MISSION STATEMENT
Hudson River Housing provides a continuum of services that improves lives and communities through housing with compassion and development with vision. We create pathways out of homelessness through empowerment, education, and advocacy. We strengthen communities by developing and preserving affordable housing and creating opportunities for people and places to thrive.

VISION STATEMENT
Housing is a basic human right. It should be available to all, regardless of income, family makeup, physical or mental health issues, or any other defining factors. All inhabitants of our region will have access to decent, cost-appropriate housing that meets their needs. Communities, including their residents and governing bodies, will value attractive, affordable, and well-designed housing and neighborhoods as essential to everyday life.

The Board of Directors adopted the above mission statement, and reaffirmed our vision statement, in November 2017. The revised mission statement more accurately reflects the broad scope of Hudson River Housing’s work as we near four decades of operations.

HISTORY
Hudson River Housing was founded in 1982 with a mission to serve the growing homeless population in Dutchess County. Our first programs consisted of emergency shelter and services for homeless individuals and families. In order to meet the need for affordable housing for households facing homelessness, Hudson River Housing became engaged in real estate development. Since our inception, we have brought over 1,100 units of affordable housing under our management through new construction, rehabilitation, and property acquisition. We currently manage a property portfolio of 663 units in 77 buildings at 38 locations. These properties include units dedicated to meeting the needs of youth, seniors, veterans, and those with mental illness, as well as the general population. In addition to affordable housing managed by our organization, our NeighborWorks HomeOwnership Center promotes homeownership, creates educated and confident homebuyers, and assists homeowners in preserving their investment. Our work has had a significant positive impact on neighborhood conditions, broadening our impact to include an expertise in community development and the expansion of programs that help both people and places thrive.

Today, Hudson River Housing operates five primary lines of business.
Hudson River Housing provides a continuum of services that improves lives and communities through housing with compassion and development with vision. We create pathways out of homelessness and opportunities for people and places to thrive.

Resident Services
Our goal is to move people to self-sufficiency and to reduce housing instability.
(1982)

Real Estate Development
Our goal is to ensure we have sufficient housing available to all.
(1991)

HomeOwnership Promotion & Preservation
Our goal is to help people achieve the dream of homeownership and to strengthen neighborhoods.
(1997)

Community Building & Engagement
Our goal is to empower residents and stakeholders to create communities of opportunity for all.
(1996)

Property Management
Our goal is to provide and manage quality affordable housing for low and moderate income residents, young adults, veterans, and seniors.
(1992)
The 2020 Strategic Plan is the result of over six months of evaluation regarding the agency as an organization, and the environment in which we operate. The purpose of this plan is to articulate the strategic priorities adopted by Hudson River Housing that will guide the annual operations of the organization over the next three years, in order to assist us in achieving our 2020 Outcomes. Hudson River Housing’s staff director team led the strategic planning process, with guidance from NeighborWorks America.

The strategic planning process began with a staff survey, which was implemented in July 2017. Over 70 responses were received, touching on a wide variety of topics relating to staff satisfaction, commitment to our mission, and vision for the future of the agency. Concurrently, we worked with our relationship manager from NeighborWorks America to conduct a series of interviews with community stakeholders. Twenty-nine stakeholders were contacted via phone and email, and asked to share their comments on community needs, threats, and opportunities for Hudson River Housing. In addition, staff undertook a Market Analysis, compiling extensive data on market conditions, demographics, income and employment, housing, and special needs populations. The sum of this work was presented for review and comment at an All-Staff Meeting in September 2017.

The All-Staff Meeting focused on facilitated conversation about the staff survey results and community stakeholder comments. Facilitation was provided by NeighborWorks America. Staff were asked to weigh in on what was missing from the analyses, and what stood out as especially important. Staff then projected forward, answering the questions: Thinking about the next three years, what would success look like for the team you work with? For the community we serve? What support would you need to make that happen? The results of this dialogue were compiled for further review by staff and board.

Following this intensive work with all staff, the staff director team (comprised of the Executive Director, the Associate Executive Director, the Director of Real Estate Development, the Director of Finance, the Director of Facilities, and the Director of Organizational and Community Development) held a retreat to delve into these results, and begin to hone a set of strategic priorities for discussion with the board of directors. In addition, the staff director team developed recommended changes to the agency mission statement.

