



STRATEGIC PLAN

2005-2010

October 2005

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The *HCPHES Strategic Plan: 2005-2010 (Strategic Plan)* is intended to identify and prioritize key issues affecting the health of Harris County populations and to guide the planning and implementation of the activities of Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services (HCPHES). The *Strategic Plan* serves as a tool to help HCPHES ensure a healthier Harris County, setting the foundation to allow policy priorities to drive organizational structure, program design and resource allocation.

Strategic Planning Process

In 2005 HCPHES convened a Strategic Planning Committee (“Committee”) to guide the development of the *Strategic Plan*. This group was comprised of thirty representatives from across the HCPHES organization, including executive, managerial and front-line staff. The HCPHES Executive Director facilitated Committee meetings, which were held between the months of March and August.

To inform the development of the *Strategic Plan*, the Committee first received an in-depth overview of the HCPHES organization, as well as a brief review of the practice of public health in Harris County, the State of Texas and in the United States. Next, the Committee reviewed the activities that HCPHES is mandated to carry out, whether by federal, state or local statute. The Committee also identified individuals, communities or entities considered to be key HCPHES stakeholders. The Committee developed new HCPHES mission and vision statements and developed a set of core organizational values. The Committee then assessed strengths and weaknesses internal to the HCPHES organization, as well as external threats and opportunities.

Using this information, Committee members identified a number of strategic issues – that is, fundamental challenges and opportunities anticipated to impact public health in Harris County during the next five years. These strategic issues were the framework used by the group to identify the key organizational strategies found in the *Strategic Plan*.

Following the identification of strategic issues and the strategies intended to address them, the Committee presented information about the plan to internal and external HCPHES stakeholders. Area stakeholders had the opportunity to provide HCPHES with input on the priority issues presented in the *Strategic Plan* following a presentation by HCPHES staff to members of Gateway to Care, the Harris County Community Access Collaborative. HCPHES staff were invited to read the draft *Strategic Plan*, which was posted on the HCPHES Intranet site, and provide input during three internal Town Hall meetings.

The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, and no substantive concerns regarding the Strategic Issues were raised. One key question, asked at two forums, requested that HCPHES provide further information regarding its role in addressing the issue of access to health care. In response, participants were informed that as an agency focused on population-based approaches to health, however, HCPHES will serve in a supportive role for area entities whose mission best equips them for leadership roles in activities related to increasing access to clinical care services.

The *Strategic Plan* was adopted in October 2005.

BACKGROUND

HCPHES provides public health assessment, policy development and assurance activities for residents of Harris County, Texas. For a majority of services the jurisdiction of HCPHES includes the unincorporated areas of the county, with a population of about 1.2 million persons, as well as approximately thirty municipalities located throughout the county (see Appendix C). In addition, for some services such as vector control, the jurisdiction of HCPHES includes all 3.6 million residents of Harris County, including the City of Houston.

The Committee developed and adopted new HCPHES Mission, Vision and Values statements, presented below:

Mission

Promoting a Healthy and Safe Community
Preventing Illness and Injury
Protecting You

HCPHES, Your Department for Life

Vision

Healthy People, Healthy Communities
...a Healthy Harris County

Core Values

Excellence
Compassion
Flexibility
Integrity
Accountability
Professionalism

HCPHES Organizational Mandates

Many of the assessment, policy development and assurance activities undertaken by HCPHES are mandated by federal, state or local statutes, codes and regulations. Understanding these externally-imposed mandates and their implications on activities and resources is critical when considering a future course of action for HCPHES.

The organizational mandates of HCPHES range from broad, all-encompassing mandates, such as a State of Texas statute which directs local health departments to provide “essential public health services,” to those that are specific to a certain area of practice, such as a statute requiring the provision of rabies eradication and control services. A comprehensive list of identified HCPHES mandates, including their source and key requirements, can be found in Appendix A.

Key HCPHES Stakeholders

Stakeholders are persons, groups or organizations that can place a claim on an organization's resources, attention or output, or are affected by its output.¹ Recognizing and analyzing the needs, influence and resources of HCPHES' key stakeholders is crucial to the development and implementation of organizational goals and objectives. The stakeholders of HCPHES are many and varied, and include the following major categories. A more detailed list of examples of HCPHES stakeholders can be found in Appendix B.

- Harris County Citizens/Public at Large

The citizens of Harris County are the key constituents of HCPHES. Because citizens are the end-users of public health services, HCPHES requires their support, cooperation, collaboration and feedback in order to pursue our mission.

