



Brownsville Wellness Coalition

Strategic Plan 2019-2022

VISION

Brownsville Wellness Coalition envisions a future where all community members sustain a healthier way of life. Everyone will have the freedom, opportunity, and tools to be self-sufficient and achieve their best wellness.

MISSION

Brownsville Wellness Coalition cultivates healthy food and lifestyles.





1

**ENSURE BWC'S
FINANCIAL AND
ORGANIZATIONAL
SUSTAINABILITY**

We are committed to ensuring BWC's financial sustainability by continuing to cultivate and steward synergistic relationships with key funders, individual donors, and the Board and by having effective mechanisms to attract funds that support and guarantee our mission. We also believe that investing in continuous capacity building will allow us to strengthen our structure, systems, programs, processes, and people, including the Board of Directors, to allow us to operate more efficiently and effectively to position BWC on a path to organizational sustainability.

2

**POSITION BWC AS
THE ACKNOWLEDGED
LEADER FOR WELLNESS
PROGRAMS**

We aim to achieve a predominant place in Brownsville's wellness community. We will cultivate current and seek new strategic alliances and partnerships with other organizations and adopt specific and targeted public relations and marketing strategies to foster clear understanding of our mission and bring to light our history of achievements in enhancing wellness in our community.

3

**EVALUATE AND
STRENGTHEN PROGRAMS
TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT
AND EFFECTIVENESS**

We strive to offer programs that engage people from all socioeconomic levels and contribute toward the enrichment of our community by promoting healthy food sourcing, food preparation, and exercise habits that lead to optimum personal wellness.

4

**SUCCESSFULLY MOVE
TO NEW FACILITIES**

We resolve to thoroughly prepare for moving to new headquarters and any other facilities. We will create a business plan to gain a clear understanding of our market, stakeholders, projected revenues, and expenses, and identify funding and operational cost gaps. We will also create a project plan to ensure all critical items are addressed to ensure a successful move and effective first two years of operations.



Message from the Executive Director

It is with great pride that the Board of Directors and administration of Brownsville Wellness Coalition introduce its Strategic Plan for 2019-2022. BWC staff and Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan that builds on the organization's long-standing mission to cultivate healthy food and lifestyles in the City of Brownsville.

I appreciate the comprehensive process in development of our Strategic Plan because it demanded we pay close attention to the manner in which we operate, including reviewing all of our systems, programs, processes, and human resources. The preparation involved prior to the consultant's assessment was intense, yet worthwhile; it helped us gain a better understanding of best practices and provided a guide to identify necessary updates to operate more effectively. This plan is a working document which will be routinely updated to assure progress towards the identified objectives of productivity and organizational effectiveness.

I am thankful to the Board of Directors, administrative staff, community partners, and Lee + Associates for their unwavering commitment and input on this process. I thank Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas and the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation for their financial support of this plan and I look forward to sharing our future achievements.

Veronica Rosenbaum
Executive Director
June 2019

From the Board Chair

I am pleased to introduce you to Brownsville Wellness Coalition's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.

The Brownsville Wellness Coalition started as a small Farmers Market with just a handful of vendors and has grown over the past decade into a thriving organization with an expanding network and several programs that build on each other and a vision for a healthier community.

We are no longer just a Farmers Market, a growth motivated by the documented needs of our families, our friends, and our neighbors—our people. As we work to develop the efficacy of BWC's programs, demand only increases.

As we stand on the precipice of yet another boom, our Executive Director and Board of Directors — with the guidance of Lee + Associates, financial support from Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas and the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation, and counsel from our ongoing partners at the UT School of Public Health — have created a bold and clear plan that outlines where we're going, how we will get there, and what it means to our home, Brownsville.

Voices from our stakeholders — including our program participants, community partners, residents, and farmers — helped to shape this plan. We are committed to receiving ongoing input as we implement this blueprint for the future and its priorities together, empowering others to be ambassadors of this plan, our organization, and wellness as an accessible option and journey for all people in our beloved city.

Dandy Pilon
Board Chair
June 2019





INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan provides a clear roadmap for strengthening organizational capacity and sustainability.

