



## COLONIA PARK

**Empower the Colonias with an enhanced investment strategy that includes economic opportunity for the local residents as well as the City. Commit services in security and education that shows the neighborhoods that the City is there to stay and improve the lives of the residents. Bring opportunity to their door step by establishing new commercial ventures by attracting enterprise through a variety of tax benefit programs and supporting social and physical infrastructure.**

**Educate all ages and show them a path to prosperity outside the bonds of welfare programs. Engage kids in productive activities such as sports, technical and trade training. Through all these things, cultivate a sense of pride in self, family, and community.**



## TRANSFORMATION

### Seeking Positive Solutions to Complex Social, Environmental, and Health Problems in Colonias

This study is only that, a study of a potential strategy that would be reviewed with a cost benefit analysis and the impacts to a wide variety of issues, and most importantly, the people who live in this district. As a study, it is important that the perception of being a real project is not justified. If the validity of this strategy was verified and the economic and social impacts were mostly positive, then a land feasibility analysis would be performed to seek out the most appropriate land to begin a more detailed study. It is not to be construed that this site or even this strategy is an active investigation, only a strategy put forth by the consultant.

Colonia Park is a place that seeks to stimulate improvements within the Colonia by upgrading housing and providing employment opportunities to the local residents. The project would be controversial due to the perception of gentrification. The current conditions mandate that something be done to improve the lives of residents that currently live well below the poverty line and in many cases do not have access to clean water or sanitary wastewater facilities.

The outer blue boundary would be a City/County joint venture acquisition. The green shaded area represents an approximate boundary of the lowland drainage that would function as a city park with trail connections outward to the neighborhoods.

The upland areas in the center of the land would be proposed as a new County/City RV Park with a strong package of amenities. Adjacent to the east is the existing elementary school. The uplands to the north and on the edges near the school and southward would be new housing to accommodate those who already live on the tract as well as staff and others in the colonias that want to buy.

The existing housing area would be bought out by the City in a negotiated settlement with the residents and developer and affordable housing for the same residents provided with certain criteria. Preferential treatment provided to displaced residents, single moms with kids at home, working individuals, and employees of the local businesses. Housing also provided for employees of the RV park.

Establish a neighborhood center that would be staffed by social workers and police to keep stability and offer services. Incorporated into the center would be a learning center with facilities for day care, pre-K education, public school homework support, technology and skills training center, and potentially a satellite presence of the community college or Sul Ross University.

The project would take an elevated amount of funding to fully develop the program and to make a public statement about the City's commitment to seek out improvements. The physical construction of elements would require an extensive upgrade to public infrastructure. Analyze the potential for applying a TIRZ district understanding that currently the value is as low as possible but the RV park would stimulate a tax increase providing the increment to assist in funding the infrastructure upgrades. Additional funding sources are available with state and federal dollars.