

SouthWest Improvement Council  
SouthWest Neighborhood Housing  
Rio de Esperanza, LLLP; RDE Corporation  
*"The Lights are On-- there's Room for Everyone in SWIC!"*

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2009  
Annual  
Report

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# 2009 Annual Report

## *SWIC SouthWest Improvement Council*

- **Brief History, SouthWest Improvement Council-SWIC**
- **SouthWest Improvement Council-SWIC** is a nonprofit nonsectarian corporation (charity) formed in 1987 by residents of Westwood, an impoverished neighborhood in to urban southwest Denver. Our purpose: Improve living conditions through civic engagement, health and human service programs, and affordable housing
- SWIC improves living conditions by identifying the assets in the people of our community. We organize our community's positive values to focus all our efforts towards Self-Help, Civility, Personal Responsibility, and Accountability.
- In 1992 SWIC took over the **Westwood Community Center** at 1000 South Lowell Boulevard under a leasehold agreement with the City and County of Denver (now a lease-purchase agreement). We now refer to this facility as "The SouthWest Denver Community Center, a Division of SouthWest Improvement Council" to honor our past heritage and to signify that our programs serve urban southwest Denver as a whole, not just the Westwood neighborhood in which we are located.
- Our lease-purchase agreement continues month-to-month and year-to-year until the City of Denver makes the decision to implement the purchase agreement. SWIC operates our many programs from this location.
- In 1995, SWIC formed a nonprofit development corporation, **SouthWest Neighborhood Housing Corporation-SWNHC** to increase the inventory of affordable housing through homeownership and foreclosure prevention. SWNHC owns 19 multifamily units, and owns over 45,000 sf of vacant land being held for development of new single family housing.
- SWNHC owns a square block of land (900 Blocks of South Meade and South Lowell) which is divided into two half-block units, one being the *SWIC All Nations Community Garden* (in partnership with Denver Urban Gardens) and the other being the *SWIC Urban Wildlife Refuge* in partnership with the Boy Scouts of America (Eagle Scout project).
- SWIC and SouthWest Neighborhood Housing are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes neighborhood residents, program volunteers, and business professionals.
- SWIC's PURPOSE is to *reduce prejudice and discrimination, combat community deterioration, provide assistance with food, clothing and housing; improve levels of educational attainment for adults and children, develop affordable housing, and cooperate with and assist other organizations having similar goals.*

- **MISSION STATEMENT**

*SWIC's mission is to empower people and improve the quality of their lives. We restore community values by creating solutions for affordable, quality neighborhood housing; youth education, recreation and employment; elder wellness, Health promotion, and minority outreach programs. Our goal is to advance human rights by tackling difficult community issues.*

## **2009 Program Outcomes: Accomplishments, Challenges and Operations**

### **[A] Major Accomplishments in 2009**

- Completion of our initial Organizational Capacity Assessment and four year Strategic Plan, with Technical Assistance from The Colorado Trust Healthy Aging Initiative. A copy of our Strategic Plan follows this Annual Report. The Colorado Trust will conduct a post-evaluation of our Organizational Capacity in 2011.
- Deepening of our Executive Staff through the recruitment and retention of a Chief of Staff (promoted to Deputy Director January 2010) and a Program Director Intern (hired as Program Director February 2010).
- Hired bilingual (Spanish-English) Housing Counselors for our foreclosure prevention program and general assistance to all clients across all programs.
- Increased resident employment opportunities by becoming a recruiting and testing site for the U.S. Census bureau. SWIC will host a Census Assistance Center in 2010 with full time multilingual census workers.
- Expanded the number of open hours per week by staffing the facility 6 AM to 8 PM (or later) Monday through Thursday, 6 AM to 7 PM on Friday, and 8 AM to 4 PM on Saturdays (or as scheduled)

**[A-1]** Formed new partnerships for health and human services, youth recreation and education; Civic Engagement and community service. *New Partnerships in 2009 are italicized:*

- **City of Denver Office of Economic Development:**

Support for Public Service programs.

