



WOMEN'S  
BEAN PROJECT®

## Strategic Plan 2024-2027

The underpinnings of this plan are founded in the idea that as a 34-year-old organization, Women's Bean Project has a proven record of adapting while the world around us has changed. We recognize that what has gotten us to this point will not get us into the future. However, bold moves of the past have prepared us for the bold moves needed in the next three years and beyond. Women's Bean Project's opportunity is to leverage its reputation, past success and potential to have an even greater impact. We are prepared to move beyond only providing direct service and imagining ways we can have impact on entire systems affecting women and their families in our community and beyond. The team of stewards at Women's Bean Project is ready for this next chapter and looks forward to handing a bigger and better organization to our successors.

### **Introduction and Background – the last three years in review**

In the 2018-2021 strategic plan, the organization decided on one overarching goal: to serve more women better. This mantra continues to serve as a guide to each department, staff member and board member. From staff meetings to board gatherings to individual goal setting, discussions continually focused on how we might serve more women and serve them better. Decisions made throughout the duration of the strategic plan kept this guidance in mind.

Not surprisingly, the Bean Project's last strategic plan, which was intended to shape our work from 2018 – 2021, did not anticipate a global pandemic and its effect on every aspect of operations. Adding to the stress of the pandemic was the loss of Women's Bean Project's founder, Jossy Eyre, in April 2020. From the unanticipated business growth at a time when staffing was hamstrung by on-site quotas, to changes in the needs of the women served, every aspect of the organization was affected. Not until 2023 has WBP begun to feel as though it can plan for its future.

### **PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

In the 2018-2021 strategic plan WBP identified how challenges in recruiting program participants and low unemployment rate affected the number of applicants as well as the women's success in the program. Historically, when the unemployment rate is low, women who continue to be unemployed have significant and numerous barriers to employment. WBP relied on referrals from community partners who provide services to women with the same characteristics as those WBP sought to serve; however, many of those referral sources had languished and, in the plan, WBP identified the need to reinvigorate the relationships.

Efforts to increase referrals from partner organizations started before the pandemic, including a promising relationship with the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) to employ women on work release during their last few months of incarceration. The disruptions of the pandemic exacerbated the challenges across the community, including for the women served by the Bean Project. Concerns about

COVID spreading in prisons ended the work release program and led to many prisoners being released with only a few days' notice, often into homelessness and with few resources or a plan for success. Women were released from prison without the identification needed to get employment, and without housing, did not have the stability needed to be successful. Too many ended up in abusive situations due to lack of choice and low feelings of empowerment. Not surprisingly, women applying to the program during the pandemic often had recent and tenuous sobriety, mental health and physical health issues, and were in active abusive relationships.

Also, starting in January 2020, before the pandemic, the WBP program team made the decision to increase the frequency of hiring program participants, with a goal to hire every 4-6 weeks in small cohorts to better identify and help each woman overcome her specific barriers to employment. This was an effort to serve more women and meet them when they were ready to be served. However, despite efforts invested to increase relationships with referral sources, applications to WBP dropped when program managers at referral agencies stopped sending applicants because of COVID concerns. Meanwhile, the DOC relationship was placed on hold. Suddenly, fewer women were applying to the program and those who did required even more intensive help with their basic needs and sobriety than ever before. We began using the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix, which measures 18 aspects of self-sufficiency on a 5-point scale, from in-crisis to empowered, as an intake tool to help identify the areas each woman most needed to address during case management. This tool helped the WBP program team identify the Big Six indicators of success in the program, noting that if a woman started her time in-crisis or vulnerable (1 or 2 on the scale) and these issues were not addressed promptly, she was unlikely to complete the program. The Big Six includes: transportation, physical health, housing, mental health, outstanding legal issues, and sobriety.

WBP also noted an interesting trend in post-graduation employment. At the 12-month follow-up, we found that over 95% of graduates were still employed. However, at the 24-month follow up, the employment rate dropped to roughly 70%. The two primary reasons why women were not employed at the two-year post-graduation mark were that they were taking care of another person (often she had had a child or was caring for another family member), or because of health issues that precluded work. To try and address these issues that might get in the way of long-term work, WBP added health and wellness programming, began teaching skills to address responses to histories of trauma, and partnered with organizations such as Colorado Mental Wellness Network and other community mental health providers to provide sobriety and mental health support. We also added workshops on healthy relationships and communications to help women feel more empowered to express their own needs in their relationships. The PCL-5, a measure of PTSD symptoms, was implemented as a pre- and post-assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the trauma skills workshop series. WBP was encouraged to see that while nearly 100% of program participants measured at a level which showed they had PTSD symptoms, everyone's levels improved after the trauma skills workshop.

