The Lower Rio Grande Valley has established itself as the front door to the international marketplace with vast regional assets including efficient access to Mexico, diverse human capital, environmental advantages and a thriving coastal ecology.

As one of the fastest growing regions in the country, the Lower Rio Grande Valley is comprised of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy counties, which boast a combined population of over 1.2 million residents.

The tri-county area is home to forty-three cities which encompass a great range of resources such as international points-of-entry, various shipping and port facilities, several commercial and international airports, numerous industrial parks, emerging institutions of higher education and over 26 miles of coast line on the Gulf of Mexico.
The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC), the regional council of governments, facilitated, planned and prepared the 2017-2022 Regional Strategic Plan to serve as a comprehensive road-map highlighting the vision, goals and strategies essential to residents, stakeholders and leaders in the region.

The nucleus of the 2017-2022 Regional Strategic Plan also serves as the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which was formulated under the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), to support the LRGVDC’s designation as the regional “Economic Development District”.

The LRGVDC is committed to taking the lead and working with all of the agencies, organizations, and programs listed in the 2017-2022 Regional Strategic Plan, of which no single agency or entity should be held responsible for implementing the goals and strategies contained therein. The Plan should serve as the initial guide for the further development and implementation of a regional plan of action.

The 2017-2022 Regional Strategic Plan is categorized into five strategic vision domains which interconnect a spectrum of community priorities to include:

- Economic Development
- Health & Human Services
- Public Safety
- Environmental Resources & Community Development
- Transportation

Each strategic vision domain is equally vital and codependent, and through effective planning, collaboration and service delivery, residents and visitors are ensured the highest quality of life, now and for many years to come.

The LRGVDC would like to thank each stakeholder, resident, organizational leader and elected official who contributed to the input and feedback essential to the development of the 2017-2022 Lower Rio Grande Valley Regional Strategic Plan.
As a highly desirable place to live, work and visit, the Lower Rio Grande Valley will ensure regional prosperity and a premier quality of life by sustaining a balanced and resilient international economy, developing an educated, qualified work force and providing enhanced opportunities for commercial, industrial and entrepreneurial growth.
Economic Development Goals

A. Enhance marketing strategies to current and potential residents and visitors which highlight the region’s high quality of life factors such as outdoor recreational activities, ecotourism and geographic assets.

B. Diversify economic development of the entire region (urban and rural) by developing collaborative strategies, resources and initiatives between business, industry, and government.

C. Maintain international competitiveness by increasing foreign trade and direct investment opportunities.

D. Ensure the region’s human capital development includes essential strategies and resources to effectively prepare a well-educated, highly-skilled professional and technical workforce.

E. Strengthen economic resilience through the advancement of emerging high-tech & high value industries (e.g., healthcare, tourism, construction, etc.), reinvestment of agricultural/aquaculture and plans for effective disaster recovery.

F. Improve economic disproportionality through diversified strategies for small business incubation, entrepreneurial innovation, information technology infrastructure and access to capital.
Through effective services, education and preservation efforts, we shall strive for the healthiest environment where urban and rural community growth ensures residents safe and sustainable housing opportunities, appropriate infrastructure development and proactive planning for the conservation of the Region’s vital agricultural and natural resources.
Environmental Resources Goals

A. Encourage innovative projects and initiatives which promote environmentally sustainable development.

B. Promote recycling and waste reduction through development of effective disposal systems for sewage, solid waste, tires, brush and hazardous materials.

C. Support water conservation measures by addressing water quality and quantity concerns.

D. Improve flood control/drainage.

E. Protect, conserve and restore regional ecosystem and native habitat.

Community Developments Goals

A. Expand the availability of suitable and affordable housing options for all valley families and residents.

B. Ensure appropriate housing and resources are available to under served populations which may include economically disadvantaged, elderly, displaced women and children, and those with chronic health conditions and disabilities.

C. Support homelessness prevention by ensuring adequate and accessible emergency shelter and transitional housing resources.

D. Promote and protect fair housing rights for all residents of the Rio Grande Valley.
The Lower Rio Grande Valley will develop, coordinate and maintain a locally based system of resources and services such as access to quality health care, comprehensive care for vulnerable individuals and accessible services to safeguard a livable, healthy, safe community for persons of all ages.
Health and Human Services

A. Encourage development of a comprehensive strategy to address the impact of our local aging population.

B. Enhance access to quality health care by expanding the current network of public/private service delivery systems for improved public health, disability management and disease prevention for medically vulnerable individuals.

C. Enrich community health, safety and wellness through promotion of quality nutrition, physical activity, obesity prevention and support of active lifestyles.

D. Promote expanded community resources and services for vulnerable and under served populations such as Veterans, ex-offenders, the homeless, and those with chronic health conditions in the region.

E. Promote enhanced civic engagement and social inclusion across all ages by expanding volunteer opportunities, cultural diversity activities and fostering multi-generational interaction.
To ensure optimal public safety throughout the region, criminal justice, homeland security, 9-1-1 and first responders will work collaboratively, with quality training and resources to prevent, protect respond and recover from threats.
A. Reduce human and drug trafficking and smuggling.

B. Support the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse.

C. Prevent and reduce incidents of violent crimes across the Rio Grande Valley.

D. Promote programs that prevent or reduce juvenile-related delinquency, criminal activity and school dropout rate.

E. Ensure regional agencies and personnel maintain adequate access to technological advancements in law enforcement equipment and resources.

F. Increase advocacy and efforts to eliminate child abuse and neglect in our community.

G. Encourage the establishment of additional mental health and suicide prevention treatment facilities and resources.

H. Expand advocacy, education and support group resources for victims of violent crimes.
Homeland Security Goals

A. Enhance homeland security in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

B. Improve the capability of local governments to prepare for and respond to terrorist and other hazardous incidents.

C. Provide resources and assistance to local agencies to establish and maintain a statewide interoperable communication radio system.

D. Increase individual and community preparedness, response, and recovery in the region.

E. Strengthen the capacity of communities to address public health issues along the U.S./Mexico border.

F. Increase bi-national surveillance and coordination of health awareness for high consequence infectious disease.
Police Academy Goals

A. Promote the development of highly qualified law enforcement professionals by providing quality education and training in alignment with requirements set forth by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE).

B. Provide continuing professional developmental instruction and resources to ensure law enforcement personnel remain dynamic, skilled, and proficient across the region.

9-1-1 Program Goals

A. Provide continuous, reliable operation of regional 9-1-1 systems.

B. Implement emerging next generation 9-1-1 technologies.

C. Promote 9-1-1 public safety education to all public, private, and educational agencies.
Transportation

Through effective planning and service delivery, people and goods will be able to move throughout the region safely and efficiently by using a seamless multi-modal transportation network.
Transportation Goals

A. Establish a seamless transportation system to increase connectivity and accessibility for people and freight, emphasizing regional planning efforts to meet the growing population demands of the region and ensure strategic development of urban and rural areas.

B. Further adopt and implement multi-modal transportation infrastructure, policies and resources to develop healthier, safer, livable communities.

C. Preserve and improve existing transportation system to ensure the safety and security for motorized and non-motorized users.

D. Ensure environmental sustainability, energy conservation and preservation of natural resources through coordinated state and local planning and economic development.