



# WELCOME! Community Action Advisory Board Meeting

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- This meeting is being recorded.
- Please identify yourself when talking so we can capture accurate minutes.
- “Chat” function is not available due to public disclosure rules.
- Closed Captioning now available 
  - Turn on Webex Assistant and follow the prompts to turn on closed captioning
- Lock participant videos in Webex
  - Lock up to 6 participants to see them regardless of who is speaking
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# Approval of Jan 2024 Minutes

## COMMUNITY ACTION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Hybrid Meeting: in-person at Center for Community Health and through Webex online platform  
January 3, 2024

PRESENT	EXCUSED	ABSENT	STAFF
Alishia Topper, vice chair	Jamie Spinelli		Abby Molloy
Amy Roark			Rebecca Royce
Bridget McLeman			Janet Snook
David Poland			Michael Torres
Diana Perez			Kayla Williams
Ernie Suggs			Vanessa Gaston
Joyce Cooper			
Karyn Kameroff			
Megan Mulsoff			
Nickeia Hunter			
Melanie Green, chair			
Rob Perkins, secretary			

Guests: Jackie St. Louis (consultant); Alex Panagotacos (DSHS); Samantha Whitley (City of Vancouver); CODAs interpreters; Allison Pauletto

- I. Welcome/Introductions
- II. Election of 2024 Executive Team  
Nominations received include: Melanie Green, Chair; Alishia Topper and David Poland for Vice Chair; Rob Perkins for Secretary.  
A motion made by Ernie Suggs was seconded by Alishia Topper to elect Rob Perkins for secretary. Motion passed.  
Alishia Topper made a motion to elect Melanie Green as chair. Motion was seconded by Bridget McLeman and carried.  
A roll call vote was conducted to select Vice Chair. 7 votes were cast for Alishia Topper and 4 votes were cast for David Poland.  
A motion was made by Rob Perkins and seconded by Bridget McLeman to elect Alishia Topper as vice chair. Motion carried.
- III. Approval of November 2023 Minutes  
David Poland requested the minutes provide more detail.  
Alishia Topper made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by David Poland and carried.
- IV. Clark County Community Services Director update (Vanessa Gaston)  
Community Services is continuing to work towards implementing best practices; monitoring; finishing ARPA and Covid funding; and improving interaction between units.  
The strategic plan is being developed with consultant, Jackie St. Louis. Working on implementation this quarter, with focus on using data-focused decision making and leveraging community resources.  
Programs are also teaming with community partners to focus on building a variety of low-income affordable housing with services for buyers. Jackie St Louis is working on a report for all partners to access resources. Ten workgroups are in planning phases. David Poland suggests considering accessibility conveniences and will send information to Jackie St Louis ([jackiekstlouis@gmail.com](mailto:jackiekstlouis@gmail.com)). Alishia Topper indicated mobile home parks should be included in the discussion for low-income housing. Vanessa mentioned Clark County does not have enough developers to address all housing types. Cowlitz Tribes are included in the discussions.
- V. Community Services Strategic Plan update (Org. Std. 6.5) (Jackie St. Louis)  
Jackie St Louis is coordinating the Community Services' Strategic Plan. A committee was formed, and

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research is being done. A draft plan is in process.

The initial survey recommended more alignment with council, more staff and community input, and more DEI inclusion. Most urgent issues to address include: mental health; racial equity, housing; homelessness; and poverty. Barriers include: political/policy; lack of resources; economic/financial. Nearly 90 percent of respondents indicated needs of their clients have changed in the past five year.

Emerging strategic objectives are: affordable housing and homelessness; economic development and employment; community engagement and representation; mental health and substance use services; equity and inclusion.

Short-term goals include immediate enhancements in homelessness services; launch targeted job training programs. Medium-term goals include: significant strides in community engagement and expansion of mental health services. Long-term goals include: sustainable economic growth with increased job opportunities; establish culture of equity and inclusion. These goals are possibly measured by number of affordable housing units developed, employment rates in targeted populations, community satisfactions, accessibility and utilization.

Data continues to be collected and the draft continues to be written.

