

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027

UPDATES TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL – 10-10-24

UPDATES TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL – 8-14-25

UPDATES TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL – 8-13-26

1. AGENCY LEVEL GOAL

Rooted in economic and environmental fairness, build capacity for and deeper connections and knowledge sharing amongst Economic Opportunity Council members, subcontractors, and community, promoting leadership development and interconnected collaboration.

Strategies:

- Engage staff, Economic Opportunity Council and subcontractors in exploring and learning about our interconnectedness to better understand it together and fully integrate it into our service delivery models so that our services are grounded in fairness, respect, and justice.
 - 60th Anniversary Roundtable held on May 9, 2024 included updates and client stories that showed integration into service delivery models.
 - Will hold Subcontractor Roundtable “Stronger Together” on October 9, 2025.
 - Held CSBG Subcontractor Roundtable “Creating Vital Conditions Together” on May 21, 2026.
- Transition to a two-year grant cycle for CSBG subcontractors to allow for deeper work and relationship-building resulting in greater outcomes.
 - Complete: This was done with the 2024–2025 contracts.
- Align the work of the Contra Costa County Community Action Agency with an increased number of community partners to aid in furthering the work outlined in the Community Action Plan.
 - In 2024 the work of our agency has been shared with other community partners at broad based coalitions such as: FESP (Family Economic Security Partnership), Ensuring Opportunity, Homeless Action Coalition, and several town hall meetings held by county legislators.
 - In 2025, we continue to align our work with the coalitions noted above and met with Congressman DeSaulnier to share our plan and outcomes on August 27, 2025 in a Roundtable discussion facilitated by CalCAPA.
 - New partnerships include Contra Costa Together, Richmond Community Foundation, Contra Costa County Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, Contra Costa County Council on Homelessness, Clean Start Showers, and C.O.R.E Outreach.
- Fully utilize the Community Action Virtual Onboarding (CAVO) eCourse system to train staff and board members, with an emphasis on leadership development for low-income sector representatives.
 - Staff will be presenting a recommendation to the Fiscal Committee for the 2025 CSBG budget to include CAVO with Roshunda Ward as project manager.
 - Will consider using any additional funding that comes in for this in 2025.
 - Funding constraints and priorities do not allow for this eCourse System. This strategy has been discontinued.
- Increase efficiency and transparency by sharing the Employment and Human Services Department’s written policies and procedures as they relate to the work of the Community Action Agency so that we can hold ourselves and others accountable.
 - Required Advisory Body training and supplemental training on RFI scoring, Site

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Monitoring, and use of social media have been shared.

- New Remote Meeting policy shared.
- New Advisory Body Required Trainings policy shared.
- New Advisory Body Training and Training Platform shared.
- New Brown Act updates shared.
- New Bylaws streamlined with procedures removed and a new procedure manual is being developed.

Alignment with National Community Action Goal: Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

2. COMMUNITY LEVEL GOAL

Create living wage jobs through our subcontractors and the CSBG internship program, sharing best practices and increasing connections between them to have a bigger impact.

Strategies:

- Elevate best practices and promote best practices, invite speakers, and increase connections with the subcontractors and student interns at the Roundtable Events hosted by the EOC.
 - Four speakers were selected for the 2024 Subcontractor Roundtable to share lived experiences with poverty and how Community Action Programs help them. They were:
 - Desire Medlen, Economic Opportunity Council Low Income Sector
 - Myhanh Lopes, Opportunity Junction, Administrative Careers Training Graduate
 - Sandra Locke, Rising Sun Center for Opportunity, Opportunity Build Program Graduate
 - Guadalupe Ristenza, St. Vincent de Paul, Workforce Development Program Graduate
 - The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors declared May 2026 Community Action Month and received a presentation from a former client or one of our subcontractor's Hope Solutions, Justine Rawlings-Weise. EHSD Public Relations created a video featuring Justine and she also addressed the board in person.
- Create an alumni program comprised of Student Intern graduates and leverage their experiences to empower and encourage current student interns.
 - Complete: Student interns are linked with graduates that are now employed by CSB in a buddy system upon hire. In addition, the current program coordinator is a former Student Intern.
- Integrate the work of Contra Costa County and the City of Richmond Workforce Development programs with that of the Contra Costa County Community Action Program to create more living wage jobs.
 - Complete: MOU signed by Marla Stuart in 2023, and Christina Castle-Barber sits on the committee.

