



2021-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN





2021-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Every three to five years the Board of Directors of the Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area (ESC), in concert with the Agency’s executive staff, its clients and community partners, development the goals and strategies that are implemented which develop the direction the Agency will take to work toward accomplishing the goal of eliminating poverty in our service area. The following content of this report reflects those intended accomplishments. Additionally, if explains our intent to develop a holistic approach of working with organizations with similar objectives and, with other community stake holders as we identify the causes and conditions of poverty and with our plans as to what we can do to eliminated them.

INTRODUCTION:

COVID-19 Pandemic provided a different process for the development of this plan. This strategic plan was developed for ESC to chart a course for the next three years. It provides guidance to maintain and build agency capacity while vision focused on a “thriving community of neighbors free from poverty.” The strategic plan is focused sharply on strengthening our organization and its services while we explore possibilities for more resources and the potential for new formal partnerships and collaborations. This is the context for the ESC’s 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

PURPOSE:

ESC is part of a 1,000 strong Community Action network. Our purpose is clear, as a member of the National Community Action Partnership: reducing poverty, the revitalization of low-income neighborhoods, and giving direction back to low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas.

We are charged with these duties through strengthening of related issues associated with the elimination of poverty, so that this assistance can be used in a manner responsive to local needs and conditions. ESC has a range of opportunities related to the needs of our neighbors. These opportunities have a measurable and potentially major impact on the causes of poverty in

our local communities and help our neighbors take control of their own lives, leading them to economic security.

LEVEL OF INFORMATION/METHOD

| <i>Method</i> | <i>Level of information</i> |
|--------------------------|---|
| Focus Groups | More targeted information from a representative sample of stakeholders (completed pre-COVID-19) |
| Key Informant Interviews | General input from a broad cross-section of stakeholders (completed pre-COVID-19) |

STAKEHOLDERS:

| <i>Internal Stakeholders</i> | <i>External Stakeholders</i> |
|--|--|
| Tripartite Board Members/Advisory Boards | Customers |
| Head Start Policy Council Members | Advisory groups (e.g. Homeless Coalition, OneJoplin, etc.) |
| Leadership Team | Key collaborates (cities, counties, etc.) |
| Human Resources | Funders (Head Start, Community Services Block Grant, etc.) |
| Fiscal | Public agencies (health departments, etc.) |
| Facilities and management | Other service providers (NGOs, etc.) |
| Information Technology (IT) | Elected officials |
| Quality improvement teams | Faith-based community |
| Front line staff | Private sector |

MANDATES/RESPONSIBILITIES: COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG), HEAD START PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS AND RESULTS ORIENTED MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (ROMA)

An important CSBG mandate that influences strategic planning is the role of the agency's tripartite board in the process. [42 USC § 9910 Section 676B](#) of the CSBG Act charges them, as a condition of designation, private nonprofit entities and public organizations administer their CSBG program through tripartite boards that "fully participate in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities." Supporting the role and responsibility of the tripartite boards in planning, The Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Community Services (OCS) [Information Memorandum \(IM\) 82](#) states, and "Tripartite boards are important participants in agency annual and longer-range planning activities. Specifically, individual members of the board, and the board as a whole, ought to contribute to, and benefit from, various aspects of program planning." As such, participation of boards is essential in strategic planning discussions of how the agency should accomplish its

mission through its programs and activities and how the agency will determine what constitutes success.

Community Services Block Grant Organizational Standards

In January 2015, the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Community Services (OCS) released [Informational Memorandum \(IM\) 138](#), State Establishment of Organizational Standards for CSBG Eligible Entities, under 678B of the CSBG Act, 42.U.S.C § 9914. This established 58 [organizational standards](#) for private nonprofit CAAs and 50 for public CAAs that are organized into nine categories. Category four of the Organizational Standards address organizational leadership and Category six of the Organizational Standards addresses requirements for strategic planning.

