Fifty Years of Success and Beyond

THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION, INC.
STRATEGIC PLAN AUGUST 2017 – JULY 2020

Economic Opportunity Foundation, Inc.
1542 Minnesota Avenue
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
913-371-7800
www.eofkck.org

Approved by the Board of Trustees
November 27, 2017
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .................................................. 3

About EOF ............................................................... 4, 5, 6

Our Mission ............................................................. 7

Our Vision ............................................................... 7

Core Values ............................................................. 7

Purpose of Strategic Plan ........................................... 8

Strategic Planning Process ........................................ 8

Community Needs Assessment .................................. 8, 9, 10

SWOT Analysis ......................................................... 11, 12

ROMA ................................................................. 13

Priorities, Goals, Objectives, Strategies ...................... 14, 15, 16, 17

Plan Implementation ................................................ 18
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, the Economic Opportunity Foundation, Inc. (EOF) has faced many challenges. In 2013, EOF ceased operations of a major program which ultimately resulted in a significant loss of funding and staffing. As a result, EOF has had to re-organize, re-structure and re-think its way of doing business. Although the challenges have been many, EOF remains dedicated and committed to continuing its over fifty (50) years of service “Helping People to Help Themselves”

Every three (3) years EOF is mandated to conduct a Comprehensive Community (needs) Assessment. The purpose of the Community Assessment is to guide and assist EOF management in making informed decisions about program design and services based on specific information collected from the community. This information is then analyzed, and used to identify issues, problems, needs, available resources and current trends impacting low-income families in Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas. The Community Assessment is the instrument that guides the EOF Strategic Plan.

Between October 2016 and July 2017 EOF collected quantitative, qualitative and evidence informed data that included conducting a community survey, co-facilitating a focus group, gleaming information from the 2017 Community Health Survey, collecting and analyzing customer satisfaction data and prioritizing community issues and needs. Information was collected from community residents, social service and community organizations, local churches, local government, educational institutions, and other public and private entities and stakeholders. All of this information and data was collectively used to frame and develop the EOF 2017 Community Assessment document.

As we prepare to take the next steps in implementing our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan EOF will strive to provide programs and services designed to strengthen families and individuals, advocate on behalf of the low-income, mobilize resources and promote community coordination of programs and services for the low-income through its various partnerships and collaborations. Where necessary, adjustments will be made in order to successfully and consistently provide quality services to the customers (families and individuals) served by EOF.

Mrs. Rita D. Adams, Executive Director

Economic Opportunity Foundation, Inc. (EOF)
Fifty Years of Success and Beyond

The Economic Opportunity Foundation Strategic Plan
2017 – 2020

ABOUT EOF

The Economic Opportunity Foundation, Inc. (EOF) is a nonprofit private Community Action Agency (CAA) established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fight America’s “War on Poverty”. Community Action Agencies are private non-profit or public agencies who fight the causes and conditions of poverty in part by empowering the low-income and by promoting self-sufficiency. CAA’s seek to involve the community (low-income residents, private sector representatives and public officials) in assessing local needs and addressing the causes and conditions of poverty. Since 1965, EOF has mobilized necessary resources to address the causes and conditions of poverty in Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas to assist low-income residents to move toward self-sufficiency. EOF "Helps People to Help Themselves".

As a Community Action Agency, EOF receives Federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds which are distributed by the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC). As a recipient of CSBG Funds, EOF is required to conduct a comprehensive community assessment at least every three years in order to assess the state of ongoing issues facing its service area, Wyandotte County and to identify new, emerging and changing community needs.

EOF is one of eight Community Action Agencies in the State of Kansas and over 1,000 throughout the country. Community Action Agencies such as EOF are responsible for identifying the causes and conditions of poverty and implementing programs and services that create the opportunity for individuals, families and communities to improve their economic and social conditions.

A unique element of CAA’s is that they are locally governed by a tri-partite board, comprised of representatives from low-income residents, government officials and the private sector. EOF’s tri-partite Board of Trustees provides oversight and determines the direction of programs and services that best help residents in Wyandotte County “move towards self-sufficiency”.

