2024 Strategic Plan

Raleigh Housing Authority

Strategic Goals

1. **Vibrant Communities**

2. **Thriving Customers**

3. **Organizational Health**

4. **Effective Partnerships**

5. **Racial and Social Equity**

Strategic Goal 1—Vibrant Communities: Create access to and develop vibrant, economically diverse communities of high opportunity throughout our jurisdiction.

Objective 1. **Develop access to and acquire the financial tools necessary for success.**

Strategies

a. Obtain and maintain an investment-grade credit rating for issuing and selling RHA municipal bonds.
b. Grow unrestricted and restricted reserves to fund the objectives and strategies related to this goal.
c. Pursue ability and state authorization to self-develop LIHTC properties as soon as possible.
d. Ensure that all RHA assets generate positive cash flow.
e. Recruit for a Real Estate Finance professional experienced in affordable and market-rate housing finance.

Objective 2. **Reposition all public housing developments, preferably through one-for-one replacement and an increase of at least 2,000 units.**

Strategies

a. Complete Capital Needs Assessments for all public housing and determine appropriate redevelopment path (RAD, Section 18, Other)
b. Based on CNAs, redevelopment path, and other considerations, develop a prioritized list of projects.
c. Create and expand a Real Estate Investments Department with the capacity to execute a repositioning strategy.
d. Dispose of scattered sites Public Housing and make houses available for affordable homeownership.
e. Develop appropriate relocation strategies and plans.
f. Work with City and County partners to ensure robust local funding capacity.

Objective 3. **Preserve and acquire existing affordable housing with expiring affordability terms.**

Strategies

a. Maintain and monitor a database of affordable properties, including expiration dates of affordability requirements.
b. Work with City, County and State to establish a budget/funding source for acquiring affordable properties in danger of becoming market-rent properties.

c. As a primary source of capital for acquisitions, focus on the use of RHA-issued municipal bonds.
d. Work with the NC State Housing Finance Agency and other funders to require perpetual affordability as a condition of funding.
e. Collaborate with other owners of affordable housing to acquire properties with expiring affordability requirements.

Objective 4.   Expand RHA housing stock through new construction, especially affordable housing.
Strategies
a. Create the internal capacity to self-develop new construction projects.
b. Develop new housing on RHA vacant land (including Halifax ballfield) first.
c. Pursue City-owned (and County) vacant property acquired and set aside for affordable housing development.
d. Create housing in partnership with other developers.
e. Explore partnership with or consent of Wake County Housing Authority and relevant cities to develop new housing outside of Raleigh's jurisdiction.

Objective 5.   Utilize the Housing Choice Voucher Program to promote mobility and access to communities of high opportunity.
Strategies
a. Analyze the potential of Small Area Fair Market Rents (FMRs) as a means of creating greater access to communities of higher opportunity.
b. Pursue grant funding through HUD and other sources to design and implement a mobility program.
c. Provide assistance to tenant-based voucher recipients to pursue housing options in lower poverty communities with access to amenities like schools, public transportation, grocery stores, jobs, and green spaces.
d. Design the Project-Based Voucher Program to locate housing opportunities throughout RHA's jurisdiction.

Strategic Goal 2—Thriving Customers[1]: RHA customers will live in communities where they and their households have the opportunity to thrive.

Objective 1: **Planning, design and implementation of policies, programs and services will be customer centered.**

Strategies

a. Make reasonable efforts to support the formation of customer organizations that represent the interests of their communities.
b. Consult with customer organizations and residents on all significant policy, program, and service initiatives.
c. Use a variety of tools to gather relevant information, including surveys, focus groups and community meetings, before making policy and program decisions.

Objective 2. **High-quality customer service will be a key objective of all staff interactions with RHA's customers.**

Strategies

a. All staff will receive annual training and coaching to learn and reinforce the skills and knowledge to deliver quality customer service.
b. Measure customer service performance through a survey at least annually.
c. All departments will design ongoing customer service assessments after interactions (e.g., inspections, annual recertifications) to monitor progress towards the goal of high-quality customer service.
d. Shortcomings identified through surveys and other feedback mechanisms will be prioritized for improvement.

Objective 3. **RHA will pursue and develop the resources needed to provide access to services that support households' ability to thrive.**

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[1] "RHA customers" is used to refer to "residents"—those residing in properties owned and/or managed by RHA—as well as "participants"—recipients of Housing Choice Vouchers.

Strategies

a. Leverage support and other services available in the communities where our customers live.
b. Hire service coordinators to connect and refer customers to services in the community.
c. Include space for the delivery of support services as part of all redevelopment efforts.
d. Operating Pro Formas for all redeveloped communities will include funding for service coordination "above the line."
e. Hire staff or consultants to pursue cost-effective local and federal grants to fund services by community-based organizations.

