



MCLENNAN COUNTY

ACTIVE LIVING AND HEALTHY EATING PLAN

For a Healthy Lifestyle - Waco, McLennan County, Texas

A Project of the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District, Live Well Waco, and Prosper Waco



PROMOTE • PREVENT • PROTECT



WACO-MCLENNAN COUNTY
Public Health District

Texas Healthy Communities



healthy places to live, work and play



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Executive Summary

The McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan is a living document focused on a comprehensive set of programs and initiatives that target improving the overall health of the community through physical activity and a nutritious diet.

The Waco-McLennan County Public Health District (Health District) functions as a liaison between both federal and state health organizations and the community of McLennan County. The Health District identifies with the strategies and framework set by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and accommodates those standards to fit our community needs.

The Health District provides leadership for the Live Well Waco Coalition. Founded over six years ago, Live Well Waco's mission is to improve the health and well-being of McLennan County residents through collaborative community action, education, and prevention. The collaborative efforts among community businesses, organizations, and individuals dedicated to the health of McLennan County residents are vital to achieving the overarching goal of reducing health disparities in the area.

Live Well Waco is part of a Collective Impact Model known as Prosper Waco whose mission is to improve three areas of health issues affecting the community: financial security, education and health. In response to alarming health outcomes reported in the 2013 McLennan County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), four groups were formed under the Health Initiative to target specific health areas of opportunity: women's health, mental health, access to care, and obesity. In line with the Collective Impact Model and to further create accessible opportunities that support physical activity and nutritious foods, the obesity group and Live Well Waco joined forces in 2014.

The Health District strives to provide health promotion efforts that impact the health of county residents. Its staff promotes adopting healthier lifestyles by participating in health presentations, leading coalition efforts, and fostering collaborative partnerships to enhance health promotion activities.

Through creative innovation and collaboration, the mission of the organization is to continuously improve the health and well-being of the citizens and environment of the county. A healthy community is one in which its residents enjoy a high quality of life, are physically active, and have a healthy diet.

This document provides recommendations that will enable the community members of McLennan County to adopt and enjoy a healthier lifestyle.

The recommendations in the plan are presented by the following societal sectors:

- Business and Industry
- Education, After School, and Early Childhood Programs
- Faith Based
- Healthcare
- Mass Media
- Parks and Recreations, Fitness, and Sports
- Public Health
- Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design
- Volunteer and Non-Profit

Each sector offers goals aimed at promoting and offering opportunities for improved quality of life. These sectors provide a framework in which organizations, agencies, and individuals can use to reach the goals.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Table of Contents.....	3
Introduction	4
Sector Strategies, Tactics, and Outcome Measures	7
Business and Industry.....	7
Education, After School, and Early Childhood	8
Faith Based	9
Healthcare	10
Mass Media	11
Parks and Recreation, Fitness, and Sports	12
Public Health	13
Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design	14
Volunteer and Non-Profit.....	15
Conclusion	16
Team Members.....	17
References.....	20

Introduction

This McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan was funded through a grant by the Texas Healthy Communities Program at the Texas Department of State Health Services, with the goal to design and implement changes in the community and adopt priority public health practices to reduce risk factors for chronic diseases.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan is designed to target health conditions related to healthy eating and physical activity. The goal of the Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan is to improve the overall quality of life in the community by increasing access to affordable healthy foods and promoting physical activity.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN?

