

DECEMBER 3, 2024



STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

Project BRAVO builds bridges to opportunities that help individuals and families thrive. Its vision is for the community of El Paso to achieve equity and elevate the quality of life through education and social services that lead to self-sufficiency. Project BRAVO is the Community Action Program that serves people living the County of El Paso.

The past three years, Project BRAVO focused on the COVID-19 pandemic response with services such as rental assistance, mortgage assistance, eviction diversion, water utility assistance, and other emergency services, as well as core programs and services. After successfully completing the pandemic response work and fully expending all temporary federal, state and local COVID-19 grants, is time for Project BRAVO to focus on the transformational impact of family self-sufficiency.

Project BRAVO partnered with Measurement Resources Company to facilitate a data-driven Community Needs Assessment (CNA) and strategic planning process to lay out a roadmap of strategic priorities over the next three years.

The CNA is a vital tool designed to comprehensively understand the needs of our client population, guiding us in our mission to serve them effectively.

The strategic planning process is then designed to:

1. Explore the current state of Project BRAVO's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
2. Clarify the desired future vision.
3. Set organizational priorities.
4. Lay out the road map to address the priority needs.

The following outlines each phase of the strategic planning process and key takeaways from each phase.

Phase One: Exploring the Current State

Exploring the current state of Project BRAVO and the context in which it operates allows Project BRAVO to appropriately calibrate strategies to achieve a better future. Below is a summary of key current state findings used to facilitate discussion and action planning during the process. A detailed Current State Report may be obtained by contacting Project BRAVO.

Clients' Goals'

Clients articulated the following goals in surveys and interviews:

- To have good **health** and be healthy
- To have a better **quality of life** for myself and my family, to be happy and to have peace
- To work, secure **employment**, and get a better job that leads to higher pay and personal satisfaction

- To be **financially secure** and stable. In other words, to be able to provide for family, have savings, pay bills, buy a car, buy and maintain a home, and take care of family members when they are ill
- To earn an education and support family with their educational goals (e.g., complete school; earn a degree; learn and study; access school)
- To be a **better person**, friend, or family member, and support my community and other people

Client Population Needs

Results of the community needs assessment identified the following needs.

Area of Need	Details of Need
Housing	Individuals and families need affordable housing through support to rent, own, or maintain a safe and affordable home.
Economic Opportunity	Individuals and families need economic opportunity through financial wellness and enough income to take care of family and community.
Access to Health, Mental Health and Substance Use Services	Individuals and families need access to health, mental health, and substance use services that address prevention and are culturally relevant.
Education/Workforce Development	Individuals and families need access to education and workforce development that integrates digital literacy, career-specific training or technical education.
Legal Services	Individuals and families need legal services, especially for households with older adults, immigrants, refugees, and other special populations.

Project BRAVO's Strengths, Weaknesses (internal factors)

An analysis of all organizational, survey and interview data illuminated the following:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and board believe that Project BRAVO is effective and achieving its mission. • High job satisfaction among staff. • Community partner perceptions are positive, and all will likely refer those in need to Project BRAVO. • Clients are most often referred by friends, family, and service providers. • Partners see their mission being extended through a partnership with Project BRAVO. • Partners view Project BRAVO as having a good, solid reputation with neighborhood-centric staff/trusted by the community. • Project BRAVO knows where the big money is, getting resources from the government or community partners. • Partners and staff view the new leadership as strong (e.g., improving the reputation and using their resources or available funding for actionable agencies; nationally recognized). • Bi-weekly manager meetings between departments allow for timely adjustments and proactive planning. • Frequent (monthly) trainings remind staff of Project BRAVO's mission and create a unified agency. • Partners and their work • Clients and their engagement/feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some partners and clients perceive Project BRAVO's services are not easily accessible to persons with disabilities, specifically the application and getting to services. • Partners wrongfully believe that Project BRAVO is not taking in-person applications and assume older adults cannot access services because they do not have computers or can only use their phones, which is an issue for older adults without computers who cannot see the text on their phones. • Those needed at outreach events are not always available, making it extra challenging for other staff to gain access to schools. • The older adult clientele are not tech savvy or proficient in email, so when they have missing documents and no transportation to the offices, they struggle to email the documents; limited internet access among this population is also a barrier to providing documents. • Clients feel it needs to be clarified why someone does not qualify for Project BRAVO's program, especially when they need those services. • Clients feel that completing applications is too much of a hassle (requires a lot of paperwork and steps).

