

Community Action Organization of Western New York 2018 – 2020 Strategic Plan

Prepared by: L. Nathan Hare, President and CEO

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I. Executive Summary:

The CAO 2018 – 2020 Strategic Plan focuses on both the needs of the communities in Erie and Niagara Counties that we serve, and upon the needs of the CAO, as an organization, to achieve and to improve upon our achievement of our agency’s vision, mission and goals.

Through our assessment of the needs of the Erie and Niagara County communities, the CAO has developed a profile of what needs the CAO can redress directly, and through indirect services through partnerships or other collaborative relationships.

The CAO developed a profile of how we see our agency’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) through our internal assessments, and our work with the agency’s administrators, and our Board. We also gleaned insights from our surveys of the communities of customer/clients of the agency, our agency partners, our volunteers and our direct service staff,

From our analysis of this framework of insights, observations, research and experiences the CAO has developed a strategic plan defining strategic priorities of how the agency will work over the next three years to achieve its vision to **“promote opportunities for low-income families and individuals to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency through advocacy, partnerships and services within the community.”**

II. Introduction of the Strategic Plan’s Development

The strategic plan was developed in part through a Community Needs Assessment drawn from a study of statistical reports and surveys of CAO Board Members, Agency Administrators, CAO Partner Agencies, Volunteers and members of the communities of people served by the agency. The CAO convened panels from each of our twelve major program centers to conduct a SWOT analysis. Additionally,

we convened panels of our CAO Board Members, our Human Resources department, our Business Office, our Office of Program Administration and our Information Technology Department. We used a ranking system where agency administration ranked the top seven strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTs), with 7 as their highest priority and 1 as their lowest of their top seven. Similarly, with the program centers and the office of program administration, each cohort ranked their top five SWOTs, with 5 being the highest priority and 1 being the lowest of their top five. We averaged out the scores from the agency-wide central administration cohorts, and those from the agency-wide program center cohorts, to develop a profile of the collective strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats perceived by the stakeholders of our agency as a whole.

We then asked each of the cohorts to provide a recommendation for how we might build on the strengths they identified, how to reduce or eliminate the weaknesses they identified, how we might seize the opportunities they identified, and how we might mitigate any threats to the agency they may have identified.

This approach provided a strategic framework around which the strategic priorities and strategic plan for the next three years has been built.

III. CSBG and ROMA Mandates

A. Organizational Standards

The CAO has integrated into its strategic planning each of the following CSBG Organizational Standards, including: consumer input and involvement, community engagement, community assessment, organizational leadership, board governance, strategic planning, human resource management, financial operations and oversight, and data and analysis. The CAO seeks to achieve the following in the course of creating and implementing its strategic plan:

Goal 1) Assess organizational capacity and performance

Goal 2) Coordinate and lead activities related to implementation of Organizational Standards

Goal 3) Use the Organizational Self-Assessment Tools that have been developed by the Center of Excellence (COE) to assist CAAs in conducting a self-assessment and provide web-based and in-person training on how to use them.

Goal 4) Collaborate with CSBG T/TA partners and stakeholder organizations to insure achievement of the Organizational Standards.

Goal 5) Make optimum use of the CSBG T/TA Resource Center and its relevant Organizational Standards tools and resources.

To this end, the CAO of Western New York will continue to work to move beyond mere compliance with Organizational Standards and toward excellence.

B. ROMA Mandate

The CAO promotes a comprehensive, progressive approach to empowering families to achieve self-sufficiency. The CAO approach exemplifies the CSBG philosophy of providing individuals and families a hand up, not a handout, realizing that long-term success in maintaining family stability, rebuilding communities, one family at a time, and self-sufficiency are effective investments and productive uses of federal funds.

1. Results Oriented Management Principles

- Assess poverty needs and conditions within the community.
- Define a clear anti-poverty mission for the CSBG Network and the strategies and services to address those needs, both immediate and longer term, in the context of existing resources and opportunities in the community.
- Identify specific improvements, or results, to be achieved among people with low-incomes and communities in which they live.
- Organize and implement programs, services, and strategies within the agency and among partnering organizations, to achieve anticipated results.

