



Northwest
Housing
Alternatives



2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN



OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY THROUGH HOUSING

Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA) has created opportunity through housing since 1982. NHA develops, builds, and manages multifamily rental homes designed for Oregonians with extremely limited incomes; resident households on average earn only \$16,000 per year. Along with providing affordable housing, we connect residents to critical health and community resources, and work to prevent homelessness before it begins. Through the Annie Ross House, we offer emergency shelter and services for families experiencing homelessness.

At the heart of our work are the families, older adults and people with disabilities we serve. For a senior, a home can create peace of mind and the ability to live independently. For a family, a stable home means children can attend the same school each year. For a person with a disability, an affordable home can improve their health and help form strong ties to their community.

NHA is one of the largest and most established statewide developers of affordable housing in Oregon. Our residents collectively save millions each year by living in our properties. And as the need for affordable, safe and dignified housing grows in Oregon, we are committed to building high quality homes across the state, and to ensuring equitable outcomes in housing.

FRAMING FOR 2020 – 2022

To implement and expand our mission we will organize our efforts around four pillars of themed work (People / Places / Partnerships / Process), with two focused priorities.

FOCUSED PRIORITIES

RACIAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We recognize, and do not accept as fair and just, a disgraceful history of discrimination against people and communities of color across the country and in Oregon. This is specifically relevant in housing and community development, where racism has impeded access to home ownership and affordable rental housing in opportunity communities. Creating equitable opportunities for all people remains a priority in our work.

To eliminate racial inequities in housing outcomes, working through our mission we will focus on:

- Understanding historical discrimination and racism in our field and working to make sure that the impact of the past does not predict the future
- Becoming an anti-racist organization to be more diverse and inclusive, and working for outcomes that are equitable
- Dismantling institutional racism by evaluating and reviewing policy, rules / regulations, and industry practices

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

We also recognize the link between healthy people and a healthy planet, and the historical impacts of environmental degradation, pollution and climate change disproportionately affecting people and communities of color. We will approach our work with an environmental sustainability lens that furthers our long standing commitment to green building, the use of renewable energy, and protecting natural resources. **To reduce environmental impacts and be better environmental stewards, we will focus our work on:**

- Developing housing that achieves environmental protection goals and standards by measuring outcomes with programs such as Salmon Safe, Energy Star, Net Zero and / or others
- Increasing user awareness of energy and resource conservation, creating learning opportunities for residents, staff and board members
- Creating and maintaining healthy living and work environments, using non-toxic and natural supplies and materials
- Building partnerships with organizations and initiatives that focus on preserving natural features and areas, seeking the intersections between racial and environmental justice

WHAT WE HEARD

Using a 360-degree analysis of NHA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis) we gathered input from staff and board members, funders and community stakeholders, as well as residents. This is what we heard:

- our mission is crucial, and how we work to achieve it is motivating to others
- keep doing what we are good at (housing development, resident services, homeless services, asset management)
- stay focused on people and services that support them (our residents and clients, our staff, our board, our community)
- deepen our work in equity, diversity and inclusion with a focus on racial justice
- enhance organizational capacity to further our work across the state
- explore new opportunities in rural communities and pursue new funding
- build upon ground work from the capital campaign that raised \$2,000,000 for the new campus
- maintain the high level of trust we garner among investors and donors by applying high quality housing and performance standards

THEMED WORK

PEOPLE

Provide services that create stability and transform lives, offering opportunities in the context and form that people with diverse backgrounds need to thrive

- Support a strong and cohesive staff team
- Provide resident services to assist people with eviction prevention, access health care, obtain food security, increase economic resiliency, and obtain higher levels of education and training
- Provide transitional services to families through the Annie Ross House homeless shelter that result in 10% diversion and 80% housing stability within 12 months
- Deliver rapid rehousing services to homeless families through case management and housing placement activities that result in 80% housing stability within 12 months
- Through RS engagement, maintain or improve the housing stability of 85% of residents, and achieve an eviction rate of 1% or less at NHA properties
- Use data and work to ensure that people of color do not experience rental application denials, appeal denials, or lease violation notices at a higher rate than whites
- Invest in the health and well-being of NHA employees

PLACES

Develop and manage exceptional, energy efficient affordable homes that creates more mission-based housing opportunities statewide – homes for people with lower incomes

- Create more affordable housing that builds upon our statewide presence and green-building commitment by adding 500 new rental homes:
 - > Secure Metro Bond funds for at least 3 projects
 - > Secure funding for at least 3 projects outside of the Portland metro area
 - > Increase the number of PSH homes in the portfolio
- Continue strong asset management of our portfolio through fiscal oversight, proactive physical stewardship, and resident-focused practices
- Refinance and rehabilitate properties in our portfolio to sustain existing opportunities
- Ensure that our 58 CIP homes continue to serve the community in the best way possible
- Undertake 2 to 3 smaller scale pilot/demonstration/community projects that advance new models or innovations in housing

WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND US

Understanding the affordable housing industry, this is what influences our work going forward:

- rents and home prices continuing to outpace income and wages
- racial disparities continuing to impact access to housing opportunities
- increasing competition for development opportunities and project subsidies
- decreasing funding from Federal and local sources to support homeless services
- decreasing funding from the State to maintain the (CIP) group home portfolio long-term
- more resources are becoming available for new housing development than ever before in Oregon
- Oregon Housing and Community Services has a new strategic plan in which we are called upon to act as key implementers

THEMED WORK

PARTNERSHIPS

Explore and engage in authentic, innovative and inclusive collaborations that deepen outcomes for people across the state

- Pursue co-venture/co-development opportunities with individuals and organizations with mission alignment such as faith based and culturally specific organizations
- Create new relationships with service organizations for the services in PSH
- Offer our capacity and expertise to support culturally-specific organizations
- Explore REDI work with partners, share experiences and resources, support deeper engagement across and between partnerships and collaborations
- Collaborate on pilot/demonstration/community projects with groups we have not worked with before
- Work with other CIP group home owners across the state, advocates and providers to form a planned response to the housing needs of individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities

RS = Resident Services

PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing

REDI = Racial Equity Diversity Inclusion

CIP = Community Integration Program

PROCESS

Support organizational excellence, inclusivity and transparency to achieve equity and diversity outcomes among our people, in our places, and across our partnerships

- Apply an equity lens to organizational decisions big and small
- Evaluate and address historical institutional barriers experienced by people of color to access our rental housing portfolio
- Provide opportunities to staff and board members for continued growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Undertake planned and scheduled processes to decenter dominant white culture
- Use performance-based budgeting to manage toward more cost efficiency production effectiveness
- Create input opportunities to NHA planning, learning and evaluation that includes the perspective and voices of residents, clients, partners, vendors, community stake-holders, funders, and staff
- Support a Resident Advisory Council that provides input directly to the NHA Board of Directors and engages in community education and advocacy



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