



2021 - 2023

STRATEGIC PLAN



San Benito County Community Action Board



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03** Community Action Board
- 04** Letter from Board Chair
- 05** Letter from Executive Director
- 06** Staff Members
- 07** Mission Statement
- 08** Vision Statement
- 09** About Us
- 10** ROMA
- 11** San Benito County Community Profile
- 13** Programs
- 14** Goals and Strategies
- 19** Contact Us



Community Action Board Members



Ellen Laitinen
Board Chair



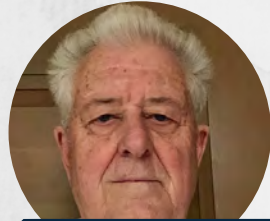
Carol Thomas
District 1



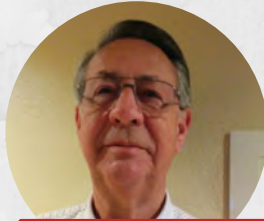
Shari Stevenson
District 5



Juan Cruz
District 3



Gary Cameron
District 2



Jim Whiehead
District 5



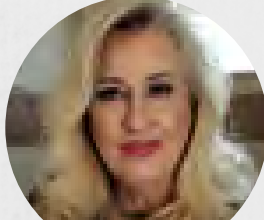
Mel Tungate
District 4



Darlene Boyd
Secretary



Linda Mckell
District 1



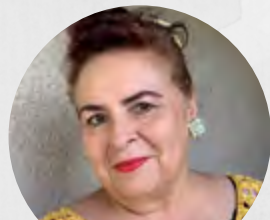
Tonia Sunseri
District 3



Judi Johnson
District 4



Dennis Wightman
District 4



Nelda Escamilla
Vice-Chair



Christy Eggers
District 3



Katherine Zavala
District 2



Joey Fernandez
Youth Member

Message from the Board Chair

Dear Community,



For the past four years, I have had the honor and the privilege to serve on the Community Action Board for San Benito County. Initially, I began as a board member representing the Private Sector for District 1 and now serve as the Community Action Board Chair. My journey began as a resident who simply wanted to be involved in serving the community in which I lived and help to better meet the felt needs of our vulnerable populations here within the county. It is here that I discovered a team of people made up of board members and staff, working under the direction of the Board of Supervisors, that not only deeply care about our county, but are actively engaged in helping to make a difference!

Our vision is "Ending Poverty by Empowering People". We seek to do this by serving our vulnerable populations with the resources needed to obtain skills, knowledge, and the opportunities needed to be more self-sufficient. Currently, we are updating our strategic plan so that we can identify the evolving needs of our stakeholders and focus our efforts to meet the specific needs of our community. This strategic plan also serves as a guideline with specific goals identified that reflect the input we have received from the community. As we continue to work together as a team, we are also excited to find new ways that we can network and partner with community leaders to broaden our resources in an effort to eliminate poverty. It is my great joy to continue in this work and I look forward to what new doors will open in the future to accomplish this vision together!

Ellen Laitinen
CAB Board Chair



Message from the Executive Director

For the last 12 years, I have been blessed to work with San Benito County Community Action Board (CAB) and Community Services & Workforce Development (CSWD). I have dedicated more than 25 years of my life as a public servant helping low-income residents and those most in need with services to meet their immediate needs. I am a firm believer of the CAB's mission to "End Poverty by Empowering People" and a champion to provide and empower our community with services and resources. Having lived in poverty myself in a migrant farm worker family and having lived in a labor camp for many years, I know the many challenges facing families when living in poverty. We are facing unprecedented times with the COVID Pandemic which is affecting everyone especially low-income families. Many are struggling with the basic necessities such as food, household supplies, healthcare and are unable to pay their rent and utilities.

