

LRGVDC

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Prepared by:
LRGV Economic Development District

Guided by:
Economic Development Advisory
Committee

Presented to:
LRGVDC Board of Directors

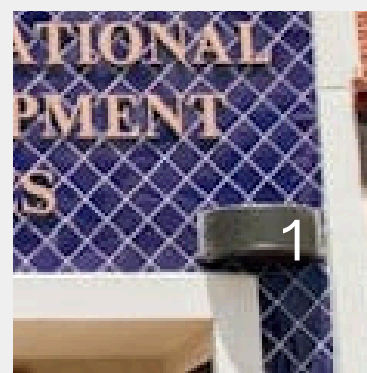
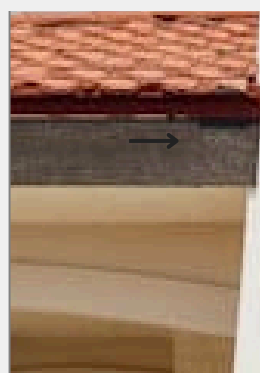
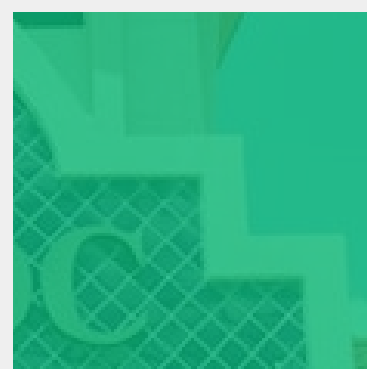
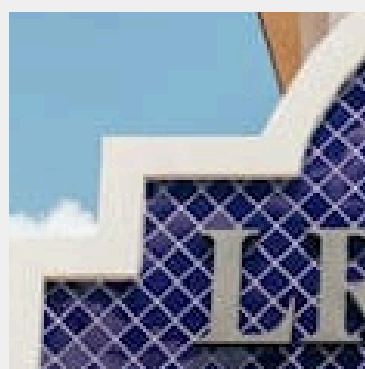
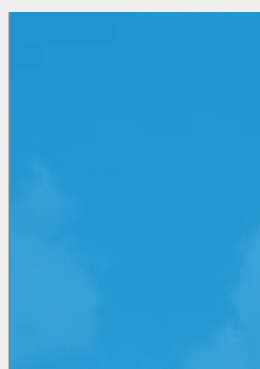


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Acronyms

- LRGVDC.....Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
- LRGVEDD.....Lower Rio Grande Valley Economic Development District
- ERRP.....Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan
- EDA.....Economic Development Administration
- EDAC.....Economic Development Advisory Committee
- CEDS.....Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies
- SWOT.....Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
- EDD.....Economic Development District
- RGV.....Rio Grande Valley
- EDC.....Economic Development Corporation
- COG.....Council of Governments
- C&ED.....Community & Economic Development Department
- BCIC.....Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation
- SPICVB.....South Padre Island Convention & Visitors Bureau
- V.I.A.....Valley International Airport
- IBWC.....International Boundary and Water Commission
- TCEQ.....Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- TSTC.....Texas State Technical College
- FTZ.....Foreign Trade Zones
- CPB.....U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- FDI.....Foreign Direct Investment

Introduction

Prepared by the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC), serving as the Economic Development District (EDD) for the three-county region of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties, with guidance from the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and the LRGVDC Board of Directors to meet the requirements of the Economic Development Administration.

Economic Development Administration

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) was established under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3121), as amended, to generate jobs, help retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically distressed areas of the United States. EDA assistance is available to rural and urban areas of the nation experiencing high unemployment, low income, or other severe economic distress.

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council

The LRGVDC is a voluntary association of local governments formed under Texas law in 1967 as one of Texas' 24 regional Councils of Governments (COGs), serving Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties. The LRGVDC promotes and encourages cooperation among local units of government to improve the region's health, safety, and general welfare and to plan for future development.

LRGVDC is governed by a twenty-seven (27) member Board of Directors, of whom two-thirds are required to be elected officials within the designated boundaries. This Board provides direction for LRGVDC programmatic implementation through policies, committees, plans, and initiatives.

LRGVDC's general membership includes:

- County and municipal governments
- Public educational institutions & school districts
- Special purpose governmental units
- Stakeholder organizations dedicated to the unified development of the region



LRGVDC Economic Development District

LRGVDC plays a vital role in implementing specific functions as designated by local, state, and federal agencies, including serving as the region's EDD as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration.

The Community and Economic Development (C&ED) Program of the LRGVDC serves as the designated EDD for the tri-county region of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties. As an EDD, the program plays a pivotal role in guiding regionally driven economic development planning, ensuring that growth is strategic, inclusive, and resilient. While economic development remains a cornerstone of this program, the LRGVDC recognizes that community development is equally vital to fostering a thriving region.

The EDA Planning Program supports planning organizations, such as Economic Development Districts, in developing, implementing, revising, or replacing Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS). It also provides support for short-term planning investments and state plans designed to create and retain higher-skill, higher-wage jobs, particularly for the unemployed and underemployed in the nation's most economically distressed regions.

Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)

Guided by its Board of Directors and supported by advisory committees representing diverse industries and interests, the C&ED program remains committed to addressing the region's evolving needs. To enhance this commitment, the program established the EDAC, bringing together leaders from municipal and university-level Economic Development Corporations (EDC)'s across the region. comprised of professionals dedicated to fostering local economic growth, the EDAC provides real-time feedback and strategic guidance in the development of this document, ensuring that it reflects the priorities and opportunities unique to the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV).

An EDAC kick-off meeting was held on April 30, 2024, where committee membership, by-laws, and meeting schedules were discussed. A virtual EDAC meeting was held on May 23, 2024, to approve the by-laws and membership listing, and these by-laws and membership were subsequently approved by the LRGVDC Board of Directors on May 29, 2024.

The EDAC will serve as the governing body that will oversee the development, update, and implementation of the CEDS as well as the Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan (ERRP), ensuring that the region stays aligned with the identified EDA regional priorities while assisting the LRGVDC in leveraging future programs, initiatives, and opportunities that promote sustainable and inclusive development.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The CEDS serves as a roadmap for economic growth, resilience, and sustainability in the LRGV. This strategy is designed to facilitate job creation, economic diversification, and improved quality of life while strengthening the region's ability to adapt to economic disruptions.

The C&ED program of the LRGVDC leveraged key insights from the ERRP, published in March 2023, as a foundational resource for this CEDS update. The recovery plan, developed with broad stakeholder engagement and data-driven analysis, provided a critical framework to align regional priorities and economic strategies.

