

Learning History

Saguache Downtown Revitalization Project (SDRP)

Planning Process – Phase I

Organizations like ours try to learn from our experiences, especially the successful ones. This is a way of assessing our effectiveness and sharing information. It is an important process for the growth of any organization. In doing so, we have developed this article around the concept of a “learning history.” We went back to the source of our project - the people who initiated the idea, developed the goals, formed the partnerships, motivated the volunteers, implemented and managed the program, and represented the community. We tried to capture and convey the experience and understandings of these groups of people. The result of this new form of assessment, a learning history, is put forth here. We hope that what we have learned throughout this process will help you to develop a successful project in your community.

Within the pages of this document we have gathered the building blocks for developing a project designed to mobilize people and generate community support. Obviously, the nature and success of the project has much to do with the people involved. It is very likely that you will end up with some variation of this project specific to the personalities you bring to it. The building blocks described on the following pages are specific to the Phase I planning process of the **Saguache Downtown Revitalization Project**, an economic development project developed by and for the residents of the Town of Saguache. ScSEED would like to thank those volunteers who agreed to be interviewed for this document: Liza Marron, Rese Garcia, Rick Barandes, Lindy McDaniel, Kate Vasha, Laura Archuleta, Steve Sanchez; and Kim Smoyer, who has written the piece.

We hope that this work will help you lay the foundation for your own project. It is designed to give you the building blocks to get started. What you create will be up to the “architects, builders, carpenters, designers and occupants” who create and participate in your program.

ScSEED staff members are more than happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this process. Please call Kim Smoyer at (719) 655-2775 for more information.

At the Friday, May 23, 2008, Saguache County Sustainable Environment & Economic Development (ScSEED) Board of Directors meeting, Kim Smoyer, presented a proposal to the Board of Directors which outlined the concept for coordinating a downtown revitalization project somewhere in Saguache County. This idea originated from a community meeting presented by the Colorado Office of Economic Development (COED), an ED101 workshop. As a result of that meeting, the County Commissioners asked Stephanie Steffens, COED staff person and ScSEED board member, to develop a smaller task force to discuss economic vitality strategies for Saguache. This group became known as the Saguache Economic Vitality Task Force and was made up of ScSEED board members, staff and other volunteers.

At their May meeting, the ScSEED Board of Directors discussed which town would be offered this opportunity; all agreed that the Town of Saguache was a wonderful place to begin. Saguache is the County seat; it has a great deal of historical and cultural assets; and it has community members who are active and interested in the idea. ScSEED Board Chair, Liza Marron, shares, "I've been in Saguache for 22 years and I'm so excited that ScSEED has offered this opportunity to Saguache. It's wonderful how the community meeting turned into the Task Force and now it's morphing into the Saguache Downtown Revitalization Project (SDRP). With this strong show of community support I just know we'll be successful."

The Board instructed Kim Smoyer, ScSEED staff consultant, to craft a letter to the Trustees explaining the offer and asking to address them at their June 16, 2008 Trustee meeting. Below is the letter and subsequent information that was sent to the Town in late May:

Dear Town Board of Trustees,

I am writing to request placement on your June 16, 2008 Town Board meeting agenda to discuss the possibilities of partnering with the Town of Saguache on a downtown revitalization project.

ScSEED has been awarded three (3) operating grants through the El Pomar and Anschutz Family Foundations and Saguache County to work with towns within Saguache County on economic development and downtown revitalization. At our last meeting, the ScSEED Board of Directors decided to offer the Town of Saguache this initial opportunity believing that there is a great deal of potential in your downtown corridor. Since the Town of Saguache is the county seat, we felt it was a viable place to start. Our hope is to be able to provide these services to other towns throughout the county in the coming years. If you decide that this is not something you wish to pursue then we will offer this assistance to another Saguache County community.

I have attached a brief outline of a plan which includes several steps which I will present at the June 16th meeting. ScSEED will act as the organizing unit for this public-private partnership of various entities throughout Saguache (several of which are outlined on the plan). ScSEED would also provide project coordination services including grant resource identification, application submission, and follow-through. The cost of these services is covered by the grants we received from the foundations and the county; so there is no initial financial commitment needed to get things started. There are also funds available through ScSEED to provide capacity-building and grant writing services for this project should you decide to move forward.

