

# 2022-2026

# Strategic Plan



RURAL RESOURCES COMMUNITY ACTION

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# STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

## 2022-2026

### MISSION

To assist people and communities to develop the skills, resources, and services necessary to improve their general welfare

### VISION

To create and facilitate opportunities for all people to thrive and build strong, resilient, and equitable communities

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## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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<b>PEOPLE</b>	Rural Resources Community Action strives to attract/retain a skilled and dedicated workforce.
<b>RESOURCES</b>	Expand resources to increase capacity to serve community.
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	Provide solutions to urgent needs in communities that RRCA serves.
<b>CONNECTION</b>	RRCA will be the premier service agency in our communities

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**WE BELIEVE IN...THE POTENTIAL OF THOSE WE SERVE, THE COMPASSION OF OUR COMMUNITY, AND THE POWER OF WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILIES IN NORTHEAST WASHINGTON.**

# INTRODUCTION

The strategic plan of Rural Resources Community Action is intended to provide a five-year roadmap for programming, civic leadership, emerging client needs, governance and operations and data use. The plan was developed by the Leadership Team with approval of the Board Members of Rural Resources, and progress toward its goals will be reviewed annually.

To produce this plan, the staff participated in an internal assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses of the agency, then the Leadership Team held a day-long retreat and met on several occasions to reflect on the mission, vision, and core operating values and assumptions underlying the organizations approach to its work. These meetings set the stage to define the organization's strategic directions.

Information from the Community Needs Assessment and internal assessment helped RRCA assess both the challenges and opportunities it is likely to face over the next five years and set the context for the choices reflected in this strategic plan. The plan identifies poverty-related needs and resources in the community, establishes goals and priorities for delivering those services to individuals and families most affected by poverty, and complies with organizational standards and state and federal laws. RRCA supports activities that assist low-income families and individuals, homeless families and individuals, marginalized populations, and elderly low-income individuals and families by removing obstacles and solving problems that block their achievement of self-sufficiency.

RRCA is a private 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization established in 1965 to offer programs and services that provide opportunities to community members to help identify and overcome economic barriers. RRCA works throughout Eastern Washington to improve the lives of low-income people.

RRCA offers services to individuals and families through outreach, energy assistance programs, rental assistance, nutrition services, homeownership services, homeless assistance, medicine management, senior in-home care services and case management, transportation services, early childhood education, services to victims of crime, and more.

RRCA embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and is dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. RRCA is part of a national network of community action agencies, state associations, state offices, and federal partners across the nation supported by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to mobilize to fight poverty. Community action agencies have been operating in the United States since 1964, when they were created through economic opportunity legislation designed to fight the war on poverty.

CSBG organizational standards require a new strategic plan every five years and aligns itself to the community needs assessment. The RRCA strategic plan is also aligned with ROMA and ROMA Next Generation goals as described below.

## Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)

Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) provides a framework for continuous growth and improvement among hundreds of community action agencies and are the basis for state leadership and assistance toward those ends. It contains six anti-poverty performance indicators:

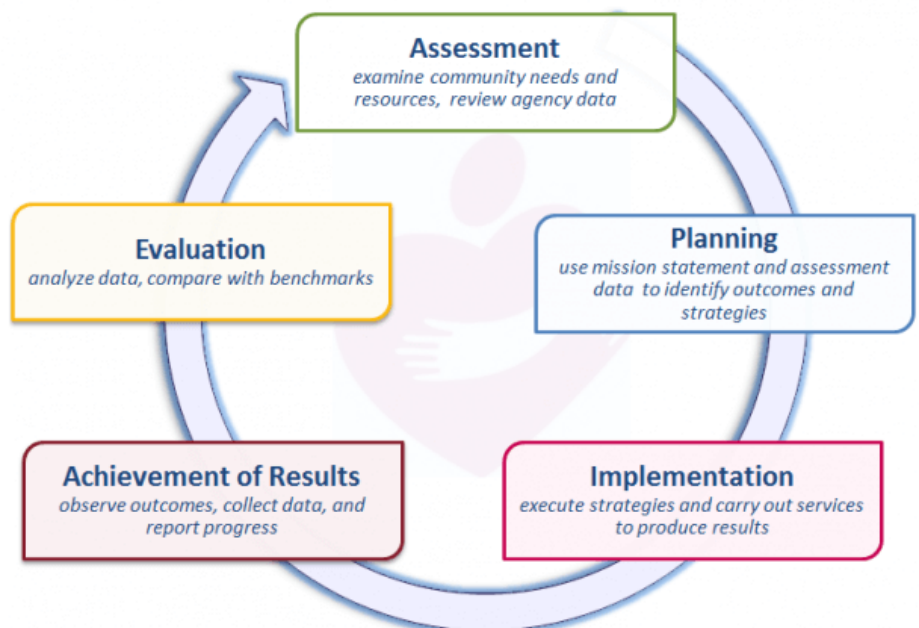
- Low-income people become more self-sufficient.
- The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.
- Low-income people own a stake in their community.
- Partnerships among supporters and providers of service to low-income people are achieved.
- Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.
- Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Tangible, realistic, specific, and measurable goals integrating the ROMA performance indicators have been developed in this strategic plan, which offers strategic objectives, timelines, and an accountability framework.

## ROMA Next Generation (ROMA NG)

In addition to the ROMA anti-poverty performance indicators, this strategic plan was informed by the ROMA Next Generation (ROMA NG), a supplemental system for continuous quality improvement established in 2018 that enables the network of community action to measure, analyze, and communicate performance. As a continuous learning and improvement agency, RRCA has aligned this plan's strategic goals with the proposed ROMA NG framework, which identifies three performance indicators:

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



# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Rural Resources' strategic planning processes are informed by the ROMA cycle, starting with the Community Needs Assessment, a major data collection project that assesses the needs of the community.

The primary purpose of this assessment is to ensure that RRCA provides responsive services that meet community needs. To this end, the results from this assessment were incorporated into the strategic plan.

Direct feedback from program participants, community partners and community members was collected through a comprehensive survey covering nine areas of need. 381 responses were received from a variety of zip codes across the service region which were analyzed by staff to understand the needs identified, conduct statistical validation, and check response bias.

## EDUCATION

- Survey respondents were asked to identify any needs or concerns they or someone else in their family had about education. Financial assistance towards college, trade, or technical education was the biggest concern, while the most applicable concern was transportation

## HOUSING

- When asked to identify needs or concerns they or someone in their family had regarding housing-related services, survey respondents identified utility payments as the most important concern, with weatherization being the most widely applicable.

## VICTIM SERVICES

- Survey respondents identified child abuse and human trafficking as the most important concern regarding victimization-related services. Property crimes like theft/robbery, identity theft and trespassing take on an elevated preponderance compared to the intense concern for other abuses.

## EMPLOYMENT

- Survey respondents were asked to identify needs or concerns they or someone in their family had regarding employment services. While getting a better job was seen as the most important, the primary barriers are seen to be transportation, having the items to become employed, and getting a better job.

## NUTRITION

- Regarding nutrition-related services, survey respondents identified affordability and access to healthy foods as the paramount concern.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Access to public transportation and knowledge of available public transportation dominate the respondents' concerns, although the inability to afford auto insurance was also a major concern.

## INCOME AND ASSET BUILDING

- Survey respondents were asked to identify needs or concerns they or someone in their family had regarding income and asset-building-related services. Obtaining/maintaining benefits naturally takes the most vital role, but financial planning, credit repair, and budgeting classes have a widespread appeal.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Respondents identified that seeing a dentist, seeing a medical doctor, and paying for the services as the primary need or concern in this category.

## SUPPORT

- Survey respondents were asked to identify needs or concerns they or someone in their family had regarding support-related services. Learning and accessing local resources were of primary concern, although clearly transportation, eldercare, ID documents, and legal assistance have a widespread impact.

