



WASHINGTON LOW INCOME
Housing Alliance

STRATEGIC PLAN
2021-2024



ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The **Washington Low Income Housing Alliance** Over our 30+ year history, we have continued to learn, grow, and advocate for just and equitable housing policy.

The Washington Low Income Housing Alliance has a rich history reaching back more than three decades. Its roots can be traced to the Washington Coalition for Rural Housing, which was created in 1980 to advocate for more affordable housing in rural Washington. Our story is filled with many twists, turns, and legislative achievements; it's a story of how a relatively small organization grew into a movement that today is getting affordable housing the public attention and recognition it so profoundly deserves. Above all, this is a story of people who recognized how much more can be achieved when we all work together and speak with a unified voice.

The Washington Housing Alliance Action Fund is our 501(c)(4) sister organization. The two organizations work together on policy advocacy. The Action Fund also engages in electoral advocacy.



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This process began in November 2020 and concluded in March 2021. This strategic plan was collaboratively developed by the board of directors and supported by Headwater People, a consulting group.

- 1 Strategic planning committee spent time deeply considering the Housing Alliance's Vision, Mission and Values. This group thought through how those declarations are relevant in the state's current environment and in relation to the Housing Alliance's present opportunities and strengths. This initial commitment grounded and inspired the strategic planning work.
- 2 Headwater People reached out to affordable housing advocates, funders, policy makers, and community organizers via an online survey and individual interviews
- 3 The strategic planning committee reviewed the survey data and reconvened to discern the organization's strategic priorities by charting the environmental landscape and taking stock of the organization's strengths and leverage opportunities.
- 4 The board set high level priorities that would lead the Housing Alliance closer to achieving its mission. At this stage, the primary concern was strategy. Translating the priorities with an operational lens would begin in following stages with staff taking the lead. The guiding paradigm for this stage is to Do the Right Thing.

This step prioritizes defining what the translation of these priorities into what on the ground success will realistically look like, considering the dynamic context.
- 5 With the strategic priorities set, the staff digested these priorities and gathered to assess their programmatic and staffing capacity and project what effective and viable success looks like in the next two years. The guiding paradigm shifted here from Doing the Right Thing to Doing Things Right.

The now paired strategic priorities and measures of success then was reviewed and approved by the strategic planning committee and finally by the full board.



MISSION

The Washington Low Income Housing Alliance leads the movement to ensure that all our residents have the opportunity to thrive in safe, healthy, affordable homes. We do this through advocacy, education, and organizing.

VISION

Our vision is that all Washington residents have the opportunity to live in safe, healthy, and affordable homes in thriving communities.



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SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

While each of the Housing Alliance strategic priorities are dynamic and intersectional, the priorities are organized under four themes: Equity and Racial Justice, Strategic Communications and Narrative Development, a Roadmap to Housing Justice, and Capacity and Organization.

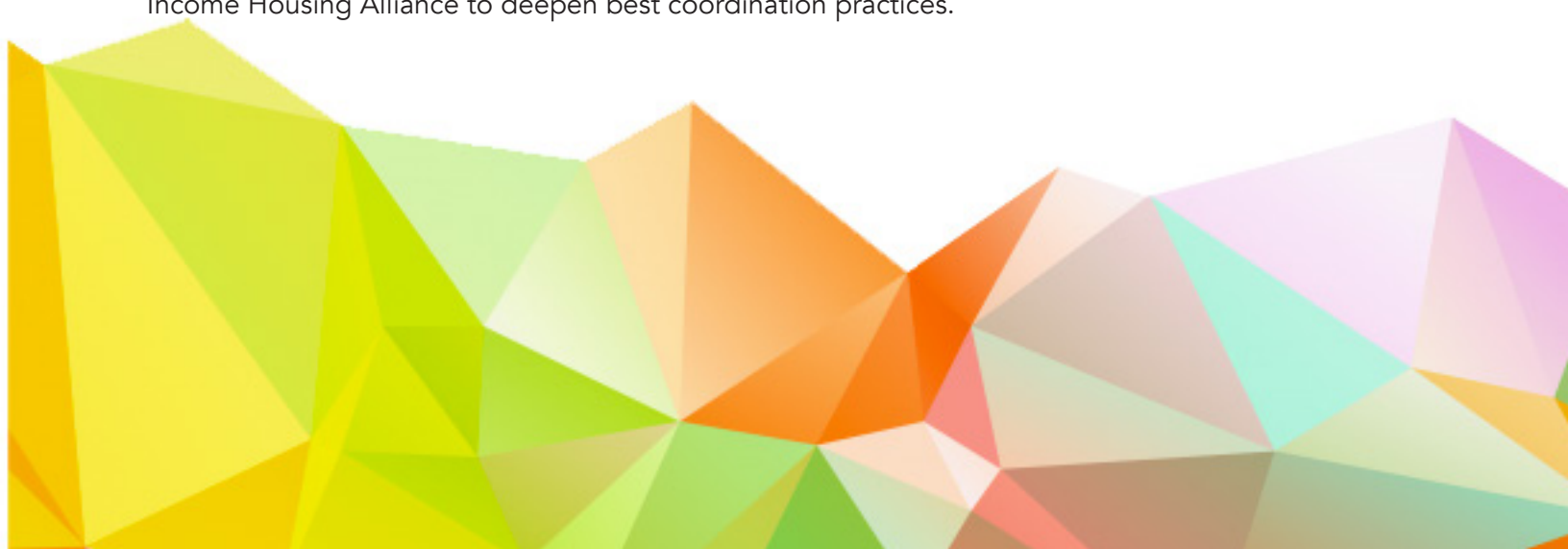
In the next three years, as the Housing Alliance continues in its commitment to equity and racial justice, we will adopt internal racial equity practices that engage current partners and create new partnerships with people working in race equity spheres. We will develop a public policy strategy that identifies racial and other disparities in housing and supports targeted efforts to achieve universal goals. The Housing Alliance will also design and convene stakeholder spaces to where drivers of housing issues can be surfaced and strategies to connect policy and advocacy work can be developed.

