

Goals

Strategic Plan 2025-2028

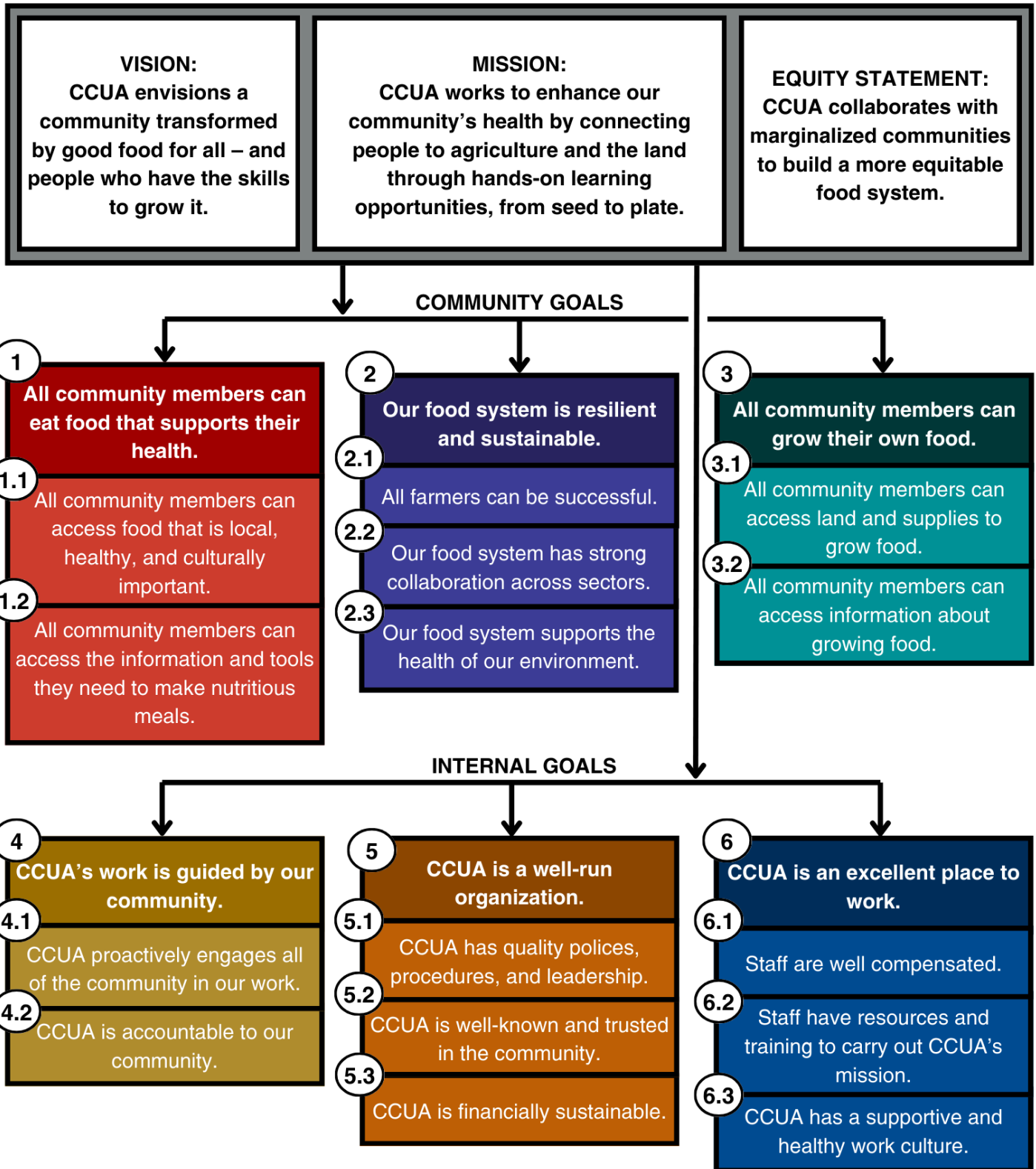


**Approved by Board of
Directors July 21, 2025**

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



COLUMBIA CENTER FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

<p>A CCUA meaningfully collaborates with and transfers resources to front-line initiatives that intersect with the mission of our organization.</p>	<p>C CCUA provides childcare, wheelchair accessibility, food, all-gender bathrooms, and interpretation services at most or all gatherings. Some events are offered in languages other than English, with interpretation to English.</p>
<p>B CCUA centrally involves people most effected by issues in program planning. There are opportunities for constituents to move into leadership roles in CCUA.</p>	<p>D Everyone at CCUA understands how power is distributed and how decisions are made.</p>

