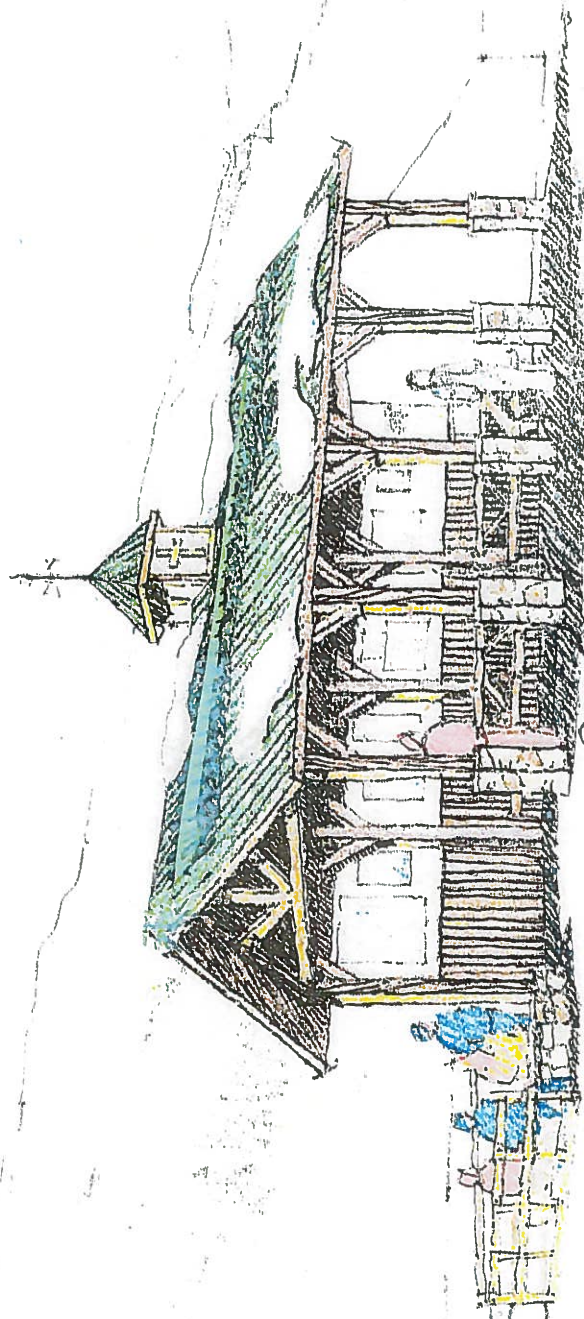


**CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, March 8, 2017  
7:00 P.M.  
Carbondale Town Hall**

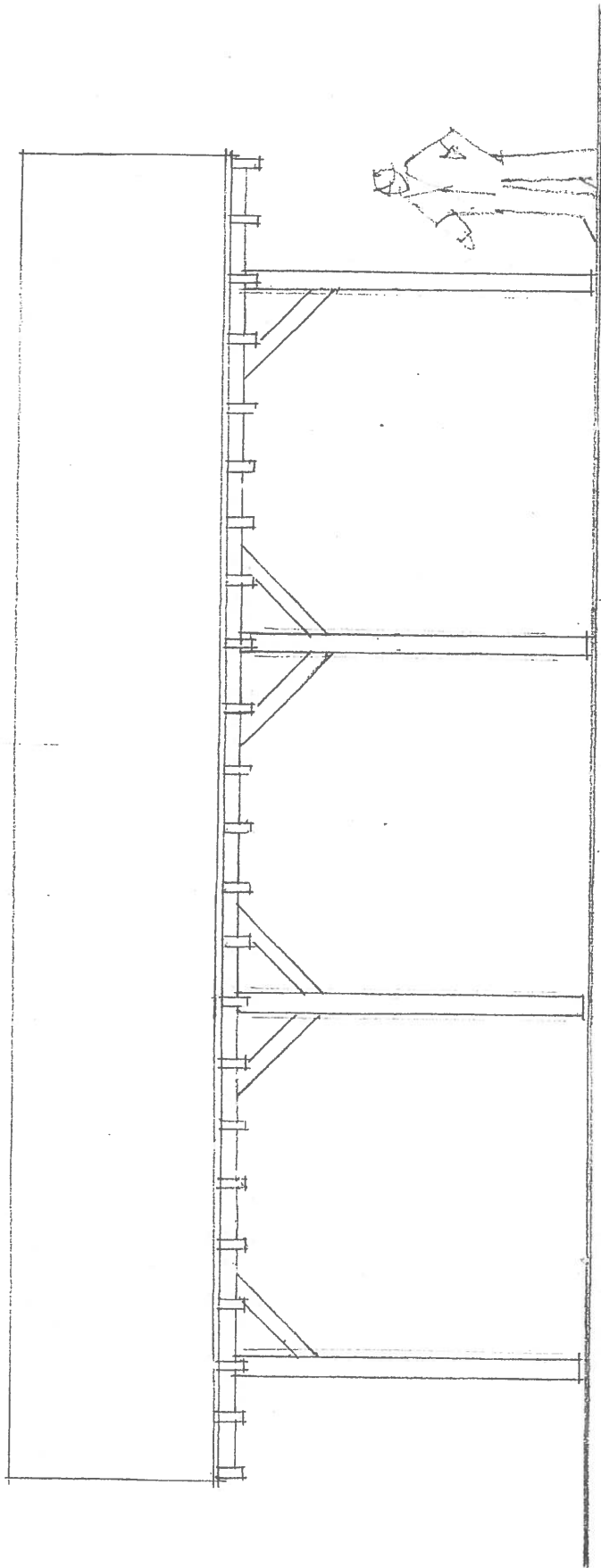
<b>TIME*</b>			<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DESIRED OUTCOME</b>
7:00		1.	Roll Call	
7:05		2.	Approval of February 8, 2017 Minutes	APPROVAL NEEDED
7:10		3.	Items from Citizens Present Not on the Agenda	
7:15		4.	Update on Gus Darien Rodeo Grounds Picnic Shelter (design review)	DISCUSSION & DECISION NEEDED
7:30		5.	Resurrection of Bonedale Bike Week Report Morgan Williams & Tracy Wilson	INFORMATION , CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS
7:45		6.	Recreation Coordinator Program Report Margaret Donnelly-Aquatics and Wellness Coordinator	INFORMATION & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
8:15		7.	Master Plan Goals and Priorities reports Eric-Garfield County Built Environment Grant Two Rivers Community Foundation Todd-Aspen Community Foundation Donor Advised Funds Tracy-Shop Local Campaign	INFORMATION
8:45		8.	Report & Updates: Staff & Commission Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eric Brendlinger, Parks &amp; Recreation Director</li> <li>Parks &amp; Recreation Commissioners</li> <li>Erica Sparhawk, Trustee Liaison</li> </ul>	INFORMATION
9:00		9.	Adjournment	

\* Please note: times are approximate



One front pillar will be removed to open up the view

CHAMBERLAIN'S  
ARCHITECTS



This is with the four  
Pillars instead of five



**TOWN OF CARBONDALE**  
**511 COLORADO AVENUE**  
**CARBONDALE, CO 81623**

## **Parks & Recreation Commission Agenda Memorandum**

**Item No: 7**

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2017