- **The Colorado Trust:**

*Support for Healthy Aging Initiative; technical assistance and consultant for capacity building, strategic planning, executive transition, organizational sustainability, program development, Information Technology audit and upgrade planning, board engagement; continuing technical assistance for staff development, continuing community needs assessment.*

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- **Denver Regional Council of Governments:**  
Support for outreach to Native Americans and Hispanics
- **National Council of La Raza:**  
Technical assistance to SWIC as member organization.  
*\$5,000 prize in 2009 for Excellence in Service to the Hispanic Community.*
- **Colorado Housing and Finance Authority:**  
*Support and referrals for foreclosure prevention*  
Curriculum and Technical Assistance for Homebuyer Education classes.
- **HUD Homeownership Center:**  
Support for housing counseling, foreclosure prevention, first time homeownership, affordable rental housing, and fair housing education
- **Westwood Branch, Denver Public Library**  
After-school education and crafts programs Tuesday-Thursday for youth 5-15.
- **United Neighborhood Centers of America:**  
Community-building assistance. *\$5,000 grant for civic engagement.*
- **Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation:**  
Education on city-wide neighborhood issues. *Hosted INC meetings at SWIC.*
- **Mile High United Way:**  
General operational support
- **Mile High Montessori:**  
Head-Start program and wraparound day-care on SWIC campus
- **Morrison Road Business Association of Denver:**  
Neighborhood business development
- **West Denver Cop Shop:**  
Neighborhood crime prevention. Reports at Neighborhood Council meeting
- **Volunteers of America:**
- Daily lunch for Seniors
- **Visiting Nurse Association:** Monthly free health clinic
- **Food Bank of the Rockies:**
- *Free commodities weekly for elders and children (Thursdays)*
- **Denver Urban Gardens:**  
Support for "All Nations Community Garden"
- **Denver Public Library:**  
Daily afterschool programs (arts, crafts, educational enrichment)
- **Denver Public Schools (STAR: Students Transitioning to Adult Resources Program)**  
*Classroom work and training for developmentally disabled young adults who are transitioning out of public school and into independent living at age 21.*
- **Rocky Mountain Micro Finance Institute:**  
*Start Your Own Business monthly workshop*
- **Operation Frontline:**  
*Weekly "Side by Side" cooking class*
- **Riverside Soccer Club:**  
*Holding Food Drive for SWIC*

- **Mountain View Church:**  
*AWANA Program—Free meal, youth sports and crafts Monday evenings*
- **United States Census:**  
*Testing and Questionnaire Assistance, SWIC selected as Census Assistance Center, with bilingual staff daily (3-7 PM) providing one-on-one assistance in completing census forms; census job placement testing, training and orientation meetings for census workers.*
- **LiveWell Westwood:**  
*Promoting healthy eating and active living in Westwood.*
- **ThaMyx International Church:**  
*Lifeline Program: Music, Drama, Basketball, and Art classes, Hoops and Raps, partnership with Denver Area Youth Services for adjudicated youth activities*
- **Sisters of Color United for Education:**  
*HIV and pregnancy Testing at SWIC; assistance for people living with AIDS*
- **Urban Farming, Detroit Michigan:**  
*Support to develop Urban Farm at 3400 W. Tennessee/3400 W. Mississippi*
- **COMPA Ministries:**  
*Nonperishable food items for weekly boxes*
- **Laradon Hall:**  
*Developmentally disabled youth work weekly at SWIC*
- **Rights for All People:**  
*Know Your Rights Workshop reaching out to people of Color and languages other than English*
- **GRID (Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver):**  
*Monthly gang prevention trainings*
- **GRASP (Gang Rescue and Support Project):**  
*Assistance for gang-involved youth*

## **[A-2] SWIC PROGRAM EXPANSIONS**

- Expanded opportunities for residents at-risk for hunger and malnutrition to obtain nutritious food at no cost:
  - SWIC Food box distribution increased to weekly (every Friday)
  - Commodities every Thursday (partnership with Food Bank of the Rockies)
  - Identified additional funding partners for food purchases
- Organized SWIC Youth Teams to perform a variety of neighborhood and community center service projects in return for gift certificates to purchase clothing, food and school supplies at area stores such as Target.
  - We awarded \$7,500 (2008-2009) in gift certificates (7,500 person/hours completed) through funding from the City of Denver Safe City office.
  - Youth earned \$1 for every hour of work satisfactorily completed. Youth learned job skills by working in our office as receptionists and file clerks,

in the food bank helping to box and distribute food, on the grounds trimming bushes and watering trees, and in the community by picking up