The year 2020 is a year that will not be forgotten. In light of the COVID Pandemic and many challenges facing our community, the agency has increased its budget by almost 100% over the last year resulting in an increase of services. To highlight a few, our homeless services continue to expand. Over 250 homeless individuals received assistance with emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, Project Roomkey, and permanent housing. Over 150 households received rental assistance and avoided eviction. Annually, over 800 households receive energy assistance and services preventing shut-off through Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) provides free tax preparation services to almost 400 residents. In partnership with the Workforce Development Board, the America's Job Center of California provides workforce services to over 2,000 job seekers and businesses. In addition, the agency serves 67 migrant seasonal farm worker families at the Migrant Center. Not only are services provided in-house, the agency has established partnerships and contracts with local organizations to operate the local homeless shelter (HOME Resource Center) and the San Benito County Labor Camp. In past years, the agency has also provided grants to the food bank, shelter for victims of domestic violence and to other non-profit organizations.

As always, the CAB and CSWD is committed to meeting the needs of low-income individuals and to advocate for the vulnerable population in our community with resources, knowledge, and opportunities for advancement and independence. It is the agency's goal to empower those in need and provide a hand up approach to people and provide the skills and resources they need to reach self-sufficiency and independence.

Enrique Arreola
Deputy Director

COMMUNITY ACTION Staff Members

- Sylvia Jacquez Program Manager
- Andi Anderson Staff Services Specialist
- Ruby Soto Employment & Training Supervisor
- Ester Alva Employment Training Supervisor
- Elsie Marshall Employment & Training Counselor II
- Sandra Mata Employment & Training Counselor II
- Thomas Abear Integrated Case Worker II
- Grace Orta Integrated Case Worker
- Jessica Valenzuela Social Worker
- Jose Serrano Eligibility Specialist
- Nadia Kvitko Employment & Training Counselor
- Shardae Salgado Vocational Assistant



MIGRANT CENTER Staff Members

- Elias Baracio Migrant Center Manager
- Lorraine Desrosiers Office Assistant



COMMUNITY ACTION **PROMISE**

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



MISSION **STATEMENT**

The Community Action Board is committed to advocate for the vulnerable population in our community with resources, knowledge, and opportunities for advancement and independence.



Community Action Awareness outreach at the Farmers Market

CORE VALUES

**Community Voice
Advocate**

**Public Service
Sustainability**

Integrity



VISION STATEMENT

**Ending Poverty by
Empowering
People**



ABOUT US

YOUTH RALLY THINK KINDNESS

The San Benito County Community Services and Workforce Development (CSWD) is the local Community Action Agency working to address the needs of the low-income community. Although the economy has seen improvement, low-income residents are still trying to recuperate from the downturn of the economy within the past 10 years. In addition to the downturn, COVID-19 has impacted the lives of the most vulnerable populations.

The agency reaches out to low-income people to address their multiple needs and administer a full range of coordinated programs designed to have a measurable impact on poverty. Of the clients served about 99% are low-income. CSWD envisions a future where San Benito County residents and communities will achieve self-sufficiency through the high-quality and client-focused programs are offered.

CSWD carries out its mission through a variety of means including, but not limited to, the following:

- community-wide needs assessment of needs and strengths;
- comprehensive anti-poverty strategies;
- provision of a broad range of direct services;
- mobilization of financial and non-financial (in-kind) resources;
- advocacy on behalf of low-income people; and
- partnerships with other community, regional, state, and national organizations.



ROMA

Results-Oriented Management & Accountability



■ WHAT IS ROMA?

The San Benito Community Services and Workforce Development (CSWD) receives Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds from the Federal Office of Community Services, and it is administered by the State Office of Community Services Department (CSD) in California. Since 1994, the Community Action network has used an evaluation tool called Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) in order, to ensure funds align with network goals and local efforts. The process of creating a local agency Theory of Change is a process of thinking about how the agency is supposed to work and what is supposed to change because of their work. The thinking process essentially answers the question “How will this agency affect the movement of people with low-incomes to stability and economic security?” and also “How will it affect the well-being of the community.”

