



# SHAMBHALA

## ATLANTA

*Meditation • Community • Social Vision*

DRAFT- STRATEGIC PLAN 2016- 2019

# **Table of Contents**

## **SECTION I: INTRODUCTION**

- I. LETTER OF INTRODUCTION 3
- II. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY 4
- III. SHAMBHALA ATLANTA MISSION 5
- IV. ENDS STATEMENTS (OVERARCHING CENTER GOALS AND VALUES) 5
- V. SHAMBHALA ATLANTA GUIDING GOALS 5

## **SECTION II : PROGRAMMATIC AREAS**

- I. PRACTICE AND EDUCATION 6
- II. SOCIETAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING 8
- III. COMMUNITY RELATIONS 9
- IV. SHAMBHALA CULTURE AND DECORUM 11
- V. DORJE KASUNG 12

## **SECTION III. ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS**

- I. HUMAN RESOURCES, VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION, AND LEADERSHIP 13
- II. FINANCIAL SYSTEMS 14
- III. MEMBERSHIP 15
- IV. COMMUNICATIONS 17
- V. FACILITIES- SITE 18
- VI. FACILITIES- BUILDINGS 19
- VII. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT (GROWTH & CHANGE) 20

## **Section I: Introduction**

This section is an introduction to the strategic plan and to Shambhala Atlanta as a whole.



February 23, 2016

Dear members and friends of Shambhala,

This Strategic Plan is intended to serve as a means of communicating with the Center's leadership and our community. We hope that it can be a reference, and to provide guidelines for all of our volunteers and leaders, and that it will help to make our efforts be better coordinated and focused.

In January of 2014, our Center began a Vision to Action process with Acharya Susan Skjei and Anyana Banerjee. More than seventy people participated and formed themselves into groups focusing on their areas of interest. In May of that year those groups presented their ideas to the Governing Council. Following that meeting, the Council then went on retreat to contemplate what they had heard from the community, and how we could express these ideas, and the Sakyong's vision for creating an enlightened society.

Following that retreat, the Governing Council began the process of writing a Strategic Plan, and to form an Executive Committee. Following the Shambhala Governance model, it is the responsibility of the Governing Council to establish a direction and a plan for the Center, and the Executive Committee is charged with bringing that plan to a fruition.

The process was challenging. It required each of us to consider how our particular committee might be able to make our Center and our community stronger. And, when we wrote down our ideas, we found that we didn't always agree. Still, we continued, and our relationships deepened. And, an Executive Committee did form and is now taking on a larger and larger role in the leadership of our Center.

This Strategic Plan should be considered a living document. We intend to issue updated versions of it on an annual basis. Thank you for all of your support and participation. We look forward to you feedback and input.

With warm appreciation for all of you,  
The Atlanta Shambhala Governing Council  
Dan Phillips  
Lindsey Muse  
Donna Kingsman  
Chris Wenger

Brenda Collins  
Stephanie Lindemann  
Sally Larrick

## **II. Background and History**

Established in 1976, the Atlanta Shambhala Center is a center for meditation, community, culture and social vision. Shambhala Atlanta offers beginning and advanced programs in mindfulness meditation, Buddhism and other contemplative practices including Shambhala warriorship (training in non-aggressive human bravery and leadership), arts, and movement; opportunities for community; and social action activities.

Shambhala Atlanta is part of a global community of over 200 meditation and retreat centers reaching more than 100,000 people in 94 countries. Shambhala is a global community of people inspired by the principle that every human being has a fundamental nature of basic goodness. This nature, our innate wisdom, can be developed so that it benefits our own lives and helps us meet the many challenges facing the world.

Shambhala was founded by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche and is led by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. Shambhala combines the teachings of the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions of Tibetan Buddhism with the Shambhala principles of living an uplifted life and creating enlightened society.

In its 39-year history, the Atlanta Shambhala Center had numerous locations in Atlanta before moving in 1998 to its present location in the city of Decatur which is in the center of metro Atlanta, six miles east of downtown Atlanta.

