



PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Strategic Plan 2025 Update





HABC Employee Appreciation Week in September 2019



Left: Ms. Hattie Rhames and others are recognized for their efforts on the Resident Advisory Board in January 2020

Center: Uproar Outreach team distributing groceries and supplies to Brooklyn Heights in April 2020

Right: Residents and community members gathered for the ribbon cutting ceremony for Perkins II in April 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Pathways to Success

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) adopted its first 10-year strategic plan, *Pathways to Success*, in 2019. This 10-year inaugural plan, [*Pathways to Success*](#), defined HABC as an independent agency and served “as a roadmap for the agency as we fortify HABC’s existing good works and establish how to strengthen and change the things that must change to secure future success” (*Pathways to Success* preface).



Transform



Innovate



Advocate

Pathways to Success presented a comprehensive account of HABC’s people, portfolio, and programs in 2019 and presented goals and strategies for the next 10 years. The plan looked at current residents and families served, analyzed the composition and needs of families on HABC’s waitlist, and addressed the need for thoughtful staff development, succession planning, and transitions. HABC’s portfolio analysis highlighted the diversity of assets, which range from scattered site lots to large public housing complexes with over 500 housing units, avenues to improve the physical conditions and financial viability of the existing portfolio, and opportunities to expand and develop new partnerships and housing options. The plan also showcased the range and depth of HABC’s supportive services while looking at HABC’s own operations to understand HABC’s priorities and areas where it can improve impact. The plan also highlighted HABC’s impact in Baltimore.



West Side Community Meeting at the University of Baltimore



East Side Community Meeting at PVG



West Side Community Workshop

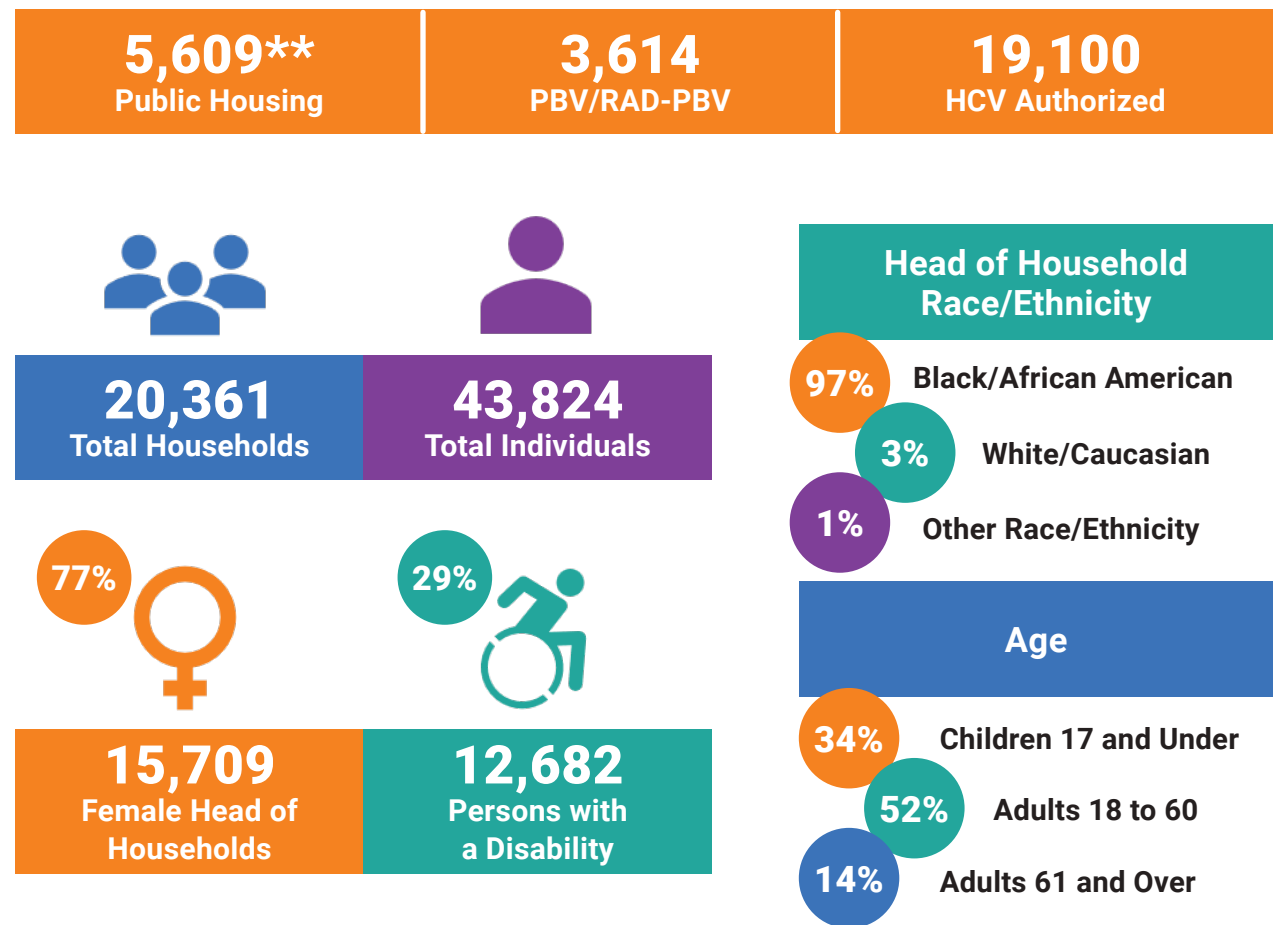
Pathways to Success was the product of a collaborative, community-centered planning process that embraced diverse stakeholders and perspectives to create a plan that was attuned to the community's needs and aligned with HABC's goals. A 33-person Advisory Group consisting of community stakeholders, employees, residents, and affordable housing advocates helped guide and inform the planning process, which relied on a variety of community engagement techniques including community conversations, individual and focus group interviews, and online surveys. Over 1,300 participants engaged in the process.

