

Bridges to Tomorrow: Building Community Partnerships for Sustainable Support



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INTRODUCTION

Project Purpose

Bridges to Tomorrow was an outreach project designed to build lasting, supportive partnerships between the Long Beach Rescue Mission (LBRM) and local businesses, markets, and vendors. The purpose of this project was to enhance the Mission's capacity to provide vital resources, such as food, hygiene products, medicine, and clothing, for transitional-age youth (TAY) and families experiencing homelessness.

Description

Bridges to Tomorrow involved creating a structured outreach effort to connect LBRM with local businesses and vendors who could donate goods and services that directly benefit those experiencing homelessness. Key tools developed for this initiative included a fillable outreach script, informational flyers, and a curated contact list of businesses. These tools facilitated effective communication and relationship-building with potential donors. In total, over 20 businesses were contacted, leading to partnerships with two farmers' markets and a local grocery store. Additionally, the project aided in LBRM's application for grants from the Walmart Foundation and Spark Good.

Scope of Social Problem & Focus Population

Youth and families experiencing homelessness in Long Beach's 90813-zip-code faced consistent barriers to accessing basic necessities such as food, hygiene products, clothing, and medicine. Transitional Age Youth (TAY) were particularly impacted due to limited awareness of available services and a lack of structured partnerships to distribute these resources more effectively. The community assessment highlighted the need to improve outreach and strengthen collaborations between service providers and local businesses to better support this vulnerable population.

Key Findings

- Several community members interviewed in the 90813-zip-code expressed that they were unaware of where to access essential services, highlighting a need for more visibility and outreach.
- Community members emphasized the importance of youth-focused services and expressed concern that existing efforts were not reaching young people directly
- Stakeholders identified the importance of consistent access to basic necessities as a way to promote dignity and stability.

Secondary Data

- In 2024, 3,376 individuals were experiencing homelessness in Long Beach, including nearly 200 youth (Los Angeles Almanac, 2025).
- Statewide, over 200,000 youth in California reported experiencing homelessness each year (Coalition for Youth, 2020).
- The 90813-zip-code experienced high rates of poverty and displacement, contributing to increased challenges for among youth and families (City of Long Beach, 2024 Community Needs Assessment)

