

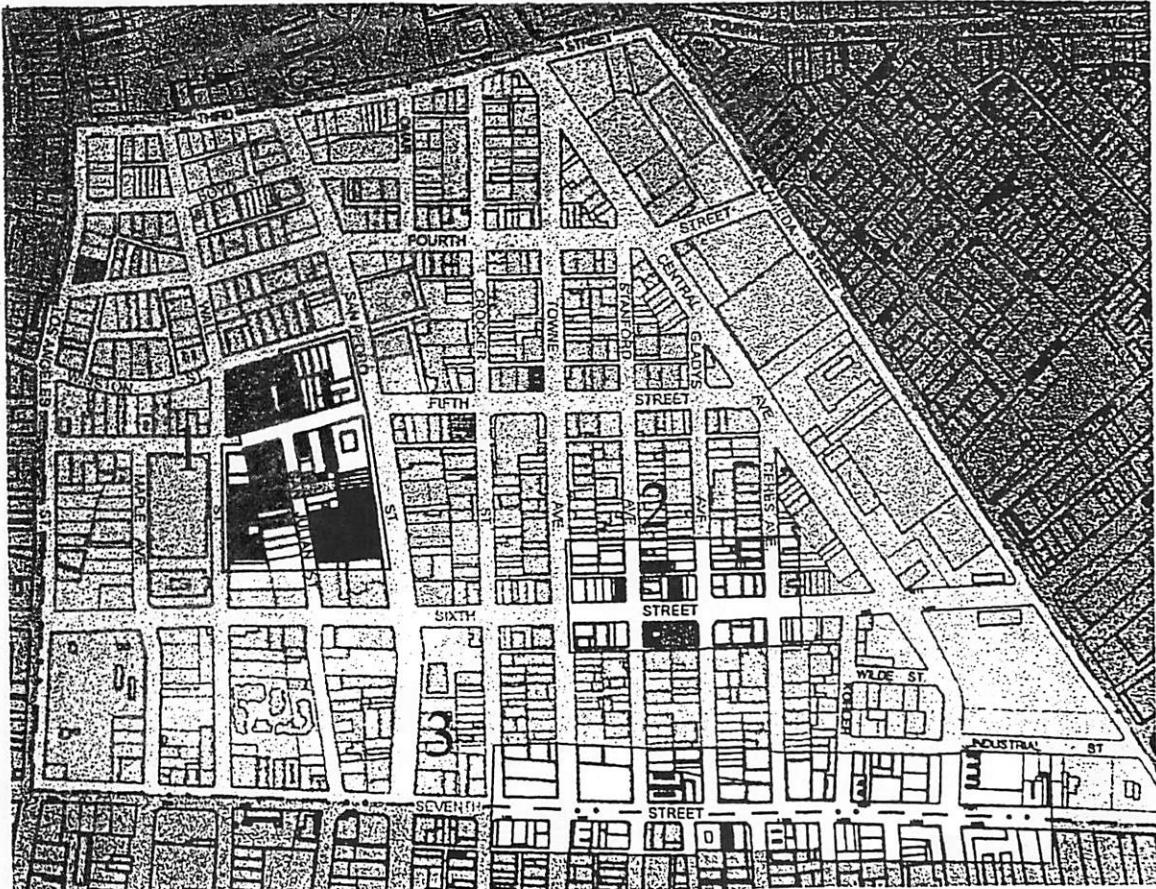
SRO Housing Corporation
Building Common Ground

BUILDING COMMON GROUND

A Proposal to Revitalize Skid Row Los Angeles

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The Single Room Occupancy Housing Corporation proposes establishing a community-based planning and development strategy for the revitalization of Central City East ("Skid Row") called: *Building Common Ground*. Among the other impediments to the effective development of the Central City East portion of downtown Los Angeles are the many internecine rivalries among non-profit agencies. The intent of SRO Housing's application for funding through the Neighborhood Turnaround Initiative is to develop substantive projects that will (a) provide benefits to the *entire community* and (b) create a healthy process by which *consensus may be achieved* as to redevelopment strategies, plans, and activities. SRO will accomplish these aims by creating the position of Community Builder who will work on activities to make all of Central City East a more livable neighborhood while organizing the disparate interests of the community to build consensus through a program advisory committee. In short, the intent of this project is to build common ground *within* the community so as to build *upon* common ground in Skid Row.



1024.2
C 1427

gives a
very
brief
outline

of what is
available
in
the
area
of
the
country
to
the
people
to
the
government
and
the
people
of
the
area.

It gives a
list of
the
various
types
of
information

that
is
available
in
the
area
and
the
various
types
of
information

that is available in the area.

It gives a
list of
the
various
types
of
information

that
is
available
in
the
area
and
the
various
types
of
information

that
is
available
in
the
area
and
the
various
types
of
information

that
is
available
in
the
area
and
the
various
types
of
information

Part IV. Preliminary Neighborhood Turnaround Initiative Strategy Outcome and Targets

A. Primary Intervention Area: Skid Row Los Angeles

Since 1984, the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Corporation has developed housing, parks, supportive social services, and public services and amenities in the Central City East portion of downtown Los Angeles commonly referred to as "Skid Row." SRO takes as its mission the revitalization of Central City East, its transformation into a more normative, healthy community. The City of Los Angeles defines Central City East as that portion of Los Angeles bounded by 3rd Street on the North, 7th Street on the South, Alameda Avenue on the East and Los Angeles Street on the West. The 55 square blocks that compose Central City East (CCE) are among the most severely blighted in the City of Los Angeles, and the residents that make up the neighborhoods of Skid Row are among the most impoverished in the County. The housing stock is primarily renter-occupied single room occupancy units, built at the turn of the century and many of these dwellings are in need of substantial rehabilitation.

