



Sara Patenaude

Director, Policy Solutions, Reinvestment Fund

Dr. Sara Patenaude (she/her) is the Director of Policy Solutions for the Southeast. In her role, she leads Policy Solutions engagements in the region, conducting rigorous research and building analytic tools that help stakeholders implement effective interventions to achieve equitable outcomes.

Prior to joining Reinvestment Fund, Sara worked as a nonprofit housing developer, directly contributing to the creation and preservation of over 1,000 units of affordable housing across the southeast, representing over \$220 million of affordable housing investment. Her previous experience also includes creating comprehensive city and county housing strategies and providing consultative input into affordable housing needs for communities across the southeast.

She has a PhD in Urban History and a Certificate in Planning and Economic Development from Georgia State University, where she studied affordable housing policy. Sara serves on the boards of HouseATL, the Atlanta Women's Affordable Housing Network, and the Friends School of Atlanta. She also serves as an advisor for community groups advocating for affordable housing and supporting our unhoused neighbors.

Dr. Sara Patenaude

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director, Policy Solutions - Southeast Reinvestment Fund, Atlanta, GA

2024 – Present

- Lead mixed methods research evaluation engagements in the Southeast region, conducting rigorous research and building analytic tools that help stakeholders implement effective interventions to achieve equitable outcomes.
- Establish and maintain relationships with current and prospective clients
- Communicate research findings to clients and public audiences

Development Director

Decatur Housing Authority, Decatur, GA

- Responsible for \$114 million residential multifamily development pipeline representing 332 units in development or under construction
- Developed and maintained key partner relationships and nurture future business including self-development and fee-development opportunities
- Managed all aspects of real estate development projects, from project concept to stabilized operations

2019 – 2022

Senior Project Manager

Tapestry Development Group, Inc., Decatur, GA

- Closed deals accounting for \$133.5 million of investment in affordable housing across the Southeast market (Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina)
- Responsible for pipeline totaling \$118 million in residential development projects
- Managed all aspects of development projects, from project concept to stabilized operations

2017 – 2019

Real Estate and Economic Development Consultant

KB Advisory Group, Atlanta, GA

- Conducted economic, demographic, and real estate research including real estate market studies, tax allocation district (TAD/TIF) analyses, and economic impact studies for public sector and private developers
- Organize data, analyze trends, and construct models in Excel and GIS and communicate key findings and recommendations to internal partners and external clients

Graduate Researcher and Teacher

Department of History, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

2012 – 2018

- Researched, analyzed, and communicated historical data about low-income housing policy
- Analyzed complex datasets and summarized results in written and oral presentations

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Board Member 2025-Present
Rental Housing Preservation Working Group Co-Chair 2023-Present
HouseATL

- Co-lead of new 25-member working group working to ensure tools for preserving affordable housing are abundant and flexible in the metro Atlanta (5-county) region

Board Clerk (chair) 2021-Present
Board Member 2019-Present
Friends School of Atlanta

- Oversee 16-member board providing strategic leadership for a PreK-8th independent school. Led search process and transition support for new Head of School in 2023.

Vice President of Communication 2022-Present
Atlanta Women's Affordable Housing Network

- Board member supervising 6-person volunteer communications team responsible for newsletter and social media outreach to 600+ members

Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Committee Member 2022-Present
Urban Land Institute – Atlanta

Board Member 2024-Present
Trans Housing Coalition

AWARDS AND HONORS

ULI Center for Leadership, ULI Atlanta, class of 2022

Provost Dissertation Fellow, GSU College of Arts and Sciences, 2017

Urban Fellow, Center for the Comparative Study of Metropolitan Growth, GSU College of Law 2013-2015

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy – Urban History 2018
Graduate Certificate in Planning and Economic Development

Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

Master of Arts – Public History 2011
University of Maryland Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD

Bachelor of Arts – History and English 2009
Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY