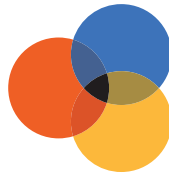




**BALTIMORE CITY COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP
STRATEGIC PLAN 2021**



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
**CHILDREN &
FAMILY SUCCESS**



BALTIMORE CITY
**COMMUNITY
ACTION PARTNERSHIP**

“I have never asked for help before. I’m usually the one who is always helping my family, friends and patients. But when COVID-19 infected my entire family, I had no choice but to ask for help. I was able to receive help and was approved for the rental assistance program and they covered 100% of my missing rent. Throughout this struggle all I could see was darkness but you became the light at the end of the tunnel. Thank you.”

Chanell P.
Baltimore City Resident

Board of Directors

Because the Baltimore City Community Action Partnership (BCCAP) is funded through the federal Community Service Block Grant, it is required to have a “tripartite” Board of Directors that participates in the development, planning, implementation and evaluation of Community Action Partnership (CAP) center programming to support Baltimore’s low-income communities. BCCAP’s tripartite board includes three local elected officials, three representatives of CAP partner organizations and three individuals with lived experience who reside in the areas CAP centers serve.

Doris Minor Terrell, Chair
City Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton, Vice Chair
Francesca Jean Baptiste, Secretary
Manami Brown
Scott Gottbreht
Theodore (Theo) Jackson
LaRhonda Medley
City Councilman Robert Stokes, Sr.

CAP center locations

Northern CAP Center
5225 York Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21212

Northwest CAP Center
3939 Reisterstown Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21215

Southern CAP Center
606 Cherry Hill Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21225

Southeast CAP Center
3411 Bank St.
Baltimore, MD 21224

Eastern CAP Center
1731 E. Chase St.
Baltimore, MD 21213

The BCCAP Board of Directors acknowledges the many CAP center and Mayor’s Office of Children & Family Success staff members who contributed to and supported this document.

The Board also thanks the residents of Baltimore for partnering with and guiding BCCAP in its work to support families in their move to financial stability.

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FAMILY

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OVERVIEW

The Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success (MOCFS) brings together the tools of city government, our city's collective love for children and the vast assets of our community to radically improve the lives of Baltimore's children and families. The Baltimore City Community Action Partnership (BCCAP) is at the heart of this work.

In addition to partnering with community-based and nonprofit organizations, BCCAP's five community-based CAP centers administer the city's energy, water and rental assistance programs and collaborate across the community to connect almost 30,000 families every year to the resources they need to move toward financial stability. These centers have long been historical, familiar community hubs. There has never been a greater need for the services they provide.

Soon after becoming the managing agency for BCCAP in 2019, MOCFS convened the Baltimore Children's Cabinet, which includes city and state agencies and key external partners focused on increasing the city's collective investment in our children and youth. One of the questions that the cabinet asked was: *How are Baltimore's children doing?*

The answer: Out of the gate, our children face unacceptable odds. To overcome these unacceptable odds, the cabinet identified seven priorities and is actively pursuing specific actions to advance these priorities in 2021-2022.

| UNACCEPTABLE ODDS | OUR PRIORITIES |
|---|---|
| <p>63% children enter Baltimore City Public Schools kindergarten unprepared</p> <p>>33% Baltimore youth are food insecure</p> <p>1 in 25 City Schools students experience homelessness</p> <p>84% City Schools students enter 9th grade below reading level</p> <p>>40% City Schools students were chronically absent in 2019</p> <p>90% juvenile arrests in 2018 involved Black & Brown youth</p> <p>69% homicide victims in Baltimore in 2018 were Black men</p> | <p>Increase early childhood development</p> <p>Decrease youth food insecurity</p> <p>Decrease youth homelessness</p> <p>Increase youth literacy</p> <p>Increase trauma-informed care for youth</p> <p>Increase youth diversion practices</p> <p>Break down historical barriers to success for Black boys and young men</p> |

CAP centers have the existing infrastructure to both support these priorities and lead the way in eradicating poverty in Baltimore.

Before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, BCCAP had already begun a transformation to grow its assistance programs and adopt a comprehensive approach to service delivery. That transformation included a new Board of Directors and leadership team, the automation and digitization of operations, extensive staff training, center renovations and a deepened commitment to customer service. The pandemic accelerated all of these efforts.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As the designated community action agency for Baltimore City, BCCAP is required to carry out a community needs assessment every three years and to create a strategic plan every five years. These documents, in turn, inform BCCAP's annual community action plans.

