



2022-27 STRATEGIC PLAN

Approved by the Board of Directors

November 17, 2022

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❖ **A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO AND BOARD CHAIR**

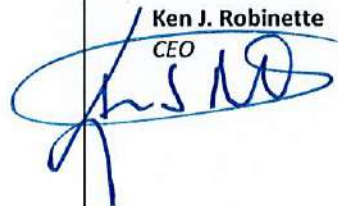
South Central Community Action Partnership (SCCAP) is celebrating its 55th Anniversary in 2022 and SCCAP's Board of Directors Strategic Planning Committee, staff, and certified consultant have created our pathway for the future with this five (5) year Strategic Plan.

This plan is the result of a process that included many months of reflection, research, and refinement that reflect the history and preferred future of SCCAP within the context of the communities we serve. Our consultant kept the process focused and well-documented, gathering information; completing research and analysis, and helping to identify SCCAP's objectives, strategies, and priorities. By looking closely at community needs assessments as well as current trends, we were able to evaluate how we are meeting the needs of those we serve, and identify how we can improve.

Within this plan, you will find our mission, vision, and core values, which have all been strongly reaffirmed by this strategic planning process. You will also find our agency priorities, built around the needs of our constituents and the priorities set out by Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA), a performance-based initiative designed to preserve the anti-poverty focus of community action and to promote greater effectiveness among state and local agencies receiving Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds. This plan will guide our work in the coming five (5) years as we strive to empower people to achieve social and economic well-being.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all those who participated in this strategic planning process which included the SCCAP strategic planning committee, program staff from each of our core departments; Administration, Family Stability, Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Self Help Housing (SHH) and Weatherization. Within these pages is SCCAP's guide to how we will grow and improve our services locally; what our agency's goals and internal needs for the next five years; and a roadmap of how we will achieve the mission of helping people, and changing lives.

Sincerely,

Ken J. Robinette
CEO


Walt Haines
Board Chair


Introduction

Organizational Background, Strategic Planning Approach

South-Central Community Action Partnership (SCCAP) is a private, non-profit organization that has been providing services to low-income individuals and families since 1967. The SCCAP service territory includes the following eight counties of the Magic Valley:

Blaine County

2020 Population: 24,272
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 12.53%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 23.4%

Camas County

2020 Population: 1,077
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 15.55%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 28.4%

Cassia County

2020 Population: 24,655
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 14.26%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 18.0%

Gooding County

2020 Population: 15,598
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 16.27%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 23.4%

Jerome County

2020 Population: 24,237
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 19.02%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 30.1%

Lincoln County

2020 Population: 5,172
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 12.11%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 19.6%

Minidoka County

2020 Population: 21,613
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 16.72%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 23.5%

Twin Falls County

2020 Population: 90,046
Poverty Rate (All Ages): 14.31%
Poverty Rate (<18 years): 18.2%



For the purpose of planning outreach, assuring accessibility, and delivering programs--SCCAP has broken out their service territory into the following three geographic regions:

- **Twin Falls County**
- **Northern Counties:** includes Blaine, Camas, Gooding, Jerome, and Lincoln Counties
- **Mini-Cassia:** includes Cassia and Minidoka Counties

In 2021, SCCAP provided services to more than 10,300 individuals (3,913 families). Low-income households can access services at the SCCAP central office in Twin Falls, a satellite office in Burley (Cassia County), or during various outreach events throughout the service territory. Additionally, the Northern Counties Assessment Specialist is "mobile" in an effort to actively reach underserved populations. This includes clients in geographically hard to reach areas, as well as those individuals who are homebound or may otherwise have trouble accessing services through traditional means.

Services at SCCAP are grouped into the following program areas:

