

# LEADING WITH IMPACT

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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF  
THE ST. LOUIS REGION



*Updated June, 2020*

## OUR VISION

### A STRONG START

When United Way of Greater St. Louis started nearly 100 years ago, the world was a very different place. Penicillin hadn't been discovered yet. Movies with sound were hitting the market. And women had just secured the right to vote.

The people who started United Way had a vision. A vision to help the poor, to care for the sick, and to make their community better. They worked diligently to make this happen — even through trying times, they kept their focus on helping people in our region.

As we head into a new century of helping, the vision isn't much different. We continue to envision a region where people have access to the resources, tools, and services they need to thrive.

Today, however, we have the benefit of sophisticated measurements, historical knowledge, and advancing technology. We have the benefit of a strong board, a strong voice, and a strong story. And, we have the benefit of each other — a community ready to be its best.

Helping people has officially moved into the 21st century.

### A SAFETY NET FOR THE REGION

The needs of our region are as varied as the people themselves. There is no one-size-fits-all path to a healthy, thriving life. And, there is no one-size-fits-all path to helping people. That's why United Way believes in a safety net approach to supporting the community.

The safety net approach understands that needs are connected. It demands that we don't just recognize varied needs, but embrace them. If you don't have access to transportation, keeping a job will be tough. If children don't have permanent housing, they find it challenging to thrive in school. By taking a holistic, interconnected approach to investments, supporting a safety net is supporting an entire community.

### AN ALIGNED FUTURE

United Way envisions a path of aligning needs with funding and funding with outcomes in a way that ensures our citizens receive the help they need.

As part of the ecosystem of community support, United Way helps provide kids with care and enrichment before and after school, ensures families don't go hungry, and gives people living with disabilities tools and resources.

We can't do it alone.

It will take partnerships with the most effective nonprofit organizations in our region.

It will take leveraging data of community needs through our Community Needs Assessment (CNA).

It will take innovation and courage.

Ultimately, we strive to achieve the impact and outcomes that are as effective, efficient, and equitable as our community deserves in today's world.

### LEADING WITH IMPACT

Every day, United Way answers the call to help our Missouri and Illinois neighbors in need by leading with impact. Through a powerful mix of community generosity, understanding needs, and making strategic investments into programs and services that meet needs and achieve outcomes, we are creating a stronger, healthier, and more equitable region.

The following pages share a summary of results of the CNA, as well as United Way's investment strategy to meet the needs of our community.

We believe that by starting with a clear focus on what we want to achieve — a strong and healthy community supported by a safety net of nonprofit organizations — we are leading with impact.

## SAFETY NET: KEY NEEDS OF OUR REGION

**Crisis Intervention:** Availability and quality of services for individuals or families in need and when costs related to housing, child care, transportation, and basic needs are a significant burden.

**Food Security:** Having enough food for an active and healthy life.

**Housing Security:** Having safe and stable housing without fear of losing your home.

**Legal Assistance:** Legal help with basic needs, such as housing, immigration, domestic violence, government benefits, and welfare.

**Transportation:** Having private or public transportation that does not cost a lot and is flexible, dependable, and safe.

**Debt:** Money that you borrow that must be paid back at a later date.

**Financial Education:** Resources that teach people how to manage their money.

**Financial Safety Net:** Money you save for an emergency or a bill you did not expect.

**Income:** Having enough money to keep a good standard of living.

**Jobs:** Having a steady job and the level of job you are qualified for.

**Child Welfare:** Making sure all children are safe and taken care of by their family. Includes adopted children and children in foster care.

**Early Childhood Education:** Having good and low-cost early childhood care (for kids age 0-5 years).

**K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time:** Having good and low-cost schools for kindergarten through 12th grade, as well as good before- and after-school activities.

**Post-Secondary Education:** School or training after high school and throughout people's lives so they can learn skills needed for jobs.

**Access to Healthcare:** Having good healthcare providers and treatment places.

**Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse:** Having what you need to keep your mind healthy, and helping with mental and emotional problems, as well as addiction to painkillers, alcohol, or other drugs.

**Physical Health:** Having what you need to keep your body healthy, and helping with chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, and asthma.

**Aging and Senior Support:** Support for people later in life.

**Built Environment:** The area where you live, work, and play. This includes how close you are to healthy food, green space, and places to relax and play.

**Community Building:** Knowing others in your community and building social resources to improve the quality of life in your community. Also includes resources to help support community issues and policy changes.

**Disaster Preparedness and Response:** Having an action plan in case there is a disaster, such as a tornado, earthquake, or flood.

