

## CSA #4 – Baytown/Highlands Executive Summary

### Demographics:

The Baytown/Highlands CSA is a predominantly Anglo area located just east of downtown Houston. 56% of the population is Anglo; just less than 30% is Hispanic, and the remainder of the population consists of considerably smaller proportions of African Americans and Asians. The median household income is slightly less than that of Greater Houston, and the median home value is about two thirds that of the city as a whole. The Baytown/Highlands area is slightly less educated than Greater Houston. Roughly a quarter of the adult population has no high school diploma, and only 13% of residents have a college degree. Most households consist of married couples with children; however, nearly 12% of families with children are headed by single mothers.

### Satisfaction levels:

Compared to the rest of Houston, the residents of the Baytown/Highlands area reported levels of satisfaction consistent with the city as a whole. 39% of residents reported a great deal of satisfaction with their neighborhoods, roughly average among all CSAs. 76% reported high levels of satisfaction with their families, and 53% reported high levels of satisfaction with their friends. Only 31% of adults successfully manage the demands of their careers and families, and 46% of residents reported being happy with their lives as a whole.

### Spiritual Condition:

Relative to the rest of Greater Houston, residents of Baytown/Highlands are much more spiritually receptive than other CSAs in the Greater Houston area; however, this increased spiritual receptivity does not translate into increased church attendance. Only 32% of residents attend church weekly, and 15% of residents never attend church. When having problems, 41% would be likely to see a religious counselor, and 34% would seek help in a place of worship. However, the community is much more spiritually aware than these statistics would indicate. Nearly 75% of residents are likely to read the Bible or other inspired literature when they have problems. Likewise, 88% of residents are likely to pray when they have problems, and 82% of residents have no doubts about the existence of God.

### Interviews with Key Leaders in the Baytown/Highlands CSA:

Key leaders pointed to the small town community feel, friendly people, strong industrial base, and diversity of cultures as the best characteristics about the community. The problems facing the area included gang related issues, image problems, lack of economic development, and what one interviewee called a “spiritual deadness.” Community leaders commented that the congregations strive to work within the community, offering a myriad of programs designed to meet the needs of parents, youth, and those marginalized within the community. African American congregations have done an “incredible job” helping address these problems. However, while some churches are working to solve problems separately, as a whole the Church is not a strong, visible presence within the community. There is little communication among congregations, and churches are perceived as having moved away the older parts of town into “better” areas. The interviewees challenged the churches to work together to seriously address the issues facing the community. They suggested organizing an effort to build a homeless shelter, providing outreach for needy families, and mobilizing the “silent majorities” who are not engaged within the community at large.

