



2025 – 2029 Strategic Plan



Coalition for Responsible Community Development
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Foundational Statements

Our vision is to join with others in the community to create an environment where the basic needs of youth are met; where youth can develop positive social skills, become more aware of their neighborhood's needs, and demonstrate genuine civic pride by actively contributing to the empowerment of their community.

Our mission is to sustain, coordinate, and improve local planning, development, and community services that address the needs of low-income and working-class residents and small businesses in South Los Angeles.

Our ecosystem supports the whole person with affordable housing, good jobs, quality training, and comprehensive services in collaboration with public organizations and community partners.

Our core values

Staff and board members are guided in our interactions with the community, our partners, funders, clients, and each other by these strongly held values.

- **Collaboration:** We value work with reputable organizations and partners that are mindful of community needs and have as their mission to work with the same target population.
- **Accountability:** We act responsibly and with transparency, always accountable to the community we serve.
- **Effectiveness:** We are efficient and produce results, making the best use of resources.
- **Stewardship:** We take seriously our role as trustees of community assets and public resources.
- **Empowerment:** We seek to empower others to take a leadership role in improving the community.
- **Commitment:** We are mission driven and follow through successfully on projects we undertake.



CEO Message

Join us in celebrating CRCD's 20th Anniversary in 2025! We have accomplished so much in relatively little time! With a \$60 million budget and 250 staff in 2024, we are the trusted leader for community-focused development in South Los Angeles. We are known for an unwavering commitment to our founding mission to change lives and build neighborhoods responsibly, and our focus on education, housing, and jobs for youth ages 18 – 24. CRCD has evolved in response to changing community needs and populations, now serving people returning from incarceration with the same need for family-sustaining wages.

Through our twenty years, CRCD has grounded our decisions in a series of strategic plans. We made progress during the 2020 - 2024 plan period beyond what anyone could have anticipated:

- During COVID, the City of LA tapped CRCD to distribute individual emergency funds with two days to prepare; our success demonstrated our capacity as a reliable, trusted local leader; built credibility; and led to other opportunities including in other council districts
- Launched CRCD Partners housing development entity and grew CRCD Enterprises
- When George Floyd's murder led to the Reimagine Fund, we were ready to lead
- All while building our executive team and making progress on all strategic priorities

While our 2020 plan focused on the numbers of people served, our theme for this 2025 – 2029 plan is **IMPACT**. We emphasize the COALITION in our name, taking leadership roles across collaborative efforts. To build up the community and strengthen our brand we:

- Serve as thought leaders within collaboratives seeking new funding
- Position our real estate development and jobs entities as go-to partners for community-based opportunities that will generate family sustaining wages
- Bring resources into historically disinvested communities
- Tap the once-in-a-generation opportunity for the World Cup and Olympics to positively benefit our community with near-term and lasting economic benefit
- FOCUS and target within these opportunities to build on our strengths, deepen our influence, and nurture coalitions as a step toward where we want to be long-term

Our North Star is the unique CRCD ecosystem that brings together services, education, housing, and jobs. While we shift based on the community's needs, all our work focuses on best serving people in South LA, in particular youth ages 18 - 24. Moving forward, though, many challenges must be approached with regional structures and allies. We will continue to grow our leadership roles at tables that take us further afield, with local IMPACT.

With success comes new requests. We will lend our expertise and capacity to support the growth of local organizations while creating new revenue streams.

As part of our ongoing investment in data, we will create a new measure of the value CRCD contributes to the community. It will capture our role bringing in jobs and housing, and the local benefits to individuals and businesses of our efforts across our entities.

This is a tremendously exciting time at CRCD – thank you for your partnership!



