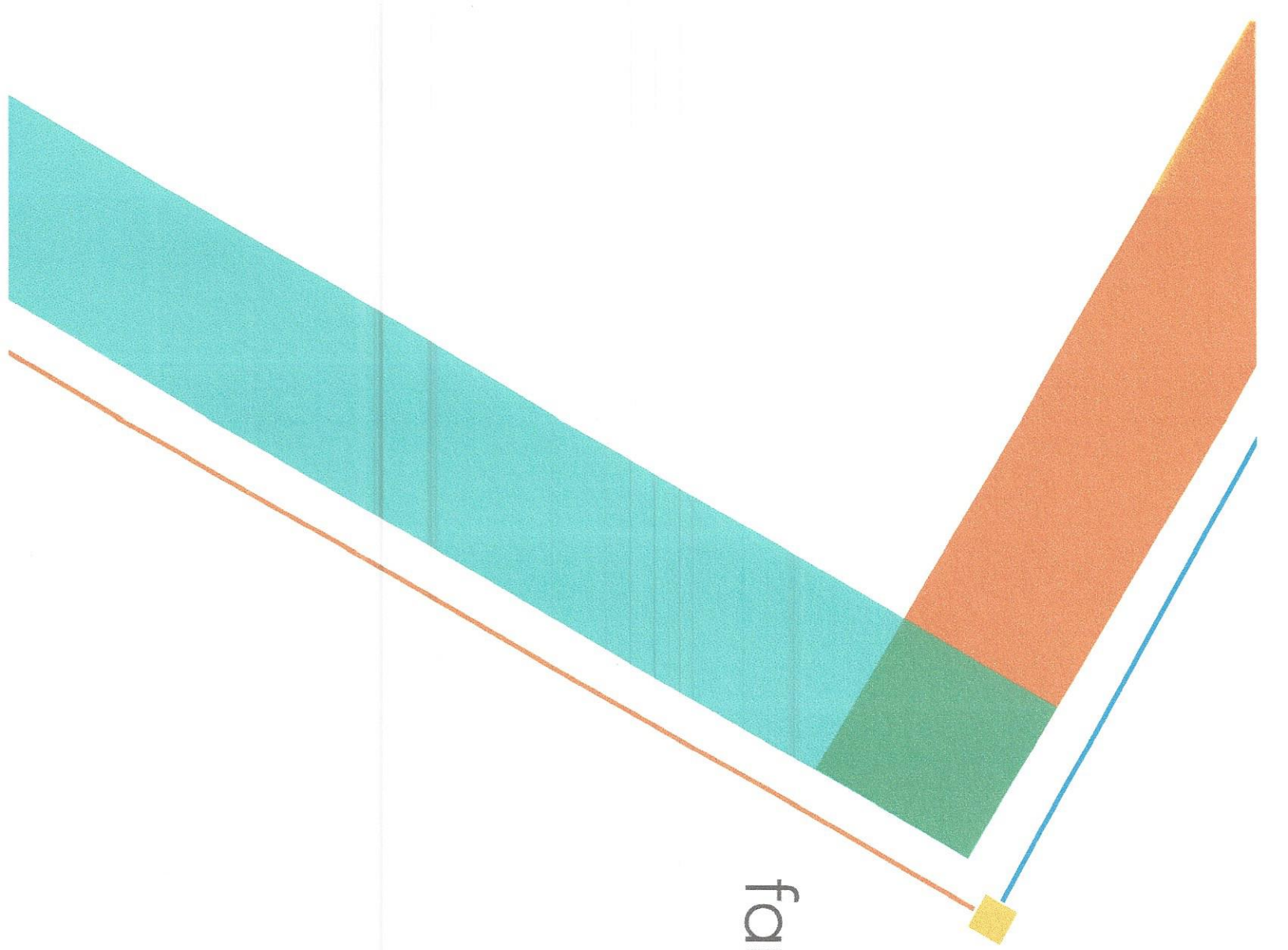


2023-2026

Strategic Priorities



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<p>About Us</p> <p>Bidwell Riverside Center and Hawthorn Hill - both sharing roots with the United Methodist Church as well as being United Way of Central Iowa partner agencies - traditionally worked in parallel to provide different programs with the similar goal of helping children and families in need.</p> <p>In July 2023, Bidwell Riverside Center and Hawthorn Hill officially merged into Families Forward, an organization where the original four programs - Bidwell Pantry, Child Development Center, New Directions Shelter, and The Home Connection - work together to provide compassionate, life-changing assistance to families and their path to self-sufficiency.</p> <p>Families Forward Mission Statement</p> <p>Over 100 years of providing compassionate, life-changing assistance to families on their path to self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>Families Forward Programs & Services</p> <p>Bidwell Pantry 1203 Hartford Ave, Des Moines Providing food, clothing, and basic essentials to all in need.</p> <p>Child Development Center 1203 Hartford Ave, Des Moines Affordable, high-quality early childhood education targeting families on limited incomes.</p> <p>New Directions Shelter 3001 Grand Ave, Des Moines Emergency shelter and supportive services for families experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>The Home Connection 3001 Grand Ave, Des Moines Providing vulnerable families with affordable homes while they work to achieve economic self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>Families Forward Board of Directors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Hughes, President • Jill Kempkes, Vice President • Martha Ward, Secretary • Nick Roby, Treasurer • Juanita Gallegos • Gina Graham • Julie Kellner • Scott Paulson • Ernest Phillips • Kevin Pothoven • Sara Schuler • Sue Smith • Phyllis Tinker • Dee Ann Wilson • Rhonda Alessio <p>Families Forward Leadership Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Shanahan, Executive Director • Tamsin Webb, Development & PR Director • Sergio Hernandez, The Home Connection Program Manager • Missy Reams, Volunteer & Community Outreach • Kelsie Pinegar, New Directions Shelter Program Manager
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Families Forward Strategic Priorities



