

Gate City Community Development Corporation

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2005

School of Community Economic Development

Southern New Hampshire University

Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the
Masters of Science in Community Economic Development

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Abstract

The Gate City Community Development Corporation (GCCDC) project involves the development of a faith-based community development corporation by the same name serving the Nashua, NH region. GCCDC operates from buildings owned by Grace Fellowship of Nashua Inc. (GFNI) on Franklin Street in downtown Nashua. GCCDC is an independent organization whose mission is to provide training and services designed to meet the needs of immigrant and low-to-moderate income residents of the Nashua region.

During this project, GCCDC was formed, and became a sustainable community development corporation in its first year of operations, and is now comprised of a community technology center, AmeriCorps Vista program, and a furniture donation center. The host organization, during startup, was Grace Fellowship of Nashua, Inc (GFNI), which is a church-run nonprofit in Nashua. GFNI provided space and limited funding for GCCDC startup costs and provided technical assistance related to forming the CDC. This project is evaluated in this document by determining (a) was a CDC successfully formed as a Board run 501(c)3 Corporation and (b) was the CDC able to perform at least one appropriate community economic development project.

Executive Summary

Gate City Community Development Corporation, a faith-based nonprofit, was developed during this project. This project consisted of two parts; first, the organization and incorporation of Gate City Community Development Corporation; second, the design and implementation of several community projects within the Gate City CDC organization.

The target community of this project is the “Greater Nashua Region,” as specified by the New Hampshire Office of State Planning. GCCDC is based in downtown Nashua, NH, but works with and in all eleven communities of the “Greater Nashua Region.”

There are many problems that cannot be addressed by the local faith community without the corporate vehicle described in this document. The community development corporation described here is necessary for the purpose of receiving grants and doing projects not possible without this legal and organizational structure.

Before this project, the members of several churches in the area around Nashua, NH did not have the correct corporate vehicle for community development. Without this vehicle, the faith communities involved could not apply for grants for, or participate fully in, community development projects. With Gate City CDC they are now able to apply for, and participate fully in, community development projects.

The primary project goal was the creation of a sustainable, faith-based community development corporation in the greater Nashua, NH region, and by the end of the project, be successfully running a community-desired project. The project objectives were to first create the organizational framework, then to develop at least one community project, and finally do this all while creating a sustainable organization.

Gate City Community Development Corporation was successfully set up and several community projects were successfully started. These projects were: a community technology center, a Donation Networks affiliated site, and the assignment of an AmeriCorps volunteer to handle the Gate City CDC immigrant empowerment project.

The project was successfully completed with successes on all project sections. The original goal of one community project was surpassed, even though, as of this writing, each project remains quite small. These projects will grow and develop over time and more projects and programs will be added as the organization matures.

The Gate City CDC project was successful and sustainable. However, other organizations and groups of individuals that are considering starting a community development corporation should proceed with extreme caution. It is a long, difficult and time-consuming project that requires long-term commitment. Starting a nonprofit is similar to starting any business, and should be attempted only by those with the entrepreneurial spirit to persevere.

I. Community Needs Assessment

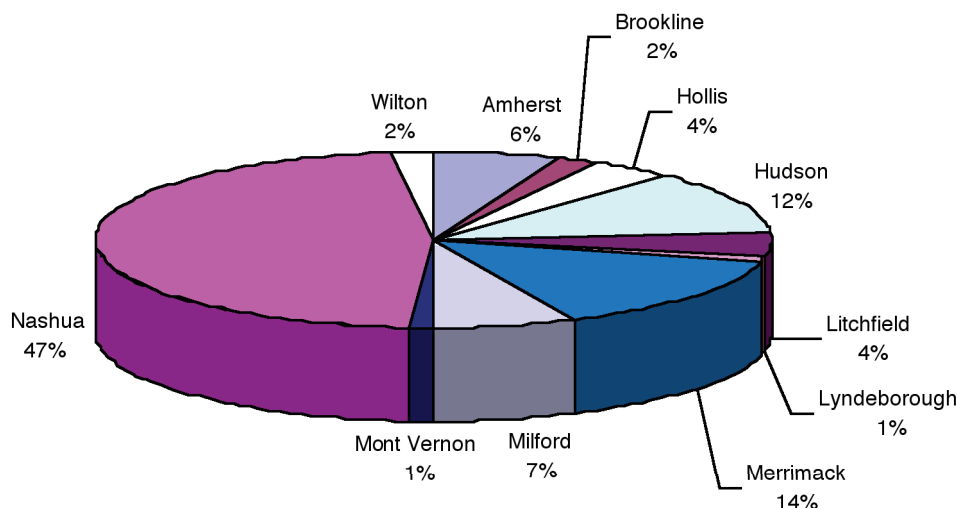
Grace Fellowship of Nashua Inc. (GFNI) is the parent organization of several churches in downtown Nashua and currently owns one church building at 43 Main Street in Nashua, as well as several mill buildings on Franklin Street directly behind the Main Street location. These buildings house one congregation directly associated with the nonprofit (Grace Fellowship Church), two independent congregations (a Baptist and a Chinese) and two Grace Fellowship Church ethnic ministries (Indian and Ukrainian/Russian language groups).

GFNI is also the parent of Grace Outreach International; a group involved in economic development aid via projects such as grants for buildings and in sponsorship of micro enterprise projects in developing countries. GFNI has identified local community economic development as an area of need that the faith community should be addressing. GFNI also realized that it did have a local, faith-based vehicle with which it could do community development. To provide a vehicle in a strategic location in the heart of the region's highest poverty census tracts, the faith community decided to help develop on GCCDC.

The Greater Nashua United Way, Southern New Hampshire Services and the Nashua Mayor's Office have done community needs assessments in 2002 and 2003 that covered the 12 towns defined by the New Hampshire Office of State Planning as the "Greater Nashua Region." About 47% of the 197,000 people who live in the region

live in Nashua, while 53% live in the surrounding communities, including 14% in Merrimack and 12% in Hudson.