**Justice System:** Fair and respectful treatment of all people in the criminal justice system.

**Safety:** Low risk of crime and people are not afraid to live in their home, neighborhood, or city.

**Services for Individuals with Disabilities:** Support for people with cognitive, physical, or other disabilities, and their caregivers.

# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## ASSESSING THE NEED

Guided by a committed group of volunteer leaders, United Way conducted a comprehensive regional needs assessment to understand what services and resources were most needed across our 16-county service area and within our impact areas. The following pages provide a summary of the findings and methodology used to conduct a comprehensive CNA of the St. Louis region.

## APPROACH

United Way engaged four external entities to conduct the CNA: Mutare Network, University of Missouri St. Louis' Community Innovation Action Center, Urban Strategies, Inc. (USI), and Brown School Evaluation Center at Washington University. The CNA team designed a collaborative approach to understand priority needs, map regional funding, and identify community partnerships.

## METHODOLOGY

### Understanding Priority Needs

To help United Way understand priority needs in each county and the most common needs across the region, the researchers conducted a multi-step process that included various methods of data collection, data triangulation, and a rating system using pre-defined criteria.

The first step of this process was to engage the community through primary data collection. This was done through a public survey to the broad community, focus groups with social support providers and local government agencies, and in-depth interviews with community members. As this primary data was collected, secondary data was also thoroughly reviewed by using existing information from sources, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Census Bureau, and other datasets.

With this primary and secondary data in hand, a triangulation process was implemented to organize and format the data, allowing the researchers to compare different types of data to understand need.

FIGURE 1: PRIORITIZATION MATRIX RATING SCALE

CRITERIA	MAGNITUDE	RACIAL DISPARITY	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED NEEDS			UPSTREAM/ROOT CAUSE
			PUBLIC SURVEY	FOCUS GROUP	1:1 INTERVIEW	
Criteria Description	What number/percentage of people is affected?	How much does this need disproportionately affect a particular race?	To what extent did the survey respondent identify this as a top need?	Did the focus group participants prioritize this as a need?	Did the interview participants perceive this as a challenge they faced in their community?	Is this need an upstream factor/root cause?
Scoring	3 = High 2 = Medium 1 = Low 0 = Data are not available	5 = A lot 3 = Some 1 = A little 0 = No disparity or data are not available	3 = High need 2 = Medium 1 = Low 0 = Data are not available	2 = Yes 0 = No	2 = Yes 0 = No	3 = Upstream/Root cause 1 = Downstream/Not root cause

## COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Using this, a data summary matrix for each county that represented all collected data was created. A prioritization matrix was then created to rate needs in each county using the following criteria:

- Magnitude
- Racial disparity
- Community-identified needs
- Upstream/Root cause

Five researchers scored each topic by these criteria for all counties in United Way's service area. Figure 1 is a representation of the rating scale used for each of the prioritization matrix criteria.

Note that the racial equity criteria were weighted more than the other selected criteria because it was important to reflect United Way's commitment to employing a racial equity approach to the CNA.

The ratings given by CNA researchers were summed across the criteria to generate total scores. Those scores were then adjusted to account for the data availability of each criteria, accounting for the sometimes limited data access. Using the adjusted rating scores, United Way ranked the top half of each county's needs 1 through 12. This is the final set of needs represented in the table on page 3.

A second step of the prioritization process was employed, but not utilized, in determining the final priority needs in each county. A web-based prioritization survey was sent to the community

asking participants to select what they believed to be the five greatest needs of their county based on a list of the top 12 to 14 topics (those identified by the CNA researchers through the rating process). Due to low community participation in numerous counties, the results of the community prioritization survey could not be used in the final needs prioritization process, but this feedback can be found in the full report.

### Understanding Regional Funding

Along with understanding need, United Way aimed to understand the availability of existing government and philanthropic funding to address needs identified through the CNA. The research process used publicly available government (federal, state, local) and philanthropic (private and corporate) data from grant awards of \$50,000 or more made to entities in United Way's 16-county service area during fiscal year 2017.

### Understanding Community Partnerships

To better understand not only needs but also assets in the region, United Way sought to better understand the landscape of community partnerships in its geographic footprint and impact areas. A survey was dispersed, and a scan of existing information was conducted to develop an initial picture of regional partnerships and their efforts to address need.

