

Upper Cumberland Development District

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2022



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MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

It is our mission to help the Upper Cumberland region cultivate self-sufficiency and build true wealth through innovation, collaboration, and leadership. It is our vision to have a region abundant in resources, fostering a productive and vibrant life for the people of the Upper Cumberland.

OUR VISION.

A region abundant in resources, fostering a productive and vibrant life for the people of the Upper Cumberland.

OUR MISSION.

To help the Upper Cumberland region cultivate self-sufficiency and build true wealth through innovation, collaboration, and leadership.



BUILDING TRUE WEALTH

What is "true wealth"? True wealth is achieved when our citizens no longer worry about their physiological and safety needs but are moving toward the best version of themselves.

Building true wealth for people in the Upper Cumberland includes improving access to higher incomes, greater knowledge, wider freedoms, stronger relationships, and healthier communities.



OUR MEASUREMENT

The following core principles have been identified as a means of measuring success in achieving the goals listed for each department and program. For the Upper Cumberland Region to be successful, the following core principles must be met:

Core Principle #1: People should be able to easily travel within the region.

- Connector routes should be in place between communities and tied to the highway systems of Interstate 40 and Highway 111.
- A responsive public transit system must be in place.
- Rail and air transportation systems should progress to meet the size and scope of the region.

Core Principle #2: Safe, affordable housing should be available to all those who desire it.

- All communities should have an adequate mix of housing to meet different income levels.
- Blighted areas must be addressed and improved to maintain the attractiveness of the community.

Core Principle #3: Programs must exist to break the cycle of poverty and provide a safety net for those going through a difficult period in their life.

- The poverty rate of the region should decline each year.

Core Principle #4: The economy must add new jobs each year to meet the growth of the region and provide opportunities for income improvement.

- Per-Capita-Income levels must increase each year.
- Five-year average job growth/decline must be monitored.

Core Principle #5: Education must be available and encouraged at all stages of life.

- A better-educated society means better jobs, better health, and a more stable community.

Core Principle #6: To retain our population base we must ensure that our communities have adequate support services.

- Health care facilities, law enforcement, emergency services, childcare facilities, and geriatric services.

Core Principle #7: The natural beauty of the region must be protected.

- Smart development of natural areas and parks is essential.

OUR TEST

Our Agency uses the SMART goals method (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) for identifying key goals and objectives during the strategic planning process.

- Are our goals focused and do they identify a tangible outcome?
- How will our success be measured?
- Are our goals challenging but also reasonable to achieve?
- Are the goals worthwhile and relevant?
- When will each goal be met and are targeted timelines and completion dates realistic?

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Goal: UCDD/UCHRA have a trained workforce able to provide problem-solving skills for both individual and community needs.

Objective: Employees are systematically enrolled in training to provide program support and customer assistance to improve the client's condition; resulting in better satisfaction questionnaire responses and increased services provided.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, department leaders and County Coordinators need more authority to make programmatic and customer satisfaction decisions which reduces the number of complaints and improves the process of delivering services.

WHY WAS THIS GOAL IDENTIFIED? TO BEST SERVE THE CHANGING NEEDS OF OUR REGION, THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS MUST HAVE EMPLOYEES WHO CAN CRITICALLY THINK THROUGH ISSUES THAT AFFECT BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

AGING

Goal: A strengthened existing service provider networks to allow clients to receive more relevant, quality, and timely services.

Objective: Advocate for an increase in provider rates resulting in providers being able to better recruit and retain staff. Providers experience a large percentage of turnover which directly affects the quality of services our clients receive. Turnover also creates a financial strain on providers.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, staff must prepare position documents and have them ready to present to legislative members in February 2021. Staff and key representatives will participate in a statewide effort in an attempt to saturate the message while continuing to spread the message at the local level. Entities would rather see something that is a collaborative effort. The target completion for this item is 2Q 2021.