2. Results Oriented Accountability Principles

- Develop and implement processes to identify, measure, and record improvements in the condition of people with low-incomes and the communities in which they live that result from CSBG Network intervention.
- Use information about outcomes, or results, among agency tripartite boards

and staff to determine overall effectiveness; inform annual and long-range planning; and promote new funding and community partnership activities.

- Encourage state CSBG offices and state CAA associations to work in coordination to advance ROMA performance-based concepts among CSBG Eligible Entities through ongoing training and technical assistance.

IV. Assessment Summary

The Assessment Summary lists the main resource documents the CAO used to develop its Needs Analysis and Strategic Plan, discussing the main findings from the SWOT analysis; review of the vision, mission, and values; and any other research or activities. The CAO used the following tools to develop its profile of the strategic needs and objectives embraced in this strategic plan:

- A. The Community Assessment
- B. The Community Needs Surveys
- C. Analysis of Service Gaps and Priorities
- D. The Agency-wide SWOT Analysis

The Community Needs Surveys were conducted with separate groups of CAO Board Members, CAO Clients/Customers served, CAO Agency Administrators and Line Staff, CAO Partner/Collaborator Agencies and of CAO Volunteers.

A. The Community Assessment

To develop this needs assessment, information was integrated from several sources. The New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA) produces a snap shot of poverty indicators every year as a part of its Annual Poverty Report. Because each year's report tabulates the same indicators, it was possible to use, in our case the 2013 and 2017 Annual Poverty Reports, to assess trends that could inform our assessment of current needs. That comparison and analysis is included in the CAO's "**Beginning the Dialog on Poverty Community Needs Assessment 2017 – 2018**, Published: January 26, 2018, written and published by the President and CEO of the CAO, L. Nathan Hare (Can be retrieved from: <https://caowny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2017-Community-Needs-Analysis-Report.pdf>).

The Needs Assessment begins with a section entitled “Just the Facts: Snap Shot of Indicators for Erie and Niagara Counties.

It provides statistical and analytical information focused on various factors that impact on persons living at or below poverty and the communities the poor and low income live in. It assesses factors impacting on poverty through the eyes of members of the Erie and Niagara County communities. Data was incorporated from the Economic Innovation Group, a public policy research organization, which showed that **11 of the 53 most economically distressed communities in New York State are in Erie and Niagara Counties, 9 of them in the City of Buffalo.**

The Needs assessment also incorporated news articles from the Niagara Gazette and the Forbes Magazine, analyzing and confirming what research data had shown about patterns of poverty in Niagara County and that **economic conditions in Erie and Niagara County have made earning and undergraduate degree less of a shield against poverty than in the past.**

The Needs Analysis discusses trends in Education, Housing, Health, Teen Pregnancies, and Lead Poisoning. It demonstrates that the two County area and their big cities have been effective in reducing teen pregnancies. However, such pregnancies remain a key factor in the incidence of poverty in this area.

Analyses included in the Dialog On Poverty Report, provided by the Buffalo News and the New York Times, shine light on childhood poverty, supported by a census tract and census map depiction of where childhood poverty is most pronounced in Erie and Niagara Counties, and an analysis of graduation rates specific to the City of Buffalo.

Our Needs Analysis incorporates information gleaned from members of the community, including customer/clients of several of CAO’s programs, Partner Agencies and Organizations, Community Members and a survey that incorporated CAO Board Members, Staff and Volunteers. These surveys provided excellent insight into the manner in which varying stakeholders perceive the needs of the communities of people we serve.

Finally, **the Needs Analysis provided a look at how the CAO’s allocation of its resources aligns with the needs identified by the stakeholders incorporated in the surveys** and a comparison of the characteristics of the

people actually served by the CAO over the past year, to the characteristics of the overall poor in Erie and Niagara Counties as a whole.