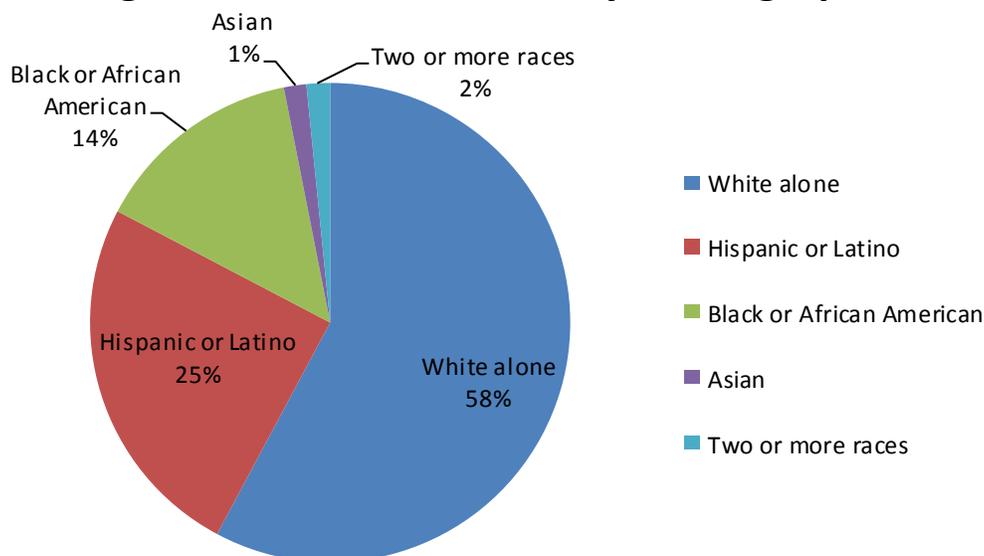
The purpose of this strategic plan is to address the needs of McLennan County as identified in the 2013 and 2016 Community Health Needs Assessments. The plan has been formulated according to the recommended interventions of the National Active Living Plan and focuses on the sectors that promote community participation in physical activity along with encouragement of healthier nutritional options.

This plan prioritizes strategies that have been developed by community partners. It is designed to benefit local institutions and organizations from all sectors of McLennan County in developing and promoting policies, programs, as well as creating systems and environmental changes that support active living. The vision is to use this plan to guide decisions about policy, resource allocation, program development, and advocacy. Every member of the community plays a role in the implementation of this plan.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIENCES

The Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan is targeted toward the McLennan County community as a whole. We hope to create the healthiest county in Texas where all people can live, play, work, and thrive. According to the US Census Bureau, McLennan County has a total of 241,505 residents. The chart on page 5 demonstrates the demographics of the county.

Figure 1: McLennan County Demographics



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

WHAT ARE THE MAIN AREAS OF FOCUS?

The main areas of focus are non-communicable disease, nutrition, and physical activity. Specifically, we wish to maximize prevention of non-communicable diseases, support policies that improve nutrition within school and work environments, and promote opportunities for increased physical activity for all ages. According to the 2016 McLennan County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), 43% of the total adult survey respondents were considered obese, an increase from 2013 of nearly 39% while the percentage of overweight respondents decreased from 31% in 2013 to 27% in 2016. While the 2016 report did not include data on children, the 2013 survey reported that approximately 25% of children 18 years and younger in McLennan County were at risk for obesity. Statewide, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that about 35% of Texas adults are overweight and almost 31% are obese. Just as adult overweight and obesity rates are higher in McLennan County in comparison to statewide data, so are the findings for children; about 14% of children in Texas are considered obese while almost 16% are overweight. Furthermore, only three percent of CHNA respondents walk as a main form of transportation and less than one percent use bikes. To address these health disparities, the county has identified two high priority areas to improve quality of life. The first is the need to increase physical activity by promoting parks and alternative methods of transportation as a high priority. One of the main goals is to continue supporting local and regional public transportation services, Waco Transit System services, the Waco Parks and Recreation Department, and other community organizations involved with promotion of physical activity assets within the community.

The second high priority topic to improve the quality of life within the community is nutrition. According to the 2016 CHNA, nearly 34% of respondents consumed one serving of vegetables or less per day and 40% consumed one serving or less of fruits per

day. The CDC State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables provided that approximately 22% of Texas adults eat one serving or less of vegetables per day and about 40% of adults eat one serving or less of fruits per day. Although McLennan County reported higher fruit and vegetable consumption in comparison with statewide data, it is important to continually encourage schools and businesses to add healthy vending options and promote healthy lifestyles to students and employees. We are also developing asset maps which will be used to link community members to various service agencies in hopes of increasing accessibility to healthy food options and nutritional education.

