

BOUND BROOK CIVIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

A New Initiative to Regenerate Our Community

An Opportunity to Shape Our Future

“How would you like the members of your community to work together as part of a thriving and resilient ecosystem, providing for the basic needs of all citizens while protecting our resources for future generations?”

The Bound Brook Civic Cooperative Association is a local community development organization, a vehicle for community resilience and sustainability solutions. The cooperative will have a license to use unique financing models as community redevelopment tools, attracting developers, bankers, property owners, investors, and local contractors, to undertake a local clean energy and economic revitalization program.

In addition, the cooperative may undertake other projects based on the needs and aspirations of the community, such as buy-local and self-sufficiency programs, local food sourcing and production, local energy generation and aggregation, civic education, child- and elder-care programs, language fluency, and ecotourism destination programming.

Examples include:

- Urban agriculture, local food, and community garden programs
- Artists cooperative
- Local downtown business collaborative controlled by its members
- A vehicle for profitable local real estate development
- A green energy and clean economy co-op

Civic Association: A civic association is a type of organization whose official goal is to improve neighborhoods through volunteer work by its members.

Cooperative Association: "The term cooperative association signifies a business organization formed by a group of individuals for their mutual benefit. A cooperative is owned and operated by its members and is generally organized either under general business laws or under specific statutes applicable to cooperative associations. A cooperative corporation is distinct from a charitable association organized for some benevolent purpose."

(<http://cooperativeassociations.uslegal.com/>)

The Co-op is not a nonprofit. Like a private corporation, it returns all profits to its shareholders in the form of dividends based on their level of participation. But it is wholly member-owned, and focuses on investments that make a difference in the community.

“Unless we take our future into our own hands, our destiny will be shaped by forces beyond our control, interested only in taking money out of the community. By joining together, we can boost our local economy, improve our resilience, support the developments we really want, reduce carbon emissions, and create local jobs.”

We are looking for emerging neighborhood leaders and caring citizens to join together, to take advantage of unique opportunities and innovative financial tools in order to grow our community sustainably.

***To join, please contact Jonathan Cloud at
908-581-8418 or jcloud@crcsolutions.org***

Center for Regenerative Community Solutions, a NJ 501(c)(3) Corporation

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Civic Cooperatives: Powerhouse Engines of the New Economy

The "New Economy" means different things to different people, but there's no doubt that we are in the midst of a major economic transition, one in which many of the old rules no longer apply. Whether it is the recognition that we're moving into a "gig economy" – one "in which temporary positions are common and organizations contract with independent workers for short-term engagements," which a recent study forecast will be 40% of the American workforce by 2020 – or "conscious capitalism," or any of a hundred other new trends, tomorrow's economy will be different from today's.

Because most people are not that familiar with the way co-ops work, even if they happen to belong to one (such as a credit union), the first step is typically an educational one, helping people understand the benefits and requirements of successful cooperatives. The next step is to evaluate the members' and the community's needs to determine the best opportunities for a co-op's success. In a community with a "food desert" this might be a retail fresh food operation; in other communities it could be an arts cooperative, or a housing community, or a financial cooperative, or a clean energy finance co-op – using innovative economic development tools and approaches that are emerging in the transition economy.



The benefits of the cooperative model are:

- Greater citizen engagement
- Democratic participation and control
- Local jobs and economic development
- Long term organizational viability
- Community-driven initiatives (local food production and distribution, local clean energy generation, educational initiatives, cohousing and affordable homes, bikeways and walkways, local currencies, credit exchanges, community-based climate initiatives, etc.) based on local priorities and opportunities
- Local self-sufficiency and community development vs. gentrification and conventional real estate development.

The Bound Brook Civic Cooperative will be initially established under the fiscal sponsorship of the Center for Regenerative Community Solutions, a NJ 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation (CRCS). CRCS will hold the shares in trust. *Our mission is to assist communities, organizations, and neighborhoods with climate protection strategies, and to thrive by embracing a new vision of what's possible for humanity. Our greatest existential challenge—climate change—is also our greatest opportunity. We are pioneering new ideas, and new financial tools to enable change in scalable ways, in today's neighborhoods and communities. As part of our work, we collaborate with other organizations and individuals, and share our insights, actions, and experiences in a variety of ways. We offer unique learning opportunities for individuals, for self-organizing groups, and for larger audiences. We invite you to join us in creating a shared future of ecological balance, economic prosperity, and societal transformation.*

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