ 8,980	\$13,470	\$17,960
2	12,120	18,180	24,240
3	15,260	22,890	30,520
4	18,400	27,600	36,800
5	21,540	32,310	43,080
6	24,680	37,020	49,360
7	27,820	41,730	55,640
8	30,960	46,440	61,920

Poverty guidelines are used by a number of government assistance programs for administrative purposes, such as determining eligibility for Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Child Care, rent and utility assistance, and others. Some programs use the guidelines as only one of several criteria for eligibility.

In January 2003, 4 Food Stamp recipients were available for work (Able Bodied Adults With Dependents-families) (Texas Workforce Commission, Performance Analysis and Reporting, February 17, 2003).

The Texas Workforce Centers serve Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients. There are 8 TANF recipients available for work in Reagan County as of January 2003.

## Worker Interviews

Out of the 64 businesses surveyed, 34 businesses participated in worker interviews (53.13%). The table below depicts the type of the participating workers' job positions:

<b>Position</b>	<b># of Positions</b>	<b>% of Total Positions</b>
Building Service/Domestic Work	7	8.24%
Clerical	11	12.94%
Drilling/Mining (Oil & Gas)	16	18.82%
Education – Certified	4	4.71%
Education – Non-Certified	1	1.18%
Food Service Work	5	5.88%
Health Occupations	6	7.06%
Library	2	2.35%
Management	2	2.35%
Other	2	2.35%
Personal Services	3	3.53%
Sales	2	2.35%
Sales Clerk/Cashier/Desk Clerk/Teller	6	7.06%
Tax Preparing/Bookkeeping/Accounting/Finance	6	7.06%
Trade/Technical/Specialized Work	12	14.12%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100%</b>

Worker interviews were conducted on a personal, one-on-one basis. The Business/Civic Organization Coordinator asked each worker the exact same twelve questions and documented their responses. Worker interviews were approximately 10 minutes in length. The “Other” category includes: insurance service representative and van driver.

Workers' skills related to their jobs are outlined in the table below:

<b>Skill</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Total:	153	100%
General Office Skills	22	14.38%
Computer Skills	21	13.73%
People Skills/Public Relations/ Customer Relations	12	7.84%
Basic Skills	11	7.19%
Medical Skills	10	6.54%
Maintenance/Mechanic Skills	9	5.88%
Drilling/Mining (Oil & Gas) Skills	8	5.23%
Other	8	5.23%
Critical Thinking Skills	6	3.92%
Driving Skills	6	3.92%
Accounting/Bookkeeping/Financial	5	3.27%
Communication Skills	5	3.27%
Electronic/Electrical Skills	5	3.27%
Heavy Equipment Operation Skills	4	2.61%
Cooking/Food Preparation Skills	3	1.96%
Management Skills	3	1.96%
None	3	1.96%
Organizational Skills	3	1.96%
Plumbing Skills	3	1.96%
Construction/Carpentry Skills	2	1.31%
Cleaning Skills	2	1.31%
Bilingual Skills	2	1.31%

“Other” includes cash register skills, welding/fitting skills, law enforcement skills, developmental motor skills, safety skills, and childcare skills.

The experience that workers brought to their jobs when they were hired are:

<b>Experience</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
None	14	12.07%
General Office/Secretarial	10	8.62%
Oil/Gas/Ranching	10	8.62%
Customer Relations	9	7.76%
Education	8	6.90%
Sales Clerk Experience	7	6.03%
Computer	6	5.17%
Food Service	6	5.17%
Other	6	5.17%
Maintenance/Mechanics Operating	6	5.17%
Accounting/Bookkeeping/Financial	5	4.31%
Health Occupations Training	5	4.31%
Child/Elder Care	4	3.45%
Construction/Welding/Fabrication	4	3.45%
Truck Driving	4	3.45%
Electrical/Plumbing/Engineer/Plant Operations	3	2.59%
Management Experience	3	2.59%
Banking	2	1.72%
General Labor	2	1.72%
Personal Services	2	1.72%

“Other” experience consists of heavy equipment operating, housekeeping, bilingual, firefighting, library, and teaching experience.



During the worker interviews, the Business/Civic Organization Coordinator did not ask whether the worker received or did not receive any job related benefits. The following are responses to the statement “Tell me, in order of importance, what benefits would be important to you as a valued employee.”

<b>Benefit</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Total:	147	100%
Health/Medical/Dental/Vision Insurance	46	31.29%
Retirement Plan/Savings Plan	28	19.05%
Paid Vacation/Vacation	11	7.48%
Good Pay/Pay Increase	9	6.12%
Good Working Environment/Relationship	9	6.12%
Sick Leave Benefits	9	6.12%
Job Security	8	5.44%
Job Satisfaction	7	4.76%
Bonus/Promotion/Work Incentives	5	3.40%
Other Insurance	5	3.40%
Flex Time/Flexible Schedule/Comp Time	4	2.72%
Other	4	2.72%
Training/Education	2	1.36%

“Other” includes: day care, more hours or full-time work, utility credit, and work experience. “Other Insurance” includes: accidental, life, and workman’s compensation. Workers positively responded by 98.53% that they felt they were an important part of the company.