- **Family Development** — This program builds on families’ strengths to broaden skills and enhance their ability to be self-sufficient. Families set short- and long-term goals, then meet regularly with a Family Development Specialist to assess progress toward completing an action plan. The Family Development Specialist provides in-depth advisement, applicable referrals, resource materials, and home and/or office visits.
- **Family and individual Stability** — This program focuses on providing families and individuals with the specific set of services or resources needed to become stable and/or maintain stability. This may involve a variety of interventions, including but not limited to information and referral, transportation, rental assistance, utility assistance, veterans’ services, or emergency medical resources.
- **Homeless Assistance** — Caseworkers assist homeless individuals and families with an initial assessment to help determine and prioritize their needs. This may include referrals to Valley House or other homeless shelters and assistance necessary to maintain employment or housing. Examples include, but are not limited to help to obtain documentation for identification purposes, special clothing or tools needed for employment, and first month’s rent to help working families transition from the shelter to more permanent housing. All participants are introduced to the Family Development Program and required to complete a budget outlining income versus outgoing bills.
- **Weatherization Assistance** — This program is designed to reduce heating and cooling costs for income-eligible families, particularly for the elderly, people with disabilities, and children, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes and ensuring their health and safety. This program provides energy efficiency measures tailored to each house and designed for maximum cost savings.
- **Energy Assistance** — The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides a one-time per-season payment to the household’s primary heat source utility company. This program is designed to help eligible households with winter heating costs.
- **Water Assistance Program (Pilot program)** – The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provides a twice-a-year payment towards the household’s water bill.
- **Food Assistance** — This program provides emergency food to income-eligible families. Food boxes consist of USDA commodities, donated food, and products from the Salvage Program. In addition to food boxes, SCCAP also provides direct services to 11 food pantries and 2 soup kitchens, and 2 shelters and serves as a clearinghouse (first point of contact) for other service providers and churches in the community.
- **Self-Help Housing** — Self Help Housing is a group-method build where a group of six to eight families comes together under the guidance of a Construction Supervisor(s) (employed by South Central Community Action Partnership) to build their own homes. Families provide 65% of the labor themselves by committing 35 hours a week with friend and family volunteers. By putting in this “sweat equity,” the family does not have to come up with a down payment and moves into their new homes with instant equity of generally \$80,000 to \$100,000.

In addition to the above-noted programs for low-income households, SCCAP actively cultivates partnerships and encourages engagement within their local communities. This includes serving as low-income experts on various boards and committees, educating groups and organizations about SCCAP programs, as well as providing volunteer opportunities to local residents interested in tackling poverty.

Developing the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan: Our Approach

This 2022 Strategic Plan is the product of four work sessions with the SCCAP Strategic Planning Committee. The committee is made up of 19 Board members and staff from across all areas of the organization.

The planning process also relied heavily on insight from clients and community members provided during the Community Needs Assessment Survey (administered between June 2021 and May 2022).

Each section of this report reflects a stage of the strategic planning process as illustrated in outline below.

Who We Are

The agency DNA lies in our mission, vision, and values.

The Current Landscape

Community, clients, staff, and Board members help us identify factors that impact our mission

Strategic Plan Goals

Our agency priorities for 2022-2027

Strategies

The methods we believe are necessary to reach our 2022-2027 goals

First Steps

Initial action(s) needed to implement strategies

Primary and Secondary Outcomes

The changes we expect to see if we are successful

Moving Forward

Next steps toward implementation, achieving outcomes, and evaluation.



WHO WE ARE

Our Mission, Vision, and Values

This section provides an overview of the South-Central Community Action Partnership’s mission, vision, and values. Together, these elements serve as the “DNA” of our organization.

Mission

Our mission is a statement about why SCCAP exists:

South Central Community Action Partnership exists to provide a wide range of services in collaboration with community partners in an effort to help improve the quality of life for people with an economic disadvantage.

Vision

Our vision represents the future we’d like to see. When we engage clients, partners, community members, and other stakeholders—we do so with the intention of working together to accomplish this vision:

To empower people to overcome the causes and effects of poverty in South Central Idaho.

Values

Our values reflect the principles that guide our actions and decisions at every level of the organization:

- **Respect** — SCCAP employees and Board members treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- **Integrity** — SCCAP is committed to excellence in all we do. This includes good stewardship of resources and accountability for our results.
- **Empowerment** — SCCAP strives to deliver services that empower low-income families to overcome the causes and effects of poverty.
- **Collaboration** — SCCAP creates and promotes partnerships, leveraging the diverse strengths and assets of individuals, organizations, and businesses to address poverty in our communities.
- **Inclusivity** — SCCAP strives to foster a healthy work environment where employees and Board members feel connected and valued and understand how their day-to-day work contributes to shared agency goals.
- **Innovation** — SCCAP recognizes that overcoming poverty is not easy. Therefore, we encourage clients, employees, Board members, and partners to continually learn and try new approaches.

This strategic plan is designed to advance our mission, vision, and values—translating them into tangible goals, strategies, and outcomes.



THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE

External and Internal Factors that Impact our Planning

While our core ideology (mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities) remains constant over time—the goals and strategies outlined in this plan are significantly influenced by the external and internal landscape in which SCCAP does its work.

To learn more about the current landscape, the Strategic Planning Committee relied heavily on client and service provider responses from the Community Needs Assessment (an extensive survey that took place between June 2021 and May 2022). Additionally, staff and Board members on the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed key accomplishments and strengths of the organization, as well as identify places where additional focus or improvement may be necessary.

