



LEADERSHIP PROFILE

President
Focused Community Strategies

Atlanta, GA

Focused Community Strategies partners with under-resourced neighborhoods to provide innovative and holistic development that produces flourishing communities where God's Shalom is present.

A Unique Opportunity

For 47 years [Focused Community Strategies](#) (FCS) has been investing in relationships to revitalize neighborhoods in Atlanta. FCS empowers neighborhoods to thrive by taking a holistic, neighbor-focused approach to bring renewal and vitality. Working with local organizations, leaders and residents to build sustainable community infrastructure and programs, FCS's impact is a story of collaboration, partnership and lasting improvement.

Rooted in historic South Atlanta, FCS's work contributes to important change in the systems and structures that limit communities. Their innovation, advocacy, and programming support legacy residents and attract new neighbors in communities located in the heart of the City of Atlanta.

In partnership with neighbors and other organizations, FCS has renovated over 175 homes in South Atlanta, renovated or constructed close to 30% of the housing stock in its service area, and supported affordable and mixed-income housing options that have generated growth in people and resources. Through holistic programs, FCS has spurred economic development and promoted the health, connection and growth of its neighbors.

As FCS grows into the sixth decade of impact, the organization is seeking a new President to strengthen, sustain, and enhance the character, resilience, affordability, and flourishing of South Atlanta in this time of fast-paced growth.

Rooted in historic South Atlanta, FCS's work contributes to important change in the systems and structures that limit communities.



The Organization

Holistic Approach

Empowering neighborhoods to thrive means leveraging the unique attributes of people, places, and the systems that shape them. FCS enters into relationships with a focus on the wellness of an individual's or entity's entire being.

FCS's roots are in ministry; Christian faith informs the culture and efforts. Their work is accomplished in an ecumenical way, promoting flourishing communities where God's Shalom is present and bringing together people of all faiths in partnership.

A member of the powerful [Purpose Built Network](#), FCS's role is defined as "community quarterback," yet they prefer the term "partner." Through the power of relationships, FCS is supporting a thriving, equitable, and mixed-income South Atlanta.

Footprint

South Atlanta's rich history dates back to the late 1800s, when it was known as Brownsville, a vibrant and prosperous community created by Black Americans despite the harsh realities of racial violence and discrimination. This thriving educational and cultural center had hundreds of African American homeowners and dozens of Black-owned businesses. From 1883 to 1941, the area proudly housed Clark University and the Gammon School of Theology, serving as intellectual anchors for the community. When these institutions relocated to the Atlanta University Center in 1941, the City of Atlanta acquired the campuses and constructed Carver Homes, a 990-unit public housing project. What had once been a dynamic, mixed-income community transformed rapidly into an area struggling with concentrated poverty and disinvestment.

South Atlanta's rich history dates back to the late 1800s, when it was known as Brownsville, a vibrant and prosperous community created by Black Americans despite the harsh realities of racial violence and discrimination.



The community's renewal began to accelerate in 2000 when the South Atlanta Civic League invited FCS to join their efforts in community development and revitalization. The partnership marked the beginning of a remarkable transformation. Two decades later, South Atlanta has emerged as one of Atlanta's most equitable and stable mixed-income neighborhoods.

Together with residents, community partners, and guided by shared values, FCS continues to be actively involved in co-creating South Atlanta's promising future, honoring its historical significance, and building toward an inclusive tomorrow.

FCS's work has also extended beyond South Atlanta, and is expanding into adjacent areas within the shared Carver Cluster school district. Specifically, there is a growing partnership with the Thomasville Heights community. This Thomasville Heights effort has support from the City of Atlanta and from a key funder. Housing and neighborhood engagements efforts continue to grow and will be an evolving strategic focus for FCS now and over the next decade.

Values

Neighboring, dignity, and development are at the core of everything that FCS does.

- **Neighboring:** FCS values local living, believing proximity and diversity allow for mutually transformative relationships.
- **Dignity:** FCS values the gifts and abilities of their neighbors, believing as bearers of the image of God all have the inherent capacity and are engaged as full participants in bringing about the flourishing of the neighborhood.
- **Development:** FCS values sustainable strategies, believing that lasting impact requires addressing systemic, economic, and structural barriers.



FCS's work has also extended beyond South Atlanta, and is expanding into adjacent areas within the shared Carver Cluster school district.



FCS's work has yielded remarkable results. They are responsible for over 100 newly constructed homes and 75 thoughtfully renovated properties.