## REGIONAL DATA

United Way of Greater St. Louis' service area covers a population of more than 3 million people in two states with both rural and urban areas. Recognizing that each community faces unique challenges, the research team focused on understanding the distinct needs of each individual county. A total of 24 areas of need were identified within United Way's five impact areas. Using a process that reviewed all available data, priority needs for each county were identified. The table below provides a comprehensive overview of each county's top priority needs, followed by an analysis of the most common needs across the entire St. Louis region.

Priority needs																	
1	2	3	4	5													
○ Indicates need was not in the top half for that county.																	
Need	Impact area	Calhoun	Clinton	Franklin	Greene	Jefferson	Jersey	Lincoln	Macoupin	Madison	Monroe	Randolph	St. Charles	St. Clair	STL City	STL County	Warren
Crisis Intervention*	Provide Food and Shelter	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Food Security	Provide Food and Shelter	○	○	○	12	○	○	12	5	12	11	10	12	10	○	8	11
Housing Security	Provide Food and Shelter	9	8	1	7	2	5	8	○	2	7	○	1	1	2	5	1
Legal Assistance**	Provide Food and Shelter	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Transportation	Provide Food and Shelter	3	3	5	3	4	4	5	11	10	5	8	6	7	11	3	5
Debt**	Financial Stability	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Financial Education**	Financial Stability	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Financial Safety Net	Financial Stability	9	11	○	11	○	○	○	○	○	12	○	○	○	○	○	○
Income	Financial Stability	7	12	○	6	11	11	7	○	11	2	4	9	6	6	12	○
Jobs	Financial Stability	2	1	12	2	6	1	9	1	1	3	9	3	2	2	7	12
Child Welfare	Foster Learning	○	○	4	12	8	10	1	○	4	○	4	5	4	7	11	4
Early Childhood Education	Foster Learning	○	○	7	9	7	○	○	7	○	○	4	7	○	○	○	8
K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time	Foster Learning	4	7	○	4	12	3	6	2	5	○	2	7	3	9	6	9
Post-Secondary Education	Foster Learning	6	○	○	○	○	○	10	○	○	12	12	○	○	○	○	○
Access to Healthcare	Improve Health	○	4	9	1	10	5	3	3	○	1	1	○	8	9	○	2
Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse	Improve Health	11	5	1	9	5	8	4	9	3	7	11	1	○	○	○	6
Physical Health	Improve Health	○	○	12	○	○	○	○	○	○	10	12	10	10	○	○	○
Aging and Senior Support***	Strengthen Communities	11	○	○	5	○	○	○	3	○	6	4	○	○	○	○	9
Built Environment	Strengthen Communities	8	2	6	8	3	2	○	5	8	○	3	○	9	2	2	3
Community Building	Strengthen Communities	5	6	3	○	1	7	○	8	5	4	12	10	○	1	1	○
Disaster Preparedness and Response	Strengthen Communities	1	○	○	○	○	9	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Justice System	Strengthen Communities	○	9	8	○	9	○	2	10	7	○	○	4	12	8	3	7
Safety	Strengthen Communities	○	○	9	○	○	11	11	12	9	○	○	○	5	5	8	○
Services for Individuals with Disabilities†	Strengthen Communities	○	9	9	○	○	○	○	○	○	7	○	○	○	11	10	○

Some needs ended in a tie. In the case of a tie, those numbers accounted for the tie number and the following number. (Example: St. Charles had two No. 1 answers, so the next need is ranked No. 3.)

\*Crisis intervention was not included in the needs prioritization process because it so often could be placed under other need areas, such as housing or food security.

\*\*In these instances, some data were not available (existing secondary data for Legal Assistance and Financial Education; primary data from community members for Debt). The needs prioritization methodology did account for how much data were available to prioritize each topic, and even with score adjustments for these three topics, they were not elevated to a priority need in any county.

\*\*\*Aging and Senior Support and Services for Individuals with Disabilities were classified under the impact area of Strengthen Communities for this CNA.

## REGIONAL DATA

### HIGHEST PRIORITY NEEDS

Seven of the 24 topics were identified as the highest priority need in a county.

Topic (service categories)	# of counties
• Housing Security • Jobs	4
• Access to Healthcare • Community Building	3
• Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse	2
• Child Welfare • Disaster Preparedness and Response	1

*Note: Two counties had a tie between two topics for highest priority need.*

### REGIONAL GRANT FUNDING

Grants of \$50,000 or more made in United Way's service area.