While the CEDS is non-regulatory, it serves as an essential strategic tool to coordinate economic development efforts across Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties. It recognizes the LRGV as a fast-growing, binational region where economic opportunities are driven by its multicultural workforce, strong international trade connections, and diverse industries. By fostering regional collaboration, this strategy ensures that communities within the LRGV remain competitive in an evolving global economy.

CEDS Update Process

The 2025–2030 regional strategic plan reflects these priorities by integrating economic and community development efforts under a unified vision. The plan emphasizes regional collaboration, infrastructure investment, and long-term sustainability, ensuring that the LRGV remains competitive, resilient, and positioned for future growth. As the LRGV experiences continued growth and transformation, the LRGVDC remains committed to leading strategic efforts that balance economic opportunity with community well-being, ensuring a more prosperous and sustainable future for all.

The process of updating the CEDS in 2024 was guided by the C&ED staff and administration, with input from the EDAC, as well as utilizing pertinent information from the approved LRGVDC's ERRP.

This plan was initiated in 2021 through a CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant from the EDA to help the region anticipate, mitigate, and respond to future economic disruptions. The ERRP was reviewed and approved by the LRGVDC Board of Directors in Summer 2023.

The development process included:

- Stakeholder engagement through in-person and virtual meetings
- Comprehensive data collection and analysis
- Review of regional plans and economic reports
- Engagement with the private sector, local economic development organizations, and educational institutions

LRGVDC C&ED staff held three public meetings (one per county) to review, discuss, and update the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) analysis, regional strategies, and action plans. Staff utilized SWOT information obtained during the 2019 CEDS update activities, as well as SWOT information received during the development of the LRGVDC ERRP. Invitations were sent to EDAC members, county elected officials, and their representatives. All public meetings were open to the general public.

SWOT Analysis

The LRGVDC SWOT were arranged into six different categories:

- Foreign Trade and International Competitiveness
- Transportation, Technology, and Infrastructure
- Industry, Growth, Diversity, and Resiliency
- Urban and Rural Entrepreneurship
- RGV Destinations, Geographic Assets, and Quality of Life Factors
- Education and Workforce Development

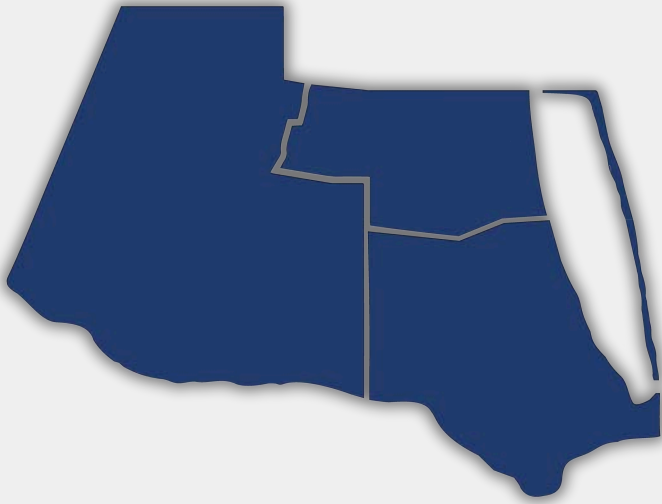
Acknowledgements

The LRGVDC, in partnership with Thomas P. Miller and Associates, would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for their participation in various phases of the project process:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation | • South Padre Island EDC |
| • Cameron County | • Texas State Technical College |
| • City of Palmview | • University of Texas Rio Grande Valley |
| • Council for South Texas Economic Progress | • Weslaco EDC |
| • Edinburg EDC | • Willacy County |
| • Harlingen EDC | • Workforce Solutions |
| • Hidalgo County | • Workforce Solutions Cameron County |
| • McAllen EDC | |
| • Rio Grande Valley Partnership | |

Their contributions were instrumental in shaping the CEDS update, ensuring it reflects the economic priorities, opportunities, and challenges of the Lower Rio Grande Valley region.

Regional Lower Rio Grande Valley



3

Counties

42

Cities

6

institutions of
Higher Learning

1.36

Million People

3,643

Miles of roads



A



B



C



D



E



F



G

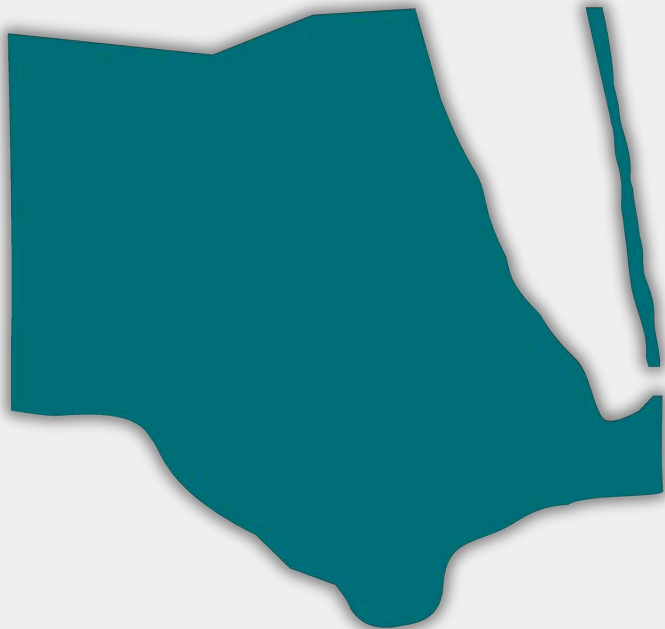


H

A. Glazers Beer & Beverage - Weslaco EDC; B. V.I.A - Harlingen EDC; C. Penn Aluminum Harlingen EDC; D. Brownsville linear Park - BCIC; E. Basilica de San Juan ; F. South Texas Welding School - Edinburg EDC; G. Willacy County Windmills - Rigo Davila Photography; H. Market Square - BCIC

Data

Cameron County



17

Cities

\$51.3K

Median Household
Income (2023)