Four Pillars:

The four pillars of FCS's work are:

1. Mixed-Income Housing:

FCS stands as a beacon of hope amidst Atlanta's affordable housing crisis, implementing strategic interventions that have transformed South Atlanta's housing landscape. By securing over 50% of the neighborhood's housing stock for low and moderate-income residents, FCS has created a model for inclusive community development.

FCS's work has yielded remarkable results. They are responsible for over 100 newly constructed homes and 75 thoughtfully renovated properties. This concentrated effort has dramatically shifted the neighborhood's homeownership dynamic, with rates soaring from 10% in 2000 to 60% today. Particularly significant is that 30% of the neighborhood is now owned by low-income families, creating genuine economic opportunity and wealth-building potential.

Beyond homeownership, FCS maintains a carefully managed portfolio of high-quality single-family rentals with income-based pricing that never exceeds 30% of a tenant's earnings. This approach ensures housing stability and educational continuity for families while preserving neighborhood cohesion.

FCS's Senior Home Repair Initiative allows long-time residents to age in place with dignity. Each repair represents not merely a structural improvement but an investment in preserving community wisdom and relationships that form the neighborhood's cultural foundation.

Through this multi-faceted approach, FCS demonstrates how purposeful intervention can create sustainable, diverse communities where housing affordability coexists with neighborhood vitality and resident empowerment.

2. Economic Development

FCS operates small businesses that provide jobs, boost the local economy, serve as community hubs, and increase access to resources for all residents. The development initiatives include two retail outlets and entrepreneurial support:

- [Carver Market](#) opened in 2014 to provide access to healthy foods, groceries, and fresh produce to the neighborhood that was once defined as a food desert. In partnership with the Food Well Alliance and Common Foods, Carver Market also serves as a place of employment and skill development for local residents.
- [Community Grounds](#) coffee shop opened in 2010 and has built a loyal customer base. Together with Carver Market, Community Grounds has become a thriving resource for coffee and connection, serving nearly 300 customers daily and supporting 15 local employees.

Both establishments exemplify FCS's commitment to creating positive "third spaces" for the neighborhood—places where community members can connect and flourish outside of home or work. The Community Room, located next door in FCS's office space, further extends this vision by providing an additional gathering place for neighborhood residents.

- [Start:ME](#) is a four-month business training program launched in 2018. In this intensive program, cohort members are matched with teams of three mentors, each bringing unique expertise and skillsets to support emerging entrepreneurs. The program focuses on economic mobility by transforming ideas into viable businesses. Since its launch, the Southside StartMe cohort has helped create 77 businesses, employing 123 people and generating over \$3 million in annual revenue.



[Carver Market](#) opened in 2014 to provide access to healthy foods, groceries, and fresh produce to the neighborhood that was once defined as a food desert.



FCS believes in the transformative power of neighboring, working with local leadership to strengthen and unify communities through various interconnected programs.

FCS is just breaking ground on Brownsville Pointe an innovative infill project that will include a restaurant and 18 units of housing (12 affordable units and 6 market-rate units).

3. Community Health & Wellness/ Neighborhood Engagement

FCS believes in the transformative power of neighboring, working with local leadership to strengthen and unify communities through various interconnected programs:

- Youth Engagement
 - South Atlanta Youth Group Community: Weekly meetings and meals.
 - Bike Club: Youth programming through local schools.
- Community Support
 - Pride for Parents and the [South Atlanta Christmas Store](#).
- Food Security
 - Two Food Co-ops: Distributing healthy food and produce to enhance resident well-being.

These initiatives collectively support resident health and well-being while developing the next generation of neighborhood residents and leaders.

4. Cradle to Career Education

In partnership with [Purpose Built Schools Atlanta](#) (PBSA), FCS is committed to providing high-quality education for all children from early learning through high school, preparing them for college and career success. Their focus is on:

- Preparing young children for kindergarten.
- Cultivating an ecosystem of engagement for school-age children outside of school hours.

- Ensuring on-time high school graduation.
- Equipping students for post-secondary success.

By combining the best elements of traditional public schools with the best of charter schools, PBSA offers a proven program designed to put all students on a trajectory for success and delivers outstanding results for students and the surrounding community through:

- High-quality instruction.
- Intentional enrichment opportunities.
- A strategic approach to serving families' needs beyond school walls.

Training & Consulting

FCS has always provided training and consulting, whether informal or structured, to inspire and benefit others. During the early decades of FCS training and consulting was a program function done by leader-practitioners. In more recent years efforts evolved into a pillar with a team of dedicated staff providing various forms of training and consulting, as well as the development of the Flourishing Neighborhood Index. Training and Consulting has taken different forms, with many expressions over various times and seasons (published writings, tours, walk-alongside consulting, tools, materials, etc.). FCS has a firm commitment to enabling other communities to thrive, and is currently in the process of freshly re-imagining how to best structure the Training & Consulting function.

Financials

FCS is proud to report that every \$1 donated generates \$2.12 in neighborhood investment, creating a powerful multiplier effect for community transformation. Working with numerous programmatic, educational, housing, nonprofit, and funding partners, FCS has raised over \$22 million in direct and indirect resources, resulting in significant neighborhood investments and programs.

FCS is proud to report that every \$1 donated generates \$2.12 in neighborhood investment, creating a powerful multiplier effect for community transformation.





The new President must bring expertise, creativity, and visionary leadership to advance FCS's mission of preserving affordability while driving community and economic development initiatives throughout South Atlanta.

The annual operating budget of \$8.5 million is supported through foundation and corporate partnerships, philanthropic donations, interest income, and revenue from land sales and rentals.

The President's Mandate

FCS has initiated a comprehensive strategic planning process, with foundational elements currently being established and made ready for the new President's arrival and participation.

Mature and financially stable, FCS is undergoing a presidential transition during a pivotal moment of external transformation and opportunity. South Atlanta's property values have surged due to the rapid development of the [Atlanta Beltline Southside Trail](#), making FCS's neighborhood preservation work increasingly urgent. The new President must bring expertise, creativity, and visionary leadership to advance FCS's mission of preserving affordability while driving community and economic development initiatives throughout South Atlanta. The mandate for the President is:

Advance the Mission & Impact:

- Broaden FCS's work in housing beyond single-family units to multi-family options.
- Increase mixed-use developments to bring more economic vitality to the area.
- Build out FCS's 4th Pillar of Cradle to Career Education through partnership with all schools and stakeholders in the Carver Cluster.
- Create more Third Spaces to connect the community.
- Continue development of the landscape for parks and green spaces, which will support greater pedestrian and general safety for the neighborhood.

- Continue to uphold and enhance the organization's faith charter.

Expand Pillar Frameworks

Each of FCS's 4 pillars complements each other and operates in coordination. Strategic planning will inform the work of expanding the existing frameworks. The board of directors has identified the following needs:

- Pillar 1: Mixed-Income Housing. Expanded housing inventory is critical. FCS is actively engaged in important partnerships with the City of Atlanta and Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta on this topic. It is important that the new President bring real estate and community development expertise.
- Pillar 2: Flourishing for South Atlanta means bringing prosperity. Economic Development is focused on more robust commerce such as restaurants and retailers, along with workforce development programs.
- Pillar 3: Neighborhood Engagement will be greatly informed by the strategic planning process. Current wellness needs include a focus on proximity to healthcare and transportation.
- Pillar 4: Cradle to Career Education. With more young families returning to the neighborhood, FCS has increased its focus on quality schools and engaging after-school opportunities. In partnership with PBSA, FCS is identifying programs to support student residents and their families after school hours and during the summer.

Develop the Ecosystem of Partners

- The President will lead partnerships of shared responsibility with all stakeholders. Their work must maintain the trust built between the community and FCS.

The President will lead partnerships of shared responsibility with all stakeholders. Their work must maintain the trust built between the community and FCS.





With deep management experience, empathy, and genuine care; the President will engage and activate the team and harness their unique abilities, passions and potential.

- The President will bring innovation and insights to inspire collective action. Connections must be organic, and the President will lead from behind or alongside partners as appropriate.
- Slow, steady, and intentional, FCS has been a trusted builder of relationships throughout its history. Bringing new partners and funders to the work will be a top priority for the President.
- Active participation in Purpose Built Community Network is important for the organization and for the national movement.

Expand and Preserve Financial Stability

- The President will secure and diversify revenue streams by galvanizing support and investment. While federal funding represents only a small percentage of FCS's budget, establishing sustainability is essential to fulfilling the organization's bold aspirations.
- Manage critical funding relationships—whether private, public, philanthropic, or individual—all are vital to FCS's mission. The President must bring fundraising expertise and quickly establish rapport with existing funders.
- The President must think tactically and proactively about cultivating new supporters, expanding funding sources, and increasing the overall financial health of the organization. This requires a forward-thinking approach to identifying and capitalizing on emerging funding opportunities aligned with FCS's mission.