**TITLE:** 2016 Garfield County Needs Assessment and the TOC Parks & Recreation Commission Goals Funding Strategy

**SUBMITTING:** Recreation Department

**ATTACHMENTS:** Garfield County Built Environment Grant potential

---

**PURPOSE:** Review 2017 Parks & Recreation Commission priority funding opportunities and potential grant funded financial assistance.

**BACKGROUND** Over the last few months the Parks & Recreation Commission has solidified goals and work projects for 2017. Some granting sources that the Parks & Recreation Department is pursuing to help fund the projects identified in the master plan include the Garfield County "Built Environment" grant (due March 20<sup>th</sup>).

**ANALYSIS** Prioritizing the "Built Environment" community needs assessment conducted in 2016 by the BEWG (Built Environment Working Group) see attached, allows for a self-directed prioritization of potential projects. These projects will be prioritized for the funding based on the following criteria:

Each community needs to make the following revisions in relation to their priority projects on the 2016 Built Environment Needs Assessment

1. provide more detail on current projects listed
2. add projects that have come up within the last year
3. remove projects that have been completed or that are no longer a priority
4. assign costs estimates and timelines to projects (if applicable)
5. rank and prioritize projects in order of importance using the Project Prioritization Criteria Needs Assessment (attached).

**DISCUSSION:** Staff will submit the needs assessment (questions 1-4) listed above to Dana Wood, Garfield Healthy Communities Coalition Coordinator by March 30. Parks & Recreation Commission members will utilize Appendix B, the Prioritization Criteria, to answer question number 5 above.

