



***Telling a  
powerful  
housing story  
to BUILD  
support for  
affordable  
housing***



Deputy Director  
Big fan of storytelling for  
social change

# HOUSING NARRATIVE LAB





**Who is in the room?**



The background is a vibrant, abstract mosaic composed of many small, irregular tiles in shades of blue, green, yellow, and red. In the center, there is a circular inset that shows a person walking away from the viewer on a path that leads towards a bright, hazy horizon. The overall effect is one of a complex, multi-colored tapestry.

# **NARRATIVES ARE LIKE MOSAICS.**

**STORIES** and **MESSAGES** are the individual pieces of glass that, when we put in the right place, make up the narratives.



# WHAT IS NARRATIVE?

**A collection of stories that  
shape how we feel, think  
and act.**





# WHAT IS NARRATIVE?

A collection of stories that  
shape how we feel, think  
and act.

Stories conveyed in politics,  
policy, news media, pop  
culture, social media, the  
bbq and dinner table.



# **WHAT IS THE CURRENT NARRATIVE ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Why do you think you have that in your mind?

How has affordable housing been portrayed in movies, TV, news, conversations among neighbors who are suddenly worried about the capacity of the sewer in their town?



The image features a white background with decorative dotted patterns. In the top-left corner, there are several concentric, semi-circular dotted lines in an orange-brown color. In the bottom-center, there are similar concentric, semi-circular dotted lines in a yellow-gold color. The main text is centered and reads: 

**WE ALL HAVE A ROLE  
IN SHAPING THE  
NARRATIVE AROUND  
AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING**





# WHY STORIES?

**It is human: Stories are the way  
humans communicate**



# WHY STORIES?

It is human: Stories are the way  
humans communicate

Create connection and brings  
people into your journey



# WHY STORIES?

It is human: Stories are the way  
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Create connection and brings  
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It is a way to build trust  
understanding and relationship  
with your audience





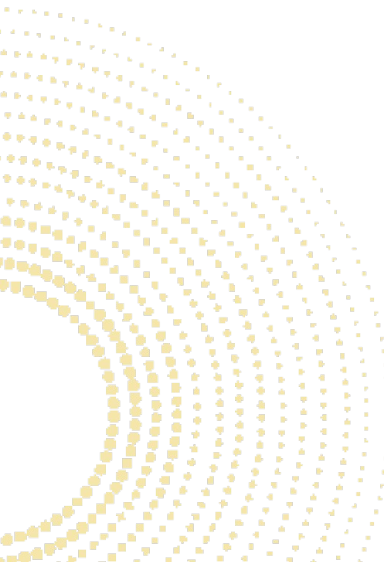
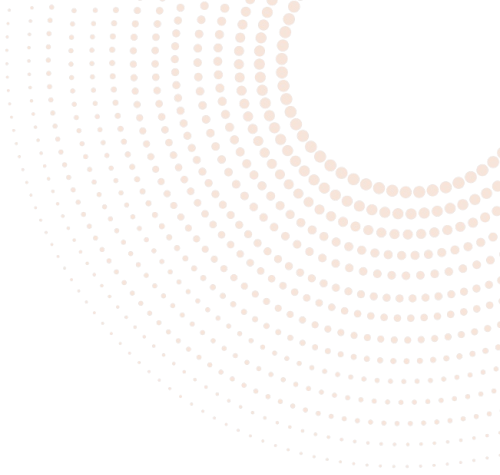
# WHY STORIES?

**It is human: Stories are the way  
humans communicate**

**Create connection and brings  
people into your journey**

**It is a way to build trust,  
understanding and relationship  
with your audience**

**People take action based on  
how they feel**  
(The Heart part of Hearts and Minds)



**Low-income families making  
40% of AMI who qualify for  
affordable units together with  
access to transportation are  
found to have generally  
positive effects on health and  
wellbeing as a result of their  
stable environment.**

HOW NONPROFITS  
TALK ABOUT HOME



Ruth R is a hard-working mom from the Bronx.

Her paycheck is \$2,800 a month after taxes.

Rent is \$3,000 a month.

The math does not add up





Or the Norton family.

“We struggled for a year to pay rent with odd jobs, but finding him one was tough. Last Christmas, we finally couldn’t do it and got evicted. We stayed with some friends in the winter, but come summer, we had to leave, and since then, it has been truck living.”



The background features two sets of concentric dotted patterns. In the top-left corner, there are several overlapping circles of dots in a light orange or peach color. In the bottom-center, there are several overlapping semi-circular arcs of dots in a light yellow or gold color.

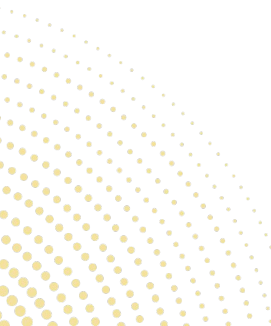
**ARE THESE THE STORIES  
YOU SHARE WHEN YOU  
TALK ABOUT THE NEED FOR  
HOUSING?**



Photo by Gregg Brekke



Photo by @jayaon1 via Nappy.co






The image features a white background with decorative elements consisting of concentric dotted arcs. In the top-left corner, there are several overlapping arcs in a light orange or peach color. In the bottom-center, there are several overlapping arcs in a light yellow or gold color. The text is centered horizontally and vertically between these two sets of arcs.

**THESE ARE THE STORIES  
WE NEED TO BE TELLING**

The slide features decorative elements consisting of concentric dotted arcs in the corners. In the top-right corner, there are several arcs of light orange dots. In the bottom-left corner, there are several arcs of yellow dots. A solid horizontal bar at the very bottom of the slide transitions from dark blue on the left to orange on the right.

**YOUR TURN!**



**HOW TO DO THIS**  
**Start with shared values**  
**Focus on solutions**  
**Plain language, no wonk**