



Moving the CDC Forward

Our Five-Year Strategic Plan (2022-2027)

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to establish both the general organizational principles and the specific priority goals and initiatives that will guide the CDC's decision-making over the next five-year period (2022-2027). The Plan endeavors to facilitate wide-ranging capacity-building within the CDC to secure our position as Salisbury's leading community development organization. The Plan acknowledges that while the CDC must continue operating its core programs, it is imperative that the organization decide whether, and how, and how seriously, it will participate in more ambitious community development efforts moving forward. The Plan also acknowledges the CDC's unique position as a partner to the City of Salisbury and explores opportunities to strengthen cooperation with long-range planning staff on neighborhood planning initiatives, housing policy and program development, and beyond.

In order to successfully deliver on larger projects, including the ambitious Eaman Park Redevelopment and other high-quality new infill construction, the CDC will be required to answer several fundamental questions. For example, given limited staffing, how can the CDC continue to effectively administer its core programs (e.g. CDBG/HOME, ESFR, URP) while also delivering successfully on larger-scale transformational projects? How do we effectively meet our obligations to the lowest-income clients we serve, while also serving Salisbury as a whole? What are the skills and talents the CDC needs to attract, and what kind of organizational culture are we called upon to build, in order to retain a dedicated workforce for the long march ahead?

With this Strategic Plan, the Board is invited to consider such questions and to engage in meaningful dialogue around the future direction of the organization. This Plan should not collect dust on a shelf. The Plan should be reviewed regularly to ensure that meaningful progress is being made on the goals and initiatives outlined in it.

To summarize, the Plan establishes eight (8) key goals which were identified during the Board's goal-setting workshop. Each goal is underscored by a number of suggested actions designed to ensure goal attainment. The key goals are as follows:

- 1. Strengthen core programs and procedures.*
- 2. Coordinate with the City of Salisbury on strategic neighborhood planning initiatives.*
- 3. In coordination with the City of Salisbury, develop strategies and identify mechanisms to protect long-term affordability in appreciating neighborhoods.*
- 4. Increase successful outreach and engagement with eligible clients. Ensure ease of access to information regarding available assistance from the CDC, and ease of access to staff.*
- 5. Explore opportunities to increase funding streams. Maintain and improve trust and support from all donors, funders, and partners.*

6. *Ensure long-term organizational resiliency by strengthening internal capacity and expertise.*
7. *Spearhead transformative housing and neighborhood projects.*
8. *Facilitate dialogue and coordination between diverse partners and stakeholders to achieve community development goals.*

These goals should be articulated regularly over the next five-year period (2022-2027) and should serve as a reminder of the CDC's fundamental purpose. The CDC's Board reaffirmed that the organization's fundamental purpose is the provision of quality affordable housing, but the Board also determined that in order to the secure long-term affordability and to maximize the CDC's investments, the CDC must also engage in a diverse range of community development initiatives to help build wealth and stability over the long term in the populations that we serve. This Plan reflects that broad ambition.

We have great confidence in this organization. We envision a CDC that is smart, bold, and trusted. We envision a CDC that is on the cutting edge of community development, following best practices but never hesitating to be creative and innovative when the situation demands it. We envision a CDC that will continue to serve Salisbury and the surrounding regions for many decades to come.

Re-Affirming Our Fundamental Purpose & Mission

The CDC's Board reaffirmed that the organization's fundamental purpose is the provision of quality affordable housing. However, to secure long-term affordability and to maximize the CDC's investments, the CDC must also engage in a diverse range of community development initiatives to help build wealth and stability over the long term in the populations we serve.

The CDC's Board reaffirmed the current mission statement, but expressed a desire to clarify and expand it:

- ✓ Define what we mean by "quality" affordable housing by describing our key design and planning principles.
- ✓ Add our commitment to securing "long-term affordability", building long-term wealth in served populations.
- ✓ Expand on our definition of "self-sufficiency", expand on homeownership support.

