TEXAS STATE SERVICE PLAN, 2016 – 2018

Introduction

Texas Governor Greg Abbott, in his [inauguration speech](#) after being sworn in as the 48th Governor of Texas on January 20, 2015, made the following remarks:

Texas is the place where the improbable becomes the possible… I am living proof that we live in a state where a young man's life can literally be broken in half and yet he can still rise up and be governor of this great state. As governor I will ensure Texas remains the state that provides that brand of opportunity for every Texan.

Texas truly is the land of opportunity, the place where anyone can achieve anything. But as great as Texas is there's more we must do.

More for the families stuck in traffic.
More for parched towns thirsty for water.
More for parents who fear their child is falling behind in school.
More for employers searching for skilled workers.
More for our veterans who return broken from battle…

We must never forget that government is the servant of the people – not the other way around.

I will also ensure that we keep Texas number one in the nation for job creation. We will promote policies that limit the growth of government – not the size of your dreams.

Yet we know too many still live on the fringe of opportunity. For them there is no solace in number one rankings that fail to touch their lives. I speak about children living in broken homes and struggling in broken schools. On this point we cannot be captive to partisan arguments. Our children transcend politics. If Texas is to remain the leader at creating jobs we must become the leader at educating our children.

Countries sometimes excel because of their military might. States are different. We excel by our mental might. Texas should be the source of the greatest minds the country has ever known. These great minds will not be molded by a cookie-cutter approach to teaching. Instead they will be the product of great teachers who recognize the value and uniqueness of each student. We will cultivate those teachers to educate those students to fill the growing job markets that will keep Texas the economic engine of America…

There is no place like Texas. We will ensure that remains just as true for the next generation as it does for those here today.

Notably, the key focus areas referenced by Governor Abbott in his inauguration speech – Education, Economic Opportunity, Disaster, Environment, Health, and Veterans and Military Families – also represent the six major Focus Areas of the AmeriCorps State program, administered in Texas by OneStar Foundation, Texas' state service commission.

Vision and Strategy

OneStar Foundation exists to build a stronger nonprofit sector for a better Texas.

For almost four decades there has been an acknowledgement by the State of Texas of the critical importance of civic engagement to the strength of our communities. From the creation of the Texas Center for Volunteer Action in 1976 to the formation of its eventual successor, OneStar Foundation (incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit commission in 2004 by Executive Order under then Governor Rick Perry), Texas has maintained its support of a strong nonprofit sector. Today, OneStar Foundation is recognized state-wide as the voice of the sector, a neutral convener and a respected business partner to foundations, state agencies, and the business community.

From 2009-2011, with funding from the Meadows Foundation and in-kind sources, OneStar Foundation commissioned Dr. Angela Bies of the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A & M University to conduct a four-phase research study to provide a multi-layered perspective of the nonprofit infrastructure and capacity-building landscape in Texas. While examining different issues and areas of the nonprofit infrastructure from a diversity of vantage points, the various recommendations resulting from the four reports generated centered around five common themes:

1) **Using formal networks and alliances to increase coordination and communication across the sector;**

2) **Creation of an online database for information sharing;**

3) **Expanding nonprofit infrastructure provision in underserved areas;**

4) **Advocating for nonprofit sector funding; and**

5) **Develop a defined nomenclature.**

From 2013-2015, another series of studies on the Texas nonprofit sector was conducted by Dr. William Brown of the Bush School's Nonprofit Management Program at Texas A & M University, including the following reports:

- 2013: Texas Nonprofit Sector: Key Findings - Describing the Size & Scope
- 2014: Texas Nonprofit Sector: Capacity in Nonprofit Organizations
- 2015: Texas Nonprofit Sector: Growth and Change

Dr. Brown's studies took a more in-depth look at the changes within the Texas nonprofit sector as well as the driving forces behind nonprofits' organizational capacity (or lack thereof), including Human, Financial, Physical and Social Capital. Below are key findings from Dr. Brown's research:

- The Texas nonprofit sector remains vibrant and continues to show growth. This trend of growth, even through a recession, highlights the extreme resiliency of the nonprofit sector.
- However, there are substantial disparities between the top 1% of nonprofits and the majority of the nonprofits in the state.
- There are nearly 100,000 registered 501(c)(3) nonprofits registered in the State of Texas, but the majority of these organizations have limited or no significant assets.
- There are significant regional differences in that the Austin area has the highest number of nonprofits per capita while the southern part of the state reports the lowest per capita ratio.
- Roughly 40% of nonprofits were operating at a net deficit.
- Interconnected Goals - Open systems, bridging relationships, and financial capital are interconnected; and financial success is dependent on all of them. Nonprofits must implement more sophisticated systems to capitalize on strong external relationships and improve their financial standings.

These findings continue to reinforce OneStar's belief in the importance of our role as a partner in capacity building, a neutral convener, and a voice and advocate of the Texas nonprofit sector.

For 2016-2018, OneStar will continue to use the five guiding themes and research-based recommendations from the 2009-2011 Bush School study (and the related findings of the 2013-2015 studies conducted by Dr. Brown) to inform our mission and work, while incorporating real-life "lessons learned" along the way. Thus, in order to enhance the infrastructure, capability, and capacity of Texas nonprofit organizations and networks to more effectively and strategically serve local communities, OneStar will continue to implement our mission in 2016-2018 using the following three strategies adopted by OneStar following the Bush School study:

- **CONNECTING** faith-based and community organizations, businesses, government and foundations to resources and information about the nonprofit sector;

- **PROMOTING** the nonprofit sector, innovative strategies and public-private partnerships to drive community solutions; and

- **CONVENING** statewide nonprofit networks, developing a coordinated approach to building the strongest, most impactful nonprofit sector in the country.

These three principles, CONNECT, PROMOTE and CONVENE, continue to guide all work done by OneStar Foundation.

Background: Texas Demographics and Needs

The Urban Population Triangle

Texas is a vast state growing rapidly. As the second most populous U.S. state, Texas has continued to experience strong population growth in recent decades. Unlike most states, Texas has an array of major cities and metropolitan areas, including 25 total metropolitan areas. Of these, Texas boasts six major cities with populations above 500,000 that hold much of the state's population (Dallas, Houston, San

Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth, and El Paso), and two of which are considered global cities (Dallas and Houston). Texas also has 3 of the 10 cities in the U.S. with populations greater than 1 million.

The Texas Urban Population Triangle is a particularly populous region defined by three interstate highways – I-35 to the west (Dallas-Fort Worth to San Antonio), I-45 to the east (Dallas to Houston), and I-10 to the south (San Antonio to Houston). The region contains most of the state's largest cities and metropolitan areas, as well as nearly 75 percent of Texas' total population.

