



# **Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson**

2 Great Oak Lane  
Pleasantville, NY 10570

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## **Building Leadership for the Future 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan**

Adopted by the Board of Directors: September 22, 2021

## Introduction

Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. was formed through the realignment of five (5) legacy councils on October 1, 2007 – Sarah Wells Girl Scout Council, Girl Scouts of Dutchess County, Girl Scouts of Rockland, Girl Scouts of Ulster County, and Girl Scouts of Westchester-Putnam. Currently headquartered in Pleasantville, NY, we support the seven (7) counties in the lower Hudson Valley – Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan, Orange, and Rockland counties.

To guide the work of Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. for the next three years, this strategic plan was built around five (5) strategic priorities:

- Membership Focus
- Programming Enhancements
- Funding and Budget Management
- Operating Excellence
- Communications Outreach and Brand

In developing the strategic plan, five (5) teams were formed, each responsible for a different strategic priority. Each team had a diverse group of members (Board Directors, Girl Board Directors, council staff, community volunteers). Surveying from membership – adult volunteers and girls – was completed by Newmark Knight Frank (NKF)<sup>1</sup>, analyzed, and then weighted against GSUSA<sup>2</sup> and Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. initiatives and priorities.

## Long-Range Property Plan

Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. is fortunate to possess real estate assets such as camps, regional offices, and scout houses that all contribute in some way to serving the Girl Scout mission. These properties, both for programming and administration, are the most valuable assets owned by the council. In order to continue to be successful in our mission of providing leadership experiences for girls, we must ensure we are properly managing those assets to provide those experiences and to be fiscally responsible.

Our priority is always to provide the best outdoor, camp programming and leadership opportunities for girls, and to ensure Girl Scouting remains strong for future generations. Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. is deeply committed to using our resources wisely, and evaluating the ability of our real estate assets to enable the council to better serve girls with the 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership programming they want today.

To that end, in 2020, Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. engaged with Newmark Knight Frank (NKF) to analyze council real estate assets to ensure we're delivering program to all girls with maximum efficiency and in line with our strategic priorities. NKF's report is the first step in the development of a council long-range property plan. The final long-range property plan will work in unison with this strategic plan.

See the Appendix at the end of this document for a historical context timeline of the master property plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Newmark Knight Frank (NKF) is an international real estate firm under contract with Girl Scouts of the USA to evaluate the national portfolio through the lens of each set of local council data. Their mission is to provide a consistent and replicable process of property evaluation to all councils that take advantage of their services.

<sup>2</sup> Girl Scouts of the United States of America

# Strategic Roadmap

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## Mission

*The principle that guides all decisions.*

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

## Movement Alignment

*The foundation for Girl Scouts' identity, a guide for how we operate.*

Together, as one Movement, we'll show the world:

- We're not just for girls, we're for every **G.I.R.L.**
- We don't just empower girls; we prepare girls to empower themselves.
- Leadership isn't a label, it's an everyday lifestyle.
- We're not just a program; we're a membership with lifetime value.

## Value Delivery

*Where we excel.*

In preparing girls for a lifetime of leadership.

## Spirit of Excellence

*Our culture and behaviors we embrace.*

We promote a culture of appreciation, inclusivity, and **E.P.I.C.** leadership (Empathy, Possibility Thinking, Innovation, and Courageous Leadership) among members and foster a spirit of excellence, collaboration, and teamwork in all that we do.

**Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc. practices welcoming and inclusive behavior toward people of all ages, races, religions, cultures, abilities, sexual orientation, gender, educations, and economic backgrounds.**

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# Strategic Priorities

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The focus that will guide our tactical decisions and the allocation of council resources, directing our efforts and investments as we build leadership for the future.

## **I. Membership Focus**

Recruit and retain girl and adult members.

## **II. Programming Enhancements**

Provide the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through high quality program delivery across the council footprint with a focus on the four Girl Scout Program Pillars: Outdoor Experience, Entrepreneurship, Life Skills, and STEM.

## **III. Funding and Budget Management**

Invest in girls by optimizing GSHH<sup>3</sup> revenue sources and uses.

## **IV. Operating Excellence**

Increase efficiency throughout the organization to deliver maximum effectiveness to council customers.

## **V. Communications Outreach and Brand**

Develop a communication strategy for internal and external stakeholders through targeted messaging to build an inclusive community around the Girl Scout experience. Improve awareness of the relevance and impact of the Girl Scout Mission with a goal of increasing participation and support.

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<sup>3</sup> Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc.

## Strategic Goal I: Membership Focus

**Recruit and retain girl and adult members.**

Focus	Initiatives
<p><b>Membership</b> Increase Girl and Adult membership by 2% between MY2022 and MY2024.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific initiatives available from GSUSA<sup>4</sup></li> <li>2. Seasonal GSUSA and GSHH initiatives</li> </ol>
<p><b>Multi-Cultural Strategy – Hispanic Girl/Adult Retention</b> Increase Girl and Adult membership of members who self-report as Hispanic by 2% between MY2022 and MY2024.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific initiatives available from GSUSA</li> <li>2. Seasonal GSUSA and GSHH initiatives</li> </ol>
<p><b>Customer Service</b> Provide the best, most efficient customer service utilizing the tools available, resulting in a faster yet accurate response to our customers.</p>	Utilization of applications available from GSUSA
<p><b>Market Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain current Market Share of girls 5 to 10 years old.</li> <li>▪ Maintain current Market Share of girls 11 to 17 years old.</li> </ul>	Specific initiatives available from GSUSA