There are many ideas and opportunities for downtown revitalization including, but not limited to, façade restoration, cityscape investment, street and sidewalk restoration (cobblestone, etc.), adding planters and new light posts (with banners), etc. All of which will increase the value of property and attract businesses; increasing the economic condition of Saguache (see attached Economic Benefits Study, Executive Summary). These are just a few ideas; the real plan and vision will come from those who choose to involve themselves in this initiative. With your support for this project we would first look to organize a town-hall meeting with representatives from all the organizations listed in the plan. At this meeting we hope to garner support for this effort. If we are able to get support we will form the partnership and move forward crafting our vision.

ScSEED – Public/Private Partnership - Saguache Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Step 1: Convene a meeting to form a public/private partnership and discuss need and desire for downtown beautification and revitalization efforts including: Town of Saguache, Town of Saguache Board of Trustees, Town of Saguache Planning Commission/Board, Saguache County Board of Commissioners, ScSEED, Saguache County Economic Vitality Task Force, Saguache County Business Association, Villa Grove Area Merchants Associates, Saguache County Tourism Council, State Historical Society, Saguache Museum – Board, Saguache Public Library, Saguache Parks & Recreation Board, Business Owners throughout the Town of Saguache, Residents of the Town of Saguache and SLV Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Step 2: Develop a goal setting and visioning plan.

- 1.) Apply for a grant through the Colorado Community Revitalization Partnership Program (CCRA) and DOLA.
- 2.) CCRA will send staff to Saguache for a two-day assessment and to assist the partnership with the goal-setting process.
- 3.) Partnership is formed and entities are involved in the assessment process.

Step 3: Create a vision – architectural renderings.

- 1.) Apply for grants through DOLA – both for the architectural aspects and the implementation of the beautification plans.
- 2.) Hire architectural firm to design cityscape and provide renderings.
- 3.) Partnership implements promotional plan and obtains participation from downtown business and building owners.

Step 4: Implementation of the visioning plan.

- 1.) Obtain grant funds and other resources to implement the planning process.
- 2.) Hire contractors to carry-out the downtown renovations.
- 3.) Continue to attract new businesses to the downtown by providing façade restoration funding; downtown business incubator (ScSEED); and other value-added benefits.
- 4.) Discuss Colorado Main Street Program – Application

Kim Smoyer attended the June 16, 2008 meeting of the Town of Saguache Trustees. She reviewed the letter and subsequent information and made the pitch to begin the project. The Town Trustees unanimously agreed to partner with ScSEED to begin the process outlined in the original goals. "The trustees were excited to have the assistance of an outside agency to work on this project," said Ms. Smoyer, "they were anxious to move forward with the steps we outlined and see where it led." Rese Garcia, Saguache Town Clerk, agreed, "this project would not have gotten off the ground without this partnership with ScSEED, we needed a non-governmental entity as a lead organization, then public is much more receptive and willing to

participate. We also have our hands full with only two administrative staff to do the work of the Town, so a partner willing to do the project coordination for the project was imperative and necessary."

ScSEED staff immediately began to obtain information about what types of planning programs and assistance were available through the state and federal governments. "The state programs through Downtown Colorado, Inc. and the Colorado Office of Economic Development cost more than we had in our account for this project. So we decided because I had past experience coordinating large-scale projects, community organizing experience, fund-development expertise and strong communication skills, I would manage the planning process and not use an outside agency," remembers Kim, "with that said, I definitely want to use a team approach to managing the project. There would be no project without the support and interaction of the community members and partner organizations."

Extensive web research was conducted and examples of other small, rural and poor communities' efforts were reviewed. Kim recalls, "I spent a lot of time looking at the processes that other communities used to create successful downtown revitalization projects and decided to combine different elements of each of those examples." One element that repeated in each successful example was the need for a great deal of community buy-in and participation.

To be able to provide this opportunity to the Town, ScSEED would need to raise funds for the project coordination services. Kim Smoyer immediately began writing grants to support the SDRP. On June 16, 2008, Kim submitted a \$12,500 grant request to the El Pomar Foundation SLV Regional Council. She also applied for a \$10,000 grant from the local Saguache County Board of County Commissioners Sales Tax Fund. In the meantime, ScSEED would use operating funds already in-hand from other sources including the Saguache County Board of Commissioners, Anschutz Foundation, and El Pomar Foundation to begin the project.

