

HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE, INC.

Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028



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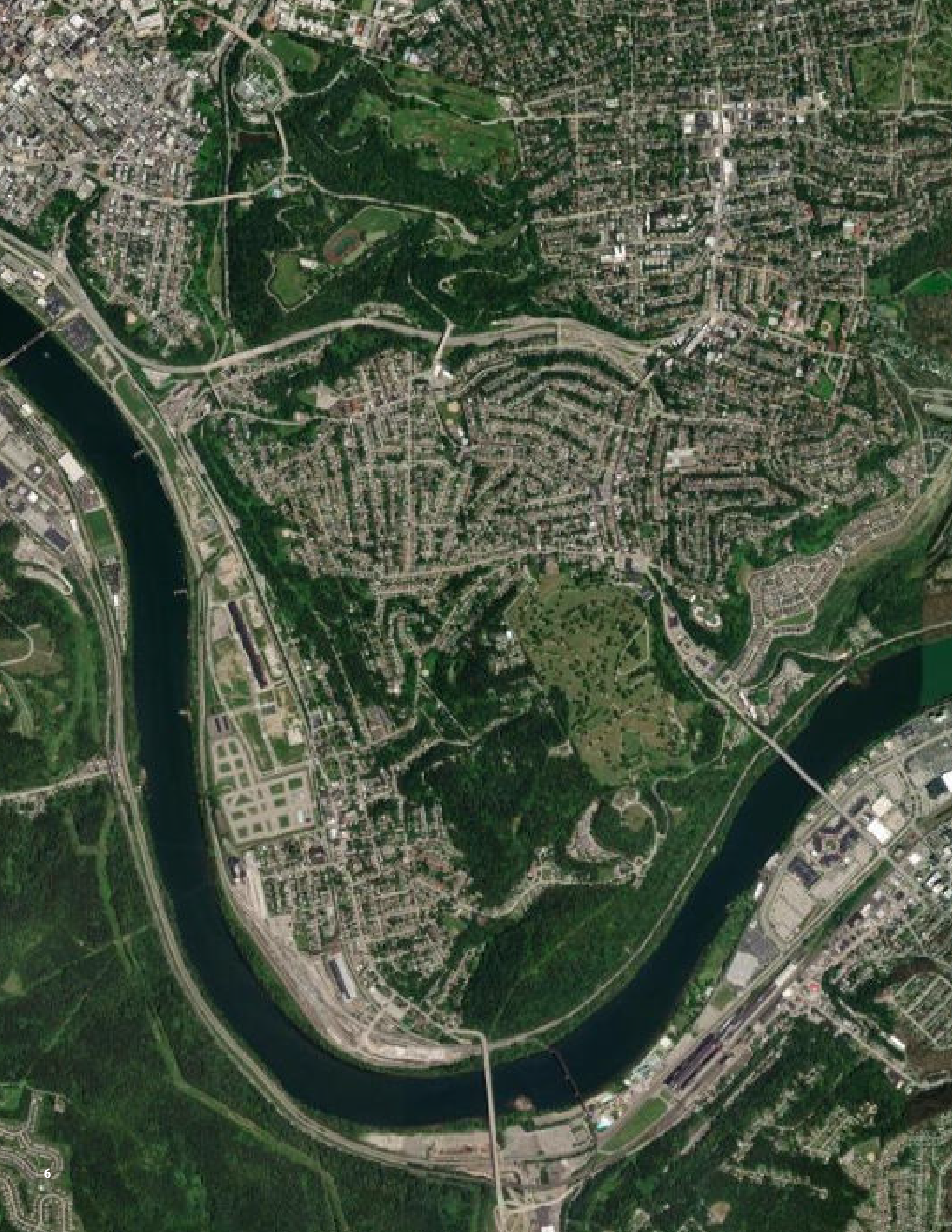
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December 2023

HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE
growing together

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Honoring our Past, Celebrating our Present, Co-Creating our Future.

Dear neighbors and friends,

Hazelwood Initiative (HI) was formed nearly 25 years ago in October 1999 to give voice and opportunity to ALL the residents of Hazelwood.

INCLUSION is the 25-year-long thread that weaves through the fabric of our work.

OUR PAST... HI began convening meetings for the neighborhood to ensure the city was responsive to resident concerns as well as organizing community-building events, rallying volunteers for community clean-ups, and publishing a monthly newspaper (The Homepage) that continues to this day.

OUR PRESENT... In recent years, HI's work has dramatically expanded to include affordable housing ("Development without Displacement") and pursuing community control and development of the Second Avenue Business District and key community assets (Burgwin and Gladstone Schools among others). And in the last few years, HI's Board and staff have begun addressing issues of environmental justice and health, recognizing that climate change is an existential threat to Hazelwood, as well as the rest of the world. We recently celebrated the work that HI has done over the last seven years in our Community Impact Report.