| Organizational Standard Number | Organizational Standard Description | Organizational Standards Documentation |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Organizational Standard 4.1 | The governing board has reviewed the organization mission statement. The mission statement addresses poverty and the organization's programs and services are in alignment with the mission. | During the May 2021 Board meeting, there was a presentation that included the recommendation from the staff that the mission and vision statement did not need to be updated, since in 2018 there was a total rewrite of ESC's mission and vision. The Board approved to keep the current mission and vision statements. |
| Organizational Standard 4.2 | The organization's Community Action plan is outcome based; anti-poverty focused and ties directly to the community assessment. | ESC's Community Action plan was developed using logic models, which includes mission alignment, needs identification, services/strategies and outcomes. |
| Organizational Standard 4.3 | The organization's Community Action Plan and strategy plan document continuous use of full results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA cycle). In addition, the organization documents having used the services of a ROMA certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation. | ESC's strategic plan is led by the Resource Development Director who has a NCRT and consults with the Community Development Director who has a NCRI. ESC has developed their own strategic plan ROMA cycle that was used with the agency's Board and strategic planning internal team during 2021 Strategic Planning process. (December, May, August and September) |
| Organizational Standard 4.4 | The governing board receives an annual update on the success of specific strategies included in the Community Action Plan. | ESC's utilizes a self-developed dashboard that is presented to the Board, quarterly for discussion. It has all of ESC's outcomes, inclusive of the Agency's Strategic Plan and Community Action Plan outcomes. |
| Organizational Standard 4.6 | An organization wide, comprehensive risk assessment has been completed within the past 2 years and reported to the governing board. | ESC completed their 2021-2023 risk assessment and the results reported to the Board at the June 3, 2021. |
| Organizational Standard 6.1 | The organization has an agency-wide strategic plan in place that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years. | ESC's last strategic plan was complete June 2018 and approved by the Board of Directors in September 2018. The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan is in a draft form, presented to the Board of Directors, June 2021 for review, August for comments and September for approval. |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Organizational Standard 6.2 | The approved strategic plan addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient. | ESC's approved strategic plan strategies can be found on pages, 10-12 of this document. |
| Organizational Standard 6.3 | The approved strategic plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals. | ESC's approved strategic plan strategies (F, A and C) can be found on pages, 10-12 of this document. |
| Organizational Standard 6.4 | Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment, is included in the strategic planning process. | ESC's customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected was used from the Community Needs Assessment for the strategic planning process which is found on page 6. |
| Organizational Standard 6.5 | The governing board has received an update(s) on progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan within the past 12 months. | Progress on strategic plan for the past 12 months will found in the Board of Director's Minutes, December 3, 2020, May 6, 2021 (escswa.org). |

Head Start Performance Standards

ESC is a grantee for Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Southwest Missouri. One of Head Start performance standards that impact strategic planning is the role of the agency's tripartite board and Head Start Policy Council to be involved in the process §1302.11(b) determining community strengths, needs and resources. These items can be found as part of [ESC's 2020-2023 Community Needs Assessment](#).

Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)

The Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Community Services (OCS) Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) [Informational Memorandum \(IM\) No. 49](#) Program Challenges, Responsibilities and Strategies reflect a need for technical assistance and training to standardized national performance outcomes.

OCS believes that the three national ROMA goals (attachment 1) reflect a number of important concepts that transcend CSBG as a stand-alone program. The goals convey the unique strengths that the broader concept of Community Action brings to the Nation's anti-poverty efforts, focusing our efforts on client/community/organizational change, not particular programs or services. As such, the goals provide a basis for results-oriented, not process-based or program-specific plans, activities and reports. Understanding the interdependence of programs, clients and community working together is better. We recognize that CSBG does not succeed as an individual program.

The goals presume that Community Action is most successful when activities supported by a number of funding sources are organized around client and community outcomes, both within an agency and with other service providers.

VISION, MISSION AND THEORY OF CHANGE

Vision: A thriving community of neighbors that is free from poverty.

Mission: To provide comprehensive services that instill hope and share opportunities to eliminate the conditions of poverty and help neighbors achieve self-sufficiency.

During strategic planning sessions held during January through May 2021, Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area's Vision and Mission work was reviewed and noted that in 2018 there was a brand new vision and mission created. Staff reviewed the mission, OCS's National Theory of Change and ESC's Theory of Change during a virtual meeting January 2021. Staff felt after a virtual presentation and discussion that ESC should continue with the current vision and mission statement. Mission and vision presentation to the Board of Directors during the May 2021 meeting and the Board recommended continuing with the current mission and vision. It was approved at the May 2021 meeting. This will be presented to the entire agency starting October 1, 2021. ESC's TOC and Community Action's TOC can be found in attachment 1.

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Economic Security Corporation utilized the following support data to provide the principles in the thoughtful development of our strategic plan. This information was utilized in developing essential planned series of services and strategies that would lead us to our Agency's Broad Goals. It is important that family services empower our neighbors. Community strategies must advance our communities. Agency strategies build capacity. All of this will assist with our overarching vision: a thriving community of neighbors that is free from poverty.

Community Needs Assessment (CNA) Support Data

ESC conducted an agency-wide community needs assessment in 2020. In 2021, there was an annual update completed. This information was presented at the May 6, 2021 Board of Director's meeting for review and discussion. June 3, 2021 the Board approved the revised changes. We utilized the Community Action Partnership Assessment tool website. ESC also reviewed other national, state, local and county needs assessments, such as the Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA), Community Housing Assessment (CHAS) and Missouri Extension economy data. In addition, we surveyed Head Start and Early Head Start parents, customers, partners, Head Start Policy Council, Jasper County Public Housing Agency and Board of Directors in gathering key informant information and data. Then we conducted key informant interviews that included: partners, customers, Head Start parents, Head Start Policy Council, Board of Directors, employees in varying job positions, local elected officials and city government. We utilized customer satisfaction survey data as well. We were able to pool this vast information into a county-by-county needs assessment to identify and prioritize the needs. The Board of Directors approved the Community Needs Assessment for 2020-2023 in September 2020. On May 6, 2021, an update to the CNA was presented to the Board for review and then June 3, 2021 was approved by the Board. For more in-depth CNA information, please contact ESC's Resource Development Director, 417-623-2013.

