



# O-H Community Partners Newsletter

Issue 1, Spring 2008

Dear Lisa,

Welcome to the quarterly newsletter of O-H Community Partners, Ltd. (OHcp). Exciting changes are about to take place with OHcp. Through this newsletter, we will keep you informed of these changes, as well as keep you up to date on economic development and organizational development news and innovations that can impact your organization and/or community.

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## O-H Community Partners Assists Quad Communities Development Corporation with Structuring and Raising a \$12 Million Loan Fund



O-H Community Partners (OHcp) has assisted the Quad Communities Development Corporation (QCDC), a nonprofit group, to negotiate a public-private partnership with ShoreBank, Harris Bank, and Citibank to create and administer a \$12 million Cottage Grove Restoration Initiative (CGRI) fund. This fund will support commercial revitalization efforts in the Bronzeville community with the goal of attracting more retail and services businesses to the Cottage Grove commercial corridor, including full-service restaurants, home furnishing and accessories, apparel, grocery, and specialty stores.

Thanks to this creative financing tool, below market interest loans with flexible repayment schedules will be available to local businesses and property owners to assist with financing renovations of their commercial and mixed-use buildings. The fund will also offer technical assistance and branded design elements from Little Black Pearl Arts and Design Center. The CGRI fund is also being offered in conjunction with a new 43rd & Cottage Grove Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF), which offers grants of up to \$150,000 to rehab existing storefronts.



Terry Johnson and Tony Smith of ShoreBank announce CGRI launch

To secure funding, OHcp assisted QCDC in conducting a market analysis to determine the need for this type of loan product. After determining a need, OHcp helped QCDC to create an inventory of target redevelopment sites, structure the loan fund, and prepare, present, and negotiate the proposal with local financial institutions. OHCP and QCDC also met with local property owners to share information about the product and build a pipeline of interest. The launch of the CGRI fund was covered by Crain's Chicago Business on January 31, 2008 (please [click here](#) to link to the article).

To learn more about how your community can create financing tools to revitalize your business district, call Chinwe Onyeagoro at 312-850-0600 or send an email to [inquiries@o-hcommunitypartners.com](mailto:inquiries@o-hcommunitypartners.com).

## Three Key Steps to an Actionable Strategic Plan

Has your organization ever developed a strategic plan? Was the plan fully implemented? Whether or not a strategic plan is fully implemented depends to a large extent on whether it is an *actionable* strategic plan.

A strategic plan that's actionable does not sit on a shelf collecting dust. Rather, it is a dynamic roadmap for decision making and prioritizing. To achieve an actionable strategic plan, in addition to collecting data, adopting mission and vision statements, and setting organizational goals, the following three key steps should be taken:

First, objectives need to be developed that support the organization's goals. But not just any objectives--they should be SMART\* objectives. What are SMART objectives? SMART objectives meet the following criteria:

<b>S</b> pecific	Is the objective precise and well defined? Is it clear? Can everyone understand it?
<b>M</b> easurable	How will you know when the task has been completed? What evidence is needed to confirm it?
<b>A</b> chievable	Is it within your organization's capabilities? Are there sufficient resources available to enable this to happen?
<b>R</b> ealistic	How sensible is the objective in the current community/target demographic context?
<b>T</b> imely	What is the deadline? Are there review dates?

Secondly, for a strategic plan to be actionable, it needs concrete actions in the form of work plans that support the organization's SMART objectives. These work plans should include each task needed to realize the objective. Along with stating the task, the work plan should also specify the timing or deadline and the lead person or team responsible for performing the task.

Thirdly, the plan needs to be integrated into the organization and kept alive by, for example:

- Tying the work plans to performance evaluations
- Celebrating strategic plan accomplishments regularly
- Reciting the mission and vision statements at the beginning of board and staff meetings
- Making the strategic plan a standing board meeting agenda item at least quarterly
- Reporting strategic plan updates in the annual report and on the website
- Reviewing the strategic plan annually

If the above three steps are applied, your organization will be better able to fully implement your strategic plan, which will greatly contribute to the success of your organization!

If you are interested in learning more about how your organization can develop an actionable strategic plan, please call Kim Hunt at 312-850-0600 or send an email to [inquiries@o-hcommunitypartners.com](mailto:inquiries@o-hcommunitypartners.com).

\*Source: [www.freeskills.com](http://www.freeskills.com)

## NeighborWorks Green Bay Benefits From an Actionable Strategic Plan

As a prequalified member of the consulting pool for NeighborWorks America, O-H Community Partners had their first engagement within the NeighborWorks Network with NeighborWorks Green Bay, a nonprofit corporation that strengthens neighborhoods and improves lives by revitalizing housing, enhancing neighborhood character, and promoting homeownership in the Green Bay, Wisconsin, area.