External Factors

Certain “external factors” emerged as prominent themes in both the community needs assessment, and in discussion with staff and Board members. Subsequently, the planning committee prioritized the following external factors for consideration in the 2022 Strategic Plan:

- **The COVID-19 Pandemic.** The COVID-19 Pandemic has affected many individuals in various ways. One example is the housing market. There are less housing options available to individuals and payments for housing have increased making it difficult for families and individuals to find affordable housing. Another example the Pandemic has affected individuals is employment. Many individuals lost their jobs due to closure caused by the loss of customers, other individuals weren’t able to work due to being sick. In other words, COVID-19 has impacted individuals through the main cost of living, such as, food, energy, gas, and housing costs.
- **Affordable Housing Options.** While some housing obstacles are the result of credit history, criminal background, or past evictions—both clients and service providers identify lack of affordable housing stock as a significant challenge facing their community. For example, 47.8% of Community Needs Assessment respondents indicated that they need help finding housing they can afford. Not only has the rent increased overall, but in our region, specifically, it has increased dramatically. The following were increases in the Fair Market Rent: Blaine County 20.36%, Camas County 16.80%, Cassia County 10.92%, Gooding County 8.80%, Jerome County 22.20%, Lincoln County 15.35%, Minidoka County 11.6%, and Twin Falls County 25.02%.
- **Available Housing.** Not only is there a need for more affordable housing, but also for available housing in general. The following are Rental Vacancy Rates reported: Blaine 8.35%, Camas 0%, Cassia 1.23%, Gooding 0%, Jerome 9%, Lincoln 0%, Minidoka 0%, and Twin Falls 0%. Therefore, individuals and families who are trying to locate an affordable house and/or apartment are unable to do so. In 2021, SCCAP received 2,927 requests for housing assistance, this is 52% over the 2020 (1,925) housing assistance requests.
- **Accessibility and Affordable Nutrition.** The cost of living has increased over the years, with that, the cost and availability of food has become harder to find. According to the Community Needs Assessment, 53.6% respondents indicated that they have received help with food and 37.7% indicated that they skipped or cut back on the size of their meals because there was not enough money for food. The percentage of food distribution, for the agency, has increased. For instance, in 2021, SCCAP distributed 42,108 food boxes which has increased from 2020 (39,038 food boxes) by 7.86%.

- **Cost of Living-Employment Wages.** While the cost of living has increased, employment wages have not kept pace with the cost of living. According to the Community Needs Assessment, when respondents were asked where their household income comes from 258 of them responded “wages from employment”. However, when they were asked if they were able to save up for the following: 346 said no for emergencies, 366 said no for child’s education, 363 said no for vacation, and 356 said no to retirement.

Internal Factors

The following internal (agency) strengths and areas for improvement were identified in the community needs assessment, as well as in discussion with staff and Board members. Strengths provide insight into promising or successful practices that could be continued or carried into new initiatives. Areas for improvement shed light on potential priorities for the 2022 Strategic Plan.

❖ *Strengths and Accomplishments*

- **SCCAP catalyzes community partnerships.** Strengthened partnerships with local businesses and organizations resulted in SCCAP gaining volunteers, expertise, and funding to support SCCAP programs.
- **SCCAP successfully expanded our Family Stability Services including food, housing, and utility assistance.** Within the last five years, we have added the Continuum of Care Rapid-Rehousing program and the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program. SCCAP vastly expanded rent assistance and food distribution to families in need during the COVID pandemic.
- **SCCAP recognizes the need for both short- and long-term solutions.** In addition to emergency services, SCCAP has continued providing services that contribute to long-term “self-sufficiency.” Examples include Self-Help Housing, SSI/SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery (SOAR), and the Continuum of Care programs. The Continuum of Care (COC) Program works with homeless families and individuals to find and maintain permanent housing and become self-sufficient by setting goals, budgeting, and receiving monthly case management.
- **SCCAP is continually improving customer service.** SCCAP has found ways to bridge different programs across the agency via common elements (e.g., financial literacy services). This decreases duplication of services and burdens on the client. SCCAP has also improved accessibility among underserved populations, including a position dedicated to outreach in the northern counties.
- **SCCAP sought to expand our boundaries with new and innovative programs.** For example, SCCAP is nationally recognized for Home Energy Management LLC (HEM), a for-profit corporation that provides energy conservation services to homes and businesses. HEM is used to support SCCAP programs. Our Self-Help Housing Program has partnered with the local high school and Community Council of Idaho’s Youth Build Program to aid students in learning general construction skills.
- **SCCAP is committed to financial sustainability.** SCCAP has successfully obtained new sources of funding. Assets were reallocated to further develop the Self-Help Housing program. SCCAP continued to increase support for the food program with funds raised through the annual 60 Hours to Fight Hunger and Empty Bowls events.
- **Media Communication about SCCAP within the community is improving.** Continued maintenance of the agency’s website and increased use of social media have opened up additional avenues for outreach and donations.

