2014-2017 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Board of Directors

of Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina, Inc.

November 18, 2014

218 Patton Avenue
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
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MISSION
Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina works with others to end the cycle of homelessness.

VISION
We envision a day when any homeless person can move directly into service-enriched permanent housing and become a productive member of society.

We envision a day when the poor and vulnerable among us will no longer be invisible and ignored but treated with compassion and decency.

VALUES
- We believe in the absolute value and worth of every single human being.
- We believe that housing is a basic human right, integral to self-worth and dignity.
- We believe that homelessness is a solvable problem.
- We believe that all services should be offered respect and empathy and in the spirit of hope and recovery.
- We believe that we are successful as an organization when one individual takes one step forward on the road home.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION – 2014-2017
Over the next three years, Homeward Bound will have helped the community to effectively end chronic and veteran homelessness and collaborated with stakeholders to develop and implement prevention and housing crisis systems of care to decrease a person’s likelihood of homelessness or amount of time in the homeless service system.

A. Community Awareness and Support: Buncombe and Henderson County community members understand and increase investment in Homeward Bound’s work to end homelessness.

B. Staff Capacity: Homeward Bound has sufficient and well-trained staff to meet its mission.

C. Program Efficiency and Expansion: Homeward Bound strengthens existing programming and smartly expands programs to meet community needs.

D. Evaluation and Data: Homeward Bound uses key data to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs to meet its mission.

E. Strengthening Collaborations: Homeward Bound actively works with a network of community partners.

F. Funding Expansion: Homeward Bound has sufficient and diverse revenue streams to meet its mission.
STRATEGIC DIRECTION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

A. **Community Awareness and Support:** Buncombe and Henderson County community members understand and increase investment in Homeward Bound’s work to end homelessness.

**Goals**

1. Raise community awareness and lead the discussion about homelessness and the best practices that will shape the direction of homeless services in Buncombe and Henderson Counties.
   a. Implement the Communications Plan developed in 2013 to increase Homeward Bound’s visibility.
   b. Develop and implement an effective advocacy plan that includes outreach to both public and private entities.
   c. Train staff, board, and volunteers to effectively educate and provide community members actionable steps to getting involved in advocacy.

2. Engage community members as volunteers and evaluate effectiveness.
   a. Standardize and enhance orientation, training, cultivation, and appreciation for all volunteers.
   b. Establish a strategy for donations and engagement amongst local businesses, faith communities, local schools and universities, and demographics (especially young professionals).
   c. Develop and implement policy to record, track, and evaluate volunteer engagement in Donor Perfect.

3. Develop a new marketing plan that strengthens branding for Homeward Bound and its programming.
   a. Engage professional marketing firms to update Homeward Bound branding and logos.
   b. Establish a plan to discontinue the use of confusing program titles and develop new methods of talking about Homeward Bound housing and homeless services.
   c. Update website and expand use of social media platforms for more active and real time engagement in Homeward Bound’s work.
   d. Develop new collateral materials such brochures and annual report.
   e. Evaluate agency marketing capacity and secure professional contracts for ongoing marketing strategies and needs.

4. Build a stronger, more engaged Homeward Bound Board of Directors.
   a. Review agency bylaws and officer and member job descriptions on an annual basis and establish board accountability measures.
   b. Engage Western North Carolina Nonprofit Pathways to provide on-site board training.
   c. Implement board mentor program, pairing experienced members with new members to educate new members on roles and responsibilities, important aspects of Homeward Bound, and ways to effectively involve themselves in furthering the agency’s mission.
d. Understand the current needs of the agency and develop a strong recruitment process to meet those needs, setting clear expectations for board membership.

5. Engage community stakeholders.
   a. Identify civic organizations, faith communities, local businesses, community partners, and housing providers/landlords/developers.
   b. Identify strategies for consistent outreach, catered to the needs of each stakeholder group.
   c. Showcase Homeward Bound’s assets, increasing the community’s recognition of Homeward Bound’s contributions.

B. **Staff Capacity:** Homeward Bound has sufficient and well-trained staff to meet its mission.

**Goals**

1. Train all staff to effectively perform their roles.
   a. Implement new employee orientation procedure for all incoming employees and ensure existing employees have basic orientation information.
   b. Budget adequate funding for continuing education for each employee annually.
   c. Develop written standards for current best practices Homeward Bound implements throughout program areas, training all employees for baseline understanding. Hold employees accountable for these standards.
   d. Research other best practices that fit with the mission and philosophy of Homeward Bound and plan timeline for implementation.

