



HouseATL plans for renewed call to action on affordable housing, initiates Homeownership Working Group and elects new Board Directors

HouseATL starts 2023 as a formalized coalition with more than 200 members and lays the groundwork for a metro Atlanta expansion

ATLANTA – Feb. 15, 2023 – HouseATL has appropriately ambitious plans for 2023 relative to Atlanta’s housing affordability challenges, such as the fact that 50% of Atlanta’s renters are housing cost burdened. After formalizing its ‘coalition of the willing’ last year, HouseATL has launched into a strategic planning process facilitated by Blaze Leadership. This nine-month planning process will result in recommendations for how Atlanta’s civic leaders can most effectively address affordability and the growing inequity in Atlanta’s housing market. HouseATL’s [affordable housing recommendations from 2018](#) prompted Mayor Bottoms to issue her One Atlanta Housing Action Plan and the goal of constructing or preserving 20,000 affordable housing units. When the new recommendations are issued in the fall, they will include a path for expanding beyond the City of Atlanta into the metro region.

At HouseATL’s recent membership convening on Friday, February 10th, its 200 plus members elected nine new Board directors:

Alan Ferguson, President and CEO, Atlanta Habitat for Humanity
Jennifer Freeman, Community Engagement Representative, U.S. Congresswoman Nikema Williams’ Office
Rita Gibson, Community Volunteer, Georgia ACT
Karen Hatcher, CEO, Sovereign Realty & Management
Clyde Higgs, President and CEO, Atlanta Beltline Inc.
Josh Humphries, Mayor’s Policy Advisor for Housing, City of Atlanta
Lindsey Siegel, Director of Housing Advocacy, Atlanta Legal Aid Society
Jacob Vallo, Sr. Director, Transit Oriented Development, MARTA
Mariel Sivley, Director of Housing, St. Vincent de Paul

The bios of these new directors can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3jYLsDW>

HouseATL Board Co-Chair Margaret Stagmeier, partner in TriStar Real Estate Investment, expressed her appreciation for these new directors. “I am thrilled that these well-qualified civic leaders will join our existing Board and help guide our strategic planning process.”

Board Co-Chair Janis Ware, executive director of SUMMECH CDC, noted, “These new directors will bring their skills and enthusiasm to our state and local policy work, as well as our programmatic priorities.” In addition to appointing new Board members, HouseATL has launched a new Homeownership Working Group under the leadership of Karen Hatcher, CPM®, CEO and head broker of Sovereign Realty + Management, and Dr. Christie Cade, vice president of NeighborWorks America’s Southern Region. This group joins three other working groups, Policy, Prioritizing Communities and the Funders Collective. The Homeownership Working Group is targeting affordability and sustainability of homeownership, focusing



on Black and brown families. A significant component of the initial work will be in cooperation with the Wealth Opportunities through Homeownership Initiative, a \$7.5 million effort supported by Wells Fargo.

“According to the National Association of Realtors, the homeownership rate for Black Americans is nearly 30 points lower than White Americans and is linked to higher poverty and reduced economic growth,” noted HouseATL Co-chair, Karen Hatcher. “It’s important to identify the cause and join forces to create solutions promoting economic opportunity and financial security.”

Co-Chair Dr. Christie Cade added, “The HouseATL Homeownership Working Group understands that homeownership is the catalyst for thriving communities. We are committed to advancing key initiatives and strategies that are focused on both increasing and sustaining homeownership.”

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Photos attached:

- Alan Ferguson, new Board Director, at 2.10.23 HouseATL Membership Convening
- Christie Cade, new Co-Chair of Homeownership Working Group, at 2.10.23 HouseATL Membership Convening
- Karen Hatcher, new Board Director and Co-Chair of Homeownership Working Group, at 2.10.23 HouseATL Membership Convening
- Mariel Sivley, new Board Director, at 2.10.23 HouseATL Membership Convening
- Margaret Stagmeier, Board Co-Chair, at 10.26.22 HouseATL Membership Convening

About HouseATL

HouseATL is a cross-sector membership coalition of civic leaders committed to building the public will for a comprehensive and coordinated housing affordability action plan for Atlanta. HouseATL’s vision is that Atlanta will have a shared, comprehensive set of policies and adequate funding to address housing affordability. HouseATL was initiated in early 2018 through the convening power and resources of the Urban Land Institute of Atlanta, The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Central Atlanta Progress, the Center for Civic Innovation and the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. More than 200 civic leaders came together to develop a bold plan with 23 actionable recommendations for Atlanta to achieve 20,000 additional affordable housing units. Mayor Bottoms responded directly to these recommendations with her own One Atlanta Affordable Housing Plan. Since 2018, HouseATL’s constituents have continued to work together to define root causes of the affordable housing challenge, examine the data, look at best practices and engage in thoughtful problem-solving to make concrete recommendations on a path forward. In late 2021, HouseATL’s leadership moved to formalize under the fiscal and operational sponsorship of the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta.

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