Workers noted what steps companies could take to keep a worker as a valued employee:

<b>Steps</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Job Satisfaction	25	28.41%
Good Pay/Pay Increase	16	18.18%
Good Working Environment/Relationship	10	11.36%
Keep or Offer Benefits/Incentives/Promotions	10	11.36%
Respect/Trust/Fairness/Honesty/Support	6	6.82%
Appreciation/Recognition	5	5.68%
Education/Training Opportunities	3	3.41%
Job Security	3	3.41%
Other	3	3.41%
Advancement Opportunities	2	2.27%
Full-Time Employment	2	2.27%
Employee Empowerment	1	1.14%
Nothing	1	1.14%
Open Communications	1	1.14%

“Other” accounts for uniforms, less paperwork, and more staff.

There is a high percentage of companies in Reagan County that provide training (95.59%) as compared to those that do not provide training (4.41%). A large majority (90.77%) of current workers take advantage of this training benefit to advance their skills, whereas 9.23% of current workers do not avail themselves of this training benefit.

Although training is provided as a benefit and workers take advantage of the training benefit, the following table clearly shows that workers overwhelmingly feel they need additional education, training and computer skills to advance in their careers:

<b>Response</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Education/Training	46	58.97%
Computer Skills	9	11.54%
Nothing	9	11.54%
Advancement Opportunities	3	3.85%
Increased/Improved Technology	3	3.85%
Other	3	3.85%
Work Experience	3	3.85%
Productivity	2	2.56%

Responses in regard to types of training workers feel they need to advance in their careers are: food service supervisor licensing, cake decorating, communications, communication skills, commercial driver licensing, college hours, college degree, high school diploma, continued education as licensed pharmacy tech, intermediate emergency medical technician, English as a Second Language, law enforcement, Spanish language, licensed vocational nursing, training in current job, medical lab, safety, electrician classes, and computer software and technology. The “Other” category includes: management skills and tuition assistance.

The following tables are in relation to where workers see themselves, in regard to their careers, in one year and in five years.

**One-Year Career Goals**

<b>Response</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Same position in same or different company	50	68.49%
Advanced position in same or different company	11	15.07%
More Efficient/Confident	7	9.59%
Receiving Benefits/Bonuses/Incentives/Awards	2	2.74%
Don't know	1	1.37%
Enrolled in Education/Training	1	1.37%
Self-Employed	1	1.37%

**Five-Year Career Goals**

<b>Response</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Same position in same or different company	31	44.93%
Advanced position in same or different company	18	26.09%
Don't Know	8	11.59%
Self-Employed	4	5.80%
Enrolled in Education/Training	3	4.35%
Retired or Semi-retired	3	4.35%
More Efficient/Confident	1	1.45%
Working Full-Time	1	1.45%

Under one-year and five-year career goals, “Enrolled in Education/Training” includes licensed vocational nursing, registered nursing, food service supervisor licensing, accounting, and/or clerical.

## Analysis

Responses indicate that workers perceive a career ladder or pathway is available for advancement within their company or Reagan County. Responses indicate that most workers are happy in their job or company, and they perceive advancement opportunities are available to them. It is interesting to note that while workers indicated the need for additional education, training and computer skills, workers do not predominantly address these needs in their one- and five-year goals.

The table below shows the responses to the question “What do you expect from your employer”:

<b>Expectations</b>	<b># of Responses</b>	<b>% of Responses</b>
Respect/Trust/Fairness/Honesty/Understanding	26	27.66%
Good Working Environment/Relationship	19	20.21%
Benefits/Bonuses/Incentives/Awards	8	8.51%
Increased Wages	8	8.51%
Good Communication	7	7.45%
Job Security	7	7.45%
Job Satisfaction	6	6.38%
Appreciation/Recognition	3	3.19%
Advancement Opportunities	2	2.13%
Increased/Improved Technology	2	2.13%
Nothing	2	2.13%
Training	2	2.13%
Increased Hours	1	1.06%
Pay Check	1	1.06%

Workers’ expectations of their employers are based on more intangible or intrinsic qualities such as respect, trust, fairness, honesty, understanding, good working environment/relationship rather than tangible outcomes such as benefits, increased wages, advancement opportunities, increased/improved technology, etc.

