

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA
COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

STRATEGIC PLAN

HELPING PEOPLE, CHANGING LIVES

2019-2024



207 EAST CHERRY STREET
CLEARFIELD, PA 16830

November 18, 2019

INDEX

3	HISTORY
4	VISION
5	MISSION
6	STRATEGIC PLAN PARTICIPANTS
7	NATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTION GOALS
8	PRIORITIES
9	HOUSING
10	WEATHERIZATION
11	TRANSPORTATION
	FAMILY SERVICES
12	- Employment
13	- Food & Nutrition
14	PRIVATE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
15	AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE
16	FUTURE STRATEGIES & GOALS
17	ONGOING REVIEW AND MONITORING

STRATEGIC PLAN

2019-2024

CPCA HISTORY

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

Community Action was initially established on November 14, 1965, and was incorporated as Central Pennsylvania Community Action, Inc. (CPCA) on December 14, 1967. The organization embarked on providing services to families and individuals with low to moderate incomes in Centre and Clearfield counties. Today, we have six outreach offices located in Clearfield, DuBois, Houtzdale, Philipsburg, Bellefonte and Aaronsburg, plus three warehouses in Clearfield, to provide quarters for our Weatherization Programs. With all of the various locations, CPCA is able to provide many services to our target sector.

In 1983, CPCA formed an affiliate corporation, Central Pennsylvania Development Corporation (CPDC), to develop, own and manage the real estate holdings of the agency. Today, CPDC has approximately 200 affordable rental units in its portfolio, which includes HUD subsidized housing from four other affiliates: Community Action in Clearfield County (T/A Lawrence Park Village, Clearfield), Curwensville Housing Corporation (T/A Park Avenue Tower, Curwensville), Moshannon Housing Corporation (T/A Moshannon Valley Apartments, Houtzdale), and Leonard Housing Corporation (T/A Leonard Court Apartments, Clearfield).

CPCA has a long and successful history of meeting the diverse needs of low income families and individuals, providing quite an array of services such as affordable housing, weatherization measures to owner-occupied homes and rental properties, as well as supportive services, such as case management that helps address food insecurity, medical transportation, utility assistance, and employment opportunities, while maintaining partnerships with other organizations to fill the gaps, as needed by the clients.

The agency also supports eighteen (18) Food Pantries throughout Centre and Clearfield Counties, which provides the many low income families with various food products, to supplement their monthly needs and also provides some individuals with emergency food when necessary. CPCA also operates a Congregate Meal program, in conjunction with the Area Agency on Aging, for Senior Citizens, at our Houtzdale Family Service Center, that provides nutritional meals on a daily basis.

The CPCA Staff, Board of Directors and affiliate corporations have been a force, for over 50 years, in trying to alleviate poverty in the Bi-County area, and will continue to do so for many years into the future, by utilizing the strategies developed in our Strategic Plan.

VISION

As an anti-poverty agency, we are painfully aware that the number of persons below the poverty level in Centre and Clearfield Counties has increased from 32,770 to 41,410 between the census of 2000 and the census of 2010. Now, more than ever, there is a huge disparity between the needs of the Community, and the resources available to meet those needs. As we continue to improve our ability to assess need, we recognize that we must do more to acquire the resources to meet those needs.

Our vision of Centre and Clearfield Counties continues to be one of thriving communities that offer safe, affordable housing, employment opportunities, transportation options and financial services by identifying and eliminating barriers for low to moderate income individuals and families.

After 52 years of serving our communities, we believe that we must reinvent our agency, and renew our energies to deal more effectively with anti-poverty issues that are increasing despite our efforts.

Our three (3) primary overall goals are the following:

- 1) Reduction of poverty
- 2) Revitalization of low-income communities
- 3) Empowerment of low-income individuals and families in becoming more self-sufficient

MISSION

**Strengthening communities in Centre and Clearfield counties
by helping families and individuals
to become self-sufficient.**

Helping people, changing lives.

In meeting our mission CPCA provides many programs and services to assist communities, individuals and families. We offer affordable rental housing, housing services such as homeowner rehabilitation, and weatherization.

Furthermore, in meeting basic needs, CPCA operates numerous programs and maintain partnerships with other organizations to help fill gaps.

- With a family-focused approach, CPCA's employment and training staff offers case planning, identifying goals and removing barriers to assist program participants in obtaining and maintaining employment.
- CPCA provides transportation and mileage reimbursement through the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) that assists residents in attending their medical appointments.
- CPCA addresses food-insecurity and nutritional needs through our food pantries; Congregate Meals; and Home-delivered meal programs.

