



# Annual Report

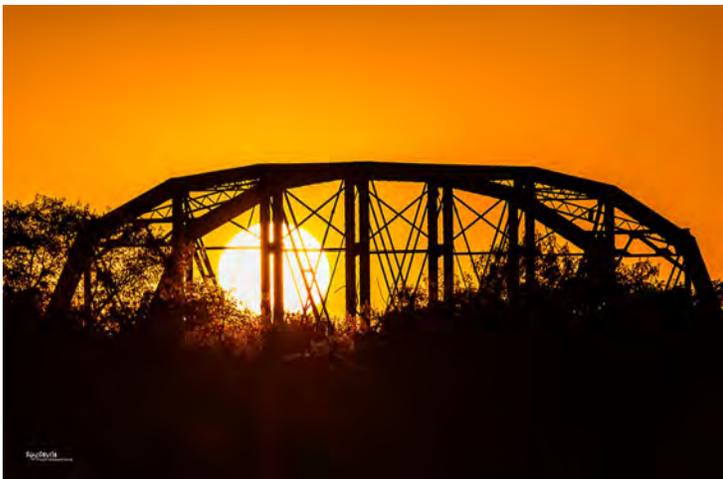
## 2020-2021



**Our Harlingen**



Harlingen is one of the few cities in the State of Texas that has an elevated rail bridge. It crosses over the Arroyo Colorado and is 370 feet in length. It was originally built in 1927 and a portion of the bridge was rebuilt in 1967.



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*Cover photos provided by Rodrigo Davila.*

Dear fellow residents of Harlingen,

On behalf of the Harlingen City Commission, I present to you the 2020 Annual Report. This is one way of showing how our City government is working for you.

As for everyone, 2020 was an incredibly challenging year as we dealt with the COVID-19 Pandemic, a hurricane, and then in early 2021 a very damaging hard freeze—three distinct declarations in 12 months. Despite it all, the City of Harlingen met these challenges and continued our strong pattern of growth, prosperity, financial security, safety, and quality of life improvements as this report will demonstrate.

And so it is with extraordinary amount of gratitude that I wish to thank and recognize many public servants working for our City who have persevered and brought us success as we were put to the test.



Thanks to one of the very best City Commissions I have had the privilege to work with. City Manager Dan Serna and Assistant City Manager and Emergency Management Coordinator Carlos A. Sanchez have been masterful in addressing the needs of our City despite the crisis. Health Director Josh Ramirez and Dr. Michael Mohun have provided the best expert guidance for us in handling COVID-19 issues of all kinds. The entire city hall team including our City Secretary Amanda Elizondo and Finance Director Robert Rodriguez have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Our vital statistics team led by Diana Vargas were a model for Cameron County and the rest of the state in many of their reporting duties.

Our public works, parks, and library departments are undoubtedly top-notch in the state for the incredible services they continued to provide despite the pandemic.

Our Waterworks Board and professional staff led by Tim Skoglund continued their forward progress and maintained our water supply during a critical time during the freeze. Marv Esterly, Director of Aviation at Valley International Airport and his team and Board navigated stiff headwinds while also making Harlingen a model for pandemic safety and providing support for airlines and other airport tenants. The Economic Development Group led by Raudel Garza found innovative and helpful ways to give direct support to those local businesses who needed help the most.

Our police officers and fire fighters have all performed admirably during these trying last 12 months, encountering a myriad unforeseen circumstances as they kept our city safe. Thank you, Chief Kester and Chief Balderas.

We especially thank those community members not on our City staff but who played such an important role in getting all of us through this past year: our grocers and clerks, nurses, doctors, and other hospital personnel, our linemen with AEP, teachers, and educators and administrators and our partners in local government in other cities and at the County. We thank Bill Aston and Rene Perez at South Texas Emergency Care and their team of first responders for their crucial and dangerous life-saving care.

Thanks to all the Food Banks, Churches, and Charities for caring for our most vulnerable.

And thanks to all the businesses which struggled and survived the confusing constantly changing restrictions.

And to so many others I cannot name or mention in this limited space— Thank you! Thank you for your faith and spirit to adapt, overcome, and achieve. That's what makes Harlingen great!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. H. Bennett'.

Mayor

# Our Harlingen City Commission



**Richard Uribe**  
Commissioner District 1



**Frank Puento**  
Commissioner District 2



**Michael Mezmar**  
Commissioner District 3



**Ruben De La Rosa**  
Commissioner District 4



**Victor Leal**  
Commissioner District 5

# Message from Our City Manager



**Dan Serna**  
City Manager, CPM



As you know, the past year has been challenging. Harlingen and the region faced a hurricane, flood, freezing temperatures, power outages, and like the rest of the country and the world the COVID-19 Pandemic. Through it all, we continued to work together in recovering from each disaster and we continue to develop ways to respond to the ongoing pandemic for the benefit of our citizens, region, and country.

Our response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic includes safety improvements to several city-owned buildings, purchase of personal protective equipment for our first responders and essential employees, and the purchase of critical oxygen concentrators for our local hospitals that helped many of our hospitalized residents go home early to recuperate in the comfort of their homes surrounded by their loved ones. We created two Financial Assistance Programs to help residents whose jobs and finances were affected because of the pandemic. And we also coordinated several food distribution programs, COVID-19 testing sites, and vaccination clinics all in an effort to help those impacted.