Focus Population: TAY 18-24 years old and their families

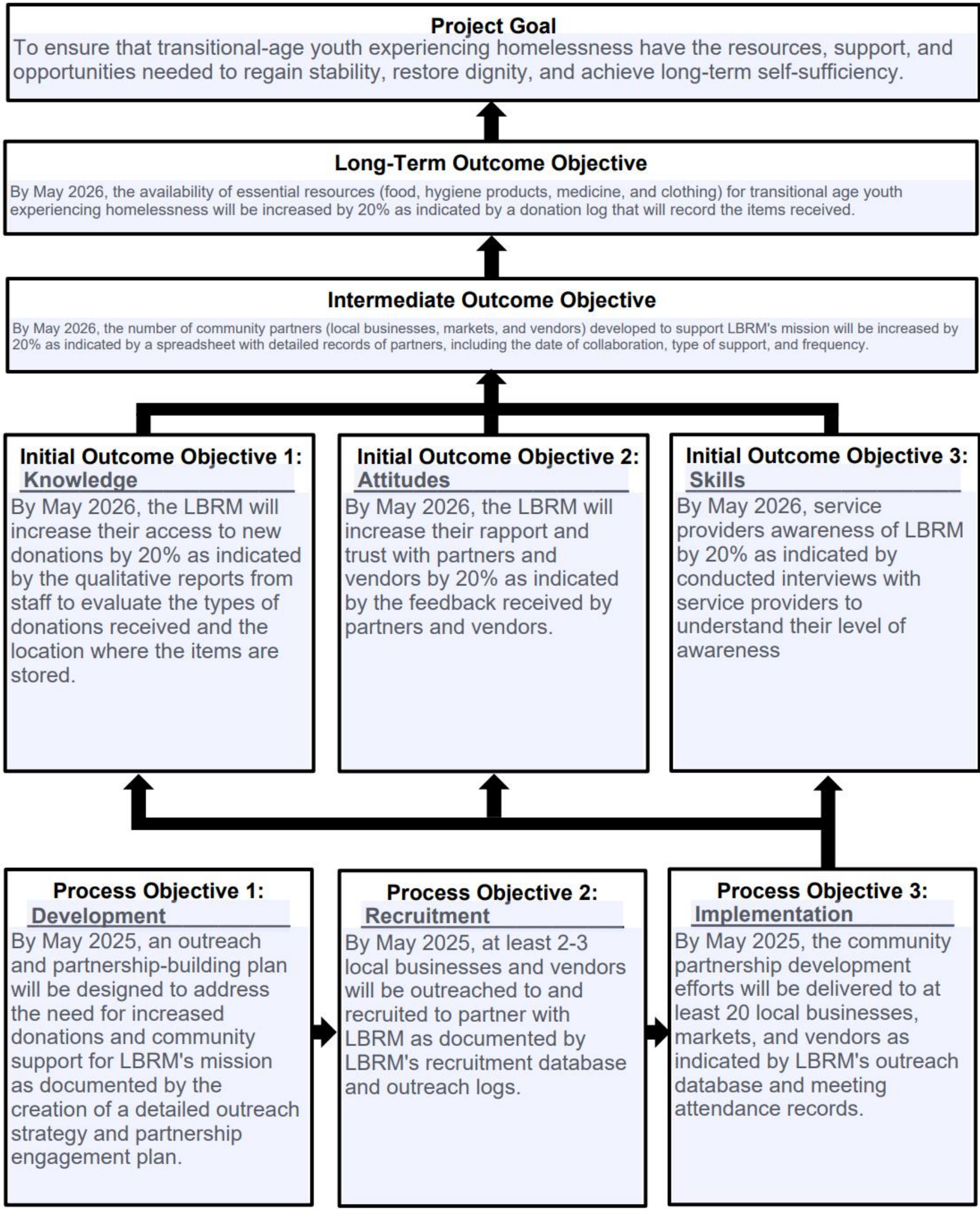
Alignment to Specialization

Strengthened community support systems that addressed the basic needs of vulnerable youth and families, promoting stability and holistic well-being. It fostered sustainable partnerships that enhance access to essential resources, directly supporting the well-being and resilience of these populations.

METHODS

An outreach script was created to guide communication with local businesses, markets, and vendors. Before implementation, the script was reviewed by Jesse Lueb to ensure accuracy and alignment with organizational messaging. A detailed contact list was compiled, including the names of local businesses, markets, and vendors along with their phone numbers, emails, and addresses. This list also served as a tracking tool to document outreach progress. Businesses were contacted through a combination of phone calls, emails, and in-person visits to initiate conversations and explore potential partnerships.

PROJECT OVERVIEW, OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES



RESULTS

The project successfully secured new opportunities for LBRM, including two local farmers' markets in the Long Beach area agreeing to support outreach efforts by allow LBRM to host informational booths at their markets and one local grocery store that expressed interest in a formal partnership.

Additionally, this project contributed to LBRM's efforts to secure future donations through grant applications with Walmart Foundation and Spark Good. Grant applications were been submitted, but I likely would not find out if they were accepted until after the project ended.