B. The Community Needs and Client Satisfaction Surveys

A sample of the Community Needs Survey instrument is provided below.

Needs Assessment Feedback Survey

1. Did the assessment cover a full range of the Erie and Niagara County community needs?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____
2. Is "mal-employment" (having a college degree, but working in a job that requires a high school diploma or less) a significant issue?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____
3. Should the CAO increase its emphasis on providing education and employment opportunities specifically focused on women?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____
4. Should the CAO increase its emphasis on providing education and employment opportunities specifically focused on women and men with children?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____
5. Should the CAO perform an analysis of where its programs are located in relation to the "most Distressed" communities report by the Economic Innovation Group?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____
6. Research suggests that part of the problem for the poor is lack of knowledge about the resources available to them. Should the CAO seek expanded resources to provide more case management for the customer/client base it serves?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____
7. Should the CAO seek to increase and diversify its resources and efforts to increase high school completion and post-secondary entry?
Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____

8. Is access to information about jobs and job training a significant factor in low labor force participation in Erie and Niagara Counties?

Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____

9. Should the CAO commit more of its resources to improving access to primary care in Erie and Niagara Counties?

Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____

10. Should the CAO increase its efforts to provide affordable housing and improve neighborhood housing stock?

Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____

11. Should the CAO add education and family service oriented day care to its range of services?

Yes_____ No_____ Don't know_____

12. Where do you see the greatest gaps in:

a. Populations to be served

b. Where services need to be located

c. Types of services that need to be provided

13. Given the need to prioritize use of funds

a. What would be your three highest service priorities

b. What would you de-emphasize

c. What would be your highest priority geographic areas

C. Service Gaps and Service Priorities: An Integrated View

Through the Community Needs Survey, the CAO developed a profile of Service Gaps and Service Priorities as expressed by the cohorts surveyed, including the CAO Board of Directors, Clients/Customers served, Representatives of Partner/Collaborative Agencies, Volunteers, Agency Program Administrators and Agency Line Staff. The analysis of service gaps and priorities is also based on the inferences derived from the Needs Analysis the agency conducted and submitted to the Department of State on January 26, 2018 (<https://caowny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2017-Community-Needs-Analysis-Report.pdf>). **Table 1**, below, summarizes the input of the CAO Senior Managers, surveys of Community members, agency partners, agency staff and customers making up one look at service gaps and service priorities. **Table 2** results from a survey of the members of the CAO Board of Directors and makes up the other summation. **Table 3** compares the needs identified with the services currently provided by the CAO.

Table 1 - Service Gaps and Service Priorities

| Greatest Gaps in Service | CAO Locations | Services | Priorities |
|--|--|--|--|
| Behavioral Health, Veterans Services, Homeless Services; Single Parent Homes; Poor; Ages 18 - 40, Adults ages 20 - 30; Income, Housing, Health; Age 18 - 65 African Americans; Rural Poverty | Southern Tier, Buffalo, Southern Tier of Erie County; Niagara County, Minority areas; Lower West Side of Buffalo, Lower East Side of Buffalo; Buffalo's East Side 14211 and 14215; Rural Poverty | Medication Assisted Treatment, Linkages to Housing, Job Training, Mental Health Case Management, Food Pantry; Education and Neighborhood Services; Housing, Employment and Training; Food Security and Mental Health | Education, Health Care, Emergency Services, Food Security, Financial Assistance. Prescriptions Assistance (de-emphasize Housing Repair and Sports Programs; Food, Shelter, Employment; Education, Housing, How to get to college, Drop outs, Single moms, pops and Parenting; Specific Education guidance, Youth Services, Teen Programs; Education, |

Employment Services, focus on Inner-City Neighborhoods; Child Care, Food, Education; Housing, Jobs/Training, Youth Services; Food, Mental Health, Housing

Integrating the feedback from the management team there was a strong need expressed for services to the homeless, to single parents, and to adults in the areas of housing, food and job assistance, mental health and case management, food assistance and youth programs. There was a high degree of agreement that the assessment covered a sufficient range of the Erie and Niagara County needs. It found that "mal-employment" was a significant issue, that CAO needs more resources for case management and resources to direct middle school and high school students to make more career-entry college choices. The assessment also found that the CAO needed to add education-based family day care to its' service portfolio. Further, the managers felt that the CAO was geographically well-placed and was sufficiently focused on serving single-women led households.

Service Gaps and Service Priorities: A Top - Down View

Table 2 - Service Gaps and Service Priorities

| Greatest Gaps in Service | Needed Locations | Services | Priorities |
|--|---|--|---|
| Hispanics; Residential Downtown Buffalo; Lower East Side, Lower West Side; Career Counseling and General Information/Referral; 14211 and 14215 and both the East Side and the West Side of Buffalo; East Side and West Side, Residential Downtown Buffalo; Men returning from prison; Persons with | High crime areas, low income areas; Niagara County and Buffalo outer-ring suburbs and zip codes 14211 and 14215, Inner-Cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls; Niagara County; Zip Codes 14203 - 14213 (essentially the West Side of Buffalo.) | Education, Job Readiness, Financial planning for high schoolers and youth; Education and housing; Family Resources, Emergency Services, Health Care; Jobs, Education, Housing; Half-way Housing; Senior Services; Vocational Training and Education that is career-oriented. | Safe and Affordable Housing , Job Skills and Education; Employment, Emergency Services, After-School Initiatives; Housing, College Preparation and Life Skills Training; Housing, Education and Employment with Job Preparation at the top; Jobs, Education, Health Care. |

High School Diplomas
or less;

Integrating the feedback from the CAO Board Members and from the customers served by our various programs, there was a strong need expressed for services targeting the West Side of Buffalo, as well as the East Side, and especially the residential areas of downtown Buffalo. Board members consistently identified Niagara Falls as an under-served area. The Board was very clear that jobs and training leading to jobs was the highest priority need in addition to Housing, Emergency services and services to help emerging young adults make college choices that will lead them consistently into high rates of self-sustaining employment.

From the integration of the responses to the CAO surveys of the CAO Senior Managers, surveys of Community Members, Agency Partners, Agency Staff and Customers the following classes of services were most prioritized: Education, Emergency Services, Safe and Affordable Housing, College Preparation, Employment and Job Preparation.

Additionally, the CAO compared the services identified by our survey respondents (i.e., customers, community members, partners, direct service staff and the Board members) with the services the CAO currently provides, described in Table 3 - Comparative Analysis, below.

Table 3 – Comparative Analysis

| Service Priority Identified | CAO Current Related Service |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Education | 21 st Century Schools/Head Start |
| Physical Health Care | |
| Emergency Services | Food/Clothing Pantry/CA Angels |
| Food Security | CAgro |
| Financial Assistance | FEMA |
| Prescriptions Assistance | |
| Sports Programs | Sports PLUS |
| Shelter | HOME, AHC, DHCR |
| Employment | STEPS - ETA |
| Housing | St. Martin's, H.I.R.P. |
| College Preparation and Life Skills | STEPS – ETA, Youth Services |
| Reducing High School Drop outs | 21 st Century, NURTURE |
| Service/Education for Single moms | Head Start |
| Service/Education for Single dads | Head Start |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Parenting Education | Head Start |
| Specific Career Education | Youth Services, STEPS-ETA |
| Adolescent Youth and Teen Services | Youth Services |
| Building Inner-City Neighborhoods | Masten Resource CTR |
| Child Care | Head Start/Early Head Start |
| Affordable above Standard Housing | H.I.R.P., RESTORE, AHC |
| Training Leading to Employment | |
| Mental Health | |

From this analysis of the priorities expressed by the key stakeholders in the CAO’s execution of its mission, **the following are areas of need that are not being addressed directly by the CAO: Physical Health Care, Prescriptions Assistance, Training Leading to Employment, and Mental Health.**

D. SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis enabled the CAO to gather from our stakeholders how they viewed the agency’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We gathered these stakeholder perspectives, had the cohorts prioritize them and then determined what we could tackle that was realistically within our means. Samples of stages of the analysis are provided below.

| Sample of SWOT Analysis by Agency-wide View | | |
|--|-------------|--|
| <p>Below are the SWOT indicators put forward by the Central Administration. Now prioritize <i>the 7 most important agency-wide Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.</i> Rank the highest as "7", and the lowest as "1". On the right, briefly state the "Steps" you would like to see taken to build on a Strength or Opportunity, or to lessen or eliminate a Weakness or a Threat.</p> | | |
| form completed by: | | Department: |
| SWOT Indicator – Agency-wide Strengths | Rank | Steps Recommended to Build on or Mitigate |
| a. Visionary leadership with high expectations | | |
| b. Supportive/Experienced President/CEO | | |
| c. Supportive team leaders | | |
| d. Diversity amongst staff providing service delivery for children and families | | |
| e. Strong and positive community resources | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| f. Supporting outcomes with data | | |
| g. CAO Brand Name | | |
| h. Strong Brand Recognition in communities we serve. (46,000 impacted in 2017) | | |
| i. Visionary, Capable Leadership (Mission-driven) | | |
| j. Dedicated staff that work beyond expectations to provide outstanding quality to our clients. | | |
| k. Outstanding relationship with block clubs and volunteer based community organizations | | |
| | | |

Sample Integration of SWOT Priorities

| SWOT Indicator – Agency-wide Opportunities | NICAP | Steps Recommended to Build on or Mitigate |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Create an Eastside Family and Education Campus | Goal 4.1 | Coalition centered around the UB, KULC, CAO Head Start and Catholic Charities targeting defined poor community |
| create unrestricted revenue for the CAO early childhood program (Early Childhood Services) | Goal 5.1.C.D.E. | Research opportunities available |
| To create a comprehensive system tracking and supporting student development through college (Early Childhood Services) | Goal 6.3.B.5 | |
| Build or otherwise acquire state of art facilities (Early Childhood Services) | Goal 2.1.F. | |
| small business development & support; (Masten Resource Center) | Goal 3.2.B | Developing new businesses collaborating w/Pathstone for entrepreneurial educ., facility improvement, and financing |
| building for budget tracking (YSD) | Not a NICAP | Director building spreadsheets and a binder system for our coordinators to manage spreadsheets to track expenses. |
| Create private day care models through which to extend Head Start practices to a wider population (Early Childhood Services) | Goal 6.3.A.3.4 | Continue expansion of early Childhood Day care Partnerships |
| Strengthening relationship with Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and building stronger ties with area employers | Goal 2.1.B.C. | Expand structural role with the WIB and increase job development and job matching capability |
| Increase capacity to improve access to and availability of quality housing in the City of Buffalo | Goal 2.1.B.C. Goal 2.1.B.C. | Work with the NYS Affordable Housing Corp., NYSERDA, the Housing Trust Fund and DHCR to expand opportunities |

V. Strategic Plan

The CAO Strategic Plan focuses on family, agency, and community, guided by the six broad anti-poverty goals:

Goal 1: Low-income people become more self-sufficient. (FAMILY)

Goal 2: The conditions in which low-income people live are improved. (COMMUNITY)

Goal 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community. (COMMUNITY)

Goal 4: Partnerships among supporters and providers of service to low-income people are achieved. (AGENCY)

Goal 5: Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. (AGENCY)

Goal 6: Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. (FAMILY)

Through its comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (Retrieved from: <https://caowny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2017-Community-Needs-Analysis-Report.pdf>) **and its' Community Needs Surveys, the CAP developed a framework of service gaps and service needs the CAO might fill.**

From the integration of the responses to the CAO surveys of the CAO Senior Managers, Community Members, Agency Partners, Agency Staff and Customers the following classes of services were most prioritized: Education, Emergency Services, Safe and Affordable Housing, College Preparation, Employment and Job Preparation.

