



Housing Resources

Empowering independence one home at a time.

STRATEGIC PLAN FISCAL YEARS 2023-2025

Board Approved
November 2, 2022



OUR PAST & PRESENT

Housing Resources of Western Colorado celebrated a milestone in 2022: our 45th anniversary. In 1977, we launched as the Grand Junction Public Energy Information Office to provide solar energy conservation, education, and recycling programs. Since that time, we have added new programs and increased our service area to meet the needs of homeowners, homebuyers, and renters throughout western Colorado. In 1982, with the launch of our first state contract for weatherization, we became a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. In 2001, we officially joined the NeighborWorks America network as a chartered member and changed our name to Housing Resources of Western Colorado the following year. Today we offer programs and services in 15 counties driven by our belief that every Colorado resident should have the opportunity to thrive in a quality, safe, and healthy home. We are just getting started.

The Housing Resources team dove into the Strategic Planning process in early 2022 in an uncertain environment, contending with

challenges that are confounding organizations across the country: housing markets that defy prediction, labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, political upheaval, increasing wealth disparities, and the ongoing effects of a global pandemic unprecedented in our lifetimes. Despite this uncertainty, we envision the next three years with optimism and excitement, knowing the work we do has the potential to improve people's lives profoundly. Every metric in this plan represents a family, a home, a neighborhood, and most importantly, an opportunity to deepen our impact.

As we look back over the past 45 years, our staff and board can't help but reflect on how much has changed in western Colorado, and to wonder if the founders of The Public Energy Information Office could have imagined our growth trajectory back in 1977. While we imagine the *next* 45 years, we remain committed to helping western Colorado residents improve their lives through housing and community services. This Strategic Plan is our roadmap for doing just that.



OUR SERVICES

Over the past 45 years, our programs and services have expanded to meet the needs of the communities we serve. Today our work includes services for homeowners, homebuyers, renters, and the general community.

Weatherization

Weatherization is our longest-standing program and has been providing cost-effective, energy efficient home improvements throughout western Colorado since 1989. The free service reduces the energy usage and carbon footprint of our housing stock, and helps our clients enjoy lower utility bills and more comfortable homes. Since 1994, we have weatherized 7,195 homes.

Self-Help Homeownership

The Self-Help Homeownership program helps people build their own homes with construction and permanent financing coupled with coaching and training. Families who participate perform about 65% of the construction labor under qualified supervision, which builds their equity and lowers the monthly costs of ownership. Since 1995 we have helped 403 families build their own homes, a life-changing experience with long term benefits.

Lending

The Lending team provides low-cost loans and emergency grants to help homeowners maintain the safety, comfort, and value of their properties. Under this program, 294 homeowners have secured loans for home rehabilitation since 1991. An additional 133 households have received assistance for critical repairs to their homes since 2016. The Lending team also supports the Self-Help Homeownership program by packaging the construction loans our clients use to build their homes and by helping them access supplemental financing as needed.

Housing Counseling & Education

Housing Resources is a HUD-approved counseling agency. We provide free one-on-one housing counseling and coaching as well as group education classes in areas including: rental counseling, financial coaching, homebuyer education, pre-purchase counseling, reserve mortgage counseling, foreclosure, and eviction prevention. Since 2016, Housing Counseling and Education has counseled more than 1,200 households and educated about 2,800 households.

Property Ownership & Management

Housing Resources owns and manages 180 affordable rental units in Mesa County, creating a safe, secure, and affordable home from which our tenants can thrive. We manage these properties with a strong commitment to quality and fairness.

Community Building & Engagement

Our team supports efforts to build local, vibrant communities and equitable opportunities for people to thrive. Community building and engagement is a place-based strategy driven by resident priorities and input. The program facilitated the formation of the Montrose Housing Network and the creation of the Montrose Housing Action Plan. Through this work, our team has helped mobile home park residents advocate for long overdue improvements, empowered residents by providing opportunities for them to understand their rights as tenants and mobile homeowners, and is currently working with residents to pursue cooperative ownership options.

