



2022 - 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission Statement

Operation Food Search heals hunger with innovative and collaborative solutions that provide food today and help create a hunger-free tomorrow.

Vision Statement

Operation Food Search envisions a region where everyone has equitable access to the food they need to lead healthy lives

Core Values

We believe food is a basic human right, and all people should have access to the food they need to live healthy lives. We are committed to solving the problem of hunger while strengthening individuals and communities. Therefore, we practice these values within our organization and with our partners, supporters and all those in the communities we serve:

Equity: We strive to address disparities to ensure that everyone has equitable access to sufficient, nutritious food.

Innovation: We are committed to enacting bold solutions through courageous leadership and continuous organizational improvement.

Collaboration: We empower each other by working in partnership with individuals and organizations in our community.

Respect: We recognize the inherent worth of every person and treat all with compassion.

Integrity: We deliver on our commitments and hold ourselves accountable for our words, decisions and actions.

Strategic Planning Executive Summary

In fall of 2021, Operation Food Search (OFS) embarked upon a strategic planning process that engaged select members of the OFS Board and staff. They met periodically to discuss nine strategic initiatives, specific goals and action steps that would guide the organization over the next several years.

From these discussions, a strategic plan was drafted and presented to the staff and board. It was approved at the board meeting held on March 21, 2022. The plan will go into effect with regular reviews of progress toward objectives and with renewed, altered or additional objectives put into place so that OFS will continue the path outlined in this document. OFS is in a strong financial position. As we implement the plan, we will carefully evaluate each action to ensure we maintain our financial strength and stability.

Plan Description

The plan is a documentation of the thoughts and ideas that were determined in the strategic planning meetings and sets out the strategic initiatives and action steps to be pursued. It is organized into nine overarching strategies. Each strategy is structured into specific actions that will be led by specific committees or individuals. Some actions will begin immediately, while others will begin later. It is a living document that is subject to change over time based on what is in the best interest of OFS. The focus was on a three-year plan. It is a guideline only and should be treated in this manner. The plan sets out suggested timing for beginning each action step. The timing is quarterly on a calendar year. This does not mean the task will be accomplished at the end of the period, just begun. Finally, the plan sets out the party or parties responsible for making sure each action is accomplished.

Strategic Initiatives



PROGRAMS

Engage the community and collaborate to ensure we meet the immediate need of those who are food insecure while also developing innovative and systemic solutions to increase food access.



FACILITIES

Optimize our facilities to meet the needs of our programs, staff, volunteers and the community.



DEI

Build a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace and extend our support for DEI into the community.



STAFFING

Bolster our internal culture and improve policies to attract and retain a highly qualified, passionate staff.



PARTNERSHIPS

Develop strategic partnerships and deepen relationships with existing partners to strengthen those organizations while collaborating on solutions to end hunger.



ADVOCACY

Influence impactful policy changes at the state and federal levels through data-driven advocacy and an engaged community.



BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Engage an active and self-perpetuating board to collaborate on bold, creative solutions to ending hunger.



MARKETING

Broaden awareness of OFS's work and inspire others to help create a hunger-free tomorrow.



FUNDRAISING

Diversify and broaden funding for OFS so our work is sustainable, and we are empowered to realize our vision.



Strategic Initiative: Programs

Engage the community and collaborate to ensure we meet the immediate need of those who are food insecure while also developing innovative and systemic solutions to end hunger.

Goal One: Ensure strong community presence through programs

Action One:

Discovery: Ask the community what they need. Eliminate bias and listen broadly to the community at large. Create ongoing opportunities for input from the community.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Director of Communications/COO/CIO

Action Two:

Prioritization: Determine expansion priorities considering both need and OFS resources.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team

Action Three:

Analysis: Determine who is the optimal provider of additional/expansion services if needed - OFS or a partner. If partner, determine OFS's role and participate in execution as needed.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: COO/CIO

Action Four:

Assessment: Ensure we have strong, effective, and equitable programs that are duplicatable where additional need exists for OFS programs, and we have the systems in place to expand. Understand how to get from inception to scale and optimal size for new/existing programs.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022

Responsibility: COO/CIO

Action Five:

Execution/Evaluation: Ensure new programming/expansion is rigorously executed and then analyzed in our new evaluation system. When possible, create a template others can use.