Planning Overview

Brownsville Wellness Coalition Board of Directors and Executive Director developed this Strategic Plan with assistance from Lee + Associates, a nonprofit consulting firm in San Antonio, Texas. The work and deliberation of the Board and Executive leadership produced the strategic goals and objectives for the next three years along with an operations plan to ensure accountability for implementation. This strategic plan is an important step toward continued success and provides Brownsville Wellness Coalition with a clear roadmap for strengthening organizational capacity and sustainability.

This plan was developed with involvement and guidance from the full Board of Directors and the organization's Executive Director. The Board met twice, first to reflect on the vision of the organization and later to determine the strategic goals to govern the strategic plan.

Brownsville Wellness Coalition sought the voice and opinion of its stakeholders, including the Board, volunteers, staff, funders, individual donors, community partners, and City officials in this planning effort. Based on input from its stakeholders, this plan focuses Brownsville Wellness Coalition's vision and direction towards creating greater impact in the Brownsville community.

Lee + Associates also conducted an organizational scan to review BWC's structure, systems, programs, processes, people, finances and reputation to explore how these elements currently and potentially could affect BWC's operations. The survey results and assessment report were presented at the second Strategic Planning Committee session. The data gathered helped the Board assess both the challenges and opportunities BWC is likely to face over the next three years and set the context for the choices reflected in this strategic plan.

This plan will give BWC invaluable direction toward progress over the next three years. Based on input from key stakeholders, this plan focuses BWC's vision and direction. BWC will move into a new facility, create a strategic funding plan, build internal capacity and engagement, increase community awareness, and strengthen mission-centered programs.



Background and History

The Brownsville Wellness Coalition (BWC), a Texas not-for-profit corporation was formed to address our community's poor health status by providing programs that promote nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Like the entire U.S. border with Mexico, which has some of the worst health outcomes in the nation (Fisher- Hoch et al., 2015), Brownsville has an alarming, above-national prevalence of residents who are overweight (34%), obese (50%), and living with diabetes (28%). Furthermore, Brownsville, Texas, is one of the nation's poorest cities, with over 31% of families living below the poverty level (Census Bureau's American Community Survey). BWC grew from the community's response to our health crisis and many organizations and individuals came together to plan for change including the University of Texas School of Public Health, Brownsville Regional Campus; the City of Brownsville (COB); and Su Clinica Familiar.

Our mission is simple: The Brownsville Wellness Coalition cultivates healthy food and lifestyles. We impact the overall wellness in our community by:

- strengthening the local food system
- improving access to nutritious affordable food
- educating the public to produce, cook and eat healthy local food
- promoting healthy lifestyle choices
- providing opportunities to engage in physical activity

Our mission is simple:

*Brownsville Wellness Coalition
cultivates healthy food
and lifestyles.*

We reach out to high-risk populations through education and behavior change support programs. Our mission directly supports the Imagine Brownsville Comprehensive Plan (imaginebrownsville.com) formally adopted by the City of Brownsville in 2009 and specifically addresses one of the strategic initiatives in the Plan's Healthcare section: "Promote affordable fruits and vegetables through community gardens and farmers markets that would also promote education on healthy living." The mission also aligns with State Health Services to "increase consumption of fruits and vegetables" by bringing fruits and vegetables to more places and people, creating new paths for fruits and vegetables to reach the market, and promoting healthy food choices.

The Brownsville Wellness Coalition envisions a future where all community members sustain a healthier way of life. Everyone will have the freedom, opportunity, and tools to be self-sufficient and achieve their best wellness.

Programs and Community Impact

FARMERS' MARKET

The Farmers' Market provides fresh produce in a food desert location, enhances the social aspect of building community, ensures access to local seasonal products in a low-income area of the city, and encourages entrepreneurship.

Brownsville Wellness Coalition's Farmers' Market, a bi-cultural tourist destination is located in the Mitte Cultural District and is one of only three certified markets to accept SNAP and WIC vouchers in the Rio Grande Valley. This important designation creates inclusiveness and erases the stigma that farmers markets are for the affluent.

The Market's location in a park and its setting along a walking trail invite physical activities. Free yoga, Little Pretzel yoga for kids, and gym boot camps take place every Saturday. Because this is also a pet-friendly market, the "entire" family can spend quality time together in a healthful, supportive, and safe environment.