Our Board of Directors then took part in a full day retreat in October 2017 focused on finalizing the strategic priorities. The board reviewed the market analysis, staff survey results, input from the All-Staff Meeting, and the results of the stakeholder interviews. As a result of the retreat, a set of seven strategic priorities was confirmed. Over the following months, staff refined the wording of the priorities, which were presented to the board for final approval in January 2018.
Hudson River Housing continues to evolve and adapt to changing community needs and market and funding conditions. As an organization, we continue to grow. We have added new programs and services. We are expanding our geographic footprint. We are taking a more holistic and nuanced view of housing. For example, we are looking at the impact of local community conditions on households. How does the quality of a neighborhood affect a person’s ability to sustain self-sufficiency? We are looking at the importance of jobs to sustaining housing. How can we better prepare our clients for economic success? We are looking at specialized housing services for high-needs populations. How can we safely house the mentally ill, at-risk youth, veterans, and others, particularly as government services for these populations continue to decline? Our 2020 Strategic Plan helps move us toward answering these questions, and it does so by capitalizing on our organizational strengths while preparing us to grow in new directions.

**Staff Resources**

In April 2017, Christa Hines was formally named Hudson River Housing’s new Executive Director. Christa most recently served the agency as Associate Executive Director and CFO. This has been a seamless transition for the agency, as Christa has nearly two decades of experience working with Hudson River Housing. Our staff and board have responded extremely positively to Christa’s leadership, which has truly been the right step for Hudson River Housing as we continue our diverse and complex work.

A top priority for Christa and the rest of the senior staff is maintaining staff morale. We do difficult work, and staff are at risk of burnout and compassion fatigue. However, we have found through staff surveying and all-staff meetings that morale is quite high, with a large majority of employees reporting that they find their work meaningful and are happy to work for Hudson River Housing. Keeping our staff engaged and happy is critical, as our staff are our most important resource!

**Environmental Context**

Externally, we continue to navigate the changing political climate. At the local level, we have seen positive changes with an active and supportive Mayor taking office in 2016, and continued strong support at the county level as well. The New York State governor also has an aggressive affordable housing campaign and is providing new resources for affordable and supportive housing development, which we are already taking advantage of. As we move in to 2018, we are beginning to see impacts on our work at the federal level. Our Supportive Services
for Veteran Families grant, a significant grant of $500,000 from the VA, was completely eliminated with no notice. We currently await the final 2018 federal budget, which proposes ominous cuts to human services and housing programs. To address these changes, we are adjusting our staffing structure to bring communications and resource development into a closer working relationship. This will help us share a strong message with elected officials and the community, convey the positive impacts of our work to funders, and seek new resources through grants and donations. We are also strengthening relationships with our elected officials and increasing our advocacy efforts through lobbying days and email and social media campaigns.

Locally, we are seeing new competition within the housing market. More developers from outside the area, particularly New York City, are entering the Poughkeepsie-area market and making significant purchases. At the same time, we are seeing an upswing in housing market conditions. The number of units of housing proposed to the planning board in the City of Poughkeepsie has increased dramatically over the course of the past twelve months, from an average of 3 in February/March 2017 to over 130 by the end of 2017. The City of Poughkeepsie also recently released data from the Mid-Hudson Multiple Listing Service showing annual sales of single family homes increased from 93 in 2013 to 159 in 2017, a 71% increase. While these indicators show an economic upswing, they also point toward increasing pressures on low-income households seeking housing. The urgency to address this topic is high, and Hudson River Housing is taking the lead on convening community partners in conversation about an equitable development future for our communities.

**ONGOING PROGRAMS**
Part of this conversation includes the need to ensure housing exists for everyone in our community, including the chronically homeless and those with complex special needs. We continue to seek ways to balance the needs of the high-risk populations we serve with staff capacity and expertise. This winter we are seeing the highest numbers ever in our emergency shelter, at times surpassing 100 guests per night. This has come in part as a result of the NYS Code Blue policy, which mandates that shelter be provided for all individuals whenever the temperature is below 32 degrees. Local law enforcement and other

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**DATA POINT**
Over 60% of Poughkeepsie renters and 53% of Dutchess County renters paying more than 30% of income on housing costs. Poughkeepsie’s median income has fallen by over 7% over the past 15 years. In comparison, household incomes have grown by 5% and 6% in Dutchess County and New York State respectively over the same time period.
providers are bringing ever higher numbers of guests to us in response to this policy. Given this, new affordable housing development is critical to meet the need for affordable housing and special needs housing in our community, particularly small, low-cost units of transitional and permanent housing. To meet this need, we have a significant real estate development pipeline that includes 7 projects in progress representing over 290 units.