❖ *Areas for Additional Focus or Improvement*

- **Community Awareness of SCCAP and services offered.** When members of the community are fully aware of SCCAP services, there may be more opportunities for collaboration and partnership. As a result, clients may be referred to SCCAP for the services they need.
- **Low-Income Awareness of SCCAP and the services offered.** Many in the low-income community remain unfamiliar with SCCAP services. This means that clients may not be requesting all the services they need, or even worse, may not be approaching SCCAP at all. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee suspect this may be particularly true in outlying areas, or a diverse population.
- **Integration of Services.** SCCAP has made significant strides in integrating client services—improving its “wrap-around” approach and reducing client burden. However, the Strategic Planning Committee acknowledged that more work can be done in this area. In particular, the group highlighted a need for more cross-training and communication among staff.
- **Recruitment of Qualified Staff.** A low unemployment rate (and less than competitive wages) makes it difficult to recruit qualified staff for open positions. This directly impacts both the quality and availability of services for clients.
- **Retention of Existing Staff.** The Strategic Planning Committee recognizes the importance of open communication and proactively addressing employee morale, job satisfaction, and professional development. The committee believes that employees who feel valued through effective communication with leadership and staff members will stay longer, be more effective team members, have better interactions with clients, and experience less burnout.
- **Board Engagement.** Board member engagement is a value and strength at SCCAP. The Strategic Planning Committee recognized the need to proactively maintain this strength. In particular, the group mentioned finding ways to assist Board members with the steep learning curve that comes when joining (or speaking on behalf of) the agency. Additionally, the committee suggested making better use of Board member “star power” in the community as well as within the agency (e.g., mentoring, professional development, program development).



STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Our Agency Priorities for 2022-2027

The following six goals were selected based on the current landscape facing low-income families, our community, and our agency.

Goal 1: Reduce barriers to affordable housing among low-income individuals and families.

Goal 2: Increase the amount of safe, healthy, and affordable housing available in our community.

Goal 3: Seek new or strengthen existing partnerships to increase access to fresh produce and healthy foods.

Goal 4: Increase awareness about SCCAP within our community. Help all community members realize their stake in reducing poverty, and how they can contribute.

Goal 5: Improve recruitment, retention, and professional development of highly effective staff at SCCAP.

Goal 6: Improve communication agency-wide to increase productivity, effectiveness, staff moral and overall agency wellness.

For each of the six goals above, the following pages outline the following elements:

- **Strategies** — these are the methods we believe are necessary to accomplish our 2022-2027 goals.
- **First Steps** — these are the potential first steps to be taken in each goal area. *(Each goal team will need to break these steps into manageable tasks, assign them to appropriate team members, and determine reasonable timelines for completion).*
- **Outcomes** — these are the changes in behaviors, conditions, attitudes, or knowledge we expect to see as a result of our work.
- **National Goals** - each SCCAP goal is linked with one or more national Community Action program goals. The National Goals are:
 - 1) Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security
 - 2) Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity
 - 3) People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.



**2022-2027
GOAL 1**

Reduce barriers to affordable housing among low-income families.

Strategies and First Steps

1.1 Improve household financial wellness through SCCAP Family and Individual Stability Program services.

- A. *Identify new private, local, state, and/or federal grant sources that could be used to expand Family Stability Program services, particularly among those populations facing disproportionate barriers to housing.*
- B. *Continue to seek agencies or private donors who are willing to sponsor a SOAR case worker (full or part-time).*

1.1 Increase collaboration with landlords and partners to address barriers to affordable housing.

- A. *Evaluate promising practices for engaging landlords and other community members in overcoming housing barriers.*
- B. *Create safe opportunities (e.g., listening sessions) where landlords can share their experiences with low-income renters. Actively work with them to float ideas and get suggestions. More specifically, what would it take for them to rent to a family with obvious barriers? Do they have ideas for SCCAP to pursue or consider?*

1.3 Explore tenant education or other incentive programs.

- A. *Explore promising practices around tenant education and/or certification. This includes incentives for completion (e.g., application fees waived, security deposits covered, priority consideration of landlord or management companies).*
- B. *Work with Board to reach out to landlords for buy-in. This includes getting their suggestions for the curriculum, and finding out what it would take for them to prioritize program graduates during the rental application process.*

1.4 Increase resources available to assist with housing costs (including deposits and application fees).

- A. *In addition to private, local, state, or federal grant sources, work with Board to find community sponsors for housing programs. For example, are there groups or organizations who are willing to match Individual Development Account (IDA) contributions for move-in costs? To pay for rental application fees or security deposit when a household successfully completes education or other programs?*

1.5 Bolster services help households maintain affordable housing once they have it.

- A. *Work within the agency, with the Board, and with community partners to create a plan for systematically following up and providing support to newly housed families. Examples might include IDA incentives, energy education visits, or regular check-ins. Encourage households to provide feedback about their experience, and use learning to improve targeted services in the future.*



Primary Outcomes

Assist more households to obtain affordable housing
Households maintain affordable housing for longer periods of time

Secondary Outcomes

Improved financial wellness among SCCAP clients (decreased debt-to-income ratio)
Increased collaboration with landlords, and community partners to address household barriers to affordable rental housing
Increased education available for low-income tenants
Increased resources available to assist with housing costs (including deposits and application fees)



Link to National Community Action Goals

NATIONAL GOAL 1 — Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security



**2022-2027
GOAL 2**

Increase the amount of safe, healthy, and affordable housing available in our community.

