

# Koinonia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Habitat for Humanity **Priority Session**

Affiliate priority content is established each fiscal year and focuses on topics that speak to the strategic plan, missions and values of Habitat for Humanity.



# Koinonia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Doers of Justice  
Driven by Faith





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Yesterday,  
Today &  
Tomorrow

## Pair & Share: How do you define?

**Pair up with someone near you and give them your personal definition of the following words:**

- **Equity**
- **Housing Justice**
- **Marginalized Groups**





## Equity

Equity is about responding to the history of inequality by giving certain groups more, less, or different resources entirely, so that everyone can have what they need to be safe, healthy, and happy. Equity is a measure of justice.



## Housing Justice

Ensuring that all individuals, regardless of race, background, or income, have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing. It involves addressing systemic inequalities that have historically excluded marginalized groups.



## Marginalized Groups

Communities or populations that experience exclusion, disadvantages, barriers to equal opportunity or discrimination based on their identity



## The Affordable Housing Need

**Figure 2: Housing production has not kept pace with population growth**

Percent



Source: Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED); CEA calculations.

**1,200,000,000**


people live in substandard housing

**3,000,000,000**

people will need new housing by 2030

Source: World Bank Group





**What does “equitable”  
affordable housing  
opportunities mean to  
you?**



**What are some of the  
barriers to achieving  
true housing equity?**



## **Session Goal**

Gain a deeper understanding of how Habitat's Christian foundations at **Koinonia Farms** impacts and compels our work in communities as we strive to actively promote everyone's right to have **equitable access** to decent, affordable housing.

## **Learning Objectives**

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explore the impact of Koinonia Farms and our foundations
- Examine effective practices to address housing equity, and our work on affordable housing to increase impact
- Identify key actions and strategies to impact affordable housing in our local communities through community engagement and relationship building



# Exploring the Foundations

## Habitat's Origins and Justice Work



*Koinonia* comes from a root word that means “partner” or “companion,” it has in it the idea of “sharing”—sharing possessions, sharing experiences, sharing life, sharing one’s self with another.

## Doers of Justice: Koinonia Farm

Koinonia residents contended with bullets, bombs, and boycotts because of their commitment to equity.



# Briars

IN THE COTTONPATCH



THE STORY OF KOINONIA FARM





# Briars Today & For the Future

“One of our biggest challenges is that we have become acceptable. When you become acceptable, you run the risk of becoming mediocre. Our greatest fear is that we would lose our prophetic edge, and we need to fear mediocrity more than failure.”



# Habitat's Faith Foundation

Mission: Seeking to put God's love into action...

First Mission Principle: Demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ

**Love all our  
neighbors**




**Do  
justice**



**Walk humbly  
with God**





A portrait of an elderly woman with dark hair, smiling gently. She is wearing a vibrant purple blouse with a brown, textured vest-like overlay. The vest features intricate floral and geometric embroidery in pink, green, and yellow. The background is a rustic wooden wall with horizontal slats on the right. In the top left corner, there are three decorative circles: a large orange one, a small blue one, and a medium blue one.

**How can loosening  
the chain of injustice  
advance our mission?**

# HOME Purpose Statement & Imperatives

## HOME Purpose Statement

We are compelled by our Koinonia roots to put God's love into action and **pursue housing equity** by bringing people together, building community, and driving program impact with **learning, accountability** and **trust** while attracting and retaining **mission-driven talent** reflecting the global communities we serve.

### Theological Imperative

we are called to put God's love into action and love our neighbors as ourselves by insisting on **reconciliation and justice**.

### Historical Imperative

we are rooted in the legacy of Koinonia Farms and a radical commitment to racial equity.

### Mission Imperative

we build homes, communities and hope by actively advocating for the rights of all people to have equitable access to decent, affordable housing.



# The Housing Affordability Challenge

Applying Habitat's Principles Today





**What are the chains  
of injustice today?**

# The affordable housing landscape

Over the last ten years nationwide, there have been significant land and construction cost increases.