Objective: To increase the number of providers for homemaker, personal care, and respite services so that there is a minimum number (goal of five per county) to choose from per Upper Cumberland county.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, our agency will contact all providers within each Upper Cumberland county to ensure an increased provider network by July 1, 2021. Some delays in being able to provide services to clients changing providers are anticipated. The targeted completion date is July 1, 2021. However, staff will be able to add providers at any time.

Objective: Identify providers offering a grocery delivery service; allowing clients who are on the home-delivered meal program to benefit from grocery delivery instead of home-delivered meals.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, staff and key agency representatives will conduct meetings with multiple providers to gauge interest in providing this service. The agency will need to obtain permission from the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability. By offering this service, our clients will be able to maintain some independence. Delays stemming from sitting on a waiting list for services will be removed. The new service is anticipated to begin Oct. 1, 2021; coinciding with the ending of CARES funding (clients losing their meals service at that time); allowing possible more absorption of clients affected by the ending of CARES funding.

Objective: Implementing new barcode scanning technology that will feed into meal delivery tracking/invoicing purposes.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, staff will acquire necessary equipment, train providers on equipment usage, and rollout equipment by Oct. 1, 2021. Clients would not likely see changes as a result of this item but it would create an improved impact on paperwork, etc. The targeted completion of the technology component is anticipated in 3Q 2021.

Achievement of some of these objectives relies on the successful lobbying of key points. For the technology portion, Aging team members will serve as project managers who will work with the various provider sites to provide equipment, training, and support.

WHY WAS THIS GOAL IDENTIFIED? IN A TIME WHERE THE REGION'S AGING POPULATION IS GROWING, WE MUST STRENGTHEN NOT ONLY OUR OPERATIONS BUT THAT OF THE SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT FULFILL THE NEEDS OF OUR SENIORS.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Goal: An Economic and Community Development Best Practice manual is developed and incorporated into the annual strategic planning process across the cities and counties of the Upper Cumberland region.

Objective: The Best Practices manual will begin with seven (7) sections. Many projects have been developed because of the strategic planning process and the best practice manual as well as the number of strategic planning meetings with the cities and counties. The best practices manual will be used not only as a development tool but as an opportunity to show communities the effectiveness of goal setting, effective planning, and teamwork.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, the Economic and Community Development teams will be involved in this process; working on the subsection as a team, and then, once the template is complete, it will be divided into individual sections. Workloads will be delegated to topic experts or distributed to staff for further education and experience. The Best Practice Manual will be discussed during Summer 2021 strategy sessions with community leaders and feedback will be collected. The manual (a three-ring binder and electronic version) will be complete by 3Q 2021.

WHY WAS THIS GOAL IDENTIFIED? BECAUSE BOTH ELECTED AND UNELECTED COMMUNITY LEADERS CHANGE FROM TIME TO TIME, WE MUST PROVIDE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WORK HAS BEEN DONE AND WHY WE MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES AND THE REGION.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Awareness of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and the Cumberland Area Investment Corporation (CAIC) revolving loan fund products and services is increased by hosting outreach in all 14 counties.

Objective: Explore joining all Upper Cumberland chambers of commerce and relevant associations to build networks and personal connections.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, program staff/agency representatives will become active participants in area Chambers of Commerce and other such organizations/associations that will allow our agency to better connect with communities and individuals we serve. Our agency will be members of Chambers of Commerce and relevant associations by 2Q 2021.

Objective: Develop a marketing plan for SBDC and CAIC program.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, the new marketing plan will be developed through a collaborative effort with key staff and the marketing/communications team.

Objective: Provide better training to program staff and implement cross-training.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, cross-training will be promoted internally. Staff will educate the public on available resources and support from SBDC and CAIC. Staff training will be a collaborative effort by all.

