

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2027



NORWESCAP



ABOUT NORWESCAP

Norwescap is a comprehensive social services and community development organization founded as a nonprofit corporation in 1965 to support the individuals, families and communities of northwest New Jersey.

Norwescap serves as a foundation of support, offering crucial assistance, effective strategies, and necessary resources to help individuals and families overcome economic hurdles so they can thrive. Our tailored portfolio of services is designed to address a wide range of unique challenges faced by NJ residents, offering access to the essentials for a more secure life. The five pillars of Norwescap's critical support include:

- **Building Stronger Families:** through childcare, early childhood education, financial support and other programs;
- **Creating Thriving Communities:** building housing for low-income families, recruiting volunteers, and grants to small businesses;
- **Helping People Become Financially Secure:** matching savings account, employment & career assistance, free tax preparation;
- **Helping People Through Crisis:** homelessness prevention programs, food security, helping families pay utilities;
- **Promoting Health & Wellness:** providing over 80 food pantries with healthy, nutritious food, providing free cancer screenings, running fitness programs for seniors;

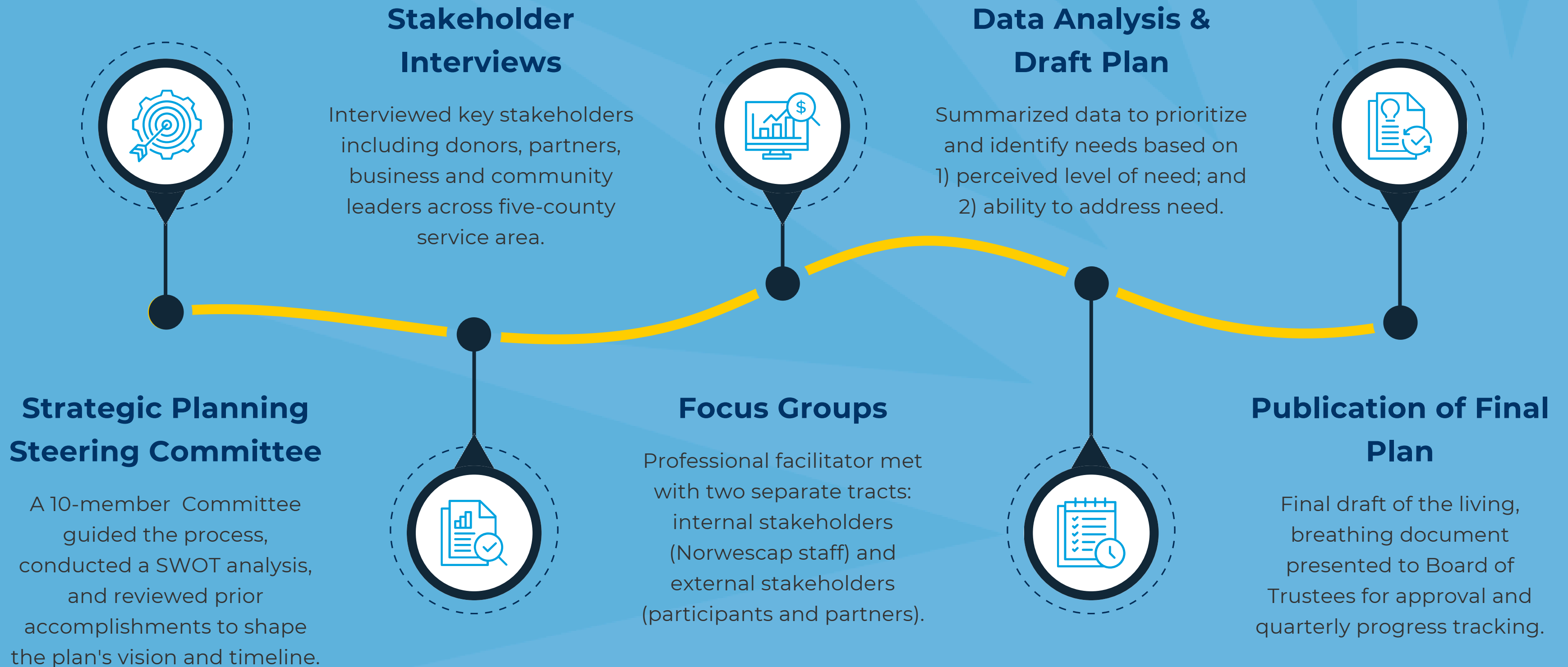
By bridging the gap between surviving and thriving, Norwescap creates pathways for people to build a stronger, more stable future.