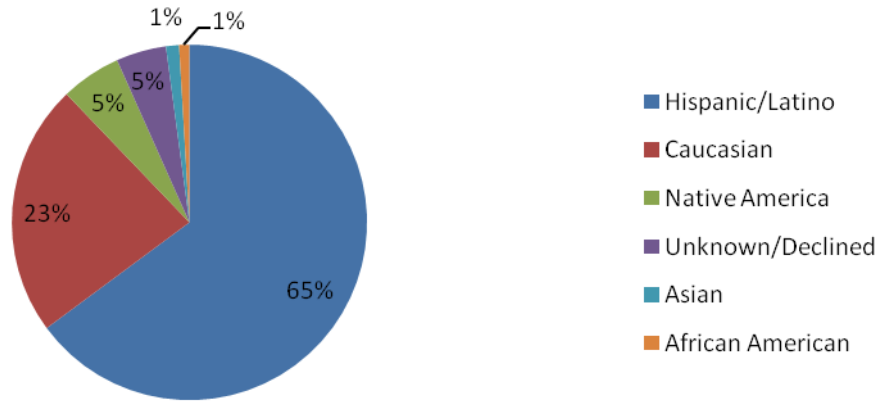
- We organized community input for the City of Denver’s Zoning Code Changes and Westwood’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program through our monthly (Second Thursday) Neighborhood Advisory Council meetings.
- We hosted stakeholder meetings and community trainings by the Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID). SWIC staff and volunteers (J. Belle, R. Cardenas. L. Miller, R. Abeyta, J. LNU, I. Mitchell) completed the “Gangs 101” GRID training.
- We expanded our housing counseling and foreclosure prevention programs by hiring new bilingual staff and training volunteers for part-time assistance.
- We provided free for meetings and special events of community stakeholders, including but not limited to:

Table Mountain Treasures Doll Club  
 Colorado WINS  
 Southwest Denver Lutheran Ministries  
 Mile High United Way community stakeholder meetings  
 Kaiser Foundation—Free Foot Care Clinic  
 Comprecare Foundation Grantees meeting  
 Safe City Program  
 National Council of La Raza  
 Live Well Westwood (various meetings, classes, and activities)  
 Operation Frontline—Cooking classes  
 GRID—Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver  
 STARS program  
 Rights for All People  
 City and County of Denver (various meetings)  
 Urban Land Use Institute  
 Ruby Hill Caucus  
 InterNeighborhood Cooperation  
 GRASP—Gang Rescue and Support Project  
 Mile High Montessori  
 Mi Vota Mi Voz Education project

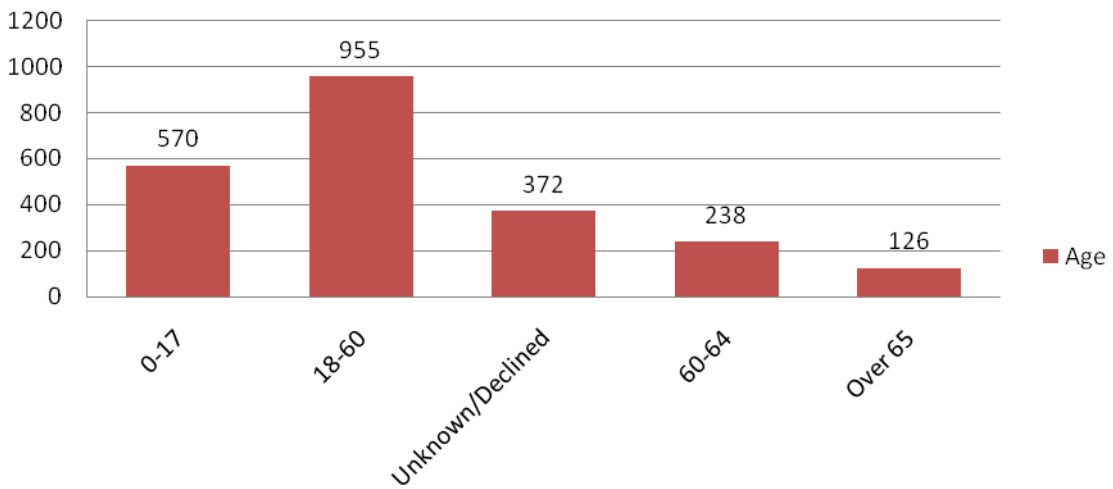
UNDUPLICATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED BY SWIC IN 2009: 2,260

