

# Strategic Plan

## Tacony Community Development Corporation

2012-2017

Prepared by



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## *Introduction*

The Tacony Community Development Corporation (TCDC) has been in existence for more than ten years and, in that time, has focused on improving the housing stock in the community. Since October 2011, the TCDC has revised its agenda to concentrate exclusively on the commercial corridor's revitalization along the 6300 and 7200 blocks of Torresdale Avenue. This work is part of the Tacony Community Development Corporation's overall mission to combat blight, lower vacancies and improve the physical condition of the commercial corridor of the Tacony community.

The Historic Tacony Revitalization Program is using an organizing method known nationally as the Main Street Four Point Approach™. Torresdale and Longshore Avenues, as the historic and current commercial corridor of Tacony, define the local identity and reflect that community's history and 'sense of place.' The Main Street Approach stresses historic preservation as the underlying design principle for the revitalization effort. Main Street efforts nationwide aim to maximize the economic potential of each historic commercial district while preserving its distinct historic character. For Tacony, volunteer-led committees, called Teams are integral to the success of the program and involve stakeholders—be they residents, business owners or property owners—in making decisions about the future of the corridor. This new strategic plan represents the next phase in the TCDC's organizational development.

## *A New Strategic Plan*

Even though the TCDC has been working as an all-volunteer organization for more than a decade, the organization has never had a strategic plan to guide its activities. With the hiring of Alexander Balloon as the first commercial corridor manager in January 2012, the Tacony CDC has positioned itself to take on larger projects to benefit commercial property owners, merchants, residents and visitors.

The Tacony CDC Board felt it was time to set forth a clear future agenda for the organization through a comprehensive strategic planning process. Long-time Tacony CDC consultant, Donna Ann Harris of Heritage Consulting Inc., organized and hosted a Visioning and Strategic Planning Workshop on September 17, 2012 to seek the input of Board members, property owners, business owners and residents to discuss the long-term future of the commercial revitalization effort, now that the organization has completed its first year of revitalization operations. In addition, the recently completed Market Analysis and Marketing Plan by the Clue Group and Market Knowledge, provides critical demographic and market data about the neighborhood and helps inform this Strategic Plan.

## *What is a Strategic Plan?*

**Board Source**™, a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the public good by building exceptional nonprofit boards and inspiring board service, defines a Strategic Plan as

a written document that defines an organization's over-arching strategies and major areas of work for the next three to five years to achieve the organization's mission.

Strategic plans for nonprofit organizations are created through a process that builds on research to accumulate wisdom about the organization, its environment, economic potential and involves stakeholders in the process to assure that the resulting Strategic Plan contains a compressive understanding of the preferred future of the organization.

### *Visioning and Strategic Planning Workshop*

Tacony CDC held a three-hour evening workshop where stakeholders gathered to create a vision of the preferred future of the organization and to identify a handful of strategic goals, strategies and projects to implement over the life of the Strategic Plan. Fifteen Tacony Board members, residents, Civic Association representatives, business owners and property owners attended this workshop held at the Disston Street Baptist Church. Attendees learned about the recently completed Market Analysis and Marketing Plan completed by the CLUE Group and Market Knowledge, and reviewed the list of committee and Board member accomplishments over the last year (attached).

Ms. Harris conducted an exercise designed to help participants articulate and visualize the future of the Torresdale Avenue commercial corridor in five (5) years' time. This information was used to develop the vision statement contained herein. The balance of the evening workshop was focused on uncovering a handful of broad strategic goals to ground the work of the organization in the future. These five broad strategic goals were identified as:

### 2012-2017 TCDC Strategic Goals

1. Continue to **monitor** Torresdale Avenue to maintain a clean and safe environment for residents, shoppers and visitors;
2. Market, advertise and grow events and activities to **bring people** to Torresdale Avenue;
3. Maintain and enhance all aspects of the physical environment to **increase foot traffic** on the Avenue;
4. **Expand financial resources**, partner with a variety of organizations/agencies and continue to recruit volunteers to implement activities and
5. Manage and **expand the business mix** by retaining existing businesses and recruiting complimentary new businesses.

### *How to Use This Strategic Plan*

This 2012-2017 Strategic Plan for Tacony is a review of the past performance of the organization and a representation of its bright future. This Strategic Plan contains a new vision statement. The five Strategic Goals mentioned above organize the rest of the document and should be used

to guide all of the organization's work in the next five (5) years, which is the useful life of this planning document.

### *Role of the Strategic Goals*

The five Strategic Goals serve as the bridge to the new vision for the future of Tacony's commercial corridor along Torresdale and Longshore Avenues. All of the short and longer-term projects (individually and collectively) move the organization towards making its Vision real by allocating all of its financial and volunteer resources accordingly.