In the five years since adopting *Pathways to Success*, HABC has implemented the plan and made significant progress towards its goals, as documented in [A Look Back \(2017-2024\)](#) report. In fact, although *Pathways to Success* was designed to be a 10-year strategic plan, HABC has already accomplished many of its original goals, so after Year 5, it was already time for an update.

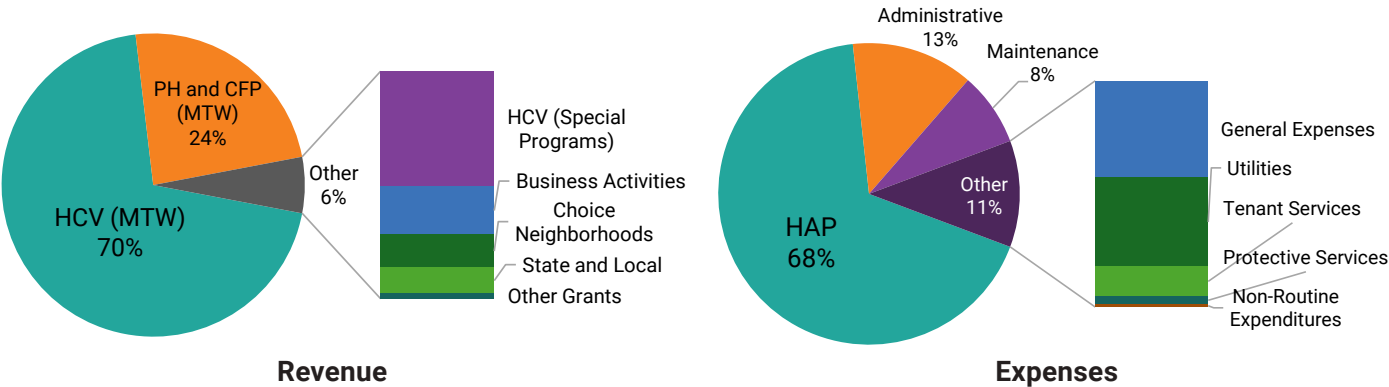
This strategic plan update celebrates HABC's achievement and revisits the goals, objectives, and strategies and introduces new ones to reflect HABC's progress to-date and establish a path forward for implementing the next five years of their plan. HABC hired EJP Consulting Group, LLC, which supported the development of *Pathways to Success*, to assist with the strategic plan update.

1,300
Participants

HABC Snapshot*



HABC Revenue and Expenses



*Data as of December 2023

**Units available for lease; does not include off-line or non-residential units



16% of the rental housing market in Baltimore City is HABC-assisted.
(RAD, Public Housing, and/or Housing Choice Voucher)

97.1%
Occupied

Public Housing

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Individuals | 12,604 |
| Age Distribution | >61: 10.5% <18: 40.9% |
| Percent HH with Children | 47.7% |
| Race | Black: 97.8% All Others: 2.2% |
| Individuals with a Disability | 24.1% |
| Female Headed HH | 82.7% |
| Average Income | \$13,672 |
| Average Rent | \$309 |

14,752
Leased***

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Individuals | 31,220 |
| Age Distribution | >61: 15.5% <18: 31.7% |
| Percent HH with Children | 36.6% |
| Race | Black: 96.1% All Others: 3.9% |
| Individuals with a Disability | 31.0% |
| Female Headed HH | 74.3% |
| Average Income | \$16,207 |
| Average Rent | \$247 |

***Does not include 4,348 vouchers managed by Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership

HABC'S IMPACT

[A Look Back \(2017-2024\)](#) report documents HABC's work over the last eight years, and the highlights of the report are presented in the following pages.

