



NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING
**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

JANUARY 2023



NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING STRATEGIC PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission, Vision, and Values.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Program Summary	3
Strategic Priorities and Objectives (2023-2025)	5
Conclusions	6
Appendix A: New Hampshire Housing Guiding Principles.....	7
Appendix B: The Strategic Planning Process	13
Appendix C: New Hampshire Housing SWOT Analysis	14
Appendix D: The External and Internal Environments.....	15
Appendix E: List of Those Interviewed.....	18
Appendix F: Stakeholder Focus Group Participants.....	19

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MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

As a part of this strategic planning process, New Hampshire Housing adopted new mission and vision statements.

The new mission is:

New Hampshire Housing promotes, finances, and supports housing solutions for the people of New Hampshire.

NH Housing's new vision statement is:

A New Hampshire where everyone can afford a place to call home.

Values guide NH Housing's strategic decisions, community relations, and its behavior and actions toward each other and the people who benefit from our services. These values are:

- **Leadership:** Motivate and inspire others and ourselves to proactively work together towards achieving common goals.
- **Teamwork:** Collaborate with and respond to each other and our partners to identify and exploit opportunities to achieve our common goals.
- **Stewardship:** Exhibit prudent, ethical, and transparent use of public resources and a commitment to environmental, economic, and social sustainability.
- **Integrity:** Be honest, accountable, and reliable in all matters and demonstrate actions that will inspire the trust of others.
- **Respect:** Treat everyone we encounter with dignity; be inclusive, candid, and open in our communications and behavior.
- **Innovation:** Think objectively and listen with open minds, raise questions, challenge assumptions, and encourage creativity.
- **Agility:** Be vigilant and alert; adapt to changing conditions, opportunities, and challenges.
- **Trust:** Assume positive intentions and demonstrate the belief that others will meet their commitments and do their jobs.
- **Equity:** Strive to ensure transparent access to New Hampshire Housing's opportunities and resources for all New Hampshire residents.
- **Courage:** Take appropriate risks in service of the mission; acknowledge the inevitability of occasional failures and the desire and ability to learn from them.

INTRODUCTION

The mission of New Hampshire Housing (NH Housing) is to promote, finance, and support housing solutions for the people of New Hampshire. To accomplish this, NH Housing develops multifamily housing units, advocates for housing, promotes homeownership, and administers vouchers for rental assistance. This work is done to help realize the vision of a New Hampshire where everyone can afford a place to call home.

In the summer of 2022, NH Housing began the process of creating a new strategic plan. This occurred in the context of a great deal of change in both the internal and external environments.

Externally, the coronavirus pandemic and its many ripples intensified challenges in a housing market that was already historically tight. Housing demand was rising due to demographic and economic factors, but it increased even more rapidly during the pandemic. This, combined with low interest rates, caused historic spikes in home prices and rents. Supply chain problems, inflation, and (more recently) increased interest rates put downward pressure on supply as demand was increasing. There were new federal and state funding opportunities, although some of the new programs came with aggressive timelines and reporting requirements which strained existing staff and systems.

Internally, many staff experienced stress from the challenges outlined above. While overall staff satisfaction is extremely high, employees of NH Housing have expressed a desire for more efficient processes (especially fewer layers of approvals), improved IT systems, and increased staffing levels. Perhaps due in part to limited staff bandwidth, external partners expressed a desire for increased engagement with NH Housing.

Key conclusions from this planning process include:

- One of NH Housing's greatest strengths, and a key to solving the housing crisis, is its advocacy and education work.
- NH Housing has a reputation for excellence. However, excellence has come with the price of many process steps that are sometimes unnecessary and decrease efficiency.
- Overall staff satisfaction and retention are very high. Moving forward, the keys to high retention are increased engagement, sufficient staffing, and improved IT infrastructure.
- Given the national history of housing discrimination, it will be important that NH Housing continues to invest in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work.
- Some partners feel the need for increased engagement with NH Housing.
- Some of NH Housing's marketing and branding have not kept up with changes in demand.