The activities and programs that the Tacony CDC implements in the future, through the combination of Board, staff, Teams (Committees), partners and individual task volunteers must be aligned to achieve at least one (1) of the five (5) Strategic Goals as outlined above. If a project does not *clearly* meet any of the Strategic Goals, the project should neither be staffed nor funded, as there are limited volunteer and financial resources.

### *Implementing Projects*

Annual projects will typically be anchored in one (1) Strategic Goal but will affect (typically and to a lesser degree) other goals. If a project meets at least one (1) of the five (5) goals but runs *counter* to any of the other five goals, it should not be implemented unless the Tacony Board determines that the upside is overwhelmingly crucial to the TCDC vision and mission.

### *Establishing Priorities*

Annual projects that meet multiple Strategic Goals should receive higher prioritization for staffing by either paid staff or volunteer team members as well as funding. Once annual projects are approved by the Tacony Board for funding (resource allocation) then the programmatic budget for TCDC for the year is effectively determined. Any additional resources (such as money, in-kind services or partners) may allow for the expansion of annual projects or the addition of new ones that may have been initially put on hold by the Board. No project should go ahead without adequate volunteer support and/or oversight of TCDC staff members.

### *Role of Work Plans*

Work plans for each project are completed by the volunteer Teams, or by Board or TCDC Staff. The work plan provides detail on how to implement an effective project. Every work plan contains the following elements: Who (person or partner organization.), What, When, How Much Cost, How Much Income, Volunteer Hours, Staff Hours and of course, the Strategic Goal(s) met. Collectively, these work plans become the annual TCDC Work Plan. The Work Plan can be used to sell sponsorships and support, as well as to assertively market the volunteer

and collaborative opportunities therein to individuals and groups of current or potential stakeholders.

### *An Ambitious Agenda*

This Strategic Plan sets out a very ambitious improvement agenda for the Tacony CDC over the next five (5) years. All of these activities are important and worthy, but the Tacony Board must reach agreement about how it will staff these activities.

While there are already some volunteers involved with the organization, there are not enough to implement even a small portion of these activities. The current staff cannot take on any more duties, as it is already significantly overstretched.

If the TCDC Board, along with Teams and volunteers, is to be responsible for implementing these tasks, then the TCDC Board must invest substantially in volunteer infrastructure. New systems will be needed, including volunteer job descriptions, databases, volunteer recruitment drives and volunteer training and recognition events. Leadership for any new volunteer effort must come from the Board itself; staff cannot implement this kind of wholesale change without full Board commitment.

If the TCDC Board is uncomfortable with volunteers implementing these activities, then the Board must invest in new staff members. The TCDC Board must recognize that there is just not enough administrative staff to implement these exciting new projects while managing current efforts to fully realize the vision and implement all of these worthy activities. The current budget for the Tacony CDC is simply too small to facilitate this change. This Strategic Plan sets a new agenda for the future of Tacony and the Tacony CDC Board is poised to meet this challenge.

### *Conclusion*

This first-ever 2012-2017 Tacony Strategic Plan is a great first step towards realizing some of the long-term dreams discussed during the stakeholder workshop. The future for Torresdale and Longshore Avenues as a commercial district and for the Tacony CDC organization, while not without its challenges, is bright.

### *What is a vision statement?*

A vision statement sums up the preferred future of the organization's commercial district. It is often a lofty statement or series of paragraphs that express what will happen if the organization works hard over five (5) years to make the future plans real. This is a long-term vision, and meant to be aspirational. Some elements may not be able to be accomplished in five (5) years, due to changes in property ownership, politics or funding streams, for example. However, most of this vision can be achieved with hard work and additional resources, both financial and volunteer/staff. The vision is grounded in current market data including an understanding of the changing demographics and business clusters in the area.

The vision statement (in its varying version lengths) itself will be used differently for a variety of purposes including: Public relations, marketing, stakeholder education, partnership building, financial resource cultivation and volunteer attraction.

### **Our Vision for Tacony in 2017**

By 2017, Tacony will be recognized as a quality destination for shopping and dining in Philadelphia. People will throng Longshore and Torresdale Avenues on weekdays for appointments with the myriad of health care and professional service providers and to shop in their favorite stores. On weekends, the corridor is packed with residents and visitors from other parts of the city who shop at the growing number of independent retailers and national chain stores. Tacony continues as an award winning restaurant destination. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and other news outlets tout our corridor as the city's emerging restaurant mecca. The district is filled with sidewalk cafes, which help to boost the foot traffic and the economic success of the district.

