



5 Year Strategic Plan 2023-2027



Fort Wayne Housing Authority Strategic Planning Executive Summary

The Board of Commissioners

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Debra Simmons Evans, CEO Essential Advisors
Corporation – Temple, Texas



George Guy
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings:

ON BEHALF OF THE FORT WAYNE HOUSING AUTHORITY board of directors and staff we are pleased to present our 2022 – 2027 strategic plan. The goals and priorities in this plan will enable Fort Wayne Housing Authority to achieve our mission to revitalize the city of Fort Wayne by building and developing safe, quality, affordable housing options, while providing programs to foster community, alleviate poverty and encourage long-term economic self-sufficiency.

Currently, FWHA serves as one of Indiana's largest housing providers and represents a housing portfolio that includes 904 units of conventional housing. Of these units, 656 are Public Housing, 96 represent Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)/ Project Based Voucher (PBV), 52 are tax credit and our inventory includes 100 Permanent Supportive Housing/ Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)/ Project Based Vouchers (PBV). We also administer and manage over 2,760 Housing Choice vouchers and provide homes for 7,082 family members.

With a commitment to community, we have and will continue to identify partnerships that will provide the much-needed social supports that our families need. The goals and strategies within this plan will provide us with an opportunity to diversify our housing options, cultivate landlords and address stigmas associated with affordable housing. It will also provide us with an opportunity to develop the next generation of housing professionals who will further our mission and vision amongst the ever-changing housing landscape.

CEO/Executive Director George Guy, the Board of Commissioners, and FWHA team invite the entire community to work alongside us to achieve the goals we have outlined. We hope the plan inspires you and shines a light on the future of affordable housing and the families who call our developments home.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George Guy'.

George Guy
Executive Director

Strategic Planning Process

A great American business leader once said, “Don’t be afraid to give up the good to go for the great.” When it comes to providing quality affordable public housing options for Fort Wayne residents, the Fort Wayne Housing Authority (FWHA) strives for greatness. For that reason, the agency focuses on being best in class and that takes intention, strategic thinking, accountability, and having a keen sense and understanding of what the people of Fort Wayne need when it comes to public housing.

Through this planning process, the voices, ideas, and perspectives of FWHA Commissioners, residents, FWHA leaders/staff, community leaders, landlords, and other stakeholders were disclosed. What we heard from these listening sessions helped shape this plan and continue to keep FWHA on the path to implementing strong policies and initiatives.

This updated plan will guide the agency’s efforts through 2022-2027 to meet its strategic mission: The FWHA mission is to provide good quality, affordable housing, and superior services to eligible members of the Fort Wayne community and to maintain an atmosphere that encourages self-sufficiency.

The Fort Wayne Housing Authority (FWHA) has developed its 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. Strategic planning is the ongoing organizational process of using available knowledge to document an organization’s intended direction. This important process is used to prioritize efforts, effectively allocate resources, align shareholders and employees on the organization’s goals, and ensure those goals are backed by data and sound reasoning.

The strategic planning process the FWHA undertook helped to create a single, forward-focused vision for how it should be positioned over the next five years.

The strategic planning process used for the FWHA Strategic Plan is based on the approach developed by Dr. Teresa Jeter, Engaging Solutions LLC Strategic Planning Team, and Debra Simmons Evans, Essential Advisors Corporation. The process included these specific phases:

- Discovery Phase
- Review and Confirmation Phase
- Visioning and Planning Phase
- Reveal Phase
- Wrap-Up Phase

Big Picture

Before the Discovery Phase, participants were asked to think big picture regarding the strategic plan. Below are the questions and responses:

- If the strategic plan could only accomplish one thing, what would it be?
~ Diversify housing options; Focus on a core mission; Cultivate landlords; Tell the success stories
- How would you like to describe the future FWHA?
~ Offering a “hands-up” to program participants; Community pillar; Viable; Respected; Impactful
- What should the FWHA be?
~ Competent and compassionate;
- What should the FWHA do?
~ Change community perceptions; Market success stories; Build community partnerships
- What challenges will the FWHA face in the future?
~ Addressing public housing stigma; Recruiting landlords in a booming housing market; NIMBYism; Retaining staff during the COVID pandemic

Discovery Phase

The Discovery Phase took place from November 2021 to April 2022. The objectives were to understand the organizational landscape and to help shape the vision, the commitment, and the direction of the process. In addition, the Discovery Phase was designed to gather input regarding perceptions, identity, current understandings, and future aspirations that would further shape visioning discussions in the strategic planning process. While seven strategic categories ultimately rose to the top of the consensus-building sessions, addressing public housing stigma, recruiting landlords in a booming housing market, NIMBYism, and retaining FWHA staff during the COVID pandemic continued to resound throughout the Discovery Phase.

The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee invited community and government stakeholders and housing authority residents to participate in the planning process. The input was gathered from FWHA commissioners and staff, housing authority residents, landlords, nonprofit directors, bankers, and city employees via interviews, focus groups, meeting sessions, and surveys. During this phase, four virtual stakeholder meetings, five focus group meetings, five one-to-one commissioner interviews, and one survey were implemented. A total of one hundred five people participated virtually in the Discovery Phase.

During the Discovery Phase, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted during the stakeholders’ and focus group meetings. The S.W.O.T.. framework is considered powerful support for decision-making because it enables an organization to uncover opportunities for success that were previously unarticulated. It also highlights threats before they become overly burdensome.

The strengths and weaknesses exercise looks at the past and present and offers assessments of the internal organization. The scan of opportunities and threats looks into the future. The S.W.O.T. analysis supplies an overall systems view of the organization, and it brings to the surface clues for identifying key strategic issues and the contours of effective strategies.

The opportunities and threats exercise provides an early foundation for vision statements of the FWHA in the community setting as well as in the organization. The input was organized into themes or possible preliminary issue areas. There were many strengths in the operation of the FWHA. The analysis also revealed an honest effort at identifying weaknesses. External challenges or outside factors that could negatively affect the FWHA were also listed. There were varying degrees of agreement and disagreement regarding the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities assessment. There was an effort to gauge consensus.

In the Discovery Phase, the FWHA's 2016 5-Year Plan, the 2019 – 2024 5-Year Plan, and the 2021-2022 Annual Plan were reviewed and analyzed to determine how the objectives and goals aligned with the findings of the SWOT analysis.

The assessment criteria for the PHA's Plans consisted of identifying goals that;

- Aligned with SWOT outcomes
- Aligned with SWOT outcomes and are in progress
- Aligned with SWOT outcomes and are ongoing

Ninety-five percent of the Plans' objectives and goals aligned with the SWOT outcomes as either ongoing or in the process of starting.

After the SWOT analysis and the review of organizational documents, there was consensus building around the SWOT outcome which led to seven strategic categories:

- Affordable Housing
- Education Programs
- Staff and Leadership
- Landlord Relationships
- Maintenance-Communication Protocol
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Safety

Goals were created and prioritized for each category that would help address weaknesses and threats facing the FWHA. Goals were also created and prioritized to assist the FWHA in building upon its strengths and to identify opportunities for creating partnerships that would further assist in addressing weaknesses and threats.

Review & Confirmation Phase

The FWHA's website was reviewed and assessed by Engaging Solutions' Technology Team during the Discovery Phase to determine website usability. Overall, the website was rated "Highly" for user-friendliness.

Stakeholders examined the FWHA's mission. While they found it to be relevant, they recommended that it be shortened to reflect a more concise and focused statement.

The purpose of the Review and Confirmation Phase was to review the information gathered during the Discovery Phase, document the process and findings, and present it in a one-hour meeting to Director George Guy and the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee for approval and for initiating the Visioning and Planning Phase. After the presentation, all concurred that information gathered during the Discovery Phase was thorough and adequate for moving to the Visioning and Planning Phase.

During this Phase, Mr. Guy requested for additional participants to be invited to the next Phase. The Strategic Advisory Planning Committee invited more stakeholders to participate which led to ten additional people providing input during the Visioning and Planning Phase.

Visioning & Planning Phase

The objectives of the Visioning and Planning Phase were to have consensus building around SWOT outcomes and to develop and prioritize strategic goals. Stakeholders were also asked to determine how success would look after goals were implemented. The Visioning and Planning Phase occurred in two, two-hour working sessions with a collective group of stakeholders comprised of executive staff, board members, internal staff, landlords, community organizations, government staff, nonprofit representatives, and banking officials.

Participants agreed that the strategic goals that were identified for each category are important to help build upon the strengths of the FWHA and to address the weaknesses and threats facing the PHA.

The following identifies the strategic goals, objectives, and success milestones. They are the foundation for the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan that will be operationalized and implemented by FWHA in the next phase of its strategic planning process. The strategic plan represents the voices, ideas and perspectives heard from stakeholders engaged in the planning process and it will guide how FWHA operates over the next five years.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GOAL #1: CREATE EFFICIENT PAPERWORK PROCESSES

Stakeholders prioritized this goal as number one because of the challenges in processing paperwork often encountered by those doing business with the PHA.

SUCCESS: A streamlined and electronic way to process paperwork for staff, tenants, and landlords.

GOAL #2: COORDINATE AND CONNECT RESOURCES

Stakeholders stated that one way to expand affordable housing opportunities was to partner with more community stakeholders and organizations that could help identify and create more resources.

SUCCESS: More financial resources are created through partnerships; frequent community meetings such as housing summits; having an in-house dedicated grant writer.

GOAL #3: OFFER EVICTION INTERVENTION

Create an eviction intervention plan to assist households who are going through the eviction process.