~ Mark Wilson, President & Chief Executive Officer

Community and Desired IMPACT

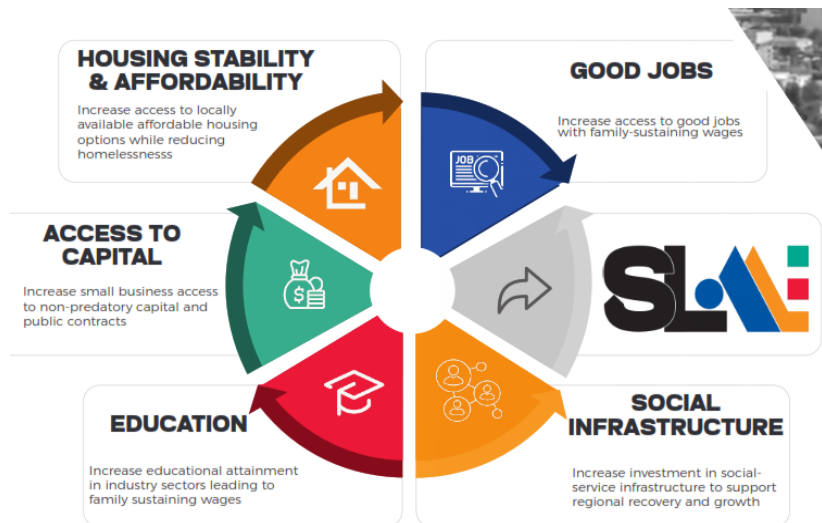
Deeply rooted in South Los Angeles, CRCD was founded to sustain the heritage of Vernon Central while addressing its significant unmet needs. (Vernon Central refers to the geographic community within the 110 Harbor Freeway and Alameda Street, south of Washington Boulevard and north of Slauson Avenue.) Today, our geographic focus continues in Vernon/Central, with expanding and deepening services and contracts in other areas and council districts of Los Angeles that also experience unmet need. At times we partner with organizations with a broader footprint to bring necessary expertise to our work.



Fulfilling a commitment in our 2020 strategic plan, CRCD is a leader in documenting the strengths, disparities, and opportunities in South Los Angeles as part of the South LA All In (SLAAI) network¹. SLAAI focuses on the 47 square miles of historically dis-invested communities across 101 census tracts, including Vernon Central, that make up South Los Angeles. As stated in the SLAAI Data Walk, “While the area boasts a rich tapestry of history and resilience, longstanding racial and socio-economic disparities necessitate a call for renewed investment and focus.” Despite historic disinvestment and resulting precarity for residents, a majority of respondents in the SLAAI 2022 community survey feel rooted in the community and plan to stay in the area long-term.

SLAAI created a new Community Development Index to assess needs in five priority areas:

- Housing Stability and Affordability
- Access to Capital
- Good Jobs
- Education



CRCD is uniquely positioned to address these needs and associated goals as part of the vital social service infrastructure, in South LA and beyond.

While our direct service focus remains in and around South Los Angeles, CRCD shares our expertise and best practices so other organizations can make a similar IMPACT in their own communities.

¹ South LA All In: Data Walk, 2022
CRCD strategic plan, adopted September 2024

Participants and Our Client-Centered Approach

CRCD nonprofit served 3,850 people in 2023, some of whom lived in 413 units of affordable housing provided by CRCD Partners; some were among the 384 people who had good jobs that year through CRCD Enterprises.²

Reflecting our target population, 45% of participants were ages 18 - 24, and 510 were current or former foster youth. Nearly 54% overall reported a history of homelessness.

Over 90% of CRCD service participants are Black, Indigenous, or other people of color. Black clients are over-represented (39% of clients and 16% of South LA residents), while Latino/a are under-represented (47% of clients and over 81% of South LA residents).

Across all CRCD entities, staff embrace the nine key elements of the client-centered approach that has been a hallmark of our work since our founding:

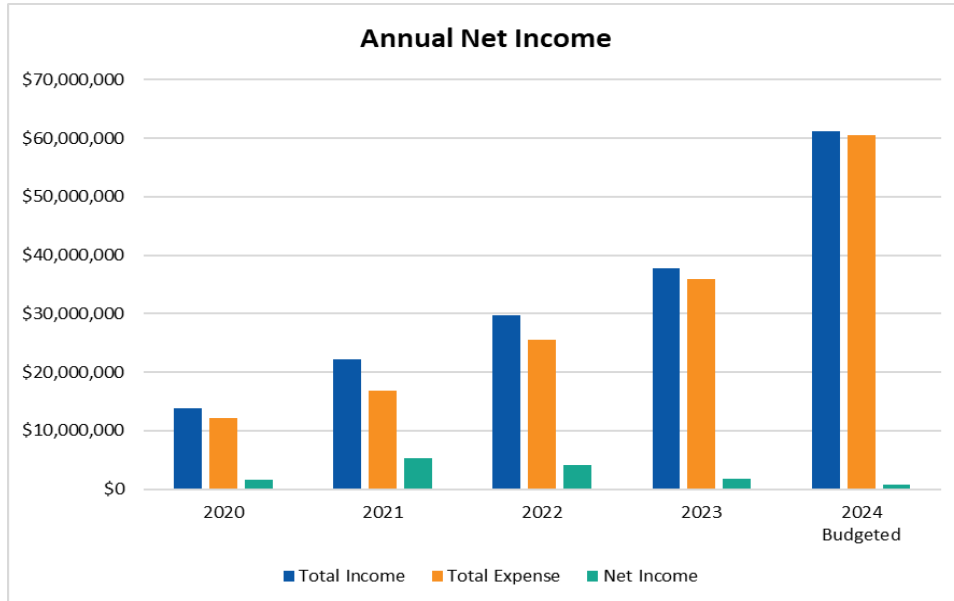
- Go above and beyond to provide a solution or a positive interaction every time
- Seek to understand before responding
- Service with grace and humility; never make a situation worse or “add fuel to a fire”
- Be accountable and take ownership when we mess up
- Good is not good enough; be prepared to provide excellent service to fully meet clients’ needs
- Build rapport on genuine, authentic engagement, not just program outcomes
- Take a back seat to the client’s journey; provide support, not direction
- Positively engage every person you encounter
- Your word is your bond; maintain integrity in your word and continually educate yourself in your craft

Each year, we survey an ever-expanding portion of our clients to better understand their experience with our programs and services so we can continue to improve our IMPACT. CRCD’s 2023 Participant Satisfaction Survey reported 87% satisfaction with CRCD overall, with 89% saying they received the services they need and the same percentage indicating they would continue working with CRCD. Reflecting an increase from the previous two years, 93% would recommend CRCD to family or friends. Survey data showed an upward trend in clients feeling understood and listened to by staff, with a 92% satisfaction rating. In addition, programs in 2023 delivered services in a more timely way, leading to greater satisfaction that participants’ problem(s) were resolved.

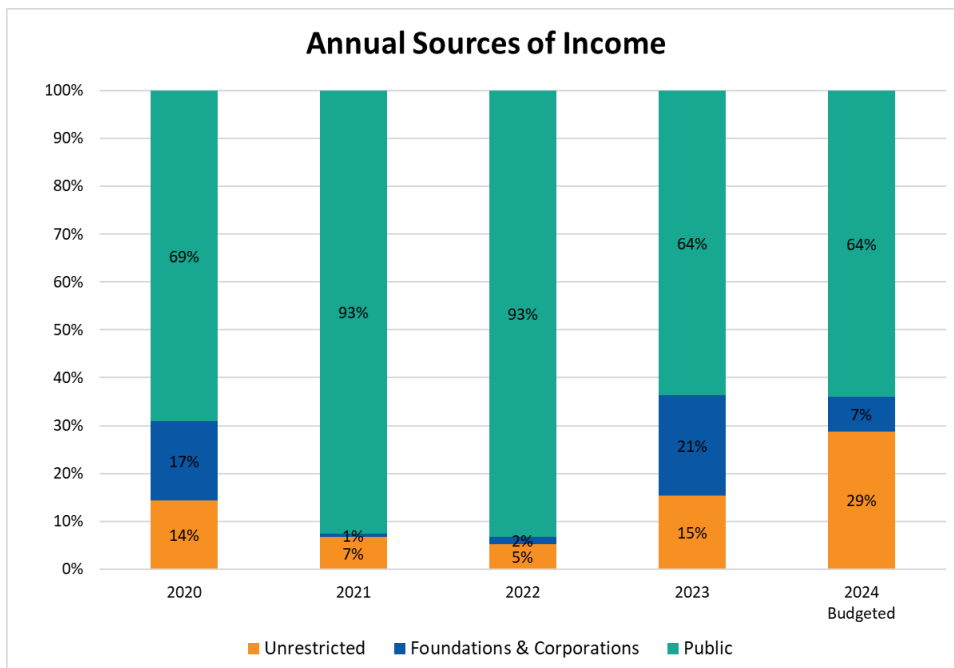
² Duplicated counts
CRCD strategic plan, adopted September 2024

Financial

During the 2020 - 2024 plan period, CRCD's budget has increased fourfold.



Public grants (local, federal, and now state) have consistently been the major source of funds. Spikes in 2021 and 2022 reflect our role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including major one-time grants for distributing funds to the community.