Metropolitan areas

The following table lists population figures for those metropolitan areas, in rank of population. Population figures are as of the April 1, 2010 U.S. Census estimates
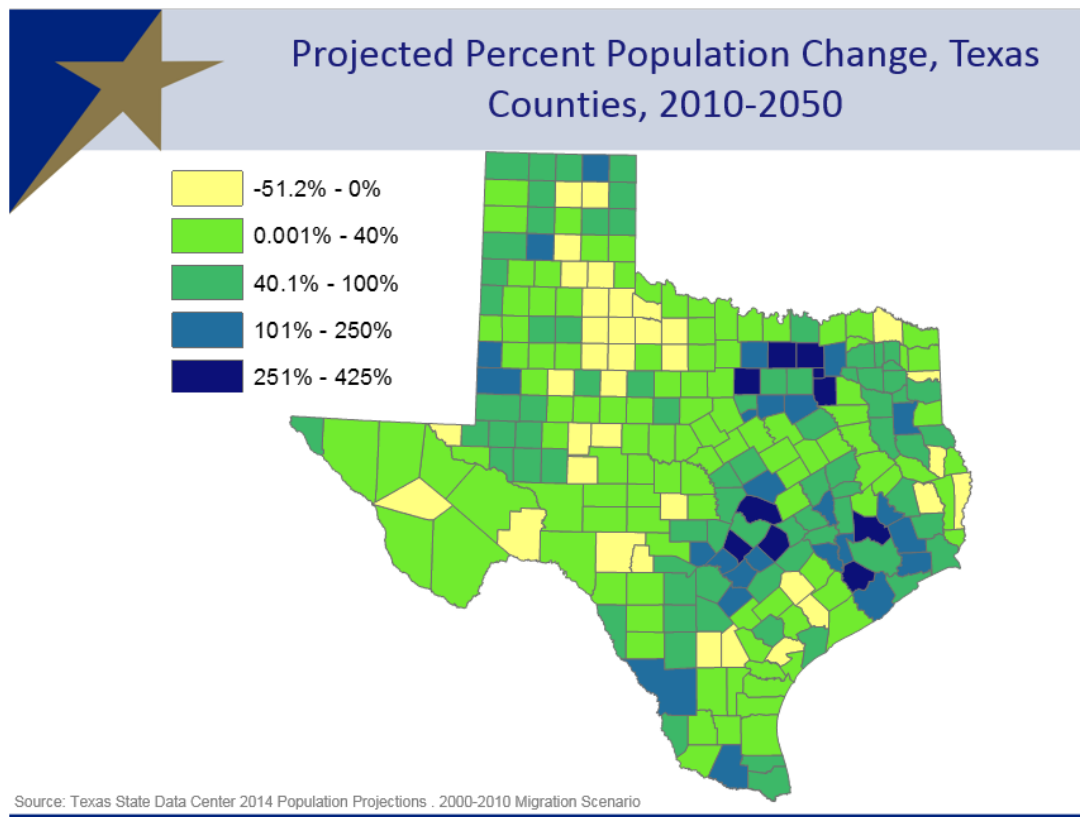
Texas rank	U.S. rank	Metropolitan Area	Metropolitan Division	Population
1	4	Dallas–Fort Worth–Arlington		**6,371,773**
			Dallas–Plano–Irving	4,235,751
			Fort Worth–Arlington	2,136,022
2	5	Houston–Sugar Land–Baytown		**6,086,538**
3	25	San Antonio–New Braunfels		**2,142,508**
4	35	Austin–Round Rock–San Marcos		**1,716,289**
5	58	El Paso		**830,735**
6	68	McAllen–Edinburg–Mission		**774,769**
7	114	Corpus Christi		**442,600**
8	126	Brownsville–Harlingen		**406,220**
9	127	Killeen–Temple–Fort Hood		**405,300**
10	132	Beaumont–Port Arthur		**388,745**
11	162	Lubbock		**284,890**
12	184	Laredo		**250,304**
13	185	Amarillo		**249,881**
14	188	Waco		**234,906**
15	192	College Station–Bryan		**228,660**
16	202	Tyler		**209,714**
17	198	Longview		**206,874**
18	240	Abilene		**165,252**
19	263	Wichita Falls		**151,306**
20	288	Texarkana		**143,027**
21	283	Odessa		**137,130**
22	284	Midland		**136,872**
23	313	Sherman–Denison		**120,877**

24	322	Victoria		115,384
25	326	San Angelo		111,823

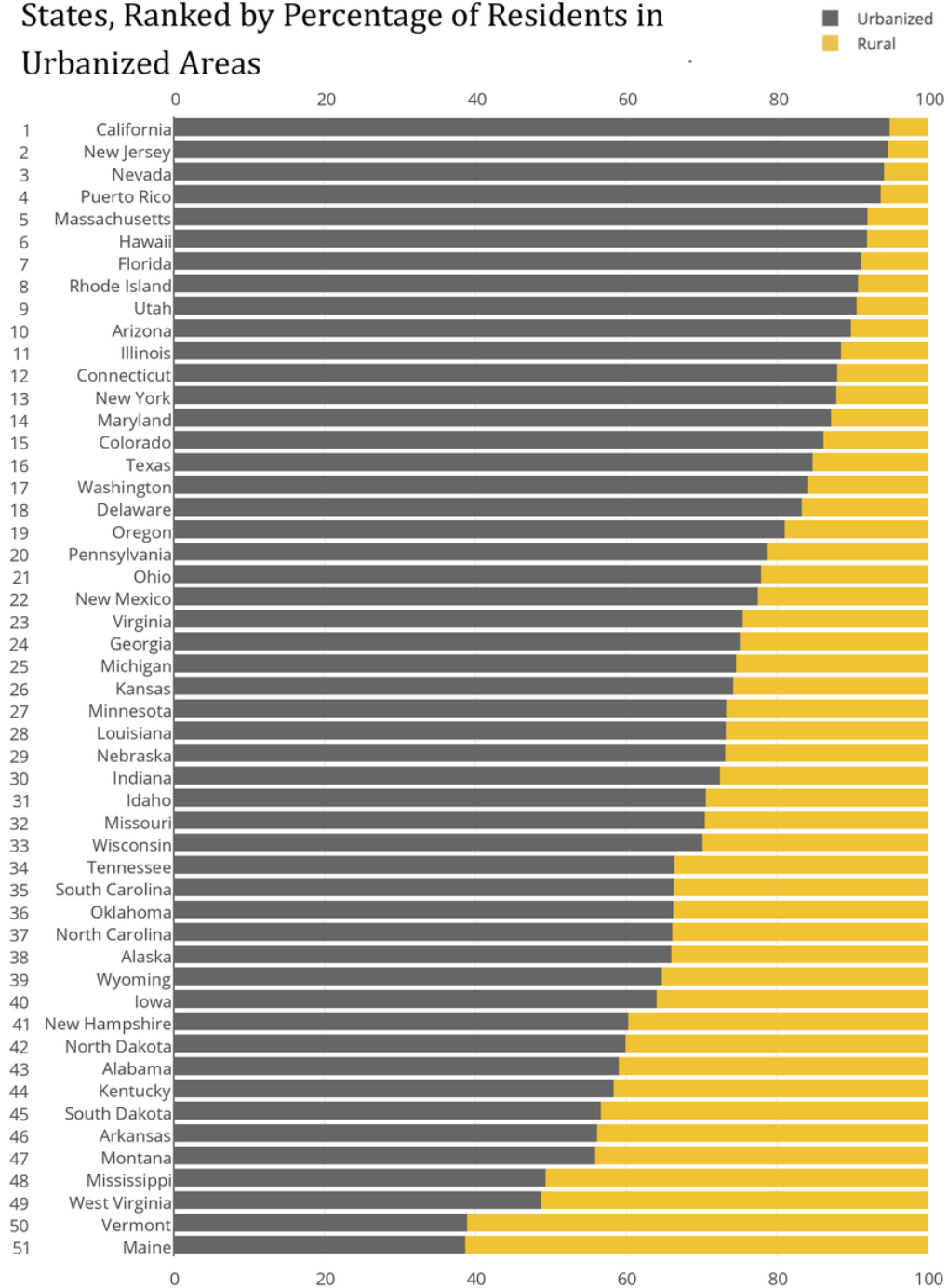**Diverse Landscapes and Diminishing Rural Population**

