



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROCESS

Community Impact Approach

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Community Investment Approach

The United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois will make positive, effective impact in our community through the following Vision and Mission statements:

Vision: United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois envisions a community in which everyone has the opportunity to be self-sufficient.

Mission: United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois leads community transformation efforts that empower everyone to be/become self-sufficient.

1. We will accomplish our vision and mission through implementation of the **Common Community Approach** (refer to visual representation on pages 3-10; for an online version of the **Common Community Approach** please visit <https://uwdecatur.org/Common-Community-Approach>).

The **Common Community Approach** is: a systematic approach to move members of our community who live in crisis on a path towards self-sufficiency. We remove barriers so that these individuals can move out of crisis into stability, from stable to thriving, from thriving to self-sufficient and finally, to prevent them from moving from self-sufficiency back into crisis (Self-Sufficiency Continuum). We want to increase the capacity of individuals in our community so that they are capable of effectively responding to short-term shocks and long-term stressors. This not only strengthens individuals, but also our community. The approach identifies struggles (Current Environment) in our community that inhibit movement along this path. It also identifies where we want to be as a community (Desired End State) where all residents have the ability and opportunity to provide for themselves and their families without subsidization (To Become Self-Sufficient) or have the opportunity to live independently with dignity (Individuals who are not able to achieve self-sufficiency due to disability or age have the opportunity to control where they live and have the same range of choices and level of respect as non-disabled, non-senior persons). What prevents our community from moving from where we are (Current Environment) to where we want to be (Desired End State) is the problem we must solve.

The problems our community suffers from are poor graduation rates and college/job readiness; significant health issues (access to healthcare, unhealthy behaviors, poor nutrition, inactivity); and safety issues/challenges (child abuse, domestic abuse, sexual assault, drugs, violent crime) that create the conditions for life crisis and the need for essential services (food, clothing, shelter, furniture). The result is that a significant percentage of our population is not self-sufficient which affects their current and future well-being and that of our community. We will address these problems by focusing our efforts and resources in four areas. First, we will continue to ensure essential services are provided in our community (Impact Area #4 – Community Resiliency). However, it is imperative that programs providing these services link clients to programs that move them out of living a status quo existence. Next, we will provide resources to programs along three additional Impact Areas (Impact Area #1 – Youth Opportunity; Impact Area #2 – Financial Security; Impact Area #3 – Healthy Community).

Community Investment Approach

United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois' Impact Areas are:

1. Youth Opportunity (Young people realize their full potential)
2. Financial Security (Every generation has a stronger financial future)
3. Healthy Community (Wellness-focused community with healthcare access for all)
4. Community Resiliency (Urgent needs addressed today for a better tomorrow)

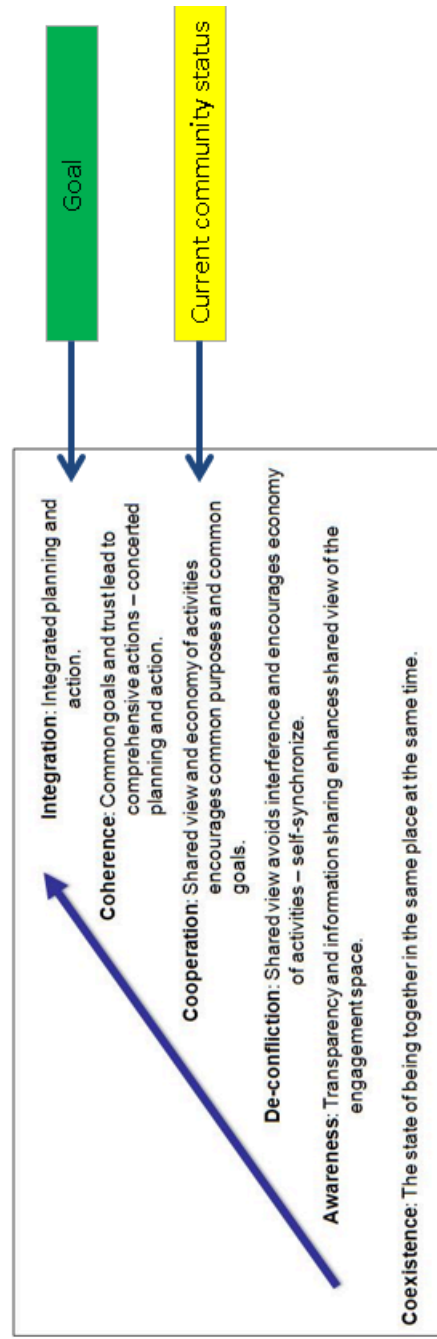
Each of these Impact Areas utilize outcome-based thinking and have measurable outcomes, objectives, and goals that we will use to monitor whether our efforts are truly impacting our community (Center of Gravity) and moving us to a greater level of self-sufficiency (Desired End State).