OUR CLIENTS

The services previously described are designed with the specific needs of our clients in mind. We offer homeowners, home buyers and renters a suite of programs that aim to empower and assist residents at various stages of their housing journey. The range of services offered by our Housing Counseling and Education team serves clients in a variety of ways; as such, this team often acts as the first connection point clients have with Housing Resources, regardless of housing type or mode. Community Building & Engagement supports efforts to provide equitable opportunities for renters, homeowners and home buyers.



	HOMEOWNERS	HOME BUYERS	RENTERS
HOUSING COUNSELING & EDUCATION	Weatherization	Self-Help Homeownership	Affordable Rental Units
	Emergency Home Repair Grants	For-Sale Development*	Property Management
	Home Improvement Lending	Purchase Lending*	Rental Development*
	Post-Purchase & Foreclosure Counseling	Pre-Purchase Counseling	Eviction Prevention Counseling
	Reverse Mortgage Counseling	Home Buyer Education Classes	Rental Counseling
	COMMUNITY BUILDING & ENGAGEMENT		

OUR SERVICE AREA

Housing Resources serves 15 counties from three offices: our headquarters in Grand Junction, and satellite offices in Montrose, and Durango. Having been founded in Mesa County, that continues to be where our services are most concentrated. Although we do not serve all 15 counties with our full suite of offerings, we seek to connect our clients to other agencies to ensure their needs are met.

As western Colorado communities continue to grow and experience increasing housing affordability challenges, we will expand our services thoughtfully and strategically to meet those needs. This Strategic Plan envisions the most immediate expansion of our services within the Mesa-to-Montrose corridor and sets goals to bring our Self-Help Housing program and real estate development projects to Montrose County in the near future.

SERVICES BY COUNTY

Housing Counseling & Education:

- Archuleta
- Delta
- Dolores
- Eagle
- Hinsdale
- Garfield
- Gunnison
- La Plata
- Mesa
- Montezuma
- Montrose
- Ouray
- Pitkin
- San Juan
- San Miguel

Weatherization:

- Archuleta
- Delta
- Dolores
- Hinsdale
- Gunnison
- La Plata
- Mesa
- Montezuma
- Montrose
- Ouray
- San Juan
- San Miguel

Self-Help Homeownership:

- Mesa
- Montrose (future)

Lending:

- Mesa
- Garfield

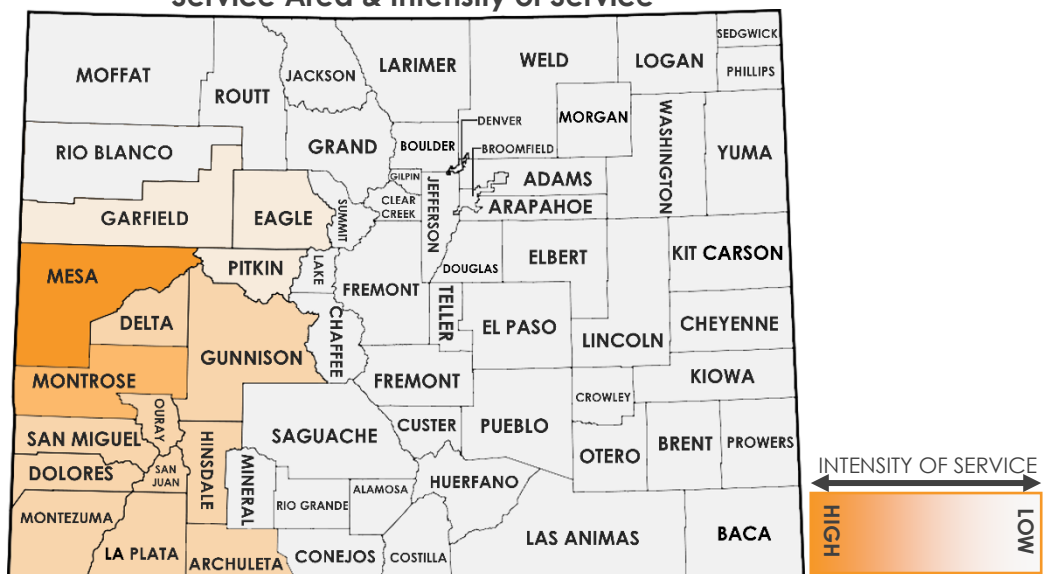
Community Building & Engagement:

- Delta
- Mesa
- Montrose

Affordable Rental Properties:

- Mesa

Map of Colorado Showing Housing Resources' Service Area & Intensity of Service



THE NEXT THREE YEARS

VISION

Every western Colorado resident thrives in a quality, safe, and healthy home.