**Prepared By:** Eric Brendlinger, Parks & Recreation Director

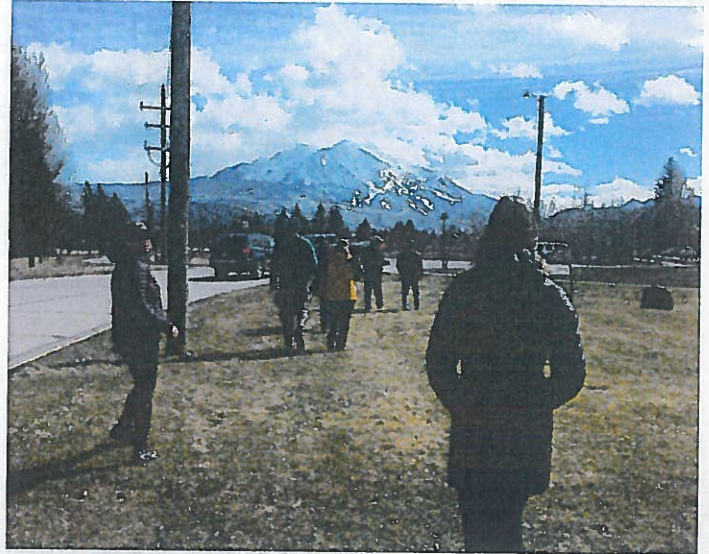
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## C. 1 Carbondale Community Needs

### What are your community's biggest bicycling and walking assets?

- 133 corridor trail
- Rio Grande Trail
- Wide ROWs throughout the city present the opportunity to implement pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- Connectivity between trails and links to community amenities
- Old Carbondale "Town Grid System"
- Gold Bicycle Friendly Community award



### What are the biggest challenges (policy and physical) to bicycling and walking in your community?

- Dedicated funding source
- Policy is often not enforced and creates barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists (sidewalks are often not shoveled)
- ROW is wide but the current pattern of use does not support new or enhanced facilities
- Bike, pedestrian and trail commission does not exist



### What would have the greatest impact on bicycling and walking in your community?

- Communication - success stories that make people aware of benefits
- Closing small gaps
- Snowmass to Main Street trail lighting (could be strategically placed solar lighting)





## 3.2 Community Priorities

The following priorities were developed through an iterative process that included input from the BEWG and the community members. After review of the RFTA Bike-Ped Plan and initiatives outlined in section 2.2, draft project maps were developed to highlight existing recommendations that would enhance bicycling and walking. BEWG members

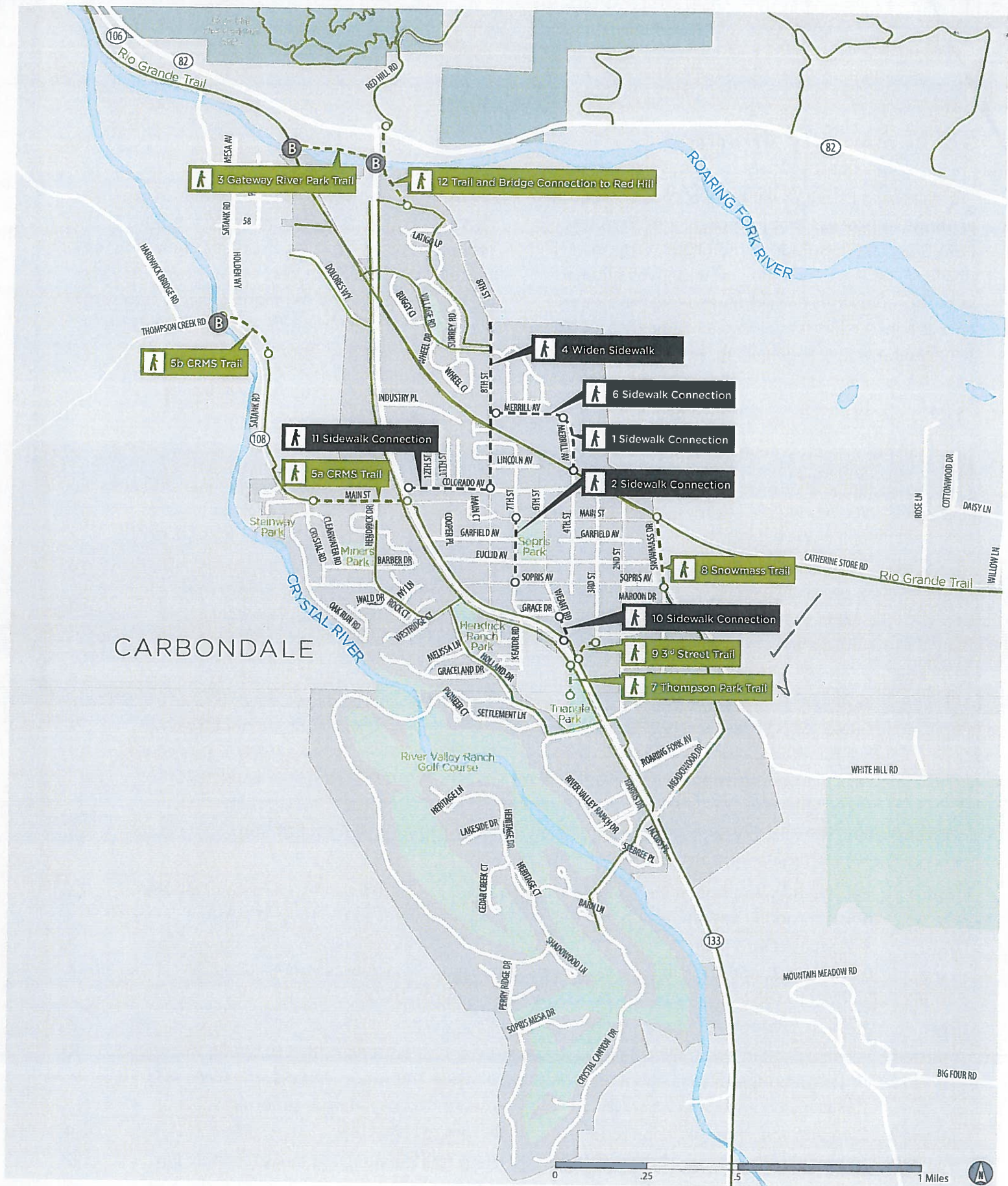
reviewed draft maps and provided input regarding recommendations. Recommendations were further refined through input received at community walking tours. The following projects have been vetted by each community and highlight projects that would enhance and encourage bicycling and walking throughout Garfield County.