Additionally, the **Common Community Approach**:

- Promotes positive, transformative community change - causing a marked change that makes our community better
- Focuses on:
 - Raised awareness – by identifying and defining potential community challenges
 - Shared Understanding – ensuring the community has a common comprehension of community challenges and solutions
 - Integration – promoting unified community planning and action
 - Respect – by valuing differing attitudes and opinions
 - Unity of Aim - focusing community resources on a common objective
 - Proactive Community Engagement - eliminating challenges before they have a chance to negatively affect our community
 - Shared Responsibility - our community accepts responsibility for all successes and failures

Specifically, the United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois will:

- Facilitate sustainable community solutions
- Synchronize and coordinate effective community action in partnership with private and public organizations, including local, state, and federal agencies
- Develop community resources
- Promote disaster and emergency preparedness and prevention
- Coordinate and implement effective and principled community action in response to disasters and emergencies



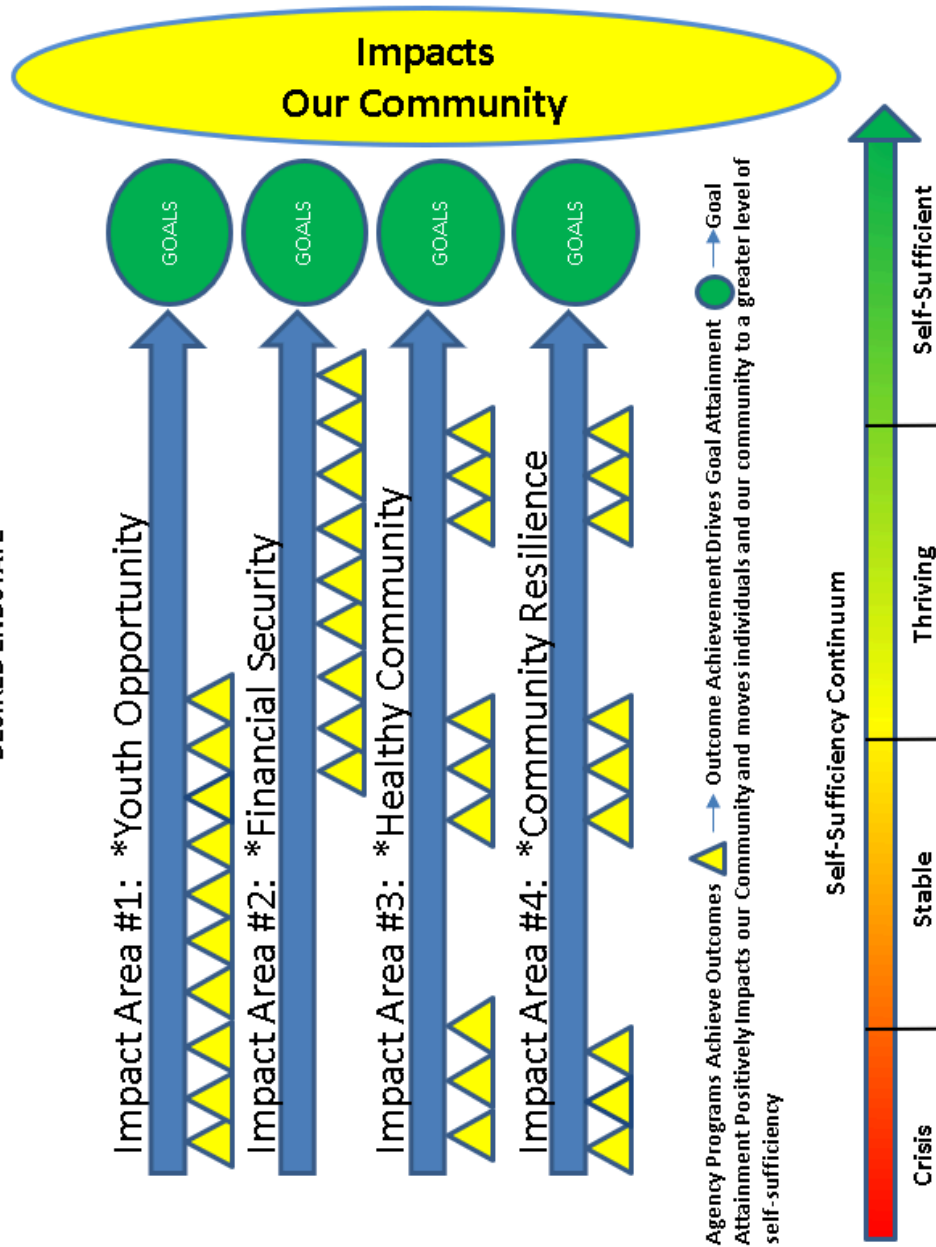
What is a Common Community Approach?