Strategies and First Steps

1.1 Increase the number of new, affordable housing units built through the SCCAP Self-Help Housing program each year.

- A. *Identify new private, local, state, and/or federal resources that could be used to expand the Self-Help Housing program.*
- B. *Identify unique ways that individuals or groups in the community can take ownership of program success. For example, could organizations or companies sponsor a home or one room in a home? Work with Board to find community sponsors for the program.*
- C. *Identify ways to provide more opportunities to lower-income households, by finding less expensive housing unit options.*

2.2 Increase the number of existing affordable housing units where energy efficiency, health, and/or safety are improved (through SCCAP Weatherization programs).

- A. *Identify new private, utility-based, local, state, and/or federal grant sources that could be used to expand funding for health, safety, and energy efficiency improvements. This includes looking beyond traditional energy efficiency or housing rehab grants to funders who have a particular interest in the well-being of specific low-income populations.*

2.3 Cooperate with other organizations in the region to address health and safety needs within existing, affordable housing stock.

- A. *Collaborate with groups and organizations who regularly inspect affordable housing units or visit the homes of low-income households (e.g., Housing Authority, aging services, Meals on Wheels, Children's Services, faith-based organizations, and so on).*
- B. *Work with these partners to identify gaps that SCCAP can help fill. For example, are there agencies with limited funding to address housing needs that could be maximized through the SCCAP partnership? Are there very specific unmet needs (types of repair or particular populations) where SCCAP could apply for grant funding (in partnership with other organizations or solo?)*

2.4 Increase SCCAP's role in local and regional housing development discussions.

- A. *Explore ways that other Community Action Agencies across the United States are shaping affordable housing development in their communities. Initiate and/or continue conversations between the agency (including Board members) and leaders in the community. Is SCCAP considered a local low-income housing expert? How could SCCAP expand its role in development discussions?*



Primary Outcomes

- Increased number of affordable housing units available in the community.
- Increased health, safety, and efficiency of existing affordable housing units in the community.
- Increased number of affordable housing units in communities receiving health, safety, or efficiency improvements.

Secondary Outcomes

- Increased resources available for the development of new units through the Self-Help Housing Program
- Increased resources available for health, safety, and efficiency improvements through the Weatherization program
- Increased partnerships/collaboration to address the development of new affordable housing units
- Increased partnerships/collaboration to address improvement of existing affordable housing



Link to National Community Action Goals

NATIONAL GOAL 1 — Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security

NATIONAL GOAL 2 — Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity



2022-2027
GOAL 3

Seek new or strengthen existing partnerships to increase access to fresh produce and healthy foods.

Strategies and First Steps

3.1 Explore new sources of fresh produce.

- A. Maintain and increase partnerships with food producers

3.2 Increase free or low-cost food storage.

- A. *Look for other storage companies that will provide less expensive or free space*
- B. *Expand SCCAP storage capacity in dry and freezer space on-site*

3.3 Identify new funding sources for food and food operation costs.

- A. *Investigate a way to change funding allocation among categories*
- B. *Research new grant opportunities*



Primary Outcomes

Distribute healthy food and produce to families

We have adequate storage space for the food available for distribution

Secondary Outcomes

Families will have access to healthy food

Link to National Community Action Goals



NATIONAL GOAL 1 — Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security

NATIONAL GOAL 2 — Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity



**2022-2027
GOAL 4**

Increase awareness about SCCAP within our community. Help all community members realize their stake in reducing poverty, and how they can contribute.

Strategies and First Steps

4.1 Continue expanding outreach efforts to inform people of services.

- A. *Reach out to low-income members in the community (especially in outlying areas or hard-to-reach populations). This learning could be done through customer satisfaction surveys, follow-up phone calls, or listening sessions. Find out how they learned about SCCAP services, and what else they “wish they had known sooner.” Get their suggestions regarding new, creative approaches for outreach.*
- B. *Identify and implement practices that ensure existing clients know about the full range of services.*

4.2 Proactively reach out to groups in the community to raise awareness of poverty, how it impacts them, and how they can help.