FRESCO MOBILE MARKET

The Fresco Market seeks to bring the Farmers' Market and access to food to those who cannot otherwise travel to the Farmers' Market location. The Fresco Market travels to 11 locations throughout the city. Low-income, home-bound individuals gain the most benefit by this service as they participate in purchasing food and cooking demonstrations. Additionally, the Fresco Market also accepts SNAP and WIC to encourage participation.



COMMUNITY GARDENS

The Community Garden program was created in 2013 to teach people how to grow their own food with organic methods. Through their involvement with the community garden program, participants are taught how to save and make money; they save through growing their food and earn through an opportunity to sell it at the Farmers' Market. This program teaches food self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship.



THE HAPPY KITCHEN / LA COCINA ALEGRE®

The Happy Kitchen / La Cocina Alegre® — cooking classes and nutrition education — teaches participants the importance and benefits of eating healthy foods and instructs them in how to cook nutritious, low-cost meals using fresh, locally-sourced foods. The long-term goals for participants are to learn good nutrition habits using local and seasonal produce while having fun, and to inspire them to make lifestyle changes that will impact participants' and their families' overall health.



DALE WALKING GROUP

Dale Walking Group aims to produce a long-lasting positive health impact on participants by reducing weight, improving cardiovascular and pulmonary fitness, and enhancing feelings of well-being.

Our program provides a low-impact, family friendly, and community-building physical fitness activity for everyone but especially those who cannot afford a gym membership. Brownsville Wellness Coalition offers this as a complimentary program to enhance its holistic approach to wellness.

Strategic Goal 1

Ensure BWC's financial and organizational sustainability

We are committed to ensuring BWC's financial sustainability by continuing to cultivate and steward synergistic relationships with key funders, individual donors and the Board, and by having effective mechanisms to attract funds that support and guarantee our mission. We also believe that investing in continuous capacity building will allow us to strengthen our structure, systems, programs, processes, and people, including the Board of Directors, to allow us to operate more efficiently and effectively to position BWC on a path to organizational sustainability.

GOAL OVERVIEW

BWC recognizes that having a strong sustainability plan in place will position the organization to serve the Brownsville community with maximum impact for years to come.

The generous financial support from key funders have afforded BWC the opportunity to strengthen its internal capacity to better serve the Brownsville community. BWC seeks to ensure continued support from current funders and partners, while seeking new funding resources, including greater support from individual donors and exploring innovative business models for increased earned revenue potential.

As the organization matures and faces an important growth stage, developing a strategic human capital plan to ensure the delivery of high quality programs and enhanced customer satisfaction, strong governance, engaged volunteers, and effective executive leadership will help BWC achieve greater levels of organizational sustainability for years to come.

Strategic objectives

to support ensuring BWC's financial and organizational sustainability include:

- 1 Develop an ideal funding mix to ensure organizational viability
- 2 Develop an organizational structure to support growth during 2019-2021
- 3 Create a Board engagement and accountability plan
- 4 Develop and implement an Annual Fund Campaign
- 5 Cultivate and steward key funding relationships and ensure contract deliverables

Strategic Goal 2

Position BWC as the acknowledged leader for wellness programs

We aim to achieve a predominant place in Brownsville's wellness community. We will cultivate current and seek new strategic alliances and partnerships with other organizations and adopt specific and targeted public relations & marketing strategies to foster clear understanding of our mission and bring to light our history of achievements in enhancing wellness in our community.

