



**2025-2027**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

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# Introduction of **CAPRW**



## Community **Action**

### **Who We Are**

Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington counties is a private, 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that offers a variety of services and programs to people living in poverty in Ramsey and Washington counties.

### **Our Mission**

Invest in people experiencing poverty to build generational prosperity.

### **Our Vision**

Create thriving communities where empowered people have access to opportunities.

### **Our Values**

Recognize the self determination and inherent power of people.

Be boldly accountable and transparent.

Serve with humility and compassion.

Change systems to heal communities.

## Strategic Planning

# Methodology

Community Action Agencies across the United States must comply with 58 Organizational Standards that ensure agencies have appropriate organizational capacity to provide services to low-income members of the community. These Organizational Standards are organized into nine (9) categories that focus on Maximum Feasible Participation, Agency Vision and Direction and Operations and Accountability \*(Reference IM 138, State Establishment of Organizational Standards for CSBG Eligible Entities). Category 6 of the Organizational Standards specifically looks at agency Strategic Planning.

**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.

**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.

**Standard 6.3:** The approved Strategic Plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals.

**Standard 6.4:** Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment, is included in the Strategic Planning process.

**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.

\*Adapted from NCAP Center of Excellence Developed CSBG Organizational Standards

CAPRW has included these and other Organizational Standards into the Strategic Planning process. In accordance with the Community Action Performance Management Framework, CAPRW incorporated Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) principles into the planning and development of this Strategic Plan. The agency is committed to ensuring these practices and principles guide the Strategic Planning process with the support and oversight by a ROMA Implementer who has completed the National ROMA Implementer training and provide ongoing agency support and implementation in ROMA practices.

# Community Needs Assessment

CAPRW, in partnership with The Improve Group, conducted a needs assessment in 2024 to understand community strengths and needs in order to ensure that organization planning aligns with the communities that CAPRW supports.

The needs assessment utilized a mixed methods approach to gather input from seven communities in Ramsey and Washington Counties (Hmong, Somali, African American, Native, Karen, Latino, and disability community). The Improve Group engaged community advisors, analyzed secondary statistical data, conducted focus groups and interviews, and supported CAPRW in administering a survey for participants of CAPRW's services. Additionally, key informant interviews with community organizations provided insight into the communities as a whole and gave direction to the broader need assessment.

## Strategic Focus Areas

By determining where the essential components of our mission and vision intersect with the current strengths and needs of our agency and community, we ensure that the efforts we focus on in the next few years are strategic, relevant in our present landscape, and in alignment with the overall purpose of our organization.

Analyzing what was learned during the CAPRW 2024 Community Needs Assessment and a series of agency review activities, CAPRW's board and senior leadership set the focus areas below to advance our vision of communities where empowered people have access to opportunities.



# Problem

# People lack safe, stable, and affordable housing.

Access to safe, stable, and affordable housing is a key area of concern for residents of Ramsey and Washington Counties. It was among the top 3 economic needs identified by respondents with low incomes on our community needs survey.<sup>1</sup>

## Shortage

The data points to a severe shortage of affordable housing, with one in four households being cost burdened by their housing payments.<sup>2</sup> This has been caused by both the underproduction of housing in general over the last decade and the continued underproduction of enough new affordable housing.

1 IN 4 HOUSHOLDS



ARE HOUSING COST BURDENED

## EXTREMELY LOW INCOME RENTERS WITH A HOUSING PROBLEM



## Disparities

While the housing shortage is felt by all, unacceptable housing disparities across the state indicate that some communities are particularly impacted.

According to MN Housing, Black households are over 6 times more likely than white households to be extremely-low-income renters with a housing problem.<sup>2</sup> And while 77 percent of all white households own their home, only 60 percent of Asian, 50 percent of Hispanic, 49 percent of Native American, and just 25 percent of Black households own their homes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties: Community Strengths and Needs Assessment 2024; [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zsa-0OfzvszkaHp\\_eef7LwzRhKHezkgn/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zsa-0OfzvszkaHp_eef7LwzRhKHezkgn/view?usp=sharing)

<sup>2</sup>MN Housingf Draft Chart Book: Key Housing Needs and Issues, 5/3/2023 <https://www.mnhousing.gov>

<sup>3</sup> <https://mhponline.org/state-of-the-states-housing-2021/>

## **Strategic Goal**

**People have access to safe, stable,  
and affordable housing.**



We view affordable housing and homeownership as an essential piece of building generational prosperity and creating thriving communities. We must not only decrease the housing instability that our community faces, but also address the unacceptable disparities that some communities experience.