Topic (service categories)	2017 dedicated funding
K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time	\$302M
Early Childhood Education	\$151M
Food Security	\$136M
Housing Security	\$99M
Jobs	\$64M
Services for Individuals with Disabilities	\$43M
Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse	\$33M
Community Building	\$33M
Post-Secondary Education	\$29M
Physical Health	\$28M
Child Welfare	\$23M
Transportation	\$21M
Built Environment	\$17M
Access to Healthcare	\$17M
Aging and Senior Support	\$14M
Disaster Preparedness and Response	\$8M
Safety	\$6M
Crisis Intervention	\$5M
Justice System	\$3M
Legal Assistance	\$2M
Income	\$2M
Financial Education	\$500K
Debt	\$0
Financial Safety Net	\$0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1.5B</b>

*Note: See page 5 for more details.*

### MOST COMMON NEEDS ACROSS THE 16 COUNTIES

Needs identified in the top-12 in more than one county.

Need	# of counties
Jobs; Transportation	16
Housing Security; K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time	14
Built Environment; Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse; Income	13
Access to Healthcare; Child Welfare; Community Building	12
Justice System	11
Food Security	10
Safety	8
Early Childhood Education	7
Aging and Senior Support	6
Physical Health; Services for Individuals with Disabilities	5
Financial Safety Net; Post-Secondary Education	4
Disaster Preparedness and Response	2

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Below are the number of community partnerships in United Way's service area based on the five impact areas.

Impact area	Partnerships
Strengthen Communities	71
Improve Health	52
Foster Learning	30
Basic Needs	23
Financial Stability	19
<b>Total:</b>	<b>137 Partnerships</b>

*Note: Some partnerships were assigned to more than one impact area.*

## COUNTY BY COUNTY


CALHOUN COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
4,897	97.4%	0.3%	0.9%	1.1%	12.8%

PRIORITY NEEDS

1	Disaster Preparedness and Response
2	Jobs
3	Transportation
4	K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time
5	Community Building



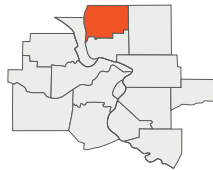
GREENE COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
13,311	97.1%	1.3%	0.2%	0.4%	17.9%

PRIORITY NEEDS

1	Access to Healthcare
2	Jobs
3	Transportation
4	K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time
5	Aging and Senior Support




CLINTON COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
37,640	93.8%	3.6%	0.6%	3.1%	9%

PRIORITY NEEDS

1	Jobs
2	Built Environment
3	Transportation
4	Access to Healthcare
5	Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse




JEFFERSON COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
222,639	96.2%	1%	0.8%	1.9%	10.9%

PRIORITY NEEDS

1	Community Building
2	Housing Security
3	Built Environment
4	Transportation
5	Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse




FRANKLIN COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
102,413	96.2%	0.8%	0.6%	1.7%	10.6%

PRIORITY NEEDS

1	Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse
1	Housing Security
3	Community Building
4	Child Welfare
5	Transportation



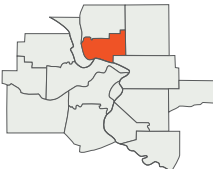
JERSEY COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
22,215	96.8%	0.5%	0.4%	1.3%	9.4%

PRIORITY NEEDS


1	Jobs
2	Built Environment
3	K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time
4	Transportation
5	Access to Healthcare
5	Housing Security






## COUNTY BY COUNTY

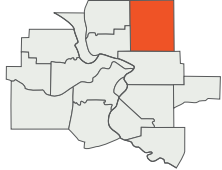
LINCOLN COUNTY					
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
54,800	95%	1.9%	0.4%	2.3%	13.2%
PRIORITY NEEDS					
1	Child Welfare				
2	Justice System				
3	Access to Healthcare				
4	Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse				
5	Transportation				




MONROE COUNTY					
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
33,739	97.8%	0.4%	0.7%	1.5%	5.3%
PRIORITY NEEDS					
1	Access to Healthcare				
2	Income				
3	Jobs				
4	Community Building				
5	Transportation				




MACOUPIN COUNTY					
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
45,960	97%	0.8%	0.4%	1.1%	13.3%
PRIORITY NEEDS					
1	Jobs				
2	K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time				
3	Access to Healthcare				
3	Aging and Senior Support				
5	Built Environment				
5	Food Security				




RANDOLPH COUNTY					
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
32,829	87.1%	10.6%	0.4%	3.1%	12.3%
PRIORITY NEEDS					
1	Access to Healthcare				
2	K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time				
3	Built Environment				
4	Aging and Senior Support				
4	Child Welfare				
4	Early Childhood Education				
4	Income				



