



2020-2022 Strategic Plan



PROJECT FOR PRIDE IN LIVING

Our Mission

PPL builds the hope, assets, and self-reliance of individuals and families who have lower incomes by providing transformative affordable housing and career readiness services.

From the President & CEO

PPL's founder, Joe Selvaggio, believed in the dignity—the inner pride—that all people possess. For the last three years, PPL has been on a journey to refine and drive that core belief through all that we do. More specifically, we have been providing stable and affordable housing, along with career-building job readiness programs, reinforcing our theory that housing and jobs help stabilize the household and create economic possibilities.

The pursuit of this strategic plan over the last three years has generated dramatic results. Close to 3,500 individuals live with PPL every night, a growth of over 27 percent since 2015. Our job readiness programs, serving primarily immigrants and people of color, have grown by close to 25 percent. We renovated the Franklin Theater to serve as the home to those expanded employment programs and have branched out into Minneapolis' North Side, as well as numerous suburban communities. Meanwhile, our work in St. Paul continues to grow, including several new transit-oriented housing projects that are already transforming lives.

The growing housing shortage and an increasingly tight workforce have reinforced our conviction that our strategic focus on housing and employment is right for our community and right for these times. Housing and employment are vital issues not only for families, but for employers and for the competitiveness of the regional economy.

Over the next three years, PPL will take this work to scale: increasing our production of affordable housing; thinking creatively about how to build and deliver that housing; continuing to respond to demand for our employment training; and expanding our groundbreaking work around youth employment. The work we began just three years ago is far from done.

Internally, we'll further our efforts to link our housing and employment programs in new and powerful ways.

We also want to continue to be a partner and collaborator in the community, especially with groups and causes working effectively with people of color, who comprise the vast majority of PPL participants and residents.

We plan to push forward with our own learning on cultural competency and racial equity. We'll continue our intentional partnerships with neighborhoods where PPL has a presence. And, interlinked with these efforts, we'll work to raise the voices of our organization and participants in advocacy, part of an effort to deepen our public policy engagement.

Underlying this work will be a strong operational foundation, including a continued commitment to long-term financial sustainability and high-performing staff. Effective fundraising strategies will be critical, including our commitment to complete PPL's current \$12.4 million capital campaign.

The vision we articulated in 2016 still inspires us: strong, vibrant, diverse communities filled with individuals and families who have achieved stability and are contributing to the regional economy.



Our Strategic Direction 2020-2022

By continuing our strategic focus on housing stability and career readiness, we're reaffirming our commitment to two essential components of economic stability for families and communities.

Housing Stability

We will increase production, refine our development strategy, and continue working towards sustainable funding of our essential wraparound services for residents.



Career Readiness

As we grow into our new career center and add new career training programs for adults, we will continue our groundbreaking work helping young people become career-ready.



Internal teams comprising a cross-section of staff are advancing our efforts on three pillars that support our programmatic work.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

We will become a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization, enabling us to address racial and other systemic inequities.

Neighborhood Engagement

We will continue to develop partnerships with key neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations to enhance safety and economic opportunity, and more.

Public Policy

We will use our collective voice as an organization to influence policy and help unleash the power and wisdom of the people we serve.



Underlying all of our work is a foundation of operational strength and a commitment to results.

Operational Strength

We will continue to focus on financial strength, integration, evaluation, and innovation across every department to ensure a strong foundation to support our programs.

pride \prīd\ noun

The recognition of one's self-worth and dignity; a sense of achievement.

Our supporters have the satisfaction of knowing that their gift helps others experience the pride and dignity that comes from self-reliance.

Housing Stability

For a renter in the Twin Cities, finding a decent place that doesn't eat up half the family's take-home pay is harder than ever. An affordable home means stability and peace of mind. Add to that after-school programs for children and help navigating a crisis, and it's finally possible to think about the future.

What we do now

PPL's 1,500 affordable apartments in the region provide a safe, stable, and quality home for thousands, with wraparound services to support residents' academic and employment success. Supportive housing for people with the lowest incomes and greatest challenges remains a top priority for PPL.