PLANNING PROCESS - PART ONE

Step 1: Convene a meeting to form a public/private partnership and discuss need and desire for downtown beautification and revitalization efforts

ScSEED began with **Step 1**, as outlined in the original proposal to the Town, to "convene a meeting to form a public/private partnership and discuss need and desire for downtown beautification and revitalization efforts." ScSEED staff spent a large part of June and July spreading the word about this next step and asking community members to attend. Invitations were sent to all the proposed partners listed in the proposal. On July 28, 2008, ScSEED and the Town held a set of two meetings, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, to try and accommodate citizens' schedules. Kim Smoyer acted as the meeting facilitator. She was careful to make sure that everyone knew that revitalization was an option not a conclusion. "I tried to get across that we would only proceed with a revitalization effort if there was a substantial amount of support and interest on the part of the citizens, businesses, and other entities within the community," said Kim. A one-page survey included the following:

- 1. List the three (3) greatest assets of the Town of Saguache.*
- 2. List the three (3) greatest challenges or needs for the Town of Saguache.*
- 3. Would you like to see a downtown revitalization effort in downtown Saguache?*

4. Which statement(s) best describes your view(s):
 - 1). don't touch downtown Saguache, I love it just the way it is!
 - 2). we could use some beautification efforts, new sidewalks and lights.
 - 3). I don't want Saguache to become a big tourist town.
 - 3). we need more businesses and some economic vitality in this community.
 - 4). I'd like to see a lively downtown entertainment district in downtown.
 - 5). Saguache would make a wonderful cultural arts community.
 - 6). let's encourage tourism.
5. What types of businesses would you patronize if they were located in the Town of Saguache?
6. What improvements to downtown Saguache would make it a more inviting and attractive commercial district?
7. How often do you come to downtown Saguache?
8. Would you come to Saguache more often if there were more businesses downtown?
9. What further areas of improvement would you like to see in the downtown area?
10. What do you think can be done to encourage new businesses in downtown?
11. Would you be interested in becoming part of a downtown revitalization effort?

Fifty-five (55) individuals including community members, business owners, governmental representatives and non-profit organizations participated in the meetings held in July. In a town of a little less than 600 citizens, this was a good turn-out. There were twenty-four (24) partner organizations, businesses and government entities that agreed to participate in what was to be called the **Saguache Downtown Revitalization Partnership**. The Saguache Downtown Revitalization Partnership includes the following partners: Town of Saguache Trustees, Town of Saguache Planning Commission, Saguache Recreation Board, Saguache County Commissioners, Saguache County Public Library, Saguache County Credit Union, SLV Small Business Development Center, Mountain Valley School, Saguache Community Garden, Saguache County Economic Vitality Task Force (SCEVTF), Saguache Camp & Lodge, ScSEED, Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Congressperson John Salazar & Office, Town of Crestone – Board of Trustees, San Luis Valley Development Resource Group, San Luis Valley Council of Governments, Mirage Trading Post, Rick Barandes Antiques, Saguache County Business Association (SCBA), Saguache County Public Health, Villa Grove Trade, Town of Moffat, and Colorado State Senator, Gail Schwartz.

A total of fifty-seven (57) opinion surveys were distributed, collected and tallied (detailed survey results can be found at www.scseed.org). The survey results showed that ninety-three percent (93%) of the respondents said that they want to see a downtown revitalization project in Saguache; no one answered "No" to this question. In addition, a majority of respondents (67%) signed up to help with the effort. There was a clear demonstration of community support for this effort and an obvious indication to move forward with the planning process. "Had we gotten poor turn-out at the meetings and responses to the survey, we would have aborted the effort and offered the opportunity to some other community in Saguache County, but the Town of Saguache came out and supported the effort and we were excited to push ahead," recalls Ms. Smoyer.

As the "buzz" about the project began to spread through the community, other interested citizens and organizations came on board. Community members started thinking about the possibilities for the project and great ideas were proposed. A wonderful example of this presented itself in June 2008, when Katye Chadbourn, Colorado Preservation Inc. (CPI), staff-person contacted Margaret Finnerty at the Saguache Museum, and told her that Saguache County had been under-represented on the Colorado's Most Endangered Places list.