OUR SHARED FUTURE... And now, with the release of this Strategic Plan, the result of more than a year's work by our Board of Directors, staff and you, our neighbors, HI is putting forth a vision for the next five years of how we will grow to address the evolving needs and opportunities in Hazelwood.

- A foundational commitment to community inclusion and engagement that guides and enhances our work;
- Growing our commitment to affordable housing ("Development without Displacement");
- Re-imagining a Second Avenue Business District that balances neighborhood businesses with exciting new destinations;
- Community-driven stewardship of historic and institutional assets; and,
- A newer and growing commitment to environmental justice and health including greenway improvements, sustainable affordable energy improvements, and advocacy and action to fight climate change.
- Along with new ideas, projects, and initiatives based on what you, our neighbors bring to us.

I hope you find this Strategic Plan inspiring. More importantly, I hope that it will make you want to roll up your sleeves and join us in our mission of building a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development!

Sonya Tilghman, Executive Director



Sonya Tilghman,
Executive Director,
Hazelwood Initiative Inc.

"I hope you find this Strategic Plan inspiring. More importantly, I hope that it will make you want to roll up your sleeves and join us...!"

We are

HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE

A 501(c)3 non-profit, community development corporation proudly serving Greater Hazelwood.

We strengthen our

NEIGHBORHOOD

by investing in housing, commercial, and historic real estate to build community and generational wealth.

We advance

JUSTICE

by engaging our community and creating a healthy and sustainable Greater Hazelwood.

We build

CAPACITY

through organizational stability and resilience.

Our Vision
Hazelwood is the city's most diverse, vibrant, and active neighborhood.

Our Mission
We are a leader in building a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development.

When we do our work well, the **people of Hazelwood thrive** and together we create **unique and dynamic places** that are **environmentally and economically healthy.**

INCLUSION is the thread that weaves through all of our work.

DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

Discount Home Repairs
Affordable Home Ownership Program
Affordable Rental Housing
Advocate for implementation of city-wide inclusionary zoning
Emerging opportunities for affordable/mixed-income housing development

PLACEMAKING ON SECOND AVE.

Revitalizing Second Avenue
Josza's Corner @ 4800 Second Ave.
4800 Block of Second Avenue
4901 - 4915 Second Ave. Parcels
4948 Second Avenue Plaza
Commercial Rentals: 4944, 5017, 50364, and 5035 Second Ave.; 5426 Dyke Street Artist Enclave
Merchant Assistance

NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE PLANNING

Land Use Planning and Branding
Connecting Hazelwood Green to the larger community
Vacant Land Strategy
Public Art Strategy
Greening, Placemaking, & Public Space Improvement and Planning

STEWARDSHIP OF HISTORIC AND INSTITUTIONAL ASSETS

Propel Hazelwood School
Gladstone School
Three Rivers Village School Building
Historic Library
Future Projects

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Membership
Monthly Community Meetings
The Homepage
External Partnerships

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Air Quality
Stormwater Control
Renewable Energy
Healthy Homes
Mobility & Infrastructure
Greenways, Trails, & Connections
Urban Agriculture

RESOURCE NAVIGATION

Housing & Utility Assistance
Workforce Development
Educational Opportunities

ORGANIZATIONAL STABILIZATION AND RESILIENCE

Driving Forces
Staffing & Capacity Plan
Financial Sustainability & Capacity
Board Governance & Culture



History & Context

Hazelwood Initiative has worked to build a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development since 1999.

Hazelwood Initiative (HI) was born in 1999 when the Hazelwood Neighborhood Maintenance Task Force (HNMTF), joined forces with the Hazelwood Economic Leveraging Partnership to create a new organization. The two groups maintained and cleaned the neighborhood and successfully opposed the re-opening of the LTV Steel Coke Works. Community driven efforts to improve the built environment of Hazelwood while protecting its people from environmental threats are in our DNA.

Rising to the Occasion

Over the years, the leadership of HI recognized that while several organizations were working with children and families, little work was focused on protecting and preserving the community's physical assets. HI understood the community's growth as a place for everyone also would be dependent on increasing the amount of affordable housing, protecting the neighborhood's historic assets, and investing in the business district. This led to HI increasing its capacity and partnerships in order to purchase and renovate residential & commercial properties, to organize stakeholders to build consensus, guide planning, and, ultimately, to put development in the hands of the community.



Hazelwood’s context is changing...

Hazelwood is at an inflection point. After weathering deindustrialization, de-urbanization, and disinvestment, the neighborhood is experiencing a new period of revitalization that has the potential to drastically change both the quality of life for residents and the identity of the community.



