



PARKWAY COUNCIL *foundation*
Enhancing & Promoting the Parkway

***Annual Meeting Report by
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This past year has been a very productive one for the Parkway Council Foundation.

Increasing Revenue

To support the organization's defined objectives and operating expenses, the Parkway Council focused on expanding our sources of revenue. We added one Parkway Champion in 2008: The Klein Co. They joined six other current Champions: Comcast, PNC, Public Financial Management, Lenfest Foundation, Pepper Hamilton, and Pearl Properties.

The Parkway Council secured \$100,000 in new grant funding for Parkway studies from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The studies will focus on developing a long term plan for funding Parkway transportation, and creating a strategy for increased cultural development in the Parkway area. The Request for Proposals was distributed in November, and proposals were received last week. A well-rounded and representative study committee will provide oversight for the studies when they begin in January 2009.

The Parkway Council continued to pursue additional grant funding via meetings with (and/or grant applications submitted to) the City of Philadelphia, Lenfest Foundation, William Penn Foundation, PNC, and several others. Our efforts to obtain matching City funding for the DCNR studies, and financial support for year round weekend service extension of the Phlash were thwarted by the City's current budget crisis.

Planning

The Parkway Council wrapped up a shuttle feasibility study (funded by the William Penn Foundation and Lenfest Foundation) by Michael Baker Inc. in January 2008. Their recommendations included various route and shuttle vehicle alternatives. The study determined that a Parkway-only shuttle was not, in fact, financially feasible.

We hosted a special board meeting on January 31st, attended by our board members, as well as several funders, and leaders of neighborhood organizations. Upcoming projects and priorities for the Parkway Council, its member organizations, and the neighborhood groups were shared, and common interests were discussed.

At the Parkway Council's annual planning meeting, the Board established a set of programmatic and organizational objectives for July 2008 - June 2009. The "programmatic objectives" are focused on long term Parkway enhancements, visitor shuttle expansion and funding, the development of a strategy for increasing cultural development in the Parkway area, and the exploration of major project ideas (such as an installation or major event) for the Parkway. The Parkway Council's "organizational objectives" fall into the categories of working with the new City administration, marketing initiatives, fundraising, and board membership issues.

The board met with senior level City administration (Camille Barnett, Andy Altman, and Rina Cutler) to discuss our *Agenda for the Parkway*, spelling out the organization's top priorities and building key relationships.

Attorney board members dedicated several summer associates to research state and local ordinances and national case law relevant to "Public Behavior on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway." Areas of focus included: public feedings and encampments, as well as aggressive and inappropriate public behavior. A detailed white paper containing the research and recommendations was created, and delivered to Mayor Nutter and select members of his administration. It was welcomed as a very useful piece of research, and a helpful tool for future strategies being developed by the City. We have met with City administration to follow up, and will continue to do so.

A new board committee was formed to develop recommendations regarding several board membership-related issues, including board expansion, meeting frequency and committee structure. Their work is still in progress.

Programming

In April 2008, we once again planned and hosted the well-attended Parkway FunDay event in Logan Circle. The event received good press attention, including a free public service spot created by Comcast, which ran with high frequency on their cable stations.

A project was initiated with Fairmount Park staff to identify Parkway events that could be moved off the Parkway, and possible alternative event sites. That work is still in progress.

Marketing

In July 2008, our Marketing and Special Events Manager Sharon Tice developed and received board approval for a strategic marketing plan. She also held two "marketing summits" with marketing counterparts at Parkway Council member organizations to solicit ideas and determine support for our marketing strategies and programs.

The Board approved use of the term "Parkway Museums District" in branding. A collateral piece was designed to capitalize on that brand name, and we have filed a trademark application for the name.

A new on-board Phlash shuttle video was created by Center City District and the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation, in partnership with the Parkway Council. The video markets the Parkway institutions as well as other destinations on the route.

The *Make it a Day on the Parkway* marketing initiative, encouraging major event attendees to visit Parkway institutions, received good press coverage and increased web site visitation.

Our two *Parkway Picks* brochures received broad distribution for Summer 2008 and (currently) Holiday 2008 - encouraging visitors and residents to explore the Parkway's special offerings during those periods (and continuing to remind residents and visitors that the Parkway is a destination).

The coming year, 2009, will likely be more challenging than the past, as everyone (including members and funders) will be facing economic uncertainty and planning accordingly. This will require more creativity in the funding arena, as well as special care to ensure that we are spending every dollar wisely in support of our efforts to enhance and promote the Parkway.