Today, more than one year later, the City continues to operate at an elevated level of concern with our Emergency Management Staff committed to daily COVID-19 responsibilities along with their regular duties. And we continue to work with our Cameron County and State partners to ensure that everyone in the community that wants a COVID-19 Vaccine has access to get one here in Harlingen.

Throughout these challenging times, we continue to make infrastructure improvements with numerous multi-million dollar projects that will improve drainage, roadways, and the overall quality of life in our beautiful city.

Please look through this annual report for more details on these and all other ongoing and futures projects we're working on.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Serna', with a long, sweeping underline.



**Gabriel Gonzalez, CPM**  
Assistant City Manager



**Carlos Sanchez, P.E., CPM**  
Assistant City Manager

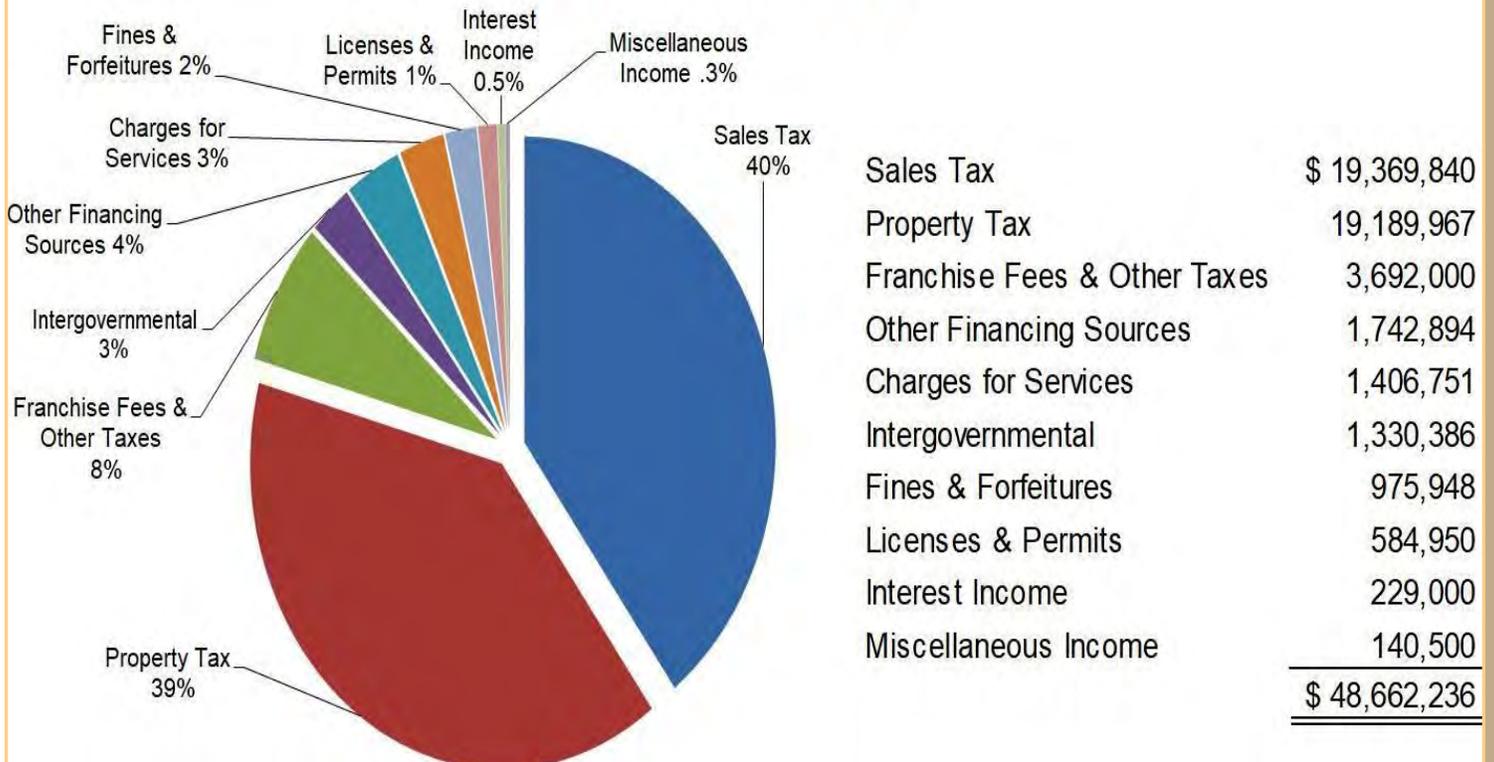
# Our Finances

The City of Harlingen remains financially sound and anticipates finishing FY 2020-2021 with an estimated fund balance of \$17,605,363. The city's largest revenue source continues to be sales and property taxes respectively. Franchise fees and other taxes come in third.