Timing: Ongoing

Responsibility: COO/CIO

Goal Two: Advance OFS's leadership position in our region

Action One:

Create a committee comprised of staff members to work on convening community partners to discuss the optimal ways to create a system that will lead to nutrition security in our region.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2023

Responsibility: CEO

Action Two:

Determine goals for the convening which might include:

1. Sharing analysis of statewide and regional data
2. Elevating voices of all organizations
3. Creating innovative partnerships
4. Reducing redundancy in the system
5. Eliminating bias and understanding better who is being served
6. Identifying gaps in service and possible solutions

Timing: First Quarter 2024

Responsibility: Committee (to be formed)

Action Three:

Determine format, agenda, location, invitation, and a schedule for first meeting.

Timing: First Quarter 2024

Responsibility: Committee (to be formed)

Action Four:

Evaluate meeting and determine next steps including formulation of on-going strategic partnerships.

Timing: Second Quarter 2024

Responsibility: Committee (to be formed)

Goal Three: Create and implement a comprehensive evaluation system for OFS

Action One:

Explore industry standards and determine ideal goals as they apply to each program (new and existing) and to the organization. Focus on results—is anyone better off? Review impact versus output, with an emphasis on quality.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: COO

Action Two:

Research existing evaluation systems to determine best fit for OFS.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022

Responsibility: COO

Action Three:

Determine best system and associated costs and timing of acquisition and implementation.

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO

Action Four:

Determine staffing needs and flow of information within the organization.

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO

Action Five:

Determine training needs and implement new system.

Timing: Second Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO

Action Six:

Determine ongoing schedule for individual program evaluations.

Timing: Second Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO

Action Seven:

Annually review effectiveness of the system.

Timing: Annually

Responsibility: COO

Goal Four: Optimize our delivery system

Action One:

Question the current model, explore the optimal way to get food into the homes of those in need, and conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the current and other potential models. Explore the following:

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO/Manager of Agency Relations

1. Where are the clients located?
2. Where is the food located?
3. Are food pantries still the best delivery system?
4. Would a hub system be viable?
5. Can we distribute food resources via MetroMarket or other means in highly accessible locations?

Examples to consider:

- a. Metro system b. Churches c. Hospitals
-

Action Two:

Explore and evaluate last mile solutions. Look at the following:

Timing: Second Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO/Manager of Agency Relations

1. Once we provide food at highly accessible areas, how do our clients get home?
 2. How much can they carry?
 3. How have current conditions and technological advancements changed the landscape?
 4. Who are some ideal partners for this project?
-

Action Three:

Determine most viable delivery system for OFS.

Timing: Third Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO/Manager of Agency Relations

Action Four:

Determine cost and timing for moving to a new delivery system. Determine partnership opportunities/work with current agency partners.

Timing: Third Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO/Manager of Agency Relations

Action Five:

Create and execute new plan.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2023

Responsibility: Manager of Agency Relations

Goal Five: Establish effective client management model (program layering)

Action One:

Determine ways to ensure our clients are made aware of all services/resources we offer and how to access those they need.

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: Director of Communications

Goal Six: Further diversify food donors

Action One:

Create and implement a plan to increase our number of food donors.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Procurement Manager

Goal Seven: Optimize technology

Action One:

Continue to explore and assess optimal technology to address our long-term needs. Consider staffing, timing and costs. Specific areas of concern include:

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: COO/CIO

1. Inventory needs
2. HIPAA compliance
3. Program data/outcomes
4. Grant tracking



Strategic Initiative: Facilities

Maximize our facilities to meet the needs of our programs, staff, volunteers and the community.

Action One:

Determine our interest in becoming a community hub.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team

1. Determine where gaps in the community exist.
 2. Research models.
 3. Analyze the role OFS can play.
 4. Determine our optimal approach.
 5. Analyze costs and funding options.
 6. Determine additional required permits.
-

Action Two:

Determine needs for 1660 Lotsie. Needs to consider include:

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team

1. Office space needs to be expanded for additional personnel
 2. Additional meeting space
 3. More cold storage space
 4. Volunteer space needs to be reclaimed or relocated.
 5. Prep kitchen
 6. Directly serving the community in our space (see Action Step One above)
-

Action Three:

Hire a master space planner/architect.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Facilities Manager

Action Four:

Create a short-term and long-term master plan.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Master space planner

Action Five:

Determine costs and timing for executing plans.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team



Strategic Initiative: DEI

Foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace and community.

