

Lakes Region Community Developers 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

We create opportunities for the Lakes Region to thrive by developing healthy homes, creating vibrant community assets, and engaging residents.

Values

- We believe that every community in the Lakes Region can provide opportunities for all people to reach their full potential.
- We believe that everyone can play a positive role in improving their community.
- We believe in environmental sustainability and responsible use of resources.
- We believe in the power of strategic partnerships and collective impact.
- We value honesty, excellence, accountability, and respect.

2018-2020 Goals & Objectives

Healthy Homes

Healthy homes are the foundation of a healthy community. Healthy homes promote physical and mental well-being, which contribute to success in work, education, and relationships.

What is a healthy home? We describe it as a home that is safe, affordable, energy-efficient, dry, clean, ventilated, free from pests and contaminants, and designed to facilitate access to healthy food, outdoor recreational opportunities, and, to the extent feasible, other goods and services needed on a regular basis.

Goal:

Increase the availability of healthy homes in the Lakes Region. We will do this by designing new projects with all the components of healthy housing in mind and continuing to make investments in maintaining, rehabilitating, and adding amenities to our existing properties.

Real Estate Development Objectives:

1. Develop at least one residential project every year.
 - a. Revise our project scoring matrix to help us decide between two viable Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects.

- b. Explore partnerships with municipalities and new funders to develop affordable single-family homes for sale to families earning 80% to 120% of area median income.
2. Explore the feasibility of incorporating commercial spaces into new residential projects and developing free-standing community facilities to house childcare, workforce development, healthcare, or other services needed in the community.
3. Incorporate recreational amenities and community gathering spaces into all new projects when feasible.
4. Explore the feasibility of incorporating market-rate apartments into our residential developments.
5. Explore the possibility of expanding our Transitional Housing Program through partnerships or real estate development to include:
 - a. Phase 1 - a congregate living facility to house families in need of emergency shelter who require daily intervention in order to stabilize before they can plan for the future.
 - b. Phase 2 - our existing Transitional Housing building on Elm Street in Laconia provides a stable environment for families to set and pursue goals for their future. We need to determine if we should add another scattered site building to the Transitional Housing Program.

Homeownership Objectives:

1. Increase our capacity to support HOMEteam in establishing brand recognition in the Lakes Region and serving more residents of the Lakes Region.
2. As we develop single family, for-sale housing, work with NH Housing Finance Authority and HOMEteam to package financial counseling and down payment assistance for interested buyers.

Asset Management Objectives:

1. Identify and obtain new financial resources for the preservation and rehabilitation of older properties to ensure they meet our standard of *Healthy Homes*.
2. Identify and pursue new financial resources and partnerships that enable us to add amenities to older properties (e.g. playgrounds, community gardens, community gathering spaces, etc.).
3. Focus on improving the tenant experience. We need to make sure tenants feel safe and secure in their homes and that, as our portfolio grows, we have adequate systems and staffing in place to respond in a timely and respectful way to all tenants.

Community Building & Engagement

Vibrant communities possess strong social networks and engage residents in solving problems and making decisions. Communities with strong resident engagement are places of quality, opportunity, and elevated standards. Adults and families who live in such communities participate in neighborhood initiatives, serve in local government, and volunteer for community organizations. This creates a healthier eco-system in which residents and businesses are likely to succeed.

Goal:

Establish Community Building and Engagement (CB&E) programming across 85% of our portfolio (units) by 2020.

Given our size and our desire to grow at a sustainable pace, we will build CB&E programming in phases. Phase one coincides with the timeframe of this strategic plan and entails expanding our Resident Services Program. This includes enhancing our communications with tenants and conducting a sustained level of CB&E activities. Phase two entails separating CB&E into its own program once adequate funding and staff are secured.

Objectives:

1. Add one full-time staff person to improve our ability to respond to residents' needs, which will in turn build trust among residents and enable us to engage them in other conversations and activities.
2. Enhance our annual Resident Satisfaction Survey to include questions that help us figure out what tenants are concerned about and what types of projects or programming they would find most valuable.
3. Establish more effective means of communicating with our tenants (e.g., email, text, tenant-specific newsletter, tenant portal).
4. Expand community engagement programming at Lochmere Meadows, Pinecrest, and River's Edge. Programming will include community gardens, beautification projects, playground builds, green education, regular events, and a new focus on career exploration and career development.
5. Establish community engagement programming at Harriman Hill, Harvey Heights, Millview, Avery Hill, and Pine Hill (same activities listed above).
6. Create a longer-term strategy that articulates our theory of change for our CB&E program and outlines a plan of action and the resources needed to implement it.

Organizational Sustainability

We are recognized for the high quality of our board and staff, for our strong financial position, and for our commitment to green practices. This provides a strong foundation for us to build upon as we expand our mission and grow the organization.

Goal:

Strive for even greater excellence in the area of organizational health and development while growing the organization at a thoughtful and measured pace.

Board Objectives

1. Maintain strong board recruitment process and officer succession planning.
2. Provide new types of thought-provoking education and training that contribute to the board's ability to engage in thoughtful discussions around strategy and policies.
3. Assess board satisfaction on an annual basis to identify opportunities to strengthen board engagement and better harness the skills of board members.

Staff Objectives

1. Ensure that our compensation levels and work environment are competitive with other housing organizations in the Northeast in order to keep our talented and dedicated staff and recruit top talent as we grow.
2. Provide interesting and challenging professional development opportunities for all staff.
3. Assess staffing structure on at least an annual basis to ensure that staff skills are being put to the best possible use. Utilize contractors to supplement staff skills or to off-load lower-value tasks so staff can focus on higher-level work.
4. Evaluate our green operations policies on an annual basis to identify areas for improvement.

Asset Management Objectives

1. Focus on curb appeal when prioritizing property maintenance to ensure our rental units are attractive.
2. Set higher standards for customer service and property maintenance to improve the tenant experience and enhance our reputation as a landlord.
3. Enhance analysis of portfolio performance to identify key drivers and set realistic annual performance goals.

4. Evaluate technology needs and take steps to improve efficiency in all aspects of finance and asset management.
5. Continue to pursue energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that lower utility usage at our properties, thereby reducing our carbon footprint.

Resource Development Objectives

1. Implement a new marketing strategy to enhance community awareness of our work. Set clear performance measurements for marketing activities and analyze performance at least quarterly.
2. Develop and implement annual plans to increase corporate and individual giving, including planned giving. Set clear goals and measure progress on a quarterly basis.
3. Maintain or exceed the more aggressive pace of grant-writing that we pursued in 2017.

Our History

We were founded in 1988 as the Laconia Area Community Land Trust. During the 1990s we focused on providing high-quality affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate-income families in the City of Laconia.

During the 2000s, we began to expand our geographic reach to the surrounding towns of Ashland, Meredith, Tilton, and Wolfeboro. By 2017, we had developed a \$46 million real estate portfolio comprising 341 affordable rental units. We also began to engage with local communities and partners in discussions about community development needs other than affordable housing.

In 2017, we changed our name to Lakes Region Community Developers to reflect the broader work we do to build community throughout the region. We are proud to partner with local communities and residents to identify needs and work together on projects that sustain the high quality of life we cherish here.

The Communities We Serve

We are proud to serve the Greater Lakes Region of New Hampshire, which includes all of Belknap County, lower Grafton County, and lower Carroll County. This area is also commonly described as the Lake Winnepesaukee and Squam Lakes region.