Organizational Principles

- ✓ The CDC is **flexible**. We have the capacity to quickly adapt or pivot to respond to the urgent needs or opportunities of the moment. Our organization is nimble, can be restructured quickly if there is a strategic need.
- ✓ The CDC is **collaborative**. We bring diverse partners and stakeholders together to accomplish shared objectives. We are a facilitator of dialogue between public, private, and non-profit actors working in a broad range of areas, and leverage our position to achieve the greatest impact.
- ✓ The CDC is **innovative**. We have the courage to demonstrate what's possible to creatively transform neighborhoods using best practices and new strategies. We are working to become a model community development organization.
- ✓ The CDC is **committed to excellence** in neighborhood planning and design. As our organization begins to spearhead larger-scale neighborhood development projects, we will hold ourselves to high standards of design while remaining aligned with our core affordable housing mission.
- ✓ The CDC is **trustworthy**. We have a demonstrated track record of success and a strong reputation within the community. We are entrusted to do the work that the market cannot or won't do.

Top 5 Priority Goals

1. **Strategic Housing Planning**: In coordination with the City of Salisbury, engage in strategic housing planning initiatives and develop strategies/identify mechanisms to protect long-term affordability in appreciating neighborhoods. Includes collaborating on the City's upcoming Affordable Housing Strategy, and on housing policy and program development (e.g. Neighborhood Stabilization Program, community land trust concept, receivership program, homeownership assistance, etc.).
2. **Eaman Park Transformation**: Move forward on the Eaman Park planning process, including preparing an RFP. This project will be an opportunity for the CDC to demonstrate new and innovative housing and neighborhood design models that can be replicated moving forward. Hold ourselves to a high standard of architecture and urban design.
3. **Organizational Capacity-Building**: Ensure long-term organizational excellence by strengthening internal capacity and expertise. Conduct a review of current staffing and develop a plan to ensure CDC has capacity to effectively administer fund for core programs and special projects. Consider hiring additional staff, creating new roles, re-assigned duties, as necessary.
4. **Secure Long-Term Institutional Resiliency**: Ensure that the CDC's institutional knowledge is retained over the long-term. Conduct a review of procedures and processes and develop Standard Operating Procedures, internal plans, program manuals, etc. as necessary.
5. **Marketing & Communications**: Ensure ease of access to information regarding available assistance from the CDC. Increase effectiveness of outreach to target populations by identifying and implementing best-practices and creative communications and marketing techniques. Build a modern website.

Goal #	2022-2027: Goals & Initiatives	Status	
1	Strengthen Core Programs & Procedures		
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a review of the CDC’s existing core programs (e.g. CDBG/HOME, ESFR, URP, Neighborhood Stabilization) to ensure that overall program design is aligned with desired outcomes. Enhance organizational and program effectiveness through continuous innovation and improvement of programs and procedures. Review and implement best practices from other CDCs, government agencies, and/or organizations doing similar work. 		
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify strategies to reduce administrative costs and improve overall efficiency. Provide highest quality service at lowest possible overhead cost and time. 		
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where possible, increase support to low-income homeowners by expanding core programs. 		
2	Coordinate with the City of Salisbury on strategic neighborhood planning initiatives.		
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate with the City on its new Affordable Housing Strategy. (Explore special tools and new approaches to preserving long-term affordability. Determine feasibility of community land trust model or similar approaches.) 		
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase coordination with City on identifying priority geographic investment areas. Establish plans to address needs in each area. These are areas which could benefit from special neighborhood stabilization funding and/or neighborhood planning (e.g. Salisbury VA, Eaman Park, etc.). 		
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase coordination with City on housing policy and program development. 		
2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore partnering with the City on implementation of a Receivership Program. 		
3	In coordination with the City of Salisbury, develop strategies and identify mechanisms to protect long-term affordability in appreciating neighborhoods.		
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review affordability requirements of existing programs and ensure enforcement (e.g. Neighborhood Stabilization Program’s affordability requirement for rental owner assistance). 		