Empower Team

- With deep management experience, empathy, and genuine care; the President will engage and activate the team and harness their unique abilities, passions and potential. As FCS's strategy develops, the President will center employee growth and development in his or her priorities.

- With a people-centered and development mindset, the President will help to shape a culture that is collaborative, inclusive, and values feedback.
- The power of FCS's model is holistic integration of efforts. This integration must be reflected in the team and their work. Breaking down silos and promoting exchange and integration is essential to the organization's successes.
- For the President and the team, the enterprise of community development is mutually transformative.

Personal Characteristics

The President is an experienced builder of relationships, resources and community. Ideal attributes of FCS's next President are:

Leadership

- Adept at change management. Embraces complexity with a strategic mindset and pioneering problem-solving.
- Vision caster with the ability to hold both long-term strategy and present realities simultaneously.
- Ability to guide expansion and strategic implementation in evolving landscapes.
- Entrepreneur who promotes innovation and creative solutions.
- Responsive to the board and balances respect for institutional legacy with future needs and growth.

Champion

- Deeply respects the dignity and wholeness of every individual.

Ideal attributes of FCS's next President include the ability to guide expansion and strategic implementation in evolving landscapes.





The President will embrace community work beyond traditional boundaries, recognizing it extends beyond 9-5.

- Brings the experience, courage, and humility that is essential to advancing racial equity, justice and inclusion in community work.
- Passionate about and committed to the development of South Atlanta.
- Faith motivation. A person of spiritual maturity whose life and work strive to manifest “God’s Shalom”.
- Embraces community work beyond traditional boundaries, recognizing it extends beyond 9-5. Active and visible to everyone in the organization and community.
- Champion of the team who promotes organizational success through a strong, united, and inspired workforce.
- Creative, courageous and grounded.

Connector

- Builds relationships easily and has exceptional ability to forge connections across diverse stakeholder groups.
- Convener with natural talent for bringing together different interests to work towards common goals.
- Inherently combines self-confidence with genuine humility and approachability.
- Unites diverse perspectives and builds consensus amidst complexity.

Communicator

- Demonstrates exceptional listening skills with genuine interest in hearing and understanding others.
- Adaptable and self-aware; possessing emotional intelligence to own when she/he makes mistakes and course-correct.



- Articulates ideas with clarity, engagement and persuasion across various audiences.
- Skillfully distills complex information into approachable and actionable insights.
- Practices honest, transparent and open communication that builds trust and invites diverse and differing perspectives.

Steward

- Brings deep cross-sectoral experience and a record of relevant results.
- Strong knowledge of budgeting and forecasting. Applies sophisticated financial acumen to drive both stability and growth.
- Eager and effective fundraiser who cultivates diverse investment and revenue streams.
- Detail-oriented leader of processes and systems.
- Accountable, decisive, and focused on fiscal oversight and overall health of the organization.

The Relationships

The President reports to:	The Board of Directors
Works closely with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors and civic associations • A cross-section of local leaders and organizations who have a vested interest in the communities of South Atlanta.
And directs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full-time team of 30 with 3 direct reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senior Director of Business Operations ○ Senior Director of Community Development
While stewarding other key relationships, such as:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose Built Network leaders and members • Program partners and collaborators • Current and potential funders • City, state, and regional leaders



Compensation

A competitive compensation package of salary and full benefits will be offered to attract an outstanding candidate. The anticipated starting salary is \$150,000-170,000.

Location

FCS values proximity. Ideally, the next President will live within or near its work and footprint in South Atlanta.

The metro Atlanta area is growing, currently a region of 6.3 million residents, with a population of 510,000 within the city limits. As Georgia's economic powerhouse, Atlanta hosts headquarters for global corporations like Coca-Cola, Home Depot, Delta Air Lines, and UPS, alongside a thriving startup ecosystem and tech scene. The city attracts talent from across the country, creating a diverse and dynamic environment where innovation thrives and new ideas are welcomed.

Atlanta's rich cultural heritage shines through its world-class arts scene, award-winning restaurants, and vibrant neighborhoods each with distinct character. The city balances urban settings with over 340 parks and green spaces, its famous tree canopy and connectivity via the Beltline Southside Trail. Learn more about Atlanta [here](#).

For consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email FCS@BoardWalkConsulting.com
Michelle Hall or **Lysondra Somerville**
at 404-BoardWalk 404-262-7392.

For the current status of this and other searches, please visit www.BoardWalkConsulting.com.
