



NEWS

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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State housing agency awards \$1.2 million for Cameron/Willacy Counties Colonia Self-Help Center

(AUSTIN) — Recognizing that improving housing conditions in the state’s colonias can lead to improved health and economic standards for colonia residents, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs today announced that it has awarded Cameron and Willacy counties a \$1.2 million contract to operate the counties’ Colonia Self-Help Center, which provides a wide range of housing related services designed to help qualifying households improve their own circumstances.

The Cameron/Willacy Counties Self-Help Center (SHC) will serve an estimated 7,723 residents living in Sunny Skies, Cameron Park, Laguna Heights, La Paloma, and Los Angeles colonias. The contract will be administered on behalf of each county by the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville, a local nonprofit organization.

“We recognize that most colonia residents must face and overcome enormous obstacles just to meet the most basic of housing needs,” noted Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. “By partnering with the counties, the Department is helping area residents build or repair their homes and obtain the skills they need to improve their lives. 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 has contracted with Cameron and Willacy counties to rehabilitate 18 homes, assist 45 households with self-help home repairs, construct 17 new homes and present 125 homeownership education classes, in addition to operating a tool lending library.

The Colonia SHC Program helps provide technical assistance to eligible colonia residents in the areas of housing rehabilitation, new home construction, construction skills training, and many other housing related topics. Funding for the program is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through its Community Development Block Grant Program allocation to the State of Texas.

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, and colonia housing programs. The Department annually administers more than \$400 million through for-profit, nonprofit, and local government partnerships to deliver local housing and community-based opportunities and assistance to Texans in need.