In 2011 the Atlanta Shambhala Center formed a Governing Council model of leadership and in 2014 engaged in a Vision to Action process led by Acharya Susan Skjei. We invited the input of everyone connected with our center for the purpose of gathering inspiration and ideas of how we might move forward as a community.

The level of participation was quite strong and eight working groups were formed to investigate different areas of interest. The working groups presented reports to the Governing Council. The Governing Council then went on a weekend retreat to consider the ideas that had been presented. Out of that retreat the Council began the process of creating a vision for the future of the Center. What followed was the beginning of a Strategic Plan. This document is a guide for the direction of the Center and a working document. As well, we began formulating an Executive Committee comprised largely from members of the Vision to Action working groups.

## **III. Shambhala Atlanta Mission**

Our mission is offer the teachings and practices of Shambhala to contribute to the creation of an enlightened society in metropolitan Atlanta.

## **IV. Ends Statements (Overarching Center Goals and Values)**

The Atlanta Shambhala Center Governing Council has taken the past year to reflect upon the values that we hold as a community and our overarching goals. Primarily, we acknowledge and promote the value of every human being and all of life. Our goal is to make it possible for every person to be fully who they are and to fully inhabit their lives.

We seek to create a culture of kindness by deepening our connection with our own nature and that of others, and by providing the training and environment that can make this possible.

## **V. Shambhala Atlanta Guiding Goals**

- Develop leaders and clear governing structure
- Develop clear operating model, supporting processes, and trained people to execute
- Expand and Deepen Understanding of Shambhala practice, path and culture
- Further Connect and Engage our Sangha
- Cultivate our Wealth
- Be of Service to Metro Atlanta

# **Section II: Programmatic Areas**

## **I. Practice and Education**

### **Mission:**

To strengthen and support a vital culture of practice and study throughout the local sangha; to hold and offer the Shambhala teachings as a defining and magnetizing force for Shambhala Atlanta within the metro area and the region

### **Current Strengths:**

- Offering all courses in the Way of Shambhala with strong cohorts in Heart of Warriorship weekend levels
- Strengthening vajrayana program offerings, including extended practice programs
- Substantial number of new vajrayana practitioners

### **Current Challenges:**

- Identifying and training coordinators to sustain Heart of Warriorship and support diversification of program offerings
- Identifying and training upcoming teachers, esp. for weeknight format courses, as currently authorized teachers become less available
- Consistency in fully staffing and supporting the center's current range of practice and program opportunities

### **Vision for 2019**

Shambhala Atlanta will be known within the metro area and north Georgia as the best place to receive and practice authentic teachings on meditation, Buddhism, Shambhala vision, and mindfulness in action. With regard to core Shambhala program offerings, it will be a key resource for the southeast and Florida, filling a niche between smaller local centers and land centers.

### **Objectives for 2019:**

- 15-20 people completing Rigden annually
- 6-8 people attending Enlightened Society Assembly annually
- 12-15 people completing Sacred Path annually
- 20-25 people attending quarterly nyinthuns
- 20-25 people attending twice-yearly weekthuns
- 2-3 offerings/year of mindfulness-in-action program/s aimed at attracting non-Shambhalians
- Vajrayana practice opportunities regularly drawing 8 or more participants

### **Objectives for 2016**

- Integrate shastris into P&E planning
- In coordination with shastris, develop plan for regional acharya
- Provide training to increase number of coordinators and aides and to deepen the view of program service as a practice
- Refresh (or develop) lists of current AD's, MI's, coordinators, aides, and hosts

- Revamp role of hosts for open houses to better engage newcomers and recruit Shambhala Guides to serve in that capacity
- Strengthen consistency of first-time meditation instruction by providing continuing training for Meditation Instructors and Shambhala Guides
- Develop more proactive and consistent approach to educating community members regarding the Shambhala path
- Restart Basic Goodness series
- Coordinate scheduling of programs with Birmingham and Asheville
- Review status of Sacred Path to determine feasibility of offering grouped programs (e.g., GES/Windhorse/Drala) instead of periodic weekends
- Strengthen pathway from MBSR and One Breath to core Shambhala Training programs (e.g., investigate offering ST Level 1 oriented toward people in recovery)
- Create chopon corps to take lead in supporting and promoting community's view of and connection with Shambhala ritual

**Finance:**

Develop a budget.