### 3.2.1 Carbondale Priority Projects

Type	Description	Map Number <sup>1</sup>
Sidewalk	4 <sup>th</sup> St Sidewalk - Complete the sidewalk along 4th St from Colorado Ave to the Nature Park (path to park) to provide a connection to/from the Rio Grande Trail (approx. 1,100').	1
Sidewalk	7 <sup>th</sup> St Sidewalk Sopris Ave to Main St (no sidewalk exists)	2
Trail	Gateway River Park Trail is a proposed connection from Red Hill Roaring Fork River Bridge crossing to Rio Grande Trail Roaring Fork River Bridge crossing as it passes through the Gateway River Park	3
Sidewalk	Widen 8 <sup>th</sup> St. sidewalk from Village Rd. to Main St. and address on-street parking management (approx. 2,020')	4
Trail	CRMS Main St Trail to HWY 133 - Extend the paved trail along Main St connecting HWY 133 roundabout and Colorado Rocky Mountain School CRMS (approx. 1,420'). This could be a joint project between Garfield County and the Town of Carbondale and may be applicable for a Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District (FMLD) grant.	5
Sidewalk	Merrill Ave Sidewalk - Add a paved sidewalk along Merrill Ave from 8th St to connect to the Nature Park (path to park) (approx. 770').	6
Trail	The existing Thompson Park Trail from Holland Dr. to Lewie's Lane should be extended north through the RVR Triangle Park parking lot & connect to the Hwy. 133 Path.	7
Trail	Snowmass Dr to Main St Trail - Complete a paved trail along Snowmass Dr connecting from Main St and the Rio Grande Trail to the existing Snowmass Dr multi-use trail leading to the elementary and middle schools (approx. 900').	8
Trail	Third St Center HWY 133 to 3rd St Corridor	9
Sidewalk	Weant Blvd Sidewalk - Complete sidewalk connection on Weant Blvd between Historic Museum/Bridges High School and the Crystal Valley Trail (from Grace Dr to HWY 133). This is an incomplete portion of the Safe Routes to School network (approx. 325').	10
Sidewalk	Colorado Ave sidewalk connection from 8th Street to HWY 133.	11
Trail	Trail and Bridge Connection to Red Hill - Existing trail behind Days Inn & Comfort Inn leads to the Roaring Fork River where a bridge connection over the river should be built connecting to the proposed Gateway River Park Trail (#3 above) and to the Hwy. 82/133 intersection crossing to the Red Hill BLM Recreation Area.	12

<sup>1</sup>Projects are keyed to recommendations maps and do not represent project priority.





## Carbondale Priority Projects

Priority Projects

----- Sidewalk

----- Trail

Existing Trail



Existing Bridge

Land Ownership

Private

Local

Federal



## B. PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

The following prioritization criteria was developed as part of the Year 1 planning process to rank projects. Although projects included in this needs assessment were not ranked, this criteria is provided as a resource for future initiatives.

The RFTA Bike-Ped Plan served as the basis for this criteria and incorporates related goals from the 2014

LiveWell Garfield County Community Strategic Plan and input from Built Environment Working Group. The following criteria also reflects evaluation criteria included in CDOT's Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

	Meets Criteria	Does not Meet Criteria
<b>Enhances Safety</b>		
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes		
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety		
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users		
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>		
Improves bicycling or walking conditions		
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users		
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors		
Provides multi-use pathway near populations		
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities		
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity		
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>		
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities		
Provides economic benefits to the region		
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>		
Provide mobility options to underserved populations		
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers		
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations		



	Meets Criteria	Does not Meet Criteria
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>		
Provides better access to jobs		
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region		
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income		
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>		
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.		
The project is "shovel ready"		
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials		
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance		
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition		
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).		
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.		
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).		

<b>#1 - 4th St. Sidewalk Colorado Ave. to Nature Park</b>	<b>Meets Criteria</b>	<b>Does not meet criteria</b>
<b>Enhances Safety</b>		
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes	X	
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety	X	
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users	X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>		
Improves bicycling or walking conditions	X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users	X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors	X	
Provides multi-use pathway near populations	X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities	X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity	X	
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>		
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities		X
Provides economic benefits to the region		X
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>		
Provide mobility options to underserved populations	X	
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers		X
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations	X	
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>		
Provides better access to jobs		X
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region	X	
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income		X
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>		
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.	X	
The project is "shovel ready"	X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials	X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance	X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition	X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).	X	
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.		X
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).		X
	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>



## #2 - 7th St. Sidewalk Sopris Ave. to Main St.

	Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria
<b>Enhances Safety</b>		
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes	X	
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety	X	
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users	X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>		
Improves bicycling or walking conditions	X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users	X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors	X	
Provides multi-use pathway near populations	X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities	X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity		X
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>		
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities		X
Provides economic benefits to the region		X
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>		
Provide mobility options to underserved populations	X	
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers		X
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations	X	
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>		
Provides better access to jobs		X
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region		X
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income	X	
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>		
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.	X	
The project is "shovel ready"	X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials	X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance	X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition	X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).	X	
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.		X
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).		X
	17	8

### #3 - 8th St. Sidewalk Village Rd. to Cowen Dr.

Meets Criteria Does not meet criteria

#### Enhances Safety

Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes

X

Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety

X

Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users

X

#### Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity

Improves bicycling or walking conditions

X

Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users

X

Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors

X

Provides multi-use pathway near populations

X

Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities

X

Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity

X

#### Project is Regionally Significant

Provides connectivity options to multiple communities

X

Provides economic benefits to the region

X

#### Provide Transportation Equity

Provide mobility options to underserved populations

X

Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers

X

Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations

X

#### Improve State/Regional Economy

Provides better access to jobs

X

Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region

X

Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income

X

#### Ease of Implementation

Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.

X

The project is "shovel ready"

X

The project is supported by both the community and elected officials

X

An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance

X

Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition

X

Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).

X

Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.

X

The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).

X

18

7



<b># 4 - 8th St. Sidewalk Widened Village Rd. to Main St.</b>	<b>Meets Criteria</b>	<b>Does not meet criteria</b>
<b>Enhances Safety</b>		
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes		X
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety	X	
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users	X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>		
Improves bicycling or walking conditions	X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users	X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors	X	
Provides multi-use pathway near populations	X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities	X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity		X
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>		
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities		X
Provides economic benefits to the region		X
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>		
Provide mobility options to underserved populations	X	
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers		X
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations	X	
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>		
Provides better access to jobs	X	
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region		X
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income	X	
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>		
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.	X	
The project is "shovel ready"	X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials	X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance	X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition	X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).		X
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.		X
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).		X
	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>

## #5a&b - CRMS Main St. Trail to Highway 133

	Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria
<b>Enhances Safety</b>		
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes	X	
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety	X	
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users	X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>		
Improves bicycling or walking conditions	X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users	X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors	X	
Provides multi-use pathway near populations	X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities	X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity	X	
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>		
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities		X
Provides economic benefits to the region		X
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>		
Provide mobility options to underserved populations		X
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers	X	
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations		X
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>		
Provides better access to jobs	X	
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region		X
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income	X	
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>		
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.	X	
The project is "shovel ready"	X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials	X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance	X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition	X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).	X	
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.		X
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).	X	

19

6



#6 - Merrill Ave. Sidewalk 8th St. to Nature Park		Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria
<b>Enhances Safety</b>			
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes		X	
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety		X	
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users		X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>			
Improves bicycling or walking conditions		X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users		X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors		X	
Provides multi-use pathway near populations		X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities		X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity		X	
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>			
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities			X
Provides economic benefits to the region			X
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>			
Provide mobility options to underserved populations		X	
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers			X
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations		X	
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>			
Provides better access to jobs			X
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region			X
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income		X	
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>			
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.		X	
The project is "shovel ready"		X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials		X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance		X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition		X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).		X	
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.			X
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).			X
		18	7