Implementing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle involves being active, having access to and seeking preventative care, being well informed, and being able to access and utilize resources such as health services, public transportation, and healthy foods.

Sector Strategies and Tactics

This section presents each of the sectors, identifying strategies and tactics to aid in improving the overall quality of life in McLennan County.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

The Business and Industry Sector is a combination of two subdivisions within the economic system. The business subdivision represents organizations that offer goods and services to consumers, governments, and other businesses. The industry subdivision includes activities related to manufacturing goods and products.

STRATEGY #1

Encourage business and industry sectors to collaborate with each other and with all other sectors to identify opportunities that promote healthy lifestyles.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Encourage businesses to explore ways to adopt healthy vending options.
2. Support businesses in establishing flexibility for employees with work hours to allow time for nutritious meals, physical activity, and appropriate walk break times throughout the day.
3. Encourage businesses to establish partnerships that offer gym membership discounts with the intention to improve the overall health of their employees.
4. Continue to involve businesses and industry leaders in developing healthy living incentive programs through Live Well Waco.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

37 Wellness

Oh My Juice (OMJ)

L3 Communications

Pilgrim's Pride

Cargill

Baylor University

Providence Health Network

Baylor Scott & White Hillcrest Hospital

Family Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

City of Waco

McLennan County Independent School Districts

EDUCATION, AFTER SCHOOL, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Education sector includes programs from early childhood through post-secondary education. Facilities and services provided through this sector include school-based personnel, such as teachers and administrators, education decision makers and policy leaders.

STRATEGY #1

Recommend all school districts, after school programs and early childhood care centers and programs to adopt healthy living practices according to national standards.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Inform school districts about alternative active transportation and safe routes so that they may promote walking and bicycling to school.
2. Encourage schools to adopt healthy vending options by adding nutritional alternatives to unhealthy foods and decreasing the number of soda machines.
3. Educate the school district on summer programs such as summer meals, parks and recreation activities, summer camps, and nutrition classes so they may promote them to students.
4. Encourage schools, after school programs, and early childhood programs to develop educational programs and nutritious meals and snacks to promote healthy lifestyles such as: cooking skills for cafeteria workers, breakfast in the classroom, adjusting lunch to be scheduled after recess, etc.
5. Enhance partnerships with child related programs and schools in order to increase capabilities in linking youth and their families with healthy lifestyle opportunities throughout the community.
6. Partner with school districts to create joint use agreements that encourage physical activity.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

Baylor University
YMCA of Central Texas
McLennan County Independent School Districts
Region 12
Waco Boys and Girls Club
Mission Waco
EOAC Bells Hill Jump Start
Brooklyn's Community Child Care Center
First Woodway Christian Preschool
Greater Waco Early Education Center
Think Play Grow Academy

FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The Faith Based Organizations sector includes initiatives and services provided for church leaders and their members through promotion of community service and outreach.

STRATEGY #1

Identify faith based health ministries and educate members to adopt healthy living practices according to national standards within the church.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Inform health ministries and church members about the important benefits to being physically active and eating healthy meals and ways to live a healthy lifestyle.
2. Partner health ministries with local organizations and community resources to promote healthy eating and active living through healthy potluck gatherings, fitness classes, nutrition education, and community garden initiatives.
3. Educate church members on existing programs such as parks and recreation activities, nutrition and cooking classes, and educational workshops.
4. Enhance partnerships with community programs in order to increase capabilities in linking church families with healthy lifestyle opportunities throughout the community.
6. Partner with churches with adequate green space to create joint use agreements that encourage physical activity.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

Waco Regional Baptist Association

St. Luke's AME Church

Trinity AME Church

Highland Baptist Church

Calvary Baptist Church

First Baptist Church of Woodway

HEALTHCARE

The Healthcare sector includes primary care providers and healthcare systems. Advanced practice clinicians and allied health professionals such as physical therapists, dietitians, and pharmacists are also included to ensure consistent and holistic healthy lifestyle messages are delivered to numerous patients.

