

Rochester Housing Authority

2016-2021 Strategic Plan

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Message from the Board

The Board of Commissioners initiated and supported this comprehensive strategic planning process with the aim of developing a robust framework for change and growth. The plan is an opportunity to reaffirm, rethink and innovate ways for the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) to better serve its clients and to align our efforts with the Rochester Monroe County Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI). As a result, the Board of Commissioners has spent considerable time working with the Interim Executive Director and the staff to develop a strategic plan that is a workable and vibrant roadmap for progress and transformation.



This Strategic Plan has been built upon certain assumptions that have translated into seven guiding core strategic goals. The strategies to provide the framework for the transformational activities are identified in each section of the plan. These core strategies are the impetus for the hard work that must take place to produce new units, preserve existing ones, improve the quality of our work, and monitor the integrity of our actions.

RHA has refined its mission statement to affirm its commitment to providing housing opportunities to the Greater Rochester Community. As a leading force for justice and progress, the scope of our mission reaches beyond the work of a basic, housing resource center. At the heart of the RHA mission is the determination to ensure that every resident is given the chance to be a valued member of the Greater Rochester Community. This also entails that we must work to both eradicate the existence and prevent the rise

of all barriers that restrict any resident of Greater Rochester from joining and partaking in the larger community. This commitment on the part of RHA's leadership has been further driven by the historical *Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc.* Supreme Court Case, which recently upheld that "disparate impact claims" do not supersede the rules and regulations set in the *Fair Housing Act*.

In line with our vision to provide economically sustainable and viable communities throughout Greater Rochester, I am proud to say that this plan provides comprehensive strategies for promoting resident self-sustainability. The best path to self-sufficiency is to build a platform to economic opportunities – with emphasis placed on building Section 3 participation, career development, and job placement, as well as maintaining and enhancing key resident services, such as support programs for the elderly and the disabled.

This plan is designed to clearly communicate our vision for the future to our many diverse stakeholders and partners, both public and private, throughout the City of Rochester and Greater State of NY. We sincerely hope that readers find this plan a dynamic demonstration of how we can all work together and persevere to meet the pressing affordable housing needs of Greater Rochester.

Respectfully,

George Moses, Chair

Message from the Executive Director

I am pleased to present to you the 2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan for the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA). This plan was developed over the past year with input from numerous stakeholders representing diverse viewpoints on how RHA can best serve the Greater Rochester Community. RHA is dedicated to serving its residents and program participants, but we recognize that we also have a broader role in improving Greater Rochester.



The plan establishes ambitious goals for building a path to self-sufficiency for more of our residents and participants and increasing the number of Housing Choice Vouchers. RHA recognizes that, in order to expand its reach and impact to the communities of Greater Rochester, it is not enough to simply provide quality affordable housing alone. This is why our plan contains strategies and actions for improving and growing our Section 3 program, resident relations and participation in activities, resident input, training and employment opportunities, and improving our current housing stock and financial assets.

RHA further recognizes that our goals cannot be achieved alone. We will leverage our partnerships with government, the private sector and non-profit organizations to achieve success. Greater Rochester needs more quality affordable housing, training, and employment opportunities, and RHA will lead, facilitate, and support these efforts.

The plan provides goals focused on staff and organizational capacity, as well as on internal processes and systems. RHA is

fortunate to have fantastic hard-working and dedicated staff, and obtaining their input was a high priority in the strategic planning process. This plan recognizes the need to support them if we are to achieve our goals, and provides various strategies for developing RHA's workforce through initiatives including: employee training programs, job shadowing and mentorship, succession planning, and compensation studies.

This strategic planning initiative was structured in a manner to transform our vision and goals into real results. The plan will be used to guide the development of a new organizational structure for RHA. Mirroring our goals, we will have teams dedicated to facilities, clients, community, and administration. Additionally, we will utilize a "goal tracker" with performance metrics to measure our progress and ensure we stay on track. The RHA Board of Commissioners and executive leadership recognized a need for RHA to chart a new strategic course to ensure that the opportunities were pursued to improve the quality of life for all residents of Greater Rochester.

I want to recognize the support of our staff, residents, program participants, and our stakeholders for their assistance in developing this plan. They pushed us to re-envision RHA's roles and set ambitious goals so we can play our role in making the Greater Rochester Area a thriving community.

Respectfully,

Shawn Burr, Interim Executive Director

RHA Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners provided significant input throughout the Strategic Planning process. From their leadership in starting the process through numerous meetings to discuss the mission, vision, goals and objectives, they have provided direction necessary to lead RHA for the next five years.



Rosemary Rivera, Commissioner



Sara Valencia, Commissioner



John Page, Vice-Chair



George Moses, Board Chair



Calvin Lee, Jr., Commissioner



Willie Otis, Resident Commissioner



Hershel Patterson, Resident Commissioner

Planning Framework

The Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) engaged in an extensive process over the past year to develop this Strategic Plan. One of the central goals of the plan was to provide clear direction to the agency as it endeavors to support the residents of Greater Rochester at a time of decreasing and unstable sources of revenue. This plan identifies key goals and objectives to provide the agency with a clear direction and a framework for decision making.

