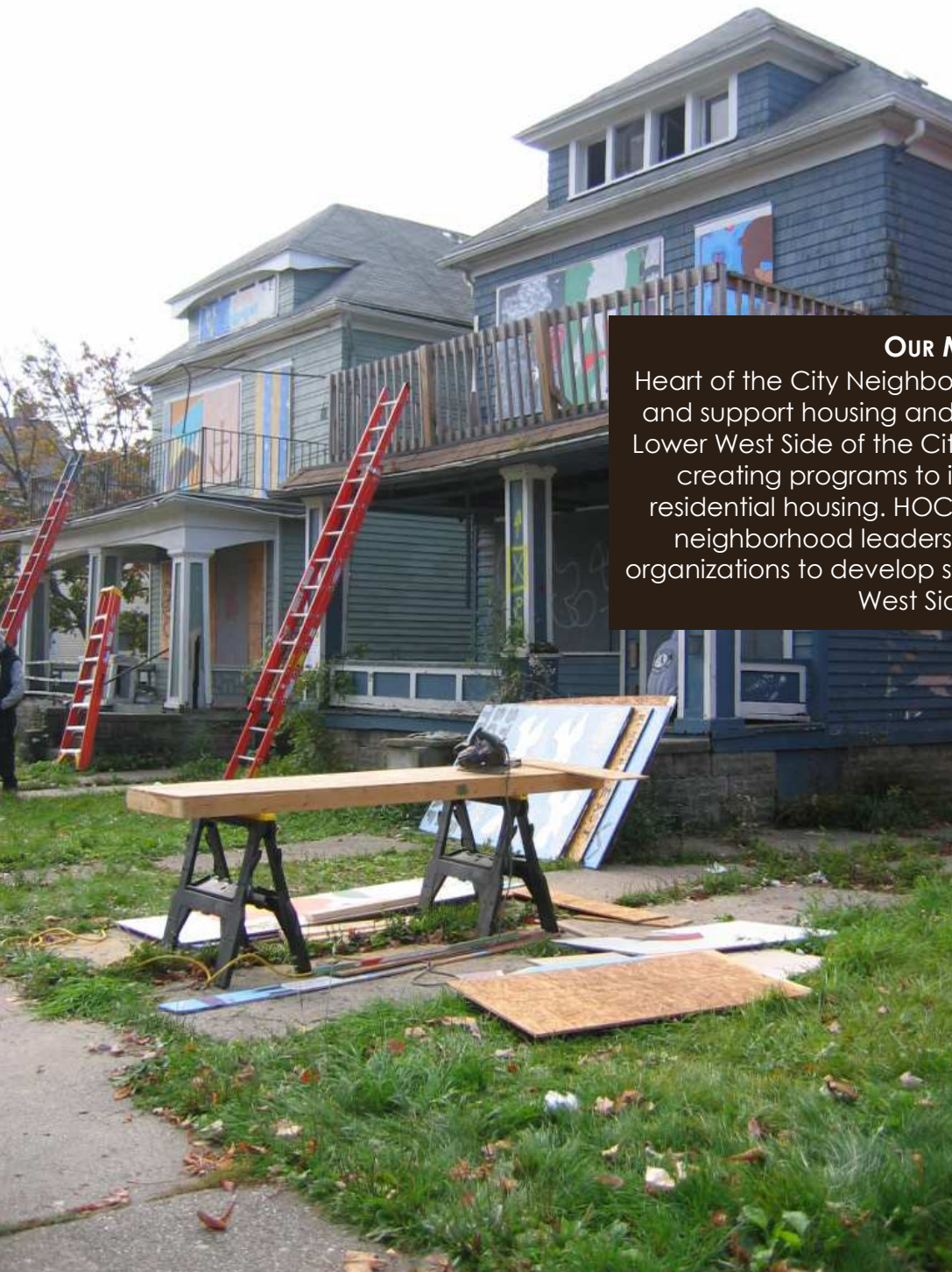


HEART OF THE CITY NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.

PROVIDING QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES SINCE 1998



Heart of the City Neighborhoods, Inc. (HOCN) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Community Development Corporation created to stabilize Buffalo's communities in the Lower West Side through redevelopment, neighborhood stabilization, and affordable housing development.

OUR MISSION & VISION

Heart of the City Neighborhoods mission is to create, facilitate and support housing and neighborhood development in the Lower West Side of the City of Buffalo. This is accomplished by creating programs to improve the quality of affordable residential housing. HOCN partners with private developers, neighborhood leaders, the City, and other not-for-profit organizations to develop sustainable projects to improve Lower West Side neighborhoods.

