



## THE GRAPEVINE FAMILY & COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN: 2024 - 2026

### The Grapevine Then & Now

Established in 1996 with funding from a Community Block Grant, the Grapevine has been serving the Eastern Monadnock Region for over 25 years. It started out in a small space on Main Street in Antrim and moved to the current location at 4 Aiken Street in 2003. At the beginning, parent-child groups were the primary programs. Activities were volunteer-led and there was significant help and input from the community to get the organization up and running. Since then, the Grapevine has remained mission-focused: *To promote family and community health and well-being through support, education and the sharing of resources.* Communities of focus include Antrim, Bennington, Deering, Frankestown, Hancock, Hillsborough and some surrounding towns.

Since the last Strategic Plan was developed in 2017, the Grapevine has grown considerably. The operating budget has more than doubled, and funding sources have significantly expanded. Staffing has increased substantially, both in terms of increasing hours allocated to existing staff and hiring staff for new positions. Focus on staff retention has led to increased compensation, an annual bonus, and expanded benefits. Growth in programs and services has resulted in more families and teens being served.

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the organization served over 1,400 children, teens and adults with a wide variety of programs and services. The Grapevine is often called the place to go when you don't know where to go! Today, the Grapevine provides a robust offering of family and community supports:

#### Family Supports

Infant & Early Childhood Programs  
Learning Vine Preschool  
Parent Support Groups  
Home Visiting & One-to-One Supports  
Avenue A Teen & Community Center  
Kinship/Relative Caregiver Support

#### Community Supports

Community Wood Bank & Tool Lending Shed  
Information & Supported Referral Services  
Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Resources  
Community Suppers  
Senior Exercise  
Community Convener of BBC, Hillsborough and other resource groups

The Grapevine also convenes special training, programs and groups to address emergent needs and community interest including Suicide Prevention training, Parenting programs such as Positive Solutions for Families and special topics such as Raising Teens.



## Focus on DEI

The organization has been working toward greater emphasis and attention to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Two lead staff have participated in multiple trainings, and the most recent 6 month cohort training also included two Grapevine Board members. Plans for full staff training and participation are upcoming in 2024. With input from staff and Board, the Grapevine has developed a DEI mission statement which is informing our organizational and program efforts:

*The Grapevine is a place where everyone feels welcome, invited and included. The Grapevine staff and board reflect a diversity of perspectives & experiences, making us a stronger organization. We are a mindful, respectful, reflective staff and board who are consistently working toward that. The Grapevine staff and board are enriched by the perspectives of others.*

## Strategic Plan Process

Because of COVID-19 and the demands put on the organization to respond to community needs related to the pandemic, the Grapevine was delayed in creating its revised Strategic Plan. (The previous plan lapsed in 2020). The development of a Strategic Plan for 2024-2026 allowed for the Grapevine to stay focused on its mission and values, build on what is working, and identify new areas for growth and sustainability.

A strategic planning consultant was hired in June of 2023 to assist the Executive Director with planning and facilitating the process. A small group of staff and Board were identified to form the Strategic Planning Committee. Membership representation included two program staff, two administrative staff, and three Board members, along with the consultant. The group met for four 2-hour meetings from July through September. The Committee began by identifying the Grapevine's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges; prioritized focus areas for the Strategic Plan; and finally explored each focus area to identify potential short and long-term strategies. (Summaries of the Committee's focus area reflections appear in Appendix A to this plan document).

The focus areas\* for the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan are:

- **Facilities:** Grapevine's buildings and outdoor spaces as well as shared community spaces
- **Financial Health:** Long-term funding stability for growth and sustainability of operations
- **Public Presence:** Print & electronic marketing, community relations & outreach, recruitment of teens and families

\*As part of the Committee's reflection process, members identified a need to incorporate Human Resources and DEI considerations into each of the three focus areas.



The work of the Committee served as a springboard for the Strategic Planning Retreat with staff and Board held on September 29, 2023 at The Harris Center in Hancock. The retreat, facilitated by the consultant, created an opportunity for staff and Board to work together to brainstorm SMART goal statements and strategies for each focus area that would build organizational capacity and sustainability. The goals and strategies in the matrix below reflect priorities that were deemed to be most feasible with greatest potential impact.

**Note:** The Grapevine will designate an internal process for reviewing this plan annually and make any necessary updates to this Strategic Plan’s goals and strategies. It will be important to document current activities and practices as a way to reflect back, set a baseline and measure progress. Internally, the Grapevine will prioritize collecting qualitative and quantitative data and identify measurable outcomes.

**GRAPEVINE STRATEGIC PLAN MATRIX 2024-2026**

<b>Facilities Goal: To ensure sustainable, accessible, and safe spaces that support program expansion and community needs.</b>				
	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
1.	Hire a Facilities Coordinator and/or expand the role of a current Grapevine position to incorporate key facility responsibilities. (HR & DEI)	X		
2.	Create, monitor and evaluate a Facilities Plan that outlines steps toward improved health and safety, expansion of space and programming, and ADA compliance and accessibility to meet community needs. (DEI)	X	X	X
3.	Expand existing facility at 4 Aiken Street to bring Avenue A Teen Center to the Grapevine’s main building. (Programming)		X	X



<b>Financial Health Goal: To sustain and expand the Grapevine's financial capacity to support efficient operations and high-quality programs and services.</b>				
	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
1.	Hire a Development Director. (HR & DEI)	X		
2.	Create, monitor and evaluate a Development Plan for expansion of donor base and increase in revenue.		X	X
3.	Invest in staff through increased compensation and added benefits. (DEI)	X	X	X
4.	Develop a process (similar to a cost-benefit analysis) to guide funding decisions and grant applications.	X		
5.	Identify new/expanded tools to support administrative staff with financial management.	X		
6.	Develop a plan for spending current resources as well as plan for how future funds will be allocated.	X		



Public Presence Goal: To increase our public presence in the communities we serve and raise awareness of the Grapevine’s programs and resources.				
	Strategy	2024	2025	2026
1.	Hire a Communications Coordinator. (HR)	X		
2.	Create, monitor and evaluate a Communications Plan that assures consistent and regular messaging; strong partnerships with local organizations and businesses; intentional social media campaign; and the creation, distribution scheduling, and analysis of a survey to learn who Grapevine is serving (DEI) and how they access their information.	X	X	X
3.	Hold an annual Grapevine Open House night with representation from all Grapevine programs.	X	X	X
4.	Increase the allocation of resources so that the Grapevine can explore and use tools to more efficiently communicate with program participants. (DEI, Programming)	X	X	X

If we are successful in implementing the strategies above, we anticipate the following:

- Increased revenue growth incrementally over the next three years across all programs resulting in a 10 percent growth by 2026.
- Increased total numbers served throughout our communities by another 10 percent, or, approximately 140 people by 2026.
- Increased square footage of usable space to offer to our families and community



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Special thanks to:

The Strategic Planning Committee: Staff members Melissa Gallagher, Carol Lunan, Jacqueline Roland, and Lisa Swarbrick; Board members Dottie Bauer, Rose Novotny, and Jenine Rubin.

Strategic Planning Facilitator: Jill Morgan

And thanks to the entire Grapevine staff and Board of Directors for their participation in the September 29, 2023 Strategic Planning Retreat.

*Adopted by the Grapevine Board of Directors on 11.14.23*