Margaret contacted Linda Joseph, Saguache County Commissioner and ScSEED board member, and Linda recognized how wonderfully CPI's program would fit with activities that were underway to revitalize downtown Saguache. In June 2008, Jonas Landes (Endangered Places Coordinator) and Katye came to Saguache and made a presentation to members of the Saguache Town Board of Trustees, Saguache Planning Commission, ScSEED, and members of the community (including several 4th Street property owners). The Town Board decided to nominate the 4th Street Business District at that meeting and subsequently approved that nomination at a Board meeting in July. Kim Smoyer and Laura Archuleta, Town Planning Commission member, were asked to prepare an application for nomination to CPI's Most Endangered Places List (for 2009). "I think going for the CPI designation was a key component to motivating the community to see more clearly the wonderful historical assets we have here in Saguache. They started to develop a deeper sense of pride in our community," said Laura Archuleta, Town Planning Commission member.

While working on CPI's Most Endanger Places application (due in August 2008), Kim found a reference to a survey report that was completed in 2000 called TOWN OF SAGUACHE AND COCHETOPA CORRIDOR HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY, by Front Range Research Associates, Inc in Denver, Colorado. She contacted the company and obtained a copy of the report. The data from this report was used to complete the final application to CPI, and has since proven very useful to the SDRP. The hope in applying to CPI's Most Endangered Places program for designation on the 2009 list was to bring some recognition to the Town of Saguache for its unique historical and cultural assets. In November 2009, Kim received a call from Jonas Landes informing her that the Saguache 4th Street Business District would be named to the Most Endangered Places list for 2009. "The announcement was a huge bonus to the SDRP. Town residents started to really believe that something was going to happen around here," recalls Ms. Archuleta.

PLANNING PROCESS - PART TWO

Step 2: Develop a goal setting and visioning plan

ScSEED, having completed Step 1, was ready to begin **Step 2:** to develop a goal setting and visioning plan. To this end, on September 29, 2008, ScSEED convened a second community meeting with the individuals who had signed up to participate in the planning process. At this meeting the results of the first survey were reviewed and the visioning and planning process continued with more community input. Specific outcomes from this meeting included the following: discussion of options for specific revitalization elements (i.e. sidewalks, benches, façade restoration, etc.); overall vision for the Town of Saguache – what areas will be affected; discussion of thematic approach to economic development (i.e. cultural, way of life, tourism, etc.); creation of a Planning Committee to work on the details of the project and to collect community input in order to begin to draft a rendering and architectural design model. "I felt it was important to set a very clear agenda with meeting outcomes but I also tried to remain flexible to let the meeting interactions steer the direction of those outcomes," said Ms. Smoyer.

At this meeting the group recommended that a second survey be developed using the improvement elements discussed among the group. This survey was called the Economic Revitalization Input Survey and it was distributed throughout the community.

Saguache Downtown Revitalization Project
Economic Revitalization Input Survey

As of 3/11/09 - thirty-nine (39) surveys were collected and tabulated below.

Infrastructure (already existing)	Beautification Ideas (new elements)	Other Ideas to Consider	Economic Vital & Tourism Ideas
27 Fix roads, gutters, curbs & sidewalks	16 Solar lights on 4th Street	7 Focus on 4th Street	10 Freebie publication with map of businesses info
24 Refurbish community building	13 Find alternative place for large trucks on 4th Street	8 Focus on Loop (285 - 4th Street)	12 Visitor Center
8 Better signage on 4th St.	11 Put up awning on 4th Street businesses	9 Use sustainable methods	13 Recreation Center
15 Tend existing trees	Enlarge intersections on 4th Street	13 Make it authentic restoration (real)	5 Chamber
15 Support a community garden	6 Add a median on 4th Street	12 Consider maintenance in plans	12 Create a draw -something to bring tourists
8 Bring more art to downtown	13 Plant trees on 4th Street	8 Put lights at street level	7 Link to other sites (PR)
3 Replace 4th Street	20 Install planters	10 Put electric underground	15 Farmer's market
2 Narrow 4th St.	17 Install pedestrian benches	10 Wi-Fi throughout town	4 Art Crawl
9 Invest in public infrastructure/bldgs.	3 Expand sidewalks on 4th Street	1 Make 4th St. commercial only (write-in)	16 Historic walking tour
6 Revitalize Post Office	2 Cobblestone the streets	1 Solar installation on town buildings. (write-in)	9 Use local sign makers
1 Recycling Center (write-in)	2 Cobblestone the sidewalks		17 Use local contractors, artists, professionals
1 Add pay phone on 4th (write-in)	5 Install bike racks		1 Offer help to existing businesses (write-in)
	11 Develop bike/walk paths		
	15 Recycling area		
	3 Install newspaper boxes		
	10 Add flea market vestibules in park		
	11 Add amphitheatre in park		
	5 Vacant lot into information area		
	11 Display with info about town & businesses		
	4 Mini-park		
	13 Info plaques at historic sites		
	3 Feature signs		
	8 Tree identification markers (yrr/type)		
	6 Directional signs		
	12 Informational signs on highway		
	8 Historic signs/kiosk at sites		
	14 Welcome signs		