Objective 4. **Services and programs provided will be consistent with supporting customers' need to thrive.**

Strategies

a. For the elderly, programs and services that combat isolation and loneliness will be prioritized.
b. For non-elderly older adults, acquiring education and employment-related skills will be prioritized to promote economic self-sufficiency.
c. For youth, education support and healthy activities and programs will be prioritized.
d. For families with young children, childcare and early education programs will be primary.
e. For customers who cannot live independently without significant support services, RHA will partner with providers of permanent supportive housing through project-based vouchers.

Objective 5. **RHA will leverage technology to empower our customers to access information and educational materials.**

Strategies

a. Pursue grants and other resources to assist customers to close the digital divide.
b. Prioritize affordable connectivity and internet access in all new developments (including redevelopment)
c. Leverage Yardi's Aspire learning management system to provide skills training and information to RHA customers, e.g., develop learning plans with relevant courses for RHA customers.
d. Upgrade RHA's website and digital customer newsletter as key information and education resources.

Strategic Goal 3—Organizational Health: Continually maximize RHA's Organizational Health to ensure RHA's ability to thrive through challenges.

Objective 1. **Ensure that all staff understand the organization's core goals and the strategies to achieve them.**

Strategies

a. Periodically (every five years), develop an agency strategic plan with broad staff, client, and other stakeholder involvement.
b. Based on the overall strategic plan, develop an annual plan that forms the basis of the annual budget.
c. "Overcommunicate" the goals and strategies through a variety of methods.
d. Ensure that the goals and strategies become embedded in RHA's culture and systems.

Objective 2. **Increase employee satisfaction as a key determinant of overall organizational health.**

Strategies

a. Regularly assess indicators of employee satisfaction through surveys.
b. Identify lowest scoring indicators for targeted actions.
c. Use qualitative means (e.g., employee focus groups) to shed light on specific factors that impact satisfaction.
d. Use employee feedback to positively impact specific indicators (e.g., leadership communication) with targeted actions.

Objective 3. **Increase employee engagement as a key determinant of overall organizational health.**

Strategies

a. Regularly assess indicators of employee engagement through surveys
b. Assure employees that they are seen—**not anonymous.**
c. Ensure that employees see **relevance** of their work to RHA's mission.
d. Ensure that employees can **measure** their own progress.

Objective 4. **Establish a competitive compensation and benefits system to attract and retain a qualified workforce.**

Strategies

a. At least every three years, conduct a market survey as the primary tool for ensuring competitive compensation for all staff.
b. Conduct an annual health benefits survey to ensure that RHA remains competitive and that the benefits are attractive to all employees.
c. Establish a performance-based compensation system that has broad support.

Objective 5. **Leverage state-of-the-art information systems, including Yardi, to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and quality customer service.**

Strategies

a. Transition to paperless operations through Yardi software, especially RentCafe, which will allow customers to interact with RHA mostly through online portals.
b. Ensure that all staff receive Yardi training to maximize operational efficiency.
c. Utilize Aspire as a key online platform for professional development.
d. Focus all departments on the goal of capturing cost savings from investment in technology.

Objective 6. **Implement a comprehensive Human Resources Information Management System that provides the framework for talent recruitment, onboarding, development, and retention.**

Strategies

a. Maximize effectiveness in recruiting talented professionals.
b. Develop and implement an effective and efficient onboarding program, including using Yardi's Aspire application.
c. Invest in professional development of all staff consistent with current and future job requirements.
d. Identify and implement multiple other strategies to increase employee retention.

Objective 7. **Develop a more effective means of leveraging the resources and talents represented by RHA's Board of Commissioners.**

Strategies

a. Establish three to four committees of the Board—Real Estate Investment Committee (currently exists), Personnel Committee (currently meets only to evaluate the CEO's performance), Finance and Audit Committee (replacing the Audit Committee), and Policies and Programs Committee.

b. Each committee will meet quarterly to review reports as well as consider relevant resolutions and changes for Board action.

c. All Board members will be required to serve on at least one committee, with the Chair and Vice Chair expected to serve on two committees.

d. All Board members will be required to attend an established percentage of regular Board meetings as well as committee meetings.

e. Select relevant training for Board members and require completion of such training within the first 12 months of appointment as a condition for continued service as a Commissioner.

f. Develop and implement an effective and efficient onboarding program, including using Yardi's Aspire application.

g. Enlist the services of a consultant to advise the Board on best practices and more effective functioning of a PHA Board of Commissioners.

Strategic Goal 4—Effective Partnerships: RHA will pursue effective partnerships with a broad range of mission-aligned organizations.

Objective 1.   Implement a strategic engagement plan as a core ingredient and building block of effective partnerships.