<b>Ethnicity</b>			<b>Age</b>	
Hispanic/Latino (a)	1,466	65%	0-17	570 26%
Caucasian	519	23%	<i>unknown/declined</i>	<i>372 16%</i>
Native American	124	5.5%	60-64	238 10%
<i>Unknown/declined</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>4.5%</i>	Over 65	125 6%
Asian	27	1%		
African American	21	1%		

### Ethnicity of Unduplicated Persons Served by SWIC in 2009 (total: 2,260)



### Age of Unduplicated Persons Served by SWIC in 2009 (total: 2,260)

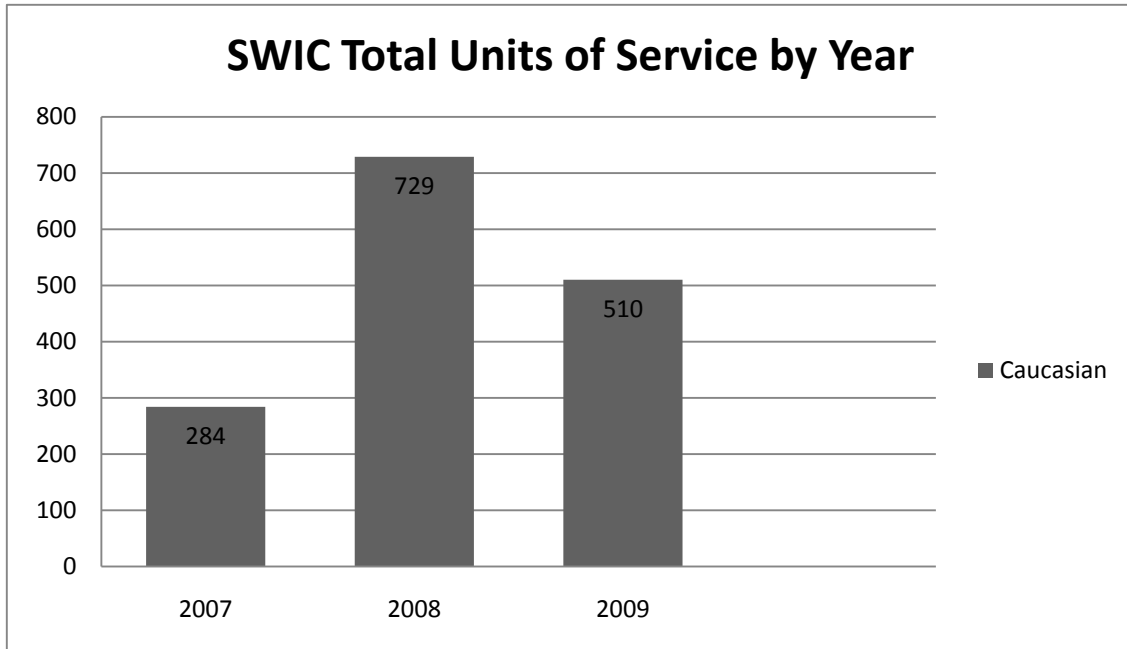


**2009 YTD UNITS OF SERVICE**  
**Health and Human Service Programs**  
**SouthWest Improvement**  
**Council**

**As of December 2009**

**UNITS OF SERVICE: Each time one person receives one service = One Unit of Program Service**

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD
Neighborhood Council	10	14	18	14	16	7	6	63	43	36	40	9	276
Visiting Nurse	9	11	10	8	16	13	10	24	12	13	11	15	152
Home Chore Help	7	2	8	11	9	4	5	5	8	9	4	4	76
Food Distribution	419	366	380	237	432	368	417	432	514	674	550	560	5349
Exercise/Fitness/Wellness	153	128	176	15	10	110	242	252	399	492	228	240	2445
Home Buyer Workshop	4	8	2	0	5	6	2	2	6	8	1	3	47
Housing Counseling	65	54	60	65	56	58	47	44	46	56	58	47	656
Native American Group	0	31	30	23	16	24	9	14	49	18	33	0	247
Senior Lunch	294	611	625	679	589	553	578	622	658	692	655	646	7202
Sewing/Arts/Crafts	16	25	9	0	6	31	14	23	43	33	30	7	237
Youth Events/Programs	0	0	43	0	0	59	0	138	252	62	29	29	612
Computer Lab	0	0	12	0	0	8	8	0	7	7	8	9	59
<b>TOTAL</b>													<b>17,358</b>