Organizational Development & Thoughtful Leadership: Cultivate a thriving organization that is adaptable, inclusive and well-governed, with a dynamic, empowered team, dedicated to advancing the Families Forward mission.



Activate the Families Forward Brand: Elevate the Families Forward brand by leveraging a combination of strategies and tactics to leave a lasting impression in the minds of donors, supporters, and the public leading to fundraising success and greater awareness of our mission.



Program Enhancement & Evaluation: Assess, enhance and adjust Families Forward programs and services to better meet the changing needs of our families, to maximize our positive impact.

Strategic Priority: Organizational Development & Thoughtful Leadership

Cultivate a thriving organization that is adaptable, inclusive and well-governed, with a dynamic, empowered team, dedicated to advancing the Families Forward mission.

Strategic Impact Areas:

Focus on the Families Forward Team: Foster a culture that unifies the Families Forward team with a focus toward the future. We will implement programs and practices to promote team building, continue to support each other through change and improve communication with the goal of enhancing staff morale, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Develop Strong Leadership: Identify and nurture leadership talent from within the Families Forward team. We will invest in leadership development, training and mentorship programs to nurture and empower current and emerging leaders, helping them build skills, vision and the commitment needed to drive the mission forward and ensure continuity through succession.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA): Advance DEIA priorities in Families Forward operations and work. We will integrate DEIA principles into all aspects of Families Forward, from recruitment and hiring, to policies and practices, including program development and decision-making to promote the well-being and success of all individuals and our organization.

Optimize Governance: Strengthen Board effectiveness through increased engagement and learning. We will seek opportunities for Board training and evaluate governance practices to adopt a balanced approach in shaping strategic goals, fostering more insightful interactions with leadership and staff and enhance board dynamics by recruiting more members with diverse skills and experiences.

Desired Outcomes:

- Employee satisfaction
- Leadership development and succession plan implementation
- Board effectiveness

Strategic Priority: Activate the Families Forward Brand

Elevate the Families Forward brand by leveraging a combination of strategies and tactics to leave a lasting impression in the minds of donors, supporters, and the public leading to fundraising success and greater awareness of our mission.

Strategic Impact Areas:

Develop & Implement the Brand Strategy: Promote Families Forward. We will activate our brand through a variety of activities all designed to secure financial support and create a community of engaged supporters who are passionate about what we do. Further, our brand strategy will address promotion of programs and services reaching families most in need of support, providing the information to them in the way, and language, that resonates best.

Donor Engagement & Fundraising Campaigns: Develop targeted fundraising campaigns with clear objectives, messaging, and a compelling call to action. We will innovate and create unique promotional events or activities that highlight the impact of donations on our efforts offering more ways for people to participate in supporting our work.

Social Media Engagement & Content Marketing: Utilize social media platforms to tell our stories. We will produce high-quality content such as blog posts, videos, infographics, and newsletters to educate, inspire, and engage our audience. By sharing success stories of the people we serve, volunteer experiences and community impact, we can engage with more people and promote fundraising initiatives.

Desired Outcomes:

- Distinctive brand identity/increase visibility
- Increased donor and volunteer participation
- Engaged online community

Strategic Priority: Program Enhancement & Evaluation

Assess, enhance and adjust Families Forward programs and services to better meet the changing needs of our families, to maximize our positive impact.

Strategic Impact Areas:

Ongoing Assessment & Evaluation: Implement assessment tools to monitor Families Forward progress and support data-driven decision making. We will develop clear and measurable program outcomes and objectives to assess the impact and effectiveness of programs, learning from stakeholder feedback to understand their experiences, gathering data on program outcomes, satisfaction, and areas for improvement.

Facilities Improvement: Upgrade and maintain program facilities to create a safe, welcoming environment. We will complete a facilities improvement plan evaluating physical and cultural accessibility considerations aligning improvements with budgetary considerations. Improvements may involve renovations, equipment upgrades, or technology enhancements.

Innovation & Expansion: Explore innovative program approaches and opportunities for program expansion. We understand our long-term success can be attributed to staying focused on what we do well. Our intention with this priority is not to expand into new work, but to consider how we expand our existing programs to serve more people because the need in the community currently exceeds our capacity. With that, we will identify and analyze challenges or barriers that may impede program delivery or outcomes and develop strategies to address them. We will also collaborate with other organizations or agencies that can enhance program delivery or expand resources, helping us to strengthen our ability to fulfill our mission through new ideas.

Desired Outcomes:

- Clear program objectives
- Tools in place to capture stakeholder feedback
- Accessibility improvements
- More collaborative partnerships
- Barriers identified preventing expansion