This strategic plan strives to balance new opportunities and historic needs with a need to invest internally in staffing and IT infrastructure. Therefore, the four high-level goals in this strategic plan are:

- Empower and develop our staff to encourage collaboration and innovation;
- Invest in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work to build a representative culture;
- Increase engagement and outreach with external partners; and
- Maintain excellence in program work through continuous learning and process improvement.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

New Hampshire Housing (NH Housing) promotes, finances, and supports housing solutions for the people of New Hampshire. The organization's vision is to create a state where everyone can afford a place to call home. Established by statute in 1981, NH Housing generates, receives, and administers federal, state, and other affordable housing resources. The organization employs approximately 140 staff members and has a nine-member board appointed by the Governor and Executive Council. Over four decades, NH Housing has helped more than 50,000 families purchase homes and has been instrumental in financing the creation of more than 15,000 multifamily housing units in New Hampshire.

The organization operates three core housing programs: (1) Homeownership; (2) Rental Assistance; and (3) Multifamily Housing. It also has a robust Policy, Planning, and Communications program.

The Homeownership Division works with a statewide network of lenders and real estate professionals to offer mortgage programs that enable low- and moderate-income homebuyers to purchase or refinance a home. These programs serve about 2,000 new households each year. The division also supports homebuyer education and foreclosure counseling activities.

The Assisted Housing Division administers a statewide, federally funded Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, also known as Section 8. These tenant-based and project-based vouchers serve close to 4,300 households. Individuals receiving rental assistance are encouraged to participate in financial education and counseling on how to become more self-sufficient.

The Multifamily Housing Division (MHD) finances new, affordable multifamily rental unit construction and refinances and recapitalizes existing properties to preserve affordable housing units. It utilizes a variety of financing tools to fund projects and leverages other funds to provide supportive services to help those in transitional and permanent supportive housing maintain their housing. The Asset Management group within MHD oversees more than 475 properties with more than 15,000 units, ensuring there is quality administration and maintenance of the properties, which house low- and moderate- and extremely low-income residents.

The Policy, Planning, and Communications Group is the state's primary housing research and planning entity. It conducts research, issues reports, and offers presentations and insights on the state's housing needs and conditions. Staff members work with local partners on housing advocacy issues and offer technical assistance to communities throughout the state on housing-related matters.

While each of these program areas has historically developed annual goals, the organization has not conducted a comprehensive strategic plan in the recent past. However, significant changes in NH Housing's internal and external operating environments have led to a desire to take a holistic and strategic approach to this year's planning. Internally, NH Housing saw its first new Executive Director in over a decade in 2022. Additionally, roughly half of its board members were appointed within the last two years. Also, like most organizations, NH Housing is working to learn, and respond to, the post-Covid staffing landscape. Externally, the environment has been affected by new sources of funding generated from the unprecedented need for housing affordability as well as some Covid relief funds being dedicated to housing.

The goals and strategies outlined in this plan represent NH Housing's strong commitment to providing greater housing opportunity, building inclusive and vibrant communities, and supporting New Hampshire residents.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES (2023-2025)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: Empower and develop our staff to encourage collaboration and innovation

1. **Objective:** Assess the staffing required to allow for organizational resilience, work-life balance, creativity, and innovation.
2. **Objective:** Empower people to do their jobs more effectively, including improved workflow processes and elimination of unnecessary and bureaucratic layers of approval.
3. **Objective:** Continue to invest in employee development through education, systems, and technological resources.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: Invest in DEI work to build an inclusive and representative culture

1. **Objective:** Work to achieve representation at all levels of our staff and Board of the diverse population we serve by increasing and developing talent from underrepresented sectors.
2. **Objective:** Increase connection and sense of community across levels, roles, and backgrounds; increase DEI skills and engagement across the organization to foster a sense of belonging and drive fairness.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: Increase engagement and outreach with external partners

1. **Objective:** Deepen engagement with existing and potential partners.
2. **Objective:** Engage underrepresented communities to increase the understanding of community needs to design more effective and equitable solutions.
3. **Objective:** Expand local community engagement/advocacy and marketing efforts.
4. **Objective:** Develop a comprehensive communications strategy with a focus on video and non-print media.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: Maintain excellence in program work through continuous learning and process improvement

1. **Objective:** Increase access to NH Housing products for currently underrepresented populations.
2. **Objective:** Support the creation of more diverse housing types.
3. **Objective:** Increase the adoption of high-quality, user-friendly IT systems.
4. **Objective:** Incorporate economic and environmental sustainability objectives in programs, processes, and operations.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on our assessment of both the internal and external environments, we have come to the following conclusions. These conclusions inform the goals and strategic objectives outlined below.

