

Next City's unique approach to journalism is centered on uplifting marginalized voices and amplifying solutions to the problems that oppress people in cities. As a news organization with a nonprofit structure, we leverage donations and grants to provide knowledge and connections to city-builders, leaders, and residents in the form of news, events and experiential learning. At a time when media is increasingly polarized and devalued, and when people in cities face rampant inequality and urgent challenges, Next City's work is critical: by spreading real stories and workable ideas from one city to the next, we connect people, places and solutions that move our society toward justice and equity.

Next City's three-year strategic plan focuses on expanding our impact by reaching new audiences, strengthening our community of changemakers, and building organizational capacity to support growth and sustainability.



## MISSION

Our mission is to unleash the transformative power of solutions-based journalism to equip communities and their leaders with the knowledge and connections to reimagine cities as liberated places of economic, environmental and racial justice. We accomplish this by uplifting diverse perspectives and marginalized narratives.

## VISION

Our vision is a world in which people in cities build flourishing societies that liberate all of us from systems and cultures of oppression.

## CORE VALUES

**Justice:** We hold ourselves accountable for our role in advancing a fully equitable democracy that works to overturn systems of oppression and can lead to liberation.

**Honesty:** We acknowledge hard truths and always uphold journalistic principles of transparency, fairness and accuracy.

**Openness:** We value imagination that finds different and better solutions to problems, grounded within affected communities.

**Humanity:** We recognize the voices and experiences of marginalized communities by centering their dignity in how we work, what stories we tell, who we publish.

**Connection:** We believe collaboration is a superpower that inspires and fuels change, and we offer space for new ideas to flourish and diverse partners to connect with each other.

As the world is increasingly urbanized, **with ultimately 70% of the future population living in cities**, the need is urgent for solutions that counter systemic inequity and injustice.



Next City uses **transparent, fair, accurate journalism to amplify groundbreaking and overlooked solutions that uplift the perspectives of people** who have been excluded by systems of power.



Next City amplifies these narratives **by engaging journalists, stories and sources that are not part of traditional media**. Next City strengthens a movement that promises workable ideas can spread from one city to the next city.



Next City leverages the power of our platform to host events that **connect these changemakers and uplift their ideas, cultivating grassroots leadership across sectors and inspiring community action in cities**.



**Democracy is strengthened. People liberate cities from systems and cultures of oppression, and everyone flourishes on their own terms.**

# 3-YEAR VISION, GOALS & STRATEGIES

Over the next three years, Next City will expand its role and gain recognition as the preeminent leader in journalism about solutions that achieve equitable and just cities. We will expand the reach of our platform and leverage its power to cultivate a diverse network of leaders from across sectors and political spectrums to achieve community action. Building on our 18 years of success, we will iterate our business model to achieve financial resilience and attract the people and partnerships to meet our goals and advance our mission. Our culture and work will be rooted in our values.

## **GOAL 1. GAIN RECOGNITION AS THE LEADER IN JOURNALISM ABOUT THE EQUITABLE AND JUST SOLUTIONS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO COLLECTIVE LIBERATION IN CITIES.**

STRATEGY A. Tell stories from diverse perspectives about the full lifecycle of solutions so we provide a feedback loop for urban planning professionals and grassroots leaders as they implement change.

STRATEGY B. Broaden and deepen key audiences' understanding of Next City's unique value proposition through thought leadership and partnerships.

STRATEGY C. Pilot a national hub partnership model to increase the reach of stories published, cover more solutions, promote narrative change, uplift marginalized voices, connect grassroots and national leaders, and elevate the reputation of Next City.

STRATEGY D. Support and advance journalists of color, both early career and established, at Next City and for the sector overall.





## **GOAL 2. LEVERAGE THE POWER OF OUR SIGNATURE PROGRAMS TO CONVENE AND CULTIVATE AN ENGAGED AND DIVERSE NETWORK OF LEADERS FROM ACROSS SECTORS TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY ACTION THAT ADVANCES EQUITY AND JUSTICE IN CITIES.**

STRATEGY A. Further develop Vanguard as a unique experience cultivating changemakers through learning, collaboration and engagement with a long-term community.

STRATEGY B. Explore and implement ways to expand the reach and impact of Solutions of the Year as a forum for connecting people and ideas.

STRATEGY C. Use webinars and other channels and tools to help people connect with Next City's stories and engage with each other.

## **GOAL 3. BUILD OUR BUSINESS MODEL FOR RESILIENCE AND GROWTH BY INCREASING REVENUE THAT ISN'T DERIVED FROM FOUNDATIONS TO 60% OF OVERALL INCOME AND GROWING OPERATING RESERVES TO THE EQUIVALENT OF THREE MONTHS OF OPERATING EXPENSES.**

STRATEGY A. Expand reader-revenue and individual support through structured membership and major gifts programs.

STRATEGY B. Build earned revenue streams, including advertising, sponsorships/underwriting, and business membership.

STRATEGY C. Expand grant funding from private foundations.

STRATEGY D. Further develop Next City's financial policies, strategies and plans, including operating reserves.

## **GOAL 4. INCREASE INTERNAL CAPACITY TO UPHOLD NEXT CITY'S CORE VALUES, SUPPORT ITS GOALS, AND STRENGTHEN A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE.**

STRATEGY A. Build staff structure and organizational resilience.

STRATEGY B. Further develop the roles of the Board of Directors and create a leadership pipeline.