- Commissioners Court

Harris County Commissioners Court is the stakeholder that most directly influences the funding policies of HCPHES. As the body that approves the HCPHES budget, as well as administrative and programmatic requests, it is crucial that Commissioners Court has confidence in HCPHES as a responsive, effective, credible and relevant organization. Commissioners Court consists of four Commissioners, each an administrator of a County Precinct, and the County Judge.

- Governmental Agencies

- *Federal Agencies*

Federal governmental agencies influence HCPHES by establishing national health and safety standards, publishing public health and clinical guidelines, setting environmental standards and setting priorities and goals that must be implemented at the local level. Examples of federal governmental agencies that influence the mission and activities of HCPHES include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

- *State Agencies*

State governmental agencies influence HCPHES by establishing health, safety and environmental rules and regulations; providing state and federal funding; administering legislatively mandated and other statewide programs; and collecting and disseminating statewide data. Examples of state governmental agencies that influence the mission and activities of HCPHES include the Texas Department of State Health Services, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Texas Animal Health Commission.

¹ Bryson JM, Alston FK, Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan, 1996

- *Local Agencies*

Local governmental agencies influence HCPHES by collaborating and sharing resources on initiatives that benefit the citizens of Harris County and support the mission of HCPHES. Local governmental agencies include other County departments such as the Medical Examiner's Office, the County and District Attorney's Offices, the Fire and Emergency Services Department and the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; agencies that are part of the many municipalities within Harris County such as the City of Houston Department of Health and Human Services; and local agencies outside of Harris County, such as the Galveston County Health District.

- Medical Community

As providers of individual clinical treatment and care, physicians, other health care providers and hospitals are crucial to the mission and activities of HCPHES. For example, HCPHES works with the medical community to coordinate public health emergency preparedness planning, and depends on their reports of notifiable conditions to conduct disease and injury surveillance and shape population-based prevention efforts.

- Legislators

The federal and state legislators who represent Texas and districts within Harris County impact the mandates and activities of HCPHES by shaping Federal and State laws and responding to constituents' concerns. The federal legislative delegation representing Texas and Harris County includes two U.S. Senators and 32 U.S. Representatives. The State legislative delegation representing Harris County includes seven State Senators and 25 State Representatives. HCPHES works through the Harris County Office of Legislative Relations to inform and educate legislators about public health and environmental issues and legislation.

- Media

As an important means by which the community obtains health and environmental-related information, the media – including print, television and radio sources – are important HCPHES stakeholders. HCPHES depends on local and national media to deliver timely and accurate public health messages; therefore HCPHES must remain accessible, professional and knowledgeable when working with its media partners.

- Non-Governmental Organizations

- *Professional Organizations*

Professional organizations enhance the mission and activities of HCPHES by providing guidance on mandates and policy, facilitating information exchange among partner agencies and coordinating opportunities for workforce development. Examples of national, state and local professional organizations with which HCPHES or its employees affiliate include the American Public Health Association, the Texas Association of Local Health Officials, the Texas Environmental Health Association, the Texas Veterinary Medical Association and the Harris County Medical Society.

- *Community-Based Organizations and Philanthropic Organizations*

Philanthropic and community-based organizations can affect HCPHES by influencing public opinion, the media and policymakers as well as collaborating and sharing resources on initiatives that benefit the community. Examples of community-based and philanthropic organizations include the Houston Branch of the American Heart Association, St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities, the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

- *Community Consortia*

Community consortia and planning groups provide HCPHES with valuable information regarding the public health and environmental needs among Harris County populations, as well as strategies for addressing them. Examples of community consortia and planning groups include the Harris County Public Health Care System Council, the Ryan White Planning Council and Gateway to Care.

- *Civic Organizations*

Civic organizations and citizen groups influence HCPHES by identifying, communicating and working to resolve community and neighborhood-level public health and environmental-related concerns. Examples of civic organizations include neighborhood associations, community health watch groups and community preservation groups.

- Regulated Entities

Following state and local laws, HCPHES conducts permitting, inspection, monitoring and enforcement activities for a variety of business and industrial entities. The cooperation of such entities as food establishments, public drinking water systems and petrochemical industries in complying with applicable environmental, health and safety-related regulations directly impacts the public's health and well-being, as well as the activities and resources of HCPHES.

- Academic Institutions

- *Institutions of Higher Learning*

By conducting public health research and training public health professionals, institutions of higher learning influence how HCPHES puts into practice its mission and activities. Among the many area institutions that collaborate with HCPHES include the University of Texas at Health Science Center at Houston, Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Texas Medical Branch and Texas Southern University.