Strategies
a. Establish a clear brand based on shared values.
b. Identify and pursue a set of communications goals.
c. Define key messages to be communicated consistently to identified audiences.
d. Utilize a range of communications tools—website, social media, focus groups, etc.—to overcommunicate RHA's mission, vision, goals and strategies.
e. Create feedback loops and use input from surveys, focus groups and community meetings.

Objective 2.   Increase customers' access to partners' services to enhance their potential to flourish.
Strategies
a. Leverage community-based service providers to focus on RHA's clients—families, youth, children, elderly, etc.
b. Increase support service coordinators to connect RHA clients to services in their communities.
c. Prioritize the use of space by providers directly serving our clients.
d. Include the development of nonresidential space in all redevelopment plans.
e. Identify and pursue resources to fund contracts with service partners.
f. In all redeveloped communities, fund support services "above the line."

Objective 3.   Build strong relationships with elected officials and City and County staff and other government partners to maximize the availability of affordable housing.
Strategies
a. Work with City, County and State to establish a budget/funding source for acquiring affordable properties in danger of becoming market-rent properties.
b. Create, maintain and monitor a database of all LIHTC and other affordable properties, including the expiration dates of the affordability requirements.

c. Work with the NC State Housing Finance Agency and other funders to require perpetual affordability as a condition of funding.
d. Collaborate with other owners of affordable housing to acquire properties with expiring affordability requirements.
e. Obtain and use RHA's credit rating as a source for affordable housing acquisitions.

Objective 4. Partner with a wide spectrum of nonprofit and other housing developers to maximize the availability of affordable housing.

Strategies

a. Use RHA's funding resources, including project-based vouchers, to support partners' efforts to increase housing production.
b. Collaborate with providers for permanent supportive housing to serve households needing extensive services to remain stably housed.
c. Develop partnerships to ensure that there is a predictable supply of housing for RHA residents' permanent or temporary relocation needs.
d. Work with the NC State Housing Finance Agency and other funders to require perpetual affordability as a condition of funding.
e. Collaborate with other owners of affordable housing to acquire properties with expiring affordability requirements.

Objective 5. Achieve greater effectiveness through RHA's nonprofit partners—Capitol Area Developments and Oak City Affordable Communities—to achieve the mission imperatives of increasing the availability of quality affordable housing.

Strategies

a. Seek the services of a qualified consultant to advise RHA and its nonprofit partners on the most effective and appropriate structure to meet the area's need for quality affordable housing.
b. Develop a strategic plan for developing and financing affordable housing through the relationship with RHA's nonprofits.

c. Maximize the accumulation of unrestricted funds for housing development through the operations of the nonprofit partners and that of RHA.

Objective 6.   **Utilize the Housing Choice Voucher Program to create partnerships with landlords and owners with assets in communities of high opportunity.**

Strategies

a. Analyze the potential of Small Area FMRs as a means of creating greater access to communities of higher opportunity.
b. Pursue grant funding through HUD and other sources to design and implement a mobility program.
c. Provide assistance to tenant-based voucher recipients to pursue housing options in lower poverty communities with access to amenities like schools, public transportation, grocery stores, jobs, and green spaces.
d. Develop partnerships with housing providers through the Project-Based Voucher Program to locate housing opportunities with a focus on low-poverty neighborhoods.

Strategic Goal 5—Racial and Social Equity: Pursue and Promote Racial and Social Equity in RHA's Housing, Community, and Economic Development Efforts

Objective 1. **Address the disproportionate impacts of gentrification and displacement on Black and Hispanic communities.**

Strategies

a. Ensure a robust supply of quality affordable housing in all neighborhoods, especially in those where Black and other people of color have been forced out due to market forces.
b. Prioritize increased affordable housing close to downtown Raleigh for convenient access to job centers.
c. Target transportation hubs for increased affordable housing to ensure affordable transit to employment and amenities.

Objective 2. **Leverage RHA's resources to provide equitable access to livable wage jobs.**

Strategies

a. Establish an internship program that can lead to full-time employment with RHA and other employers.
b. Market internship and employment opportunities to students and graduates of the area's Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
c. Target entry-level positions to customers with limited employment experience.
d. Use RHA's purchasing power (e.g., Capital Fund and resources for development) to leverage employment opportunities for people of color.

Objective 3. **Leverage RHA's construction and development opportunities to strengthen and grow minority-owned businesses.**

Strategies

a. Reach out to established minority-owned businesses as a regular part of RHA's procurement practices.
b. Utilize RHA's annual capital improvement investments ($3 to $4 million annually) to provide contracting opportunities for minority-owned businesses to grow and thrive.
c. Develop strategic partnerships with minority-owned businesses to provide progressively larger opportunities for participation larger multi-million-dollar projects, as subcontractors and eventually general contractors.