## *S.W.O.T. Analysis*

Review and discussion of the external and internal assessments allowed the Strategic Planning Team to develop a S.W.O.T. analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) which summarized key findings from all assessments into a usable framework for identifying and analyzing the internal and external factors that impact RRCA. The SWOT analysis, displayed below served as a foundational planning tool in creating the strategic plan's goals and objectives.

### Strengths

- Flexibility
- Commitment
- Longevity
- Specialization
- Creativity
- Willingness to partner
- Responsiveness
- Communication
- Recognize needs
- Passion
- Solution-oriented
- Problem solvers
- Collaborative
- Listen without judgment
- Transparency
- Innovative
- Knowledgeable
- Accepts people where they are

## Weaknesses

- Too sensitive
- Age of building/Limited space
- Not enough help for mental health issues
- Referral system
- Outreach/education
- Lack of program collaboration
- Training
- Communication - leadership to staff/leadership to community
- People slipping through gaps
- Hard to understand
- Unrestricted funding
- Trust
- Knowledge about internal service
- Compensation package
- Lack of labor pool
- Narrow mindedness
- High level of requirements
- Don't share success stories
- Lack of cross training

## Opportunities

- Saying yes!
- High quality childcare business
- Families/children/daycare/work (transportation) \*
- Opportunities to further education
- Never too old to get GED/diploma
- Build housing
- Standing in line for a job at RRCA
- Eliminate backlog in fee for service
- Build revenue streams
- Finding funding & employees
- Staff trained at hire
- Transitional housing
- Support system instead of shutting doors
- Internal systems to build success

## Threats

- "We're part of the problem" - community stigma
- Broadband access
- Potential to lose funding
- Restricted funding requirements
- Entrenched ideas/predefined outcomes
- External social media/bad press - perception
- Balance between conflicting opinions
- Lack of trust/distrust
- Closed mindset - lack of exposure
- Changing thresholds - pay and hours
- Lack of unrestricted funds
- New law enforcement requirements
- COVID-HIPPA-confidentiality
- Growth management

# STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

RRCA's highest standards for excellence in programming, civic leadership, addressing emerging needs, governance and operations, and data use will be sought through close attention to the following strategic goals:

<b>WE WILL BECOME THE PREMIER EMPLOYER IN THE COMMUNITIES THAT RURAL RESOURCES SERVES</b>	
OBJECTIVES	1.1 Align employee training with organizational culture and specific work
	1.2 Overall compensation
	1.3 Prioritize strong, positive, equitable organizational culture
	1.4 Align recruiting, retention and development with the values of Community Action
<b>EXPAND RESOURCES TO INCREASE CAPACITY TO SERVE COMMUNITY</b>	
OBJECTIVES	2.1 Maintain financial stability and accountability
	2.2 Maintain effective governance and organizational compliance
	2.3 Establish resource development plan
<b>DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES THAT MEET FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS</b>	
OBJECTIVES	3.1 Utilize Community Needs Assessment and information from community stakeholders to drive prioritization of service needs
	3.2 Whole family approach to achieve long-term outcomes
	3.3 RRCA is a nimble organization, able to quickly respond to the changing the needs of staff, agency, and the community we serve.
	3.4 Integrate trauma-informed service delivery into daily operations.
	3.5 Regularly assess community and agency-level data to identify trends and inform programming decisions
<b>RRCA WILL BE THE PREMIER SERVICE AGENCY IN OUR COMMUNITIES</b>	
OBJECTIVES	4.1 Increase agency visibility across communities RRCA serves.
	4.2 Collaborate with community partners and create outcome-driven systems of support
	4.3 Participate in and drive civic engagement within the communities RRCA serves.



# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. WE WILL BECOME THE PREMIER EMPLOYER IN THE COMMUNITIES THAT RURAL RESOURCES SERVES	
1.1 Align employee training with organizational culture and specific work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity, Equity, Inclusion; Mandated Reporting; Trauma Informed; Understanding causes and conditions of poverty</li> <li>• Orientation/Preservice – Philosophy and foundation of the work</li> <li>• Internal Education Programs</li> <li>• Create cross training – provide exposure opportunities and cross training to ensure agility and to optimize employee fit.</li> <li>• Prioritize equity in hiring and promotion practices by analyzing essential competencies for the role vs. education</li> <li>• Safety Training &amp; Education</li> </ul>
1.2 Overall Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compensation – Salary structure – analyzing pay equity and compensation</li> <li>• Benefits</li> <li>• Schedules/Flexibility</li> <li>• Prioritize employee wellness</li> </ul>
1.3 Prioritize strong, positive, equitable organization culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All-Staff meetings</li> <li>• Staff professional development and training</li> <li>• Monthly updates</li> <li>• Paylocity/Intranet</li> </ul>
1.4 Align recruiting, retention and development with the values of Community Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create equitable expectations, requirements, and compensation for agency roles</li> <li>• Provide on-going “stay interviews” and report results staff and the Board</li> <li>• Continuously identify and implement on-going staff training opportunities across the agency to support growth and succession for leadership</li> </ul>

<b>2. EXPAND RESOURCES TO INCREASE CAPACITY TO SERVE COMMUNITY</b>	
2.1 Maintain financial stability and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External and internal audit of processes</li> <li>• Analysis of appropriate infrastructure and capacity of Fiscal Department to support the Programs and services of the agency, including implementation of efficient and accurate processes, as outlined in RRCA's Business Opportunity Assessment</li> <li>• Align reports with funder requests for data regarding time and labor, as well as REVEX</li> </ul>
2.2 Maintain effective governance and organizational compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active and engaged board,</li> <li>• Identify compliance oversight roles in both Fiscal and programs.</li> </ul>
2.3 Establish resource development plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Development Director role to provide essential planning and implementation of resource development, outreach, and marketing.</li> <li>• Create a culture of philanthropy</li> <li>• Fee for service expansion</li> <li>• Development of a fundraising plan</li> <li>• Systematically align grants, client needs and staff capacity</li> </ul>
<b>3. DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES THAT MEET FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS</b>	
3.1 Utilize CNA and information from community stakeholders to drive prioritization of service needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Permanent Supportive Housing</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
3.2 Whole Family Approach to achieve long term outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Services Model</li> <li>• Kintone</li> </ul>
3.3 RRCA is a nimble organization, able to quickly respond to the changing needs of staff, agency, and the community we serve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid</li> <li>• Wildfires</li> <li>• Excessive Heat/Cold</li> </ul>
3.4 Integrate trauma-informed service delivery into daily operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Every touch" Trauma-informed interactions and interventions</li> </ul>
3.5 Regularly assess community and agency-level data to identify trends and inform programming decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize voices of low income/underserved communities in developing solutions to address poverty</li> <li>• Create and sustain comprehensive community hubs that are culturally</li> </ul>

	responsive and informed by the community they serve.
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- Client Surveys

#### 4. RRCA WILL BE THE PREMIER SERVICE AGENCY IN OUR COMMUNITIES

4.1 Increase agency visibility across communities RRCA serves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Create agency-wide communication and engagement plan<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Newsletter</li><li>○ Social Media</li><li>○ Billboards</li><li>○ Storytelling</li><li>○ Outreach</li></ul></li></ul>
4.2 Collaborate with community partners and create outcomes driven systems of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Participate in and drive coalitions to support equitable interventions for seamless participant and community access and success</li><li>● RRCA Board Engagement and Education</li><li>● Service on Boards</li><li>● Multidisciplinary Teams, Board Participation, Law Enforcement, System-wide Coalitions</li><li>● Engage in systemic discussions w/ community partners who interface with shared program participants.</li><li>● Participate in strategic efforts to address needs in rural communities</li><li>● Advocate at the local, state, and federal levels to create equitable policies that address the causes and conditions of poverty.</li></ul>
4.3 Participate in and drive civic engagement within the communities RRCA serves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Increase exposure to and understanding of the barriers to equitable opportunities within the community.</li><li>● Secure membership in key community-based organizations (Chamber, Rotary, etc.).</li></ul>