Because the community knows best what children and families need to succeed, MOCFS held community design sessions in 2019 in all 14 Baltimore City Council districts, with additional sessions for youth and the Baltimore Children's Cabinet. The design sessions informed the agency's work across all programs, and laid the foundation for the 2021 Community Needs Assessment.

In June 2020, BCCAP employed an external consultant, iLead Strategies, to conduct the BCCAP community needs assessment. That analysis included primary and secondary data from BCCAP, the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey, along with feedback gathered from community listening sessions and surveys, a staff focus group and key stakeholder interviews. In addition to informing the community needs assessment, the process also met or exceeded the organizational standards of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program which provides funds to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities and empower families.

BCCAP'S COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Informs the vision and direction of the agency
- Drives decision-making, program planning, goals and short- and long-term program objectives
- Addresses changing priorities and policies
- Responds to trends and environmental changes
- Educates staff, stakeholders and the community
- Mobilizes community resources and activates community relationships



The Board approved BCCAP's 2021 Community Needs Assessment at its January 20, 2021 meeting.

This Strategic Plan report—built on this strong foundation of community outreach and engagement, research and analysis—addresses the reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities and empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient. In short, it strives to position Baltimore's children, youth and families to thrive.

OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

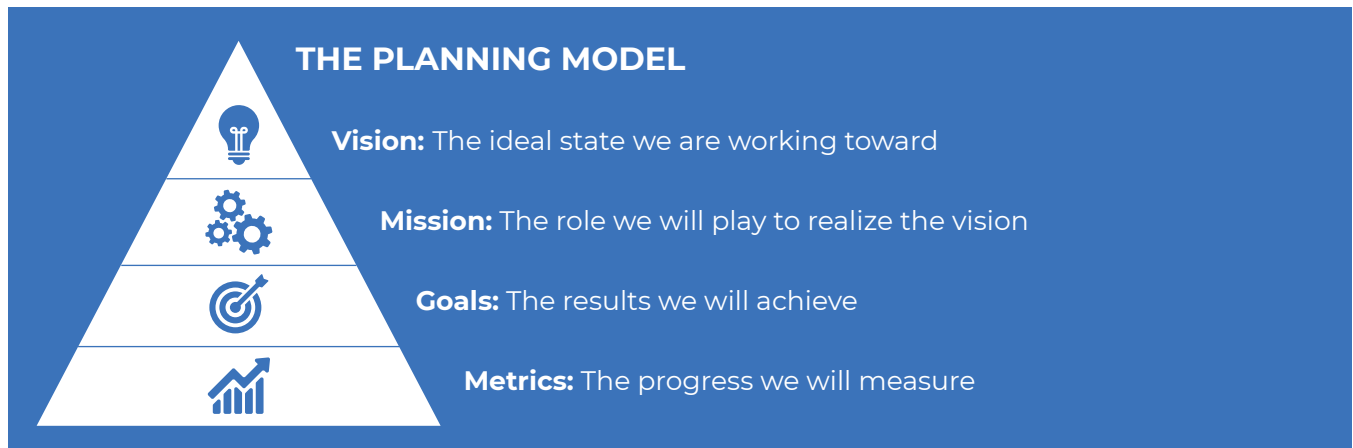
Our strategic planning process began with a review of the community needs assessment, recent state reports and our current vision, mission, values, priorities and goals.

This strategic plan represents the second phase of the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle of continuous improvement: assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results and evaluation.

We developed a two-day agenda to begin this process and met virtually on Sunday, March 28 and Saturday, April 17, 2021. A certified ROMA trainer facilitated both meetings.

Our planning process

- Review and revise, as necessary, the agency's vision and mission statements, priorities and goals
- Develop three to seven short- and long-term goals and objectives addressing family, community and agency needs
- Review and refine key indicators and outcomes to determine success in achieving these goals and objectives
- Develop key strategies for achieving these goals and objectives
- Identify resources needed to implement these strategies
- Develop and implement a plan with clear roles, responsibilities and timelines to ensure the identified strategies become active, integrated and measured parts of all operations
- Measure and report progress to the Board and adjust plans as necessary



One of the most revealing activities of the early planning process was an activity in which participants discussed their vision for Baltimore City. These ideals—and the shared desire for a better, safer and more equitable city—shaped and defined our mission.



We created a new BCCAP mission statement, drawing on the vision discussion and other similar organizations' mission statements:

The Baltimore City Community Action Partnership (BCCAP) uses a holistic, strengths-based approach with a racial equity lens to ensure Baltimore residents live in safe environments and are empowered to achieve social and financial success.