CPCA will continue our efforts in providing programs that assist families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency.

Finally, CPCA will continue to provide opportunities for staff's professional growth and knowledge. We recognize the importance of staff development in order for our efforts to be successful in empowering the individuals and families we serve.

STRATEGIC PLAN PARTICIPANTS

BOARD MEMBERS

Bill Carbone

Daniel Nelson

Holly Kithcart

Jan Reasinger

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Kelly Hopper

Lesa Norman

Nanci Rommel

Paul Springer

Randy Lemmo

Romayne Naylor

STAFF

Bill Zupich – Executive Director

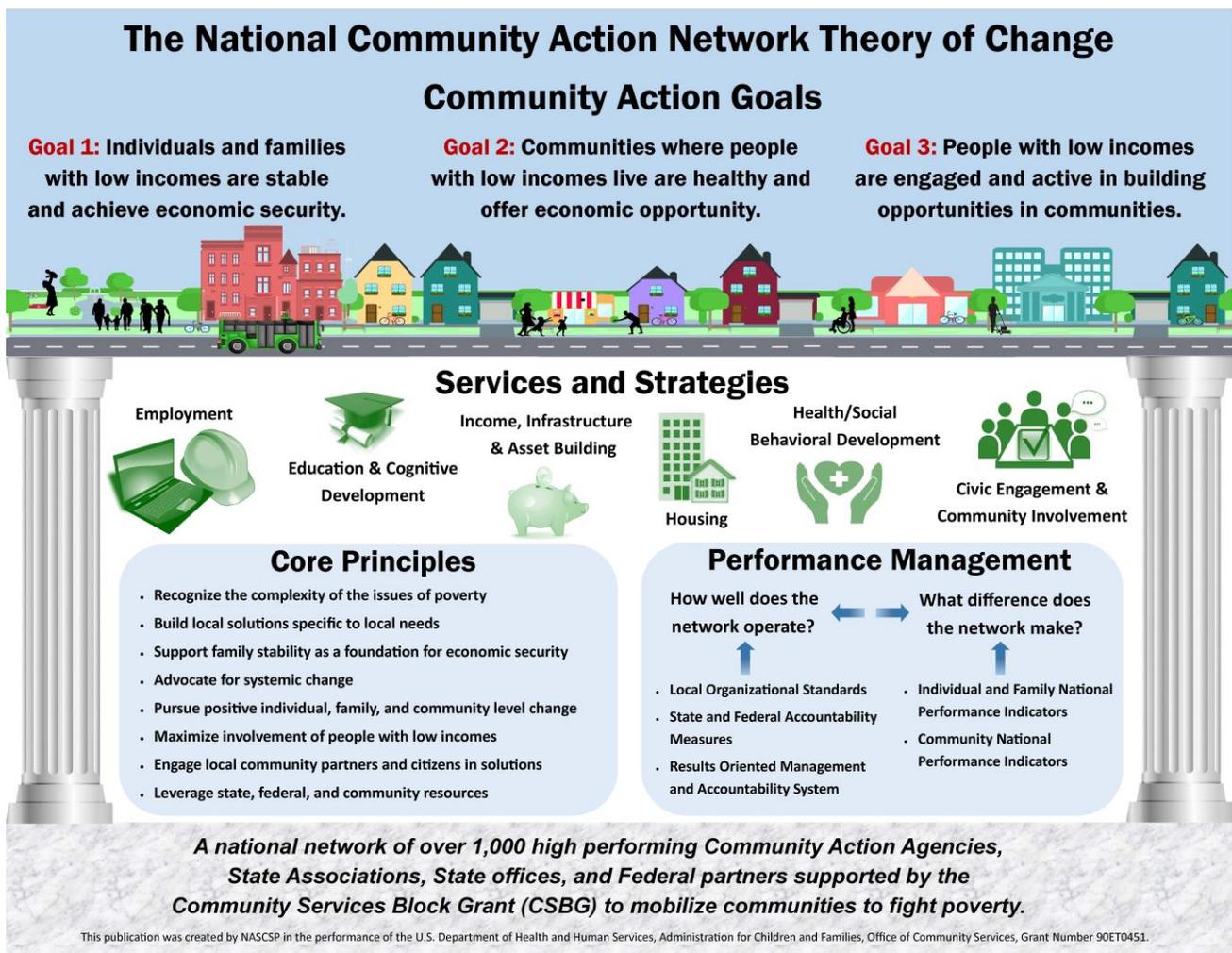
Michelle Stiner – Director of Operations & Finance

Deanna Graham – Development & Planning

Three National Community Action Goals

Theory of Change Model

- Goal 1** Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
- Goal 2** Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.
- Goal 3** People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.



PRIORITIES

- Housing
- Weatherization
- Transportation
- Family Services
 - Employment
 - Food & Nutrition
- Private Funding Opportunities
- Agency Infrastructure
- Future Strategies & Goals

HOUSING

Community Outcome:

Increasing the availability of Affordable Housing for everyone within the two-county service area.

Programmatic Goals:

Maintain safe and affordable existing housing and continue to expand our portfolio within the two-county area where there is the most need. Furthermore, by keeping the following affiliates well managed, CPCA can only benefit the various communities where the corporations provide rental housing. The affiliate corporations include: Central PA Development Corporation; Community Action In Clearfield County Inc.; Curwensville Housing Corporation; Moshannon Housing Corporation; and Leonard Housing Corporation

Indicator of Success:

- Increasing the number of safe and affordable homes through homeowner rehabilitation projects.
- Expanding our safe and affordable housing initiative through obtaining and/or constructing new properties targeting low-income individuals/families.

Challenges:

Finding safe and affordable homes; blighted and older housing stock; cost of land in Centre County and the challenges between the two separate counties (Centre and Clearfield) regarding populations, areas and need; waiting lists for vouchers and some housing; level of rehabilitation need; houses failing inspections; and the “Not in my backyard” attitude of some communities. Low and middle income families are struggling and typically pay more than 30% of their income for housing. Rural locations limit access to employment and services. Water and sewer issues limit development as rising cost of utilities is a problem.

Strategies:

- Maintain existing rental units currently owned by affiliate corporations by accomplishing capital improvements on a regular basis.
- Utilization of affiliate corporation’s real estate holdings to strengthen CPCA’s financial position.
- Creating and maintaining partnerships with other housing agencies to meet the needs of the communities
- Seek funding and partnership opportunities in developing single family rental units
- Pursue opportunities to develop new housing in the two counties area, by targeting communities in the most need.
- Maintain existing rent and mortgage assistance programs through quality case management
- Explore transitional and emergency housing needs and options
- Advocate for additional housing funding with area legislators and private community stakeholders

Team Leaders:

Executive Director; Director of Operations & Finance; Development & Planning; and Property Manager.

Resources:

U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD); Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED); Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA); Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP); Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB); Clearfield County Government; Homeless Assistance Program (HAP) and cooperation with local stakeholders and private funding resources.

WEATHERIZATION

Community Outcome:

Increasing energy efficiency in homes by reducing energy costs and increasing comfort while safeguarding health and safety.

Programmatic Goals:

- Provide safe housing by weatherizing homes to help homeowners reduce their heating costs
- Increase production with more efficient construction methods and providing quality work
- Expand capacity through collaborations utilizing the various utility programs.

Indicator of Success:

Clients receiving weatherization services will have reduced heating utility costs, and a better, safer home environment.

Challenges:

Low educational levels; lack of awareness of home maintenance and operation; low income with little available to make modifications to living areas. Variable climatic conditions with large temperature swings between and within seasons.

Strategies:

- Continue to provide energy efficiency measures through State and utility Weatherization programs.
- Continue to maintain fully certified Weatherization crews.
- Increase agency capacity through partnerships with local utility companies in order to increase the number of homes weatherized and provide additional employment opportunities in our service area.

Team Leaders: Executive Director; Director of Operations & Finance; Development & Planning; and the Weatherization Dept. Supervisors

Resources:

Department of Energy (DOE); Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED); Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP); Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); First Energy; UGI Utilities; National Fuel Gas; Penn College of Technology National Sustainable Structures Center.

TRANSPORTATION

Community Outcome:

Provide safe and reliable transportation to low-income individuals and families throughout both Centre and Clearfield Counties.

Agency Outcome:

- Continue to operate and manage the MATP program at a high-level of efficiency throughout the Clearfield county area and commonwealth.
- Through the use of a Vehicle Assistance Program, CPCA will be able to help increase low-income individuals/families ability to obtain and maintain employment; be able to access medical care, and provide for their basic needs through various shopping establishments, etc.