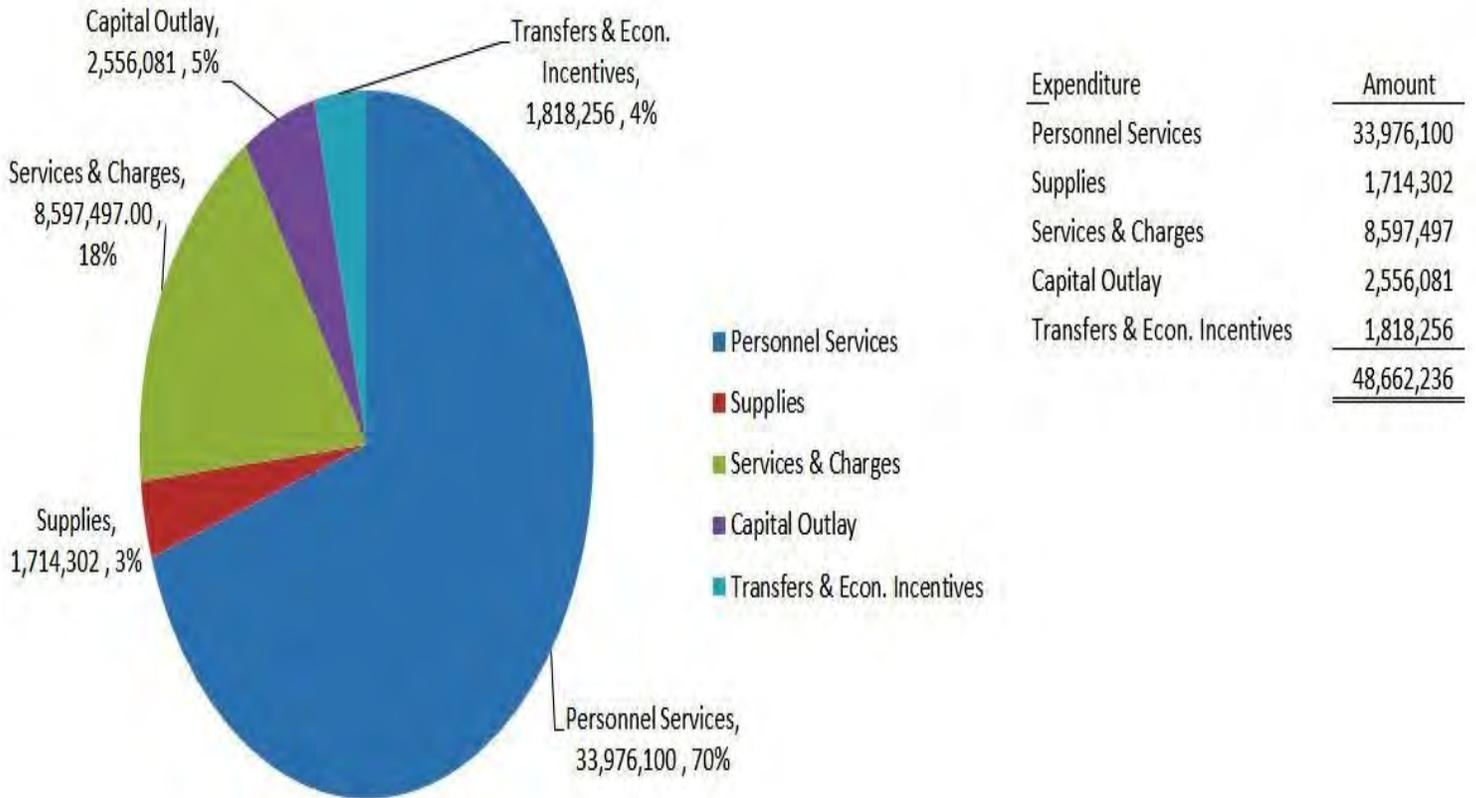
Harlingen's credit rating is an "AA+" which means credit rating companies see the City as having a very strong capability to meet financial commitments. This has been reaffirmed by Fitch Ratings Inc. who reports that Harlingen has very strong revenue prospects as well as strong budgetary flexibility, and moderate fixed costs. Fitch predicts Harlingen will continue to have strong reserve levels with a strong operating performance. Standard & Poor's Rating Services also reports that Harlingen's economy is stable predicting the fund balance will again remain above 30% of expenditures for the current and next fiscal years.

FY 2020-2021 Budget Highlights include \$1.4 million for street maintenance and overlay projects, \$1 million for public safety vehicles, uniforms, and personnel salary and benefits. It also includes approximately \$1 million in improvements for drainage and sidewalks.

## Proposed Revenues \$48,662,236 General Fund



# Our Finances



Harlingen received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 35th consecutive year.

Harlingen received the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 30th time.

Harlingen Municipal Court was selected as the winner of the Municipal Traffic Safety Award for the fourth consecutive year.

# Our Grants

Grants help cities do more for their communities. The application process can be long and competitive, and while not guaranteed, many City of Harlingen Departments submit grant applications yearly. Below are a sample of the most recent grant awards totaling more than \$40 million.

- ◇ 9th & 13th Street Drainage Improvements Project – \$1.2 million FEMA and \$1.3 million Texas Water Development Board grants.
- ◇ \$5.6 million Texas Water Development Grant for Regional Flood Plan Study.
- ◇ VIA rehab RW 13-31 and replace fire alarm system– \$4 million.
- ◇ VIA CARES Act– \$20.4 million.
- ◇ VIA Federal Payroll Support Program– \$88,912.81.
- ◇ Harlingen Sidewalks Project– \$3.9 million TxDOT.
- ◇ Loop 499 Sidewalks Project– \$415,216 Federal Highway Administration and \$94,894 state and Economic Development Corporation grants.
- ◇ Police equipment, education, and crime prevention programs – 13 grants \$397,971.67.
- ◇ Fire ATV with a Fire Skid Load– \$28,000.
- ◇ Lon C. Hill Destination Park– \$1 million Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.
- ◇ Arroyo Hike & Bike Trail Extension– \$1.2 million Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation.
- ◇ Vector Control– \$135,123.
- ◇ Library Service Kiosk, van, and material tagging conversion– \$400,000 TSLAC Border Cities Grant.
- ◇ Two RFID self-checkout machines with credit card payment terminals– \$25,000 TSLAC Cares Grant.
- ◇ Interlibrary loan services–\$7,722 TSLAC Interlibrary Loan Grant.
- ◇ Affordable network and internet access– \$35,023.49 eRate Program.
- ◇ Youth Story Clubs & large print children’s books–\$2,000 Dollar General Grant.