SUCCESS: A well-defined process that would ensure those being evicted understand their rights; leading to fewer evictions.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

GOAL #1: FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

Implementing a financial literacy program will empower individuals and families to thrive by having them understand and learn about finances and financial management tools.

SUCCESS: Residents being educated about finances and becoming more financially stable.

GOAL #2: SECTION 8 EDUCATION FOR PROSPECTIVE LANDLORDS

For prospective landlords to learn about and participate in the Section 8 program, stakeholders concurred that there needed to be intentional opportunities for the PHA to provide information through a variety of learning methods such as handbooks, meetings, and quarterly Q&A sessions.

SUCCESS: Knowledgeable landlords signing up for the Section 8 program.

GOAL #3: HOMEOWNERSHIP EDUCATION

Stakeholders agreed that PHA residents who have an interest in owning a home should have the opportunity to learn about homeownership. Homeownership education can inspire hope that owning a home is possible. Homeownership can create stability and independence, and it can also build wealth.

SUCCESS: A homeownership education program is created and PHA residents are learning about homeownership opportunities.

GOALS #4: TENANT EDUCATION

Guidance on how to be a good tenant and understanding tenant rights is important for the PHA, tenants, and landlords. A strong tenant education program can help address landlord concerns and equip tenants with knowledge about their roles and responsibilities.

SUCCESS: Tenants and landlords are educated about tenant-landlord relationships and subsequently minimize tenant-landlord issues.

STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

GOAL #1: IMPROVED TENANT INTERACTION

Stakeholders concurred that FWHA staff needed to improve communication processes with PHA residents.

SUCCESS: Better responsive communication through customer service training, quarterly surveys, and 24-hour response times.

GOAL #2: STANDARDIZED AND STREAMLINED WORK PROCESSES

The FWHA staff should implement better work processes such as paperless processing, E-pay, Docusign, a collaborative website portal, and other technological methods to improve the overall efficiency of the staff.

SUCCESS: Efficient and streamlined work processes.

GOAL #3: MINIMAL STAFF TURNOVER

FWHA staff identified retaining staff as a problem and an overall threat to the PHA's operations. The goal is for leadership to minimize staff turnover through improved employee performance processes, team-building activities, and career development opportunities.

SUCCESS: Decreased staff turnover.

LANDLORD RELATIONSHIPS

GOAL 1: IMPROVE LANDLORD-TENANT INTERACTION

Landlord and tenant interactions can be contentious at times. This is an opportunity for the FWHA to provide training for landlords around customer service and tenant rights.

SUCCESS: Improved landlord-tenant interactions.

GOAL #2: INCREASE LANDLORD PARTICIPATION

Create opportunities to engage landlords through information sessions. Create a landlord liaison position. Have specific marketing campaigns targeting landlords.

SUCCESS: More landlords participating in FWHA programs.

GOAL #3: CREATE A LANDLORD MARKETING CAMPAIGN

This category was created from stakeholder feedback around the need for the FWHA to tell its success stories about landlords and their participation in the Section 8 program.

SUCCESS: Increased landlord participation.

MAINTENANCE-COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

GOAL #1: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LANDLORDS, TENANTS, AND FWHA STAFF AROUND MAINTENANCE ISSUES.

There is a need for clarity about the maintenance protocol and how it should be communicated among all parties (tenants, landlords, and FWHA staff).

SUCCESS: A well-defined maintenance protocol that is enforced and communicated to all parties.

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOAL #1: BRAND AWARENESS MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The objective of this goal is to create marketing information that highlights success stories, FWHA programs, and current and future endeavors.

SUCCESS: The public continues to be informed about the good the FWHA is doing.

GOAL #2: BETTER PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Public perceptions of housing authorities are usually negative, even when PHAs are doing great in carrying out their missions. Therefore, the objective of this goal is for the FWHA to tell its success stories and tell them often so that the public perception can continue to be improved.

SUCCESS: FWHA's public perception continues to improve.

SAFETY

Part of the FWHA mission includes "safe" housing. However, when stakeholders identified Safety as an important category that should be included in the strategic plan, there were no specific goals identified to ensure **safety** for public housing and its residents.

It is recommended that goals be created by the FWHA staff and leadership to help ensure that public housing residents and landlords are aware of safety protocols and aware of the PHA's stance on safety for its housing and its residents.

CONCLUSION

The FWHA strategic planning process was robust and engaging. Stakeholders were very passionate about the FWHA, its processes, and the strategic goals that were identified to help address the organization's SWOT. The FWHA strategic plan will assist the organization in aligning with the identified goals for the future. It will require the organization to be innovative, provide a greater understanding of the housing needs of the people of Fort Wayne, be best in class by leading the public housing industry in providing quality-of-life initiatives for its residents, and educate public housing residents on home ownership options.

The key takeaways from the strategic planning process are for the FWHA to be **ACCESSIBLE**, to be **VISIBLE**, and to be **EMPOWERING**.

NEXT STEPS

Plan implementation is defined as the carrying out of strategies, and the incorporation of strategies into the relevant organizational systems. This typically requires the empowerment of different individuals and partnerships.

The next step is for the FWHA and its partners to implement the strategic plan. This will require developing action steps, timeframes, and milestones to advance the plan with the assistance of the same consultant team; Engaging Solutions and Essential Advisors Corporation. On the next page is an example of the implementation timeframe.

Strategic Plan Implementation Timeframe

CATEGORY	Goal	Timeframe*	Responsible Party	Resources Needed	Milestones	On Target	Off Target
Affordable Housing							
Efficient Paperwork	1	6 mos-1 yr					
Coordinate & Connect Resources	2	1 mo & ongoing					
Eviction Intervention	3	1-3 mos & ongoing					
Education Programs							
Financial Literacy	1	3-6 mos					
Sec 8 for Landlords	2	1 mo & ongoing					
Homeownership	3	3 mos & ongoing					
FWHA Staff & Leadership							
Tenant Eviction Intervention	1	3 mos & ongoing					
Standardized and Streamlined Work Processes	2	6 mos-1 yr					
Minimal Staff Turnover	3	3 mos & ongoing					
Landlord Relationships							
Improve Landlord-Tenant Interaction	1	3 mos & ongoing					
Increase Landlord Participation	2	2 mos & ongoing					
Create Landlord Marketing Campaign	3	3 mos & ongoing					
Maintenance/Communication Protocol							
Improve communication between landlords, tenants & staff	1	1 mo & ongoing					
Marketing & Public Relations							
Brand Awareness Marketing Campaign	1	2-3 mos & ongoing					
Better Public Perception	2	1 mo & ongoing					
Safety							
	TBD						

INTRODUCTION | TABLE OF CONTENTS



14

Introduction
ABOUT THE FWHA
FWHA PROPERTIES



16

Who We Are
THE MISSION
THE VISION



17

How We Planned
THE PROCESS
PLANNING PHASES



34

Where We Are Going
GOALS & SUCCESS METRICS
NEXT STEPS



42

Appendix

CURRENTLY, THE FWHA SERVES AS ONE OF INDIANA'S LARGEST HOUSING PROVIDERS AND REPRESENTS A HOUSING PORTFOLIO THAT INCLUDES 904 UNITS OF CONVENTIONAL HOUSING. OF THESE UNITS, 656 ARE PUBLIC HOUSING, NINETY-SIX REPRESENT RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION (RAD)/ PROJECT BASE VOUCHER (PBV), 52 ARE TAX CREDIT AND OUR INVENTORY INCLUDES 100 PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING/ LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT (LIHTC)/ PROJECT BASE VOUCHERS (PBV). WE ALSO ADMINISTER AND MANAGE OVER 2,760 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS AND PROVIDE HOMES FOR 7,082 FAMILY MEMBERS.