High Priority Needs

The high priority needs were identified and prioritized using ESC's Community Needs Assessment that was developed during 2020 and included 2021 updated CNA data. The Board approved this document in September 2020. The 2021 CNA update was approved by ESC's Board in June.

Family (F)

- Families lack resources for affordable, decent and safe housing. (F)
- Families lack a place for their children to stay while they attend higher education. (customer input/surveys) {F}
- Families lack enough resources to cover basic needs. (customer survey input) {F}

Agency (A)

- Agency lacks resources to fill open positions timely. (A)
- Agency staff lack technical knowledge and skills. (A)
- Agency lacks ability to retain employees. (A)

Community (C)

- Community lacks enough resources to provide living wage opportunities.(C)
- Community lacks resources to maintain existing affordable, decent and safe housing. (C)
- Lack of correct knowledge by property of public housing subsidies programs lead to less available safe, decent and affordable housing stock. (C)
- Community lack resources to meet behavioral health needs of children. (key informant interviews) {C}

Communication Needs Identified

ESC's Strategic 2021-2023 Communication Plan is found as part of this plan (attachment 2). The bullets listed below noted high priority items.

- Website audit, old website, search engine does not help staff and customers find available resources. (A)
- Human Resource communication needs to improve to staff. (employee survey) {A}
- Data Governance plan development. (A)
- Inter-departmental communications need improvement. (A)

Technology Needs Identified

ESC's 2021-2024 Strategic Technology Plan is found as part of this plan (attached). The bullets listed below noted high priority items.

- Evolving Password Management. (A)
- Addition of Cyber Insurance. (A)
- Climate controlled server room. (A)
- Networking/Firewall is approaching end of life. (A)

Human Resources' Needs and Analysis

Human Resources development and deployment is a very important factor for the success of any organization, including ESC.

The following was identified as a short-term need and the target goal: Different recruitment tool resources and development of an updated staff recruitment procedure to ensure ESC fills open positions within the agency timely.

Currently, the Human Resource department has five Human Resource staff to maintain central office receptionist duties, hiring, training, benefits management, and termination (voluntary and involuntary) for 356 employees.

This was identified as a long-term need and the target goal: Develop a new pay scale to move the agency as a whole toward all employees making \$15/hr. or more. All employment positions are experiencing difficulties in finding any applicants. The Human Resources, Fiscal and other program divisions will be developing a plan to achieve this target goal.

Unusual Succession Planning

Succession planning is very important, during the next two years, ESC has five planned retirements. The following leadership positions: CEO (24 years), Deputy Director {34 years} (Head Start/Early Head Start Director, planned retirement date: 12.31.2021), Resource Development Director (34 years) and Fiscal Director (12 years). This represents over 100 years of Community Action experience. The loss of Community Action network certifications: three CCAPs and one NCRT.

Risk Analysis

The most recent risk assessment was completed by ESC in 2021. ESC has appointed two risk assessment co-coordinators who can appoint up to a five-person risk assessment team. This team is responsible for assisting with improvement practices to reduce ESC's risk based on the 2021-2023 risk assessment summary. The co-coordinators for the 2021-2023 risk assessment cycle will be the Weatherization Director and Community Development Director.

This team is charged with presenting suggestions to ESC's management team and ESC's Board of Directors. In addition, they will provide an updated 2023-2025 Risk Assessment Summary, at the direction of the Chief Executive Officer.

Financial Projections

Financial projections monitor the overall health of the organization. Being a non-profit organization where profit is not the motive, financial projections are fix expense budgets that must be within allocated resources for various activities. ESC reviews annual budgets with the board of directors on a monthly basis for effective monitoring of actual performance and timely correction of deviations.

In addition, ESC's Board of Directors reviews the entire agency's budget in October of each year for approval by the board. This is the time for review of shortfalls for the agency's coming fiscal year.

As a non-profit, ESC can spend only what it raises as grants and funds from its beneficiaries. It becomes extremely important for ESC to know how much we can spend on various activities to

be within the available funds' position. In addition, where expenses go beyond the projected limits, ESC's leadership team must be able to take corrective action to bring down such expenses.

Currently, the Fiscal department has four Fiscal staff for an agency that handles over \$19,000,000, annually. They will be adding one employee, an assistant Fiscal Director, this is a new position.

2021 SWOT Analysis, Future Strengths and Challenges identified

We conducted three SWOT Analysis; one was conducted with the ESC's Strategic Planning internal group, ESC's Administrative team, the whole agency for the communication needs. We utilized Survey Monkey tool for all three due to COVID-19 Global Pandemic restrictions. The information on the next page was gathered during ESC's Strategic Planning virtual sessions in January through March 2021. Staff, Board members and Head Start Policy Council members reviewed ESC's Community Needs Assessment, with the 2021 annual update to help complete the SWOT analysis. Below are the results of two SWOT analysis (Administrative and Internal Team). The Communication SWOT analysis is found with the Strategic Communication Plan 2021-2024, attached.

