



2009

PLAN OF WORK

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Mission

The mission of Cornerstone Alliance is to generate economic growth and promote civic development in the community comprised of the cities of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, the charter townships of Benton, St. Joseph, Lincoln and Royalton, and the villages of Stevensville and Baroda.

Vision

Creating individual opportunity in a world-class community through partnerships.

About Us

Cornerstone Alliance is an agent of change, commitment and coalition-building that will evolve as an organization by measuring our goals and functions against the ultimate objective – a community where each citizen and organization has equal opportunity to participate to their fullest potential.

Cornerstone Alliance is a 501(c)(3) investor driven economic development organization committed to improving the economic wealth of our community. The wealth of any community is driven by improvements in educational attainment, increased per capita income, and a stable tax base. We seek to create a disciplined investment policy geared toward providing an overall framework for (re)development, establishing links between business and education, and supporting the preparation of local business leaders to sustain positive change.

How We Operate

Working through our family of affiliated organizations, we strive to be an outcome-based performance entity which induces growth in our area’s job and tax base. Our organization is a reflection of the community and, as such, our work is accomplished only by working in partnership with other businesses, local units of government, and community organizations.

An accredited economic development organization.



Investor Survey 2007 Executive Summary

A 2007 survey of Cornerstone Alliance's investors showed strong support for the performance and direction of the organization. Survey participation was strong, with 85 investors, or just under 30% of all contributors to the organization, completing the survey.

Over 92% of respondents rated Cornerstone as a vital partner in regional community growth, while 73% said Cornerstone Alliance was doing an effective or very effective job in articulating its vision of building the community through partnerships. Survey results also show that 84% view Cornerstone as a good steward for their investment dollars.

Several responses with the survey indicate that there are challenges that the organization is facing concerning communications with investors. For example, responses to several questions brought forth a desire for a greater focus and emphasis on economic development activities. This may be due to a lack of understanding of the relationship between Cornerstone Alliance and the Alliance for World-Class Communities, as well as our role in Harbor Shores. This also indicates that there may be a disconnect between the activities of the organization and how they apply to the overall mission. Cornerstone Alliance must continue efforts to improve communications through more information dissemination about our role and goals, as well as how the success of each project reflects back to the overall mission.

In the programming area, investors ranked the following programs of most importance: business retention, business recruitment, Harbor Shores, physical redevelopment of infrastructure and small business services.

In order to continue efforts to grow and improve the community and to assist in the recruitment and retention of businesses and individuals, marketing efforts must be undertaken both inside and outside the community. As we target certain industries for growth in our area, respondents felt that the following industries should top the list: marine related, distribution and logistics, business service and shared services and design services.

Investors unanimously shared that they are seeing signs of progress due to the efforts of Cornerstone Alliance. The top priorities shared for future funding included:

- Commercial and mixed-use development in downtown Benton Harbor.
- Business Loop 94 through Benton Harbor.
- Completion of US 31.

When asked about future investments in Cornerstone, while no individual or organization intends to discontinue their investment, it was noted by several that this decision is reviewed on an annual basis and they will contribute as they are able. The survey document asked investors to identify whether they were answering as an individual or corporate donor. While 82% of individuals felt confident that they would continue to support Cornerstone's efforts on an individual basis, 70% felt strongly that their organization would financially support Cornerstone in the future.

When asked to prioritize the areas of importance for allocation of limited funding for the organization, the top 3 responses matched those rankings of program importance. In ranking the responses, the top three areas for fund allocation include: 1. Business Recruitment; 2. Business Retention; and 3. Harbor Shores

When asked if they considered Cornerstone Alliance an economic development or community development organization, 56% of investors said they considered the organization as both a community development and economic development organization, with 34% identifying Cornerstone as solely an economic development organization.

Cornerstone Alliance 2009 Plan of Work

The rebirth of the Alliance for World Class Communities in 2007 gave Cornerstone Alliance, Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce and the Renaissance Development Fund an opportunity to further define our focus in the economic development arena while recognizing the importance that community development activities play in economic success.

Alliance for World Class Communities

Established in 2004, the Alliance for World Class Communities (AWCC) is charged with creating an inclusive environment where the richness of our differences are viewed as strengths, and where all citizens are prepared and contributing to our interdependent world class communities.

The strategic areas of concentration fall into economic development and community development strategies. We must have seamless implementation strategies and programs on both the economic development axis and community development axis to drive systemic and lasting change. Therefore, member organizations will collaboratively focus and leverage their resources to achieve shared goals and strategies:

Economic Development Consortium: We must create agreement on strategies and key initiatives and, through collaborative execution, achieve increased employment, an expanded tax base, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals and communities. This effort seeks to coordinate the economic development activities of Cornerstone Alliance, Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce and Renaissance Development Fund.

The Consortium for Community Development: This work concentrates on catalyzing capacity building focused in the areas of most need in Berrien County such that all citizens are prepared and contributing to our interdependent world-class communities. The activities of the Council for World-Class Communities, Community Partnership for Lifelong Learning and Citizens for Progressive Change will build capacity through coordinated efforts.

Economic Development – Missions and Visions

The economic wealth of any community is driven by a healthy business environment, a stable tax base, superior public infrastructure, customer-focused service and quality business resources so that local leaders can sustain positive change.

- **Cornerstone Alliance – Creating individual opportunity in a world-class community through partnerships.** Cornerstone Alliance is a 501(c)(3) investor-driven economic development organization committed to improving the economic wealth of our community. The mission of Cornerstone Alliance is to generate economic growth and promote civic development in the community comprised of the cities of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, the charter townships of Benton, St. Joseph, Lincoln and Royalton, and the villages of Stevensville and Shoreham.
- **Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce – World-class membership services.** Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce is a 501(c)(6) member-driven organization that services existing businesses with member benefits, networking events, visibility opportunities, business-education seminars and serves as an advocate tracking legislation that is important to our business community.
- **Renaissance Development Fund – Financial Assistance for Growing Ventures.** The Renaissance Development Fund promotes business growth, employment and housing opportunities within designated development corridors. These projects should benefit the low income population of Berrien County by providing business and housing development funds by loans and other means.