- One of NH Housing's greatest strengths, and a key to housing solutions, is advocacy and education. Finding new ways to leverage this strength should be a key strategic focus over the next three years.
- NH Housing has a reputation for excellence. However, excellence has come with the price of sometimes unnecessary process steps that decrease efficiency and create bottlenecks at the organization's top. Selectively eliminating layers of approval that do not add value represents an opportunity for NH Housing moving forward.
- Overall staff satisfaction and retention are very high. The keys to high retention in the future are increased engagement, sufficient staffing, improved IT infrastructure, and eliminating process inefficiencies. Additionally, NH Housing should continue to invest in employee development.
- Given the history of housing discrimination, it will be important that NH Housing continues to invest in DEI work. Potential partners in that work want NH Housing to "come to them" and get to know them "at their table."
- Perhaps due to Covid and NH Housing turnover, some partners need increased engagement with NH Housing. Reinvesting in partner engagement will be important over the next three years.
- Some of NH Housing's marketing and branding have not kept up with changes in demand. Forming a comprehensive communication strategy that is not print media focused will help NH Housing connect with those needing housing services.

APPENDIX A

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following statements have been developed by the Board and staff of NH Housing over many years of policy development and program administration. They are intended to provide overall guidance on how to meet strategic priorities and objectives with specific actions.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

By law, New Hampshire Housing is responsible for promoting access to affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. In support of this role, NH Housing will:

1. Maintain a high level of fiduciary oversight as expected of a responsible public financial institution.
2. Establish and cultivate effective partnerships with government agencies, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, lenders, real estate professionals, homebuilders, and others with interests in housing.
3. Effectively communicate priorities and expectations while simultaneously considering and responding to partners' concerns and needs.
4. Design programs, whenever possible, as an integral element of broader community development activities undertaken by local governments and by nonprofit and for-profit developers.
5. Engage in a comprehensive annual process of operations and program planning and budgeting.
6. Ensure that programs are conducted in an effective and efficient manner and in compliance with external requirements, and are designed to include measurable outcome indicators, performance goals and standards.
7. Develop a comprehensive, modern communication and marketing strategy that ensures people understand the value of housing in the community, the value of NH Housing as an organization, and the range of available products and services offered by NH Housing.
8. Implement People Operations and compensation strategies that serve to attract, motivate, and retain the best talent. Provide opportunities for career advancement, cultivate a positive work environment, and recognize and reward high-potential and high-performing employees to make NH Housing a place where people want to work.
9. Maximize the cost-effective deployment of technology in support of strategic and operational goals, and to maintain or improve administrative and program efficiency.
10. Invest in DEI work to build an inclusive and representative culture.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

New Hampshire Housing is an independent public financial institution with access to and responsibility for a broad range of financial resources. As the steward of these public resources, NH Housing will:

1. Generate and manage financial resources to ensure its ability to support ongoing operations and preserve the capacity to fund existing and new program initiatives.
2. Control costs and attempt to optimize the return on investment of financial resources while achieving a responsible balance between financial gain and public policy goals.
3. Make all unrestricted funds available through the Operating Fund and use such resources to support administrative operations, capitalize and maintain formal reserves established by the Board of Directors, and fund program activities. The appropriate capitalization level of the reserves will be reviewed periodically,
4. Allocate Operating Fund resources for program activities based on the following priorities:
 - Activities that will yield a financial return;
 - Activities that will result in the return of principal expended if a financial return or yield is not possible; and
 - Grant and other programmatic expenditures that contribute to achieving the mission of NH Housing.
5. Seek the best execution for mortgage financing that balances current market conditions with NH Housing's short- and long-term financial stability. Such executions may include retaining loans, selling loans, selling loan participations and issuing bonds or mortgage-backed securities.
6. Work to identify and secure new funding sources to increase NH Housing's (and partners') capacity to support affordable housing initiatives.

HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

New Hampshire Housing will ensure there are responsible homeownership opportunities for eligible households because successful homeownership helps borrowers, lenders, real estate professionals and the state's overall economy. In this context, NH Housing will:

1. Provide a range of homeownership programs, adjusting programs in response to available resources and to changes in the housing finance market.
2. Follow underwriting guidelines that serve qualified borrowers, support prudent lending, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.
3. Offer a unique mortgage product that provides borrowers with cash assistance for down payment and closing costs.
4. Provide participating lenders and originators with an array of mortgage options that also enables NH Housing to have varied and effective secondary-market executions.
5. Maintain a constant and viable presence in the mortgage market.
6. Provide special mortgage programs to underserved borrowers, when appropriate, through the targeted use of subsidies and through partnerships with suitable organizations.
7. Use federal tax-exempt bond capacity to help low- and moderate-income borrowers achieve successful homeownership, including through mortgage credit certificates and/or loans funded by tax-exempt bonds.
8. Support education and counseling activities that help homebuyers attain and retain successful homeownership. This includes supporting foreclosure intervention strategies for at-risk homeowners.
9. Promote energy efficiency, sustainability, and resiliency by engaging with partners to encourage design innovation and improvements to existing housing stock.
10. Engage borrowers, lenders, real estate professionals and nonprofits about NH Housing's homeownership programs.
11. With other stakeholders, support the development of new, moderately priced single-family homes.

HOMEOWNERSHIP SERVICING PRINCIPLES

The single-family mortgage and servicing rights portfolios constitute New Hampshire Housing's largest financial assets. Management and preservation of these portfolios is key to the agency's financial future and critical to the well-being of our borrowers. In administering these portfolios, NH Housing will:

1. Service single-family loans originated through NH Housing's programs.
2. Manage the portfolios in a manner that minimizes the displacement of borrowers without jeopardizing NH Housing's financial stability, bond rating or ability to meet obligations to creditors and investors.

MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

New Hampshire Housing is the principal source in the state for financing both new affordable rental housing and initiatives to preserve existing affordable housing. NH Housing will:

1. Finance housing that is constructed to provide high quality, environmentally safe living spaces that are energy efficient and designed to minimize maintenance and on-going replacement expenses.
2. Monitor short- and long-term changes in housing market needs and demands and, in turn, implement and modify programs and practices to best allocate housing development finance resources.
3. Give priority to housing projects that:
 - Have strong community, economic and neighborhood development outcomes.
 - Provide housing opportunities for all ages.
 - Target scarce public resources, as is feasible, to the lowest income households.
 - Benefit underserved populations and communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the lack of housing, including persons with disabilities and persons experiencing homelessness.
 - Provide appropriate levels of resident services.
 - Are located in municipalities that have not historically provided the opportunity for affordable housing.
 - Incorporate efficient and sustainable design and construction methods to reduce long-term environmental impact and operating costs.
 - Leverage non-NH Housing capital and operating subsidy funding sources.
 - Provide for long-term rent and resident income restriction periods.
4. Allocate scarce housing development resources using the following criteria:
 - Use accepted subsidy layering practices to provide the minimum amount of public subsidy necessary for the cost of development and long-term operating sustainability.
 - Use HOME and other federal capital subsidy sources to support full utilization of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.
 - Use 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits primarily to create new affordable housing units through new construction, adaptive re-use of non-residential buildings, and conversion of existing market-rate residential buildings into affordable units and, to a limited degree, for the preservation of existing rent- and income-restricted housing.
 - Use tax-exempt construction and/or permanent debt financing to access 4% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits for the preservation of existing rent- and income-restricted housing or new construction, including mixed-income projects.

5. Look for new financing tools and encourage the use of existing financing tools by doing the following:
 - Take a proactive approach to identifying opportunities for taxable lending opportunities, including loan participation models.
 - Identify ways to simplify and reduce the cost of using tax-exempt bond construction financing (and the 4% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit) to induce developers to seek long-term financing options from NH Housing.
 - Provide technical assistance to housing development partners.

MULTIFAMILY ASSET MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

New Hampshire Housing has asset management oversight responsibility for hundreds of assisted housing projects with thousands of rental homes throughout the state. In managing this critical resource, NH Housing will:

1. Oversee management of the multifamily portfolio to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and agreements, to mitigate financial risk, and to provide a safe and healthy environment for residents.
2. Maintain fully funded reserves in all projects to support long-term viability.
3. Support efforts to preserve the existing stock of financially assisted housing.
4. Strive to maintain the strength of the NH Housing-financed portfolio of multifamily properties as an asset of NH Housing.
5. Take a proactive approach to resolving issues within the portfolio to assure that, as feasible, investments and assets are retained for public benefit.