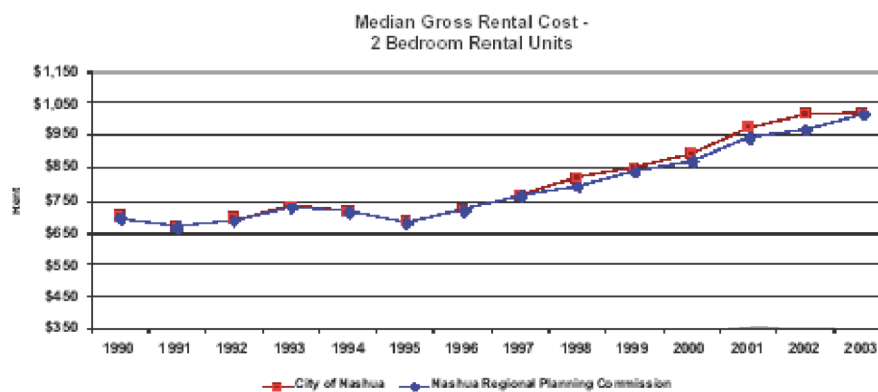
Regional Population Distribution, 2000



Before putting forth a proposal for a community development corporation to facilitate the community-desired economic development programs, it is important to see whether there are community needs that could be fulfilled through such an organization. This is done by examining the community needs in each of the three areas of projected market penetration and whether there are known service needs in each of these areas. The areas are financial opportunity, cultural diversity and immigrant empowerment, and housing opportunities. While these are general categories and will probably be explored, expanded and changed by the community, these areas provide a good benchmark when examining the region.

The interplay between housing prices and the financial struggle of community members is the driving force behind problems in the region. Housing prices are

spiraling up at a rapid rate throughout the region. As can be seen through an examination of the rental market trends in the region.



The high cost of rental housing in Nashua and the region has resulted in renters spending a disproportionate amount of their income on housing. Region-wide, according to the 2000 census, 32.3% of all renters were spending more than 30% of their income on housing, while 63.3% of renters have a household income of less than \$35,000 per year.

From the Mayor's [of Nashua] Task Force on Housing: "With the high cost of housing in the Region, individuals are being forced to live further and further from their place of employment. Preservation of quality of life is critical to everyone and is a value important to New Hampshire residents. How can we preserve the quality of life if significant commutes are required to find quality employment? Whether with schools, day care, elder care, health care, or recreation, our employees are being pushed further and further from their places of employment to take advantage of these amenities for their families" (MTFH, p. 11).

The Mayor's Task Force Report goes on to explain the pressure this jump in housing cost puts on employers: "As an employer, one must pay a premium for the salaries of its employees to retain them and maintain stability of the workforce. If one contemplates expansion, the business must pay not only a premium for salaries but will also need to provide some type of hiring bonus or salary premium to offset the high cost of housing. Assuming prices cannot be increased due to competition, the business must either generate additional incremental revenue or elect to remain static in terms of growth" (MTFH, p.15). The building pressure on employees and employers in the region could lead to a weak regional economy if not addressed immediately. However, this is not the only issue that the new CDC considers an issue of important community need that must be addressed.

The CDC also considers fostering all types of financial sufficiency to be part of its primary goals. This means several things: First, it is a goal that the alleviation of poverty through the acquisition of skills needed to enter the workforce must be addressed. As was shown above, the offices of GCCDC are located in the heart of Nashua, directly in the center of the area of greatest need in the entire region. Because these census tracts with poverty levels above 12% are located within walking distance of the downtown location of GCCDC, the communities' with need for services can come to the CDC without transportation, a vitally important aspect of the project design.

The United Way of Greater Nashua noted in its community needs assessment that "the short-term view of working at the minimum wage tends to be favored by state welfare officials instead of the longer term promise of better wages from a college or

trade education” (United Way, p. 13, 2002). The results of short-term view are left to fester within the community, which, according to Southern New Hampshire Services leads to “poor and low skilled workers of Greater Nashua expressed significant frustration at the barriers they face in finding, obtaining and keeping a job (Concannon, p. 21, 2003).

“The perception that services and jobs are located beyond low-income downtown residents’ geographic reach is very strong in the community” (Concannon, p. 21, 2003). The location of GCCDC is ideally located right in the heart of this downtown community, and it has the opportunity to provide services where there are gaps, of which there are many. And while our desire is not to step into the domain of existing organizations, we will seek to fill any gaps of service for our community if we feel we are capable of doing so.

II. Problem Identification and Proposed Solutions

Problem Statement

There are many problems that cannot be addressed by the community of GFNI/Grace Fellowship Church without the appropriate corporate vehicle. A viable solution for the community is to set up a community development corporation for the purpose of receiving grants and doing projects not possible without this legal and organizational structure. Without this vehicle, the faith community would not be able to meet the needs documented in the *Needs Assessment* section of this document.

Project Target Community

The target community of this project is the “Greater Nashua Region,” as specified by the New Hampshire Office of State Planning. GCCDC projects focus on the low-to-moderate income and immigrant communities of the region. GCCDC is based in downtown Nashua, NH, but works with and in all eleven communities of the “Greater Nashua Region.”

Stakeholder & Community Analysis

Whether the clients and organizations that benefit directly from the CDC’s services or partner organizations that create mutually beneficial arrangements, success depends on understanding the relationship between stakeholders and how each effected project implementation.

GCCDC Stakeholder Analysis Table

Stakeholder	Stakeholder Interest	Assessment of Impact	Impact of Participation
Grace Fellowship of Nashua, Inc.	Nonprofit host of GCCDC.	High	Needed to host the startup and house the offices of GCCDC. Serves as a mutually beneficial partner, with GCCDC contributing to the programs available through Grace Fellowship marketing channels and GCCDC sending clients to GFNI programs.
Board of Directors	Controlling Board of the CDC	High	Is the guiding influence behind the CDC. Make decisions regarding money, programs, and other related decisions. Recommendation is that this Board comes largely from GFNI and its board during the early stages of CDC development.
Staff	Fulltime paid employees of the CDC. They work in program, fundraising and other areas of the CDC.	High	The initial staff made up of an executive director and two staff members. Staff members work on program areas listed in the CDCs mission statement.
Clients (Organizations)	Churches, other CDCs and Nonprofits.	High	Benefit from CDC programs and knowledge. Also contribute to CDC projects.
Clients (Individuals)	Low to Moderate Income Individuals. Immigrant communities.	High	Benefit directly from CDC programs in all of the outlined areas.
Community Governments	Come into mutually beneficial partnerships to encourage goodwill and the expansion of services.	Low	It is important to partner and work with local democratically elected governments on community-related projects.

