

# CBC National Banking On Ocala And The Villages Market



CBC National Bank recently acquired First Avenue National Bank, but they're not some "big bank" weeding out a community resource. CBC is big enough to matter and small enough to care.

CBC National Bank is moving into the former First Avenue National Bank building, bringing with them numerous opportunities for families and businesses in Ocala and The Villages to flourish. CBC's President, Charles Wagner, is excited to bring new services to the community and provide opportunities for growth.

"We have a three-legged stool model: community banking, SBA loans and mortgage banking. Prior to the acquisition in Ocala, if we could constructively criticize ourselves, we'd say our community banking leg was a little shorter than it should be," Wagner explains. "I think Ocala and The Villages will bring all three parts of our business together and really create something special."

CBC approached the merge uniquely when it came to the staff—they compared duplicated positions in their corporate office and the local branch and retained the staff member best suited for each role. As for the management team at former First Avenue,

it remains intact, including Adam Woods, who will now serve as the market executive for CBC.

"We're not importing somebody new. CBC quickly realized Adam was the best possible leader to run with this in the community," says Wagner.

Besides maintaining a leadership team recognized by the community, why choose CBC over one of the more recognizable, big bank names? To CBC, banking is a very personal part of a person's life whether for an individual or a business.

"Being a retail community bank is about being involved in and taking care of our community. We have a responsibility not just to be a bank in the

community but to be a trusted advisor. I think you'll see that continue in The Villages and in Ocala."

National banks offer access to capital, no doubt, but they rarely compare to community banks in terms of service excellence and tailoring solutions to individual needs.

"What we have is a small, efficient bank with products and guidelines to work within, but the ability to think efficiently while managing risk," Wagner explains. "We design ways to solve problems for our customers. In all our community banking markets, our customers are working with the decision makers. They're not working with a frontline person who has to work up a national bank ladder to get anything done. That's an important piece to us."

Wagner notes one thing he spotted everywhere when driving around: rooftops. Homes are a valuable asset and a staple in Ocala and The Villages.

"We think mortgage banking has been taboo for a few years after one or two of the banks maybe had some issues. We think we can come in and make mortgage banking a more respectable thing to offer. We've been involved with mortgage banking now for almost nine years. We can bring that core strength with us into the central Florida market and grow mortgage banking as part of the community bank, both bringing in customers and taking care of their needs so they're not going out to other lenders and getting poor service. You'll see us go from two lenders in the market and grow it by two to six loan officers, and we think we can provide more support that maybe hasn't been in place up to this point," he says.

Individuals will gain a resource in CBC National Bank—and so will small businesses in the area. CBC offers Small Business Administration loans for



L to R: Carol Cason, Dan Powell, Jason Welborn, Adam Woods, Stephanie Wrightson, Patrick Moses, Charles Wagner, Michelle Bailey, Brynn Stensrud, Michael Brooks, Scott Curtis, Everette Kuhn, Vanessa Wall

*Big enough to matter. Small enough to care.*

businesses with special circumstances. As an SBA-preferred lender, CBC specializes in small business loans, especially those for medical, dental and veterinary practices. They can assist with lending for anything from new construction, facility expansions and updates, equipment purchases, acquisitions or financing inventory.

"We were the top community bank lender by dollars and units for 2015 in the state of Florida. There will be a significant amount of SBA lending available in the market as well as traditional commercial loans. If one of our lenders is working with a business and it goes well and fits the commercial category, great, but if they're growing or have a unique issue causing it to need a little more risk management on our part, we may move it into an SBA loan," Wagner explains.

"We have the expertise—that's a core competency of ours."

Established businesses will also find CBC can streamline their experiences as well. Small business owners don't often have access to the resources of larger companies, like an HR department to handle employee affairs, and those duties then fall squarely (and often heavily) on the shoulders of the owner. CBC hopes to alleviate that weight.

The bank launched its payroll and HR services in January after the bank realized many of its relationships involved small business owners needing administrative support.

"One of our services where we saw real opportunity for our customers is our Payroll+HCM solution. It not only provides them with a local payroll provider but also HR support for these smaller businesses they haven't had before. We think we can bring a focus to that 2-to-50-employee company range and bring some human capital and ongoing HR support they may need in a business. We think it ties in nicely to the access and the added value we hope to provide our customers."

While CBC plans to offer a plethora of new opportunities to Ocala and The Villages, the bank also hopes Ocala's support will teach them lessons they need to further expand.

"We expect to be the community bank of choice in Ocala and the other markets we serve," says Wagner. "We also want Ocala and The Villages to be the southernmost point of our footprint. We think the leadership team gives us the strength to grow, maybe toward Gainesville, Lake City and back north to Jacksonville. We expect to grow from here."

*Being a retail community bank is about being involved in and taking care of our community.*

› Charles Wagner, President of CBC



CBC National Bank › 910 SW 1st Ave, Ocala › (352) 732-6616 › [cbcnationalbank.com](http://cbcnationalbank.com)

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