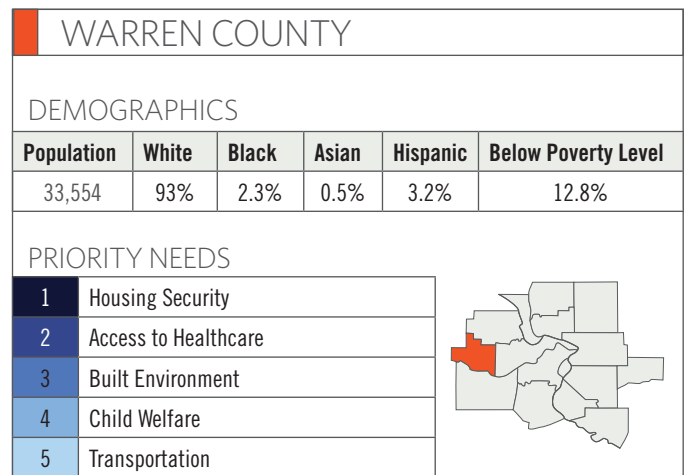
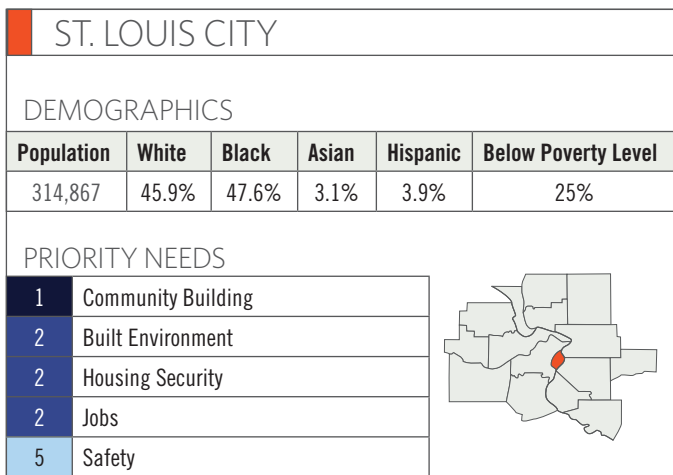
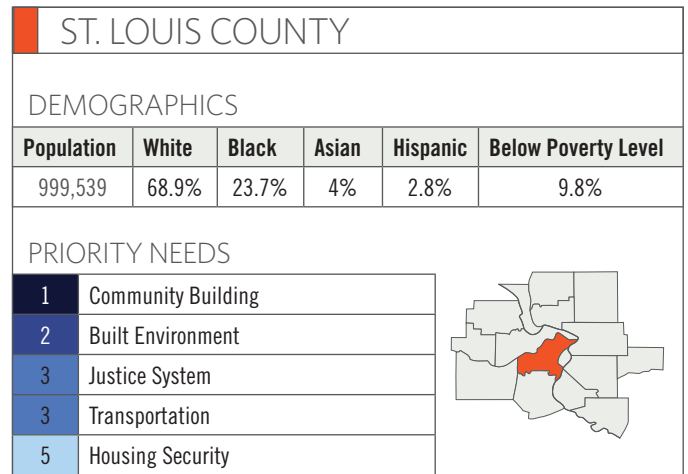
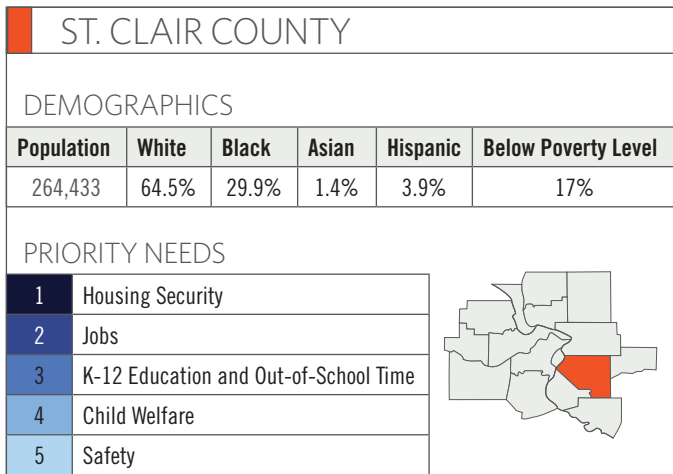
MADISON COUNTY					
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
266,153	87.9%	8.6%	0.9%	3.1%	13.5%
PRIORITY NEEDS					
1	Jobs				
2	Housing Security				
3	Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse				
4	Child Welfare				
5	Community Building				
5	K-12 Education and Out-of-School Time				



ST. CHARLES COUNTY					
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Population	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Below Poverty Level
385,115	90.2%	4.3%	2.4%	3.2%	5.7%
PRIORITY NEEDS					
1	Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse				
1	Housing Security				
3	Jobs				
4	Justice System				
5	Child Welfare				



## COUNTY BY COUNTY



To read the entire CNA report, including further details on the methodology and community input, visit [HelpingPeople.org/CommunityNeeds](https://helpingpeople.org/CommunityNeeds).