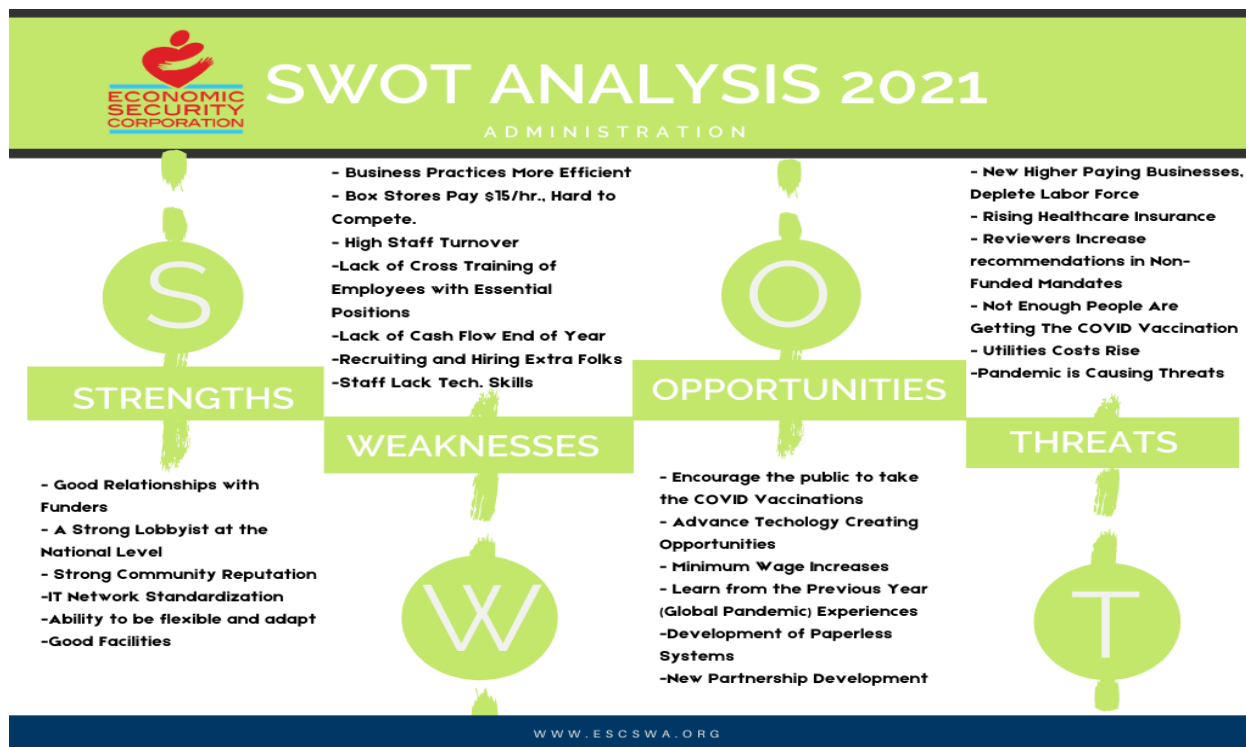
ECONOMIC SECURITY CORPORATION

SWOT ANALYSIS 2021

INTERNAL TEAM

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>S</p> <p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Agency Has A History Of Success Audits (No Findings) - Staff Have Been Responsive & Flexible During Changing Times - Strong Community Reputation - Staff Are Compassionate With Customers - Good Main Office Support - Commitment To Serving Our Communities | <p>W</p> <p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wage Comparability, ESC's Pay Too Low To Secure Open Positions - Lack Inter-Department Communications -Lack Of Training On "Business Practices" -Fear Of Thinking Outside The Box -High Staff Turnover -Digital Divide, New Tech, Staff Missing Skills -Running Out Of Physical Space | <p>O</p> <p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An Increase in Federal Weatherization funds - Look At Other SD models to Become More Efficient - Opportunity To Be All Inclusive - Increase Virtual Services -Close The Digital Divide -Develop More Landlord Relationships -Develop Potential Partnerships | <p>T</p> <p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not Staying Competitive With Wages - Uncertainty Of ESC Funding - The Ongoing Global Pandemic - Loss Of Affordable Housing Stock - Outside Resources Who Do Not Collaborate -Inability to Address Transportation Needs in Rural Areas |
|---|--|---|--|

WWW.ESCSWA.ORG



Assumptions

- Everyone can get help
- ESC has comprehensive services to provide
- People don't have hope and ESC can instill hope
- ESC can eliminate the conditions of poverty in Southwest Missouri
- Neighbors are struggling
- ESC has opportunity to share to help neighbors achieve self sufficiency

Broad Agency Goals

1. Children are ready for school
2. Families are ready to engage
3. The agency is ready to support
4. The community is ready to invest

2021 LOCAL THEORY OF CHANGE (TOC)

ESC has developed a local theory of change graphic that includes mission, vision, assumptions, services and strategies, outcomes, broad agency goals and Community Action national goals are on the reverse side (Theory of Change attachment).