4 Fifty Years of Success and Beyond | EOF Inc. 2017-2020 Strategic Plan
EOF’s service area is Wyandotte County in Kansas City, Kansas. According to the most recent census, Wyandotte County has a population of $159,000$ and approximately $25.2\%$ of the residents live below the Federal Poverty line. Wyandotte County’s per capita income of $18,912$ is over $30\%$ lower that the Kansas per capita income of $27,706$. Partnering with local agencies, including local churches and the United Way, EOF brings many needed anti-poverty programs and services to Wyandotte County.

The programs and/or services provided by EOF include but are not limited to the following:

- **Emergency Assistance** — Through the EOF Emergency Assistance Program, families are able to obtain needed supports such as utility and/or rent assistance, and mortgage assistance (default counseling) to address emergency situations.

- **Employment Services** — EOF staff work with unemployed eligible residents to provide job preparation and placement assistance.

- **Case Management Services** — EOF staff work with low-income families to set and achieve self-sufficiency goals.

- **Housing Services** — EOF staff work with unemployed/low-income residents who are either Homeless, lacking stable housing, or needing assistance with rent/mortgage payments or other everyday needs regarding their housing situation.

Through its various partnerships and collaborations EOF provides the following services:

- **EOF/Crosslines Partnership — Senior Commodity Distribution** — Low-income and disabled Seniors Citizens are provided nutritional foods to help support healthy eating and to lessen their food budget.

- **EOF/Kansas Appleseed Partnership** — This partnership aims to reduce child hunger in Kansas City with emphasis being placed on Wyandotte County, Kansas — EOF’s service area.

- **EOF/DCF Partnership (Non-Custodial Parent Child Support Project)** — This partnership provides employment assistance and support services to non-custodial parents who are delinquent on their child support payments and have already gone through the courts.

- **EOF/Northeast Historic Neighborhood Society/Parkwood Colony— “Learn To Earn Summer Youth Program”** — This program provides youth with classroom training (job search and interviewing skills, conflict resolution, investing, financial management) in addition to providing on the job training. Youth receive a stipend that can be used for school supplies and clothing, after successful completion of the program.
• **EOF/Kansas Lifeline Partnership** - This collaboration aims to increase the communications ability of the low-income residents in the EOF service area (Wyandotte County). Eligible participants receive free cell phones and minutes.

• **EOF/Avenue of Life Partnership** - This collaboration assist homeless families and individuals by providing the support and services they need to emerge from homelessness and move towards sustainability.

• **EOF/Village Initiative Partnership** – This collaboration focuses on assisting “Returning Citizens” (Ex Offender’s) with their employment goals.

According to “Poverty in Wyandotte County”, a [free series paper], Poverty is commonly described in terms of income, or more correctly the lack of income. Fundamentally, Poverty is the absence of the ability to acquire the necessities of life. From a societal standpoint, Poverty can be viewed as a state or condition in which an individual, family or community lacks the financial resources and essentials to enjoy a minimum standard of life. Regardless of how it is defined, Poverty is a complex, complicated, multi-faceted condition that requires the collected effort of all concerned to help combat and alleviate.

Individual and community issues relating to poverty requires commitment from the entire community. EOF is part of several larger groups, boards and committees who work collectively to effect change and improve poverty outcomes from the individual, family and community level. EOF plays an integral part in working with various groups in the community more holistically, to alleviate/minimize the causes and conditions of poverty in Wyandotte County.
MISSION, VISION AND CORE VALUES

OUR MISSION

EOF’s Mission is to mobilize necessary resources to address the causes and conditions of poverty in Wyandotte County, to assist low-income residents in moving towards self-sufficiency.

OUR VISION

"Reducing Poverty by enabling individual and family self-sufficiency"

CORE VALUES

EOF has adopted the following core values.

- Excellence
- Advocacy
- Integrity
- Respect
- Confidentiality
- Compassion
- Self-Sufficiency
- Quality
- Professionalism
- Accountability
PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A Strategic Plan is a tool or document used by management to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working towards a common goal, establish agreements around intended outcomes and assess and adjust the organization as warranted in response to changing environments. Strategic Planning identifies where an organization wants to be at some point in time in the future and how it plans to get there. The Strategic Planning Process involves looking at the organization as a complete entity in terms of its long term development. EOF will use information and data obtained from its 2017 Community Needs Assessment, Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA Cycle) and Community Action Plan and SWOT Analysis in the development of its 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