431,874

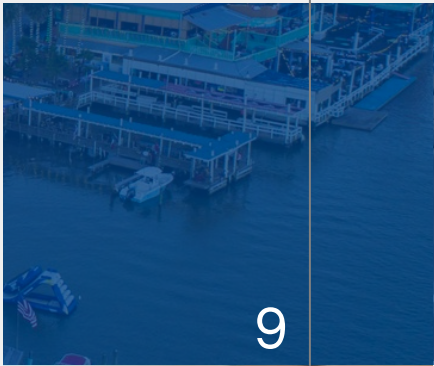
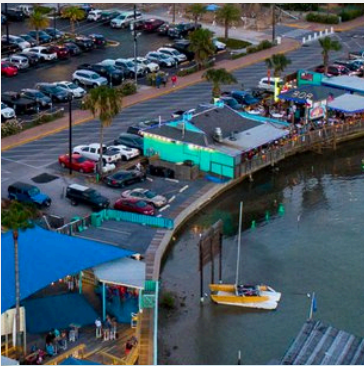
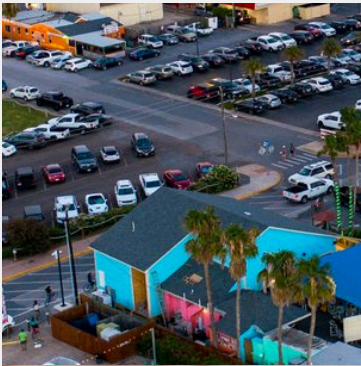
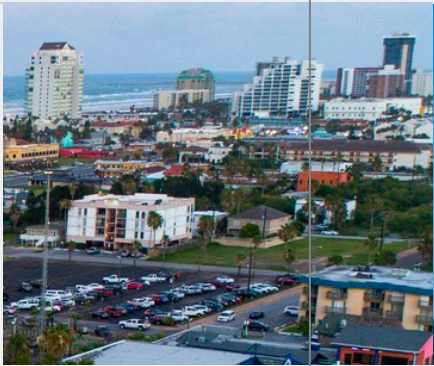
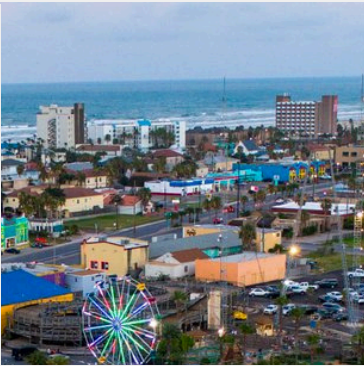
People

Top sector(s) by numbers: Health Care, Social Assistance,
Government, Retail Trade, and Accommodation & Food
Services

Top sector(s) by earnings: Utilities

South Padre Island

*Photo Credit - SPICVB



Regional Hidalgo County



22

Cities

\$52.2K

Median Household
Income (2023)

914,820

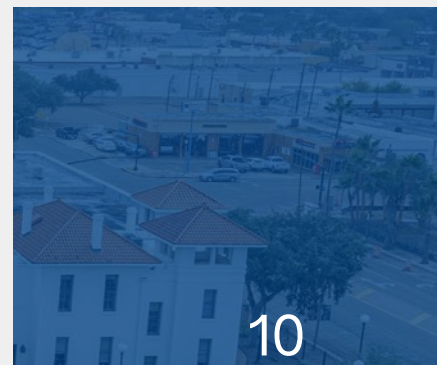
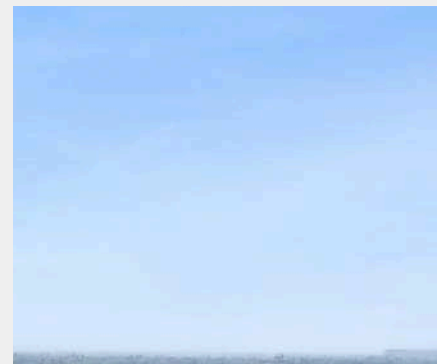
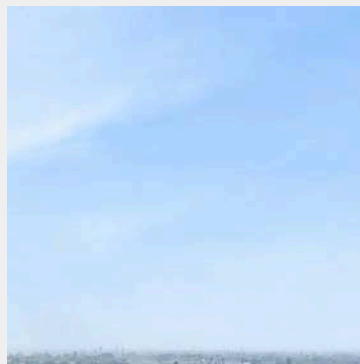
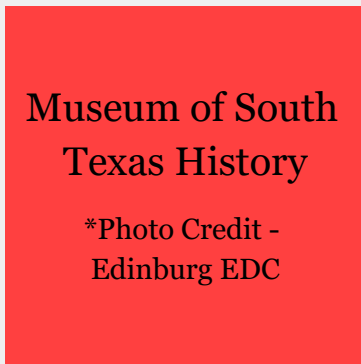
People

Top sector(s) by numbers: Health Care, Social
Assistance, Government, & Retail Trade

Top sector(s) by earnings: Utilities

Museum of South
Texas History

*Photo Credit -
Edinburg EDC



Data

Willacy County



3

Cities

\$45.6K

Median Household
Income (2023)

Top sector(s) by numbers: Government, Administrative and Support, and Agriculture Forestry Fishing, & Hunting

20,027

Top sector(s) by earnings: Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction

People

Willacy County Courthouse

*Photo Credit -
Willacy County



Economic Recovery &

The ERRP served as a critical framework for guiding the LRGVDC and its regional partners through the challenges of economic, environmental, and social disruptions. Developed through extensive stakeholder engagement, the plan provided a data-driven approach to understanding regional vulnerabilities and strengths. The findings outlined in the plan emphasized the region's increasing population growth, demographic composition, and workforce potential. Importantly, it identified key occupational sectors and economic drivers, laying the foundation for strategic planning efforts. The regional profile underscored a need for improved talent retention and higher educational attainment, ensuring that the workforce remains competitive and resilient in the face of future disruptions.

One of the key themes of the ERRP was the demand for increased inter-sector collaboration.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the necessity of stronger communication and coordination between public, private, and nonprofit sectors. While the region demonstrated resilience through food drives and high vaccination rates, stakeholders identified gaps in preparedness and response strategies. The plan highlighted the importance of maintaining an ecosystem approach to economic resilience, advocating for an integrated network of regional economic development organizations, workforce development entities, local governments, and higher education institutions. These collaborative efforts were essential in shaping policies that would address future crises more effectively.



Resiliency Plan

The ERRP also reinforced the role of the LRGVDC as a central entity in coordinating regional economic strategies. The council was positioned to act as an analyst, educator, catalyst, and advocate in various capacities, ensuring that strategic efforts were both actionable and inclusive. Stakeholders acknowledged the significance of data collection and analysis in formulating economic strategies, emphasizing the importance of having a comprehensive resource catalog to guide planning initiatives. By adopting a proactive stance on economic resilience, the plan empowered the region to better anticipate risks and implement preventative measures, mitigating the impact of potential economic shocks.

This foundational work played a crucial role in updating the current strategic framework, allowing the LRGVDC to build upon existing data and stakeholder insights rather than starting from scratch.



