

BETHEL RURAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2027



VISION

Preserving Yesterday – Helping Today – Planning for Tomorrow

MISSION

To coordinate local and regional resources to implement programs and projects that enhance the quality of rural life in Bethel Community

VALUES

- **Service:** We welcome the opportunity to serve our community and address the concerns of those in need.
- **Individual Talent:** We strive to utilize and appreciate the skills, abilities, knowledge, and experience that each individual brings to our organization.
- **Stewardship of Resources:** We commit to being good stewards of the fiscal resources entrusted to us and the natural resources that sustain us.
- **Historic Preservation:** We embrace the history of the Bethel area and take delight in preserving and sharing it.

GOALS

GOAL 1: MAINTAIN A QUALITY FACILITY THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

1. During 2022, develop a comprehensive plan that identifies the aspects of the facility that will need maintenance, repair, or replacement by 2027.
2. During 2022, replace the front entrance door to improve accessibility of the fellowship hall by BRCO members, guests, and Food Pantry volunteers.
3. During 2022, repair or replace the furnace in the church sanctuary.
4. During 2023, replace the lights in the fellowship hall.

GOAL 2: UPDATE THE FELLOWSHIP HALL TO ACCOMMODATE NEW WAYS OF HOLDING MEETINGS, PROVIDING TRAINING, AND SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

1. During 2022, install internet service that can be accessed in the church and fellowship hall and in the parking lot.
2. During 2022, install a large monitor with camera that can be used for Zoom meetings, training sessions, and program presentations.
3. During 2022, try out the equipment during meetings to ensure that it meets a variety of needs.
4. During 2022, test the internet access from the parking lot to determine the extent to which it can be utilized by the community.
5. By 2024, make available the fellowship hall for community training sessions.
6. By 2025, update the flooring and floor molding in the dining facility to enhance its appearance for rentals.
7. By 2026, update the kitchen with modern appliances and cabinetry to enhance usability and appearance.

GOAL 3: INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE BRCO FOOD PANTRY IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE A 10% INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES SERVED EACH YEAR

1. During each month of each year, maintain a list of families who regularly rely on monthly food boxes, note any new additions, and monitor the list through the year to determine when an increase occurs in the total number of families receiving food boxes.
2. Increase the amount of food ordered from MANNA to meet the increased demand.
3. Increase freezer capacity to accommodate storage of increased amounts of frozen food.
4. Increase the number of BRCO pre-paid coupons that Food Pantry clients can use to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at produce stands in Bethel.
5. Solicit a 10% increase in Food Pantry donations from organizations and individuals not associated with the local churches that regularly support the Food Pantry.
6. Apply for a grant to help fund the expansion of the Food Pantry storage area.

GOAL 4: PROMOTE BRCO PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE BETHEL SERVICE AREA

1. During 2022, develop an outreach plan that identifies local businesses, churches, and recreation sites where information on BRCO can be made available to residents and visitors.
2. During 2022, identify areas of Bethel where the distribution of BRCO information can be achieved more effectively by utilizing rural route mailings.
3. From 2022 through 2024, experiment with making available BRCO information at various businesses, churches, and recreation sites and through rural route mailings.
4. In 2025, make improvements in the outreach strategy based on the lessons learned from the results of the outreach conducted in 2022-2024.
5. During 2022, partner with the Haywood County Senior Center to share BRCO volunteer opportunities with newly retired seniors and others who visit the Senior Center.
6. During 2022, partner with Pisgah High School to share BRCO volunteer opportunities with Pisgah's JROTC cadets who desire to earn credit for community service.
7. During 2023, develop new strategies for connecting with rural landowners in order to promote conservation easements and encourage continued good stewardship of the water resources that originate in and flow out of the Bethel area.
8. During 2023, establish a grant research procedure to identify those funding sources that can be utilized to establish programs, promote our historic and rural heritage, and fund service projects.
9. During 2024, at the west entrance to Bethel (on the BRCO-owned parcel), install permanent signage that welcomes visitors and promotes BRCO.

GOAL 5: PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE OF BETHEL RESIDENTS BY CONTRIBUTING FUNDS, DONATING ITEMS, ARRANGING IN-KIND SERVICES, AND FACILITATING COUNTY ASSISTANCE AS COMMUNITY NEEDS ARE IDENTIFIED

1. During 2022, support the Haywood County Community Development Council's Broadband Initiative by attending the County Commissioners Meeting where community broadband needs will be discussed.
2. During 2022, identify where the need is greatest for improving the broadband connectivity in the Bethel area, and share the information with the county leaders who will be setting the priorities for the county-led broadband initiative.
3. During 2022, publicize the BRCO Flood Relief Fund and continue to identify and assist residents in the Bethel area who were impacted by the August 2021 flood.
4. Each year, provide back-to-school supplies for deserving children at Bethel Elementary and Bethel Middle Schools.
5. Each year, provide Christmas funding for deserving children at Bethel Elementary and Bethel Middle Schools.

GOAL 6: SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS IN THE BETHEL AREA THROUGH PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS THAT PROVIDE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS, AWARDS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

1. Each year, present the BRCO Scholarship Award (\$1000) to a High School senior who is a member of Bethel Community and will attend a two- or four-year college.
2. Each year, present the BRCO David Curphey Citizenship Award (\$50) to a graduating 8th grader at Bethel Middle School.
3. Each year, present the BRCO David Curphey STEM Awards (\$50) to graduating 5th graders who rank at the top achievement level at Bethel Elementary School.
4. Each year, promote the WNC Communities George H.V. Cecil Journey Scholarship for students preparing to attend a two- or four-year college.
5. During 2022, provide BRCO-produced DVDs that can be used by Bethel Middle School teachers to introduce students to topics pertaining to Bethel history, agriculture, and land and water resources.
6. Each year, present programs of interest to the Bethel Community at BRCO bi-monthly meetings.
7. Each year, promote WNC Communities Coffee Hour sessions and share Coffee Hour tips and "Lessons Learned."

GOAL 7: PRESERVE AND SHARE THE HISTORY OF THE BETHEL AREA

1. During 2022 and 2023, record interviews of people who have knowledge of the history of Bethel Schools, and during 2024, complete the editing for final production of the Historic Bethel Schools DVD.
2. During 2022, commission the painting of the Pigeon Gap Watering Hole.
3. During 2022-2024, visit the 22 cemeteries in the Bethel area, prepare narratives describing their historical significance, and post each narrative on the BRCO web site for use by researchers.
4. During 2022, install a sign at Truss Bridge #79 that describes the bridge's unique design and its historical significance as the oldest highway truss bridge in North Carolina.
5. During 2022, present the BRCO Pigeon Valley Award to Mack Ledbetter for his work in researching and documenting the points of interest of historic Sunburst logging village and creating a map that showcases the information.
6. During 2023, work with the Bethel Middle School principal in arranging a field trip for students to visit Bethel historic sites.
7. During 2024, partner with the Sons of the American Revolution Western Waters Chapter and the Daughters of the American Revolution Hugh Rogers Chapter in developing a plan for commemorating the 1776 march of Griffith Rutherford's troops through the Bethel area.
8. During 2025, gather and document information about the men on the Rutherford Trace who settled in the Bethel area, and identify where they lived and where they are buried.
9. During 2024-2025, gather and document information about what life was like in the Bethel area in 1776 and develop a program that can be presented at community gatherings.
10. During the fall of 2026, join with SAR and DAR in commemorating Rutherford's march.