_EOF Community Assessment/Strategic Planning Committee_

The EOF Board of Trustees and Management Staff designated a five (5) member planning committee to oversee the activities associated with the development and implementation of the EOF Community Assessment and Strategic Plan. The Community Assessment/Strategic Planning Committee consisted of EOF Board members representing the Low-Income Sector, Management Staff and a Community Partner. A key function of the Community Assessment/Strategic Planning Committee was/is to determine the direction and scope of EOF over a 3 to 5 year period. The Community Assessment/Strategic Planning Committee provided leadership, direction and oversight for the Strategic Planning Process. The Community Assessment/Strategic Planning Committee met several times throughout the year in order to develop and craft the EOF 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. The EOF Board of Trustees provided input as warranted. The EOF 2017-2020 was presented to, review, discussed, accepted and approved by the EOF Board of Trustees on November 27, 2017 at a regular meeting of the Board.

_EOF 2017 Community Assessment_

Between October 2016 and July 2017, EOF collected quantitative and qualitative data which included conducting a community survey, co-facilitating a focus group, gleaming information from a community health assessment, collecting and analyzing customer satisfaction data and prioritizing community issues and needs. The information learned through the EOF Community
Assessment forms the basis for considering whether or not EOF’s current programs and plans are effectively achieving the agency’s desired outcomes. Information was collected from community residents, social service and community organizations, local churches, local government, educational institution and other public and private entities and stakeholders. Participants were asked questions relating to Employment, Public Benefits, Programs, Housing and Utilities, Finances, Transportation, Health/Mental Health and Child Care, What’s Important to You, Agency Satisfaction and Demographics. Five hundred (500) surveys were distributed through thirteen (13) organizations, the Board of Trustees and EOF Staff. One hundred and sixty-eight (168) individuals completed the surveys for a return rate of 33.6%. The information learned from the EOF Community Assessment formed the basis for considering whether EOF’s current programs and plans are effectively achieving the agency’s desired outcomes. The Community Assessment also serves as the foundation for the development of EOF’s 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

The 2015-2016 EOF Community Assessment identified Employment and Housing as Strategic Priorities. The 2017 EOF Community Assessment currently re-enforces Employment (unemployment/lack of employment and Housing (affordable housing) as priority areas. Based on this and other factors, EOF does not need to change its strategic focus. Both quantitative and qualitative data reinforces what EOF Customers and the community are saying.

When analyzing the priorities identified in the surveys, focus group and community health assessment, the number one need identified is unemployment and/lack of jobs. Crime and Violence was identified as a priority by both surveys and the community health assessment. Affordable housing was identified as a need by both the focus group and the community health assessment. Also noted in the survey priorities was alcohol and drug abuse. A summary of priority needs identified the following four areas:

1. Unemployment/lack of jobs/low paying jobs
2. Crime and Violence
3. Affordable Housing
4. Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Of the top four issue areas (priorities) Crime and Violence is identified as the #2 priority. EOF realizes that crime and violence is a great concern (as identified in the EOF Community Assessment) and negatively impacts families, individuals and communities as a whole, however there are agencies, entities and programs already established, have the expertise and are better equipped to tackle this area.
Alcohol and Drug Abuse (priority #4) is another issue area that has been identified as one of the major causes of poverty. EOF currently does not have the capacity to directly tackle this issue on a larger scale. EOF does touch on Alcohol and Drug Abuse issues either indirectly through its various partnerships and collaborations, or directly thorough one on one contact with its customers (families/individuals) who are affected by alcohol and drug abuse. EOF will address customers (families/individuals) affected by alcohol and drug abuse issues one on one on a case by case basis, through case management and (self-sufficiency counseling) and referrals as warranted.

Both quantitative and qualitative data supports and reinforces what EOF Customers, survey participants and focus group participants are indicating. Unemployment (Lack of Jobs/Low Paying Jobs) remains the number one (#1) identified priority or area of need. Wyandotte County ranks 102 out of 105 Kansas Counties for per capita income. Per capita income measures the average income earned per person in a specified year. Several data sources suggest that the availability of good paying jobs and adequate education are a problem for the residents of Wyandotte County. Data also suggest (2015) that 55% of Wyandotte County residents over the age 25 with a high school education or less are at greater risk for becoming poor and cycling in and out of poverty.

The priority of Affordable Housing will be addressed through the EOF Housing Services Program. The EOF Housing Services Program provides assistance to low-income eligible individuals and/or families who are unemployment/underemployed and actively seeking employment and/or those whom only need temporary supports, who are disabled and/or otherwise unable to work.