Project Goals and Objectives in CED Terms

The primary goal of this project was the creation of a sustainable community development corporation that focuses primarily on providing financial training and community programs in the Nashua region. Specific goals include the following:

- The project goal was to form a community development corporation and complete one community development project.
 - Create the organizational framework for a community development corporation
 - Work with the community on the recruitment and setup of a board of directors
 - Develop the legal framework necessary for a CDC

- The second goal was to have at least one project that is based on the mission, vision and values of the organization.
 - Work with the community to determine the most pressing needs
 - Obtain funding for solutions to these community determined needs by the development of fundraising strategies and writing grants, so that the CDC is able to push forward with desired programs/projects.

- The third goal was to complete the first two objectives in a way that looked toward creating a sustainable organization.
 - Work with the community to develop a strategy for organizational sustainability and growth
 - Hire organization staff necessary to complete one project and work toward organizational sustainability

III. Project Design

Review of the Literature

The literature review for Christian community development corporations is divided into two categories. First, there is the information that addresses the concept and ways to approach any community development corporation. Second, there is the information that relates directly to the concept of “Christian community development” and specifically how this is being deployed throughout the field.

When working with a faith community, the unique cultural and religious context must be understood. In the case of Evangelical Protestant Christians (referred to from here out as “Christians” for simplicity’s sake) this means that the final authority on all matters of faith and practice come down to their interpretation of the “Holy Bible.” This means that all decisions regarding economic principles must first be checked against the Scriptures. In 2003, Rev. Doug Lee summarized the importance of comparing mission to underlying beliefs thus: “Because we tend to focus more on implementation, we never get to the underlying assumptions. Consequently, we view congregation and community development from the world view of American culture” (Lee, p.1, 2003). The mission of Christian community development must be understood before the form it should take can be determined.

While Fikkert argues that economic theory is not directly dictated in the Holy Bible, he does suggest that there are general principles that can be taken from the Scriptures (Fikkert, 2003). These principles are elaborated in part by Chewning who

successfully argues that some sort of private property-based economic system is preferable: “abolishing private property does not improve man; it makes him unproductive and reduces both the freedom God intended for him and his God-ordained ability to enjoy with thanksgiving the rewards of his work” (Chewning, p. 44).

This does not mean that Christianity is an inherently pro-capitalist religion; in fact the notion that capitalist hoarding is good is directly against the Scriptures. Ronald Sider argues in an article provocatively titled “Are All Evangelicals Going to Hell? (Or: Do We Believe What Jesus Said?)” That “the Bible is clear. If we get rich by oppression or if we have wealth and do not reach out generously to the poor, the Lord acts in history to destroy us” (Sider, p. 3, 2004). He goes on to detail the historic demands put on Christians throughout the Holy Bible to help others.

Since Christians are to understand life through the Scriptures, and since the Scriptures appear to command helping to alleviate poverty without abolishing anyone’s rights, community development seems to fit very well with Christian theology. Dr. Wayne Gordon believes that “the question arises as to what the response as Christians will be to the troubles of the poor and the inner cities today. The desperate conditions that face the poor call for a revolution in the church's attempts at a solution” (Gordon, 2004) He goes on to assert that Christian community development is the revolution that needs to take place. For Dr. Gordon this concept includes three pillars of the Christian Community Development Association: relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution (Gordon, 2004).

Community development corporations are the central institutions of community economic development, and Christian communities should be engaged in transforming their communities. It follows closely that Christian communities should set up community development corporations to maximize their possible positive impact in their communities. Whether Christian, other faith-based, or secular, Community Development Corporations are “the central institution in the theory and practice of CED” (Simon, p.119, 2001).

The startup and design of a community development corporation are made up of specific steps and depend on decisions by the community. Temali in the Community Development Handbook outlines the steps needed to start a community development corporation; specifically Chapter 2 “Develop Your Organization.” These steps include: handle basic start-up tasks, establish basic operating principles, build funding, build staff, develop and maintain strong relationships and gain visibility and credibility (Temali, p. 14, 2002).

Also important to the development of CDC programs is the *Hip Pocket Guide for Program Managers*, which describes in-depth program design, and *A Guide to Careers in Community Development* (Craig, D., 1978), which gives example job descriptions and explains the how to hire CDC staff (Brophy, P., Shabecoff, A., 2001). While pursuing these steps it is important for a nonprofit to develop a definite and focused purpose, especially when it is associated with an existing group or ministry (Skjegstad, p. 39, 2002).

There are several practical reasons for setting up CDCs that are separate from the church nonprofits that already exist, when the community wishes to engage in community development work. Some of these are enumerated in Reese and Clamp including: “legal protection afforded the religious corporation...a separate corporation may make it easier to secure funds to finance the proposed faith-based CED activities...A third advantage of establishing a separate corporation is that it can create an institution that brings together various disparate stakeholders” (Reese, p. 34, 2003).

Another consideration for faith communities is whether or not they should engage in projects separately from the existing systems, or should pour resources into existing programs. It is not my intention in this project proposal to imply that Gate City CDC will engage in activities already being done in the community; it is important to understand whether or not this should be a main consideration.

While it is not advisable to compete for competition’s sake, there are reasons for churches to mirror work in their communities even if “secular” programs already exist. First, as shown above, Christian community development cannot be separated from its underlying religious tenets. Second, duplication is seen as an important kind of accountability mechanism in the nonprofit sector by at least one author (Simon, p. 127, 2001). While always striving for collaboration, groups, both faith-based and secular, do not need to succumb to pressure from existing groups who are afraid of competition. “Nonprofits are not monopolistic” (Simon, p. 127, 2001).

Based on this literature review, it is clear that there is much information about the governing and procedural framework of community development corporations. It is also clear that there is a fairly long and rich tradition of Christian community development that can be leaned on heavily in the completion of this project's goals and objectives.

Program

The goal of this project was to form and begin operations of a faith-based community development corporation in Nashua, NH. This organization, going by the name "Gate City Community Development Corporation," serves the Greater Nashua Region, which includes the towns of Nashua, Merrimack, Litchfield, Hudson, Pelham, Amherst, Milford, Hollis, Brookline, Mont Vernon, Wilton and Lyndeborough. This area corresponds to the area of GFNI and the area of the Nashua Regional Planning Commission. GCCDC was formed under the sponsorship of GFNI but is an independent corporation with a separately incorporated board, mission and goals.

GCCDC focuses primarily on three areas of development: financial sufficiency; cultural diversity and immigrant empowerment; and housing opportunities. In order to develop and sustain these purposes, GCCDC provides the following services to individuals or institutions: training, technical assistance, economic aid, and any other support that seems necessary and appropriate to fulfill the organizational mission.

