Upward mobility. You can only climb the ladder when there’s a ladder.

One of the keys to upward mobility is when individuals have greater control of their own destinies. That's why Mecklenburg County offers employment counseling and placement services. We also provide small businesses with critical guidance and financial resources. We are aggressively addressing the need for affordable housing, so people can truly achieve a higher quality of life.
Economic Opportunities

**STRATEGIES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

**Strategy:** Promote access to housing for individuals and families to reduce the rate of homelessness in the County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S)</th>
<th>CALCULATION METHODOLOGY</th>
<th>3-YEAR TARGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness Rate</td>
<td>Homelessness rate per 1,000 residents</td>
<td>This measure does not have a target, as it is used for tracking purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Stability Rate</td>
<td>Percentage of individuals participating in the supportive housing programs (Shelter Plus Care, Moore, Place and Housing First Char-Meck Partnership) who are stably housed</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy:** Strengthen individual access to upward mobility opportunities through health and human integrated services and employment placement services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unified Workforce Development Employment Rate</td>
<td>Percentage of program participants with an employment placement</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Workforce Development Retention Rate</td>
<td>Percentage of program participants that maintain employment for a minimum of 6 months</td>
<td>Baseline data will be collected in FY2020 to establish a target for FY2022.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY INITIATIVES**

**KEY INITIATIVE #1: MINORITY, WOMEN AND SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES**

Mecklenburg County’s Minority, Women, and Small Business Enterprises (MWSBE) Program is committed to supporting the economic development of small business enterprises and the minority community. The program seeks to widen opportunities for participation, increase competition and ensure the proper use of public funds. The County currently supports increasing participation of minorities, women and small businesses in Mecklenburg County business opportunities through outreach, training and partnerships. Despite the ongoing work in this area, the County recognizes there are ways to enhance its MWSBE offering, especially around the County’s procurement activities. To address any gaps, the County is working with a consultant to secure a clear understanding of existing County policies and procedures regarding enterprise-wide equity of contracting opportunities. In addition, the consultant is completing a comprehensive disparity study, combining anecdotal data and perspectives from local business owners and community stakeholders, statistical analyses, and other insights from the private sector to evaluate the impact of current County policies and procedures across racial and gender lines within the community. This work will yield findings and recommendations on any identified potential changes or improvements to the County’s MWSBE initiative.

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES / STRATEGIES & KEY INITIATIVES**

**KEY INITIATIVE #1: MINORITY, WOMEN AND SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (continued)**

Improving the County’s MWSBE purchasing protocols is a multi-phased initiative, with the first phase focused on the examination and evaluation of current policies and procedures. The insights developed from this initial work will shape the forthcoming implementation plan and guide the downstream efforts to advance the County’s commitment to the MWSBE community.

**ANNUAL ACTIONS**

**FY2020**

- Complete contractor-led assessment and develop implementation plan based on findings.
- Collaborate with Finance Department and all enterprise-wide departments on firm data practices and data integrity for assessment exercise.
- Solicit feedback from the business community to ensure relevant stakeholders have access to MWSBE/vendor information.
- Update FY2021 Annual Actions based on assessment findings.

**FY2021–2022**

- Using data from FY2020 assessment, develop action plan to advance recommendations.
- Implement action plan, including any additional evaluations.
- Update FY2022 annual actions.
- Implement identified annual actions (2022).

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) | CALCULATION METHODOLOGY | 3-YEAR TARGET**

| Timely and successful completion of MWSBE Assessment and Disparity Study | Yes/No | Yes |

Note: Additional KPIs to be developed based upon findings and recommendations from the assessment.
KEY INITIATIVE #2: SMALL BUSINESS REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Small business growth and stability is a critical factor in developing and maintaining a healthy and diverse economic base. To date, Mecklenburg County’s Office of Economic Development has supported the sustainability and vitality of the local small business community through its Small Business Concierge Service. This program provides free customized guidance and expert advice to those seeking to start or grow a business, in addition to connecting them to the resources available throughout Charlotte, Mecklenburg County and North Carolina. In furthering this commitment, the County recently commissioned a study of the local small business environment and identified opportunities for growth, particularly around improving financing options for local entrepreneurs.

To address gaps in financing and expand its overall strategy to support small businesses, Mecklenburg County has developed a small business lending program to provide capital to small businesses not served by traditional banks and credit unions. The program will provide loan amounts and terms currently not available in the lending market. The loan fund will be seeded by the County and all operational aspects will be managed by a third party. By helping small businesses grow, the County will encourage job growth, economic diversification and, most importantly, greater opportunities for economic mobility.

ANNUAL ACTIONS

**FY2020**
- Create brand and product awareness in partnership with third party fund manager for loan fund.
- Launch loan fund and assist loan manager in marketing and attracting applications.
- Monitor and review lending activity.

**FY2021-2022**
- Review and assess fund performance of previous year.
- Adjust marketing, fund seeding and loan program parameters as necessary.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) | CALCULATION METHODOLOGY | 3-YEAR TARGET
--- | --- | ---
Number of businesses that receive funding from the County’s Revolving Loan Program | Count of number of businesses that receive funding from the County’s Revolving Loan Program | 42

Dollar amount of the committed funds to the County’s Revolving Loan Program | Count of dollars committed to the County’s Revolving Loan Program | $1,500,000

KEY INITIATIVE #3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A lack of affordable housing continues to pose a significant challenge for many Mecklenburg County residents. According to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg State of Housing Instability & Homelessness report released in 2019, in the Charlotte area alone there is a deficit of over 27,000 housing units for individuals and families earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income, a calculation based on regional factors and family size. County leaders are committed to tackling the affordable housing crisis over the next several years.