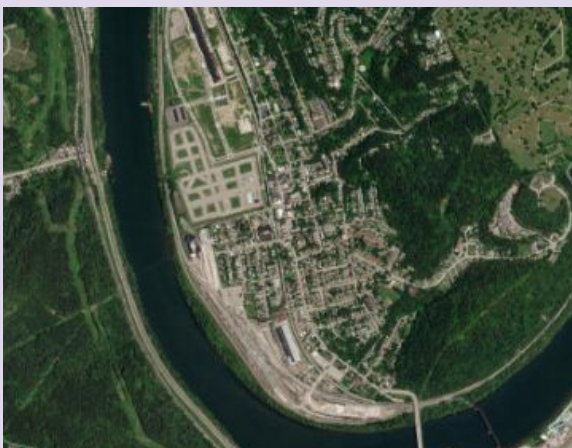
Climate change is intensifying existing economic, health, and environmental challenges .

The effects of heat waves, polar vortexes, increased rainfall, poor air quality, and more increase the burden on Hazelwood residents. Hazelwood has an opportunity to not only mitigate these impacts but build generational wealth and lessen the community’s contribution to the changing climate while doing so.



The neighborhood is attracting attention from investors and the community is experiencing a rebirth.

Hazelwood is gaining more attention and is experiencing a market shift. Long-time owners are experiencing equity growth due to increasing home values, new small businesses are opening along Second Avenue – great things are happening for the community. Yet this shifting market is also bringing rising residential rents, higher interest rates, and incomes that aren’t keeping up with costs. This threatens the security of long-time residents and business owners, who also have growing concerns about changing neighborhood character and potential displacement.



Hazelwood Green could impact community character and affordability.

The long-vacant LTV Coke Work’s site is being transformed by its current owners, Almono LP, into Hazelwood Green and will include new buildings, businesses, and residents. The shared goal among residents and stakeholders, including Almono LP, is to eliminate the development risk of creating “two Hazelwoods” and instead seamlessly reconnect the rest of Hazelwood to the river.

A selection of Hazelwood Initiative's achievements include:



27 houses

sold to low- and moderate- income homebuyers



64 low-income homes

stabilized through the Discount Home Repair program



110

units of permanently affordable housing



\$260,000+

of Neighborhood Investment Fund (NIF) grants provided to Hazelwood residents and businesses



700 trees

planted throughout the neighborhood



4 businesses

received assistance with transformative new signage and facades



18 flower beds

created at the Hazelwood Community Garden



8 key properties

in the Second Avenue business district acquired



8 free solar installations

installed on low-income homes

The ongoing development of Hazelwood Green on a 178-acre brownfield that once housed the LTV Coke Plant, along with a decline in affordable housing in Pittsburgh, brought increased attention to Hazelwood from developers and business owners. Seeing that the community's lower priced houses could be vulnerable to speculation or further decay, HI sought funding from Pittsburgh's foundation community to purchase, rehab, sell and rent hundreds of homes to Hazelwood residents with low and moderate incomes to help them benefit from future development.

Today: Growth, Collaboration & Future Planning

HI also listened to the community's concerns about having a neighborhood school and the need to secure shuttered buildings of cultural and historic significance to the neighborhood. The purchase of the Burgwin School in 2014 to house a Propel charter school, the current redevelopment of part of the former Gladstone School into affordable rental housing, and the purchase of Jozsa's Corner are a few examples.

Today, HI is led by a board and staff that reflect the diversity of Greater Hazelwood, with a staff dedicated to engaging the community and implementing a shared vision of equitable development. As a member of the Greater Hazelwood Community Collaborative (GHCC), HI joined with other community-based organizations in the creation of the Greater Hazelwood Neighborhood Plan (GHNP), which was adopted by the City's Planning Commission in November 2019.

Guided by the GHNP, our development principles, and our mission of "building a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development," HI is committed to an approach that avoids displacement and creates opportunities for residents and small businesses to benefit from the neighborhood's future growth.



Hazelwood Initiative plans to build 3 houses to sell to lower-income residents

Pittsburgh Tribune Review, September 14, 2023

Putting equity in energy: Local partners celebrate solar program for low-income homeowners

WESA, March 31, 2023

Industrial Arts Workshop in Hazelwood creates public art and career opportunities

NEXT Pittsburgh September 27, 2023

Hazelwood redevelopment initiative to generate affordable apartments

Pittsburgh City Paper November 21, 2022

Hazelwood Neighborhood Plan charts development priorities for a changing community

NEXT Pittsburgh September 23, 2019

Our Vision

Hazelwood is the city's most diverse, vibrant, and active neighborhood.

Our Mission

We are a leader in building a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development.

Our Outcomes

When we do our work well, the people of Hazelwood thrive and together we create unique and dynamic places that are environmentally and economically healthy.

Inclusion is the thread that weaves through all of our work.

This results in...

