



OUR JUST FUTURE

WORKING TOGETHER FOR RACIAL,
HOUSING & ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN
EAST MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

STRATEGIC AND EQUITY PLAN

2018 to 2025

Presented to the Board of
Directors July 30, 2018

MISSION AND VISION

OUR VISION

Community Vision

Our Just Future envisions vibrant, healthy neighborhoods where all people can share in the security, hopes and advantages of a thriving, supportive community.

Organizational Vision

Our Just Future operates as a nimble, financially strong organization driven by our passion, strategic goals and guiding principles.

OUR MISSION

Our Just Future counters the forces that keep people and communities in poverty by building relationships and assets that create opportunity – today and for future generations. Here's how:

- **We partner** with people and communities impacted by poverty so they can achieve long-term housing and economic security.
- **We invest** in affordable housing and community assets that contribute to strong, inclusive neighborhoods.
- **We advocate** with our community for policies and investments that expand housing and economic opportunity, eliminate wealth inequality and end poverty.

East Portland/East Multnomah County, Oregon is our home and the heart of our investments, advocacy and programs.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Guiding Principles form the foundation of how we show up each day to achieve our mission.

We Value Excellence

Our passion for our mission inspires us every day to do our best work for the people and communities with whom we partner.

We Value Humanity

We believe in the infinite worth of every human being and value the life experiences and abilities we each bring.

We Value Integrity

We are honest and transparent in all of our relationships.

We Value Collaboration

We intentionally form new and relevant relationships to learn, grow, and deliver the best possible results.

We Value Justice

Our work - and how we accomplish it - strives to counter the oppressive forces of our past and present to create a just and equitable future.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

THE PROBLEM WE TACKLE: INTERGENERATIONAL POVERTY

At Our Just Future, we define poverty as a lack of power, choice and control over circumstances, typically caused by a lack of income, assets and resources at a personal and community level. People and communities who experience poverty typically inherit it as a product of deep structural inequality caused by adverse systemic forces like racism, misogyny, ableism, and mass incarceration.

As a result of historic, ongoing and intentional policies that concentrate wealth and power, far too many people – especially people of color - continue to experience intergenerational poverty. In our home of East Portland and East Multnomah County, people and communities experiencing poverty typically reside in neighborhoods that have experienced years of disinvestment and lack basic amenities like healthy food, safe streets and welcoming places to gather and play. Entrenched, intergenerational poverty and a landscape of disinvestment leave people and whole communities vulnerable to poverty's compounding conditions: powerlessness, residential displacement, lack of educational and economic opportunity, and the recurring trauma of hopelessness and homelessness.

OUR APPROACH: INVEST IN TRANSFORMATION AND LONG-TERM SUCCESS

Our Just Future works to counter the forces that keep people and communities in poverty. We partner with individuals, families and communities to support their long-term success and transcendence from the conditions of poverty. Here's how:

- We provide trauma-informed programs that offer hope, support and a pathway to stability and opportunity to our community's most vulnerable families and individuals.
- We develop and maintain healthy, high-quality affordable and supportive housing that responds to the needs and desires of people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness.
- We offer employment training and career coaching to help people build skills that lead to higher incomes and greater economic opportunity.
- We partner to strengthen poverty-concentrated neighborhoods by developing housing, resources and community amenities that support the success of future generations.
- We advocate for public policies and investments that expand housing and economic opportunity, eliminate wealth inequality, and end poverty.

We believe Our Just Future can counter structural causes of poverty by sharing and aligning our influence, resources, programs, investments and expertise with individuals and communities so they can build wealth, power, security and influence.

OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Our Just Future is an inclusive, multi-racial and multi-cultural organization working to alleviate the impacts of poverty on people and communities. Our work counters many of the primary forces that make and keep people poor.

We focus our work in East Portland and East Multnomah County, one of the most diverse areas in Oregon. Here, many individuals, families and communities experience high rates of economic and housing insecurity and residential displacement as a direct result of historic and ongoing policies and practices that deprive communities and individuals of land, wealth and basic human rights because of their identity.

As an organization working to counter a legacy of inequity, we commit to:

- Understand the impacts and causes of bias that include racism and white supremacy, learned patterns of oppression, and the strong connection between poverty, homelessness and race.
- Confront and challenge all forms of institutional oppression within our organization so that staff and those who partner with us will experience Our Just Future as truly inclusive. We will create the time and space to continue learning vital lessons and to undertake the urgent work necessary to counter the centuries-old and still-active forces that block opportunity for people of color and other oppressed people.
- Continue our growth into an intentionally anti-bias, anti-racist organization that actively aligns with community-based efforts to overcome inequality and its roots in racism and oppression.
- Acknowledge who holds power in our organization, whose voices shape our decisions and who is not "in the room." We will work constantly and vigorously to address internal disparities of power and influence.
- Hold ourselves accountable by continuously measuring and sharing progress toward all diversity, equity and inclusion goals.
- Revisit these commitments regularly to update the actions and words that define this critical work as we learn and grow.