- Requires a raised awareness throughout the community
- Based on mutual trust and a willingness to **integrate**
- Proactive not reactive
- **Outcome focused**
- Shared understanding, **commonly agreed end-state**, common language, **shared approach**, and **shared responsibility**

PROBLEM: The problems our community suffers from are poor graduation rates and college/job readiness; significant health issues; and safety issues/challenges that create the conditions for life crisis and the need for essential services (food, clothing, shelter, furniture).

- DESIRED ENDSTATE:** All residents have -
1. The ability and opportunity to provide for themselves and their families without subsidized assistance.
 2. The opportunity to live independently with dignity

The **PROBLEM** is what prevents our community from moving from the **CURRENT ENVIRONMENT** to the **DESIRED ENDSTATE**



CURRENT ENVIRONMENT: A significant percentage of our population is not self-sufficient (Poverty and ALICE) which affects their current and future well-being and that of our community.

Impact Area #1: Youth Opportunity (Helping Young People Realize Their Full Potential)



Outcomes

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Y1.1. Infant/child physical, cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional development achieved as assessed using a reliable/valid screening tool</p> <p>Y1.2. Infant/child Early Childhood Education (ECE) matriculation/medical referral decisions made by parents using assessment</p> <p>Y1.3. Child IEPs developed for identified children</p> <p>Y1.4. ECE scholarships available/utilized</p> <p>Y1.5. ECE sliding financial scale available/utilized</p> <p>Y1.6. ECE Bussing or other transportation available/utilized (tokens, vouchers, direct assistance)</p> <p>Y1.7. Kindergarten readiness achieved as assessed using a reliable and valid screening tool</p> <p>Y1.8. Matriculation decision made by parents using assessment</p> <p>Y1.9. Kindergarten readiness validated by kindergarten teacher at kindergarten conclusion</p> <p>Y1.10. IEPs developed for identified students</p> | <p>Y3.1. STEM and technology (e.g., coding, robotics, AI learning)</p> <p>Y3.2. Creative Arts and expression (e.g., photography, music, theater, dance, creative writing)</p> <p>Y3.3. Physical and wellness activities (e.g., individual and team sports, outdoor and nature activities, play-based activities, mind-body activities)</p> <p>Y3.4. Community and leadership (e.g., community service, club-based activities)</p> | <p>Y4.1. Increased graduation rates</p> <p>Y4.2. Increased college readiness scores</p> <p>Y4.3. Decreased rate of required remedial classes</p> |
| <p>Y2.1. At grade level learning achieved as assessed using a reliable and valid screening tool, or state directed standardized test tool</p> <p>Y2.2. Matriculation decision made by parents/teachers/administration using assessment</p> <p>Y2.3. IEPs developed for identified students</p> <p>Y2.4. Increased English proficiency through English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction</p> <p>Y2.5. Increased graduation rates</p> <p>Y2.6. Increased college readiness scores</p> | | |

Impact Area #2: Financial Security (Creating a Stronger Financial Future For Every Generation)



Outcomes

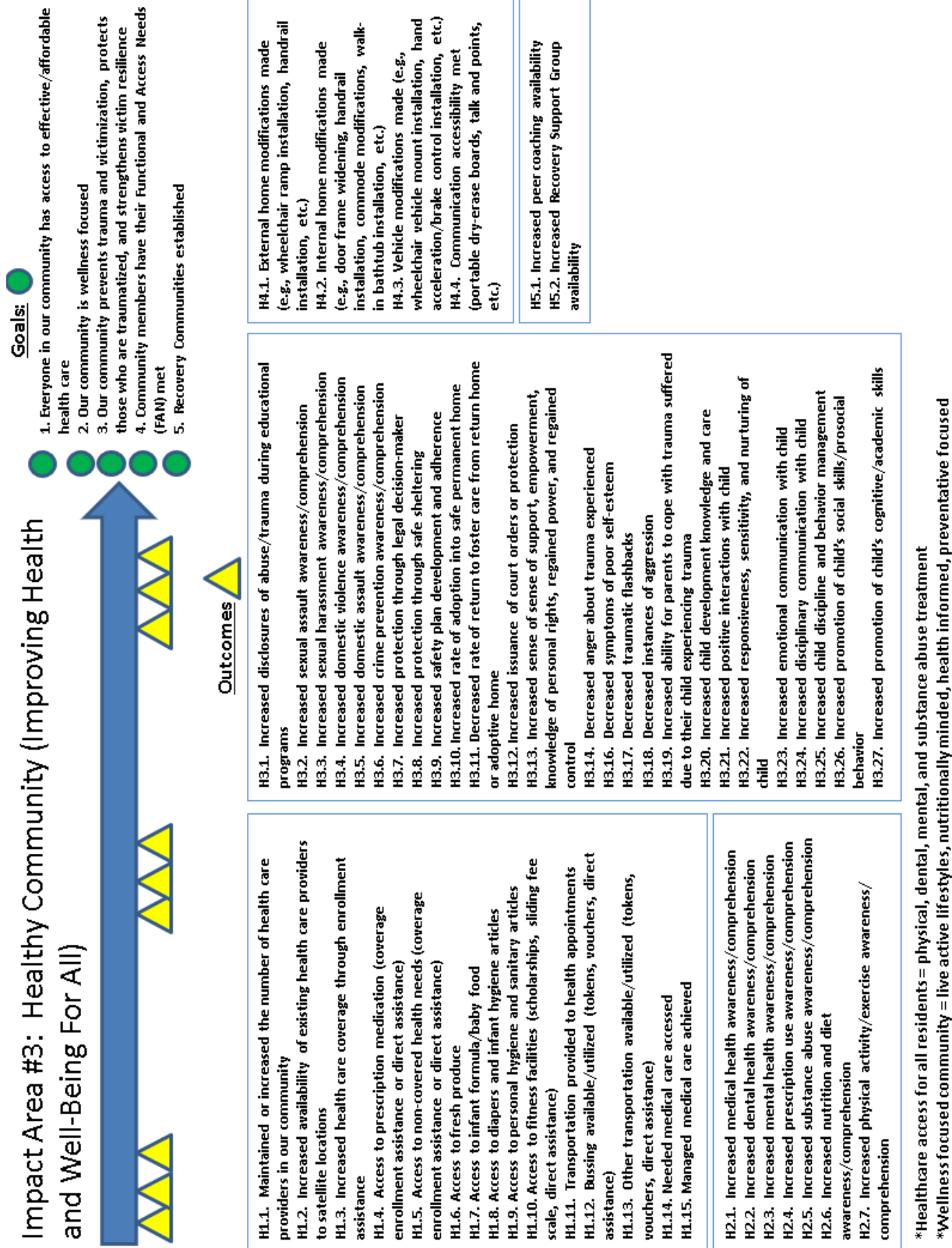
F1.1. Adult basic education improvement achieved as assessed using a nationally recognized screening tool
 F1.2. Increased English proficiency through English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction
 F1.3. Progress toward High School Equivalency completion measured and assessed using a nationally recognized screening tool
 F1.4. Increased persistence rate for second semester college attendance
 F1.5. Increased persistence rate entering sophomore year of college
 F1.6. Vocational/technical readiness achieved as assessed by respective industry standards and readiness validated through recognized certifications/licenses
 F1.7. Vocational program provides meaningful, subsidized/unsubsidized employment that can be used effectively on a resume