Below are listed examples of activities for each of Gate City CDC's primary areas of development. These lists contain examples but are not meant to be all-inclusive or exhaustive.

- Financial Sufficiency
 - Financial literacy training
 - Micro-enterprise development for organizations and individuals
 - Individual development accounts and training
 - Workforce development
 - Vocational training
 - Computer training and access
- Cultural Diversity and Immigrant Empowerment
 - Citizenship training for immigrants
 - Training on principles of civic participation
 - Encouraging the development of civil institutions
 - Encouraging the development of cultural institutions
- Housing Opportunities
 - Developing workforce and affordable housing
 - Assisting individuals to acquire and maintain appropriate housing

The first project that Gate City CDC took on was the development of Community Technology Center in the main GCCDC offices at 34 Franklin St. in Nashua, NH. The GCCDC Community Technology Center was chosen as the first community development project because of the opportunity to complete multiple training and community development activities within the CTC. Currently the CTC has walk-in access and is running NH Works workforce-training classes in partnership with INTERCED of Manchester. GCCDC has written a 2005 work plan that includes future

expansion and development of the CTC project. The 2005 GCCDC work plan is located in Work Plan Appendix at the end of this project report.

Participants

During the planning stages of the project, participants, in addition to the project manager, included the Board of Directors of GFNI, the staff of GFNI the appointed Executive Director of GCCDC, and members of the community. During the implementation of the first year GCCDC programs, all of the above were involved, in addition to the GCCDC staff, community volunteers and program participants.

Community Role

The development of a community-based organization was the fundamental reason for this project. GCCDC Board of Directors is made up of members of the community, all from Grace Fellowship of Nashua, Inc. This board oversees the decisions and programs of GCCDC. Funding and projects pursued are done by GCCDC staff under the direction of the community-based board of directors and take into account community needs and desires. GCCDC also has volunteers from outside of the GFNI community including: several local pastors and members of the community at large.

Host Organization

The formation and startup projects of GCCDC received support from its host organization, Grace Fellowship of Nashua Inc, through the donation of space, start-up

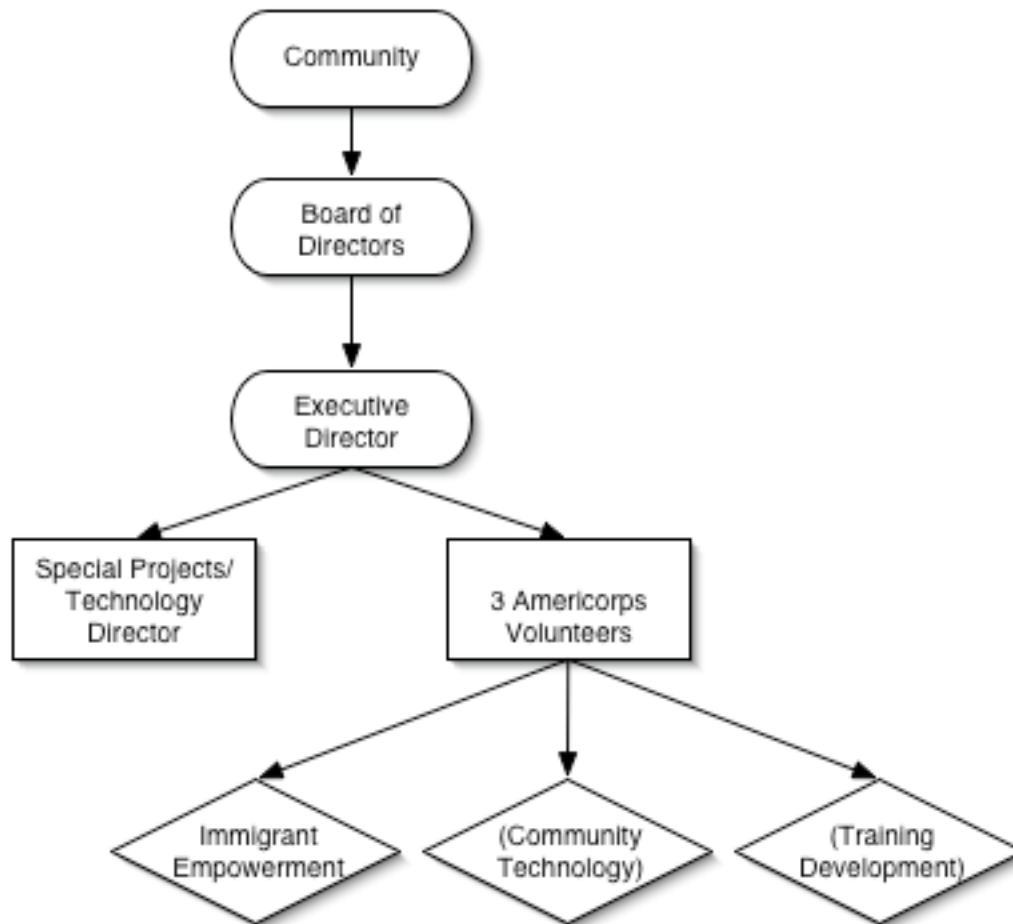
costs and staff support. GFNI assisted the new CDC by donating space in church-owned warehouse/ office buildings at 18 and 34 Franklin Street, in Nashua, NH. The 34 Franklin Street office space is used for CDC offices and the Community Technology Center. The warehouse at 18 Franklin Street is used for the Nashua location of the INTERCED Donation Networks program, which is a partnership between Gate City CDC, INTERCED, and GFNI.

GFNI also supported the CDC through the donation of funds necessary to creation of the CDC organization and a limited amount of startup funds necessary for opening CDC offices.

Since GCCDC incorporated, the relationship with GFNI remains, but quickly changed during the first year of operations from GFNI as the incubator organization for GCCDC to GFNI as a collaborator on community projects. GCCDC has also formed partnerships with other community groups for the purpose of collaboration and growth in GCCDC's community impact area.

Organizational Chart

Below is the Organizational Chart for Gate City Community Development Corporation as of April 2005. Included in parenthesis are the two AmeriCorps volunteers who will be joining the organization in July 2005.



Method

The organization was formed and is run as a nonprofit IRS 501(c)3 community development corporation. GCCDC is a faith-based community organization built from the ground up. The organization was started as an outgrowth of GFNI's existing mission and facilities but with GCCDC's own separate mission and organizational structure. GCCDC does not participate in any proselytizing or other religious activities outside of the GCCDC mission, vision and values.

Products & Outputs

- Establishment of a Community Development Corporation

- Recruitment of a board of directors
- Fundraising to support the cost of starting up of the CDC
- Appointment of an Executive Director and any additional staff needed for startup
- Acquisition of office and program space either by donation by or lease agreement with Grace Fellowship of Nashua, Inc.
- Transition project to CDC staff for full implementation
- Organize within the community and work with CDC board and staff to determine community needs
- Work with INTERCED of Manchester and Grace Fellowship of Nashua on establishment and running of Donation Networks site
- Development and implementation of GCCDC's first community development project: a Community Technology Center
- Hire first AmeriCorps volunteer
- Develop work plan for fiscal year 2005

IV. Project Implementation

Implementation Plan

The GCCDC implementation plan consisted of three distinct yet interdependent components.

1. Formation of Gate City Community Development Corporation consisting of:
 - Approval of formation by Board of Directors
 - Registration of Articles of Incorporation
 - Adoption of bylaws
 - Application for 501(c)3 status

2. Start up of actual operations consisting of:
 - Application for grants
 - Hiring of initial staff members
 - Acquisition of office and training space

3. First projects implementation by Gate City CDC
 - Acquisition of computers, desks and Internet access needed for Community Technology Center (CTC)
 - Preparing CTC space for occupancy
 - Open CTC to public for walk-in and workforce training classes
 - Open Donation Networks Site
 - Hire first AmeriCorps volunteer

- Prepare 2005 CTC work plan

Project Implementation Gantt Chart

	2004												2005				
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	
Phase 1: Formation																	
Formal Board Approval																	
Articles of Incorporation, by-laws, IRS(c)3																	
Acquisition of office and program space																	
Develop CDC policies and procedures																	
Phase 2: Startup																	
Volunteer staff develops initial CDC project																	
Hiring of initial part-time staff and beginning of CDC operations																	
Phase 3: Operations																	
Planning and implementation of first CDC project																	
Project evaluation and continued CDC operations																	

Formation of Gate City Community Development Corporation

The first key to the GCCDC plan was the formation of a community development corporation. This organizational structure allows the Corporation to apply for grants and to do work in housing and other fields, which is not possible without separating from the

GFNI community church-based organizational structure. The CDC designation and associated open-book nonprofit tax structure allows the corporation not only to get grants, but also to make the separate purpose and governance of the organization clear to both partners and clients inside the community and also to outside collaborators and funders.

This distinction does affect the faith emphasis of the separate organization, since the separate organization does not participate in religious proselytizing or other religious activities outside of the GCCDC mission, vision and values. The members of the community decided to form the separate organization because they believe that GCCDC will continue to allow the light of faith through the actions of a known and trusted community development model.

The formation of the CDC facilitated the staff structure listed in Organizational Chart Appendix. This structure is expected grow and change as the organization grows and changes, assuming past year one of the Part 1 of the GCCDC operations plan. A projected staff structure is shown in Part 3 of this project report.

With a startup organization there is always role “cross-pollination,” with each coordinator working closely with each of his or her colleagues on CDC projects. These positions also require the performance of some clerical, accounting, fundraising duties, and require that the individuals can complete other duties as required. To this end, convincing highly skilled and highly motivated personnel who show a great desire to work in a start up was absolutely essential to project success.

Start up of Gate City CDC Operations

During the operations start-up phase, the doors of the newly formed Gate City Community Development Corporation opened. This phase included the appointment of an executive director who is in charge of ongoing operations. The executive director came on as volunteer in February 2004 and is responsible for designing projects and writing the grants for his or her own salary. During this phase, the executive director and volunteers began overseeing day-to-day operations and applying for grants for funding for the coordinator position, Americorps positions, and any other positions deemed necessary for future growth. Three volunteers handled the largest share of the workload, donating a combined 60 hours a week of labor.

At the time of opening, GCCDC had four offices for staff and one room designed to house the Community Technology Center. At the beginning of operations, the Executive Director had an office and two full-time volunteers each have an office, using the remaining offices for staging equipment and as collaborative space. This arrangement facilitated cross-pollination during task completion by allowing shared duties to be carried out in an efficient and effective manner.

The last part of this phase was the beginning of community organizing and exploring different options for community development projects. Other tasks begun during this time also included holding discussions with community leaders, conducting surveys, studying existing reports and performing other research necessary to continue to Phase 3 and full operation of the CDC.

Management and Operation of Gate City Community Development Corporation

This phase includes all operations of GCCDC and the development of plans for the expansion of GCCDC at the end of Year 1. All fundraising done by the GCCDC executive director, board and staff was done with a view towards a possible expansion of staff and services as funds become available. Project staffing at the end of the GCCDC project time period consisted of an Executive Director, Special Projects and Technology Director and one full-time Americorps volunteer. Two additional Americorps volunteers are expected at GCCDC in July 2005.

This space used during phase three consisted of three offices: one for the executive director, one for the special projects director, and two for the Americorps volunteers. In addition, a reception area is used for display and reception of volunteers and clients is located between the staff offices and the Community Technology Center. GCCDC also operated the Donation Networks location at 18 Franklin Street in Nashua.

Staffing Pattern

Phase 1 staffing pattern consisted of the project manager, the volunteer executive director, and the potential board of directors. All positions during this phase are staffed on a volunteer basis.

Phase 2 staffing pattern consisted of the board of directors, the appointed executive director, and two project managers. All staff members continued to be involved on a volunteer basis.

During Phase 3, the Executive Director, and other GCCDC employees became fully responsible for raising operations funds.

Job descriptions and supervisory roles are defined in Appendix: Staff Job Descriptions.

Budget

Gate City Community Development Corporation startup funding of \$1000 was donated by GFNI to help facilitate the creation of the CDC legal nonprofit entity. This amount was designated to the preparation of legal documentation needed for the setup of the corporation with the city, state and federal government. GFNI has also donated office space sufficient for 3-year growth of the organization, as well as training space sufficient for project implementation.

Members of the community and other nonprofit and for-profit organizations donated all other materials and staff time. All of these costs have been estimated based on fair market value; this includes the estimated staff costs by job title. Budget for first year of operations was \$91,922. This includes donated and paid for staff salaries, training materials, documentation and office space. Not included is the warehouse space or furniture used in the Donation Networks warehouse, the only costs incurred or responsibility is staff time accounted for in the staff costs. Gate City Community Development Corporation project costs include:

- Staff Costs - \$66,307
 - Executive Director - \$30,000 total time donated
 - Two Project Managers - \$36,307 total time donated
- Legal Documents - \$530
- Equipment and Space- \$26,620
- Training Costs - \$17,800

Program Budget

Budget projections are for the first year of operations: June 2004 to June 2005.