The following plan of work represents a variety of economic development goals that will guide our activities throughout 2009. This document was developed to help guide and direct our activities, as well as the allocation of our resources, so that we can provide positive impact to the economy of our communities.

The 2009 Plan of Work is being developed around the six (6) primary focus areas of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan. The Work Plan will include action items, contributing partners, target completion dates and what you will observe in each of the focus areas. An Executive Summary of that Plan follows below.

Strategic Plan Executive Summary

The 2008-2012 Strategic Plan for Cornerstone Alliance consists of six (6) primary focus areas in which our work will be concentrated, communicated and measured.

1. Operational Activities Supporting Harbor Shores

The promise of a 530-acre development, which includes residential, commercial and recreational amenities, is a transformational opportunity for all residents served by Cornerstone's activities. As a partner in this project, Cornerstone will take a lead role in:

- Vertical development within the project site;
- Local, state and national permitting issues;
- Managing public grants and loans; and
- Relationship management with the many partner entities.

2. Existing Business Retention and Expansion

Existing businesses create a stable environment by providing jobs for area residents, opportunities for local business-to-business commerce, and support of community activities. Cornerstone's focus on retention and expansion will assist our existing businesses by:

- Assisting them in meeting their current and future needs;
- Helping them survive economic difficulties; and
- Supporting their expansions that could add new jobs and investment to our communities.

3. New Business Recruitment and Development

Businesses locate to and grow within communities that have created an environment in which they will achieve business competitiveness. Cornerstone's focus in this area will center upon:

- Accentuating the "Quality of Place" characteristics that encourage further business growth and development;
- Developing local businesses through start-up counseling, technical training and financial assistance; and
- Targeted prospecting to attract companies that are compatible with our business environment and strategy.

4. Community Messaging

As our organization establishes a role in our many projects, the purpose, goals and results of each endeavor should be communicated to our many stakeholders. Proactive messaging for these projects should include an emphasis on:

- Branding the community, both internally and externally;
- Community benefits of our projects and linkages; and
- Investor messaging to highlight our stewardship of resources.

5. Organizational Sustainability

We perform many day-to-day activities to ensure the effective and efficient operation of our economic development efforts. The longevity and ultimate effectiveness of these activities depend on our success in the following areas:

- Governance to maximize engagement of the Board of Directors, staff, investors and other stakeholders;
- Investor relations, including the annual fundraising efforts;
- Opportunities for self-sufficiency; and
- Financial accountability for all of our activities.

6. Integration with Community Development Consortium

We must have seamless implementation strategies and programs on both the economic development axis as well as the community development axis to drive systemic and lasting change. Therefore, we will engage in strategic initiatives to maximize our transformational activities in the areas of:

- Subsidized and market rate housing opportunities;
- Downtown development activities;
- Understanding the workforce needs of our businesses; and
- Shared accountability for joint efforts.

In addition to the six primary focus areas, a plan of work for Supportive Activities will be developed and managed by staff.

5-Year Measurements/Performance Indicators

(Indicators as of December 2008)

Harbor Shores

- Golf course – Completion of course in 2009; Startup of initial operations in Fall 2009
- Facilitate Development of Vertical Construction for Phase I
 - Sell 40% of Development Parcels
 - \$100 Million of Tax Base created
- Assist Harbor Shores Community Redevelopment, LLC in meeting objectives in regards to local competitiveness
 - 150 job opportunities created (direct and indirect)
 - 25% of contract work to competitive local firms and a commitment to local employee hiring
- Semi-annual meetings with the Local Business Consortium on upcoming opportunities within the project
- Environmental remediation of 1 additional development parcel within project area and surrounding parcels

Existing Business Retention

Business Assistance - BAT and Chamber

- Make 150 existing business calls per year
- Business Assistance Team response to 5 companies each year
- Increase Chamber membership total by 2% per year
- Track 60% of Chamber members participating in Chamber activities over 5 years

Business Retention/Expansions

- Affect the retention of 850 jobs with local entities through incentive tools, relocation assistance, IFT applications and other direct services over 5 years
- Add one company using First Choice each year, and increase number of tours by 2% per year

Business Recruitment, Development and Expansion

Business Development/Job Creation Services

- Assist in creation of 725 jobs through recruitment efforts and expansion services over 5 years
- Assist in creation of \$25 million in tax base (real and personal property) over 5 years
- Small Business Services programming averages resulting in 30 new jobs, 8 new businesses, 35 training programs for startups, and 325 counseling sessions per year
- Lend an average \$200,000 in small business loans per year from our revolving loan funds

Quality of Place (Physical Development /Infrastructure)

- Development and rehabilitation of 150 housing units over 5 years
- Generate \$200,000 of revenue per year by managing Cornerstone's portfolio of assets
- Facilitate and assist in 5 Public Infrastructure improvement projects over 5 years
- Facilitate 4 commercial/mixed-use projects during five year period

Supporting Services

- No major non-conformances in annual audits
- Increase number of investors and cash raised by 5% per year
- Leverage grant/loan funds and private investment into projects by 5:1 ratio for each \$1 invested by Cornerstone

Operational Activities Supporting Harbor Shores

The promise of a 530-acre development, which includes residential, commercial and recreational amenities, is a transformational opportunity for all residents served by Cornerstone's activities. Three areas of focus for the project include:

- **Economic transformation** – significant increases in the tax base for the participating communities, new employers attracted to the area resulting in job creation; and increased consumer spending power to benefit our existing businesses.
- **Environmental transformation** – Much of the land dedicated to the Harbor Shores development is economically underutilized because of significant environmental contamination. The partners in Harbor Shores are committed to over \$8 million in environmental clean up efforts.
- **Social/cultural transformation** – The project developers, all non-profit entities with a history of accomplishment, are dedicated to using any proceeds from the development to fund community benefits programs. This comprehensive plan will provide significant emphasis on literacy and workforce development, housing and homeownership, local business participation and capacity building endeavors.

