

Bay Area Community Council

112 N. Adams St. First Floor, Green Bay, WI 54301

www.bayareacommunitycouncil.org

Origin

In 1989 The Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce adopted a strategic plan in which it expressed a desire to promote the general prosperity and quality of life of the greater Green Bay area. One of the specific directives in that five year plan was to become actively involved in a process to formalize the coordination of various special interest groups in the community and to coordinate an alignment of these interests in the achievement of overall community goals and objectives.

To accomplish that end a task force was created whose members were taken from a wide cross section of the community and were charged with the obligation of preparing a strategy and mission consistent with this long-term goal. The task force recommended the establishment of a community strategic planning council. This recommendation resulted in the creation of Bay Area Community Council (BACC).

The Organization

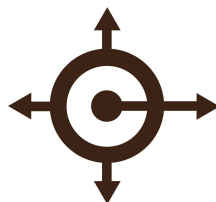
Established in 1990, Bay Area Community Council is a non-profit community organization chartered under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. It is a Brown County citizens' "think tank" made up of volunteers representing business, education, non-profits, and government. Hundreds of individuals and organizations from all parts of the community support the work of the council with annual gifts and grants for special projects. The council is governed by a board of 24 directors representing a cross section of the community. It has a nominating committee formed of board members, officers elected from among the board members, and special committees appointed from time to time from among the board members and community.

Mission Statement

As amended and adopted in 2001 and reconfirmed in 2016:

With awareness of current issues, BACC provides Brown County with insight into future issues of our community through...

- Examination of anticipated community concerns that affect the growth and health of Brown County;
- Analysis of those issues through rigorous discussion and discovery;
- Effective communication of those issues to the community; and
- Engaging the community in the issues.



How We Achieve Our Mission

To ensure identified issues become part of the total vision of the community and lead to active consideration and appropriate action by the community, BACC has identified our long-term ‘Strategic Role’ and the Core to support it as the framework for what we do as an organization:



Strategic Priorities

Be a Thought Leader on Emerging Community Issues

- Use foresight analysis processes to explore key emerging issues—“futuring.”
- Monitor and engage with community partners on key issues.
- Analyze issues through rigorous discussion and discovery.
- Research issues for root cause and recommendations.

Engage the Community

- Research best communications practices at similar community organizations.
- Develop effective communication strategies and systems for incoming and outgoing sharing of information including enhancing and leveraging website and increasing the visibility of BACC’s mission and call for action.
- Publish findings and/or sponsor conferences or other learning opportunities.
- Identify and engage stakeholders through convening dialogue with key stakeholders, developing strategies for action and identifying funding options.
- Be a resource for inquiries and understanding the issues.

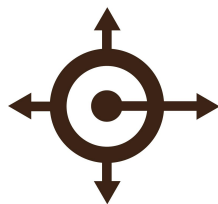
Monitor and Report Progress

- Determine standards to demonstrate commitment to what we start.
- Develop methods for measurement of and accountability for our own effectiveness.
- Produce and share follow up assessments of progress on the issues.

Resource Development to Accomplish BACC Vision

- Determine and assure appropriate funding and administrative support are available to provide organizational continuity and sustainability.
- Engage and leverage an inclusive, diverse volunteer base including a continued role for past board members.
- Engage with other think tank organizations to explore best practices that can enhance BACC.

