

Bringing People Hope and Changing Lives



**communityaction**  
OF GREATER INDIANAPOLIS

# 2023-2025 **STRATEGIC PLAN**







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## OUR MISSION



To eradicate poverty, promote upward mobility, and to empower those we serve to become self-sufficient.

# PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action of Greater Indianapolis (CAGI) changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Community Action of Greater Indianapolis, Inc. (CAGI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the reduction and ultimate elimination of poverty among the clients in its service area. Currently, we served more than 40,000 households and 100,000 residents of Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Marion and Tipton Counties in Indiana. CAGI has pursued its mission since its incorporation in 1965, and the constellation of services we provide has grown and evolved as the shape and face of poverty has changed and the needs of our clients have changed. We are proud to be among the more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies in the country striving to achieve such outcomes for our constituents.

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## HISTORY

The precursor to today's Community Action Of Greater Indianapolis (CAGI) was established in 1965 as Community Action Against Poverty (CAAP). With the assistance of community leaders such as Senator (then Mayor) Richard G. Lugar, CAAP was formed as part of the "War On Poverty" to provide programs and services to low-income residents of the city of Indianapolis. "Low-income" is generally defined as a household income at or below 150% of the federally-determined poverty level.

Long after the federal government's "War On Poverty" ceased, the community action agencies it spawned continue to fight existing poverty and seek to eradicate its causes. In 1982, CAAP significantly expanded its coverage area from one to four counties, (subsuming community action activities in Boone, Hamilton and Hendricks Counties as well as Marion County). At that time, the agency's name became Community Action Of Greater Indianapolis (CAGI) to reflect its responsibility for and engagement in a much larger geographic area.

Since its inception more than 50 years ago, CAGI has provided services including energy assistance, childcare, family support, education and training programs, transitional housing, lead remediation and emergency rental and food assistance to eligible participants (principally low-income, disabled, or senior residents of the agency service area). The agency also has acted as funding agent for programs which provided legal services, programs through neighborhood centers, Head Start, and summer jobs programs.

As the needs and expectations of its clients have grown and evolved, CAGI's portfolio has expanded to include assistance in such areas as home repair, housing counseling, financial literacy and the development of tax-credit based senior housing apartments. A hallmark of the agency since its inception has been its governance model: the agency board must consist of one-third elected officials (or their designated representatives), one-third members of the private sector and one-third representatives of its eligible client constituency (or their representatives). This has ensured a diverse stakeholder partnership throughout the agency's existence.

# ROMA GOAL ALIGNMENT

## Standard 6.2 (a)

Community Action of Greater Indianapolis, Inc. (CAGI) has established strategic family, community, and agency goals as required by Standard 6.2 (a).

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### AGENCY GOALS



Board  
Development



Resource  
Development



Staff Engagement &  
Retention



Public Awareness &  
Engagement

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### COMMUNITY GOAL



Revitalize distressed neighborhoods through the creation of safe, affordable housing and increased home ownership.

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### FAMILY GOALS



Equip and empower low-income individuals with knowledge, skills, tools, and support to achieve upward mobility.



## Goal: Board Development

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### Strategy 1:

*Refine committee roles and responsibilities to align with strategic goals and priorities.*

- 1.1 Develop and implement coaching program for committee chairs.
- 1.2 Expand the capacity of the Resource Development Committee by increasing committee membership and providing fund development training.

### Strategy 2:

*Ensure board members are well informed of agency programs and services to better support the leadership team in implementing key strategic goals.*

- 2.1 Strengthen the role of board committee staff liaisons by redefining roles and responsibilities.
- 2.2 Develop and maintain consistent communication channels to keep board members informed and provide opportunities for engagement.
- 2.3 Integrate a hybrid board meeting schedule to include in-person meetings.



## Goal: Resource Development

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### Strategy 1:

*Increase annual gross unrestricted revenue raised by \$150,000.*

- 1.1 Create a new Development Manager position solely dedicated to resource development.
- 1.2 Develop and implement corporate strategic partnership program which includes investment opportunities for corporate partners.
- 1.3 Establish multiple giving channels to attain individual donors.



## Goal: Staff Engagement & Retention

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### Strategy 1:

*Expand staff capacity and leadership skills.*

- 1.1 Launch a leadership development program.
- 1.2 Create cross-training opportunities and ensure staff complete training.
- 1.3 Develop succession plans for leadership staff positions.





## Goal: Staff Engagement & Retention

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### Strategy 2:

*Create an all year round employee reward and recognition program.*

- 2.1 Ensure employees are aware of benefits and resources.
- 2.2 Identify and implement alternative pay equity strategies.
- 2.3 Establish an employee relations committee.