The Tacony CDC works closely with partner organizations to host regular events and activities throughout the year to create a vibrant street scene. The sidewalk cafes, pubs, restaurants and seasonal special events keep the sidewalks and street parking full virtually year round. Strategically located sidewalk kiosks show pedestrians where to find their favorite store or restaurant. Trees planted by the TCDC shade pedestrians in summer, and provide visual interest in spring and fall. The district is highly managed with the TCDC taking responsibility for all aspects of the customer experience including way finding signage, Christmas decorations, gateways, banners, planters, benches, trees, sweeping, parking management and its traditional role in assuring that the corridor is safe. The district pops with color from the flower baskets, flags, bunting, banners and seasonally planted flowers in the tree pits installed by TCDC volunteers.

Perceived as a business friendly community, the Tacony CDC continues its long-standing, productive and cordial working relationships with its elected officials at the City, State and Federal levels. The TCDC is a full partner with the City in any local planning effort in the neighborhood. The extensive stock of historic buildings in the commercial corridor continue to

be well maintained, celebrated and new appropriate uses are found for the rare vacancy that occurs. When a storefront does become available, there are several potential tenants because the TCDC maintains a listing of interested local and national retailers. The TCDC is the “go to” place for businesses who wish to locate or expand in Tacony.

All Torresdale and Longshore Avenue merchants actively participate in co-op advertising sponsored by the TCDC. The organization works closely with the merchants to promote a handful of high quality and creative retail events each year that appeal to the variety of market niches in the district. Property owners sponsor activities that are beneficial to their tenants. The 2017 TCDC budget is over \$200,000 and the TCDC Board manages a staff of three including an executive director, and two part time events and marketing staff. More than 200 volunteers on the roster provide leadership for and mount the award winning special events and retail events. The Tacony commercial corridor is decidedly on the upswing.

*Vision statement--Medium length version*

Torresdale Avenue is the hub of the Tacony community. Throughout the week, and especially on the weekends, the commercial corridor is packed as residents and visitors shop their favorite independent retailers and national chain stores. The district pops with color from the flower baskets, banners and seasonally planted flowers in the tree pits planted by CDC volunteers. For those seeking to locate to the commercial district or expand, the TCDC is the “go to” organization. Both volunteers and other partners play an important role in managing the award winning seasonal special events. Year round, the beloved sidewalk cafes, shops and entertainment venues keep the sidewalks and streets of Tacony hopping.

*Vision statement--Short version*

Torresdale and Longshore Avenues are the hub of the Tacony community where residents and visitors find a thriving commercial district full of exciting shops and restaurants.



Tacony Community Development Corporation  
2012-2017 Strategic Goals

1. Continue to monitor Torresdale Avenue to maintain a clean and safe environment for residents, shoppers and visitors;
2. Market, advertise and grow events and activities to bring people to Torresdale Avenue;
3. Maintain and enhance all aspects of the physical environment to increase foot traffic on the Avenue;
4. Expand financial resources, partner with a variety of organizations/agencies and continue to recruit volunteers to implement activities, and
5. Manage and expand the business mix by retaining existing businesses and recruiting new complimentary businesses.

*Timing*

These goals are further reinforced by strategies that support the overall goal. Each goal includes at least several possible projects, listed as bullet points below each strategy. Each project is identified as a short, medium or a long-term effort.

Short-term projects are meant to be accomplished in 2013. Medium-term projects build on work accomplished during 2013, but will take place in 2014-2015. Long-term projects build incrementally on previous work and will be accomplished in 2016 and 2017.

## ***CLEAN AND SAFE***

Goal 1. Continue to monitor Torresdale Avenue to maintain a clean and safe environment for residents, shoppers and visitors.

Responsible Team: Clean and Safe Team and other task forces as needed.

### *Strategies*

**1. Continue to monitor safety concerns and partner with Town Watch, CLIP, the Tacony Civic Association and other organizations to combat crime and promote enforcement of local codes and laws on the commercial corridor. SHORT TERM**

- Continue to monitor crime statistics in the 15<sup>th</sup> Police District.
- Continue to work closely with the 15<sup>th</sup> District Police Captain, community relations officer and Town Watch.
- Ensure that installed pedestrian lighting, cameras or other crime deterrents are well maintained.
- Work with property owners and city agencies to ensure that corridor buildings meet existing building codes and encourage property owners to take advantage of incentive programs to make improvements.
- Monitor any zoning changes in the commercial corridor and cooperate with the Zoning Committee of the Tacony Civic Association.
- Use CLIP or other city programs to ensure that abandoned cars, graffiti or other nuisances are removed.

**2. Combat misperceptions about the corridor's safety by promoting any positive change in crime statistics in the corridor. SHORT TERM**

- Publicize any positive change in crime statistics in the corridor to a broad network of stakeholders.
- Participate in any crime or safety programs for commercial corridors.
- Continue to distribute business safety and security packets when new merchants open in the corridor.

