



Blaine County Housing Authority/ 5B Housing

A central source for innovative solutions, advocacy, and knowledge for community housing in Blaine County

Final Strategic Plan

June 2022

A Collaborative Plan of the Blaine County Housing Authority, Blaine County, and the City of Ketchum



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Introduction

Summary

The Blaine County Housing Authority (BCHA) developed the following strategic plan while undergoing tremendous organizational change. Simultaneous to the strategic planning effort being undertaken by the Board of BCHA, the BCHA staff had resigned, and other local housing planning conversations and planning efforts were occurring in the region. These changes and housing planning discussions and planning efforts have created an exciting opportunity for BCHA to reimagine the organization in a different way. As such, the following plan reflects the goals of BCHA while also setting up the organization to transition into being a more robust and stronger voice for regional housing needs in the region. We are calling the next evolution of the Blaine County Housing Authority--5B Housing to signify the refresh of the entity to serve the five communities more effectively and innovatively in Blaine County with housing amplification and connection. There are still many unknowns at this point about the funding and organizational structure of 5B Housing but what we do know is that the work to serve unmet housing needs is here today and every day. Therefore, we put forward the BCHA/5B Housing Strategic Plan with the hopes of creating a road map to address both the immediate needs as well as the exiting new vision for housing coordination in Blaine County.

Background

It is both a very challenging and exciting time for affordable and workforce housing in Blaine County Idaho. According to a recent housing needs study published by the City of Ketchum, housing prices continue to rise and be out of reach for a majority of workers, the inventory for long-term rentals has been drastically reduced by short term rentals, rents are high and building permits have trended flat to zero over the past few years. On top of this, the COVID-19 Pandemic put pressure on the already challenging housing market. And yet, despite the unprecedented rise in affordable housing challenges in Blaine County, there are more entities stepping up to address the housing issue than ever before.



This is good news. However, with more non-profit, local government, employers, private property and developers working to address housing needs, there becomes a greater need for coordination.

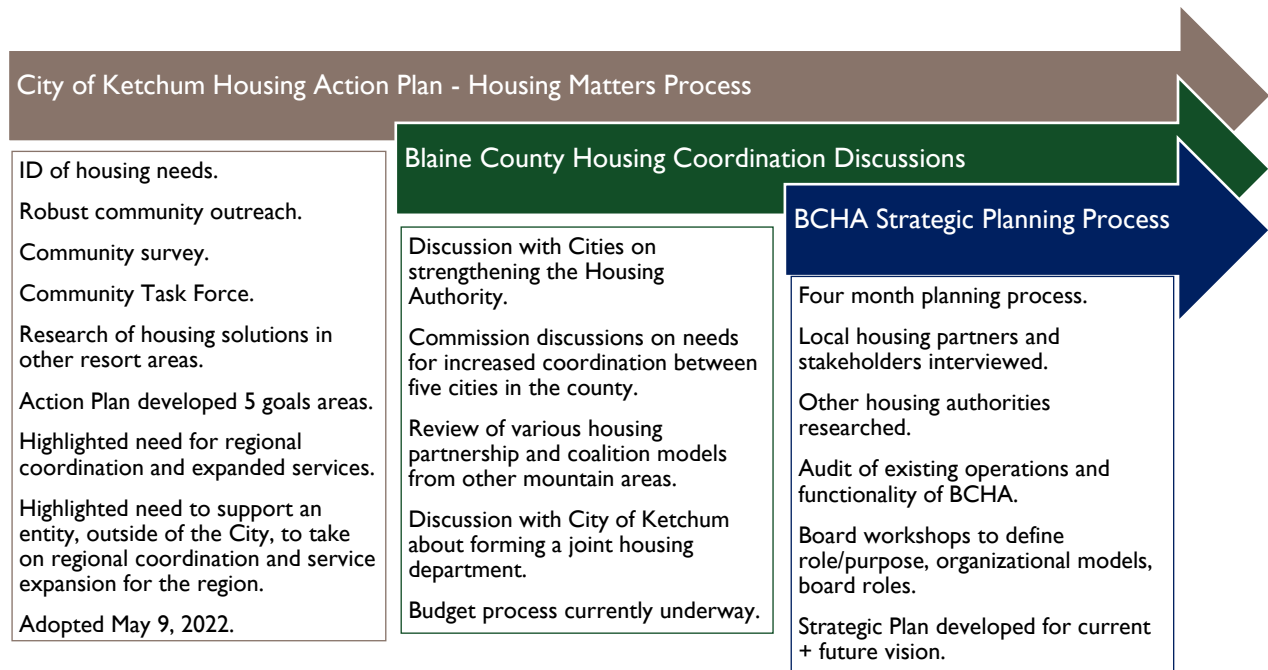
In the Spring of 2022, the Blaine County Housing Authority conducted a strategic planning process to better understand their role and purpose within the context of this new dynamic in the region. The BCHA Board and representatives from the cities of Sun Valley, Hailey and Ketchum as well as Blaine County participated in a several month planning process to answer the following questions:

1. What housing services are we currently providing? What are we doing well? Where are we falling short?
2. What can we do to make navigating the various housing services, programs, and efforts in the region less confusing for our community and more efficient for developers and funders?
3. Are we providing value to our funders? If yes, how? If not, how can we do better?
4. Is the current housing authority model working?

5. Is there a more effective way to coordinate services and provide better results for our community?
6. What are the gaps in housing services in the region and how can we be of service to address that need?
7. What is our role and how do we work to complement and support the other housing entities/initiatives in the region?

Parallel Planning Efforts

Since December 2021, three distinct but overlapping housing planning efforts were taking place in Blaine County as pictured below. Simultaneously to the strategic planning process BCHA was undertaking, the City of Ketchum was engaged in developing a Housing Action Plan with a community Task Force. Additionally, Blaine County was having conversations about how to increase coordination amongst the various partners involved in housing and how to build their own internal capacity to respond to the increased need to address regional housing needs. What this parallel process brought to light is the need for county-wide coordination to make the process less confusing for the community but also investors such as developers and local philanthropic entities as well as local government funders. Additionally, the parallel process helped BCHA clarify where they are most needed to serve the regional coordination and expanded services role. The following graphic illustrates the different planning efforts and discussions



BCHA Today

BCHA's main role today is to steward existing deed restricted affordable housing units, link people to housing and resources, advocate for housing solutions and partner on an as needed basis with local cities on projects. BCHA stewards an estimated \$18 million of deed restricted housing assets on behalf of the community and for the community.

This includes 85 ownership units and 24 rental units of which:

- 17 are in Hailey
- 60 are in Ketchum (14 rooms at the Lift Tower Lodge)
- 8 are in Sun Valley



Gaps in Housing Services

One result of the above-mentioned parallel planning discussions and efforts was the clarity around gaps in services. Clearly, despite the many organizations working to address housing, gaps still exist for key housing services and the overall experience for the community remains fragmented and disconnected.

Following summarizes the identified gaps in services that emerged from the three housing planning efforts in Blaine County. There is a need for:

1. A regional entity to provide community education about regional housing information, relevant topics, resources, needs and solutions in the works.
2. A regional entity that could support, coordinate, and expand the social services side for housing stability (e.g., eviction prevention, landlord relations, tenant communications, legal services, etc.) Also, serve as a one-stop-shop for housing, housing access and other services for the community in a safe, welcoming, culturally relevant manner.
3. A regional process for advocacy at the local level to strengthen affordable and workforce housing policy, code, and outcomes.
4. A regional entity that can effectively advocate at the state and federal level for affordable and workforce housing that could advocate for pro-housing policies at the city, county, and state level.
5. A housing department or entity that could support the technical, capacity and coordination needs of the City of Ketchum, Blaine County, Hailey, Sun Valley, Bellevue and potentially Carey in a manner that is effective and demonstrates an efficient use of tax dollars through the consolidation of staffing.
6. A regional entity to serve as a coordinator of housing developments underway and in the pipeline and to track results happening throughout the County (both development, existing units, and projects in the works).

The Result: A New Housing Entity is Envisioned – 5B Housing

As reflected in the following pages, the result of the BCHA strategic planning sessions on May 5 & 6, 2022 as well as the other housing planning discussion listed above, was the realization that the best way to serve the community, provide regional coordination services and respond to funders was to reinvent BCHA. This re-imagination is based upon Board discussions that looked at a combination of factors such as where the organization is today, what other strong partners are working on and the gaps in services that surfaced. The BCHA Board and local government representatives involved with the strategic planning sessions developed a new approach to implementing public housing services, programs, advocacy, coordination that they believe will result in better results for the community and better outcomes for housing in Blaine County. Though many details still need to be finalized, at this point in the process, the Board of the Blaine County Housing Authority agreed that resetting the name and the organizational structure of the Authority should be pursued. The BCHA today does not have the capacity nor the support from funders to carry out all the needed housing programs, but with adequate funding and joining forces with the City of Ketchum and Blaine County to establish a new regional housing entity, better outcomes for housing in Blaine County in the short and long-term could be achieved.

