

# Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska

**Operations and Strategic Plan**

**2020-2023**



**Helping People ~ Changing Lives**

**Our Promise. Our Purpose**

## Introduction:

Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska (Mid) serves 139 communities located within 27 counties in south central Nebraska and two counties located within Kansas.

Our private, non-profit organization is an important collaborative partner working with community leaders, residents and other organizations to identify needs, seek resources, and strengthen current programs. Our Board of Directors consists of representatives from the following segments: 1/3 elected public officials, 1/3 private sector, and 1/3 consumer representatives.

Mid was established in 1965 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty." The main purpose of our agency is to provide diverse services and programs that will help people and change lives. Throughout over 50 years of operation, the agency has established a wide variety of solid programs that benefit our communities. Mid offers a diverse number of program services to benefit those in need. Mid Programs include: Affordable Housing, Community Services, Commodities and Food Bank, Early Head Start/Head Start, Health Services, Homeless Prevention, Senior Centers, RYDE Transit, and the Women Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Mid also has Policy Advisory Committees (PACs) comprised of local representatives. PACs promote public involvement in our operations, policies, and philosophy. Mid serves individuals of all ages, with emphasis placed upon assisting low-income families, elderly on fixed incomes, and the disabled.

Funding sources include state and federal grants as well as local resources. Our fully automated Grants Management Accounting System (GMS) allows us to track multi-level funding and keep accurate records for every project into which the agency enters. We are proud of the work we do and are thankful for the support that enables us to help people and change lives. Ninety-four percent of our total revenues are applied directly to program services. Mid partners with over 600 agencies that include: local United Ways, the Salvation Army, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, local businesses, and the faith community.



## **Our Vision, Mission, and Purpose:**

### **Our Vision:**

*“Helping people, changing lives, and making communities a better place to live.”*

### **Our Mission:**

“To provide essential programs that help individuals, families, and communities reach their fullest potential through advocacy and partnerships. Our dedicated staff provides access to opportunities in education, health, housing, nutrition, and transportation. These services empower people to make a positive difference in their lives and communities.”

### **The Seven Principles of Community Action:**

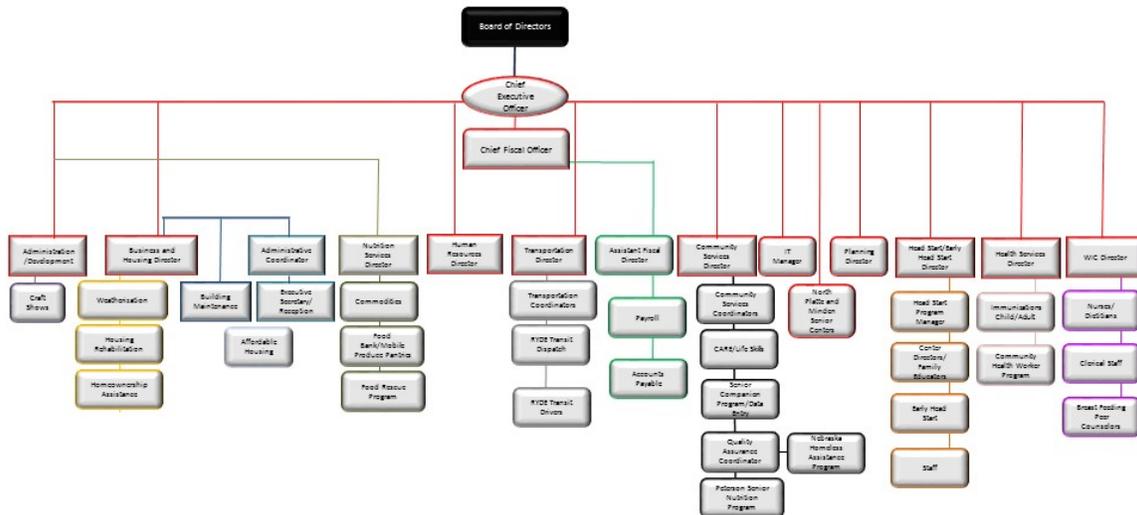
- **Opening Doors and Leading the Way**
  - We provide access to the opportunities people need to improve their lives, to help themselves and each other.
- **Turning Hope Into Reality**
  - We identify the needs of the entire community, collaborate with others in the community, and take action to improve life for everyone in the community.
- **Empathizing**
  - Our staff and volunteers are from the community in which they serve.
- **Treating People with Respect**
  - We treat people the way we want to be treated.
- **Saying "Yes"**
  - If we do not provide the needed service, we will link you to those who do.
- **Giving a Voice to the Poor**
  - Through our advocacy, we seek to make society more flexible and responsive to the needs of the poor.
- **Mirroring the Diversity of our Communities**
  - Our local boards include low-income representatives, local public officials, and business and community groups.

## The Community Action Code of Ethics

***We, as community action professionals, dedicate ourselves to eliminating poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening the opportunity for education and training; the opportunity for work; and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity; and with respect for cultural diversity, commit ourselves to:***

- Recognize that the chief function of the community action movement at all times is to serve the best interests of the poor, thereby serving the best interests of all people.
- Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Respect the structure and responsibilities of the board of directors, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for making their policy decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the board of directors.
- Keep the community informed about issues affecting the poor; facilitate communication by the poor with locally elected public officials and the private sector.
- Conduct our organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
- Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to promote the interests of the poor.
- Lead the community action movement with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness, recognizing that service to the poor is beyond service to oneself.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our community action activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in the community action movement.
- Service in such a way that we do not realize undue personal gain from the performance of our professional duties.
- Avoid any interest or activity that is in conflict with the conduct of official duties.
- Respect and protect privileged information to which we have access in the course of official duties.
- Strive for professional excellence and encourage the professional development of our associates, including those seeking to become certified community action professional.

# Operational Structure:



The agency employs 246 staff members. On an annual basis, volunteers contribute over 100,000 hours to our programs.

## Organizational Chart

The Mid Board of Directors sets policy, reviews and approves all grant applications, budgets, etc.

- The Board consists of representatives from the following community segments
  - 1/3 elected public officials
  - 1/3 private sector
  - 1/3 consumer representatives

### Chief Executive Officer

- Meredith Collins has worked for the agency since 1999 and was named as Executive Director in 2014 and Chief Executive Officer in 2017.
- The agency’s annual budget was over \$12 million dollars in 2019

The agency utilizes a Performance Management Scorecard that provides benchmarks that can be used to evaluate the program’s core strengths and weaknesses.

The agency also uses an annual Risk Mitigation Assessment tool.

## **Current Operational Plan**

Mid works to provide the programs and resources needed to reduce and eliminate poverty conditions in the communities we serve. Program services provided are based on community needs. Mid does a comprehensive community needs assessment every three years. These community need assessments help guide the agency in both operational and strategic planning.

In the 1970's and 80's, child care, food security, and transportation were important issues, and they remain so today. In the 1990's, rural communities were facing challenging issues including health care, affordable housing, and an aging population. Access to quality health care, housing, and food security continue to be the top needs identified in our assessment process. Mid expanded these program services and continues to strive to provide affordable and quality education, child care, health care, housing, nutritional services, senior and volunteer programs, and transportation.

Current program services include:

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES/SUPPORT SERVICES:** Coordinators link individuals to available community resources. They take applications for Mid programs, refer customers to the appropriate agencies and/or services, and can work with an individual or a family one on one to increase self-sufficiency. Coordinators can assist with emergency rent and utility costs to income qualifying individuals. Coordinators' offices are located in Franklin, Hastings, Kearney, Lexington, McCook, Minden, North Platte, and Superior. *Please call 1-877-335-6422 for more information.*

### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**EARLY HEAD START/HEAD START:** Head Start (0-5 years) is a comprehensive, community-based program serving income-eligible pregnant women, infants, toddlers, preschool children, and their families. Mid has home-based and center-based program options. Home-based programs, which are parent focused, serve the counties of Buffalo, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Harlan, Hitchcock, Perkins, Norton, KS, and Phillips, KS. Center-based programs, which are child-focused, are in Ravenna, Gibbon, Kearney, Minden, Holdrege, Lexington, Cozad, North Platte, Ogallala, and McCook. Early Head Start (pregnant women, infants and toddlers) services are available in Buffalo County. *Please call (308) 865-5690 for more information.*

## **HEALTH PROGRAMS**

**COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS:** Mid employs Community Health Workers that focus on increasing linkages between health systems and community resources for minorities to promote healthier lifestyles. The grant will specifically target minorities who are obese and likely have comorbidity of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. The Community Health Workers will be traveling between the five county area, working with Head Start, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs, Mid's Immunization Clinic, the Help Care Clinic in Kearney, Plum Creek Medical Group in Lexington; and other community partners.