- Development without displacement
- Diverse and mixed-income community
- Generational wealth building
- Second Avenue being the heart of our community
- Balance of local entrepreneurs and destinations
- Strong, supportive institutions (schools, nonprofits, etc.)
- Respect for our history and preservation of our existing assets
- An engaged, empowered, and connected community
- A sustainable and resilient community
- Seamless integration of one Hazelwood (existing + Hazelwood green)

Bedrock Statements

Informed by the community, Hazelwood Initiative's vision, mission, and desired outcomes are the foundation of the organization.

All that HI does should be measured or informed by these statements in some way. HI's vision describes the ideal, aspirational state that it would like Greater Hazelwood to achieve. The mission is a concise explanation of HI's reason for existence and how it supports achievement of its vision. HI's outcomes describe what HI intends to achieve through its work.

Key themes within the bedrock statements include:

Hazelwood is for everyone

Everyone belongs in Hazelwood no matter who they are, how long they have lived here, or where in Hazelwood they reside. Our diversity is our strength, as we act as one Hazelwood.

Collaboration lifts everyone up

Connections and partnerships between HI and the community, and within the community itself, are essential to empower residents, engage in inclusive community development, and lift all boats in Hazelwood.

Places are an important part of community

Thoughtful, unique, and dynamic places should bring the community together, reflect Hazelwood's identity, respect our history and culture, and they should be leveraged to help the community thrive.

Hazelwood's future is people-centered

Community solutions must consider the environment and the economy, but - above all else - must contribute to a more socially equitable society. Hazelwood can't thrive unless every resident thrives.

Organizational Structure

Over the next five years, Hazelwood Initiative anticipates growing our capacity through additional staff, consultants, and partnerships.

Hazelwood Initiative is a relatively small but nimble organization that, over the next five years, anticipates hiring additional staff to better meet current and anticipated organizational needs, while also engaging consultants and expanding partnership opportunities.