### Strategy 3:

*Enhance and expand cross-functional team communication and engagement.*

- 3.1 Develop standard operating procedure for internal communication.
- 3.2 Ensure staff are trained in the use of TEAMS, Zoom, and all other communications platforms.
- 3.3 Develop an online learning experience for staff to become knowledgeable of CAGI's mission, vision, programs, and services.



## Goal: Public Awareness & Engagement

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### Strategy 1:

*Expand public awareness of CAGI brand, programs/services, and value proposition.*

- 1.1 Develop and implement comprehensive communications and marketing strategy.
- 1.2 Standardize program branding to align with overall CAGI brand and develop standard operating procedures for program marketing and media management.
- 1.3 Utilize audience segmentation to drive targeted marketing campaigns and improve engagement.

### Strategy 2:

*Increase social media following, website engagement, and digital donations by 35%.*

- 1.1 Improve website user experience of improve ease of online donations.
- 1.2 Increase the number and frequency of brand contact with neighborhood associations and residents.



## Goal: Revitalize distressed neighborhoods through the creation of safe, affordable housing and increased home ownership.

### Strategy 1:

***Launch two thriving neighborhood project sites and build twenty single family dwellings.***

- 1.1 Implement RFP process to select a construction project manager.
- 1.2 Develop and implement investor program to secure funding for construction costs.
- 1.3 Complete pre-development neighborhood assessments.
- 1.4 Identify thriving neighborhood sites, secure building permits, and gain community support.
- 1.5 Complete dwelling concepts and design elements.
- 1.6 Launch construction.

### Strategy 2:

***Launch pathway to home ownership.***

- 2.1 Develop homebuyer education curriculum and pathway.
- 2.2 Establish lender partnership.
- 2.3 Form community partnerships.
- 2.4 Design and launch homebuyer recruitment campaign including designing a selection criteria and process.
- 2.5 Select homebuyers and implement ownership pathway.

### Strategy 3:

***Inspire and engage residents in co-building strong, thriving communities.***

- 3.1 Develop post-buyer engagement and education program to ensure new homeowners understand how to maintain their properties and actively engage with neighbors.
- 3.2 Develop and implement resident engagement program.
- 3.3 Design a wraparound services model for homebuyers to provide long-term case management, support services, and resource connections to promote sustainability.



**Goal: Equip and empower low-income individuals with knowledge, skills, tools, and support to achieve upward mobility.**

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**Strategy 1:**

***Shift Client Services program to S.T.A.R. delivery model to focus on long-term sufficiency as opposed to short-term crisis management.***

- 1.1 Identify key areas of focus such as asset attainment, career readiness/attainment, housing, transportation, etc..
- 1.2 Refresh projected program outcomes and indicators.
- 1.3 Develop standard operating procedures for case management staff.
- 1.4 Develop program marketing materials to inform and recruit participants.

**Strategy 2:**

***Develop short-term crisis mitigation program to provide safety net for vulnerable populations living on fixed incomes.***

- 2.1 Establish crisis assistance categories and eligibility criteria.
- 2.2 Develop standard operating procedures for intake staff.
- 2.3 Design materials to inform clients of assistance categories, application process, and eligibility criteria.





## **Case Management/ S.T.A.R. Program**

The intent of case management is to help families become self-supporting while assisting them with basic needs which could include Rental Assistance, Car Repair, Transportation Assistance, Emergency Hygiene Assistance, Job Readiness skills etc. CAGI empowers clients by recognizing they are capable, have strengths, and have resources that can help them take control of their lives. We treat clients respectfully, assisting them in identifying their needs, building on their strengths while supporting them in meeting their goals. Comprehensive assessments and case action plans are integrated with self-sufficiency-enhancing resources. The outcome of case management is increased stability and self-sufficiency through individualized case management. Case management takes a team effort. The team consists of the client, the case manager, agency staff, and community partners that the client may be working with.

## **Financial Wellness/ Homebuyer Educaion/Foreclosure Prevention**

CAGI offers a variety of financial education classes to assist clients with the understanding of what and how important financial wellness is. The objective is to help clients become proficient in the understanding of budgeting, credit and credit scores, banking and saving, capital asset purchases, avoiding foreclosure, and more.

## **Individual Development Account/IDA**

The IDA program assists low-moderate income Hoosiers attain their goals through matched-savings incentives and financial education. Operating behind the rationale that income alone is not enough for individuals to break trends of generational poverty, the IDA program focuses on asset building as a key component towards family and self-sufficiency. Participants in the IDA program are eligible to receive up to \$4,500 in state match funds towards one of the eligible asset goals mentioned below. Participants also receive one-on-one counseling and 6+ hours of financial education covering topics such as budgeting, savings, credit, banking, taxes, and other money management strategies.