INTRODUCTION | PROPERTIES

FWHA Property Locations



North Highlands



Southside Senior Villas



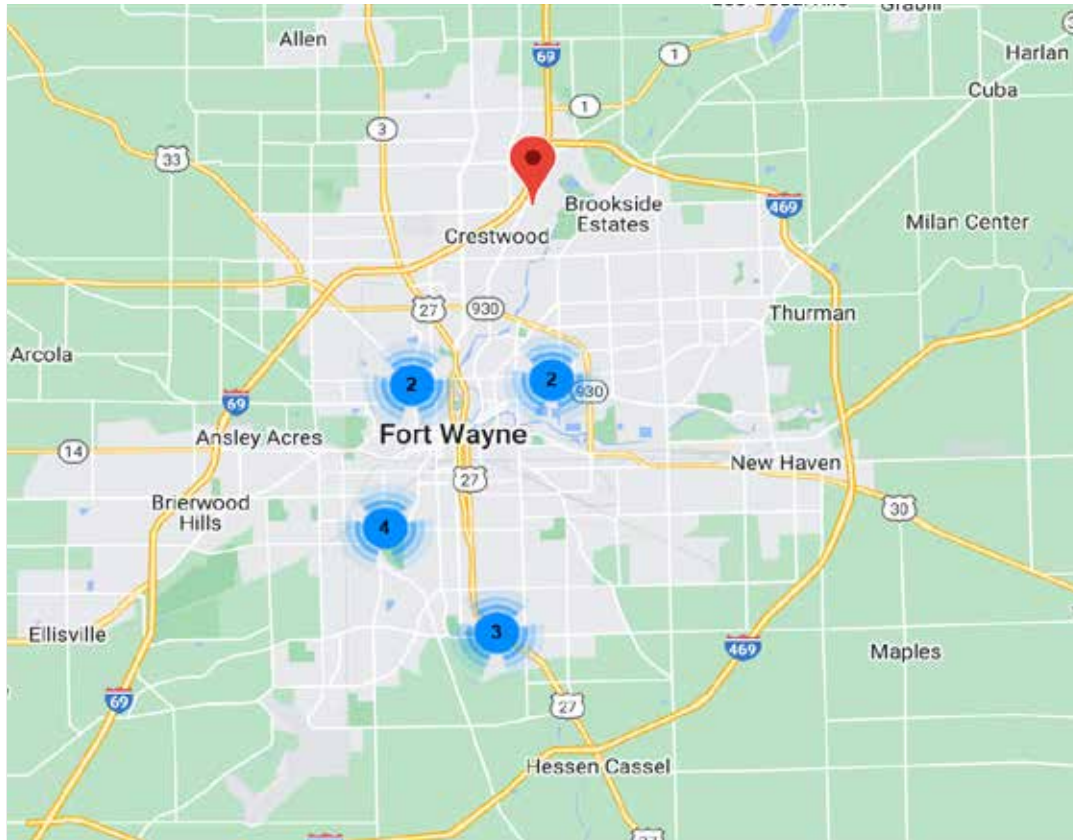
Brooklyn Manor



Tall Oaks



Brookmill Court



River Cove



Maumee Terrace



Scattered Sites



Whispering Oaks



Village of Brooklyn Pointe



Beacon Heights



Miami Homes



McCormick Place

WHO WE ARE | MISSION & VISION

Mission

A mission is a short statement of why an organization exists, what its overall goal is, and identifying the goal of its operations: what kind of product or service it provides, its primary customers or market, and its geographical region of operation.

During the FWHA strategic planning process, stakeholders had an opportunity to discuss the PHA's mission and recommend modifications to it. After the discussions, all felt the mission statement was still relevant today, however, it needed to be fine-tuned to reflect the PHA's primary focus which is affordable housing. The following mission statement is the outcome of the discussions:

To cultivate vibrant, inclusive neighborhoods throughout Fort Wayne, where all residents have safe, quality, affordable housing.

VISION Stakeholders were asked how the ideal FWHA would look in the year 2025. The below graphic captures their responses.

How will FWHA look in 2025?

- USER-FRIENDLY • EFFICIENT • VISIBLE IN THE COMMUNITY • RESPONSIVE
- COLLABORATIVE PARTNER
- SOUGHT AFTER • COMMUNICATIVE
- ACCESSIBLE • RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- VIEWED POSITIVELY • FULLY-STAFFED
- ENGAGED PARTICIPANTS • CLIENT-CENTERED • OFFERING MORE CHOICES TO RESIDENTS • SUPPORTIVE OF EMPLOYEES
- MULTI-GENERATIONAL APPROACH

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

Overview

The Fort Wayne Housing Authority engaged in an extensive process over the past several months to develop its Strategic Plan (the Plan). FWHA has done due diligence to consider its options, and its future, and have its staff, governance, and community partners come alongside it to develop the strategic plan.

The goals of the process were to develop a Plan which:

- Builds upon the PHA's organizational strengths and successes, to support organizational growth, affordable housing, and other services, and contributes to the prosperity of the City of Fort Wayne
- Reflects input from key stakeholders
- Identifies goals and action steps that will help support the mission and future vision
- Communicates organizational priorities.

The Process

Strategic planning is the ongoing organizational process of using available knowledge to document a business's intended direction. This process is used to prioritize efforts, effectively allocate resources, align shareholders and employees on the organization's goals, and ensure those goals are backed by data and sound reasoning.

The FWHA strategic planning process began in late 2021. At the start of planning, the FWHA wanted to create a path forward with assistance from Engaging Solutions LLC, a consulting firm, to help shepherd them through the process. The Strategic Plan resulted from extensive stakeholder engagement from FWHA internal and external participants.

To have a comprehensive approach for gathering input, assessing and analyzing data, and identifying goals and strategies, the planning process occurred in three phases; The Discovery Phase, the Review and Confirmation Phase, and the Visioning and Planning Phase. The Reveal and wrap Up stages provided the opportunity to develop a marketing plan, level set with the FWHA leadership, and determine next steps. Below are the phases, the tasks, and the deliverables.



**DISCOVERY
PHASE**



**REVIEW &
CONFIRMATION
PHASE**



**VISION &
PLANNING
PHASE**



REVEAL



WRAP UP

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS



DISCOVERY PHASE

- Engagement through Stakeholder group meetings
- Exploratory conversations and interviews with staff, commissioners, external stakeholders, and resident council members
- SWOT Analysis
- Discovery survey



REVIEW & CONFIRMATION PHASE

- Review Discovery phase findings with the Executive Director, Commissioners, and Strategic Planning Committee
- Gather additional feedback and insight



VISION & PLANNING PHASE

- Meet with internal and external stakeholders to discuss vision and mission
- Translate visions into a strategic plan
- Identify goals, prioritize goals, and create action steps
- Identify partnerships, and resources
- Understand the organizational impact



REVEAL

- Develop a branding and marketing plan



WRAP UP

- Conversation wrap-up with the Executive Director
- Confirm project completion
- Celebrate results
- Strategic Plan Implementation
- Discuss next steps

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

Discovery Phase Overview

The Discovery Phase took place from November 2021 to April 2022. The objectives were to understand the organizational landscape and to help shape the vision, the commitment, and the direction of the process. In addition, the Discovery Phase was designed to gather input regarding perceptions, identity, current understandings, and future aspirations that would further shape future visioning discussions in the strategic planning process.

The input was gathered from FWHA commissioners and staff, housing residents, and community stakeholders via interviews, focus groups, stakeholder meetings, and one survey. During this phase four virtual stakeholder meetings, five focus group meetings, five one-to-one commissioner interviews occurred, and one survey was implemented. A total of one hundred and five people participated in the Discovery Phase.

During the Discovery Phase, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was conducted during the stakeholders' and focus group meetings. The SWOT framework is considered powerful support for decision-making because it enables an organization to uncover opportunities for success that were previously unarticulated. It also highlights threats before they become overly burdensome.

FWHA annual plans between 2016 and the 2020 5-year PHA plan were reviewed during this phase to determine how goals and objectives in the plans aligned with prioritized goals identified from the SWOT analysis.

The FWHA's website was also reviewed and assessed to determine website usability.

Page 20 depicts a graphic summary of the Discovery Phase process.

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS



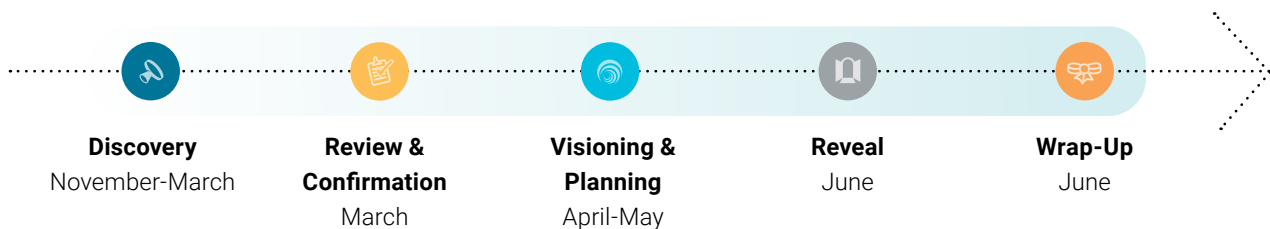
105

Participants

90

Minute
Sessions

Project Timeline



Feedback Types:

- 1:1 Interviews
- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Stakeholder Meetings

Strategies Utilized:

SWOT Analysis
Mixed & Homogeneous Groups

Quantitative Survey Analysis
Descriptive Analytics

Qualitative Interviewing
1:1 Interviews

Document Review
Goal Assimilation

Participant Groups:

- FWHA Staff/Leadership
- Government Officials
- Residents
- Landlords
- Community Partners

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

Big Picture

Before the SWOT discussions and interviews in the Discovery Phase, participants were asked to think big picture regarding the strategic plan. One question asked was, "If the strategic plan could only accomplish one thing, what would it be?" Below are additional questions and the key takeaways from the responses.

IF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN COULD ONLY ACCOMPLISH ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE? KEY TAKEAWAYS:



HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO DESCRIBE FWHA IN THE FUTURE? WHAT SHOULD FWHA BE? WHAT SHOULD FWHA DO? KEY TAKEAWAYS:



WHAT CHALLENGE DO YOU THINK FWHA WILL FACE TRYING TO ACHIEVE THE FUTURE VISION? KEY TAKEAWAYS:



HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

Methods of Analysis & Findings

To analyze the input collected during the Discovery Phase, there were four methods used to identify and organize the data. They were Bucketing, Grouping, Theming, and Comment Counts.

BUCKETING - Responses were divided into seven overarching categories that emerged from the data. The categories were:



GROUPING – Bucketed comments were divided further into respondent groups to determine if comments from a particular group differed from the entire sample.

THEMING – Within each bucket, themes were identified for further analysis.

COMMENT COUNTS – A simple count of comments in each category provided a big-picture view of potential areas of focus for strategic planning.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis helps to shape current and future operations and helps to develop strategic goals. It was a method for identifying the internal strengths and weaknesses of the FWHA, external opportunities for the organization, and threats. A significant amount of time was devoted to this process.

The following pages show graphics that outline the most common threads that appeared for each SWOT category and the response distribution by stakeholder groups.