EOF will mainly concentrate its efforts on the two (2) priority areas –

- Unemployed/Lack of Jobs/Low Paying Jobs (#1)
- Affordable Housing (#3)
SWOT analysis
The strategic planning team considered the internal strengths and weaknesses that would have an impact on its planning, along with external threats and opportunities. The items listed below received two or more votes from planning team members.

**STRENGTHS**
- Serve all of Wyandotte County
- Experience - Longevity in the community
- Staff dedicated to the Mission and Vision of EOF
- Integral partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people
- Adaptable to changing environment income inequality
- Good communication with our Board

**WEAKNESSES**
- Lack of diverse funding
- PR/Media/Website communication outside EOF is lacking
- "NOT" telling our story
- Absent adequate Fiscal and IT Staffing

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Increase visibility throughout Wyandotte County
- Canvassing potential new employers and building/strengthening relations with existing employers
- Board Members to be more visible representing EOF
- Explore Opportunities for small business incubators and entrepreneurship
- Equipping inmates/offenders with financial literacy
- Fiscal and Information Technology Interns
- Form a "Friends of EOF" volunteer group
- Form a "Youth Friends of EOF" volunteer group

**THREATS**
- Loss of federal dollars
- Continued increase in rules and regulations from funding sources
- Reputation damage due to the relinquishment of the Head Start Program
- Compliance Issues
- Lack of diverse funding
A SWOT Analysis is an analysis of the organizations Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT Analysis allows an organization to assess changing environments and respond proactively. The EOF Community Assessment/Strategic Planning Committee conducted a “SWOT” Analysis as part of EOF’s Strategic Planning Process. The Committee identified the following:

**STRENGTHS**

- Serves all of Wyandotte County
- Experience- Longevity in the community
- Staff dedicated to the Mission and Vision of EOF
- Integral partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people
- Adaptable to changing environment
- Good communication with the Board
- Customers are satisfied with EOF services.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Lack of diverse funding
- “Not” telling our story
- Absent adequate Fiscal and IT Staffing

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Increase visibility throughout Wyandotte County
- Increase agency low-income volunteers
- Canvassing potential new employers/strengthening relations with existing employers
- Board members to be more visible representing EOF
- Explore Opportunities for small business incubators/entrepreneurship
- Equipping inmates/offenders with financial literacy
- Fiscal and Information Technology Interns
- Form a “Friends of EOF” Volunteer Group
- Form a “Youth Friends of EOF” Volunteer Group

**THREATS**

- Loss of Federal dollars
- Continued increase in rules and regulations from funding sources
- Compliance Issues
- Lack of diverse funding
RESULTS ORIENTED MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (ROMA)

ROMA is a performance-based initiative designed to preserve the anti-poverty focus of community action and to promote greater effectiveness among state and local agencies receiving Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds. ROMA provides a framework for continuous growth and improvement among Community Action Agencies. ROMA was created in 1994 by an ongoing task force of Federal, State and Local Community Action Officials—the Monitoring and Assessment Task Force (MATF). There are six (6) overarching National CSBG ROMA Goals that guide the Community Services Network. They are as follows:

- Low-income people become more self-sufficient
- The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.
- Low-income people own a stake in their community.
- Partnerships among supporters and providers of service to low-income people are achieved.
- Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results
- Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

THE ROMA CYCLE:

- Assessment—Community needs and resources, agency data
- Planning—Use agency mission statement and assessment data to identify results and strategies
- Implementation—Services and strategies produce results
- Achievement of Results—Observe and report progress
- Evaluation—Analyze data, compare with benchmarks

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

CSBG Eligible Entities must submit a detailed Community Action Plan in order to receive CSBG funding under the State of Kansas. The Community Action Plan outlines a comprehensive approach to addressing family and community level needs identified with in an agency’s/organization’s service area.
PRIORITIES, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

EOF has compiled information and data collected from the 2017 Community Assessment, SWOT Analysis and linked this information and data to the EOF Community Action Plan and ROMA Goals to develop the EOF 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. The EOF Strategic Plan addresses Family, Community and Agency Priorities, Goals, Objectives and Strategies

FAMILY GOALS:

ROMA GOAL #1: LOW INCOME PEOPLE BECOME MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Employment (Unemployment/Lack of Jobs/Low Paying Jobs)

OBJECTIVE # 1: To improve the employment prospects of low-income residents by providing a mix of services and interventions that will link skill development with employment supports.

