



EASTERN SIERRA
COMMUNITY HOUSING

FORMERLY



STRATEGIC PLAN

JANUARY 2024 – DECEMBER 2026



COMMUNITIES IN THE EASTERN SIERRA THRIVE
BECAUSE EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO SAFE,
AFFORDABLE, QUALITY HOUSING.

GRATITUDE

Our Board of Directors

Kirk Stapp, Founding Member and President

Tom Hodges, Vice President

Lindsay Barksdale, Treasurer

Jennifer Kreitz

Tony Perkins

Brian D'Andrea

Heidi Steenstra

Sarah Nuttall

Amanda Rice

Our Staff

Patricia Robertson, Executive Director

Erik Guzman, Program & Project Associate

Diane Doonan, Grant & Financial Associate

Isaura Ocampo, Housing Navigator

Olya Egorov, Housing Navigator

Agnew Beck Consulting

Seana Doherty, Senior Manager.

Our Partners

Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties; Town of Mammoth Lakes; City of Bishop;

Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care;

California Coalition for Rural Housing;

Rural Community Assistance

Corporation; Wild Iris Family Counseling & Crisis Center; Mammoth Mountain Ski

Area; Alterra Mountain Company Community Foundation; Century Housing Corporation; Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce; DeChambeau Creek Foundation.



And all of those who served before them and helped shape this organization to positively influence the lives of our community members.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Eastern Sierra Community Housing recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as the traditional and ongoing stewards of this land – and all the land where we recreate, develop, thrive, steward, and protect – and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

This Land Acknowledgement is part of ongoing efforts to include tribal nations.

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INTRODUCTION

The Purpose

The 2024 Strategic Plan is a roadmap that will drive the decision-making of the Board of Directors and staff over the next three (3) years. The Strategic Plan describes the organization’s achievements and opportunities, goals of the Board of Directors, and the background and context of our work environment. This Strategic Plan gives direction to staff through specific action items and establishes the framework for Eastern Sierra Community Housing to achieve its mission.

The Strategic Plan will be used on an annual basis to guide the annual work plan and budget.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

Vision

Communities in the Eastern Sierra thrive because everyone has access to safe, affordable, quality housing.

Mission

Eastern Sierra Community Housing provides and supports community housing for a viable economy and a sustainable community.

Articles of Incorporation

The public and charitable purposes of the corporation specifically include providing, assisting in the provision of, and/or facilitating the creation of affordable housing within the counties of Alpine, Mono and Inyo in the State of California through any means or method authorized by law and which will conduct the corporate purpose.

Adoption by the Board of Directors

The 2024 Strategic Plan was adopted by the Eastern Sierra Community Housing Board of Directors on **Month DD, 2024**.

OVERVIEW

About

Eastern Sierra Community Housing is a 501(c)3 State-certified Community Housing Development Organization that has over twenty (20) years of experience serving the rural communities of Inyo, Mono, and Alpine counties. Since our inception, we have initiated a comprehensive regional approach to grow and sustain community housing projects and programs through our collaborative public-private partnerships.

We maintain a nine (9)-member Board of Directors whose expertise in property management, recreation and tourism, small business and entrepreneurship, landscape architecture, and community development guides the organization’s investments and activities. Our bylaws require at least one-third low-income representation, while no more than one-third may be public officials or employees. This ensures that our most vulnerable community members are represented. All our Board of Directors volunteer their time and represent the public and private sectors of our region, providing the institutional and expert knowledge that drives our organization.

Organizational Structure

Eastern Sierra Community Housing is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, allowing us to receive charitable donations, such as cash and personal or real property. This designation gives private donors the opportunity to give back to community housing projects, while also making us eligible for state and federal grant funding.