A house that cost \$120,000 all-in to produce in 2012  
now costs at least \$190,000, and as much as \$300,000 in some regions

Labor and materials  
increased 56%

Land increased at least 60%  
nationally – and as much as  
300% in some contexts








Everyone deserves a  
decent place to live, but  
everyone doesn't face  
the same barriers to  
affordable housing.



# Combating Barriers to Housing





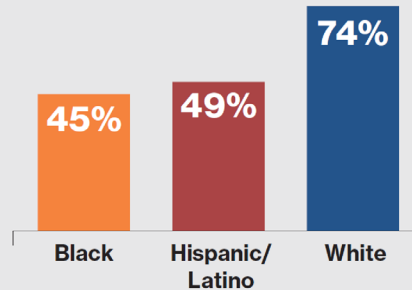
**Who are the groups  
in your community  
facing barriers to  
housing?**

# The Housing equity gap

- Redlining, segregation and housing discrimination still impacts Black homeowners today.
- Black, Hispanic and Latino homeowners face less access to credit, exclusionary zoning, face higher taxes and unsafe neighborhoods.

## How do racial inequities limit homeownership opportunities?

**FIGURE 3: U.S. HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES**

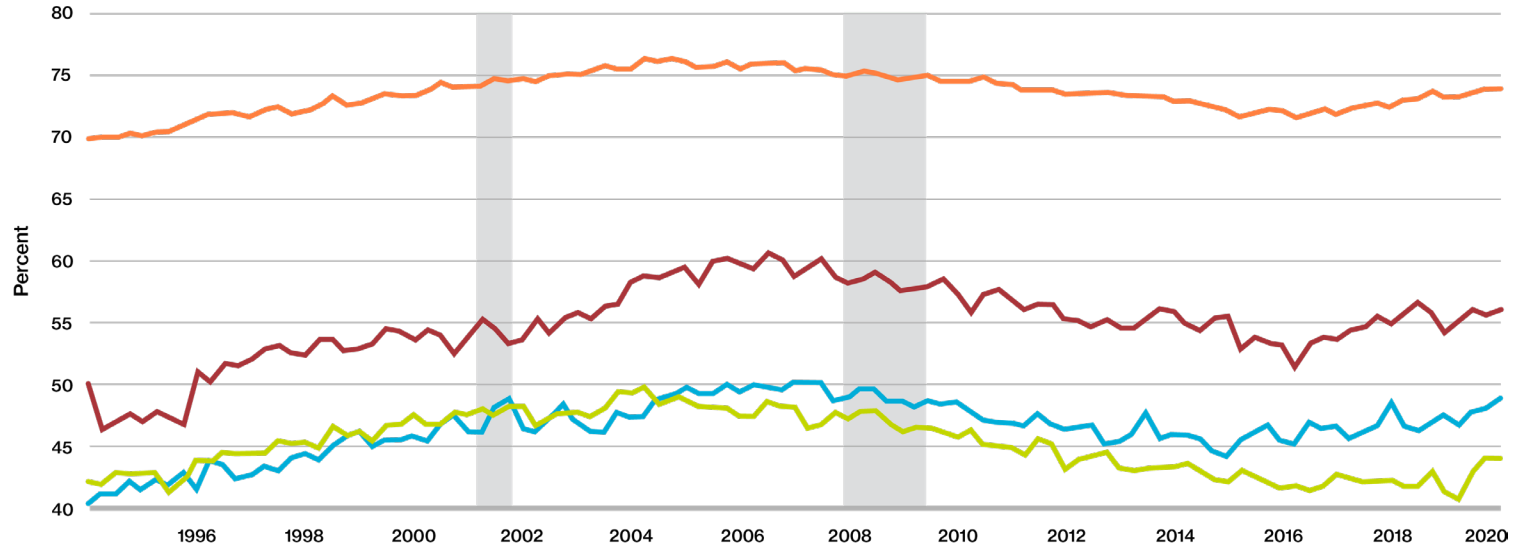


Latino households face unique barriers to homeownership that limit their access to the beneficial outcomes associated with homeownership, including improved health and higher educational attainment. These barriers are often the result of racial and institutional obstacles faced by racial and ethnic minorities that make it more difficult for them to produce these inequities.