The robust engagement process and the insights gained from the ERRP enabled a more informed and targeted approach to economic planning. By leveraging past research and lessons learned, the updated plan ensures continuity in addressing regional challenges while fostering sustainable growth and development. The plan's legacy lies in its ability to provide a roadmap for a more resilient, adaptive, and prosperous Lower Rio Grande Valley, ensuring that regional development efforts remain forward-thinking and responsive to emerging needs.

Federal Opportunity

Federal Opportunity Zones in the Lower Rio Grande Valley

The Opportunity Zone Program, established under the Tax Cuts & Jobs Act of 2017, is a federal initiative administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. This program is designed to stimulate economic growth and job creation in distressed communities across the United States by offering capital gains tax incentives for investments in designated Opportunity Zones. These incentives encourage long-term investment in businesses, real estate, and infrastructure projects that drive economic revitalization.

Opportunity Zones in Texas and the Rio Grande Valley

On March 22, 2018, Governor Greg Abbott designated 628 census tracts across 145 Texas counties as Opportunity Zones, including multiple tracts within Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties. These zones were identified based on economic indicators such as chronic unemployment, lower population density, and economic challenges caused by significant disruptors, such as natural disasters.

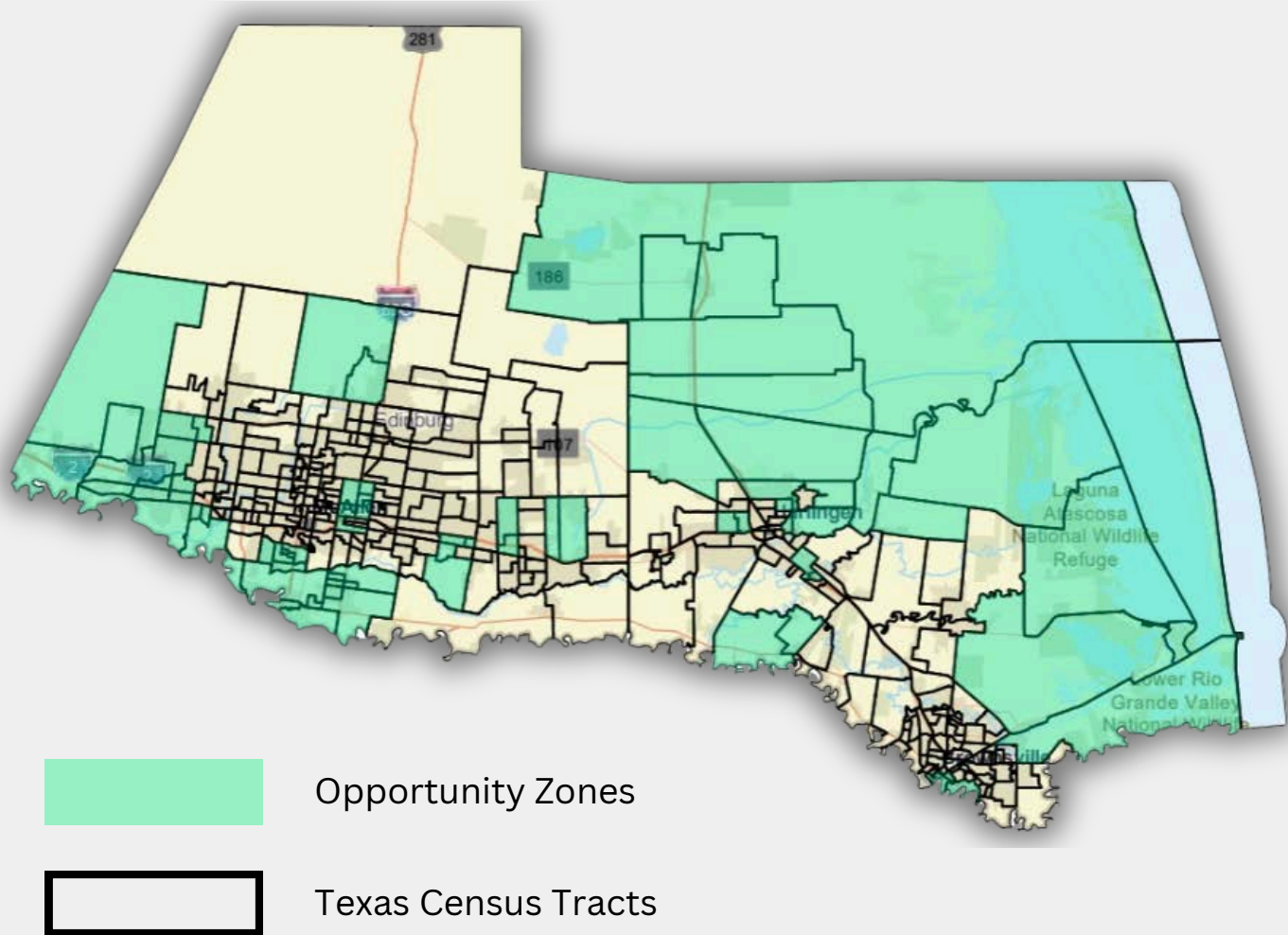
Leveraging Opportunity Zones for Regional Economic Growth

As the designated EDD for the tri-county region, the LRGVDC recognizes the significant role that Opportunity Zones play in advancing strategic economic development. Local EDCs and municipalities can leverage these zones to attract private investment into infrastructure, housing, and business development, fostering job creation and long-term economic resilience.

To maximize the benefits of Opportunity Zones, the LRGVDC works alongside regional stakeholders, including local governments, business leaders, and community organizations, to connect investors with eligible projects. By integrating Opportunity Zones into the region's broader economic development strategies, the LRGVDC aims to support sustainable growth and enhance the competitiveness of the LRGV.

For more information on Opportunity Zones and investment opportunities in the Rio Grande Valley, visit the U.S. Department of the Treasury's website or contact the LRGVDC Economic Development Program.

Zones of the LRGV



[Federal Opportunity Zones Interactive Map](#)

Foreign Trade

An Overview of Foreign-Trade Zones (FTZs)

Foreign-Trade Zones (FTZs) are secure areas under U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) supervision, considered outside CBP territory for duty and tax purposes. Established under the Foreign-Trade Zones Act of 1934, FTZs facilitate the storage, exhibition, assembly, manufacturing, and processing of foreign and domestic goods. Merchandise may remain in these zones indefinitely without being subject to U.S. duties or taxes unless it enters domestic commerce.

The Role of FTZs in Regional Growth

Texas is a top destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), hosting 35 FTZs and over 1,900 foreign corporations, making it the most popular state for FDI over the past two decades. The Rio Grande Valley is home to several FTZs, strategically located near CBP ports of entry, offering significant advantages for businesses seeking to lower costs and increase global competitiveness. These zones enhance the region's economic vitality by attracting investment and creating jobs.