- A. *Identify a set of materials/curriculum to be used when talking with community groups about poverty. Move beyond brochures and PowerPoint presentations to hands-on activities that help people make the connection between poverty and their own lives (e.g., [Compassion Project](#) or [Community Action Poverty Simulation](#)). Materials or curriculum should be scalable based on the size of the group and amount of time available—but should all include an opportunity for groups to brainstorm ways they can use their unique skills, networks, or assets as part of the solution.*
- B. *Work within the Board to identify groups in the community that is not currently partnered with SCCAP. This may include organizations that are not necessarily “community service” oriented. Proactively reach out to present information on poverty in our area (see above), as well as ways that SCCAP helps.*

4.4 Make it easier for community members to learn about volunteer opportunities and get involved.

- A. *Work with managers and their teams to identify volunteer opportunities throughout the agency. This should include a wide range of options for people with unique skills (e.g., web design, grant writing, advertising, construction, and public speaking). Volunteer opportunities should also take into consideration people’s varied work schedules, physical limitations, geographical locations, etc.*

4.4 Provide volunteer or civic engagement training to the community, including low-income households.

- A. *Provide guidance and training for community members wishing to become advocates for low-income populations. For example, what are the steps someone should take to speak about low-income issues with legislators? Materials/curriculum should be scalable based on the level of engagement.*
- B. *Provide guidance and training for community members wishing to volunteer. What are some of the ground rules when volunteering around low-income families (e.g., confidentiality, safety, boundaries)?*



Primary Outcomes

- More low-income households reach out to SCCAP for services
- More service providers reach out to SCCAP to refer households or request information
- More community members reach out to SCCAP to learn about volunteering, partnerships, or poverty
- More community members (including low-income households) are engaged in volunteering/advocacy

Secondary Outcomes

- Increased Community members’ knowledge of poverty in community (and how it impacts them)
- More community members know how and where they can volunteer or advocate for others

Link to National Community Action Goals



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



2022-2027
GOAL 5

Improve recruitment, retention, and professional development of highly effective staff at SCCAP.

Strategies and First Steps

5.1 Develop a pipeline of talent from which to draw future SCCAP employees.

- A. *Identify volunteer or internship opportunities for students considering careers in social services, housing, energy, advocacy, policy, etc. Proactively reach out to advisors or career centers at schools to learn the kinds of internships students are looking for (skills, hours, incentives, etc.).*
- B. *Advertise volunteer or internship opportunities via high school programs with career tracks, community colleges, and universities. Build relationships with internship coordinators who will help market SCCAP as a great place to intern, and also call SCCAP first when a student is looking for opportunities.*

5.2 Expand the net used to reach potential new hires.

- A. *Broaden methods used to advertise open positions. This includes expanding use of social media, as well as posting vacancies on social service Listservs, forums, or blogs, etc. (local, state, and national). Use university career centers to reach candidates who are interested in a community action related career and actively seeking opportunities to get their foot in the door.*
- B. *Evaluate the feasibility of "under-filling" positions with candidates who demonstrate the minimum set of skills and traits necessary to enter a position, with additional wages or promotion contingent on completion of training or professional development plan.*

5.3 Conduct survey of existing staff to identify areas where retention efforts should be focused.

- A. *Develop and conduct a survey of current SCCAP employees to identify what they like most about working at SCCAP, where improvement is needed, and what additional tools they need to do their jobs effectively. The survey will be conducted annually, with the initial set of results used to set benchmarks as well as provide direction to management.*

5.4 Bring together a group of staff with and without Board members who focus on employee morale, inclusivity, recognition, development, and retention.

- A. *Each team within the agency will send at least one staff member forward to participate in a committee focused on staff retention. The Board will have at least one representative participating as well. Using results from the staff survey, this committee will develop a "charter," identify priorities, and create an action plan for moving forward.*

5.5 Provide a competitive compensation package to all employees

- B. *Explore alternative funding scenarios*



Primary Outcomes

Increased pool of qualified applicants for SCCAP positions
Increased tenure (length of time employed) among SCCAP employees
Increased employee satisfaction with professional development opportunities

Secondary Outcomes

Increased amount of employee feedback regarding organizational culture and job satisfaction
Improved employee feedback regarding organizational culture and job satisfaction
Increased engagement of committee dedicated to maintaining staff morale



Link to National Community Action Goals

NATIONAL GOAL 1 — Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security

NATIONAL GOAL 2 — Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity



2022-2027
GOAL 6

Improve communication agency-wide to increase productivity, effectiveness, staff morale, and overall agency wellness.