The Job Readiness Assessment (JRA), developed by REDF, one of our partners in the employment social enterprise space, was also implemented as an assessment tool for the program participants and their supervisors at WBP. This tool objectively identifies when women are ready to make the transition to the job search phase of the program and into career entry-level jobs in the community.

In 2023, effects of the pandemic remain, though in unexpected ways. Historically, WBP benefited from high unemployment by having more applicants to the program than could be hired. Conversely, when unemployment was low, applications declined. Despite a low unemployment rate and having hired program participants three separate times in early 2023, between April and August 130 applicants applied for 16 open positions in September. The conditions present in the number of applicants and the characteristics of the applicant pool, i.e., high applicant numbers and higher needs in the Big Six indicators, do not match our past experience and will require adaptation. This, along with the introduction of assessment tools and the need to improve how data is collected and used, set the stage for the Program team's work in this strategic plan.

## **BUSINESS OPERATIONS**

As an essential business, WBP stayed open and kept everyone employed during the pandemic. In fact, a handful of program graduates who were laid off from their post-graduation jobs returned to help WBP. From March 2020 throughout the rest of the year sales reached an unprecedented high. The consumer trend of purchasing products supported by a mission accelerated during the pandemic. Because of WBP's product selection, this trend served us well during the Stay-at-Home orders mandated during the pandemic.

The regulations to mitigate the spread of disease required WBP to keep an on-site staffing ratio of 25 percent of total. To prioritize program participants and staff related to the food production operations, the administrative staff members worked a hybrid schedule of home and office. During the busy holiday season administrative staff worked onsite after hours to keep up with the larger than anticipated sales volume. These demands, combined with other stressors every person was experiencing due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, led to turnover of several key staff members in 2021.

In 2016 Colorado voted to adopt constitutional Amendment 70 to increase minimum wage to \$12.00 per hour by 2020 and then increase based on inflation thereafter. In 2019, to address the higher costs in the city, Denver City Council increased the minimum wage even further. As a result, 2024 minimum wage across the state is \$14.42/hour and in Denver is \$18.29/hour. Though WBP has historically tried to offer program participants an hourly wage above the minimum, the rapid increases from these legislative decisions have meant that minimum wage has doubled in six years, outpacing product price increases. High minimum wages also squeeze salaries in the middle of the pay scale, leading WBP to increase staff wages to keep pace. Supply chain issues and inflation have created additional cost pressures on the manufacturing operations. Increasing efficiency and managing product margins will be the theme for the food production business in this strategic plan.

## **CONTRIBUTED INCOME**

A wise move to Donor Perfect software for donation and donor relationship management was instrumental in helping the development team cultivate relationships. In 2019 WBP made the decision to take the first step toward acquiring a new building by first determining what fundraising capacity existed within the donor base.

In January 2020, after completing a feasibility study and receiving positive feedback about the fundraising potential within the existing donor base, the WBP board gave the go-ahead to conduct a

capital campaign. The subsequent months were spent planning, and the campaign was targeted to launch in the spring of 2020, requiring 18 months to complete. When it became clear the shutdowns caused by COVID were going to impact how money could be raised, the team revisited the plan, but eventually decided to proceed, while extending the runway for the campaign to 24 months.

On the one hand, the pandemic created opportunities with donors who were easier to reach and often eager to give at a time when they perceived others were struggling more than they were. WBP also saw the years of donor cultivation pay off. There had been so many references to needing a new building, that when donors were approached about the campaign, they were overwhelmingly supportive and excited to give to the project. Worries about whether we had appropriately cultivated donors were dispelled when the \$6.5M campaign was completed in 24 months after raising \$7.4M.

### **WBP'S HOME – The Bean Factory**

In the 2018 strategic plan, WBP identified one of the key issues needing resolution was related to real estate. After more than 20 years in the Firehouse, the organization had outgrown the building, and the facility was limiting the growth potential of the organization. WBP had reached the point where it was forced to consider physical space in every business and program decision. Attempts to grow the business and even expand into doing work for other companies to create more jobs were thwarted due to space limitations.