#7 - RVR Triangle Park Lewie's Lane to Hwy. 133 Trail Connection		Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria
<b>Enhances Safety</b>			
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes			X
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety			X
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users		X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>			
Improves bicycling or walking conditions		X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users		X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors			X
Provides multi-use pathway near populations		X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities		X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity			X
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>			
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities			X
Provides economic benefits to the region		X	
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>			
Provide mobility options to underserved populations			X
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers			X
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations		X	
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>			
Provides better access to jobs			X
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region		X	
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income		X	
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>			
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.		X	
The project is "shovel ready"		X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials		X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance		X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition		X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).		X	
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.		X	
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).		X	

17 8



#8 - Snowmass Dr. to Main St. Trail Connection		Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria
<b>Enhances Safety</b>			
Reduces crash rate or potential threat of crashes		X	
Project potentially improves bicycle and pedestrian safety		X	
Provides facilities appropriate for a wider range of users		X	
<b>Increase Bicycling and Walking Activity</b>			
Improves bicycling or walking conditions		X	
Provides facilities that are attractive and convenient to a wider range of users		X	
Reduces disease/obesity in children, adults, seniors		X	
Provides multi-use pathway near populations		X	
Increases activity levels among Garfield County residents through recreation opportunities		X	
Increases the time by which students (ages 3-18) at schools in our community are engaged in vigorous and/or moderate physical activity		X	
<b>Project is Regionally Significant</b>			
Provides connectivity options to multiple communities			X
Provides economic benefits to the region			X
<b>Provide Transportation Equity</b>			
Provide mobility options to underserved populations		X	
Provides safe active transportation to schools and learning centers		X	
Provides pedestrian mobility for seniors and disabled populations		X	
<b>Improve State/Regional Economy</b>			
Provides better access to jobs		X	
Bolsters Tourism / provides facilities that would attract visitors from outside the region			X
Induces mode shift to bicycling, walking and transit = more household disposable income		X	
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>			
Does not significantly impact the environment and does not require extensive permitting.		X	
The project is "shovel ready"		X	
The project is supported by both the community and elected officials		X	
An entity exists and is willing to assume management and maintenance		X	
Utilizes publicly owned land with no need for additional right of way acquisition		X	
Includes minimal technical challenges and is not expected to have excessive costs compared similar facilities constructed elsewhere (provides good financial value).			X
Can be incorporated into other project to reduce project cost compared to independent implementation.			X
The project is a strong candidate for funding from outside the region or from private sources (developers, etc.).		X	
		20	5

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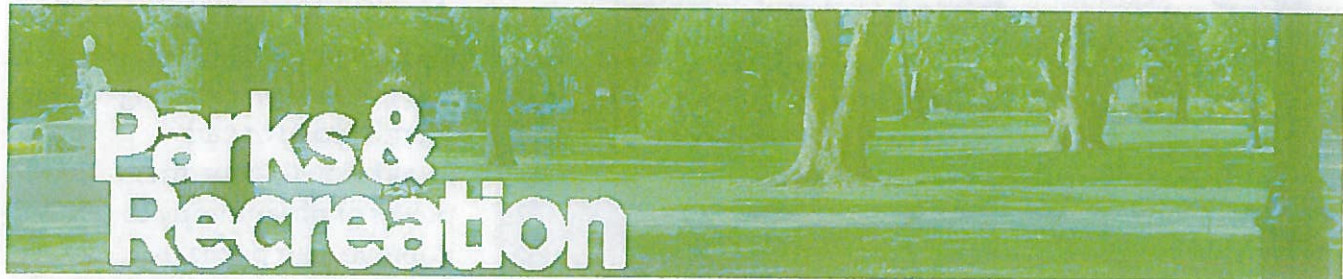
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# February

## Forget About Grants! Annual Fundraising for Park Foundations & Friends Groups

February 1, 2017, Feature, by Nathan A. Schaumleffel, Ph.D., CPRP, CNP, CFRM, CVA, IYD







At the 2016 NRPA Conference in St. Louis, I shared best practices on how to set your park foundation's cornerstone to build optimally functioning fundraising and engaging volunteer organizations. Setting the cornerstone is code for building a board of directors that works, gives, gets and understands the role and benefits of operating a friends group or park foundation to hone the power of philanthropy to improve your public park system.

Admittedly, there are a host of benefits for creating and operating a park foundation, but the essential function is relationship-building and resource development that starts with the board of directors and membership. Resource development includes fundraising; acquiring in-kind donations of equipment, supplies and land; and engaging volunteers.