2. Build adequate resources for staff to effectively perform their roles.
   a. Analyze current staffing structure to evaluate parity of workload and make strategic plans to address short staffing in program areas.
   b. Perform analysis of community nonprofit employee salary and benefits and set long term goals to reach parity with area averages.
   c. Create and begin implementation of long-term facilities plan (buildings, technology, and vehicle fleet) that will ensure Homeward Bound can meet its mission and give employees the tools needed to perform their roles.

3. Set and implement standards for employee supervision.
   a. Develop policies and procedures of employee supervision and evaluate annually for appropriate changes.
   b. Educate supervisory staff on supervision policies and procedures.
   c. Hold employees accountable for their roles and set appropriate measures for correcting employee behaviors.
C. **Program Efficiency and Expansion:** Homeward Bound strengthens existing programming and smartly expands programs to meet community needs.

Goals

1. Increase involvement in affordable housing and landlord advocacy.
   a. Develop and implement an effective affordable housing advocacy plan that includes outreach to both public and private entities.
   b. Train staff, board, and volunteers to effectively educate and provide community members actionable steps to getting involved in affordable housing advocacy.
   c. Hold two “lunch and learn” workshops annually in Buncombe and Henderson Counties to engage both potential landlords and affordable housing developers to offer and/or build units for homeless individuals and families.
   d. Expand collaborative efforts with developers and explore feasibility of becoming property managers for new and existing properties.

2. Develop a long-term services and business plan for Henderson County.
   a. Determine the types and level of services needed in Henderson County to end homelessness.
   b. Hire a Henderson County Director to engage community stakeholders (providers, elected officials, faith communities, local businesses, and other interested parties) and build a solid, effective housing program in the community.
   c. Develop a funding plan for Henderson County to ensure long-term viability of Henderson County services.

3. Implement new model of AHOPE services.
   a. Engage the faith community to provide long-term volunteer and financial support for day center services.
   b. Lead the implementation of systematic Coordinated Assessment approach to ending homelessness. Transition current day center model to prioritize housing assessment and case management model.
   c. Perform feasibility of new AHOPE facility and engage local government and businesses to invest in new facility.
   d. Explore all possible avenues for long-term investment in one-stop shop for homeless services, including foundations, private donations, and public grants.

4. Improve program service delivery.
   a. Identify current service partners and how to formalize relationships to enhance programs.
   b. Identify and engage potential service partners, especially in the areas of employment assistance, physical and behavioral health, and life skills.
   c. Research and implement new best practices complementing current services.
   d. Research the feasibility of holding a Community Engagement Summit.
5. Strengthen the Pathways to Permanent Housing program.
   a. Expand life skills options for housed clients, increasing volunteer participation in areas such as cooking, gardening, and budgeting.
   b. Facilitate creation of resource guide for meaningful work and activities in the community for clients.
   c. Evaluate current staffing structure for Pathways to Permanent Housing, making adjustments as necessary to meet needs of the program.
   d. Train housing staff to adequately and effectively perform their roles, moving from a crisis-driven to sustainability-driven model of case management.
   e. Evaluate the need for additional clinical support and implement plan to meet needs.

6. Research the feasibility of program expansion, developing business plans prior to implementation.
   a. Implement the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program, evaluating effectiveness every 6 months.
   b. Research potential public funding sources to seed expansions and develop plans for long-term sustainability prior to implementation.
   c. Evaluate staffing and infrastructure capacity prior to implementing new or expanding existing programs.
   d. Implement PATH program in Henderson County, enhancing engagement to chronically homeless individuals and families and to community stakeholders.

7. Develop and implement a facilities plan to include properties, technology, and vehicle fleet.
   a. Evaluate current properties, technology, and vehicle fleet to determine gaps in programmatic and administrative needs.
   b. Develop long-term goals for filling facility gaps and plan development plan to reach these goals.
   c. Develop formal policy and procedure manual for routine maintenance of all facilities.
   d. Determine the feasibility of hiring an IT employee or contracting with local IT company to maintain and update agency technology.

D. Evaluation and Data: Homeward Bound uses key data to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs to meet its mission.