2023 Staff



Sonya Tilghman
Executive Director



David Brewton
Senior Director of Real Estate



Tiffany Taulton
Director of Outreach and Sustainability



Ray Bowman
Real Estate Project Manager

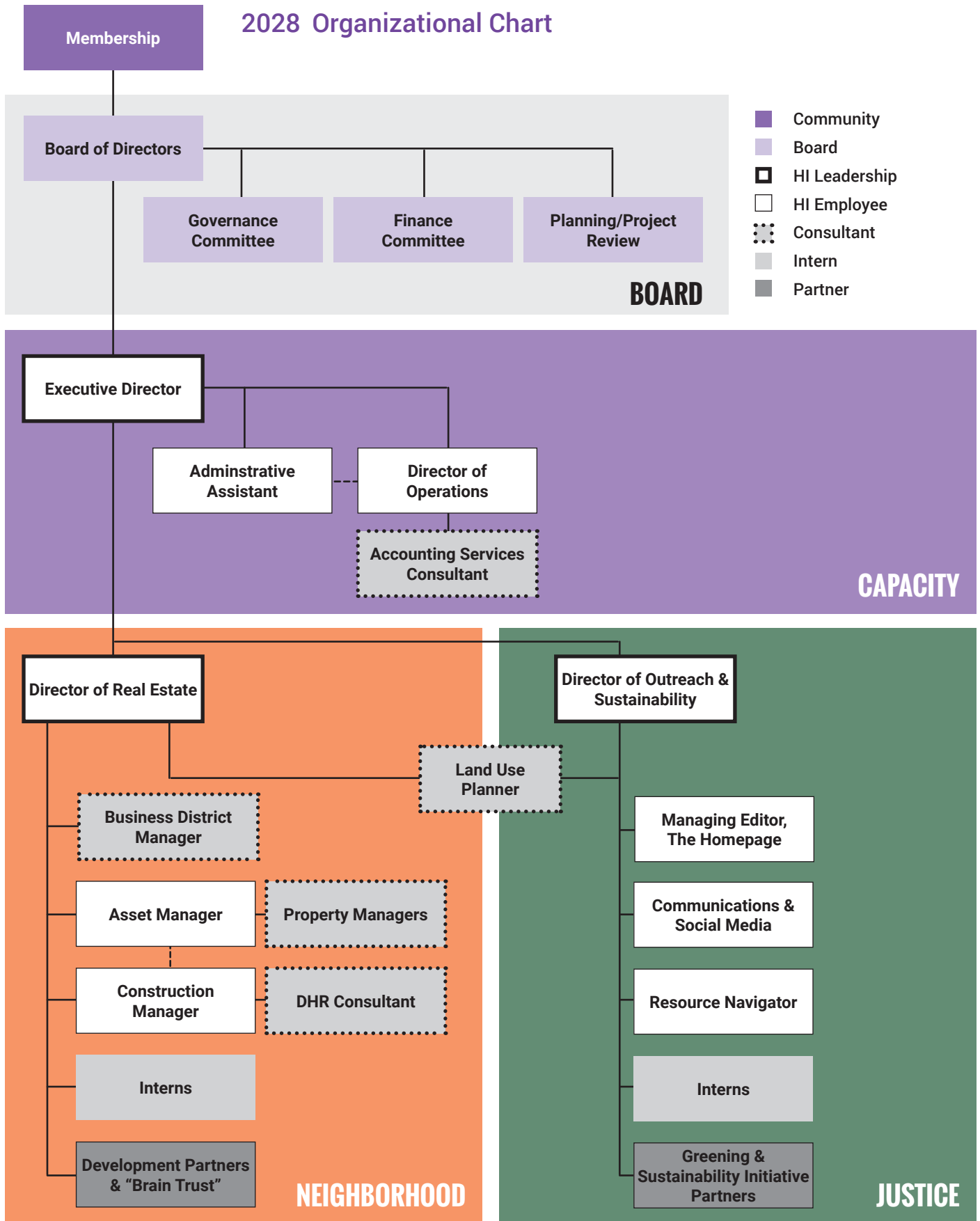


Juliet Martinez
Managing Editor, The Homepage



Khaleelah Ali Muhammed
Administrative Assistant

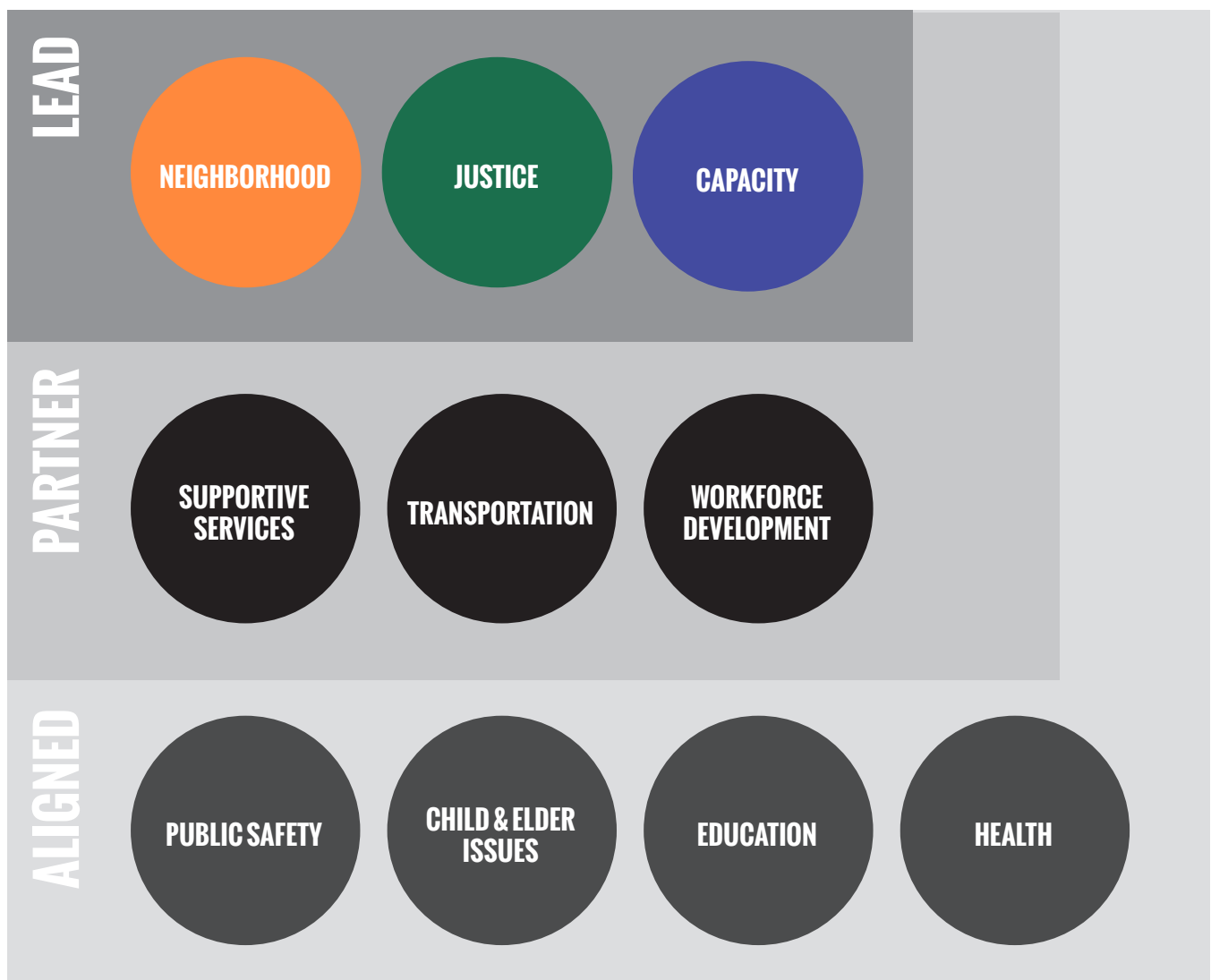
2028 Organizational Chart



Our Role

Hazelwood Initiative supplements our capacity by partnering with other entities.