- *Independent School Districts*

As influential local leaders with access to a majority of Harris County citizens, the 21 Independent School Districts (ISDs) within Harris County provide HCPHES with opportunities for disseminating public health information and resources to children, their families and communities at large.

- *Pre-Kindergarten Facilities*

Programs and facilities that provide pre-kindergarten education and care provide HCPHES with access to the County's youngest citizens and their families. Examples of pre-kindergarten facilities include Head Start programs and child day cares licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

- Emergency Response Community

By providing information, resources and logistical support, emergency response agencies influence HCPHES' public health preparedness planning and response activities. HCPHES collaborates with first responders such as police, fire and emergency management services; planning groups such as Local Emergency Planning Councils, local offices of emergency management such as the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; and state and federal partners such as the Texas Department of Emergency Management and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to ensure an "all-hazards" approach to public health emergency preparedness.

- HCPHES Staff

- *Executive Staff*

HCPHES Executive Staff, which includes the Executive Director, Deputy Director and Division Directors, are the key decision-makers for HCPHES. By setting goals and objectives, allocating resources and guiding policy and procedure, HCPHES depends on their leadership to ensure that we follow our mission.

- *Employees*

HCPHES employees are the backbone of the organization, implementing the HCPHES mission on a day-to-day basis. By providing public health assessment, assurance, policy development and education activities, HCPHES employees protect and promote the health, safety and environmental quality of Harris County communities.

HCPHES Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Identifying HCPHES' internal strengths and weaknesses as well as its external opportunities and threats provides an overall systems view of the department and the factors affecting it. Recognizing these factors is crucial, as future goals and activities must include approaches for maximizing strengths and opportunities and overcoming weaknesses and threats.

Many issues are both assets and barriers to HCPHES – what is considered a strength in some aspects may be a weakness in others, and a number of opportunities could also be considered threats. These assets and barriers, grouped into broad themes, informed the development of the Strategic Issues. These themes include:

- Emerging and existing public health and environmental threats
- Service effectiveness and service delivery
- Organizational issues such as communication, staff development and leadership
- Stakeholder awareness and support
- Departmental resources
- Partnerships and collaborations

THE PLAN

The following six Strategic Issues and their accompanying strategies and key activities are intended to guide the planning and implementation of HCPHES programs, services and activities during the five-year period of 2005-2010. The Plan serves as a tool to help HCPHES ensure a healthier Harris County, setting the foundation to allow policy priorities to drive organizational structure, program design, and resource allocation.

Although the strategies and key activities presented below are organized under one of six prioritized Strategic Issues, many are interrelated and have the potential to address multiple Strategic Issues.

- **Strategic Issue 1: Enhance and/or establish HCPHES capacity to identify, prevent and respond to current and emerging public health issues**

Globalization, the increased risk of terrorism and changing socioeconomic, demographic and environmental factors contribute to new and emergent health threats as well as an increased scope of existing health threats. While threats such as avian influenza, obesity and the potential for bioterrorism attacks are not unique to Harris County, our area also faces such challenges as a rapidly growing population, ideal conditions for floods and hurricanes, and industrial sources of air and water pollutants.

To address this Strategic Issue, HCPHES must ensure comprehensive local surveillance activities and enhance its ability to monitor state, national and global health events. The department must employ evidenced-based strategies whenever feasible to optimize public health outcomes. In addition, HCPHES must make certain that it is organizationally flexible to ensure appropriately rapid response. HCPHES must be able to rapidly and reliably communicate within the department and among external partners. In addition, HCPHES must consider technological solutions whenever appropriate to maximize efficiency.

The Committee reviewed available and relevant summaries regarding the health of Harris County populations. Based on careful consideration of these summaries and on the collective breadth and depth of public health experience among the members, the Committee identified the following public health issues as priority areas for HCPHES activities during the next five-year period. Note that these issues are not listed in any priority order.

- **clean air**
- **water quality**, including the integrity of drinking water, creeks, bayous and lakes
- **food safety**
- **neighborhood nuisances**, including accumulated rubbish, dilapidated structures and conditions that harbor insects and rodents
- **infectious diseases**, including vaccine-preventable diseases, vector-borne diseases, zoonotic diseases, communicable diseases and imported diseases
- **chronic diseases** such as heart disease, diabetes and stroke, as well as associated determinants of chronic disease prevalence and outcomes such as tobacco use, access to supportive environments for physical activity and oral health care

- **intentional and unintentional injuries**, including drownings, motor vehicle crashes, animal bites, violence and occupational exposures
- **public health emergency preparedness**, including an all-hazards approach to planning and response activities for diverse threats such as acts of bioterrorism, weather-related disasters and pandemic influenza
- **leading causes of death and disability**, including activities targeted at age-specific issues such as **infant mortality and senior health concerns**
- **mental illness and substance abuse**.