- VI. DHSH 10-year plan presentation (Alex Panagotacos) (org. std. 5.9)  
Alex discussed the 10-year plan to dismantle poverty in Washington blueprint. The blueprint was guided by people with lived experience. The plan seeks improvements in well-being; enhanced education, health, employment; decreased homelessness, child neglect, addiction, and crime; and dignity, humanity and belonging. For every \$1 invested, the return is at least \$7. It is a detailed guide for government to adjust how government works. Strategies include: undo structural racism; balance power; increase economic opportunity; ensure foundational well-being; prioritize urgent needs; build a holistic continuum of care; prepare for the future of work. Plan is in implementation stage. More information is available at [www.facebook.com/dismantlepovertyinWA/](http://www.facebook.com/dismantlepovertyinWA/) or <https://dimatleypovertyinwa.com/>. Alex can be reached at [Alex.Panagotacos@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Alex.Panagotacos@dshs.wa.gov); 360.763.2900.
- VII. City of Vancouver Affordable Housing and Homelessness update (Samantha Whitley) (org. std. 5.9)  
Completed applications for CDBG and HOME funds have been received and are being reviewed. Applicants will present next month. Applications are being moved to Neighborly.  
All four safe stays are open. City looking for bridge shelter now, to include 150-175 beds.
- VIII. Board Business
  - CAAB bylaws (org. std. 5.4), Bylaws were updated in 2022, and are available online.
  - Conflict of Interest policy (org. std. 5.6), Sent for signature via DocuSign.
  - Board member responsibilities (org. std. 5.8), Sent for signature in DocuSign. Bridget requests more involvement in Community Services activities such as the Strategic Planning. David Poland requests discussion of meeting time to increase public inclusion. Executive Board will discuss this and revisit at March meeting.
  - Organizational Standards update, CAAB required to uphold 50 organizational standards annually. All standards were accepted for 2023, except those out-of-compliance with the Strategic Plan. These will be updated in March.
  - 2024 Board member update, Currently 3 open positions. Re-advertising for these positions later this month.
  - Upcoming RFA information (org. std. 8.7), Next request for applications will open this fall. CAAB will be trained for scoring and selecting in 2025.
- IX. Adopt 2024 Work Plan  
Work plan was sent by email and is available online. It outlines anticipated activities to be covered in each meeting. David Poland moved to accept the draft plan; Ernie Suggs seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- X. Task Force updates
  - Legislative Advocacy

Community Action Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes

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# YWCA HCRS Program Presentation