Included among these is the largest tax credit project Hudson River Housing has undertaken in our history as lead developer, Fall Kill Commons on Rose. Fall Kill Commons is a 78 unit new construction project on Rose Street in Poughkeepsie, one block from the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory. This project will repurpose multiple vacant and blighted properties, providing critically needed permanent housing for homeless, mentally ill and low-income households. It will also support our ongoing community building work through the Middle Main Initiative by creating a new entryway from Main Street to Rose Street, and providing a key link in a planned Fall Kill Creek greenway trail.

NEW APPROACHES

Fall Kill Commons on Rose is the next major development project in the Middle Main neighborhood, which includes the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory, a landmark project in Hudson River Housing’s history. The Underwear Factory has met with even more success than anticipated. To date we have received three awards for the project: as Nonprofit of the Year from Think Dutchess; the Community Impact Award from the NY Housing Conference; and a Historic Preservation Award from NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory aligns the many facets of Hudson River Housing’s work, providing affordable housing, training and employment opportunities, and accessible community spaces that bring people together. The project has allowed us to merge services in new and exciting ways, as our social enterprises on site (the North River Roasters Coffee House and Poughkeepsie Open Kitchen) have created new opportunities for training and employment. These enterprises, together with wrap around services provided by our Employment Assistance and Training Station, are

DATA POINT

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 20-25% of homeless individuals have a severe mental illness, compared to only 6% of the general population.

DATA POINT

Unemployment remains higher in Poughkeepsie than in the county and the state. While total employment in the county grew during the last few years, employment growth is significantly slower than in the state or country overall.
enhancing our programs to holistically meet the needs of our clients and community. Over the coming years, we strive to grow this area of our work and undertake more programming in the realm of social enterprise and employment training.

Even as we deepen our work in the City of Poughkeepsie, we are also seeking to expand our geographic footprint to areas where there are clear gaps in housing services, in particular Columbia County. Over the course of the past several years, our community engagement work in rural northeastern Dutchess County has led to new connections in Columbia County, including Columbia Opportunities, Habitat for Humanity of Columbia County, the Hillsdale Housing Commission, and Philmont Beautification, Inc. We have heard from these entities of the need for affordable housing services in the region, ranging from homeownership counseling to affordable housing development. We continue these conversations with the express purpose of growing our regional influence as a housing and community development expert in the Mid-Hudson Valley.

**ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Hudson River Housing strives to be responsive to and representative of the community we serve. To that end, we are seeking to enhance the diversity of our board of directors. While we already have a diverse staff, with 51% of employees of color, we need to respond to the growing ethnic diversity of our service area, particularly the rapid growth in the Latino population. For many of our clients and tenants, English is a second language. We aim to ensure that key materials and forms are all available in Spanish, and increase the number of bilingual/bicultural staff in key positions.

Lastly, as we look to the future, we will ensure we maintain our strong financial position, working to meet or exceed industry financial standards. And we will seek to grow flexible, unrestricted resources while also maintaining strong government support.

Together with all of our supporters and our community stakeholders, we are settling a course for the future that will ensure Hudson River Housing is an active and growing organization for many years to come.
Our 2020 Strategic Plan establishes seven strategic priorities that impact all business lines, as well as organizational management and resource development. Our objective is to align the work of all departments of the agency toward common objectives that truly advance our mission to improve lives and communities and respond to our environmental context and community needs.

**Strategic Priorities**

- Grow our influence as a leader in the housing and community development field in order to advance our mission
- Address the issue of vacant properties in Poughkeepsie in order to create places where residents can thrive
- Increase opportunities for residents to live in affordable housing in the Mid-Hudson Region
- Enhance strategies to provide the highest quality services possible to tenants and clients in our care
- Continue social enterprise activities that provide training and employment that helps participants thrive
- Infuse core values into all aspects of our work to strengthen staff morale and enhance our mission
- Sustain and enhance existing programs while allowing for expansion and innovation in new areas

**How We Accomplish Our Work**

- Resident Services
- Real Estate Development
- Property Management
- Home Ownership Promotion & Preservation
- Community Building & Engagement
- Organizational Management
- Resource Development

- Compassionate
- Empathetic
- Transparent
- Inclusive
GOAL ONE: Grow our influence as a leader in the housing and community development field in order to advance our agenda of developing and preserving affordable housing and strengthening communities.

As we address the changes in our political and funding climate, we need to do more to influence policy, advocate for our cause, and educate the community on the critical importance of affordable housing and strong communities. We seek to grow our role as a leader in housing and community development across the Mid-Hudson Valley.