THREE NATIONAL GOALS

- Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security
- Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity
- People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities

Using the ROMA goals to identify crucial components of the plan, San Benito Community Service and Workforce Development reviewed their internal capacity, outcomes, and other factors in order to compile the finalized strategic plan for 2021–2023. San Benito County Community Action Board, agency director and staff gathered together over three sessions to develop all parts of this strategic plan.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

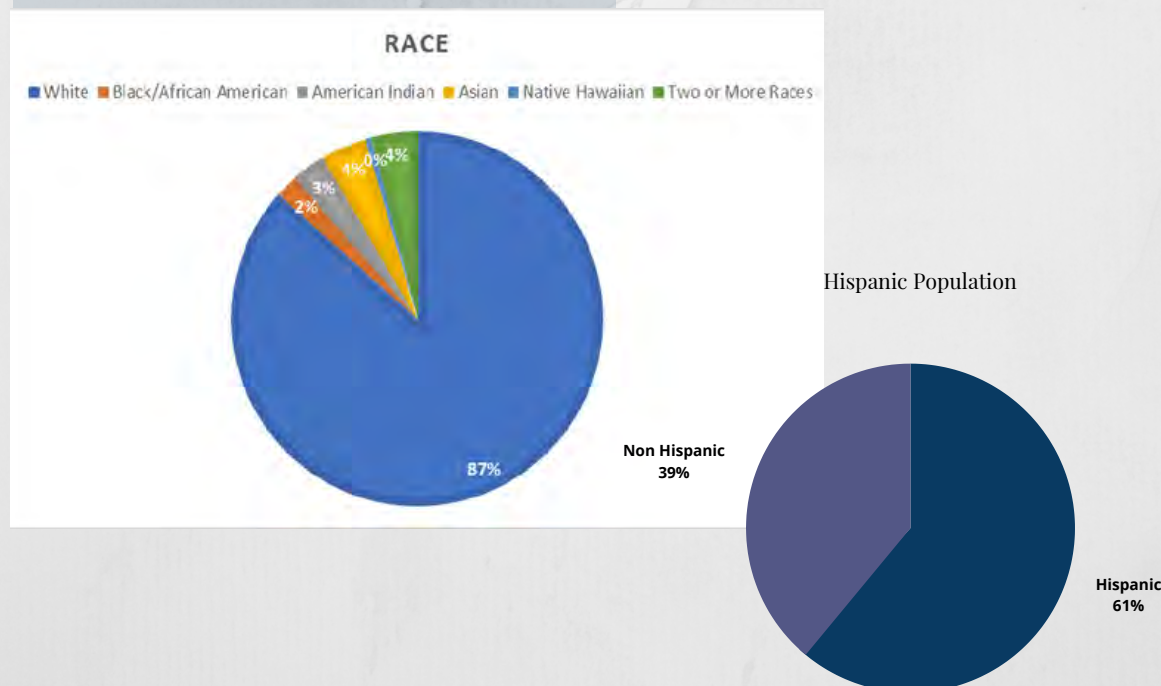


Located in California’s Central Coast region, San Benito county maintains a rural feel while offering a strong sense of community and historic charm in the County. The County encompasses almost 1,400 square miles and was formed from parts of Monterey County in 1874. San Benito’s largest industry is agriculture due to the fertile valley soil. Cool air regulates the County’s temperatures resulting in warm summers and mild winters, perfect for outdoor pursuits all year long.

San Benito County offers a wide array of “hidden” treasures including San Jan Bautista mission, winning wines and the majestic mountains of Pinnacles National Monument. The ideal proximity situated between the Silicon Valley and Monterey Bay provides easy access to big city amenities, while offering an idyllic and scenic setting with affordable housing and a quality lifestyle. (San Benito County webpage).

DEMOGRAPHICS

San Benito County is comprised of primarily 61% Hispanic or Latino population, 87% White, 2% African American, 4% Asian, 3% American Indian and 4% reporting two or more races (US Census Bureau).



INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate in San Benito County was 7.5% in October 2020, up from 3.8% in September 2019. This can be attributed to the pandemic of COVID-19 which occurred in March 2020. This compares with an unemployment rate of 9% for California in October 2020. (State of California Employment Development Department, December ,2020).