9th & 13th Improvement Project



Police body cameras



Example of Fire ATV



Large print children’s books

# Our COVID-19 Response

March 2020, Mayor Chris Boswell declared a Public Health Emergency coinciding with State and Federal Declarations of Disaster as the COVID-19 Pandemic gripped the nation. Cameron County, like the rest of Texas imposed a Shelter in Place Order directing all non-essential workers to self-isolate.

Two months later when the Order was lifted, dozens of local businesses were unable to re-open leaving thousands of people without jobs.

In an effort to help those in need, the City of Harlingen partnered with the Food Bank RGV to distribute food. Starting in April, two distributions were held each month with more than 362,208 pounds of food handed out and more than 6,554 families representing 28,095 individuals were helped. The City will continue with the monthly food distribution through at least June 2021.

Using CARES Act Funds allocated to the City, Harlingen established the Hardship Assistance Program to help residents who lost their job or lost work hour pay utility bills and rent or mortgage for up to three months. Already, 92 families have been helped with more than \$142, 317.06 in payments. This program will be available until at least June 2021.

A second Hardship Program with HUD CARES Act Funds was created specifically to help residents with low-to-moderate incomes. This program has paid out \$79,649 helping 50 families pay their bills. This program will be available through 2023.



March 19, 2020, Dr. Michael Mohun is appointed as Harlingen's Health Authority tasked with leading and advising the City about best practices on dealing with the pandemic.



Mayor Boswell keeps the community informed about COVID-19 efforts through media updates.



City partners with Food Bank RGV to sponsor 18 Food Distributions at Harlingen's Soccer Complex.

# Our COVID-19 Response



The City of Harlingen purchased 50 oxygen concentrators to help local hospitals at the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The portable units allow hospitals to discharge recovering patients that still need oxygen but are well enough to be sent home, thus making needed beds available for more critical patients. The concentrators were purchased with CARES Act COVID Relief Funds allocated to the City.



Casa de Amistad was converted into a temporary COVID-19 Field Hospital to help relieve overwhelmed intensive care units and emergency rooms in the area. The Casa de Amistad Care site is part of the state's response to help fight COVID-19 in the Rio Grande Valley. It was then also used as an infusion treatment center where positive patients get treated for COVID-19.



The Harlingen Sports Complex served as a COVID-19 Testing site conducted by the Texas Military. The tests were free to the community. Harlingen also partnered with UTRGV and the City of Brownsville for two more free testing sites.

# Our COVID-19 Response

The City partnered with its 9-1-1 provider, South Texas Emergency Care Foundation (STEC) to test home-bound elderly and lower-income or indigent Harlingen residents for COVID-19 in the comfort of their own homes.

The City paid for the tests and materials and STEC provided the service at no cost.



The City partnered with Cameron County Health to administer COVID-19 vaccines for the first County-wide vaccine clinic at Casa del Sol. Two thousand vaccines were administered.



The City and the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation set aside \$1 million to establish the Harlingen Emergency Loan Program (HELP) to assist small businesses impacted by the Shelter in Place mandates.

Zero percent emergency loans of up to \$10,000 were provided to help Harlingen small businesses stay operational.

# Our Health Department

## Achievements

- ◇ Provided COVID-19 support to community.
- ◇ Coordinated COVID-19 health protocols for nursing homes.
- ◇ Coordinated bi-monthly food drives.
- ◇ Performed mosquito assessments and set traps throughout the city in order to better identify and address mosquito issues.



## Goals

- ◇ Continue providing COVID-19 support to community.
- ◇ Finalize mosquito research project.
- ◇ Ensure staff continues to be trained and informed on Health updates and pandemic impacts on population.
- ◇ Coordinate and assist with the expansion of pet adoptions so fewer animals are euthanized.
- ◇ Implementation of electronic vital records.
- ◇ Convert all microfiche records into digital format to comply with state requirements and achieve a paperless office.



# Our Police Officers

## Achievements

- ◇ Reduction in Crime.
- ◇ Raised \$3,215 through No Shave November to help terminally ill 7 year old Abigail Arias.
- ◇ Another successful Shop with a Cop program building relationships with children and families in the community.
- ◇ Hosted the Texas Sergeants Academy along with Texas Municipal League & Institute for Law Enforcement Administration. Harlingen is the only city in the RGV to host the two week program.

## Goals

- ◇ Continue to foster relationships with the community.
- ◇ Implement body cameras for all officers.
- ◇ Implement crime prevention strategies and aggressively investigate criminal actions.
- ◇ Resume Police Department Citizens Police Academy when pandemic is over.
- ◇ Seek inspection and re-accreditation by the Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices Recognition Program.