RHA started the process by issuing a Request for Proposal for assistance with the development of the strategic plan. RHA selected Bronner Group, LLC (BRONNER) to develop the strategic plan. Below is a visual representation of the process.



Analyzing the Environment

A comprehensive review was undertaken to provide a solid foundation for the plan, including:

- Existing and previous strategic and agency plans developed by RHA were reviewed to support a coordinated approach.
- RHA leadership and staff were interviewed and surveyed to gain an understanding of internal processes and identify key issues facing the agency. This helped identify approaches to saving costs and prioritize staff development activities.
- RHA landlords and vendors were interviewed and surveyed to gain further insight on external processes.
- Interviews or surveys were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders including, but not limited to:
 - Public Housing Residents
 - Section 8 Program Participants
 - Employees
 - Vendors/Contractors
 - Landlords
 - Board of Commissioners
 - Community Partners

Identifying and Analyzing Strategic Issues

The background research and discussions with key stakeholders were used to develop draft mission and vision statements, values and guiding principles, and goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan is focused on internal and external facing initiatives.

The draft goals and objectives were reviewed and refined several times based on input from RHA leadership, staff, and the public. The draft goals were revisited and revised several times by the Board and the Senior Staff, including two strategic planning retreats held on November 11 and December 15. This document provides the final version of the plan for approval by the Board of Commissioners.

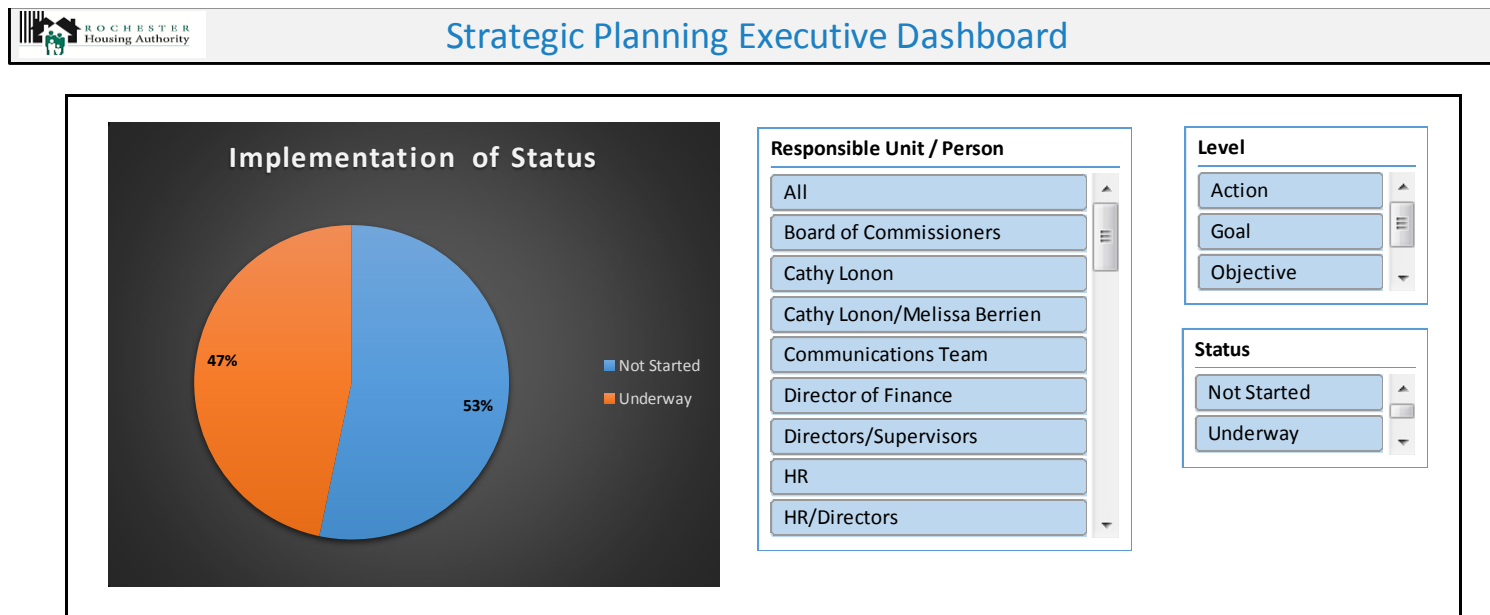
Implementation and the Action Plan

Several steps were taken to ensure the Strategic Plan is successfully implemented, including a reviewed staff organizational structure, increased clarity on the roles of affiliated non-profits, and an Action Plan with implementation framework.

The Senior Staff worked in coordination with the Board of Commissioners in developing an updated organizational structure which mirrors the framework of the Strategic Plan's goals with teams dedicated to facilities, clients, community, and administration. This structure will support the implementation of the plan through clear lines of accountability. The organizational structure is provided in Appendix A.