Norwescap currently employs over 300 people, annually serving nearly 20,000 people with a budget of just over \$28,000,000.

We are grateful to our Board, staff, program participants, donors, volunteers, and other stakeholders who provided us with input on this plan to help us create opportunities and change lives.



NORWESCAP STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



REFINED MISSION & VISION STATEMENT

Mission:

To partner with individuals and families in creating pathways to achieve their hopes and dreams.

Vision:

Communities where engagement and collaboration lead to empowered lives with opportunity for all.



UPDATED VALUES

Innovative: Norwescap is innovative, creative, and data-driven, focused on forward-thinking, new ideas, and using data to drive decisions.

Community: Norwescap works to foster community by collaborating, and being inclusive to drive a collective approach with a high priority on building bridges and working together.

Caring: Norwescap is caring, compassionate, kind, and supportive, taking an empathetic approach for individuals and families.

Empowering: Norwescap is an empowering partner providing people the tools and pathways they need to succeed. Treating our program participants as partners, with dignity and respect.

Inclusive: Norwescap is inclusive and welcoming to all, operating under the belief that diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging are essential to the health and effectiveness of our organization as well as the people and communities that we serve.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS



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STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

> Deepen the “Norwescap Way”

Perfect a system focused on assessing and meeting multiple needs of individuals with personalized services to move them on the pathway from crisis to thriving.

> Strengthen Outcomes for Children and Families

Strengthen families by providing a portfolio of supports for healthy childhood development that enhances the accessibility and quality of early education programs.

> Improve Food Security and Health Equity

Connect people with critical resources to improve their health, and increase their food security.

> Advance Economic Mobility through Financial Empowerment & Workforce Development

Support individual and family economic independence to build knowledge and wealth.

> Increase Community Infrastructure and Revitalize Communities

Build vibrant and engaged communities' assets through strategic investments in housing, small business, and civic culture.



DEEPEN THE “NORWESCAP WAY”

Perfect a system focused on assessing and meeting multiple needs of individuals with personalized services to move them on the pathway from crisis to thriving.

Increase enrollment in the Engagement Partner (EP) program.

Increase program participation by 25% (approximately 100 cases total) year over year. To achieve this, we will need to increase traffic to website, referrals from programs and community engagement. Additional consideration given to increase the number of Norwescap full-time Engagement Partners.

Define and document the Norwescap Way.

Outline the Engagement Partner (EP) program and elements that define its process. Process defined by ROMA standards: Assessment, Planning, Implementation, Achievement of Results, and Evaluation.

Train new staff in leveraging the Norwescap Way in day-to-day activities.

Modify onboarding training for all new employees to include how to work across programs to maximize support to participants. Follow the EP framework (assess, refer, and follow-up) as outlined in 1B. Consider adding EP responsibilities to Norwescap job descriptions; increasing compensation; and examine automation as a strategy to increase impact.

Foster partnerships with local organizations.

Once the program is well-established, defined and supported by data, we will develop 6 quality, new organizational partnerships to share an expanded resource list and insights, as well as collaborate on best practices to ensure continuous, quality referrals yielding increased services for all.

Package, market, and deliver the program to the public.

Once the program is well-established, defined and its results supported by data, market the program through multiple channels (workshops, newsletter, social media, conferences, etc.) for replication in other Community Action Agencies, and other social service organizations.

STRENGTHEN OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Strengthen families by providing a portfolio of supports for healthy childhood development that enhances the accessibility and quality of early education programs.

Offer accessible, quality early childcare experiences.

Measure success by the number of centers with star ratings and their levels, the number of centers with improved ratings, the number of programs enrolled in the Grow NJ Kids quality rating system, the growth in early education programs (e.g., expansion, wraparound, HS/EHS, family childcare, centers), center capacity, and the number of families receiving vouchers.

Explore the possibility of expanding programs to include youth ages 5-18.

Explore funding and organizational changes that would be required to serve youth ages 5-18, and present recommendations to the Norwescap Board of Trustees by the close of FY27.

Expand senior support programs.

Expand programming and services available to seniors by expanding existing programs.

Expand bilingual supports for families.

Provide trainings, increase bilingual staff, expand supports, and other proactive measures to ensure that all families have access to language supports or services that they are entitled to.

Improve cross-program integration.

Identify areas of commonality in children & family-serving programs to replicate successful strategies, streamline efforts and improve outcomes.