Organization Growth

Building on our tremendous growth over the past five years, CRCD is committed to continued growth in the coming years, including:

- Launch of a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)
- Expansion of systems change and policy advocacy work to benefit South LA
- Work with SLAAI and the Funders' Collaborative to address the resource desert in South Los Angeles
- Partner with and provide capacity building to other nonprofits in the community including through the Infrastructure Coalition
- Housing development through an ambitious real estate pipeline
- Significant new contracts for Enterprises enhancing training

Success in our current and new programs requires ongoing investment in administrative capacity, with an emphasis on efficient, timely systems for gathering and reporting data across the ecosystem. Programmatically, our target population remains focused on youth ages 18 – 24.

As additional opportunities arise in Los Angeles, including those related to the upcoming FIFA World Cup and the Olympics, we will stay resolutely FOCUSED on advancing our Mission through our unique ecosystem and culture, always ensuring that any expansion fits within our mix of expertise, and makes a long-term contribution to the community.

Going forward, we will foster trust by staying transparent regarding our roles and activities, as we face scrutiny and increased feelings of competition that can come with continued growth.

Strategic Framework

Adopting and monitoring a strategic plan is one of the most important governance responsibilities of a nonprofit board. This strategic plan establishes Priorities and Goals to guide decisions and direction for the next five years, along with an ongoing process to monitor and report our progress. CRCD’s 2025 - 2029 strategic direction is grounded in our history, strengths, and commitments, informed by the current and anticipated environment. Over the previous five years we significantly improved our programs, contracts, and financial position; expanded our executive team and expertise; and launched the CRCD Partners entity for housing development. In the coming years, we will focus on our North Star of delivering IMPACT for South LA using our ecosystem model, upholding our CRCD culture, and sustaining the four interconnected priorities of our 2020 strategic plan.

The **Priorities** are the four highest-level strategic areas for attention in the next five years.

Established in our 2020 strategic plan, these pillars continue to hold up our work to change lives and build neighborhoods responsibly. The three priorities of Strong Leadership, Organization, and Financials work together to provide the structure, systems, and resources necessary to deliver Economic Vitality. As a result, CRCD adds value and creates lasting IMPACT across the community.



For each priority, the 2025 – 2029 strategic framework includes:

IMPACT Measures: a small number of overarching quantitative measures to demonstrate progress in each priority

Goals: for each priority, specific and, where possible, measurable actions through which we will achieve each priority; CRCD programs, departments, and entities all contribute to goals across the four priorities

Objectives: specific actions identified by staff in coordinated and approved annual entity workplans that are supported by department and individual workplans

The Priorities and Goals intentionally cut across the CRCD ecosystem, so we can draw on our expertise and encourage increased collaboration across departments, reinforcing that everyone has a role in community economic development and organization health.

Strategic Priorities and Goals

Priority 1: Economic vitality of individuals, families, businesses, neighborhoods

CRCD's central philosophy and ecosystem structure are uniquely designed to provide education, training, housing, and support to residents so they can obtain and retain jobs with family-sustaining wages, which in turn can provide options for home ownership, small business ownership, and other personal financial goals.

In addition to recent investments through the SoFi stadium and Crenshaw Metro line, South Los Angeles will experience billions of dollars of investment in the next five years for the 2026 World Cup, 2028 Olympics, and Lucas Museum. In the face of associated gentrification, the promised commitment to mixed income development may dissipate, with market rate housing displacing current residents. CRCD will ensure that there is a public, political, and moral commitment that new development will benefit the current residents of South Los Angeles, with jobs at family-sustaining wages, affordable housing, support for legacy businesses, and new economic development.

With new development comes a variety of job opportunities. CRCD is dedicated to using data, including community input, to anticipate those jobs, create training and apprenticeship pathways, build the pipeline of qualified workers, and retain participants in employment. Through CRCD Enterprises' expertise as general contractors, we connect South LA YouthBuild, VCN YouthSource Center, and Vernon-Central/LATTC WorkSource Center graduates to fulfill local hiring requirements, resulting in well-paid jobs.

These major economic investments have also heightened the existing affordable housing crisis in the area. CRCD Partners has grown in experience and capacity, serving as lead developer in projects across South Los Angeles and beyond to expand and protect housing that is affordable to community members with low and moderate incomes.