HCPHES will identify and obtain quality data to assess and monitor each priority public health issue, ensuring its timely use during decision-making processes. HCPHES will work to identify and reduce health disparities that may exist among populations of different racial, ethnic, age-related and socioeconomic background with respect to each priority public health issue, including disparities related to access to health care.

- *Strategy 1a: Enhance HCPHES capacity to conduct surveillance activities, monitor global, national and local health events and report outbreaks, with an emphasis on the priority public health issues identified above.*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will ensure that existing and emerging threats are incorporated in the scope of surveillance and monitoring activities by assessing current capacity, identifying resource needs and developing a long-range plan to meet these needs.
 - HCPHES will develop methods to acquire relevant data and perform appropriate data analysis to guide the development of programs and policies.
 - HCPHES will work with applicable stakeholders to ensure that disease reporting rules and regulations are followed and encourage the public to report occurrences of disease.
 - HCPHES will prioritize the maintenance of adequate staff dedicated to conducting surveillance and monitoring activities, and will cross-train staff to assist in surveillance and monitoring activities when needed.
- *Strategy 1b: Expand HCPHES capacity to coordinate and integrate interventions and response activities that address priority public health issues, ensuring organizational flexibility*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will ensure rapid and thorough responses to public health incidents and timely and appropriate public health interventions.
- HCPHES will develop and enhance plans for interventions and response activities that delineate roles, responsibility and authority.
- Interventions will be evidenced-based whenever feasible.
- HCPHES will disseminate plans to staff and provide relevant training on an ongoing basis.
- HCPHES will work with external stakeholders to define, clarify and formalize expectations regarding roles and responsibilities for interventions and response activities.
- HCPHES will provide training to staff on skills related to interdepartmental collaboration and coordination.

- *Strategy 1c: Improve HCPHES capacity for internal and external communication*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will enhance and continually update procedures for rapid internal communications, to include its employee call-down protocol.
- HCPHES will identify and continually update an inventory of stakeholders critical to surveillance and response activities and develop standardized protocols for rapid communication and information exchange.
- HCPHES will identify clear standards and protocols for internal and external written and verbal communications.
- HCPHES will ensure appropriate communications technology that is compatible with other local, state and national systems is considered and adopted when feasible.
- HCPHES will ensure that staff is trained on internal and external communications protocols.

- *Strategy 1d: Expand HCPHES capacity to seek out and effectively utilize technology*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will identify departmental programs, services and activities that can be enhanced with technology. HCPHES will adopt appropriate technological systems whenever feasible.
- HCPHES will ensure that technology is compatible with other systems within HCPHES, Harris County and other local, state and national systems. HCPHES will coordinate systems internally to avoid duplication and encourage networking.
- HCPHES will communicate technology needs to funding sources, ensuring that they understand their benefits and potential cost savings.
- HCPHES will establish mechanisms within the department for assisting staff with technological issues and training.

- **Strategic Issue 2: Implement systems to measure, evaluate and ensure that HCPHES outcome objectives are met or exceeded and that quality services are delivered in a manner that reflect HCPHES core values**

Outcomes evaluation activities measure the effectiveness of an organization's programs and services. Data from evaluation activities provides accountability, informs resource allocation processes and allows an organization to quantify and communicate its impact to stakeholders. Though a number of HCPHES programs currently perform evaluation activities, there is no systematic and standardized process for determining service effectiveness across the organization.

The delivery of quality services in a manner that reflects core organizational values is an important tool in assuring service effectiveness. Providing services in accordance with established guidelines and standards ensures that quality will be upheld, while conducting business according to core organizational values facilitates trust, respect and support among stakeholders.

To address this Strategic Issue, HCPHES must develop and implement a department-wide framework to measure, evaluate and ensure that HCPHES outcome objectives are met or exceeded, that services meet or exceed established standards and that they are delivered in a manner that reflects core values.

- *Strategy 2a: Ensure that HCPHES outcome objectives are met or exceeded*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will establish and prioritize desired outcomes as they relate to strategic objectives.
- HCPHES will identify reliable, accurate and feasible measures for identified outcomes.
- HCPHES will develop strategies to incorporate results of evaluation activities into program development and design processes.