Strategic goals

Increase housing production

- Continue providing a balance of supportive and workforce housing production (100-150 units/year)
- Adopt industry-leading innovations that reduce construction costs and speed up development
- Identify efficiencies in design, construction techniques, and financing

Strengthen resident stability through supportive services

- Match residents with career readiness opportunities
- Create and deepen community partnerships for mental health services and the youth and parenting program

Cultivate and implement effective housing management strategy

- Refine portfolio strategy and business model
- Review and enhance property management structure and efficiency
- Create long-term plan for managing scattered site housing
- Create training program for assistant property managers

Formalize process for new revenue streams

- Develop protocols for consulting and fee-for-service arrangements
- Refine and strengthen revenue models

The need

- 1,300 “naturally” affordable apartments are lost annually when sold to new owners.
- 7 in 10 households with the lowest incomes spend more than 30 percent on housing.
- Vacancy rates below 3% are pushing rents higher.
- 6,700 people a night are homeless in the Twin Cities.
- Affordable housing is key to establishing a stable workforce.

Our challenges

- Competition for funds amidst a flat revenue environment.
- Maintaining our commitment to supportive housing, despite higher development and operating costs.
- Sustainably funding life-changing wraparound services for residents.

“None of this would have happened if it weren’t for New Foundations. PPL has helped in so many areas of my life, not just sobriety. I owe everything to PPL.”

Tara Golden



Building a new foundation

Tara Golden remembers the first time she used meth, the summer before ninth grade. Her sister and friend were both users and had always pushed her to try it.

“I always said, ‘No, no, I don’t want to do it,’” Tara says. “But then one day I tried it. And that was it.”

Because her mother had a drug addiction, Tara was raised by her father. She says when she started using, her dad immediately enrolled her in treatment.

Tara spent high school in and out of treatment programs. Some helped, but going back to old friends always caused a relapse.

At 24, Tara had two young children and was facing 48 months in prison for drug possession.

“I felt like such a failure,” Tara says. “I always said, ‘I’m never going to be like my mom. I never want my kids to go through what I went through with my mom.’”

When Tara got probation instead of prison time, she moved into New Foundations, PPL’s housing program for parents in recovery and their children.

Tara says the classes, community, and caring she found at New Foundations helped her build a different life.

Tara is now excelling at work and school and has recently bought a home.

“None of this would have happened if it weren’t for New Foundations. PPL has helped in so many areas of my life, not just sobriety. I owe everything to PPL.”

Career Readiness

The urgency of the Twin Cities workforce shortage means that we need every worker in the region to be trained and ready to work. That's why PPL CEO Paul Williams often tells graduates of PPL's employment programs, "We desperately need you to succeed." Jobseekers come to PPL to discover their innate strengths and then get the skills, knowledge, and even interviewing practice needed to launch their career.

What we do now

Our range of career services includes training to enter high-growth sectors, plus help finding and keeping a job. Our daytime and evening training programs in banking, healthcare, government, building operations, property appraisal, and more, are designed to prepare jobseekers for entry level jobs that offer career ladders and income growth. Our work with young people includes LEAP, an intensive, two-year program that helps high-school-age youth transition to careers with family-sustaining wages. Our alternative high schools and other youth employment programs help high-school-age youth define a career pathway and plan to earn the credentials they need to enter the workforce.

Strategic goals

Strengthen and develop programs

- Expand into new, larger classrooms by increasing cohort sizes
- Increase short-term trainings
- Create new offerings for younger workers
- Increase enrollment among PPL residents and walk-in computer lab users
- Sustainably fund a full slate of trainings year-round

Manage employment program growth

- Plan for geographic expansion, driven by LEAP program growth
- Sustainably fund expansion of vital financial literacy and coaching programs

Refine and deepen youth employment strategy

- Grow Step Up program, connecting youth with training and internships at area employers
- Grow LEAP program, helping non-traditional high school students graduate ready for college or a career
- Provide job credentials and/or employment coaching to all PPL alternative high school students
- Provide high school credits for work-based learning

The need

- Minnesota’s worker shortage is expected to rise to 250,000 within five years.
- The jobless rate for people of color in the Twin Cities is more than double the state average.
- Black and Native American populations earn about half of what their white neighbors do.
- 7 in 10 students of color graduate from high school, compared to 9 in 10 white students, putting them at risk for poor health, lower lifetime earnings, and unemployment.
- In the next 25 years, 70% of our local workforce will come from communities of color.