The median household size in San Benito County is 3.33 per household, with a median income of \$81,977 in comparison to California’s median income of \$63,059. The county’s poverty level is 8.6% of the population,

COMMUNITY PROFILE, con't

FOOD

15.7% of school-age children were eligible for free or reduced-price school meals and lived in 'food insecure households' (Kidsdata.org, 2018). Since the 2013/14 school year, the number of children eligible for school meals has increased each year.

HEALTH

Out of 58 California counties, San Benito County ranked 18th in length and 22nd quality of life and 25th in health factors such as, behaviors, care, social/economic and physical environment (Countyhealthrankings.org, 2020).

POPULATION

San Benito population is expected to grow each year. As migration accelerates, it is anticipated that growth is expected at 1.7% per year. In addition, natural increase will add approximately 420 residents each year.

HOUSING

The median house cost is \$629,000 in San Benito County (Refin.com, October 2020) while the median gross rent is \$2,092 versus the median gross rent for California at \$2,070. The owner-occupancy is 63.5% (US Census Bureau, 2019).



PROGRAMS



■ HOUSING:

- Rental Assistance and Rapid Rehousing
- Helping Hands Permanent Supportive Housing
- Housing Opportunities Meals Empowerment (H.O.M.E.) Resource Shelter
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Housing and Homeless Services
- Emergency Housing
- Transitional and Permanent Housing Programs
- Operations of the San Benito County Migrant Housing and Labor Camp

■ EMPLOYMENT:

- Individual Training Account Scholarships
- Work Experience Program
- On-the-Job Training
- CalWorks Expanded Subsidized Employment
- Vocational Training
- Subsidized Employment

■ OTHER PROGRAMS:

- Family Emergency Winter Shelter
- Transportation Assistance
- Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)



GOALS & STRATEGIES



San Benito County Community Services and Workforce Development (CSWD) partnered with the California Community Action Partnership Association (CalCAPA) to begin its strategic planning in 2020 for the agency's three-year plan. In order to gain a better understanding of the current state of poverty in the county, the agency identified many key trends through the planning meetings, as well as assessing current demographics, housing, employment, and analyzing community survey and data reports. The input supported the development of the strategic plan, to identify the goals of the agency, CSWD makes it a priority to engage with the community and completed a community needs assessment as part of the 2021-2023 Community Action Plan, to assess how to leverage Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds effectively coupled with the agency's results-oriented management & accountability framework.

The strategic planning effort was led through facilitation with a CalCAPA consultant, agency staff, and board members to gain a better understanding of the current state of poverty in San Benito County. The San Benito Community Services and Workforce Development Deputy Director and staff are pleased to develop a responsive plan to meet the needs of residents in San Benito County.

Addressing the causes of poverty have become more challenging as individuals and families are facing high-rising prices in housing, lack of employment, low-levels of educational attainment to meet the demands of the workforce, access to nutritious food, access to affordable child care, and job development opportunities. CSWD is responding to the needs of residents within the county through impacted programs and the need to develop new initiatives, higher performing programs and lead impactful community-based services as a response to the local gaps and needs faced by vulnerable and low-income populations in the county. Funding is critical in a time of an uncertain federal landscape, in addition to the current health crisis faced nationwide. The agency is facing a need to establish internal capacity to evaluate performance, measure results and sustain services to decrease the poverty rates in San Benito County.

The Board and Agency Staff identified four (4) key strategic goals for the next three-year period to continue providing essential and effective services for the community. The four strategic goals also align with the 2020-2021 Community Action Plan. These goals will also enable the agency to assess future funding and programmatic decisions.



YOUTH SERVICES

Through the Community Needs Assessment completed in June 2020, Youth Services was identified as a priority for San Benito County and Community Services and Workforce Development. Youth Services include family recreation/sports center, youth employment, after-school programs, and community parks.