3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and expand existing homeownership programs. Prioritize building “the next generation of homeowners” through investments in human capital (education, connecting people to resources, homeownership and credit counseling, down payment assistance, etc.). Focus on helping build wealth and equity over the long term in the families we serve. 		
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new affordable homeownership opportunities with long-term income restrictions. 		
4	Increase successful outreach and engagement with eligible clients. Ensure ease of access to information regarding available assistance from the CDC, and ease of access to staff.		
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase effectiveness of outreach to target populations by identifying and implementing best-practices and creative communications and marketing techniques. 		
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a modern website for the CDC containing clear, easy-to-read information on our programs. Clearly display contact information for staff and instructions on how to apply for assistance. 		
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, reduce barriers for people seeking our services. Improve accessibility off staff. 		
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Community Development Week (April 11-16) by advertising programs and celebrating accomplishments. Coordinate with City’s communications department to maximize effectiveness of campaign. 		
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new, creative, and compelling ways to engage the public on community development issues, education, and advocacy. 		
4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that other community groups and organizations working with low-income populations are aware of the CDC’s programs and can refer individuals to us when appropriate. 		
4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that outreach is targeting not only City of Salisbury residents, but also eligible populations in other jurisdictions. Work with communications staff of other jurisdictions on effective outreach strategies. 		
4.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider hiring communications specialist (social media, website, on-the-ground, advocacy, liaison with other groups, attending events, facilitating, etc.) 		

5	Explore opportunities to increase funding streams. Maintain and improve trust and support from all donors, funders, and partners.		
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain relationships with existing funding partners and donors and continuously improve funding by demonstrating our capacity to use funds and demonstrate impact of funds. Make the most of our current sponsor base by focusing attention on strengthening relationships with current supporters and increasing revenue by building donor retention. 		
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve self-promotion of the CDC's accomplishments. Maximize leverage of our excellent track record and reputation. 		
6	Ensure long-term organizational resiliency by strengthening internal capacity and expertise.		
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review to identify potential organizational weak spots and risks (e.g. loss of institutional memory, need for standard operating procedures, lack of qualified contractors, etc.) and develop strategies to remediate them. 		
6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate board and staff training (e.g. continuing education, certifications, conferences, etc.) including, where appropriate, cross-training between roles. 		
6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to limited resources and limited staff, CDC will focus on leveraging support from external partners and stakeholders to fill gaps in organizational capacity. Maximize CDC's strategic position as nonprofit with greater flexibility to adapt. 		
6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the CDC's insititutional knowledge is retained over the long-term. Consider succession planning to secure effective leadership over the long-term (e.g. development of Standard Operating Procedures, internal plans, program manuals, etc.). 		
6.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop staffing plan to ensure CDC has capacity to effectively utilized increasing funding and/or administer both core programs and special projects. Consider hiring additional staff, creating new roles, re-assigning duties, as necessary, especially where needed to support special projects. 		
6.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the CDC's internal planning and urban design staffing expertise. 		
7	Spearhead transformative housing and neighborhood projects.		
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand beyond core programs to identify special projects the CDC is well-positioned to plan and facilitate (e.g. Eaman Park). Consider these 		

	special projects as an opportunity to demonstrate new and innovative community development models that can be replicated moving forward.		
7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize line of credit to realize projects which are not feasible using other restricted program funds. 		
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in larger scale transformative projects such as planned developments, mixed-use developments, etc. Explore creative project options including creating smaller-scale affordable housing, building new housing types (duplexes, small multifamily), creative and high-quality infill development, accessory dwelling units, 'the Missing Middle', etc. 		
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create development and design standards outlining the CDC's expectations for our housing products (e.g architecture, urban design, form, type, sustainability, etc.). 		
7.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on developing untutilized land which is less attractive to private investors. 		
8	Facilitate dialogue and coordination between diverse partners and stakeholders to achieve community development goals.		
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on existing partnerships and identify new partnerships to achieve organizational goals. Identify areas of consensus among stakeholders. 		
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with other agencies/organizations working with the same populations. Where appropriate, work to build "pipelines" of clients who could benefit from our services. 		