The Housing Alliance will also produce an education campaign for policy makers and the public that clarifies root causes, social consequences, and solutions. And finally, the Housing Alliance will create and execute communication and engagement strategies to align members on strategic foci and priorities.

The Housing Alliance will develop a multi year plan to move us closer to a time when everyone in Washington lives in a safe, healthy, affordable home.



To increase effective stewarding of resources and staff time and to maximize impact ,the Housing Alliance will complete an organizational review of both the Action Fund and the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance to deepen best coordination practices.



Strategic Priority ONE

Adopt internal racial equity practices that engage current members and creates partnerships with people working in race equity spheres.

We believe that undoing systemic racism and other forms of institutional oppression is foundational to our mission and we are working to become a fully equitable and anti-racist organization. We are committed to embodying a commitment to equity and racial justice that is recognizable in our practices and partnerships and to growing as an organization that expresses our values holistically.

What success will look like:

- Members of organizational leadership bodies have signed annual personal commitments to equity and racial justice. Our members are also asked to affirm support for an equity statement.
- Development of an annual accountability report that analyzes our equity and racial justice work.
- Publication of a refocused annual dashboard report, "Bringing Washington Home," that highlights disparities in affordable housing and homelessness experiences in Washington.
- Organizational leadership includes those with intersecting and marginalized identities, specifically people impacted by housing injustice.
- We are actively participating in coalitions that focus on BIPOC-led statewide policy efforts intersect with affordable housing and homelessness.
- Adopt revised mission, vision, and values that reflect our commitment to equity and racial justice.

Strategic Priority TWO

Strategic Communication/Narrative Development

The way we talk about affordable homes and homelessness greatly impacts people's understanding of solutions and their willingness to act on those solutions. Using tools and research from the Housing Justice Narrative Project, we will develop a narrative for Washington that articulates how our present housing crisis reflects historic and contemporary racist policies and that advances equitable solutions.

What success will look like:

- Members and advocates participate in training and tools that we provide on effective use of narrative.
- We have materials available in a variety of formats and languages describing the causes, consequences, and solutions to the affordable housing and homelessness crisis.
- Creation of a public education campaign focusing on decision makers, our base, and the persuadable public.
- Our narrative and messages are reflected externally –by lawmakers, in the press, in social media, and in communications from members and allies



Strategic Priority THREE

Road Map to Housing Justice

We have made big strides in advancing solutions to the affordable housing and homelessness crisis in Washington over the last several years and are poised to build on that momentum. We will develop a comprehensive set of policies, that when enacted, will move us closer to everyone in Washington having a safe, affordable place to live.

What success will look like:

- Board adopts a multi-year plan ("Road Map") that uses targeted universalism principles to remove barriers and ensure strategies meet the needs of those furthest away from housing justice (including BIPOC communities, people with disabilities, people with behavioral health needs, people who have been incarcerated, and LGBTQ+ people.)
- Communities and people who are most impacted have leadership roles in developing policies and strategies.
- Members, allies, and advocates embrace the road map and advocate for the policy solutions.



Strategic Priority FOUR

Capacity and Organization

Both the Housing Alliance and Action Fund have experienced high level of success in advocacy and organizing. This success has also brought increased opportunities and intersectional work. As both organizations continue to grow in scope and impact, we will increase organizational capacity by avoiding redundancies and coordinating efforts where appropriate.

What success will look like:

- We have written case statements in a variety of formats for the Housing Alliance and Housing Action Fund, that can be articulated by staff, board, and other organizational leaders.
- We have an organizational theory of change that guides how we prioritize activities and a framework/rubric for decision making.
- Future staffing structure and priorities are clear, and we have a fundraising plan to support a larger staff team.
- We have reviewed, and changed if necessary, where public policy advocacy should be based within the c3-c4 structure to have the greatest impact.



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A heartfelt thank you to the entire Washington Low Income Housing Alliance for this opportunity to build this plan with you. Your leadership and service to our state is inspiring and it is a true privilege to support you in our work.

HEADWATER PEOPLE

is a Native-owned family company purposed to serve the greater good.

OUR MISSION

To work towards a more equitable and flourishing future by partnering with public and private organizations committed to a more just and healthful world.

To deliver effective, efficient, and thoughtful results to our clients and the people they serve.

To inspire and retain talented and dedicated individuals by providing meaningful work, career opportunities, and the capacity to offer transformative service to our clients and their missions.

OUR VISION

We envision a long term, profitable community whose service is transformative, empathetic, and excellent; and where the lives of our partners, clients, and neighborhoods are enriched by our presence.



HEADWATER PEOPLE