



Connecting Lawyers and Communities

**DETROIT VACANT PROPERTY CAMPAIGN
PROJECT DIRECTOR POSITION OPENING
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2008**

Community Legal Resources (CLR), a nonprofit legal services provider in downtown Detroit, seeks a full-time Project Director to fill an immediate vacancy. CLR provides pro bono legal representation, education and policy advocacy on behalf of nonprofits and low income communities throughout Michigan with an emphasis on community economic development activities.

CLR is serving as the lead organization on a collaborative project called the **Detroit Vacant Property Campaign**. This multi-year campaign focuses on Detroit, is modeled after the National Vacant Properties Campaign (www.vacantproperties.org), and involves Detroit LISC, the University of Michigan, and the Community Development Advocates of Detroit. The purpose of the campaign is to work with communities throughout Detroit to develop an array of tools and strategies for preventing, managing, and productively re-using vacant properties.

The three components of the campaign include: 1) development of vacant property plans in six neighborhoods; 2) creation of a "toolbox" of strategies and resources designed to help communities outside the six neighborhoods get control their vacant properties; and 3) technical assistance to policy makers in order to help them enhance the vacant property legal and policy environment thereby increasing the effectiveness of communities working to address vacant properties.

Position Description

The Project Director has primary responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the Detroit Vacant Property Campaign. Specific responsibilities of the Project Director include:

- Providing leadership to the DVPC Steering Committee and coordinating its resources and work products in order to meet project goals within specific timeframes;
- Advocating for land use changes in multiple arenas (community meetings, media interviews, panel presentations, etc.)
- Reviewing national best practices for addressing vacant properties and offering recommendations on applications in Detroit;
- Collecting and analyzing information and tracking trends about Detroit's vacant properties;
- Analyzing the systems in place that affect vacant properties (i.e., foreclosure process, tax version, nuisance abatement, code enforcement, repair/rehab resources, property disposition, etc.) and offering ideas for improvement;
- Creating systems to organize and manage vacant property information (i.e., website, databases, articles, publications, reports, stakeholder contacts, press contacts, information about specific vacant properties, etc.);
- Building strong relationships with a variety of community, business and government leaders;
- Writing technical reports geared toward public policy makers;
- Writing educational publications geared toward community stakeholders;

- Actively evaluating and reporting on campaign activities and outcomes to funders, partners and the general public;
- Working with other CLR staff to identify and address the key legal needs of the project that could be met through CLR's pro bono legal network;
- Maintaining strong relationships with funders and actively pursuing additional funding for the campaign, as necessary;
- Working with the Executive Director to develop and implement a public relations strategy about the campaign;
- Regular reporting to the Board of Directors and interaction with Board Committees on program goals and results.

Skill Requirements and Preferred Qualifications

- JD, preferred but not required, or MA in a related discipline;
- Willingness to be a risk-taker in innovative program development with the goal of long term program growth and sustainability;
- Superior written and oral communication skills and a desire to advocate for low income communities affected by vacant properties;
- Experience with community development groups, grassroots organizations and/or the nonprofit sector;
- Ability to work effectively with high-level government, business and elected officials;
- Basic understanding of real estate transactions and other community development business and financial considerations;
- Some policy analysis and advocacy experience;
- Ability to work effectively in a highly-productive, dynamic, team-oriented nonprofit organization;
- Exceptional organizational and time management skills.

CLR has been recognized as a national leader among business law pro bono programs serving nonprofit organizations. Since its inception in 1998, CLR has secured legal representation for over 600 nonprofit organizations who work to build neighborhoods through the construction of affordable housing, attraction of new business, feeding and sheltering the homeless, and educating and mentoring youth. The estimated market value of these services exceeds \$6.2 million. CLR has also provided leadership on a number of land policy issues including: development of a Community Land Trust legal manual, analyzing and making recommendations on the state's land bank legislation, and researching legal mechanisms that ensure long-term affordability of housing.

Community Legal Resources is an equal opportunity employer and offers a full range of benefits, including paid vacation, health, dental, optical, life and disability insurance, parking, and flexible work arrangements. Salary is dependent upon qualifications and is commensurate with experience and credentials. Interviews begin immediately. Additional information is available at www.clronline.org. Interested persons should send a cover letter, resume and technical writing sample to Heidi Mucherie, Community Legal Resources, 220 Bagley, Suite 900, Detroit MI 48226 or via email to hamucherie@clronline.org.