In the meantime, a site was identified, and because the desired building was on more land than WBP needed, a partnership with Denver Housing Authority (DHA) was developed. This partnership and a lease to purchase agreement with DHA enabled WBP to have control of the property and the time to fundraise. Eventually the decision was made to do a New Markets Tax Credit deal for the purchase and renovation of the building.

Simultaneously, a buyer for the firehouse was sought and an agreement was reached that allowed a long lead time before the sale was final. After 26 years of ownership, the significant equity WBP had in the firehouse helped reassure all parties that the project could be completed successfully.

The patient capital on both ends – in the sale of the old building and the purchase of the new – allowed WBP ample time to do the fundraising necessary to make the project successful. Within a month of moving into The Bean Factory, funds raised during this period were used to pay off the bridge loan.

Now that WBP has completed its first year in the new building, it is time to complete a strategic plan to guide the upcoming years. In this plan, the strategic goals set out to pursue a steady stream of improvements in our operations that are executed diligently to transform the organization into one with higher impact and greater reach.

### **The Future: 2024 – 2027**

#### **The Foundation for this Plan**

As a first step in planning for the future, we reviewed and updated our guiding principles. These updates reflect who we are as well as our perspective today.

## **Women's Bean Project's Guiding Principles**

### **Support**

We are a social enterprise that believes it is a basic human right to live a stable, healthy life. We support the women we serve in creating a foundation of lasting change by connecting them with resources to improve their job readiness, life skills and overall well-being.

### **Opportunity**

We partner with program participants by providing tools and opportunities in a supportive, non-judgmental environment. We believe the women we serve will thrive when they have the space and time to discover the talents and skills necessary to engage in the workforce and build better lives.

### **Self-sufficiency**

We meet the women we serve where they are so they can access the tools to create a path to greater self-sufficiency. With the dignity and hope that results, the women impact their own lives as well as those of their families.

### **Empowerment**

Women's Bean Project strives to create an environment in which women feel empowered, recognize their self-worth, and move along the path to self-sufficiency. By making positive choices that improve their lives, women become contributors to our community.

### **Transformation**

Starting with a seed of hope that brings her to Women's Bean Project, each woman's potential is cultivated to help her develop skills to transform her life. Each woman's transformation weaves threads of success that transform more than just the individual woman, expanding to families and communities.

### **Community**

At Women's Bean Project everyone is accepted for who they are and celebrated for what they contribute. We are a workplace focused on mutual support and celebration of our differences and similarities.

These Guiding Principles serve as the foundation of our plan. We proceed knowing we are most effective when:

- We help women help themselves.
- We bring together the resources and support the women can access to meet their basic needs, and support their sobriety, mental and physical health, and wellness.
- We provide a safe and accepting work environment in which the women learn the skills they need to get and keep future employment, the foundation for their self-sufficiency.

We know we are as good as the resources we bring to bear, and we are committed to providing what the women need through a mixture of direct services and partnerships, understanding our place as a supportive employer in the continuum of care. We exist to help women develop the skills and cultivate the talents to overcome the psychosocial barriers to employment that have held them back in the past.

**Our Mission**

Women’s Bean Project is a social enterprise that supports women striving to create lasting change in their lives by establishing steppingstones to self-sufficiency.

**Our Vision**

We believe all women have the power to transform their lives through employment. We envision a day when barriers to employment are eliminated, when employers hire based on talent and potential rather than background, when all women who want a second chance can come to the Bean Project and find the community, support and confidence needed to improve the future for themselves, their families, and the community.

Additionally,

- We believe people should not be defined by their worst moments.
- We believe in every person’s inherent ability to affect their own change.
- We believe barriers to employment can be overcome or mitigated to create change in one’s life.
- We believe everyone has something to offer – talent, time or treasure.

We have developed the following strategic framework to guide our work in this strategic plan:

# WBP Strategic Framework 2023



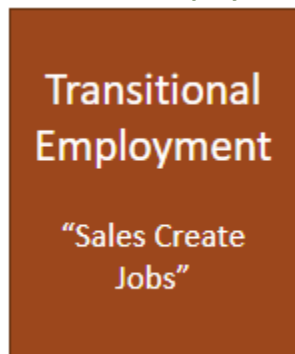
## Overarching Goal: By the end of FYE 2027, impact 2,000 lives

By the end of FYE2027, we will have cumulatively impacted 2,000 lives. Over the strategic plan period, we will define whose lives we will focus on impacting and how. We know this will include the current food manufacturing business and women hired as production assistants who participate in the existing program. We will continue to provide and improve program services to create long-term impact on those hired.