GOAL OVERVIEW

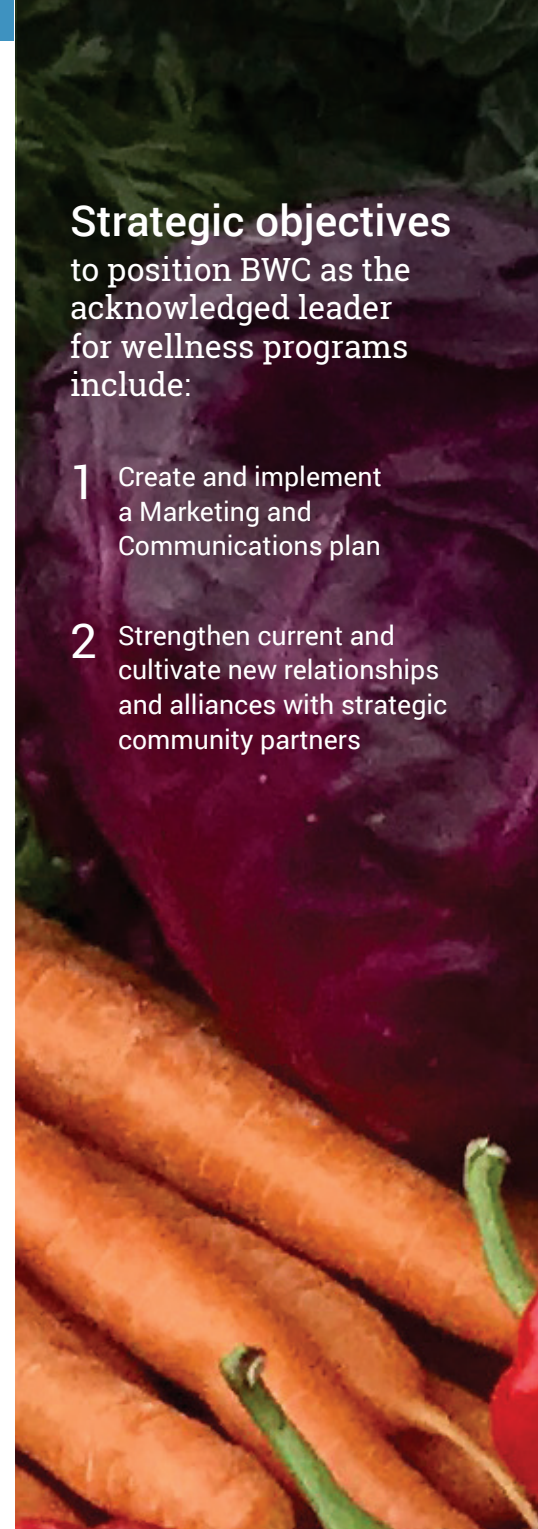
BWC understands the great need and opportunity to increase wellness in Brownsville. BWC's programs work holistically to improve the physical, emotional, and behavioral health of all participants through its programs and services. Additionally, through participating in incubator and entrepreneurship activities offered through the Community Gardens and Farmers' Market, participants learn how to start their own businesses leading to higher levels of financial wellness. Several program participants have become successful business owners and restaurateurs.

BWC enjoys strong community stakeholder support, including The City of Brownsville; Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville; Brownsville Independent School District; The Mitte Historical District; and The University of Texas Health, School of Public Health, Brownsville Regional Campus. BWC seeks to strengthen and leverage these partnerships and alliances for the continued good of the community. While recognizing these important partnerships, it is important to develop new, mutually beneficial ones to continue elevating the reach and breadth of programs to benefit Brownsville residents.

Strategic objectives

to position BWC as the acknowledged leader for wellness programs include:

- 1 Create and implement a Marketing and Communications plan
- 2 Strengthen current and cultivate new relationships and alliances with strategic community partners



Strategic Goal 3

Evaluate and strengthen programs to maximize impact and effectiveness

We strive to offer programs to engage people from all socio-economic levels and contribute towards the enrichment of our community by promoting healthy food sourcing, food preparation and exercise habits that lead to optimum personal wellness.

