

Community Investment Strategy 2022

Strategic Vision

We envision a region where every generation has the resources and opportunities needed to lead a healthy, fulfilling life. A life fulfilled is built upon myriad social factors and systems that provide the stability, pathways and connections humans need to grow and thrive. These include safe and affordable housing, an education that begins at birth and lasts throughout life, a holistic economy that fosters many avenues for achieving financial security and social, health and environmental conditions and systems that support lifelong mental and physical health and wellbeing.

These social factors and systems are interdependent, weaving together to create the fabric that supports and enhances everyone's ability to lead a healthy and fulfilling life. We strive to make each thread stronger and the fabric more equitable across our entire region, especially for communities that have been under-resourced or disadvantaged.

We support communities throughout Western North Carolina by investing within and across our strategic priority areas of housing, education, economic opportunity and health & wellness. We work with local, state and federal partners and communities toward equitable access to opportunities, resources and supports for everyone, regardless of place, race, ethnicity, physical or mental ability, gender or income. **Dogwood, working through community, aims to create a WNC where every generation can live, learn, earn and thrive (no exceptions).**

Our Strategic Priorities, Goals and Objectives

In 2020, Dogwood's Board of Directors identified four **strategic priorities: housing, education, economic opportunity and health & wellness**. These four areas have significant impact on individual health and wellbeing and should offer opportunities that help every individual achieve a life that is most fulfilling for them. Our strategic priorities are broad, so we focus on areas of intersection where we, along with our community partners, can make the biggest impact. These areas form our goals and objectives, which frequently include cross-sector approaches. We use data - both numbers and stories - to better understand regional needs and assets, drive investments and evaluate our effectiveness. As we continue to learn, our goals and objectives will evolve.



Live:

Housing – A safe place to live is crucial to economic stability, generational wealth creation and health and wellbeing.

- Healthy and Safe Revitalization
- Supportive Housing
- Senior Housing
- Low-Income Affordable Units
- Workforce Housing



Learn:

Education – A solid education opens the door to robust opportunities in work that support housing and health.

- Access to Quality Early Care and Education
- Excellent K-12 Learning Experiences
- Post-Secondary for Career Readiness



Earn:

Economic Opportunity – A good job allows for greater access to housing stability, economic security and health.

- Work Readiness
- Economic Ecosystems
- Entrepreneurship



Thrive:

Health & Wellness – Healthy environments and relationships, combined with access to quality health care, provide a cornerstone to success in education and work.

- Healthy, Engaged Communities
- Integrated, Whole-Person Care
- Reduced Health Disparities
- Behavioral Health and SUD

Making grants is an important part of our work. Dogwood also uses many other tools and approaches to help create generational change in our region. We make “impact investments” to provide loans or guarantees to help close gaps in funding for things like workforce housing development or access to financing for historically under-resourced small businesses. We also serve as a convener, conduct and share useful research, support advocacy work and help nonprofits build their own capacity.



Housing

Goal 1: Support Healthy and Safe Revitalization Opportunities

Support healthy and safe revitalizations that work against displacement and gentrification and create generational wealth

Objectives:

- 1.1: Revitalize neighborhoods
- 1.2: Repurpose existing structures to minimize environmental impact
- 1.3: Support home ownership

Goal 2: Create and Preserve Supportive Housing Rental Units

Invest in housing with sustainable supports for physical and mental health and wellbeing

Objectives:

- 2.1: Create new supportive housing
- 2.2: Preserve existing supportive housing
- 2.3: Leverage state and federal funds

Goal 3: Create and Preserve Senior Housing

Support age-appropriate resources in affordable and workforce units, rental and owned

Objectives:

- 3.1: Create needed rental and homeownership opportunities for seniors
- 3.2: Incorporate supportive services in rental housing developments
- 3.3: Increase use of universal design in development *

Goal 4: Create and Preserve Housing Units for Persons Below 50% of the Median Income

Increase affordable housing for lowest-income individuals and families

Objectives:

- 4.1: Create rental units for households below 50% of the median income
- 4.2: Help families pay no more than 30% of their income on housing
- 4.3: Create and preserve communities in a way that is representative of the WNC natural landscape

Goal 5: Use Impact Investments to Create Affordable and Workforce Housing

Provide loans, guarantees and other financial tools to leverage funding opportunities

*Universal design is a growing movement for development that ensures homes accommodate anyone who wants to live there, including seniors and persons with disabilities.