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

SWOT Results: Strengths Summary

Common Threads

FWHA Leaders

- Strong leadership
- Passionate & experienced staff

Affordable Housing Program

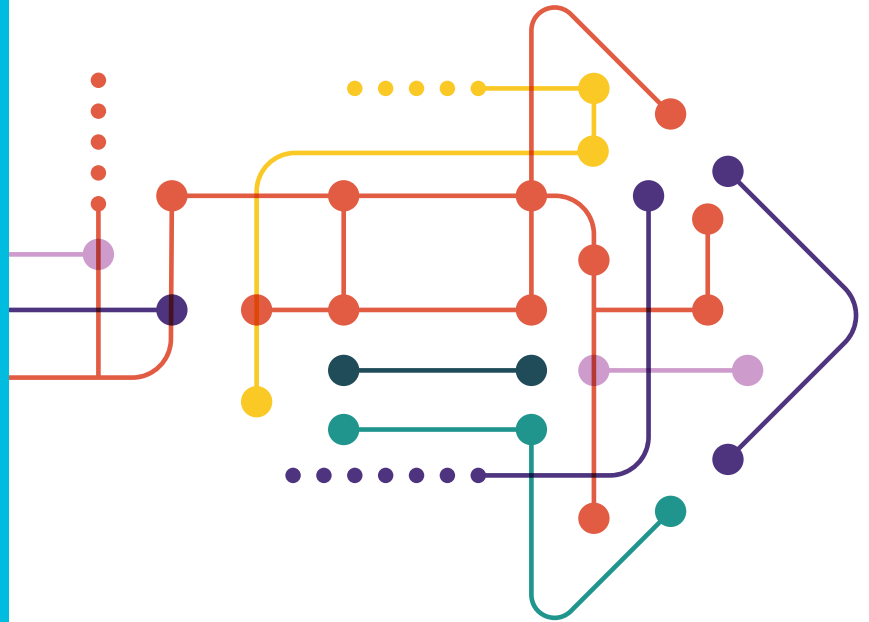
- Exemplifies the mission - provides safe, affordable, housing options
- Satisfies a growing community need

Education Programs

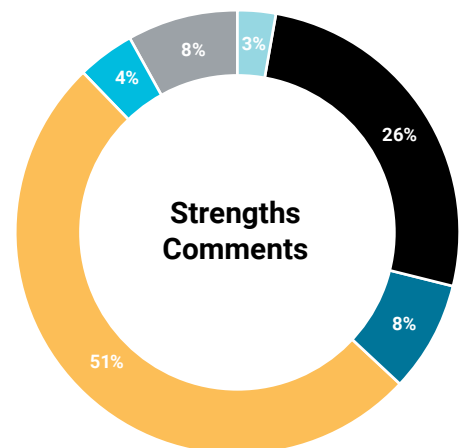
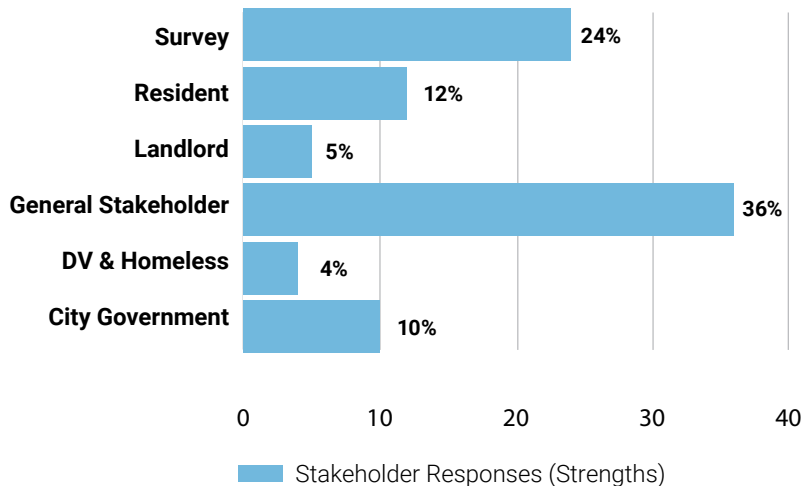
- Variety of programming
- Moves program participants to economic self-sufficiency

Maintenance

- Face of the organization for many residents
- Properties are generally well-maintained



Response Distribution by Stakeholder Group (Strengths)



- 26% Affordable Housing
- 8% Education
- 51% FWHA Leadership & Staff
- 4% Landlord Relationships
- 8% Maintenance
- 3% Marketing & PR

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

SWOT Results: Weakness Summary

Common Threads

FWHA Leadership & Staff

- Tenant concerns left unaddressed
- Communication breakdown among staff
- Turnover & insufficient staffing

Affordable Housing Program

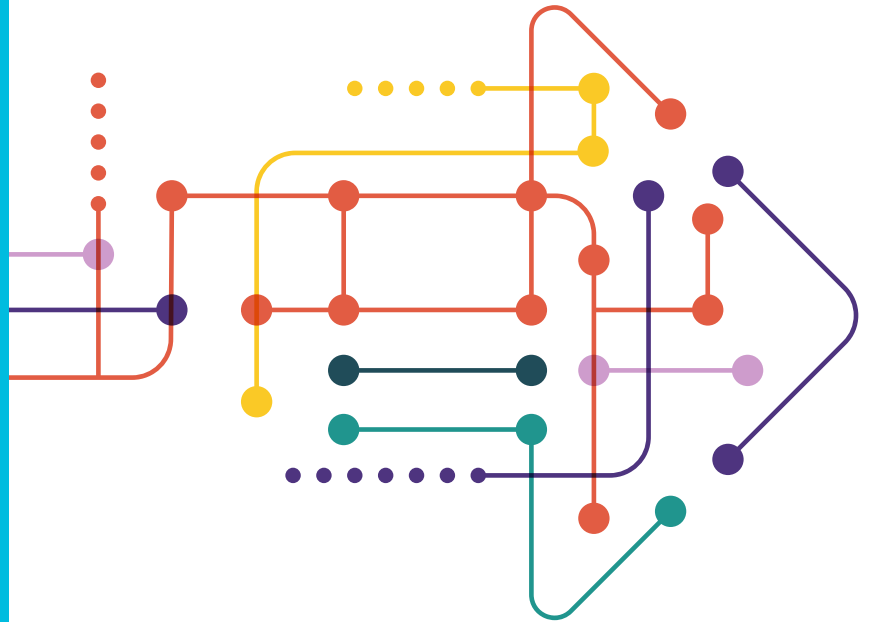
- Reputation management - negative community perception
- Lack of efficiency
- Shortage of housing - waiting list management

Safety

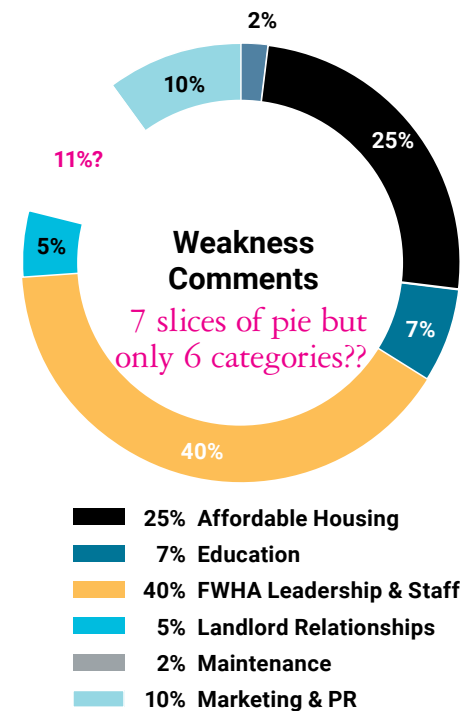
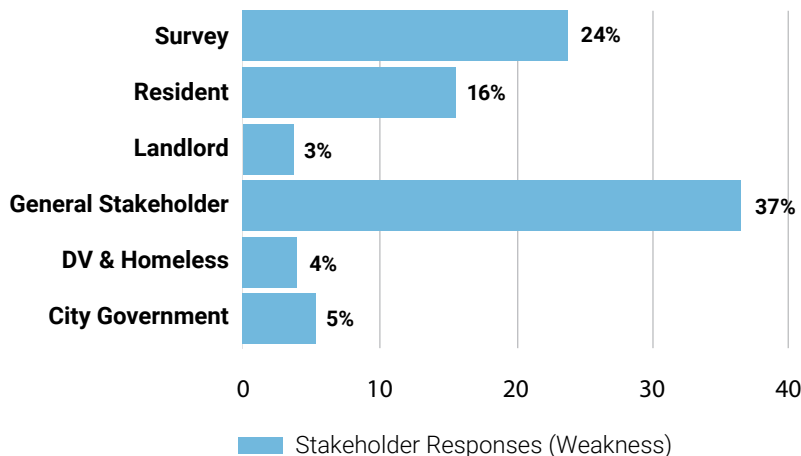
- Fewer security patrols and inadequate lighting
- Residents do not feel safe calling the police

Maintenance

- Aging buildings
- Sluggish inspection process (for landlords and residents)



Response Distribution by
Stakeholder Group (Weakness)



HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

SWOT Results: Opportunities Summary

Common Threads

FWHA Leadership & Staff

- More visibility in the community
- Develop new partnerships

Marketing

- Sustained PR & Marketing campaign - HOP as a separate brand
- Tell resident success stories