In addition to several large metropolitan areas, Texas also boasts a vast number of smaller towns, rural areas, and varied terrain. With a total area of 268,820 square miles, Texas is made up of diverse landscapes that resemble both the American South and Southwest. Although most associate Texas with the visual imagery of Southwestern deserts, less than 10 percent of Texas' land area is desert. The majority of the state is made up of prairies, grasslands, forests and coastline. Traveling from east to west, Texas' terrain changes dramatically from the coastal swamps and piney woods of East and Southeast Texas, to rolling plains and rugged hills of Central and North Texas, and finally the desert and mountainous Big Bend region in West Texas.

Yet while Texas has a vast amount of land, it is far less rural than in the past. Despite a strong agricultural economy and remaining rural pockets in parts of the state, net migration patterns from the Texas State Demographer show Texas' rural counties (represented in yellow below) losing population to more urbanized areas.

Projected Percent Population Change, Texas Counties, 2010-2050

- -51.2% - 0%
- 0.001% - 40%
- 40.1% - 100%
- 101% - 250%
- 251% - 425%

Source: Texas State Data Center 2014 Population Projections . 2000-2010 Migration Scenario

Additionally, as shown in the charts below, 2010 US Census data indicates that Texas is a less than average rural state, ranking #16 in most urbanized states with urban population far exceeding rural.

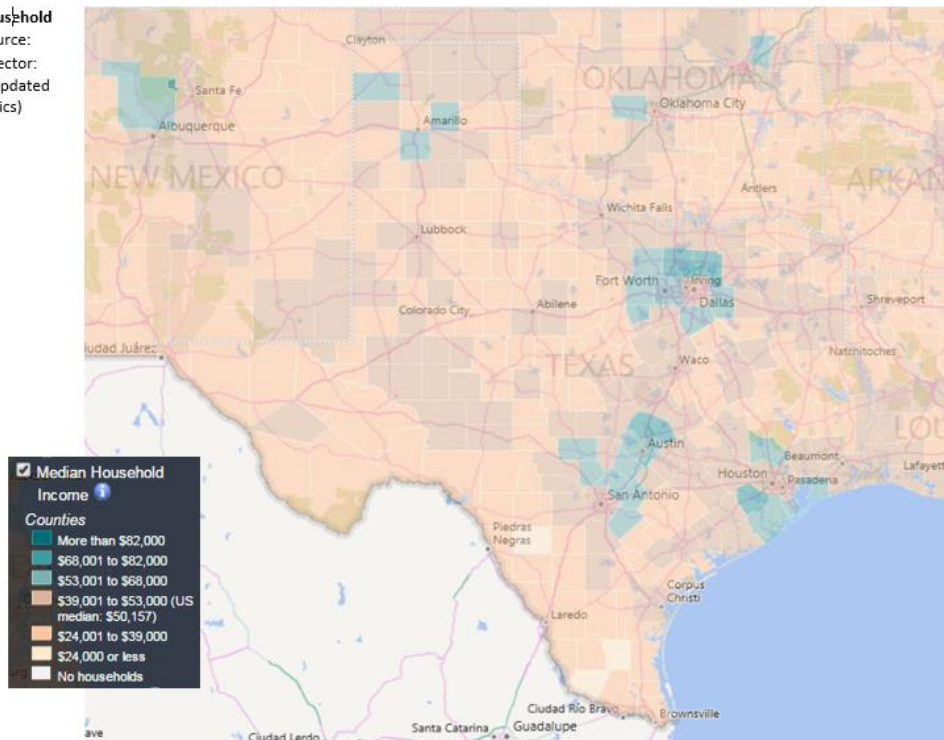## States, Ranked by Percentage of Residents in Urbanized Areas

Legend: ■ Urbanized ■ Rural

Rank	State
1	California
2	New Jersey
3	Nevada
4	Puerto Rico
5	Massachusetts
6	Hawaii
7	Florida
8	Rhode Island
9	Utah
10	Arizona
11	Illinois
12	Connecticut
13	New York
14	Maryland
15	Colorado
16	Texas
17	Washington
18	Delaware
19	Oregon
20	Pennsylvania
21	Ohio
22	New Mexico
23	Virginia
24	Georgia
25	Michigan
26	Kansas
27	Minnesota
28	Louisiana
29	Nebraska
30	Indiana
31	Idaho
32	Missouri
33	Wisconsin
34	Tennessee
35	South Carolina
36	Oklahoma
37	North Carolina
38	Alaska
39	Wyoming
40	Iowa
41	New Hampshire
42	North Dakota
43	Alabama
44	Kentucky
45	South Dakota
46	Arkansas
47	Montana
48	Mississippi
49	West Virginia
50	Vermont
51	Maine

The 50 states and Puerto Rico ranked by the percentage of residents who live in urban vs. rural areas.
Rosie Cima, Priceonomics; Source: Census 2010

However, with diminishing rural populations also comes diminishing community resources and infrastructure (including jobs), and therefore corresponding high rates of poverty, free/reduced school lunch eligibility, and unemployment. The chart below from OneStar's Texas Connector geo-mapping

system, based on US Census data, shows the lower income rates of more rural areas of Texas (for instance, West Texas and the Panhandle).