SRO has approached the challenge of community development in CCE by working in what it refers to as Strategic Intervention Areas (SIA). Through a community-based planning process begun in the mid-1980s, SRO identified three primary areas in CCE where the housing stock was sufficiently concentrated so that the Corporation's housing rehabilitation activities would have the greatest impact in the surrounding neighborhood. The Strategic Intervention Areas have been named as follows: SIA-1/ San Julian Cluster; SIA-2/Gladys Park Cluster; and SIA-3/the New Century Cluster. The accompanying map shows the general areas of these clusters. Each of these areas has attained a greater or lesser degree of stability and conformity with SRO's vision of a normative urban community composed of extremely low income persons.

CCE is an area characterized by a number of unique social, economic, and political factors. The residents are among the most impoverished in Los Angeles, a recent survey by SRO of its tenants showed them to be at just 16% of the County median for one person households. The U.S. Census found that 51% of all residents fell below the poverty threshold. The vast majority of residents subsist on public benefits, either General Relief payments of \$212 per month (plus Food Stamps of \$93), or Supplemental Security Income revenue of \$620 per month (without Food Stamps). The housed and sheltered population is almost equally divided between African-Americans and whites, with Hispanics, Asians, and others making up no more than 10% of the population. In the streets of CCE the picture is somewhat different with the vast majority of visibly homeless persons being African-Americans. Drug use is rampant and deals are struck in plain sight on a regular basis.

In addition to the distribution of narcotics and its attendant vices (like prostitution), other prominent industries in CCE include toy warehousing, fish processing, hotel operations, and the provision of social services. The area has a thriving barter-based gray economy with cash exchanged for (typically) menial labor.

Major one-way arteries cut through the area, but none are heavily used except during the rush hour. Motorists rarely stop in the neighborhood as there are few reasons to do so, and many reasons not. In short, the life in Central City East is typically bleak. The area is notable for its

lack of basic amenities, services, and cultural outlets that are normative parts of other neighborhoods in Los Angeles. In the city that makes movies, there are no theaters in Skid Row. Nor, for that matter, does CCE have a library, dry cleaners, supermarket, pharmacy, or other services most of us take for granted. The only open space are two parks operated by SRO Housing: Gladys Park with active recreational opportunities, and San Julian Park, with sedentary activities.

The needs in Skid Row are tremendous and varied. The Building Common Ground Community Builder will undertake work in each of the Strategic Impact Areas, with each having a somewhat different focus. SRO has nearly completed the work of revitalizing the San Julian Cluster, but the area is in desperate need of appropriate community space. SRO's San Julian Park is teeming with people each day who reside in the neighborhood. Senior citizens enjoy lunch five days each week in the converted lobby of SRO's Russ Hotel. The seniors need and deserve a more dignified setting thus SRO has plans to develop the James Wood Memorial Community Center at the corner of Fifth and San Julian Streets in the heart of SIA-1. At the Gladys Park Cluster, SRO recognizes the need for additional affordable housing. There are a number of un-rehabilitated properties in this comparatively quiet cluster and the development of more housing will help to further support its residential character. The New Century Cluster (on 7th Street) is an area in need of a more substantial vision of redevelopment. SIA-3 is characterized by numerous live-above/work-below properties that present an opportunity for both additional affordable housing and commercial development.

CCE is an area in need of additional entry-level and low-skill jobs which makes the development of single room occupancy housing a form of economic development. SRO Housing currently employs a staff of 140 persons full-time, and it is among the leading organizations utilizing Chrysalis' Labor Connection. Clearly not all new jobs should be centered on the hotel and service industries. A number of local residents have important job skills that are currently underutilized, and the development of micro-enterprise opportunities could further their economic standing. Two important developments will further the creation of jobs in CCE: the Alameda Corridor and the City of Los Angeles' Empowerment Zone.

By concentrating development in these three Strategic Impact Areas, SRO looks to further the transformation of these neighborhoods of Skid Row. In four years, these areas will be both more livable owing to the development of additional affordable housing, public amenities and facilities, and improved public safety. These areas will also be more productive and economically viable owing to the creation of new jobs and self-employment opportunities.

B. Quantifiable Targets

SRO has established ambitious (yet realistic) goals for the Building Common Ground project, and it looks to engage the community in a process that will further shape, and refine the goals while providing leadership for this initiative. Based on its comprehensive knowledge of the community and its needs owing to its diverse involvement in its Strategic Intervention Areas, SRO will target the work of the Community Builder on a number of specific goals in each SIA. Because Central City East lacks a neighborhood facility, SRO will engage the Community Builder in furthering the development of the James Wood Memorial Community Center—a multi-purpose facility. The ground floor of this building will house Project Hotel Alert, a senior citizen nutrition, transportation, and case management program. In the evenings and off-hours, this space will serve the needs of the large 12-step recovery meetings that are in need of space. The second floor is currently intended to serve as the offices for SRO's numerous social service programs for persons with AIDS, homeless persons, veterans, persons with mental illnesses, and persons in recovery from addictions to illegal narcotics and alcohol. A third story would provide space for community initiated and run activities, like offices for the secretaries of the many local recovery meetings, small conference rooms, a computer learning lab, and offices for SRO's Tenant Advisory Council. The goal is to make this facility into a landmark that will bring pride and dignity to the residents of downtown while serving their purposes. Other projects to be addressed in SIA-1 would be: the development of open space; and urban greening, landscaping, and beautification. SRO is currently in development of the Southern Hotel which will be adjacent to the Community Center. SRO has begun work to acquire and rehabilitate the remaining two private market hotels in this neighborhood: the Brownstone Hotel and the San Julian Hotel.