### Harlingen PD 2020 Crime Stats

NIBERS	2018	2019	2020	Percentage Change
<b>Violent Crime</b>				
Homicide	2	0	5	500%
Robbery	50	54	67	24.00%
Sex Offenses	62	81	27	-66%
Assault Offenses	1233	1171	1062	-9.30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1347</b>	<b>1306</b>	<b>1161</b>	<b>-11.10%</b>
<b>Property Crime</b>				
Burglary	449	447	304	-32%
Auto Theft	78	98	124	26.5
Larceny/Theft	2294	2667	2011	-24.60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2821</b>	<b>3212</b>	<b>2439</b>	<b>-24%</b>
<b>Viol/Prop Total</b>	<b>4168</b>	<b>4518</b>	<b>3600</b>	<b>-20.30%</b>
<b>Other NIBERS Catagories</b>				
Arson	12	10	11	10%
Counterfeiting/Forgery	62	67	40	-35%
Damage/Vandalism	706	699	634	-9.50%
Drug Offenses	536	548	527	-3.80%
Fraud	278	252	162	-35.70%
Abduction	3	9	13	44.40%
Weapons violations	13	16	22	37.50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1610</b>	<b>1601</b>	<b>1409</b>	<b>-12%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5778</b>	<b>6119</b>	<b>5009</b>	<b>-18.10%</b>



HPD raised funds for Harlingen Humane Society.



HPD remembers Honorary Officer Abigail Arias who lost her battle with Cancer in 2019.



HPD manages traffic control for COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics.

# Our Firefighters



Harlingen Fire Fighters in action in Harlingen and providing mutual aid to South Padre Island. HFD also provides service to Combes, Palm Valley, Primera, and some parts of Cameron County.

## Achievements

- ◇ Hired 11 new fire cadets.
- ◇ Implemented new reporting system and merged with HPD.
- ◇ Provided 24-hour Fire Watch at Casa de Amistad Care Facility for COVID-19 patients.
- ◇ Replaced deteriorating self contained breathing apparatus for fire fighters.

## Goals

- ◇ Conduct state required continuous education training in Aircraft Rescue Firefighting, Emergency Medical First Response, and Hazardous Materials Response.
- ◇ Replace existing aging rescue/extrication equipment.
- ◇ Continue fire safety and awareness programs within the community.

# Our Airport



Airforce One, a Boeing 747-200B Series Aircraft landed at Valley International Airport for a presidential visit to the Rio Grande Valley. The presidential crew chose VIA because of its expanded runway.

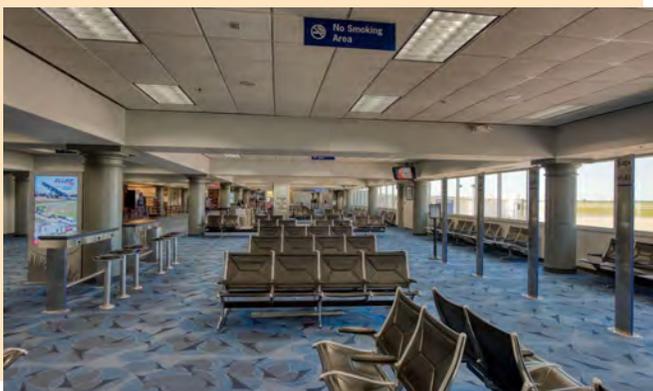
## Achievements

- ◇ \$12.3 million reconstruction of northwest & southwest concrete apron.
- ◇ Completed fan coil project.
- ◇ Completed two Passenger Loading Bridges at a cost of \$1.8 million
- ◇ Completed the \$1.1 million Concourse Flooring Project.
- ◇ Completed the Flat Roof Project.



## Goals

- ◇ Tenant retention.
- ◇ Airline route expansion, both domestic and international.
- ◇ Receive engine test cell certification.
- ◇ Strive to receive U.S. Customs Port of Entry designated status.
- ◇ Gain public trust on the safeness of flying.



# Our Airport

Air Cargo continues to be a big part of Valley International Airport operations. Deplaned cargo increased by 8% in Fiscal Year 2019-2020. The main air cargo carriers are FedEx and DHL. They average three to four departures daily using wide-body 767-200 and 767-300 freighters. The DHL 767-300 freighter is now dedicated to freight from the Rio Grande Valley, trans-border Maquiladora freight, and local air freight from Laredo which is trucked to Harlingen. The flight is no longer shared with air cargo from Monterrey. As a result, DHL now has more air cargo lift from HRL to meet growing demand from e-commerce freight traffic.



# Our Planning & Development

## Achievements

- ◇ Amended and adopted the Subdivision Ordinance and the Subdivision Development Guide.
- ◇ Demolished three unsafe structures using City resources.
- ◇ Issued 759 permits in FY 2019-2020 with a construction value of \$70,745,821.40.
- ◇ Permits for new homes this fiscal year increased by 28.8% going from 177 to 228.

## Goals

- ◇ Implement the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- ◇ Safeguard community by emphasizing cleanliness, safety, and a healthy environment.
- ◇ Help maintain property values.
- ◇ Ensure proper procedures and codes are followed in building construction projects.
- ◇ Provide guidance to developers by administering building codes & assisting in the implementation of the Zoning Ordinances.



Construction of UTRGV's School of Medicine Neuroscience Institute continues on Haine Drive. This project is a partnership between the university, the medical school, and the City of Harlingen. When finished in 2021 it will be a place for teaching and research.



September 2020-UTRGV, HCISD, and the City of Harlingen broke ground on a dual education campus on Medical Drive. This campus will allow high school students to undergo dual enrollment while UTRGV students take college classes and earn a four-year degree in their home town.



TaskUs, the leading tech-enabled business services company delivering CX, AI Operations, and content security to the world's most innovative companies, chose Harlingen for its third Texas location and will create 1000+ new jobs.

# Our Planning & Development

Of the 759 permits issued, 228 were for new residences, 143 for other such as solar panels, cell towers, and fences, followed by 106 for new signs. In the area of new commercial permits, the City issued 21 and 58 for commercial additions & remodels with a value of more than \$17 million. Some of the new commercial properties include a hotel, retail, health, and food industry.