We believe when you change a woman’s life you change her family’s life, though we have not historically tracked the additional impact beyond each woman we hire. We intend to change that in the coming years. This will allow us to acknowledge and celebrate the extended reach of each woman affected by the program services. We will be more intentional about tracking and measuring the impact of our activities beyond the individual and track the households/family members whose lives are touched as well. For instance, when Jewish Family Services’ mobile food pantry comes onsite to Women’s Bean Project, each woman gets food for herself and her household, as well as other family members not under her roof. Supplies from WeeCycle, such as diapers and baby toys, car seats and other items for infants and toddlers are offered to program participants who are encouraged to share with family and friends. The paychecks the women bring home touch many lives in addition to her own.

We will consider what “impacting” a life looks like, understanding there will be “high touch” opportunities that are also higher cost and potentially higher impact. There will also be “low touch” opportunities that will be lower cost and lower impact, but still valuable. These criteria, along with the potential to generate revenue for WBP, will be considered as we explore new opportunities for impact and touching more lives.

### Transitional Employment Pillar – Sales Create Jobs



#### GOAL 1: Operate businesses that thrive and create life-changing job opportunities.

Grow operating budget to \$4.5M distributed as follows:

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue	Sales	% of Total	Contributed	% of Total	New Initiatives	% of Total
2024	\$3,100,000	\$1,272,891	41%	\$1,842,725	59%	\$0	0%
2025	\$3,500,00	\$1,505,000	43%	\$1,855,000	53%	\$150,000	4%
2026	\$4,000,000	\$1,800,000	45%	\$1,840,000	46%	\$350,000	9%

2027	\$4,500,000	\$2,000,000	45%	\$2,000,000	45%	\$500,000	11%
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Sales

- Create a sales growth plan to increase total sales revenue to \$2,000,000 (57% increase over FYE2024 budget) by FYE2027.
  - Add incremental revenue growth through new combinations of existing products and recurring revenue, e.g., subscription boxes.
  - Determine minimum margin requirements and phase out products not meeting them.
  - Selectively grow new products (seasonal, refresh, etc.)
    - Develop criteria to evaluate new product ideas.
    - Update new product launch process.
- Review sales channels for profitability and place efforts and resources into those with best margins and greatest potential.
  - Update and maintain website to capture online sales growth potential. Target 50% of overall sales from 39% of total sales projected in FYE2024.
  - Grow gift card business.
  - Grow partnerships with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to sell WBP products.
  - Expand corporate giving and product offerings to capture new and recurring business.

Operational efficiencies

- Create continuous improvements in manufacturing operations to ensure efficiency and cost savings.

Jobs

- By 2027 reach the milestone of hiring 75 women per year in the food manufacturing business (\$2,000,000 revenue).

Contributed income

- Create a comprehensive development plan to grow total contributed income to \$2,000,000 (9% increase over FYE2024 budget) by the end of 2027.
  - Create a grant revenue plan which includes identifying new grant sources and succession planning for grant writing.
  - Identify revenue sources to support growth in people served who are not employed at Women’s Bean Project.
  - Identify additional sources of contributed income, including ways to subsidize the high cost of employment created by increases in minimum wage.

Overall

- Develop a comprehensive marketing communications strategy that supports all revenue generation and shifts seasonality of sales while continuing to build the Women’s Bean Project brand.

The key risks in implementing this plan include:

- An economic downturn that affects sales and charitable giving. To mitigate this risk, we must monitor the current environment, watch for signs of a downturn, understand who is most likely to be affected, and prepare our response. For instance, how will growing sales channels, such as



corporate gifting change? Will we see growth or contraction in our existing sales channels?  
Which products are more likely to sell in an economic downturn?