Benefits of Utilizing Foreign-Trade Zones

- **Duty Deferral & Reduction:** Duties and excise taxes are deferred until merchandise enters U.S. commerce, with the option to apply the lower duty rate on the original material or the finished product.
- **Tax Advantages:** Certain tangible property in FTZs is exempt from state and local ad valorem taxes.
- **Export Incentives:** Goods may be exported from zones without paying duties or taxes.
- **Operational Flexibility:** Merchandise can be stored indefinitely, and security measures protect against theft.

Zones of the LRGV



Maximizing FTZ Potential for Regional Development

The LRGVDC recognizes the significant contributions that FTZs have made in driving economic growth across the region. These zones have played a key role in attracting global investment, supporting local industries, and creating jobs. For more information on FTZs and investment opportunities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, visit the Foreign-Trade Zones Board website or contact the LRGVEDD.

Here is a list of the regional FTZ's in the LRGV

- Hidalgo County Regional Foreign Trade Zone (Progreso, TX) #156
- McAllen Foreign Trade Zone (McAllen, TX) #012
- Brownsville Navigation District (Brownsville, TX) #062

Here are two important links

- [FTZ Homepage](#)
- [FTZ Zone Information](#)

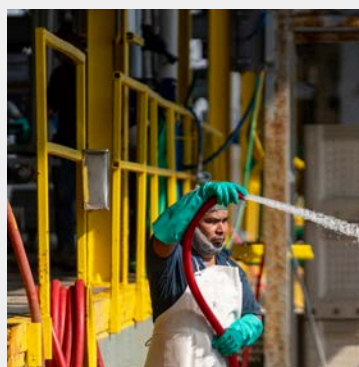
EDA Priorities &

The U.S. EDA outlines key categories that must be addressed when developing the CEDS. These categories include workforce development, equity, resilience, infrastructure, and economic diversification, among others. The ERRP played a crucial role in laying the foundation for this effort by conducting extensive outreach to regional stakeholders and collecting valuable data on the region's strengths and challenges. Given the depth of research already conducted through the RRP, this document will be structured into two main sections: the research completed during the development of the ERRP and the research conducted over the past year to address additional topics and stakeholder concerns. This approach ensures continuity while allowing for an updated and expanded focus on emerging priorities.

For this cycle of the CEDS, the LRGVDC is focusing on four critical areas: **Economic Development, Workforce Development, Economic Mobility, and Water.** These priorities reflect the region's most pressing needs and opportunities for long-term growth and resilience. Each of these topics will be explored in greater detail throughout this document, outlining strategies to enhance regional prosperity and sustainability.

Little Bear Produce

*Photo Credit - Edinburg EDC



Regional Focus Areas

The ERRP thoroughly examined workforce development, equity, and resilience, all of which align with the EDA's priorities for sustainable economic growth. To build upon these findings, the C&ED program sought additional input from the EDAC through a targeted survey. The survey identified three key areas of concern that will shape the next phase of regional economic development planning: water, transportation, and broadband. These issues were recognized as critical for ensuring long-term economic stability and growth. As a result, the next two sections of this document will focus on integrating the findings from the ERRP with the newly gathered data on these essential infrastructure components, providing a comprehensive roadmap for regional development over the next five years.

Action Groups:

- To ensure the successful implementation and ongoing monitoring of the strategic actions outlined in this document, the LRGVEDD has action groups focused on key areas, including workforce development (page 18), economic resilience (page 19), economic mobility (page 20), and water management (page 21). These action groups will consist of key regional stakeholders, including the LRGVDC EDAC, the various advisory committees associated with the programs and organizations that fall under the umbrella of the LRGVDC, local economic development and planning agencies, local convention and visitors bureaus, local chambers of commerce, institutions of higher learning, and local governments, all working collaboratively to advance the region's economic goals.



Brownsville Farmers Market

*Photo Credit - BCIC

Workforce Development



A. Objective: Build strong partnerships, share resources, improve communication, and leverage strengths to increase the impact of the regional workforce in business, community projects, and international relations.

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- Support current business and local education institutions partnerships
- Identify sustainable partnerships to support regional business and higher education outreach
- Develop a business and higher educational partnership recruitment plan

Strategic Action: Timeline (1-5 years)

- Focus on youth-based employment Opportunities
- Enhance Business Outreach efforts
- Convene partners to support and grow these opportunities

B. Objective: Support a coordinated system between employers, education and workforce training providers to maximize learning skill training for the region's workforce.

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- Develop bi-national standards of training, certification and re-certification
- Convene a regional meeting for vocational training and certification programs
- Strengthen vocational training and certification programs increasing the marketing reach
- Offer Work-based learning

Strategic Action: Timeline (1-5 years)

- Encourage strategic regional collaboration
- Support expansion of resources
- Enhance Business Outreach Efforts to identify workforce challenges





Economic Resilience

A. Objective: Identify and organize resources to help the Lower Rio Grande region prevent, prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover for economic disruption.

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- *Formalize an economic resiliency ecosystem*
- *Develop an organizational continuity plan*
- *Identify sustainable funding to support regional business retention and expansion outreach*

B. Objective: Ensure the Lower Rio Grande Valley region has the resources necessary to respond to inevitable future economic disruptions

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- *Organize small business technical assistance support network*
- *Create stronger Regional and Community Connections*

C. Objective: Ensure the Lower Rio Grande Valley region is positioned for the future characterized by a resilient regional economy.

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-5 years)

- *Invest in stormwater management infrastructure*
- *Support Industry Technology Adoption*
- *Expand Broadband Access Across the Region*
- *Address Digital equity*
- *Convene Partners to Support a Modern Talent Ecosystem*



Economic Mobility



A. Objective: Improve regional economic prosperity through comprehensive strategies to cultivate rural and small business expansion, access to capital, and educational opportunities.

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- *Formalize an economic resiliency ecosystem*
- *Support organizations focused on creating stronger community connections*
- *Identify sustainable funding to support regional business retention and expansion outreach*
- *Cultivate an environment ripe for new development*

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

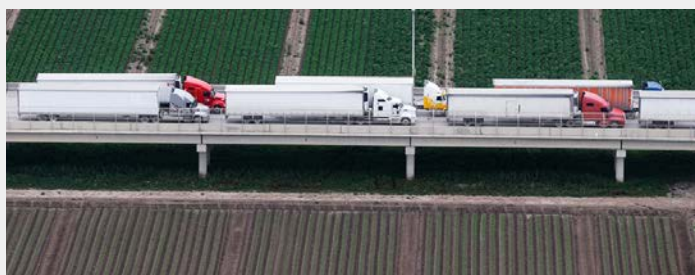
Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- *Support public Transportation availability and accessibility*
- *Support road and highway infrastructure maintenance and improvements*
- *Encourage connectivity between urban and rural areas*

C. Objective: Improve regional economic disproportionality through diversified strategies to cultivate, rural and small business incubation, entrepreneurial innovation, information technology infrastructure, and access to capital.