Median Household Income (Source: Texas Connector: 2012 ESRI Updated Demographics)


Median Household Income
Counties
- More than $82,000
- $68,001 to $82,000
- $53,001 to $68,000
- $39,001 to $53,000 (US median: $50,157)
- $24,001 to $39,000
- $24,000 or less
- No households

Relevant Demographic Trends

Texas State Demographer Dr. Lloyd Potter, presented to both the OneStar National Service Commission and Foundation Boards of Directors in April 2015 regarding "Texas Demographic Characteristics and Trends for Non-Profit Organizations" to aid Commissioners in understanding important current and future demographic trends of the state while considering strategic priorities for OneStar's grant portfolio and support of Texas' nonprofit sector.

Several key demographic trends emerged from Dr. Potter's presentation relevant to OneStar's work:

- ➢ **POPULATION EXPLOSION: Significant population growth statewide**
  - o In 2014, Texas had an estimated 27 million residents, while in the 2010 Census Texas had just over 25 million residents. There is no indication that the population growth in Texas will slow.
  - o The Texas Population Projections 2010 to 2050 Report also suggests that the population of Texas could double by 2050. This would be the result if migration patterns continue at the same pace they have been growing during the 2000-2010 decade. The report highlights a population explosion over the next 45 years – individuals aged 14 and under would nearly double from 5.7 million in 2010 to 10.2 million in 2050. The 15-64 demographic would swell from 16.8 million to 34.7 million, and the senior 65-and-over demographic would jump from 2.6 million to 9.4 million. In total, Texas population would swell to **54.4 million**, based on immigration and people moving from other U.S. states.

Projected Population Growth in Texas, 2010-2050
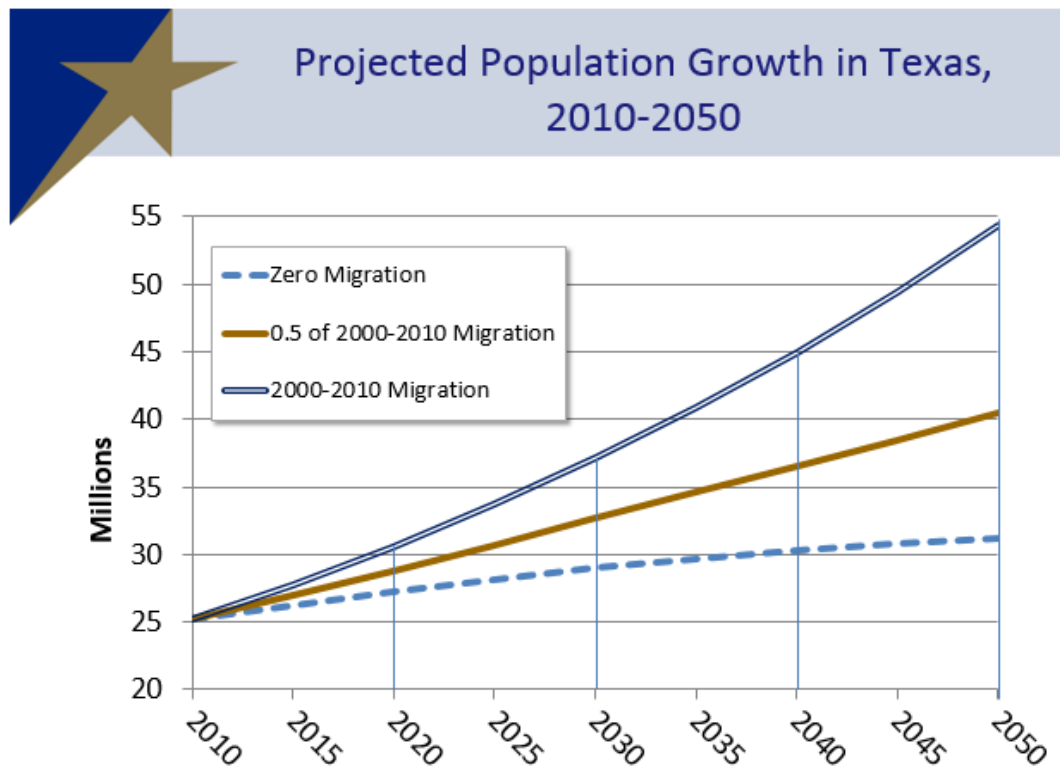
Source: Texas State Data Center 2014 Population Projections

➢ **URBANIZATION/SUBURBANIZATION ACROSS THE TEXAS POPULATION TRIANGLE: Migration from more rural areas of Texas to urban and "suburban ring" counties**
  o Texas growth has been steady but not geographically even over the past seven decades.
  o Population change over the decade has been greatest in the urban and suburban population triangle counties. As the population in the major urban areas and surrounding suburban areas has grown dramatically, areas in the more rural western part of the state that were populated earlier have become less and less populated in recent decades.
  o Approximately 86% of Texas' population is along the I-35 corridor and east; this area with the 3 major metropolitan areas at the points is often described as the "Texas Urban population triangle," made up of the counties of Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, and Travis Counties, the most populated in the State.
  o Counties in the Rio Grande Valley and El Paso region also have significant and fast growing population concentrations, Hidalgo and El Paso counties.
  o Overall, 155 counties gained population (urban and suburban ring) while 99 counties (mostly rural and western) lost population over the decade.
  o The Top Counties for Percent Growth in Texas are largely Suburban ring Counties such as Hays, Fort Bend, Comal, Andrews, and Montgomery Counties.
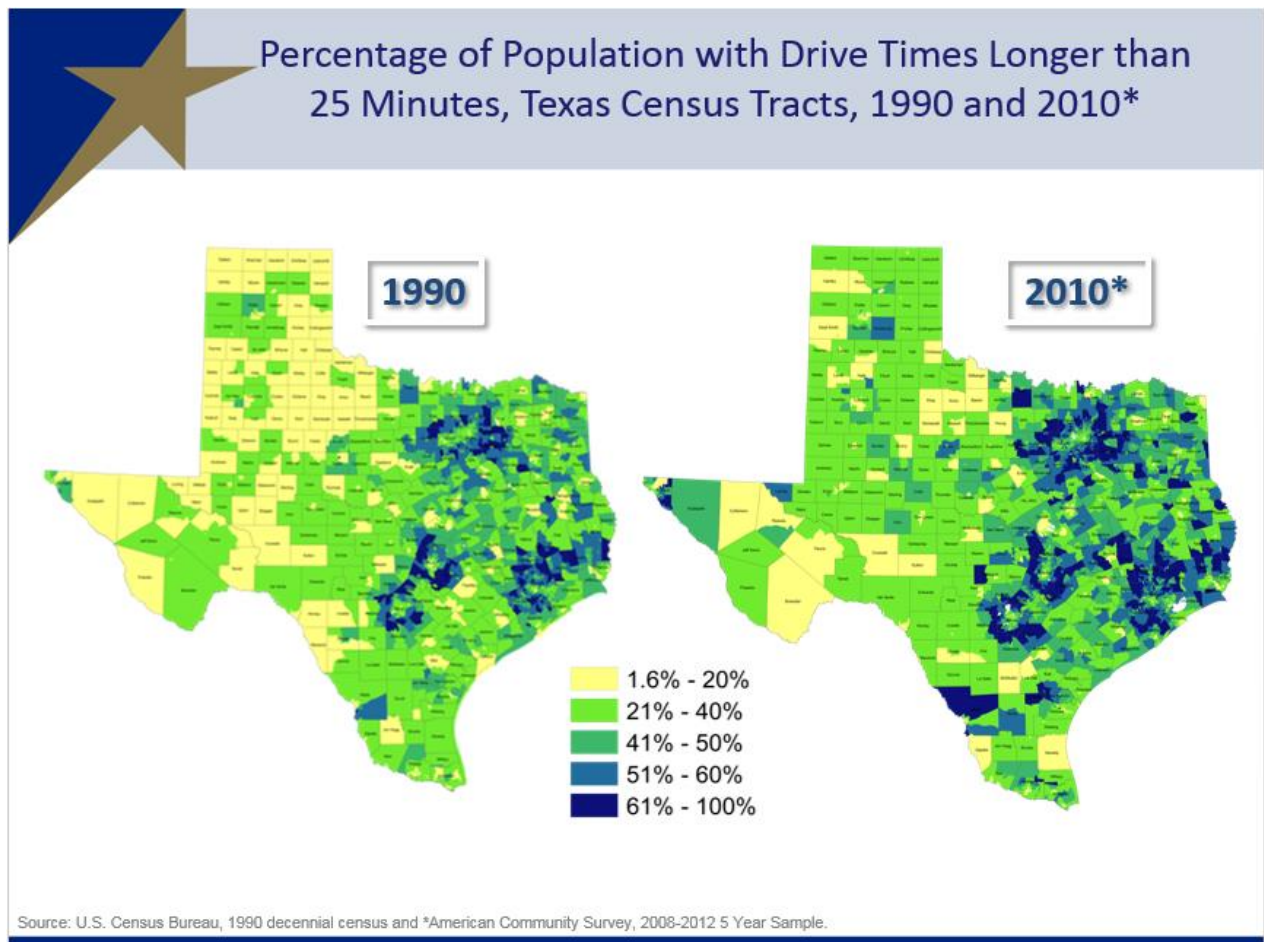
Top Counties for Percent Growth* in Texas, 2013-2014