Hazelwood Initiative is primarily engaged in initiatives that are directly related to their three priorities - Neighborhood, Justice, and Capacity. HI actively partners with other organizations around initiatives that are directly related to its -mission, but are beyond the current capacity of the organization (such as supportive services, transportation, and workforce development). HI participates minimally in initiatives that are aligned with mission but rarely actively provides direct programming. For example, HI may provide a platform for aligned work by allowing presentations at community meetings or coverage in The Homepage.



Workplan

Hazelwood Initiative's workplan will guide the organization's efforts for the next five years.

Hazelwood Initiative will accomplish their mission by strengthening the neighborhood, advancing justice, and building capacity, and they have developed a workplan to guide these efforts for the next five years. The workplan prioritization was informed by community need, organizational capacity, and funding availability. It will be evaluated on an annual basis to develop more detailed staff workplans. The organization will also remain flexible so they can cultivate, evaluate, and pursue opportunities that are not yet identified in this workplan, but may become available over the next five years.

Priorities

The three areas that HI works within to realize their vision.

Focus Areas

The categories of activity that HI performs with the three priorities.

Programs

The programs that HI leads within each of the focus areas.

WE ARE HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE

A 501(c)3 non-profit, community development corporation proudly serving Greater Hazelwood.

We achieve this through...

WE STRENGTHEN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

by investing in housing, commercial, and historic real estate to build community and generational wealth.

development without displacement

placemaking on second ave.

comp. neighborhood land use planning

stewardship of historic and institutional assets

WE ADVANCE JUSTICE

by engaging our community and creating a healthy and sustainable Greater Hazelwood.

outreach and engagement

environmental health

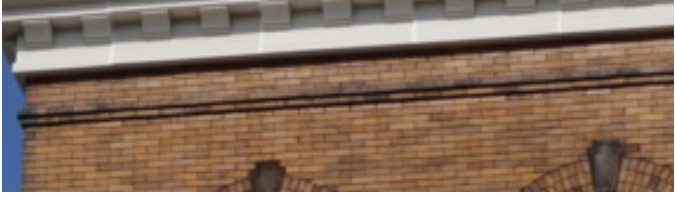
resource navigation

WE BUILD CAPACITY

through organizational stability and resilience.

organizational stabilization and resilience

INCLUSION is the thread that weaves through all of our work.



We strengthen our

NEIGHBORHOOD

by investing in housing, commercial, and historic real estate to build community and generational wealth.



1

DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

Hazelwood Initiative invests in affordable housing in partnership with low- and moderate-income owners, buyers, and renters to build generational wealth individually and communally.

- 1.a Discount Home Repairs**
HI provides discounts on the price of needed home repairs for low-to-moderate income Hazelwood homeowners.
- 1.b Affordable Home Ownership Program**
HI renovates blighted houses and builds new houses for affordable homeownership for low-to-moderate income households so that Hazelwood renters can become homeowners and build generational wealth.
- 1.c Affordable Rental Housing**
HI develops permanently affordable rental housing so that as property values rise, low-income renters can stay in their homes and in their community.
- 1.d Advocate for implementation of city-wide inclusionary zoning**
HI advocates for city-wide adoption of inclusionary zoning.
- 1.e Emerging opportunities for affordable/mixed-income housing development**
HI plans with the community and other community partners to get control of the most strategic properties to protect affordable housing now and in the future.

2

PLACEMAKING ON SECOND AVE.

Hazelwood Initiative plans and invests in Second Avenue (and possibly Lytle) to become a vibrant neighborhood business district and an integrative “zipper” between existing Hazelwood and Hazelwood Green.

- 2.a Revitalizing Second Avenue**
Through community engagement, investment and support of small businesses, HI is the community’s driver of the re-imagining of the Second Avenue business district.
- 2.b Josza’s Corner @ 4800 Second Ave.**
HI drives historic renovation of this anchor building with a vibrant mixed-use restoration.
- 2.c 4800 Block of Second Avenue**
HI ensures that these strategic parcels support the neighborhood’s agenda for both sides of the block.
- 2.d 4901 - 4915 Second Avenue**
HI fully activates 4901 Second Avenue while planning with the community for a new urban-main street redevelopment of the entire parcel.
- 2.e 4948 Second Avenue Plaza**
Having transformed this gravel parking lot into a beautiful public plaza, HI works with the community to activate the site to build community and forge a key physical connection with Hazelwood Green.
- 2.f Commercial Rentals: 4944, 5017, 5034, and 5035 Second Ave.; 5426 Dyke Street Artist Enclave**
Having secured these key commercial buildings under community ownership, HI sustainably manages them while creating a sense of place that has room for neighborhood entrepreneurs, artists and makers, and new destination businesses to drive customer traffic to Second Avenue.
- 2.g Merchant Assistance**
HI operates a monthly newspaper that supports Second Avenue businesses; and as the business district grows, HI’s anticipates its support will grow and evolve into more of a business district support association.