An Action Plan was developed to identify responsibilities, priorities, timeline, and metrics. The Action Plan will be updated by project leads monthly to aid in tracking implementation. This Strategic Plan document includes key information from the Action Plan. Additional information, such as notes, is included in a user-friendly spreadsheet that is organized to track the progress of implementation. Regular meetings will be used to discuss the status of projects. If necessary, the information in goal tracker can be changed to reflect new information.

The goal tracker includes an issue log which is used to document ongoing and closed issues related to specific tasks and to identify tasks requiring executive action. It contains a Summary Report and Executive Dashboard that provide interactive snapshots of current progress/status for executive management. This allows the executive team to identify and focus on activities that are behind schedule.



Mission and Vision

As part of the strategic planning process, RHA developed new mission and vision statements below to clearly identify our current role and where we envision our future.

MISSION:

- *The Rochester Housing Authority is an essential resource for Greater Rochester, providing quality housing opportunities and services for its communities.*

VISION:

- *To be the leader in developing and cultivating dynamic, economically sustainable, and desirable communities where everyone can thrive.*

Values and Guiding Principles

The Core Values outlined below represent those that govern the actions of all RHA employees and Commissioners and establish a standard of excellence for the Authority.



Strategic Plan Goals

Our Strategic Plan contains seven goals focused on housing, people, communications, and organizational structure. Each goal contains strategic objectives and specific action items to measure RHA's success.

ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY 2016 – 2021 GOALS



Goal 1

Create a supportive environment and path to self-sufficiency for residents and participants.



Goal 2

Diversify and grow overall revenue, resources, and community partnerships.



Goal 3

Support our employees to enhance an organizational culture of excellence.

Strategic Plan Goals

ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY 2016 – 2021 GOALS



Goal 4

Preserve and increase inventory of RHA-owned or controlled properties and grow financial assets.



Goal 5

Increase the number of vouchers, participants, and landlords.

Strategic Plan Goals

ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY 2016 – 2021 GOALS



Goal 6

Improve internal and external communication.



Goal 7

Ensure work processes, systems, and staff are integrated and aligned to support RHA's mission and to enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Strategic Goal I:



Create a supportive environment and path to self-sufficiency for residents and participants.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Implement best practices to ensure exemplary Section 3 and self-sufficiency programs
- b. Develop relationships with outside partners for apprenticeship, training, and job placement
- c. Identify, align, and promote existing services in cooperation with Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI), Rochester Housing Charities, the City of Rochester, Monroe County, the State of New York, and other service providers
- d. Continue supportive programs for seniors and people with disabilities
- e. Expand homeownership opportunities
- f. Develop partnerships for addressing foreclosed homes

Strategic Goal II:



Diversify and grow overall revenue, resources, and community partnerships.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Create and implement Alternative Revenue Sourcing strategy
- b. Develop strategic relationships with community partners to leverage additional resources
- c. Effectively leverage RHA affiliates
- d. Develop and implement strategies to address capital needs
- e. Develop and expand advocacy efforts to increase revenue from traditional and non-traditional funding sources
- f. Increase participation, decrease the concentration of poverty, and prevent de facto discrimination in compliance with MBE, WBE, and Section 3 federal and RHA established policy.

Strategic Goal III:



Support our employees to enhance an organizational culture of excellence.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Develop workforce to support succession planning and career ladders
- b. Build a system for training and supporting employees to reach their full potential based on training needs assessment
- c. Facilitate the Board of Commissioners in developing additional expertise
- d. Identify and implement ways to improve attraction and retention of employees
- e. Leverage strategic relationships to improve administration of the Civil Service system

Strategic Goal IV:



Preserve and increase inventory of RHA-owned or controlled properties and grow financial assets.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Transform identified public housing properties through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program
- b. Develop RHA-owned mixed-income and multi-family housing
- c. Develop resources to improve the quality of the existing housing stock

Strategic Goal V:



Increase the number of vouchers, participants, and landlords.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Increase the administrative efficiency of the Section 8 programs
- b. Obtain additional vouchers as buildings convert from public housing and multi-family programs
- c. Grow the existing voucher program and pursue opportunities for new programs
- d. Improve landlords' program awareness and communication to increase and sustain participation
- e. Develop and implement process for waitlist management to include more frequent opening of the waitlist beginning in the Spring of 2016

Strategic Goal VI:



Improve internal and external communication.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Increase effective communication to internal and external stakeholders
- b. Create and implement policy for providing information in non-English languages
- c. Develop and implement an external communication strategy that uses branding, newsletters, town hall meetings, press releases, and social media
- d. Increase effective communication to internal staff
- e. Increase effective communication to residents and program participants
- f. Train staff on effective communication and customer service

Strategic Goal VII:



Ensure work processes, systems, and staff are integrated and aligned to support RHA's mission and to enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Objectives/Supporting Actions:

- a. Develop and implement a technology strategy for updating software and hardware to reduce paper processes and streamline customer service
- b. Develop comprehensive policies and procedures with systematic approach for updating and budgeting to meet needs
- c. Educate RHA staff the role they play in supporting the mission and vision
- d. Develop and maintain goal tracker for tracking the implementation of strategic plan