MISSION

Advance equitable housing and healthy communities through education, empowerment, development, and preservation.



VALUES

These values were selected by staff, our Board, and clients and exemplify the core values of Housing Resources:

ALTRUISM

The empathetic regard for the welfare of others.

HIGH QUALITY

Commitment to an excellent standard of measure.

INTEGRITY

The quality of being honest & having strong moral principles.

TRUST

Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Financial accountability & stewardship over limited resources.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Housing Resources commits to:



Achieving excellence with fiscal responsibility, while meeting production goals, creating high quality work, and having excellent customer service.



Employing and promoting green and sustainable practices for the long-term benefit of clients and communities.



Improving communication by listening with active engagement to our clients and community, and by striving to constantly improve our services and enhance our community.



Making equity, diversity, and inclusion an organizational priority, fostering a culture that identifies and addresses inequities within both our organization and larger community.

GOALS TO ADVANCE OUR MISSION

To advance our mission and implement our operating principals, Housing Resources adopts these six goals:

1

Increase number of new homeowners

Homeownership gives people control over their housing, a fundamental element of their daily lives. It also allows owners to build their assets with each housing payment and create wealth that can be passed down to future generations.

2

Increase access to affordable rental housing and manage this housing stock

High quality, safe, comfortable, and affordable rental housing is a critical foundation to the personal success of individuals and the economic vitality of the community. By providing this housing, we give our clients a safe place to pursue their life goals.

3

Increase the number of existing homeowners who sustain homeownership

We support the homeownership journey long after the first move-in. Maintaining a home's value, safety, and comfort is critical to the success and resiliency of homeowners and the communities around them.

4

Increase knowledge of critical housing and financial capability concepts

We believe that people who are equipped with knowledge and understanding are better positioned to make well-informed decisions and meet their personal housing and financial goals. Coaching and education create the basis for success in other Housing Resources activities.

5

Increase positive environmental impact

Energy efficiency has been the root of our organizational mission from the beginning when we launched as The Public Energy Information Office. We continue to honor those roots by improving the resource efficiency of the housing inventory in western Colorado, reducing its environmental footprint, and creating homes that are more comfortable and less expensive to operate.

6

Increase residents' collective capacity to realize their own visions for their communities

Housing Resources believes that resident engagement and leadership are essential for communities to realize their own visions. We work to bring the talents, resources, and skills of people together to increase their collective capacity.

ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS

Housing Resources takes on many activities to advance the Strategic Goals enumerated in this plan. Many of the activities advance more than one Strategic Goal. Below are the activities we will pursue over the next three years and beyond, with new initiatives indicated by a star.