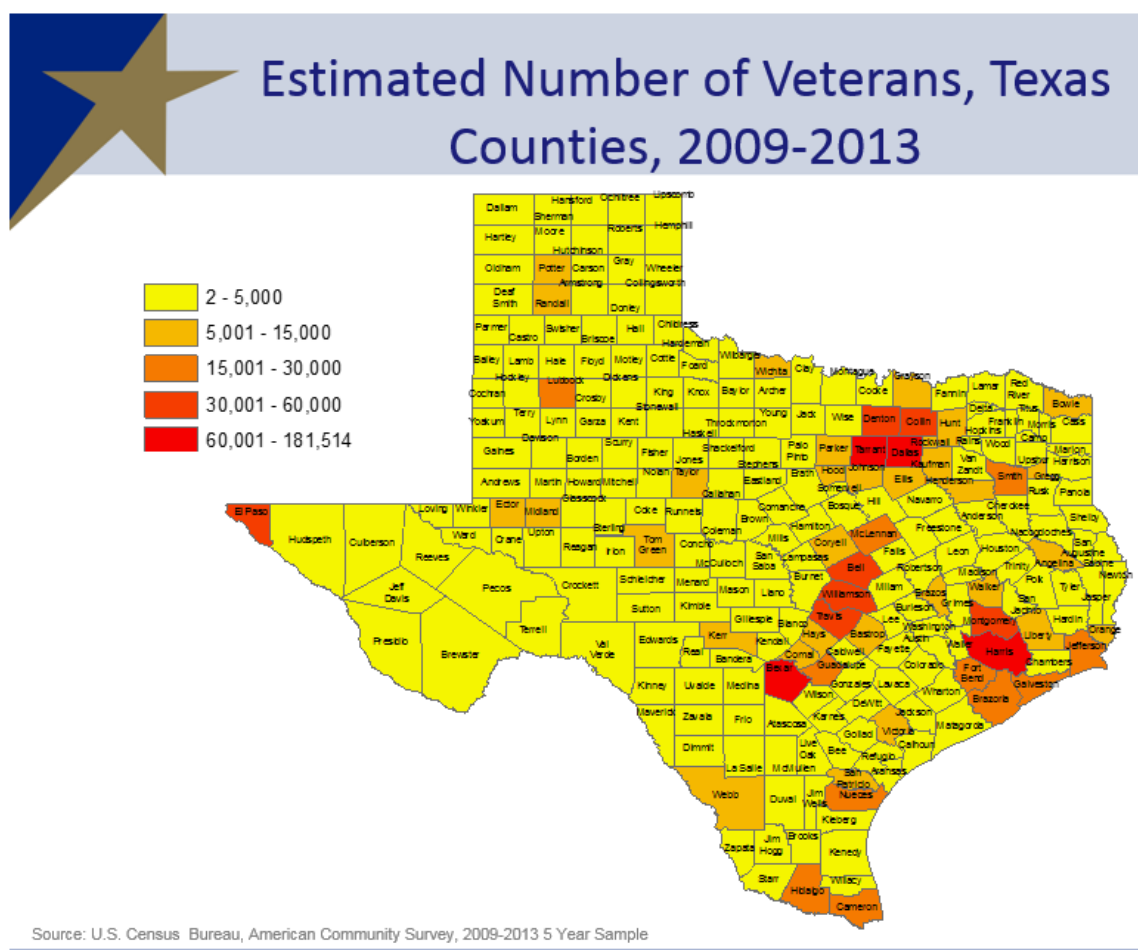|	U.S. Rank	2013-2014 Percent Population Change	Percent Change from Migration	Percent of Migration that is International
Hays	5	4.8%	83.89%	2.62%
Fort Bend	6	4.7%	80.6%	17.27%
Comal	9	4.0%	90.1%	3.04%
Andrews	12	4.0%	62.8%	3.57%
Montgomery	13	3.8%	82.1%	10.39%
Williamson	14	3.8%	76.8%	7.84%
Kendall	15	3.8%	98.0%	5.02%
Ward	21	3.4%	72.0%	1.49%
Denton	23	3.3%	72.8%	14.2%
Collin	31	3.1%	73.9%	20.1%
Aransas	32	3.1%	110.8%	4.3%
Rockwall	35	3.0%	78.3%	7.8%
Waller	36	2.9%	77.2%	5.3%
Ector	37	2.9%	59.9%	2.0%
Guadalupe	42	2.8%	78.6%	4.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 Vintage Population Estimates
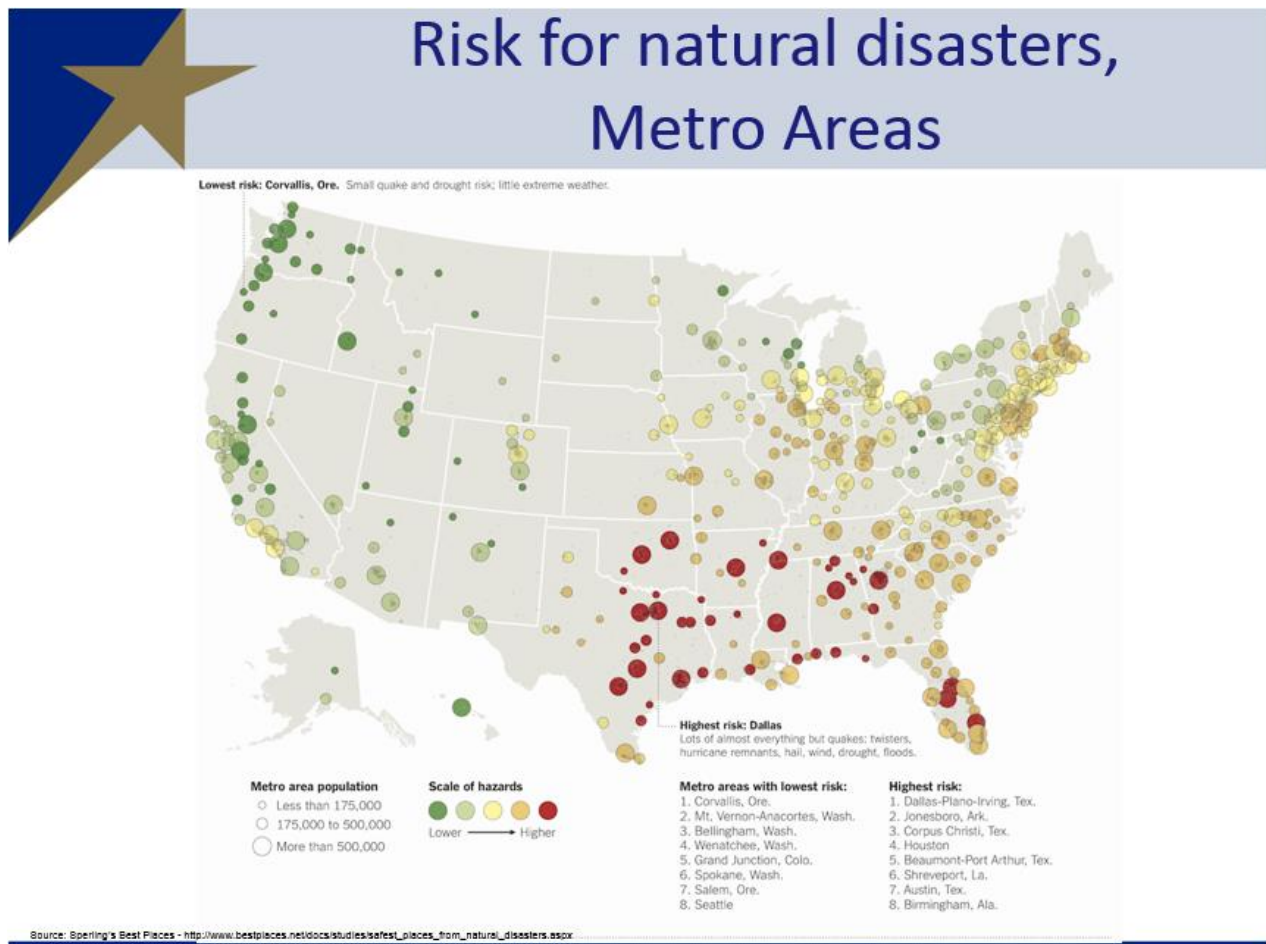
*Among Counties with 10,000 or more population in 2013