STRATEGY #1

Encourage healthcare professionals to proactively promote wellness with patients.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Promote wellness to patients and staff by providing educational materials written in plain language and culturally appropriate (Spanish and English versions) of the following: 1) posters, reading materials, and videos throughout the facility, and 2) User friendly and accessible wellness websites for patients.
2. Encourage health care providers to prescribe physical activity or healthy eating with referral to community resources/programs for inactive individuals.
3. Encourage continued education for health care providers in order to provide information on healthy eating including: the importance for all people to eat healthy, access to healthy foods, and provide opportunities for cooking skills.

STRATEGY #2

Encourage health care professional website coordinators to maintain and update company websites to provide resource information within and outside of the health care agency.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Refer community members to specific agency websites by providing web addresses on the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District website.
2. Keep the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District website up to date and provide resources for other agencies to refer to.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

Providence Health Network

Baylor Scott & White Hillcrest

Waco McLennan County Public Health District

Family Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

MASS MEDIA

The Mass Media Sector represents all media outlets including: television, radio, newspaper, magazines, and social networking media such as Facebook and Twitter. Mass media allows stakeholders in the community to reach key opinion leaders and policy makers as well as promote the active living message, campaigns, and events to community members.

STRATEGY #1

Encourage partnerships across sectors to combine resources and key messages around common themes in promoting healthy lifestyles in McLennan County.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Improve partnership with media to evade misinterpretation and inaccuracy involved with Live Well Waco Partners.
2. Connect with media outlets by inviting representatives to Live Well Waco Coalition meetings.
3. Encourage media to interpret news reports in English and Spanish representing the McLennan County population.
4. Utilize traditional and new media channels (electronic, print, social media, and web-based) to reach diverse audiences throughout the community.
5. Encourage writers and producers to include messages and stories related to physical activity and overall health and wellness by continuing to provide coverage for health related topics.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

Waco Tribune-Herald
Wacoan Magazine
Waco Today
Time Warner Cable
M&M Broadcasters
94.5 FM
Clear Channel Communications
LaLey
KWTX
KXXV
KCEN

PARKS AND RECREATION, FITNESS, AND SPORTS

The Parks and Recreation, Fitness, and Sports sector includes a wide range of community facilities and services available at low or no cost to McLennan County residents.

Facilities and services provided through this sector cover environments, programs, and services provided through non-profit and local government community centers such as public parks, trails, and open spaces.

STRATEGY #1

Promote programs and facilities where all people learn, live, play, and work (e.g., workplace, public, private, and non-profit recreational sites) to provide easy access to safe and affordable healthy lifestyle opportunities.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Support community strategies that improve access to and the safety and security of parks, recreation, fitness, and sports facilities, especially in low-resource areas.

2. Improve access to public-private recreational facilities in communities with limited recreational opportunities through:

- Reduced cost for participation in programs and/or use of facilities
- Increased operating hours
- Improved lighting
- Availability of childcare
- Joint use agreements

3. Establish partnerships to provide funding for enhancing public parks including placing new mile markers with calorie tracker and coded workouts and/or other recreational facilities such as trails.

5. Refer student interns to provide assistance in services and programming.

6. Support social marketing to increase use of established Parks and Recreation, Fitness and Sports resources.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

City of Waco

All Independent School Districts

YMCA of Central Texas

Waco McLennan County Public Health District

Boys and Girls Club

Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization

City of Waco Planning & Zoning Services

City of Waco Parks & Recreation

Meals & Wheels Senior Centers

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Public Health sector consists of population health research, surveillance, evaluation, training, advocacy, and program development. Governmental organizations within this sector include public health agencies as well as federal, state, county, and local health departments. Non-governmental organizations include institutions of higher education, professional societies, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups that support public health efforts.