“What we learned from the September meeting and subsequent results of the second survey, was that first of all, people did not want this project to be about ‘beautification,’ only, instead that wanted it to be about economic vitality and infrastructure improvements,” said Ms. Smoyer, “they also were adamant about the town not losing its authenticity and charm. The respondents and meeting participants were specific about not becoming a ‘cutesy’ town, like Telluride.” The results of the survey (see graphic above) broke down into several interest areas which included: Infrastructure and Physical Improvement, Economic Vitality & Tourism, and Historic & Cultural Preservation. These interest areas began the basis for sub-committees which later formed within the Planning Committee (PC).

A Planning Committee, comprised of thirty-four (34) volunteers, met for the first time on November 20, 2008. Discussion about the results of the surveys led the PC to discuss the need for a more comprehensive Action Plan that would include recommendations for the forward movement of the SDRP. At this meeting the committee reviewed the process for creating an Action Plan Recommendation document and decided to break into three Sub-Committees that included the following focus areas: **Economic Vitality & Tourism, Historic & Cultural Preservation, and Physical Changes & Improvements.**

At the PC meeting the following tasks were accomplished: formed a plan to break into sub-committees to focus on specific areas and begin to draft recommendations for each focus area; determined when each sub-committee would meet in December 2008 to begin the specific action plan steps; discussed when to reconvene the entire Planning Committee to review each of the sub-committees draft action plan recommendations.

Throughout the month of December 2008, the three subcommittees met; some a couple times. Prior to each sub-committee meeting, ScSEED provided sample action plan worksheets (see example below). “I asked a professional from each of the interest areas to attend a specific

Saguache Downtown Revitalization Project Action Plan Recommendations - Summary

Economic Vitality & Tourism	Historic & Cultural Preservation	Physical Changes
MEMBERS: Teri Rill Maria Archuleta Tino Archuleta Laura Archuleta (Planning Commission) Caroline W. Irwin (Secretary)(Grant Writer) Sharon Ray Gretchen Haller Barry Van Sant Tina Setma	MEMBERS: Carla Quintana (Town Trustee) John Sladek (Secretary) Kate Vasha (Grant Writer) Judy Page Trish Gilbert Jonas Landes (CPI) Laura Archuleta (Ad Hoc) (Planning Commission) Caroline W. Irwin (Ad Hoc) Don Geddes (Ad Hoc) Jan Duncan Martin Duncan	MEMBERS: Joan Wilfong Jeannie Norris Mike Norris Heidi Pacheco Mike Cassidy Lindy McDaniel (Grant Writer) Rick Barandes Marge Hoglin (Planning Commission) Marty Mitchell Jean Wilcox (Secretary) Kathy Geddes (Ad Hoc)(Planning Commission) Leigh Mills
Key Strategic Topic:	Key Strategic Topic:	Key Strategic Topic:
Develop a vibrant town economy that creates job opportunities suited to the local labor pool and expands and diversifies the tax base; accomplished through supporting small business development, expansion and retention and attracting new business investments that meet the desired town economic, social and environmental goals and objectives.	Capacity building, awareness and fundraising for authentic, genuine historic preservation efforts.	Design & establish an environment that will attract sustainable growth, business investment, highlight historic preservation, and enhance the quality of 21st century small town life.
Goal # 1- To promote a positive and unique town identity that positions Saguache as a tourist and business-friendly community with an excellent quality of life. Objective #1: Re-establish the Saguache Chamber of Commerce.	Goal # 1- Establish programs that will provide long term support for Saguache's Historic Preservation efforts. Objective #1: Obtain Certified Local Government (CLG) status for the Town of Saguache	Goal # 1- Revitalize the Saguache Business Loop by making physical renovations and improvements to the public streets and streetscapes. Objective #1: Repair and renovate 4th Street and surrounding streetscape. Objective #2: Identify and visually define a Saguache Business Loop (SBL) with such elements as signage, benches, and bike or walking paths. Objective #3: Rejuvenate, refurbish and renovate public buildings throughout Saguache.
Goal # 2- Improve existing and establish new facilities to enhance the lives of citizens living in Saguache and attract tourists to the community. Objective #1: Create a Saguache town "plaza" and visitors center. Objective #2: Enhance and expand the entertainment, recreation and town festival events using a seasonal focus and year-round approach; establish Saguache as an event destination community and preferred rest-stop for travelers.	Goal # 2- To rehabilitate strategic historic property(s) that provides a model for neighboring businesses. Objective #1: Create a model and mechanism to provide support to historic buildings throughout the Saguache community. Find a pilot project to start with in January 2009.	Goal # 2- To create a visual plan, including architectural renderings, for the revitalization of 4th Street and the Saguache Business Loop. Objective #1: Establish a "visioning" committee to craft a vision for the physical elements and improvements associated with the revitalization of both 4th Street and the Saguache Business Loop.
Goal # 3- Attract businesses to 4 th Street, the Saguache Business Loop and the greater Saguache area. Objective #1: Create a business incubator and support system for new and existing businesses.	Goal # 3- To designate the 4th St. Commercial District as a Historic District in Saguache. Objective #1: Obtain national/state historic register status for the 4 th Street Commercial District	Goal # 3- Create a model and mechanism to incorporate sustainability, energy efficiency, and renewable energy into the revitalization of Saguache. Objective #1: Provide energy programs that focus on 4th and are expandable to other areas in Saguache.
	Goal # 4- To establish an archive and repository for historical information and data for the Town of Saguache. Objective #1: Create a designated site at the Saguache Public Library to collect historical information about people, places and things in Saguache and provide public access year-round.	Goal # 4- Bring technological infrastructure to Saguache that supports continued growth. Objective #1: Bring Wi-Fi to the entire Town of Saguache.

With some minor changes, the Planning Committee was ready to present the DRAFT Action Plan Recommendations to the larger Saguache Downtown Revitalization Partnership. On January 18, 2009, the Draft Action Plan Recommendations were presented to the entire Saguache Downtown Revitalization Partnership and general public at an open meeting. Again, with some minor changes and updating the Planning Committee approved the DRAFT Action Plan Recommendations and instructed ScSEED staff to move forward with presenting the recommendations to the Saguache Planning Commission and the Saguache Trustees and Mayor. At this same January Saguache Downtown Revitalization Partnership meeting, ScSEED announced that both El Pomar Foundation SLV Regional Council (\$12,500) and Saguache County BOCC (\$10,000) had awarded ScSEED a total of \$22,500 toward the SDRP.

The DRAFT Action Plan Recommendations were submitted to both the Planning Commission and Town Trustees in January 2009. A special work session took place on February 16, 2009 at 10:00 AM at the Community Building in Saguache to discuss the details and answer questions. A few changes were made to the Draft Action Plan and the Abstract. They were submitted to the Trustees at the February 17, 2009 meeting and the trustees unanimously supported the Final Action Plan and Summary Abstract. (Final Action Plan documents can be viewed in their entirety at www.scseed.org).

Also in February 2008, Saguache Downtown 4th Street Business District was placed on Colorado's Most Endangered Places list for 2009. Several Town Trustees and Planning Commission members, along with ScSEED staff, attended CPI's Saving Places conference in Denver. During the conference, Laura Archuleta introduced Kim Smoyer to Colorado Brownfields Foundation staff member Deb Phenicie. The three discussed some elements of the SDRP and they determined that there could be some interest in partnering with Colorado Brownfields Foundation. Ms. Phenicie later made a trip to Saguache and has subsequently been working with ScSEED and the Town on the Hammel Superette piece of the SDRP.

At the conference luncheon, the 4th Street Business District was recognized with a 10-minute video presentation that was made in January 2009 with the help of several members of the SDRP including: 4th Street business owners, the Mayor, and ScSEED staff. A Large Endangered Places banner was presented to the representatives from the Town of Saguache; and CPI committed to provide technical assistance to the SDRP to help with the formation of a Historic Preservation Commission, that would work toward Saguache becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG); and inventory other historic buildings on 4th Street in order to designate part of the street a historic district.

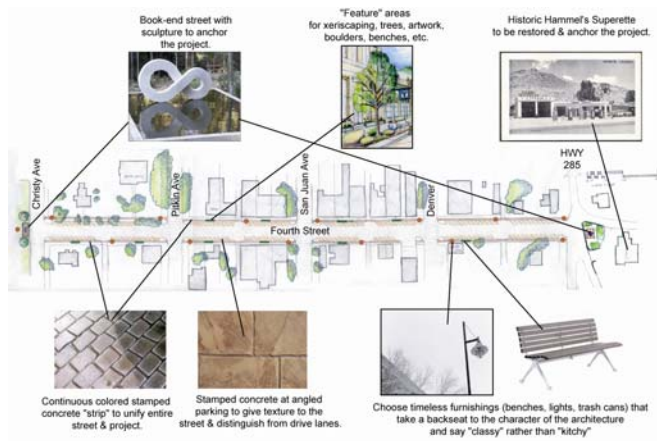
PLANNING PROCESS - PART THREE

Step 3: Create a vision – architectural renderings

With the Endangered Places listing and a Final Action Plan approved by the Town government, ScSEED was ready to begin **Step 3:** create a vision and architectural renderings. Saguache Town officials were ready to move forward with action steps laid out in the Action Plan including: becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) and creating a "Visioning" Committee to start drafting the actual vision for a renovated 4th Street. To this end, a community and partnership meeting was held on Thursday, March 12, 2009 at 6:30 PM at the Community Building in Saguache. This meeting was a first step in gathering community input into the visioning process – and also in finding individuals who would like to serve on this visioning committee. Approximately forty-five (45) Saguache residents and business owners attended this public meeting. Participants agreed that at least 10 people would serve on the Visioning Committee. At the public meeting, most agreed that a small committee was the place to start the discussion about what the renovation might look like and then the committee would bring their concept to the public for input and feedback. A diverse representation of community members, including seniors, youth, ranchers, business owners and 4th Street property owners, volunteered to serve on the Visioning Committee (VC).

The Visioning Committee met several times (April 8, April 20, May 4, 2009) to discuss what a 4th Street renovation might include with local, professional architect and planner, Laura Mezoff. The meetings took place at one of the volunteer VC member's home on 4th Street. Laura was able to walk through technical design elements and ideas with the group. There was a wide range of ideas and input given by the committee members, not always agreeing with each other. Often times a consensus would have to be found, making for some spirited meetings and some difficult negotiations.

ScSEED and the Visioning Committee presented the committee's conceptual plan to the public on April 11, 2009 for feedback and discussion (see graphics below).



We asked Saguache residents to provide input to committee members and we also provided a feedback form (which 18 people completed). This public meeting created a great deal of “buzz” around the community. There were some questions and objections that arose about the proposed plan. The negative “buzz” that followed the public meeting began to take a toll on the VC members. Often they would be approached to answer questions or address issues, which became very stressful for some of the VC member and even project staff. This led to a small breakdown within the committee. “I have to admit I got tired of hearing the negative buzz, especially since we heard from only 18 people, and only half of those were negative. The negative voices were strong though, the squeaky wheels in the community, and it caused both me, and committee, to grow weary. However, after a call to the Mayor, who reminded me that the trustees and he were supportive of the efforts made so far, I was able to rebound and rebuild the committee with a new directive,” said Ms. Smoyer. Other committee members reminded the group of the necessity of this kind of interaction. Lindy McDaniel, VC committee member, remembers telling the group, “It’s a normal group dynamic process to go from forming, to storming, to norming, to performing. We’re just working our way through that process. We’ll get there.”

The Visioning Committee, due in part to the opposition to the original conceptual plan, had several follow-up meetings (May 18, May 22, June 5, June 8, July 6, & July 13, 2009) to restructure and design another plan that took into consideration some of the public input and feedback. Discussion took place among the members as to how to deal with the public opposition. “We made a huge mistake here; we really should have addressed these issues right away, when they came up, to quell the fury. They probably would not have taken on such force had we dealt them straightaway,” recalls Rick Barandes, VC member, “we needed to remember that it was only a small minority of folks who felt this way, more people were on-board with our plan.”

As more and more discussion took place, new ideas and concepts were being laid on the table. VC members began to do some research on their own time, visiting other communities, taking photographs, and bringing data to the meetings to share with other members. For example, several members of the committee made a trip to Lake City, CO for a site visit. These committee members met with Lake City officials including the Mayor, Town Manager, DIRT and local business owners. They brought their ideas for using boardwalk back to the committee but after plenty of discussion the idea was rejected. After lots of information sharing and idea generation the committee created another conceptual plan to present to the public.