5B Housing – Operational Scenarios

The following outlines potential models for the new 5B Housing entity. The Board of BCHA as well as city representatives/liaisons discussed the three potential models for moving the “new” regional housing entity forward as outlined in the table below.

Scenarios	Pro	Con	BCHA Board Decision
1. Status Quo/ Staying as is	BCHA Board clear on role.	Current model is less appealing to funders unless qualified staff and new vision/plan established.	No but aspects of BCHA’s role should be maintained.
2. Form a regional housing JPA (Mt. Rides/Airport).	County and 4 cities may need to commit funding and elected officials to create.	Little support for this model. Takes a long time to set up.	No
3. Set up a new housing initiative 5B Housing as a joint project funded by the City of Ketchum/Blaine County. BCHA sits under this new umbrella.	Funding (City of Kethum and County interested in funding this model): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creates shared City/Housing Department that can take on regional housing needs ▪ Better outcomes for regional coordination ▪ Nests BCHA under a housing effort with funding and capacity support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confusing for the community unless clearly communicated ▪ Will require time and resources to transition to new model 	Yes, but need more information about future BCHA Board structure/role/housing asset management.

The BCHA/5B Housing Strategic Plan

Use of the Plan

Based on the support to move the 5B Housing model forward in the next six months, the following strategic plan was developed using a hybrid approach which aims to address immediate actions of BCHA while also setting forth actions to build the new 5B Housing entity. As such, the BCHA/5B Housing Strategic Plan aims to set out immediate (3-6 months) priorities as well as three-year goals. This Strategic Plan aligns with many of the goals and strategies listed in the City of Ketchum Housing Action Plan as well as the proposed budget being put before the County. Once the B5 Housing entity is established, this Plan can be updated or folded into a new Regional Housing Action Plan.

Vision

All partners work together to provide excellent, comprehensive, confidential, safe housing services and homes to meet the diverse needs in the region.

Mission

A central source for innovative solutions, advocacy, and knowledge for community housing in Blaine County.

Guiding Principles

Support a collaborative, coordinated strategy to:

- Ensure every person has a safe, healthy home.
- Ensure housing is affordable for our local workforce.
- Sustain an inclusive, year-round community.



Goal Areas



GOAL 1: Build organizational structure + capacity to serve regional housing opportunities + gaps

Objectives (within the next 1 year)		Strategies (within the next 3-6 months)
1	Define governance structure for 5B Housing and BCHA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define governance structure for 5B Housing that meets legal and partner needs. Define decision making process, roles of Board(s), etc. Define role of BCHA under new entity: Board role, deed restrictions, etc.
2.	Secure funding to operate new 5B Housing entity, include BCHA actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and secure approval of a budget (Blaine County and City of Ketchum) to support 5B Housing + BCHA transition in FY 2022/2023.
3.	Create a robust, diverse housing staff team with a range of technical skills to serve regional housing needs and launch new entity. Three staff YR 1, add additional in Y2 and Y3 if performance grows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an organizational staffing chart. Hire a 5B Housing Executive Director/Director. Hire staff team to support 5B Housing (or contract for services) and/or transition existing staff into new roles. Contract for technical services (e.g., grant writer, code amendments, etc.).
4.	Build value by providing excellent technical and policy related services to various housing agencies, local government, and developers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire staff to support policy and technical code amendment work.
5.	Expand membership and fundraising.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a fundraising plan beyond local government. Identify BC Housing Foundation role. Explore options for other members outside of local government to participate. Continue meetings with Hailey, Sun Valley, Bellevue to update as 5B Housing evolves.

GOAL 2: Recommend + advocate for policy that promotes housing

Objectives (within the next 3 years)		Strategies (within the next 3-6 months)
1	Recommend policies to promote housing at the local level including: code amendments, projects, funding allocations, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define 5B Housing annual policy agenda that promotes housing in coordination with staff at each city and county as well as developers. ▪ Develop incentive-based land use policies that result in long term deed restricted affordable housing.
2	Serve as the single source of housing data, housing needs, housing lists to support data-driven decision making, action and investments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide data to answer the question: Who has housing, what type, eligibility requirements, how long is the list. ▪ ID staff to keep data relevant and useful.
3.	Advocate on behalf of tenants and serve as a liaison to property management companies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore and contract for landlord tenant support services ▪ Build plan for property management outreach and partnership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Host meetings, go to sites, connect with all property managers in the Valley to build relationships. ○ List open units on our new site. ○ Establish plan for on-going communications.
4.	Identify and support policy changes that improve and increase access to housing.	Work with social services Blaine County Interagency Working Group to design a strategy to address this issue.