November 2020– Harlingen welcomes Hilton Garden Inn to the community. The new hotel is connected to the Harlingen Convention Center and it is the only hotel attached to a convention center in the RGV.



TJ Maxx opened its doors in early 2021. U.S. Renal Care invested \$1M to open a second location in Harlingen at the Sun Valley Plaza. Elliff Kubota built a new assembly warehouse off the Expressway at a cost of \$800,000. The owners of the Reese Building spent \$1.6M to remodel the first & second floors of the building. United Health Care on 77 Sunshine Strip remodeled at a cost of \$1.1M. Firehouse Subs opened its doors in September 2020 at the Harlingen Corners Retail Center.

# Our Public Works

## Achievements

- ◇ Completed 8.33 miles as part of the 2019 Street Improvement Project.
- ◇ Completed Jefferson Drainage Ditch Project.
- ◇ Completed 13th Street Drainage Ditch Project.
- ◇ Commenced the 9th & 13th Street Drainage Improvements Project.
- ◇ Initiated Self-Serve Recycling Program

## Goals

- ◇ Construction of the 5th & 7th Street Storm Sewer Improvement Project.
- ◇ Construction of the 21st Street Storm Sewer Improvement Project.
- ◇ Complete Regional Flood Protection Study.
- ◇ Seek additional grant funding and opportunities for drainage and street projects
- ◇ Rehab 18 roadways through the 2020-2021 Street Improvement Program totaling 4.45 miles.



Markowsky and Traxler Way are two of the eight streets overlaid through the City's Street Improvement Program during FY 2019-2020 at a cost of \$1.4 million

The Jefferson Drainage Ditch concrete lining was replaced after it cracked and separated from the bottom of the ditch following the June 2019 flooding event. The project cost was \$278,891.98.



A \$544,000 grant from the Federal Highway Administration is helping us add 1.5 miles of sidewalks along Loop 499 from Harrison to Rio Hondo Rd. A separate grant for \$3.9M from TxDOT is providing 13.2 more miles of sidewalks in several areas including Business 77, I69E, Harrison & Tyler, and Dixieland to F Street. The City is also adding sidewalks with a pedestrian bridge in the area of Vela Middle School.

# Our Public Works



August 25, 2020–Implemented Self-Drop-Off Recycling Program allowing residents to drop off cardboard, paper, aluminum, and plastics #1 & #2 at the Recycling Center on Commerce Blvd.



The City partnered with HID#1 and CCDD#5 to make repairs to the Dixieland Drain Ditch from Lincoln Street south past Dixieland to where it discharges into the Arroyo Colorado. The cost of the project is just under \$500,000.



Harlingen received a \$5.6M grant for a \$6.2M regional flood study focusing on areas that drain into the Arroyo Colorado which includes 9 cities, 3 drainage districts, an irrigation canal, & CAMCO and HIDCO. The goal is flood mitigation. The balance not covered by the grant will be shared by the parties involved.



December 8, 2020–Held a groundbreaking ceremony for the 9 & 13th Street Drainage Improvement Project that will increase water capacity and improve stormwater run-off. The project involves replacing the existing storm sewer drain pipes with 48-inch reinforced concrete pipes and 52 inlets and manholes. Total cost is \$2.8 million.

# Our Parks



## Achievements

- ◇ Completed Phase 1 of the Lon C. Hill Destination Park.
- ◇ Completed renovation of Hunter Park, creating the City's 6th All-Inclusive Park.
- ◇ Commenced construction of the Tennis Center with funding provided by the 2001 Certificates of Obligation.
- ◇ Commenced \$1.7M extension of the Arroyo Colorado Hike & Bike Trail.
- ◇ Installed dozens of sneeze guards and air purifiers in City facilities to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

## Goals

- ◇ Commence Phase Two of the Lon C. Hill Destination Park.
- ◇ Design & construct trail extension from McKelvey Park back to Hugh Ramsey Nature Park.
- ◇ Replace first & second floor ceiling tiles at library.
- ◇ Replace A/C chiller at Casa del Sol.
- ◇ Construct pavilion with BBQ pits at C.B. Wood Park.
- ◇ Improve golf course turf quality and playability.



Phase 1 of The Lon C. Hill Destination Park is complete. The park features a unique entryway, a water feature, a center plaza, new landscaping, and a new parking lot.

# Our Parks



Arroyo Colorado Hike & Bike Trail Extension. A grant for \$1.2 million from the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation and \$500,000 from the Harlingen Community Improvement Board are allowing the City to extend the trail. The plan is to construct an all-weather, all-purpose trail from the end of the current Arroyo Trail at the trailhead at I69 E west toward Dixieland Park.



Hunter Park has been rehabilitated and is now the City's sixth All-Inclusive Park thanks to a CDBG Grant. It includes a new playground with specialized ramping for wheelchairs, synthetic turf, and a sidewalk that connects to the parking lot also for easier wheelchair access.



Improvements continue on the Henry Roberts Loop. Parks staff and volunteers have installed signs and markers throughout the trail and cleared out more than three miles of trail and are working on an extra skills/agility area.

The construction of the Tennis Center is almost complete. The project includes a Pro-Shop building and spectator area.