Payroll taxes and employee benefits are assumed in this budget as a part of the salaries expense.

	Total Costs	Administrative & General	Sub-Total Programs
Revenue			
Program services	17,800	0	17,800
Start up funds	1000	1000	0
In-kind donations	91,000	30,000	62,927
Total revenue	111,727	31,000	78,800
Expenses			
Salaries	66,307	30,000	36,307
Rent and Utilities	20,475	0	20,475
Computers	1,575	0	1,575
Supplies	2,685		2,685
Telephone	40	40	0
Computers	1,525	0	1,525
Internet	320		320
Legal Documents	530	530	0
Training	17,800	0	17,800
Total Expenses	111,257	30,570	80,687
Net income	\$470		

V. Monitoring & Evaluation

Management Information System, Evaluation Plan & Reporting

Management Information Systems for Gate City CDC include the filing of legal and organizational paperwork at the CDC main offices as well as computer-based management tools. These tools include: financial reporting using QuickBooks; project management and class management using Moodle. Moodle is a web-based portal and course management system customized by Gate City CDC. During this project a volunteer developed the Moodle-based MIS that is now currently used by GCCDC for tasking, planning and organizing at the CDC. These programs are used to track the internal and external projects, and as well as financials of the CDC.

Evaluation

Evaluation is based on the two main outputs detailed in the section entitled “Products/Outputs.” The performance indicators are based on whether or not GCCDC was able to incorporate and complete necessary project phases. Measures are based on the Hip Pocket Guide to Planning and Evaluation section titled “Data Sources and Measures” (Craig, 1978, p. 102).

Summary Evaluation Table

Goal		
Objective	Due Date	Status
Goal: Formation of Gate City Community Development Corporation		
Approval of formation by Board of Directors	Feb 2004	Completed
Registration of Articles of Incorporation	Feb 2004	Completed
Adoption of bylaws	Feb 2004	Completed
Application for 501(c)3 status	Feb 2004	Completed

Acquisition of office and training space	Apr 2004	Completed
Start up of actual operations		
Volunteers Develop Initial Programs	Sep 2004	Completed
Hiring of initial staff members	Sep 2004	Completed
First projects implementation by Gate City CDC		
Acquisition of computers, desks and Internet access needed for Community Technology Center (CTC) (First CDC Project)	Oct 2004	Completed
Preparing CTC space for occupancy	Oct 2004	Completed
Open CTC to public for walk-in and workforce training classes	Oct 2004	Completed
Prepare 2005 CDC and CTC work plans	Feb 2005	Completed

Evaluation of each goal in the Summary Evaluation Table is based on the capacity to complete the tasks necessary for the completion of each project phase. This project evaluation was done presuming the ability to complete tasks in a linear timeline: each objective must be completed before moving on to the next objective. When all objectives were complete under a specific goal in the project evaluation table, it was then possible to move on to the next project phase and associated objectives.

The “Formation of Gate City Community Development Corporation” goal required receiving approval of the formation by the Board of Directors; registering the Articles of Incorporation with the city and state; adopting bylaws; and sending in the Federal IRS 501(c)3 paperwork to become a nonprofit. These steps were necessary to become a fully functioning legal corporation that could undertake community development projects.

The “Start up of actual operations” goal and associated phase required getting volunteers to assist in the development of the initial Gate City Community Development Corporation programs. Once these programs ideas were developed it was necessary to hire staff to work in the program areas developed.

The last goal and associated objectives, "First project implementation by Gate City CDC," consists of those activities necessary to design and implement a community technology center, run by the staff of Gate City CDC. This fulfilled the last project requirement: the implementation of a community development corporation run project. The last objective under this goal was to "Prepare 2005 CDC and CTC work plans". This objective was to help Gate City CDC develop a sustainable work plan for the coming year. The completion of this project objective brought the final goal to a close and allowed for a smooth transition to a fully functioning, sustainable community development corporation.

Sustainability

Field Observation

Field observation consisted of the project manager being daily involved in the ongoing project operations combined with the evaluation being done in by the project manager in conjunction with his colleagues.

Sustainability Elements

The project was able to create an organization that has been sustainable for at least one-year post the project phases. However, continued post project sustainability of this project will be dependent on the following factors:

- Continued support of the faith community including the continued support of Grace Fellowship of Nashua through the donation of office and training space.
- Ongoing efforts of CDC staff to raise money through grants, creation of earned-income streams and other fundraising efforts.

- Ongoing efforts of CDC staff and board members to serve the interests and needs of the community. This means keeping in touch with community needs, continuing to build community support through encouraging community involvement and allowing community input.

Institutional Plan

The development of a CDC is an attempt to create a viable institution that will have continuing and sustainable impact. By having a strong community-oriented board of directors, and recruiting staff from within the community, GCCDC will continue to develop into a strong community institution. Long-term sustainability will also depend on successful recruitment of qualified staff. Strong and competent staff is vital to creating a sustainable institution. So far this has been the case at Gate City CDC; hopefully it will continue for many years to come.

VI. Conclusions & Recommendations

Results

Basic projects goals remained the same throughout the lifetime of the project. The primary goal of the project was always to create a new, sustainable faith-based community development corporation. This goal was achieved; of the tasks undertaken, some were grander and others smaller than were assumed in the planning stage.

First, the project overall was more successful than anticipated; it spawned three distinct tasks in the first year: the community technology center, the Donation Networks site, and the immigrant empowerment programs. All three of these programs are

currently making headway in the community; they are staffed; people have been trained; and donated materials distributed to other non-profits, as GCCDC attempts to empower and educate through its programs.

However, as might be expected with an undertaking grown in blind idealism, each task has started very small and will take time to grow. This is for two reasons: first, it is very difficult to scale up from zero to large projects in one year. Second, the core group at GCCDC made a conscious decision to only work within the organization's core mission. This decision caused the organization to refuse to 'chase the money' and instead to focus on developing projects, and then to look for money that fit into each project's mission. Admittedly, this is a much more difficult way to build a large organization, and requires sacrifice and use of alternative methods by the organization's staff and volunteers. In this case, GCCDC felt this method fit best with the organization's vision and values.