- *Strategy 2b: Ensure that service delivery reflects HCPHES core values*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will establish quality-related standards as they relate to the delivery of services in a manner consistent with core values.
- HCPHES will identify reliable, accurate and feasible measures for identified standards.
- HCPHES will develop strategies to incorporate results of evaluation activities into program development and design processes.
- HCPHES will develop a system of incentives and rewards to encourage delivery of quality services.

- **Strategic Issue 3: Foster a departmental organizational structure that supports open and effective communication and encourages staff development and leadership**

An organization that supports and encourages open and effective communication among executive, managerial and front-line staff and across divisions, programs and services results in enhanced productivity, efficiency and service delivery. In addition, open and effective communication supports teamwork, decision-making, coordination and cooperation, and ensures that employees feel connected to the larger mission of the organization. With more than 700 employees dispersed throughout the County providing a diverse array of services, HCPHES must prioritize efforts to ensure that communication flows consistently across the chain of command and between organizational units.

Further, encouraging staff development and leadership ensures a strong foundation to conduct the mission and activities of HCPHES, providing consistent leadership and expertise over time. Equipping staff with the skills, competencies and abilities needed to perform current job duties as well as advance professionally will improve service delivery while fostering a sense of pride and ownership.

To address this Strategic Issue, HCPHES must create an environment that supports open communication and adopt practices that ensure clear, consistent and effective communication. HCPHES must provide opportunities for professional development, communicate steps for employee advancement and ensure objective measures for job performance.

- *Strategy 3a: Improve the delivery of internal organizational communication*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will adopt comprehensive policies and procedures to increase internal communication and foster an environment that encourages communication among all levels of staff and across organizational units.
- HCPHES will establish mechanisms to facilitate the ongoing sharing of internal and external information, issues, activities, best practices and current topics among all levels of HCPHES staff.

- *Strategy 3b: Recruit a competent workforce and provide training opportunities that develop leadership skills and enhance job competencies*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will recruit and retain a competent, committed and diverse workforce.
- HCPHES will establish methods to assess training needs, identify core competencies and facilitate training to maintain and/or enhance job-specific competencies.
- HCPHES will establish methods to identify and facilitate leadership development training and mentoring as appropriate.
- HCPHES will explore partnerships with local educational institutions to assist in the development and implementation of training plans.

- *Strategy 3c: Clearly communicate job expectations and steps for advancement*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will ensure that job descriptions reflect expectations for current tasks.
- HCPHES will establish standardized, measurable steps for career advancement.

- *Strategy 3d: Establish objective measures to evaluate job performance and develop a standardized system for employee incentives and rewards*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will establish standardized, objective and measurable criteria for evaluating employee job performance.
- HCPHES will develop a standardized system to provide incentives and rewards for employee job performance.

- **Strategic Issue 4: Increase stakeholder awareness, understanding and support of the HCPHES mission and its activities.**

Well-informed stakeholders are more likely to support the mission, mandates and activities of HCPHES. For example, when knowledgeable and supportive, policymakers are more likely to ensure adequate resources and appropriate mandates; potential partners are more likely to share information, resources and access; regulated entities are more likely to comply with rules and regulations; communities are more likely to communicate their public health needs; and the public is more likely to utilize public health services, trust public health messages and support public health practice.

There has traditionally been a lack of awareness of the mission and activities of HCPHES among many key stakeholders. This lack of awareness extends beyond HCPHES as an organization – the concept, breadth and scope of public health practice is often misunderstood. For example, “public health” is often interpreted to mean the provision of publicly funded health care, rather than the assurance of the conditions under which people can be healthy. Further, because most successful public health efforts do not make headlines – usually because their results mean that death, illness or injury were prevented – it is difficult to communicate their value to the public on an ongoing basis.

To address this Strategic Issue, HCPHES must establish effective strategies for communicating the mission and vision of HCPHES as well as the concept and value of public health to our many stakeholders, both internally and externally.

- *Strategy 4a: Initiate and maintain an ongoing forum to educate HCPHES employees about the department and its mission and activities, as well as about general public health concepts and current events*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will establish mechanisms to facilitate the ongoing sharing of information, issues, activities, best practices and current topics among all levels of HCPHES staff.
- *Strategy 4b: Initiate and maintain a targeted campaign to educate and promote HCPHES and the practice of public health among external stakeholders*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will create and disseminate positive, proactive information that will communicate the HCPHES mission and activities as well as general public health concepts to its external stakeholders. HCPHES will utilize a multi-faceted approach, incorporating a variety of communications methods to disseminate targeted information.
- HCPHES will conduct informational campaigns that communicate general wellness and health promotion concepts to the community. HCPHES will utilize a multi-faceted approach, incorporating a variety of communications methods to disseminated targeted information.