GOALS

The Board of Directors and staff of Our Just Future commit to achieving four goals by 2023:

GOAL 1 | Thriving individuals, families and communities.

The people and communities who partner with Our Just Future will experience long-term housing stability and economic security so they can seize opportunities to thrive.

GOAL 2 | An inclusive, anti-racist organization delivering equitable results.

Our Just Future will recognize and counter the impacts of racism and other forms of systemic oppression by modeling and championing diversity, equity and inclusivity in our leadership, programs, outcomes, investments and operations.

GOAL 3 | Public policies and systems that reduce poverty and help more people thrive.

Our Just Future will advocate with our community for policies and investments that expand housing and economic opportunity, eliminate wealth inequality and end poverty.

GOAL 4 | A strong, capable and nimble organization.

Our Just Future will develop the resources, internal systems, staffing and capacity to achieve our mission.

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GOAL 1 | Thriving individuals, families and communities.

The people and communities who partner with Our Just Future will experience long-term housing stability and economic security so they can seize opportunities to thrive.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 | Long-term success for the people with whom we partner.

People who participate in our programs and live in our housing will have access to a continuum of integrated resources and supportive services designed to support their long-term housing and economic security.

Key Strategies:

1. Engage our community to collaboratively define the conditions and supports they need to thrive.
2. Transform and integrate our continuum of shelters, services, programs, and housing to streamline access to long-term housing and economic security for program participants and residents.
3. Deepen partnerships with providers of critical companion services to enhance the impact of our service continuum (e.g. mental health, early childhood education, culturally-specific services, homeownership support).
4. Develop and pilot best-practice programming that helps people achieve the economic security and success they desire.
5. Measure and report long-term outcomes and use them to evaluate program development and success.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 | Build inclusive, healthy neighborhoods in East Portland/East Multnomah County that create a foundation for stability and success across generations.

Our Just Future will lead or partner in at least two community-driven neighborhood revitalization efforts that promote the intergenerational success of residents, build community equity and prevent involuntary displacement.

Key Strategies:

1. Identify the neighborhoods we can most positively impact by partnering with existing or emerging community-based efforts.
2. Leverage and share our capacity for real estate and program development to strengthen neighborhoods. Work with the community to build housing, neighborhood programs and community assets (e.g. early childhood learning centers and cultural spaces) that impact core social determinants of health and promote the long-term economic security of *all* neighborhood residents.
3. Acquire, rehabilitate and preserve existing multi-family housing occupied by families vulnerable to residential displacement.
4. Develop high-quality affordable, supportive and mixed-income housing to ensure long-term and equitable access for all to neighborhoods undergoing positive transformation.

GOAL 2 | An inclusive, anti-racist organization delivering equitable results.

Our Just Future will recognize and counter the impacts of racism and other forms of systemic oppression by modeling and championing diversity, equity and inclusivity in our leadership, programs, outcomes, investments and operations.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 | Representative Leadership: Our leadership will reflect the communities we work with.

Our Just Future will be led by a Board of Directors, leadership teams and staff who reflect the racial, ethnic, experiential and other diversity of the communities we work with.

Key Strategies:

1. Diversify our agency leadership through recruitment and hiring and by considering structural changes that will create more diverse leadership teams.
2. Adopt best practices in hiring and Human Resources management to recruit and attract diverse pools of qualified applicants and intentionally support and retain diverse leaders.
3. Develop a pipeline of diverse future leaders by training, retaining and promoting our staff.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 | Inclusive Organization: Staff and Board of Directors will experience Our Just Future as truly inclusive.

Staff and board members across *all* identities will experience Our Just Future as an inclusive organization where they feel welcomed and supported and have influence over the organization's direction and decisions.

Key Strategies:

1. Invest in training and deep learning opportunities for staff and board to better understand and practice diversity, equity and inclusion in our work.
2. Develop internal structures and assessment tools that provide inclusive input into decision making and grow an internal culture of inclusivity (e.g. affinity groups, equity council and staff surveys).

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OBJECTIVE 2.3 | Equitable Results: Our programs, housing and investments will increase racial equity, not perpetuate disparities.

Participants and residents of color will have positive outcomes and experiences with Our Just Future's programs and housing at a rate at least as high as white participants.