## **Desired Results**

**Reduce housing  
disparities among  
underserved  
communities**

**Decrease housing  
instability**

## Problem

# Resources need to be sensitive and accessible to all communities.

The desire for community responsive services was a key theme identified by the community during our community needs assessment.<sup>1</sup> Participants reported an inability to access services, resources, and government assistance, highlighting a lack of information about what is available, how to apply, a repetitive and confusing application process and inaccessible qualification criteria.

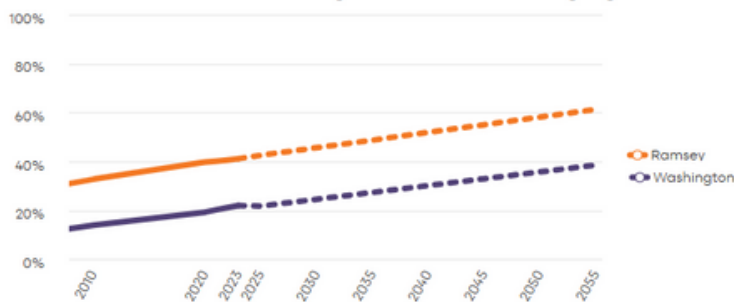
*Local service providers often do not cater to their specific needs or reflect the local community's diversity, and outreach is not designed to reach communities of color.*

-Community conversation participant, CAPRW Community Needs Assessment

## Growing Diversity

Populations of Color are expected to swell by more than one million residents between 2018 and 2053—exceeding one-third of the total population. Communities of Color are driving our state's population growth and, as such, community responsiveness is imperative for the prosperity and quality of life for all Minnesotans.<sup>4</sup>

**Persons of Color as a percent of total population**



COMPILED by COMPASS

IN RAMSEY COUNTY<sup>5</sup>

23% 10%

SPEAK LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH SPEAK ENGLISH LESS THAN "VERY WELL"

IN WASHINGTON COUNTY<sup>5</sup>

11% 4%

SPEAK LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH SPEAK ENGLISH LESS THAN "VERY WELL"

<sup>1</sup>Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties: Community Strengths and Needs Assessment 2024; [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zsa-0OfzvszkaHp\\_eef7LwzRhKHHzkgn/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zsa-0OfzvszkaHp_eef7LwzRhKHHzkgn/view?usp=sharing)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.childrensdefense.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/MN-KidsCountReport-2022-Digital.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mncompass.org/>



# Strategic Goal All people feel a sense of belonging.

We believe that it is essential to engage and empower our community members in order to achieve our vision and mission, and we recognize that authentic engagement and true empowerment cannot happen without paying special attention to the unique experiences of the people we serve. Our desired results in this focus area reflect our commitment to nurturing belonging through community responsiveness.



## Desired Results

**Increase customer  
satisfaction from  
participants across the  
community**

## Problem

# Children and their families need support in early care and education to thrive.

The top three early care and education needs identified by low income respondents with children of our community survey were safety at school for children ages 6-17, access to academic support services for children 6-17, and access to affordable early education for children under 5.<sup>1</sup>

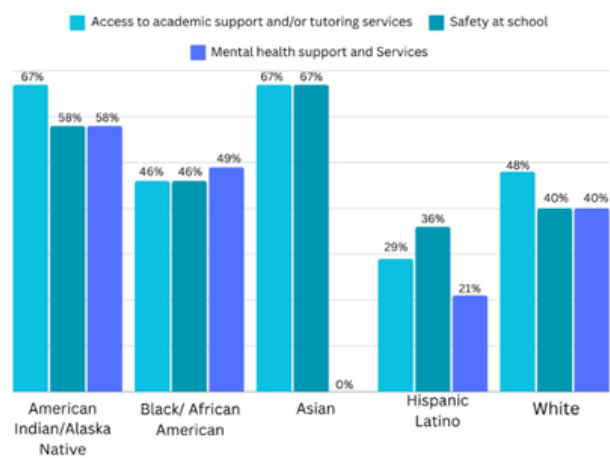
## Varied Needs

The community survey, conducted as part of CAPRW’s Community Needs Assessment, asked respondents to select their households’ top three needs in several domains, including early care and education. The charts here illustrate the top three needs of 295 low-income respondents by race and ethnicity in that domain, delineated by the ages of the children in the household.

