building impact

Habitat for Humanity Capital District’s
2020 Strategic Plan

A set of guiding principles, goals and strategies to achieve our vision of a community – and a world – where everyone has a decent place to live.

Approved by the Board of Directors May 25, 2016
Updated July 1, 2019
vision
A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

mission
Habitat for Humanity Capital District builds strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable homeownership.
our shared vision
Spring 2016

Why create a strategic plan when we’ve accomplished so much without one?

It’s true, we are blessed with a talented and energetic staff, a dedicated Board of Directors and a community of committed volunteers and donors that have helped propel us from building a few houses a year to strengthening entire communities through homeownership.

But we can do more, and we are called to do more.

It isn’t enough to keep doing what we’re doing. We need to take time to reflect on our values and to commit to thoughtful, inclusive decision-making as we move forward.

When we began this process of planning for Habitat’s future, we knew the first thing we needed to do was to listen. So we hosted a public forum called the Habitat Café, where we engaged in conversation about who Habitat is, what we do, how we do it and where we go from here. We also collected survey responses and stories from the community. Our board and staff listened and then used this feedback to inform our planning and decision-making process.

These are the goals that emerged:

- **Identify a set of guiding principles and values** for the organization to help strengthen our decision-making processes and priorities
- **Develop ambitious three-year goals** and accompanying strategies
• Align our strategic plan with Habitat for Humanity International’s 2020 plan, in recognition of our common vision

We believe that the following plan is rooted in community values and provides a framework for sustainable, high-impact growth in the years to come.

Our plan proposes big goals—transforming lives and neighborhoods, engaging a coalition of support, influencing housing policy and building a sustainable organization—and identifies broad strategies for achieving these goals. We’ve included metrics where appropriate and will revisit these each year of the plan to adjust as necessary. Using this framework, our board and staff will create annual work plans and ways to measure and report on our successes and challenges.

In short, this plan proposes a new framework for how Habitat does business. We’re excited to share it with you as we work together to strengthen our community.

No matter who we are or where we come from, we all deserve to have a decent life. We deserve to feel strength and stability day after day. We deserve to know we have the power to take care of ourselves and build our own futures. At Habitat for Humanity Capital District, this is what unites us. Though homeownership, we empower. Our shared vision is a community—and a world—where everyone has a decent place to live.

We need your help to achieve this vision. Your financial support, your voice and your time will help bring strength, stability and independence to families in need of a decent place to live. Donate or sign up to help today at habitatcd.org.
Our 2020 focus
Extending our impact.

In July 2016, we launched a multi-year strategic plan to guide Habitat for Humanity Capital District's work in the community. In three years, we have made significant progress in meeting many of our goals. With your support, Habitat has built and sold 26 homes, has 9 more under construction or in pre-development and an additional 22 homes in the pipeline. We have also significantly strengthened our operations across our homeowner services, community outreach, construction, resource development, ReStore and financial stewardship functions.

In service of our bold vision of a community—and a world—where everyone has a decent place to live, we are extending our commitment to this comprehensive plan through 2020. This extension supports several key priorities including our commitment to:

- Address unmet goals outlined in the original plan;
- Align with Habitat for Humanity International's 2020 strategic plan, new five-year Cost of Home national advocacy campaign and upcoming changes to the affiliate structure, and to;
- Strengthen Habitat’s ongoing listening and participation in community-led initiatives.

While this plan remains our guiding document in its entirety, we have identified specific areas that are of renewed priority through 2020. Those strategies are marked in orange on the following pages.

In partnership,

Christine Schudde  
Executive Director

Brian Barker  
Board President, 2018-2019
guiding principles

Diversity and inclusiveness
Habitat for Humanity welcomes people from all walks of life to partner with us as volunteers, donors, employees and homebuyers. We celebrate and value our diversity, welcome differences and leverage the collective strengths of all people.

A hand up, not a hand out
Habitat for Humanity does not build homes for people, but with them as equal partners. Habitat homeowners build alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage.

The power of homeownership
We believe in the power of homeownership to build strength, stability, independence and opportunity for families and communities.

Focus on community
Habitat for Humanity is committed not just to building homes, but to building community. We prioritize our construction efforts within focus neighborhoods to maximize our impact.

Volunteerism as a social change strategy
Habitat for Humanity volunteers don't just reduce cost—they are our ambassadors and partners in helping to change the world. We are committed to offering opportunities for people in our community to put their values into action.

Collaboration
We strive to create strong, productive and mutually-beneficial partnerships with like-minded organizations in service of our common vision—a community where everyone has a decent place to live.