- **Strategic Issue 5: Enhance the acquisition and utilization of departmental resources**

Resources needed to accomplish public health activities include staff, technology, information, equipment, facilities and funding. The adequacy of such resources directly impacts the capacity of HCPHES to carry out its mission effectively and efficiently. Though HCPHES is rich in certain resources, such as its competent and skilled workforce, as public funds for population-based health services become increasingly limited at the state and federal levels HCPHES must plan for the maximization of existing resources and the acquisition of new resources.

To address this Strategic Issue, it is imperative that HCPHES adopt a long-term budget planning process, prioritize the use of existing resources based on departmental goals, utilize innovative approaches for maximizing these resources and explore alternate funding sources.

- *Strategy 5a: Develop a long-range budget planning process that is aligned with strategic planning goals*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will develop an internal three-to-five year budget plan that allows HCPHES to identify and articulate resource needs as well as plan for resource acquisition and utilization. The plan will follow strategic planning goals and ensure that resource planning is closely aligned with program planning.
- HCPHES will encourage open discussion on budgeting issues and ensure broad and easy access to HCPHES budget information.
- HCPHES will ensure that outcomes evaluation and quality assurance activities inform resource planning.

- *Strategy 5b: Maximize existing resources and identify alternate funding sources*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will continually assess current resources to ensure that they are allocated based on priority needs as identified by strategic planning goals.
- HCPHES will identify and acquire new funding sources based on priority needs as identified by strategic planning goals.
- HCPHES will develop and/or enhance quality assurance protocols to ensure appropriate and effective use of new funding sources.

- *Strategy 5c: Encourage innovative approaches to resource planning and management*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will foster an environment that encourages employees to bring forward creative concepts and recommendations to address resource shortfalls and constraints. HCPHES will provide opportunities to share successful approaches for maximizing resources.
- HCPHES will explore ways to adapt technology and automation across programs and services to improve resource utilization.

- **Strategic Issue 6: Actively develop and/or sustain effective partnerships to advance the HCPHES mission and its activities**

Partnerships allow HCPHES and its key stakeholders to accomplish shared goals in the community while maximizing scarce resources and minimizing duplicate efforts. In addition, partnerships provide HCPHES access within the community, allowing the department to build trust and credibility with target populations. While partnerships with external organizations may be initiated at the individual or programmatic level, such partnerships should be sustained at the departmental level.

To address this Strategic Issue, HCPHES must actively network to identify entities with similar priorities and goals and develop a systematic approach to sustaining existing relationships.

- *Strategy 6a: Build and sustain partnerships across the HCPHES organization and among key stakeholders*

Key Activities:

- HCPHES will develop guidelines for formalizing, evaluating and sharing information about partnerships. This process will include methods to measure the effectiveness of each collaboration and to maximize departmental participation with each partnership.
- HCPHES will identify and prioritize the implementation of collaborative opportunities among the organizational units within HCPHES.
- HCPHES will identify potential partnership opportunities among key stakeholders and prioritize the development of collaborative relationships.
- HCPHES will identify opportunities to facilitate partnerships among stakeholders, linking entities with common goals and objectives

CONCLUSION

The strategic issues, strategies and activities described in the *Strategic Plan* serve as a roadmap for HCPHES in the next five years. The *Strategic Plan* identifies the key public health issues around which HCPHES will focus its policies, programs and services, and prioritizes efforts to ensure that these activities are effective and conducted in a manner reflective of HCPHES core values. The *Strategic Plan* addresses internal factors that impact service quality and effectiveness, such as fostering departmental communication, staff development and leadership and maximizing departmental resources. Similarly, the *Strategic Plan* prioritizes factors external to HCPHES that impact public health service delivery, including increasing stakeholder support and fostering effective partnerships.

In summary, the *HCPHES Strategic Plan* serves as a tool to help HCPHES ensure a healthier Harris County, setting the foundation to allow policy priorities to drive organizational structure, program design and resource allocation.