HABC also developed an [online, interactive dashboard](#) to track and share their progress on the goals, strategies, and objectives presented in *Pathways to Success*.



RECENT RECOGNITION



***National Public Housing
CEO of the Year Award 2023***



***Business Partner of the
Year Award 2024***



**Housing Choice Voucher Program Sidewalk Resource
Fair in July 2022**

Since 2017, HABC has prioritized its efforts to expand its reach, deepen its support, and improve its operations to better support its residents and communities. The following pages highlight some of the major milestones and success highlighted in *A Look Back (2017-2024)*. A complete list and more detailed description of the activities can be found in the report itself.



April 2020 COVID-19 Response at Poe Homes: 1,120 residents vaccinated at 56 onsite vaccine clinics and free food distributed

By the Numbers

2017-2024

\$1 Billion

in investments as part of the Perkins, Somerset, Oldtown (PSO) Transformation

\$127 Million

in capital improvements (renovations to existing units) from 2018-2023

\$2 Million+

investments received in safety and security

4,046

units renovated with 28 total RAD closings

44

residents have purchased a home and 150 families have enrolled in Homebuyer Readiness Programs

688

participants and 147 graduates of Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program

180

jobs created through the PSO Transformation Plan from 2019 to Q3 2024



Perkins Groundbreaking April 2023



Healing Day July 2024



HABC Staff update Latrobe Homes residents



Residents Homeownership Banquet June 2024



Twenty-nine (29) HABC residents have received a total of \$148,000 through the Rising Star Scholarship from 2018-2023.

PROCESS

The strategic plan update process was iterative. By incorporating diverse inputs, the update process sought to create a holistic understanding of HABC's progress to-date to make informed decisions about the path forward. Sources include HABC's strategic plan dashboard, Board reports, employee surveys, financial audits, housing program information, and intentional stakeholder outreach.

Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement

The stakeholder engagement strategy relied on multiple methods including semi-structured interviews, surveys, and an in-person staff retreat. Because the strategic plan update is focused on implementation, the stakeholder outreach process was intentionally targeted toward groups that were directly connected to the implementation and outcomes of the strategic plan.

HABC Commissioners and Executive Leadership participated in individual and stakeholder interviews. HABC also surveyed HABC employees, current and former public housing residents, voucher holders, tenants, partnering agencies, landlords, service providers and partners, and other community members.

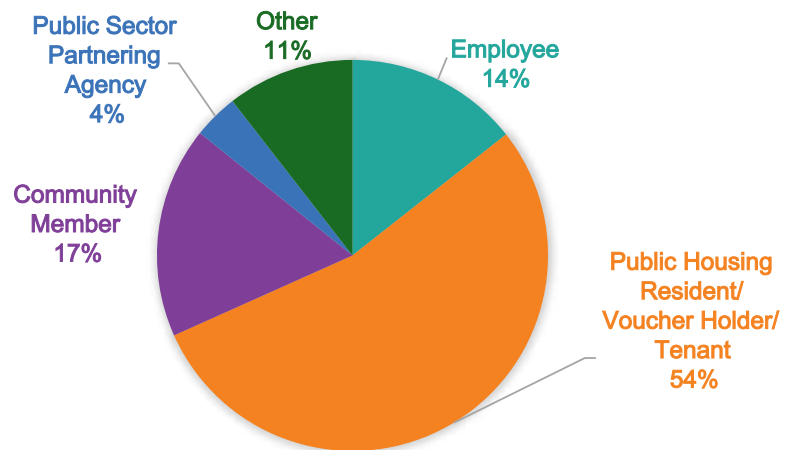
2,044

completed stakeholder surveys

8

stakeholder group interviews

SURVEY RESPONDENTS



Retreat

On July 17 and 18, 2024, HABC Commissioners and senior staff participated in a facilitated, in-person retreat. The purpose of the retreat was to review HABC's progress to-date and propose goals and strategies that will be prioritized for implementation for the next five years. After reflecting on the current state of the agency, the retreat participants reviewed and reaffirmed HABC's current mission, vision, and values. Participants reviewed each of the goals, objectives, and strategies and decided whether to keep, revise, remove, and add new goals considering the work they have done and want to do.