Key Strategies:

1. Report and monitor program and housing outcomes and satisfaction levels disaggregated by race. Involve staff and board to assess outcomes, identify disparities and make needed improvements.
2. Expand avenues for partners, community members, residents and participants to provide input into our program and housing development and operations. Consider the formation of a community advisory committee to promote equity and inclusivity in decision-making.
3. Intentionally partner and subcontract with culturally specific organizations and contractors.
4. Invest in robust training and continuous learning about fair housing and diversity, equity and inclusion for staff and contracted partners (e.g. property managers).

OBJECTIVE 2.4 | Equitable Results: Spend and invest in minority-owned businesses to close racial wealth gaps.

Invest aggressively in contracts, goods, services and community partnerships with minority-owned businesses and culturally-specific partners.

Key Strategies:

1. Assess current investments in minority-owned businesses, establish spending targets and plan for continuous improvement.
2. Establish and follow rigorous purchasing procedures that will increase the transparency and equity of our contracting decisions.
3. Grow and use a purchasing list of qualified businesses of color that provide goods and services we regularly purchase.

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GOAL 3 | Public policies and systems that reduce poverty and help more people thrive.

Our Just Future will advocate with our community for policies and investments that expand housing and economic opportunity, eliminate wealth inequality and end poverty.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 | Thought Leadership: Leverage our expertise and influence for community impact.

Our Just Future will grow and apply our expertise with poverty, homelessness and neighborhood strengthening to ensure that local and national initiatives and investments follow best practices.

Key Strategies:

1. Harness our internal expertise on “what works.” Mine our experience and outcome data to promote policies and develop programs and investments that can end poverty, homelessness, displacement and neighborhood disinvestment.
2. Elevate the experience and voices of our staff and participants. Our Just Future “shows up” at key hearings and events and in the media to share policy and program knowledge and stories of transformation.
3. Deepen and share our knowledge by attending and co-hosting conferences and events that promote understanding of the issues and communities we care about.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 Advocacy: Reform the systems and structures that make and keep people poor.

Our Just Future will engage successfully with partners and community coalitions to support policies and legislation that increase the stability, wealth and influence of the people and communities with whom we partner.

Key Strategies:

1. Prioritize the changes we seek by adopting an annual public policy agenda informed by the people and communities we partner with.
2. Participate actively in local coalitions to improve relevant programs and public policies.
3. Invest in our internal expertise and capacity to meaningfully engage and advocate.

GOAL 4 | A strong, capable and nimble organization.

Our Just Future will develop the resources, internal systems, staffing and capacity to achieve our mission.

OBJECTIVE 4.1 | Strong and Stable Finances: Invest directly in our financial sustainability and growth.

Our Just Future will achieve a level of financial growth and sustainability demonstrated by having an operating reserve equal to at least three months of operating expenses and by meeting other financial metrics to be adopted by the board.

Key Strategies:

1. Use our annual budgeting process to grow organizational reserves and achieve key milestones of financial health to be set by the board.
2. Raise sufficient resources - with a focus on unrestricted revenue - to achieve annual budget and reserve targets and grow our capacity and sustainability.
3. Market Our Just Future strategically to an expanded group of donors and investors using an updated brand that effectively tells our story of impact and success.

OBJECTIVE 4.2 | Strong and Stable Team: Invest in our greatest asset: our people!

Our Just Future will attract, support and retain a diverse and talented staff and Board of Directors through high job satisfaction and reduced turnover.

Key Strategies:

1. Invest in competitive wages and benefits, professional development and a healthy, inclusive working environment.
2. Inspire and support an effective, engaged Board of Directors that supports the staff and mission of the organization.
3. Foster a strong organizational culture that continuously connects staff to our mission, vision and trauma-informed approach.
4. Plan for continuity and succession for key board and leadership positions.

OBJECTIVE 4.3 | Effective Internal Systems & Structure: Establish the infrastructure we need to achieve our goals.

Our Just Future's organizational and board structure and internal business systems will support informed, transparent decision-making and sound, efficient business operations.

Key Strategies:

1. Align our board and organizational structures to achieve this plan's goals and objectives.
2. Invest in the state-of-the-art controls, systems, practices, training, and technology needed to streamline operations.

OBJECTIVE 4.4 | Stable Housing Portfolio: Ensure the future of our affordable housing. Our **Just Future**’ real estate portfolio will operate sustainably and provide residents with affordable homes that are well managed and maintained.

Key Strategies:

1. Develop new housing properties that are designed to meet the needs of the community and financed to perform sustainably and strengthen the overall health of our housing portfolio.
2. Recapitalize existing housing assets to improve their physical and financial health.
3. Pursue alternative revenue streams that will sustainably support critical housing functions like asset management and resident services.
4. Integrate our employment and social service programs with our housing portfolio to more effectively promote the economic and housing security of residents.