Affordable Housing & Landlord Relationships

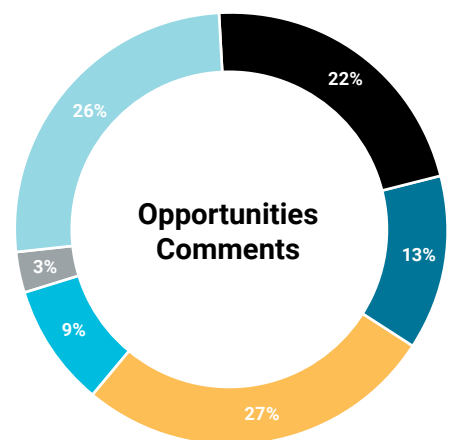
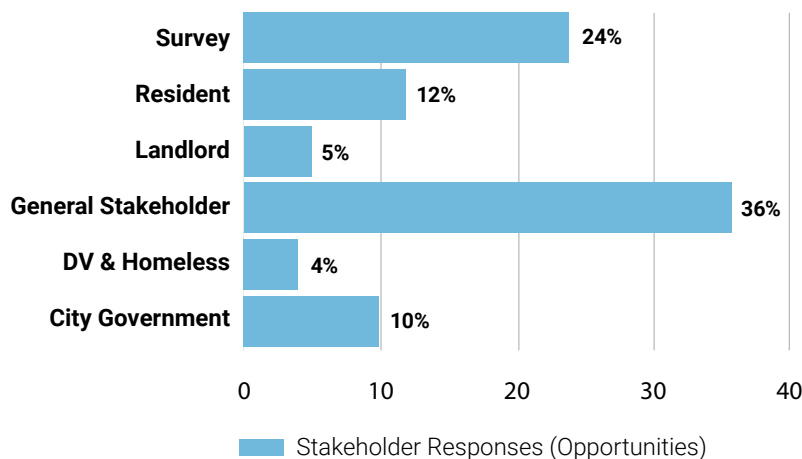
- Electronic payment options & e-communication
- Expansion into a variety of neighborhoods

Education Programs

- Expand landlord & resident education programs
- Multi-generational education programs for tenants and their youth
- Homeowner rights and responsibilities



Response Distribution by Stakeholder Group (Opportunities)



- 22% Affordable Housing
- 13% Education
- 27% FWHA Leadership & Staff
- 9% Landlord Relationships
- 3% Maintenance
- 26% Marketing & PR

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

SWOT Results: Threats Comments

Common Threads

Affordable Housing Program

- Hot housing market—rising rates
- Housing shortage
- Decreased HUD funding

FWHA Leadership & Staff

- COVID-19—still closed
- Insufficient staff capacity

Landlord Relationships

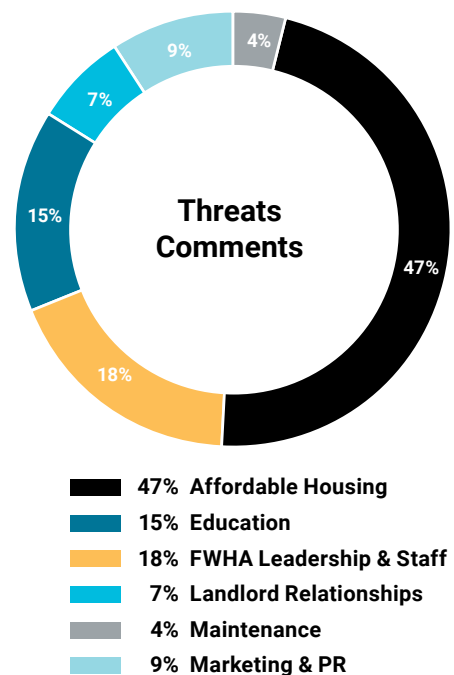
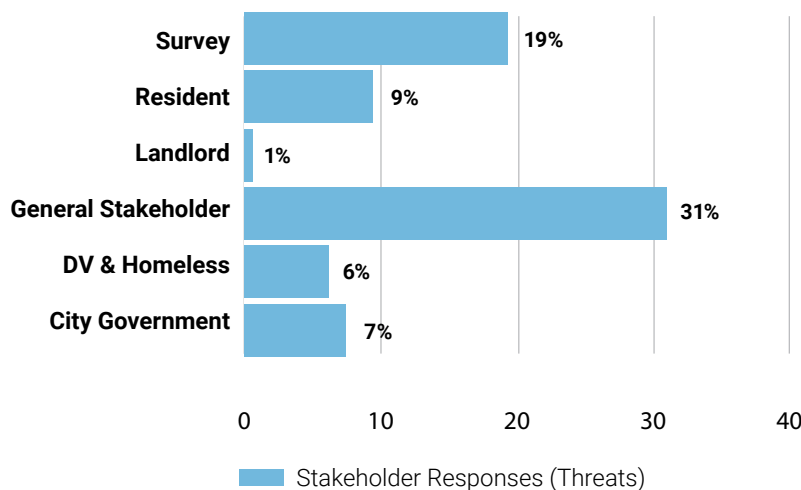
- Current incentives for landlords are insufficient
- Quick turnaround on the open market

Marketing & PR

- NIMBYism & negative public perceptions of section 8 housing and its residents
- Misconception that housing is affordable in Ft. Wayne



Response Distribution by
Stakeholder Group (Threats)



HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

PHA Plan Reviews & Alignment Assessment

The PHA Plan is a comprehensive guide to public housing agency (PHA) policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. There are two parts to the PHA Plan: the 5-Year Plan, which each PHA submits to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development once every 5th PHA fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year by non-qualified agencies.

In the Discovery Phase, the FWHA's 2016 5-Year Plan, the 2019 – 2024 5-Year Plan, and the 2021-2022 Annual Plan were reviewed and analyzed to determine how the objectives and goals aligned with the findings of the SWOT analysis. The Strengths of the FWHA were not included in the analysis of the PHA and Annual Plans.

The assessment criteria for the PHA's Plans consisted of identifying goals that are: 1) aligned with SWOT outcomes, 2) aligned with SWOT outcomes and are in progress, and 3) aligned with SWOT outcomes and are ongoing.

WEAKNESSES

Based on the weaknesses that were identified during the SWOT analysis, and the assessment of the PHA's Plans, one weakness, residents do not feel safe, was not identified to be addressed in the 2022-23 Annual Plan, nor the 2019-2024 5-Year Plan. However, the PHA Plans identified objectives outlined that are addressing the remaining weaknesses.

OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the opportunities that were identified during the SWOT analysis, and the assessment of the PHA's Plans, two opportunities, online payments, and e-communication, were not identified to be addressed in the 2022-23 Annual Plan, nor the 2019-2024 5-Year Plan. Expanding landlord and resident education programs and developing family-centered multi-generational programming were identified in the 2019-2024 5-Year Plan.

THREATS

Based on the threats that were identified during the SWOT analysis, and the assessment of the PHA's Annual and 5-year Plans, the 2022-23 Annual Plan and the 2019-2024 5-Year Plan had objectives that would address perceived threats.

The following three pages provide graphics that outline the assessment outcomes.

Goal Review

KEY WEAKNESS

Is this weakness addressed in the 2016 5 yr. Plan?

Is this weakness addressed in the 2022-23 Annual Plan/2019-2024 5 yr. plan?

WEAKNESS	Unaddressed Tenant Concerns	Turnover/ Insufficient Staffing	Reputation Management	Lack of Efficiency	Shortage of Housing	Residents Do Not Feel Safe	Sluggish Inspection Process
5 YR. OBJ.	2.4 - Answer phone calls and return voicemail within 24 hrs.	7.8 - Maintain commitment to staff training.	3.4 - Promote Homeownership opportunities.	1.2 - Streamline process for transfers, terminations, and issuance of rental vouchers.	1.8 - Submit at least 1 tax credit application every 3 years, with a goal to increase the number of affordable housing units by at least 250 under FWHA management.	4.2 - Implement public housing security improvements. Including documentation to be filled out by visitors.	2.6 - Concentrate on efforts to improve specific management functions (public housing, finance, and voucher unit inspections).
	FWHA will evaluate the concerns raised in the Customer Satisfaction Survey and determine if there are some corrective actions needed to ensure that high quality and timely maintenance services are being provided to customers.	FWHA will monitor and evaluate its current staff/consultant structure for meeting the human resources needs of the agency.	FWHA will use multiple marketing and public relations strategies to dispel many of the negative or erroneous perceptions regarding assisted housing programs and clients by providing factual realities and personal success stories.	FWHA will function as a high-performing business entity. Performance metrics will measure programs/ services output, and quality.	FWHA will expand its collaboration with the business community, major employers, The Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, and the political sector to formulate stronger public-private partnerships with address critical shortages of workforce housing.	N/A	FWHA will function as a high-performing business entity. Performance metrics will measure programs /services outcomes, output, and quality.
1 YR. OBJ.							
STATUS	IN PROGRESS	ONGOING	ONGOING	ONGOING	ONGOING	ONGOING	ONGOING

Goal Review

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Is this opportunity addressed in the 2016 5 yr. Plan?

Is this opportunity addressed in the 2022-23 Annual Plan/2019-2024 5 yr. plan?

OPPORTUNITY

5 YR. OBJ.

1 YR. OBJ.

STATUS

More visibility in the community

3.3 - Market programs at community outreach fairs, senior fairs, local non-profit agencies assisting families with disabilities, local ethnic and immigrant advocates, public forums, lobby, websites and community network groups.

FWHA will use multiple marketing and public relations strategies to improve the clarity and understanding of the public values advanced through housing assistance.

ONGOING

Develop new partnerships

3.15 - Utilize marketing consultant to expand to partnership for development opportunities.

FWHA will seek out funding options or community partnerships to expand case management services to meet the needs of some of its clients that will not be adequately met through the family-self-sufficiency program.

IN PROGRESS

Sustained PR & Marketing campaign

3.15 - Utilize marketing consultant to assist with FWHA marketing efforts to expand the use of affordable housing. Also, expand partnership for development opportunities.