APPENDIX A: COMPILATION OF KEY HCPHES MANDATES

Mandate	Source	Key Requirements
Provide Essential Public Health Services	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 121	Provide personal health promotion and maintenance services; infectious disease control and prevention services; environmental and consumer health programs; public health education and information services; laboratory services; and administrative services
Perform Health Authority Duties	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 121	Administer state and local laws relating to public health
Report Notifiable Conditions	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 81	Receive reports of notifiable conditions and report them to TDSHS
Enforce Animal Cruelty/Disposition of Cruelly-Treated Animals Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 821	Enforce and apply state standards and regulations regarding animal cruelty and disposition of cruelly treated animals
Enforce Animal Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 822	Regulate and permit dangerous dog and dangerous wild animals. Administer pet licensing program and enforce leash laws.
Provide Rabies Eradication and Control Services	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 826	Investigate animal-to-people bites. Enforce rabies vaccination/quarantine requirements and standards
Meet Animal Shelter and Euthanasia Standards	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 823	Ensure that the County animal shelter meets or exceeds state standards for animal shelters and euthanasia
Provide Dog and Cat Sterilization Services	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 828	Ensure that pets adopted from the County animal shelter are neutered
Provide Mosquito Control Services	Texas Health and Safety Chapter 344; Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Chapter 267; Texas Agriculture Code Chapter 76	Provide surveillance, education and control of mosquito-borne disease in compliance with State licensure requirements and regulations regarding pesticide/herbicide application
Enforce Food Safety Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 437	Permit and inspect food establishments to ensure compliance with state regulations
Enforce Neighborhood Nuisance Abatement Law	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 341 and 343	Abate public nuisances through owner notification and prosecution
Enforce Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 341	Enforce state standards and regulations regarding sanitary conditions at businesses and places of employment
Enforce Public Drinking Water Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 341	Inspect public drinking water systems to ensure compliance with state standards and regulations
Enforce Swimming Pool Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 341	Inspect public swimming pools to ensure compliance with state standards and regulations

Mandate	Source	Key Requirements
Enforce Water Quality Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 341; Texas Water Code Chapters 7 & 26	Monitor water quality and perform investigations to ensure compliance with state rules and regulations; file civil/criminal suit if necessary
Enforce Air Quality Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 382; Texas Water Code Chapter 7	Monitor air quality and perform investigations to ensure compliance with state rules and regulations; file civil/criminal suit if necessary
Enforce Solid Waste Regulations	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 361; Texas Water Code Chapter 7	Monitor and investigate hazardous, industrial and municipal solid waste activities to ensure compliance with state rules and regulations; file civil/criminal suit if necessary
Comply with Joint National Pollutant Discharge Elimination MS4 Permit; Enforce Storm Water Regulations	Harris County Storm Water Quality Management Regulations; Clean Water Act Section 404; Texas Water Code Chapter 26	Perform representative sampling to characterize the quality of rainwater run-off; conduct inspections of industrial and non-industrial facilities, locate and eliminate illicit discharge
Enforce Litter Abatement Law	Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 365	Monitor the disposal of litter and investigate illegal dumping activities to ensure compliance with state rules and regulations
Ensure Privacy of Personal Health Information	U.S. Public Law 104-101 - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996	Ensure that personal health data and information is maintained, used and disclosed according to federal law

APPENDIX B: COMPILATION OF KEY HCPHES STAKEHOLDERS*

- **Harris County Citizens/Public at Large**

- **Commissioners Court**

County Judge Robert Eckels
Precinct One Commissioner El Franco Lee
Precinct Two Commissioner Sylvia Garcia
Precinct Three Commissioner Steve Radack
Precinct Four Commissioner Jerry Eversole

- **Governmental Agencies**

- *Federal Agencies*

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - Health Resources and Services Administration
 - National Institutes of Health
 - Food and Drug Administration
 - Office of Population Affairs
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
 - Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency
 - U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Labor
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Justice
 - Federal Bureau of Investigation
 - Drug Enforcement Administration

- *State Agencies*

- State of Texas
 - Animal Health Commission
 - Attorney General's Office
 - Commission on Environmental Quality
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Department of Corrections
 - Department of Criminal Justice
 - Department of Family and Protective Services
 - Department of Licensing and Regulations

* This list is intended to highlight the breadth of HCPHES stakeholders; it is not intended as a complete listing of all stakeholders

Department of Transportation
District Courts
Education Agency
Engineering Extension Service
General Land Office
Health and Human Services Commission
 Department of State Health Services
 Department of Aging and Disability Services
 Department of Family and Protective Services
 Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
Office of Administrative Hearings
Parks and Wildlife Department
Railroad Commission
Workers Compensation Commission
Workforce Commission