STRATEGY: Offer case management (self-sufficiency counseling) that includes Job Readiness, Job Search and Job Retention Skills.

OBJECTIVE # 2: To eliminate or minimize barriers to gainful employment and the employability of low-income residents.

STRATEGY: Offer eligible participant enrolled in the employment services program employment support such as transportation (car insurance, bus passes, limited direct transportation), safety equipment, work clothing, uniforms, boot, assistance securing driver’s license and ID’s as warranted.

OBJECTIVE #3: To expand the job opportunities of low-income participants.

STRATEGY: Canvass for potential new employers, build and strengthen relationships with existing employers.
ROMA GOAL #6: LOW-INCOME PEOPLE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL BY STRENGTHENING FAMILY AND OTHER SUPPORTIVE SYSTEMS.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: HOUSING (Affordable Housing)

OBJECTIVE: To minimize the incidents of homelessness (at risk homelessness) for low-income families and individuals.

STRATEGY #1: Offer the following Housing Services-

- Preventive Homeless Assistance (Delinquent Rent/Mortgage Payments)
- Housing Counseling (Landlord/Tenant Rights and Responsibilities)
- Emergency Assistance (Delinquent Utility Bill Payments)
- Application Assistance for temporary public supports
- Assistance in apply for low-income or income based housing
- Case Management (Self-Sufficiency Counseling)

COMMUNITY GOALS

ROMA GOAL #2: THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH LOW-INCOME PEOPLE LIVE ARE IMPROVED.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: HOUSING (Affordable Housing)

OBJECTIVE: Increase the availability of safe affordable housing for low-income families and individuals.

STRATEGY: Advocate on behalf of the low-income by engaging stakeholders and other concerned parties to increase safety measures.
ROMA GOAL #3 LOW-INCOME PEOPLE OWN A STAKE IN THEIR COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE: To increase volunteer and customer participation in Agency programs, giving more individuals a stake in their community. To strengthen the Agency's ability to address the needs of the community, by soliciting more low income people to be involved in the decision making.

STRATEGY #1: Devise a volunteer recruitment plan for the agency utilizing input from the EOF Board of Trustees. Utilize the plan.

STRATEGY #2: In addition to the Low-Income representation on the EOF Board of Trustees, determine other areas within and outside of the Agency where low-income residents and customers can be most effective, encourage them to participate in various activities.

AGENCY GOALS

ROMA GOAL #4: Partnerships among supporters and providers of service to people with low-income are achieved.

OBJECTIVE: To continue to develop, foster, strengthen and maintain strong partnerships with agencies and organizations (public and private) that provide programs and services to and advocate on behalf of the low-income.

STRATEGY: Strength and improve current partnerships and collaborations. Foster new partnerships and collaborations that have mutual benefits and shared goals and visions. Evaluate partnerships in order to determine if they are still viable and productive to the goals and vision of the Agency and the low-income community it serves.
ROMA GOAL #5: Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.

OBJECTIVE: To assure that all programs operate efficiently and effectively, achieve program goals and meet intended outcomes; evaluate and assess the impact of Agency services and programs within the community being served on an ongoing basis.

STRATEGY #1: Continue to review and analyze Agency finances, fiscal procedures, personnel policies and staffing to assure Agency resources are being used in the most effective and efficient manner. Make adjustments as warranted. Continue to provide training for staff enrichment and skill enhancement. Continue to provide training for Board members and to keep Board members actively engaged in Agency operations.

STRATEGY #2: Continue to regularly update and make post on social media. Better utilize social media to reach a larger number of residents and in doing so, promote Agency services, programs and accomplishments to the community.
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Economic Opportunity Foundation, Inc. (EOF) 2017-2020 Strategic Plan will be implemented by Management and Staff with oversight from the EOF Board of Trustees. Management and Staff will work together and individually to address priorities, objectives and strategies was designated.

Management will review the EOF 2017-2020 Strategic Plan on quarterly basis. A report will be given to the Board of Trustees on the plan progress at the six month period. Any necessary adjustments that may need to be made will be reviewed and discussed at that time. A yearly progress report will also be given to the Board as well. Recommended Board Approved adjustments as warranted will be incorporated at that time.