Beth Landry, VP Domestic Violence Programs

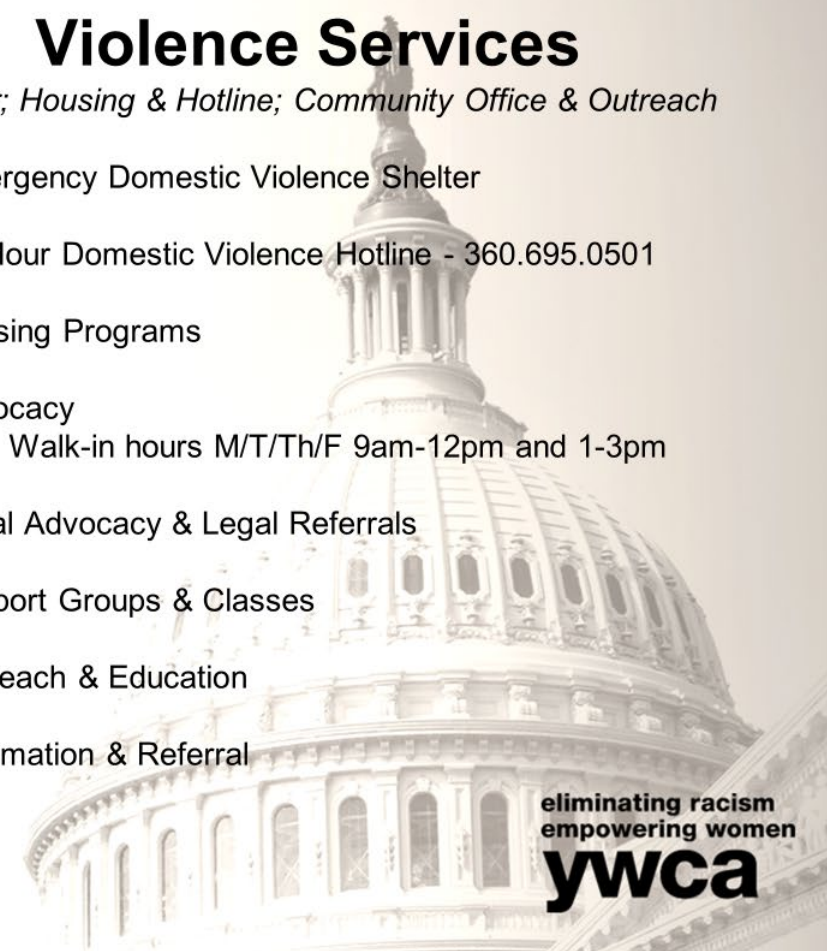




# SafeChoice Domestic Violence Services

*Shelter; Housing & Hotline; Community Office & Outreach*

- Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter
- 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline - 360.695.0501
- Housing Programs
- Advocacy  
Walk-in hours M/T/Th/F 9am-12pm and 1-3pm
- Legal Advocacy & Legal Referrals
- Support Groups & Classes
- Outreach & Education
- Information & Referral



eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**



# SafeChoice Contact Information

## **YWCA Clark County SafeChoice Domestic Violence Program**

**Hotline: 360-695-0501**

Main Line: 360-696-0167

3609 Main Street Vancouver, WA 98663

[www.ywcaclarkcounty.org](http://www.ywcaclarkcounty.org)

**DARETOBE POWERFUL**



# What is Domestic Violence?

“Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior that one person in a relationship uses to gain power and control over the other. Abuse is not caused by anger, mental problems, alcohol or other drugs, or other common excuses. It is caused by one person’s belief that they have the right to control their partner.”

*Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence*

# Terminology

**"Domestic violence"** means: (a) Physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the infliction of fear of physical harm, bodily injury, or assault; nonconsensual sexual conduct or nonconsensual sexual penetration; coercive control; unlawful harassment; or stalking of one intimate partner by another intimate partner; or (b) Physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the infliction of fear of physical harm, bodily injury, or assault; nonconsensual sexual conduct or nonconsensual sexual penetration; coercive control; unlawful harassment; or stalking of one family or household member by another family or household member.

Substitute HB 1901 2021-22

# Domestic Violence affects everyone

- 1 in 15 children are exposed to DV each year, and 90% are an eyewitness to violence
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience severe intimate partner violence
- 72% of all murder-suicides involve an intimate partner, 94% of the victims of these murder suicides are female.
- Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8 million days of paid work each year

*National Coalition Against Domestic Violence*



# DV & Marginalized Populations

## **Survivors who belong to marginalized or oppressed groups may face additional obstacles when seeking safety:**

- LGBTQ individuals may fear being outed or discrimination at the programs designed to support them (or discrimination from police)
- Immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, may face language barriers and fear the legal system
- Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing face significant difficulties when accessing services and may risk losing access to an already small community
- People of color are often more likely to be discriminated against by the legal system and may be less likely to seek judicial action or help from police

## Domestic violence is **NOT** caused by...

- Genetics or gender
- Substance use (drugs or alcohol)
- Mental health
- Anger
- Stress
- Survivor's behavior
- Relationship challenges

# Types of Abuse:

- Sexual
- Financial
- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional
- Mental/psychological
- Use of technology
- Social abuse and isolation
- Abuse through systems

# Approach to the Work - Supporting Survivors:

- Trauma informed practices
- Survivor/person/family-centered
- Strength-based
- Empowerment
- Safety Planning

# Reframing: "Why does the survivor stay?"

- Instead ask: "Why does the abuser choose to act violently" and "What can I do to offer support to the survivor?"
- **Asking why someone stays blames the survivor** for the abuser's harmful actions and does not hold the abuser accountable.

# Terminology

## **Advocacy Model Language**

- Survivor – a person who experiences a pattern of power and control by another
- Abuser / Batterer – a person who establishes a pattern of power and control over another

**The Advocacy Model** understands that people who abuse their partner may:

- Establish a pattern of control that occurs 24 / 7
- Control / exploit their partner over time
- Use several tactics – some of which are illegal, most of which are legal
- Rely on systems of oppression and social inequalities to maintain control over their partner



# Terminology

## Criminal Legal System Language

- **Victim** – a person against whom a crime of battery has been committed
- **Perpetrator** – a person who has been convicted of committing a crime of battery

## The criminal legal system:

- Is designed to address *specific incidents* and determine if they are legal or illegal
- Evaluates “moments in time”, not patterns of abusive control
- Ignores bias and sees everyone as agents under the law – regardless of institutional inequalities

# Emergency DV Shelter Program Overview

- Serves up to 14 households at any time.
- DV survivors and their families who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence and are experiencing active high lethality safety concerns
- Gender Inclusive
- Pet Friendly
- 24/7 DV hotline
- **Services:**
  - Civil Legal Advocacy
  - General Advocacy
  - Safety Planning
  - Referrals
  - Emergency Financial Assistance
  - Tangible goods including culturally specific food and hygiene items, emergency clothing
  - Housing Stability Plan Support
  - Family Services: child advocacy and activities
  - Crisis intervention and support
  - Secure facility with trained advocates available 24/7

# Participants Served in 2023

	Individuals Sheltered	Bednights Provided
Adults	57	2,663
Children	95	4,348
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>7,011</b>

- **93.63%** Extremely low income (0-30% AMI)
- **59.57%** BIPOC
- **25.53%** Latinx/Hispanic
- **2.64 persons** =Average Family Size
- **58.57 days** =Average Length of Stay
- **71.87%** of Exits Positive and Successful
  - **58.59%** to permanent housing
  - **13.28%** to transitional housing



# Renovation Overview

- Funded primarily by VHA and City of Vancouver, renovation occurred from Sept. 2022 to July 2023.
- Increased capacity from 10 rooms to 14 rooms (33 beds to 44 beds)
- Increased accessibility, safety, and comfort for survivors and their children escaping unsafe situations.
- Trauma-informed spaces designed with accessibility, recreation, and security in mind.
- Includes renovation of the community kitchen and dining room, restroom, indoor children's playroom, backyard expansion, and new playground



# Housing Programs in Safe Choice

- Rapid Rehousing Programs
- Transitional Housing Programs
- Motel Voucher Program
- Eviction Prevention



# Housing Advocacy

The goal of SafeChoice housing programs is to empower participants with skills for self-sufficiency, enabling them to maintain their housing beyond program assistance.

- Case managers who provide long-term advocacy
- Housing Advocates carry a **caseload** involving frequent communication with participants by phone calls, home visits, and off-site visits.
- Landlord support

# Domestic Violence & Housing

Domestic violence is a **leading** cause of homelessness for women and children, both in Washington state and nationwide.

- 38% of survivors seeking services with Safe Choice for the first time were experiencing homelessness or housing instability
- 46% of homeless women reported that they had previously stayed in abusive relationships because they had nowhere to go
- In IPV, survivors experience financial abuse nearly 99% of the time.
- For survivors, this can include evictions due to dv, leaving housing to increase safety but damages to the housing resulting in significant debt occurrence, loss of stable income to pay rent if abuser is jailed or the relationship separates.
- Survivors suffer poor credit due to financial abuse or no work history due to DV.
- We work with many survivors that will continue their residence even if it is unsafe due to limited or no options elsewhere to secure housing.

# Legal Advocacy

WAC defines Legal Advocacy as **personal support and assistance with victims of domestic violence to ensure their interests are represented and their rights upheld within the civil and criminal justice systems, including administrative hearings.**

*WAC 388-61A-0220*

# SafeChoice Legal Advocacy Services

- Legal Assistance Referrals
  - Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program
  - CLEAR Hotline
  - Legal Clinics\*
- DV PO completion assistance
- Printing documents and making copies per survivors' request
- Support at DV PO docket and family law hearings
- General legal information related to DV

# Legal Advocacy with Individuals

- Educating and assisting survivors in navigating the court system
- Discussing advantages and disadvantages of participating in the legal processes
- Supporting survivors' access and participation in the legal system
- Promoting survivors' choices and rights
- Sharing what might be possible and what is not
- Sharing options that do not involve law enforcement and / or the court system
- Providing space for survivors to think about the options they are interested in versus what they may be pressured to do

# Legal Advocacy in Systems

## **Criminal Legal System**

Crime reporting, prosecution, victim notification services, survivors charged with crimes, criminal DV laws, resolution of criminal cases, sentencing, probation

## **Civil Legal System**

DV PO's, family law (parenting plans, paternity cases, dissolution of marriage, etc.)

## **Legal Rights and Protections in other Systems**

Housing, child welfare, social services, immigration, health care, employment, education, etc.



# Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program

**CCVLP focuses on WA state (specifically Clark County) civil legal cases**

DV and Survivor Support **YWCA referral only**

FY23 served 373 survivors with various legal needs; 130 in Survivor Support Program.