## **II. Societal Health and Well-Being**

**Mission:** To promote and support the ongoing development of community within the Atlanta Shambhala Center Sangha

### **Current Strengths:**

- There is energy and interest in helping each other even though there are no care teams established.
- Interest groups, LGBTQ Sangha and One Breath, are meeting regularly
- People of Color Sangha is just starting up
- Children's Program is meeting on Nyida Days (once a quarter)

### **Current Challenges:**

- There is no Director of SHWB
- We don't have a method of knowing when members need help
- Groups that were meeting, Young Sangha and The Elders' Group, have stopped meeting for lack of support or energy

**Vision for 2019:** The Shambhala Meditation Center of Atlanta will develop a culture of profound kindness where we care for each other and foster community engagement and celebration.

### **Objectives for 2019:**

- There are protocols in place to work together in times of need – health issues, mental health issues, conflict resolution
- Celebration is a regular feature of our community life
- Death, Dying and Sukhavati are handled as a natural process in our Sangha
- Establish and grow Children and Family Programming
  - Once/mo young children's program
  - Bodhi School of older children
- Interest Groups are supported

### **Objectives for 2016:**

- Identify a Director of SHWB
- Fill positions in Executive Committee under SHWB - Sangha Care, Children and Families, Social
- Establish local practice and social groups by region where there is energy, by way of initiating a deleg system
- Establish a Care Team to help members in crisis
- Have celebrations as a way to shift the culture to one where we want to be together
- Continue our Sunday child care and once/quarter Children's Programs

### **Finance:**

Develop a budget.

### **III. Community Relations**

**Mission:** To foster individual and societal liberation, Shambhala Vision, and to cultivate a good human society in the Greater Atlanta community through social engagement and inclusive community building.

**Current Strengths:**

- We currently have community building activities taking place that are conversations about diversity and Inclusion. These have included three Public Conversations about diversity and racial issues, two People of Color Forums, the formation of a People of Color Sangha and a five part workshop called Becoming an Ally: A Contemplative Approach to Examining White Privilege. On the advice from Reverend angel Kyodo williams, Sensei, who visited our center earlier this year, we are holding independent conversations amongst self-identified racial groups that will come together for a mixed-race conversation.
- In addition, our center hosted Acharya Fleet Maull's program, Radical Responsibility, this year as a community event at the Agnes Scott campus. Many of the people attending that program were from outside our sangha (the Shambhala Atlanta community). Our on-going programs include: A Path of Freedom program to work with the DeKalb Juvenile Justice Center; involvement with Compassionate Atlanta as a charter; member Valerie Morvan was the president of the Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta and we continue to be involved in interfaith work; and One Breath, aka Heart of Recovery, a program that is ten years old and continuing to deepen and grow.
- We are fortunate to have Brenda Collins as our Chair of the newly formed Community Relations Committee. She is a member of the Governing Council and she has been forming a committee to help with the many dimensions of community relations.

**Current Challenges:**

- We are not well known in the metro Atlanta community as an organization of social engagement. And, although that is beginning to change, we have a long way to go to effectively helping to make a culture of kindness a real part of our city.
- Our Community Relations Committee has a large mission and is in the very beginning of a formative phase. There is a need for many people and a variety of skills.
- Vision for 2019: Shambhala Atlanta would like to bring a contemplative view to our city's most challenging issues and to be an agent in cultivating a stronger sense of community.

**Objectives for 2019:**

- Continue to bring a more hopeful and self-reflective view to our city's race relations.
- Begin conversations on other issues that are important to the people of our city and our world. These might include issues such as: income disparity, a

sustainable relationship with our environment and improving our many broken systems (ie. criminal justice, healthcare, education, etc.).

**Vision for 2016:** Our intention is to create relationships in the metro Atlanta community and to host conversations about things that matter, most especially on the topic of race relations, diversity and inclusion.