Project BRAVO's Opportunities and Threats (external factors)

An analysis of all community, organizational, survey and interview data illuminated the following:

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population has grown faster than the national average. • The community is recovering from COVID-era unemployment spikes. • Average annual pay has increased steadily from 39K in 2019 to 47K in 2023. • The rate of poverty in children has decreased. • More people are becoming insured. • Healthcare providers have become more available. • Estimated 11 vacant rental units per unhoused person. • El Paso is a safe city. • Increasing rates for college education, high school graduation, and students performing at or above grade level on state K -12 assessments. • Teen births are decreasing, and prenatal care is being used more often. • The community and agencies in El Paso have a strong work ethic and are a close-knit community that sits together at the table to strategize. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding restraints. • Service demands are high. • Income inequality is at an all-time high, and median wages are well below a living wage for many residents. • Clients' greatest unmet needs are financial support and healthy and accessible food. • Community partners identified service gaps for marginalized groups like immigrant workers, those who cannot afford childcare or health insurance, and formerly incarcerated individuals. • Housing availability/cost is a persistent issue. • Substance use is a growing issue. • Mental health is a growing issue. • Clients are afraid to accept state-level support due to fear stemming from stories they have heard, so they stick with local organizations that are not meant to be long-term solutions. • Clients fear losing assistance because jobs are not secure and wages are low, so they stop working towards their goal.

Phase Two: Defining the Desired Future State

With the current state thoroughly understood, the Project BRAVO leadership and staff participated in a facilitated visioning session (session 1) that resulted in a clear, compelling future vision. The results of the visioning session are below.

Our Vision

To bridge access to opportunities for residents of El Paso County to achieve equity and elevate our quality of life through education and social services that lead to self-sufficiency.

Our Mission

Project BRAVO builds bridges to opportunities that help individuals and families thrive in our Borderland community.

Our Three-Year Aspiration

A description of the impact Project BRAVO is having and how the organization looks three years from now:

By December 2027 clients in our borderland community have housing stability, financial wellness, educational training that leads to living wage jobs, and access to the resources they need to meet their goals.

Additionally, Project BRAVO has fostered a robust partner ecosystem, expanded outreach in unreached communities, and high-quality services (digital and in-person).

As a preferred employer, Project BRAVO has a highly trained and engaged workforce that embraces technology and is adaptable to the evolving needs of the community.

Finally, Project BRAVO has the funding and a system of continuous improvement that allows Project BRAVO staff and leaders to effectively meet strategic goals.

Phase Three: Making the Way Forward

Finally, during the strategic planning session (session 2), Project BRAVO staff defined goals and strategic priorities that will guide the allocation of time and resources over the next three years to achieve the desired future.

Our Strategic Priorities

Areas that Project BRAVO needs to focus on to achieve the 3-year aspiration.

1. Staff Development- Staff are highly engaged and equipped to meet client's' needs.
2. Partner Engagement- Strengthen partnerships that best serve clients, specifically those addressing the needs identified by the 2024 CNA.
3. Expand Outreach- Expand services to unreached communities.
4. Impact Evaluation and Continuous Improvement- Have reliable data on service delivery, quality and impact.

Finally, small groups outlined key pieces of an action plan to move Project BRAVO towards its goals.

Action Plan

Strategic Priority: Staff development			
Overarching Goal: Staff are highly engaged; Staff are equipped to meet clients' needs.			
Goal: (2025) Address current and emerging training opportunities for a stronger workforce Goal: (2026) Project BRAVO has the relevant technology for it's workforce to better meet client needs.			
Success Metric: Staff report having the technology support needed to their job well.			
How would you rate yourself on this goal from 0 to 10: 7			
Supporting Forces (update)		Restraining Forces: (update)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departments are already in the practice of managing staff training • Department heads and staff understand their clients • Positive employee culture • Local partners may be able to provide formal or informal training to staff 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation in client tech-savviness • Cost of some trainings 	
Leadership Champion: Martha H.			
Next Action Steps	What Does Success Look Like? (KPI)	Staff – Who is responsible?	By When? (Due Date)
Talk with departments about technology challenges among staff	List of technology challenges across the agency.	HR-Martha H.	Q1 2025
Update training offerings, including technology related training, to meet current and emerging needs of the workforce (for example, fire safety, CPR, addiction services, mental health first aid, Excel, AI)	Project BRAVO has a refreshed list of training offerings that meet staff technology and other professional needs	HR-Martha H.	Q3 2025
Identify technology solutions that may be helpful for your workforce in serving clients better	Inventory of technology solutions in social services/customer service	Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	Q4 2025
Determine the feasibility of bringing that technology to Project BRAVO	Clear understanding of which, if any, technology will benefit Project BRAVO's workforce in better serving clients	Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.; HR- Martha H.	Q1 2026