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- Educate ourselves about successful job training programs and share learnings to replicate them in the community.
 - Will work on this in 2025
 - Will host a convening in 2026
 - CSBG Subcontractor Roundtable on May 21, 2026 featured job training program updates from subcontractors, including promising practices through the lens of the Vital Conditions framework.
- Invite labor, libraries, and other entities that offer volunteer or paid internship and apprenticeship positions that involve skill building and lead to attainment of entry level jobs leading to living wages.
 - Will work on this in 2025
 - Will host a convening in 2026.
 - The Economic Opportunity Council received a presentation featuring two CSB Student Interns, Nayeli and Luis Roman, who are also siblings. They shared the skills they have acquired and the benefits of being in a paid student internship.

Alignment with National Community Action Goal: People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

3. INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY LEVEL GOAL

Acknowledge gaps, meet people where they are, and advocate for compassionate solutions to provide the basic needs for the most vulnerable individuals and families in Contra Costa County.

Strategies:

- Increase advocacy efforts by engaging the EOC and community partners in opportunities to contact legislators on a regular basis regarding policy issues that impact the work of Community Action and the low-income community.
 - EOC members remain engaged in town hall meetings, one-on-one meetings with legislators, and, in May 2024, visited Sacramento for CalCAPAs Legislative Conference and Capitol visit.
 - EOC was well represented at CalCAPA Advocacy Day in April 2025. All seven Contra Costa County Legislators were contacted via visits to the Swing Building or on the lawn of the Capitol Building. Advocated for three bills.
 - CSB Director and EOC Chair were invited to speak to Congressman Mark DeSaulnier regarding the impact of CSBG funding in Contra Costa County.
 - EOC members attended the 2026 CalCAPA Advocacy Day in Sacramento on May 14, where the members advocated for three bills and met with several legislators.
- Identify gaps by conducting listening sessions with the low-income community and community partners and actively seek solutions to ensure the well-being of individuals and families.
 - Site monitoring includes a listening session with each subcontractor on what their needs and opportunities are and how the agency and EOC can align. The

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Subcontractor Roundtable in May also included opportunities for clients and agencies to share. Plans are in progress for a minimum of 5 listening sessions in early 2025 to inform the Community Action Plan.

- Site monitoring and five public hearings held in 2025 yielded excellent information to identify gaps and address them with the 2026-2027 funding awards. RFP to be issued in August 2025.
- Site Monitoring and the Subcontractor Roundtable in 2026 yielded excellent information for consideration by the EOC as well as the 2026 Community Assessment. Gaps centered on health care accessibility, services to undocumented immigrants, and transportation.
- Increase knowledge of and gain a better understanding of systems changes and use this knowledge to help individuals and families navigate these changes through educational campaigns and appropriate methods of communication.
 - EOC Chair Zeimer training Head Start Policy Council members on how to register to vote, CSB educated the community about the new regulation allowing anyone who receives CalFresh to be automatically income-eligible for head start services through a mailing and social media campaign.
 - Staff and some EOC members attended immigration training available in the community. CSBG staff attended webinars on new executive orders to ensure that programs funded by the federal government were following all requirements as instructed by funding agency.
 - EOC Members were advised of threats to funding for various federal programs, including CSBG, LIHEAP, and Head Start and were given opportunities for advocating through various channels. Individuals on the EOC who represent or work with elected officials keep the EOC updated on issues as they arise.
- Keep abreast of funding coming into the county and advocate for its use to address the gaps identified.
 - EOC members have been active on Measure X committees and have attended public hearings and town halls to address gaps as identified in the Community Action Plan.
 - Measure X funds received by Measure X to expand mental health services to Head Start and Early Head Start program children, families and staff.
 - Measure B, which would have augmented funding to various programs that took deep hits due to HR1, was on the ballot in Contra Costa on June 2, 2026 and was soundly defeated. The Board of Supervisors and the EOC advocated for its passage.

Alignment with National Community Action Goal: Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.