**Objectives for 2016:**

- We intend to continue our conversations of groups who self-identify as persons of color and whites, and to host conversations with the groups together.
- We will continue to make connections with persons in the community who are involved in the area of race relations and to look for opportunities to work together.
- Host an event in the community that will include a nationally known figure in the area of a contemplative approach to race relations for the purpose of deepening and broadening the conversation.
- Deepen and expand our involvement in changing our criminal justice system.
- Encourage social and educational events that relate to cultures that are different from our own.
- Provide opportunities for members of our sangha to work with other socially active organizations (Hands On Atlanta, Habitat for Humanity, Hosea Feed the Hungry, etc.).

**Finance:**

Develop a budget.

## IV. Shambhala Culture and Decorum

**Mission:** To practice and propagate a culture of kindness and celebration

**Current Strengths:**

Brandy Amato as Nyida day person (especially interested in arts); Kim Nelson as children's program person for Nyida days

Strong attendance at most recent Nyida days

Communication committee to help publicize events

Shastris and other senior students who could train others in decorum, service, etc.

**Current Challenges:**

- Nyida days planned ad hoc and relatively last minute
- Difficulties getting volunteers for Nyida days (at least this go-round)
- Tendency for "adult" events and "children's" events to be somewhat separate, rather than having much by way of community events that bring all ages and sub-groups together
- Nothing explicitly helping to bring Shambhala culture outside the Center and into homes
- Not much view/culture/training around service (e.g. around Acharya household or Sakyong visit)

**Vision for 2019:** (3 years/Anticipation)

- Nyida days widely seen as important part of the community, with broad participation across all subgroups, with view of volunteering as part of bringing practice into daily life
- Include more programs/activities/expressions of the arts
- Neighborhood deleks helping to bring practice 'closer to home'; informal gatherings/ networks in various neighborhoods
- View of service more broadly understood, with training and path available

**Objectives for 2019:** (specific & measurable)

- Include Shambhala songs and other arts at every Nyida day
- Compilation of Shambhala songs prepared and accessible to all
- Neighborhood delek get-togethers encouraged as part of at least one Nyida day (perhaps an option for the neglected spring equinox, or possibly other times in the year)
- Have a service corps of 8-12 people who have been trained and who regard service as path, ideally participating in regular service-related practice

**Objectives for 2016:** (specific & measurable)

- Write up guidelines for Nyida days to help in future planning (list of tasks, possible components)
- Begin collecting Shambhala songs (e.g. CD from Gampo Abbey, song shared by John Rockwell, Binny Clark's work, etc.)
- Stephanie & Norma meet, plan on how to move forward with neighborhood deleks

- Shastri or senior student to give open house talk(s) on the vision of service, service as path
- Identify people who might be interested in service training; offer training
- **Finance:** Develop a budget.

## **V. DORJE KASUNG- PILLAR OF PROTECTION**

**MISSION:** To do what is needed to ensure there is a safe, harmonious and conducive environment for the Atlanta Shambhala Buddhist teachings to be transmitted to the community.

### **CURRENT STRENGTHS:**

- We are fortunate to have a couple of very senior Kasung in our sangha who have mentored newer kasung, including the Rusung, and continue to practice and serve in our community. The fact that our Center Director and the Assistant to the Director are both Dorje Kasung is a huge benefit, as they understand the view and place of the Kasung in the Mandala. The Regimental Commander, who is now a Shastri, will also be moving to Atlanta.
- We have a strong senior Kasung presence.
- Having an outdoor shrine area and a place to drill is also a benefit.
- Given our central location in the Southeast, and our large facilities, the Atlanta Dorje Kasung
- Shiwa Squad have hosted Regional Kasung Programs such as the Regional Maneuvers held in May 2015 and a Regional Trident Assembly held in Dec. 2015.

### **CURRENT CHALLENGES:**

- For such a large Center, we do not have a high number of Dorje
- Kasung. However, we do have several Kasung who have "Active" oaths, but who do not participate or serve. We also do not currently have a Squad Desung.
- We do not have enough troop numbers to provide a consistent presence at Open Houses and Programs.
- It would also raise the lungta of the Dorje Kasung to have a more uplifted KHQ (Kasung
- Headquarters) in which to practice and contribute t a feeling of inspiration and motivation.