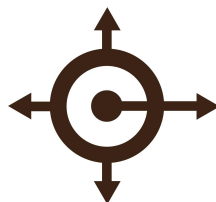
Policies



- The council operates within the greater Green Bay community. This requires an outreach beyond normal, local and traditional geographic boundaries.
- The council facilitates and builds upon the base of information in the community; it gathers, enhances, coordinates and consolidates existing data and plans. Its philosophy is one of constant change and improvement in the data and plans rather than the development of new and different data and plans.
- The council aids the community in prioritizing initiatives based on the community's goals.
- The council embraces the widest possible variety of interests and priorities in the community in order to be able to tap those interests and that knowledge and in order to be able to identify and mobilize the strengths of our community. These strengths consist not only of our physical and financial resources, but more importantly, the people of our community as its greatest resource.
- The council works to achieve as much alignment as possible from our diverse constituency through consensus building.
- The council holds up a mirror to the community, presenting a strong visual representation of our progress towards measurable goals and objectives.
- The council relies on a public conference process to present the vision and promote the exchange of concepts and ideas leading to consensus.
- The council focuses community thinking on future generations and concentrates on positioning the community so that future generations will receive the benefits of our actions today.
- The council does not impose its views on the community. It maintains its position as a helpful partner rather than an approving/disapproving authority.
- The council does not intend to become a fund raiser for identified priorities. The council will not lightly create new action groups or organizations. Rather it will assist and provide in-kind support to existing projects and programs that align with the strategic plans and objectives articulated by the council. Where no existing group is willing to take on a priority issue, the council might provide in-kind assistance to facilitate the start-up of a new organization.
- The selection of specific council board members is based upon individuals and their commitment to the overall community good as opposed to representing various special interest agendas. The council wishes to have board representation across a variety of community demographics such as geography, age, race, size of organization and career selection.

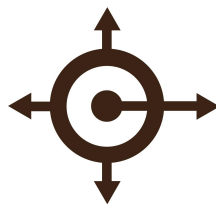
Brief History

- 1989 Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce strategic plan calls for community strategic plan
- 1990 Bay Area Community Council chartered
- 1992 First Partners in Progress conference at UWGB with IBM facilitators
- 1992 Library workshop forums on key issues
- 1993 Work begins on Community Benchmarks Study and Quality of Life Survey with citizen study committees
- 1994 Second Partners in Progress conference at UWGB reviews study committees' work
- 1995 Community Benchmarks and Quality of Life Survey results released at NEW Outlook Symposium co-sponsored by Green Bay Press Gazette and Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce
- 1996 Third Partners in Progress Conference at St. Norbert College International Center focuses on "The New Localism;" 1996 Quality of Life Survey results released
- 1997 Fourth Partners in Progress Conference at UWGB focuses on "Community Sustainability;" 1997 Community Benchmarks Study released incorporating updated quality of life survey data
- 1998 Fifth Partners in Progress Conference at St. Norbert College International Center focuses on "Governing Together;" 1998 Quality of Life survey results released. St. Norbert College agrees to manage the Community Benchmarks Study.



- 1999 1999 Quality of Life survey and Community Benchmarks Study released. Co-sponsored a community visioning process on sustainability in March. Council members are involved with the new Sustainable Green Bay Initiative's project management team and work teams and at first acted as its fiscal agent.
- 2000 An update of the Community Benchmarks Study with enhanced analysis and commentary.
- 2001 A new mission statement, objectives and strategies were adopted.
- 2002 By-laws were amended and updated.
- 2003 A white paper on *Social Capital* was produced after a year of study, containing findings about our community's level of social capital and practical suggestions about what could be done to increase it. Follow-up meetings were held in 2004 with corporations and neighborhood groups interested in implementing these concepts.
- 2004 BACC co-sponsored the "By the People" civic dialog held to bring together a random sample of local citizens to discuss a variety of state and national public policy issues.
- 2005 A white paper on state and local tax policy "*Wisconsin and the Perfect Policy Storm: Why We Need to Find a Better Way of Raising Tax Revenue and Delivering Basic Public Services*" was published after more than a year of research.
- 2007 A white paper entitled "*Poverty in Brown County*" was released in June after an 18 month study. For the first time the Council recommended measurable community responses in 5 key poverty-related areas, and issued progress report in 2009.
- 2008 BACC launched its website www.bayareacommunitycouncil.org and an emailed newsletter, and held a fundraising drive.
- 2009 Culminating a very active 18 month study period the BACC published "*Immigration in Brown County: The Urgency of English Language and Assimilation Training*," released survey results in "*Transportation Needs of Low Income Residents in the Green Bay Metro Area*" and held an August conference with community activists on the local culture of alcohol abuse.
- 2010 Publication of our study "*Alcohol Abuse in Brown County: Changing Our Community Culture of Acceptance*."
- 2011 Participation in the LIFE Study, a comprehensive look at the quality of life in Brown County and the region through opinion surveys, focus groups, expert panels and examination of relevant statistical indicators. For reports see <http://lifestudy.info>
- 2012 *Brown County 20/20: Envisioning the Future*, a community visioning summit similar to the one we sponsored in 1992, held February 17-18 2012. A report to the community about the conference can be found on the BACC website.
- 2013 Initiated five community study groups (Education, Overcoming Divisions [later called Connecting Our Community], Economic Development, Personal and Community Health, and Self Sufficiency) to follow up on the *Brown County 20/20* conference report to the community.
- 2014 Publication of "*County Half Percent Sales Tax – FAQ's*" to promote an informed discussion among county residents and their elected representatives around the issue of a potential Brown County Sales Tax to succeed the Stadium Sales Tax when it expires.
- 2015 Publication of "*Poverty in Brown County*" updating the 2007 and 2009 studies. Connecting Our Community From Many Directions used appreciative inquiry to hold community meetings which created Brown County Dreams for 2020.
- 2016 Publication of "*Journey to a Greater Green Bay*" on community economic development. Strategic plan updated and new action teams formed to learn from other community think tanks and develop "futuring" techniques. A newly updated LIFE Study was researched and published by partners in the community.
- 2017 BACC hosted *Greater Green Bay 2017: Envisioning the Future* on September 29-30. 200 participants heard from community experts and discussed six key issues raised by the LIFE Study.