There were two main factors that were not anticipated that made project completion difficult. The first was the long periods of time it takes to complete the paperwork necessary to start a nonprofit organization. This does not mean the number of pages necessary to fill out, or the confusion stemming from having to fill out, multiple rounds of paperwork at the city, state and federal levels. While this process can be irritating, it can be negotiated in a few weeks time. The most difficult part of becoming a nonprofit organization is the necessity of waiting nearly 8 months to receive 501(c)3 nonprofit status.

There are supposedly several ways around this wait. First, another nonprofit organization can be used for a fiscal agent. This approach only works if board and community are willing to give up a certain amount of control over the financial affairs of the organization. Second, since all donations are said to be deductible, if an organization receives 501(c)3 status, it can start taking tax deductible donations immediately upon sending in the federal IRS 501(c)3 application. What GCCDC found is that this last approach does not work with many foundations or businesses that give grants. Most importantly, this second approach does not work with the federal government itself. The federal government would not give GCCDC AmeriCorps volunteers, or other funding, before the federal government determined that GCCDC was a 501(c)3 organization. The amount of time needed to become an organization that can take tax deductible donations is extremely important to understand when starting a new organization.

The second factor that made project completion difficult is the challenge involved with bringing together faith-based evangelical Christians and 'secular' groups to work on project ideas. It is very important to not blame any single group, as there is plenty of sniping and pettiness to go around. Also, it must be noted that GCCDC has worked successfully with local governments and groups on both the giving and receiving end of projects. However, it is important to note that much "translation" must go on to explain common ground and to insure that all groups understand that they share mutual goals and objectives. This translation goes on in a case-by-case basis, and there is no easy, or simple way of avoiding confrontation when both style and belief systems are very different.

Overall the project went quite well and all the projects overall goals and objectives were met. The project was completely successfully and at the present time Gate City Community Development Corporation is a growing and active organization. GCCDC was a worthy project that has the possibly of positively affecting the Greater Nashua, New Hampshire region for years to come.

Recommendations

First of all, you must have a reason to believe that it is important for your purposed organization to come into existence. If you cannot sell yourself fully on your idea no one else will believe in your organization either. This goes for both the individuals and the communities involved in the purposed organization. You must believe completely in the project you are undertaking.

Second, anyone attempting to participate in the creation of any organization should examine herself or himself to assure she or he has a truly entrepreneurial nature. The entrepreneurial individual must be set to endure long hours, no pay, begging, borrowing, and finding resources just short of stealing, and must do so with a willingness to sit in an empty office for days without a telephone, internet, or even a desk. In a community development organization there should be more than one person willing to work in this manner. The entire group must be willing to stick together through defeat, hardship, and all forms of internal and external irritation.

Third, we found that existing models are helpful, but cannot be your ultimate source of information or inspiration. Every community and situation is different. Read every book you can get your hands on; ask every person who you can talk to; email similar organizations wherever you can find them, but ultimately it will come down to the ability to execute in unique and challenging circumstances.

Fourth, do not, under any circumstances hate! This means do not hate those who oppose you, and I don't mean for any moral reason, which is (almost) a reason to hate, but rather don't hate those who slow you down or oppose you mostly so that you can keep your sanity. The opposition you face is the same opposition groundbreakers face any time they make an attempt to change circumstances or to alter attitudes; resistance is assured. The most important way to keep to your mission is to believe in your mission more than you believe against your enemy's mission.

Finally, have a great team. Often times during this project one member of the team or another would allow hate and anger to begin to get in the way of the core mission. With a great team we had the ability to calm one another down, breathe in and refocus on our core mission again. In the same way you will be able to focus and to create, as you must in an entrepreneurial endeavor.

Appendices

Appendix I: Job Descriptions

Listed below are the positions that were necessary to fulfill project objectives. The only positions detailed are those that relate directly to successful project completion. Two positions are necessary for successful project completion: an Executive Director and a Project Manager.

Executive Director

The executive director oversees the overall direction of the faith-based community development corporation and reports to the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities

- Oversee and manage the staff and the overall day-to-day operations of the community development corporation.
- Create and execute a set of programs aimed at improving the community.
- Work with the board in setting the direction and policies for the organization.
- Collaborate with the organization's treasurer and financial manager to establish a budget for each fiscal year.
- Actively promote the goals and image of the corporation within the community.
- Secure funding for the operations and special projects.

Skills

- Extensive knowledge of community-based and faith-based organizations and/or a strong background in nonprofit housing development;
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills;

- Capability to organize and provide direction for working groups;
- Ability to do financial analysis and planning;
- Ability to work independently and exercise excellent judgment.

Experience

- Advanced degree in the appropriate field and a minimum of three years' experience in a related field.

Special Projects and Technology Director

The Special Projects and Technology Director works to improve the business and working opportunities in low-income communities through community development and technology projects.

Responsibilities

- Provide direct assistance to community-based organizations.
- Engage in a range of economic development activities.
- Plan and implement a comprehensive community economic development training program.
- Help develop new community economic development programs and initiatives.
- Coordinate the technology and innovation projects of the organization.

Skills

- Strong skills in training, program development, project management, and technical assistance.
- Experience in web development, server technologies, and open source technologies.

Experience

Demonstrated experience in economic development in community settings, including small business development, and/or workforce development; experience providing training and/or technical assistance to community-based organizations; experience in developing computer information systems.

Vista AmeriCorps Volunteer Description: Immigrant Empowerment Program Outline

Gate City Community Development Corporation (GCCDC) is committed to supporting cultural diversity and assisting immigrants and refugees, a growing population in Nashua, as they settle into their new homes; GCCDC is also committed to helping them address the unique needs created by their moves. In order to do this, we will strive to help find solutions for local transportation & child care issues, for the lack of affordable housing, and we will work to build community financial sufficiency, entrepreneurial and employment opportunities and asset development strategies.

In addition, GCCDC is committed to designing activities to educate residents and businesses about cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication; and to assist in building the capacity of other community- and faith-based organizations working with this population.

Member Responsibilities

The AmeriCorps VISTA member assigned to this project will help develop solutions for Nashua's immigrant and refugee population by addressing any issues that

affect the ability of new residents to adapt to the area and to achieve self-sufficiency within the community.

Specifically, the member will be assigned to help clients with job development and placement; to assist refugee clients with the initial resettlement process; to assist with financial literacy and social and cultural activities; to write grants and build partnerships in order to stabilize programs and develop new programs; to coordinate with the city of Nashua and other community- and faith-based organizations to share information on economic opportunities, cultural orientations, relevant seminars, and other initiatives for immigrant and refugee families.