F3.1. Housing or access to housing provided
 F3.2. Childcare or access to childcare provided
 F3.3. Transportation or access to transportation provided
 F3.4. Stipend provided
 F3.5. Wrap around support provided to scaffold individuals experiencing benefits cliff effects
 F3.6.. Advocacy provided for high unemployment demographics (e.g., race, gender, convictions, reintegration from DOC, etc.)

F4.1. Increased banking comprehension
 F4.2. Increased bank usage
 F4.3. Increased credit score comprehension
 F4.4. Increased budgeting comprehension
 F4.5. Increased ability to obtain loan from non-predatory lender
 F4.6. Tax returns increased
 F4.7. Increased Earned Income Tax Credits obtained
 F4.8. Decreased reliance on paid tax preparation

F2.1. Increased "Dress For Success" comprehension
 F2.2. Increased interview skills
 F2.3. Increased time management skills comprehension
 F2.4. Increased workplace appropriate conversational skills
 F2.5. Effective Resume developed
 F2.6. Increased job application completion skills

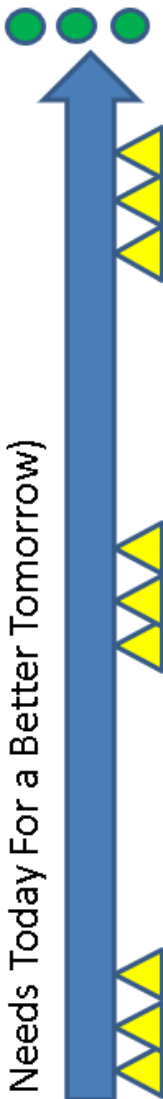
Impact Area #3: Healthy Community (Improving Health and Well-Being For All)



Impact Area #4: Community Resiliency (Addressing Urgent Needs Today For a Better Tomorrow)

Goals:

1. Everyone in our community has their essential needs met (food, shelter, clothing, utilities, furnishings)
2. Those in need of essential services in our community are linked to programs that move them toward self-sufficiency
3. Our community is disaster response/recovery ready



Outcomes

R1.1 Program provides resources to address critical shortages for those in need (food, shelter, clothing, utility assistance, furnishings)

R2.1. Program verifies number of client linkages made between Community Resiliency programs to programs in Impact Areas #1, #2, and #3

R3.1. Increased disaster awareness/comprehension
R3.2. Disaster planning/preparation

Community Investment Approach

Community Investment: United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois invests into our community in two ways:

1. Internal programming: programs developed within United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois to address resource gaps in our community not addressed by other agencies or resources gaps expanded in partnership with community partners. These programs include:
 - a. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois / Dolly Parton Imagination Library: The Dolly Parton Imagination Library mails a high-quality, age-appropriate book to registered children from birth until their 5th birthday. A book is delivered - addressed to the child - directly to the family's door once per month, at no cost to the child's family. The program encourages youth literacy from birth.
 - b. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois / ALICE Program: ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed and applies to individuals and families who are working one or more jobs but earning just at, or below a living wage. They are one crisis away from being in permanent crisis. ALICE Financial Assistance provides the money needed to stave off that one crisis (whether it's rent, mortgage, property taxes, food assistance, car, or home repairs) to keep these community members on their feet and away from living in permanent poverty.
 - c. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois / 211: 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember, non-emergency telephone number that connects people with essential community information and services. 2-1-1 saves time and frustration through specialists who match callers to the right agency based on each caller's need. The 24-hour line makes it easy for the public to navigate the maze of human service providers and help lines. All calls are free, anonymous and confidential. Crisis, information, and referral workers can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year by dialing 2-1-1 on your phone. If you are unable to access 2-1-1 through your phone, or if you have to dial an outside line access number, then you can reach 2-1-1 services by dialing 1-888-865-9903. Residents of DeWitt, Macon, Moultrie, Piatt, and Shelby Counties are able to receive information about their respective county's services.
 - d. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois / First Responder Clinical Therapist: Our Licensed Clinical Therapist provides counseling and trauma therapy to our First Responders and their family members and veterans who are or have been exposed to psychological stressors (multiple casualties, child/infant involvement, etc.) inherent to their job. Reduces job burn-out and turn-over.
 - e. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois / Hispanic Community Liaison: Our Hispanic Community Liaison assists community members with low/no English ability with translation services for medical appointments, job applications, and access needed resources.
 - f. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois / Wheelchair Ramp Program: Provides resources needed by individuals who have Functional Access Needs (FAN) challenges (e.g., ramps into home entrances; stair railings; safety rails in bathrooms, etc.).
2. External programming: investment into the most effective, efficient, and integrated programs run by agencies in our community that align with our Impact Areas. This investment is done through the Community Investment Process.