- Housing Justice Project **360-334-4007**
- Court Navigation and Courtroom Readiness
- Family Law
- Early Parenting
- Guardianship
- Immigration can all be accessed by calling **360-695-5313**
- Children First **DCYF referral only**

# Questions?



eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**

# Clark County Community Services Strategic Plan

Jackie St. Louis, Consultant



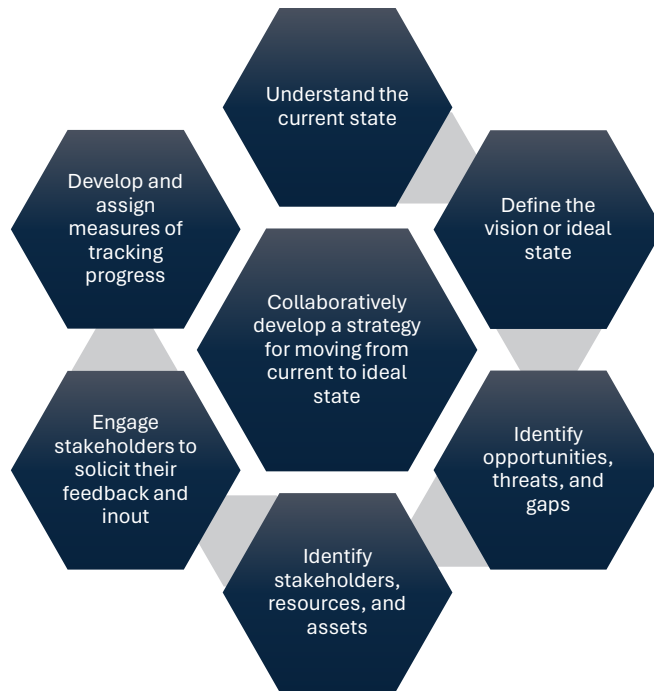
# Clark County Community Services Strategic Plan Presentation

Jackie St. Louis,

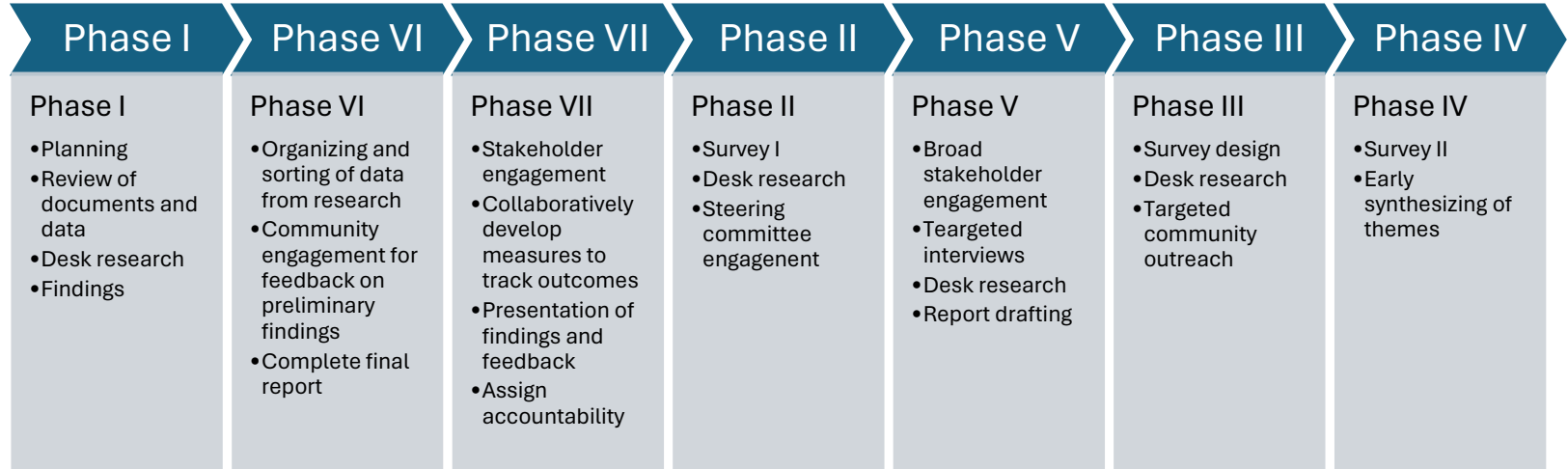
# Insights and Hopes

- The Strategic Plan focuses on key areas such as enhancing service delivery to meet the diverse needs of our community, strengthening partnerships to leverage collective resources, and promoting sustainable practices for long-term impact.
- Mixed-Method Approach
  - Surveys
  - Focus Groups
  - Interviews
  - Desk Research
- We anticipate that the successful implementation of this plan will lead to improved well-being, increased economic security, and a more engaged and resilient community.