Qualified participants set savings goals and make regular savings deposits. Every dollar they save is matched, at a minimum for \$3 for every \$1 saved, to help them reach their goals so they can:

- Purchase a primary residence located in Indiana
- Expand a small business located in Indiana
- Obtain education job training
- Make essential repairs to owner-occupied housing
- Purchase a vehicle for employment, education, or job training purposes

## **The Foster Grandparent Program**

The Foster Grandparent Program offers individuals aged 55 and older, opportunities to serve as mentors and tutors for children with special/exceptional needs or who are at risk. Foster Grandparents provide at least 15 hours of weekly service to non-profit community organizations such as schools, hospitals, day cares, and homeless centers.

## **Youth Enrichment Support Program (Y.E.S.)**

CAGI's Y.E.S. Program is an after school program that has partnered with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) and other community leaders to decrease the violence amongst our youth. This program was established to create activities for youth participation and as an alternative to gang and criminal activity for the youth in our community and to promote academic growth..

## **The We CANN Program**

Community Action of Greater Indianapolis' "We CANN", (Community Action Neighborhood Network) program is an evidence-based approach to decreasing crime and health disparities. CAGI's work concentrates on youth and young adults who are high-risk for involvement in a violent crime and who are between the ages of 18 to 26 with the aim that they will become civic minded employed members of the community. We call these individuals "Champions". Modeled after the AmeriCorps Youth programs, Youth Build and others, The We CANN program will target youth and young adults who live within some of the highest crime areas of the Indianapolis, IMPD North District 25, (ND25) zip codes: 46218, 46205 46226, and 46235.

## **Housing Choice Voucher Program**

Provides Section 8 housing choice vouchers to income eligible individuals. This service is currently only offered by CAGI in Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Tipton, and the Northern most geographical area of Marion County.

## **Senior and Multi-Family Housing**

CAGI operates five apartment developments, which cater to senior and/or disabled eligible clients. The five developments are:

- Franklin School Apartments – 48 units in a renovated school building featuring efficiencies, one- and two-bedroom apartment units with gated parking.
- Emma O. Johnson Homes – a multi-story apartment building with a mixture of efficiencies and one-bedroom apartments among its 50 units.
- Four Seasons at Hawthorne I & II – 120 units on the Indianapolis east side where the first phase of construction was completed in 2006 and the second phase in 2011.
- Commons at Springmill – 72 one to four-bedroom luxurious affordable housing located in Westfield, Indiana, where construction was completed in 2012.
- Beech Grove Station – offers 60 distinctive two-bedroom apartment homes nestled within a warm, friendly atmosphere. Spacious floor plans, beautiful landscaping and perfect location are just part of what makes this community a great place to live.

All the projects feature available parking and security, common areas, laundry facilities, and a professional property management team which oversees maintenance, making for a safe, convenient and enjoyable residential experience.

# PROGRAM LISTING

## The Weatherization Program

In concert with our mission to promote self-sufficiency and self-reliance among its clients, CAGI performs weatherization services on the residences of eligible clients. The principal objective of this activity is to remediate safety issues associated with household appliances (stoves, water heaters, and furnaces) and to improve the energy efficiency of homes which, in turn, reduces the energy cost to the household.

## Home Repair

Low-income homeowners in Marion, Hamilton, Hendricks, and Boone Counties can receive assistance for emergency home repairs. Items that are covered includes roofs, gutters, electrical wiring, plumbing, foundations, floors, and other structural damage. Our ability to offer assistance is based on available funding.

## Vocational Training Assistance Program

The program fiscally supports individuals who have an interest in formal trainings, certifications, and furthering their education. To name a few, CAGI currently partners with organizations that offer trainings and certifications in:

- o Construction
- o Customer Service
- o CDL
- o Forklift
- o HVAC and Computer Information Systems

## Food and Nutrition Outreach Programs (Mobile Food Pantry & Holiday Meal)

CAGI also offers Community Outreach Programs, such as the Mobile Food Pantry and Holiday Meal, developed to help address the food desert issue. CAGI's mobile pantries in collaboration with Gleaners Food Bank, go to locations throughout the community and allow low-income individuals to select their own food items. A selection of various dry goods, canned goods, fresh vegetables, dairy, and meat items are available to satisfy their dietary needs. CAGI also offers referral services to clients to connect them to agencies that offer services that will assist with addressing their challenges and "busting" their barriers.

Community Action of Greater Indianapolis actively pursues the development of partnerships and diverse programs to address the growing need of the community that we serve.

## Information and Referral

CAGI believes in partnering and coordinating with all types of service providers to ensure that clients are connected to as many resources available. Partners include public and private service organizations, government, and faith-based organizations. We strive to alleviate client miscommunications, duplication of services, disgruntled family members, gaps in services, and to ensure that the referral resources that CAGI utilizes are actively engaging clients.

**Community Action of Greater Indianapolis, Inc. does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, and vendors.**