ELIZABETH PHARMACY

5039

5041



PIZZA



3

COMPREHENSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE PLANNING

Hazelwood Initiative engages the community to create action plans around residential health, commercial placemaking, historic preservation, and balancing development with environmental sustainability.

- 3.a Land Use Planning and Branding**
HI engages the community to help create a unique identifier for the Second Avenue business district and possibly spreading into the neighborhood as a whole.
- 3.b Connecting Hazelwood Green to the larger community**
Through resident-driven redevelopment of Second Avenue and meaningful partnerships with Almono Partners, HI drives development along Second Avenue and possibly Lytle Street to create physical and social linkages between existing Hazelwood and Hazelwood Green.
- 3.c Vacant Land Strategy**
HI convenes residents and non-profit partners to create a comprehensive plan for the recycling of vacant land toward the community's primary goal of Development without Displacement.
- 3.d Public Art Strategy**
Through the incorporation of public art in its developments and through building a neighborhood infrastructure for public art, HI ensures that public art reflects the community and adds to a unique sense of place.
- 3.e Greening, Placemaking, & Public Space Improvement and Planning**
HI encourages tree planting, vibrant public spaces and creating a unique sense of place throughout the Second Avenue Business district, which will organically spread into the rest of the neighborhood.

4

STEWARDSHIP OF HISTORIC AND INSTITUTIONAL ASSETS

Hazelwood Initiative stewards the neighborhood's historic and institutional buildings to preserve its culture and history, and nurture its families and children.

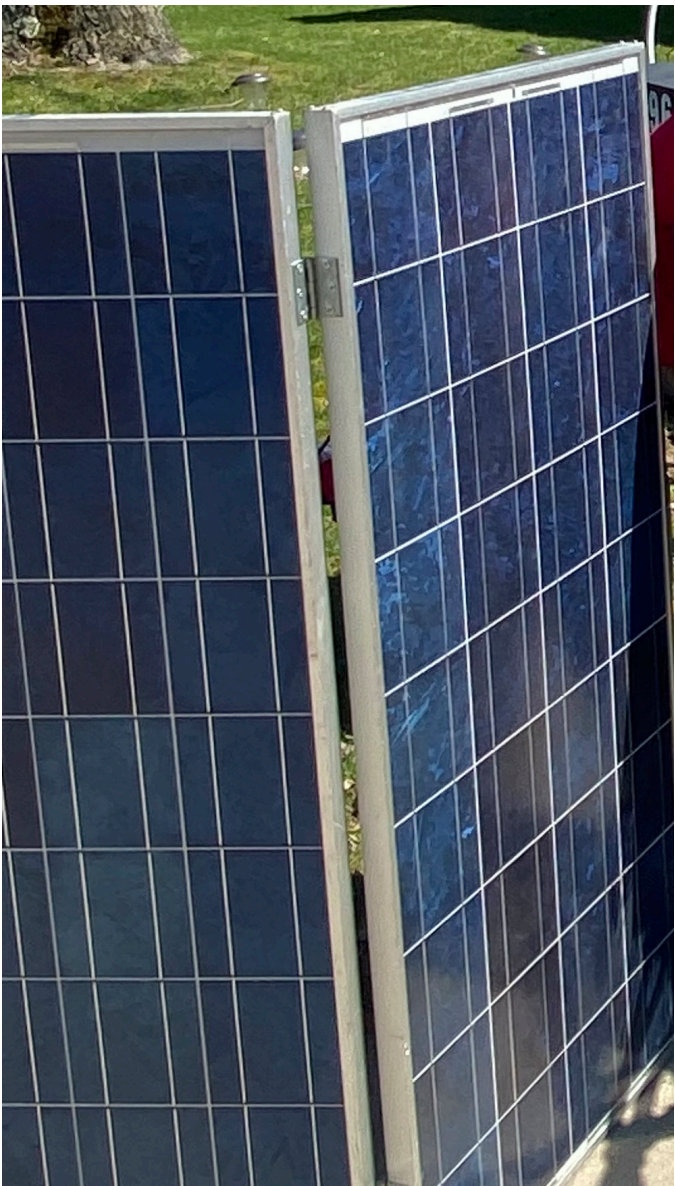
- 4.a Propel Hazelwood School**
HI will effectively and sustainably maintain this neighborhood asset as a home to a neighborhood Charter school, while using the asset and the income that it generates to support community needs through its Neighborhood Investment Fund.
- 4.b Gladstone School**
Building on the successful conversion of the larger building into affordable housing, HI engages the community to create a redevelopment plan for the Gladstone Annex.
- 4.c Three Rivers Village School Building**
HI effectively and sustainably manages this neighborhood asset as a home to a neighborhood-based private school.
- 4.d Historic Library**
HI engages residents to advocate with the city and URA to make the historic re-activation of this beautiful and historic asset a high priority toward a re-use that includes significant community benefit.
- 4.e Future Projects**
HI monitors the conditions of other key historic assets in the neighborhood to avoid unnecessary loss of these properties.