# Key Phases



# Phase Activities





# Data Collection



Literature  
Review



Research



Organizational  
Survey



Provider  
Survey



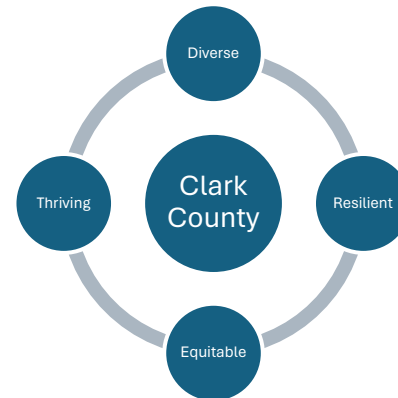
Interviews



Focus Groups

# Vision - A Thriving Clark County: Diverse, Equitable, and Resilient

Our vision for Clark County is a vibrant community where every individual and family flourishes in an environment of inclusivity and equal opportunity. We envision a future where diversity is celebrated as a strength, where the barriers that divide us are dismantled, and where the bonds of community are fortified by mutual respect and understanding.

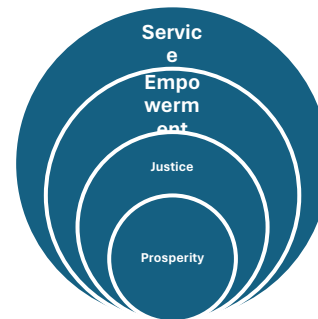


# A Vision That Leads To

- Every neighborhood pulsates with the vitality of cultural diversity and communal harmony.
- Economic opportunities are abundant and accessible, eliminating the scourge of poverty.
- Education systems are transformative, equipping each individual with the tools for success.
- Healthcare is a universal right, not a privilege, ensuring the well-being of every citizen.
- Housing is safe, affordable, and a foundation for stability and growth in every family's life.
- The environment is protected and cherished, providing a healthy and sustainable home for all.
- Social services are robust and compassionate, meeting the needs of those in distress.
- Civic engagement is the norm, with empowered citizens actively shaping their destiny.
- Every person, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, or any other part of their identity, feels valued, understood, able to fully participate and connected to the larger whole.

# Mission - Empowerment Through Service: Building a Just and Prosperous Community for All

The mission of Clark County Community Services is to empower and uplift our community by providing essential support, resources, and opportunities aimed at overcoming poverty and ensuring a stable, healthy, and engaged community for all. We are dedicated to fostering a culture of empathy, service, and accountability, where the dignity of every individual is upheld, and the interconnectedness of our well-being is recognized. Through strategic partnerships, we commit to enhancing economic security and well-being, addressing the root causes of poverty, and building a foundation for a prosperous future.



# Primary Objectives

- 1. To Advocate for Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice:** Champion policies and initiatives that address the root causes of inequity, break down barriers to opportunity, and create a just society where everyone can reach their potential.
- 2. To Promote Economic Empowerment:** Drive sustainable economic development that ensures equitable access to jobs, education, and resources, enabling all members of our community to thrive.
- 3. To Enhance Health and Well-being:** Facilitate comprehensive and accessible health services that foster physical, mental, and social health across all demographics, with a focus on the underprivileged and marginalized.
- 4. To Cultivate Inclusive Community Engagement:** Encourage active participation from all sectors of the community, ensuring that diverse voices are integral in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.
- 5. To Strengthen Support Systems:** Deliver high-quality, responsive services that meet the evolving needs of Clark County's community members, especially the most vulnerable among us.

# Guiding Principles



**Integrity:** We commit to transparency, honesty, and ethical behavior in all our interactions. We hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards of

**Innovation:** We embrace creativity and are committed to finding new and effective ways to meet the challenges of our community. We encourage experimentation and learning, understanding

**Resilience:** We aim to feature a community that is adaptable and robust, capable of withstanding challenges and bouncing back stronger. We invest in the social and economic foundations that support long-term sustainability.