The economic vitality of individuals, families, businesses, and neighborhoods of South Los Angeles must be grounded in financial literacy and access to capital. CRCD is uniquely positioned with trusting relationships to provide education for young people to build their understanding of financial health, and the associated options and cost considerations. CRCD will meet the need for local access to capital, including small loans that support entrepreneurial ventures, through our Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) in alignment with our Financial Opportunity Center.

Many organizations and communities seek to replicate CRCD's models and IMPACT. Through this plan period we codify and monetize our tested methods for sharing expertise with emerging community benefit organizations in South LA as a capacity-building partner and financial intermediary. We share best practices and provide technical assistance with organizations nationally, without establishing direct services beyond our targeted Los Angeles communities.

Economic Vitality IMPACT MEASURE: value contributed to the community

to be developed during the plan period

Programmatic outputs that lead to value contributed to the community:

- Stable and affordable homes
- Jobs with family-sustaining wages
- Education
- Access to capital

Economic Vitality GOALS:

- 1.1. Engage CRCD strengths on behalf of the community through engagement and placement across the ecosystem with CRCD services, Enterprises jobs, and Partners homes
- 1.2. Expand and protect the supply of quality housing in South Los Angeles and beyond that is affordable for people with low and moderate incomes with a diversified Partners portfolio
- 1.3. Expand Enterprises' flexible, targeted training programs, contracts, and capacity to deliver pathways to family-sustaining wages, benefits, and ladders for advancement opportunities
- 1.4. Expand local small business access to capital through a Community Development Financial Institution
- 1.5. Ensure that the community reaps lasting benefits from the Olympics and World Cup through local investment in infrastructure, small business contracts, and jobs with family-sustaining wages
- 1.6. Use CRCD credibility and build a policy department to advocate for policy change and funding that invest in creating jobs
- 1.7. Share CRCD expertise with small local community-based organizations in and around South LA and other organizations nationally as a collaborator, trainer, and intermediary

Priority 2: Strong Leadership

CRCD has a long legacy of strong volunteer and staff leadership that is recognized and respected across the community. Over the past five years, staff leadership has expanded to a talented and comprehensive executive team, and long-time board members have been joined by newer and equally committed members. In the next five years we will sustain a collaborative leadership culture that is forward-looking, forthright in its honesty, welcomes challenges, engages different workstyles and perspectives, and is grounded in accountability and continuous learning. The executive team models this culture as an inspiration for the organization and model for the community.

CRCD will establish a Leadership Academy that will provide staff training across CRCD's ecosystem. The leadership academy will serve as a key element of the organization's intentional contingency planning. Our contingency planning, structures, and policies will include professional development so staff can step into new roles in emergency situations, and grow into new positions over time.

Our leadership approach, consistent with our mission, remains grounded in the community with new structures that formally engage stakeholder input and build local leadership.

Strong Leadership IMPACT MEASURES:

- Board and staff members are actively engaged in advancing the CRCD mission
- Board and staff members agree that they IMPACT the advancement of the CRCD mission

Strong Leadership GOALS:

- 2.1. Sustain a governance structure that supports effective integration, monitoring, and accountability across the ecosystem
- 2.2. Establish CEO and leadership contingency plans for key positions across the entities
- 2.3. Cultivate and support our engaged, diverse Board leadership required to advance the mission
- 2.4. Develop staff leadership as internally and externally recognized strategic thinkers
- 2.5. Incorporate community voice and input in program development and assessment

Priority 3: Strong Organization

Since 2020, the CRCD ecosystem has expanded to include the CRCD Partners housing development entity, with CRCD Enterprises flourishing as a general contractor. With ~ 250 staff across three entities, the CRCD ecosystem is dynamic and increasingly complex. The demands of the organization's current scope along with commitments for continued growth require investment in administrative systems and capacity.

While we sustain the mission and values that have guided CRCD since our founding, we must continue to learn and change to meet current community needs and to attract and retain a skilled, dedicated workforce. We focus on our staff without whom we have nothing. Our reputation as an employer is essential to our ongoing success. This type of culture change can take time, and requires commitment and intention while facing challenging periods that lead to lasting improvements.

Externally, CRCD continues to lead from the front, building on our long-developed strengths to deepen the field of nonprofit community development organizations.