Alignment with National Community Action Goal
Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Empowering Youth

Individual/Family Level

ON-GOING STRATEGIES

- Support Youth Prevention/Intervention services and Youth Training
- Implement a Youth Job Training Program during summer months in partnership with America Job Center
- Include Youth Member(s) on the Community Action Board.
- Sustain Youth Programs and Apprenticeships
- Sustain Youth Programs and Apprenticeships
- Sustain partnerships with local and regional youth service organizations

ONE-TIME STRATEGIES

- Host Community Action Board Community Rally Youth Event
- Recruit and Approve youth for Youth Advisory Committee
- Assess Program Resources for Youth
- Develop program outcomes
- Evaluate Results for Sustainability

HOUSING & HOMELESS SERVICES

Through the Community Action Board Community Needs Assessment completed in June 2020, Housing and Homelessness was identified as a priority for San Benito County and the Community Services and Workforce Development.



Alignment with National Community Action Goal

Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Access to Housing & Sustainability

Agency Level

ON-GOING STRATEGIES

- Increase Housing Inventory for emergency, transitional and permanent housing
- Attend local and regional Homeless Services Provider Meetings
- Secure funding for housing, training, and outreach
- Partner with other agencies to ensure sustainability of developed programs
- Continue membership with the Coalition of Homeless Service Provider and Homeless Continuum of Care

ONE-TIME STRATEGIES

- Secure funding for Transitional Housing Units
- Secure funding for the on-going operations of the Emergency Shelter
- Identify CAB primary & alternate attendees for Homeless Services Provider Meetings
- Create a CAB Programs Program Outcomes Handbook
- Completion of Phase III of the HOME Resource Center for Transitional Housing Units

BOARD & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Through the Community Action strategic planning process, Board & Staff Development were identified as a priority for San Benito County Community Services and Workforce Development.



STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Board & Staff Development

Agency Level

ON-GOING STRATEGIES

- Planning between San Benito Community Action Board & Community Services Workforce Development Staff
- Attend & Complete required organizational performance trainings
- Participate and Engage in community events to leverage collaboration & input
- Board Orientation & Community Action Board Member Recruitment Provided

ONE-TIME STRATEGIES

- Host and participate in Leadership Luncheon & Youth Rallies
- Conduct two (2) Annual board orientations for new members
- CAB members and staff attend community events to build partnerships and to promote awareness & community engagement
- Community Action Board recruitment is a priority for 100% board membership; board & staff recruit county-wide

Alignment with National Community Action Goal

Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Through the Community Action strategic planning process, Community Outreach & Advocacy were identified as a priority for San Benito Community Services and Workforce Development.



Alignment with National Community Action Goal

People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Community Outreach & Advocacy

Community Level

ON-GOING STRATEGIES

- Promote programs and services through social media, on-line, PSA's, local news and other venues.
- Collaboration between Community Action Board and Workforce Development Board to promote awareness to the community
- Increase Participation in Community events, public meetings and collaboratives
- Make presentations at Board of Supervisors Meetings on a quarterly basis
- Engage with local elected officials to build awareness & support for the agency

ONE-TIME STRATEGIES

- Host Community Action Board booths at community events; Participate & attend community gatherings
- Commitment Calendar developed for Community Action Board and review as Regular Agenda Item
- Develop Quarterly Community Action Board Quarterly Presentations at Board of Supervisors meetings
- Promote outreach and community engagement efforts to diverse populations to increase awareness of program services
- Seek funding opportunities for the sustainability of existing and new programs through outreach & partnerships



The Strategic Plan 2021–2023 was developed through a facilitated process which included board members, management and staff to develop a 3-year plan that meets the needs of our San Benito County residents.

It is a pleasure to support our community through effective programs and services. For any questions on San Benito County Community Services and Workforce Development and our 2021–2023 Strategic Plan, feel free to contact our organization at (831) 637-9293.





CONTACT INFORMATION

San Benito County Community Services and Workforce Development

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Hollister, CA 95023

Enrique Arreola, Deputy Director

Phone: (831) 637-9293

Fax: (831) 637-0996



www.sbcCAB.com

<https://hhsa.cosb.us/community-service-workforce-development/>