With this as our guide, we aligned our goals with the MOCFS strategic framework, the priorities of the Baltimore Children's Cabinet, our current range of resources and the community needs assessment.

Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success Strategic Framework

We focus the three most powerful tools of city government—convening power, policymaking authority and resources—on the well-being of children and families.

We leverage every available community asset.

We engage deeply with residents, the business community, nonprofit organizations and local and state government agencies to advance a clear set of priorities.

We deliver the ecosystem of supports that:

- Families need to be self-sustaining and strong
- Children and youth need to reach their full potential
- All communities need to thrive

Baltimore Children's Cabinet Priorities

1. Increase early childhood development
2. Decrease youth food insecurity
3. Decrease youth homelessness
4. Increase youth literacy
5. Increase trauma-informed care for youth
6. Increase youth diversion practices
7. Break down historical barriers to success for Black boys and young men

BCCAP Services

- Eviction prevention
- Water assistance
- Energy assistance
- Financial education
- Case management

OUR SIX GOALS

Beginning with a list of nearly 30 objectives, we refined our focus to six goals and identified key strategies to support their success. And when discussing how to best measure that success, we focused on reducing poverty, revitalizing low-income communities and empowering low-income families and individuals to become self-sufficient.

These six goals support three, key stakeholder groups: families, the community and BCCAP itself.

Goal 1: Increase access to safe, affordable housing **(FAMILY)**

Goal 2: Strengthen service delivery by expanding intensive case management and connecting customers to the range of services for which they are eligible **(FAMILY)**

Goal 3: Build infrastructure to expand financial education and entrepreneurship **(FAMILY)**

Goal 4: Engage with and support communities and populations which have previously been underserved by BCCAP **(COMMUNITY)**

Goal 5: Expand our network of government, business and non-profit partners **(COMMUNITY)**

Goal 6: Build BCCAP staff capacity, knowledge base and skills **(AGENCY)**



OUR CHALLENGES AND ASSETS

The pandemic has exacerbated and intensified the challenges we face to address the causes and consequences of poverty in Baltimore.

- **Time.** The increased demand for assistance and the need to do so with minimal contact has made it difficult to meet demand and to reach program participants who don't have access to or are not comfortable with technology.
- **Short-term funding.** Although BCCAP has access to federal and state COVID-19 funds, these will be temporary, have different deadlines and eligibility requirements and must be spent quickly.
- **Staff knowledge, capacity and mindset.** At a time when the need for services is high, urgent and extraordinary, BCCAP staff need to embrace a more holistic service delivery approach.
- **Weak referral processes.** To increase referrals and follow-up, staff need to identify resources and develop new partnerships.
- **Awareness.** Many community members—especially those within our immigrant communities and who have been most affected by COVID-19—are not aware of our resources and services.

At the same time, we are leveraging community assets and new opportunities.

- **A new, engaged board.** The new Board of Directors brings renewed commitment from the community and support from community leaders.
- **A new leadership team.** BCCAP has a new Director and team to bring a new vision to the work and to rebuild trust in partnerships to support services for those who need assistance.
- **Investments in a strong workforce with relevant certifications.** The new leadership team is working to strengthen the skills and knowledge of staff to improve outcomes for those receiving assistance.
- **Re-emergence as the pandemic slows.** As the city opens back up, there will be increased opportunities to serve residents more personally. BCCAP team members excel at working directly with families and are looking forward to doing so when it is deemed safe.
- **New relationships forged during the pandemic.** The pandemic created opportunities to build new relationships in the community—from individual landlords to large service organizations like the United Way of Central Maryland.
- **Short-term, large infusion of funding.** The increased funding has brought pressures but also made it possible to serve more people and to strengthen the services BCCAP provides.
- **Support from MOCFS.** MOCFS is upgrading BCCAP's technological resources and expanding communications and outreach.

OUR STRATEGIES

In determining the priority strategies for each goal, we considered the current portfolio of work and the commitment within Baltimore City's Equity Assessment Program to close the "gaps in policy, practice and allocation of city resources so that race, gender, religion, sexual orientation and income do not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all." Each goal and strategy was reviewed in the context of this commitment to ensure that it furthered the city's goals for BCCAP while increasing opportunity and equity.

The strategic plan supports our mission and transformation while addressing the major findings of the 2021 Community Needs Assessment. The Board approved the 2021 Strategic Plan at its July 2021 meeting.

"I believe that the work of BCCAP is the most critical work of our agency. It is where we have the most direct opportunity to really improve the lives of thousands of Baltimore residents.