Goals
1. Develop both agency and program evaluation plans.
   a. Engage current funding organizations to determine the information they need to maintain and/or increase investment.
   b. Research the National Alliance on Ending Homelessness archives to determine how other national programs evaluate for success.
   c. Seek foundation and other private investments to fund evaluation plans.
   d. When possible, budget for evaluation in all public funding grants.
2. Use the Homeless Management Information System to evaluate programs.
   a. Hire dedicated staff to enter, report, and evaluate program and system level information from HMIS.
   b. Develop a comprehensive plan to address data quality, entry procedures, and evaluation of information put into HMIS.
   c. Use evaluation to troubleshoot programmatic issues and drive changes for program effectiveness.

E. **Strengthening Collaborations:** Homeward Bound actively works with a network of community partners.

**Goals**

1. **Build business investment.**
   a. Build stronger connections to the Asheville and Hendersonville Chambers of Commerce.
   b. Formalize PATH outreach to local businesses in Asheville and Hendersonville and develop method to connect these relationships with the Resource Development Department.
   c. Implement Leadership Asheville plan to engage local businesses in client move-in process (at least 12 per year).
   d. Engage local businesses in Buncombe and Henderson Counties, educating them and providing them appropriate ways to invest in Homeward Bound’s work.

2. **Strengthen existing collaborations.**
   a. Increase presence and more sustained interactions with existing partners.
   b. Find new avenues to expand existing partnerships.
   c. Develop evaluation process to use at regular intervals to determine what is working and what is not working.

3. **Expand active involvement of faith communities.**
   a. Seek out faith communities, especially in Henderson County, not already involved in faith based programming and find common ways to support one another in meaningful and sustainable ways.
   b. Continue working to capture names, email addresses, and physical addresses for all Room In The Inn volunteers.
   c. Engage all volunteers to make a financial investment in Homeward Bound.

4. **Seek new and expand and formalize existing programmatic collaborations.**
   a. Analyze current collaborative partnerships and determine gaps in client services that could be filled through collaborations.
   b. Target new potential partnerships in areas most in need: employment, physical and mental health, and life skills.
   c. Develop formal memoranda of agreement and seek funding for collaborative projects.
F. **Funding Expansion:** Homeward Bound has sufficient and diverse revenue streams to meet its mission.

**Goals**

1. Cultivate and secure major leadership gifts ($1000 and above). Increase major gifts by 15%.
   a. Invite potential and current major donors to key appreciation/update/fundraising events at least three times each year: Appreciation Dinner, Welcome Home Breakfast, and Major Donor Reception.
   b. Email updates to major donors monthly to keep them apprised of upcoming events, milestones, and important information.
   c. Staff and Board conduct personal visits with major donors, asking them to make investments in Homeward Bound’s work.

2. Increase business and corporate support by implementing a sponsorship move-in program for businesses and other organizations.
   a. Identify potential businesses likely to want to take advantage of volunteer and sponsorship opportunities.
   b. Develop clear, concise marketing materials to introduce the program to potential investors.
   c. Secure one business or organization per month to provide sponsorship funding and volunteers for client move-in.

3. Implementation of Benevon model with regular tours leading to annual Welcome Home Breakfast.
   a. Conduct 200 tours annually to potential donors, focusing on major donor potential.
   b. Conduct tours twice monthly on the first and fourth Thursdays of the month, adding additional tours as needed.
   c. Work with Board, Resource Development Committee, and other key supporters to recruit people for tours.

4. Develop and implement a planned giving program.
   a. Research other nonprofit planned giving programs and develop a program for Homeward Bound suited to its needs.
   b. Distribute a planned giving collateral piece to volunteers and donors.
   c. Place planned giving program information on website and social media outlets.

5. Develop a new marketing plan that establishes new branding for Homeward Bound and its programming.
   a. Engage professional marketing firms to create new Homeward Bound branding and logos.
   b. Establish plan to discontinue use of confusing program titles and develop new methods of talking about Homeward Bound housing and homeless services.
   c. Update website and expand use of social media platforms for more active and real time engagement in Homeward Bound’s work.
6. Conduct Homeward Bound Capital Campaign to meet stated goals.
   a. Contract with firm to conduct feasibility study for Capital Campaign.
   b. Finalize details of projects to be included in the Capital Campaign.
   c. Use contracted firm to engage board, staff and potential Capital Campaign donors to meet campaign goals.
HOMEWARD BOUND’S HISTORY

Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina is a 501(c)3 organization, incorporated in the State of North Carolina in May 1988. Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina (HB) opened the Hospitality House Shelter in 1986 to meet the community’s need for 24-hour shelter. In 1990 and 1993, respectively, the agency opened the Phoenix Transitional House for Men and the Sojourner Truth House for Women and Children. At the time, these programs followed the traditional model for homeless services, providing space as homeless men and women waited for permanent housing. In 1995, the agency began the AHOPE project, initially providing outreach to people living on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation. Partnering with two faith communities, the Jubilee! Community and First Presbyterian Church, Homeward Bound expanded these street outreach services into day services. After building its current facility in 1998, the AHOPE Day Center expanded its scope of services to include the Safe Haven shelter for vulnerable, mentally ill persons and the Room In The Inn shelter for unaccompanied, adult women.

In response to the community’s 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness adopted by the City of Asheville and Buncombe County in January 2005, the agency changed its name to Homeward Bound to reflect its commitment to ending homelessness through permanent housing. HB developed the Pathways to Permanent Housing program, a supportive housing program based on the national best practices model called Housing First. Housing First, the basic tenet of the 10-Year Plan, assists the hardest-to-serve homeless individuals, often referred to as the chronically homeless, to locate, procure, and maintain permanent housing long-term by providing intensive case management services matched to their specific needs. Dedicated to permanent housing as the answer to homelessness, HB has since closed the Hospitality House and Safe Haven shelters as well as its two transitional houses, reallocating financial resources to permanently housing homeless individuals in the community.

In 2008, Homeward Bound expanded its housing services to include rapid rehousing and prevention programming. These services target non-chronic homeless individuals and families, assisting them with short- or medium-term financial assistance and tenancy supports. From the community’s Homelessness Faith Summit in 2010, Homeward Bound collaborated with local faith communities to develop the HOPE to HOME program. HOPE to HOME pairs teams of volunteers with newly housed homeless households, creating intentional community and practical support, assisting with reintegrating homeless individuals and families into the wider fabric of the community. In 2013, Homeward Bound expanded its housing services to Henderson County, North Carolina. Initially providing education to community providers, elected officials, and law enforcement on best practices, Homeward Bound accessed federal funding to begin rapid rehousing and then permanent supportive housing programs to assist the community to end homelessness.

HB provides an array of services in partnership with numerous community agencies to meet client’s future and immediate needs. HB serves as a leader in the community following the 10-
Year Plan to End Homelessness and collaborates with other agencies and local, state, and federal governments to prevent homelessness and increase the availability of affordable housing.
Strategic Planning Process

January 2014 – Meeting between Judy Futch, Nonprofit Consultant, and Brian Alexander, Homeward Bound Executive Director, to lay out framework and timeline for updating Homeward Bound’s new strategic plan.

February/March 2014 – Discussed and received feedback of process from Senior Staff (Jim Lowder, Emily Ball, Patrice Wishon, Cindy Smith, and Brian Alexander) and Homeward Bound Board of Directors.

April 2014 – Paired staff and Board Members conduct face-to-face interviews with identified community stakeholders.

April/May 2014 – Board Members and Staff provide strategic planning feedback via on-line surveys.

June 2014 – Client surveys completed throughout Homeward Bound’s program slate.

July 2014 – Staff meeting to discuss strategic planning and create action items based on stakeholder feedback. Update given to the Board of Directors.

October 2014 – Draft of Strategic Plan written. Reviewed by Senior Staff (Jim Lowder, Emily Ball, Tracy Edmonds, and Brian Alexander) and Board of Directors. Corrections made.


January 2014 – Presentation of new Strategic Plan to participating Stakeholders and key partners and donors.
STRATEGIC PLANNING AGREEMENT

The Board of Directors of Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina approved this Strategic Plan on November 18, 2014. The plan represents the commitment of the Board of Directors to the mission, vision, values and organizational goals and objectives. The Board recognizes that active governance, oversight and participation are required. Staff is committed to developing well-defined action plans, monitoring the plans and as adapting as needed to fulfill the strategic directions outlined in this plan.

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Beth Trigg, Board President
November 18, 2014

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Brian K. Alexander, Executive Director
November 18, 2014

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