Strategic Priority: Partner Engagement			
Overarching Goal: Strengthen partnerships that best serve clients, specifically those addressing the needs identified by the 2024 CNA.			
Goal: (2025) Increase information exchanges/interactions with community partners			
Success Metric: Partners have at least quarterly communications/exchanges with BRAVO staff related to processes and services.			
How would you rate yourself on this goal from 0 to 10: 5			
Supporting Forces (update)		Restraining Forces: (update)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referring clients to other local agencies where we have relationships & points of contacts 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turnover at other agencies; keeping contacts up to date takes a lot of time to maintain 	
Leadership Champion: Chief Program Officer (CPO will be hired in Q1 of 2025)			
Next Action Steps	What Does Success Look Like? (KPI)	Staff – Who is responsible?	By When? (Due Date)
Consider piloting HUB spot or other platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities and software to keep track of partners 	IT-Juan M and Outreach-Andrea C.	Mid-late year 2025
Create a cadence for information exchanges and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point of contact at agencies that is regularly updated; robust resource directory 	Program Managers-Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	Would be in place by early next year (process in place)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular cadence of meetings to provide updated information where partners ask questions that manager needs to be part of (e.g. have donuts/ lunches to build stronger partnerships) 	Executive Director-Laura P.; CPO; Outreach-Andrea C ; Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	By end of 2024 to begin this in 2025 (reevaluate mid-year)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea of a traveling community advisor 	Center Supervisors-Cecilia B., Gaby M., Nancy N., and Betsabee L.	Mid- year 2025
Create standing documents about Project BRAVO (services offered, application Q&A, and other promotional materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To also include all points of contact w/in the department; proving materials to 	Outreach-Andrea C.; Program Managers-Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	Would be in place by early next year (process in place)

	<p>everyone so it could be provided to clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partner email every quarter after • Job/ employers to receive information on Project BRAVO 	<p>Departments to provide insights and distributed by Outreach-Andrea C.</p> <p>Training & Employment Case Managers-Carolina S. and Estela R.</p>	<p>Q1 2025</p> <p>2025</p>
Track partner services aligned to BRAVO client needs and linkage to referrals	Understanding if individuals received the services they were referred to; collecting insights and feedback from clients; Getting call from client and hearing the received the help/services they needed	Center Supervisors-Cecilia B., Gaby M., Nancy N., and Betsabee L.	2026 goal

Strategic Priority: Expand Outreach	
Overarching Goal: Expand services to unreached communities.	
Goal:	
Be Strategic in Outreach: to colonial or rural areas of El Paso, among veterans, senior communities, LGBTQ+, BIPOC, formally incarcerated.	
Find Opportunities for application completion during outreach	
Success Metric: CAP60 database & Spreadsheets tracking an increase of clientele of the new demographics and additional and various zip codes tracked – with monthly meetings for adjustments if necessary	
How would you rate yourself on this goal from 0 to 10: 6.5	
Supporting Forces (update)	Restraining Forces: (update)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Having a good rapport in the community · Community partnerships to help reach bigger audiences · Have the ability to track these goals/populations/areas with existing CMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Time & Capacity issues · Funding Restrictions for training opportunities for the frontline staff to participate · Funding restrictions for Marketing and/or giveaway