To me, there is nothing more important in our agency than supporting the work of BCCAP. This is bigger than just a utility bill or just rental assistance. This is about stepping in and doing our part to make Baltimore a great city."

Tisha Edwards

Executive Director, Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success
Chair, Baltimore Children's Cabinet



OUR FOCUS AREAS

FAMILY
COMMUNITY
AGENCY

FAMILY

GOAL 1

GOAL 2

GOAL 3

“It’s very important that we invest in Baltimore in ways that build strong families. I think that strong families build strong communities.”

Angela Whitaker
Director, BCCAP

GOAL 1: Increase access to safe, affordable housing

| Priority Strategies | Timeline for Completion |
|---|-------------------------|
| Develop a referral system for families who require legal services related to their rental housing | September 2021 |
| Develop eviction and shelter diversion programs | December 2021 |
| Expand the BCCAP staff to support housing stability initiatives | December 2021 |
| Develop formal partnerships with agencies providing access to affordable housing | March 2022 |

GOAL 2: Strengthen service delivery by expanding intensive case management and connecting families to the range of services for which they are eligible

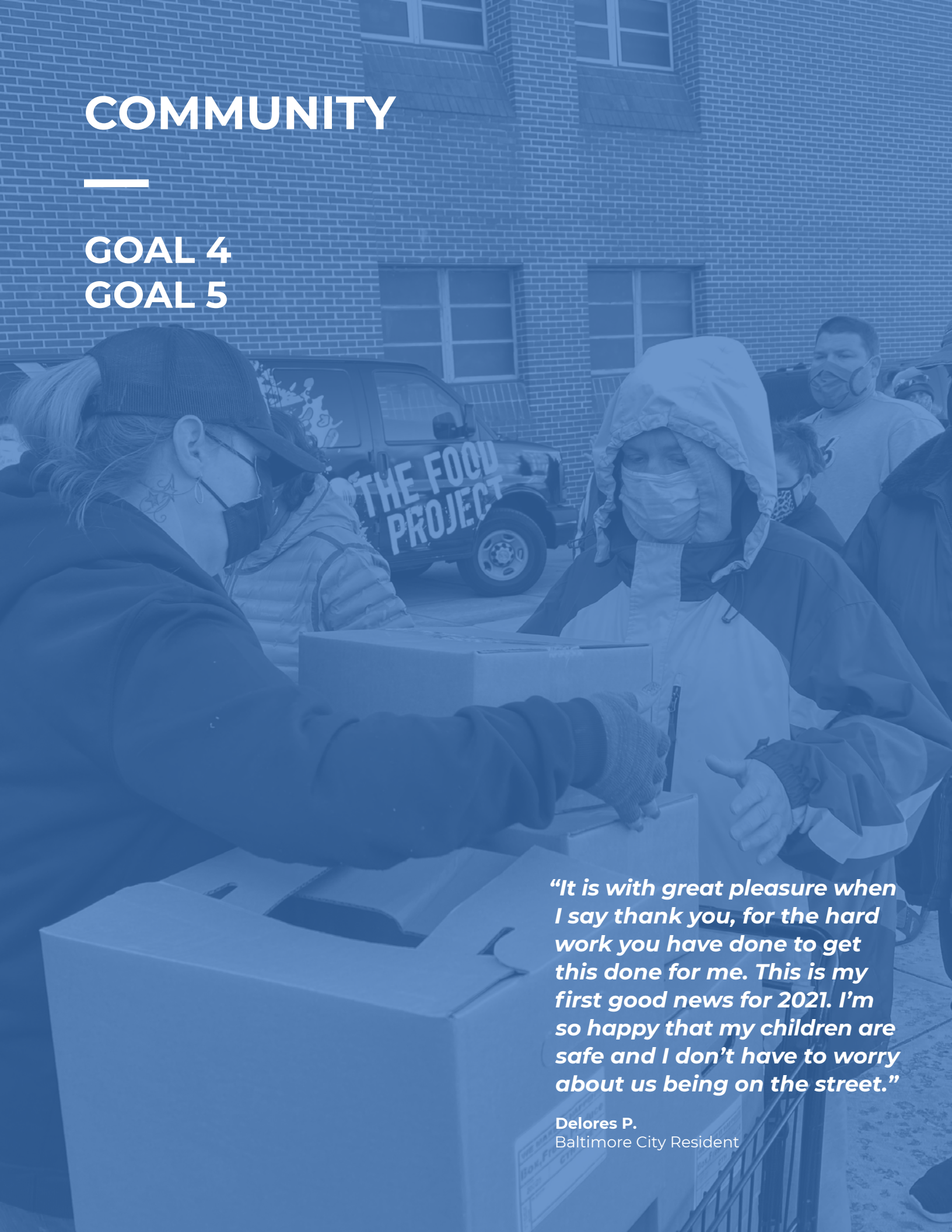
| Priority Strategies | Timeline for Completion |
|--|-------------------------|
| Increase the number of staff qualified to deliver case management services | September 2021 |
| Develop an internal system to make and track referrals to other services and programs | December 2021 |
| Implement a robust case management service model | June 2022 |
| Expand BCCAP staff use of online software and databases to more easily connect families with additional resources and other agencies | December 2022 |