Example of before and after housing renovation by NeighborWorks Green Bay

Although NeighborWorks Green Bay (NWGB) is already one of NeighborWorks' more innovative member organizations in terms of identifying opportunities and leveraging partnerships, they engaged O-H Community Partners (OHcp) to guide them through the development of a multi-year actionable strategic plan.

As part of the strategic planning process they set out to make strategic decisions about how to grow their organization by (1) diversifying programming, (2) expanding their service area, or (3) increasing clients within the existing geography.

Early in the strategic planning process, OHcp staff gathered and analyzed data, which led to an "aha!" moment for NWGB. Through census data they learned that people in Green Bay were spending a higher percentage of their income on mortgages than people statewide. This knowledge led NWGB to make the decision to deepen their penetration within their existing service area rather than broaden their reach into other areas within the county.

OHcp also assisted NeighborWorks Green Bay in establishing a new mission statement, vision statement, goals, SMART\* objectives, work plans, and tools for implementation.

Executive Director Noel S. Halvorsen states, "A key factor in choosing O-H Community Partners was the integration of the finished plan with a management tool--Microsoft Project. In hindsight, the most valuable part of the experience was the development of detailed work plans that address the desired

outcomes associated with our new strategic goals. The delivered plan is a critical document that is guiding our organization to a higher level of performance."

To learn more about effective strategic planning, please call Kim Hunt at 312-850-0600 or send an email to [inquiries@o-hcommunitypartners.com](mailto:inquiries@o-hcommunitypartners.com).

\*Source: [www.freeskills.com](http://www.freeskills.com)



## Staff Spotlight on Tonya N. Sanders

Tonya Sanders joined O-H Community Partners in November 2007 as a Research Associate. Tonya received her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Truman State University and her Master's Degree in Community Psychology and Social Change from Pennsylvania State University. While at Penn State, Tonya worked as a research assistant.

Currently, Tonya is pursuing her Doctoral Degree in Urban Planning and Policy with a specialization in community development from University of Illinois at Chicago where her research interests are centered on faith-based community development. At UIC Tonya is an Abraham Lincoln Fellow, and she has served as a teaching assistant for a graduate level course in qualitative methods.

Tonya is an active member of the American Planning Association and volunteers her time with the Beloved Community, a nonprofit community development corporation, and Lawndale Alliance, a community organizing group on Chicago's West Side.

At OHcp, Tonya has assisted in conducting research and analyzing data for strategic planning engagements with clients ranging from charter schools to affordable housing development corporations.

"The thing that I love the most about working at OHcp," Tonya says, "is that I'm helping to build stronger communities. I'm using many of the skills that I have learned during my Master's and doctoral programs. I have found myself having my hands in a variety of projects. I feel very fortunate that I have a job that allows me to do what I love--helping others."

## SAVE THE DATE!

O-H Community Partners and ShoreBank Nonprofit Service Center will present:

### Strategic Planning for Nonprofits

Date: July 23, 2008

More details to come . . .

## OHcp and OHcp Clients in the News

Click on the headlines below to link to articles:

February 24, 2008 - *Chicago Sun-Times*  
[Getting Down to Business](#)

February 13, 2008 - *Lakefront Outlook*  
[Murals Coming to Cottage Grove](#)

February 4, 2008 - *Chicago Sun-Times*  
[Part 1 of a Series: Chicagoans Under 30 - Women to Watch](#)

January 31, 2008 - *Crain's RealEstateDaily.com*  
[ShoreBank Leading Bronzeville Low-Interest Loan Program](#)

January 23, 2008 - Media Release  
[Local Banks Pledge \\$12 Million to Renovate Commercial Buildings in Bronzeville](#)

November 5, 2007 - *Crain's Chicago Business*  
[Forty Under Forty](#)



**Who we are:**

O-H Community Partners (OHcp) is a management consulting firm that provides the following services: planning, project management, and capital advisory services to nonprofits, faith-based institutions, and government agencies

**Our mission:**

Develop the capacity and sustainability of nonprofit organizations in order to build sustainable local economies

**Our vision:**

Global recognition as the premier advisor and technical assistance resource for grassroots nonprofit organizations

**Our approach:**

Every OHcp consulting engagement includes four core components:

- (1) Market and best practice research
- (2) Customized strategy and plans
- (3) Tactical "on the ground" implementation assistance
- (4) Capacity building training and tools

**We hope you have enjoyed the first issue of our newsletter. Please feel free to share this and future issues with friends and colleagues. For more information, just click on a link below to contact us or visit our website.**

**Sincerely,**

**Chinwe Onyeagoro**  
**Managing Partner**

**Kim Hunt**  
**Managing Partner**

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