OUTCOMES, SERVICES AND STRATEGIES

We have identified strategies utilizing the following categories: Family (F), Agency (A) or Community (C). These categories will address these poverty elements: reduction in poverty, revitalization of low-income communities and/or empowerment of low-income people to become more self-sufficient and are consistent with the National Community Action goals listed below.

National Community Action Goals:

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

Family strategies (Broad agency goals 1 & 2: Children are ready for school and families are ready to engage)

- **Families lack a place for their children to stay while families attend higher education. (F)**
 - By December 31, 2021, 8 Early Head Start Home-Based slots converted to four EHS/HS childcare slots. (FNPI2c1)
- **Families lack resources to cover basic needs. (F)**
 - By 30 September 2024, 3,045 low-income wage-earning families provided rental assistance, food and other supplemental income resources. (FNPI3a and FNPI3b)
 - By 30 September 2024, 2,030 free or reduced childcare slots created. (FNPI3a and FNPI3b)
- **Families lack resources for affordable, decent and safe housing. (F)**
 - By 30 September 2024, 360 families assisted with applications for Weatherization and/or home repair services. (FNPI4g and FNPI4h)
 - By 30 September 2024, 300 families applying for governmental assisted housing programs. (FNPI4b)
 - By 30 September 2024, \$75,000 will be committed to a deposit funds assistance for move-in expenses for low-income families. (FNPI4b)

Agency strategies (Broad Agency Goal 3: the agency is ready to support)

- **Agency makes programmatic policy and procedure changes to execute programs effectively. (A)**
 - By 30 December 2021, change one Head Start and Early Head Start policy and criteria to give more priority to families attending school.
- **Agency lacks resources to fill open positions, timely. (A)**
 - By 30 September 2024, 50% or 248 agency open positions filled timely within 45 days of posting. (A)
 - By 30 September 2022, development of 3 new agency benefits to offer. (A)
 - By 30 September 2022, HR develops 5 new digital resources/tools or strategic plan for new hiring practices.
 - By 30 September 2023, development of 3 hiring solutions with 9 high school vocational/higher education organizations.
- **Agency staff lack technical knowledge and skills. (A)**

- By 30 September 2022, Agency works to creates one technical training knowledge and skill pre-hire tests.
- By 30 September 2023, Agency creates training for technical skills knowledge building for 354 staff.
- By 30 September 2023, Agency creates two pre/post-technical skills knowledge tests.
- **Agency lacks ability to retain employees. (A)**
 - By 30 September 2023, 1 creative wage scales that allow for a planned increase of the minimum wage earned at ESC to increase wage scale to \$15/hr.

Community strategies (Broad Agency Goal 4: the community is ready to invest)

- **The community lacks resources to provide living wage opportunities. (C)**
 - By 30 September 2024, 3 schools preparing students for living wage opportunities. (CNPI2d)
 - By 30 September 2024, Partner with one new innovator project to better develop technical skills for new employers. (CNPI 1c. Other # of)
 - By 30 September 2024, join three local chamber of commerce's employment sub-committees. (CNPI 1c. Other # of)
 - By 30 September 2024, create three public/private transportation opportunities with living wage paying employers. (CNPI 1c. Other # of)
- **The community lack resources to maintain existing affordable, decent and safe housing. (C)**
 - By 30 September 2024, advocate for \$500,00 WX/Home Repair funds. (C) (CNPI4a and CNPI4b)
 - By 30 September 2024, 1 partnership with City of Joplin to create new homeownership strategies. (CNPI4a and CNPI4b)
 - By 30 September 2024, 60 staff working in blighted targeted neighborhoods. (C) (CNPI4a and CNPI4b)
- **The community lacks knowledge to public housing subsidy programs that leads to less available safe, decent and affordable housing stock. (C)**
 - By 30 September 2024, 3 public housing subsidy program presentations made to property owners where new housing stock is added to subsidy programs. (CNPI4a)
 - By 30 September 2024, 40 newly engaged property owners who accept public housing subsidy programs outside City of Joplin. (CNPI4a)
- **The community lack resources to meet increased behavior health needs in Jasper County (C)**
 - By 30 April 2023, Jasper County voters approve a ¼-cent sales tax increase to create one Children's Services Fund. (CNPI5b)

Economic Security Corporation's Board of Directors believe these services and strategies coupled with our Local Theory of Change to provide comprehensive bundled services will lead to hope and shared opportunities to eliminate the conditions of poverty and help neighbors achieve self-sufficiency.

Contact Us: John Joines, CEO at jjoines@escswa.org, 417-627-2014 or Debbie Markman, Resource Development Director, dmarkman@escswa.org or 417-627-2013.



2021-2024 ESC's THEORY OF CHANGE



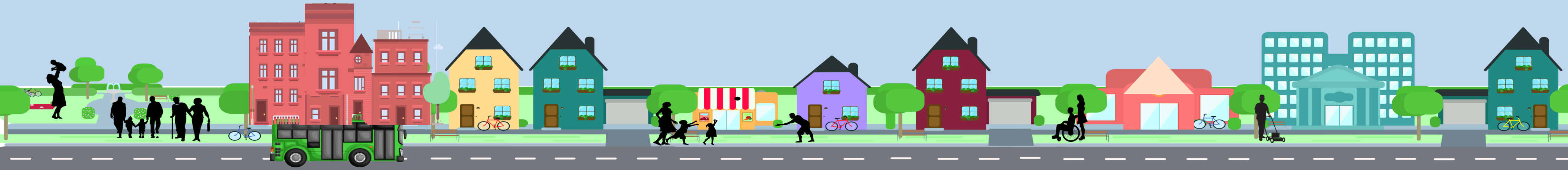
The National Community Action Network Theory of Change

Community Action Goals

Goal 1: Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Goal 2: Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

Goal 3: People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.



Services and Strategies

Employment



Education & Cognitive Development

Income, Infrastructure & Asset Building



Housing

Health/Social Behavioral Development



Civic Engagement & Community Involvement

Core Principles

- Recognize the complexity of the issues of poverty
- Build local solutions specific to local needs
- Support family stability as a foundation for economic security
- Advocate for systemic change
- Pursue positive individual, family, and community level change
- Maximize involvement of people with low incomes
- Engage local community partners and citizens in solutions
- Leverage state, federal, and community resources

Performance Management

How well does the network operate?

What difference does the network make?



- Local Organizational Standards
- State and Federal Accountability Measures
- Results Oriented Management and Accountability System

- Individual and Family National Performance Indicators
- Community National Performance Indicators

A national network of over 1,000 high performing Community Action Agencies, State Associations, State offices, and Federal partners supported by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to mobilize communities to fight poverty.

Economic Security Corporation Local Theory of Change

BROAD AGENCY GOALS:

Children are ready for school

Families are ready to engage

The agency is ready to support

The community is ready to invest



OUTCOMES:

FAMILY

- Increased engagement child development
- Increased engagement in community
- Sufficient income to support needs
- Sufficient resources to support affordable, safe & decent housing



AGENCY

- Increased staff technical knowledge
- Higher Employee Wages
- Increased employee retention
- Increase HR communication to employees



COMMUNITY

- Increased behavioral Health options
- More living wage employment opportunities
- Additional safe, healthy, affordable, energy-efficient housing units



SERVICES/ STRATEGIES:

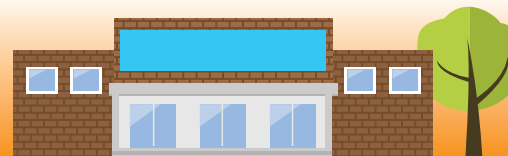
Head Start
Early Head Start
Asset Development
Rental Assistance
Housing Assistance
CHANCE

Case Management
Utility Assistance
Agency Capacity
Building Resource
Development
Communication Strategy

Weatherization Home
Repair Housing
Development
Quality of Life
Technology
Strategy



COMMUNITY ACTION CORE PRINCIPLES



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

VISION: A thriving community of neighbors that is free from poverty

MISSION: To provide comprehensive services that instill hope and share opportunities to eliminate the conditions of poverty and help neighbors achieve self-sufficiency





2021-2023

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLAN



Communication Strategic Approach



of Southwest Area

Vision: A Thriving Community of Neighbors that is Free From Poverty

MISSION

To Provide Comprehensive services that instill hope and share opportunities to eliminate the conditions of poverty and help neighbors achieve self-sufficiency

POSITIONING

← — — — — Brand Standards — — — — →
 ← — — — — Written Style Guide — — — — →

OBJECTIVES

EXTERNAL

Advocate: Become Poverty Knowledge Experts

INTERNAL

Strengthen: Create a Thriving Community Action Environment

STRATEGIES

- Establish Brand
- Raise Poverty Awareness
- Build Partnerships

- Engage ESC
- Recruitment of Community Action Staff
- Direct Communication Line

TARGET AUDIENCES

- Elected Officials
- Media + Social Media
- Current + New Community Partnerships
- For-Profit Business Community

- ESC's Staff
- Community Action Network
- Governance Board Members

TACTICS (PROJECTS)

- Continue to Grow ESC's Brand
- Revise 5-Year Brand Roll-Out Plan
 - Crisis "Communication" Plan
 - Get Signage, Vehicles & Agency Materials Re-branded

- Raise SW MO Poverty Awareness
- Poverty Education Events
 - Engage Media

- Create Partnerships
- Create network relationships, regularly

- Engage ESC
- Social Media & Website Platforms
 - Agency Publications
 - Annual Impact Report
 - Agency Connections
 - Holiday Greetings
- Recruitment of Community Action Staff
- Community Action History Training
- Direct Communication Line
- Email Blast

PLATFORMS

Social Media ← — — — — → Digital ← — — — — → Print ← — — — — → In-Person

Helping people. Changing Lives.



