

2003 Annual Report Executive Summary

FUTURO Empowerment Zone (also a Round II EC)

In 2003, FUTURO set out to create a niche in services that were currently not being met by other organizations in the region. The biggest gaps where services were lacking were identified in self-help housing and in the preparedness of the region to attract business growth. In the area of regional preparedness for business growth, FUTURO joined a regional economic development taskforce made up of nine counties that included city and county government, economic development entities, Chambers of Commerce, and the local Council of Governments. The idea was born of the wish to prepare our region for the added growth to South Texas that is expected due to the announcement of Toyota to place a new manufacturing plant in South San Antonio that will employ two thousand and will draw other automotive suppliers to South Texas. As a member of the Middle Rio Grande Regional Economic Development Task Force, FUTURO took on the responsibility of compiling the individual community profiles and related economic development information received from the nine counties into a regional profile. The information is available on the website at www.futurocommunities.org. FUTURO has also embarked on its first project in the area of self-help housing. Five homes will be built through family sweat equity in 2004, as a result of grants obtained by FUTURO in 2003. And FUTURO has successfully submitted a pre-application for an additional 10 self-help units for 2004-2005.