Grow and donate food.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate whole, raw produce grown at CCUA sites to local organizations. • Facilitate pop-up markets to distribute food directly. • Prepare healthy meals to donate/sell. 	
1.1	<p>Outcomes <i>How Much?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Donate 50,000 pounds of raw produce annually. → Facilitate 24 pop-up markets at the Truman VA hospital and other community sites annually. → Create a plan for preparing healthy meals for donation/sale by spring 2027. → Begin using the Welcome Center kitchen to prepare meals for donation/sale in 2027.
	<p>Standards <i>How Well?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Food will be grown organically, without harsh chemicals or pesticides. → Food will be donated fresh, soon after it is harvested. → Food donated raw will be first-rate and blemish-free. → Any blemished food will be cooked or prepared before it is donated. → Food will reflect the needs and desires of community members. → Food is stored effectively and clearly labeled at receiving locations.
	<p>Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i></p> <p>Community members who experience food and/or nutrition insecurity.</p>

Provide hands-on educational events for the general public.	
<p>1.2 3.2 2.3 2.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host one-time specialized workshop events. • Host recurring workshop events. • Lead one-time tour events. • Lead recurring tour events.

	<p>Outcomes <i>How Much?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Host 10 one-time specialized workshops annually. → Host 1 Farm Your Yard Field Day event annually. → Host 1 Harvest Hootenanny annually. → Host 32 drop-in garden time events annually → Lead 20 technical tours annually. → Lead 7 Food Forest tours annually.
	<p>Standards <i>How Well?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Events will be low to no commitment to increase accessibility. → Events will be open to all, with the majority of offerings available free of cost or with scholarship opportunities. → Events will focus on teaching regenerative practices. → Marketing for events will focus on low-resource communities to ensure that all can participate. → When possible, childcare will be provided for participants. → When possible, interpretation will be provided for participants.
	<p>Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i></p>	<p>Anyone with an interest to learn.</p>

	<p>Maintain educational demonstration gardens.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planting for the Pantry Field and Soccer Field ● Food Forest. ● Backyard Demonstration Garden. ● Veterans Urban Farm Production Field and Warrior Garden ● Misc. Pocket Gardens and Outdoor Classroom. ● Kilgore’s Community Garden 	
2.3 3.2	<p>Outcomes <i>How Much?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Maintain 4 acres m/l of demonstration gardens at CCUA sites. → Install 2-3 welcome/what is it signs to the Food Forest/Demo Garden areas by spring 2026. → Install identifier signs by all representative trees and shrubs in Edible Landscaping areas by spring 2026.
	<p>Standards <i>How Well?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Gardens will have educational signs. → Gardens and signs will support teaching about regenerative practices, native species, conserving pollinators, and wildlife. → Gardens will support public enjoyment.
	<p>Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i></p>	<p>All community members.</p>

3.2 2.3 A	<p>Connect farmers and growers with capital and land.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a scholarship for historically underserved farmers, as defined by the USDA. ● Cultivate farmland that can be used to incubate historically underserved farmers’ businesses. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connect retiring farmers who own land to farmers/growers who want land. ● Collaborate with local organizations to build and maintain garden/farm space for public use. ● Host land access and grant workshops for farmers/growers. ● Refer farmers/growers to relevant, available resources.
Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provide \$9,000 in mini-grants to historically underserved farmers annually. → Refer farmers to available resources 25 times annually. → Develop a plan for land access and grant workshops by Summer 2026. → Determine the feasibility of using the soccer field as an incubator farm by Fall 2026. → Participate in Alspaugh Park planning at least through 2026. → Develop a plan for the Shalom Garden property by 2026
Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Marketing for events will focus on low-resource communities to ensure that all can participate. → When needed, interpretation will be provided for participants.
Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Primarily historically underserved farmers, as defined by the USDA. (Beginning; Socially Disadvantaged; Veterans; and Limited Resource.) https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/state-offices/colorado/beginning-farmerrancher-and-historically-underserved-communities-colorado