FWHA will use multiple marketing and public relations strategies to improve the clarity and understanding of the public values advanced through housing assistance.

IN PROGRESS

Online payment & e-communications

N/A

N/A

N/A

Expand neighborhood options

3.9 - Explore establishing a project-based HCV program, as a tool, to deconcentrate the incidence of poverty. Especially, in the 30-40% AMI, elderly, handicapped and disabled population.

FWHA and its nonprofit will provide key leadership roles and redevelopment opportunities in the revitalization plans being formulated for the Southeast sector of the community.

ONGOING

Expand landlord & resident ed programs

2.16 Provide homeownership education to PH residents, HCV participants and the general public on a continuous basis.
3.2 - Conduct outreach efforts to potential voucher landlords.

N/A

ONGOING

Family-centered, multi generation programming

4.9 - Re-open River Cove Club with Boys & Girls Club support, to provide an after school youth program in public housing.

N/A

IN PROGRESS

Goal Review

KEY THREATS

Is this weakness addressed in the 2022-23 Annual Plan/2019-2024 5 yr. plan?

THREAT	Hot Housing Market	Inconsistent HUD Funding	Insufficient Landlord Incentives	Quick Turnaround In Free Market	NIMBYism & Negative Perceptions	Affordability Misconception	Insufficient Staff Capacity
5 YR. OBJ.	3.3 - Market programs at community outreach fairs, senior fairs, local non-profit agencies assisting families with disabilities, local ethnic and immigrant advocates, public forums, lobby, websites and community network groups.	1.4 - Leverage private capital, including LIHTC, tax credits, FHLB, HOME, bonds or other public funds to create additional housing opportunities, also, HUD, RAD program	3.2 - Conduct outreach efforts to potential voucher landlords.	1.2 - Streamline process for transfers, terminations, and issuance of rental vouchers.	3.3 - Market programs at community outreach fairs, senior fairs, local non-profit agencies assisting families with disabilities, local ethnic and immigrant advocates, public forums, lobby, websites and community network groups.	3.15 - Utilize marketing consultant to assist with FWHA marketing efforts to expand the use of affordable housing.	2.11 Implement a skills assessment testing program to evaluate staff training needs.
1 YR. OBJ.	FWHA will use multiple marketing and public relations strategies to improve the clarity and understanding of the public values advanced through housing assistance lower-income residents	FWHA will organize an Affordable Housing Funding Forum that will bring federal, state, and local funding providers to Fort Wayne to brief local affordable housing providers, lenders, and advocates on current funding resources and partnership opportunities.	FWHA will launch an expanded initiative to reach out to landlords that have not participated in the Housing Choice Voucher program to offer more housing choice to residents and to expand the number of quality landlords in the program.	FWHA will review and implement business models for expanding its regional relationships with other housing authorities and agencies.	FWHA will use multiple marketing and public relations strategies to dispel many of the negative or erroneous perceptions regarding assisted housing programs and clients by providing factual realities and personal success stories	FWHA will use multiple marketing and public relations strategies to improve the clarity and understanding of the public values advanced through housing assistance to lower income residents.	FWHA will monitor and evaluate its current staff/consultant structure for meeting the human resources needs of the agency

STATUS	ONGOING	IN PROGRESS	IN PROGRESS	ONGOING	ONGOING	ONGOING	ONGOING
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HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

FWHA Website Review

A website is often the first introduction to a business or organization. A good website can help to increase credibility particularly if it looks good and communicates quality information. It can help showcase the brand and mission. It can provide timely information which can help the organization save time and those needing help without having to call, which ultimately provides an all-around better user experience.

The FWHA website was reviewed to determine: 1) user-friendliness, 2) mission and vision evidence and clarity, 3) ease of locating key resources, 4) clear articulation of critical processes, and 5) accessibility of practical information. The graphic below provides the review assessment and recommendations.

Website Usability

THINGS TO KEEP

- **Inviting Design** - The web design is simple, clean and modern
- **Branding** is consistent across all elements of the web design, including images, logos, and icons
- **Accessible & Relevant Content** - The website is a helpful resource for individuals seeking housing assistance

THINGS TO IMPROVE

- Include more ways to **submit paperwork** and make **payments online**
- Spell out **acronyms** and avoid **unfamiliar jargon**
- Explicitly state your **mission, vision and values** on your "About" page
- Include testimonials and **success stories** on your page
- When prompting a user to complete an action, provide step by step **instructions and hyperlinks** to the appropriate page.

WEBSITE REVIEW

1- Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neither Agree nor Disagree 4-Agree
5- Strongly Agree

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
User-friendly				✓	
The Mission & Vision are evident and clear			✓		
It is easy for users to locate key resources				✓	
Clear articulation of critical processes (that the average user can understand)		✓			
Practical information is readily accessible				✓	

HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

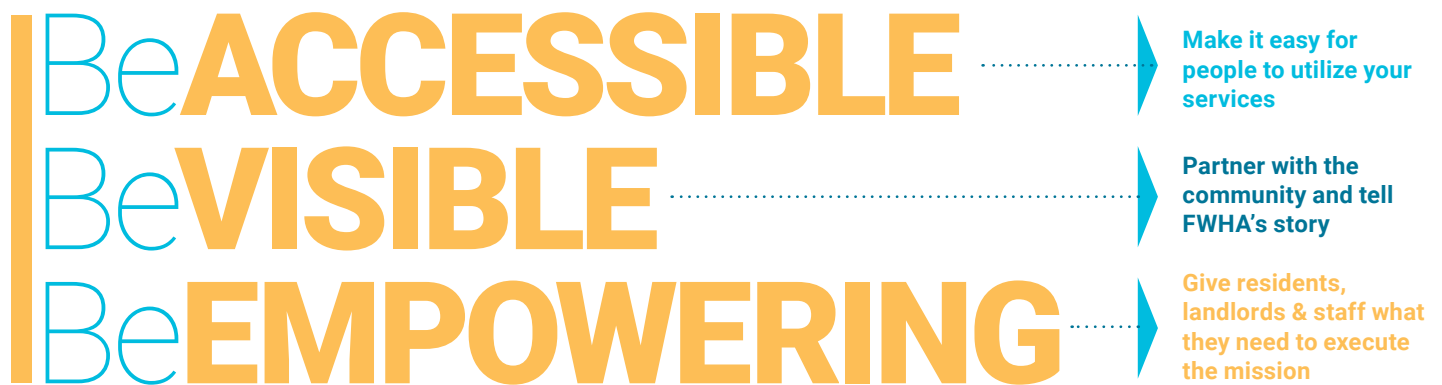
Discovery Phase Summary

Eight themes emerged from the analysis of the Discovery Phase findings. Stakeholders identified them as important objectives for the FWHA to embrace and implement. They are the basis upon which the stakeholders developed the strategic goals. They are:

TELL THE SUCCESS STORIES
ENLARGE & INCENTIVIZE LANDLORDS
EDUCATE & EMPOWER PHA RESIDENTS
EXPAND HOUSING CHOICES
BE MORE ACCESSIBLE
EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY
BE MORE VISIBLE
STAY TRUE TO THE CORE MISSION

After gathering data and listening to the stakeholders during the Discovery Phase process, three key takeaways surfaced. They are:

TAKEAWAYS



HOW WE PLANNED | THE PROCESS

Review & Confirmation Phase

Information gathered during the Discovery Phase was presented by the Engaging Solutions Team in a one-hour meeting with Director George Guy and the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee for documentation of the findings and for initiating the Visioning and Planning Phase. All concurred that the planning process could proceed. (The Appendix contains the Discovery Phase Summary presentation).