As a partner in this project, Cornerstone will take a lead role in:

a. Vertical development within the project site to ensure project goals are met:

- Working with commercial developers to maximize economic activity;
- Working with residential developers to ensure a unique mix of product and compliance with architectural guidelines; and
- Working with hotel developers to incorporate local and minority participation in both construction and employment.

b. Improvement opportunities surrounding the project site:

- Downtown redevelopment in Benton Harbor that provides “Quality of Place” for future growth;
- Strong linkages to existing businesses and development opportunities in downtown St. Joseph;
- Retail and commercial growth opportunities in Benton Charter Township so that residents have more local choices; and
- Business opportunity for Berrien County to meet the needs of new residents and increased wealth generation;

c. Local, state and national permitting issues for project compliance:

d. Managing public grants and loans:

- Environmental cleanup from DEQ and EPA;
- Transportation enhancements from MDOT;
- Economic development incentives from MEDC; and
- Housing assistance from MSHDA.

e. Relationship management with the many partner entities; and

f. Governance procedures and financial review resulting from Cornerstone's role within the project.

What you will observe:

- Public communications and updates that share the project's successes beyond construction of the golf course.
- Project implementation following formal processes, with clear goal progression indicators.
- Awareness of and projected impact to the local business community.
- Local and minority businesses directly participating with and/or benefiting from the Harbor Shores development.
- Regular communications to our investors of development status and Cornerstone's role in the project.

Operational Activities Supporting Harbor Shores

Goal 1: Establish project milestones and manage communications.

Objective: Determine the anticipated milestones that the project is likely to meet, along with the order of accomplishment, and share these with the community in a very visible way. Then maximize the foundation that Harbor Shores is creating in our communities in all communications and economic development efforts.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Meet with project consultants to create the most likely scenario of milestones that will be met and create a measurement tool that can be communicated with the community at large to measure progress toward these milestones.	Harbor Shores Community Redevelopment Inc. (HSCRI); Evergreen Development; Developers; Harbor Shores (HS) Comm. Team	4 th Qtr 2008	HSCRI Trustee*
Incorporate Harbor Shores in all communications efforts focused externally to provide positive perceptions of our area.	Cornerstone Alliance (CA) Strategy and Execution Team; Chamber Team	Quarterly	HSCRI Trustee
Include Harbor Shores updates and anticipated benefits into all Cornerstone communications strategies.	CA Strategy and Execution Team; Chamber Team	Quarterly	HSCRI Trustee
Host consistent public informational meetings to provide as many details about the project as possible.	HS Communication Team	Quarterly	HSCRI Trustee
Focus attention on the HS Discovery Center and the HS Transformation Center for public events so as to drive visitors and residents to these facilities.	CA Strategy & Execution Team; CA Administration & Compliance Team; HS Comm. Team	Quarterly	HSCRI Trustee
Identify a Harbor Shores' speaker's bureau and offer different project topics and presentations for local social and service clubs.	HS Communication Team	4 th Qtr 2008	HSCRI Trustee
Develop & implement an internal communications strategy.	HS Communication Team	4 th Qtr 2008	HSCRI Trustee & Communications
Serve as the conduit between the media and project spokespeople to provide clear and accurate information on the project.	HS Communication Team	Ongoing	HSCRI Trustee & Communications
Serve as a part of a response team should issues regarding the project arise.	HS Communication Team	Ongoing	HSCRI Trustee & Communications

* For purposes of this Plan of Work, the HSCRI Trustee is the Cornerstone Alliance representative on the Harbor Shores Board of Trustees.

Operational Activities Supporting Harbor Shores

Goal 2: Facilitate vertical construction within the Harbor Shores project area.

Objective: Community benefits from the Harbor Shores project, including job creation, tax base increases and business opportunities, will not materialize until vertical construction commences. Cornerstone's role in facilitating this development, whether commercial, residential or recreational, will help move us towards our economic mission.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist Harbor Shores team in securing commitments from developers for vertical components of project. • Serve as supporting organization in providing leads to Harbor Shores. • Investigate new contact sources with local business developers. • Research trade publications for possible pool of potential developers. 	Staff, HSCRI, Evergreen	Ongoing	Evergreen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide "Red Carpet Service" to those developers to help them meet their needs. • Meet with developers to identify and structure opportunities. • Provide turnaround information for developers ASAP. • Coordinate with relevant businesses and assistance organizations as needed. 	Staff	As Needed	HSCRI Trustee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find developers and use their status to market other development and redevelopment opportunities. • Provide participation in the planning, construction, and operation phases. 	Evergreen	Ongoing	HSCRI Trustee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide updates with local, state and federal agencies so that project approvals can be as smooth as possible for developers. • Serve as lead organization in securing necessary permits, etc. as needed. • Convene planning meetings to provide necessary support ASAP. • Consult with local, state and federal agencies to provide proactive support. 	Staff, HSCRI, HS Comm. Team	Ongoing	HSCRI Trustee

Operational Activities Supporting Harbor Shores

Goal 3: Maximize project impact on local business.

Objective: Explore the projected impact of the Harbor Shores development to maximize opportunities for existing and new local businesses.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<p>Work with local companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualify local companies and help position them to support work on the project. • Identify the likely support work for the Harbor Shores project, and the skills and experience to qualify for these opportunities. • Meet with teams to identify and quantify tasks that can be performed by local talent. • Determine the necessary skills and experience level to perform tasks in a timely and efficient manner. • Identify local companies meeting this criteria. • Work with less experienced companies and help them to develop the required experience and skills. • Review the progress of the lesser experienced companies and promote them as their skills grow to meet the necessary criteria. 	<p style="text-align: center;">HSCRI; Evergreen Development; Developers; HS; Local Business Consortium (LBC)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1st Qtr 2009 and ongoing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Small Business Services Staff (SBS)</p>
<p>Work with developers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present developers with lists of qualified local talent. • Update the Local Business Directory to provide to developers. 	<p style="text-align: center;">HSCRI; Evergreen Development; Developers; HS; Local Business Consortium (LBC)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1st Qtr 2009 and ongoing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SBS Staff</p>
<p>Communications & Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize locally the opportunities for local business participation. • Take the required tasks and qualifications created above and publicize them. • Promote opportunities through the LBC to companies included in the HS Local Business Directory and Chamber Members. • Market the business opportunities that are identified from the small business feasibility studies. • Review the Impact Study for Harbor Shores to list the likely opportunities that will result from the development. • Assign timing for these opportunities and publicize them as the construction moves forward. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Staff, HS Comm. Team, Staff, HSCRI, HS Comm. Team</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2nd Qtr 2009 and ongoing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SBS Staff</p>
<p>Work with Cornerstone Affiliates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the kinds of services and products needed for Harbor Shores to engage individuals in starting businesses, using results from feasibility studies. • Work with the Cornerstone Chamber business attraction and retention studies. • Establish a community roundtable discussion to establish Harbor Shores business needs. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Staff, Consortium for Community Development (CCD), HSCRI, Cornerstone Chamber</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1st Qtr 2009</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SBS Staff HSCRI Trustee</p>

Operational Activities Supporting Harbor Shores

Goal 4: Use the Harbor Shores project to recruit new companies and new employers to our area.

Objective: To provide improvement opportunities surrounding and including the project site and strengthen business opportunities in Michigan's Great Southwest.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a marketing plan for business attraction within the Harbor Shores site area. • Determine business needs and communicate those needs aggressively. • Promote the Michigan's Great Southwest brand to outside employers. • Exploit the many positive features available within the Harbor Shores site area. 	Staff, HSCRI, Evergreen	1 st Qtr 2009 and Ongoing	HSCRI Trustee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use LBC to foster local business collaborations and better Business-to-Business relationships. • Survey general membership for strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. • Review Chamber procedures that have been used for measuring relationships. • Convene a major brainstorming session of all involved to develop ideas. 	Staff	1 st Qtr 2009	HSCRI Trustee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in recruiting developers who share our community goals for the project. • Offer to manage the process to acquire public grants and loans. • Provide relationship management with potential partners. • Handle permitting issues for project compliance. 	Staff	As Needed	HSCRI Trustee

Goal 5: Encourage Workforce Development efforts already underway in the community.

Objective: Explore the projected impact of the Harbor Shores development to maximize employment opportunities for local citizens.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a special emphasis on Benton Harbor residents, work to ensure opportunities are made available to qualified individuals to earn employment positions within the project boundaries and parameters, during both construction and permanent development stages within the project. • Form a team to identify the employment opportunities for Benton Harbor residents, using the DSI Study as a guideline. • Quantify the number of job opportunities and the expected timing of their release and contrast this with the size of the existing qualified local labor pool. • Promote the job opportunities as they become available to Benton Harbor residents. • Formulate a strategy to develop the non-qualified local workforce to meet any excess demand. 	HSCRI; Developers; HS, CCD, City of Benton Harbor, Opportunity Center, HS Comm. Team Michigan Works!	1 st Qtr 2009 and ongoing	CCD

Existing Business Retention and Expansion

Existing businesses create a stable environment by providing jobs for area residents, opportunities for local business-to-business commerce, and support of community activities.

Key Elements:

Cornerstone's focus on retention and expansion will assist our existing businesses through:

- a. Identifying needs of our businesses through multiple channels of communications.
 - An enhanced Business Call Program to establish trusting relationships between our organization and existing businesses.
 - An annual Business Blitz to create a snapshot of the state of our local economy.
 - Business surveys on specific topics that are identified in our meetings with local businesses.
- b. Responding to needs of businesses by assembling and mobilizing a Business Assistance Team (BAT) to address specific concerns of a company.
- c. Improving Customer Service across our region by maintaining feedback to and training for local businesses.
- d. Assisting our local employers in recruiting the talent needed for the company to increase its competitiveness in its industry sector.
- e. Connecting local businesses through effective networking opportunities.
- f. Serving as the voice of our business community in regulatory and legislative affairs through Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce.

What you will observe:

- Responsiveness to the needs of individual businesses while preserving confidentiality.
- Empowered staff and timely resource identification.
- An increase in the number of meaningful, two-way communications with businesses.
- Need to measure how we assist businesses in developing their next leaders.
- Successful preparation, execution, completion and documentation of a comprehensive Business Blitz each year.
- Total number of existing companies that hire from outside of the area that are familiar with and/or use First Choice candidate and new hire tours and/or Dual Career Network services.
- Enhanced working relationships between area businesses and local units of government.
- Our staff will lead by example in delivering customer service excellence.

Goal 1: Develop a comprehensive One-Stop Guide to Services.