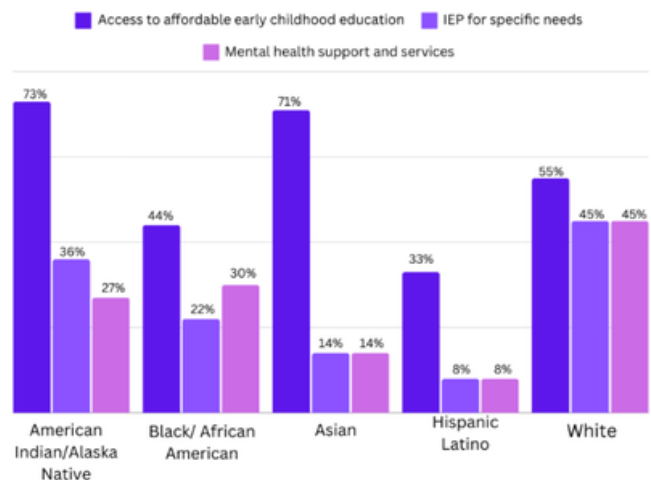
The charts show that the needs of children are often different, especially when taking into account their cultural identities. What is incredibly important to one family may not be a need for another family.

This highlights the need to be responsive to the unique priorities of families in order to help children thrive.

Top 3 Early Care and Education Needs of Low Income Respondents with Children Ages 6-17 in Ramsey and Washington Counties



Top 3 Early Care and Education Needs of Low Income Respondents with Children Under 5 in Ramsey and Washington Counties



<sup>1</sup>Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties: Community Strengths and Needs Assessment 2024; [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zsa-0OfzvszkaHp\\_eef7LwzRhKHezkgm/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zsa-0OfzvszkaHp_eef7LwzRhKHezkgm/view?usp=sharing)

**Strategic Goal**

**All children achieve their full  
potential**



Building generational prosperity is the mission of CAPRW, and we know that healthy child development and growth is a key factor in that. Ensuring that we are providing responsive services with sufficient intensity and duration will help children and their families achieve long term success.

**Desired Results**

**Increase duration that  
families with children  
receive support**

2025-2027

# Strategy Map

Our organizational values serve as the foundation of our plan, shaping the tone and disposition of our collective work.

Several agency level results are included in our strategic plan to ensure we have the organizational capacity, internal processes, and funding to drive family and community level results.

Taken together, these desired results map a path to achieving our strategic goals which we believe will ultimately move us towards our mission and vision.



# Strategic Actions

Several key strategies have been identified to best position us to achieve our desired results. Some strategies support multiple desired results. It is important to note that strategies can evolve as we implement and evaluate.

## Strategies

## Desired Results Supported

### Agency Training and Communication Plan

- Increase staff understanding related to needs identified in the CNA
- Enhance relationship between Union Reps and Management
- Enhance operational efficiency
- Improve Collaborative Decision Making
- Increase customer satisfaction from participants across the community

### Partnership Engagement Strategy

- Increase connections and partnerships with community organizations
- Improve service integration
- Increase self supporting funds
- Increase unrestricted funds
- Increase customer satisfaction from participants across the community

### Targeted Recruitment, Hiring, Onboarding And Retention Strategy

- Increase staff in supervisory positions that represent targeted communities
- Enhance relationship between Union Reps and Management
- Increase staff retention

### Strategic Budgeting

- Enhance operational efficiency
- Improve service integration
- Improve collaborative decision making
- Increase self supporting funds
- Increase unrestricted funds

### Service Integration Strategy

- Enhance operational efficiency
- Improve service integration
- Decrease housing instability
- Reduce housing disparities
- Increase duration that families with children receive support