## [B] SWIC PLANS FOR 2010

**COMMUNITY BENEFITS:** Preservation of homeownership through foreclosure prevention, decrease in risk factors for hunger and malnutrition for elders, families and individuals, improved levels of civic engagement and public participation; prevention of risk factors for heart disease through free exercise and nutrition classes, elder home fall prevention through free home chore help..

**The community benefits** through SWIC. We are providing a safe place for wholesome activities and needed services.

**The City of Denver benefits** through SWIC. We are improving property values and the tax base. We organize resident participation in City of Denver initiatives

*GOAL:*

*Become and remain the anchor and beacon of community improvement and civic engagement in Westwood and urban Southwest Denver (Zip Codes 80219 and 80223, 80227).*

*OUTCOME:*

*Increase the amount and quality of free programs assisting people living in and near urban southwest Denver*

## SPECIFIC PLANS

1. Offer free space (classroom, meeting hall, and gymnasium) for programs that are non-sectarian, free, and open to the public.
2. Hire full-time Program Director
3. Promote Chief of Staff to Deputy Director
4. Consummate lease-purchase agreement with the City of Denver
5. Maintain/improve facility--upgrades, maintenance, repairs
6. Revise Strategic Plan. Increase metrics for 2010 outcomes.
7. Hold Job Fair in partnership with City of Denver
8. Organize week-long "Financial Independence" workshops.
9. Organize day-long Family Fun/Lights on Fiesta to celebrate new and partnerships and promote the evening programs at SWIC.
10. Increase the number of seniors participating in daily congregate meal.
11. Increase the number of youth participating in all activities.
12. Manage SWIC for break-even or better financial position by 12-31-10
  - a. Identify new sources of support for staff and programming in advance of current sources of support declining or disappearing.
  - b. Utilize trained, background checked volunteers for part-time work.
  - c. Increase outreach for in-kind donations of food items.
13. Twice-monthly workshops for individuals and families seeking to develop their own businesses.
14. Increase the number of background checked and trained volunteers providing home chore help and minor repairs for homebound elders.

### **[C-1] CHANGES IN OPERATING PLAN**

Our operating plan for 2009 assumed we would consummate our lease purchase in August 2009. That date has been moved up by the City of Denver to another date, to be determined.

### **[C-2] DESCRIPTIONS OF CHALLENGES FOR 2009**

We were asked by the City of Denver in October 2009 to increase the number of collaborations between SWIC and community-serving stakeholders. SWIC is eager to create additional programming at this facility to serve our community.

SWIC more than met this challenge by deepening our staff and volunteer capacity. By 12-31-09 this facility scheduled open (staffed) hours 6 AM to 9 PM weekdays and Saturdays as scheduled.

The new partnerships developed by 12-31-09 are *italicized* in Section A-1 above.

### **[C-3] EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS**

The economic conditions surrounding us are extraordinary.

Zip Code 80219 has the highest number of Denver foreclosures West of the Platte River. In ***Westwood***, *the neighborhood in which SWIC is located, has 1,202 Westwood housing units went into foreclosures during the period 2005-2009.* Many are still vacant, now boarded up with interiors stripped of everything that can be sold.

Other Zip Code 80219 neighborhoods highly impacted by foreclosures during this same time period were Marlee (900), Harvey Park (717), Athmar Park (672), Ruby Hill (673) and Villa Park (665). (Sources: *Denver Public Trustees; U.S. Census Bureau; Denver Office of Economic Development*).

Through SWIC's foreclosure prevention program, we identified unemployment, underemployment, and plummeting housing values as the main causes of resident distress. All of these factors relate back to declines in household income.

Our clients are losing benefits at their jobs (health insurance, retirement plan contributions) at the same time that costs of basic necessities (housing, transportation, food, household expenses, school fees) continue to challenge household budgets.

Many clients find themselves "underwater"—owing more on their mortgage than the property is worth in today's market, which is not an incentive to keep paying the mortgage.