CONTINUING WITH SUCCESS



Tenant Readiness Training in March 2023

Pathways to Success introduced HABC's strategic priorities: TRANSFORM, INNOVATE, and ADVOCATE (TIA). TIA focuses on business operations, services and partnerships, and policy changes, respectively. In the process of operationalizing and implementing the plan, a fourth strategic initiative, SUSTAIN, was introduced. SUSTAIN is focused on HABC's operations and making the agency's processes more effective and efficient while maintaining the progress to-date.

Continuing with the impressive work HABC has already accomplished, the objectives and strategies of this strategic plan update are centered around HABC's 4 Goals: SUSTAIN, ADVOCATE, INNOVATE, and TRANSFORM. While the definitions of the goals have become more flexible and dynamic since the 2019 definitions, they are still true to their core focus.

This strategic plan update reaffirms HABC's missions, vision, and values.



Sustain



Advocate



Innovate



Transform

Mission

To create and provide quality affordable housing opportunities in sustainable neighborhoods for the people we serve



Vision

To create diverse and vibrant communities; to provide opportunities for self-sufficiency; and to build pathways for strong partnerships

Values



- **Excellence**
- **Leadership & Teamwork**
- **Responsiveness & Accountability**
- **Community & Partnerships**
- **Sustainability**

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Sustain

HABC will sustain a level of excellence.

| Objective | Strategy | Time frame |
|---|--|------------|
| Maintain and improve housing program administration and management | Maintain and improve asset management | Short Term |
| | Maintain and improve processes for contract administration for privately managed housing | Short Term |
| | Maintain and improve admissions and eligibility processes | Short Term |
| | Monitor Fair Housing plan and initiatives to ensure compliance | Short Term |
| | Maintain reporting and compliance processes for grants and funding | Short Term |
| | Maintain and improve legal services | Short Term |
| Recruit and maintain high quality staff | Maintain strong departmental teams | Immediate |
| | Maintain a robust staff recruitment program | Immediate |
| Maintain and improve upon high-performer status (i.e. public housing indicators) | Continue to meet FASS, MASS, PASS indicators | Immediate |
| | Continue to meet SEMAP Indicators | Immediate |
| | Maintain a quality control program | Immediate |

Advocate

HABC will advocate for affordable housing and resident services.

| Objective | Strategy | Time frame |
|--|--|------------|
| Advocate for additional federal, state and local policies to support HABC programs and operations | Advocate for legislation favorable to expanded affordable housing opportunities (e.g. state-wide legislation on Source of Income Discrimination, landlord discrimination or incentives in opportunity neighborhoods, legislation requiring affordable housing in development deals) | Short Term |
| | Establish and maintain a network of partners who are committed to affordable housing and resident supportive services to include businesses, educators, philanthropic foundations, civic institutions, residents and others to advocate for specific projects, funding, legislation, policy changes, and other opportunities in support of HABC's strategic plan | Short Term |
| Advocate for focused investment in HABC communities | Work with Baltimore City and State of Maryland to determine optimal ways to leverage the Opportunity Zone designation to support HABC-led developments | Long Term |
| | Create Baltimore City-focused coalition to advocate for funding and supportive services that are aligned with of HABC's goals | Long Term |
| | Ensure that resident voices are heard in HABC-led advocacy efforts | Long Term |
| | Require all private owners and managers to include supportive services in their operating expenses; or provide equivalent alternative funding for services investments (such as services escrow or endowments) | Long Term |
| Advocate for improved safety in HABC communities and offices for residents and for employees | Advocate for increased law enforcement presence and funding in all HABC communities | Immediate |
| | Develop and implement a comprehensive community safety plan to mitigate crime and safety challenges, which cause loss of revenue from prolonged vacancies and reluctance by residents, staff and contractors to live or work at challenging sites | Immediate |
| Advocate for continued MTW flexibility with HUD | Leverage MTW designation to provide incentives for landlord participation and expand housing choice | Short Term |

Innovate

HABC will innovate the way it operates.