We advance

JUSTICE

by engaging our community and creating a healthy and sustainable Greater Hazelwood.



1

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Identify and advocate for community needs, empower residents as decision-makers in the development of their community, and update residents on Hazelwood Initiative's programs and progress.

1.a Membership

Increase membership, membership participation at events, and interest in joining the Board of Directors.

1.b Monthly Community Meetings

Provide information to residents and stakeholders about HI programs as well as relevant events, resources, policies, job opportunities, and development projects that could impact their quality of life in the neighborhood.

1.c The Homepage

Regularly provide opportunities to assess community needs and gather resident feedback on development projects and programs designed to improve their quality of life.

1.d External Partnerships

Cultivate partnerships with governments, businesses, universities, foundations, and nonprofits to advance HI's mission of inclusive economic development that prevents displacement and improves both the economic and environmental health of the community.

2

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Create a sustainable and thriving community that is healthy, climate-resilient, and financially secure.

2.a Air Quality

Advocate for policy changes that reduce air pollution and implement infrastructure and land-use strategies that can reduce air pollution locally.

2.b Stormwater Control

Strengthen green infrastructure to reduce flood risk to homes and businesses.

2.c Renewable Energy

Reduce energy burdens, thus making housing more affordable long-term, by facilitating adoption of renewable energy.

2.d Healthy Homes

Educate residents on the types of potential toxins in their homes and connect them with resources to remove or remediate those dangers, thus resulting in improved respiratory, heart, and mental health in the community.

2.e Mobility & Infrastructure

Improve sidewalks and road safety and help connect residents to convenient and reliable transportation.

2.f Greenways, Trails, & Connections

Increase resident access to nature paths for improved physical fitness, mental health, and connection to jobs and extended family.

2.g Urban Agriculture

Beautify the community while strengthening access to healthy and culturally appropriate food through the management of community gardens.



We advance

JUSTICE

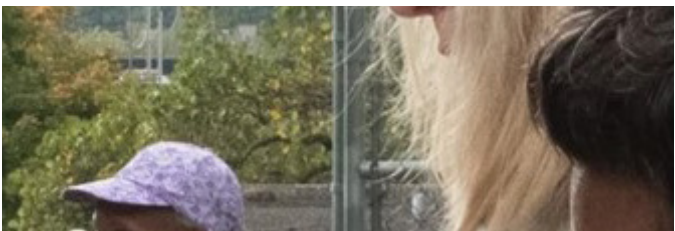
by engaging our community and creating a healthy and sustainable Greater Hazelwood.



We build

CAPACITY

through organizational stability and resilience.



3

RESOURCE NAVIGATION

We connect Hazelwood residents with resources, services, and education to improve their lives and build agency.

3.a Housing & Utility Assistance

Connect residents with financial and legal assistance programs that can help them stay on top of household expenses and avoid eviction.

3.b Workforce Development

Collaborate with partners to identify, advertise, and/or recruit for employment, training, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

3.c Educational Opportunities

Connect residents with in-neighborhood educational opportunities that will improve the quality of their lives, their ability to participate in democratic processes, and their future job prospects through support of—and partnerships with—schools, learning centers, and universities.

1

ORGANIZATIONAL STABILIZATION & RESILIENCE

Prepare Hazelwood Initiative to be resilient in the face of changing community needs for the next chapter in the community's story.

2.a Driving Forces

Remain fully aware and knowledgeable of market forces policies, and opportunities that may affect Greater Hazelwood.

2.b Staffing & Capacity Plan

Expand staff size and prioritize on-going professional development to ensure successful completion of the organizational workplan.

2.c

Financial Sustainability & Capacity

Prepare Hazelwood Initiative to be resilient in the face of an ever-changing funding environment, a broadening workplan, and growing community needs.

2.d

Board Governance & Culture

Continue cultivation of a larger, well-trained and fully-engaged Board of Directors.

HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE
growing together

powered by  evolveEA