Objective: Create a single source compendium of programs and services available to the entire business community to help advance growth, retain business, and stem the tide of closures and relocations.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory all available resources. • Survey all partners for additional programs and resources. • Catalog all programming and service resources available by business sector or category. • Draft, write, edit and finalize the One-Stop Guide to Services and publish hard copies, electronic versions (Web, CD-Rom, DVD, etc.) and provide for ease of updating. 	Staff members, board members, committee members, local units of government, Berrien County, Michigan Works!, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Lake Michigan College, and all other parties who have compatible resources to make the guide complete and comprehensive	4 th Qtr 2008 1 st Qtr 2009 2 nd & 3 rd Qtr 2009 4 th Qtr 2009	Chamber Staff

Existing Business Retention and Expansion

Goal 2: Establish, Create, Populate and Activate the Business Assistance Team (BAT).

Objective: Establishment of an effective team of pro-active players ready to step in to work diligently to retain existing businesses threatened by disaster, failure or relocation outside the service area.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the make-up of the BAT Team. • Recruit the players. • Establish the BAT Team objectives. • Implement the BAT Team. 	Staff, Chamber Board Members, outside parties identified by the objectives of the team	2 nd Qtr 2009	Chamber Staff

Goal 3: Continue the Cornerstone Chamber Business Blitz Program.

Objective: Creation of an annual Economic Snapshot through mass data gathering in a very short time span to determine the health and welfare of the business community.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish timelines for the Blitz. • Identify targeted businesses for participation in the Blitz. • Develop the call teams to perform the Blitz. • Schedule targeted businesses for the Blitz calls. • Compile and analyze the Blitz data and file the written report. • Thank the business targets with recognition certificates and copies of the report. 	Staff members, targeted business owners, Board of Directors	2 nd Qtr 2009	Chamber Staff
		2 nd Qtr 2009	
		3 rd Qtr 2009	
		3 rd Qtr 2009	
		3 rd Qtr 2009	
		3 rd Qtr 2009	

Goal 4: Assist in new community job growth through retention and expansion of the existing business community.

Objective: With 80% of new jobs coming from businesses employing 20 or fewer people, the Call Team "SWOT Analysis" visitation remains key to gauging the potential of the business sector of our economy.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Call Team outreach beyond the manufacturing sector to include retail, service, professional, and agribusiness sectors. • Collect and enter data with the Executive Pulse central repository system. • Incorporate Business Blitz and BAT Team data for additional job growth possibilities. 	Staff, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Berrien County Community Development, and the Small Business Services Team	Ongoing	Chamber Staff
		Ongoing	
		3 rd Qtr 2009	

Existing Business Retention and Expansion

Goal 5: Grow and expand Customer Service programming and initiatives.

Objective: Keep Raising the Bar on the quality of customer service throughout the region.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow the LMC Customer Service Academy to two semesters a year. • Research and implement additional customer service training opportunities. • Finalize Point-of-Purchase design, print and distribute to the business community for use by the public. • Increase participation in the Help Raise the Bar Customer Citation program. • Expand marketing of customer service initiatives to increase public awareness. 	Staff, Lake Michigan College, committee members, marketing partners, and the community-at-large	1 st Qtr 2009 4 th Qtr 2008 4 th Qtr 2008 Ongoing Ongoing	Chamber Staff

Goal 6: Grow and expand First Choice programming and initiatives.

Objective: Exceed expectations of our clients and their candidates in providing an exceptional experience in Michigan's Great Southwest.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule presentations to companies with a goal of 1 additional firm under agreement in 2009. 	Staff, First Choice clients, First Choice tour guides	Quarterly	First Choice Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-monthly Independent Contractor (IC) training meetings. • Creation and updating of marketing materials for all IC's. • Establish customized talking points of IC's. • Recruitment of additional IC's as needed. 	Staff, First Choice clients, First Choice Independent Contractors (IC's)	Bi-monthly Quarterly Bi-monthly Semi-annually	First Choice Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate Dual Career Program services for the partners of all new hires at First Choice partner firms. • Develop a Dual Career placement assistance proposal, with attendant fees, for First Choice partner firms. 	Staff, First Choice clients, job provider resources in the region	Quarterly 2 nd Qtr 2009	First Choice Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a user-friendly template system, to allow for a broader range of personnel engaged in updating materials. • Expand the base of information based on topics identified by clients and candidates as desirable for inclusion. 	Staff, First Choice clients, job provider resources in the region, candidates of client firms	1 st Qtr 2009 1 st - 2 nd Qtr 2009	First Choice Staff

New Business Recruitment and Development

Businesses locate to and grow within communities that have created an environment in which they will achieve business competitiveness.

Key Elements:

Cornerstone's focus in this area will center upon:

- Accentuating the "Quality of Place" characteristics that encourage further business growth and development;
- Developing and supporting local businesses through start-up counseling, technical training and financial assistance; and
- Development of a business recruitment strategy and targeted prospecting to attract companies and employers that are compatible with our business environment.

What you will observe:

- Creating and implementing a strategy to offer and expand Small Business Services and the Women's Business Center services to the Spanish speaking community.
- Assisting new businesses through counseling, access to capital and training programs developed to address their real needs.
- Monitoring business start-ups and provide on-going counseling so that our area surpasses the national average of small business sustainability.
- Enhancing the tax base for our local units of government.
- Maximizing our business attraction efforts by promoting the opportunities presented by Harbor Shores.
- Creating a strategy to provide targeted recruitment efforts of retail and commercial business.
- Developing a marketing schedule for targeted industry sectors, based upon sound research and compatibility with our business climate.
- External marketing of our "Quality of Place" theme through development of website, site sheets and various branding materials.
- Improving the variety and diversity of the area's business base while increasing the number of technical/manufacturing jobs in growing industry sectors.

Goal 1: Attract new businesses and investors to the Cornerstone Alliance Service Area.

