

Coffee Shop Opens In OTR, Highlights New Renovation Project

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CINCINNATI -- In the middle of Cincinnati's National Community Development week, the city's chamber of commerce held "The First Cup Is On Us" at Enzo's, a coffee and sandwich shop with a new location in Over The Rhine at 1106 Race St.

The project, which is being funded through \$19 million in grant funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is designed to attract local businesses to the OTR community. City officials have a plan of renovating a neighborhood that has carried has been notorious for excessive crime and drug trafficking.

"We want to see more people come to Over the Rhine to work, live and play here," said president of Over The Rhine Chamber, Brian Tiffany. "(Enzo's arrival) further supports the Clean and Safe efforts that we have made over the past four or five years: to make the neighborhood clean and safe to attract new businesses, and to attract new residents to Over the Rhine."

Enzo's recently relocated from Cold Spring, Ky., after seeing an opportunity to be part of a renovation project. There are numerous plans for condominium complexes, new restaurants and even a performing arts school, which will open by 2010.

Tiffany is looking at this renovation project from a long-term perspective and seeking businesses who envision the same idea. The OTR chamber has distributed grants "for furniture fixtures and equipment and also rental subsidy," he said. "Usually what they'll get is four months of free rent of the first year as long as they sign a three-year lease."

Other developments receiving funding include investments in affordable housing, downpayment assistance for first-time home buyers, and economic loans to small businesses.

"The strategy is that OTR continues to be a significant value when you compare the cost of retail space and office space," said Tiffany. "Most office space goes for between \$6 to \$10 a square foot, but you'll pay upwards of double or more than that as you get towards the second business district."

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 **Video: Enzo's Coffee, Sandwich Shop Opens In OTR**