



Lions Vision Services Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022

Adopted February 2018

Our Mission

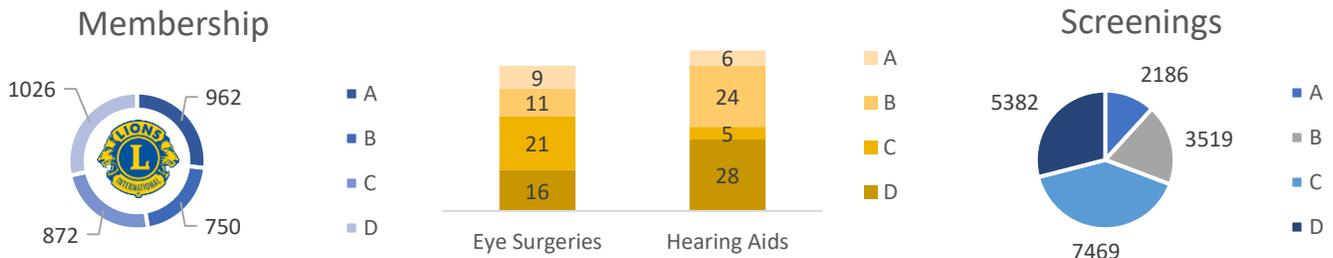
Lions Vision Services empowers the under-served blind and visually-impaired in South Carolina to live safe, meaningful, and fulfilling lives.

Our Vision

A vibrant community in which preventable blindness is eliminated, the blind and visually impaired have the resources necessary to live fulfilling lives, and public perception recognizes the potential and dignity of every blind and visually impaired person.

Who We Serve

LVS is a statewide membership-based nonprofit corporation made up of all Lions who are members in good standing of Lions Clubs in good standing in Multiple District-32 (which encompasses the state of South Carolina, also known as MD 32). Through LVS, Lions and others who are committed to preventing blindness and empowering the blind and visually impaired conduct vision screenings, facilitate eye surgeries, and provide hearing aids to vulnerable and under-served demographics across South Carolina.



Our Programs & Services

LVS currently accomplishes its mission in five ways:

- Preempt blindness and visual impediments by screening and educating vulnerable demographics;
- Provide need-based financial assistance and in-kind services for eye surgeries;
- Procure hearing aids for individuals unable to afford them;
- Promote education in the prevention of blindness across South Carolina; and
- Facilitate the recognition and volunteer involvement of Lions serving South Carolina residents.

Our Goals, 2017 – 2022

1. Advance LVS's long-term financial position through annual fund development plans and exploration of a future major fundraising effort.
2. Diversify, enrich, and expand board member recruitment and involvement.
3. Complete a comprehensive review of and recommendation for all LVS programs and services.
4. Deepen relationships with individual Lions, Lions Clubs, Districts, and the MD to increase knowledge, effectiveness and capacity for collective action.
5. Create and implement a meaningful recognition of the 50th anniversary of LVS in 2019.



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Background and Context

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

This quote from Margaret Mead exemplifies both the value of the individual and the power of collective action. These same two forces have been guiding principles of Lions Vision Services since its inception nearly half a century ago. What began in 1969 as an effort by the Lions of South Carolina to take collective action that would enable more service to those in the blind and visually impaired community who lacked the financial means to secure adequate medical attention has become a regional force for sight conservation.

Today we are faced with over 600,000 South Carolinians who are un- or under-insured, often unable to afford glasses, critical eye surgeries, hearing aids, and other vision services. With vision remaining the principal sense associated with an individual's quality of life, Helen Keller's charge to Lions to be “Knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness” remains a powerfully relevant charge to address inadequacies in healthcare coverage in South Carolina.

After several years of challenges and successes, including an executive leadership transition, corporate restructuring, programmatic, and financial reviews, it is time for LVS to again assert itself as an industry and regional leader recognized for excellence in service. To ensure this organization's continued efficiency in accomplishing its mission, the board puts forth a multi-year strategic plan to celebrate a significant organizational milestone – LVS's 50th anniversary – and create the foundation for the next fifty years of service. This plan will articulate the organization's key competencies in its service niche and the strategic goals which will advance its impact in the years ahead.

LVS's organizational competencies include:

- Providing timely, effective, and accessible vision/health screenings for vulnerable and underserved demographics across South Carolina.
- Maintaining a diverse statewide network of healthcare professionals whose services offset the cost of critical vision-related health procedures.
- Providing relevant information on blindness and visual impediments to the public.
- Expanding the services provided by local Lions Clubs in South Carolina.
- Staying responsive to the needs of the blind and visually impaired community in South Carolina.

For the purposes of benchmarking strategic goals, the Executive Committee will undertake an annual review and report of LVS's Strategic Plan using the evaluation form outlined in Appendix I. The board will routinely dedicate time and resources to the review and implementation of the strategic plan. All board members assume a personal and fiduciary responsibility to the organization to achieve the strategic plan goals.



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Our Goals: 2017 – 2022

Goal 1: Advance LVS’s long-term financial position through annual fund development plans and exploration of a future major fundraising effort.

The need for LVS’s programs will continue to grow over time as the number of un- and under-insured South Carolinians needing vision and hearing services increases. Existing partnerships with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and others have qualified the efficiency and relevancy of LVS programs.