Leadership Champion: Outreach-Andrea C.			
Next Action Steps	What Does Success Look Like? (KPI)	Staff – Who is responsible?	By When? (Due Date)
Create a list of which organizations Project BRAVO should partner with that PB is not currently serving (e.g., LGBTQ+, veterans; etc.)	A list of potential partners will be created	Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	Early 2025
Reach out to organizations for community events/fairs etc. to help with applications	We have partnered with 25 organizations	Outreach-Andrea C.	Early 2025
Creating signup sheets to include the unreached populations and zip codes	Update the sign ins and have them ready to distribute to the centers and programs	Outreach-Andrea C.	Early 2025
Updating our CMS/CAP60 to include the populations & zip codes that we weren't being tracked before	CMS/CAP60 is being adjusted to track outreach events with additional information not previously being tracked	Community Services Manager-Ema M.	Early 2025
Securing unrestricted funding resources for mobile equipment	Purchasing the equipment and help the clients apply onsite	Center Supervisor – Nancy, Betsabee, Cecilia, & Gaby	Late 2025 Early 2026

Strategic Priority: Impact Evaluation and Continuous Improvement
Overarching Goal: Have reliable data on service delivery, quality and impact. Goal: Increase staff training to effectively use the case management software
Success Metric: Increase accurate data entry and reporting
How would you rate yourself on this goal from 0 to 10: 7

Supporting Forces (update)		Restraining Forces: (update)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing CAP60 training Using software for 10 years (staff is not new to the software) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack client's input in order to achieve outcome Not fully understanding FNPIs reporting Cap60 offers limited online training relevant to our programs 	
Leadership Champion: CPO			
Next Action Steps	What Does Success Look Like? (KPI)	Staff – Who is responsible?	By When? (Due Date)
Increase attendance to Cap60 trainings (program managers & coordinators)	Management if fully trained in the case management software (data entry and reporting)	Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	Nov 2025
Managers/Coordinators will train staff on information learned. Create visual aids and add to the shared drive library.	Increase staff accountability to learn and correct data entry errors before submitting monthly report to funders	Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	Dec 2025
Monthly data review to ensure data entry accuracy, training follow-up and answer questions from staff	Increase staff confidence in properly using the case management software and accurate data reporting & client outcomes.	Center Supervisor – Nancy, Betsabee, Cecilia, & Gaby	2026
Keep monitoring data to ensure accuracy / compare current data to prior years	Report accurate data that shows agency capacity and service delivery, which puts us in good standing to receive additional funds.	Program Managers- Jessie V., Mike M. and Ema M.	2026 - 2027

Strategic Planning Implementation/Meeting Structure

Successful strategic planning relies on the extent an organization takes ACTION! Use the following process to guarantee success.

1. Weekly/Monthly: During regular leadership or manager meetings, time should be allotted on the agenda to report on the action items due within the time period for each strategic focus area. These should be short conversations that include the following topics:

- a. Have any action items been completed? If yes, acknowledge and celebrate the success.
- b. For each of the action items due that quarter, say if it is off track or on track.
- c. If it is off track, why? What needs to be done to get it back on track?
- d. Commit to the implementation of the strategies needed to get a focus area back on track.

2. Quarterly: A special strategic-planning focus time should occur at least quarterly at the organization's leadership meetings. The purpose of this section of the meeting is to establish the current state of each strategic priority, and design and identify any broad concrete next steps to reach the vision. The following process should occur in each meeting for each strategic focus area.

- a. **Review strategic focus area definition.** The Executive Director should read the strategic focus area aloud to the group.
- b. **Establish the "current state" number.** The Executive Director should update the Board on where they believe the organization currently is on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is a fully achieved vision and 1 is not at all achieving the vision) for each focus area.
- c. **Acknowledge progress/discuss stagnation.** If the current state number has increased from the previous quarter, celebrate this forward movement. If there has been no progress or a lower score was identified from the previous quarter, discuss what has prevented progress.
- d. **Review the strengths and barriers list.** Identify any supporting and restraining forces that are currently true for the organization. Add any new supporting and restraining forces that have been developed.
- e. **Identify the next broad concrete steps.** Discuss any new broad action items that staff should consider implementing to move the organization toward the goal. Make sure to include due dates for the work.

Repeat this process until the organization achieves a score of nine or 10 in each strategic focus area.

3. Annually: Hold an All-Staff and Stakeholder Meeting to celebrate progress on the strategic plan over the past year and ask for feedback regarding how the organization is doing in achieving its goals.