In SIA-2 the Community Builder will focus his or her efforts on acquiring and rehabilitating the housing stock. SRO owns four hotels in the vicinity of Gladys Park, and all but one are operational. The fourth, the Eugene Hotel, was red-tagged following the Northridge Earthquake. Owing to its having reached an impasse with FEMA, SRO is unclear as to how best to proceed to move this project forward to completion. The Community Builder will investigate strategies to bring this hotel online in an expeditious manner.

The New Century cluster (SIA-3) represents the most ambitious and exciting focus of this neighborhood revitalization effort. With input from the Building Common Ground advisory board, the Community Builder will develop a comprehensive revitalization plan that will integrate residential and economic development. SRO has already proposed a number of plans for this area, including the development of a ground floor community-based art gallery with artist lofts above at the New Terminal Hotel on 7th Street. Other plans include the establishment of a high-technology hotel where each unit comes with pre-wired Internet access. Among other contributions to this project, the Community Builder would work to recruit a tenant with interests linked to high technology, like a computer learning institute or a computer repair, recycling, and re-manufacturing concern. Another goal of redevelopment along the 7th Street corridor would be to undertake an entirely "green" project, one that would incorporate maximum energy efficiency and environmentally sound practices. We envision the development of this project to proceed as a referred design competition among architecture students at the local universities. One expected result of such an approach would be to invite the attention of local academics in the revitalization of Skid Row, bringing new ideas and new attention to areas that have been largely

ignored and written off as unredeemable. SRO knows better; we have been witness to the gradual emergence of an expected community in CCE, one made up of low income and homeless persons that others regard as social pariahs.

In addition to planning the overall residential rehabilitation, the Community Builder will concentrate on identifying and recruiting businesses that may relocate into the neighborhood. Among the goals of this project is to attract new services and businesses into CCE, including a low cost grocery store, restaurants, and perhaps venues for entertainment, like a coffee house where local blues musicians could perform (in place of honky-tonk bars).

As an organization, SRO will need to adapt to accommodate the scope of work and the Building Common Ground project and making preparations for its eventual autonomy and self-sufficiency. To be effective it is critical that the Community Builder come to be regarded in CCE as independent of SRO's corporate interests. To the extent that this planner is identified with SRO exclusively, his work will lose credibility. Thus, among the key goals to be undertaken by virtue of the NTI is establishing Building Common Ground as a community planning and development entity that is responsive to the needs articulated by persons at the Advisory Panel meetings. Eventually this may involve transferring the planning functions to a third party intermediary that will have a greater capacity to organize the diverse and conflicted interests in Skid Row. As SRO confronts the challenge of devolving authority to another agency, it will necessarily have to accept the role for more community input than it has historically done. We expect these tangible accomplishments will exist by the close of the four-year NTI funding cycle:

1. The establishment of a participatory community-based process for planning and development that will be facilitated by a self-sufficient third-party intermediary.
2. The construction of a 14,000 s.f. neighborhood facility, the James Wood Memorial Community Center (JWMCC). The active use of the Center by an average of 70 senior citizens each day, and the convening of 3 recovery meetings per week.
3. Creation of a comprehensive market analysis to better assess the demand for housing, leading to the development of 280 units of housing for very low income persons.
4. Planning for the development of 8,000-28,000 square feet of retail space to support the mixed-use housing while providing essential services in the community.
5. The creation of 15,000 s.f. of green open space, including a 5,000 s.f. sober park. Our preliminary plans are to locate much of this open space around the JWMCC, and between SRO's Marshal House and Leo Hotels (sober residences).
6. Development of a beautification and urban greening plan for all of Skid Row.
7. Creation of a labor force analysis that includes an analysis of the potential for job growth for residents in the community that will lead to the development of 80 new jobs through SRO and other agencies participating in the Building Common Ground Initiative.
8. Completion of a social services needs assessment, with particular emphasis on nutritional concerns and the impact of a chronic homeless population in the community.
9. The development of SRO's capacity by establishing it on a more balanced funding base.

OUTCOME # 1: Development of mechanism(s) for broad-based community input into project assessment and planning processes		
Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Determination of process to create a project advisory board that represents all major stakeholders in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of information concerning goals and objectives of "Common Ground" project. • Implementation of a series of community meetings to garner input regarding the composition of an advisory board. • Creation of advisory board for "Common Ground" project. 	Year 1 Quarter 1 Year 1 Quarter 1 Year 1 Quarter 1
2. Maximize effectiveness of board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRO Housing planner/LISC consultant(s) to work with board in constructing a detailed plan to enhance its effectiveness. • Training sessions (both internal and external training venucs) to enhance the effectiveness of the board, particularly the capacity of board members who are residents of the community. • Throughout project an increasing emphasis on board-driven (and especially local resident-driven goals and objectives). 	Year 1 Quarter 2 Year 1 Quarter 2 Year 1 Quarter 2
3. Creation of an autonomous community board to carry on the functions of the "Common Ground" project advisory board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of community interest in the post-project maintenance of the community board. 	Year 2 Quarter 2

OUTCOME # 2: Construction and inauguration of community center that will serve the needs of community groups, particularly senior citizens, persons in recovery from substance abuse and community organization and mobilization efforts.		
Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Construction of 14,000 s.f. Neighborhood Facility (James Wood Memorial Community Center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund-raising activities. • Financing for project secured/finalized. • Completion of all pre-construction work (architectural, subcontractor bids, etc.) • Actual start of construction. • Construction completed. 	Year 1: Q1,Q2,Q3,Q4 Year 1: Q4 Year 1: Q2 Year 1: Q2 Year 2: Q1
2. Opening of Community Center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies and procedures are established for day to day running of the Center. • All Project Hotel Alert case management offices moved to Center. • First floor is prepared to function as congregate meal site for seniors. • Other meeting spaces are prepared for use by community groups such as 12-step groups. • Opening Day ceremonies – a major day of celebration by and for residents of the downtown community. • Average daily attendance at 70 seniors per day. • Average of at least 3 recovery meetings per week. 	Year 1: Q4 Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q2

OUTCOME # 3: Conduct thorough assessment of the state of housing in the project area, identifying the need for specific housing types and specific strategies to meet needs through rehabilitation of existing structures and/or new construction.

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
Complete a thorough review of the state of housing in the project area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of need for this project type vis a vis other neighborhood priorities. • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Consult with governmental housing organization and non-profit organizations (LISC, etc.) who offer expertise in issues related to affordable housing. • Construction and dissemination of "Needs Assessment" document. 	Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1
Determination of the need for housing for "special" populations such as: persons with HIV disease, mentally ill persons, persons in recovery from addiction and persons with physical disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of need for this project type vis a vis other neighborhood priorities. • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Consult with governmental housing organization and non-profit organizations (LISC, etc.) who offer expertise in issues related to affordable housing. • Construction and dissemination of "Needs Assessment" document. 	Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q2
Construction of target area action plan to promote appropriate mixed use development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Planner will collaborate with area housing developers, business persons, community groups and others to foster movement towards a consensus on area development. 	Year 1: Q2
Identification of 5 housing "targets" for rehabilitation/280 units of affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Planner in conjunction with other SRO Housing planning personnel will identify realistic new housing projects. Projects will address the priority needs of the area. SRO staff will move forward to secure funding for projects. • Pre-development work (funding, architectural work, bids) • Construction • Rent up/Marketing 	Year 1 Q3 Year 2: Q3 to Year 4 Q1 Year 4 Q1 Year 4 Q1 Year 5 Q1

OUTCOME # 4: Provide enhanced local access to goods and services and create employment opportunities through the development of commercial retail space.

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Assessment of community need for particular retail services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit community input concerning the need for the development of retail services from "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forum, local businesses, the social service sector and other means. • Advisory board determination of priority area(s) for action. 	Year 2: Q1 Year 1: Q1
2. Development of action plan to foster development of retail entities in neighborhood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of action plan. • Creation of links with possible retail partners. • Identification of one or two realistic priority projects. • Examination of options for financing including The Retail Initiative (TRI) and other options. 	Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q1 Year 2: Q1
3. Implementation of project(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of one or more retail outlets (8,000 to 28,000 s.f. • Note: The various sub-tasks involved in this effort will be completely dependent upon the nature of the particular development. Possible developments run the gamut from small clothing outlets and "mom and pop" style grocery stores to franchise fast-food and major supermarket/pharmacy ventures. 	Year 3: Q1

OUTCOME # 5: Development of additional public park space in project area.

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Determine neighborhood level of need for and interest in the development of open green areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Determination of need for this project type vis a vis other neighborhood priorities. 	Year 1: Q1
2. Determination of priority project(s) based upon community input and existing realities (ie. Available land, zoning regulations, development funds, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of sites. • Project planner to initiate necessary fund-raising effort. • Project planner to coordinate the implementation of pre-development activities for the chosen project. 	Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1
3. The construction and inauguration of 15,000 s.f. of new public park space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete project plan to be coordinated by "Common Ground" project planner and approved by Advisory Board. • Actual implementation of construction/landscaping, etc. • Celebratory opening of new park. 	Year 1: Q3 Year 1: Q4 Year 1: Q4

OUTCOME # 6: Implementation of Neighborhood Beautification Efforts

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Determine neighborhood level of need for and interest in various community beautification and improvement activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Determination of need for this project type vis a vis other neighborhood priorities. 	Year 1: Q1 Year 1: Q1
2. Determination of priority project(s) based upon community input and existing realities (ie. Available land, zoning regulations, development funds, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of sites. • to initiate necessary fund-raising effort. • to coordinate the implementation of pre-development activities for the chosen project. 	Year 1: Q2,3 Year 1: Q2 Year 1: Q2,3
3. Implementation of various community improvement and beautification projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete project plan to be coordinated by "Common Ground" Community Builder and approved by Advisory Board. • Actual implementation of activities • Public ceremonies to mark completion of projects 	Year 1: Q3 Year 1: Q4 Year 1: Q4

OUTCOME # 7: Labor Force Analysis/Enhanced employment opportunities for local residents.

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Conduct labor force analysis to identify and create jobs for local residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of need for this project type vis a vis other neighborhood priorities. • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Input from Chrysalis, Inc. and the local business community. • Assessment of potential tie-ins with economic initiatives in the surrounding area such as the Alameda Corridor and the South Park area arena complex. • Assess need for sheltered workshop type employment situations. 	Year 2: Q2 Year 2: Q2 Year 2: Q2 Year 2: Q2 Year 2: Q2
2. Implementation of Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach and partnership efforts with local businesses. • Utilization of Chrysalis, Inc.'s multi-level employment services. • Integration with other economic development initiatives. • Training opportunities for service providers to enhance the community's awareness of employment and training opportunities. 	Year 2: Q3 Year 2: Q3 Year 2: Q3 Year 2: Q3
3. The creation of 80 jobs for persons who reside in or adjacent to the project area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job development efforts of Chrysalis result in acquisition of full-time employment of 80 additional persons. 	Year 2: Q4 to Year 4 Q4



OUTCOME # 8: Conduct thorough assessment of need for supportive services to assist persons to maintain independent living status, and the need for the development of community facilities to provide additional services to residents of the project area.

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
1. Complete a thorough review of the project area's supportive services network in terms of programs and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Conduct thorough review of existing service network. • Conduct thorough review of existing network of recovery services. 	Ongoing Year 3: Q2 Year 3: Q3
2. Determination of the need for supportive services and/or facilities development for "special" populations such as: persons with HIV disease, mentally ill persons, persons in recovery from addiction and persons with physical disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of need for this project type vis a vis other neighborhood priorities. • Solicit community input via "Common Ground" project advisory board, open community forums and other means. • Consult with governmental service providers especially in the areas of physical and mental health (in collaboration with Dept. of Mental Health and Downtown Mental Health Clinic.) • Determine the need for the development of centers for the provision of services such as mental health services, medical services, employment services, etc. • Determine the need for sheltered workshop type work environments. • Determine need for specific types of recovery-oriented activities. • Construction and dissemination of "Needs Assessment" document. 	Year 3: Q3 Year 3: Q4
3. Construction of target area action plan to promote the development of a comprehensive network of supportive services and supportive services facilities for persons in the project area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Planner will collaborate with area housing developers, social service providers, community groups and others to foster movement towards a consensus on area development based upon current gaps in service provision. 	Year 3: Q4

OUTCOME # 9: Enhanced capacity of SRO Housing Corporation as an effective CDC

Target	Milestone	Timeframe (by project year and quarter)
Enhanced fund-raising capacity and diversified portfolio of funding sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, with technical assistance of consultant, the organization's current strategies to secure funds for its housing and supportive social services programs. • Develop comprehensive plan to improve the organization's fund-raising capabilities through training and personnel development. • Develop consensus within organization (including board members) to initiate action plan. 	Year 1 Q1 Year 1 Q2 Year 1 Q3
Enhancement of organizational management practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate an internal process (with technical assistance, if necessary) to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses. Particular attention given to strategic planning and organizational communication. • Develop a plan to enhance organizational performance based on assessment. 	Year 1 Q2 Year 1 Q3,4
Increased local community presence on SRO Housing Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain organizational consensus to enhance inclusion of local residents in planning processes. 	Year 1 Q2

C. First Year Project(s)

We expect the Community Builder to focus on four key projects during his first year: the development of a neighborhood facility in SIA-1; the development of housing development strategy for SIA-2 that will include the rehabilitation of the Eugene Hotel (an asset owned by SRO); the creation of a comprehensive plan for the redevelopment of 7th Street—the New Century Project; and the facilitation of a process by which a broad range of interests may come together in support of the Building Common Ground project.

James Wood Memorial Community Center (SIA-1): this project is currently approaching a critical period in its development and the addition of a planner at this time will greatly help to move it to its completion. SRO owns the parcel at the corner of 5th and San Julian where this facility is proposed to be situated. SRO has also obtained funding of \$400,000 from the County of Los Angeles to build this center, but nearly \$2 million in additional funds must be raised to complete this project by the first quarter of 2,000. SRO has hired a consultant to assist it in its capital campaign, but additional support will be necessary including the involvement of the local labor federation (Jim Wood was the 2nd highest ranking officer of the AFL-CIO at the time of his death). The Community Builder will be instrumental in establishing labor union support and working with the project planner to coordinate the voluntary labor that SRO expects to solicit. This facility will be completed and brought on-line within the first 18 months of the Building Common Ground project.

Open Space Development (SIA-1): this project involves the identification of resources to acquire and landscape two parcels between existing SRO properties resulting in the creation of nearly 12,000 s.f. of green space in Skid Row.

Gladys Park Cluster (SIA-2) Housing Plan: SRO owns an abandoned hotel on Stanford that was red-tagged following the Northridge Earthquake. Owing to a bureaucratic impasse with FEMA, SRO has been unable to rehabilitate this hotel. The Community Builder will complete an assessment of the housing needs in each of the Strategic Intervention Areas and develop a plan to reclaim this housing stock either as demolition/new construction or as a substantial rehabilitation. As part of this planning work, the planner will begin a process of evaluating demand for new housing units in light of changes in the administration of the County's General Relief program and characteristics of the downtown population. This plan will be completed within the first 6 months of the initiation of the Building Common Ground project so that a course of action will be set to bring at least 70 affordable units on-line by December 31, 2,000.