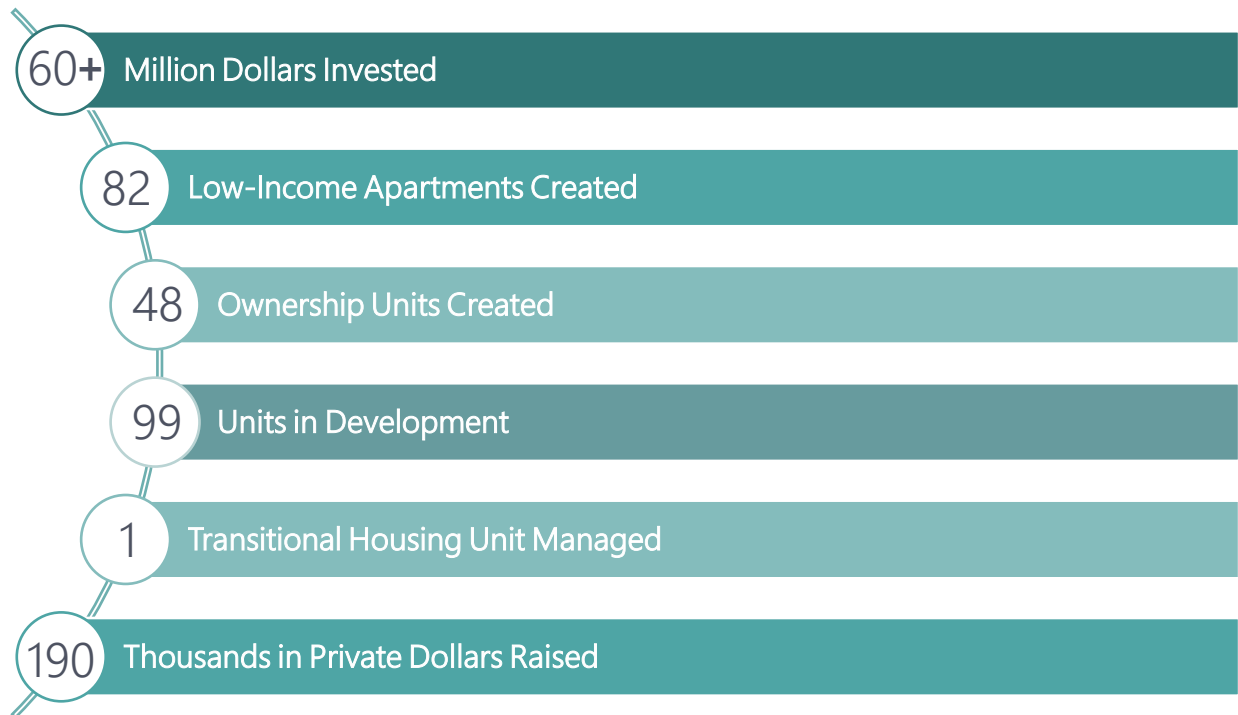
Our real estate brokerage allows us to pair clients with homeownership opportunities, provide local land trust stewardship, and facilitate property management services in-house.

We are the only State-certified Community Housing Development Organization in the region, which gives us a competitive advantage for funding. This achievement fosters community trust and requires low-income representation in our organizational structure, ensuring that our programs meet community needs.



Highlights

Since 2019, Eastern Sierra Community Housing has propelled two housing projects through the financing stage, poised to deliver sixteen apartments in 2024 and an additional thirteen units in 2025. One of these projects – the first of its kind in the service area – utilizes the regional Coordinated Entry System for tenant selection, prioritizing households experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. These housing developments sparked an unprecedented fundraising campaign that raised approximately \$200,000 and received more than \$10 million in State/Federal grant funding. Recently, we also began working on a nineteen (19)-unit preservation project in the City of Bishop, joined a seventy-two (72)-unit Low Income Housing Tax Credit project as the local nonprofit partner, initiated housing opportunity roundtables in Alpine County, and preserved the only transitional housing unit in the service area. In our twenty (20) years of community service, we have leveraged more than \$60 million towards housing programs and projects in the Eastern Sierra.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Eastern Sierra Community Housing serves the tri-county service area of Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties in the isolated, mountainous region of California. This region, regarded as the Eastern Sierra, is one of California's most beloved recreational areas in proximity to Yosemite National Park, Inyo National Forest, and Toiyabe National Forest. The closest big city is Reno, Nevada located approximately one-hundred-seventy (170) miles north of Mammoth Lakes, California. The region is home to the smallest populations by County in all of California and to the nation's most iconic ski resorts, including Kirkwood Ski Resort, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, and June Mountain Ski Area.