Objective: Establish an ECD Best-Practice Model; designed for the Upper Cumberland Region.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, the proposed ECD Best-Practice Model will be the result of a collaborative effort by all. The Model will be complete by 3Q 2021

Objective: The Economic Development department will develop an industrial development board niche.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, the proposed development of an IDB niche will be the result of a collaborative effort by all program staff. The final result will be complete by 4Q 2021

WHY WAS THIS GOAL IDENTIFIED? AS NEW BUSINESSES FORM ACROSS THE REGION, WE MUST BE DILIGENT TO ENSURE THAT THOSE WE SERVE KNOW AND UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES AT THEIR DISPOSAL.

HOUSING/RELATIVE CAREGIVER

Goal: A resource book for clients' reference is created; guiding clients through all available resources as well as a goal-setting process for those in housing or who are clients of the Family Caregiver Program.

Objective: Employees (project managers) will work directly with clients to provide resource information, perform regular monthly check-ins to ensure clients are on track to meet specified goals and milestones.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, the proposed guide will be complete in 1Q 2021. Program staff will work with clients for the remaining half of 2021 and into 2022. This objective will be complete by 2022. The practice of goal-setting will provide clients something to look forward to while also helping the client obtain something that may be just beyond reach by connecting clients with in-house services and services offered by our various community partners.

- By March 31, 2021: First draft prepared.
- Mid-May 2021: The final draft will be prepared.
- First-quarter 2022: All clients will complete planning sessions with project managers.
- First-quarter 2022: The proposed project will be complete.

WHY WAS THIS GOAL IDENTIFIED? SINCE WE SERVE A VULNERABLE POPULATION, OUR REGION WE MUST ENSURE THAT THOSE WE SERVE HAVE ACCESS TO ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

INFORMATICS

Goal: Be recognized as the regional data hub and provide comprehensible data for clients, stakeholders, and the general public.

Objective: The Director of Informatics will create dashboards of relevant data using software (such as Tableau) in order to continue to cultivate Informatics in such a way as to grow its user base, provide more real-time data, and improve the ease of gathering regional data.

Action Item: To meet the above goal and objective, the Director of Informatics will leverage ArcGIS Online in the creation of quality content (such as online maps and story maps) in order to complete the above goal by 1Q 2022.

WHY WAS THIS GOAL IDENTIFIED? OUR ORGANIZATION IS CHARGED WITH IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR REGION. TO ADEQUATELY ACHIEVE THIS, WE MUST HAVE QUANTITATIVE DATA TO ASSESS OUR PROGRESS.

‘CLOSING THE GAP’ INITIATIVE

The “Closing the Gap” initiative is designed to implement the strategic plan across all departments. Moving forward, all aspects of the organization will be working on improving the agency by becoming better employees, adding programs and services, as well as, growing our relationships with other groups. There are three (3) aspects of this initiative:

1. **Training** - Management along with Human Resources will develop and implement a training program at both the local and regional level. Cross-training will be a key component of this program.
 - a. Programmatic cross-training
 - b. Customer service
 - c. Financial training/Internal controls
 - d. Leadership development

e. Project development/grant writing

f. Communications skills

2. **Resources** - As an agency, we must understand the needs of our region. Our charge is to provide for or see that needs are being addressed. In the course of developing our strategic plan, we have identified core areas that should be addressed. To better understand our mission, we must first account for all available services within each community as well as at a regional level. Once established, we should then look for gaps in services throughout our region.
3. **Quality/Relevance** - As an agency, we owe our absolute best effort to our clients, our funding bodies, and our Executive Board. As we work through this process, we must develop improved ways to provide services. The environment that we live in changes and so must this agency. When a client's needs change, we must adapt to meet those needs. When funding agencies change their regulations, we must adapt to the new way of accounting for their funds. When the Board changes its focus, we must adapt to their leadership. As a region, we lack many of the external groups that supplement the work being done in the state's urban areas. Every dollar invested in this region must be well spent.

To increase the quality of life, in either a county or a region, all areas of development must move forward simultaneously. Leadership must develop a plan to ensure that the community can implement changes across multiple fronts. This will require adding staff, forging new partnerships, and coordinating different initiatives.