STRATEGY #1

Maintain partnerships, collaboration and communication with community health partners while connecting community members to resources within the community.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Increase communication level by developing a communications framework, such as a Live Well Waco quarterly newsletter, to facilitate collaboration among community partners.
2. Utilize Community Health Workers (CHWs) to provide education and connect community members to resources for increasing physical activity and consumption of healthy foods including fresh produce.
3. Continue established communication framework including quarterly coalition meetings to facilitate collaboration among community partners.
4. Support community partners in developing programs, trainings, and classes promoting physical activity and nutrition.
5. Develop and distribute asset maps of the community promoted on community based websites and through distribution of brochures.
6. Develop a user friendly informational website accessible to community members.
7. Participate in community health fairs and education outreach programs within the community.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

United Healthcare
Superior Health Plan
Waco-McLennan County Public Health District
City of Waco
Prosper Waco
AmeriGroup
RightCare Scott & White Health Plan
Waco Downtown Farmer's Market
YMCA of Central Texas

TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE, AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

The Transportation, Land Use and Community Design sector represents a collaboration of McLennan County agencies that aim to improve multi-modal transportation networks and design livable communities.

STRATEGY #1

Support plans to enhance community design for active transportation and encourage a “people first” design that promotes walking and bicycling and provides access to healthy foods.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Encourage the development of street designs that accommodate all users regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation.
2. Support efforts to enhance signage and viability of transit services and stops and support efforts to develop and/or maintain safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit stops.
3. Attend informational meetings regarding the Waco Comprehensive Plan and track annual implementation and reporting. Support the comprehensive planning effort by providing feedback from Live Well Waco organizations.
4. Continue to track Waco Transit System projects and programs, and communicate those updates to Live Well Waco organizations.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Texas Department of Transportation
Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization
Waco Transit System
City of Waco Planning & Zoning Services
City of Waco Engineering (Public Works, Streets, Traffic)
City of Waco Building Standards Commissions (Code Enforcement)
City of Waco Housing and Community Development
Housing and Community Development Services
Baylor University
Meals & Wheels
Neighborhood Associations

VOLUNTEER AND NON-PROFIT

The Volunteer and Non-Profit sector represents organizations that identify and provide for needs of the community, develop and promote beneficial new ideas, and provide positive opportunities and services.

STRATEGY #1

Support active lifestyles by encouraging the community to participate in running, bicycling, walking, and fundraising races as well as supporting nutrition through local farms, mobile vending, and programs of nonprofit and other volunteer organizations.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

1. Continue to use various communication channels such as print publications, websites, social media, broadcast media, and newsletters to promote engagements involving healthy lifestyles to members, volunteers, and community residents.
2. Identify opportunities to participate in all non-profit and volunteer organization events relating to healthy lifestyles.
3. Assist with marketing, promoting and inviting community members to events, local farms and mobile vending locations.
4. Allow agencies to utilize the Live Well Waco brand to promote their event or organization when relating to healthy lifestyles when certain criteria are met.
5. Support strategies that target low income populations through culturally appropriate programs, materials and communication methods.
6. Participate in prioritizing community needs to achieve the programs that will most benefit the community, particularly those at highest need.

POTENTIAL PARTNER AGENCIES

Texas Hunger Initiative
World Hunger Relief, Inc.
Mission Waco
Shepherd's Heart
St. Luke's AME Church
Urban Gardening Coalition/Baylor Campus Kitchen
YMCA of Central Texas
Viable Options in Community Endeavors (VOICE)
Caritas
NAACP
Boys & Girls Club
Meals & Wheels
Neighborhood Associations

Conclusion

The McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan provides strategies and tactics to improve the health of people living, working, and playing in McLennan County. The ultimate goal of this plan is to maintain the collaborative effort among community businesses, organizations, and individuals who are committed to the health of McLennan County residents, while also focusing on improving the areas of health disparities. This plan enhances community action, education, and prevention methods to utilize the best practices to meet lifestyle related goals.