Strategic Actions: Timeline (1-2 years)

- *Support the development of business incubators, high-growth businesses, and entrepreneurial technology centers to enhance economic development and international competition.*
- *Support the development of educational entrepreneurship initiatives.*
- *Promote and support the development of small business financing. (e.g. Micro-loans, PACE, Revolving Loan Fund Programs, etc.)*



Water



A. Objective: Identify and prioritize regional water projects that will enhance water quality and quantity

Strategies & action items: *Timeline (1-2 years)*

- *Support efforts of the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority in areas of seawater and brackish groundwater desalination*
- *Support water innovation projects that would improve water quantity and quality in the region*
- *Educate local state and federal representatives of regional water priorities*

B. Objective: Enhance the quality and reliability of water infrastructure and maintenance systems.

Strategic Actions: *Timeline (1-2 years)*

- *Support community projects that improve the water infrastructure*
- *Support community projects that improve water infrastructure maintenance*
- *Support and or establish training opportunities for water and wastewater management*

C. Objective: Support bi-national water conservation measures and improve awareness and understanding of water quality and water quantity issues

Strategic Actions: *Timeline (1-5 years)*

- *Support cooperation between local, state, federal and international entities to address water supply issues*
- *Support the Rio Grande Valley Regional Water Plan*
- *Encourage outreach and education*



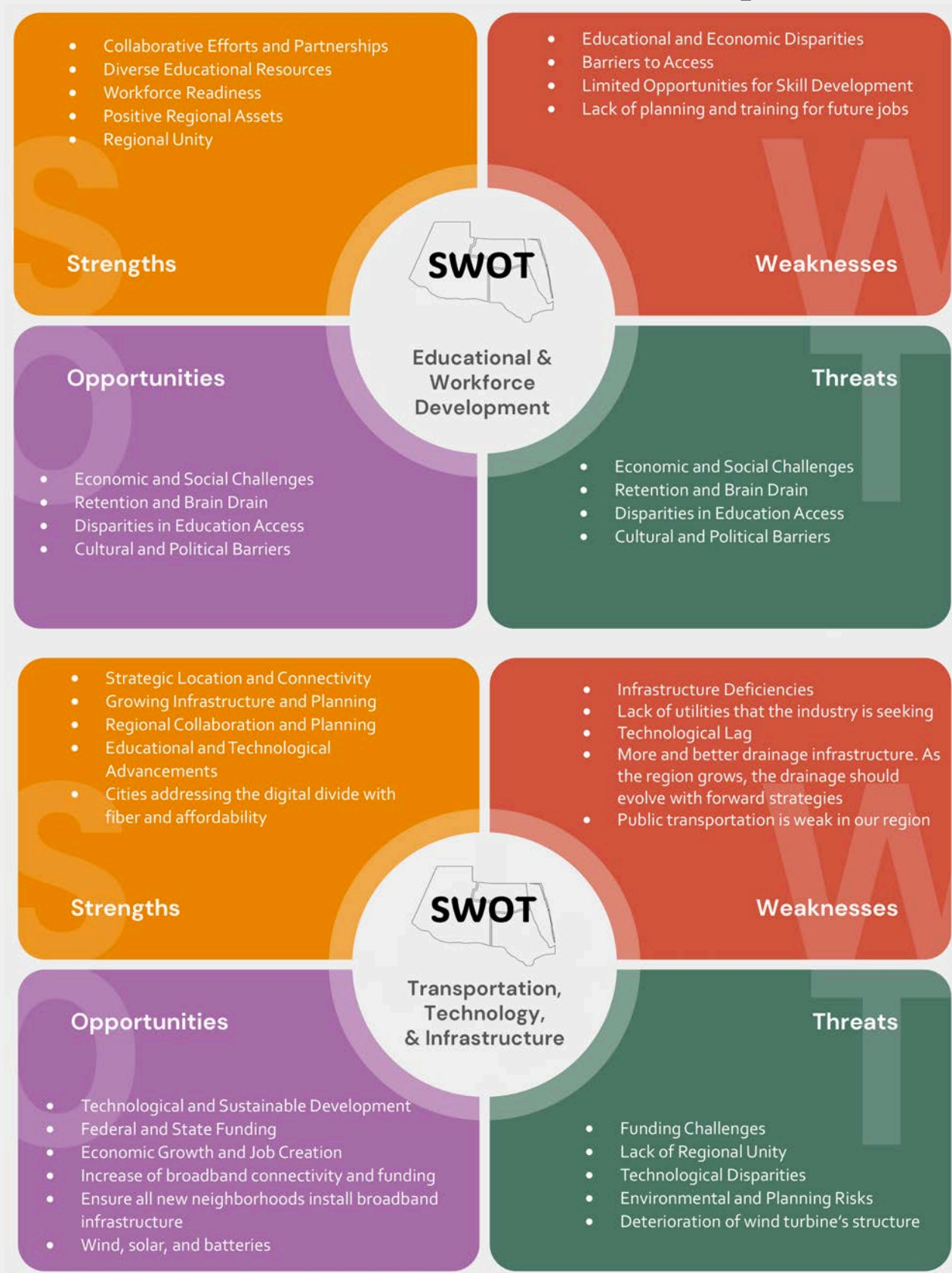
SWOT Analysis for the

The Strengths of the LRGV's regional economy lie in its strategic location, binational trade opportunities, and growing workforce. As a border region with multiple international ports of entry, the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) serves as a critical trade hub between the United States and Mexico, fostering commerce and economic activity. Additionally, the region benefits from a young and expanding labor force, providing a steady pipeline of talent for industries such as logistics, manufacturing, and healthcare. The presence of strong higher education institutions, including the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) and South Texas College (STC), further supports workforce development initiatives and regional economic growth.