Recommendation: ESC's Strategic Name Positioning



Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area, A
Community Action Agency



Economic Security Community Action Partnership

Distinctiveness

Other organizations with ESC acronym:

- European Society of Cardiology
- ESC Field Technology Software
- ESC Lab Sciences
- ESC Services (Lockout)
- ESC-Boston
- Education Service Centers
- Enterprise Service Centers

Brevity

- Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area, A Community Action Agency = 65 characters and 33 syllables (*must* be pronounced when speaking to external and new audiences)
- ESC = brief, but unknown to external and new audiences, not identifiable

Appropriateness

- No meaning in the word ESC
- No connection to the National Network

Easy Spelling and Pronunciation

- People have trouble spelling the Economic and Security. Sometimes people call us Economically Security.
- ESC, on people who work or are part of our network use ESC

Likability

- For many external audiences, ESC does not have any identity attached to it.

Extendibility

- Not easily extended to efforts outside the network.

Protectability

- Multiple organizations, so not very protected

Distinctiveness

Other Organizations similar to **Economic Security Community Action Partnership**:

- Couldn't find anything, but it linked us to a lot of other Community Action Partnership agencies

Brevity

Economic Security Community Action Partnership = 42 characters and **18** syllables

- Suggestion: Do not use an abbreviation, if at all possible, however you could use **ESC** (inside Community Action Circles)

Appropriateness

Connects us with the National Partnership and about 1/3 of the rest of the Community Action community

Easy Spelling and Pronunciation

- Cannot be mispronounced

Likability

- Will be concise with the National Community Action "The Brand Idea" philosophy

Extendibility

- Extendable to National campaigns like Community Action Partnership's Community Action Month, Community Action Partner's America's Poverty Fighting Network

Protectability

- Haven't looked in the registered trademark database



SWOT ANALYSIS 2021

COMMUNICATION



STRENGTHS

- Email communication informative
- Communication is timely
- Agency is kept informed of everything that is happening

- -Emails need to be relevant
- HR communication needs to improve with staff.
- Inter-departmental communications need to improve.
- When changes are made, often there is a lack of communications.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Create text messaging options for staff to use internally.
- Weekly/Monthly CEO update for Staff
- Use of videos to explain programs, that can be put up on our website for staff to view whenever they need too.

- No Planned Agency Advocacy Communication Plan
- HR communication needs to improve.

WEAKNESSES



THREATS



Staff Preferred Communication style:

| Communication Style | Staff % of Support |
|--|---------------------------|
| Verbally from Supervisor | 88% |
| Email Blasts | 85% |
| Staff meetings (Virtual or in-person) | 86% |

Source: Employee survey, March 2021



2021-2024 IT STRATEGIC PLAN



*Helping people.
Changing lives.*



**community
Action**
PARTNERSHIP
AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK



2021-2024

Strategic Technology Plan

**Economic Security Corporation of SW Area
(ESC)**

May 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 Summary

ESC recognizes that its technology resources are a key component within the agency's operations. Over the years, the agency has continually updated technology as needed in order to provide resources to cope with the various cycles of growth in agency programs.

As a nonprofit, the means to keep pace with these changes is a difficult endeavor. There is no specific agency wide budget set forth for technology purchasing. Each department handles technology budgeting within their own budget.

Overall, the agency has a solid case in arguing that it is meeting the challenges of the ever-changing technology landscape. Areas to focus upon going forward include certain aspects of infrastructure and networking, security, and the updating of technology related policies.

Enclosed is a detailed, three-year Strategic Technology Plan for ESC. The agency's Director of IT and Communications is the main point of contact for this plan.

1.2 Mission

The mission of information technology is to provide solutions to the staff, so they can meet their goals, deliver results, and enhance the company's position.

2. Technology Overview

2.1 Servers:

The agency currently has nine servers housed within the main office's location. These servers have unique functions that minimize downtime for the building as a whole. These servers are in a locked centrally located, climate-controlled room with minimal access. The servers are backed up by image and delta snapshot to another server networked to the main physical server. The physical location of the redundant server is on location within the central office but on a different floor and location from the original server. This minimizes data loss in localized water and fire emergencies. The backup server can assume server roles by accessing those image backups in an emergency. The backup server sends backups offsite to an underground facility in Springfield, Missouri.

2.2 Devices:

ESC has approximately 325 workstations and notebooks distributed throughout our four county service area at various locations. These items range in age from newly purchased to six years. All devices are Windows 10 devices. They contain departmental software and agency wide software such as Microsoft Office and

antivirus. All devices are attached by IP networking to leased copier units for printing or are physically attached to local printers.

ESC currently has approximately 130 Apple iPads. These devices run IOS version 11 to 14 and are managed via a commercial device management system. The majority of these devices are in use by Head Start and Early Head Start.

ESC utilizes 30 HP Chromebooks that are managed via Google Workspace's management system.

2.3 Infrastructure:

The agency has cat5e and cat6 cabling throughout its buildings.

ESC has several Ubiquiti wireless access points within its buildings. The purposes of these access points are to provide wireless internet connectivity to the majority of the building with minimal dead zones.