### Articulating Your Case

An annual fundraising plan needs to be nested within a comprehensive fundraising case statement, which absolutely should align with the organization's vision, mission, core values and strategic plan. No one from the organization should be soliciting funds on behalf of the organization without being intentional and understanding the strategy of multichannel fundraising. Whether you are launching a membership retention effort, a donor acquisition campaign or giving a speech before a 5k about the impact of the organization, all of these strategies, or what we call a "case expressions," need to be spawned from the case statement to ensure consistent communication, branding and messaging.

As rec people, we tend to be program people; we also tend to not be numbers and math people. When we think fundraising, we often default to special event fundraisers and grants. Instead, we need to do strategic planning, first! Then, develop a case statement, then an annual fund development plan followed by a membership campaign and then a direct mail campaign. Then, maybe, and I mean maybe, a signature special event.

### Establishing a Resource Development Committee that 'Gets It'

Park foundations and friends groups should establish a resource development committee, led by a board member or two. Otherwise, the committee should largely be composed of members or "friends" serving as volunteers who implement a robust, sustainable annual fund development plan. The board of directors and resource development committee should be acutely aware of the Association of Fundraising Professional's [Code of Ethical Standards](#), [Donor Bill of Rights](#) and [e-Donor Bill of Rights](#).

In an article I wrote for *Illinois Parks & Recreation* magazine, I described the goal of an annual fund campaign as being “to raise enough money to cover monthly operating expenses for the organization...it is better to think of an annual fund as the fund that pays for your organization’s annual operating expenses, like a checking account.” Author and fundraising professional, Stanley Weinstein, teaches that after we get an initial gift, then we must further our relationship with the donor to repeat the gift and, ultimately, increase the gift in a cyclical process.

When establishing an annual fund, don’t rely on one corporate sponsorship or one grant maker or one special event. In fact, put the special events on the backburner for later consideration and forget about grants! If you begin by relying on a grant, then your organization will suffer from what I like to refer to as hand-to-mouth disease. You’ll be living grant to grant, wondering how long you can pay your bills. Operating a park foundation this way is unsustainable and shortchanges the power of philanthropy and what philanthropy can do for enhancing your park system.

### **Planning the Annual Campaign**

To hone the power of philanthropy and to effectively manage the annual campaign, you’ll need to build a fundraising infrastructure by establishing a gift acceptance policy and adopting a donor management system (DMS). A DMS is an advanced software platform, typically cloud-based, that functions primarily as a dynamic database system that allows you to systematically manage relationships with prospects and donors. If you don’t have or don’t use a DMS, you’re really hurting your chances of getting off the grant-reliant life support!

Before your organization begins soliciting donations and implementing the annual fund plan, the Resource Development Committee needs to identify two to three members who can become the in-house experts on using the DMS. The DMS team should add as many suspects, prospects and past donors as possible. Your fundraising efforts, including your annual fund, will only be as successful as your DMS data are accurate.

While the DMS team is entering prospect and donor data into the DMS, the resource development committee should create a Matching Gift team. The Matching Gift team should simultaneously create a list of local employers who offer a matching gift program whereby a donor gives \$25 to your organization and their employer makes a matching \$25 donation to your organization. Building a matching gift program is critical to a successful annual fund.

The next task is to write an annual fund development plan, which serves as the road map to meeting your realistic fundraising goal for the upcoming fiscal year. Setting the goal will require you to assess your organization’s financial needs by reviewing past and current financial statements, audits and program budgets.

Sustainable annual fund campaigns deploy several strategies to generate revenue, or what we call net contributed income in the nonprofit world, to achieve the fundraising goal. Using multiple strategies is called multichannel fundraising. Strategies used by park foundations and friends groups should integrate board giving and five or more of the following channels:

membership, direct mail, direct e-mail, phone solicitation, online and social media, face-to-face, sales, contract services and a signature special event (Table 1).

**Table 1. Sample Annual Fund Development Plan Summary**

Fundraising Strategies	Percent of Annual Fundraising Goal	Dollar Amount Per Fundraising Strategy
Board Giving	20%	\$20,000.00
Membership	30%	\$30,000.00
Direct Mail	20%	\$20,000.00
Direct Email	7%	\$7,000.00
Phone Solicitation	3%	\$3,000.00
Face-to-Face	10%	\$10,000.00
Signature Special Event	5%	\$5,000.00
Sales	5%	\$5,000.00
<b>Annual Fundraising Goal</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>

Every park foundation or friends group should use multichannel fundraising. Although there is no one-size-fits-all development plan, most organizations will have some common strategies and overlap. In all park foundations, giving should be compounded with an effort to secure matching gifts from donors' employers.

