UNITED FOR A NEW ECONOMY

STRATEGIC PLAN
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United for a Fair Economy (UNE) is a multiracial community organization building people power and developing leaders in the cities and counties surrounding Denver to create a thriving economy in Colorado. We value people over profit.

UNE engaged in a year-long strategic planning process to:

1. Assess the organization’s position
2. Clarify its theory of change
3. Articulate a bold vision, clear goals and achievable strategies and outcomes

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

UNE engaged in a year-long strategic planning process to complete its transition from a policy-focused organization to one using community organizing, civic engagement and policy research to build more just and inclusive communities.

Despite the challenging, unstable year in which the COVID-19 pandemic was in full force, the economy was in a downturn, Trump was in the last year of his Presidency and the Black Lives Matter movement surged across the nation, members, staff and board members participated in a detailed organizational RoadMap Consulting’s survey and assessment process to develop an actionable 5-year plan to meet our goals.

At the outset, UNE defined it’s vision, mission and principles before conducting an internal and external analysis, articulating our theory of change, developing our organizing model and creating our five year plan.
VISION
UNE envisions vibrant, strong communities with the power to build an economic, political and social system where human lives are valued over profit and our common humanity triumphs over those that try to divide us by race and class.

MISSION
UNE builds people power for racial and economic justice by:

- Organizing in our communities across race
- Winning bold policy solutions for all
- Building a multiracial voting majority to transform economic, political and social systems

PRINCIPLES

Organizing Builds Power.
UNE organizes and centers the voices of our most directly impacted grassroots members to address systemic oppression at the root cause.

Racial Justice is Economic Justice.
UNE confronts racism, classism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, and xenophobia to ensure that our social, economic and political systems work for all, no exceptions.

Structural Reforms Build Power.
UNE campaigns shift power to the people by reforming our economic, political and social systems to serve our and our planet’s health and well-being.

Making meaning matters.
UNE draws from the values and experiences of our people to weave a narrative that creates a shared understanding of inequities, builds alliances and expands our ideas of what is possible.
THEORY OF CHANGE
UNE’s “theory of change” explains how to transform economic and political systems that currently cater to the wealthy few (who divide us by race and class) to systems that work for all of us.

Current Conditions: Economic, political and racial inequities
- Housing, a basic human need, costs more than people can afford because it’s a “commodity”
- Public goods we all need to thrive, like public education and housing we can afford, are underfunded because the wealthy few refuse to pay what they owe
- Greedy corporations enrich themselves instead of protecting our democracy and the public good
- Wealthy corporations focus on profits instead of worker safety, thriving wages and benefits
- The wealthy few contribute less to fund public goods than low and middle income families

Strategies: Our broad approach to local, state and national change
- Community organizing that builds a base of members, leaders and power to win change
- Electoral organizing that engages, educates and organizes a powerful voting block
- Winning bold policy solutions that address systemic and historic forms of oppression
- Alliance organizing that grow the partnerships necessary to win systemic change
- Compelling narrative that builds across differences to imagine what is possible together

Action: Putting our strategies into action
- Geography-based organizing to recruit members and build local power to make change
- Leadership development on political analysis, vision and making change
- Community education on local governments and political action
- Research/policy development on racially just solutions to worker rights, housing and tax reform
- Local, state and federal campaign wins that pave the way to long-term structural change
- Alliance building to develop trust, alignment of vision, shared analysis and collaboration

Impact: What we are creating
- Accountable political systems due to participation of more low income people and people of color
- Affordable and safe housing for renters
- Thriving wages and portable benefits for all workers
- Mutual care, support and a recognition of our interdependence
- Public infrastructure and services sufficiently funded by a reformed tax code that makes corporations and the wealthy few pay their fair share
- Improved lives due to UNE members identifying and winning local policy changes
Build people power.
To win justice, the main form of power to which historically excluded populations have access is “People Power,” which we build when we unite to fight collectively for our rights and common humanity. This power can be used to challenge the power of corporations and the wealthy few and their control over government to gain racial and economic justice for all of our communities.

How we do it: UNE recruits and supports low-income people and people of color to build power to make economic, political and social change.

Members lead the organization
Community organizing builds people power, as well as individual leadership. Organizing does this most effectively when members play a lead role in making decisions and speak for the organization.

How we do it: UNE members choose issues that energize our base and lead to local, state and national change improving the lives of low income people and people of color.