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**Compassion:** Our services are delivered with empathy and a deep understanding of the human experience. We approach each individual's situation with sensitivity, seeking to

**Collaboration:** We believe in the power of partnerships and collective action. By working together with individuals, organizations, and sectors, we can achieve

**Service:** At our core, we are public servants. We exist to serve the community of Clark County, to improve lives, and to contribute to the public good. Our dedication to service is unwavering and defines our path forward.



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**Inclusivity:** We recognize the strength that comes from diversity and strive to create spaces where every individual can contribute and belong. We work to ensure that all voices are heard and

**Equity:** We pledge to confront inequities head-on and dismantle the systemic barriers that hinder access to opportunity. We advocate for fairness and justice in the distribution of resources and opportunities.

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# Strategic Priorities and Goals

1. **Economic Stability and Workforce Development:** Enhance access to education, job training, and employment opportunities to promote economic self-sufficiency and reduce poverty.
2. **Housing Affordability and Stability:** Increase the availability of affordable housing and support services to address homelessness and housing insecurity.
3. **Health and Well-being:** Improve access to comprehensive healthcare services, including physical, mental, and behavioral health, to ensure the overall well-being of all community members.
4. **Equity and Inclusion:** Promote racial equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of community life, ensuring that all community members have equal access to opportunities and resources.
5. **Community Engagement and Collaboration:** Foster strong partnerships between government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and community members to address complex social issues collaboratively.



# Objectives

## **1. Economic Stability and Workforce Development:**

- Increase access to vocational training and higher education programs that align with local industry needs.
- Develop workforce re-entry programs for individuals facing barriers to employment, such as formerly incarcerated persons and veterans.
- Support small businesses and entrepreneurship as engines of economic growth and job creation.

## **2. Housing Affordability and Stability:**

- Expand affordable housing initiatives, including low-income housing tax credits and inclusionary zoning policies.
- Strengthen eviction prevention and rapid rehousing programs to reduce homelessness.
- Implement supportive housing models that integrate social services for individuals with complex needs.

## **3. Health and Well-being:**

- Increase access to preventive and primary healthcare services, especially for underserved populations.
- Enhance mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, including crisis intervention and recovery support.
- Promote healthy lifestyles through community-based initiatives focused on nutrition, physical activity, and chronic disease prevention.

## **4. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:**

- Develop and implement policies and practices that advance racial equity and social justice with the goal of influencing all county operations.
- Increase representation and participation of diverse communities in decision-making processes.
- Address disparities in education, healthcare, employment, and housing through targeted interventions.

## **5. Community Engagement and Collaboration:**

- Strengthen communication and collaboration between government agencies, non-profits, and community groups.
- Encourage community-led initiatives and empower community members to take an active role in shaping their neighborhoods.
- Leverage technology and data to enhance transparency, accountability, and community involvement in governance.

# Monitoring and Evaluation

1. **Performance Indicators:** Develop clear performance indicators for each goal and strategy to measure progress and assess the impact of the plan.
2. **Data Collection:** Implement systems for collecting data related to the performance indicators. This may involve surveys, interviews, program evaluations, and other data collection methods.
3. **Regular Reporting:** Produce regular reports that summarize progress, highlight achievements, and identify areas for improvement. These reports should be shared with stakeholders and used to inform decision-making.
4. **Feedback Loops:** Create feedback loops that allow for input from staff, community members, and partners. This feedback can be used to refine strategies and address any challenges encountered during implementation.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Use the monitoring and evaluation data to continuously improve the implementation of the strategic plan. This may involve adjusting strategies, reallocating resources, or exploring new approaches to achieving the goals.



# Status Update & Next Steps



FINALIZE REVIEW  
BY STEERING  
COMMITTEE



COMPLETE EDITS



SUBMIT FINAL  
DRAFT



PLAN APPROVAL



PUBLISH



Questions

# July – December 2023 Outcomes Report

Abby Molloy, Program Coordinator



# City of Vancouver Affordable Housing and Homelessness Update

Samantha Whitley, Community Development Manager



# Task Force Updates

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- Legislative Advocacy Task Force
  - Amy Roark
- Community Needs Assessment Task Force
  - Abby Molloy
- General
  - Task force appointments
  - Policy Task Force





# Open Public Forum and Other Business

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- Open Public Forum (up to 3 minutes)
- Other Business
  - Meeting cadence
  - Equity training
- Adjourn

***Save the date: Next CAAB Meeting***

***May 1, 2024 starting at 9am***