○ *Local Agencies*

Harris County

Attorney's Office
Community and Economic Development Department
Constables
Department of Education
District Attorney's Office
Fire and Emergency Services Department
Medical Examiners Office
Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Office of Human Resources and Risk Management
Justice of the Peace Courts
Sheriff's Office

City of Houston

Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Emergency Management

Municipalities located within Harris County (see Appendix C)
Port of Houston Authority

• **Medical Community**

Harris County Hospital District
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
Baylor College of Medicine
University of Texas Medical Branch
Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center

• **Legislators**

• **Media**

- **Non-Governmental Organizations**

- *Professional Organizations*

National:

American Academy of Pediatrics
Air and Waste Management Association
American Mosquito Control Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Environmental Health Association
Society of Vector Ecology
Society of Public Health Educators

State:

Texas Association of Environmental Professionals
Texas Association of Local Health Officials
Texas Association of Municipal Health Officials
Texas Environmental Health Association
Texas Medical Association
Texas Mosquito Control Association
Texas Nurses Association
Texas Public Health Association
Texas Society of Public Health Educators
Texas Veterinary Medical Association

Local:

Harris County Medical Society
Harris County Veterinary Medical Association
Greater Houston Restaurant Association
Lead in Healthy Homes Grantees Association

- *Community-Based Organizations/Philanthropic Organizations*

AIDS Foundation Houston
Aldine Youth Center
American Red Cross
Amigos Volunteers in Education and Services
The Assistance Fund
Bayou Preservation Association
Bering Omega Community Services
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Buffalo Bayou Partnership
The Bridge
Clean Air Clear Lake
East Harris County Manufacturers Association
Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation
Family Services of Greater Houston

Galveston/Houston Area for Smog Prevention
Gulf Coast Retailers Association
Houston Area Community Services
Houston-Area Suicide Prevention Coalition
Houston Endowment
Houston Food Bank
Houston Humane Society
Houston SPCA
Houston Zoo
Interfaith Ministries
Montrose Clinic
Montrose Counseling Center
Mothers for Clean Air
National Safe Kids Campaign
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Saint Hope Foundation
Save a Life, Prevent a Drowning
Spay/Neuter Assistance Program
St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities
TraumaLink
Various Citizen Advisory Panels
Working Families Association
YMCA of Greater Houston

○ *Community Consortia*

Gateway to Care
Greater Houston Partnership
Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Harris County Public Health Care System Council
Houston Advanced Research Center
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Houston HIV Prevention Community Planning Group
Ryan White Planning Council
Steps to a Healthier Houston/Harris County Consortium
Various Chambers of Commerce

○ *Civic Organizations*

Barrett Station Community Health Advisors
Galena Park Civic Club
Various Neighborhood and Homeowner Associations

● **Regulated Entities**

Water Districts
Small Businesses
Public Swimming Pool Owners
Retail Food Industry
Lead and Nuisance Abatement Contractors
Lead Consultants

- **Academic Institutions**

- *Institutions of Higher Learning*

- University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
 - Baylor College of Medicine
 - University of Texas Medical Branch
 - Rice University
 - University of Houston
 - Texas Southern University
 - Texas Women's University
 - Texas A&M University
 - Houston Baptist University
 - Harris County Community College System
 - North Harris Montgomery Community College System
 - Lee College
 - San Jacinto College

- *Independent School Districts*

- Aldine, Channelview, Clear Creek, Crosby, Deer Park, Alief, Cypress-Fairbanks, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Houston, Huffman, Humble, Katy, Klein, La Porte, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring, Spring Branch, Tomball, Waller

- *Pre-Kindergarten Facilities*

- Head Start
 - Licensed Day Care Facilities

- **Emergency Response Community**

- Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
 - Harris County Fire and Emergency Services Department
 - Local Emergency Planning Councils
 - Local Volunteer Fire Departments

- **HCPHES Staff**

- *Executive Staff*

- *Employees*

APPENDIX C: MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN HARRIS COUNTY (EXCLUDING THE CITY OF HOUSTON)

City of Baytown
City of Bellaire
City of Bunker Hill Village
City of Deer Park
City of El Lago
City of Friendswood
City of Galena Park
City of Hedwig Village
City of Hilshire Village
City of Humble
City of Hunters Creek Village
City of Jacinto City
City of Jersey Village
City of Katy
City of La Porte
City of Morgan's Point
City of Nassau Bay
City of Pasadena
City of Piney Point Village
City of Seabrook
City of Shoreacres
City of South Houston
City of Southside Place
City of Spring Valley
City of Stafford
City of Taylor Lake Village
City of Tomball
City of Waller
City of Webster
City of West University Place