2020 Outcome: More Mid-Hudson region residents, elected officials, and partners will be aware of the work of HRH and educated about the importance of affordable housing. 100% of HRH staff and board members will be trained as ambassadors of the HRH mission. HRH’s geographic presence and influence will expand.

GOAL TWO: Strategically address the issue of vacant and abandoned properties in Poughkeepsie in order to improve neighborhood conditions and create places where residents can thrive.

The urgency to intentionally bring racial and economic equality into the conversation around housing and community development is high. Hudson Valley communities have seen dramatic changes in market conditions and affordability over the past decade. Will Poughkeepsie be next? We need to identify the risks of gentrification in Poughkeepsie, while also addressing blight and strengthening the foundation for equitable economic development and long-term affordability.

20/20 Outcome: There will be fewer vacant and abandoned properties in the City of Poughkeepsie. More residents, businesses and stakeholders will be involved in stewarding community initiatives that lead to improved quality of life and greater opportunity in Poughkeepsie.
GOAL THREE: Increase opportunities for residents to live in affordable housing in the Mid-Hudson region.

Housing cost burdens in the region are high. There is a demand for more affordable housing, whether small units with supportive services in city centers or homeownership in increasingly expensive rural areas. We seek to play a prominent role in the production of affordable housing and the creation of stronger policies at the local level.

2020 Outcome: There will be 300 more affordable housing units under HRH management in the Mid-Hudson region, and fewer households facing housing cost burdens. Municipalities will prioritize affordable housing through housing ordinances and policies.

GOAL FOUR: Enhance and grow strategies to provide the highest quality services possible to clients and tenants in our care.

The complexity of needs in our client population continue to increase. As we add more sites and programs, we deal with an ever-increasing sheer number of clients as well. Our front-line staff are our most important resource for addressing client needs. We need to ensure that the appropriate housing is available for all members of our community, and that our staff are equipped to provide the high quality services we hold ourselves to as a leader in the field.

2020 Outcome: Staff will be have the skills and training to address complex client and tenant needs. There will be at least 50 more supportive housing units in the Mid-Hudson region that include dedicated services for special populations.
GOAL FIVE: Continue and expand upon social entrepreneurship activities that provide educational and training opportunities that helps participants thrive.

We know that without economic stability a household cannot achieve housing security. Access to local employment and training opportunities ranks among the top needs we hear from our community. We need to build upon existing programs, such as EATS and the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory, and leverage the early success of our social enterprises to create even greater opportunities for those we serve.

2020 Outcome: At least 100 more households will gain skills that lead to enhanced economic opportunity.

GOAL SIX: Infuse core values of compassion, inclusivity, empowerment, and transparency into all aspects of work in order to maintain staff morale and enhance the mission of HRH.

Staff is our most important resource. Keeping our staff strong, trained and motivated is critical to the success of everything that Hudson River Housing seeks to accomplish. Staff thrive when they are inspired by our mission and feel aligned with our values. And our staff can best meet the needs of our community when we reflect who that community is.

2020 Outcome: Staff express levels of satisfaction and commitment to the mission that meet or exceed current levels of close to 80% Staff and board members, along with HRH materials, are accessible to the diverse demographics of our service area.
GOAL SEVEN: Sustain and enhance existing programs while also allowing for expansion and innovation in new areas in order to advance our mission of developing and preserving affordable housing and strengthening communities.

How can we ensure our most impactful programs can sustain operations, and allow for innovative new ideas to be tested? A financially strong organization with strong evaluation processes can be more efficient at meeting community needs. While this plan focuses on only the next three years, we are setting a course for the future that will ensure Hudson River Housing will be an active and growing organization for many years to come.

2020 Outcome: HRH has increased liquidity and meets or exceeds industry standards for cash on hand and capital and operating reserves. The organization has robust succession plans in place that provide a framework for a long and successful future for the organization.

Evaluation Process

Our strategic priorities are posted at all our sites and are available to the public in hard copy or digital form, as we seek to be transparent with our objectives and programs.

Hudson River Housing has a multi-pronged evaluation process for the regular review and assessment of progress toward our strategic priorities. Priorities are reviewed as needed during weekly staff director meetings. They are reviewed quarterly at monthly senior management meetings of approximately twenty senior staff from across the agency, with a focus on identifying progress toward goals and discussing any areas where we are experiencing a challenge or where circumstances have changed substantially. Staff recommend course adjustments if necessary, and identify items to consider in the future.

Quarterly dashboard updates are provided to the board for review and discussion.