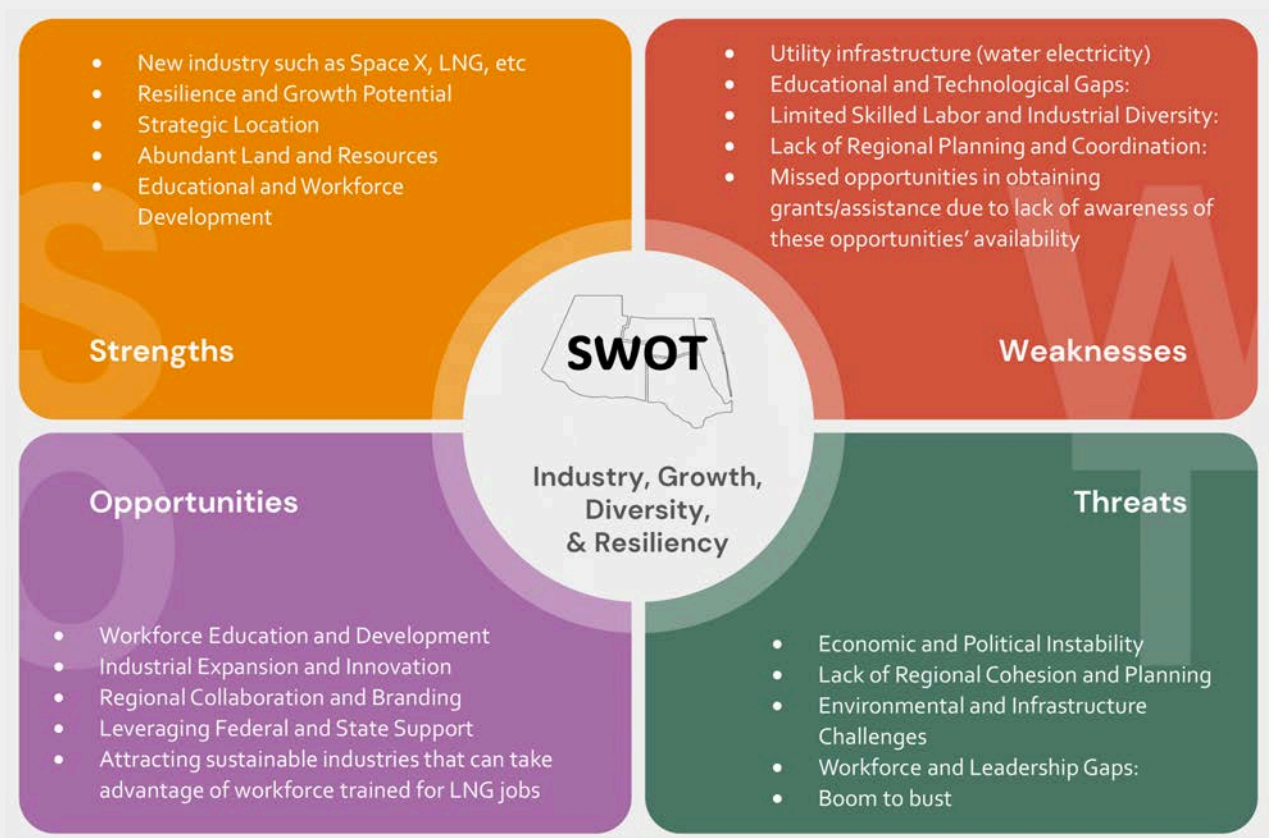
Despite these advantages, several Weaknesses continue to challenge the region's economic development. Infrastructure limitations, including aging transportation networks and insufficient water resources, pose risks to sustained growth. Workforce skill gaps persist in key industries, limiting upward mobility and economic diversification. Additionally, persistent poverty levels and disparities in access to healthcare, education, and broadband connectivity create barriers to economic mobility for many residents. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the necessity of stronger communication and coordination between public, private, and nonprofit sectors, as highlighted in the ERRP developed by the LRGVDC. This plan identified gaps in preparedness and response strategies while emphasizing the importance of a coordinated regional approach to resilience. Addressing these weaknesses will require targeted investments in infrastructure, workforce training, and regional collaboration to ensure equitable economic opportunities.

To develop a comprehensive SWOT analysis for this CEDS update, we examined key variables shaping the region's economic landscape: **Foreign Trade & International Competitiveness; Transportation, Technology, & Infrastructure; Industry, Growth, Diversity, & Resiliency; Urban & Rural Entrepreneurship; RGV Destinations, Geographic Assets, & Quality of Life Factors; and Education & Workforce Development.** These focus areas were first explored during the creation of the ERRP, which provided a data-driven framework for understanding regional vulnerabilities and strengths. That foundational work allowed the LRGVDC to refine its approach to strategic planning, ensuring that the insights gained were carried forward into this CEDS update. Expanding industries such as renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, and cross-border commerce present significant opportunities for job creation and investment. Additionally, leveraging federal and state funding programs, including Opportunity Zones and EDA grants, can drive strategic infrastructure improvements. However, external Threats such as climate change, extreme weather events, and shifts in international trade policies could impact economic stability. To mitigate these risks, the LRGVDC will work with local governments, economic development corporations, and regional stakeholders to implement proactive, data-driven strategies that enhance resilience and long-term prosperity.