**3. Continue to offer Golden Broom awards and other incentives to merchants and property owners to sweep sidewalks and shovel snow in front of their properties. SHORT TERM**

- Continue regular corridor maintenance walks by Clean and Safe Team members, referring issues to 311 and following up with city service departments. Currently the Corridor Manager undertakes these walks. Encourage volunteers and interns to take on this responsibility.
- Continue to monitor the condition of general sidewalk and gutter cleanliness, trash, vandalism, graffiti, streetlights, parking meters, dumpsters and city placed trashcans.
- Continue to undertake “Love Your Avenue Day” Spring and fall clean up in partnership with UnLitter Us, Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee and Block Captains
- Continue “Golden Broom Awards” honoring businesses for outstanding storefront cleaning efforts.

**4. Continue the dialogue with merchants and property owners to determine if they are willing to investigate implementing a business improvement district to pay for security or cleaning services paid from a mandatory increase in property taxes.**

**LONG TERM**

- If there is sufficient interest, develop a preliminary plan and budget for services that the property owners would be willing to pay for from a mandatory increase in property taxes.
- Share the plan and budget with merchants and property owners and determine if there is strong interest in moving forward with such an effort.
- Work closely with Tacony’s City Councilmember if there is sufficient interest in a BID towards creating legislation and implementation.

## PROMOTION

GOAL 2. Market, advertise and grow events and activities to bring people to Torresdale Avenue.

Responsible Team: Promotion Team and other task forces as needed.

### *Strategies*

**1. Partner with other organizations that do special events along Torresdale Avenue to create additional sales for merchants during these events. SHORT TERM**

- Create a Promotion Team made up of merchants, property owners, residents and others interested in creating events and activities in the corridor to promote shopping and dining.
- Work closely with partner organization in advance to maximize any event held along Torresdale Avenue to benefit local merchants.

**2. Continue to promote the current market niches in the corridor and target appropriate markets including younger families moving into the neighborhood. SHORT TERM**

- Continue to market selected retail and service promotions including Get Active (dance, boxing, martial arts, archery), Eat IN Tacony (food and eating establishments), and the successful Hoagie Trail of three of the neighborhood's best sandwich shops.

**3. Promote shopping on Torresdale Avenue using traditional and new media. SHORT TERM**

- Continue to use TCDC website (TaconyShops.com), Facebook page, e-newsletter to inform stakeholders and elected officials about the events, business clusters and individual merchants on a regular basis
- Create a variety of shopper way finding tools including sidewalk kiosk(s), parking lot/area maps, printed business directories, printed map(s) and other printed or on-line tools as needed. Make these business directories and other tools available in shops, on sidewalks and in stores. Make shoppers aware of the variety of businesses in the corridor.

- Continue to send press releases, pitch stories and work with reporters at area newspapers, area magazines, TV, Radio and Plan Philly. Use all social media outlets (Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter), location based applications (Four Square etc.), area business rating/review sites (such as Yelp, Urban Spoon, Trip Advisor etc.), and other online tools to promote the commercial corridor as a whole.

**4. Encourage merchants to cross promote between stores and to market the corridor as a destination. MEDIUM TERM**

- Encourage merchants to learn about other stores on Torresdale and Longshore Avenues and their offerings for cross-promotional purposes.
- Host merchant coffees or other informal networking events at any new store that opens on the corridor to welcome them, and encourage networking and cross promotions.

**5. Create a small number of new, seasonal special events, designed to add foot traffic to Torresdale Avenue especially in the early evening hours. MEDIUM TERM**

- Work with merchants to identify a small group to plan at least one seasonal special event for 2014 that will encourage early evening street traffic. Create work plans, recruit volunteers, sponsors and implement the event, so that it becomes a regular predictable revenue source for TCDC. Consider activities such as a neighborhood wide clothing or school supply drive, Community day, or a coupon partnership day or other promotions recommended in the Tacony Market Analysis and Marketing Plan.

**6. Work with merchants to create seasonal retail events and activities that promote existing and emerging business sectors. MEDIUM TERM**

- Work with merchants to identify a small group to plan at least one quality retail event for 2014 that focuses on existing or emerging business sectors. Create work plans, recruit volunteers, sponsors and implement the event. Consider offering Dollar stroll, Fashion show or a sidewalk sale or other promotions recommended in the Tacony Market Analysis and Marketing Plan.

**7. Create at least one quality family friendly event aimed at local residents MEDIUM TERM**

- Work with merchants and local residents to plan a quality family friendly event for Torresdale Avenue in 2015. Create work plans, raise money, recruit volunteers and sponsors and implement the event. Consider such events as a car show near the library, additional parades, family movie night and an Oktoberfest.