**Vision for 2019:** To be a strong squad both in number of troops and in participation of active troops so as to have a much more visible presence at Center functions.

### **Objectives for 2019:**

- To institute an outreach program to local police departments.
- Invite local police departments to our meetings and initiate discussions on working with obstacles.

### **Objectives for 2016:**

- To fill the position of Squad Desung.
- To have at least one Kasung on duty for every Sunday Open House.
- To have at least one Kasung on duty for at least one Tuesday Open House per month.
- To have at least one Kasung who has not attended MPE, do so in Summer 2016.
- To have at least 4 Kasung attend each monthly meeting.
- To host the EHOK II program in April, with Mecklenburg, Rupön facilitating.

- To offer a talk on Kasungship at an Open House during the year.
- To offer the experience of Drill practice to interested community members during or after an Open House.
- **Finance:** Develop a budget.

## **Section III: Administrative Areas**

### **I. Human Resources, Volunteer Administration, Leadership**

#### **Mission Statement**

Provide the leadership and human resources needed to fulfill our overall mission and objectives.

#### **Current Strengths**

- We currently have one full-time employee (the center director) and two part time persons (assistant to the center director and bookkeeper).
- Many of our needs are fulfilled by volunteer human resources.
- An Executive Committee has been formed and has become operational.
- Many Leadership positions have been defined and filled.
- Governing Council participated in a retreat to strengthen our vision.
- Atlanta Shambhala Center Staff Handbook has been completed.

#### **Current Challenges**

- We are unable to accomplish many needed tasks due to a lack of human resources.
- A Volunteer Coordinator is needed to promote and coordinate our volunteer human resources.
- Many Leadership positions remain unfilled leaving gaps in our ability to coordinate our efforts.
- We lack a Director of Societal Health and Well-Being as well as a Desung position in the Dorje Kasung. This challenges our ability to take care of our members.

#### **Vision for 2019**

- Shambhala Atlanta will have the appropriate volunteer and paid staff, with appropriate skills to fulfill our aspirations and needs.

#### **Objectives for 2019**

- To mentor and train our people to work towards a common vision.

#### **Vision for 2016**

- Increase the number of persons in leadership and volunteer roles by 20% or more.

#### **Objectives for 2016**

- Direct paid staff in a manner that creates stronger support for volunteer efforts.
- Find a person for the position of Director of Societal Health and Well-Being, and a Desung.
- Attract leaders to fill vacant positions.
- Identify a Volunteer Coordinator.

#### **Finance:**

Develop a budget.

## II. Financial Systems

### MISSION:

Promote fiscal clarity of the flow of financial resources. The *financial system* monitors & supports the wellbeing of the Atlanta Shambhala Meditation Center.

Ensure the current and future needs of the center are being planned for and met.

Reinforce a sane *view of money*. Chagdzo works to educate the leadership of the center in financial view & practice as well as fiscal budgets and responsibility. Inform & engage the community in the financial realm

### CURRENT STRENGTHS:

- Paid bookkeeper – consistency
- Chagdzo position filled and active
- Communication has begun
- Increasing property value
- Emergency fund
- Physical Assets Including
- increasing property value
- Nonvolatile cash flow
- Manageable expenses

### CURRENT CHALLENGES:

- No Development Committee, budget, established and documented financial systems and
- methods of communicating these systems and the information that these systems produce.
- Method & planning of ongoing
- communications needs work
- Sane view of money has not been explored or presented.
- Debt structure, cost of interest
- Limited income, lack of financial resources to support our building, SI %, fund staff, plans &
- growth.

### VISION FOR 2019:

#### *Financial Systems:*

Properly monitored annual budget that is determined by the needs and directives of the Strategic Plan. Reference points in place for leadership as established and documented systems for financial decision making. Fully supporting unified giving and a healthy connection

to center mandala by meeting the financial directives from the center of the mandala.

Established communication systems of financial goals and progress of the center.

Membership...