**IMMUNIZATION:** Immunizations are provided to children two months through 18 years of age. There is a suggested donation of \$19.00 per child per visit. No one is turned away for inability to pay. *Please call (308) 865-1352, Ext. 152, (308) 325-9432, or toll-free 1-877-209-3723 for more information.*

## **HOUSING PROGRAMS**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** The Housing Department administers several programs aimed at increasing and maintaining homeownership for people with low-to-moderate incomes.

**WEATHERIZATION:** The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) helps low-income households, particularly the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with young children, to permanently reduce their utility bills. Contractors or crews install energy efficiency measures in homes occupied by qualifying low-income families free of charge. The WAP is available to homeowners and renters living in frame or mobile homes. Typical weatherization measures include insulation (attic, sidewall, crawl space, & mobile home underbellies); weatherstripping & caulking; repairing broken windows & doors; and furnace & water heater repair or replacement, if the unit is unsafe. *Please call (308) 865-5675, Ext. 151 for more information.*

**HOMEBUYER EDUCATION:** REACH is an eight hour class designed to provide homebuyers, first-time as well as others, with information regarding the home buying process. Individuals from financial institutions, real estate agencies, insurance agencies and other experts in the home buying field present at the classes. The class is also available online. *Please call (308) 865-5675, Ext. 132.*

## **NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

**COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CSFP):** Provides nutritious, supplemental food to income eligible pregnant women, children under the age of six years, and individuals 60+. *Please call (308) 865-5683.*

**COMMUNITY ACTION FOOD BANK:** Provides Mobile Produce Pantries and food security supports to individuals, families, and communities. *Please call (308) 865-5683 for more information.*

**WIC (Women, Infants and Children):** WIC is a supplemental nutrition education program which provides health referrals, breast feeding promotions, and nutritious free foods to income-eligible pregnant, breast feeding or post-partum women, infants, and children up to age five. *Must meet income guidelines. Please call (308) 865-5375 or toll-free 1-877-803-1712 for more information.*

**SENIOR CENTERS:** Mid serves senior meals on site in Minden, North Platte, and at the Kearney Peterson Senior Activity Center. North Platte volunteers deliver meals to the elderly homebound. The Senior Centers provide informational, recreational, and social activities, as well as referrals to other programs. *Please call (308) 865-5675 for more information.*

### **VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROGRAM**

**SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (SCVP):** Senior Companions reach out to older individuals who are struggling to remain independent. Anyone may volunteer. Stipends are available to companions who are 60 or older and income qualify. *Please call 308-865-5675.*

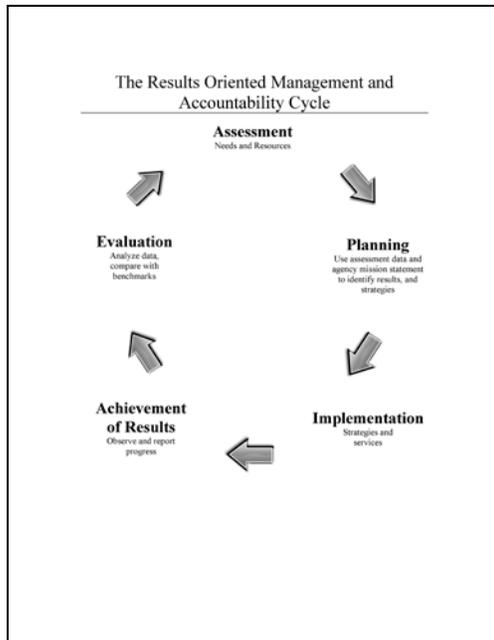
### **TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM**

**R.Y.D.E. (Reach Your Destination Easily):** The R.Y.D.E. Transit system provides accessible, low cost public transportation to the general public. R.Y.D.E. Transit operates buses in Adams, Buffalo, Dawson, Franklin, Gosper, Hamilton, and Kearney counties to provide simple and affordable transportation services. All buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts. *To schedule a ride in Buffalo County, or for more information, call (308) 865-5677.*

## How do we evaluate the success of our program services?

### Results Oriented Management Accountability (ROMA)

ROMA is a complete management and accountability process that is focused on the results achieved as a result of Mid's agency activities.