**8. Market Torresdale Avenue in Tacony and create campaigns to enhance its image LONG TERM**

- Work with merchants to create an image campaign for Torresdale and Longshore Avenues to show how much has changed over the last few years and promote this positive change to current residents and visitors. Use the Tacony Market Analysis and Marketing Plan's recommendations.

## DESIGN

### Goal 3: Maintain and enhance all aspects of the physical environment to increase foot traffic on Torresdale Avenue

Responsible Team: Design Team and other task forces as needed

#### *Strategies*

#### **1. Continue to promote existing city, state and Federal incentives and encourage quality restoration and rehabilitation of all the historic and existing buildings in the corridor. SHORT TERM**

- Create links on TCDC website for all city, State and Federal incentive programs for storefront and commercial corridor improvement.
- Write appropriate blog posts, e-newsletter stories about incentive programs to encourage their use, and post these to the organization's web site.
- Use the Tacony Design Guidelines to encourage property owners to make quality improvements to their buildings in the corridor.

#### **2. Continue to work with the Tacony Historical Society to place the Disston Estate on the National and Philadelphia Registers of Historic Places; provide a portion of the costs for this effort. SHORT TERM**

- Cooperate and support Tacony Historical Society in their effort to raise funds to pay to place eligible portions of Torresdale and Longshore Avenues on the National and Philadelphia Registers of Historic Places.
- If enough matching funds are found, provide a portion of the costs for the nominations as already allocated by the TCDC Board in 2012.
- Assist the Tacony Historical Society to celebrate the creation of the historic district.
- Once listed, encourage these property owners to take advantage of the Federal Investment Tax Credit for Rehabilitation.

#### **3. Prepare for Façade Improvement Project construction in Spring 2013. SHORT TERM**

- Understand the construction schedule for the façade improvement program across the entire corridor. Communicate the construction schedule to area merchants affected by construction in advance, and then on a weekly basis during construction.

- Work with the City's Storefront improvement program staff to learn what credit language should be used for any project sign.
- Work with a sign company to create durable, large (at least two foot by three foot) project signs for all storefront projects.
- Place these in any storefront window or on the exterior of every building receiving an incentive grant.

**4. Host a ribbon cutting ceremony/celebration for any façade improvement project where TCDC is a financial partner, and promote the general transformation of the Avenue through the City and TCDC Façade Improvement programs. SHORT TERM**

- Promote the results of the Tacony Façade Grant Program that offers 85% funding of qualified storefront improvements along Torresdale and Longshore Avenues with funding from the Philadelphia Commerce Department Storefront Improvement Program.
- Work with the merchant and property owner to schedule a ribbon cutting for each storefront improvement project. Invite all elected and appointed officials to attend, have a photographer and offer refreshments.
- Write press releases, blog posts, web site stories, post videos and before and after photos of storefront projects. Post these stories and photos to Facebook and pitch the story to local media. Use historic photos and before/after photos taken during 2012 to show progress made.

**5. Continue to work closely with MARC on upcoming streetscape improvements. MEDIUM TERM**

- Coordinate with Major Avenues Revitalization Committee (MARC) on design and implementation of second phase of streetscape improvements. Use the new Tacony logo on any banners to reinforce the Torresdale Avenue brand.
- Understand the construction schedule and work with MARC to communicate this to area merchants to be affected by construction in advance, and then on a weekly basis during construction.
- Plan and develop promotions and shopper incentives that will try to mitigate the construction impact on merchants in the corridor.

**6. Seek funding for way-finding signage for both parking and pedestrians, kiosks for business directories and maps, and bus shelters that would be appropriate for the historic district. MEDIUM TERM**

- Look for sources of funding to pay for additional pedestrian amenities beyond those to be installed in the second phase of streetscape construction such as way finding signage,



bus shelters and kiosks, gateway structure/signage and repainting the welcome sign on the train tracks.

- Install vehicular and parking way finding signage to direct cars to available parking on the street and any surface parking lot throughout the corridor.
- Make applications for funding as appropriate.

**7. Develop programs and educational activities to help the public understand the corridor's historic buildings. MEDIUM TERM**

- Continue to offer Historic Preservation Month events or activities in May each year that promotes restoration and retention of historic buildings in the commercial corridor.
- Continue to work with the Tacony Historical Society on any publications or events to promote corridor history.
- Partner with the Tacony Historical Society on any awards program to highlight good design in the commercial corridor.