As a part of the AmeriCorps VISTA team, the member will help develop local, self-sustaining solutions to problems faced by refugees.

Appendix II: 2005 Gate City Community Development Corporation Work Plan**Mission**

Gate City Community Development Corporation exists to serve the Greater Nashua area by helping to bring residents together to develop the community into a place where everyone has an equal opportunity to share in its benefits.

Vision

Gate City Community Development Corporation seeks to encourage participation and inclusion in the Greater Nashua community through the development of new and sustainable programs and services that would allow individuals, households, and organizations the opportunity for personal growth and empowerment and the ability to help improve the community around them. We particularly are interested in working with members of the community on the issues of financial sufficiency, cultural diversity, and housing opportunities.

Values

Gate City Community Development Corporation believes that in order to share in the benefits of a community, members of the community need to understand, and engage in, those activities that support the rights and the responsibilities that active community membership demands. We embrace the principles embodied in the Book of James of the New Testament. We seek to establish an organization based on compassion and trust to improve the quality of life of all people in the Greater Nashua area.

2005 Focus

Due to the lack of adequate service for immigrants and ethnic minorities in the Nashua region, it has been determined that GCCDC should allocate significant time and resources to creating programming that provides educational and financial opportunities to persons not familiar with the governmental or cultural practices in the United States or for whom English is a second language. Therefore, based on our mission, vision, values and present resource projections, we intend to focus our efforts in 2005 on the program areas listed below. Certainly, if unanticipated situations arise that would indicate it would be in the best interest of the community to refocus our activities we would do so.

Program Area #1: Cultural and ESL Assistance Activities

Overview

- Coordinate community efforts to address cultural issues relevant to the immigrant and ESL population
- Gather information on resources for this population in the region
- Create database of relevant information
- Develop curriculum on cultural differences issues related to getting and retaining jobs
- Create volunteer and pay-for database for interpretation and translation services
- Determine, and develop, needed classes and services
- Write grants and fundraise to create a sustainable program
- Create a structured approach to addressing community problems concerning immigrants, refugees, and ethnic minorities for whom English is a second language.

Specific Activities

Develop an Immigrant and ESL Literature Center

- The center would be able to provide information and literature about currently existing immigrant assistance programs. Information would be provided in digital and brochure form. The main idea of the Literature Center, which would be located in Gate City CDC Franklin St. location, is to be able to direct as many different language groups as possible to various resources in their communities.

This program would also be run in conjunction with the CTC run by Gate City at the same location.

- The center will be modeled after similar programs in existence elsewhere. Required resources will be decided upon by program developers based on observation, data collected from centers in Boston and Manchester, and evaluated needs stressed by affected community members. Many of these resources will be based on the research drawn from the community needs assessment.
- It is anticipated that such a location, if properly run, will create an invaluable network in the Greater Nashua area that will properly inform non-English speakers in the community of the opportunities that are available to them. It will also serve to demonstrate weaknesses and shortcomings in the system that might be addressed and corrected.

Provide Education and Training Opportunities

- This program will seek to empower members of the community through education and essential skills training. Classes will prospectively range from basic ESL classes to workshops that will aid prospective employees to be better prepared to earn a living. Use of the Gate City Community Technology Center will prove vital in the course of the Education and Training activities it will provide fundamental computer literacy and offer a media that can be easily translated into numerous languages.
- This program will increase the students' marketable skills in the workplace, making them more secure in their jobs and more valuable to their employer. The

program's success would allow GCCDC to create additional workforce training classes, thereby ensuring a better educated and upwardly mobile labor force.

Multicultural Awareness Arts Event and Fundraiser

- GC CDC will coordinate a Multicultural Awareness night that would involve artists of diverse cultural backgrounds to participate in an educational community outreach and fund raising event.
- This will serve to promote greater multicultural awareness in the Nashua region and encourage the formation of multicultural center in the city that would regularly sponsor such events dealing with education, diversity, and the arts.

Program Area #2. Community Technology Center (CTC) Activities

Overview

- Coordinate community efforts to address issues related to the digital divide
- Gather information about the needs of the community related to the digital divide
- Organize volunteers and develop a program for staffing at the CTC
- Work on developing the "computer in every home" program
- Determine needed classes and services related to the digital divide
- Write grants and fundraise to create a sustainable program
- Coordinate community efforts to address issues related to workforce development issues
- Determine job skills in demand in the community and develop specific training accordingly
- Develop relationships with present and potential employers
- Develop micro-enterprise training programs

Specific Activities

Provide a community technology center in Nashua open thirty hours a week

- Classes running WIA paid for and scholarship students running at least 5 at a time consistently
- Open hours for 30 hours a week
- The existing 8 computer classroom
- 2 computers in the conference room for use open use during closed classes

Develop 15 satellite locations (with 1 or 2 computers and a constant connection to the internet)

- 1 location per town, 4 in Nashua in community centers or churches
- Open source as much as possible, some type of anti porn, etc protections for kid safe browsing

Create comprehensive assistance database for the Greater Nashua Region

- Work with all GCCDC divisions in the development of comprehensive system framework
- Add all available services for immigrants, minorities, churches, low, moderate income, and other acceptable nonprofit services in the region
- Make easy to use and navigate, usability is major key
- Use open-source database software and publish on the web for all who need it

Provide classes in workforce training issues: basic computer skills, soft skills, others as needed

- Moodle-based
- Mixed instruction courses (online and classroom with expected completion times)
- Develop in at least 6 languages for all instructor facilitated classes (Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, Russian)

- Create 3 flash/html enabled self-study courses in GCCDC program-related subjects

Expand Computer in every home Program

- Work with INTERCED in developing a separate Nashua program
- Refurbish and give/admin-charge 200 computers to people throughout the region
- Develop separate GCCDC based program that does not require INTERCED assistance

Coordinate community communications activities

- Work with the community in the development of all classes, programs and finding of resources and determination of needs
- Develop ties between technology firms and the community

Summary

Gate City CDC realizes it has developed a fairly aggressive work plan for our first year of existence. We are confident that these are achievable objectives and that the foundation for sustainable programs will be built during this initial year. Of course, we recognize that there are overlaps and synergies between the identified issue areas and activities. This will be considered as each task is developed and coordination will be undertaken as appropriate.

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