Our rural communities experience unique housing challenges due to extreme weather, limited privately owned land, seasonal employment patterns, and physical isolation. The limited physical accessibility of the region coupled with snow on the ground for six months out of the year create labor shortages, supply chain setbacks, and short construction periods, often leading to project delays and increased costs. Our local economies are tourism-based, exacerbating the housing market due to the need to serve recreational visitors. These conditions factor into an inflated cost of living where our communities experience high access barriers to basic needs and mainstream resources including shelter, transportation, language support, education, workforce development services, and health care. We recognize and respect the distinct character of our rural communities and their self-determination and facilitate collaborative relationships to promote community-based efforts to address the housing crisis. We believe that these place-based efforts, along with the strategic sharing of limited resources, such as human capacity and funding sources, can be used to effectuate solutions.

During the development of the 2019 Strategic Plan, Eastern Sierra Community Housing facilitated a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats/Challenges (SWOT/C) analysis. The list below outlines some of the opportunities and challenges identified. It may be used to understand the context of the working environment.

Rebranding and Relationship Building

As our organization has grown, our Board of Directors adopted a comprehensive regional approach to consolidate resources and foster collaboration amongst our local partners. As Mammoth Lakes Housing, our Board of Directors recognized the difficulties of building meaningful relationships with our local entities with a name that only reflected one jurisdiction. Reflecting our focused, yet adaptive strategy, we launched our 20th anniversary rebranding to reflect our commitment to the tri-county service area of Alpine, Inyo, and

Mono counties. Our new name, Eastern Sierra Community Housing, demonstrates our effort to breakdown the silos that prevent collaboration and to promote partnerships that benefit the communities we serve.

Capacity

With twenty (20) years of experience in housing solutions, Eastern Sierra Community Housing brings institutional knowledge to projects across the Eastern Sierra that highlight community voice and enable meaningful housing creation, access, and retention. Through our enhanced partnerships with Alpine and Mono counties, we have doubled our staff capacity with the addition of two, full-time Housing Navigators who serve as liaisons in the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care, the regional homelessness prevention agency, and work directly with households experiencing homelessness. The Housing Navigators have contributed to the governing framework of the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care to bridge access to housing and mainstream resources and standardize service-based care across the service area. To serve those who are least likely to engage without targeted outreach and involvement, our staff established partnerships with local service providers and built a referral system to streamline access to services from housing to healthcare.

Community Engagement

Eastern Sierra Community Housing is an active facilitator and attendee of a variety of community events. In partnership with the Mono County Library and California Indian Legal Services, we have organized Tenant Rights' and Homeownership presentations to directly support locals. Recently, staff presented at the Mono Basin Housing Work Group's Community Conversations to discuss housing opportunities in the Mono Basin that drew over 60 attendees from the June Lake and Lee Vining areas. On staff, we have one HUD-certified homeownership counselor who facilitates first-time homebuyer classes, homeownership counseling, and credit repair workshops. Eastern Sierra Community Housing also recognizes the need for language proficiency in the functional languages of the service area to build an effective communications campaign and have hired four bilingual staff, three (3) of whom speak Spanish, to bridge language barriers. Additionally, staff use recommended language and practices based in Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) to provide excellent customer service to first-time homeowners, tenants, and households experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

Grant Requirements

Several State and Federal grant programs continue to utilize an urban-centric model for application threshold, scoring, and program requirements. These requirements include things like narrow definitions of "rural" and "infill" as well as unattainable density requirements which exclude small housing projects. This more urban model creates an additional layer of adversity for rural housing providers such as Eastern Sierra Community Housing. As a result, our staff are required to be creative, entrepreneurial, and collaborative to secure funding and capacity for housing projects.