- COGS pressures. Ensure we can operate a break-even business (at a minimum) to serve as a tool to teach job skills. Identify new, potentially more profitable business lines. Squeeze more efficiency out of the existing food manufacturing business while continuing to deliver on product quality and the mission.
- A large investment in existing products without margin to pay back the investment or losing sales partners that are hard to replace. To mitigate this, we must identify new and agile products with strong margins or low cost of goods as well as sales partners with whom we can grow.
- Wage increases for program participants outpacing price increases and sales growth. WBP must look at additional ways to cover the high cost of wages and adopt a continuous improvement mentality to increase productivity and lower costs as much as possible.

### **Transformative Programming Pillar – A safe place to grow**



**Goal 2: Provide a safe space to grow and offer targeted programming so every woman served gets the tools she needs to overcome her barriers to employment.**

#### Program Outcomes

- Create a sticky, high retention program, with at least 70% completion rate.
- Ensure job placement for all graduates, support post-graduation, and long-term job retention tracking.
- Track impact on the community beyond direct employment.

#### Evaluation

- Evaluate the program services and their impact on those served.
  - Utilize the following tools and monitor women's progress and outcomes to ensure the right services are being offered.
    - AZ Self-Sufficiency Matrix
    - PCL-5 (PTSD assessment)
    - Employment Hope Scale
    - Perceived Employment Barrier Scale
    - Job Readiness Assessment

- Ensure the program database is used consistently and accurately to provide useful information and data. Develop SOPs for data collection and reporting.
  - Explore participation in a rigorous evaluation to demonstrate the long-term efficacy of WBP's work.
- Adapt to the needs of program participants to ensure we are meeting them where they are and in a way that is most helpful to overcome their barriers to employment.
  - Individual Strengths are identified and cultivated.
  - Program participants invited to evaluate program components upon completion of each portion. Create a feedback loop process to identify areas for improvement based on feedback.
  - Improved system for conducting graduate follow-up, ensuring outreach occurs at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months and incentives are paid.
- Ensure we have a strong understanding of who we are best suited to serve.
  - Improve the screening processes to hire women most likely to be successful.
  - Identify alternative ways to serve women other than employment.

#### Partners

- Nurture and grow referral partnerships to ensure a strong pipeline of program participants.
- Build partnerships to provide services the women need, but for which WBP is not well suited to provide.
- Be a preferred partner for community serving organizations.
  - Easy to work with
  - Responsive
  - Communicative
  - Solution oriented
  - A place to send clients for success.

The key risks in implementing this plan include:

- Inconsistent data and outcome tracking. The move to Apricot for tracking program inputs and outcomes should help with help mitigate this risk, but standard operating procedures (SOPs) must be created to ensure all team members responsible for capturing data understand the timing and how the data must be captured.
- Not using the information collected to change processes. Capturing and reporting data is essential and using the data to inform decisions is equally important. We must ensure we have the discipline to honor the data collected, understand what it is telling us and make changes accordingly.
- Loss of partnerships necessary to accomplish our goals. Historically, WBP has engaged individuals and organizations in the community to deliver program services. Ensuring the continuous nurturing of these relationships, regardless of staff turnover, will be essential to the success of this plan.
- Hiring women not ready for change and not understanding the people served are the experts in their own lives. With a thorough understanding of what successful completion of the WBP program looks like and paying attention to the information collected, we should be able to identify those who are the most likely to benefit from the WBP program.

- Lack of adaptation to the characteristics of the women needing WBP’s services today. Though the objectives of the WBP program have remained the same throughout most of its history, how services are delivered, and the work is done has had to change as the environment changes. Maintaining a continuous improvement mentality will be essential.

### Engage Stakeholders Pillar – For, With and By



### Goal 3: Build deep and sustaining relationships with everyone who supports our success.

- Audit and improve all functions of the organization to ensure WBP is as welcoming and accessible as possible for all who interact with us.
  - Review all policies and practices through the equity lens developed by the DEI committee.
  - Collect demographic data for all program participants, staff and board members to report to funders. Identify targets for changes to WBP’s demographic profile to be more reflective of the women served.
- Expand the capacity of the board to guide the organization into the future.
  - Update policies and documentation related to board roles and responsibilities.
  - Thoughtfully recruit and fill the pipeline for new board members who have the skills and experiences needed to fulfill WBP’s future and address the needs of the community served.
  - Develop and maintain committee structure to engage volunteers and provide needed expertise.
- Develop a staff culture of belonging, working toward common goals that are larger than any individual and allows everyone to be who they are.
  - Based on the organization’s results from the Intercultural Development Assessment, take steps to move WBP from the “minimization orientation,” where we currently fall, to the “acceptance orientation,” and create a culture that attends to differences among staff and program participants and integrates those differences into organizational practices.
  - Develop succession plans for all staff positions, starting with the leadership team.
  - Collectively develop a plan for building culture.
  - Ensure the organizational values are shared with all newly hired staff members and revisited frequently with current team members.
  - Monitor progress over time.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