Working together with residents and neighborhood organizations, local leaders, financial institutions and real estate professionals, HOCN works towards stabilizing and creating integrated, mixed income neighborhoods where individuals and families of all incomes will have a better quality of life and take pride in their property, their street, and their community.

Everything Heart of the City does is with a singular goal: to improve housing opportunities and quality of life within our service area, and by extension, in the City of Buffalo.

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QUICK FACTS

- HOCN provides **homeownership opportunities** through the H.O.P.E. ("Home Ownership Provides Equity") program, while revitalizing neglected homes in this vibrant and historic neighborhood.
- In 2009, the Office of the City of Buffalo Strategic Planning noted HOCN's service area in the Lower West Side having **310 vacant properties**: **257** residential properties, **52** commercial properties, and **1** urban renewal/slum clearance.
- HOCN assists area homeowners with **grants and low-interest loan programs**.
- Between 1998 and 2011, HOCN coordinated **42** owner-occupied rehabs, successfully acquired and renovated **9** homes and **1** six-unit rental property, and helped **5** income-qualified families purchase their first homes.
- HOCN offers **referrals** to resources for homeowners, first-time homebuyers, and tenants.
- HOCN has created a **Lower West Side Map & Guide** highlighting this unique neighborhood comprised of public spaces, local businesses, cultural amenities, and vibrant residential communities.
- HOCN serves as **Ellicott District Liaison** at housing court hearings to assist neighbors who have properties they no longer able to care for in an effort to build a stronger community.
- HOCN utilizes a **block-by-block approach** to fighting blight and abandoned homes within its service area. Currently, HOCN is rehabilitating homes on Whitney Place and Prospect Avenue, and will be conducting a new build on Hudson Street.
- HOCN **planted 299 trees** all over the Lower West Side, including along our Hudson Street and Whitney Place target areas, as part of our neighborhood beautification program.



STEPHANIE J. SIMEON | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Stephanie J. Simeon works with people, neighborhoods and organizations to invigorate distressed communities. As Executive Director of Heart of the City Neighborhoods, Simeon has worked closely with public and private foundations to adopt a block-by-block approach that involves the acquisition and gut rehabilitation of vacant homes which is later resold as newly renovated, energy-efficient dwellings to income-qualified first time homebuyers. One of her most recent accomplishments involves a \$1.5 million award from New York's Housing Trust Fund Corporation to construct eight units of green, affordable housing from what is currently vacant un-utilized land. Simeon's bold and ambitious approach to fighting blight and property abandonment in Buffalo Lower West Side has made a real difference in improving whole neighborhoods.



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HEART OF THE CITY'S SUCCESS CONTINUES TO GROW WITH THE LAUNCH OF NEW PROGRAMS AND DEVELOPMENTS EACH YEAR!



OUR PAST FIFTEEN YEARS OF SUCCESS

- 1996** | HOCN's first building project was the redevelopment of the former Norbans Building into the **Glenny Center International Hostel**.
- 1997** | Commissioned a **marketing study** of the feasibility of market rate rental units in the downtown core that was the basis for much of the multiple market and high-end unit development currently underway.
- 2001** | Rehabilitation of the **Watkins Building**, a former Pan American Exposition Hotel at 170 West Chippewa that sat as a vacant eyesore on in Buffalo for many years, into six market-rate units.
- 2002** | Purchased, rehabilitated and sold **60 Cottage Street**, a century old Victorian sitting prominently at the corner of Maryland and Cottage streets that sat as an eyesore in the neighborhood for years.
- 2002** | HOCN launched the **Plymouth Avenue Block Reclamation** project with the purchase of 15 Plymouth Avenue in partnership with West Side Neighborhood Housing Services.
- 2003** | Purchased and rehabilitated **318 Maryland** into three low/moderate-income rental units.
- 2006** | Launched the **Plymouth Avenue Reclamation Plan** with the purchase and rehab of once vacant and decrepit properties, including 23, 42, and 44 Plymouth Avenue.
- 2007** | **Repainted 13 homes** in 1 day with the help of 700 volunteers in collaboration with Brush Up Buffalo.
- 2008** | Purchased, rehabilitated and sold **263 Hudson Street**, a vacant property that blighted the neighborhood for many years.
- 2010** | Launched the **Whitney Place Properties Initiative**, which involved the purchase and rehab of 245 and 251 Whitney Place for resale as part of the effort to restore life on the block.
- 2011** | Launched the **Planning to Stay Program**, assisting nine homeowners with necessary repairs so that they may remain in their home.

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