Lack of local Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI)

While Eastern Sierra Community Housing has relationships with various large, state, and national CDFIs including Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Century Housing, GenesisLA, Community Vision, and Enterprise Community Partners, the lack of a locally focused CDFI makes access to community development capital difficult. While there are Community Foundations in the region focused on specific programs including land preservation, education, and the arts, there is not currently a CDFI or Community Foundation with the specific purpose of funding programs and projects to provide safe, stable, affordable housing.

Interorganizational Coordination

The lack of interorganizational coordination across our large service area is a challenge that results in a lack of discussion surrounding the best use of resources available in our isolated region. To date, there is no overarching philanthropic entity that oversees the allocation of the limited pool of funds amongst organizations with 501(c)3 statuses such as our own. This cultivates a competitive environment for local organizations and leads to entities working towards similar goals to operate in silos. Competition and the lack of coordination also factor into the recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

On June 20, 2023, Eastern Sierra Community Housing hosted its three-year strategic planning session with assistance from Seana Doherty, Senior Manager at Agnew Beck Consulting. The session was used to update the previous 2019 Strategic Plan and contributed to the development of the new 2024 Strategic Plan.

Our planning session defined the following five focus areas, carried forward from our 2019 Strategic Plan. The following section outlines the organization’s priority goals within each focus area through the end of 2026.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES BY STRATEGIC FOCUS

Focus Area 1. Build & Facilitate Community Housing

Goal: Increase the inventory of affordable housing by facilitating three (3) housing projects with partners in the service area over the next three (3) years.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|---|---|--|
| <p>In 2019, ten (10) homes were rented to households under 80% Area Median Income with no new developments in the pipeline. By 2020, Eastern Sierra Community Housing finalized development plans for what we now know as Access Apartments. Eastern Sierra Community Housing now has three projects in various stages, totaling to \$14.5 million in State/Federal grants and \$70K in private dollars since 2019.</p> | <p>Objective A. Identify one (1) viable new development project per year.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a set of criteria for project opportunities (e.g., willingness of partner(s), funding opportunities, type of housing, income level(s) served, timeframe, size, other resources, etc.). • Track viable new development projects in the service area. |
| | <p>Objective B. Pursue housing development pipeline.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage 3-4 projects per year that are in various stages, distinguishing between new development and acquisition projects. • Utilize internal developer fees for the development of new units. |
| | <p>Objective C. Finish existing projects.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish the construction of the Innsbruck Lodge and fill one hundred percent (100%) of the units. • Finish the construction of Access Apartments. • Secure funding for Silver Peaks. |

Focus Area 2. Grow Housing Programs & Services

Goal: Improve and expand existing programs & services to assist the workforce in securing safe, stable, and affordable housing.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|---|---|---|
| <p>In 2019, Eastern Sierra Community Housing administered two first-time homebuyer assistance loans and sold one deed-restricted home to a family of six (6). Staff tripled the number of first-time homebuyer assistance loans in 2020 and sold five (5) deed-restricted homes to eligible families. Overall, staff preserved or created 108 units since the 2019 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Eastern Sierra Community Housing also installed one (1) remote legal aid station through its partnership with California Indian Legal Services.</p> | <p>Objective A. Reduce homelessness in the Eastern Sierra through the expansion of Housing Navigation services.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain contracts with Alpine and Mono counties for Housing Navigation services. • Prepare outreach materials that highlight Housing Navigation services to secure a contract with Inyo County for Housing Navigation services. • Maintain partnership with California Indian Legal Services to provide legal aid in-house. • Build and maintain relationships with local property owners to promote housing retention amongst residents. |
| | <p>Objective B. Manage and grow mortgage, rehabilitation, and ADU loan programs to provide financial assistance to eligible households.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage funding for Federal, State, and locally funded loan programs (e.g., CDBG, HOME, PLHA, CalHome, and Bridge) • Certify at least one staff on credit counseling through HUD to become the only HUD-certified agency in the service area. • Expand homeownership counseling services through RCAC-Affiliate Program. • Explore alternative funding opportunities, including loan offerings designated for manufactured homes in mobilehome parks. |
| | <p>Objective C.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare outreach materials that highlight compliance and |

