Annual Meeting Report by
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This was an excellent year for the Parkway Council Foundation on many fronts, including fundraising, strategic board expansion, programming, planning, and marketing.

**Increasing Revenue**

To support the organization’s growth and objectives, the Parkway Council focused on expanding our sources of revenue. We doubled our Parkway Champion supporters in one year to eight. The current Champions include: Comcast, GlaxoSmithKline, Lenfest Foundation, Pearl Properties, Pepper Hamilton, PNC, Public Financial Management, and Wolf Block. We also grew in the Parkway Partners category of support. Our current Partners include: Morgan Lewis, Sterling Glen, and Fox Rothschild.

The Parkway Council secured $100,000 in new grant funding from the William Penn Foundation and the Lenfest Foundation for a Parkway Shuttle Feasibility Study. Transportation consultant Denise Goren of Michael Baker Inc. was hired in the Summer of 2007 to commence the Shuttle study, which is expected to be completed in January 2008. The current focus of this study is ensuring that the (recently funded for 3 additional years) PHLASH shuttle serves the needs of the Parkway institutions, in terms of service schedule, route, vehicles, and marketing the Parkway.

We also continued to expand our grant prospects via meetings with (and/or grant applications submitted to) the Samuel S. Fels Fund, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Knight Foundation, and Rohm and Haas. We are seeking foundation funding to support a Parkway Cultural District feasibility study (building on the work of Joe Dworestzky and his board committee), and marketing initiatives.

**Strategically Expanding the Board**

Our Board of Directors experienced growth as well, with the significant additions of: Monsignor Michael McCulken, on behalf of the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul; Paul Levy, for the Center City District; Mark Focht, representing the Fairmount Park Commission; and Derek Gillman, in his new role as leader of the Barnes Foundation. Early in the year, we also welcomed Bill Brown and recently, Ted Lewis, as the new Presidents of long time Parkway Council member institutions, the Academy of Natural Sciences and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.
Programming

In April 2007, we once again planned and hosted the very well-attended and successful Parkway FunDay event in Logan Circle. Thousands of area residents and visitors enjoyed a wide array of hands-on art and science activities and entertainment, bringing very positive attention to the Parkway and its institutions. The event received good local press coverage, and Comcast produced a free public service spot for the event, which ran with high frequency on their cable stations. Event advertising also drove high numbers of people to the Parkway Council web site (and member pages), with April hits reaching over 4.5 times our monthly average.

Planning

In an effort to increase parking options for Parkway visitors, we successfully convinced the Philadelphia Parking Authority to convert 75 12-hour parking meters on the Parkway to 4-hour meters. This will discourage commuters from using those prime spots, in favor of visitors to the institutions. This is obviously just a small step, but we will continue to work with the PPA to identify other ways to improve the parking situation.

In anticipation of the City of Philadelphia’s impending changes in administration, the Parkway Council drafted and adopted our Agenda for the Parkway, spelling out the organization’s top priorities for the new City administration. That Agenda was used as the basis for the Board’s meetings with two of the mayoral candidates. The Agenda for the Parkway was later revised, and sent once more to Mayor-elect Michael Nutter, with the expectation that we will work together with his administration to achieve the stated priorities.

At the Parkway Council’s annual planning meeting, the Board established a set of programmatic and organizational objectives for July 2007 – June 2008. The programmatic objectives are focused on long-term Parkway enhancements, the Parkway Shuttle Project, and studying the feasibility of creating a Parkway Cultural District. The Parkway Council’s organizational objectives fall into the categories of marketing initiatives, fundraising, and working with the new City administration.

Marketing

On the marketing front, we initiated a new program in March 2007 called Make it a Day on the Parkway, encouraging major event attendees to visit Parkway institutions. The program has received good press coverage, increased web site visitation, and provided good exposure to Parkway Council members via press releases, ads, web links, and special collaborations with event organizers. One recent example: all 16,000 Philadelphia Marathon race registrants (75% of whom were from outside the area) received a list of activities at the Parkway institutions during marathon weekend in November.

Another marketing initiative this year: the Parkway Picks brochure, an attractive new collateral piece, encouraging visitors and residents to explore the Parkway’s special offerings. The first Parkway Picks urges people to spend their holiday on the Parkway, and spells out the events and unique gifts available on the Parkway. We hope to print similar Parkway Picks rack cards or brochures (with additional web information) 3-4 times in 2008.

The year 2007 was obviously a productive one for the Parkway Council, in our ongoing efforts to enhance and promote the Parkway. We are optimistic that 2008 will be even better.