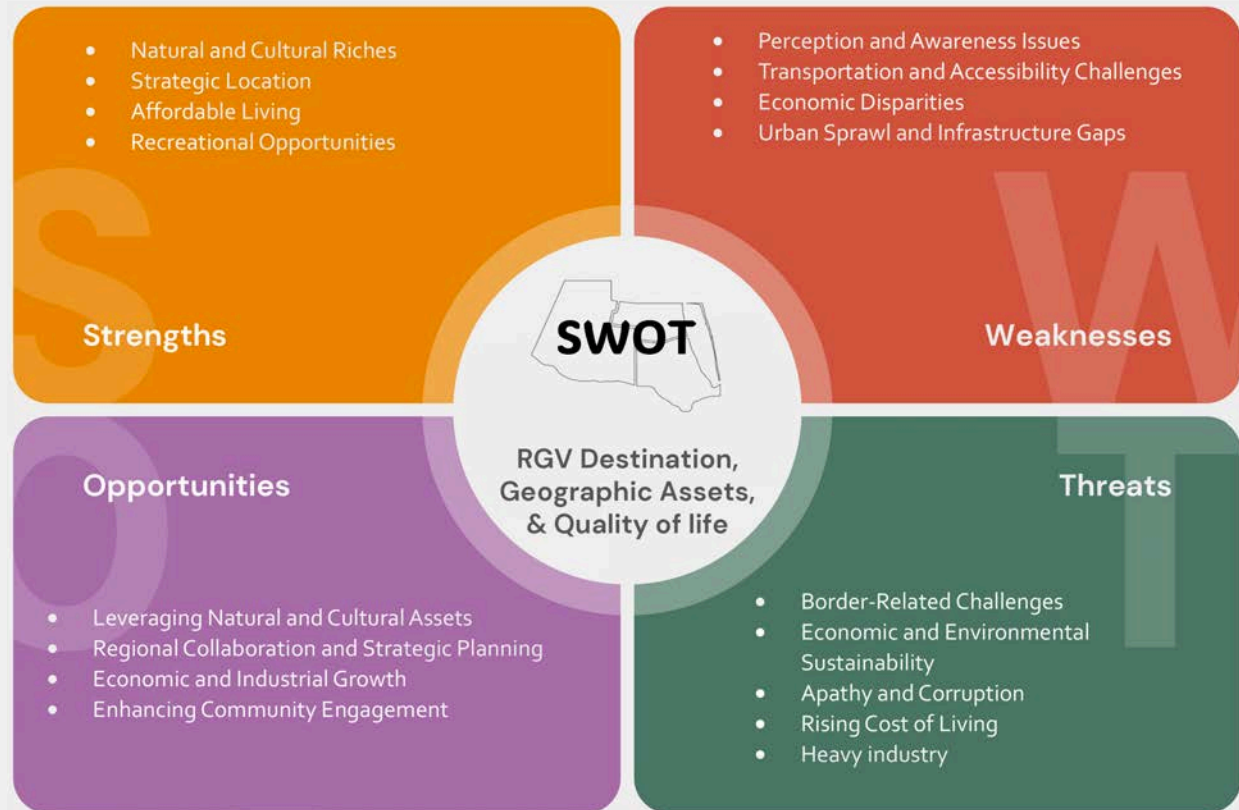
2025-2030 CEDS Update



SWOT Analysis for the



2025-2030 CEDS Update



Regional Planning



Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan

Published on March 2023

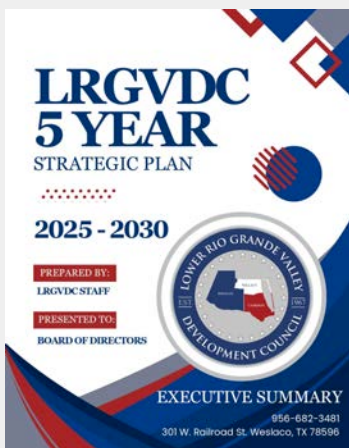
Effort lead by the LRGVDC



Rio Grande Valley Broadband & Digital Opportunity Plan

Published on 2025

Effort lead by the RGV Broadband Coalition



LRGVDC 5-Year Strategic Plan Executive Summary

Published on February 26, 2025

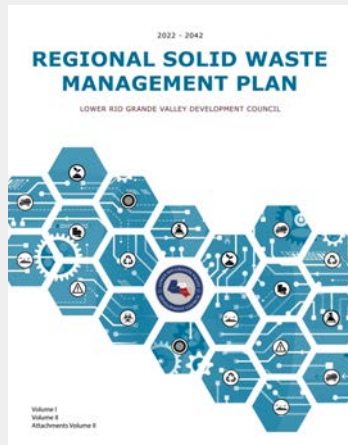
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Tierra Santa
Golf Club

*Photo Credit -
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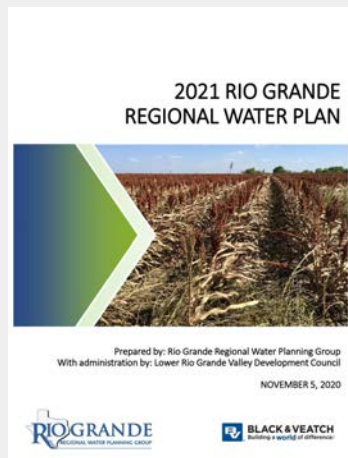
Documents & References



Regional Solid Waste Management Plan 2022- 2042

Published on September 29, 2021

Effort lead by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee of the LRGVDC

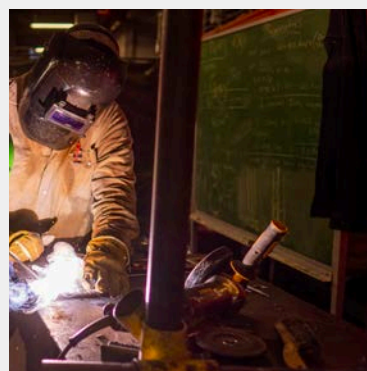
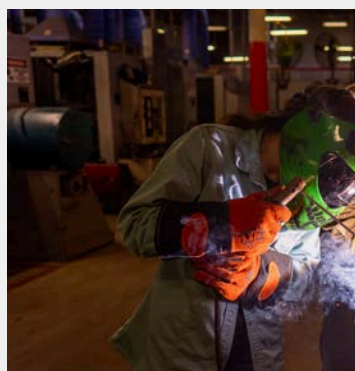


2021 Rio Grande Regional Water Plan

Published on November 5, 2020

*Document will be updated in 2026

Effort lead by the Region M Water Planning Group



TSTC

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Conclusion

The CEDS Update builds upon the foundational work established in the ERRP, integrating new data and regional priorities to create a more comprehensive and actionable roadmap for the LRGV. The extensive research conducted in the previous plan helped shape a strong understanding of workforce development, equity, and resilience, while the additional stakeholder engagement this past year has provided deeper insight into critical infrastructure needs, including water, transportation, and broadband. By combining these efforts, the CEDS Update ensures that economic development strategies are both forward-thinking and responsive to the region's evolving challenges.

The LRGV is experiencing exponential growth, both in population and economic activity, making it one of the fastest-growing regions in Texas. As the 22nd largest region in land mass out of the 24 councils of government, yet the 5th largest in population, the need for continued strategic planning has never been more critical. The LRGVDC, in partnership with the C&ED Program and the EDAC, is committed to supporting this growth by ensuring that our infrastructure, workforce, and resources are aligned to meet the region's evolving demands. With the region's rapid expansion, we will continue to harness the momentum of this growth while striving to manage it efficiently and effectively, ensuring a prosperous future for the RGV.

Moving forward, the LRGVDC, in collaboration with regional partners, will continue to foster inter-sector collaboration and pursue innovative solutions that enhance economic resilience. This document serves as a guiding framework for the next five years, helping align investments, policies, and initiatives to promote sustainable growth and long-term prosperity. With a commitment to regional cooperation and data-driven decision-making, the strategies outlined here will help build a more resilient, competitive, and inclusive economy for the Rio Grande Valley.

Alfresco Festival

*Photo Credit - Weslaco EDC



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Thank You

Thank you to all the individuals and organizations who contributed their time, expertise, and insights to the development of this form, helping to shape a stronger future for the Rio Grande Valley.



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