Objective: Recruit new businesses and developers to the community to make investments resulting in the creation of new jobs for residents and increased tax base for local municipalities.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Selectively target and pursue industries which have good potential of being interested in making investments in the community based on attributes of the community. The three industries to be targeted are: Agriculture, Distribution & Logistics, and Alternative Energy.	Staff, Berrien County, State of Michigan, and Local Municipalities	Quarterly review	Business Development Team
Develop new marketing materials based off of look/feel of the website to cater specifically to prospecting of targeted industries, etc.	Staff, Independent Contractor	1 st Qtr. 2009	Business Development Team
Obtain control of desirable real estate for utilization in attracting business to the community.	Staff, Board of Directors Sub-Committee, Berrien County, land owners, and investors.	Begin 4 th Qtr. 2008 - Ongoing	Business Development Team
Utilize incoming prospect leads outside of targeted industries to attract jobs and investment to the community.	Staff, State of Michigan, Site Selectors, and Businesses.	Ongoing	Business Development Team
Work with regional partners to generally market the Michiana area to potential companies and investors.	Michiana Regional Partnership	Ongoing	Business Development Team

New Business Recruitment and Development

Goal 2: Undertake real estate development activities which have a transformational impact on the quality of life in the community.

Objective: Utilizing development activities centered on housing, commercial spaces, and infrastructure – create an environment which both meets the needs of the existing community and transforms the perception of the community to make it more attractive to outside investors.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Develop two commercial properties which will remove blight from the community and create opportunities for entrepreneurs.	Staff, State of Michigan, Financial Institutions, and local municipalities	3 rd Qtr 2009	Physical Development Team
Undertake the development of fifty-five units of housing both the affordable and market rate sectors of the community.	State of Michigan, local municipalities, Benton Harbor Housing Commission, and investors	4 th Qtr 2009	Physical Development Team
Create a plan for development targets along Main Street in Benton Harbor and Riverview Drive corridor.	Staff, State of Michigan, City of Benton Harbor, and investors	2 nd Qtr 2009	Physical Development Team

Goal 3: Establish a results oriented program for the residents of Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties.

Objective: To provide business education and services to individuals who have a passion to produce a product or provide a service. This will allow them the opportunity to participate in the wealth created by Harbor Shores and become successful business owners.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing of the Women's Business Center and Small Business Services – expansion of Monthly Orientations throughout the tri-county area, and create non-traditional hours to accommodate the Latino Community. 	Staff, Small Business Council Members	Ongoing	Small Business Services Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable space for start-ups – communications with Business Development Team to facilitate communication on start-up needs and available property. 	Staff	Ongoing	Small Business Services Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loan Program Expansion – mitigate the risk and broaden access to capital to clients. Additionally, utilize Pre-loan Technical Assistance and Post-loan Technical Assistance. 	Staff and Advisory Board	Ongoing	Small Business Services Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Assistance – One-on-One Counseling: with at least one new business created for every 30 clients served. Additionally, Case management and technical assistance where Cornerstone Alliance will require regular financial reports from its clients. Entrepreneurial training – to provide business education. Spanish presentations / materials. 	Staff	Ongoing	Small Business Services Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide seminars and training to meet the needs of the program's clients. 	CEED, State of Michigan, MiWorks!, Advisory Council	10/02 – 11/06/08	Small Business Services Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding and Reporting: Submit 2008/2009 funding request to SBA, complete and file all relevant quarterly reports, Explore external funding opportunities to ensure SBS and WBC sustainability. 	Staff/ WBC Advisory Council	4 th Qtr 2008; 1 st Qtr 2009 2 nd Qtr 2009; 3 rd Qtr 2009; 4 th Qtr 2009	Small Business Services Team

Community Messaging

In our efforts to catalyze economic vitality throughout Michigan's *Great Southwest*, our organization often establishes a distinct role to play within our many projects. The role we play is flexible for each project, depending on projected rewards and risks. Therefore, the purpose, goals and results of each endeavor should be communicated to our many stakeholders so that we continue to build support for our efforts.

Key Elements:

a. Proactive messaging for these projects should include an emphasis on:

- The expected benefits of the project;
- The role that our organization will take to ensure the project is successful;
- Updates as to the project's success; and
- The project's contributions toward our strategic outcomes.

b. Branding the community, both internally and externally. These activities will increase not only the existing business retention and expansion efforts, but also in the recruitment and development of new businesses.

c. Measurements of the benefits of our projects to our community outside of the economic indicators, and linkages to the efforts of our partners, which can include:

- The Community Development Consortium members of the Alliance for World Class Communities;
- Our governmental partners, including municipal, county and state agencies;
- Educational and training partners; and
- Other social service providers whose missions align with our goals.

d. Investor messaging to highlight our stewardship of resources.

What you will observe:

- Development of a communication strategy that is proactive about our goals rather than reactive.
- Detailed discussions about our commitments to each of the projects we undertake, including the expected participation of each project partner.
- Measurement goals and reporting on the progress towards those goals through regular communications.
- Continued communications of the efforts toward Harbor Shores. Specifically, as this development spawns new projects that impact neighborhoods, we will report to our stakeholders the impact on residents from our activities.
- Increased staff knowledge about the goals and outcomes from each of our project areas. Work between strategic focus areas will be collaborative and seamless.
- At least one positive story on the area in a regional or national media per year.
- Quarterly communications to the investors on the activities of the organization.
- An internal and external communication strategy developed each year focused around the Michigan's *Great Southwest* brand.

Community Messaging

Goal 1: Effective communications of our projects and the impact on the community.

Objective: *Develop a communication strategy that is proactive and consistent with the Cornerstone Alliance brand.*

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Regular communications with investors that highlights the stewardship of our resources.	Staff	Quarterly	Communications Team
Working with all affiliated organizations to reassure that effective communications of their projects is taking place.	Staff	Quarterly	Communications Team
Use of communications tools such as <i>The Cornerstone</i> , investors updates, presentations etc. in order to share the Cornerstone Alliance message.	Staff/Herald Palladium	Quarterly	Communications Team
Effective use of electronic communications to share the messages of the organizations.	Staff	As Needed	Communications Team
Develop monthly electric newsletter for Cornerstone Alliance investors.	Staff	1 st Qtr. 2009	Communications Team
Keep staff informed of communication efforts.	Staff	Ongoing	Communications Team
Research new communications tools such as blogs to determine feasibility of use for the organization.	Staff	2 nd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team
Create presentations about Cornerstone Alliance beyond Harbor Shores to present a more accurate picture of the breadth of activities undertaken by the organization.	Staff	4 th Qtr. 2008 Ongoing	Communications Team

Goal 2: Continue growing the Michigan's Great Southwest branding initiative.

Objective: *Now entering its seventh year, we need to determine the next steps in implementing the brand strategy. This includes revisiting the brand strategy and updating it based upon our successes and shortfalls to date.*

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Continue to build community pride through the Michigan's Great Southwest radio campaign.	Staff, Underwriters, Midwest Family Broadcasting	Ongoing	Communications Team
Develop and implement suggestions to further seed the brand internally.	Staff	2 nd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team
Examine the steps necessary to begin external marketing of Michigan's Great Southwest.	Staff	2 nd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team
Determine how to more effectively use the <i>into the business of life</i> portion of the branding statement.	Staff	2 nd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team

Community Messaging

Goal 3: Share the story of the community with others outside the area.

Objective: Execute a media program to entice positive interest in the area in an effort to obtain at least five positive stories in regional and/or national press.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Create a media program to entice positive interest in the area and our projects.	Staff	3 rd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team
Continue to develop relationships with local and regional media outlets that will result in positive media coverage.	Staff	Ongoing	Communications Team
Use the Harbor Shores project and rankings like Money Magazine's Best Places to Retire to share the positive attributes of the community internally and externally.	Staff	2 nd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team

Goal 4: Completion and promotion of the redesigned Cornerstone Alliance website.

Objective: More and more site consultants are going directly to the web to learn about their site options. By improving our site this will put our area at an advantage. The www.gomichigan.com site will serve as the economic development site for the organization.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Completion of final pieces of web design project and launch of new site.	Staff, Johnson-Rauhoff	End 4 th Qtr. 2008	Communications Team
Marketing of the new site locally, regionally, and nationally.	Staff	1 st Qtr. 2009 and ongoing	Communications Team
Incorporate feedback on new site to keep fresh and up to date.	Staff, Johnson-Rauhoff	Ongoing	Communications Team
Continue to develop and populate the building and site section of the site.	Staff, Johnson-Rauhoff	2 nd Qtr. 2009 database determined- population ongoing	Communications Team

Goal 5: Review of all Cornerstone Alliance owned web sites to reassure they are up to date and meeting user's needs.

Objective: Seek feedback from users of the sites to assure that individual's questions are being answered accurately and the "branding" we are creating for the community accurately reflects our goals of diversity and inclusion.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the sites to measure effectiveness. Develop an on-line survey to encourage visitors to rate the sites. • Determine ways to improve the sites to make them better tools. Examine more internal updates. • Once recommendations are made for the sites, implement suggested changes. • Survey primary clients to determine their satisfaction and solicit input for enhancements. • Improve and expand the Michigan's Great Southwest web site to be more focused on relocation efforts. 	Staff	2 nd /3 rd Qtr. 2009 2 nd /3 rd Qtr. 2009 3 rd /4 th Qtr. 2009 3 rd /4 th Qtr. 2009 3 rd Qtr. 2009	Communications Team

Organizational Sustainability

We perform many day-to-day activities to ensure the effective and efficient operation of our economic development efforts. The longevity and ultimate effectiveness of these activities depend on our successful administrative and financial accountabilities.

Key Elements:

- a. Governance to maximize engagement of the Boards of Directors, staff, investors and other stakeholders;
- b. Oversight of all financial operations of the three entities;
- c. Improved communications and relationship management with the organizations' investors,
- d. Goal-oriented fundraising efforts, including the annual campaign;
- e. Explored opportunities and implementation of strategies toward organizational self-sufficiency; and
- f. Financial accountability for all of our activities.

What you will observe:

- Good stewardship of resources that are entrusted to us, and annual audits for each organization authenticating our successful administration of these funds.
- Cornerstone Alliance will maximize the challenge grant from Whirlpool Foundation each year.
- Continued self-sufficiency of the Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce through increased membership and non-dues revenue sources.
- Annual budgets that depend on project fees and returns on investment in addition to fundraising goals.
- Expansion of the number of investors in our organization.
- Implementation of a planned giving strategy.
- Continued emphasis on staff development.
- Successful pass-through programs operating at zero-balance budgets.
- Thorough communications with the Boards and Executive Committees so that volunteer members are engaged in effective meetings and decision making processes.

Goal 1: Increase investor contributions.

Objective: Raise cash / cash equivalent of 10% increase over 2008 fundraising cash / cash equivalent as part of agreement to raise \$1Million per Whirlpool Corporation's Challenge Match.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure new annual investments. • Renew existing annual investments. • Create / Implement a focused <i>Five Year Pledge Drive</i> for both individual donors and corporate donors. 	Staff, Investors, Board of Directors, Investor Relations Operating Committee	4 th Qtr 2009	Finance Team

Goal 2: Research, Establish, and Launch a Legacy Giving Plan and Endowment.