DIRECT TENANT ASSISTANCE PRINCIPLES

New Hampshire Housing administers a range of programs designed to provide direct assistance and services to low-income households. In administering those programs, NH Housing will:

1. Manage the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) to serve the maximum number of eligible clients possible within the available federal resources.
2. Maintain an open waiting list for at least those applicants eligible for special programs or with a ranked preference in the HCV program.
3. Support counseling, education and other programs designed to assist HCV clients to become economically self-sufficient.
4. Support programs designed to improve and sustain the quality of life of HCV clients and other residents of assisted housing.
5. Make limited commitments of project-based vouchers to support housing opportunities for seniors and special needs populations.

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

New Hampshire Housing is the state's principal housing entity, carrying out its mission for the benefit of the people of New Hampshire. To support its mission and business goals, NH Housing will:

1. Educate the public and public officials about the state's housing conditions, including the housing needs of low- and moderate-income households, the needs of middle-income households and the need to house the labor force to support a strong economy.
2. Provide the public with access to high quality, reliable data on the state's housing needs, trends and conditions.
3. Participate in and take a leadership role in public engagement, advocacy and technical assistance activities designed to promote improved understanding of housing needs in the state.
4. Provide technical assistance in support of, and advocate for, legislative and regulatory policies that positively affect affordable housing opportunities.
5. Provide the public and public officials with information on the economic and social impacts of NH Housing's programs.
6. Provide high-quality, reliable information and research to real estate professionals, lenders, builders, beneficiaries, and homeowners/homebuyers on options for energy efficiency and sustainable design.

APPENDIX B

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In the summer of 2022, Sapphire Consulting was hired to help facilitate the strategic planning process. The Sapphire team included President Jim Kimberly, senior consultant Greg Hessel, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) consultants Greg Gale and Ariana Gil. The Sapphire team's background reading included:

- 2021 Annual Report
- Biennial Housing Plan 2022-2023
- Consolidated Plan for HUD
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in NH – 2020 Update
- The Annual Program Plan
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment and Recommendation Report
- Recent employee satisfaction survey results

One-on-one interviews were conducted with eight organization leadership members, the board of directors, and eleven external stakeholders. Additionally, four focus groups of external stakeholders were held (Multifamily Housing, Homeownership, Assisted Housing, and DEI), and four staff focus groups were conducted. A list of those interviewed is included in Appendix E. A list of those who participated in focus groups is included in Appendix F¹.

Data from these interviews were synthesized into a SWOT analysis. Additionally, two half-day working sessions were held with the board and leadership. The first, in late August of 2022, focused on the mission and vision of the organization. It also included discussions on key topics such as:

- NH Housing's Vision for DEI work
- NH Housing's Vision for Advocacy and NH Housing's relationship with the State
- NH Housing's Vision for Programs

A final board and leadership retreat was held in the late fall of 2022. At the retreat, changes in the external environment were discussed and three high-level goals were adopted. Each goal had several objectives attached to it. The board of directors will receive a final version of the goals and objectives at the January 2023 board meeting. These goals and objectives are presented below.

¹ To protect staff confidentiality, staff members who participated in focus groups are not included.

APPENDIX C

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT Analysis	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Competence, passion, dedication, satisfaction, mission-driven • Retention • Excellence--great outcomes • Reputation/well positioned • Autonomy - quasi public • Leadership Academy • Strong administratively • Public policy work • Understanding and using data • Professionalism of the board • Available, responsive, and helpful when partnering • Seasoned leadership with long tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of process documentation • Staff bandwidth/burnout • Technology platforms and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not meeting partner's expectations and losing business ○ Legacy system • Historic culture of not engaging staff and partners • Branding/marketing—many don't know what NH Housing does and believe it is associated with welfare/bureaucratic programs • Leadership and board diversity • Board on-boarding (supporting new members through complexity), lack of experience • Can be more “bureaucratic” than is “warranted” • Creativity (not enough bandwidth or risk tolerance to be creative)
Changes in the Environment (Opportunities and Threats) <i>The world you operate in but can't control</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflation and surging building costs • A possible housing bubble • Historic need—Investors putting stock into the rental market • Remote work • The Great Resignation • Evolving technology • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion • Increased diversity in New Hampshire (percentage of people of color doubled in 10 years) • Climate change • People get news on social media (this is challenging given the complexity of the housing industry) • Increase in need for wrap-around services for those in affordable housing • Increase in need for mental health services • Increase in drug and alcohol use • Legislatures are now engaging with housing like never before • Public attitudes toward affordable housing • An aging population 	