| Objective | Strategy | Time frame |
|--|--|------------|
| Create ladders of opportunity to help HABC residents succeed | Partner with residents to identify their needs and opportunities for improved resident outcomes | Short Term |
| | Recruit and maintain a network of service providers to deliver services, including opportunities beyond HUD grant-funding programs, in HABC communities | Short Term |
| | Expand utilization and enforcement of Section 3 program to provide employment and contracting opportunity for residents | Short Term |
| | Refine comprehensive supportive services plan | Short Term |
| | Maintain mobility counseling programs to provide expanded housing options and supportive services for voucher users | Short Term |
| Expand stakeholder involvement | Build partnerships with state and local government, foundations, businesses, non-profits, educators, neighborhood groups and anchor partners to support resident success and neighborhood revitalization | Long Term |
| Increase and strengthen resident leadership and participation | Improve outreach to residents and increase awareness of resources available to residents | Immediate |
| | Recruit and support resident leaders to advocate for their own programs and needs | Immediate |
| | Improve HABC's staff capacity for direct resident engagement | Immediate |
| | Improve ongoing resident communication and engagement | Immediate |

Transform

HABC will transform the way it does business.

| Objective | Strategy | Time frame |
|--|---|------------|
| Diversify business operations and revenue streams | Use non-traditional and entrepreneurial business models to acquire real estate to generate revenue and expand affordable housing options | Long Term |
| | Establish and maintain capacity to issue own bonds | Long Term |
| | Identify and secure non-ACC funding, including maximizing developer and other fees | Long Term |
| | Collaborate with developers to leverage assets and capacity to build more housing and expand services for residents | Long Term |
| | Increase awareness with philanthropic community, and identify mutually beneficial development and services opportunities | Long Term |
| Leverage HABC's existing assets and tools | Expand housing offerings beyond traditional public housing and housing choice vouchers to include VASH, Mainstream, Family Unification Program, unsubsidized housing and other federally or state-supported housing initiatives | Short Term |
| | Maintain a homeownership program by leveraging scattered site portfolio | Short Term |
| | Reposition Baltimore Affordable Housing Development (BAHD) to be a more robust developer to assist HABC in expanding housing options to serve more families, including homeownership | Short Term |
| | Position HABC and/or BAHD in all future development transactions to ensure maximum ownership and leverage | Short Term |
| | Exercise right of first refusal and purchase options to assume ownership of mixed income communities at the end of compliance period | Short Term |

Transform (continued)

HABC will transform the way it does business.

| Objective | Strategy | Time frame |
|---|---|------------|
| Leverage HABC's existing assets and tools | Utilize HABC's MTW authority to explore new activities and initiatives. Research, develop and implement activities that use locally determined solutions to provide affordable housing as well as supportive services | Short Term |
| | Explore potential to further leverage and/or activate existing and new HABC-related entities and instrumentalities | Short Term |
| Improve organizational infrastructure | Upgrade business infrastructure and technology to enhance data collection, track performance and deliverables, and improve business processes including rent collection and maintenance | Short Term |
| | Provide continuous staff training and tools to complement new technologies and upgrades to enhance workforce efficiency and effectiveness | Short Term |
| Innovate/improve HABC's role/perception in the community | Identify current perceptions as well opportunities and challenges for improving or changing HABC perception | Immediate |
| | Refine and enhance communications plans, methodology and outreach for internal and external audiences | Immediate |
| | Develop, implement, and/or refine awareness campaign to educate targeted audiences on HABC initiatives, progress, partnerships and opportunities | Immediate |

2025 ACTION PLAN

The following table summarizes the goals, objectives, and strategies that are prioritized for 2025 (Year 6) implementation.

| Goal | Objective | Strategy |
|-----------|--|--|
| Sustain | Recruit and maintain high quality staff | Maintain strong departmental teams |
| | | Maintain a robust staff recruitment program |
| | Maintain and improve upon high-performer status (i.e. public housing indicators) | Continue to meet FASS, MASS, PASS indicators |
| | | Continue to meet SEMAP Indicators |
| | | Maintain a quality control program |
| Advocate | Advocate for improved safety in HABC communities and offices for residents and for employees | Advocate for increased law enforcement presence and funding in all HABC communities |
| | | Develop and implement a comprehensive community safety plan to mitigate crime and safety challenges which causes loss of revenue from prolonged vacancies, and reluctance by residents, staff and contractors to live or work at challenging sites |
| Innovate | Increase and strengthen resident leadership and participation | Improve outreach to residents and increase awareness of resources available to residents |
| | | Recruit and support resident leaders to advocate for their own programs and needs |
| | | Improve HABC's staff capacity for direct resident engagement |
| | | Improve ongoing resident communication and engagement |
| Transform | Innovate/improve HABC's role/perception in the community | Identify current perceptions as well opportunities and challenges for improving or changing HABC perception |
| | | Refine and enhance communications plans, methodology and outreach for internal and external audiences |
| | | Develop, implement, and/or refine awareness campaign to educate targeted audiences on HABC initiatives, progress, partnerships and opportunities |

Acknowledgments

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Commissioner Robin Truiett-Theodorson

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