Indicator of Success:

Increase in car ownership by low-income residents, and an increase access to public transportation.

Challenges:

Threat of losing the program due a state 'Broker Model' approach identifying three (3) regions providing MATP services throughout the commonwealth. Large square mileage over two county areas; cost of gas is very high; the times of availability and the cost of current transportation is a challenge; timing of appointments. Poor credit and/or budgeting, as well as, lack of license and/or ability to drive due to health, finances, criminal history and drug abuse.

Strategies:

- Continue to provide medical transportation services through MATP.
- Partner with existing providers and groups to advocate for transportation including creating a transportation coalition for Clearfield County.
- Seeking private and state or federal funding, in order to develop and sustain a program for securing and repairing cars for sale to low-income residents.
- Research a volunteer transportation program that provides volunteer drivers offering personal transportation to individuals and families who lack transportation for local medical appointments and/or transportation to meet nutritional needs through visits to local grocery stores, food pantries, etc.

Team Leaders: Executive Director; Director of Operations & Finance; Development & Planning; Medical Transportation Program (MATP) Supervisor and Family Services Supervisors.

Resources:

Collaborations with Department of Humans Services; Clearfield County Government; Health Ride Plus and ATA Pursue funding through private partnerships; and/or stated and federal resources such as Penn DOT, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), and Legislative Initiative.

EMPLOYMENT

Community Outcome:

Increase the number of family-sustaining jobs with benefits for residents of our area.

Programmatic Goal:

Continue to provide quality case management with a family-focused approach in helping individuals and families identify barriers that are preventing eligible working household members from obtaining or maintaining employment.

Indicator of Success:

Increasing the number of people employed in jobs that allows the individual or family to remain self-sufficient and live above the poverty level.

Challenges:

Low education levels; lack of transportation; limited training options; limited options for people with medical or mental health disabilities; lack of communication from businesses regarding training needs; child care not available for some shifts; communication among agencies. Employers requiring criminal history background checks prior to hiring. At the same time, area Criminal Justice system is prosecuting many more minor, so-called “victimless” crimes, and the number of unemployed citizens with criminal “records” is escalating. Unemployed persons transitioning from incarceration to the workforce lack opportunities because of their criminal background.

Strategies:

- Identify barriers through a family-focused approach that prohibit employment opportunities.
- Seek partnerships and sustainable funding to develop own employment and training program to help raise awareness to needs and solutions.
- Continue advocate efforts for employment for people who have committed non-violent crimes.
- Increase collaborations with local community stakeholders that have a vested interest in the employment of low-income individuals

Team Leaders:

Executive Director; Director of Operations & Finance; Development & Planning; and the Family Service Supervisors

Resources:

Department of Human Services; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); Work Ready; PA Work Wear; North Central Workforce Investment Board; local Vo-Tech; and surrounding universities; local county assistance office(s); and local CareerLink. Pursue new resources, as well as, build and establish key partnerships that provide sustainable funding opportunities to help individuals obtain and maintain employment.

FOOD & NUTRITION

Community Outcome: Help alleviate hunger and increase overall health by providing the residents of both Clearfield and Centre counties access to food and nutrition.

Programmatic Goals: Increase awareness, within low-income communities, of the benefits of better nutrition and healthier lifestyles.

Indicator of success: Increase the number of residents engaging in a healthier lifestyle through improved nutrition.

Challenges: Funding is reliant upon the State Food Purchase Program (SFPP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) State/Federal, as well as, limits in the choices of food for distribution. Seeking alternate food resources that are cost-effective in meeting the needs of residents we serve.

Strategies:

- Maintain funding resources for all of CPCA's food programs.
- Maintain the farmer's market fresh food voucher program.
- Continue to distribute written education materials regarding food and nutrition
- Increase public relations efforts to promote the agency and increase community awareness of need for these services.
- Maintain feeding programs that help address the nutritional needs of homebound residents and the senior population.

Team Leaders:

Board of Directors, Executive Director, Director of Operations & Finance; Development & Planning; Family Services Supervisors

Resources:

State Food Purchase Program (SFPP); The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP); Central PA Food Bank; Imler's Poultry; and food pantries being operated with volunteers by diverse groups including religious organizations and area service clubs; Clearfield and Centre County Government; Human Services Development Fund (HSDF); Area Agency on Aging; The Nutrition Group

PRIVATE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Programmatic Goals:

Additional financial resources to offset reliance upon local/state/federal governmental funding.