APPENDIX D

THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTS

THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Over the last three years, due in part to the impacts of the Covid pandemic, the environment in which NH Housing operates has been volatile. This volatility has had an impact on the work of the agency and on this strategic plan.

When Covid hit in March 2020, its impact on NH Housing had many ripples. While some of these impacts were on the internal environment and are outlined below, many also impacted the external environment. The surprising housing market surge starting in the second half of 2020 produced by high demand for home purchases led to rapidly escalating sales prices and record low inventory. This demand, coupled with rising building costs, supply chain issues, and a scarcity of qualified contractors and workers has limited the supply of new housing stock and created a historic need. While the state has responded to this crisis by investing some Covid relief funds into housing, this spending could not solve the problem alone.

A second change has been the dramatic increase in housing-related funding, some of which is a direct response to housing affordability problems associated with the pandemic. This increased funding has had both positive outcomes and unintended and challenging consequences. On the positive side, housing development and rental assistance funds became available at unprecedented levels. Yet some new initiatives presented NH Housing staff with complex and ambiguous program structures and tight deadlines. This challenged staff capacity and the organization's culture of excellence.

A third change, related to the first two, is the opportunity and challenge presented by the emergence of housing as a top-tier social and economic policy issue. This awareness has resulted in a broader and stronger coalition of advocacy allies than ever before and has brought new partners to the table. It has also resulted in greater demand for, and interest in, NH Housing's programs and activities, potentially increasing the risk of negative interactions and publicity.

Fourth, during 2022, mortgage rates increased at their fastest rate in three decades and remain elevated at year's end. Many of the families NH Housing serves were priced out of the homeownership market, and the number of both single-family and multifamily transactions declined. This has affected NH Housing's financial projections and planning because it does not receive state funding and relies on transactions to fund its operations.

Finally, the tragic killing of George Floyd, among many similar events, amplified the Black Lives Matter movement over the past three years. While NH Housing began some Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work a few years ago, the events of the last few years have increased the importance and urgency to do more. For decades, housing policy has included redlining and many other examples of systemic racism and discrimination. The confluence of the above-mentioned trends has gained the attention of policymakers and business leaders throughout the state, and housing affordability has been acknowledged as a statewide crisis.

On a more regional level, NH Housing's partners have a very high amount of respect for its work. NH Housing has a reputation as a responsive, mission-driven organization that excels at what it does. While giving NH Housing overall high grades, partners also expressed a desire for increased engagement with, and more flexibility from, NH Housing moving forward. Additionally, while partners affirm the critical need for more new multifamily housing developments, they do not believe the state can build its way out of the housing crisis. Therefore, partners want NH Housing to increase advocacy work and to partner with them to develop new and creative housing solutions.

THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Internally, NH Housing employees have expressed strong support for the organization. In an April 2021 survey with 113 participants, 98% of participants see themselves working for the organization for at least two more years and 99% said they would recommend the organization to a friend or co-worker as a place to work (79% strongly recommend and 20% recommend). Ninety-five to ninety-nine percent also expressed satisfaction with pay, benefits, paid time off, and flexibility.

One manifestation of NH Housing's flexibility is its remote work policy. While most staff are required to spend some days in the office each week, many staff work remotely most of the time. Staff expressed high satisfaction with remote work, and some expressed a desire to have more intentional ways to connect with co-workers when they are in the office.

Turnover has also been low, despite The Great Resignation and a national trend of people leaving their jobs. Over the last two years, NH Housing's turnover has been under 6%. Given the complexity of its work, however, any turnover has an impact, especially in the Multifamily Housing Division, where the learning curve is especially steep. Some partners of NH Housing believe there is a connection between staff inexperience and a more regulatory and bureaucratic feel to the organization.