The CAO then conducted a **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis**, incorporating the perspectives of CAO Board members, Program managers, Executive Managers, and Volunteers, which produced the following

From this analysis of the priorities expressed by the key stakeholders in the CAO's execution of its mission, the following are areas of need that are not being addressed directly by the CAO: Physical Health Care, Prescriptions Assistance, Training Leading to Employment, and Mental Health.

As will be seen in the Strategic plan provided below, our plan includes the creation of a pediatric and family primary health care facility in an underserved area of the City of Buffalo, and an expanded technology-supported system to connect residents to training and employment opportunities. The strategic plan addresses other priorities, including mapping the human services and housing services needs of a targeted community of residents in a low income area of Buffalo and providing case management and service coordination between cooperating agencies in this initiative. Our goal in that initiative is to demonstrate that a comprehensive effort addressing every need in a small community can produce measurably better indicators of that community's quality of life. Our plan also focuses on connecting school-age youth to after-school and out-of-school resources with the goal of reducing, if not eliminating grade failure rates and, thus, improving high school graduation rates and post-secondary education.

A. Strategic Initiative 1. Low-Income People Will Become More Self-Sufficient through obtaining employment and improving their household incomes (NICAP Goal 1.1.A. and B.),

In building upon the CAO's strengths, the CAO will work to integrate and blend agency funds to increase and diversify services to children and families.

1. Improving Employment Outcomes for Head Start and Early Head Start Families.

- The CAO will dedicate a measure of its employment and training service program specifically to find and or improve job development and job matching for adult members of Head Start and Early Head Start households (Goal 1.1.A. and B.). The CAO STEPS Employment and Training program will outreach and map the employment and training needs of 50 Head Start/Early Head Start households each week, working through the Head Start Family Partners. STEPS will make job referrals to at least 10% of those adult household members directly or through the area Workforce Investment Opportunity Act service system, with the goal of at least 3 job placements each week over the next three years.

B. Strategic Initiative 2. Expanding Opportunities through Community-Wide Partnerships (NICAP Goal 4.1) and Broadening the Resource Base to increase capacity to achieve results (NICAP Goal 5.1)

The CAO is launching the Eastside Family and Education Development Campus (EFCDC).

- The CAO will bring together a coalition of human service not-for-profits, community-based organizations and institutions to transform the quality of life in a targeted small neighborhood (Goal 4.1 Strategic Partnerships). This coalition effort to improve the conditions in which low-income people live initially will include the King Urban Life Center, the CAO Head Start and Early Head Start Program, the Parent and Child Home-based Program, Catholic Charities, the Women, Infant and Children's program (W.I.C.), the University of Buffalo Center for Urban Studies, the CAO Employment and Training Program, the CAO Better Schools – Better Neighborhoods Program and the Board of Block Clubs. The EFCDC will organize volunteers, interns and Americorps workers to seek to map every human service need and every quality of residential living unit need in the target area bounded by Best, Genesee, Fillmore and Herman Streets in Buffalo. It will use a triage team of coalition members to develop and initiate a service plan for each household, to connect each household to the appropriate service to meet their unique needs, case manage each household through access and utilization of referred services, help develop block clubs and or other neighborhood associations, and assist tenants and home owners in accessing grant and private resources (Goal 3.2.A.). Cases will be assigned to partner agencies within the EFCDC. Assigned case workers will follow up with households, coach members through effective utilization of service recommendations, follow-up with households to determine effectiveness of referral(s) and identify additional needs and or modifications of household service plans.

Quality of life improvement measures will include:

- i. Improved home energy efficiency and lowered utility costs (by an average of \$60/household) (Goal 2.1.C. and Goal 5.1.C.)). The CAO will complete these energy efficiency improvements for 50 homes per year over the next three years.
- ii. Reduced unemployment (150 job placements per year over three years (Goal 1.1.A.)).