➢ **INCREASING URBAN DENSITY AND CONGESTION: As more and more people concentrate in urban and suburban ring counties, there are more people per square mile than ever before.**
  o This increasing density in urban areas of the State puts additional stress on transportation infrastructure as well as social services and businesses.
  o One well-known indicator of "quality of life" is how much time is spent commuting to and from work, as commuting takes away time from family and leisure activities and may have an impact on work productivity as well. The chart below shows the percent of workers who now commute longer than 25 minutes by census tract, which reveals how increasing population and resulting density, perhaps combined with lagging infrastructure, has resulted in increasing commuting times for suburban residents in the more densely populated parts of the state.

Percentage of Population with Drive Times Longer than 25 Minutes, Texas Census Tracts, 1990 and 2010*

1990

2010*

- 1.6% - 20%
- 21% - 40%
- 41% - 50%
- 51% - 60%
- 61% - 100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 decennial census and *American Community Survey, 2008-2012 5 Year Sample.

➢ **GROWING VETERAN POPULATION IN CONCENTRATED AREAS:** Texas ranks #2 in the country in number of veterans.

- o According to the US Census Bureau, the number of states with 1 million or more veterans in 2014 were: California (1.7 million), Texas (1.5 million) and Florida (1.5 million).
- o According to the US Department of Veteran's Affairs, the most updated number of veterans in Texas is 1,680,418.
- o According to TexVet and VA data, Texas will likely become the #1 state for most veterans by 2019.
- o Veteran populations are concentrated in areas around military bases such as Fort Bliss (El Paso), Fort Worth (North Texas), and the largest concentration in the Central Texas region between Austin and San Antonio.

Estimated Number of Veterans, Texas Counties, 2009-2013

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 5 Year Sample

➢ **HIGH RISK FOR NATURAL DISASTERS: Texas ranks #1 as the most disaster-prone state in the nation.**

   o Texas is the #1 most disaster-prone state in the nation, with almost twice as many declared disasters as any other state. Of the nearly 2,000 major disasters that have been declared throughout the United States over the last 60 years, a third of those occurred in just 10 states. Of these 10 states, Texas has had the most major disaster declarations since 1953 at 86 total.

   o Five Texas cities rank in the Top 8 most disaster-prone cities in the country per the chart below, including Dallas-Plano-Irving (#1), Corpus Christi (#3), Houston (#4), Beaumont-Port Arthur (#5), and Austin (#7).

   o Texas is unique in that its vast geographic size, scope, and diversity means that Texas communities face significant risk of a wide variety of disasters, including hurricanes, flooding, wildfires, drought, tornadoes, earthquakes, disease and epidemics, as well as technological and man-made hazards such as the devastating West, TX fertilizer plant explosion of 2013. These disasters have led to economic devastation in under-resourced regions of the state.