## **Service Delivery Strategies**

Initial workforce strategies were determined based on critical skill shortages identified through primary sector/cluster analysis surveys with employers, workers interviews, and community member groups. These strategies focus on:

- Employer-focused training to improve the productivity and employability of the business/industry's workforce;
- "High Road" to ensure limited funds target industries, firms, and occupations that provide the most benefit in increased wages, job opportunity, skill upgrading, and job retention;

Through the employer survey and worker interview instruments, there is an indication of the need for skilled entry-level workers and skill upgrading for current workers. Since Reagan County's business sector is comprised of a few medium-sized businesses and a large number of small businesses, the Concho Valley Workforce Development Board will target limited funds to occupations that provide the most benefit in increased wages, job opportunity, skill upgrading and/or job retention. Skills shortages can be the single greatest barrier to economic growth. The number one issue from the Community Audit is that employers need an existing workforce that has both "soft" skills and "hard" skills. Soft skills are the fundamental skills such as, communication, listening, time management, problem solving, etc. Hard skills are the more tactile skills such as, technical skills, computer skills, mechanical skills, medical field skills, etc. Skilled workers who receive training, or are involved in life-long learning, to keep abreast of changes in their field are essential to the survival of a business. High-skilled workers are essential to attract new industries and retain and expand businesses for economic development.

## **Service Delivery Plans**

To respond to employer and worker needs in Reagan County, the Concho Valley Workforce Development Board's service delivery plan will focus on the following:

### **Basic Skills**

- Partner with the Reagan County Independent School District, Education Service Center Region XVIII, Howard College – Big Spring, and Midland College to promote and provide basic skills improvement, General Equivalency Diploma and English as a Second Language courses to increase current workers' and job seekers' skill levels and levels of education.

### **Computer Technology**

- Partner with the Reagan County Independent School District, Reagan County Library, Education Service Center Region XVIII, the Small Business Development Center, Midland College, and other area agencies such as, Christian Women's Job Corps and Texas Cooperative Extension, to develop and provide computer courses, such as: computer literacy, operating systems, Internet, web page, and software training utilizing existing computer resources and space to increase the productivity of area employers and the skill levels of area workers and job seekers.

### **Economic Development**

- Partner with the Big Lake Economic Development Corporation to assist in attracting new industries and businesses to the area that will increase wages and job opportunities and explore opportunities that exist for business expansion and retention.

### **Career Opportunities**

- Educate and promote the use of Internet technology to increase utilization of programs and resources such as: Socrates, Work in

Texas, Oscar, the Education Training Provider List and other on-line assessment and resource tools to both employers and job seekers.

## **Job Search**

- Partner with Texas Cooperative Extension, Christian Women’s Job Corps, and the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce to provide and promote job search seminars or clubs to increase job readiness.
- Promote job opportunities in partnership with local employers through job fairs.
- Educate and promote the use of Work in Texas and America’s Workforce Network to area employers to increase available pools of applicants.

## **Training Providers**

- Partner with the Reagan County Independent School District, Reagan County Library, the Small Business Development Center, Midland College, and area organizations such as, Christian Women’s Job Corps, to increase access to short-term training opportunities.

## **Transportation**

- Partner with the City, the County and the Concho Valley Council of Governments to identify transportation options to increase availability to jobs and job opportunities.

## **Entrepreneurship**

- Partner with Texas Cooperative Extension, the Small Business Development Center, and Midland College to offer courses, seminars and workshops to increase opportunities for entrepreneurship in the area.



## **Youth**

- Partner with Texas Cooperative Extension, the Reagan County Independent School District, Midland College, and School-to-Careers to identify and increase opportunities for youth.

## **Services for the Disabled**

- Partner with agencies and organizations such as: Texas Rehabilitation Commission, Texas Commission for the Blind, and MHMR of the Concho Valley to increase services to employers that employ people with disabilities.
- Promote peer-to-peer network and resources for employers accessible through the Texas Workforce Center website under the Employer Services Division.

## **Employer Links and Services**

- Develop and disseminate a quarterly newsletter to increase communication with area employers, the Big Lake Economic Development Corporation, the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce, the Reagan County Independent School District, and the Reagan County Judge's Office.

## **Churches and Faith-Based Organizations**

- Identify opportunities for partnership with the Faith Community Church, the First United Methodist Church, Christian Women's Job Corps, and other faith-based organizations to increase services in areas such as: child care, transportation, volunteers, and community programs.

## **Acknowledgments**

The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board and the Texas Workforce Centers recognize the following community partners who contributed extensively to the community audit to develop the Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan for Reagan County:

ACS State & Local Solutions, Inc.  
Aquila Machine & Service, Inc.  
Baker Atlas  
Big Lake Anchor & Electric Motor Service  
Big Lake Chamber of Commerce  
Big Lake City Office  
Big Lake Economic Development Corporation  
Big Lake Wildcat  
Bison Oilfield Services, Inc.  
Circle T Welding Service  
George Tucker Insurance  
Joe Dean Weatherby  
Reagan County Auditor's Office  
Reagan County Clerk's Office  
Reagan County Independent School District  
Reagan County Judge's Office  
Reagan County Sheriff Department  
Security State Bank  
Texas Department of Human Services – Big Lake  
Texas Workforce Commission  
Vicky and Dale Fisher