



2014 - 2017 Strategic Plan

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CommunityWorks Carolina 2014 – 2017 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

CommunityWorks Carolina (CWC) opened its doors in January of 2008 as the Greenville Housing Fund through a collaborative partnership between the United Way of Greenville County, the City of Greenville and the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority. The primary focus of the organization was to increase the production of affordable housing in Greenville's low wealth communities. It is important to note that the genesis of the organization coincided with one of the greatest economic recessions in recent times. Despite the tough economy GHF and its partners supported the development of over 350 new affordable housing units in Greenville's poorest neighborhoods. In an effort to be more responsive to the challenges that resulted from high unemployment, record foreclosures, and disinvestment in low wealth neighborhoods, the Board of Directors decided it was time to redirect the organization's focus beyond housing to help stabilize low wealth families and communities.

In 2010 the organization went through its first transformation by expanding its mission to build people and places to strengthen families, neighborhoods, and communities through education, lending, and investing. This transformation allowed the organization to increase its community impact by leveraging several local resources by operating a local housing trust, becoming a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and by launching a community development credit union. Together, these leveraged resources allowed the organization to provide financing for affordable housing construction and small business, invest in community economic development and create financial products and services that have a direct impact on low wealth families and communities.

In 2012, CWC helped establish the Upstate Regional Community Development Collaborative to assess and analyze the affordable housing, economic development, and financial needs of the Upstate SC. The Collaborative published a comprehensive community needs and resources analysis to support the case for a regional CDFI as a vehicle to address common community development needs across several Upstate Communities. Using the findings and outcomes from this analysis, CWC developed a strong and flexible service delivery model to address some of the common challenges across the Upstate Region. Also during that year, the Greenville Housing Fund was renamed CommunityWorks, Inc. through a major public relations and branding campaign. In 2013, the organization expanded its service delivery model to establish a presence in the three largest Upstate Counties, including Anderson, Greenville, and Spartanburg. This growth and expansion has been carefully planned in stages to preserve the service excellence that the organization has established as a benchmark for moving forward.

In 2014, CWC plans to open a low-income federal credit union to further meet the needs of its target market. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide a road map to guide the organization to increase its collective impact across the Upstate Region so that every low wealth family and underserved community will have access to products and services that lead to financial stability, economic vitality and a rising quality of life.

Mission and Vision Statement

CommunityWorks is a non-profit financial organization committed to building a brighter future for financially underserved families and communities through education, lending, and investing. We envision robust and vibrant communities that offer the opportunity for financial stability and economic achievement for everyone.

Organizational Values

We are committed to the following:

Collaboration

Developing strategic relationships with individuals, organizations, and communities to achieve a shared vision to increase the quality of life for low wealth people and communities.

Innovation

Creating responsive and timely solutions to address the financial needs of our clients.

Integrity

Operating with honesty, fairness, dignity, and respect.

Empowerment

Equipping people with the financial knowledge and tools to become self-sufficient.

Responsibility

Adhering to business practices that are in accordance with ethical principles that reflect the highest standards of the industry and individual behavior.

Confidentiality

Protecting the sensitive and private information of our clients and partners.

Strategic Focus Areas

To carry out the **Mission and Vision** of CommunityWorks, we will focus on the following **Strategic Focus Areas**:

I. Organizational Development

A strong and flexible organization is essential to providing high quality and innovative solutions to low wealth families and communities. CommunityWorks must maintain a strong and diverse Board of Directors that has representation from across the target market and a dynamic and flexible staff that maintains a keen focus on emerging trends that impact families and communities. Operational excellence must be sustained across each service delivery area to ensure consistent and timely responses to emerging economic and financial trends.

II. Diverse Resource Streams Driving Sustainability

A successful organization must attract diverse and sustainable resources in order to deliver high-impact programs, products and services that change lives and improve communities. CommunityWorks must develop and maintain a balanced approach to generating sustainable revenues through programs and service offerings and working with stakeholders that invest capital into the organization as part of their individual mission. This balance must be managed and sustained so that each community has a stake in the success in the organization. This approach will ensure that CommunityWorks will be an attractive investment opportunity for regional and nation financial institutions seeking long-term partnerships.

III. Innovative Products and Services

The overall success of CommunityWorks must be measured by how well individuals, families and communities benefit from the organizations programs and services. CWC must create a well-developed toolbox of innovative and flexible solutions to meet the challenges faced by low wealth families and underserved communities. CommunityWorks must establish itself as an agile organization recognized as a valuable regional asset in transforming people and communities.

IV. Strategic Collaborations and Advocacy

To create sustainable community impact CommunityWorks must partner with and advocate for organizations that share the same vision of financial stability and economic achievement for everyone. These relationships must provide a seamless wrap-around experience for clients and also provide several strategic partners to strengthen the organization when seeking local, state and federal funding resources.

Strategic Goals

I. Organizational Development

A strong and flexible organization is essential to providing high quality and innovative solutions to low wealth families and communities. CommunityWorks must maintain a strong and diverse Board of Directors that has representation from across the target market and a dynamic and flexible staff that maintains a keen focus on emerging trends that impact families and communities. Operational excellence must be sustained across each service delivery area to ensure consistent and timely responses to emerging economic and financial trends.