Indicator of success:

Programs and services increase to assist low-income individuals and families. In the event of loss of any local/state/federal funding, the agency is able to sustain currently offered programs, as well as, maintaining staff and preventing layoffs or job cuts.

Challenges:

Competing for the same funding as other non-profits.

Strategies:

- Explore the potential for strategic partnerships with other Community Action agencies and other local community stakeholders to strengthen grant applications and/or increase a supplemental income
- Continue to maintain the current housing stock while pursuing to build additions to real estate portfolio of affiliates.
- Increase public relations efforts to promote the agency, and increase community awareness of services and outcomes.
- Research fundraising opportunities to support our emergency CPCA Assist fund.
- Research tax-credit programs offered by state and federal government.

Team Leaders:

Board of Directors; Executive Director; Director of Operations & Finance; Development & Planning; CPCA Supervisors.

Resources:

Funding may be increased through the agency's specialized housing properties and units. Seeking partnerships with private entities and local community stakeholders that share the same mission in assisting low-income individuals and families.

AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE ~STRATEGIES~

Committee Strategies

- Form and establish long-standing committees consisting of Board; Staff; and Volunteers.
Some examples are:
 - Finance Committee
 - Annual Review Strategic Planning Committee
 - ROMA Committee

Communication Strategies

- Engage local community stakeholders through legislative visits, agency events; and other public relation outlets.
- Continue to develop local and regional collaborations with other organizations and community stakeholders.
- Provide more opportunities and initiatives to increase volunteer numbers.
- To enhance our mission, by seeking third party collaborations with creating and maintaining Agency website.
- Maintain and/or expand upon available technological resources in order to support staff with the most up-to-date equipment for efficiency.

Employee Strategies

- Provide ongoing education, training and support services to staff, as well as, training staff to know and use all available resources both within and outside the agency.
- Increase communications and engagements with local faith-based organizations and ministeriums and improve the overall communications of the agency with the public by continuing to produce employee newsletter and marketing material.
- Increase employee awareness of agency strategic goals. Celebrate successes by informing staff of positive outcomes.
- Continue to support outreach centers by both developing standardized services and encourage community specific responses to community needs.

Board Strategies

- Utilize the Board in assisting and enhancing in our professional networks.
- Assure all new and existing Board Members are in compliance with the CSBG Act.
- Complete Annual Board Assessments and provide ongoing education regarding roles and responsibilities.

Implementing ROMA Strategies

- Implement ROMA to newly hired employees during their orientation.
- Provide annual ROMA training to staff and Board members both new and seasoned.
- Remain in CSBG compliance by identifying CPCA staff members to fulfill separate roles as a ROMA Implementer and ROMA Trainer.

Financial Strategies

- Continue to review financial policies, and seek additional input from board members, to streamline operations

~FUTURE STRATEGIES AND GOALS~

- ❖ Annual Strategic Planning Reviews
- ❖ Conduct an annual or bi-annual Needs Assessment (both internally and externally with local community stakeholders) to help identify any changing or continuing needs within the two-county coverage area.
- ❖ Create and implement service agreements and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with collaborative partnerships.
- ❖ Exploring our niche and taking an active role in helping to address the Opioid Epidemic in our community.
- ❖ Identify partnerships with local stakeholders to enhance existing programs or create new opportunities that support our mission.
- ❖ Public Relations with Public Sessions (informational; demonstrations; etc.).
- ❖ Re-assess Strategic Locations
- ❖ Being proactive in the 2020 Census by educating hard-to-reach areas and low-income populations about the benefits of participating in the 2020 Census in order to help ensure everyone is fairly counted.
- ❖ Enhance outreach with a more consumer-friendly CPCA Website
- ❖ Exploring Pay Scale Analysis

ONGOING REVIEW AND MONITORING

- ❖ The final Strategic Plan for the period 2019 through 2024 will be distributed to each employee of CPCA, and to each Board Member of the governing board. New hires will also receive a copy of the plan at orientation.

- ❖ The Director of Operations and Finance will annually assign objectives for all CPCA Departments that relate to the achievement of the strategic goals and objectives and will be presented to the Board of Directors.

- ❖ The Executive Director will periodically review progress of the individual departments toward the assigned objectives and require written reports from Director of Operations and Finance by the end of the calendar year.

Helping People

~

Changing Lives