Goal: Improve and expand existing programs & services to assist the workforce in securing safe, stable, and affordable housing.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|-----------------|--|--|
| | <p>Manage and expand portfolio of deed-restricted units.</p> | <p>monitoring services for deed-restricted housing to secure contracts with public agencies in the service area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define value proposition. • Maintain compliance and monitoring services for current unit inventory (including services for existing contracts). • Implement Salesforce HomeKeeper for management of deed-restricted units, including self-management rental units and/or clients. |
| | <p>Objective D. Provide property management services to fulfil a critical need in the service area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide excellent property management services to improve health outcomes and quality of life for residents. • Maintain property management services for Star Apartments, Innsbruck Lodge, and Access Apartments. • Analyze existing resources for asset management internally. |
| | <p>Objective E. Increase housing resources and opportunities for moderate-income households (> 80% Area Median Income).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare outreach materials that highlight programs and offerings to secure formal or informal partnerships and serve moderate-income levels (e.g., Mammoth Lakes Hospital, US Forest Service, School Districts, Mono County etc.). • Support homeownership initiatives at the Parcel by sharing information with eligible households. |

Focus Area 3. Expand & Diversify Funding

Goal: Grow internal operating budget to one (1) million by 2026 to expand and increase access to services, programs, and homes.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Eastern Sierra Community Housing steadily increased its revenue and secured contracts with Alpine and Mono counties in 2022, amounting to \$582K in administrative funds. These contracts have enabled the organization to double in staff capacity.</p> | <p>Objective A. Create a Fund Development Plan to diversify funding streams and maintain organizational growth.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a case for the \$1 million-dollar Operating Budget goal: present a bullet list plan to the Board of Directors; draft a concise argument for why more funding is necessary; create a Fund Development Plan; and create a three (3)-year budget to track the \$1 million-dollar Operating Budget goal. • Prepare outreach materials that highlight the need for a \$1 million-dollar Operating Budget to secure public and private donations. • Designate one (1) staff member who is responsible for requesting public and private donations. • Consider an external contract to create a Fund Development Plan. |
| | <p>Objective B. Demonstrate the importance for regional support of Eastern Sierra Community Housing to advance community-based housing solutions in the service area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request Commitments of Support from Alpine, Inyo & Mono counties and emphasize the need for administrative overhead. • Establish the goal of one hundred percent (100%) participation from all regional jurisdictions. • Create outreach materials to describe offerings & services to each jurisdiction in the service area and highlight their importance. • Participate in and encourage government-based studies (e.g., Local Housing Needs Assessments & Housing Elements). |

Goal: Grow internal operating budget to one (1) million by 2026 to expand and increase access to services, programs, and homes.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|-----------------|---|--|
| | <p>Objective C. Explore creative partnerships and solutions to diversify funding streams.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for an ongoing set aside of the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) from regional governments. • Consider partnerships with local community foundation(s) to jointly raise funds or assist with trainings. |

Focus Area 4. Communications and Outreach

Goal: Develop a Communications & Outreach Campaign that raises awareness of the role and value of Eastern Sierra Community Housing.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Eastern Sierra Community Housing served as a community support, hosting three (3) events per year since 2019, including the infamous Housing Horror Stories event. Staff collected over 513 unique housing stories and provided a platform for households to share their experiences with the housing crisis.</p> | <p>Objective A. Drive public support for Eastern Sierra Community Housing by communicating programs & offerings to more households in the service area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare outreach materials that highlight programs & offerings to share with new households in the service area. • Distribute all outreach materials in the dominant languages of the services area. • Attend relevant stakeholder, partner, community, and statewide meetings to share programs & offerings with new households in the service area. • Ensure consistent delivery of content including: thirty (30) day updates to partners and donors; a dashboard of collective results; public Annual Reports and Strategic Plans; and bi-weekly posts on social media platforms. • Consider an external contract for marketing services. |