	Facilitate agriculture and health education for children.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct in-school curriculum with partner schools. ● Lead field trip lessons. ● Offer farmers' market activities. ● Lead after-school garden club activities. ● Lead summer camp lessons. ● Lead hands-on lessons with community partners. ● Work with partners to maintain school gardens. 	
1.2 3.2	Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Engage in 20,000 Youth Education Interactions annually. → Expand to 3-4 new CPS elementary schools annually. → Offer educational opportunities at 2 additional Boone County school Districts by the end of 2027. → Deliver 304 garden maintenance visits to school gardens annually. → Explore ways to engage youth of various ages beyond just 3rd graders by Summer 2026. → Develop kitchen/cooking programming by 2027. → Develop Youth Education SOPS by 2026.
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Lessons complement students' curriculum and learning standards. → Schools with the least resources receive greater support. → Lessons complement other local nature-based educational programs. → Educational opportunities will be available for students of all ages. → All full-time youth education staff will be Life Lab Garden Educator Certified. → The program's central principles and philosophy will guide lessons.

	Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Children in Boone County, especially low-income children. 3rd graders.
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2.3 3.1 A	Connect farmers, growers, cooks, and eaters with materials, supplies, and equipment.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Run tomato bucket giveaway events. ● Provide rentable equipment in the resource library. ● Offer a seed library in the Welcome Center. ● Offer rental of the Welcome Center’s commercial kitchen. ● Offer straw, compost, topsoil, amendments, and other materials for sale. ● Deliver free garden installations and materials through Opportunity Gardens. 	
	Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Distribute 200-500 “Tomato Bucket Gardens” annually. → Make equipment rental available by the end of 2027. → Begin kitchen programming in 2027. → Make kitchen rental available to CFM Farmers by 2027. → Deliver a minimum of 158 billable gardens through Opportunity Gardens annually. → Expand Opportunity Gardens to serve 200 households annually by the end of 2028. → Offer at least 1 compost pick-up day to Opportunity Gardens families annually. → Formalize ways to engage/support Opportunity Garden graduates by 2026. → Dedicate 1 truck to the Opportunity Gardens program by 2027. → Determine the feasibility of a paid version of Opportunity Gardens by 2026. → Develop earned income streams for kitchen programs by 2026.
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tools, materials, and supplies provided, rented, and sold will be suitable for regenerative practices. → Supplies provided through the Opportunity Gardens program will be equally accessible to all participants. → When possible, the tools provided will be adaptive to individuals with different types of mobility. → Tools and equipment will be accompanied by training for safe use. → Tool trainings will be interpreted using universal design for communication so non-English speakers have equal access and safety. → Materials, supplies, and equipment are provided at a sliding scale.
Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Primarily historically underserved farmers and growers.	

	Provide farmer & grower training.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Train new and beginning farmers through the Market Garden Apprenticeship Program. ● Train Veteran farmers/growers through the Veteran Apprenticeship Program. ● Train low-income farmers/growers through the Opportunity Gardens Program. 	

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<p>Outcomes <i>How Much?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Train 15 new and beginning farmers through the Market Garden Apprenticeship annually. → Train 5 apprentices on farm business practices each year. → Deliver a minimum of 521 mentor visits through Opportunity Gardens annually. → Train a minimum of 170 households through Opportunity Gardens annually. → Train 3-6 Veterans through the Veteran Apprenticeship Program annually. → Draft a growing guide using pictorial instructions to bypass language barriers by 2027. → Finalize a growing guide using pictorial instructions to bypass language barriers by 2028.
<p>Standards <i>How Well?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Training will focus on teaching regenerative practices. → Training will be individualized based on their needs and goals of participants. → Need-based stipends will be offered to apprentices → When needed, interpretation will be provided for participants.
<p>Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i></p>	<p>Primarily limited resource farmers and growers.</p>

<p>3.1 2.2</p>	<p>Provide therapeutic gardening opportunities.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide wrap-around therapeutic gardening service to VA Transitional Work Program Participants. ● Provide wrap-around therapeutic gardening service through the Veteran Apprentice Program. ● Partner with the Truman VA Rec Therapy program. ● Partner with the Truman VA Art Therapy program. ● Partner with the DoD Skillbridge program. ● Partner with the Truman VA Work Study program. ● Partner with the Veterans Treatment Court program. ● Partner with the Truman VA Whole Health Programs. ● Host Veteran Volunteers. ● Lead therapeutic youth education opportunities. 	
	<p>Outcomes <i>How Much?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provide wrap-around therapeutic gardening to 15 Veterans annually through the Transitional Work and Veteran Apprentice Programs. → Connect 175 Veterans with therapeutic gardening experiences annually by 2028. → Develop or adapt a Therapeutic Youth Garden Activity guide by 2027. → Lead therapeutic garden activities for 90 youth annually starting in 2027. → Provide therapeutic gardening for CPS RISE high school classes before 2027.
<p>Standards <i>How Well?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Opportunities support the overall health of participants. → Opportunities will be developed and administered in collaboration with other health organizations. → Wrap-around opportunities help Veterans to navigate life circumstances caused by or exacerbating their mental health issues (housing and employment). → Work with VA to evaluate the health impacts of VUF’s programming (EHR, support sending out questionnaires) 	

	Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Primarily Veterans and youth
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1.2 3.2 2.3 2.2	Make educational resources available to the general public.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publish social media and blog posts. ● Publish educational YouTube videos. ● Provide educational literature through the resource library. ● Publish and link to free resources on the website. ● Table with educational materials at community events. ● Provide materials for self-guided tours. 	
	Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Post on social media at least 2 times every week. → Publish blog posts 1 time every month. → Publish 10 YouTube videos each year. → Table at 20 events annually by the end of 2026. → Establish procedure for posting all educational materials to the website by 2026. → Establish translation standards for educational materials in the resource library by 2027. → Develop SOP for resource library by 2027 → Provide a self-guided tour of the Agriculture Park available online by 2026
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blog posts will be developed with staff to diversify the topics covered. → YouTube videos will be tutorials and instructions for gardening. → Resources will be easy to find and understand. → Materials available in the resource library will be easily translatable using on-hand translation tools/apps. → Newsletter development will be informed by opening rates and best practices. → Resources will be marketed toward underserved communities.
Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Underserved communities, the public, local community, beginning gardeners, community educators, and other non-profits.	

5.1 6.2	Provide staff with training and development resources.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a professional development program. ● Facilitate required trainings for all staff and each department. ● Offer quarterly all-staff development trainings. ● Provide a central library of trainings and resources for staff. 	
	Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Develop a training schedule by 2027. → Create a required training list for all staff and each department by 2027. → Make a central library of all training documents and development resources by 2026. → Assign each department a professional development budget by 2026. → Review and update the Professional Development section of the handbook by 2026.

<p>Standards <i>How Well?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Trainings will respond to staff needs, interests, and weaknesses identified by staff feedback surveys. → Training and development resources will be provided in a variety of formats, including recorded meetings, in-person meetings, webinars, and written guides. → Management and policies will encourage the use of the professional development program. → Management will prioritize training and development opportunities that help staff make CCUA more accessible to the public, including working with people who have different abilities and needs.
<p>Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i></p>	<p>Staff, VISTAs, new employees, board, program participants, and the community.</p>

<p>Facilitate proactive and transparent information channels.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Release a program output dashboard. ● Release a budget report. ● Publish a newsletter for staff. ● Administer staff, volunteer, participant, and partner feedback surveys. ● Administer participant feedback and outcome surveys for each program. ● Organize advisory committees of community members. ● Publish a newsletter for the public. ● Publish annual reports. ● Provide information through CCUA’s website. ● Provide information at request through the welcome center front desk, phone, and email. ● Maintain accountability to strategic plan. 	
<p>4.1 4.2 6.3 5.2 B C D</p> <p>Outcomes <i>How Much?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Release a program outcome dashboard to staff and board monthly. ● Release a budget report to staff and board monthly. ● Administer staff feedback survey twice a year. ● Publish a newsletter for staff monthly ● Publish a newsletter for the public monthly ● Administer participant feedback and outcome surveys for each program at least once a year. ● Administer partner and volunteer feedback surveys annually. ● Develop a framework for advisory committees by the end of 2025. ● Recruit community members to serve on advisory committees by the end of 2026. ● Lead advisory committees for all programs by the end of 2026. ● Publish an annual report once a year. ● Maintain the Candid platinum seal of transparency for the website annually. ● Develop a procedure for working with non-English speakers by 2027. ● Keep translators on retainer for the 3 most common languages besides English by 2027. ● Update the style guide with information on creating pictorial instructions by 2028. ● Create a data management plan and adopt data standards by 2027.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Release strategic plan progress reports to staff and board members twice per year.
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information for the public is accurate and updated routinely. ● When staff policies are added or changed, staff are updated on the policy. ● Staff members are updated when new board members are onboarded. ● Board members are updated when new staff are onboarded. ● Advisory committees will be made up of program participants and experts in the relevant field. ● Staff will seek feedback from advisory committees when making changes to programming or troubleshooting issues. ● Translate key information for non-English speakers.
	Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Staff members, board members, the public, and CCUA partners.

