Strategic Plan
2016-2020

Eden Housing’s mission is to build and maintain high-quality, well-managed, service-enhanced affordable housing communities that meet the needs of lower income families, seniors and persons with disabilities.
Letter from Our Chair & President

Eden Housing’s first Board of Directors came together 48 years ago to address the need for affordable housing in California. We’ve come a long way since then. Our success lies in our team culture, broad operating focus, strong partnerships, policy leadership, creative investments and bold, portfolio-wide initiatives. Today the need is greater than ever, and we want to do more.

In 2015 when we began work on this Strategic Plan, Eden assessed how we could continue to meet the pressing need for affordable housing in an increasingly uncertain political landscape. At the time we had a waiting list of 17,000 households for our 8,000 homes, so we asked ourselves this simple question: “In the next five years, what would it take to double our impact?”

Our desire to provide more homes across California inspired us throughout the planning process. We were confident we could build the internal capacity to achieve this goal, but knew that the current resource environment would pose challenges. Not afraid to face our challenges head on, we committed to the bold goal of building, acquiring and preserving an additional 5,000 homes.

Over the past 10 years, Eden has executed a series of strategic initiatives that laid the foundation for this Plan:

- Expanded internal capacity to meet the growing demand for affordable housing
- Improved quality of property operations and economies of scale regionally and state-wide
- Preserved and protected affordable homes for the long-term, both in Eden’s own portfolio and in portfolios previously owned by others
- Expanded resident services to help maintain economic and housing stability, with improved access to resources, support and enhanced quality of life
- Created a more durable organization with a sustainable operating platform by diversifying revenue sources (including the creation of a Real Estate Investment Fund)

We view this Strategic Plan as the next step in our steadfast commitment to help solve California’s affordable housing crisis. We are excited to move into this next phase, building on the work that began 48 years ago.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Randall, Chair
Linda Mandolini, President

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Chair, Eden Housing Board of Directors

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President, Eden Housing

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About Eden Housing

**The mission of Eden Housing** is to build and maintain high quality, well-managed, service-enhanced affordable housing that meets the needs of low-income families, seniors and persons with disabilities.

For 48 years, Eden has demonstrated that safe, decent, affordable homes provide a platform for families to succeed. Our homes are the launching pad for children to go to college and families to get ahead, and a landing place for seniors to age in place with dignity, courtesy and respect.

**Our vision** is for everyone to have access to safe, decent, affordable housing. We believe that housing is a basic human necessity that is essential to everyday life and future success.

**Our core values** provide guidance for all that we do:
- Community
- Sustainability
- Social Equity
- Integrity

**Our operating principles** include:
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Excellence

We have developed or acquired more than 10,400 affordable homes in California.

**Counties Served by Eden Housing**
- Alameda
- Contra Costa
- Los Angeles
- Marin
- Monterey
- Orange
- San Benito
- San Diego
- San Joaquin
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
- Santa Cruz
- Solano
- Sonoma
- Yolo
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
2016-2020

We have launched four strategic priorities to meet our challenge to provide 5,000 more affordable homes over the next 5 years:

Strategic Priority: Invest in Communities:
Scale our work in a way that expands upon what is valued about the “Eden Way” (described on page 6).

**GOAL:** Identify key components of what makes Eden a good partner at the property and neighborhood level and replicate successful property and resident service programs at every site.

**GOAL:** Expand our advocacy base by creating a formal network of community leaders including staff, board, residents and friends of Eden.

**GOAL:** Expand our community partnerships and resident programs to advance the educational and economic success of our residents in two focus areas: 1) Serve populations such as formerly homeless, veterans and older adults; and 2) Create measurable outcomes for economic empowerment, education, health and wellness, community engagement and technology access.
**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

2016-2020

**Strategic Priority: Invest in Homes:**
Pursue development and capital expansion models that allow us to build, acquire and preserve more affordable housing.

**GOAL:** Acquire, construct and preserve 5,000 homes over the next five years.

**GOAL:** Expand financing models including private equity and public investment.

**GOAL:** Advocate for state and local subsidy funding and the protection of key federal funding programs.

**Strategic Priority: Invest in Our People:**
Recruit, train, promote and retain talented employees who aspire to succeed — both personally and professionally — and who embody the “Eden Way.”