Transparency and accountability
We are committed to the efficient use of our financial, environmental, and human resources and to full and accurate reporting to our donors, volunteers and partners.
Build community impact
Improve housing conditions through direct engagement.

Serve families and individuals through sustainable construction & housing support services

+ **Build or renovate 30 homes** and sell them with affordable mortgages to qualified homebuyers.
+ Develop and launch a **targeted home preservation program** for households residing within our focus neighborhoods.
  - Develop a **three-year supply of land and properties** for future development.
  - Build and renovate all homes using **sustainable green building practices** with a focus on energy efficiency and future savings for the homebuyer.
+ **Provide comprehensive pre-purchase support** to 100% of Habitat homebuyers including one-on-one counseling, financial education, home maintenance training, and referrals to other service providers as necessary.
+ **Clarify homebuyer qualification criteria and partnership requirements** and promote transparency in qualification decisions.
+ Develop a system for collecting **feedback and input from homeowners** at 6 months, 1 year and 3 years post-purchase to assist with program evaluation and impact measurement.
+ **Provide low-cost home improvement materials and furnishings through the Habitat ReStore, empowering people of all income levels to improve their housing conditions.**
+ **Divert 2,500 tons of usable building materials, appliances and furniture from the landfill to the Habitat ReStore, thereby reducing our organization’s environmental impact.**

Leverage homeownership as a catalyst for community transformation

- **Develop a process for identifying focus neighborhoods** based on need, existing community resources, availability of land/property and organizational capacity.
• **Establish a neighborhood ambassador program** to advise Habitat staff and board on activities in their respective communities as well as to keep residents of those areas apprised of Habitat activities and provide meaningful opportunities to participate in the planning process.

• Maximize neighborhood impact through **strategic community development** versus scattered site development.

• **Encourage mixed-income development** by identifying collaborative development partners with shared vision.

• **Return $4 million to the taxable property base.**

Grow capacity to serve the most vulnerable populations worldwide through partnership with global Habitat affiliates

• Broaden and deepen our relationship with a global Habitat affiliate and tithe $30,000 to **build 10 additional homes outside the United States.**

• **Plan an affiliate Global Village trip** to visit and build with our tithing partner and strengthen our global impact.

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**Build sector impact**

Partner to increase housing access through markets, policies & systems.

**Promote policies that advance access to affordable housing**

+ **Develop and promote advocacy agenda** at the local, state and national levels to increase awareness and action in support of affordable housing.
Support market approaches to increase products, services & financing for affordable housing
- Partner with local lenders to provide affordable mortgages and advocate for improved market strategies to remove barriers to adequate housing and serve exponentially more families.

Build societal impact
Inspire action to end poverty housing through awareness and engagement.

Mobilize volunteers as hearts, hands and voices for our mission
+ Formalize volunteer training and recognition program to maximize the volunteer experience and deepen volunteer commitment.
- Launch Habitat Heroes program for non-construction volunteers and grow to 10 filled positions.
- Expand partnership with AmeriCorps NCCC, National Service and Vista programs.

Serve as a leading voice in growing awareness of housing as a critical foundation for building strength, stability and self-reliance
+ Adopt new messaging to effectively tell Habitat’s story, dispel myths and educate the community about affordable housing; implement cohesive branding across all departments.
- Develop a communications calendar to strategically share our message on our website, social media and email marketing and measure for optimal impact
- Utilize the ReStore’s high traffic volume as a platform for educating and connecting the public to Habitat’s mission.
Build a sustainable organization
Mobilize resources and steward them faithfully.

Fund the mission

- Increase and diversify community support to raise **$1.4 million through philanthropy** from individuals, foundations, faith groups and businesses.
- Continue to **perform with excellence on public grant-funded projects** and seek additional public funding as available for future construction projects.
  + Raise **$4.3 million in gross ReStore sales.**
- Identify additional ReStore location or larger flagship store location.

Grow skills & leadership capabilities

- Create annual **development and work plans** for all staff members and implement an executive and staff **performance evaluation** process.
- Research best practices for **investing in and retaining great staff** including reviews of compensation, recognition strategies and support for innovation.
  + Create a **Board Governance committee** focused on recruiting new members, orienting and training members and improving board effectiveness.

Operate with excellence

- Shift focus of Board of Directors to **long-range vision and strategic planning**; consider adoption of “consent agenda” format for more effective and engaging meetings.
- Identify **master list of policies and procedures**, including guidelines for transparent and inclusive decision-making processes. Add policy review to regular board meeting agenda.
- Hold **annual meeting of board and staff** to review and update strategic plan.
- Align our business practices with **Habitat International’s Affiliate of Distinction** guidelines.