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)

Long Beach Rescue Mission

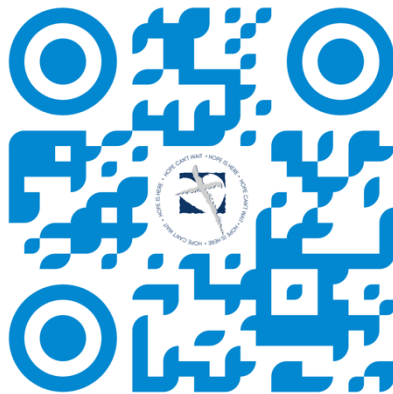
Long Beach Rescue Mission is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness in Long Beach. Their focus is on helping people regain their independence and dignity by providing shelter, food, clothing, hygiene products, and more to those they serve. LBRM mission is to give people the support they need to get back on their feet and rebuild their lives



Name of Collaborator	Contributions
Jesse Lueb <i>Volunteer Program Coordinator</i> 1430 Pacific Ave, Long Beach CA 90813 Jessel@lbrm.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provided support, guidance, and feedback on the project▪ Oversaw the project plan prior to implementation▪ Provided a list of items that LBRM was in need of

RESOURCES

Scan QR Code to see all references and outreach efforts.



CONCLUSION

Analysis of Findings

The project's success was evaluated based on the effectiveness of outreach efforts and the creation of new partnerships. Over 20 local businesses and vendors were contacted using personalized outreach methods, such as phone calls, emails, and in-person visits. While not all outreach efforts led to immediate partnerships, two farmers' markets agreed to host informational booths for LBRM, and one grocery store expressed interest in forming a partnership. Additionally, Bridges to Tomorrow assisted in LBRM's engagement with the Walmart Foundation and Spark Good to explore future donation opportunities through a grant program offered by both. The tools developed — including the outreach script and contact list — proved to be valuable assets for LBRM. Personalized outreach, particularly in-person interactions, was the most successful strategy. The project highlighted the importance of clear, professional materials, which will help sustain future outreach efforts. Overall, the outreach intervention laid a strong foundation for future growth in community partnerships and created tools that can be reused and adapted moving forward.

Limitations & Improvements

One challenge during the project was the use of the term “partnerships.” LBRM does not engage in traditional business partnerships, and instead preferred more informal, supportive relationships with local donors. This distinction needed to be clearly communicated when conducting outreach, which caused some delays. Additionally, official approval for any formal agreements had to come from someone in a higher position than my community partner, Jesse Lueb, which further extended the timeline in some cases. Another limitation was that LBRM does not currently have a dedicated space for transitional-age youth. However, they are actively working toward developing one, which may be launched during the summer. While I won't be able to observe the long-term impact of this project firsthand, the tools and outreach strategies developed here created an opportunity for the agency to refine and adapt them in ways that align with their future plans.

Recommendations

As part of the next steps, I provided LBRM with a list of businesses, markets, and vendors I was unable to reach, including their contact details, as well as provided a fill-in script for them and their volunteers to follow when they do future outreach. This left the agency with the tools needed to ensure that the agency would be well-equipped to continue its work and further its mission of supporting those they serve, including transitional-age youth.

Implications

The outcomes of this project highlighted the value of relationship-based outreach in building long-term, sustainable connections with local businesses. The tools created — including the fillable outreach script and curated contact list — can continue to support LBRM's mission by enabling future outreach efforts. These materials provide a clear, replicable strategy that goes beyond one-time donations, helping the organization foster ongoing relationships with community partners. By using this approach, LBRM can develop a reliable stream of support tailored to the needs of both the agency and the individuals it serves, especially transitional-age youth. This framework strengthens the agency's ability to serve vulnerable populations and provides a foundation for growth in community engagement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the Long Beach Rescue Mission and Jesse Lueb for giving me the opportunity and privilege to partner with them and create this project. I would like to give a big thank you to Rashida Crutchfield who stood by me every step of the way and helped me figure out the direction of this project and for creating this unique opportunity – and to Jalpa Patel, thank you for sticking by me and being a huge support to me on my journey. Thank you for not letting me give up and pushing me forward. To everyone that stood by me as I worked on this project and saw the smiles and the tears and told me “You're almost there, don't give up. You can sleep when you're done” – Thank you. You all are the reason this project is here.

Your belief and support is what pushed me to achieve the success of the project.