Community Investment Process: Agencies are invited to apply for United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois Community Investment for specific program funding. We don't invest in agencies but rather, the programs these agencies provide to our community. Programs are assessed based on their effectiveness and efficiency in accomplishing outcomes listed in each Impact Area in the Common Community Approach; the more effective and efficient the program, the greater the possibility of community investment. The Common Community Approach establishes the outcomes agency programs must achieve in each Impact Area. How programs achieve the outcomes and how agencies measure outcome achievement are the responsibility of each agency.

Community Investment Volunteer Panels: The United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois relies on community volunteers to determine which programs receive community investment and community investment amounts. Volunteers must reside in the county in which investment decisions are being made and should be United Way financial investors. Volunteers will receive an orientation introducing them to the online application process, the Common Community Approach, the Investment process agenda for their assigned Impact Area, and the measurements used for assessing program investment. Volunteers will assess program effectiveness, efficiency, and community integration based upon information provided by agencies applying for program funding and decide which programs will receive investment and investment amounts.

Community Investment (application and investment process):

- Macon County:
 - The Community Investment Process occurs annually. Youth Opportunity and Financial Security Impact Areas will be considered for investment in even numbered years (e.g., 2026, 2028, 2030). Healthy Community and Community Resiliency Impact Areas will be considered for investment in odd numbered years (e.g., 2027, 2029, 2031)
 - United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois will publish the program application timeline by December 31st of each year (see Page 17 for a generic timeline).
 - Agencies will submit program applications online at uwdecatur.org/Apply-for-Investment.
 - Agencies must submit a program in one Impact Area (can't submit the same program in multiple Impact Areas).
 - Agencies may submit multiple programs for investment consideration in one or multiple Impact Areas.
 - Agencies will apply for program investment no later than the application due date as published in the timeline. Incomplete and/or late applications will not be accepted.
 - Community Investment Volunteer Panels will decide which programs will receive investment and investment amounts utilizing this Community Investment Approach.
 - Programs selected to receive investment will receive the same percentage of investment the next year. This does not necessarily mean the same amount as received the first year. Community investment amount will determine investment total.
 - The Community Investment Process will consist of program application and program presentations. Program Presentations provide each agency the opportunity to present program effectiveness and efficiency. Agencies provide more detailed program information to include budget discussions. Program Presentations also provide Community Investment Volunteers the opportunity to ask detailed questions to better assess program effectiveness and efficiency.

- Agencies will have the opportunity to conduct “Mock Presentations” and test United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois provided automation (e.g., laptop, projector, etc.) prior to the actual Community Investment Volunteer Panel presentations. United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois Staff will observe the mock presentations and provide feedback to Agency presenters. Mock Presentations are strictly voluntary and provide Agency presenters the opportunity to rehearse their presentations in front of an objective, experienced panel. Agencies will not be penalized for opting out of Mock Presentations.
- Agencies can conduct Program Presentations using United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois automation (laptop/projector) or bring their own to use.
- Agencies are required to participate in an annual program review process. This process will provide the community with a return on investment report detailing program outcome achievement and community impact (see Page 20 for the Annual Program Review process).