As people "Walk away" from their mortgages, property values (and property tax basis) become further depressed, lowering property values for their neighbors and for entire neighborhoods. SWIC's programs are addressing these challenges.

### **[D] COMMUNITY ISSUES OF GREAT CONCERN**

Foreclosure is THE "Community issue of Great Concern":  
Westwood and Zip Code 80219 are among the most severely impacted areas in Denver. Westwood has been targeted by the City and County of Denver for a Neighborhood Revitalization program in partnership with the Federal Government and nonprofit housing developers.

Long-vacant houses are targets for metal thieves who quickly strip vacated homes-- piping, wiring, plumbing fixtures, appliances, interior doors, security doors, light fixtures, fencing, and anything else that can be sold at flea markets. The resultant "house shell" is a negative value (the land the stripped house sits on is now worth only the fair Market value of the land *minus* the cost of demolition and removal of the stripped house).

Moreover, boarded-up house shells attract gangs, drug dealers and other criminal syndicates looking for a location to conduct illegal activities.

The second greatest concern for our community is Graffiti Vandalism:

South Federal is a magnet for graffiti vandals from Denver, outside of Denver, and even outside of Colorado. Websites promote graffiti vandalism on South Federal as "cool" for international graffiti artists. The City of Denver works very hard to clean up graffiti the moment it is reported. The police work hard to identify the various graffiti "tagger crews". The police tell us that the single most effective deterrent is painting over the graffiti immediately. Residents work very hard to identify graffiti vandals.

SWIC supports all of these efforts by setting a good example.

We paint over graffiti on our building within 18 hours after we find it. As a result, graffiti vandalism is rare at our facility. We have also added motion detector sensors and outside lighting. Identified graffiti vandals are reported to the police, no exceptions. SWIC's **Operating Plan** continues to be *improving conditions in southwest Denver through personal responsibility, accountability, self-help and civic engagement.*

## **[E] 2009 PERSONNEL AND BOARD CHANGES**

We added bilingual housing counselors and promoted supervisory staff (Lead Housing Counselor) to executive staff (Chief of Staff). Our Board President the Rev. Jay McDivitt accepted a call to pastor a congregation in Wisconsin as of 11-15-09. Paul Keefe II of our Board of Directors was elected to fill Rev. McDivitt's unexpired term.

## **[F-1] FUNDRAISING METHODS; ANNUAL BUDGET FOR 2010,**

Fundraising methods: Grant Proposals, Contracts for Service, Earned Income, Individual Donations, Local Fundraisers (carwash, garage sale, bake sales).

We do not conduct mail-out fundraising campaigns. We do not solicit donations over the telephone. We do not charge for our services. We do not mail out unwanted "trinkets" or ask for donations in return for trinkets.

Our 2009 Budget was met without deficits (income sufficient to cover all expenses and provide for operating reserves).

SWIC takes pride in living prudently within our means while saving ahead for the inevitable "rainy days" (today more like cloudbursts!). We pay all bills promptly. As of April 1, 2010 there are no outstanding payables for 2009.

**[F-2]            2010BUDGET**

<b>Revenue:</b>	Facility Rentals	18,900	
	Workshop Revenue	1,000	
	Interest Income	2,500	
	Misc. Income	500	
	<b><u>TOTAL REVENUE</u></b>	<b><u>22,900</u></b>	
<b>Expenses:</b>	Advertising & Promotion	10,000	
	Audit & Tax Prep	3,500	
	Automobile Mileage	1,500	
	Bank & Bookkeeping	3,500	
	Conferences, Educ, Trainings & Meetings	7,500	
	Consulting Fees	5,000	
	Depreciation	5,000	
	Dues & Publications	500	
	Food Expense	17,000	
	Insurance, Health	20,000	
	Insurance, Other	16,000	
	Janitorial Services	13,200	
	Legal Fees	3,500	
	Office Expense	4,500	
	Payroll Taxes (FICA, WC, UE)	22,000	
	Postage	600	
	Repairs & Maintenance	12,000	
	Retirement Plan	12,360	
	Salaries	250,000	
	Security	1,300	
	Telephone, fax, internet	7,000	
	Utilities	28,000	
	Volunteer Recognition	2,500	
	Corporate Mgmt fee (SWNHC & Rio)	-12,000	
	<b><u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u></b>	<b><u>434,460</u></b>	
	<i>(Minus Revenue)</i>	-22,900	
	<i>Net Operating Income/Loss</i>	<b><u>411,560</u></b>	
<b>Support:</b>	Corporate Grants	50,000	
	Foundation Grants	61,460	
	Individual Gifts	5,000	
	Health and Human Services Grants	100,000	
	Housing Counseling Grants	150,000	
	Local Fundraising	17,000	
	General & Admin Grants	24,000	
	Board & Staff Contributions	4,000	
<b>Bottom line</b>	<b>TOTAL SUPPORT</b>		<b><u>411,460</u></b>
	<i>(Minus Net Operating Loss)</i>	-411,460	
	<b><u>Adjusted Net Income/Loss</u></b>		<b><u>0</u></b>