The County currently employs a range of programs to support residents’ housing needs. In recent years, the primary focus has been on combating homelessness and providing supportive services to those in need. The County will expand on these efforts moving forward, while also putting forth a more comprehensive approach to address the full continuum of housing instability. This includes initiatives aimed at preventing homelessness, maintaining housing, securing stable housing and increasing the stock of affordable housing.

Examples of investments and efforts the County is engaged in include:
- **Preventing Homelessness:** Supportive services and housing assistance through the Criminal Justice Services and Community Support Services departments
- **Maintaining Housing:** Habitat for Humanity’s Critical Home Repair Program; Expansion of legal aid services
- **Securing Stable Housing:** Rental Housing Subsidy Fund; Community Service Grants for local programs offering wraparound education and employment services
- **Increasing the Affordable Housing Stock:** Tax Foreclosure Affordable Housing Fund; County Code Enforcement Incentives
KEY INITIATIVE #3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING (continued)

ANNUAL ACTIONS

FY2020
- Develop a rental housing subsidy strategy that considers the number of housing needs within the community.
- In partnership with the Health and Human Services Integrated Service Delivery Model project, identify the customer needs for housing as seen through Social Services, Community Support Services, Public Health and the Department of Community Resource Centers; increase the percentage of individuals placed in housing and retained in housing.
- Partner with County and City departments, community organizations, and agencies to implement processes and procedures for the Governing Board managing the tax foreclosed properties, and provide funding and properties to qualified organizations.

FY2021
- Fully implement the rental housing subsidy program and provide options – that are sustainable and affordable – for residents.
- Evaluate and refine the Health and Human Services Integrated Service Delivery Model project housing strategies for clients.
- Implement a pilot affordable housing program utilizing tax foreclosed properties through partners with organizations and agencies.
- Implement an aggressive marketing approach for the affordable housing program, including grant options, qualifying criteria by utilizing media channels to increase prospective program candidates.

FY2022
- Evaluate the efficacy of the rental housing subsidy program and modify the program accordingly.
- Continue to evaluate and refine the Health and Human Services Integrated Service Delivery Model project housing strategies for clients.
- Maintain established marketing program and maintain partnerships with private entities to increase investor access to data and sell County property; evaluate the effectiveness of the marketing program.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) CALCULATION METHODOLOGY 3-YEAR TARGET

- Number of Households Supported by County Housing Subsidies: Count of number of households supported by County housing subsidies. To be determined
- Dollar Amount of County Housing Subsidies: Count of dollars provided through County housing subsidy program. This measure does not have a target, as it is used for tracking purposes.

ANNUAL ACTIONS

Note: Additional KPIs to be developed within FY2020 and FY2021.

KEY INITIATIVE #4: COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTERS

As part of the Bringing Mecklenburg County to You (BMC2U) initiative, the County opened its first Community Resource Center (CRC) at the Valerie C. Woodard Center in summer 2018. This initiative was part of an effort to enhance service offerings for County residents by providing a continuum of County services at a single location. Instead of residents having to travel to multiple locations, the CRC offers a single point of contact to access a coordinated suite of services like the Simplified Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Veterans Services, Immunizations and more. Since its opening in 2018, over 90,000 customers have accessed services at the first CRC.

However, the opening of the initial CRC does not represent the full scope of the County's commitment to supporting residents with a comprehensive service delivery model. Given the ongoing success of CRC 1, the County will be expanding its CRC offerings in the coming years. CRC 2 is scheduled to open in Northeast Mecklenburg County in FY2023, with CRC 3 to follow in East Mecklenburg County. Facility and staffing planning, land acquisition, and master planning verification have already been completed for CRC 2. The land acquisition process for CRC 3 was ongoing throughout 2019.

Ultimately, by continuing to strategically place CRCs throughout the County, staff can provide streamlined, integrated health and human services targeted to the unique needs of the surrounding population, in convenient, easy-to-access locations.

ANNUAL ACTIONS

FY2020
- Finalize design planning in conjunction with Asset and Facilities Management.
- Complete technology enhancement in CRC prototype for implementation in future CRCs.
- Analyze potential customer demand at future CRCs and impact on the prototype.
- Identify staffing needs for CRC 2, and work with County partners to determine potential budget impact.
- Develop ongoing communication plan in conjunction with Public Information.
- Continue land acquisition for CRC 3.

FY2021
- Finalize budget requirements and staffing/equipment needs.
- Develop staff training plan.
- Update/review governance, policies and procedures, standard operating procedures, etc.
- Conduct information sessions with community stakeholders and obtain feedback regarding base service delivery and specific community needs.
- Identify potential additional community partners.

FY2022
- Finalize preparations for opening, including staging, logistics, equipment, technology, staffing, policies and procedures, training, staff moves, customer resources, etc.
- Implement staff training plan.
- Collaborate with Business Process Management to maintain a continuous process improvement plan to monitor program performance and ensure sustainability.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) CALCULATION METHODOLOGY 3-YEAR TARGET

- Construction Completion of CRC #2: Percentage of construction completed for the second community resource center. Construction slated for completion in Q2 FY2023
- Land Acquisition Completion of CRC #3: Percentage of land acquisition completed for the third community resource center. This measure does not have a target, as it is used for tracking purposes.
- Number of community partners: Count of number of community partners in the community resource centers. This measure does not have a target, as it is used for tracking purposes.