**8. Be a full partner with the City on the upcoming Comprehensive District Plan for the neighborhood from the Planning Commission as well as any planning activity in the neighborhood that affects the corridor. MEDIUM TERM**

- Work closely with the planners at the Philadelphia City Planning Commission as they begin the Tacony Area district plan.
- Create a task force of interested individuals that will attend every meeting and communicate with the TCDC Board and staff about progress and issues of interest to corridor merchants and property owners.

**9. Create historic and interpretive signage throughout the district to acknowledge and celebrate Tacony's history. LONG TERM**

- Work closely with the Tacony Historical Society and others to create interpretive signage on selected buildings in the corridor.
- Partner with the Tacony Historical Society to determine if a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Blue Historical Sign is appropriate for the commercial corridor, make application, raise funds for installation and host ceremony when unveiled.

## **ORGANIZATION**

Goal 4. Expand financial resources, collaborate with a variety of organizations/agencies and continue to recruit volunteers to implement activities

Responsible Team: Organization Team and other task forces as needed

### *Strategies*

#### **1. Raise money from diverse revenue sources including sponsorships, annual gifts, fundraising events and special event profits to support the operating budget.**

##### **SHORT TERM**

- Build the organization's capacity to raise increasing funds during 2013-2015 so that the organization is able to raise more than \$85,000 in 2015 to meet the requirements of the new CDC Tax Credit program to match \$85,000 the Tax Credit funding.
- Create a Board Task force for 2013 charged with the responsibility of raising \$20,000 in new funding for the year.
- The Board Task Force should review the work plans from various Teams and identify sponsorship opportunities. Work with each Team to create a sponsorship sell sheet for each activity. Identify likely sponsors and solicit with a goal of raising \$5,000 in sponsorship dollars in 2013.
- Gather a small team of volunteers to create a first time fundraising event with a goal of netting \$2500 in 2013.
- Gather a small team of volunteers interested in developing a special event such as an Oktoberfest that will generate funds for the TCDC, with a goal of \$2500 for 2013.
- Develop an annual gifts program for merchants, property owners and residents to financially support the TCDC. Create a small task force. Set a goal of raising \$10,000 in 2013.
- Seek 100% participation from TCDC Board member in a new Board giving effort with a goal of raising \$2500 in 2013.

#### **2. Maintain and expand relationships with elected and appointed officials at the City, State and Federal levels. SHORT TERM**

- Host an annual tour or briefing for City, State and Federal elected representatives on the progress to date.

- Place all elected and appointed representatives on mailing list, email list and TCDC Facebook page.
- Invite all elected representatives to all major announcements, ribbon cuttings, or events and provide an opportunity for them to speak.
- Join mailing lists, email list, Facebook pages of all elected and appointed officials to get their news on a regular basis.
- Gather names of all staff members in home district office and in City Hall, Harrisburg or Washington offices and put them on mailing list, eblast and Facebook page.

**3. Continue to expand partnerships with the Tacony Library, Tacony Historical Society, Tacony Civic Association, churches and schools in the area. SHORT TERM**

- Continue to attend annual meetings or other gatherings of area partner organizations.
- Use TCDC Facebook page, email newsletter and blog to promote partner events that occur on Torresdale and Longshore Avenues.

**4. Get more people involved in the organization so we are able to implement activities throughout the year, create an annual volunteer appreciation activity and promote star volunteers into leadership positions in the organization. SHORT TERM**

- Continue to add to current database of everyone who has expressed interest in volunteering on any project. Use this list to solicit for volunteers for any project. Add to this list as new volunteers come forward.
- Create basic volunteer interest forms to collect consistent data from volunteers (name, address, phone numbers, email addresses, interests).
- Create short volunteer job descriptions for specific projects where expertise is needed. Solicit for volunteers at Team meetings, on Facebook, and other media as appropriate.
- Collect monthly volunteer hours from each Team at their monthly meetings.
- Create an annual volunteer appreciation event or activity and invite all volunteers to attend and be recognized.
- Encourage the most interested volunteers to take on increasing leadership roles by chairing events, becoming team leaders or serving on the TCDC Board. Offer to send these star volunteer to training as available.

**5. Create a nominating committee that actively searches for potential board members, officers and volunteer leadership year round. SHORT TERM**

- Identify current and former TCDC Board members and current volunteers who would be willing to work with TCDC staff to become a standing nominating committee and search for replacements for new leadership for the board on an ongoing basis.

**6. Use traditional and new media to market and promote the commercial corridor and the organization. SHORT TERM**

- Continue to use TCDC website, Facebook page, e-newsletter to inform stakeholders and elected officials about the work of the TCDC.
- Continue to send press releases, pitch stories and work with reporters at area newspapers, area magazines, TV, Radio, Plan Philly and others to promote the work of the TCDC organization.