Goal: Develop a Communications & Outreach Campaign that raises awareness of the role and value of Eastern Sierra Community Housing.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|-----------------|--|--|
| | <p>Objective B. Leverage the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to increase accessibility of programs and offerings in the service area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Communications & Outreach Campaign that includes targeted outreach to diverse communities in the service area. • Build and maintain partnerships with local service providers to reach diverse communities in the service area. • Prepare outreach materials to recruit members of the public to join the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. |

Focus Area 5. Strengthen Organizational Capacity

Goal: Strengthen and support the organization & the people who support the work.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Since 2019, staff capacity doubled through the organization's partnerships with Alpine and Mono counties, helping balance workloads and better adapt to meet community needs.</p> | <p>Objective A. Build & maintain a healthy, functional organization.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider an amendment to the bylaws to remove the Brown Act requirements and enable more flexibility, entrepreneurship, nimbleness, and to respond quickly to community needs. • Consider increasing the number of Board members to be more inclusive of regional partners. • Prepare outreach materials to recruit members of the public from Alpine, Inyo & Mono counties to join the Board of Directors. • Attend one (1) conference per year with staff. |

Goal: Strengthen and support the organization & the people who support the work.

| Accomplishments | Objectives | Year 1, 2 & 3 Priorities |
|-----------------|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue a NeighborWorks affiliate designation. |
| | <p>Objective B. Recruit, retain, and support qualified staff.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate staff compensation on an annual basis, including base compensation & incentive and/or bonus compensation. Consider adding staff to balance workloads and meet gaps for future needs. Facilitate an annual goal setting process to improve internal systems, acknowledge individual professional development goals, and increase staff efficiency. |