● DeWitt/Piatt/Moultrie/Shelby Counties: United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois supports internal programs to include the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, 211, and ALICE Programs to these counties. Community Investment Approach

2. **Disaster Assistance Management:** The United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois impacts the community through Disaster Planning and Disaster Recovery efforts. We are members of the Macon County Local Emergency Planning Committee and manage both spontaneous and agency affiliated volunteers in the event of a disaster. UWDMI occupies a position in the Macon County Emergency Management Agency Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during ongoing disaster operations. We also manage 2-1-1 as a social service information network during disasters.

Community Investment Process

Generic Timeline

| MACON COUNTY (Youth Opportunity and Financial Security - EVEN YEARS ONLY; Healthy Community and Community Resiliency – ODD YEARS ONLY) | |
|---|---|
| MONTH | EVENT |
| January | - Program Application Period Opens |
| February | - Program Application Period Closes; UWDMI Application Review |
| March | - Community Investment Volunteer Panel Orientation; Agency Mock Presentations; Community Investment Process Begins |
| April | - Community Investment Volunteer Panel Orientation; Agency Mock Presentations; Community Investment Process Continues |
| May | - UWDMI Board of Directors approves Community Investment Process Volunteer Panel Investment Decisions |
| | - Agencies Notified of Investment Amounts |
| June - November | - Agency Program Review |
| December | - Detailed Community Investment Process Schedule Distributed to Agencies for upcoming Community Investment Process |

Community Investment Process
Volunteer Panel Program Assessment Rubric

Reviewer Name: _____ Date: _____ Line of Effort: _____

Agency Name: _____ Program: _____

PLEASE ASSIGN A NUMBER RATING TO EACH ITEM
5 - Extraordinary; 4 - Very Good; 3 - Good; 2 - Needs Improvement; 1 - Unsatisfactory

| Question | Score | Comments |
|---|-------|----------|
| PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS | | |
| The program achieved stated outcomes (if the program was operated in previous years) or has clearly stated outcomes: | | |
| The agency clearly articulates their plan on how they achieved/will achieve their stated outcomes: | | |
| The agency has an assessment process in place to measure outcome achievement and the progress and success of the program/project: | | |
| The program clearly defines what services are offered, how they are offered and to whom they are offered: | | |
| The agency has adequate outreach to diverse populations/low-income families: | | |
| PROGRAM EFFICIENCY (BUDGET EVALUATION): Select either one but not both | | |
| The budget is detailed and balanced: | | |
| If the budget is not balanced and the program is operating at a surplus/deficit the agency clearly explains why: | | |

Community Investment Process
Volunteer Panel Program Assessment Rubric

| Question | Score | Comments |
|---|-------|----------|
| PROGRAM INTEGRATION | | |
| The Agency is integrated into an automated data-sharing network with other community agencies (e.g., IRIS; OASIS): | | |
| The Agency collaborates with other community agencies (e.g., partners with other agencies to accomplish mission/goals): | | |
| TOTAL SCORE | | |
| | | |
| RECOMMENDED DOLLAR AMOUNT FOR PROGRAM | | |
| Program strengths: | | |
| | | |
| Program weaknesses: | | |
| | | |
| Notes / Overall Comments: | | |
| | | |

Community Investment Process
Agency Program Review

Purpose: This process will provide the community with a return on investment report detailing program outcome achievement and community impact.

Execution: The Agency Program Review will take place at the agency receiving program investment, including observing the program, if allowable/possible.

| Checklist: | Yes/No | Comments |
|--|--------|----------|
| Is program being conducted or have an implementation plan? | | |
| Is program achieving stated outcomes? | | |
| Is program following stated outcome measurements? | | |
| If stated outcomes not being achieved/ measurements not being followed is agency assessing and adjusting outcomes and/or measurements? | | |
| Is program serving the projected demographics? | | |
| Is program serving the projected number of clients? | | |
| Is program serving the projected cities/towns? | | |
| Is program on budget? | | |
| If program is under/over budget then why? | | |

The good in this world exists.

In every kind act. Every helping hand. Every moment of care.

It's more than just you. It's us.

United is the Way