GOAL OVERVIEW

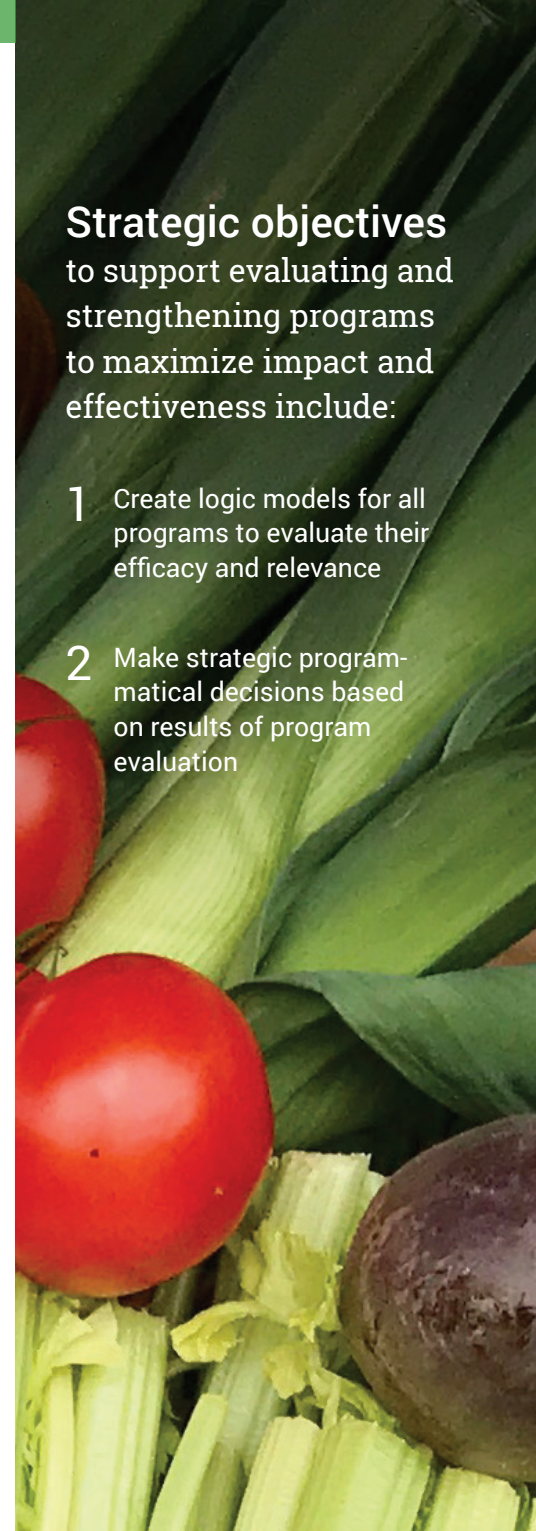
BWC has made important strides in serving the Brownsville community by successfully addressing food security and wellness issues that support changes in individual behavior - and recognizes it can do more.

Each BWC program has been intentionally created to address social determinants of health specific to the RGV, and Cameron County in particular. Continued and enhanced understanding of RGV's population and local wellness needs will allow BWC to offer programs that will promote paths to greater food security, physical health and well-being, social connection, nutritional education, and entrepreneurship. Robust program assessment, including clear understanding of client needs and satisfaction will be undertaken to enhance and provide mission-centered programs and services to positively influence behaviors that bring about enhanced quality of life and well-being.

BWC's partnership with UT School of Health and strong relationship with the City of Brownsville provide important support, resources, and information to effectively deliver its vision to create a future where all community members sustain a healthier way of life and everyone will have the freedom, opportunity, and tools to be self-sufficient and achieve their best wellness.

Strategic objectives to support evaluating and strengthening programs to maximize impact and effectiveness include:

- 1 Create logic models for all programs to evaluate their efficacy and relevance
- 2 Make strategic program-matical decisions based on results of program evaluation



Strategic Goal 4

Successfully move to new facilities

We resolve to thoroughly prepare for moving to new headquarters and any other facilities. We will create a business plan to gain a clear understanding of our market, stakeholders, projected revenues and expenses, and identify funding and operational cost gaps. We will also create a project plan to ensure all critical items are addressed to ensure a successful move and effective first two years of operations.

GOAL OVERVIEW

BWC enters a new era of growth with the upcoming move to the Quonset Hut building. Through a grant from the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation and in collaboration with the City of Brownsville and the Food Bank of Rio Grande Valley, BWC will headquarter and operate this food hub as The Cannery Public Market.

BWC will be diligent in its planning for a successful move, establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships, and the creation of a state-of-the-art, accessible, and welcoming facility for the enjoyment and benefit of the citizens of Brownsville.

Strategic objectives

to support successfully moving to new facilities include:

- 1 Create a business plan to help identify the most impactful use of new facility and ensure adequate funding for effective operations





Vision to Reality: The Operations Plan

Brownsville Wellness Coalition has developed an operations plan to ensure timely implementation of strategic goals and objectives and imbue accountability throughout the process.

The operations plan should remain flexible, understanding that objectives may change based on external and internal environmental conditions. Goals should remain as approved by the Board over the duration of the three-year period of the Strategic Plan. Staff will finalize the operations plan with responsible parties and timelines.







Brownsville Wellness Coalition

1 West University Drive
Brownsville, Texas 78520

www.brownsvillewellnesscoalition.com