**7. Seek project grants as appropriate. SHORT TERM PROJECT**

- Continue to monitor all City of Philadelphia Commerce Department grant proposals and RFPs available to commercial corridor organizations and apply when appropriate.
- Continue to monitor all Pennsylvania DCED grants and RFPs and apply when appropriate.
- Identify foundation and corporate grant prospects for project grants.
- Continue to work with City, State and Federal elected officials to understand grant opportunities as they arise.

**8. Assist in personnel and office management as appropriate. MEDIUM TERM**

- Assure that the corridor manager is evaluated at least yearly and that the TCDC is aware of current salary and benefits being offered at similar sized CDCs in the city.

**9. Submit an application to renew the CDC Tax Credit in 2015. MEDIUM TERM**

- Continue to monitor changes to the CDC Tax Credit Program, and learn about the expected lottery process to allocate the \$85,000 ten year CDC tax benefits to CDCs.
- Submit application to renew this important tax credit for Tacony and identify possible tax credit partners in advance.
- Grow the organization's fundraising capacity over 2013-2015 so that the TCDC is able to match the \$85,000 CDC Tax Credit funding as described in current legislation.

**10. Grow the organization's budget to \$200,000 by 2017. LONG TERM**

- Continue to diversify revenue sources so that each source grows incrementally each year towards a goal of an organizational operating budget of \$200,000.
- Seek revenue from several of these sources over the next five years: annual gifts, sponsorships, foundation and corporate grants, special event net profits, fundraising events net profits, CDC Tax Credit, government grants, vendor fees, earned income, consulting services or real estate development fees by 2017.

## ***ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT***

Goal 5. Manage and expand the business mix by retaining existing businesses and recruiting new complimentary businesses.

Responsible Team: Economic Improvement Team and other task forces as needed.

### *Strategies*

**1. Monitor the economic performance of the Torresdale district, gather and report statistics on at least a quarterly basis. SHORT TERM**

- Develop a database of economic performance indicators for the corridor. Indicators should include: full and part time jobs created/lost; private sector investment; public sector investment; building sales; businesses open/closed; vacancy rate; average rent per square foot; housing units created above stores; number of special events, retail events, image activities held; volunteer hours and ratio of public/private investment in corridor (leverage ratio). Report these statistics to the City of Philadelphia Commerce Department as required for funding projects.
- Report on and publicize these statistics yearly at the Annual meeting and in any media.
- Continue to update the property “hotlist” of available space and commercial properties for sale posted to website and Facebook page.

**2. Keep the recently completed market analysis up to date and make it available to everyone. SHORT TERM**

- Make the recently completed market analysis study funded by Philadelphia Department of Commerce available to everyone, post on website and provide regular update reports to stakeholders using various media.
- Continue to update and report on the identified business clusters, opportunities for growth, and market size increase.

**3. Make everyone aware of the existing financial incentives available from City, State and Federal sources. SHORT TERM**

- Create links on TCDC website for all city incentive programs.

- Write appropriate blog posts, e-newsletter stories about incentive programs to encourage their use.
- Use the Tacony Design Guidelines to encourage property owners to make quality improvements to their buildings in the corridor.
- When the Disston Estate is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, encourage commercial property owners of listed buildings to take advantage of the Federal Tax Incentive for Historic Preservation.
- Encourage the creation of upper story housing where appropriate.

**4. Understand the current market; provide up to date information on rents, real estate values and job creation to anyone seeking to locate in the corridor, post this information on the organization's website. MEDIUM TERM**

- Monitor rent per square foot for improved and code compliant retail spaces in the corridor. Continue to monitor sales of commercial buildings in the corridor and continue to place these on the "hot list" on the TCDC website.
- Encourage property owners that own storefronts that do not meet code to make improvements so they can attract better quality tenants.
- Identify funding to revise and update the market analysis in 2016 when it will be four years old and close to being outdated.

**5. Encourage the creation of partnerships between stores, such as bridal/tuxedo, or hair salon/nail salons. MEDIUM TERM**

- Show merchants how cooperating with other stores in the corridor in business clusters can lead to higher sales.
- Encourage merchants to cross-market stores, expand inventory to create logical business clusters or partnerships to expand business opportunities in the corridor.

**6. Recruit additional businesses to current market clusters (active engagement, specialty food and hobbies and collectibles). MEDIUM TERM**

- Market the Tacony Community Development Corporation as the 'Go To' resource for businesses attraction and business mix management, especially within the real estate and entrepreneurial community.
- Create a simple retail recruitment data package from the materials provided by the retail market consultants in the Tacony Market Analysis and Marketing Plan. Update the demographics yearly if possible and post on website.
- Promote the existing business clusters to any retail recruiter interested in placing new chain businesses in existing buildings in the corridor.
- Provide information on façade improvement incentives to any new merchant wishing to locate in the corridor.

