



**Oak Park River Forest
FOOD PANTRY
Strategic Plan
2010 – 2012**

Recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee December 2009
Approved by the Community of Congregations January 2010

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OUR HISTORY

For over 30 years, the villages of Oak Park and River Forest have come together to serve the hungry in our community. The Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry was started in the early 1970s by a small group of concerned citizens led by Joe Savino, Executive Director of Youth Services at Oak Park Township and Patricia Funk, a local Girl Scout leader. Initially known as the Hunger Task Force Food Pantry, it was housed in the Faith United Methodist Church for several years. Soon after its inception, the Pantry became associated with the Community of Churches, now known as the Community of Congregations. The Pantry is one of three programs of the Community of Congregations, which has its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.

As the need for supplemental food grew in our community, the Pantry outgrew its space in Faith United Methodist Church. For a brief time, the Pantry operated out of a storefront before finding its current home within First United Church of Oak Park. A generous landlord, First United not only offers the Pantry rent-free space, but also provides a high level of service and commitment from its staff, Faith in Action Committee, and congregation.

Currently the Pantry programs include food distribution eight-nine times a month to 1,000 families, recruitment and placement of 300 volunteers, client assistance with food stamp and other benefit applications, hunger awareness and education to local schools, churches, and civic groups, and advocacy on a state and national level to increase funding for food programs. The Pantry is staffed by two co-managers at 15 hours per week each; a volunteer manager at 10 hours per week; an Americorps member at 20 hours per week; and a bookkeeper, Saturday shift manager, and database manager at a few hours per month each.

The Pantry has been growing steadily since its inception, and although it began on a small scale, it now operates with increasingly sophisticated systems, equipment, service goals and accountability to numerous stakeholders. Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) has honored the Pantry with its *Best Fiscal Management Award for 2009*. Selected from food pantries in Cook County, OPRF Food Pantry was singled out for demonstrating the most effective fiscal management program for ensuring effective operations and long-term financial stability. Additionally, GCFD presented the Pantry with the Quality Performance Award for the second year in a row. In 2008 the Pantry also received the Outstanding Pantry of the Year Award, Best Community Outreach Award, and an honorable mention for the Best Volunteer Program Award.

In July of 2009, the staff embarked on the process of organizing funding and leadership to help create a Strategic Plan to guide the Pantry through its next phase of development. With donations from seven donors and a grant from the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation, the Pantry was able to hire consultants Kris Torkelson and Marianne Philbin, who worked over a period of months with staff and the volunteer Strategic Plan Committee (see appendices) to develop this Strategic Plan.

OUR FUTURE

Over the past few years, we have grown considerably in the sophistication of our operation as well as in the numbers of people we are able to serve (from 415 families served each month in 2007 to 1,200 families per month in 2009). Although community needs continue to grow, we have reached our maximum operating capacity given the limitations of the space we now occupy. Therefore, we have made the commitment to

take the steps that will enable us to increase our physical space, our staff, our volunteer and donor base, thereby increasing our programs and enabling us to better serve a larger number of clients. Additionally, we will improve and increase our community education and advocacy efforts to reduce hunger.

The advances put in motion by this strategic plan will move the Pantry from being primarily a volunteer-led program sponsored by The Community of Congregations to becoming an independent and ultimately more powerful community institution. By the end of this plan period, the Pantry will have moved into a new space better suited to serving clients, grown from an annual operating budget of \$214,000 to a budget of \$500,000, employed full time professional staff, received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation, and developed its own board of directors. With this strategic plan, we are committing ourselves to building a stronger organization and a future that allows us to provide improved and increased programming with greater resources, community support, and visibility.

OUR MISSION

As part of the Strategic Planning process, the staff and Strategic Planning Committee revisited the mission statement and revised it as follows, so as to better reflect the work of the Pantry:

The Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry's mission is to work together as a community to reduce hunger locally through

- *direct hunger relief services*
- *hunger awareness education and*
- *advocacy to influence anti-hunger policy.*

OUR DESIRED IMPACT

In support of that mission, the planning team also articulated the three ways in which the Pantry specifically seeks to have impact on the various audiences with which it is engaged.

Direct Service to Provide Hunger Relief

Impact on clients:

- Reduce clients' hunger
- Provide high quality food
- Provide benefits counseling for clients to access other hunger-relief and entitlement programs
- Connect clients to other agencies which provide additional social services

Community Engagement and Education to Inspire and Motivate

Impact on volunteers, donors, and the community:

- Increase awareness of hunger in our midst and encourage action
- Change outdated perceptions of hunger
- Connect community members with meaningful volunteer and philanthropic activity
- Enable volunteers/donors to become invested in the Pantry knowing their gifts are respected and well spent
- Help community members see the Pantry as a vital community asset worthy of their support, further connecting them to the community in which they live

Advocacy to Influence Change

Impact on government, policy, and public opinion:

- Influence and educate legislators regarding community hunger issues
- Influence level of state and national funding for anti-hunger programs
- Improve state's use of available federal funds
- Effect broader public debate on hunger relief efforts

KEY VALUES AND ASSUMPTIONS

Staff and advisors identified the following as key assumptions about our growth and our goals moving forward:

Regarding Mission and Program

- There is a social justice framework guiding us, a common belief in social justice that we share, no matter what the backgrounds or affiliations of our volunteers, leaders, and supporters.
- As our name suggests, and as part and parcel of our community identity, we pull our donors and volunteers primarily from the Oak Park-River Forest (OPRF) area, and will continue to see those two communities as our primary target market for education and outreach efforts.
- Although we support our work with the help of OPRF-based donors and volunteers, we serve a broader community, including the Austin and Humboldt Park communities in Chicago (44% of clients); Maywood, Melrose Park and other western suburbs (37%) as well as Oak Park River Forest residents (19%).
- We will continue to have geographic boundaries. Working with the GCFD, we strive to avoid duplication of services while serving those in areas of unmet needs.
- We will continue to meet USDA requirements to enable us to be eligible for free food to distribute.
- We will continue to be a collaborative initiative, “working together” is a key value to the Pantry. Drawing support from many different individuals and organizations is important to us and is deliberate. We value partnerships and collaborations that help us to support our vision and enable us to grow our resources. We plan to continue developing partnerships.
- We want involvement with us to be transformative for the community and for volunteers. Educating school children, future civic leaders, and philanthropy will always be a part of our work.
- Volunteers will always be a major part of the Pantry's way of doing business. We will continue to intentionally and strategically involve volunteers in all aspects of our work, as increased community engagement is a factor in ultimately addressing community needs such as hunger.
- Given the numbers currently coming to us and the unmet needs we are trying to fill in our current catchment area, we will not be proactive in marketing our services to new zip codes or additional client populations.

Regarding Organizational Development

- Our organizational development will be the priority throughout the years covered in this strategic plan, given that we need to create and manage the base from which we'll operate. We will focus on refining structures, systems, policies and operational procedures that will enable and sustain our work. We will place great

priority on strategies that build our visibility with donors, clients, the public, and volunteers, build the capacity of our staff and board, and build opportunities for more income.

- We are financially stable at our current scale, and are not operating in crisis mode. However, our budget is small compared to our ambitions and our potential.
- Significant financial growth in the near term will be critical to the future we envision. Income grew by 125% over the last two years, with a minimum amount of fundraising effort and no long term fundraising plan or articulated goals. By investing attention, resources, and staff time in fundraising, and following a fundraising plan, our annual budget of \$214,000 could realistically expand to \$500,000 by 2012 (133% growth).
- This budget assumption is exclusive of any sort of capital campaign for new space.
- We are limited by lack of space and need additional space in order to grow or make any substantive changes or improvements.
- We are limited by current staffing level and see the need to create and appropriately support staff positions.
- The creation of a Pantry board of directors and expanded fundraising efforts will help us raise new dollars to adjust the budget to bring staff salaries to more appropriate levels and add additional staffing.

SUMMARY OF KEY GOALS

Our plan is guided by ten goals defined through our planning process. The rationale for each of the following goals, as well as the action steps we will follow to achieve them, are outlined in detail in the following pages.

Transition Goal #1: Create and independent governance structure and transition from being a “program of” to becoming a “partner with” the Community of Congregations, creating and then operating under the guidance of our own board of director

Program Goal #1: Increase our capacity to provide hunger relief to a greater number of clients and improve the nutritional value of food distributed.

Program Goal #2: Pilot our own effort to offer benefits counseling with entitlement programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program aka food stamps), LIHEAP (Lower Income Heating Electrical Assistance Program), social security, etc.

Program Goal #3: Connect clients to other agencies that provide additional social services.

Program Goal #4: Advance hunger awareness through education and outreach to create a more informed community motivated to take action.

Program Goal #5: Strengthen the volunteer program, both in numbers, and in depth of experience, so that the Pantry operates successfully and expands its outreach to the community, involving even more individuals in hunger relief work.

Program Goal #6: Engage in advocacy efforts to influence public policy and government funding around hunger issues.

Organizational Goal #1: Take the steps necessary to prepare the organization to expand into a larger space better suited to projected programs and services.

Organizational Goal #2: Strengthen the staffing and organizational supports that will enable the Pantry to operate successfully and to expand its work.

Organizational Goal #3: Develop fundraising and communications strategies that will enable the Pantry to grow its base of supporters and ensure adequate resources.

SPECIFIC SIGNS OF SUCCESS AND STRATEGIES

The first six goals relate to our program goals:

Transitional Goal #1-Create Independent Governance Structure

Goal #1: Create an independent governance structure and transition from being a “program of” to becoming a “partner with” the Community of Congregations, creating and then operating under the guidance of our own board of directors

Rationale: The Pantry has been growing steadily since its inception, and although it began on a small scale, it now operates with increasingly sophisticated systems, equipment, service goals and accountability to numerous stakeholders. This is due to the volunteerism and leadership of a handful of very talented and committed people. Taking the next steps involves being more focused on fundraising, resources management, and community relations, all of which requires the attention of a dedicated board focused exclusively on the Pantry’s mission and its further organizational development. If we are to raise the kind of money we envision needing and believe that we *can* raise, independent tax status will be critical.

Signs of Success:

- The Community of Congregations will be consulted and will, along with legal professionals, help us pursue independent 501(c)(3) status.
- The process will be complete, the 501(c)(3) status granted by end of 2010.
- A board of director’s governance process will be developed in 2010.
- “Working board” members will begin meeting in 2010, before official 501(c)(3) status is granted. The first “official” meeting of a newly constituted legal board will be held by the end of 2010.

Strategies:

1. We will gather input /continue conversation with the Community of Congregations on the structure and relationship to the Pantry going forward.
2. We will seek legal representation and apply for 501(c)(3) status. Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws will be written.
3. We will invite the Strategic Planning Committee to segue way into becoming board members themselves and help us to identify and recruit other candidates and develop the board.
4. We will write a “job description” for new board members, and develop a simple matrix outlining our ideal board composition so that we create a board balanced the ways that will best serve the needs of the Pantry.
5. We will seek a mix of board members who will first and foremost be available and energized for the work ahead, but who also represent a variety of connections, fundraising skills and wealth.
6. A board handbook will be created and will be supplied to prospective members.
7. This Strategic Plan will be made available to all new board members.

Program Goal #1-Provide More Food

Goals #1: Increase our capacity to provide hunger relief to a greater number of clients and improve the nutritional value of food distributed

Rationale: 2009 was a year of intense growth for the Pantry. When the economy worsened, the Pantry felt the impact immediately. Visits to the Pantry had been growing steadily all year and have doubled since 2008. In 2009 the Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry served 11,088 families contributing vital nutrition to the 40,442 individuals comprising those families. We have recently been forced to turn families away without food because our space, volunteer, and staff resources are stretched to the maximum. Our pattern over the last several years indicates that whatever numbers we serve in our busiest month/week of one year became the norm by the end of the following year. If this trend holds, we'll regularly be serving 1,200 families per month in 2010. A recent human needs assessment survey of our families found that assistance in procuring food was the primary need they reported. Among those clients who are employed, 85% reported a need for food assistance--an even higher need than among the unemployed (75%).

Signs of Success:

- Our reach and impact is furthered by expanded operations which will move from serving 1,000 per month to 1,500 a month by the end of 2011.
- The food we are able to provide will increase in quality as well as quantity, with more dairy, meat and produce being made available to clients when storage and new space makes this possible.
- New space is designed that allows for the "client choice" distribution method, should that be a method of program delivery that the Pantry chooses.

Strategies:

1. We need more space in order to increase our capacity to serve the number of clients anticipated; therefore we will create a Space Search Committee as detailed later in this plan.
2. With slightly expanded space being offered in the short term by First United, and then with permanent new space, we will be able to invest in storage that enables us to store more products for distribution to our clients. We will budget for the necessary capital outlays as part of our space planning, acquiring for the Pantry commercial refrigeration, freezers, and/or walk-ins.
3. With new space, we will also have the opportunity to explore the possibility of a "client choice" approach rather than exclusively supplying pre-packaged bags. In preparation, we will visit other sites with this system in effect, and educate ourselves as to options, the pros and cons of this sort of distribution system, and best practices and will pilot several methods by the end of 2010.
4. We will design the new space so that client choice might be an option for the Pantry's distribution of the food in the future.
5. With the growth we anticipate, comes the need for increased staff as detailed later in this plan.

Program Goal #2-Provide Benefits Counseling

Goal #2: Pilot our own effort to offer on-site and off-site benefits counseling with entitlement programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program aka food stamps), LIHEAP (Lower Income Heating Electrical Assistance Program), social security, etc.

Rationale: In addition to receiving food, we have an opportunity to provide immediate assistance to clients. Beginning in October 2009, we have an AmeriCorps intern working with us 20 hours per week until August 2012, and specifically assigned by AmeriCorps contract to work on benefits assistance. This gives us a chance to pilot a Benefits Counseling program with relatively little financial risk and then evaluate it at the end of the AmeriCorps period to determine next steps and ongoing feasibility.

Signs of Success:

- We will provide one-on-one assistance to 250 clients in the pilot phase of our counseling program (pilot phase ending June 2010). Specifically we will recruit and screen interested clients for eligibility and then provide eligible clients with direct assistance in filing for SNAP, LIHEAP and social security benefits.
- Client records, intake interviews, and statistical data will be kept to assess the effectiveness of the program.
- The AmeriCorps member hours will be increased to fulltime by fall 2010.
- At the end of 2012 and the AmeriCorps program, we will have enough experience and information to inform our decision making concerning our future investment in benefits counseling.

Strategies

1. Our AmeriCorps member will be available 20 hours per week to provide assistance to our clients beginning in November 2009. By fall 2010, we will request a fulltime AmeriCorps member.
2. We will experiment with various times, days, and delivery methods for providing benefits counseling starting in 2010.
3. In early 2010, we will develop template records, intake forms, etc. that will enable us to compile the statistics we will need to evaluate the program.
4. We will work with Walk-In Ministry to recruit a dozen volunteers by the end of 2010. They will be trained to conduct 'intake' with clients to determine who might benefit from our benefits counseling.
5. In 2011, staff and volunteers working in this area will meet quarterly to evaluate the program, make plans for improvements, and will make recommendations for possible program expansion to the Pantry board.

Program Goal #3-Connect to Other Agencies

Goal #3: Connect clients to other agencies that provide additional social services

Rationale: Our recent client needs assessment survey indicated that 97% of our clients do not receive additional assistance from other agencies providing basic social and/or emergency services. Yet, our landscape scan indicates that there are more than 300 nonprofits and agencies in our catchment area providing various kinds of services related to the needs of people in poverty. Although we will be piloting an effort to provide some basic benefits counseling to clients, in general, we do not envision the Pantry taking on case management or becoming a full spectrum social services provider. However, in the spirit of service and collaboration, which has been a hallmark of the Pantry since inception, we intend to work in more deliberate and focused ways to connect our clients to useful programs that do offer case management and other social and services via referrals.

Signs of Success:

- 100% of our clients will leave with accurate information on the programs our partner agencies provide.
- These partners will track the services they provide to clients and will provide us with data as to how many visitors came to them as a result of our referral.
- A working group of these partner agencies meet quarterly to access our collaborative effort and to make recommendations for improvements.
- Clients will give us feedback on the services they access.
- A system is developed and implemented tracking our referrals to other agencies.

Strategies

1. Starting now, reach out to existing “partners” such as Calvary Clothes Closet, Township of Oak Park, PADS, the OPRF area Walk-in Ministry, to ensure that the information we are providing our clients is accurate and up-to-date on their services by early 2010.
2. Starting now, provide flyers with up-to-date information on our partners programs, (hours, directions, etc.).
3. In 2010, reach out to one new agency per month, to develop referral relationships so that we can provide our clients with accurate and up-to-date information on their services.
4. By the end of 2011, investigate with our partners possible new service collaborations, beyond referrals, that could be offered when we have expanded staff and/or space.
5. Beginning in 2011, convene the partners regularly for information sharing, data sharing, and to investigate the possibility of partners using a common referral tracking system.
6. In 2011, conduct an annual survey of those clients using the referral services.

Program Goal #4-Increase Community Outreach

Goal #4: Advance hunger awareness through education and outreach to create a more informed community motivated to take action

Rationale: The Pantry is truly a community food pantry. Individuals, service clubs, businesses, congregations, and the local press are eager to work with us to help relieve hunger in our community. Our staff works conscientiously to foster and maintain these relationships, building ongoing trust with our community of donors, volunteers and clients. Current community involvement demonstrates that 80% of volunteers reside in Oak Park and River Forest and 87% of donors reside in Oak Park and River Forest.

Signs of Success:

- We will have significantly increased public speaking engagements by 2012
- We will have increased stories in local media about the work of the Pantry or its search for a new home by 2012.
- We will have motivated an additional 10% of our existing donors to actively engage in our work—as volunteers, participants at events, food donors, food drive organizers, etc.
- Because of the community outreach efforts, we will have motivated more individuals and organizations to give financially to the Pantry.
- Donated food, especially donated toiletries, will increase.

Strategies:

1. Develop/revise job description(s) to include community outreach, fundraising, and education strategies.
2. Proactively seek out and book 80 public speaking engagements with the goal of 20 per year in 2010, and 30 per year in 2011 and 2012.
3. Write articles, pitch stories, develop relationships with the local media about our programs, our need for volunteers, and our need for cash donations once the community outreach and development position is filled. We will appear in at least 20 articles each year in 2010, 2011, 2012.
4. Develop and provide an on-going education program for donors on hunger issues and policies by 2011.
5. Train a corps of five volunteer leaders to be speakers on hunger issues for area schools by the beginning of 2011.
6. Develop a presentation that can be presented by volunteers or staff and that would be engaging to students at various grade levels. Research what may be already available through other hunger organizations by early 2011.
7. Create a district-wide Feinstein challenge drive for food and/or toiletries in 2010.
8. For January 2011, create what will become an annual hunger relief event, for the purposes of collection and education, on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Large youth and/or service groups would be referred to participate in this event, and it will gradually become a known and established event on the community calendar.
9. Develop strategies to engage more donors in hands-on work by the end of 2011.
10. Develop strategies to engage more individuals and organizations as financial donors, as detailed later in the plan.

Program Goal #5-Increase Volunteers

Goal #5: Strengthen the volunteer program, both in numbers, and in depth of experience, so that the Pantry operates successfully and expands its outreach to the community, involving even more individuals in hunger relief work.

Rationale: In order to achieve our mission and ensure sustainability for the Pantry, we need to increase the number of volunteers committing to work pantry shifts, but also to support other areas of our work—advocacy, community education, space needs, etc. Significant growth in the volunteer program will be necessary to undertake the work envisioned in this strategic plan.

Signs of Success:

- We will have 50 new volunteers commit to monthly shifts.
- In addition to shift volunteers, we will have developed a group of 20-40 people regularly volunteering on other projects and programs of the Pantry.
- Volunteers will feel engaged and better informed on hunger issues and hunger relief efforts.

Strategies:

1. Expand the hours of the volunteer manager in 2010. Expand the job description.
2. Develop improved ways of tracking data, service hours, and communicating in general, with our volunteers by 2011.
3. Saturday volunteer recruitment and scheduling is currently being done by a volunteer. By 2011, Saturday volunteer management will be handled by the staff volunteer manager.
4. Develop marketing strategies to increase our volunteer base starting in 2010.
5. Improve our standard volunteer training session(s) in 2010.
6. Develop and provide an on-going education program for volunteers on hunger issues and policies by 2011.
7. Train a corps of five volunteer leaders to be speakers on hunger issues for area schools as described in Goal # 4.
8. Create an 'Education Kit' for use by groups we can't accommodate who were hoping to schedule volunteer service hours; determine what other service they might be directed to perform or other ways we could further their awareness by 2010.
9. By the end of 2010, develop strategies to engage more volunteers as donors.
10. By the end of 2010, develop strategies to engage more donors as volunteers.

Program Goal #6-Increase Advocacy

Goal #6: Engage in advocacy efforts to influence public policy and government funding around hunger issues.

Rationale: The USDA recently released data from 2008 indicating that 1 in 6 Americans last year did not consistently have adequate food. In just one year, the number of people in households that sometimes lacked the money for enough nutritious food rose from 36 million to 49 million - the highest number on record. Among them were 17 million children. Yet only slightly more than half of the people who reported they had food shortages said that they had, in the previous month, participated in one of the government's largest anti-hunger and nutrition programs (food stamps, subsidized school lunches or WIC). Our own data show that only about 25% of our clients report receiving food stamps. Clearly there is a systemic disconnect between people in need and the assistance our government entities provide.

Signs of Success:

- Our national, state, and local legislative representatives are aware of the level of hunger in our community and of the Pantry's efforts to reduce hunger locally.
- Our legislators see us as a partner in reducing hunger locally.
- Illinois increases its use of available federal funds to fight hunger.
- Illinois funds hunger relief in the state budget.

Strategies:

1. We will continue to foster the relationship with state and national representatives begun in 2009 by sending monthly updates to each senator/representative.
2. In 2010, we will reach out to our local and national governing officials through letters specific to identified bills, calls to address pending legislation and in-person conversations on state and national hunger awareness lobby days, educating them on the local hunger issue, our response to it, and the need for systemic government involvement.
3. Working with other pantries and service organizations including GCFD, we will support a common advocacy plan by 2011, focusing attention on improving anti-hunger funding in Illinois.
4. We will further our relationships with our legislators by inviting each of them by the end of 2010 to visit the pantry as volunteers or observers so they may witness our successes and our needs on an annual basis.
5. Recognizing that our leaders cannot always come to us, we will conduct annual visits to Springfield, IL and to Washington DC in conjunction with GCFD advocacy initiatives to press for more effective government response to hunger.

The next three goals relate to our organizational development goals.

Organizational Development Goal #1-Expand Space

Goal #1: Take the steps necessary to prepare the organization to expand into a larger space better suited to projected programs and services

Rationale: We need to operate out of a space which adequately accommodates our programming needs. Although we are extremely grateful for many years of donated space at First United Church of Oak Park we must now pursue opportunities that would enable us to operate with 7,500 usable square feet, in order to support our mission and provide the expanded programs highlighted in this plan.

Signs of Success:

- By mid-2010 we will be operating with a board of directors guiding our space search process and committed to the necessary fundraising and/or negotiations which our relocation will require.
- Led by members of that board, and other partners, we will have a “Space Search Committee” in place.
- The OPRF community will be aware of our search and the importance of the Food Pantry in this community’s life and identity.
- By the end of 2011, we will have identified a specific space or location and defined what is required of us in order to be ready to lease, own or occupy it by the end of 2012, or sooner if possible.
- By the end of 2012, we will be operating in an expanded facility.

Strategies:

1. Create a board of directors for the Pantry and recruit board members with an eye to this envisioned future. Recruit some of the board members who specifically have expertise in related areas.
2. Space Search Committee begins meeting in 2010 to further define questions that must be addressed (“Does the space need to be in Oak Park?”), our options (“Are there spaces which might be donated to us from a sponsor?” Can we share space?), and the order in which needs and opportunities are to be explored.
3. As detailed later in this plan, fundraise and budget for full-time staff in 2010, with one person having the responsibility of leading the effort to secure new space.
4. Starting in 2010, engage in more consistent individual donor fundraising to form more relationships and expand donor base for general operating support for the Pantry, ramping up for whatever kind of 2011/12 capital campaign may be necessary, as well as for the ongoing fundraising that maintaining different space will likely require.
5. As soon as feasible, when staff and board leadership is clear, begin communications and public relations effort to bring attention to the Pantry turning this important page, and to make visible our need for new space.
6. Determine what kind of feasibility study or move-in plan may be necessary, depending on what is discovered via exploration of space issues, decisions made, and opportunities which surface.
7. In 2010, establish line of credit with the bank so that we are further building our financial relationship and our credit history.

Organizational Development Goal #2-Increase Staff

Goal #2: Strengthen the staffing and organizational supports that will enable the Pantry to operate successfully and to expand its work.

Rationale: In order to achieve our mission and ensure sustainability for the Pantry, we need to build an organization with an appropriately-supported staff, including positions necessary to undertake the work envisioned and meet our goals.

Signs of Success:

- Fundraising efforts will increase in order to support projected budget growth, enabling us to 1) more appropriately compensate existing staff; 2) hire additional staff as outlined in the attached organizational chart and according to the target dates projected below, and 3) better support the costs and time commitment associated with a space search and associated campaign fundraising.
- Staff salaries will have increased to be comparable to salaries at similar organizations and for similar positions in the OPRF community.
- The number of staff (full and part time) will be increased by the end of the plan period to three full-time and three part-time positions

Strategies:

1. In the first year of the strategic plan, costs for staff will increase by approximately \$100,000 over 2009. This increase will come from taking part of the reserve fund (if necessary) into the operating budget and the rest by tapping into our fundraising potential to raise the other funds.
2. We will budget for increased hours for all staff members to be put in place in 2010.
3. We will budget for a contractual bookkeeper who can also serve as our database coordinator and administrative support person to insure regular financial reporting and attentive oversight to our data.
4. We will incorporate salary adjustments for our existing staff in the 2010 budget, so that they are more appropriately compensated and so that we can move the Pantry to more professional levels necessary for grant seeking, fundraising, community relations, space negotiations and all the new work that will come with the recruitment and development of a board of directors.
5. Each existing staff position will be expanded, for a total fulltime equivalent of 4.25 staff by 2011 (see Organizational Flow Chart).
6. In addition to staff, we will contract with a freelance grants researcher to develop a 12-18 month calendar of grant submission deadlines by the beginning of 2010.
7. Money will be included in the 2010 budget for the occasional use of consultants to work on a specific project (i.e. board development, grants writing, or developing a PR plan).

Organizational Development Goal #3-Increase Fundraising

Goal #3: Develop fundraising and communications strategies that will enable the Pantry to grow its base of supporters and ensure adequate resources.

Rationale: In order to maintain stability and continued growth, we need to significantly expand our fundraising efforts. We have not yet tapped the potential of philanthropy, especially in the areas of grant possibilities from institutional funders.

Signs of Success:

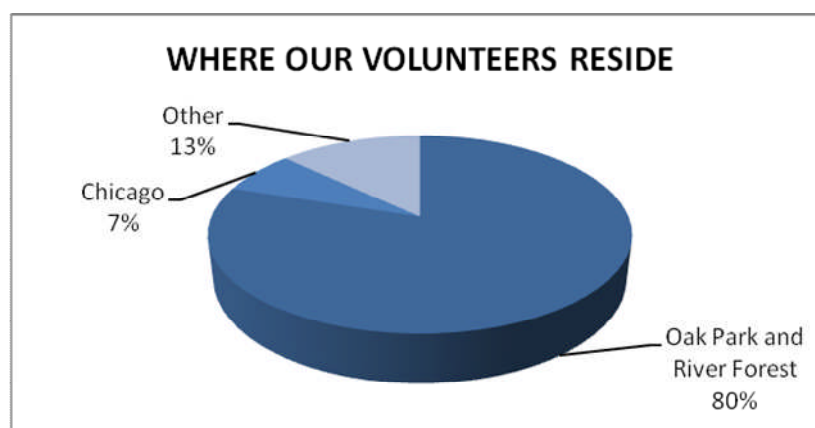
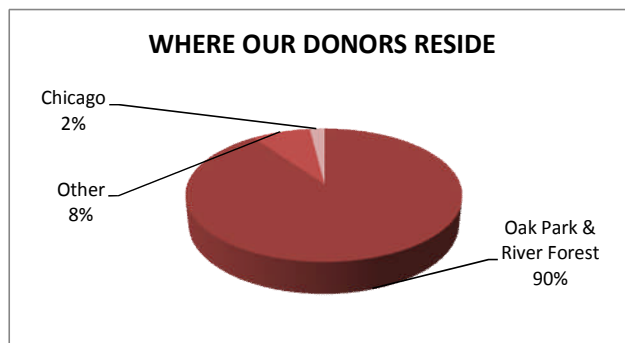
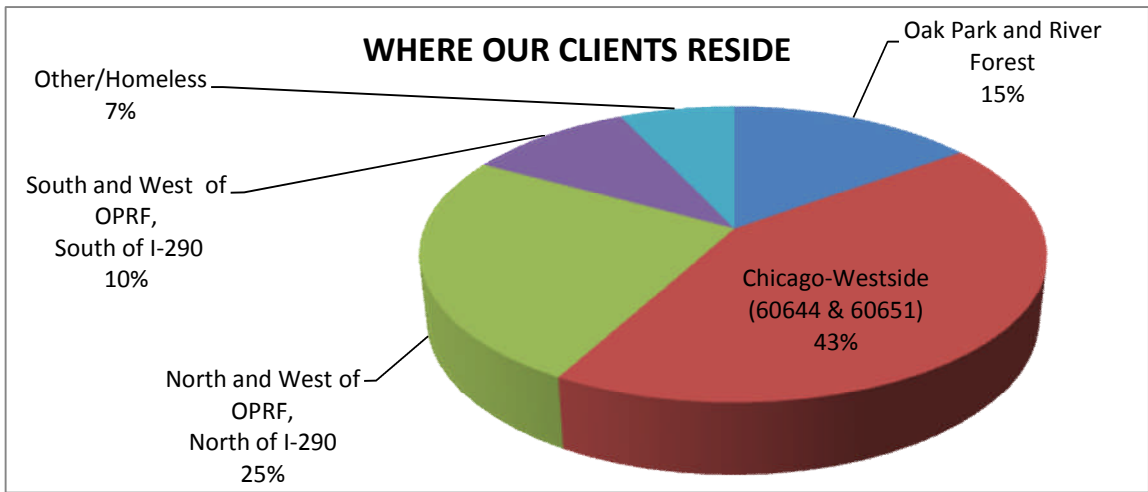
- OPRFFP will be able to grow the budget from \$214,000 to \$500,000 by 2012.
- Will maintain a healthy mix of contributed income (government, foundation and corporate grants, individual, organizational, church and business contributions, and special event income)
- Increase the current individual donors from 740 per year to 1,400 by 2012.
- Increase the number of congregation donors from 20 per year to 42 by 2012.
- Increase number of business donors from 16 per year to 30 per year by 2012.
- Secure at least three new institutional funders in 2010, five by 2011, and eight more by 2012.

Strategies

1. Starting now, hire a grants researcher for 120 hours to develop a 12-18 month calendar of proposal submissions. Include \$1,300 in the 2009 budget as a new expense.
2. In early 2010, determine how many proposals can reasonably be packaged and submitted given current staffing. Consider success rate to be interest from three out of 10 funders approached, and consider the others as introductions and awareness.
3. In 2010, develop a detailed fundraising plan which sets goals by revenue source and identifies specific targets. This plan should be written and approved by March of 2010 to insure the Pantry's ability to meet its revenue goals for the year.
4. As the board develops, the new members will work with staff to develop most effective 'case for support.' the best argument for why OPRF needs to make this investment as a community in the Pantry.
5. By 2011, increase the number of appeals and the sophistication of them (more personalized, segmented mail appeals supported by follow-up phone calls, including specific dollar requests, etc.).
6. Starting now, identify top prospects for individual major gifts of \$1,000 from amongst current circle of supporters; determine personalized cultivation and solicitation plan for each and pursue with help from board leadership.
7. By the end of 2010, investigate government grants as a potential income source.
8. By the end of 2010, identify top congregation prospects and develop a specific plan for fundraising from them.
9. As the board develops, put board energy and attention into helping staff with development of fundraising strategies, introductions to potential givers, etc.
10. Consider revising branding, website, etc. as the Food Pantry develops.