- iii. Increased household incomes (by an average of \$2,000/household per year (Goal 1.1.B.)).
- iv. 50% of households with school-age children will be actively enrolled in after-school programs by the third year of this initiative (Goal 1.2.D. and Goal 6.3.B.5.).
- v. A 10% Reduction in neighborhood nuisance rates (i.e., violations vs crimes), and a 10% reduction in person-on-person and property crime rates over the three years of this strategic initiative (Goal 6.2.E.).
- vi. A reduction in school age children rate of failure to matriculate in grade from an average of 16% to below 10% over the next three years through enrolling children in academically-oriented after-school programs. (Goal 2.1.E.)

C. Strategic Initiative 3. The quality of life and assets in low-income neighborhoods will be improved by a CAO Media Mobilization and IT Innovation Initiative (NICAP Goal 2.2.C.D.and E.).

The media Mobilization and IT Initiatives will:

- a. Increase the availability or preserve community services to improve public health and safety (Goal 2.2.C).
- b. Increase the availability or preserve commercial services within low income neighborhoods (Goal 2.2.D.).
- c. Increase or preserve neighborhood quality of life resources (Goal 2.2.D.).

The CAO will build upon its strengths by making more effective use of social media and website technology to improve the agency's brand recognition, to broaden resident utilization of CAO and other services, to help residents access training programs at the Buffalo Center for Technology and the Arts, at the Buffalo State College, and at the One Stop Centers of the Erie County Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Board, and to help residents apply for jobs and training programs both with the CAO and through the Erie County One Stop Service Systems.

The CAO will add an interactive component to its website, and provide podcast access to educational and service programs online.

The CAO has hired a Chief Information Officer who will reconstruct the IT Department of the agency. The re-engineering will include new finance software to improve on demand report writing, a cloud-based system enabling data comparisons between fiscal years, faster audits, connectivity to the agency ADP human resource software system and payroll system, enabling faster and more targeted onboarding of new personnel and evaluation of employment turnover.

The Media Mobilization and IT Innovation will re-evaluate the CAP 60 electronic client management software the agency currently uses. The agency will either improve the functional utility of CAP 60 or acquire newer software enabling more efficient loading of client information, more efficient report writing, and easier connecting of clients to external systems like the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act Board's One Stop Service Centers. The improved or new electronic client management system will also enable the agency to create a comprehensive system tracking and supporting student development through college (Goal 6.3.B.5.)

D. Strategic Initiative 4. Low-Income People Will Own a Greater Stake in Their Community through the CAO's N. Fillmore Business District Development Initiative (NICAP Goal 3.2.B.).

Complementing the EFCDC initiative described above, the CAO is working to improve the business district in the Greater Martin Luther King, Jr. Park District, of which the Eastside Family and Educational Development Center is a part (Goal 3.2.B). Through marshalling grants and business owners' private funds, the CAO will help existing businesses expand and draw new businesses into the N. Fillmore business district. The CAO has worked with the Empire State Development Corporation and already has secured and expended \$300,000 in grants matching \$100,000 in business owner private funds, and provided business building infrastructure assistance and façade improvements. The CAO is partnering with the Pathstone Enterprise Center to provide small business start-up education and assistance in acquiring business start-up funds.

CAO anticipates 3 new businesses per year over the next three years in the N. Fillmore Business District through this partnership.

E. Strategic Initiative 5. The CAO Will Increase Its Capacity to Achieve Results by Broadening the Resource Base (NICAP Goal 5.1.D.E. and F.)

Addressing a critical weakness facing the agency, the CAO will work to reduce its dependence upon large single source grants that could cripple the organization should any of such grants fail to be renewed.

The CAO has created an Office of Development that will work to increase the CAO's acquisition of local public funding, funding from private sources (including foundations and individual contributors, goods and services donated), and a wider engagement of volunteers from local universities, area private corporations and other philanthropic organizations.