# Our Water

## Achievements

- ◇ Replaced 17,500 feet of failing water mains as part of the Treasure Hills Waterline Replacement Project.
- ◇ Purchased 170 acre-feet of water rights to further ensure water availability for City's growth.
- ◇ Replaced or rehabilitated three wastewater lift stations and 55 manholes.
- ◇ Replaced more than 5,000 aging water meters as part of an accelerated program to ensure accurate metering.
- ◇ Implemented a computerized maintenance management system to improve operational efficiency and customer responsiveness.



## Goals

- ◇ Complete 20-year Capital Projects Master Plan.
- ◇ Undertake Impact Fee and Rate Studies.
- ◇ Replace 24,000 feet of failing water lines in the Pendleton Place area.
- ◇ Construct a new Bio Solids Dewatering Facility at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- ◇ Undertake a major updating of infrastructure extension policies and ordinances.



*Above-Treasure Hills Waterline replacement Project  
Left-Lift Station Project  
Below-Dixieland Water Treatment Plant*



# Our Community Development



Before demolition and reconstruction on North Sunset.



After demolition and reconstruction on North Sunset.

## Achievements

- ◇ Purchased and installed four light posts at Vestal Park for one of the soccer fields.
- ◇ Administered and expended more than \$631,347 in CDBG grant funds and \$109,621 in HOME grant funds.
- ◇ Demolished and reconstructed one owner occupied home for an elderly low income family.
- ◇ Construction of two Habitat for Humanity homes.
- ◇ Construction of basketball court at Rangerville Park.

## Goals

- ◇ Complete a minimum of six housing rehabilitation or reconstruction projects.
- ◇ Assist a minimum of six first time home buyers with affordable housing.
- ◇ Document progress of CDBG funded infrastructure programs.
- ◇ Monitor Public Service Organizations receiving CDBG funds to ensure federal regulation compliance.
- ◇ Continue to provide loan services to those previously assisted with housing assistance.

# Our Library



Hats Off to Reading, annual event to promote reading among children of all ages.



Large print children's books bought with a grant from Dollar General.

## Achievements

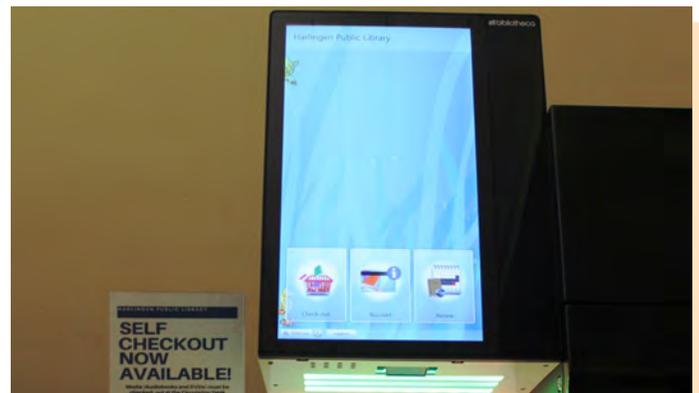
- ◇ Completed Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) conversion.
- ◇ Due to COVID-19, increased virtual programs.
- ◇ Implemented new services such as curbside pickup.
- ◇ Digital resource usage for eBooks and audiobooks increased by 345%.
- ◇ Completed auditorium and conference room improvements.

## Goals

- ◇ Technology access and instruction providing up-to-date and innovated technology and training for the community.
- ◇ Continuous refreshing and renovation of the library facility.
- ◇ Continue promoting youth development with programs and services including summer learning, outreach to schools, and expanded teen and adult services.
- ◇ Develop new and expand on existing partnership to leverage the library's resources to strengthen the services and programs offered.



A self check out kiosk like this one will be placed at the Destination Park.



Don't wait in line, you can now use one of two self checkout terminals at the library.

# Our Downtown



## Achievements

- ◇ West Jackson was added to the Downtown District. Businesses in this area are now eligible to apply for beautification awards.
- ◇ Purchased flag pole banners to beautify and add a unique distinction to Downtown.
- ◇ Created virtual window display contests and mural hunts to keep people in tune with Downtown during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- ◇ Added new lighting by replacing string lights with rope lights to help with maintenance of the palm trees and corner beds. Also added security lighting in the alleys.
- ◇ Added nine new murals.

## Goals

- ◇ Continue enhancing Downtown's physical appearance through building rehab, storefront improvements, signs, landscaping, murals, merchandising, and displays.
- ◇ Strengthen & diversify downtown's economic base by helping existing businesses grow.
- ◇ Market the commercial district.
- ◇ Partner with public & private sectors in beautification and public improvement projects.
- ◇ Build consensus and support for downtown among public & private groups, and individuals.



February 14, 2020– City and Southwest Airlines representatives unveiled the Herb Kelleher Mural in Downtown Harlingen. The mural was painted by local artist Angel Hernandez.

# Our Awards



Baxter Lofts Restoration Project received Texas Downtown Association President's Award. The restoration project was one of 104 entries in 11 different categories.



Harlingen received a Governor's Community Achievement Award and will receive \$270,000 for landscaping projects.



KHB President Sgt. Major Ford Kinsley and CM Dan Serna received the Governor's Achievement Award.



Harlingen was the It's Time Texas Challenge Mid-size City winner for the 3rd year in a row.