GOAL 3: Expand, coordinate + improve services to create housing stability

Objectives (within the next 3 years)		Strategies (within 3-6 months)
1.	Establish a one-stop-shop for providing resources, services and application assistance at BCHA/5B Housing office in English and Spanish and support coordination with other partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish welcoming, friendly office and office hours. ▪ Staff offices with bi-lingual staff. ▪ Develop resources to share (English and Spanish) ▪ Work with partners to develop programs and build other services per gaps identified (legal, educational, applying to housing, etc.). ▪ Host workshops with other service providers to build coordination and strategy to address gaps. ▪ Market new services.
2.	Address the immediate needs of unhoused and people at risk of displacement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide displacement support/housing options for families displaced housing changes (e.g., McHanville). ▪ Expand capacity at Lift Tower Lodge. ▪ Explore leases for rooms to expand emergency housing locally and elsewhere, including in RV parks.
3.	Work with partners to develop strategy for a single-point of entry system of care or other type approach to support community needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See Ketchum Housing Action for proposed plan. ▪ Details TBD
4.	Coordinate and expand funding for services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with local social service providers – Blaine County Interagency Working Group – to coordinate funding needs and expand pool of options. ▪ Work with a shared grant writer to support collective needs of the group. ▪ Coordinate to secure funds from State Workforce Housing Fund or Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA).

GOAL 4: Inform, engage, collaborate

Objectives (within the next 3 years)		Strategies (within the next 3-6 months)
1	Create a new, exiting brand to build regional awareness and support for coordinated housing solutions and the new 5B Housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch 5B Housing! Create a brand, website, etc. for new initiative. Link to County, City of Ketchum, BCHA sites.
2	Support ongoing communications to increase coordination and effectiveness amongst all housing partners, social services providers, employers, etc. and build public understanding and support for housing solutions.	<p>Create a strategic communications plan to reach a range of audiences about 5B Housing including: local government, community, English/Spanish speakers, social service providers, employers, ski areas etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include community outreach (English/Spanish) ▪ List of services, resources ▪ Report out on results and track towards collective goals.
3	Create a regional housing action plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leverage the Ketchum Housing Plan process to create a regional action plan that reflects and tracks priorities in the region. ▪ Work with regional task force or membership group to develop plan.
4	Explore model for regional housing coalition (similar to Mountain Housing Council).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess need for member-based regional housing coalition once 5B launched.
5	Serve as the hub for regional housing data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annually update regional housing needs data. On-going update all housing related data of value to members, public, development community.

GOAL 5: Steward/preserve + expand portfolio of deed restricted homes (current BCHA role)

Objectives (within the next 3 years)		Strategies (within the next 3-6 months)
1	Continue to steward inventory of existing deed-restricted homes in BCHA inventory, including on-going compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrade administrative systems, undertake compliance review of existing deed restricted units. ▪ Explore hiring 3rd party to manage.
2	Expand inventory of deed-restricted homes through an acquisition/preservation strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a list of existing potential housing for immediate needs. ▪ Create a plan to preserve “naturally” occurring affordable housing. ▪ Create a plan for a rehabilitation grant program to help people stay in their homes. ▪ Explore options to lease or buy existing homes/apartments or deeds from current owners. ▪ Explore new programs: Lease to Locals, down payment assistance, Vail Indeed type program.

Conclusion/Next Steps

This is challenging and an exciting time for housing in the Wood River Valley. Never before has there been so much engagement to address this issue. In the summer of 2022, the budget process will take place at both the County and city levels. The budgets of our local governments will drive major decisions about how best to coordinate housing efforts in the region. We put forward this Plan in hopes that it helps inform these critical budget decisions and we remain open to shaping BCHA in a manner that best serves the people of Blaine County today and well into the future. We strongly believe that a healthy and strong community starts with housing stability. Let's continue to work together to keep the residents and business of Blaine County stable and thriving!

