

Ohio City Bicycle Co-op 2015 Strategic Plan Executive Summary

Background

The original strategy that inspired OCBC's formation grew from a "service project" of Cleveland's first bike advocacy organization in the 1990's. In a cycling culture dominated by a handful of suburban clubs, whose members seemed solely focused on recreational cycling and leery of joining political battles in an entrenched car culture, this fledgling group settled on a strategy that was then gaining national attention; an Earn A Bike program for disadvantaged kids. The goal was to involve seasoned cyclists directly in teaching bicycle "literacy" skills to those who could benefit most – while building a broader constituency for the long haul.

That effort was realized in 1996 with three volunteers leading a summer-long program for an East Cleveland youth group, where 30 teens learned bike mechanics by helping to repair used bikes which they earned (with new locks and helmets) by practicing safe-cycling in a series of neighborhood rides.

In 2000, these three joined with a dozen or so others to form a more sustainable organization, listing a host of educational models from elsewhere that would satisfy their working goal to "help people use bikes" – without straying into the traditional roles of an "advocacy" group. With the Earn A Bike program at its core, over the next several years the co-op incorporated, earned its 501c3 status, and grew "organically" (that is, with dedicated volunteers and donors, but a tiny budget and no professional management) into a wide array of empty market niches with earned-income potential, but with little outside funding.

In 2010 OCBC moved from a (literal) tin shack into a large, efficient building with loading docks, ample storage, and a stable lease. This was a huge stretch, but a much-needed investment to capitalize on the many hundreds of bikes and thousands of volunteer hours now being donated each year. To make the most of this new asset – and our work with a burgeoning number of community groups, including our new advocacy partners at Bike Cleveland – we recognized that Cleveland's rapidly changing cycling culture signaled the time had finally come to focus our work closely on what we do best; and how to do it bigger, better, and truly sustainably, for maximum impact in the near term as well as over the long haul.

Thanks to the George Gund Foundation's funding of a very perceptive consultant, and a great deal of work by our small staff and highly engaged Board of Directors, this Strategic Plan represents several months of critical attention to every aspect of OCBC's work; where our greatest value for the community lies; and the new – and welcome – demographic and cultural changes affecting the growing markets in which we operate.

We have already begun implementing many of the recommendations found here, in a cascade of changes that promise real efficiencies: expanding shop-use fully to the general public facilitated selling some bikes "as-is," which added impetus to make repair classes more hands-on, requiring updated volunteer and shop-use training documentation, and necessitating closer attention to internal shop work-flow.

All of these changes were facilitated by the major, transformative decision to no longer identify the co-op as a "membership organization." We are an open, community resource; welcoming to

anyone who observes our principles of Respect, Resourcefulness, and Reciprocity; and serving the public with a full range of educational programs and services to “help people use bikes.”

Strategies, 2015 - 2017:

1. Evaluate, focus, strengthen, develop, and grow our education programs.
2. Prioritize, refine, and concentrate our focus on refurbishing bicycles.
3. Recruit, educate, retain and develop volunteers in all our programs.
4. Increase awareness and support for OCBC, its mission, and its programs.
5. Build an organizational structure with excellent management and governance.

Action Plans will be developed annually by Committees and staff, and approved with the annual budget, to guide and measure our work.

Project Selection Criteria

The range of projects that OCBC has carried out in the past is significant. However, our limited resources will require prioritization of activities, guided by these criteria:

- Mission Relevance - All projects will accomplish the goals of our mission statement and strategic plan.
- Expertise - OCBC can do this better than anyone else in the area.
- Community Need - There is a clear community need that we can address.

- Financial Viability - The community is willing to financially support the project.

Membership

The membership program has caused confusion and created the false perception of exclusivity. With careful consideration, it was decided to eliminate this program. The board will develop a donor and volunteer “thank you” program to retain some of the benefits of membership. Current membership benefits will be phased out over 2015.