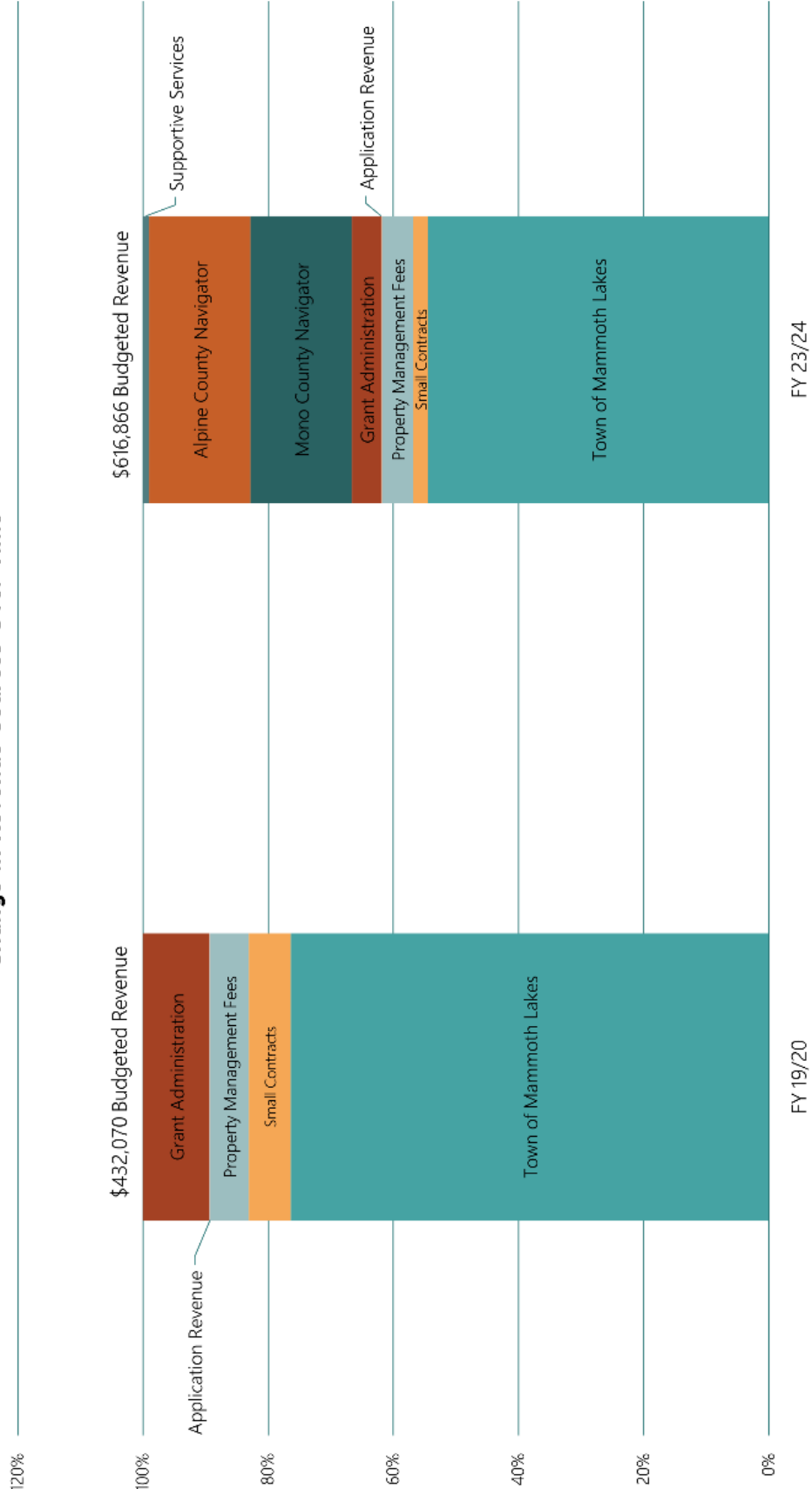
BUDGET

Eastern Sierra Community Housing has grown substantially since the previous Strategic Plan, both in staff size and project scope. Since 2019, we partnered with Alpine and Mono counties to increase the extent of service-based assistance; hosted two (2) interns through the California Coalition for Rural Housing; applied to new grant allocations (such as the ESG Balance of State Allocation and Section 4); sparked conversations about development opportunities in Alpine County; administered Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and rehabilitation loan programs to local homeowners; and sought new roles in the ownership structure of new development projects. In 2021, Eastern Sierra Community Housing was awarded Best Pandemic Pivot by Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce for fundraising nearly \$1 million in emergency rental assistance for households experiencing pandemic-related hardships. During the State of Emergency (Winter 2022-23), we secured \$130,000.00 for households who became displaced and faced unprecedented storm-related costs. Our small organization successfully doubled the number of full-time staff, increased revenue by fifty percent (50%), and diversified our funding streams not only to maintain the organization, but to adapt our services to meet the needs of our small, rural communities.

Our growth as an organization has reflected the need for a larger operating budget. With a larger budget, Eastern Sierra Community Housing hopes to improve internal infrastructure (e.g., client management software); maintain employee salaries and benefits; sustain costs of construction labor and insurance; hire new staff to fundraise or manage programs; and increase organizational flexibility to respond to community needs and the larger service area. We believe that an increase in our operating budget will enable us to sustain our housing projects and overcome the rising costs that pose barriers to our success.

Please view the graphic on the following page.

Change in Revenue Sources Over Time



CONCLUSION

The 2024 Strategic Plan describes the organization's opportunities, goals of the Board of Directors, and our work environment. Eastern Sierra Community Housing will use the specific action items detailed above to guide the staff and the Board of Directors towards our vision that communities in the Eastern Sierra thrive because everyone has access to safe, affordable, quality housing. We look forward to continued growth as we serve our friends, neighbors, and community members in securing stable housing and increasing the number of affordable homes and supportive programs. We are proud of the work we have accomplished since the 2019 Strategic Plan and are excited to strengthen our organization, foster new partnerships, and find creative solutions over the next few years. Thank you for your ongoing support. Our work starts now!