Our challenges

- Providing high school students either a path to college or job credentials quickly, to avoid years of unemployment or underemployment.
- Anticipating workforce trends (automation, digital technology, etc.) without compromising PPL’s commitment to strong entry-level wages and career ladders.
- Providing options for jobseekers who don’t have time for full-day courses and need a credential quickly.
- Responding to employers’ urgent needs for qualified workers, which compresses training timelines.
- Leveraging PPL’s unique expertise in education and employment training to create new models that merge high school education and career readiness.

“Pride, to me, means being able to really take care of myself. I take pride in my ability to not only to be self-sufficient in my life and career, but to help others in my community reach their goals.”

Grace Nakiboneka



Overcoming obstacles

“When I found PPL, I was in a rut and I needed to do something new with my life,” Grace Nakiboneka says. “I knew I enjoyed working directly with people and I’m really good at customer service, but I didn’t know where to start.”

Grace says her eyes lit up when she learned about PPL’s banking program.

In her initial interview with PPL, instructor Robert Willis described strengths he saw that would contribute to her success in banking: strong verbal abilities and a warm, welcoming personality.

After Grace completed the course, she spent several months interviewing for jobs without success, while her classmates received offers and started working. She relied on encouragement from PPL staff to keep her spirits up.

Eventually, Grace received and accepted an offer. The tenacity she demonstrated during her job search prompted an invitation to speak to the next cohort of PPL banking trainees.

In her new position, Grace has found financial stability, the challenge she craved, and time to finish a bachelor’s degree she had started at Metropolitan State University.

“You have to be in a position to want something different in your life and you have to be willing to do whatever it takes to get there,” Grace says. “The more you get over obstacles, the more you believe you can.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

We can only achieve excellence as an organization by becoming truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive. Recognizing the complexity and impact of race on our residents, program participants, staff, and community is a driving imperative at PPL. While our housing and employment programs help to reduce economic disparities, that isn't enough. We will continue to deepen our understanding and "practice" of equity until our organization fully embodies equity and inclusion.

What we do now

We began this work in earnest in 2016, investing in assessments and training and making hard conversations about race part of our everyday culture. We used the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to understand our current cultural competence and create development plans for each employee. Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) staff committee and new director of equity and engagement have created a robust training and dialogue process to continue this growth. In 2018, we adopted the following statement of equity: *PPL strives to be an equitable and inclusive organization committed to elevating the voices of the communities we serve that are disproportionately affected by systemic inequities.*

Strategic goals

Continue to define what we mean by DEI and racial equity

- Clarify internal and external terminology and language

Leverage assessment tools to boost cultural competency

- Train additional cohorts on the Intercultural Developmental Inventory; reassess initial cohorts on an annual basis

Grow partnerships

- Create and deepen partnerships with organizations that work effectively with communities of color
- Articulate and deepen PPL's external voice and presence around DEI/racial equity issues

Adopt a DEI/racial equity framework and strengthen the internal equity culture

- Implement "Awake to Woke to Work" model as a foundation to create a racial equity culture across the organization
- Integrate equity into PPL's broader organizational development strategies
- Institutionalize equity across PPL and deeply incorporate it into our programs
- Refine and deepen PPL board engagement with these strategies

Neighborhood Engagement

“Place” matters, and a neighborhood is more than the sum of its parts. At best, it’s a place that allows humans to flourish. At worst, it’s a net that stifles potential. PPL understands that it matters where you are rooted—that’s why we engage with neighborhoods. By collaborating with residents and neighborhood-based groups, we help advance efforts to create safe, healthy, vital communities.

What we do now

Our neighborhood engagement focus launched in 2016 with internal cross-disciplinary teams. In our pilot project, we engaged more deeply in three neighborhoods where we already had a presence: North Phillips, Lake Street & Bloomington Avenue, and North Minneapolis. We have approached these neighborhoods as a partner, bringing a listening ear and willingness to learn, incorporating these learnings into our work and helping to tackle a wide range of community challenges. Our engagement with residents, businesses, neighborhood organizations, and other institutions has resulted in several fruitful collaborations and a positive impact on these communities.