APPENDICES

Where Our Clients, Donors, and Volunteers Reside



OPRF Food Pantry At-A-Glance-Fact-Sheet

	2007-yesterday	2009	2010-today	2012-tomorrow
Total Income	\$ 89,421	\$ 279,340	\$ 375,000	\$ 500,000
Total Expense	\$ 44,502	\$ 204,079	\$ 374,495	\$ 500,000
Total Cash Reserve	\$ 58,682 <i>Actual</i>	\$ 177,568 <i>Actual</i>	\$ 180,000 <i>Budgeted</i>	\$ 100,000 <i>Excluding possible capital costs</i>
% of Revenue				
Foundations/Grants	3%	8%	16%	30%
Individuals	66%	67%	64%	45%
Organizations/Groups	8%	3%	2%	5%
Businesses	0%	4%	2%	5%
Congregations	23%	15%	14%	13%
Events	0%	3%	2%	2%
% of Expenses				
Program	92%	83%	74%	80%
Fundraising	0%	10%	13%	10%
Administration	8%	7%	13%	10%
Programs Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Food distribution ▪Volunteer recruitmt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Food distribution ▪Volunteer recruitmt ▪Limited client asst w/food stamps ▪Hunger awareness & community education ▪Some public policy and advocacy work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Food distribution ▪Volunteer recruitmt, training, ongoing education ▪Increased client asst w/entitlement programs ▪Increased hunger awareness & cmty education ▪Increased public policy and advocacy work ▪Client connections to partner agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Food distribution ▪Volunteer recruitmt, training, ongoing education ▪Increased client asst w/entitlement programs ▪Increased hunger awareness & cmty education ▪Increased public policy and advocacy work ▪Client connections to partner agencies
Average # of Families Served/Month	415	924	1,200	1,500
Pounds of Food Given/Month				
USDA	2,838 lbs	9,666 lbs	10,625 lbs	
Purchased	5,058 lbs	17,927 lbs	25,000 lbs	
<u>Donated</u>	<u>4,500 lbs</u>	<u>9,333 lbs</u>	<u>10,000 lbs</u>	
Total	12,396 lbs	36,926 lbs	45,625 lbs	70,000 lbs
Paid Employees	0	Fulltime equivalent: 1.75	Fulltime equivalent: 3.25	Fulltime equivalent: 4.25
# of Volunteers	150	342	400	500
# of Vol Hours/Month	300	891	850	900
# of Board members	6	6	12	15-19
Space	First United 1,300 sq/ft	First United 1,300 sq/ft	First United 2,350 sq/ft	? 7,500 sq/ft

Plan Highlights Year-By-Year

2010:

- “Client-choice” method of food delivery is piloted
- Benefits counseling has increased, volunteers are trained to conduct intake
- Existing partnerships are strengthened, and new relationships developed, to deliver more services to our clients
- Public speaking engagements are increased
- Media articles are increased
- School district-wide Feinstein food and/or toiletries drive is implemented
- New marketing strategies for volunteers are implemented
- “Education Kit” to be used by groups wanting to volunteer is created
- Local and national governing officials are being reached re: specific legislation by letters and in-person conversations on state and national hunger awareness lobby days
- Each staff job description is expanded, hours are increased for each position
- Staff positions are filled by April
- Freelance grants writer is working regularly with the Pantry and an increasing number of grant requests are submitted, relationships with funders developed
- A board of directors is formed
- Application for 501 (c)(3) status is submitted
- A “space search committee” is working on securing new space
- A PR plan is developed to inform the community about our search for space
- A line of credit is established
- An fundraising workplan, with a congregation-specific strategy is developed

2011:

- 501(c)(3) status has been granted
- On-going hunger education program for donors and volunteers is developed
- Volunteer leaders are trained to be speakers on hunger issues
- An annual hunger relief/service effort on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is piloted
- The volunteer tracking systems are improved
- More donors are volunteers. More volunteers are donors
- Possible new service collaborations with partners are explored, beyond referrals
- Working with other pantries and GCFD, a common advocacy plan is developed, focusing attention on improving anti-hunger funding in Illinois
- New space for the Pantry is identified
- A fundraising plan for new space is implemented, multi-year gifts are sought
- Government grants are investigated as a new source of revenue

2012:

- 1,500 families are served each month
- Capital fundraising progresses
- The Pantry moves to new space

Ideal Space Needs

7,500 useable square feet + 15% hallways, etc.= 8,625 square feet

Overall: Space will be handicapped accessible, bright, clean, welcoming and easily secured. It will be located near EI and bus lines and have a parking lot for 50, nearby on-street parking will also be available. Ample space will be available for trash and recycling disposal/pick-up in an alley or behind the facility.

Reception area with phone/internet service (1100 sq. ft.)

- Station for receptionist/manager
- Carrels for meeting one-on-one with clients (3-4 w/networked computers)
- Filing cabinets and shelf storage for forms, referrals, office supplies, etc
- Men's and Women's restrooms nearby

Large open room able to convert to a variety of functions (1100 sq. ft.)

- Client waiting room (holds 200 chairs)
- Volunteer trainings
- Board meetings
- Partner meetings
- Donor events (educational lectures, cocktail parties, etc.)
- Community forum site
- Holiday Food and Gift distribution center
- Includes adjacent or integrated storage space for stacking chairs and tables
- 2 restrooms (men and women) adjacent or nearby

Office space for 6-7 staff members, some of the space private space (870 sq. ft.)

- Telephone, fax and internet access
- Networked
- Large enough for 2 people to meet

Meeting Spaces (180 sq. ft.)

- Small meeting rooms 12 people

Kitchenette (9x20=180 sq. ft.)

- Microwave, fridge/freezer, coffee maker, toaster-oven
- Small sink
- Cupboard for cleaning supplies, cups, flatware
- Table and 4 chairs

Storage space for 40,000# of non-perishables on ground floor (2250 sq. ft.)

- Shelving to hold cases and pick bins
- Wheeled bins for food-drive food
- Check In/Check out area for clients. w/networked computer and phone
- Shopping carts and cart corral for client-use
- Space for clients to shop “aisles”
- Scale for weighing food
- Tables for bagging food (with storage for bags/boxes)
- Storage for hand carts, food storage bins (for food drives), etc.

Cold storage adjacent to above—clients would not be coming into these units

Walk-in Freezer to hold 10,000# (25x17=425 sq. ft.)

- Shelving to hold cases of meat
- Shelving w/racks or bins for bread, fruit, etc.

Walk-in Refrigerator to hold 10,000# (**25x17=425 sq. ft.**)

- Shelving to hold half-gallons of milk and egg cartons
- Shelving to hold cases of butter or cheese
- Shelving w/racks or bins for a variety of produce from rescues. (Ideally these would be wheeled so we could move them out to main “shopping area” for client choice.)