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Creating Housing	Increase Self-Help Homeownership production by 50% to create 24 new homeowners by 2025. (Goal 1)		
	Reduce the cycle time from 18 months to 12 months for Self-Help clients to complete the loan and construction process by 2024.		
	★Create a dedicated Real Estate Development program in 2023 and form partnerships with area developers. Complete at least four distinct projects by 2025. (Goals 1 and 2)		
		★Add the development of for-sale housing, outside of Self-Help, to our lines of business and develop at least 60 finished lots to support homeownership development by 2025. (Goal 1)	
	Increase our portfolio of affordable rental units by 30% by developing or acquiring 55 additional units by 2025 (Goal 2)		
Preserving & Managing Housing	Maintain our track record of managing properties with low vacancy rates, and excellent responsiveness to resident needs. (Goal 2)		
	Increase the number of homes we weatherize for low-income households by 50%, to reach a cumulative total of 660 homes by 2025. Achieve an average 35% reduction of energy use in the homes we improve (Goals 3 and 5)		
	Increase number of critical home repair grants by 50% to assist 90 households by 2025 (Goals 3 and 5)		
		★Launch a fee-for-service Weatherization program by 2024 (Goals 3 and 5)	
Financing Housing	Increase home improvement loans with construction technical assistance by 40% for a cumulative total of 60 improved homes by 2025 (Goals 3 and 5)		
	★Launch a new Purchase Assistance Lending program and complete 100 home purchase loans by 2025 (Goal 1)		
		★Launch a funded mobile home replacement product and replace 10 homes by 2025 (Goal 3)	
	★Establish ourselves as CDFI and achieve certification from the Department of Treasury by 2025 (Goals 1, 2 and 3)		
Educating & Empowering Clients	Increase pre-purchase counseling by 50% to increase from 500 to 750 clients per year by 2025 (Goals 1, 3 and 4)		
	Increase Homebuyer Education class attendance to at least 1200 households per year by 2025 and develop a live online option in 2023 (Goals 1 and 4)		
		★Add Home Equity Conversion Mortgages to our housing counseling offerings by 2023 and provide counseling to at least 390 clients per year by 2025 (Goals 3 and 4)	
		★Create a new Renter Education Class and educate 150 households by 2025 (Goals 2 and 4)	
	Develop networks of resident leaders and provide training and resources to elevate their effectiveness (Goal 6)		
	Continue facilitating the Montrose Housing Network and advance progress toward the shared action plan (Goal 6)		
	Adopt a community engagement document that describes how we root our activities in the needs of communities, incorporate input from various sectors, and connect our work to wider community efforts. (Goal 6)		

CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF COM ACT HOUSING

In 1968, Com Act Housing Corporation was created by a group of determined Grand Junction residents to address the shortage of affordable housing in their community. Spurred by what they saw as a lack of attention to the problem, they formed Com Act Housing Corporation and officially incorporated in 1971.

Agustin (Augie) Reyes served as the first director and dedicated much of his life to the organization's efforts. Patty Arguello later took on the role of director and staffed the organization for several years.

Com Act's organizational mission is to support homeownership for those who are not well served by the traditional home purchase market. In 2021, with Patty Arguello's retirement nearing, Com Act approached Housing Resources to take over its mission and assets. Com Act became an affiliate of Housing Resources on July 1, 2021 by Board merger. Three Com Act Board Members, Pam Francil, Nannette Allen-Brown and Sam Baldwin, continued to

serve on the Board to provide historical context and guidance that would aide in the transition.

The Housing Resources Board and staff recognize the gift and responsibility of being entrusted with Com Act's mission and assets. During the Strategic Planning process, the planning team gave particular focus to how it could best continue the Com Act mission while guarding its assets, with special attention to how we could integrate the work of the two organizations. While being careful to honor the work of the Com Act founders, board members and staff, the goal is to create an outcome greater than the sum of each organization's parts.

The following principles and tactics have been established to guide the integration of the organizations' activities and demonstrate how this will serve the overarching goals set out in this Strategic Plan.



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Use of Com Act Assets

The following principles will be used to guide the deployment of Com Act assets, to ensure continued alignment with Com Act's original mission and that of Housing Resources:



Com Act assets should remain focused on homeownership promotion.



Assets should be deployed in service of the mission rather than sitting in the bank.



Com Act and Housing Resources programming should be integrated so they leverage each other fully.



Com Act assets should be preserved and increased through smart investment.

Integration of Goals & Tactics

The joint Housing Resources and Com Act team collaborated in the formulation of this Strategic Plan, aware of the great opportunity provided by this merger. **We will capitalize on the established benefits in these specific ways as we strive to attain our overarching strategic goals (in particular goals 1 and 3):**

CDFI Certification

Com Act's affiliation with HRWC allows the organizations to jointly pursue one of our major strategic planning goals of becoming a Certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), and to do so on a faster timeline than if either acted alone. Housing Resources will pursue certification with Com Act serving as the financing entity.