**GOAL:** Launch a comprehensive training program.

**GOAL:** Create a companywide internship program.

**GOAL:** Expand our recognition program structure to incorporate specific awards in all strategic priority areas.

**GOAL:** Grow our leadership capacity on the executive team and among middle management.

**Strategic Priority: Invest in Our Foundation:**
Strengthen the underlying infrastructure that has allowed us to scale our development, operating and services platforms.

**GOAL:** Expand our administrative, asset management and accounting infrastructure.

**GOAL:** Invest in technology programs to facilitate 1) tracking of investment and portfolio management; and 2) connectivity with our residents and partners.
How We Define the “Eden Way”
Eden Housing has weathered many challenges, survived difficult times and become stronger than ever. Over the past five years, we doubled the size of our portfolio and expanded to Southern California. Our staff refers to this resiliency as the “Eden Way,” and here’s how we define it:

**Team Culture**
We are proud of our team of employees and are committed to their professional growth and job satisfaction. Our robust individualized training curriculum uses the best resources available, and our hard work has resulted in multiple year awards as “Healthiest Employer” and “Best Places to Work” from the *San Francisco Business Times* and the *Silicon Valley Business Journal*.

**Broad Operating Focus**
We shifted to a broader operating focus prior to the economic downturn, by working to strengthen property management, enhance staff capacity, and increase operations functionality overall. This was key to our resilience and laid the groundwork for a significant acquisition/preservation effort with a geographic expansion throughout California.

**Strong Partnerships**
Eden’s success rests squarely on our commitment to collaborations and partnerships including those with funders, local jurisdictions, other non-profits seeking to provide housing to specialized populations, housing authorities and the for-profit homebuilding community. We have partnered with cities and counties on multiple projects, and received direct referrals to local homebuilders looking to build affordable housing under local inclusionary ordinances. Today inclusionary partnerships make up the majority of our new construction pipeline.

**Diligent Policy Leadership**
Our attention to housing policy at all levels, and our ability to help lead these discussions has also been integral to our success. Notable efforts have included federal policy reform that has allowed us to reposition the Eden portfolio; and state policy reform and resource expansion, most notably in the Cap and Trade program.

**Creative Investment Approach**
Eden has successfully created a significant capital base to help expand our work. This base allowed us to invest $15 million into a new Program Investment Fund to support acquisition, preservation and merger activity. Eden was one of the first to pursue more traditional equity models for acquisition including the creation of a first of its kind, non-profit owned Real Estate Investment Trust.

**Bold Portfolio-wide Initiatives**
- **Our Green Initiative** incorporates energy-savings retrofits and resident education across our portfolio, reducing energy usage by 37% since 2012, and water consumption by 20% since 2015.
- **Communities Wired!** expands upon our 30-year history providing residents with access to technology through on-site computer labs and trainings. This program promotes broadband adoption portfolio-wide, and our goal is 100% free or low-cost access within 5 years.
Moving Forward

Performance Challenge Framework
Eden utilizes the Performance Challenge Framework advanced by NeighborWorks America and Harvard University Achieving Excellence Program. We create specific deliverables in each challenge area that are both short-term (100 day) and near-term (18 month). To assure the long-term success of this plan, Eden took immediate action by adding two critical executive team members and rolling out the online learning program.

Eden Board Commitment
The Eden board of directors is currently adapting its work to facilitate the realization of this plan by addressing four key issues in the near term:

1. **Board Recruitment**: Identify two new board members in 2016.
2. **Board Committees**: Invite non-board members to participate on committees focused on key areas such as resident program expansion and outcomes, expanded partnerships and future board recruitment.
3. **Board Ambassadors**: Increase Eden’s networking reach and impact across all geographic regions in our portfolio.
4. **Investment Review**: Analyze investments to consider how Eden’s capital can be best deployed to facilitate impact goals.

Conclusion
Eden Housing’s strategic planning process formulated four concrete and interrelated strategic initiatives to achieve our over-arching goal — to provide an additional 5,000 service-enhanced affordable homes for low-income families, seniors and persons with disabilities — with a commitment to invest in Communities, Homes, Our People and Our Foundation. Over the next five years, we will continue to review this plan often, and make adjustments as necessary to keep it relevant and motivational amidst an ever-changing political and financial climate.

Our passion and commitment to our mission is steadfast, and we look forward to this next phase of our expansion and capacity building. We are an organization and team of people who truly care about the future of affordable housing in California!