Strong Organization IMPACT MEASURES:

- Staff retention rates by department and position
- Measure(s) from staff engagement survey
- % of programs tracking and reporting data

Strong Organization GOALS:

- 3.1. Consistently invest in administrative systems and capacity (operations, finance, human resources, technology, data-driven decision making) to meet the demands of our current and future growth
- 3.2. Build an intentional, integrated culture, decision making, and practices across the CRCD entities
- 3.3. Become an employer of choice by providing our strong staff with family-sustaining wages and benefits, effective hiring, onboarding, training, development, and support to build necessary skills to succeed in their roles
- 3.4. Establish a replicable ecosystem model with clear accountability toward strategic goals
- 3.5. Expand alignment, communications, and collaboration across the CRCD ecosystem
- 3.6. Grow community-wide understanding of the CRCD ecosystem, work, and IMPACT through marketing, public relations, and communications systems
- 3.7. Explore possible merger or acquisition of other nonprofit organization(s) to develop the skills and resources needed to advance our mission

Priority 4: Strong Financials

As a \$60 million organization (2024 budget), CRCDC is committed to prudent financial management with a long-term view of sustaining our mission. Strong financial assets balance our liabilities and demonstrate to funders and financial partners that we can sustain our programs.

As CRCDC builds our reserves, we reduce expenses related to covering cash needs and increase our flexibility to respond to new strategic opportunities. Working together with funding partners and leveraging unrestricted earned income and philanthropic giving, we aim to cover the full costs of delivering high quality programs that meet community needs.

Strong Financials IMPACT MEASURE:

- Grow and prudently manage three months' operating reserve

Strong Financials GOALS:

- 4.1. Secure program funding that covers full costs with reasonable payment timing
- 4.2. Generate \$1 million dollars of unrestricted funds annually through CRCDC Enterprises, CRCDC Partners, CDFI, and new approaches
- 4.3. Intentionally dedicate unrestricted funds to strategic priorities through annual budgeting
- 4.4. Capitalize a \$13 million CRCDC Housing Fund for operations, pre-development, and construction
- 4.5. Explore the opportunities of a board-designated quasi-endowment

Applying the Strategy

Criteria for Assessing Possible Projects

We are very aware of the financial, human resource, as well as intangible impacts of growth through new or expanded programming. CRCD leadership intentionally consider the following criteria when assessing possible projects or expansion:

- Mission alignment – a required first filter that ALL possible projects must meet
- Serves our target population, 18 – 24 years old
- In our target geography, rooted in Vernon Central, expanding in South LA
- Draws from strengths, expertise, and existing capacity across the ecosystem
- Delivers long term IMPACT consistent with our strategic priorities and goals
- Contributes to CRCD's financial sustainability
- Opens possibilities for long term benefits, partnerships, and opportunities

The review will determine if new funds are available to cover the full costs including the administrative impact OR if there is willingness to dedicate unrestricted funds to make it happen. Based on the full assessment, we may determine that a project is a good fit for CRCD, or we may determine it is better suited for a partner from our coalition.

Prioritizing Strategic Investments

While many of the goals in this plan can be successfully implemented at low or no cost, several areas require additional funding, including:

- Cover unallowed indirect costs
- Retain current staff: cost of living increases, benefits package, onboarding, professional development
- Strengthen infrastructure – data, systems, facilities, marketing and communications
- Expand staff capacity for administrative support: HR, Finance, IT; fund development
- Invest in programs and policy advocacy
- Build cash available for daily operations
- Secure reserves for unexpected events that negatively impact the organization's business and financial functions, e.g. natural disaster, sudden loss of a major funding source
- Strengthen balance sheet for predevelopment funds

When prioritizing possible uses of funds, first we must prioritize CRCD's financial sustainability. We must build our reserves to support cash flow in the immediate term. Therefore, we prioritize projects and investments that will generate unrestricted income, including real estate development, contracts such as Intensive Case Management Services (in our buildings and others'), and fund development.

We recognize that by investing in our staff and promoting from within, we benefit from increased productivity and loyalty, while knowing some will move on to other positions. This investment is part of our culture and reflects our dedication to staff.

Implementation and Monitoring

The CRCD board adopts this Strategic Plan to establish our direction through 2029 and to guide decision making across the CRCD ecosystem during the plan period. Though the plan begins in 2025, we have already incorporated the underlying strategic thinking into our ongoing work.

Building on lessons from the previous plan period, the executive team worked closely with the Learning & Evaluation department to define the goals, intended results, and measures for each priority that will ensure clarity and accountability. Annual work plans for each entity and department articulate specific and measurable paths to advance the overall strategy.