Despite overall staff satisfaction with NH Housing, staff also felt the organization is, at times, overly bureaucratic. They named "layers of approvals" needed as one example of this culture. Other words staff used to describe this culture were "stuffy" and "micro-managing." Some felt that the layers of approval signaled that they were not trusted, and others felt demoralized that there were so many "unnecessary" bottlenecks to them accomplishing their work. Moving forward, a key challenge for the organization will be to identify which processes necessitate checks and balances to ensure excellence and which can be simplified to increase efficiency.

Another theme of staff focus groups was the need for more staff bandwidth. While hard work is something that is a part of NH Housing's culture and the staff is mission-driven, the tight staffing they perceive leaves no time for creativity, process improvement work, or enough redundancy to cover vacations. While some of this stress is attributed to staff scrambling to get new Covid-funded programs online, NH Housing may struggle to retain staff without increasing staffing so that staff feels a greater sense of work-life balance. Improvements in process efficiency and technology can bring some relief, but these initiatives require upfront investments of time to achieve long-term gains, which can result in further challenges in terms of bandwidth and morale.

Staff also expressed a desire for improved information technology (IT) platforms. These include both platforms for external users, such as a lending platform for mortgage customers, and internal platforms, such as a Customer Relations Management (CRM) tool.

In 2022, NH Housing also hired its first new Executive Director in over a decade. While new leaders always have a learning curve, this transition also creates opportunities for NH Housing. One goal of the new Executive Director has been to increase staff engagement. Given Gallup's research on employee engagement, this is a worthy and important goal that should help keep staff retention high.

APPENDIX E
LIST OF THOSE INTERVIEWED

Name	Title
Rob Dapice	Executive Director/CEO
Ben Frost	Deputy Executive Director / Chief Legal Officer
Patricia Donahue	Managing Director, Administration/CAO
David Sargent	Managing Director, Finance/CFO
DeeAnn Pouliot	Managing Director, Assisted Housing
Ignatius MacLellan	Managing Director, Multifamily Housing
David Hebert	Managing Director, IT
Julie Jussif	Managing Director, Homeownership
Chris Norwood	Board of Directors, Chair
John A. Cuddy	Board of Directors, Vice Chair
Sarah Marchant	Board of Directors
Donna Marsh	Board of Directors
Tricia Morin	Board of Directors
Anthony Poore	Board of Directors
Michael Skelton	Board of Directors
Evelyn Whelton	Board of Directors
Josh Meehan	Ex. Director, Keene Housing (Public Housing Authority)
Bob Quinn	CEO, NH Association of Realtors
Will Arvelo	Ex. Director, Cross Roads House, Inc.
Elliott Berry	Managing Attorney and Co-Director, Housing Justice Project
Dean Christon	Former Ex Dir., NH Housing
Elissa Margolin	Ex. Director, Housing Action NH
Katy Easterly Martey	Ex. Dir., NH CDFA
Robert Tourigny	Ex. Director, NeighborWorks Southern NH
Bill Shanahan/ Nancy Owens	Co-CEOs, Evernorth
Taylor Caswell	Commissioner, NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs
Harrison Kanzler	Ex. Dir., AHEAD

APPENDIX F
STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Focus Group	Name	Organization
DEI	Zachary Palmer	Community Loan Fund
	Eva Castillo	NH Alliance for Immigrants & Refugees
	James McKim	NAACP Manchester / DEI Consultant
	Susan Stearns	NAMI NH
	Angela Zhang	Listen Community Services
	Margaret Byrnes	NHMA
Assisted Housing	Donna Davey	Participant
	Jessie Tustin	Manchester VAMC
	Donnalee Lozeau	Southern NH Services
Multifamily	Rebecca Hatfield	Avesta Housing
	Alan Johnson	Hodges Property Management
	Peter Roche	Development Synergies, LLC
	Bill Shanahan	Evernorth
	Andrew Winter	Twin Pines Housing Trust
	Jack Franks	Avanru Development
Homeownership	Frank McClain	Pemi-Valley Habitat for Humanity
	Samantha Marshall	AHEAD
	Carol Zinc-Mailloux	Waterstone Mortgage
	Marty Chapman	The Housing Partnership
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