## CONCLUSION

### WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD A STRONGER REGION

When we embarked on the journey to seek a better way to invest in our region, we started with the knowledge that whatever our next strategy would be, it would take data, community input, and a healthy dose of courage. We didn't know what the data would say, but we did know that the community was counting on us to get it right. We believe this next phase of United Way is the right one, a path for investing in a region that deserves a bright future.

**Without a strong safety net of healthy, high-performing, nonprofit organizations, our region cannot thrive.** The 24 needs outlined in the CNA show the breadth and depth of needs in our region. It's imperative that United Way continues to support organizations that meet these needs through financial investments, as well as capacity building to help strengthen their performance and ability to achieve outcomes.

**While the stories of those living in rural and urban areas differ, the needs largely overlap.** Through community voice in our surveys and focus groups, we heard many different stories of need. In rural areas, we often heard that communities needed more than entry-level jobs. In urban areas, jobs were also a major theme. While some of the stories are different, there is a great deal of overlap on needs, such as housing security, transportation, jobs, access to healthcare, and education.

**Collaboration makes our region stronger.** We know there is good work happening to make systems stronger, as they are all interconnected in delicate and complex ways. The power of collaboration, either through systems work or through more informal partnerships between nonprofit organizations, helps create a true safety net so that people who need help don't fall through the cracks.

**People want to live in equitable, thriving communities.** A strong theme when talking to people who lived in our 16-county region was the desire to become more equitable and a desire for growth. People want to see opportunities beyond their basic needs and feel a part of a community. They hope for growth and prosperity, not just for themselves and their families, but for their entire region.

**There is no one solution to our region's issues.** The needs identified in the CNA are vast. We can't ensure all kids are safe until families have access to food and housing. We can't ensure seniors have access to resources without a focus on health and wellness. And we can't ensure people with disabilities have their needs met without a strong system of support. There is no one answer to helping people live their best possible lives. But there are many answers. That's why United Way will strategically invest in a safety net, systems, and targeted programs.

## CONCLUSION

### INVESTING IN A SAFETY NET

As the data highlights, without a strong safety net, our region cannot thrive. Armed with the data and insights we collected, we will invest in organizations meeting at least one of the 24 needs identified in the CNA.

These Safety Net investments will support nonprofit organizations providing direct service in our 16-county region in Missouri and Illinois.

We know that there are many ways organizations might choose to find solutions to an issue. For instance, two nonprofits working to keep kids safe after school may have vastly different programs — one a sports club, and the other a homework app. When we look at where to invest, we are particularly interested in the outcomes the nonprofit strives to achieve, how well the organization collaborates and partners, and whether the organization engages in racial equity practices — allowing us to fund the high-performing agencies making the greatest impact in our community.

### INVESTING IN SYSTEMS

Organizations providing safety net services are imperative to the health of this region, but they are not the only ingredient to a successful community. We also need to look at the systems in place that help our community move forward, or hold us back.

Through our Systems investments, we will support organizations providing backbone, collective impact, and advocacy services. These organizations look at problems from a holistic point of view and attempt to

create conditions for people to live successful lives. By understanding the prevalent needs of our region, we're able to track where systems work may have the most impact and invest in those areas. At times, there may not be a focus on a particular need identified in the CNA, and United Way may choose to host the collaborative table to ensure that need becomes a focus in the area.

### INVESTING IN TARGETED PROGRAMS

Communities grow and change. Now, United Way is more poised than ever to align investments with changing times and emerging needs.

As emergency or crisis support is needed in our community, United Way will support programs and organizations meeting those needs through targeted fundraising and grant-making efforts.

### NOD TO THE PAST; LOOK TO THE FUTURE

The United Way of the future is one of impact.

With the insights from the CNA, we will have the ability to align investments with need in new and exciting ways. Through the three strategic investments — Safety Net, Systems, and Targeted — United Way is taking its commitment to our region to the next level, while continuing its legacy of helping people live their best possible lives.

We look forward to taking this journey with you.