New Century Project (SIA-3): in 1997 SRO substituted in as General Partner of the Prentice Hotel, L.P. (in which CEF serves as limited partner). We will be beginning rehabilitation of this property this July and it will be completed by November, 1998. Once completed, this hotel will provide for 44 units of rental assisted housing, stabilizing this particular investment and establishing a "foothold" for SRO's future development in the neighborhood. SRO intends to continue its practice of working in well-defined neighborhoods in which the completion of each project furthers the general improvement of the entire area. Following this general development strategy, SRO is in need of a comprehensive plan for the New Century cluster. This plan will identify potential acquisitions, estimate rehabilitation costs, identify potential sources of capital funding to effect the development, analyze market conditions (see above at SIA-2), and identify potential appropriate tenants for the ground-floor commercial space that gives 7th Street its

unique character as a live-above/work-below neighborhood. This plan will include a complete discussion of the financial, design, time, and political opportunities and constraints to redevelop 7th Street in a comprehensive manner. SRO has had preliminary and highly positive meetings with representative from Century Housing Corporation to fund this large undertaking, but owing to our lack of resources (including appropriate staff) we have been unable to move forward on this project. A comprehensive plan that solicits maximum input from the community will be completed within 6 months. At a minimum this plan will include an identification of potential sites for the development of housing, commercial endeavors, open space, urban greening and beautification, public safety, supportive services, and transportation. The outcome of this planning work will lead to the development of 200 affordable units in the New Century Cluster by 2,002.

Building Common Ground: SRO's goal of bringing planning resources into the neighborhoods of Skid Row can only succeed if the process is recognized as open, fair, and impartial. Thus, as a part of its fundamental mission, the Building Common Ground project will facilitate maximum participation by interested members of the community. One goal of this planning process is to see the NTI resources eventually transferred to a third-party intermediary outside of SRO's direct control, but rather supported by a broad base of community interests (other non-profit agencies, businesses, public officials, etc.). SRO realizes that it will be sacrificing control in devolving authority to an independent entity, but it believes that the results of the planning will gain greater legitimacy in so doing. The rivalries among development interests in downtown Los Angeles are of operatic proportions. There has long been a need to establish a mechanism by which public and private agencies can come together to explore development options and constraints. Building Common Ground will create such a forum, and within the 18 months of its inception, it will be re-established at a community-based organization that can serve to facilitate the process of building common ground. SRO has identified one such entity that may serve as an "outside" interest, the Institute for Urban Planning and Development, a nonprofit organization currently in Pasadena (but soon to be relocated to Los Angeles) with links to a number of academic, religious, public and private development interests.

D. Other Organizations in Area

Given the extreme poverty and overwhelming needs in CCE, a large number of private organizations have established themselves in the community. These organizations can be divided into three main categories: private religious missions; private secular agencies with a narrow focus; and private secular agencies with a broad focus.

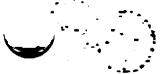
The development of a plan to revitalize the neighborhoods of Skid Row is challenged by the presence of five religious missions within the area's 55 square blocks. These missions typically operate as insular organizations, largely cut off from the community in which they operate. SRO has labored to establish effective relations with the local missions, and its results have been mixed. In order to establish a plan that will not be deleteriously impacted by the missions, SRO will have to strengthen its existing relationships with both The Union Rescue Mission and the Los Angeles Mission. The other missions in the area play a lesser role in the community, but will also be invited to participate in the Building Common Ground Advisory Board.

A large number of other non-profit agencies approach the problems of CCE from a narrow perspective, hoping to make an impact by concentrating their limited resources and skills on a specific set of problems or populations. LAMP, for example, has developed a comprehensive range of services and housing options for homeless persons with severe psychiatric disorders. Chrysalis, has made an important difference downtown through its effective programs to assist homeless persons reenter the labor force. It has also helped to create jobs connected to the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) that have been established downtown. St. Vincent de Paul's Cardinal Manning Center similarly provides an invaluable range of emergency and transitional shelter services for homeless persons and will also be an important voice on the Advisory Board. These agencies will all be represented on the Advisory Board. One goal of Building Common Ground is to link its work to that of the Community Services Roundtable, a monthly networking meeting of the heads of downtown agencies. Other local agencies that are more single-issue focused that will be contacted as part of this community planning process include: Project Open Door (homeless outreach); Homeless Outreach Project; Downtown Women's Center; The Salvation Army (recovery programs); Volunteers of America (housing, outreach, and recovery programs); the United Coalition East (drug and alcohol abuse mitigation program) and the Weingart Center (emergency and transitional programs for homeless persons).

Three organizations take a much broader view of their missions and the opportunities to transform Skid Row into a more normative community. The Skid Row Development Corporation (SRDC), provides permanent and transitional housing and has developed commercial properties as economic incubators to create new jobs in CCE. Skid Row Housing Trust (SRHT) controls 15 residential properties in Skid Row, many of which have ground-floor commercial tenants. Over the past few years, SRHT has self-consciously begun to market its units to a disabled population through HUD's Shelter Plus Care program. In so doing, SRHT has developed a number of supportive social services to assist its permanent residents. By virtue of their large real estate holdings, each of these agencies takes a broad and comprehensive view of the development opportunities and challenges of CCE.