**Development:** The *Development* Committee anticipates the financial and physical needs of Atlanta Shambhala as informed by the Executive Committee, Governing Council & Director and fundraises for those needs.

#### *Financial View & Practice:*

Established ourselves in the conversation of enlightened approach to money in the Atlanta community. Atlanta Shambhala provides both the teachings and the container for our sangha to engage in the practice of relating sanely to money. Clear & Accessible. Both practical and inspiring. Foster an environment where generosity arises naturally.

***Communications of Finance Realm:***

Financial communication with the community occurs on an ongoing basis rooted in a longterm plan that keeps the membership informed, involved and inspired.

**OBJECTIVES FOR 2019:**

- ***Financial Systems:*** Continue to work with established budgeting and financial systems,
- including decision making tools. (Refining) Contribute 25% of Atlanta Shambhala's income to
- Shambhala International. Membership & donations support 100% of nonprogram
- operating
- costs. Debt is reduced and/or restructured. Interest expense is redirected towards Atlanta
- Shambhala's goals.
- ***Development:*** Fundraising strategies and tools established. Functioning and supported DC.
- Determining physical needs. Engaged and able to carry out our financial needs – filling the
- gaps.
- Healthy membership of committee.
- ***Financial View & Practice:*** Opportunities to train and engage in the view and practice of
- money are provided on a regular basis. The message of sane view and understanding of that
- message is familiar to our membership.
- ***Communication:*** Maintaining and tailoring to the current needs and feedback from the
- community/success of methods.

**OBJECTIVES FOR 2016:**

***Financial Systems:***

- Build 2016 annual budget with collaboration of committees. Monitor and
- adjust budget on a monthly basis.
- SI% Double
- monthly contribution (\$1400), consider this in developing the budget and adjust
- percentage contributed based on this information.
- Membership increase by 15%.
- Debt Investigate
- Ashoka, Potrong debt restructuring.
- Evaluate priorities for developing decision making tools – for example Staff Compensation
- standards, program pricing..., make them. Include methods to track and measure.

***Development:***

- Find and appoint a chair for the Development Committee. Chair & Chagdzo
- work to grow and support development committee.



- Composition of the committee – Chagdzo, Director, Chair and Members.
- Familiarize Executive Council on role of Development and work on establishing communication
- with Director and Development to create an informed Development Committee.

***Financial View & Practice:***

- Begin developing a plan to provide training and engagement in the view and practice of working with money to both the sangha and the greater Atlanta community as informed by the Economic Pillar of Shambhala. Explore and develop sane view of money.

***Communication Objectives:***

- Create and institute a plan that includes timing of communications, model, etc.
- Quarterly updates – through website?? of financial graphs, membership covering operations.
- Webpage devoted to finance information for community with link in newsletter.
- Using recurring representations that familiarize the community with the financial progress and state of the center. Standards that people can get used to.
- Community Meeting on finances, engaging in person. Financial communication at Member's meeting, HOP.

**Finance:**

Develop a budget.

### **III. Membership**

**Mission:** To grow, diversify and increase engagement of membership

#### **Current Strengths:**

- We currently have 182 members (155 dues paying members). We don't have demographic data on current members.
- Revenue from member contributions = \$5983 per month, average from 7/14-7/15
- There is a Membership Chair who welcomes new members via email and by phone.
- We have one Members' Meeting a year in the spring where we welcome new members.
- 31 people have become members since January 1, 2015.

#### **Current Challenges:**

- need to recruit a Membership Team to work with Membership Chair
- need a Volunteer Coordinator to connect with new members as soon as they join to make volunteering an integral part of joining

#### **Vision for 2019**

Working together with Societal Health and Well-Being, the Community Relations Committee, and the Chagdzo, create a thriving and growing community that is informed, connected and working together to keep the Shambhala Center flourishing and engaged in the wider community. Practically, this means increasing our member contributions to sustain the operations of the center and support satellite centers.