Evidence of Future Success

- Diverse and actively engaged Board members
- High capacity staff with flexible and adaptive skill sets
- Well documented organizational policies and procedures
- Achieve a successful “CARS” rating

1. Long-Range Goal: Develop Board and Staff to strengthen capacity and engagement.

Objectives

1. Develop a Board Annual Operating Plan to address Board development, fund raising and succession planning
2. Review and update Board Policies and Procedures to clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations
3. Develop and implement an Annual Staffing Plan to support growth and expansion targets
4. Implement Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool every two years and act on the findings

2. Long-Range Goal: Attract, retain and fully leverage a dynamic management team and staff.

Objectives

1. Review and update all job descriptions and align them with Program Maps and expectations of performance
2. Develop and implement individual Staff Development Plans and review progress annually

3. Long-Range Goal: Establish and maintain operational excellence across the service delivery area.

Objectives

1. Develop a CommunityWorks' Procedural Manual with consistent operational policies and procedures
2. Use the Program Maps to document key resource relationships in each service delivery area
3. Develop and implement program performance targets for each service delivery area
4. Achieve a successful "CARS" rating that measures the organization's community impact and financial strength

II. Diverse Resource Streams Driving Sustainability

A successful organization must attract diverse and sustainable resources in order to deliver high-impact programs, products and services that change lives and improve communities. CommunityWorks must develop and maintain a balanced approach to generating sustainable revenues through programs and service offerings and working with stakeholders that invest capital into the organization as part of their individual mission. This balance must be managed and sustained so that each community has a stake in the success in the organization. This approach will ensure that CommunityWorks will be an attractive investment opportunity for regional and nation financial institutions seeking long-term partnerships.

Evidence of Future Success

- A successful capitalization/fundraising plan and strategy
- Increasing number of regional and national partnerships
- Strong relationships with resource providers in each service delivery area

1. Long-Range Goal: Develop an awareness campaign to educate and inform stakeholders and funders.

Objectives

1. Identify local needs and align with key resources and funders in each service delivery area
2. Develop a marketing awareness tool that captures successful outcomes for each program and service

3. Develop and implement a series of communication events to educate and inform potential and future funders

2. Long-Range Goal: Develop and grow revenue generating products and services to drive sustainability.

Objectives

1. Assess and rank each product and service for current and future revenue generation in each service delivery area
2. Develop an annual plan to fully leverage the revenue potential of each program, product and service
3. Track, measure and monitor results quarterly

3. Long-Range Goal: Establish and maintain a diverse cadre of funders and investors with mission interest.

Objectives

1. Develop and implement a capitalization/fundraising plan to include a mix of debt, equity, and grants
2. Identify local and regional organizations that share similar mission interest with CommunityWorks
3. Develop a quarterly meeting schedule to explore opportunities to develop mutually beneficial relationships

4. Long-Range Goal: Develop strong relationships with high-wealth partners.

Objectives

1. Develop and cultivate a list of high-wealth individuals that resonate with CommunityWorks' Mission and Vision
2. Plan a series of strategic activities to engage Board members to invite the participation of potential future partners

III. Innovative Products and Services

The overall success of CommunityWorks must be measured by how well individuals, families and communities are impacted by the organizations programs and services. Having a well-developed toolbox of innovative and flexible solutions to meet the challenges faced by low wealth families and underserved communities CommunityWorks must establish itself as an agile organization recognized as a valuable regional asset in transforming people and communities.

Evidence of Future Success

- Update market analysis and demand
- A successfully operating credit union to grow client base
- A keen understanding of current and emerging client/customer and community needs
- Achieve measureable success targets for each product and service

1. Long-Range Goal: Grow and sustain effective products and services.

Objectives

1. Complete market analysis and demand study to guide product development and delivery
2. Set multi-year growth and revenue targets for each service delivery area
3. Use the Program Maps and Annual Staffing Plan to implement annual growth strategies
4. Annually assess the alignment of products and services to match individual and community needs

2. Long-Range Goal: Utilize client market data from the credit union to drive new product development and enhance technical support services.

Objectives

1. Develop a tool to capture and prioritize all client needs data
2. Review and utilize client data to evaluate product improvement and expansion opportunities
3. Establish a diverse review committee to consider new product and service offerings

IV. Strategic Collaborations and Advocacy

To create sustainable community impact CommunityWorks must partner with and advocate for organizations that share the same vision of financial stability and economic achievement for everyone. These relationships must provide a seamless wrap-around experience for clients and also provide several strategic partners to strengthen the organization when seeking local, state and federal funding resources.

Evidence of Future Success

- An accurate listing of key service providers in each service delivery area
- Strong relationships with key individuals and organizations with shared mission interest
- A strong advocacy and support strategy focused on financial stability and economic achievement
- High referral recommendations from local and regional human services organizations

1. Long-Range Goal: Leverage and sustain existing partnerships.

Objectives

1. Develop a series of key messages for Board and Staff to use when engaging stakeholders
2. Provide regularly scheduled communications meetings to share organizational successes and emerging opportunities
3. Structure ad hoc committees to engage partner organizations in participating in key CommunityWorks initiatives
4. Evaluate existing partnerships and explore opportunities to grow the relationships

2. Long-Range Goal: Create new partnerships to support and sustain the regional footprint.

Objectives

1. Obtain/maintain an accurate listing of all community partners and providers in each Upstate Community
2. Leverage regional Board members to initiate and establish relationships with key funders and potential partners
3. Develop key messages for Board members to use in developing new relationships with mission-similar individuals

3. Long-Range Goal: Develop and nurture relationships with referral organizations to enhance client experiences.

Objectives

1. Create a comprehensive matrix of referral organizations that could benefit CommunityWorks' clients
2. Establish a strong working relationship with each referral organization
3. Develop a joint organizational Client/Customer Survey to evaluate the effectiveness of each relationship
4. Plan bi-annual client success celebrations with referral organizations to increase community awareness

4. Long-Range Goal: Create communications tools to enhance advocacy for low wealth families and communities.

Objectives

1. Develop a simple package of key information that provides a situational assessment of CommunityWorks' clients
2. Identify key politicians, faith based leaders and community leaders to educate and inform on opportunities to impact underserved individuals, families and communities
3. Leverage existing regional, statewide and nationwide relations to support mission-driven advocacy efforts