In addition to connecting Building Common Ground to these agencies active in CCE, SRO will look to integrate local business and government agencies in its planning and development work. The local business community in Skid Row is represented by the Central City East Association (CCEA). Because one of the critical needs to be addressed through Building Common Ground is job development, CCEA will play an important role in linking the community based agencies to the business community. Also, owing to the many public safety concerns that need to be addressed in Skid Row, the local police will also be included in the work of the Building Common Ground planner.

Over the 14 years that it has developed a continuum of housing opportunities, it has also worked to establish working relationships with the numerous other organizations looking to improve the quality of life in CCE. SRO has a close relationship with Chrysalis, having operated a joint venture with it over the past 4 years. SRO also has close working relations with each of the agencies noted above. Over the past year, SRO has worked closely with the LAPD to develop an integrated approach to reducing the local drug traffic around the intersection of Fifth and San Julian.



E. Development of Strategic Plan

SRO Housing has been engaged in a strategic planning process for the Corporation over the past 18 months. This plan takes as its focus the political, economic, social, and other forces that create new opportunities or constrain the efforts of SRO in furthering its mission of revitalizing Central City East. LISC's Neighborhood Turnaround Initiative has created an opportunity to confront one of the greatest challenges of development in Skid Row, namely the inability of the community to identify and articulate a unified vision of what can and should be accomplished. While SRO's corporate plan will be finalized within three months, a comprehensive plan for the community will require a far greater investment of time and resources to complete.

SRO's strategic plan was developed in consultation with Mr. Jim Heath, MBA, who has facilitated the creation of plans for a number of Fortune 500 Corporations. The development of the plan involved staff from all levels of the Corporation along with the heads of other local social service and housing agencies and a large number of tenant representatives. Among the key findings of this inclusive process was the sense that SRO has made considerable contributions in the areas of housing, public amenities, and social services, and that it should continue to expand and develop in these areas. It also became clear that while housing is a core competency of SRO, the mission of the Corporation was much broader and comprehensive, namely the complete revitalization of Central City East to transform it into a healthy community. It also became clear that SRO would be unable to achieve its mission without the support and consent of the other interests in the neighborhoods in which it operates.

The large number of housing and social service agencies in downtown Los Angeles tends to complicate the coordination of planning. No area in Southern California is in greater need of a consensual vision and strategy of revitalization than Skid Row. Yet, CCE is currently characterized as fractious and torn by rivalries and incompatible views regarding the most efficacious plan to redevelop the area. SRO contacted a large number of other agencies regarding this proposal in the hopes of developing a process by which a more consensual and community-based approach could emerge. The most serious and important discussions were with Skid Row Housing Trust, the only other agency to rival SRO in terms of its presence as a major stakeholder of residential properties in the community.

In an effort to overcome the long and unproductive feuding between these agencies and others, SRO proposes to support a process by which the Building Common Ground Community Builder eventually comes to be connected to an organization outside of SRO Housing. Our view is that the extent that the community Builder is viewed as aligned with a particular development interest, his credibility is compromised and the legitimacy of the entire process is called into questions. For this reason, SRO proposes to transfer the grant to an outside planning entity with the capacity to build consensus within the community. We have identified a few organizations that may serve in this capacity, but to best authenticate a local process of inclusion, we feel it is best to first establish the Building Common Ground Advisory Board. As its first assignment, this entity will be charged with the task of selecting the appropriate independent agency capable of undertaking the work of building consensus, completing a development plan, and undertaking the work of implementation. SRO recognizes that this may be viewed as controversial, but we are convinced that to create a unified vision of the future of Central City East, one must first

have mechanisms in place that will facilitate consensus.

Building consensus takes time and hard work. It is likely to take nearly a year and a half to move the process forward to a point that the Building Common Ground project can establish itself outside of SRO and stand more autonomously. A realistic time line for the development of this process and a plan for each of the projects identified in this proposal is 12 months. The planning for 7th Street will be the most challenging and time consuming given the scope and scale of what can and should be done there.

SRO Housing Corporation
Building Common Ground

TIME LINE:

Period		Process—Consensus Building	Substance—Planning Activities
Year 1	Quarter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of SRO-initiated Strategic Plan • Notification of Award and Inaugural Community Forum to discuss Implementation of <i>Building Common Ground</i> • Convening of Initial Community Advisory Panel • Recruitment of Interns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Market Analysis Begun • Labor Force Analysis Begun • Inventory of Properties Completed
Year 1	Quarter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening of Community Advisory Panel • Priority Setting Meetings • Identification of Environmental and Institutional Challenges and Opportunities for the Neighborhoods to be Developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Market Analysis Completed
Year 1	Quarter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening of Community Advisory Panel • Identification of Resources and Organizational Strengths and Weaknesses among Public and Private For-profit and Non-profit Agencies Operating in Downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail/service Needs Assessment Begun
Year 1	Quarter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening of Community Advisory Panel • Identification of Institutional Barriers to Collaborative Planning, Goal Setting, and Prioritization in Target Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor Force Analysis Completed • Retail/services Needs Assessment Completed