The agency uses Sonicwall firewalls that includes intrusion protection, website filtering, and gateway antivirus.

Switches are mainly Ubiquiti switches with the core network found within the central office using the HP and Cisco product line

Internet providers vary throughout the agency dependent upon available providers. If feasible, fiber connections are the preferred choice.

The central office has AT&T fiber to the building that terminates in the server room. Current speeds are 150mbps for both upload and download speeds. The agency has a backup internet connection in case of a primary ISP failure. In addition, the backup connection also allows the agency to offload any incoming bandwidth needs from the primary ISP. The backup connection currently offers the agency a 100 mbps download speed with a 10 mbps upload speed.

Remote locations have internet connections via best effort service offered by local Internet providers. Connections are a mixture of fiber, dsl, cable, or wireless connection with average bandwidth speeds ranging 75mbps download and 15mbps upload.

Remote locations are connected via site to site virtual private network to the central office.

ESC has a mixture of various phone systems and technology dependent upon need and what is available. The central office uses an AT&T PRI via the fiber connection that enters the building. The phone system was installed in 2010 and allows for several hundred extensions with 23 concurrent lines in use. There are 100 direct dial phone numbers available. In general, remote locations employ POTS lines with select locations utilizing phone systems. One location currently uses a hosted VOIP solution.

3. Technology Issues

3.1 Security

3.1.1 Passwords

Various leading technology companies such as Google and Microsoft are currently leading a push to make the traditional password obsolete. Like fax technology, traditional passwords still will be utilized in some form. However, the challenge for the agency is to be adaptive in its employment of passwords as this new approach is implemented on a larger scale in the technology world.

3.1.2 Password Management

Periodically, ESC had issues with management team members needing access to various websites that other members had created. When this occurs, the agency risks missed opportunities or missed deadlines if the original management team member that created the agency profile on a website is no longer available and the agency has not be able to retain the original information.

Current password management for agency employees is time consuming for both employees and the IT Director. The current method involves the employee reaching out to the administrator of the domain or an admin of Google Workspace. If the admin is unavailable because of being out of the office for any length of time, this increases potential downtime for the employee until the problem is resolved.

3.1.3 Cyber Insurance

With the rise of cyber intrusions, the agency's insurance provider has suggested adding cyber insurance. This insurance would cover the investigation of the intrusion along with protection against any potential litigation against the company.

3.1.4 User rights

Multilayer protection of agency devices has led to reduced incidents of virus and malware problems. That said, in some cases current rights allowed for employees on their assigned devices are an increased risk factor for viruses, malware and ransomware incidents.

3.2 Infrastructure

3.2.1 Devices

The current voicemail equipment is nearly 11 years old. It is becoming more difficult to back up with no way to automate. Most software is no longer supported on this device. With the age of the device and the lack of

available backup capabilities, the device is a potential weak point in the operations of the agency.

3.2.2 Networking

The current Sonicwall Firewall at the Central Office firewall is currently six years old. As time passes, the requirements demanded by the agency over the internet has increased. End of life of the product is approaching.

Even as internet data speeds have increased, there are still several locations that have inadequate internet bandwidth versus the needs and the amount of devices in usage. This problem amplified during the pandemic as the agency went to online virtual meetings. The external internet bandwidth could not meet the needs of select locations. Though the pandemic may eventually subside, the usage of virtual video meetings has taken hold and the expectation is that the video meetings will continue to be utilized at a higher rate than before the pandemic.

The server room is currently climate controlled. However, it is not optimally configured, as it does not have its own zone within the agency's HVAC system. A zone specifically for the server room would provide the agency better climate control management.

3.3 Policy and policies

Ever changing requirements in the technology sector require timely creation or updates of current policies that affect the agency.

In addition, there needs to be a clear succession plan in place for contingency purposes in regards to information only the Director of IT and Communication currently has knowledge. This potential weak spot could cause downtime for the agency if an unexpected situation occurs that leaves the agency without a current person in the position of Director of IT and Communications for any length of time.

4. Technology Initiatives

4.1 Security

Explore potential changes to the usage of passwords to access agency devices. This includes implementation of biometric devices and other innovative technology that makes usage easier for employees while strengthening security.

Implement a solution for the management team that pertains to websites and agency-level login information.

Explore a new method to automate password resets for employees. Explore the possibility for a second person to have rights to reset employee network passwords.

Reduce rights on local machines to reduce the security of devices.

Determine if agency needs to purchase cyber insurance and acquire if feasible.

4.2 Infrastructure

4.2.1 Devices

Replace the central office voicemail equipment

4.2.1 Networking

Replace central office firewall.

Update climate control zone for server room alongside the planned installation of the new HVAC unit that is to be purchased by the agency for the central office.

When available and feasible, increase bandwidth speeds at those locations that are underserved.

4.3 Policy and Procedures

Update or create various policies that reflect the requirements of the agency's funders.

Create or lead in the establishment of a process specific to the passing of integral technology information to a secondary position within the agency.

5. Implementation

Timeframe

October 1st, 2021 - September 30th, 2024