Committee Structure

Executive Committee (Four officers chaired by the President.)

- Acts on behalf of the board as authorized between meetings
- Serves as Personnel and Finance Committee
- Manages process to complete an annual budget, work plan, dashboard
- Conducts the annual audit/provides regular budget monitoring/reports to Board

Governance Committee (Chaired by the Vice President.)

- Manages the nominating process
- Conducts new board member recruitment and orientation
- Ensures that all governing documents are kept current
- Ensures Board demonstrates leadership with 100% contributing/soliciting

Education Committee

- Ensures appropriate curriculum and class schedule

Refurbishing Committee

- Oversees shop use and work-flow management of donated bikes and other materials

Volunteer/Community Engagement Committee

- Builds and manages the Volunteer Corps and the Key Volunteer group
- Organizes social and community events

Resource Development Committee

- Maintains and implements the Marketing Plan
- Oversees the Annual Report, Newsletter and Website
- Maintains and implements the Development Plan
- Coordinates and supports database development

Mission Statement

The mission of the Ohio City Bicycle Co-op (OCBC) is to promote the use of bicycles in greater Cleveland and engage area youth and adults in cycling activities that foster independence, resourcefulness and good health. "The OCBC works to accomplish this by offering safe cycling and bike repair education, Earn A Bike programs, and a consumer's cooperative bike shop; by providing dependable used bikes and accessories; and by producing cycling events and tours that impart skills while encouraging riding for fun, fitness and practical transportation." (as filed in 2003 Articles of Incorporation)

Working Mission Statement: Help people use bicycles.

This means:

(Help)

We offer and impart the knowledge, provide the space, tools, and parts, and create a safe atmosphere;

(People)

for anyone, from any background, in our facility and elsewhere with community partners;

(Use)

to ride, maintain, repair, and equip for transportation, recreation, fitness, work, and other purposes;

(Bicycles)

any human-powered vehicle that can be made to operate safely for its intended purpose.

Guiding Principles

Respect

- welcoming, inclusive, non-judgmental, tolerant of all diversity
- non-violent, calm, easy-going, respectable,
- transparent, simple, understandable
- honest, fair, principled, responsible

Resourcefulness

- efficient, hard-working, effective,
- safe, nurturing, rewarding
- organized, deliberate, adaptable
- mindful of time constraints
- minimizing waste of materials and other resources
- using tools correctly, therefore safely and efficiently

Reciprocity

- results-oriented, evidence-based, scientific
- confident, appreciative, generous, supportive, flexible
- helpful, sharing, active, responsive
- pricing and compensating fairly

Proposed Budget

	Actual		Proposed		
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Income from Services	11,386	22,181	20,500	24,000	26,000
Shop Income	69,193	100,157	102,500	117,000	122,000
Donations/Grants	58,133	57,987	81,500	65,000	70,000
Total Income	138,712	180,325	210,500	206,000	218,000

Total COGS	11,607	15,803	17,750	20,000	22,000
GROSS PROFIT	127,105	164,522	192,750	186,000	196,000
TOTAL OVERHEAD	49,459	49,902	53,951	55,500	57,750
TOTAL PAYROLL EXPENSES	83,191	93,049	138,627	125,000	131,000
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	(5,545)	21,571	172	5,500	7,250

OCBC Board of Directors
(as of plan adoption, 20 July, 02015)
*Krissie Wells – President
*Michael Hudecek – Vice President
*Marty Vanderkaar – Treasurer
Ashley Shaw - Secretary
Keely Andrews
*Jill Davis
*Matt Libbey
*John Mikolich
John McGovern
David Rivera
*Peggy Sands
*Kath Sonnhalter
Phil Teare

Staff

*Jim Sheehan – Executive Director

*Joshua Goran – Administrator

Al Baron - Mechanic

Erin Costello – Volunteer Coordinator

(* members of the Strategic Planning Task Force)