- Create a small task force to actively recruit new businesses identified from the Strategic Planning workshop: Artisan bakery; Sporting goods store that also provides lessons and trips; Boys and Men's clothing store (also rents tuxedos); Coffee shop and internet café, a Game store (like game stop); a Pretzel Factory satellite store; DiNardo's seafood restaurant or an Amish market. Recruit additional businesses as recommended on page 42 of the Tacony Market Analysis and Marketing Plan. Use the recommended procedures for business recruitment and retention as noted in this document.

## Credits

Donna Ann Harris, principal of Heritage Consulting Inc., wrote this Strategic Plan.

**Donna Ann Harris** is the principal of Heritage Consulting Inc., a Philadelphia-based consulting firm that works nationwide in three practice areas: downtown and commercial district revitalization, historic preservation and nonprofit organizational development. Prior to starting her firm eight years ago, Ms. Harris was state coordinator for the Illinois Main Street program for two years and the manager of the Illinois suburban Main Street program for four years. During her tenure, Ms. Harris served 56 Illinois Main Street communities, led a staff of 12 and managed a budget of over a million dollars. Prior to her Main Street career, Ms. Harris spent 15 years as an executive director of three start-up and two mature preservation organizations, each with its own organizational and fundraising challenges. Prior to her Main Street career, Ms. Harris spent 15 years as an executive director of three start-up and two mature historic preservation organizations in New Jersey, Illinois, Philadelphia and Bryn Mawr PA. Since starting her firm, Ms. Harris has worked with state, regional and local Main Street programs in 21 states. She has written five feature articles in The National Trust Main Street Center's monthly journal *Main Street News*, and scholarly articles in the American Association for State and Local History's *History News* and the National Trust's *Forum Journal*.

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### 2011-2012 Tacony Community Development Corporation Projects Completed & Planned

#### **Clean and Safe:**

- Formed Clean and Safe Committee, created work plans, add new volunteers
- Regular corridor maintenance walks by committee members, referring issues to city services departments. Issues addressed: short dumping, trash, vandalism, graffiti, street lights, parking meters
- Removal of all unlicensed and vandalized newspaper boxes
- Spring and fall clean up days “Love Your Avenue” partnership with UnLitter Us and Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee and Block Captains
- Completed “Golden Broom Awards” honoring businesses for outstanding storefront cleaning efforts
- Distributed business safety and security packets
- Partnership with Tacony Town Watch & Philadelphia Police Department
- Researched corridor-wide neighborhood security camera system, received estimates. (Planned but not funded)
- Regular street and sidewalk cleaning services. (Planned but not funded)

#### **Design:**

- Formed Design Committee, created work plans, add new volunteers
- Photo survey of corridor; photos taken of every building
- Historic preservation presentation and exhibition at Tacony Library for Historic Preservation Month. Presentations to be placed online with narration
- Removed dead trees from tree pits on corridor
- 17 new trees to be planted this fall in tree pits through the TreePhilly program
- Committee volunteers created Design Guidelines for Torresdale Avenue in Tacony

- Created and launched the Tacony Façade Grant Program, offering 85% funding of qualified storefront improvements along Torresdale and Longshore Avenues. Partnered with the Philadelphia Commerce Department Storefront Improvement Program
- Supported National Register District Nomination with the Tacony Historical Society and Preservation Alliance
- Received grant from Community Design Collaborative, provided one-on-one design consultations and plans for six storefront owners
- Completed 21 design consultations with storeowners with architect and designers

#### **Economic Improvement:**

- Creation of Economic Improvement Committee, created work plans, added volunteers
- Worked with consultants over nine months on market analysis study funded by Philadelphia Department of Commerce; report identified business clusters, opportunities for growth, and market size
- Completed property “hotlist” of available space and commercial properties for sale posted to website, Facebook page
- Completed selected retail and service promotions including Get Active (dance, boxing, martial arts, archery), Eat IN Tacony (food and eating establishments), and the upcoming Hoagie Trail of three of the neighborhood’s best sandwich shops.

#### **Organizational Development:**

- Hosted Kick off meeting for Historic Tacony Revitalization project in October 2011
- Created website, Facebook page, blog, e-newsletter, send press releases and post comments regularly on social media tools
- Completed Board training on roles and responsibilities, reorganized board classes, added new board members
- Hired corridor manager in January 2012
- Hosted visit by Mayor Nutter and Councilmember Henon in February 2012
- Created new organizational budget
- Revised bylaws, created policies and procedures manual
- Solicit volunteers to add to committees

Compiled September 2012.