#### **Objectives for 2019:**

- Increase the number of members at the Atlanta Shambhala Center with an emphasis on diversifying our membership to reflect the demographics of the Atlanta area in terms of race, age, gender identity, sexual-orientation and socio-economic level.
- Communicate with newcomers about membership and with new members about how to get connected to the community and the path of practice and study and the importance of supporting the center financially and through volunteering.
- Track members – how many join each year and how many drop out. Conduct an exit interview with members who leave.
- Volunteering will be an integrated part of becoming a new member.

#### **Objectives for 2016**

- Find Membership Team members
- Have clear communication about money – what member's contribution pays for and what the center needs to operate – on the website
- Have someone from the Membership Committee meet with each new member to answer questions and give a membership pin

- Talk about Membership in a regularly scheduled forum
- Have regular member get-togethers that promote connection
- Have a volunteer appreciation lunch

**Finance:** We need money to buy refreshments for member get-togethers and volunteer appreciation lunches.

## **IV. Communications**

### **Mission:**

To maintain and improve our communications at the Atlanta Shambhala Center in a manner that will make it easy for newer people to know what we are about and how they can connect, for more experienced people to stay informed and connected, and for leaders and volunteers to exchange information about their specific area of involvement. We would also like to make it easy for people beyond our center to be informed about our programs that may be of interest to them in the service of creating enlightened society.

### **Current State:**

Our website and its connection to the Shambhala Database is the hub of our center's communications. However, we also send out weekly newsletters from Mailchimp and maintain two Facebook pages. We also utilize BringIt as a means of scheduling volunteers. There is someone managing our Facebook pages and someone managing weekly announcements. Our administrative assistant presently sends out the newsletter.

### **Recent Activity:**

Tommy Houseworth has agreed to be our Director of Communications and he now sits on the Executive Committee. We have recently begun sending a shortened version of the newsletter twice a month and a full version twice a month. We have asked someone to help with the more menial parts of the newsletter.

### **Vision for 2019:**

Create a system of communication that utilizes current technology, is user-friendly and that has the most appealing and useful content possible.

### **Objectives for 2019:**

1. Increase the depth and appeal of our communications.

### **Objectives for 2016:**

- Create a Communications Committee to oversee the maintenance and improvement of our communications. The head of this committee sits on the Executive Committee.
- Continue and improve our existing communications.
- Develop an information packet that can be sent to newer people who come to our center. Some of this information could have a link on our Home Page and some of it could be sent to people when they sign-in to our database.
- Assign someone on the Communications Committee to be responsible for the center newsletter.
- Develop expertise and resources in promoting programs beyond our center.
- Develop an effective and user-friendly means of communicating with other members of a committee or area of interest.
- Add a network cable in the Turquoise Hall.

### **Finance:**

Provide cost estimates for all improvements and repairs.

Deliver approved improvements and repairs within budget.



## **V. Facilities – Site**

### **Mission:**

To maintain and improve the site and landscaping of our property in a manner that reflects the Atlanta Shambhala Center's goal of creating a peaceful and magnetizing environment.

### **Current State:**

The Atlanta Shambhala Center bought the property at 1447 Church St. in October of 1998. It consisted of two lots on 1.1 acres with two residences. In 2004 the Green Dragon guest house was purchased and in 2005 a 3,600s.f. new building was constructed with extensive landscaping and 21 parking spaces. The area around our center is undergoing a significant increase in development and property values.

### **Current challenges:**

The availability of parking is often an issue for programs at our center. Erosion is an issue on some parts of the site and on rare occasions our plaza will flood and threaten to flow into our building. The English Ivy that is pervasive on the property to the north requires on-going attention to prevent it from spreading.

### **Recent Activity:**

In 2013 a permaculture design was done for the site but not yet installed. In 2013 an Ikebana Garden was installed and flags placed along the walkway. The following year a children's playset was installed. This year the bamboo was removed from either side of the walkway because it had become too invasive, and it was replaced by new trees and shrubs. A Drala Landing was installed and our street sign was lighted and the area around it was landscaped.

### **Vision for 2019:**

Landscaping plan implemented.

### **Objectives for 2019:**

2. Install the permaculture design and supporting irrigation systems.
3. Implement parking plan (see Physical Development)
4. Replace our sign.

### **Vision for 2016:**

Develop a plan for realizing the potential of our site landscape.