Tables/shelves for placing clients’ cold/frozen items

Glass-front, reach-in freezer for misc. frozen rescue items (client choice)

Shelves or trays for produce (client choice)

Loading dock

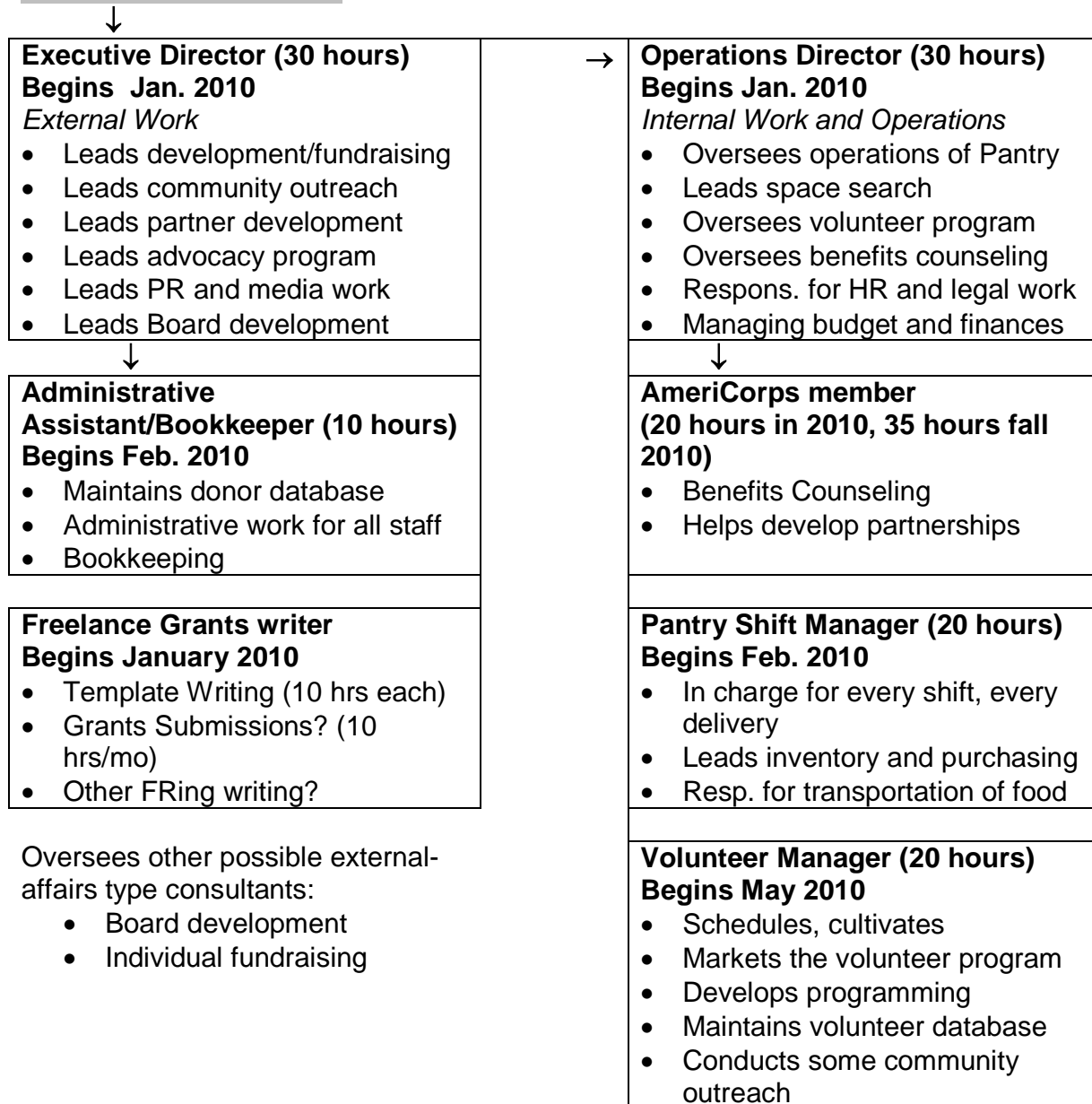
Really Big Dream: Demonstration Kitchen (40x20=800 sq. ft.)

- Ability to teach cooking/nutrition classes and host Chef’s Table Fundraisers
- Central Island for food prep (10-12 people can work at it)
- Commercial stove, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher
- Pots, pans, cooking/eating utensils, dishes and glassware (and storage for same)
- Video capability (to make and screen) and internet access
- Tables and chairs for 20

OPRF Food Pantry Staff –Recommended 2010 Organizational Flow Chart

This represents the transition period until the opening of a new pantry/new space, at which time a new organizational structure will be needed. There will be the equivalent of 4.25 fulltime positions starting in 2011. The board of directors supervises the executive director. The executive director supervises the operations director, the administrative assistant, and freelancers. The operations director supervises the Americorps member, pantry shift manager, volunteer manager.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Strategic Plan Committee

Michael Carr

Vice President, Technology & Media, Navigators Pro, OPRF Food Pantry
volunteer

Rev. Harriette Cross

Pastor, Cornerstone Methodist Church and president of the OPRF Community of
Congregations

Donna Myers

Volunteer, Brookfield Zoo and Holmes Elementary School, former fundraiser and
financial analyst, member of Oak Park Temple

Andrew Hibel

Chief Operating Officer, HigherEdJobs, member of Oak Park Temple

Bob Haisman

Retired teacher, past president of IL Education Association, member of First
United Church, OPRF Food Pantry volunteer

Kristi Braun

Volunteer coordinator of the OPRF Food Pantry

Kathy Russell

Co-manager of the OPRF Food Pantry

Shavora Steward

Americorps member, 2009/10, OPRF Food Pantry

Michele Zurakowski

Co-manager of the OPRF Food Pantry

Marianne Philbin

Strategic planning consultant

Kris Torkelson

Strategic planning consultant, OPRF Food Pantry volunteer