In 1993, Congress passed the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). This Act incorporated ROMA to improve Federal program effectiveness and public accountability by promoting a new focus on results, service quality and customer satisfaction.

All Community Action agencies across the United States measure, track, and report performance linked to the national goals. Reports are sent into our State offices every six months.

## Three Year Strategic Plan:

### ***About the Strategic Plan:***

The agency has formally adopted and actively uses an agency-wide strategic plan and this plan serves as a framework to track the progress and overall success of agency resources and services. The plan incorporates the agency's vision/mission, our focus on poverty, and incorporates specific strategies, measures, and metrics that drive agency action. All priority areas, objectives, and measures are linked to the ROMA National Goals.

### Strategic Plan Process 2020-2023 Timeline

- **Agency three year Community Needs Assessment completed – Census Data compiled – March 2019**
- **Board and Staff Strategic Planning Session – All Staff Day - April 2019 – review of Needs Assessment/client, staff, stakeholder input, brainstorming of new goals/objectives**
- **Threats, Opportunity, Weakness, Strengths Planning Session with Senior Management – January 2020**
- **Senior Management Strategic Planning Session – February 25, 2020**
- **Board of Director's Planning Session – February 27, 2020**
- **All Staff input – March 2020 In Touch Overview**
- **Finalize Priority Areas and Objectives – Senior Management – May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020**
- **Board Approval – May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

### ROMA Goals:

Individuals and families with low-incomes are stable and achieve economic security; Communities are healthy and offer economic opportunity; Agency increase their capacity and resources

### 2020-2023 Three Year Strategic Plan Summary

#### *Priority Area: Reduce barriers for our clients*

- Assist with job training scholarships
- Increase capacity for case management services
- Emergency vehicle repair program
- Create directory of dental, vision, and health care providers that accept Medicaid

#### *Priority Area: Increase the availability and affordability of housing services*

- Establish funding program to help individuals make needed home improvements so they can also receive Weatherization services
- Expand Down Payment Assistance Program

*Priority Area: Community Outreach and Advocacy*

- Partner with area entities to educate and facilitate discussion of community needs
- Improve marketing for agency and programs to better engage community members
- Expand Partnerships

*Priority Area: Expand Health Access Opportunities*

- Fund the Community Health Worker Program
- Pilot a Mobile Dental Van/Onsite Dental Program to serve adults in rural areas
- Provide case management for providers not accepting Medicaid to ensure clients keep appointments

*Priority Area: Community Engagement*

- Comprehensive three year needs assessment
- Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Stakeholder and Funder Surveys every two years
- Facilitate community meetings on poverty issues

*Priority Area: Building and Retaining a Quality Workforce*

- Improve wages and benefits for agency staff
- Decrease staff turnover

*Priority Area: Board Governance*

- Strengthen Board knowledge and governance for agency programs

*Priority Area: Improve Transportation Access*

- Improve same day on demand services by adding more floater drivers for RYDE Transit
- Partner with Uber Services to provide referrals
- Create marketing plan and short video to better explain Public Transit
- Utilize Transportation Matrix from Tri-City Intercity Bus Route to determine new partners

*Priority Area: Increase Access to Preschool/Childcare*

- Increase childcare partnerships
- Expansion of Head Start/Early Head Start
- Meet with all Licensed Education Districts to promote Head Start

*Priority Area: Access to Healthy Foods*

- Research expansion of the Mobile Produce Pantry Program
- Start a centralized Food Pantry in Buffalo County with local partners
- Maintain/Expand Senior Center meal programs
- Establish drop off locations for people to donate extra produce
- Increase WIC Caseload to serve more families

The agency utilizes a Strategic Planning Scorecard to track progress of ongoing goals.

In the **Strategic Plan & Project Scorecard** we measure progress as well as results. In strategic planning, you may never accomplish your goal or produce a result, but the measurement of that progress will define the scoring. For those strategic goals that are successful, we measure the degree of success using data from the ROMA logic model (NPI report) over a three year period (the normal life span of our strategic plan). New Projects are scored in much the same way. By their nature, new programs or projects may take time to develop the necessary partnerships and funding streams thus the measurement of progress. The Scorecard is updated on the ROMA reporting cycle.

**For more information about our agency, please check out our website at: [www.communityactionmidne.com](http://www.communityactionmidne.com)**