### **Objectives for 2016:**

- Create a Facilities- Site Committee to oversee the maintenance and improvement of the site. The head of this committee will have a seat on the Executive Committee.
- Develop a plan for improving and maintaining our landscaping.
- Remove brush piles and remove dead tree limbs.
- Install a contemplative walking path.

### **Finances:**

Develop a budget for landscaping improvements and replacing our sign.

## **VI. Facilities - Buildings**

### **Mission:**

To maintain and develop our buildings to create an environment that is comfortable and inspiring, and one that can accommodate the programmatic and social needs of the people who come to the Center.

### **Current State:**

We have four buildings on our property, and three of them were renovated in 1999. Our largest building, the Turquoise Hall was constructed in 2004. The life-cycles of some of the fixtures, appliances and building elements of these facilities will be coming to an end in the next ten years. Also, our spaces are becoming less available due to increased program use. Some of our spaces are being rented to people who are not members of our Center.

### **Recent Activity**

We recently have created a multi-purpose space in the Sapphire House. Also, the Green Dragon has changed in function from a guest house to a residence that is being rented by the center director. Some renovations were done in association with this change to improve the building's circulation, create a full size kitchen and to install a washer and dryer.

### **Vision for 2019**

Properly maintain our buildings and develop built space for any future needs.

### **Objectives for 2019:**

- Fully implement the directives of the Facilities- Building Committee.

### **Vision for 2016**

To develop a plan for maintaining our facilities and accommodating growth.

### **Objectives for 2016**

- Create a Facilities- Building Committee to oversee the maintenance and improvement of our buildings. The head of this committee will have a seat on the Executive Committee.
- To prioritize who the Center's facilities should accommodate. Many people desire to use the facilities without having any interest in participating in the mission of the Center. At the same time, we are experiencing growth that requires more space for our program functions.
- Develop a list of needed building maintenance items, prioritize the need for each, develop a budget and an action plan for each.
- Hire a consulting architect to assess the potential for adding additional space to our buildings (see Physical Development).
- Our larger current building maintenance needs include replacing our corroding underground gas line, replacing our microwave and oven, and replacing the light fixtures in the Turquoise Hall Community Room.

### **Finance:**

Currently we have budgeted \$6K annually for the maintenance of our buildings. The rental income from the Green Dragon will be earmarked for a building maintenance fund for future use. A budget and plan for fundraising will need to be done for the addition of any building spaces.

## **VII. Physical Development (Growth & Change)**

### **Mission:**

To develop a proactive strategy for accommodating the physical needs of our center, as our programmatic and social needs change, and to respond to the changes that are occurring in our urban environment.

### **Current State**

The number of people who are coming to our center is increasing (63% increase over four years ago from Shambhala database information). And, at the same time, a significant amount of redevelopment is occurring in the urban environment where we are located. It is anticipated that our property, and those around us will be targeted for redevelopment.

Parking is an issue on our site. When the Turquoise Hall was constructed, we required a zoning variance for having an insufficient amount of parking for that amount of occupied building space.

### **Recent Activity**

We have been advised by one of our members, an attorney, that our property would not likely be subject to involuntary sale. Hopefully, we can remain in our present location. But, we must remain aware of the changes that are occurring. And, we need to determine if it would be possible for us to add additional building space, with our lack of parking.

### **Vision for 2019**

Continue with vision and objectives from 2016 as needed.

### **Vision for 2016**

Consider, as a community, if and how we would like to expand our building facilities. And, research the possibilities for satellite locations.

### **Objectives for 2016**

- Consult with an architect about the potential for expanding our building spaces.
- Consider the following construction projects:
  - Constructing a parking garage
  - Adding a six foot addition to the Diamond Temple shrine room.
  - Expand the Diamond Temple shrine room within the existing building footprint.
  - Replace the Green Dragon garage with a wider carriage apartment structure, and rent the apartment for short term periods.
- Contact other centers (ie. Seattle) about their experience with satellite centers.
- Consider the relationship between satellite centers and deleks.

### **Finances:**

\$2K consulting fee for architect to analyze our parking options.