Develop a powerful base and leadership
Organizing is rooted in public relationships, our focus is to move our members and partners to contend and move power. The work of strong knowledgeable organizers includes base building, leadership development, campaign work, political education, and alliance building. The organization must constantly be growing and learning alongside its members and maintaining the best staff for the job at hand.

How we do it: UNE develops the political consciousness and organizing skills of members to make change collectively, while building an individual sense of power.
Win local and municipal campaigns as the foundation for structural change
Campaigns focused on local, winnable issues build people’s skills and sense of power, and lead to broader campaigns at the state and federal level that tackle root causes and win structural change.
How we do it: UNE utilizes issue campaigns in every local chapter that focus on winnable issues to impact lives, build skills/power and lead to structural change.

Work in alliance as the most effective way to build to scale
To build broader power capable of winning structural change, organizations must come together to create alliances capable of having an impact at the local, state and national levels.
How we do it: UNE builds alliances for broader power capable of winning local, state and national change.

Challenge the narrative of scarcity by building a narrative based on race and class
To make meaning and energize our base, we constantly develop a narrative that unites us across race and class by speaking to our common values while persuading people from the center.
How we do it: UNE uses a narrative strategy to unite people across race and class to expand our vision of what’s possible together.
FIVE YEAR GOALS

To bring this organizing model to scale, UNE recently developed and adopted an updated strategic plan including five year goals:

Base Building: By 2026 UNE will mobilize 2,000 people to take action for UNE priority issues through rallies, press conferences and actions.

Key Base Building guideposts over the next 5 years include:

» UNE has 500 dues-paying members who actively participate in leadership development and campaigns; at least 75% identify as POC/immigrant/women/lowlow-income or non-English-speaking

» One hundred dues-paying core members play a lead role in the organization’s work, including leadership development and campaigns – and have their own following they can call to action

» UNE can mobilize and turn out 2,000 people for rallies, press-conferences and actions

Leadership Development: By 2026 300 new UNE members will have the leadership skills necessary to win structural changes for low income people and people of color in Colorado.

Key Leadership Development guideposts over the next 5 years include:

» Members will receive deeper skills training and decide UNE’s upcoming campaign priorities at a weekend-long event in summer 2022

» All members will complete a uniform set of action skills trainings and have individualized leadership development plans by 2023

» Members attend day-long training and decision-making Leadership Assemblies twice a year by 2024

Campaign and Policy Victories: By 2026 UNE members will win major structural reforms important to UNE’s base by leading policy campaigns at both the state and local levels.

Key Campaign and Policy Victory guideposts over the next 5 years include:

» State rent control preemption is overturned by 2024

» Three strong statewide policies for either worker rights, housing or taxes are passed by coalitions that UNE helps leads

» Rent control ordinances are in place in Adams County, Westminster, Commerce City and Aurora by 2026

» One progressive policy for housing, worker rights, or taxes, is passed each year in a municipality where UNE has a membership chapter
Electoral Power: By 2026 UNE’s nonpartisan electoral program will produce a 5% increase in voters in the targeted local election by turning out low propensity BIPOC/Women/New American voters. Key Electoral Power guideposts over the next 5 years include:

» UNE members will conduct direct outreach to the 10 most diverse precincts in Westminster, Commerce City and Aurora to 10,000+ low propensity BIPOC/Women/New Americans via door knocking, phone calls, texts, mail and media campaigns to double POC voter turnout from 6% to 12% in 30 key precincts in Adams county by 2024

» UNE’s legislative field program activates voters to email, call, tweet or petition legislators for legislative policy changes

Organizational Development: By 2026 UNE will have the board, staff, operations and financial health necessary to win structural changes for low income people and people of color in Colorado. Key Organizational Development guideposts over the next 5 years include:

» UNE’s Board is representative of our constituency and leads and supports the organization; 80% are POC/immigrant/women/low-income, half are core members and will expand to nine members to ensure expertise in finance, labor and organizing by 2025

» $1.3M is raised by 2023, 70% of it general operating funds to hire and retain high performing staff in every position – diversify to include 5% from non-foundation sources by 2025, 100 small donors and 10 large donors who give $500 or more

» UNE’s operations and systems provide appropriate and efficient digital security, data tracking, and cost effective program support by 2023

» UNE’s Budget is balanced each year. UNE maintains a continuous 6 month operating reserve once fully staffed in 2022

UNE’s five year goals and interim guideposts will build the capacity and power necessary to accomplish our vision and mission.