Strategies and First Steps

6.1 Enhance and expand systems of communication throughout the agency

A. Survey staff about communication within the organization

- a) *Results shared with*
 - *Board*
 - *All Staff*
- b) *Administration will disseminate the results and take action as necessary*
- c) *Survey to be conducted annually to show progress*

B. Develop regular and consistent systems of communications

- a) *Possible platforms of communication*
 - *Calendars*
 - *Podcasts*
 - *Emails*
 - *Program reports*
 - *Staff meetings*
 - *Potlucks/BBQ*
 - *Social media*



Primary Outcomes

Increased staff morale as they will be more informed and feel valued, included, and engaged
Improved productivity and effectiveness
Better job satisfaction and increased employee retention

Secondary Outcomes

Improved interpersonal wellness
Increase organizational knowledge and pride



Link to National Community Action Goals

NATIONAL GOAL 1 — Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security

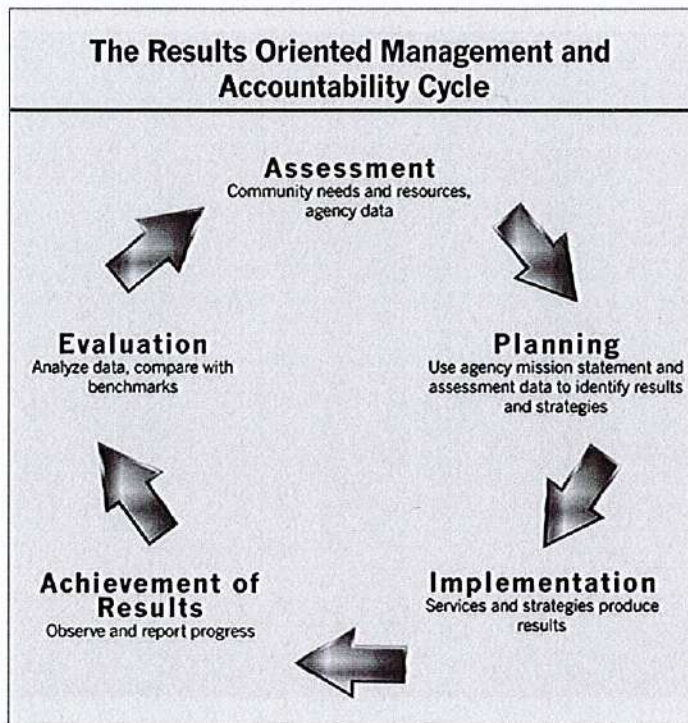
NATIONAL GOAL 2 — Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity



MOVING FORWARD

Implementation, Results, and Evaluation

Community Action Agencies across the country use the *Results Oriented Management and Accountability* (ROMA) framework to assure their work aligns with national program goals and priorities.



Source: National Association for State Community Services Programs

As illustrated above, strategic planning is a critical part of the ROMA model. **However, to be successful, the strategic planning process itself must move through all five steps of the ROMA cycle.**

Between August and November of 2022, SCCAP staff and Board members engaged in both “assessment” and “planning”—the first two phases in the ROMA cycle. Their work culminated in the development of this strategic plan.

However, most of the heavy lifting lies in the next steps. In the months immediately following Board approval of this plan, the SCCAP Certified ROMA Trainer and ROMA Implementer (SCCAP ROMA Professionals) will be responsible for implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation of outcomes. At minimum, this includes the following:

- **Communication and engagement** — for an agency strategic plan to be successful, it is critical that everyone is on the same page. This may include reviewing the plan with all staff and Board members, then asking each to identify one or more goal areas where 1) their everyday work will contribute to success, and 2) where they’d like to make unique contributions as part of a Goal Team.

- **Creating detailed action plans** — this report provides the ROMA professionals) with strategies and potential first steps for each goal. However, each goal will need to be broken down into manageable tasks, assigned to appropriate team members in order to determine reasonable timelines for completion.
- **Periodic meetings to monitor and report progress** — the SCCAP ROMA Professionals will meet periodically to report progress, evaluate outcomes, and if necessary, identify areas where revisions or changes to the plan are necessary. Any proposed revisions to the plan will be presented to the Board for approval.
- **Annual progress report** — the SCCAP ROMA Professionals will report outcomes to the Board once every 12 months (at minimum). Wherever possible, milestones will also be shared with staff, stakeholders, and the community.



Appendix A

CSBG Organizational Standards

The following section explicitly outlines SCCAP compliance with Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards during design and implementation of the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan.

Strategic Planning Organizational Standards

CSBG Organizational Standards under Category 6 relate directly to design and implementation of the agency strategic plan.

Standard 6.1 *The organization has an agency wide strategic plan in place that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.*

South Central Community Action Partnership (SCCAP) is currently working under a strategic plan approved by their governing board in September of 2017. Upon Board approval, this strategic plan will replace the existing plan for a period of up to five years.