Risk for natural disasters, Metro Areas

Lowest risk: Corvallis, Ore. Small quake and drought risk; little extreme weather.

Highest risk: Dallas
Lots of almost everything but quakes; twisters, hurricane remnants, hail, wind, drought, floods.

Metro area population
○ Less than 175,000
○ 175,000 to 500,000
○ More than 500,000

Scale of hazards
Lower ——— Higher

Metro areas with lowest risk:
1. Corvallis, Ore.
2. Mt. Vernon-Anacortes, Wash.
3. Bellingham, Wash.
4. Wenatchee, Wash.
5. Grand Junction, Colo.
6. Spokane, Wash.
7. Salem, Ore.
8. Seattle

Highest risk:
1. Dallas-Plano-Irving, Tex.
2. Jonesboro, Ark.
3. Corpus Christi, Tex.
4. Houston
5. Beaumont-Port Arthur, Tex.
6. Shreveport, La.
7. Austin, Tex.
8. Birmingham, Ala.

Source: Sperling's Best Places - http://www.bestplaces.net/docs/studies/safest_places_from_natural_disasters.aspx

Service Plan and Priorities

As Texas' state service commission, OneStar seeks to align our work with the Governor's priorities, our state's changing demographics and needs, and implementation strategies that work for a state as large and diverse as Texas.

The collective results of our research and experience over the years have allowed OneStar to move forward in making data driven decisions in our outreach, grant making, and management and development of programs. In light of our research, the above demographic data, and observed needs of nonprofits and national service programs in Texas, OneStar will focus its 2016-2018 efforts on the following strategies:

1) **Visibility and Awareness:** OneStar seeks to heighten public awareness and understanding of national and community service resources, programs and opportunities throughout the state through cohesive branding, marketing, and special events that showcase Texas' national service resources and programs.

2) **Funding What Works through Evaluation and Evidence-Based Approaches:** OneStar's grantee portfolio boasts many seasoned, evidence-based AmeriCorps programs whose interventions are being shown through rigorous evaluations and evidence-based approaches to make the critical difference for specific populations in Texas. OneStar will continue to prioritize funding high-quality, evidence-based program interventions that can demonstrate transformative impact on the communities and individuals served. We will continue to align with and uphold the rigorous federal AmeriCorps Evaluation Requirements in our grant making process, while also working to develop additional resources, tools and templates, and expertise in building our grantees' evaluative capacity.

3) **Strategic Expansion of Effective Programming to Underserved, Rural, and Geographically Diverse Communities:** OneStar is committed to assisting evidence-based, successful national service programs with expanding to other areas of Texas that would benefit from such interventions. As a thought leader, incubator of innovation, and philanthropic partner, OneStar is well poised to help promising, effective programs assess growth feasibility and connect to philanthropic and other resources to serve in locations that are in the best interest of Texas. OneStar also recognizes the important role that Multi-Focus Intermediary programs play in developing more geographically diverse service locations.

4) **New Program Development and Outreach:** OneStar is interested in expanding its program development efforts in Texas in collaboration with the CNCS State office and other networks. We plan to do this through offering AmeriCorps Planning Grants, as funding and capacity allows, to promising new programs in underserved geographic regions or Focus Areas (such as Veterans and Military Families, with an emphasis on aiding veterans in their transition back into the community and workforce), implementing cross-stream partnerships to serve municipal, county, and tribal leaders, and cultivating stronger relationships with rural and/or Tribal communities to identify potential areas of collaboration. We will also seek out and prioritize new program designs that plan to utilize volunteers age 55 and older (see Supplemental State Service Plan for Texans Age 55 and Older below).

5) **Volunteer Recruitment and Talent Pipeline Development:** To ensure that vacant Texas volunteer and service opportunities are being filled across the state with talented individuals who want to give back to their communities, OneStar seeks to help grow the number of individuals who want to serve with Texas nonprofits and national service programs, as well as the visibility of Texas nonprofits and service opportunities, to ensure community needs are being met and existing grant dollars are being maximized.

6) **Creating Pathways to Employment:** OneStar seeks to promote volunteer and service opportunities such as AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other skill-based volunteer positions as strategies for Texans seeking employment, including people with disabilities, returned veterans, and seniors age 55+. Recent research shows that people who volunteer have a 27 percent higher likelihood of finding a job after being out of work than non-volunteers, and volunteers in rural communities have a 55 percent higher likelihood of finding employment (Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment Report, 2013).

7) **Partnering Across Sectors and Streams of Service to Maximize Collaboration and Efficiency:** OneStar works closely and effectively across the nonprofit, philanthropic, business, and government sectors through our various networks and collaborations including the Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG), Nonprofit Management Alliance of Texas (NMAT), Academic Affinity Group (AAG), and various foundation and business associations. We also partner closely across "streams of service" – including AmeriCorps NCCC, VISTA, State/National and Senior Corps RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companion Programs – on special events and service opportunities. In 2016-2018, we will continue to seek out ways to collaborate to maximize our effectiveness, efficiency, and ability to serve the State of Texas to the best extent possible.

8) **Education Award Matching for Texas Institutions of Higher Education:** AmeriCorps members who successfully complete their terms of service are eligible for an Education Award proportional to the number of hours they served (the current award for full-time AmeriCorps members in 2016 is $5,775). AmeriCorps members may earn up to the equivalent of two full Education Awards (up to $11,550) to pursue higher education and pay off student loans. These funds can be used for qualified educational expenses (tuition, student loan repayment, and room and board), paid directly to institutions of higher education, helping keep higher education affordable for Texans. Throughout the nation, many colleges and universities augment the value of the AmeriCorps Education Award through a variety of incentives, including matching scholarships, tuition discounts, and academic credit for time served. Only two Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) in the State of Texas currently match the AmeriCorps Education Award. OneStar believes that we can and should incentivize AmeriCorps Alums, who have a year of service experience and a heart for service, to use their Education Awards at our Texas colleges and universities. We will do so by continuing to work toward increasing the number of Texas institutions that participate in these matching programs.