To maintain and expand these initiatives over time, existing staff will need appropriate raises in salary, a long-term personnel plan will need to address staffing needs, the office infrastructure to support LVS programs will need to be enhanced, and unrestricted endowment funds will need to grow to create a meaningful measure of financial stability. These opportunities require expanding LVS’s annual revenue streams and will eventually require a major fundraising campaign to propel LVS forward.

Strategies:

- a) Grow annual unrestricted giving to \$250,000 to stabilize existing operations, then move incrementally towards raising \$1,000,000 each year for operations as outlined in annual Fund Development Plans.
 - b) Create an effective marketing plan that converts interest in LVS into revenue streams.
 - c) Identify and secure non-Lion revenue streams.
 - d) Once the Annual Fund sustains sufficient growth, prioritize the hiring of a full-time development staff.
 - e) Implement an annual review of LVS’s capacity for undertaking a major fundraising effort.
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Goal 2: Diversify, enrich, and expand board member recruitment and involvement.

Board members set the pace and direction of our organization and are responsible for, among other things, serving as the face of our organization in the community. The board should therefore be composed of committed, resourceful individuals who reflect the breadth and depth of our work. To ensure a “working board” philosophy attracts effective leadership we must be intentional in seeking out new board members.

Strategies:

- a) Expand LVS’s presence and reputation within corporate, nonprofit, and government entities.
- b) Engage current board members in cultivating a state-wide network of nonprofit governance talent that connects board members’ skills and interests with specific organizational opportunities.



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Goal 3: Complete a comprehensive review of and recommendation for all LVS programs and services.

Currently centered on three programs for vision screenings, eye surgeries, and hearing aids, the demand for LVS's involvement in the blind and visually impaired community across South Carolina will continue to grow with time. As technology, resources, and research continues to transform this field of medicine, LVS must implement a rigorous and continuous review process of the need and efficiency of all current programs, staying on the forefront of new programs and services. Strategies for funding and institutional advancement will be guided by a mission-centric approach to programs and needs in the blind and visually impaired community.

In addition to LVS's current statewide network of healthcare professionals, LVS will intentionally cultivate industry partnerships with like-minded peers including, but not limited to, the Storm Eye Institute, the Commission for the Blind, the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Lighthouse for the Blind, and the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind. The purpose of these partnerships will be to: (1) maintain a visible network of peers and professionals representing the best and brightest minds in the state; (2) inform programmatic needs for the blind and visually impaired community across South Carolina; and (3) collaborate routinely to increase the collective impact on the communities we serve.

Strategies:

- a) Review the scale and funding allocations of existing LVS programs.
- b) Prioritize vulnerable demographics that are un- or under-served from existing programs of other organizations (i.e. – blind and visually impaired between the ages of 21 and 55).
- c) Pursue technology-based programs which equip the blind and visually impaired with the latest resources at home and at work for living safe, meaningful, and fulfilling lives.
- d) Expand education opportunities across the state to advance the blind and visually impaired communities in two ways: (1) limit cases of preventable blindness and (2) change existing stereotypes and negative stigmas of blind and visually impaired persons.
- e) Prioritize treatment, care, and prevention of diabetic retinopathy.
- f) Evaluate career placement/counseling opportunities for the blind and visually impaired.
- g) Seek routine input from industry experts on other programmatic opportunities.



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Goal 4: Deepen relationships with individual Lions, Lions Clubs, Districts, and the MD to increase knowledge, effectiveness and capacity for collective action.

Although membership in Lions Clubs continues to decline across the state, the heritage and identity of LVS is permanently tied to the Lions of South Carolina who chartered this organization in 1969. To maintain the support and interest of Lions across the state, and to use LVS as a professional resource to engage non-Lion constituencies in the work of Lions Clubs International, a clear and meaningful relationship must be maintained between LVS board members, staff, and the Lions of South Carolina.

Strategies:

- a) Maintain a physical presence of LVS's programmatic impact at Lions events.
- b) Hold board members accountable for sharing compelling information about LVS with Lions Clubs throughout the year.
- c) Petition the MD Council to approve an LVS Ambassador position in each district to collectively form a MD LVS Advisory Committee, the purpose of which will be to enhance LVS's presence at the district and club level and advise the board on advancing Lions Clubs involvement with the organization.
- d) Be responsive to the mission-related needs of South Carolina Lions.

Goal 5: Create and implement a meaningful recognition of the 50th anniversary of LVS in 2019.

The longevity of LVS is a testimony to the organization's capacity to effect meaningful change. The momentous energy that can be generated from celebrating such a milestone can unite the efforts of a diverse network of support, presenting rare opportunities for strategic progress and capital investment. To effectively harness the potential of such a significant event, we must proactively implement a plan of action.

Strategies:

- a) Create a core committee tasked with planning a 50th anniversary event and meaningful recognition of LVS's history throughout the anniversary year.
- b) Engage key stakeholders in the planning, celebration, and follow-up of this anniversary year.
- c) Identify and articulate special opportunities to invest in LVS in celebration of the past and anticipation of the future.
- d) Expand brand awareness of LVS across multiple channels throughout the state.