Action One:

Create a DEI statement for OFS.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: DEI Committee

Action Two:

Continue to explore ways to improve and enhance our DEI efforts by developing a multi-year intentional plan that is a framework for moving our culture forward. Things to consider in the plan include:

1. How to continue to implement and expand the Embrace Program
 - a. We each have a role to play in creating our culture.
 2. Mandatory versus voluntary training
 3. Identify internal and external resources.
 4. Determine consulting needs.
 5. Determine additional staffing needs.
 6. Opportunities for partnerships
 7. Costs
 8. Grant opportunities
-

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: HR and DEI Manager

Action Three:

Enhance our efforts to diversify our volunteer corps. Ideas to consider include the following:

1. Enhance awareness of opportunities through outreach to churches, black sororities and fraternities, etc.
2. Intentional diverse recruitment efforts
3. Provide opportunities outside typical work hours (weekends and evenings).

Timing: Second Quarter 2022 and ongoing

Responsibility: Volunteer and Food Drive Manager



Strategic Initiative: Staffing

Continue to improve our internal culture and policies to attract and retain a highly qualified, passionate staff.

Action One:

Determine right size of organization. Create optimal organizational charts for today and the future. Prioritize additional hiring and consider costs involved. Ideas include additional personnel for data analytics, DEI, and program expansion.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team

Action Two:

Create and execute multi-year hiring plan.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: HR and DEI Manager

Action Three:

Expand leadership development. Create individual plans for each leader and set up schedule within a viable budget.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: HR and DEI Manager

Action Four:

Determine needs of the employees. How do we ensure they have the wages, benefits within a culture that will allow them to thrive? What motivates them to stay and perform at a high level? Things to consider include:

1. Mission
2. Culture
3. Flex time
4. Pay
5. PTO
6. Equitable treatment
7. Health care benefits
8. Clear goals and responsibilities
9. Clear job descriptions
10. Other

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: HR and DEI Manager

Action Five:

Designate funds to create a plan that serves the needs of our individual staff members.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team

Action Six:

Execute plan and periodically review its effectiveness. Ensure we reduce unwanted turnover and burnout.

Timing: Ongoing

Responsibility: HR and DEI Manager

Action Seven:

Continue our efforts to diversify our staff. Things to consider include:

1. Expansion of our recruitment into more diverse communities
2. Training for managers to help eliminate unconscious hiring bias
3. Ensure there is a fair final look before providing any candidate with an offer.
4. Offer paid internships at various educational levels (high school and above) to broaden awareness of career opportunities.
5. Offer scholarships/jobs to diverse candidates during their unpaid internships.
6. Staff training for individuals transitioning from one career to another

Timing: Second Quarter 2022 and ongoing

Responsibility: HR and DEI Manager

Action Eight:

Create succession plan for C-suite positions.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Board Chair/CEO



Strategic Initiative: Partnerships

Develop strategic partnerships and deepen relationships with existing partners to strengthen those organizations while collaborating on solutions to end hunger.

Action One:

Continue to identify strategic partnerships by understanding our strengths and where gaps exist in fulfilling our mission. Use data to help in this analysis. Determine an on-going target list of ideal partners and timing and strategy for approach.

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team

Action Two:

Determine strategies for increasing equity partners that includes small and larger partnerships.

Timing : First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: Senior Leadership Team



Strategic Initiative: Advocacy

Influence impactful policy changes at the state and federal levels through data-driven advocacy and an engaged community.

Action One:

Determine need and purpose of an advocacy committee comprised of community food advocates and partner organizations engaged in policy work. This committee would assist in planning and implementing OFS's long-term policy priorities.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Manager of Public Policy

Action Two:

Determine staffing needs and develop expansion plan for policy work. Ideas to consider include:

1. Need for a government affairs staff member
2. Expansion of policy research
3. Engage in regional-level advocacy.
4. Working on both sides of the aisle

Timing: Second Quarter 2022 and ongoing

Responsibility: Senior Manager of Public Policy

Action Three:

Create evaluation system to track and report on the impact of our advocacy efforts.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Manager of Public Policy



Strategic Initiative: Board Development

Engage an active and self-perpetuating board to collaborate on bold, creative solutions to ending hunger.