Supplemental State Service Plan for Texans Age 55 or Older

In accordance with federal requirement 45 CFR 2550.50 (a9)e and 45 CFR 2550.60, OneStar also seeks to increase service for adults age 55 and older. We will do this through the following strategies for 2016-2018:

1) Create policies and incentives throughout our work to increase and prioritize service opportunities for adults age 55 or older.
2) Prioritize the use of 55+ volunteers and multi-generational service activities by making it a priority for new program development and in AmeriCorps funding decisions.
3) Connect with the Texas Association of Volunteer Centers (TAVC) to learn about the ways in which Texas volunteer centers are already leveraging and promoting volunteers 55+ and what resources are still needed to improve in this area.
4) Explore ways new technology platforms (such as Catch-a-Fire or similar sites) may help OneStar and Texas nonprofits harness the power of highly skilled volunteers with a focus on volunteers 55+ with years of experience in high-demand fields such as Evaluation, Marketing, Public Relations, Graphic Design, Accounting, and more.
5) Explore ways to utilize OneStar's existing technology, including the Texas Connector nonprofit geo-mapping system and VolunteerTX.org portal, to help nonprofits identify potential volunteers 55+ as well as organizations with potential senior volunteer opportunities. Through VolunteerTX, we will also explore ways in which nonprofits and state government can potentially leverage volunteers 55+ for disaster response and recovery.
6) Support the expansion of effective Texas Senior Corps programs and service areas through assisting the CNCS State Office with potential resource development and partnership opportunities.
7) Partner with Texas Senior Corps Association (TSCA) on special events, trainings, and publicity opportunities to raise cross-sector awareness and visibility of senior volunteer programs.
8) Partner with a variety of organizations currently serving Texans 55+ to recruit and develop opportunities to serve.
9) Connect with Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) that have a high population of non-traditional students who fit the 55+ demographic to determine potential points of collaboration.
10) Connect with nonprofit management support organizations, state agencies, and other statewide networks to develop a list of high need volunteer positions to better connect to our 55+ volunteers.
11) Encourage the development of Encore service programs in the state through actively pursuing collaboration and partnership opportunities with AARP, Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), and other senior-focused groups.

CNCS (National) Focus Areas

As the entity that administers the AmeriCorps grant program in Texas, as part of our State Service Plan for 2016-2018, OneStar will continue to accept AmeriCorps grant applications in any of the six (6) nationally designated Focus Areas listed below. Learn more about the National Focus Areas here.

See below for additional OneStar Priority Areas.

OneStar 2016-18 Priority Areas

In addition to the national Focus Areas, and in alignment with Texas's unique needs as a state, OneStar will prioritize investment in programs which address one or more of the following priority areas:

➢ **Veterans and Military Families** – Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength; increase the number of veterans, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

➢ **Disaster Services** – Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters. Grantees also have the ability to respond to national disasters under CNCS cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

➢ **55+ Corps Programs** – In alignment with OneStar's Supplemental State Service Plan for Texans age 55 and older as well as Congress's intention that AmeriCorps funding should also support service programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older, OneStar seeks to identify and encourage such programs to operate in Texas and expand their 55+ volunteer programs through AmeriCorps funding.

➢ **Intermediary Programs** – OneStar recognizes that rural and/or otherwise under-resourced communities may have limited capacity to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps grant, due to the high level of organizational capacity required of eligible applicant/host site organizations or the lack of available matching funds in these communities. Thus it may be effective for a single eligible applicant (an intermediary) to develop an application and oversee the implementation of an AmeriCorps program that engages multiple non-profits/eligible applicants (a consortium) that, individually, do not have the necessary organizational or fundraising capacity to apply for and run an AmeriCorps program. Given the desire to address community needs holistically, the nonprofits/eligible applicants that make up the consortium may have but are not required to have different focus areas and thus the nonprofit/eligible applicant intermediary may be multi-focused. Applications seeking consideration under this priority must demonstrate that they will be serving at least one or more under-resourced community; that their application represents a consortium model; that the activities provided by the consortium collectively address a compelling community need or set of needs; and that they have sufficient financial and management capacity to act as an umbrella organization for the consortia.

➢ **Youth* Educational Attainment** – Programs which focus on Youth Educational Attainment will have a primary goal of one or more of the following:
  - Increase school-readiness rates among children **– with a focus on Early Childhood Education**
  - Improve literacy rates among youth **– with a focus on Reading Excellence**
  - Improve attendance rates
  - Improve student achievement and educational outcomes
  - Improve math performance and ensure students are performing at grade-level
  - Decrease in students that are required to repeat a grade (grade retention)
  - Increase enrollment in postsecondary education
  - Improve attainment of postsecondary degree
  - Increase rate in attainment of high school diploma and/or high school equivalency

- Provide students with new opportunities through collaborative partnerships with education and businesses to help ensure post-secondary success
- Other goals than listed above that measure increased educational attainment

For these purposes, "youth" is defined as: 1) An infant or toddler age birth to 4; 2) a person enrolled in an educational institution from pre-kindergarten to undergraduate; or 3) a person under the age of 21 who has dropped-out of high school and is seeking to enroll in an educational program to obtain their high school equivalency.

Additional priority will be placed on programs addressing two key **Governor Emergency Priorities: Early Childhood Education** and **Reading Excellence**. Learn more about Governor Abbott's Emergency Items, adopted in March 2015, outlined here.

OneStar will continue to select AmeriCorps programs for funding using a multi-phase process that will include review by experts from the community, OneStar staff, OneStar Senior Leadership and approval by the OneStar National Service Commission Board. Applications will be reviewed based on eligibility, selection criteria, and OneStar priorities. Upon selection of finalists, OneStar will give special consideration to applications whose program designs significantly align with one or more of the OneStar 2016-2018 Priority Focus Areas and which ensure geographic, demographic, and programmatic diversity across the AmeriCorps*Texas portfolio. Applicants will be encouraged to integrate OneStar's priority areas into their program design, where they logically align with their organizational mission and objectives.

In Conclusion

Implementation of this State Service Plan will be guided by specific activities, outputs, and outcomes as outlined in OneStar's Logic Model, updated and reported on annually. Throughout this State Service Plan and all of our work, OneStar remains steadfast in its vision to make Texas home to the strongest, most effective nonprofit sector in the country.

Addendum

In accordance with the federal requirement that State Service Plans be developed through an open and public process, over the course of the previous three years (2013-2016), OneStar's leadership has had ongoing discussions toward that end with the following representatives of the nonprofit, academic and philanthropic sectors:

- **Nonprofit Management Alliance of Texas**, a statewide membership organization of nonprofits whose primary focus is to provide management and governance services to nonprofits

- **Texas Association of Volunteer Centers**, a statewide membership organization of nonprofits that focus on connecting volunteers with service opportunities including mentoring and tutoring, meal preparation and delivery, senior transportation and disaster response

- **OneStar Academic Affinity Group**, a network of colleges and universities with accredited certificate or degree programs in the field of nonprofit management, philanthropy,

volunteerism, and civic engagement or that are active in research and evaluation of the nonprofit sector

- **OneStar's AmeriCorps*Texas grantees**, a portfolio of 26 highly competitive programs serving in the areas of education, health care, disaster services, workforce readiness and other critical issue areas across the state

- **National Service Stakeholders**, including the Texas State Office of the Corporation for National & Community Service, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)-Southwest Region, and Texas Senior Corps Association members, among others

- **Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG)**, 24 state agencies tasked with facilitating the relationship between state government and nonprofits including improving communication, contracting and reporting processes and better utilizing existing nonprofit networks

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