**SRO Housing Corporation
Building Common Ground**

Year 2	Quarter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening of Community Advisory Panel • Definition of Criteria for Effective Community Facilitation and Consensus Building Planning Strategy • Identification of Potential <i>Building Common Ground</i> Third-Party Intermediaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Findings Welfare Reform Analysis
Year 2	Quarter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening of Community Advisory Panel • Selection of Third-Party Intermediary • Re-inauguration of <i>Building Common Ground</i> with an autonomous mission statement, set of objectives, organizational by-laws, policies, procedures, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Findings • Identification of Projects • Prioritization of Projects • Identification of Agencies to Complete Projects
Year 2	Quarter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening of Community Advisory Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Development

F. Other Resources

SRO Housing will support the work of the Building Common Ground Community Builder through its general administrative services and by linking its work with an existing planning endeavor, the United Coalition East project. Since 1996 SRO and Social Model Recovery Services, Inc. have jointly administered a planning and community development grant from the County of Los Angeles Department of Health. These grant resources have been used to plan for and implement an approach to mitigating the consumption of drugs and alcohol in Skid Row through "environmental education." By environmental education is meant taking a broad view as to the causes of substance abuse and recovery. Among the accomplishments of United Coalition East have been the completion of an identification of "problem" properties where management systems are so poor and weak that there is virtually no control over the environment. Through the United Coalition East project, some of the research necessary to establish an effective and substantive plan to revitalize Skid Row has already been completed. SRO intends to house the Community Builder in the offices of the United Coalition East project during the initial (data gathering) phase of this project.

SRO will make available a number of resources to support the work of Building Common Ground. The Community Builder will be supported by the Associate Executive Director/Director of Community Development of SRO, Geoffrey Gilbert, Ph.D. His division will assist the planner by coordinating his work with the ongoing development work of SRO. The full resources of this division's offices will be made available to this planner, including a telephone line, computer technology, maps, etc.

Recognizing that the work to be undertaken in Skid Row is enormous, SRO believes it will be necessary to support the work of Building Common Ground with additional funds from private foundations, corporations, and the local business improvement districts. SRO will assist the planner in identifying sources of supplemental funds and will submit proposals to help this process establish itself as an autonomous entity within the first 18 months. Moreover, because all of the projects will be developed in the LA Empowerment Zone, SRO will solicit resources from the Community Development Bank in support of Building Common Ground.

Through the consensus-building process envisioned in this proposal, a number of collaborative endeavors will emerge among agencies that will further support the work of the Community Builder. While no specific commitment will be expected of each agency to benefit from the research and development work of Building Common Ground, the planner will regularly solicit appeals for support in the form of in-kind resources. SRO Housing, for example, will make available units at its hotels for interns recruited from local universities who are interested in immersing themselves in the life of the community. SRO will also support the process by making its vehicles (including its 14-passenger van) and drivers available to the project.

G. Connecting Physical Development and Social Community Development Activities

SRO looks upon Building Common Ground as an occasion to link the physical improvement of the neighborhood while uplifting the community itself. Each of the projects proposed will further both the physical and "spiritual" development of the neighborhood in which they will be situated. The James Wood Memorial Community Center will not only beautify the intersection, it will landmark the neighborhood, providing a symbol of dignity and hope to the low income residents. As part of a master-planned redevelopment of the intersection of Fifth and San Julian which includes the rehabilitation of the Southern Hotel and the creation of landscaped open-space, the James Wood Center will enhance the overall appearance of the neighborhood. Persons driving along Fifth Street will be unable not to notice the new facility and the work taking place to transform Skid Row.

The facility itself will enhance and empower the community owing to the management plan to be developed for the center. In addition to serving as a congregant lunch site for seniors, providing them a dignified setting for their meals, the large ground-floor space will host recovery meetings on a regular basis. Smaller meeting rooms will also be included in the center so that neighborhood working groups can also accomplish their tasks. SRO already has in place an empowered Tenant Advisory Council which assists the Corporation in the areas of policy, planning, and development. TAC will be provided space in the center so that it can conduct its business effectively.

Among the other projects to be undertaken by the Community Builder will be the planning for retail development and job growth, particularly in the New Century Cluster. The mixed-use properties to be rehabilitated as part of this plan will each have a unique character that will be linked to the ground-floor commercial space. One hotel, for example, will be designed with Internet access in each dwelling unit, and the Community Builder will work to recruit a commercial tenant from the field of high technology. Owing to the fact that this project will be located in the City of Los Angeles' Empowerment Zone and the Alameda Corridor, resources will shortly become available to attract tenants and create jobs.

H. NTI Support Needed

SRO proposes support of \$75,000 per year for four years from LISC through the Neighborhood Turnaround Initiative to establish a new initiative: Building Common Ground. The Community Builder to be hired through these funds will advance consensus and bring online a number of projects of benefit to the entire community. Grant funds will be used to enhance SRO's capacity to plan and develop in areas beyond housing where it already has much strength. The funds will primarily be used to cover the salary and benefits of a professional planner—the Community Builder—who will have the vision to complete the development of public facilities, other common area improvements, and commercial development. SRO will supplement funds from LISC with both in-kind support and funding necessary to make Building Common Ground a successful endeavor.

In as much as SRO is nearing the completion of a strategic plan, it will probably not require much assistance from LISC in this area. However, SRO's current staff would benefit by additional training in a number of areas, including: the financing of housing development using Low Income Housing Tax Credits and business development and marketing. In addition, SRO would benefit by LISC's guidance, technical assistance and financial support to develop the James Wood Memorial Community Center.

I. Budget