Strategic goals

Deepen relationships with neighborhoods through community engagement

- Deepen relationships in North Phillips, Lake Street & Bloomington Avenue, and North Minneapolis neighborhoods
- Identify new individual leaders and key neighborhood partners utilizing neighborhood mapping tools
- Support neighborhoods’ housing and employment goals

Intentionally engage with community members

- Support and attend neighborhood gatherings
- Convene resident groups at PPL properties
- Support civic engagement efforts

Increase neighborhood safety

- Monitor crime trends and collaborate on safety strategies
- Build relationships with community organizations and police
- Connect PPL residents and neighborhood partners to key policymakers
- Participate in and plan community safety events

Explore expansion of pilot program

- Review and refine framework for selecting neighborhoods
- Consider expanding initiative to additional neighborhoods

Public Policy

Even as we walk alongside our participants, residents, and youth toward greater stability and success, we can't ignore the policy issues that shape our lives. As a leading housing and employment organization, PPL's voice can be influential. But it's also essential that governing bodies hear the voices of the people who feel the effects of policy decisions first-hand.

What we do now

PPL continues to be an active member of legislative coalitions on issues impacting our mission and the people we serve. Over the last three years, we have made it a priority to support civic engagement and advocacy among PPL participants, residents, and youth, listening and supporting them as they bring their stories to policymakers. A march for neighborhood peace conducted by PPL residents in 2017 showed participants the power of their own voices. In 2018, we created an internal public policy committee to help us broaden our engagement in local and state decision-making.

Strategic goals

Research and analyze policies that impact PPL participants and residents from low-income communities

- Identify strategic policy priorities for PPL
- Engage PPL staff in efforts to influence public policies that help PPL provide housing stability and career readiness
- Better inform and engage the PPL board on policy priorities and key activities

Empower participant, resident, and youth voices through advocacy and training

- Educate and engage PPL participants, residents, and youth in civic endeavors where their voices will be heard on public policy issues that impact their quality of life



PPL residents marched down Franklin Ave to advocate for neighborhood safety.



OUR STATEMENT OF EQUITY

PPL strives to be an equitable and inclusive organization committed to elevating the voices of the communities we serve that are disproportionately affected by systemic inequities.

Operational strength

Our impact is strongest when we are working from a foundation of operational strength and applying a data-informed lens to our work. Financial sustainability across all of our programs is one component. We also need to provide a seamless experience to residents and participants, attract and develop talent, and solidify our status as an employer of choice in the nonprofit sector. Finally, we must anticipate the infrastructure we'll need tomorrow and begin building it today.

What we do now

We have steadily built a stronger financial foundation for PPL over the past three years, both by focusing our mission and diversifying our revenue sources. As a result, we've seen three consecutive years of balanced budgets and positive operating debt reduction. We launched a \$12.4 million capital campaign in 2017, which is on track to meet its fundraising goal. Our results-focused staff are constantly pushing towards new and better ways of providing housing and employment services and forging creative links between these two areas to serve our residents and participants better. We've continued to develop our data and evaluation model, which has helped earn PPL its reputation for results and which informs the constant improvement of our offerings.



Strategic goals

Ensure PPL's financial sustainability and strength

- Develop rolling, multi-year financial and capital asset management plan
- Strengthen internal processes and controls to efficiently support programs and reduce risk
- Refine and deepen individual donor and corporate/foundation strategies for increased giving
- Complete \$12.4-million capital campaign by 2020

Attract and retain diverse talent

- Develop culture of coaching among managers and supervisors
- Create succession planning system to identify and develop a depth of talent
- Create recruitment strategy using a racial equity lens to attract high-caliber talent
- Develop learning opportunities to enhance internal career pathways and make PPL an "Employer of Choice"

Strengthen understanding and use of data and evaluation strategies

- Cultivate organizational-wide framework that integrates data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement
- Expand shared learning strategies around defining, tracking, and use of strong outcomes for consistency
- Clearly outline strategies that help PPL identify systemic issues, check bias, and create culturally-responsive tools
- Elevate participant voice through data collection and analysis strategies

Develop robust technology infrastructure

- Broaden 5-year technology plan to include PPL's computer lab, plus AV and phone equipment
- Develop IT applications strategic plan
- Implement best practices for training, security, mobile work and virtual collaboration

Support integration and innovation of programs to better serve participants, residents, and youth

- Integrate career readiness and housing programming
- Enhance work of the cross-disciplinary "Integration Team"
- Identify and develop revenue models and funding sources that can make integration efforts sustainable



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