Education

Goal 1: Develop a Comprehensive Landscape Study

Source, analyze and share comprehensive, regularly updated data that provides a regularly updated, county-by-county picture of access, workforce and student outcomes in early childhood education and K-12 education specific to Western North Carolina

Goal 2: Improve Early Care and Education System

Invest in an improved early childcare and education system with the resources and sustainability to provide developmentally appropriate, affordable and accessible education and care to support ages birth to five, so that all children in WNC enter kindergarten ready to learn

Objectives:

- 2.1: Address early childhood educator workforce challenges
- 2.2: Equip families of early learners to support development beginning before birth
- 2.3: Increase capacity of partners to provide quality services, particularly for children facing challenges related to poverty, systemic racism, being differently abled or limited English proficiency

Goal 3: Improve K-12 Education

Support K-12 learning experiences with the resources and sustainability to provide an excellent academic and social-emotional education, so that all students graduate ready for college or career

Objectives:

- 3.1: Address teacher workforce challenges
- 3.2: Equip families of students to support academic growth and social-emotional health
- 3.3: Increase capacity of partners to provide supports and services, particularly for children facing challenges related to poverty, systemic racism, being differently abled or limited English proficiency

Goal 4: Support Higher Education Career Readiness

Work in tandem with Economic Opportunity Strategic Priority to invest in career readiness at the community college and university levels

See Economic Opportunity, Goal 2, for objectives



Economic Opportunity

Goal 1: Develop a Comprehensive Data Resource

Source, analyze and share comprehensive, regional data that paints a full picture of work readiness, economic development and entrepreneurial needs and opportunities specific to Western North Carolina

Goal 2: Promote Work Readiness

Help build a skilled workforce with the knowledge and technical abilities to excel in a wide range of industry employment opportunities that provide a competitive, sustainable wage

Objective:

- 2.1: Close the educational attainment gap in WNC, staying on pace with regional and county-specific projections (myFutureNC 2030).

Goal 3: Build Economic Ecosystems

Help build a regional economic ecosystem that supports increased creation/retention of jobs and business ownership

Objectives:

- 3.1: Improve access to higher-paying jobs throughout the region, targeting the lowest income populations
- 3.2: Increase and retain quality jobs
- 3.3: Stimulate economic growth, catalyzing businesses and revenue

Goal 4: Foster Entrepreneurship

Support a well-funded, sustainable, competitive entrepreneur and small business ecosystem throughout the region

Objectives:

- 4.1: Increase the number of Person of Color (POC)-led small businesses throughout the region
- 4.2: Increase the number of rural small businesses throughout the region



Health & Wellness

Goal 1: Support and Build Healthy Communities

Support communities that promote healthy living and resiliency and help mitigate the impact of trauma, isolation and stress on individuals and families, especially those experiencing poverty

Objectives:

- 1.1: Decrease adverse experiences (ACEs and traumatic violence) and improve individual and family resiliency
- 1.2: Increase access to community environments that promote healthy living and social connectedness across the age continuum

Goal 2: Increase Access to Whole-Person Health Care

Invest in integrated health care with seamless connections to supportive services

Objectives:

- 2.1: Increase the number of people with affordable health insurance coverage
- 2.2: Increase the available workforce for primary and allied health care services
- 2.3: Increase access to comprehensive and integrated care
- 2.4: Increase access to community-based services in low-income, elderly and rural communities

Goal 3: Address Health Disparities

Help reduce disparities based on race, location, education and income factors

Objectives:

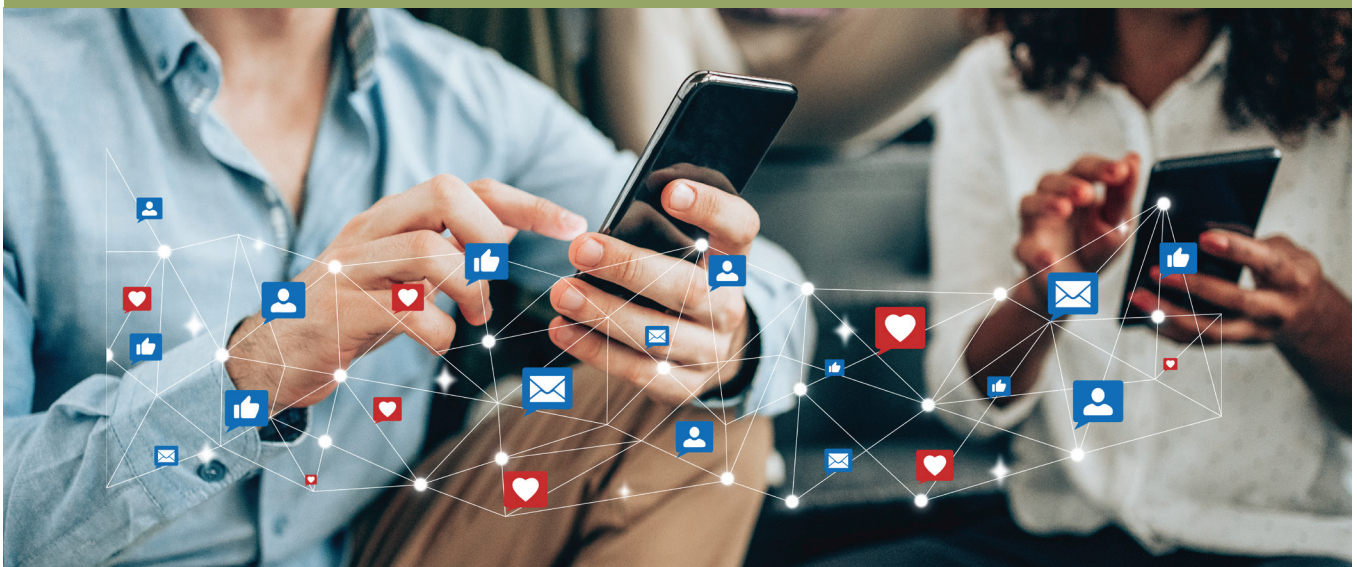
- 3.1: Improve health outcomes for women and infants in rural and low-income communities and communities of color
- 3.2: Reduce the prevalence of common chronic health diseases in disproportionately affected communities
- 3.3: Increase effectiveness of health care through delivery of culturally aligned services

Goal 4: Increase Access to Behavioral Health and Substance Use Prevention and Treatment

Support programs and networks that reduce deaths, treat addiction and prevent first use

Objectives:

- 4.1: Reduce opioid overdose mortality throughout the region
- 4.2: Reduce untreated behavioral health and substance use disorder in disproportionately affected communities
- 4.3: Prevent and reduce behavioral health issues and substance use (tobacco, alcohol, illicit and prescription drugs) in youth



Engage With Us

Multiple partnerships are the key to generational change in Western North Carolina. If you share our vision of creating a region where every generation can live, learn, earn and thrive and your organization shares a focus on one or more of our Strategic Priority areas, we'd love to learn about your work.



DogwoodWNC



@dogwoodwnc



Dogwood-Health-Trust



@DogwoodWNC

Become a Partner

We recognize that partner organizations will cover a range of ages, stages and capacities. Our goal is to provide flexible funding opportunities by initiating Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and scheduled open grant cycles in 2022. As always, we encourage a conversation with our Impact Team as a first step in the funding process. More information about RFPs and grant cycles is coming soon at **dogwoodhealthtrust.org/apply-for-funding**.

Stay Connected

We encourage you to connect with us in any of the following ways.

- Visit our website at **dogwoodhealthtrust.org** to learn more about our activities and connect directly with team members.
- Sign up for our **monthly e-newsletter** (at the top of our website) to stay connected and up to date with our activities, partners and funding opportunities.
- Follow us on **social media**.