GOAL 3: Build infrastructure to expand financial education and entrepreneurship

| Priority Strategies | Timeline for Completion |
|---|-------------------------|
| Increase the number of BCCAP staff certified as tax preparers | December 2021 |
| Raise awareness about city, state and federal funds and programs for individuals, families and small businesses | March 2022 |
| Increase the number of BCCAP staff certified as financial counselors | June 2022 |
| Develop partnerships with agencies supporting entrepreneurial skill development and opportunities | March 2023 |

COMMUNITY

GOAL 4
GOAL 5



"It is with great pleasure when I say thank you, for the hard work you have done to get this done for me. This is my first good news for 2021. I'm so happy that my children are safe and I don't have to worry about us being on the street."

Delores P.
Baltimore City Resident

GOAL 4: Engage with and support communities and populations which have previously been underserved by BCCAP

| Priority Strategies | Timeline for Completion |
|---|-------------------------|
| Hire bilingual staff, with an initial focus on those with Spanish-language ability | September 2021 |
| Identify and collaborate with community-based organizations which support our target populations | June 2022 |
| Implement outreach and communications campaigns to reach new mothers, young families, immigrants and the Latinx community | September 2022 |

GOAL 5: Expand our network of government, business and non-profit partners

| Priority Strategies | Timeline for Completion |
|---|-------------------------|
| Strengthen collaboration with city agencies | March 2022 |
| Cultivate business partners and sponsors | September 2022 |
| Develop and maintain a database of partners for each CAP center to inform and manage partner engagement | September 2022 |
| Create and maintain a calendar of partner-organized community events for each CAP center | September 2022 |
| Participate in community events to promote services provided by BCCAP | September 2022 |
| Provide staff volunteers to support partner-organized events | June 2023 |

AGENCY

GOAL 6

My experience with Ms. Wanda Wiley was truly heartwarming and reassuring. Realizing how many demands are placed on your staff, I am even more impressed with her approach to problem resolution and compassion.

Armentha C.
Baltimore City Resident

GOAL 6: Build BCCAP staff capacity, knowledge base and skills

| Priority Strategies | Timeline for Completion |
|--|-------------------------|
| Increase number of BCCAP staff with professional certifications | September 2021 |
| Expand staff diversity to create a team with a range of professional backgrounds that is racially and culturally representative of our CAP communities | September 2021 |
| Develop and implement an internal communications strategy to keep staff current on BCCAP and agency information and updates | December 2021 |
| Develop and implement an agency-wide professional development plan | March 2022 |
| Develop an organizational culture of exceptional customer service through regular training, monitoring and coaching | June 2022 |

Strategic planning session participants

Virtual sessions were held on Sunday, March 28 and Saturday, April 17, 2021.

Board members

Doris Minor Terrell, Chair
City Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton, Vice Chair
Francesca Jean Baptiste, Secretary
Manami Brown
Scott Gottbreht
Theodore (Theo) Jackson
LaRhonda Medley
City Councilman Robert Stokes, Sr.

MOCFS staff

Tisha Edwards, Executive Director
Eboni Wimbush, Deputy Director
Molly Rath, Communications & Engagement Director

BCCAP staff

Angela Whitaker, Director
Kevin Large, Deputy Director
Andre Brown, Systems Engineering Manager
Tiffany Cash, Energy Program Technician
David Cherry, Operations Officer
Dante Franklin, Human Services Manager
Jamie Kinney, Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) Deputy Director
Detola Laditan, Human Service Worker
Desiree Mack, Human Services Manager
Daniela McDonald, Human Services Manager
Lashawn Moore, Human Services Manager
Paula Reynolds, Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) Director
Seana Thomas, Office Support Specialist
Kimberley Whitaker, Human Services Manager

External consultant

Julie Jakopic, iLead Strategies



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