CAO will pursue an aggressive campaign to create a pool of unrestricted non-federal funds the CAO may use to provide the non-federal and non-State fund match for federal and State grants. The CAO will also use those funds to enable the agency to innovate new services, giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their effectiveness and to attract funding from regular grant funding streams (Goal 5.1.D.E.). In addition, this office will help the CAO increase its access to and utilization of volunteers to expand our community services outreach and our mapping of resident and neighborhood needs.

To this end the CAO has hired a Director of Development, using its own non-federal funds, who will develop and implement fund raising events, develop relationships with the charitable giving arms of area corporations, and with the foundations and charities of the Western New York region. This unit's goal will be to amass \$1Million in new funds over the next three years.

F. Strategic Initiative 6. The Conditions in Which Low-Income People Live will be improved (Goal 2.1.F.).

The Deaconess Heights Head Start/Early Head Start Academy.

The CAO will take advantage of opportunities to improve and revitalize the community by building and or acquiring a state of the Head Start/Early Head Start facility and an adjacent pediatric and family health clinic.

The CAO is sponsoring the construction of a state of the art Head Start/Early Head Start facility that will house 9 Head Start classrooms and 4 Early Head Start classrooms.

Additionally, the facility will include an adjacent pediatric and family primary health care facility to serve parents and children in Head Start and Early Head Start households, and families and children in the neighborhoods surrounding clinic site in the environs around the former Deaconess hospital location near the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

The Head Start/Early Head Start facility will serve about 192 children in full day pre-school education programs. The pediatric and family primary health clinic will be operated by the Community Health Center of Buffalo and will serve roughly 400 patients per week, and roughly 2,400 unduplicated patients per year.

The CAO anticipates the opening of the Head Start/Early Head Start facility and the attached pediatric primary and family health care clinic between the beginning of September and the end of November of 2019.

G. Strategic Goal 7. The CAO will improve the availability of safe and affordable housing units in the community through weatherization or rehabilitation achieved by community action activity (NICAP Goal 2.1.C., and will increase its capacity to achieve results by broadening its resource base (NICAP Goal 5:1).

The CAO will continue to expand and build upon its Home Improvement and Resource (HIRP) Program and take advantage of the opportunity to increase our capacity to improve access to, and availability of, quality housing in the City of Buffalo. The CAO Needs Analysis found that the rapid reduction in availability of above-standard affordable housing is a serious threat to the quality of life of the poor and low income in the Erie County community, particularly in Buffalo. Virtually all of the above standard grade housing in the City of Buffalo is occupied. Low-income persons needing housing are often forced to accept high rental costs for below standard housing.

The HIRP outreaches to homeowners to identify those eligible for existing State and other services, assists those homeowners in documenting their eligibility, assists those homeowners in getting assessments of their homes'

needs, makes their applications for eligible services, obtains construction estimates and creates home service plans, connects homeowners to contractors, insures that lead assessments, radon assessments and asbestos assessments are conducted where required. HIRP works with the homeowners to insure that work is done satisfactorily, and follows up intermittently with homeowners to assure that post-assistance compliance with transfers of ownership are observed.

The HIRP's goals are to reduce the costs of operating homes by reducing the energy costs incurred by homeowners. Further, the HIRP uses its relationships with area banks to connect homeowners to accessible home improvement loans and, where possible, connect them to State grants designed to address emergency repairs needs, safety repairs or improvement needs, energy efficiency and weatherization needs.

The CAO will work with the NYS Affordable Housing Corp., NYSEERDA, the Housing Trust Fund and Department of Housing and Community Renewal and homeowners to leverage State and private resources to make homes more affordable to operate through energy efficiency and weatherization, and make more homes safe to live in through repairs and improvements.

The CAO anticipates assisting 120 homes each year over the next three years in obtaining home improvement, weatherization, energy efficiency, and safety repairs, 40% of whose homes will be occupied by a senior citizen.