<sup>4</sup> Girl Scouts of the United States of America

## Strategic Goal II: Programming Enhancements

**Provide the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through high quality program delivery across the council footprint with a focus on the four Girl Scout Program Pillars: Outdoor Experience, Entrepreneurship, Life Skills, and STEM.**

Focus	Initiatives
<b>Deliver quality program reflective of GSHH girl membership.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GSUSA program portfolio</li> <li>2. Age- and grade-level initiatives</li> <li>3. Skills progression initiatives</li> <li>4. Integrate program delivery through technology</li> </ol>
<b>Enhance the program experience.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific initiatives from GSUSA</li> <li>2. Communication enhancements</li> <li>3. Website/technology enhancements</li> </ol>
<b>Provide leadership opportunities to support girl member retention.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GSUSA opportunities</li> <li>2. High Awards</li> <li>3. GSHH initiatives</li> </ol>

## Strategic Goal III: Funding and Budget Management

Invest in girls by optimizing GSHH revenue sources and uses.

Focus	Initiatives
Program product sales and retail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Fall Product Program</li><li>2. Cookie Program</li><li>3. Retail</li></ol>
Fund development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Donor Support Base</li><li>2. Individual Supporters</li><li>3. Board Director Participation</li></ol>
Budget surplus and bequest funds	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Budget Surplus</li><li>2. Bequest Funds</li></ol>

## Strategic Goal IV: Operating Excellence

**Increase efficiency throughout the organization to deliver maximum effectiveness to council customers.**

Focus	Initiatives
<b>Implement staff engagement at all levels of the organization to improve cross functional support.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weekly Management meetings</li> <li>2. Monthly all-staff meetings</li> <li>3. Quarterly Management meetings</li> <li>4. Specific initiatives available from GSUSA</li> </ol>
<b>Create a staff survey to establish periodic internal review of the customer support system across the organization.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff focus group to review results</li> <li>2. Present results to all staff</li> <li>3. Engage staff to create solutions</li> </ol>
<b>Develop a robust staff development program that will benefit staff to achieve their goals</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National GSUSA conferences and trainings</li> <li>2. Create incentive system</li> </ol>
<b>Ensure GSHH performance management processes are designed and executed to align and maximize staff's performance with the goals of the organization.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define and communicate organizational goals</li> <li>2. Staff/Supervisor goal setting</li> </ol>



## Strategic Goal V: Communications Outreach and Brand

**Develop a communication strategy for internal and external stakeholders through targeted messaging to build an inclusive community around the Girl Scout experience. Improve awareness of the relevance and impact of the Girl Scout Mission with a goal of increasing participation and support.**

Focus	Initiatives
<b>Stakeholder Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls</li> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• External                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girl Scout Community</li> <li>• Funders</li> <li>• Donors</li> <li>• Alumnae</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and communicate targeted Girl Scout messaging for each stakeholder group.</li> <li>2. Strengthen connections to the Girl Scout community for all stakeholders through targeted and unifying communications.</li> </ol>
<b>Messaging Effectiveness</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver clear, consistent and concise messaging across all platforms.</li> </ol>
<b>Communication Impact</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance and diversify communication so that it is more inclusive and targets all communities/emerging markets.</li> <li>2. Reinforce communication of the value and relevance of Girl Scouts (K-12) to existing and future stakeholders.</li> </ol>
<b>Branding</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementation of the GSUSA brand refresh.</li> </ol>

# Appendix: Property Plan Historical Context

<p><b>2007 GSUSA Council Realignment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSHH acquired a number of legacy properties in varying states of condition and utility</li> </ul>	<p><b>2018<sup>5</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sold Kingston council office (Ulster County)</li> <li>Sold Middletown council office (Orange County)</li> <li>Purchased Montgomery office (Orange County)</li> </ul>
<p><b>2010</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSHH completed a comprehensive inventory of council properties – often referred to as the Property Plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Result:</b> GSHH did not need nor could we afford to own all these properties.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Based on the criteria of utility, condition, and maintenance cost, GSHH divested the council of several properties.</p> <p><b>Process:</b> Began with the sale of surplus land and have steadily monetized or sold obsolete properties.</p>	<p><b>2019/2020</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sold New City council office (Rockland County)</li> <li>Sold Camp Birch Ridge in Otisville/Mount Hope (Orange County)</li> <li>Sold Camp Blueberry Hill in Liberty (Sullivan County)</li> <li>Entered into a purchase agreement contingent on approvals for Pleasantville council office (2 Great Oak Lane) (Westchester County). Potential sale is ongoing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2016</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Camp Addisone Boyce (CAB) (Rockland County) – Sold surplus land with a conservation easement</li> </ul>	<p><b>2020/2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explored the sale of surplus land and a conservation easement on Camp Ludington (Dutchess County), similar to the CAB property with the Trust for Public Land (TPL). Potential sale moved to due diligence phase in early 2021.</li> <li>Engaged with Newmark Knight Frank (NKF)<sup>6</sup> to analyze council real estate assets to ensure we’re delivering program to all girls with maximum efficiency and in line with our strategic plan in early 2020. Final report delivered to Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, Inc in May 2021.</li> <li>Formed the Board Property Plan Committee in June 2021 to develop a council long-range property plan based on the NKF final report.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> All properties were sold near or over the appraised values.

<sup>6</sup> Newmark Knight Frank (NKF) is an international real estate firm under contract with the Girl Scouts of the USA organization to evaluate the national portfolio through the lens of each set of local council data. Their mission is to provide a consistent and replicable process of property evaluation to all councils that take advantage of their services.