Enroll families in the Engagement Partner program.

Expand number of children/families assigned to an Engagement Partner.

Provide referrals and support to families with children with special needs.

Create systems for cross-collaboration to identify resources for families of children with special needs, offering intensive referral support and case conferencing when necessary.

IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTH EQUITY

Partner on pathways to good health and food security.

Expand nutritious food access and local farmer investment.

Expand partnerships with farmers and invest in agricultural innovation to secure a steady fresh produce supply. Additionally, invest in network partners and enhance Norwescap facilities, infrastructure, and delivery capabilities to improve operations, aligned with the organization's capital investment plan.

Create an integrated network of community food hubs.

Establish community hubs annually that provide healthy food and access to essential wraparound services, while strengthening connections to Norwescap programs through its network of partners.

Build county level coalitions of entities focused on food security.

Strengthen collaboration among systems, emergency food providers, community groups, and stakeholders by assessing collective priorities and addressing barriers.

Reduce chronic disease through deployment of prevention strategies and partnerships.

Build on existing infrastructure to enhance disease prevention, strengthen CFRS and WIC, and focus on early childhood health, unhoused and homeless families, seniors, health screenings, and integration across services.

ADVANCE ECONOMIC MOBILITY THROUGH FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Support individual and family economic independence by building knowledge and wealth.

Develop an integrated and labor-informed curriculum to be delivered in multiple formats.

Develop a modular, integrated curriculum to be used across programming inclusive of technical and professional skills and certifications/credentials, financial empowerment, portfolio building, essential/power skills (formerly “soft skills”), and socioemotional capacity building to equip participants with the skills needed to drive financial independence and economic mobility.

Integrate existing financial empowerment and workforce development programs for consistency and efficiency.

Integrate existing workforce development and financial empowerment programs by end of FY27 to create a seamless and comprehensive program that enhances service delivery, optimizes resources, and provides participants with multiple tools, tactics, and strategies to achieve financial independence and build lasting wealth.

Cultivate intentional and strategic partnerships.

Develop a network of strong, targeted partnerships by end of FY26 with government agencies, employers, educational and training institutions, financial institutions, and community organizations to amplify comprehensive and multi-faceted support, cultivate the creation of industry-specific pathways to careers, and advance individual, family, and community financial health.

INCREASE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES

Build vibrant and engaged communities through strategic investments in housing, commerce, and civic culture.

Develop a self-sustaining housing plan to expand access to affordable housing.

Develop a business plan for building 5-10 housing units annually, addressing research, legal issues, housing requirements, and securing agreements, while presenting municipalities with a resolution that avoids the need for a "builder's remedy."

Complete 371 S. Main Street (Sullivan's) Community Hub.

Create a financially self-sustaining restaurant that supports small food businesses and offers job training, while developing community programs to sustain investment in Phillipsburg's South Main Street corridor.

Develop program to support tenants in existing Norwescap housing.

Enroll current Norwescap tenants in the Engagement Partner program.

Develop strategy to ensure strong investment in Norwescap's two Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit communities.

Work with potential corporate investors to ensure a pipeline of Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) investors.

Plan for a homeless shelter in Hunterdon/Warren/Sussex County.

Develop a business plan to build a homeless shelter in currently underserved counties.

CAPACITY BUILDERS



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CAPACITY BUILDER #1: COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

Expand impact on Norwescap program outcomes by strengthening and expanding network of collaborations and partnerships.



Grow existing relationships.

Meet with current partners to grow relationships and existing partners to explore ways to strengthen or expand current relationships to expand service levels and/or improve outcomes.



Develop new strategic partnerships.

Reach out to potential new partners to expand existing services.



Recognize partnership success.

Recognize partnership success. Develop a system that recognizes and rewards successful agency partnerships.

CAPACITY BUILDER #2:

CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

Transform Norwescap's culture into one where everyone actively contributes and encourages others outside the organization to do the same.



100% Board Engagement

Achieve and sustain 100% Board contribution rate and participation in fundraising events, major/corporate donors 'asks' and campaigns. Set clear expectations for Board giving and involvement in fundraising activities, and regularly review progress. Ensure board participation is engaging and enjoyable.



Encourage staff participation.

Encourage staff giving and participation in fundraising events and campaigns. Create fun and engaging opportunities for Norwescap staff to join fundraising activities and campaigns, encouraging friends and family to participate. Set the expectation that all staff support the organization.