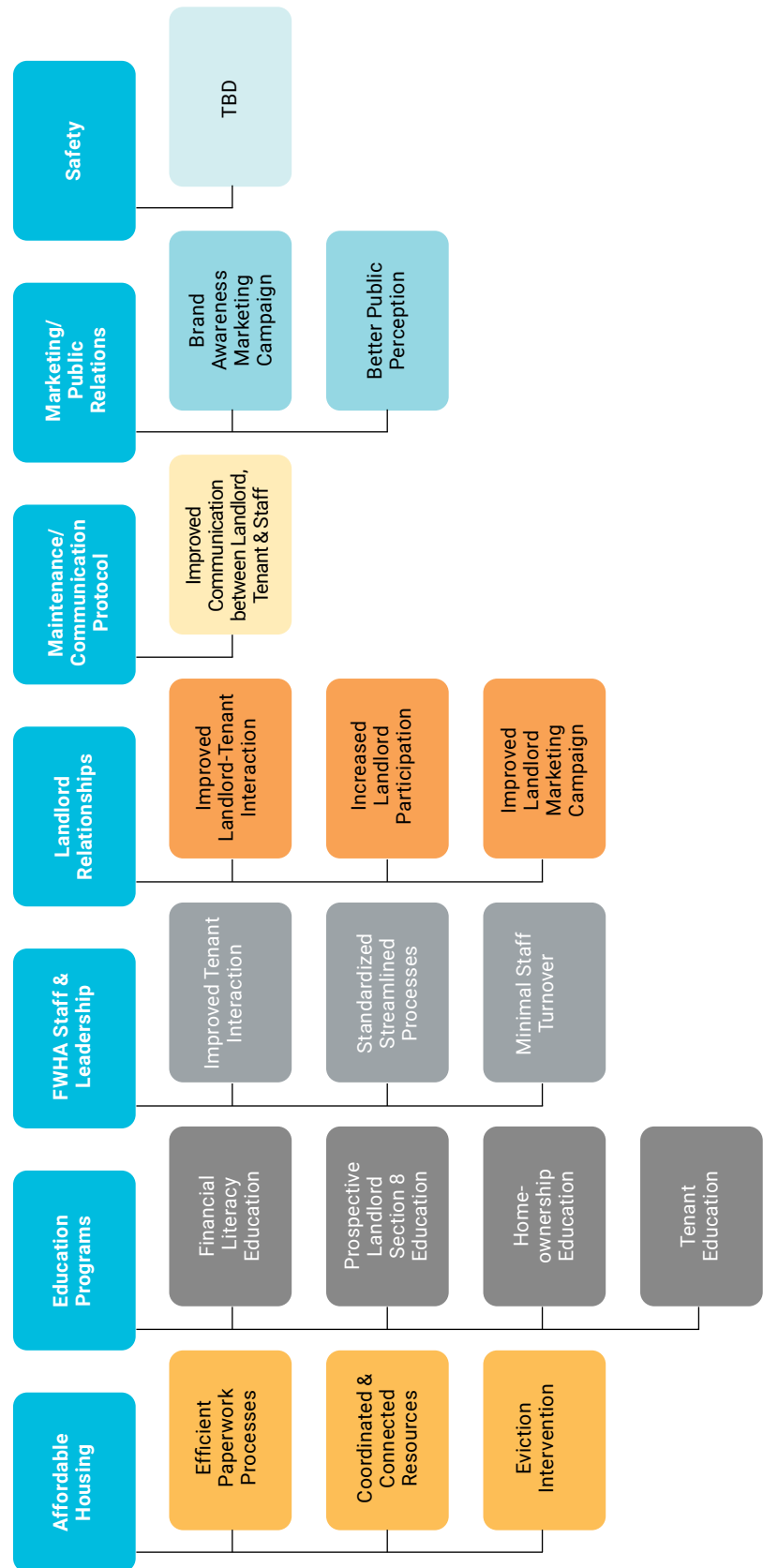
Visioning & Planning Phase

The Visioning and Planning Phase occurred in two, two-hour working sessions with a collective group of stakeholders comprised of executive staff, board members, internal staff, landlords, community organizations, government staff, nonprofit representatives, and banking officials. The objective of the Visioning and Planning Phase was to have consensus building around SWOT outcomes and to develop and prioritize goals. They were also asked to determine how success would look after goals were implemented.

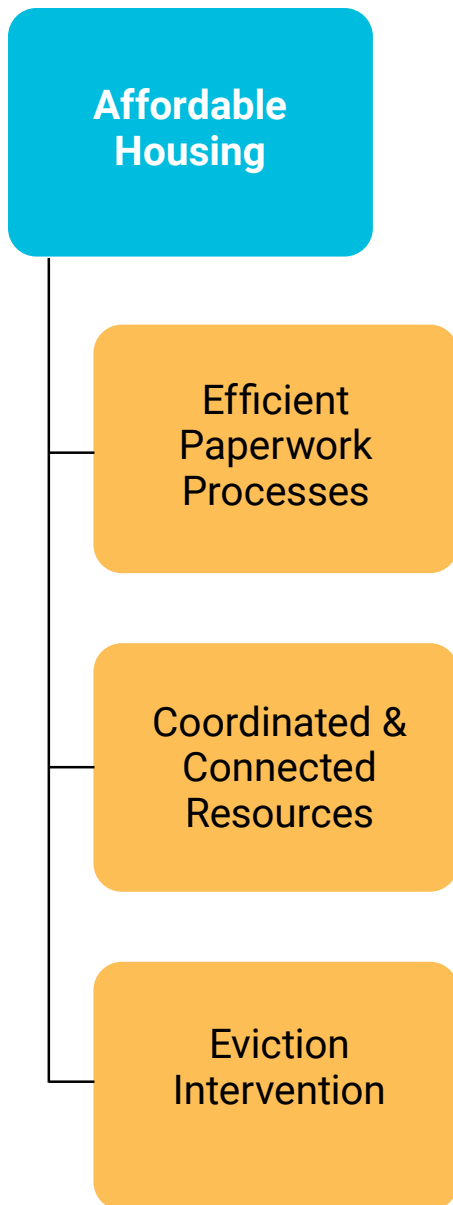
Participants agreed that the strategic goals that were identified for each category are important to help build upon the strengths of the FWHA and to address the weaknesses and threats facing the PHA.

Page 22 depicts a graphic that shows seven categories and prioritized goals for each. Subsequent pages provide additional details about goals as well as information about how success would look when goals are implemented.

WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS



WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS



During the discovery and visioning phases, much of the discussion centered on Affordable Housing. Given that this is the core mission of the FWHA, stakeholders talked about how the PHA might better facilitate affordable housing development, affordable housing choice, and housing access when the top three goals are implemented.

GOAL #1: CREATE EFFICIENT PAPERWORK PROCESSES

Stakeholders prioritized this goal as number one because of the challenges in processing paperwork often encountered by those doing business with the PHA.

SUCCESS: A streamlined and electronic way to process paperwork for staff, tenants, and landlords.

GOAL # 2: COORDINATE AND CONNECT RESOURCES

Stakeholders stated that one way to expand affordable housing opportunities was to partner with more community stakeholders and organizations that could help identify and create more resources.

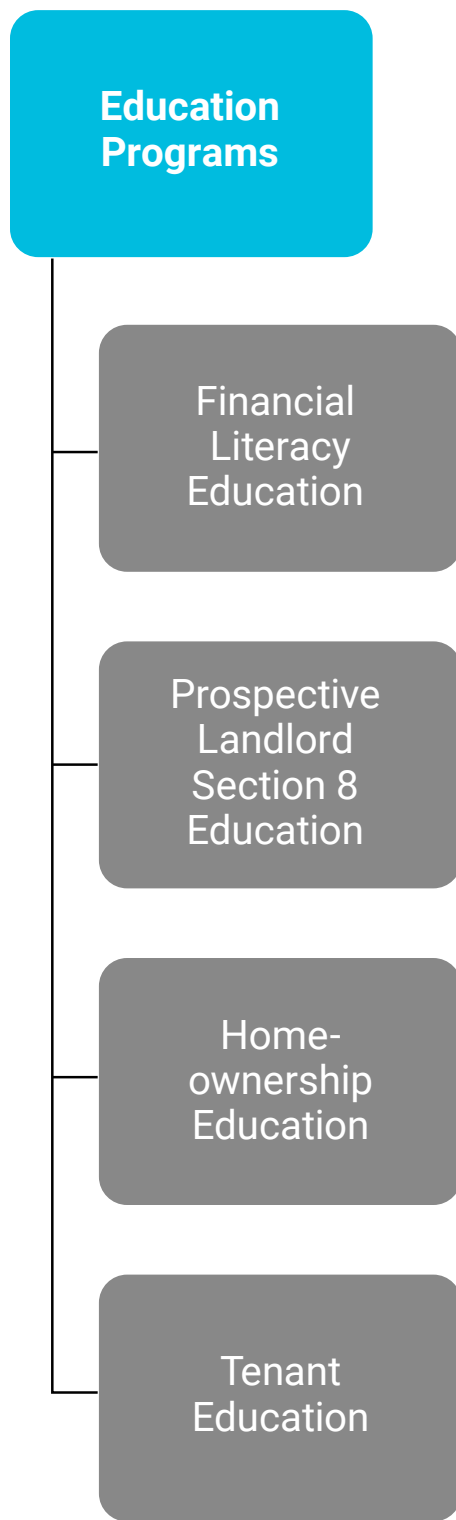
SUCCESS: More financial resources are created through partnerships; frequent community meetings such as housing summits; having an in-house dedicated grant writer.

GOAL #3: OFFER EVICTION INTERVENTION

Create an eviction intervention plan to assist households who are going through the eviction process.

SUCCESS: A well-defined process that would ensure those being evicted understand their rights; leading to fewer evictions.

WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS



Stakeholders agreed that the FWHA should provide learning opportunities for tenants, prospective landlords, and renters through Education Programs that focus on financial literacy, Section 8, homeownership, and renter's rights.

GOAL #1: FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

Implementing a financial literacy program will empower individuals and families to thrive by having them understand and learn about finances and financial management tools.

SUCCESS: Residents being educated about finances and, becoming more financially stable.

GOAL #2: SECTION 8 EDUCATION FOR PROSPECTIVE LANDLORDS

For prospective landlords to learn about and participate in the Section 8 program, stakeholders concurred that there needed to be intentional opportunities for the PHA to provide information through a variety of learning methods such as handbooks, meetings, and quarterly Q&A sessions.

SUCCESS: Knowledgeable landlords signing up for the Section 8 program.

GOAL #3: HOMEOWNERSHIP EDUCATION

Stakeholders agreed that PHA residents who have an interest in owning a home should have the opportunity to learn about homeownership. Homeownership education can inspire hope that owning a home is possible. Homeownership can create stability, and independence, and build wealth.