Increase homeownership activity

Another major Strategic Planning goal is to increase our homeownership impact beyond the Self-Help program. Com Act capital will be deployed as seed capital to expand homeownership, real estate development, and lending projects. The availability of ready capital will be an important asset in this effort, allowing Housing Resources/Com Act to address two of the most challenging aspects of development: being able to move quickly when opportunities arise, and being able to fund the start-up costs necessary to launch a new program or project.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

Housing Resources understands that we can only achieve our ambitious goals if we are **financially strong**, **operationally efficient**, and **staffed by a top-notch team**. Thus, the organizational improvement goals are just as critical to delivering on our promise to the community as our client-facing goals. The goals listed below represent our top priorities for the next three years.

Financial Strength

- Improve financial sustainability by increasing sources of unrestricted revenue and reducing our reliance on reimbursable grant funds.
- Implement best practices in accounting and finance to simplify, strengthen, and improve the transparency of our financials.
- Improve the financial strength of existing assets, especially our rental portfolio.

Our place in the Community

- Establish Housing Resources as the experts in housing and community development and a well-recognized resource for the people we intend to serve.

Operational Efficiency

- Improve efficiency through the thoughtful use of automated procedures and new systems, such as an accounting software upgrade, payroll processing, payment collections, bill pay, client intake, and document storage.
- Prepare for the future through work-process documentation and succession planning.



Capital Facilities

- Improve the physical working environment for our staff, especially in the Durango office.

Top Notch Staff Team

- Improve the recruitment and retention of high-quality employees with new recruiting strategies, competitive compensation, and a focus on organizational culture.
- Thoughtfully increase staff capacity to build our team and avoid burnout of our existing staff.
- Provide opportunities for professional development that enable employees to achieve their growth goals.

Customer Experience

- Examine our workflows from the customer's perspective and create better connectivity between programs in order to improve the customer experience, increase staff efficiency, and provide more services to more clients.

Board Governance

- Continue to recruit outstanding Board Members to maintain a governing board that represents our service area and brings critical skills and knowledge to the organization.
- Provide for continuing Board education and reassess our Board committee structure to ensure maximize effectiveness.



PLANNING TEAM & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Housing Resources Board of Directors:

Linda Dannenberger, President
Ivy Williams, Vice President
Annette Pfeffer, Treasurer
Keith Fife, Secretary
Joe Carter
Nita Gomez Whitson
Mark Luff
Sandy Perry
Cheri Schindler
Ross Valdez

Senior Management Team:

Emilee Powell, Executive Director
Dawn Rubalcaba, Operations Director
Shawna Allen, Accounting Director
Marcy Child, Weatherization Director
Jason Colunga, Housing Counseling and Education Director
Sarah Fishering, Community Building and Engagement Director
Wendy Genkov, Lending Director
John Gross, Self-Help Program Director
Coleen Simpson, Property Management Director

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Chad Klawetter of NeighborWorks America
Marisa Felix-Campbell and Jessica Empson
Nannette Allen-Brown, Sam Baldwin and Pam Francil

Additional thanks to the entire staff team at Housing Resources of Western Colorado for their input into this plan and their dedication to our organizational mission. The work they do everyday changes people's lives for the better. None of the goals in this plan are possible without their tireless efforts.

Image Credits:

Front Cover: Photograph by Jan Kroon: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/grayscale-photo-of-roadway-surrounded-with-rocky-mountains-1169107/>

Page 1:

Photograph of completed self-help home.

Page 4:

Colorado map FedStats, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Page 5:

Left: Photograph of homebuyer education graduates.

Right: Photograph of self-help home clients on completion of their new home.

Page 11:

Left: Photograph of Agustin Becerra Reyes, source <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/grand-junction-co/agustin-becerra-reyes-10400110/>

Right: Photograph of LeRoy and Patty Arguello giving a speech for their Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020, source MacKenzie Lange, Grand Junction Sentinel.

Page 13:

Left: Photograph of Self-Help program participants at the completion of their homes.

Right: Photograph of Housing Resources team members.

Page 14:

Left: Photograph of Housing Resources Weatherization Team.

Right: Photograph of sign advertising Self-Help program.

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Images are internal unless otherwise noted above.