



OLDCITY
DISTRICT

Strategic Plan 2010 - 2014

Old City District

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Introduction

The Hipstoric™ Old City District in Philadelphia is a place of talented people, significant history, charming shops, intriguing night life, and just loads of entertainment. The mission of Old City District, a municipal authority/business improvement district, is to improve Philadelphia's historic district as a place for people to meet, work, shop and live by supplementing municipal services with maintenance, public safety, hospitality and promotional programs. Old City District's Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014 is a roadmap for change to guide the organization's growth and development at a time when businesses, residents, and civic institutions are coming together to make Old City a distinct and treasured element of Philadelphia's social fabric and cultural and economic renaissance.

On September 16, 2009, Old City District's Board of Directors held a full-day strategic planning retreat. At the retreat, the Board of Directors established the following organizational strategic goals for 2010 – 2014 ranked by order of priority:

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| Goal 1 | Build a shared vision for the future of Old City as a sustainable and walkable neighborhood that is both economically and culturally vibrant. |
| Goal 2 | Position Old City District to lead and catalyze economic development in Old City. |
| Goal 3 | Increase and diversify Old City District's funding base. |
| Goal 4 | Help ensure that Old City is a clean and safe neighborhood. |
| Goal 5 | Enhance Old City District's identity and reputation in the community. |
| Goal 6 | Strengthen Old City District's Board governance capacity. |
| Goal 7 | Lead a coordinated marketing campaign to promote Old City businesses. |

Old City District's Board of Directors and staff will work together to achieve these goals to the benefit of Old City's businesses and residents.

Methodology

In Spring 2009, Old City District embarked on a six-month comprehensive strategic planning process to affirm the organization's vision and mission and set its strategic direction for the next five years based on meaningful input from its stakeholders and an assessment of the organization's internal capacity and social, political and economic trends in its operating environment. Old City District received a \$6,950 grant from the William Penn Foundation to subsidize the fee for retaining a consultant from The Nonprofit Center at LaSalle University's School of Business to facilitate the planning process.

The project was overseen by the Executive Committee of Old City District's Board of Directors. The committee encouraged the facilitator to engage a variety of stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, staff, local business owners, civic leaders, residents, and others outside the District in a dialogue about the future of Old City. As a result, the strategic plan reflects the combined input of the Old City District's stakeholders and constituents.

Stakeholder data were collected using the following methods:

- Thirteen in-depth telephone interviews with key informants, including business and civic leaders in Old City and high-ranking officials in the City of Philadelphia's administration.
- Two hundred and ninety-five Old City business owners, commercial property owners, residents, and visitors responded to an online planning survey distributed to approximately 800 individuals for a 37% response rate.

These data were discussed at a full-day strategic planning retreat for the Board of Directors and staff held on September 16, 2009.

Context for Planning Decisions

Old City District's context for developing and prioritizing a set of strategic goals and measurable objectives to advance its mission over the next five years was informed by an analysis of the key informant interview data, stakeholder survey results, and input from the OCD Board of Directors. Key findings from this data analysis provided the framework for strategic planning decisions and included the following:

- Old City is stronger economically and socially than it was ten years ago, but the further revitalization of Old City will require a comprehensive and sustained effort to integrate economic, cultural, environmental and residential activities directed towards a shared vision for the future of the district.
- Global economic conditions affect the Old City District's economic climate for business and employment.
- Old City District is doing a good job in its core mission activities of keeping the district clean and safe through its streetscaping, maintenance, and coordination of public safety efforts with the Philadelphia Police Department's 6th District.
- There is strong demand among business owners for Old City District to help market and promote local businesses.
- Old City District should build stronger collaborative partnerships with businesses and civic organizations to deal with neighborhood challenges related to economic development, environment sustainability, public safety, and homelessness.
- Old City District business owners and residents desire more green spaces, parking, and public transit options throughout the district.
- Old City District should improve its communications with business owners and better demonstrate the positive impact of its work to the district.

Old City District's Vision Framework

Old City District's strategic plan is framed by a shared sense of mission, core values and vision for the future. This vision framework was developed by the Board of Directors through a visual mapping activity focused on the future of Old City at its strategic planning retreat. The facilitator helped to organize and phrase the Board's efforts into the following cogent statement.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Mission</p> <p>The mission of Old City District is to improve Philadelphia's historic district as a place for people to meet, work, shop and live by supplementing municipal services with maintenance, public safety, hospitality and promotional programs.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Vision for the Future</p> <p>Philadelphia's Old City District will serve as a national model for neighborhood revitalization. Old City will preserve its history and diversity while transforming itself into a vibrant cityscape that...</p> <p>...Showcases a distinctive skyline of new and historic midrise buildings that combine affordable, high-quality residential living space with shops, restaurants, cultural institutions, commercial businesses, and other amenities.</p> <p>...Is physically and environmentally connected to the Delaware waterfront.</p> <p>...Has clean, well-lit streets, sidewalks, and buildings.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Core Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Diversity • Excellence • Inclusivity • Sustainability | |

Strategic Goals and Objectives for 2010 - 2014

Goal 1: Build a shared vision for the future of Old City as a sustainable and walkable neighborhood that is both economically and culturally vibrant.

Measurable Objectives:

- 1.1. Engage business owners, commercial property owners, residents, and civic leaders in meaningful conversations about the future of Old City's economic, social, and cultural revitalization.
- 1.2. Create and distribute a visually-stimulating publication that communicates a shared vision for a revitalized Old City.
- 1.3. Develop economic development initiatives critical to the revitalization of Old City.
- 1.4. Partner with businesses, cultural and civic organizations to foster the revitalization of Old City.

Goal 2: Position Old City District to lead and catalyze economic development in Old City.

Measurable Objectives:

- 2.1. Leverage Old City District's existing relationships with businesses and civic institutions to participate more actively in economic development and zoning decisions.
- 2.2. Form new partnerships with the City of Philadelphia's Commerce Department, developers, and other nonprofit organizations with economic development expertise.
- 2.3. Reach out to elected and appointed city and district officials to influence economic decisions that affect Old City businesses and residents.
- 2.4. Establish an online marketing program to encourage new business investment in Old City.

Goal 3: Increase and diversify Old City District's funding base.

Measurable Objectives:

- 3.1. Evaluate the need to increase Old City District's assessment fee from 5% to between 8-10%.
- 3.2. Establish a reasonable "give or get" policy for the Board of Directors.
- 3.3. Solicit donations from Old City residents.

Goal 4: Help ensure that Old City is a clean and safe neighborhood.

Measurable Objectives:

- 4.1. Maintain the quality of Old City District's current street cleaning and maintenance programs.
- 4.2. Maintain the quality of the Old City District's current streetscape programs.
- 4.3. Collaborate more effectively with the Philadelphia Police Department and other City of Philadelphia departments to improve public safety, especially in dealing with noise pollution, graffiti, crime, and derelict buildings.
- 4.4. Work to implement OCD approved streetscaping programs.

Goal 5: Enhance Old City District's identity and reputation in the community.

Measurable Objectives:

- 5.1. Hire a marketing/PR firm to help establish a key message, a stronger brand identity, and a media relations strategy for Old City District.
- 5.2. Relocate Old City District's offices to a more central and visible location in Old City.
- 5.3. Improve Old City District's website and utilize social networking tools to communicate more effectively with allies and supporters.

Goal 6: Strengthen Old City District's Board governance capacity.

Measurable Objectives:

- 6.1. Establish an Advisory Council comprised of civic and business leaders to serve as champions for Old City District's mission and strategic priorities.
- 6.2. Improve Board performance and accountability through a board development plan that includes a new and stronger committee structure and a board member commitment letter.
- 6.3. Recruit more Board members with access to financial resources and networks of influence.

Goal 7: Lead a coordinated marketing campaign to promote Old City businesses.

Measurable Objectives:

- 7.1. Raise the visibility of Old City as a popular destination to meet, work, shop, and live.

- 7.2. Increase the number of visitors, residents, and business-to-business clients that patronize Old City businesses.

Implementation and Evaluation

Action Planning

Old City District's strategic plan is a governance and management tool that provides a roadmap for decision-making, budgeting, program delivery, fundraising, communications and recruitment for the Old City District. The plan is designed to help the OCD Board of Directors and staff to focus their energies on strategic priorities that enhance the mission and build long-term sustainability to increase the value of the organization to its constituents and the community.

Either Old City District's Board of Directors or staff will be assigned a leadership role in implementing each strategic goal in the plan. Those assigned the lead responsibility for implementation of a strategic goal should develop an annual action plan that identifies the tasks, benchmarks and cost estimates associated with implementation.

Evaluation

The Board of Directors should evaluate progress made on each strategic goal on a quarterly basis. In addition, the Board of Directors should hold an annual strategic planning review meeting to assess long-term progress. This will allow the organization to build on its successes, identify challenges or barriers to the implementation of specific goals or objectives, and have the flexibility to alter the strategic plan to reflect changes in the organization's operating environment. Meeting participants may include a variety of key stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, staff, funders, constituents, and supporters.

In 2013, the Board of Directors should begin preparations for the next strategic planning cycle.

Appendix A: Key Informants

1. Denise Campo
Owner, Campo's Deli
2. Jane Cowley
Public Affairs Officer, Independence National Historical Park
3. John Elfrey
Managing Director's Office, City of Philadelphia
4. Ken Foster
Owner, Foster's Homeware
5. Alan Greenberger
Executive Director, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
6. Brian Korn
Captain, 6th District Philadelphia Police
7. Jim Leemon
Owner, Spa Terme di Aroma
8. Meryl Levitz
President/CEO, Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation
9. Paul Levy (w/ Anthony Pipitone)
President & CEO, Center City District
10. Kevin Meeker
Owner, Q BBQ and Tequila Restaurant
11. Carolyn Pfeiffer
Property Manager, Kaiserman Company
12. Amy Sarner Williams
President, Old City Arts Association
13. Dominic Verdi
Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses & Inspections