Data Collection and Sharing



The Community Benchmarks and Quality of Life Survey, in addition to the Partners in Progress conferences and publication of white papers, were the main tools used by BACC to achieve its goals. The Benchmarks Study begun in 1993 was a collection of key indicators monitored for BACC on an annual basis by the St. Norbert College Local Government Forum. The Quality of Life Survey, begun in 1995, was a public opinion survey conducted annually by St. Norbert College Survey Center, and sponsored by BACC along with several other community groups. Some of the survey results had been used as components of the Benchmarks Study. In 2009 BACC joined with Community Foundations, United Ways and Chambers of Commerce from throughout the region to conduct and publish a regional community benchmarks study, the **2011 LIFE Study**. An updated, Brown County only **2016 LIFE Study** was issued in 2017, with BACC participation, but mainly conducted by the Greater Green Bay Chamber, Greater Green Bay Community Foundation and Brown County United Way.

Our Role

During BACC's first decade of existence a series of issues, in succession, occupied the attention of the community and BACC: education, diversity, devolution (the new localism) and sustainability. New organizations and processes formed in the community around each of these issues, often with the help of BACC. These included the (then-called) Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners in Education program, the Committee to Promote Respect, the Multicultural Center, Sustainable Green Bay Inc. and others. The level of cordial intergovernmental cooperation and the pro-activeness of local governments fluctuated significantly this and recent decades.

In 2001 the BACC board undertook a self-examination that resulted in a move from a "strategic planning" mission to a "think tank" mission and called for a new organizational vision that would be far-reaching and multi-faceted. The new role was articulated as the continuing study of critical issues of future importance, and bringing these issues to the attention of citizens and leaders alike in our community. Between 2000 and 2010, projects on social capital, tax base sharing, poverty, immigration, mass transit and alcohol abuse produced six important white papers that were widely discussed in the community.

BACC began its third decade by partnering with key community organizations on the 2011 LIFE Study, and then led the *Brown County 20/20* visioning conference, which convened a wide range of community leaders to take the LIFE Study and translate it into a vision for Brown County in the year 2020. The resulting *Report to the Community* outlined that vision around five topics: Education, Overcoming Divisions, Economic Development, Personal and Community Health, and Self Sufficiency. From that report, BACC launched five corresponding new issue groups, which produced their own reports and conferences, helped spur the growth of new community groups like Achieve Brown County and LIVE54218 and helped redirect the attention of philanthropists to fund more collaborative approaches to these issues. The 2016 LIFE Study update and community summit results, our new commitment to the use of foresight analysis ("futuring") tools and processes to improve community issue identification, and our adoption of a package of new communication techniques are expected to help BACC reach its 30th anniversary in 2020 as an ever more valuable vehicle for community self-examination and improvement.

Revised February 21, 2018

