



# HDC STRATEGIC PLAN

## Introduction

Poverty in America is often unseen. Media portrayals of America do not focus on poverty. Stories of Americans in poverty often start and end with an individual “pulling himself up by his bootstraps” and ending up in middle class America. However, census and other data shows us that in real life, poverty is as American as apple pie and baseball.

Poverty really came to center stage in America during news footage of Appalachia in the early 1960s. When President Lyndon Johnson gave his 1964 State of the Union address, he announced that “this administration, here and now, declares unconditional War on Poverty in America”. He went on to state: “For in your time we have the opportunity to move not only toward the rich society and the powerful society, but upward to the Great Society. The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time. But that is just the beginning.” The Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) of 1964 created multiple programs as the arsenal for the War on Poverty. One of these programs was Community Action. Community Action mobilized the programs created under the EOA to make change in local communities.

The Human Development Commission (HDC) has been the Community Action Agency of record for Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, and Tuscola Counties since its inception in 1965. The agency’s Board of Directors is composed of three equal parts consisting of public, private and consumer sectors, and members from each of the four counties represented. Over the past 50+ years, HDC has provided services to the “Thumb” of Michigan to increase self-sufficiency and assist people in meeting their needs, as well as those of their community. Some programs that are currently offered by HDC include Home Weatherization Assistance, Foster Grandparents, Homeless Assistance, Utility Assistance, Early Head Start, Thumb Assault Crisis Center, Senior Services, Commodity Food, and many more. This Strategic Plan furthers this work.

## Mandates

As a part of the data-driven Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle, every three years HDC conducts Strategic Planning exercises to develop a Strategic Plan using the data from the Community Assessment. This plan is used to create the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) application for the agency.

In addition, the CSBG Organizational Standards mandate agency-wide strategic planning processes that occur at least every 5 years (6.1), address reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient (6.2), contains family, agency, and/or community goals (6.3), and includes customer satisfaction data and customer input (6.4).

## Assessment Process Summary

HDC completed the latest Community Assessment in 2017/18. This data was used to assist in production of this Strategic Plan and inform the direction taken by the Strategic Planning Committee. The Strategic Planning Committee set up a timeline and system for gathering both internal and external data. This primary system included a number of SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analyses with both internal and external input. In addition, an anonymous web-based survey was created to distribute to all HDC staff related to the current agency mission and vision statements.

The web-based survey on the mission and vision statements was distributed via e-mail to all HDC staff on January 16, 2018, and participants were asked to complete the survey by January 30, 2018. The survey was closed on January 30, 2018, and the results were tabulated for presentation to the HDC Board of Directors on March 21, 2018. Following this presentation (see Appendix A), the HDC Board of Directors determined to maintain the current mission and vision statements as presented. The minutes of this meeting are attached in Appendix B.

Information packets were collected and disseminated to participants of the SWOT analyses. These packets included the following information for participant review: HDC Strategic Plan (2014), 2017 Community Assessment summary, Agency-wide Budgets for 2015-2018, selected results from the 2017 CSBG Annual Report, 2017 Achieved Organizational Objectives, 2017 Customer Satisfaction Survey results, and a SWOT Analysis Worksheet for participant use. The contents of this information packet are attached in Appendix C.

SWOT analyses were held across the agency from the period of January 31-April 18, 2018. There were eight SWOT analyses with a total of 73 participants. During these SWOT analyses, a presentation was given, including video footage related to the fast pace of change and income inequality in America (see Appendix D). Each individual SWOT analysis brainstormed and then prioritized the four areas of SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and the top five results from each category were tabulated and reported (Appendix E). Finally, the top results were presented to the HDC Board of Directors following their SWOT analysis (see Strategic Issues below).

The results from all SWOT analyses were discussed by the HDC Board of Directors, and three broad goals were formed by the participating Board members to be included in the agency Strategic Plan (2018). This plan has been reviewed and approved by the HDC Board of Directors on May 16, 2018. The minutes of this meeting are attached in Appendix F.

## Strategic Issues

### Top Strengths

Excellent reputation with funders, i.e. looked at as one of the best CAAs in the State

Agency benefits provided to obtain/retain qualified and committed staff

Offers broad range of services across the four counties that cover the entire lifespan of individuals

Employs experienced, educated and non-judgmental staff that work together to support entire families

Fiscally responsible and able to adapt to changes in funding streams

Treat customers with dignity and respect

Partner with other organizations to strengthen services

Regional provider vs. single county

### Top Opportunities

Enhanced internal/external communication

Enhanced use of technology

Enhanced collaboration and partnerships with other community entities, including private

Additional opportunities for employee empowerment

Assess financial viability of service expansion:

- Veterans
- Men's Homeless Shelter
- Emergency Fund
- Children's Food Security Services
- Basic Financial, Nutrition, Diabetic, Couponing & Computer Technology Classes
- Trade Programs
- Expanded Transportation Services
- Walk For Warmth
- Early Childhood Services

Parity of services across service area

### Top Weaknesses

Unrealistic staff expectations, i.e. wages, fringes and accountability

Too dependent on grant funding which can affect the availability of adequate staffing

Inability to focus on self-sufficiency in some services

Complex eligibility guidelines impact the public's understanding of agency services

Limited technology and use of social media

Low community visibility of HDC/services

Do not share successes enough

### Top Threats

Over-regulation and monitoring

90-day board member replacement rule

Competition for funding and/or customers

Lack of accessible technology in rural communities

Lack of resources to meet the changing demographics

Extreme competition for qualified employees, i.e. lack of competitive wages and fringe benefits

Substance abuse

Myths vs reality regarding individuals in poverty

Lack of community awareness of HDC/services

## **HDC Mission Statement**

*Restoring Hope by Helping People and Changing Lives*

## **HDC Vision Statement**

*The Human Development Commission will be the visible leader by providing quality services that promote self-sufficiency while advocating for social and economic change.*

## **Goals and Objectives**

### **Goal #1: Strengthen Community Awareness of HDC**

**Strategy #1:** Increase community visibility of HDC, particularly agency as a whole

**Strategy #2:** Share agency and customer successes more widely

**Strategy #3:** Address issues of stigma in receiving services

### **Goal #2: Enhance Services through Community Partnerships**

**Strategy #1:** Explore partnership possibilities with nontraditional partners

**Strategy #2:** Increase recruitment for community partners, including board and advisory council participation

### **Goal #3: Promote and Integrate Self-Sufficiency Models in Services**

**Strategy #1:** Evaluate current service models for effectiveness in self-sufficiency

**Strategy #2:** Explore funding resources to assist in providing self-sufficiency services

**Strategy #3:** Look at re-aligning current funding streams and programs to enable true self-sufficiency work

## **Next Steps**

The agency will use the above-noted goals and strategies to maintain and expand our internal Strategic Planning Workgroup, utilizing and expanding the current workgroup to form more detailed and time-oriented action steps and plans. The Strategic Planning Workgroup will report out to the board on a quarterly basis through the Director's Report in the Achieved Organizational Objectives reporting mechanism.