### **Board Giving**

Most park foundations have an average board size of 10 members, so in the example in Table 1, the assumption is made that each board member should be giving a gift of \$2,000. You may be in shock right now as you realize that your foundation doesn't even have 100 percent of board members giving, much less giving at a leadership level. The fact that board members are not giving at a leadership level is the single most critical reason that park foundations and friends groups are not meeting their annual fundraising goals.

Weinstein highlights the 80/20 rule of annual fundraising and summarizes it as follows: 80 percent of annual funds should come from the top 20 percent of donors. Most of the top 20 percent of donors should be the board members. If your board members follow the 80/20 rule, then, as a group, they would be contributing about \$60,000 of the \$100,000 goal. The



example given in Table 1 is actually very modest for board giving until your organization creates a culture of leadership giving by the board.

Weinstein also highlights that trends in fundraising are actually transforming the 80/20 rule into the 90/10 rule, so be sure to not just nominate any park lover for the park foundation or friends group board, but nominate a park advocate that has affinity along with the financial capacity. Individual board member annual giving is directly correlated with the impact that the park foundation can make on the park system and users. All park foundations must have a board policy that sets the expectation of 100 percent board giving.

### **Direct Mail**

Annual fundraising should be anchored with board giving and membership, then spring boarded with a solid direct mail campaign. Once you control for board giving and membership, direct mail is still king! These letters, delivered by the U.S. Postal Service, should include a persuasive, donor-centered appeal that highlights the needs of the target audience your organization is serving, not the financial needs of your organization. The mailing should also include a response device, employer matching gift information, a pre-addressed return envelope (sometimes postage paid, sometimes not), and, usually, a free gift or trinket.

It is critical to ask donors and members to give at least quarterly through direct mail, once each season, including a late fall or early winter end-of-year appeal. Remember, annual fund does not mean we ask one-time each year but, rather, that we ask multiple times per year so we can pay our annual expenses. It's also helpful because the USPS will notify you of prospects', donors' and members' change of address information so you can systematically update mailing address information in your DMS. In essence, the direct mail campaign is critical to maintaining an accurate, up-to-date database.

Your annual new and sustaining membership campaign can be seamlessly combined with your direct mail campaign, so that each year a first gift is the "membership" and any following gift that fiscal year falls under the direct mail campaign.

Many board members will want to eliminate a direct mail campaign simply because of the assumed cost and the seemingly free online options, like crowdfunding, social media and online gift processing. There's no doubt online giving has increased exponentially over the last 15 years. However, organizations that use direct mail in tandem with online strategies tend to raise more money, which means your organization will need to invest in establishing a mobile-friendly website with a "Donate Now" online gift processing opportunity. Many times, the direct mail letter serves as the reminder to give online.

### **Signature Special Events**

Now that you have 100 percent board giving, a new and sustaining membership campaign, and direct mail fundraising is underway, consider establishing a signature special event that metaphorically ties to your mission. Signature events can bring new prospects to your DMS and replace donors who have quit giving to the annual fund. Get creative and don't default to a golf scramble, 5k, 10k, or typical walk or run event.

So what makes a special event a signature special event? The event does several of the following things very well:

- It builds mission awareness through metaphors (i.e., missionizing the event)
- It deepens existing relationships with volunteers and donors
- It establishes new relationships with prospects
- Your organization assesses your community's unofficial social and philanthropy calendar and then carves out a date that the community essentially annually reserves for your organization. For example, your event might ALWAYS be on the third full weekend in September each year.
- Your organization is KNOWN for the event!
- Your organization MIGHT choose to use the event as a fundraising event.

Not all nonprofit special events are intended to be fundraising events. It's important to determine the role of your signature special event and then intentionally engineer the experience to achieve that goal. Ultimately, the event is ALWAYS about your mission and vision and the specific function of the event is determined by your strategic plan.

*Note: Article content is drawn from "Cornerstone Blog with @Drschaumleffel" and is copyright protected.*

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## References

Association of Fundraising Professionals – [Code of Ethics and Donor Bill of Rights](#).

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## Resources

[National Association of Park Foundations](#)

Schaumleffel, N. A. (Ed.) (2014). [Cooperate - Advancing your nonprofit organization's mission through college & community partnerships: A guide for nonprofit leaders](#). Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Campus Compact.

## Donor Advised Funds

Donor advised funds are an attractive alternative to a private foundation. All legal, tax and administrative requirements are handled by 2RCF, yet the donor may recommend distributions to the charitable beneficiaries of their choosing. Donor advised funds can be established with the flexibility to support multiple and varying charitable causes each year.