	Build connections with the community.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participate in boards/committees (governmental & non-governmental) that impact CCUA’s mission. ● Partner with community organizations to connect them to the food system. ● Host events where community members can connect directly with local organizations. ● Participate in community events. ● Connect community members with CCUA programs and partners at the Welcome Center front desk. ● Market the use of public spaces at the Agriculture Park to increase traffic to the park. 	
2.1 2.2 2.3 4.1 5.2 D	Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Participate in 10 boards/committees of mission-aligned organizations and community partners by 2028. → Host 10 community and tabling events annually. → Participate in 75 community and tabling events annually. → Develop a working relationship with Osage and other Indigenous Nations whose Ancestral Lands include central Missouri by 2028 → Develop parameters for accepting partners into the resource center by 2027. → Operate a resource center that is open to the public by 2027 → Create a master partnership spreadsheet by 2025. Update annually. → Update the style guide to include standards on engaging with the community by 2026. → Create outreach/accessibility training guide by 2026 → Host 700 volunteers, totaling 12,000 hours of service annually.
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Leadership will actively seek and pursue opportunities to connect with the community. → Leadership will advocate for an equitable food system and the health of our environment. → Outreach will focus on connecting with communities that are not already widely engaged with or aware of our programs. → Volunteer opportunities will be flexible and accessible for members of our community to learn, participate, and contribute to the organization.

	Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	All members of our food system.
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5.3	Maintain Financial Health	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Operate a robust spring Sponsor a Row campaign. ● Operate a robust December / CoMo Gives end-of-year campaign. ● Aggressively seek diverse grant awards with a renewed focus on private foundations. ● Closely monitor progress with monthly budget reports. ● Develop a sponsorship program for Hootenanny and other events. ● Develop a new giving program for the \$5,000 - \$20,000 range. ● Convert capital campaign donors to the annual campaign. ● Increase earned income. ● Pursue Medicaid and insurance reimbursement for program expansion and new projects. 	
	Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Cultivate annual campaign (operations) gifts in the following proportions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ \$0 - \$100 = 3% of the budget. ◆ \$101 - \$1200 = 10% of the budget. ◆ \$1201 - \$5,000 = 17% of the budget. ◆ \$5,001 - \$20,000 = 20% of the budget. ◆ \$20,001 - \$100,000 = 25% of the budget. ◆ \$100,000+ = 25% of the budget. → Pay off the Welcome Center loan by 2028. → Develop a plan to increase earned income using new facilities by 2027. → Begin working with volunteers to engage donors who give less than \$100 annually and lapsed donors by 2025.
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → CCUA's fundraising activities are ethical and transparent. → Federal funding will primarily fund one-time projects.
Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	All who benefit from CCUA's programs benefit when our funding is stable.	

6.1 6.3 B	Invest in quality personnel policies.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assess current salary ranges and benefits, compare to similar organizations, and adjust ranges if needed. ● Identify best practices for personnel policies, compare current policies to best practices, and adjust policies if needed. 	
Outcomes <i>How Much?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Research and set goals for future salary and benefit ranges by the end of 2026. → Work with a consultant to review and update the employee handbook by the end of 2026. → Determine the feasibility of childcare stipends for staff by the end of 2026. → Convert critical VISTAs positions to paid staff by 2028. → Develop an outreach plan for recruiting new employees by the end of 2026. → Develop SOPs for staff and board recognition by 2027. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Develop new volunteer opportunities for activities which take place in the new Community Welcome Center by the end of 2026. → Maintain an employee (non-VISTA) turnover rate of less than 10% annually. → Maintain overall staff satisfaction ratings of 4-5 stars annually.
	Standards <i>How Well?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → New policies and updated procedures are developed with the input of staff and experts.
	Beneficiaries <i>Who Benefits?</i>	Staff and all who benefit from CCUA's programs benefit when our staff receive quality compensation and benefits.