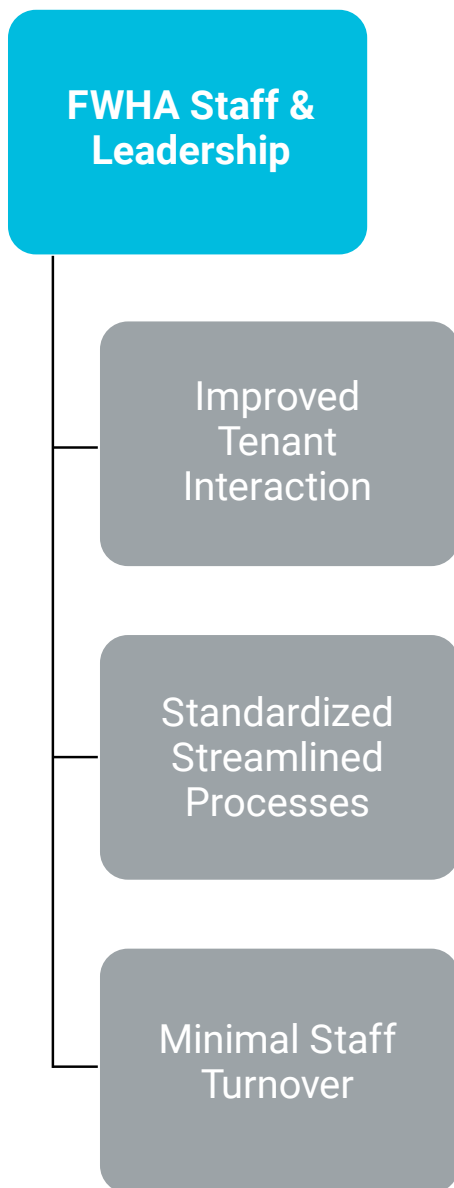
SUCCESS: A homeownership education program is created and PHA residents are learning about homeownership opportunities.

GOALS #4: TENANT EDUCATION

Guiding how to be a good tenant and understanding tenant rights are important for the PHA, both tenants, and landlords. A strong tenant education program can help address landlord concerns and equip tenants with knowledge about their roles and responsibilities.

SUCCESS: Tenants and landlords are educated about tenant-landlord relationships and subsequently minimal tenant-landlord issues.

WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS



Another category that stakeholders identified as important were the FWHA Staff and Leadership. Three goals stakeholders felt would help address weaknesses and threats facing the PHA's staff and leadership are improved tenant interactions, standardized and streamlined work processes, and minimal staff turnover.

GOAL #1: IMPROVED TENANT INTERACTION

Stakeholders concurred that FWHA staff needed to improve communication processes with PHA residents.

SUCCESS: Better responsive communication through customer service training, quarterly surveys, and 24-hour response times.

GOAL #2: STANDARDIZED AND STREAMLINED WORK PROCESSES

The FWHA staff should implement better work processes such as paperless processing, E-pay, Docusign, a collaborative website portal, and other technological methods to improve the overall efficiency of the staff.

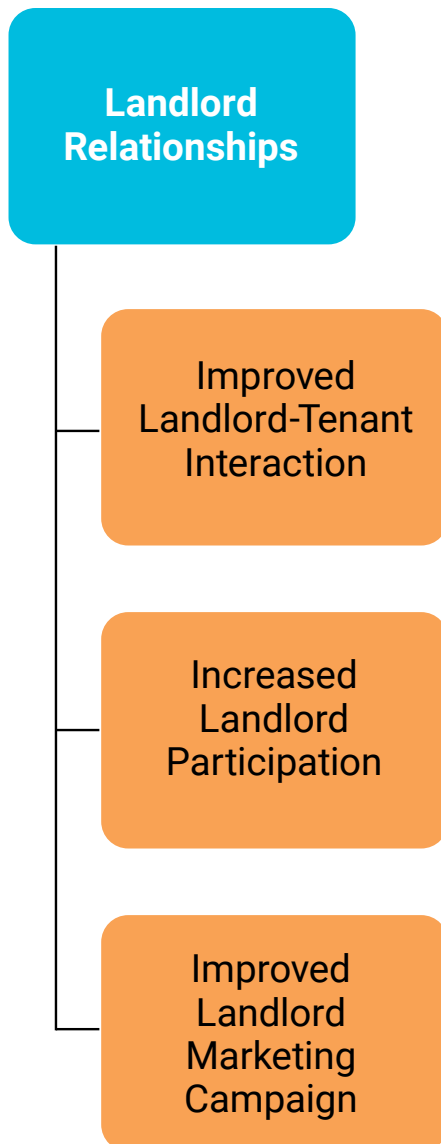
SUCCESS: Efficient and streamlined work processes.

GOAL #3: MINIMAL STAFF TURNOVER

FWHA staff identified retaining staff as a problem and an overall threat to the PHA's operations. The goal is for leadership to minimize staff turnover through improved employee performance processes, team-building activities, and career development opportunities.

SUCCESS: Decreased staff turnover.

WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS



Landlord Relationships are another category identified for the FWHA to cultivate and improve upon. Stakeholders created three goals to help in this area.

GOAL #1: IMPROVE LANDLORD-TENANT INTERACTION

Often landlord and tenant interactions can be contentious at times. This is an opportunity for the FWHA to provide training for landlords around customer service and tenant rights.

SUCCESS: Improved landlord-tenant interactions.

GOAL #2: INCREASE LANDLORD PARTICIPATION

Create opportunities to engage landlords through information sessions. Create a landlord liaison position. Have specific marketing campaigns targeting landlords.

SUCCESS: More landlords participating in FWHA programs.

GOAL #3: CREATE A LANDLORD MARKETING CAMPAIGN

This category was created from stakeholder feedback around the need for the FWHA to tell its success stories about landlords and their participation in the Section 8 program.

SUCCESS: Increased landlord participation.

WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS

Maintenance/ Communication Protocol

Improved
Communication
between Landlord,
Tenant & Staff

Stakeholders identified the Maintenance/ Communication Protocol, in its current state, as a weakness. While the FWHA has a maintenance process in place, the communication processes between maintenance staff, landlords, and tenants could be improved.

GOAL #1: Improve communication between landlords, tenants, and FWHA staff around maintenance issues. There is a need for clarity about the maintenance protocol and how it should be communicated among all parties (tenants, landlords, and FWHA staff).

SUCCESS: A well-defined maintenance protocol that is enforced and communicated to all parties.

Marketing/ Public Relations

Brand
Awareness
Marketing
Campaign

Better Public
Perception

Stakeholders agreed that the FWHA has many success stories to tell. However, it needs a targeted Marketing/Public Relations campaign to help get those stories out to the public. Two goals were created.

GOAL #1: BRAND AWARENESS MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The objective of this goal is to create marketing information that highlights success stories, FWHA programs, and current and future endeavors.

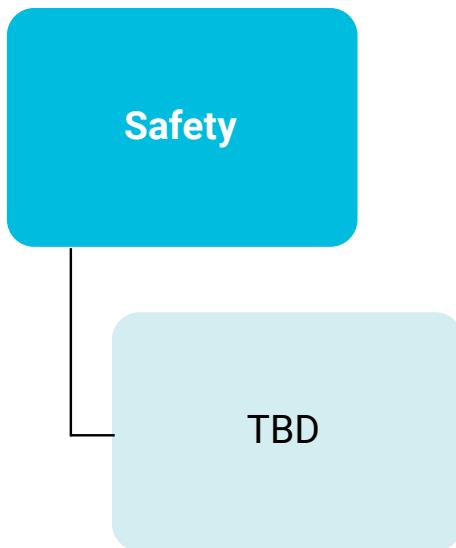
SUCCESS: The public continues to be informed about the good the FWHA is doing.

GOAL #2: BETTER PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Public perceptions of housing authorities are usually negative, even when PHAs are doing great in implementing their missions. Therefore, the objective of this goal is for the FWHA to tell its success stories and tell them often so that the public perception can continue to be improved.

SUCCESS: FWHA's public perception continues to improve.

WHERE WE ARE GOING | THE GOALS



Part of the FWHA mission includes “safe” housing. However, when stakeholders identified Safety as an important category that should be included in the strategic plan, there were no specific goals identified to ensure safety for public housing and its residents.

It is recommended that goals be created by the FWHA staff and leadership to help ensure that public housing residents and landlords are aware of safety protocols and aware of the PHA's stance on safety for its housing and its residents.

Conclusion

The FWHA strategic planning process was robust and engaging. Stakeholders were very passionate about the FWHA, its processes, and the strategic goals that were identified to help address the organization’s SWOT. The FWHA strategic plan will assist the organization in aligning with the identified goals for the future. It will require the organization to be innovative, provide a greater understanding of the housing needs of the people of Fort Wayne, be best in class by leading the public housing industry in providing quality-of-life initiatives for its residents, and educate public housing residents on home ownership options.

The key takeaways from the strategic planning process are for the FWHA to be ACCESSIBLE, to be VISIBLE, and to be EMPOWERING.

Next Steps

Plan implementation is defined as the carrying out of strategies, and the incorporation of strategies into the relevant organizational systems. This typically requires the empowerment of different individuals and partnerships.

The next step is for the FWHA and its partners to implement the strategic plan. This will require developing action steps, timeframes, and milestones to advance the plan with the assistance of the same consultant team; Engaging Solutions and Essential Advisors Corporation.

Page 41 identifies a sample timeframe for next steps.

Appendix

- Visioning Phase Outcome PowerPoint Slides And Notes
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:27f4f9b7-971d-3ad4-8445-52bd9ca2fc68>
- Commissioner Presentation and Interviews
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:1af37862-43c3-3f44-ab8c-f2cae355ff74>
- Discovery Phase Overview & Findings
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:1d1f01d6-8643-315d-8224-38c0bad33d58>
- Stakeholder Meeting Notes – January 27, 2002
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:0a084ef9-5306-32db-92d9-215e7ead4a36>
- Advisory Committee Meeting Notes - December 21, 2021
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:25050370-0ffc-3168-85e1-4dd44ae3a822>
- Initial Kick-Off Meeting Notes September 29, 2021
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:458b89a7-424e-3966-8c60-2f52914f2d5b>
- Stakeholder Survey
~ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:9ccad030-f57e-3e4f-ae45-2bc4c06ba921>