CRCD established a new role of Interagency Project Liaison to, in part, guide the implementation, monitoring, and adjustment of this plan over time, ensuring close collaboration across all CRCD entities. The Interagency Project Liaison facilitates a Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, made up of staff from across the organization plus board members. The committee supports the creation of annual work plans, and meets quarterly to review quantitative and qualitative data demonstrating progress toward the plan and documenting trends compared to historic results.

Twice each year the committee provides a clear, concise, high-level report to apprise the board of progress toward the plan. For the mid-year review, the board focuses on areas that are off track. Near year-end, a deep dive into progress and what's next informs the budgeting process. Based on the reports, the board explores:

- Where have we made the greatest progress in advancing our mission?
- What changes in conditions, assumptions, and/or opportunities impact our strategy?
- What barriers, challenges, or shifts in priority require our attention?
- What changes will we make to best advance our mission?

Each year the CEO, with support from the executive team, will identify a small number (~three) of strategic priorities for board attention and support.

CRCD Leadership

Board of Directors



Antonio Manning, Chair
President and CEO,
Affordable Living for the Aging



Linwood "Lenny" McNeill
National Head of Inclusive Growth
US Bank



Bryan Wilson
Treasurer & Interim Secretary,
Senior Sales Executive, Reyes
Coca-Cola Bottling Company



Marcia Wilson, Ph.D.
Dean, Pathway Innovation and
Institutional Effectiveness
LA Trade-Tech



Beatriz P. Flores, Esq
Law Office of Beatriz Pimentel
Flores



Ronald Mitnick
Director Construction Management
Citi Community Capital



**The Honorable David
Herriford**
Judge of the Los Angeles
County Superior Court



Bruce Saito
Environmental and youth development
programs professional (Retired)

Executive Team



Mark Wilson
President & CEO



Alejandro Martinez
President
CRCD Partners



Aissa Cerda
Chief Programs Officer



Ricardo Mendoza
Chief Business Development Officer



Joe Gamez
Vice President
CRCD Enterprises



Selerin Ntahitagabira
Chief Financial Officer



Veronica Garcia
Chief Human Resources
Officer



Jahrell Thomas
Chief Operations Officer

Strategic Planning Process

CRCD's 2020 – 2024 strategic plan built on a long history of organizational plans grounded in the founding mission and commitment to the South Los Angeles community. In 2020, CRCD established the four strategic priorities that continue in this plan: Economic Vitality, Strong Leadership, Strong Organization, and Strong Financials. The alignment and strategic direction served CRCD well as we navigated through the dramatic changes, growth, challenges, and demands of the Covid pandemic.

In the fall of 2022, executive leadership launched a year-long process to review progress toward the 2020 plan, refresh goals and objectives, and build measurement and reporting systems, supported by ImpactHaus Consulting. The analysis found that, in addition to making meaningful progress in all priority areas, CRCD had responded to community needs and opportunities with many additional, unanticipated programs and services, all aligned with our mission. The staff and consulting team also identified the need to build a system for consistent, comprehensive, and coordinated work planning, data collection, and reporting. Staff across the organization began piloting a new work plan system in mid-2024 to track progress in the last year of the current plan and build knowledge and experience before launching this 2025 – 2029 plan.

Parallel with the measurement work, in April 2024 CRCD formed a strategic planning committee of board and staff from all three entities to refresh the plan for the next five years, supported by consultants from Sadlon & Associates. To inform the planning process, the executive team and planning consultants conducted 26 stakeholder interviews. All staff had opportunities to learn about and contribute to the process through questions in the annual staff engagement survey and regular segments in all staff meetings. The team drew on participant and community survey reports to understand the needs and strengths of program participants and the broader community.

The executive team regularly addressed strategic questions in their standing meetings. The broader leadership team participated in a full day strategy retreat. The planning consultant worked closely with leadership, staff, and board of CRCD Enterprises to align with their business planning process, and led a parallel and connected housing strategy planning process with CRCD Partners. These efforts led to the articulation of the ecosystem model that serves as the North Star of this plan.

CRCD's Board of Directors participated in 1:1 conversations with the planning consultant, engaged in strategic discussions at each of their regular board meetings during the planning period, and participated in a full day retreat with the executive team to integrate the input and build the strategy of this plan.

Through an engaged process that aligned closely with ongoing measurement capacity building and connecting across all CRCD entities, we have strengthened our strategic leadership for the future.