Objective: Create an opportunity for individuals to contribute to permanent funding for the organization.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research potential plans. • Establish / Implement a plan. • Launch the plan. 	Staff, Investor Relations Operating Committee	4 th Qtr 2009	Finance Team

Organizational Sustainability

Goal 3: Pursue projects which enhance the net worth of the organization via asset management and developer fees with the goal being to raise \$250,000 per year.

Objective: Utilizing development activities centered on housing, commercial spaces, and infrastructure – create an environment which both meets the needs of the existing community and transforms the perception of the community to make it more attractive to outside investors.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop 2 commercial properties which will remove blight from the community and create opportunities for entrepreneurs. • Undertake the development of 55 unites of housing targeted to both the affordable and market rate sectors of the community. • Develop plan for development targets along Main Street and Riverview Corridors. 	Staff, State of Michigan, Financial Institutions, Local Municipalities, Benton Harbor Housing Commission (BHHC), Investors, City of Benton Harbor	3 rd Qtr 2009	Finance Team
		4 th Qtr 2009	
		2 nd Qtr 2009	

Goal 4: Maintain financial accountability and positive audit reports.

Objective: The investors in Cornerstone Alliance entrust the Board of Directors and staff with proper administration of their funds. Throughout 2009 Cornerstone will continue to earn the trust of its investors.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a cash flow projection model for 2009 and forward for all Cornerstone Alliance affiliates supported by our investors. • Complete a successful audit for 2008. • Update proper allocations of the common costs for Cornerstone Alliance. • Update project cost tracking systems. • Along with Finance Operating Unit, review and simplify financial reporting documents and streamline classes. • Develop 2009 budget for each program. • Manual review of cash and investments to make sure there is the right mix. 	Staff, Finance Committee	1 st Qtr 2009	Finance Team
		2 nd Qtr 2009	
		1 st Qtr 2009	
		2 nd Qtr 2009	
		3 rd Qtr 2009	
		3 rd and 4 th Qtr 2009	
		During 3 rd Quarter 2009	

Organizational Sustainability

Goal 5: Make sure our investors are informed and engaged.

Objective: Go beyond traditional forms of communication to make sure information is timely, relative and informative

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal visits with #1 investors annually. • Use email and database system to provide timely information. • Develop materials that demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) of investing in Cornerstone Alliance. • Continue our strong communication with investors through regular communications. • Utilize our website more efficiently to reach investors. • Effective messaging to both investors and non-investors. 	Staff	Ongoing	Finance Team Communications Team

Goal 6: Improve staff development process and tools.

Objective: Ensure the appropriate talent retention and growth activities are in place to prepare the organization for the future.

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have development / growth plan for every staff member. • Create / update accurate job descriptions. • Outline performance management process. 	Staff	2 nd Qtr 2009 2 nd Qtr 2009 1 st Qtr 2009	Human Resources

Integration with Community Development Partners

We must have seamless implementation strategies and programs on both the economic development axis as well as the community development axis to drive systemic and lasting change. Therefore, we will engage in strategic initiatives to maximize our transformational activities.

Key Elements:

- In order to assist in providing stability to our neighborhoods, we will continue to engage in subsidized and market rate housing opportunities;
- Small business development efforts will be directed to best achieve results in the areas with documented need. Activities with an emphasis on downtown revitalization will be prioritized; and
- Understanding the workforce needs of our businesses and the resources available to address those needs. Gaps in services will be addressed with partner organizations.

What you will observe:

- Coordination on community benefits plan from the Harbor Shores project, including:
 - Shared communications recognizing successes on both economic and community development measurements;
 - Work plan activities that encourage further cooperation with partner agencies; and
 - Local and minority businesses directly participating with and or benefiting from the project.
- Engaged stakeholders and, where possible, citizen input on projects while in the planning stages.
- Partner teams assembled to meet specific issues and needs as they are identified.
- Continued alignment with our community development partners will become the responsibility of each staff member as their shared accountabilities are dependent upon each other's success.

Goal 1: With the reorganization of the Alliance for World-Class Communities, Cornerstone is integrating its operations with our community development partners while maintaining our own identity. These partner groups are reorganized as the Consortium for Community Development which will be comprised of the organizations formerly known as Citizens for Progressive Change, the Council for World-Class Communities, and the Community Partnership for Lifelong Learning.

Objective: *Define our relationship to maximize support and cooperation to promote self-sustainment and self-sufficiency.*

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Arrange for a meeting between the Work Plan group and Marcus Robinson to discuss action items and make any additions, changes, etc.	Staff	1 st Qtr. 2009	Human Resources
Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) to guide the joint work of our organizations.	CA/CCD	TBD	Cornerstone Alliance Staff
Include affiliate activities within Cornerstone's Communications Plan to effectively share the AWCC's message throughout the community.	CA/CCD	TBD	Cornerstone Alliance Staff
Conduct joint staff meetings on a quarterly basis.	CA/CCD	TBD	Cornerstone Alliance Staff

Integration with Community Development Partners

Goal 2: Jointly define roles for both Cornerstone Alliance and Community Development Partners for those projects that have shared objectives.

Objective: *Coordinate efforts to provide stability to our neighborhoods, revitalize our downtown, and meet the workforce needs of our businesses.*

Action Items	Contributing Partners	Target Completion	Accountable Party
Neighborhood Stabilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage as a partner in community projects such as HOPE VI. • Provide leadership to projects such as the revitalization of the Empire corridor. Downtown Revitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide financial assistance and technical assistance to small businesses. Workforce Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop position profiles for jobs forecasted by the Harbor Shores project. 	CA/CCD/BHHC CA/CCD/City of Benton Harbor CA/Renaissance Development Fund (RDF)/SBS/Women's Business Center (WBC) CA/HS/CCD/Michigan Works!/Opportunity Center	TBD TBD TBD TBD	Cornerstone Alliance Staff