Action One:

Review board committee structure. Determine which additional (if any) committees are needed (i.e., marketing, governance and advocacy). Determine committee purpose, composition (board members vs non-board members) and meeting schedule. Review and set goals for each committee annually.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Board Chair/CEO

Action Two:

Create and execute multi-year hiring plan.

Timing: Annually

Responsibility: Governance Committee/CEO

Action Three:

Review and revise board grid on a periodic basis to make it a useful document for the recruiting process.

Timing: As needed

Responsibility: Governance Committee/CEO

Action Four:

Review and revise the give/get policy to ensure it is inclusive.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Board Development Committee

Action Five:

Continue to find ways for staff and board to interact. In addition, clearly communicate to staff the purpose of the board and the work they are doing.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Board Chair/CEO

Action Six:

Create a more robust finance committee which meets quarterly and focuses on improving the financial planning methods to ensure an agile response to varying funding levels as they occur during the fiscal year. Ensure a structured and timely allocation of any available funds in excess/deficit of planned budget to/from programs/services/accounts while seeking to balance the financial strength of the organization with providing the maximum possible service between the annual fiscal planning time horizons.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Finance Committee/CEO

Action Seven:

Provide further clarity to the board on proper funding levels of key strategic reserve accounts:

1. Determine the correct level of funding for the endowment in alignment with benchmarking of other not-for-profit organizations of similar size
2. Determine the correct level of funding for organization's financial reserve accounts in alignment with benchmarking of other not-for-profit organizations of similar size

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Finance Committee/CEO



Strategic Initiative: Marketing

Broaden awareness of OFS's work and inspire others to help end hunger.

Action One:

Enhance our efforts to educate our community about OFS, food security and ways to look beyond meeting only the immediate needs. Work with our corporate partners/donors.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Board Chair/CEO

Action Two:

Use technology to create more targeted marketing efforts and messages to different market segments.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Director of Communications

Action Three:

Educate board and all staff on our annual marketing plan and the role they can play in marketing in OFS.

Timing: First Quarter 2023 and annually

Responsibility: Director of Communications

Action Four:

Examine ways to further awareness of the diversity of our programs.

Timing: First Quarter 2023

Responsibility: Director of Communications

Action Five:

Use mission and vision in marketing efforts to continue to distinguish ourselves from other providers.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Director of Communications

Action Six:

Continue to take advantage of opportunities to broaden awareness of OFS through publicizing our advocacy efforts and positive outcomes.

Timing: Second Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Senior Manager of Public Policy

Action Seven:

Institutionalize use of an annual survey to staff to determine effectiveness of our internal communications (can be part of a broader survey.) Use the survey results to look for ways to increase and improve our transparency and connectivity. Continue to use a variety of vehicles to communicate to ensure we reach all segments of our staff.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022 and annually
Responsibility: Director of Communications

Action Eight:

Determine need and purpose of a marketing committee comprised of board, relevant staff, and outside participants. The marketing committee would help to raise awareness of OFS and its programming and advocacy efforts.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022
Responsibility: Director of Communications



Strategic Initiative: Fundraising

Engage an active and self-perpetuating board to collaborate on bold, creative solutions to ending hunger.

Action One:

Create an ad-hoc committee to assist in structuring and marketing a planned giving program. Program would focus on continuing to build the endowment through legacy gifts.

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Chief Development Officer

Action Two:

Create a more targeted strategy on the diversification of our donors. Ideas to consider include:

1. Diversity efforts being made in both staff and board composition can be leveraged into greater donor diversity.
2. Opportunities that engage a more diverse age group
 - a. Expand OFS Friends Board.
3. Efforts to engage disabled population
4. Highlight atypical donors and what their contribution looks like.
5. The impact of smaller donations
6. Diversity in ways to give

Timing: Third Quarter 2022

Responsibility: Chief Development Officer

Action Three:

Continue to make strategic decisions that look at entire organizational impact of grant opportunities including workload, reporting and technology needs.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022 and ongoing

Responsibility: Chief Development Officer

Action Four:

Continue to strategically develop corporate relationships. Periodically update board on corporate relationships to identify where gaps exist and provide warm introductions. Possibly use Healing Hunger modules to better inform corporations and their staff about the need and how to help and use volunteer opportunities to engage corporate employees with our mission.

Timing: Fourth Quarter 2022 and ongoing

Responsibility: Chief Development Officer