

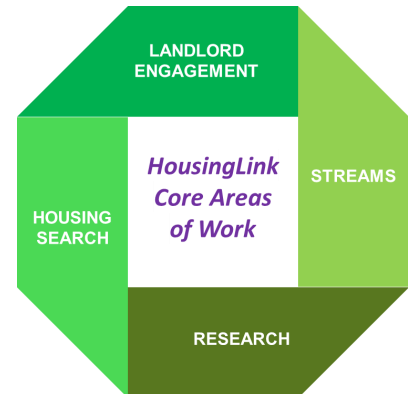
This plan is based on stakeholder interviews, emerging issues, and the results from the last strategic plan. Strategic priorities are broad statements of organizational focus. They translate what we learned during the planning process into actionable opportunities through annual work plans. These priorities will help HousingLink meet its mission over the next 3-5 years.

Mission Statement

Connecting people to affordable rental homes, increasing choice and access for all.

Strategic Priorities

- ◆ Purposefully articulate the value and benefit of HousingLink.
- ◆ Using new and existing technology solutions, continue expanding affordable rental housing opportunities.
- ◆ Make HousingLink data and research more accessible to improve community knowledge about rental housing.
- ◆ Deepen connections to and develop resources for DIY landlords.
- ◆ Continue strategic expansion.
- ◆ Build intentional connections and deepen work in Greater Minnesota.



Implementation

Stakeholders were clear that HousingLink is on track. They also shared ways HousingLink can magnify its impact. HousingLink's opportunity is expanding on existing resources and going deeper with partners. This is the focus of the strategic priorities. Besides providing direction, the priorities are responsive to changing social, political, and community dynamics, and provide the flexibility necessary to respond to new and emerging opportunities.

HousingLink builds an annual organizational work plan addressing each strategic priority. Each year, the plan will build on the previous year's progress. Annual organizational reports measure and document progress on each priority.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Screen

At HousingLink we know that Black, Indigenous and People of Color are disproportionately impacted by challenges in the affordable rental market. We are committed to prioritizing their voices and experiences to guide our work. To codify our commitment, we use the following screen when making organizational and program commitments:

- ...Consider your diversity – who do we serve?
- ...Check assumptions – what do we believe about them? What do we actually know and understand about them.
- ...Ask about inclusion – how can new voices be brought to the conversation?
- ...Apply to your work – how has our work systemically been exclusive and inequitable?
- ...Be a change agent, take action – change systems and behaviors and lead boldly.

Values

HousingLink's work is guided and informed by our commitment to:

- EQUITY** - We understand that many people have unique challenges with housing access and stability. We believe all renters deserve equitable access to an affordable home.
- RACIAL & ETHNIC EQUITY** - Black people, Indigenous people, and all people of color are much more likely to experience housing discrimination. We prioritize their voices and perspectives to guide our work.
- PEOPLE** - Our work is centered on the people we serve. This includes honoring our staff as whole people.
- RELIABILITY & TRUST** - We are a trusted source of information for renters, landlords, policymakers, and the communities we serve.
- INNOVATION** - We always seek new and better ways to achieve our mission.
- CONTINUOUS LEARNING** - We learn from the communities we serve. We incorporate those lessons into our resources and programs.

HousingLink Definition of an Affordable Home

A home is affordable when it fits a renter's income and budget. At HousingLink, we serve renters who are low and moderate income.

Strategic Priority	Why It is a Priority	What Success Looks Like
Purposefully articulate the value and benefit of HousingLink.	We heard that our work is valuable and important, but that value is not recognized throughout the community.	HousingLink has brand recognition and is looked to as a go-to resource. More stakeholders (community members, government staff/leaders, funders, nonprofits) know and can speak to why HousingLink is important.
Using new and existing technology solutions, continue expanding affordable rental housing opportunities.	Technology solutions are our bread and butter. We need to continue developing new ways to help renters find an affordable home through technology.	Access to rental housing opportunities is easier to navigate online, especially for those with lower internet literacy. The newly designed website is known as a suite of tools/resources for renters and landlords. HousingHub has a successful launch and is sustainable.
Make HousingLink data and research more accessible to improve community knowledge about rental housing.	We heard that our research could improve housing policy conversations if it connected housing data more clearly. This is also an opportunity to build stronger partnerships.	HousingLink data is used by more local governments and community members. HousingLink logs an increased number of contracted or specifically-funded research projects. Development of new data products that inform leaders and citizens in the communities we serve.
Deepen connections to and develop resources for DIY landlords.	DIY landlords present a unique niche for HousingLink services. Many DIY owners are able and inclined to work with individual renters to find mutually-beneficial solutions.	Increased listings and greater participation in HCV/Beyond Backgrounds and housing search. HousingLink develops and operates a statewide registry of rental properties with annual update from owner/managers.
Continue strategic expansion.	We strive to expand people's affordable rental options. Expansion is strategic only if it has a sustainable funding model.	Beyond Backgrounds is available throughout Minnesota. Housing Hub is in use outside of Minnesota. Expansion activities fund staff and program expenses, plus core operations.
Build intentional connections and deepen work in Greater Minnesota.	Our market penetration in Greater Minnesota is not deep enough to provide the same value as in the Metro area.	HousingLink has sufficient data from Greater Minnesota cities/regions to publish research on communities in Greater Minnesota. Increased Greater Minnesota representation on the Board of Directors. Increased partnerships with organizations or stakeholders in Greater Minnesota communities.

Background

A collaborative effort established HousingLink in 1997. Government, housing advocates, property owners/managers, and low-income renters needed a single affordable rental listing resource. The goal was to increase low-income renters' access to housing options. Initially, HousingLink maintained a database of rental listings. Lists of housing openings were faxed to partners throughout the Twin Cities. In 2015, HousingLink expanded to serve all of Minnesota.



Today, Housing Link serves clients through a website and robust online search tool. The site facilitates nearly 1.5 million annual affordable housing searches. HousingLink programs also increase housing access for people with barriers beyond low incomes. These programs include Beyond Backgrounds and Housing Hub.

HousingLink is a neutral and unbiased source for housing-related data and information. HousingLink provides renter and landlord education and collaborates with social service agencies. HousingLink also provides essential housing market data to policy makers.

The 2022-2026 strategic plan builds on the organization's 25 years of success. There are no major shifts for HousingLink in this plan. Instead, it calls on HousingLink to go deeper. The plan focuses on improving services and technology solutions. It aims to expand HousingLink's reach to strategic audiences. It reminds HousingLink to tell the stories that show its value, supporting greater financial stability.

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