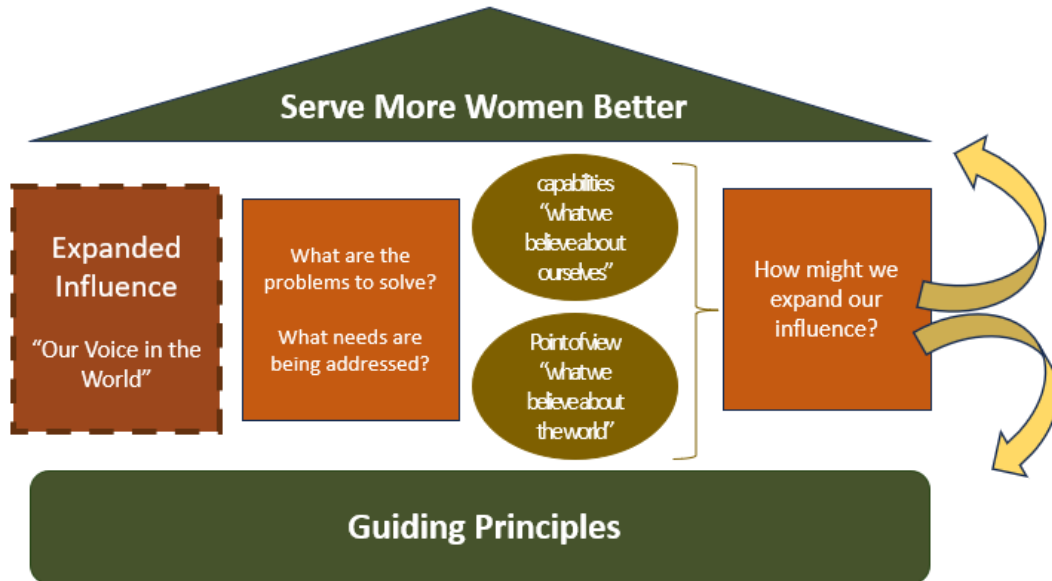
Though presented as a subset of the strategic plan, these goals were set by the DEI committee as part of the strategic planning process. We believe this work will help us accomplish our strategic goals and make the organization stronger.

- By FYE2027, make the staff, board, volunteers, and donors more representative of the women served.
  - Develop systems for measuring starting point and progress. Set specific goals based on starting point and revise based on progress.
- Set a culture of feedback that encourages program participants and staff members to share helpful information and criticism to improve WBP, including systems to regularly seek and evaluate the feedback.
  - Use feedback to address issues, change policy and standard operating procedures.
  - Provide transparency around the feedback given and the results.
- Create an overall culture where people feel valued, respected, and that they belong.
  - Prioritize DEI in recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees as well as in task and growth assignments.
  - Increase staff, volunteers, and program participants' feelings of belonging.
    - Acknowledge employee contributions and achievements.
    - Invite diverse opinions.
    - Set goals for retention.
    - Implement stay and exit interviews.
    - Review recruitment and onboarding through the DEI lens.
    - Clarify standards and expectations for all involved with the organization.
- Ensure all communications are transparent, inclusive, and accessible by:
  - Sharing the communications guide
  - Conducting a communications audit relative to the audiences we wish to reach and updating materials to ensure communications are inclusive.
  - Creating a process to ensure communications are reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- Create a culture of continuous learning around DEI by:
  - Conducting monthly training or assigning readings targeted to different areas of improving diversity, equity and inclusion.
  - Aligning and prioritizing training with our mission, vision, and desired company culture.
  - Respecting and creating a safe place for feedback after training is executed.

The key risks in implementing this plan include:

- Interest in these initiatives is dependent on a limited number of people and wanes over time. WBP must work to ensure the processes and goals become a part of the organizational culture and not dependent on any individual.
- Losing sight of why we are doing this work. Our focus must be on how these initiatives make us better. We will need to frequently review progress toward our goals and revisit the purpose of the work.