**[G] 2009 REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES, SOUTHWEST IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL**  
*(Source: 2009 IRS Form 990)*

**REVENUE**

Federated Campaigns	23,249
Govm't Grants (contributions)	293,093
Other Grants, Gifts etc.	169,243
CHFA Counseling Fees	125,155
Sub-lease Income (WWCC)	23,505
Management Fees	12,000
Savings interest income	3,225
<b>TOTAL REVENUE, 2009</b>	<b>649,470</b>

**EXPENSES**

Fundraising Expenses	-0-
Key Employee Salary	74,832
Other salaries and wages	171,167
Other employee benefits	12,301
Payroll taxes	17,554
Other	22,308
Office Expenses	26,497
Information Technology	7,234
Occupancy	18,312
Travel	3,324
Conferences, conventions, meetings	6,143
Depreciation	4,404
Insurance	19,062
Food & Food Bank	37,956
Repairs and Maintenance	5,972
Printing and Publications	3,756
Postage and Shipping	473
Management and General Expenses	44,755
<i>TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES</i>	<i>476,041</i>
Replacement, Repair and Operational Reserve	173,429
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES AND RESERVES, 2009</b>	<b>649,470.</b>

**[G-2] Breakout of Program Operating Expenses**

*\$230,295*

Daily congregate meal (hot lunch) for seniors, Native American and Hispanic outreach, meals and information about nutrition and wellness. Youth education, health and fitness, recreation.

*Unduplicated number served in 2009: 2,135*

*\$117,968*

Affordable housing initiatives to combat neighborhood deterioration, provide affordable housing choices to low and moderate income residents, provide foreclosure prevention services, and work to eliminate prejudice and discrimination.

*Unduplicated number served in 2009: 955*

\$83,023

Operate Westwood Community Center, aka SouthWest Denver Community Center for benefit of neighborhood residents: youth, families and seniors. The center provides emergency food, clothing and shelter assistance to residents in need.

Unduplicated number served in 2009: 2,364

\$173,429

Operating, Maintenance and Repair Reserve

### **[G-3] 2009 Management and General Expenses as Percentage of Total Revenue**

Management and General Expense	44,755
Fundraising Expense	-0-
TOTAL	44,755

Divided by total Revenue /649,470

**EQUALS 7%**  
**Management & General Expenses as % total Revenue**

A complete copy of SWIC's IRS Form 990 is posted on the website of the Colorado Secretary of State.

A complete copy of SouthWest Neighborhood Housing's IRS Form 990 is posted on the website of the Colorado Secretary of State.

A copy of the 2009 Audits for SWIC and SouthWest Neighborhood Housing (Consolidated), Rio de Esperanza LLLP and RDE Corporation are available from the SWIC office for \$5 per document to cover postage and copying costs.

### **[I] List of outstanding payables as of 4-1-09—NONE (all 2009 bills are paid)**

#### **2009 Board of Directors**

Rev. Jay McDivitt, President; Paul Keefe II, President

David Hoover, Treasurer

Linda Vargas, Corporate Secretary

Directors: Steve Hildmann, Peter Smith, Jane Hann, Kyle Kastberg

#### **2010 Board of Directors as of 4-5-2010**

Paul Keefe II, President

Kyle Kastberg, Treasurer

Linda Vargas, Corporate Secretary

Directors: Steve Hildmann, Jane Hann, Cindy Charlton

Director Candidate: Rosy Arbutto