Understanding the barriers of racial inequities in housing, and the barriers that Black and Hispanic/Latino households confront in accessing homeownership and attaining the positive outcomes of homeownership, is critical to the work that Habitat for Humanity responds to these barriers to promote homeownership.

EVIDENCE BRIEF

# Homeownership rate in the United States





Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

fred.stlouisfed.org

 Hispanic or Latino

 All other races

 Non-Hispanic White Alone

 Black or African American Alone



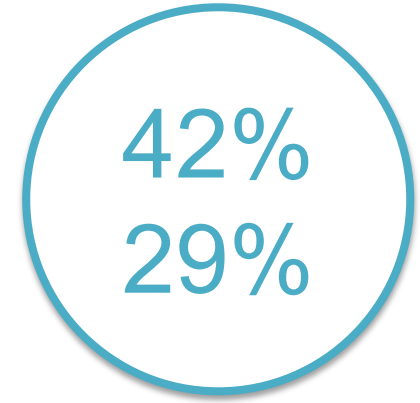
# Combating NIMBYism



Developers have experienced at least one incident of community opposition




Formal public hearings are used to combat NIMBY by two out of every three developers

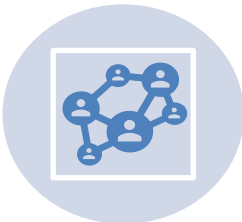


Developers Identify meetings with community leaders and the public in general as the most effective way to engage the public

## What Is Bridge-Building?



Bridge-building is an approach to building meaningful connections among people across social, economic, theological, political, and other demographic divides.



This approach centers **relationship** and **trust** building and emphasizes **listening** and finding **common ground** as a first step to working together. Bridge-building can be used to build **coalitions** among allies in the short-term, while also **creating space** for others not yet ready to come to the table in the long-term.

# The Goals of Bridge Building



## GOAL 1

Bring together people from varied backgrounds



## GOAL 2

Engage with and value people from vastly different lived experiences



## GOAL 3

Dispel the “us” vs. “them” mentality



## GOAL 4

Acknowledge and address systemic barriers



## GOAL 5

Encourage the voice of the marginalized and urge advocacy for equity



## GOAL 6

Form partnerships/ collaborations that foster equity and lead to community healing and collective empowerment



# Doing Justice





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# Habitat for Humanity Twin Cities

# Community Strategies

- Explicit about advancing equity in housing: mission statement, vision, values, & strategic plan
- In 2019, hired consultant (Research in Action) to assess homeownership and financial coaching programs and how to better serve foundational Black households
  - Created Homeowner Advisory Committee
  - Conducted extensive community outreach, surveys, focus groups, and data walks
- Values-based approach to equity including modifications in Sweat Equity policy to lower barriers to homeownership



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Portland Region**

# Community Impact

- Hired community members as staff to lead “Living Cully”, a neighborhood revitalization collaboration
- Assess current external partnerships, particularly with organizations led by communities of color.
- Created an equity statement that acknowledges discriminatory history of the communities they serve
- Adopted a racial equity filter and launched Black homeownership initiative
- Exploring region-wide advocacy campaign to close the racial homeownership gap.
- Developing plan to diversify donor and volunteer base.





# Our path to housing justice

## Our Commitment to Housing Equity

# We were built for this moment



**Demonstrate  
the love of  
Jesus Christ**



**Focus on  
shelter**



**Advocate for  
affordable  
housing**



**Promote  
dignity and  
hope**



**Support  
sustainable &  
transformative  
development**



# Action Planning

**What do you plan to do in the next 60-90 days to loose the chains of injustice? Tell your partner one concrete thing that can make a difference.**



**“It is not enough to limit your love to your own nation, to your own group. **You must respond with love even to those outside of it.** . . . This concept enables people to live together not as nations, but as the human race.”**

Clarence Jordan





**Thank You!**  
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*Share your  
feedback!*