## Expanded Influence Pillar – Our Voice in the World



**Goal 4: Grow impact and reach by deliberately considering and developing ways to have influence on policy, broaden community engagement, offer community-based programming, and formalize leadership in the employment social enterprise field to touch more lives and generate new revenue.**

### Policy and Leadership

- Participate in thought leadership activities such as working groups, consortia and other gatherings aimed at driving policy change and measuring collective impact.
  - Participate in public policy affecting service delivery through the workforce system and benefits cliffs.
- Explore ways to assert leadership in employment social enterprise.
  - As an expert on psycho-social barriers to employment
  - The benefits of second chance hiring
  - Ways to achieve economic mobility
  - Mission-driven branding and marketing
  - Operating a social enterprise

### Community engagement and programming

- Develop criteria to evaluate new opportunities to have a greater impact on the community.
  - Create tools to allow for easy assessment, for instance, based on mission alignment and net budget impact.
  - Be wise about what we know and the best way to take WBP's knowledge to a broader audience.

- Be bold about trying new things to expand impact.
- Grow sources of revenue to expand impact. Generate \$500,000 in new revenue in FYE2027 to support reaching 2,000 lives impacted.
  - Tie to the knowledge and experience of WBP
  - Utilize production space to create more jobs
  - Utilize program space of 1300 W. Alameda Avenue in off-hours
  - Doing work for other companies
- Consider ways to expand program services to touch more lives in ways that impact more lives.
  - Partner with other organizations in the community to offer additional/more advanced trainings.
  - Offer services to non-WBP employees.

The key risks in implementing this plan include:

- Mission drift. In the quest to create new initiatives, WBP loses site of its core mission.
- Tools developed to evaluate new opportunities are not effective, are overly restrictive (no idea is good), or overly liberal (all ideas are good).
- Over reliance on current team and not expanding personnel to champion new initiatives. This creates a risk of doing more but doing nothing effectively.
- Overreach in ways that cost money and drain human resources but do not generate revenue.
- WBP expands program offerings with little uptake. Discipline around market research and program partners must be adhered to.
- Use of space but no revenue generation, i.e., cost and wear and tear on the building but insufficient income to make it worthwhile.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

This strategic plan will come alive through the work of the Leadership Team who will be assigned as leads for each of the objectives and the board committees and staff departments that support and monitor the work. The team will use dashboards to monitor progress, committees will review progress, and identify any concerns, barriers or areas of interest that warrant requesting the board of directors' attention or support. The board's Governance Committee will work to ensure board members have the skills needed to augment staff knowledge and expertise and are engaged and active in their committee participation. Committee chairs will monitor the progress of their committees and share with the board and leadership team any concerns which need to be addressed. Once each year at the full board retreat, the board will assess with a dashboard progress toward achieving the Strategic Plan. The intention is to monitor progress toward the intended impact, identify barriers to the desired outcomes, shift resources, or respond to the changing environments or act in anticipation of potential changes.

## **Summary/conclusion**

As a well-established organization, we are not seeking revolutionary change, but a steady stream of improvements that are diligently executed to transform our organization as we enter the next chapter.

This will include small, frequent assessments and adjustments to our activities. WBP is firm in our understanding of what we currently do. Our challenge will be to adapt, measure and grow.

After 34 years, WBP is an expert in what prevents women from overcoming their barriers to employment. Though the world around us has shifted, we have kept up, building an organization with a solid reputation in the community. Since 2003, the Bean Project has operated in a conservative way that has mostly served it well, but that has also limited its growth. The challenge in the next chapter will be to stop operating from a place of fear. Calculated risks are necessary and with the staff team and select experts from the community, the organization will be well-positioned to take risks and ask ourselves “How might we?” As well as getting in the habit of saying, “yes, and...” The key to this strategic plan is to understand that we must be responsive, dynamic, and adaptable as WBP evolves in the upcoming years.

Some things that are certain: Women’s Bean Project has a desire for growth. This includes growing the number of women hired and lives impacted, increasing sales, and offering more services that improve employment prospects for more women. WBP is seeking to expand our audience of women served and deepen and expand relationships with partners in the community. The Bean Project would like to be recognized for its work and utilize that recognition to increase our impact on the women and the larger community through policy and advocacy work.

We believe the implementation of this strategic plan will lead to a positive impact on the broadest audience Women’s Bean Project has ever served.