The Waco-McLennan County Public Health District leads the Live Well Waco Coalition, which is represented in part by the Active Living Healthy Eating Plan. The collaboration of strategies addressing local disease burden through implementing various strategies to improve the health of county residents include: deployment of mass media campaigns, gaining support from key community stakeholders, working to change policies and environments at schools and worksites, promoting shared space agreements in communities to increase access to physical activity, and working to increase availability of healthy foods in areas at high risk for obesity and chronic disease.

The collaborative leadership team within the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District and Live Well Waco has positively impacted the planning for the future health of the community through the use of the Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan. The steps that follow include: engaging and encouraging all partners and stakeholders within the community, supporting continuous efforts to improve the quality of life in McLennan County, promoting healthy, active lifestyles to community members, businesses and schools, and involving the community in the plan we envision for a healthier future.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the input of our partners that contributed information, time, and expertise in the gathering of data and information to develop the McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan. We are very grateful for the time and energy they have devoted to making the lives of our residents healthier.

The McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan was made possible because of the leadership of the following individuals and organizations: Courtney Restivo Wollard, Janet Jones, Review Board Members (Waco-McLennan County Public Health District), Kodie Talley, Hannah Parrish (Summer Interns), Yara William (Doctorate Resident), Matt Hess (World Hunger Relief), Debbie King (Meals & Wheels), Kelsey Miller (Texas Hunger Initiative), Chelsea Phlegar (City of Waco Planning/Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization). The plan will be implemented with the assistance of the following organizations and potential partner agencies.

Members

2016 Active Living and Healthy Eating Team Members and the Live Well Waco Coalition

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

37 Wellness
Oh My Juice (OMJ)
L3 Communications
Pilgrim's Pride
Cargill
Baylor University
Providence Health Network
Baylor Scott & White Hillcrest Hospital
Family Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
City of Waco
McLennan County Independent School Districts

EDUCATION, AFTER SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Baylor University
YMCA of Central Texas
McLennan County Independent School Districts
Waco Boys and Girls Club
Mission Waco
EOAC Bells Hill Jump Start
Brooklyn's Community Child Care Center
First Woodway Christian Preschool
Greater Waco Early Education Center
Think Play Grow Academy

FAITH BASED

Waco Regional Baptist Association
St. Luke's AME Church
Trinity AME Church
Highland Baptist Church
Calvary Baptist Church
First Baptist Church of Woodway

HEALTHCARE

Providence Health Network

Baylor Scott & White Hillcrest
Family Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
Waco-McLennan County Public Health District

MASS MEDIA

Waco Tribune-Herald
Wacoan Magazine
Waco Today
Time Warner Cable
M&M Broadcasters
Clear Channel Communications
94.5 FM
LaLey
KWTX
KXXV
KCEN

PARKS, RECREATION, FITNESS AND SPORTS

City of Waco
YMCA of Central Texas
Boys and Girls Club
Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization
City of Waco Planning & Zoning Services
City of Waco Parks & Recreation
Waco Independent School District
Waco-McLennan County Public Health District
Meals & Wheels Senior Centers

PUBLIC HEALTH

Waco-McLennan County Public Health District
City of Waco
United Healthcare
Superior Health Plan
AmeriGroup
RightCare Scott & White Health Plan
Prosper Waco
Live Well Waco
Waco Downtown Farmer's Market
YMCA of Central Texas

TRANSPORTATION, LAND-USE, & COMMUNITY DESIGN

Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Texas Department of Transportation

Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization
Waco Transit System
City of Waco Planning & Zoning Services
City of Waco Engineering (Public Works, Streets, Traffic)
City of Waco Building Standards Commissions (Code Enforcement)
City of Waco Housing and Community Development
Housing and Community Development Services
Baylor University
Meals & Wheels

VOLUNTEER AND NON-PROFIT

Texas Hunger Initiative
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YMCA of Central Texas
Viable Options in Community Endeavors (VOICE)
NAACP
St. Luke's AME Church
Shepherd's Heart
Mission Waco
Boys & Girls Club
Caritas
Meals & Wheels
Neighborhood Associations

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