Celebrate fundraising success.

Recognize and celebrate fundraising success. Use communications channels to recognize staff, Board members, and volunteers who support Norwescap and publicly celebrate successes and fundraising opportunities.



Create a planned giving program.

Develop a planned giving program to foster long-term commitment to Norwescap's financial and programmatic success.



Plan for a Capital Campaign.

Use feasibility studies, market research, and community feedback to identify needs and prioritize projects for a capital campaign.

CAPACITY BUILDER #3:

HIGH PERFORMING BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Inspire high-impact Board performance.



Improve Board Orientation process.

Develop an efficient onboarding process for new board members, including a mentorship program, updated orientation manual, and revisions to the Trustee manual. Improve the Board portal, clarify Norwescap financials, update Board member bios on the website, and ensure easy access to key information for informed and effective board discussions and decisions.



Build a diverse pipeline of potential candidates.

Create a process to engage prospective board members, leveraging existing board and staff. Develop a tracking system for board member engagement, including donations, committee participation, and attendance. Establish a framework for identifying and recruiting high-potential trustees, with accountability measures. Create committees or engagement structures to involve nonvoting potential trustees, and revise the Trustee job description to outline expectations for performance, financial support, and event participation.



Ensure efficient, engaging, and strategic meetings.

Revise the board meeting structure to prioritize strategic discussions, time management, and efficient processes. Focus on one key issue per meeting, allocate time wisely, and use written reports to minimize staff presentations. Introduce quarterly reports and close meetings with member feedback. Implement a tool to evaluate board performance, set annual goals based on self-assessments, and address areas for improvement.



Engage counties more strategically.

Engage Board members in strategies around county-based partnerships and collaborations to be more impactful as an organization.

CAPACITY BUILDER #4:

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING CULTURE

Make Norwescap a recognized leader among nonprofits for investing and optimizing data and technology to enhance the delivery of services, measuring programmatic outcomes.



Develop a data-fluent culture.

Empower staff to use data in decision-making by offering regular training on interpreting and analyzing data, using dashboards, and leveraging 3rd party sources. Create a feedback loop for sharing insights across departments to foster collaboration and cross-program understanding.



Establish clear metrics and Key Performance Indicators of program outcomes.

Set clear, ambitious targets based on 2024 reporting that align with the strategic plan, mission, and vision. Track progress monthly, quarterly, and annually, reporting both total outputs and progress toward targets to adjust strategies as needed.



Package/market and deliver to the public.

Document and summarize Norwescap's data-driven approach to showcase as a best-practice model for other nonprofits and CAP agencies to adopt. Communication plans will include case studies, white papers, publicly and privately facing presentations and other marketing strategies.

CAPACITY BUILDER #5:

NORWESCAP AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Norwescap will foster a culture that attracts, supports, retains, and develops a diverse, engaged, and high-performing workforce through comprehensive recruitment, competitive personnel policies, strong training, and professional development programs.



Implement a strong professional development program.

Enhance existing professional development programs to focus on leadership and specialized skills that cultivate and promote internal talent. Expand leadership training, professional development opportunities, and extend the employee orientation process beyond a single day to support ongoing growth.



Develop policies to attract, support, and retain talent.

Leverage ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) data to develop policies and benefits aimed at retaining ALICE employees. Beyond direct compensation, create a comprehensive benefits package to support retention, while adopting policies catering to the ALICE population and establish clear communication and feedback channels.



Institute employee recognition program.

Develop employee recognition program that helps drive excellence/high performance.
Develop a system that recognizes and rewards agency staff for high performance.



Implement a strong DEIB* program.

Implement professional development and training both in cross-cultural supports and bilingual training opportunities to both retain and attract a diverse workforce that is welcoming and supportive.

*Diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging



Institute succession planning for leadership and management positions.

Develop succession plans for leadership/management positions and revisit every three years.

CAPACITY BUILDER #6: STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION

Ensure Norwescap remains in a strong financial position with adequate cash flow and surplus.



Maximize recurring revenue.

Explore different approaches to expand recurring income including maximizing indirect costs, adding earned income streams, aggressive fundraising and generating earning interest on Norwescap funds.



Reduce operational costs.

Implement effective and efficient policies and procedures to reduce operating costs including competitive bidding, joint purchasing, and utilizing technology.



Recognize successful cost-savings measures.

Recognize successful cost-savings measures and develop a system that recognizes and rewards successful cost-savings efforts.



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