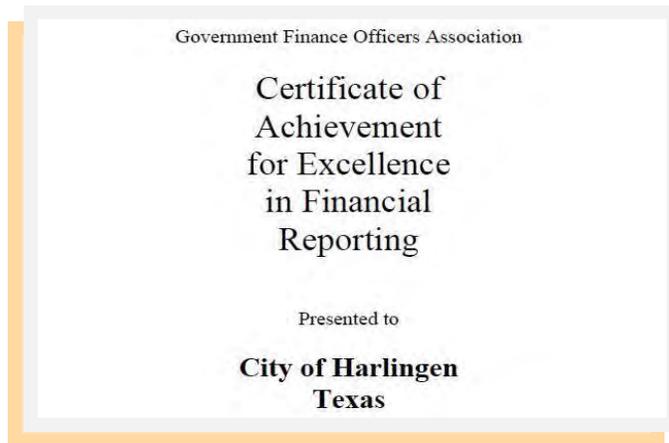


Public Works received the In-House Project of the Year Award by the Texas Public Works Association.

# Our Awards



Harlingen's Vital Statistics, a division of our Health Department received the Five Star Exemplary Award for the 20th year in a row.



Our Finance department received the Certificate of Achievement for excellence in Financial Reporting for 34th year in a row.

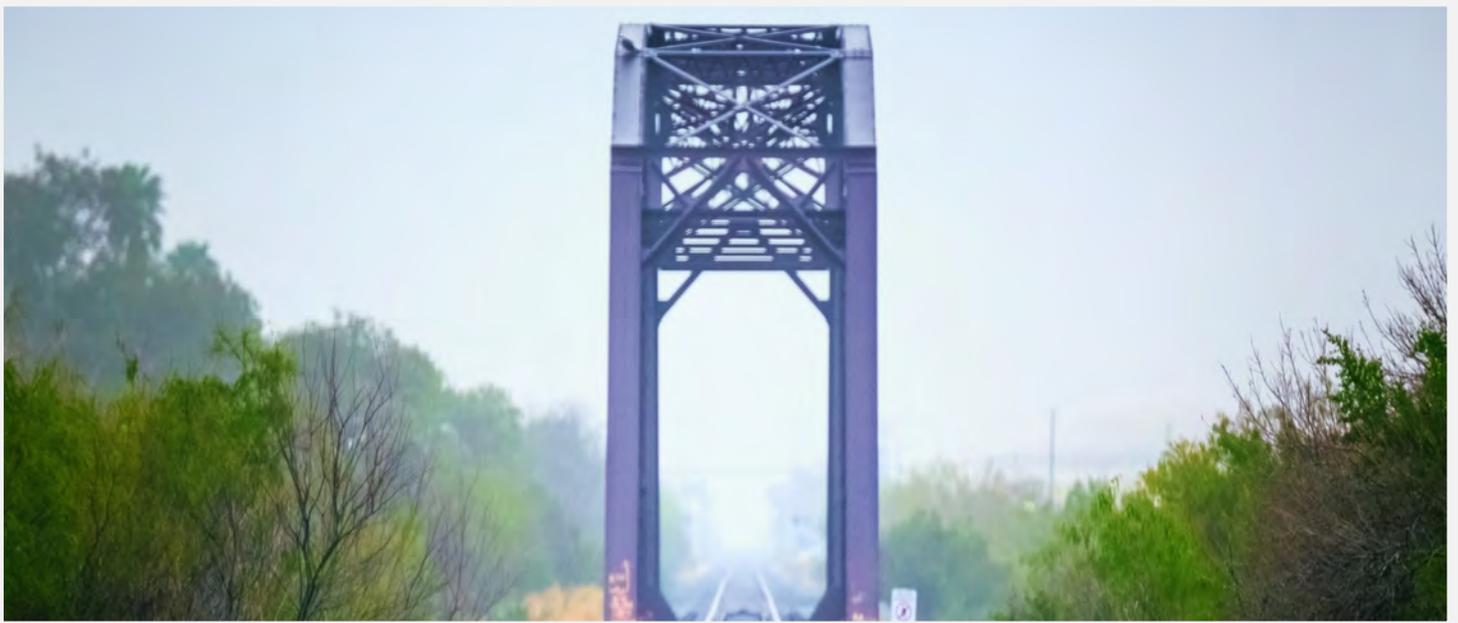


Harlingen was the only City in the RGV and one of two in Texas selected as finalists for the All-America City Award.

# Our Numbers

<b>Mayor Chris Boswell</b>	<b>(956) 216-5001</b>
<b>City Commissioners</b>	<b>(956) 216-5001</b>
<b>City Manager's Office</b>	<b>(956) 216-5001</b>
<b>Finance Department</b>	<b>(956) 216-5050</b>
<b>Public Health</b>	<b>(956) 216-5220</b>
<b>Harlingen Police Department</b>	<b>(956) 216-5940</b>
<b>Harlingen Fire Department</b>	<b>(956)230-8011</b>
<b>Valley International Airport</b>	<b>(956)430-8600</b>
<b>Planning &amp; Zoning</b>	<b>(956) 216-5101</b>
<b>Public Works</b>	<b>(956) 216-5300</b>
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	<b>(956) 216-5951</b>
<b>Harlingen Water Works System</b>	<b>(956) 430-6100</b>
<b>Community Development</b>	<b>(956) 216-5180</b>
<b>Harlingen Public Library</b>	<b>(956) 216-5800</b>
<b>Downtown Harlingen</b>	<b>(956) 216-4910</b>





**Harlingen is home to one of only a handful of elevated rail bridges in Texas. It is owned by Union Pacific and runs west to east and overlooks the Arroyo Colorado.**



# Annual Report

2020-2021

Publication produced by the City of Harlingen  
Public Relations Department.



## City of Harlingen

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Our Harlingen