Standard 6.2 *The approved strategic plan addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.*

The following table outlines how each goal aligns with one or more of the three categories identified in Standard 6.2. Additionally, the goals on pages 12-17 of this report include a link to National Community Action Goals.

SCCAP Strategic Plan Goal		Standard 6.2
Goal 1	Reduce barriers to affordable housing among low-income individuals and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.
Goal 2	Increase the amount of safe, healthy, and affordable housing available in our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalization of low-income communities.
Goal 3	Seek new or strengthen existing partnerships to increase access to fresh produce and healthy foods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to achieve results in all three areas.
Goal 4	Increase awareness about SCCAP within our community. Help all community members realize their stake in reducing poverty, and how they can contribute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalization of low-income communities • Reduction of poverty
Goal 5	Improve recruitment, retention, and professional development of highly effective staff at SCCAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to achieve results in all three areas.
Goal 6	Improve communication agency-wide to increase productivity, effectiveness, staff morale and overall agency wellness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to achieve results in all three areas.

Standard 6.3 *The approved strategic plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals.*

The following table outlines how each goal aligns with one or more of the three categories identified in Standard 6.3. Additionally, the goals on pages 12-17 of this report include a link to National Community Action Goals.

SCCAP Strategic Plan Goal		Standard 6.3
Goal 1	Reduce barriers to affordable housing among low-income individuals and families.	<i>Family</i>
Goal 2	Increase the amount of safe, healthy, and affordable housing available in our community.	<i>Community</i>
Goal 3	Seek new or strengthen existing partnerships to increase access to fresh produce and healthy foods.	<i>Agency</i>
Goal 4	Increase awareness about SCCAP within our community. Help all community members realize their stake in reducing poverty, and how they can contribute.	<i>Community</i>
Goal 5	Improve recruitment, retention, and professional development of highly effective staff at SCCAP.	<i>Agency</i>
Goal 6	Improve communication agency-wide to increase productivity, effectiveness, staff morale and overall agency wellness.	<i>Agency</i>

Standard 6.4 *Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment, is included in the strategic planning process.*

The Strategic Planning Committee spent a considerable amount of time reviewing findings from the Community Needs Assessment Survey (conducted between June, 2021 and May, 2022). This included responses from both clients, as well as community partners and community stakeholders.

Standard 6.5 *The governing board has received an update(s) on progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan within the past 12 months.*

The agency Chief Executive Officer provided the Board with an update on 2017 Strategic Plan goals and outcomes on September 16, 2021. The SCCAP ROMA Professionals will provide the Board with progress reports on this 2022 Strategic Plan every 12 months (at minimum).

Other CSBG Organizational Standards

Design and implementation of the agency strategic plan intersects with several other CSBG organizational standards (in addition to Category 6 outlined above).

Standard 1.1 *The organization demonstrates low-income individuals' participation in its activities.*

The goals and strategies outlined in this 2022 strategic plan were heavily influenced by client and low income community member responses from the most recent Community Needs Assessment. Additionally, several of the strategies identified across this plan rely on direct engagement (participation) of low-income households.

Standard 1.2 *The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment*

As noted above, the process to develop this 2022 Strategic Plan included a significant amount of time dedicated to evaluation of Community Needs Assessment responses. This is also reflected in the goals and strategies proposed throughout the plan.

Standard 1.3 *The organization has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the governing board.*

SCCAP periodically collects analyzes customer satisfaction input through survey cards that customers fill out after their interaction with SCCAP. These surveys are analyzed, reported to the Board annually and informs how service is improved.

Standard 4.1 *The governing board has reviewed the organization's mission statement within the past 5 years and assured that: 1) the mission addresses poverty, and 2) the organization's programs and services are in alignment with the mission.*

The SCCAP mission statement was slightly revised during the 2022 strategic planning process. A review was also conducted for this 2022 strategic plan to assure that the mission addresses poverty, and that the organization's programs and services are in alignment with the mission. Additionally, all goals and strategies proposed throughout the strategic planning process were checked against the "litmus test" of the agency mission.

Standard 4.3 *The organizations Community Action plan and strategic plan document the continuous use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle or comparable systems (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). In addition, the organization documents having used the services of a ROMA certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation.*

Pages 18-19 of this report outline how this strategic plan (and planning process) align with steps in the ROMA cycle. Randy Wastradowski, a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, is a National Certified ROMA trainer. He actively participated in development of this plan, and will also take a leadership role in overseeing implementation and monitoring of the plan moving forward. Ana Del Rio, also a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, is in the process of obtaining ROMA Implementer certification and will assist with overseeing implementation and monitoring of the plan moving forward.

Standard 9.3 *The organization has presented to the governing board for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary.*

The Strategic Plan progress will be presented at SCCAP Board Meetings, at least once, throughout the year for progress reports.