On July 18, 2009 the Visioning Committee unveiled Plan B renderings to the public at the Saguache Flea Market. Citizens were asked to provide feedback both verbally and in writing. The renderings were placed at Town Hall for public viewing and after several weeks the VC met to review the input and results from the Plan B unveiling. On August 31, 2009 the VC met to discuss what their final recommendations to the Town Trustees would be and to develop a strategy for the future implementation of the approved recommendations.

The following report was presented to the Trustees at the September 8, 2009 meeting at Town Hall. The VC recommendations for the renovation of 4th Street were unanimously approved by the Town Trustees with one amendment (to change the VC's recommendation of 10 foot sidewalks to 11 ½ foot sidewalks).

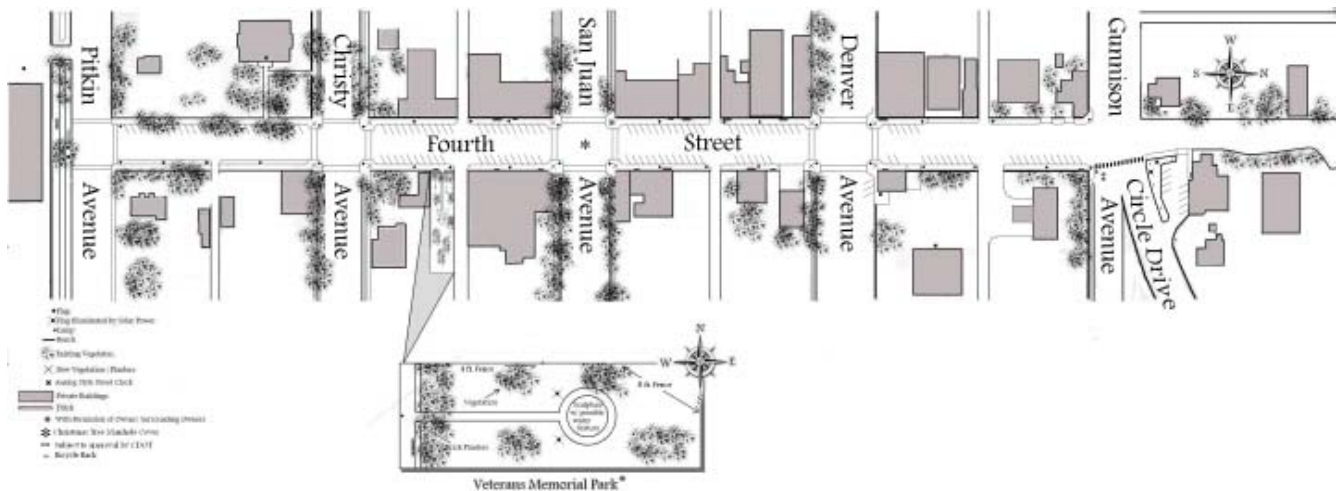
4th Street Final Design Concepts include the following:

1. Complete infrastructure renovations along 4th Street.
2. Eleven and one half (11.5) foot sidewalks that run the length of 4th Street on both sides of the street (leaving 60 feet of street space remaining for diagonal, designated parking and traffic flow).
3. Tear-shaped (plow-friendly) bump-outs on the corners of Christy, Denver and San Juan streets; including colored (or possibly stamped) concrete to distinguish cross-walks.
4. Planters on specific bump-outs that include greenery that is easily maintained, drought tolerant, deer tolerant, and provides some color (the VC has compiled a list of such plants and trees).
5. Water swales at the bump-outs that provide water cleaning and water planters.
6. Energy-efficient street lighting, down-facing at various sites, based on need and input from property owners on 4th Street.
7. Lighted flag pole at the Post Office with plantings.
8. Remove the south tree at the Post Office and reshape the north (larger) tree to work with the new sidewalks.
9. Incorporate bike racks in parking areas and some bump-outs (this is not reflected on the design below).
10. Incorporate benches and trash cans (based on property owner's input).
11. No fence on the north (alley) side of the "pocket" park. Contact property owners abutting the south/east side of the pocket park on screening options (fence or greenery).
12. Benches, tables, sculpture (with water feature) and gazebo in the pocket park. Add pavers to the adjacent alley-way.
13. Install a fire-light at the intersection of Hwy 285 and 4th Street with cross-walks.
14. Install an analogue-style clock at the north-west corner of San Juan.
15. Begin conversation (and negotiation) with Mountain Valley School officials to discuss placement of LED sign.

Approved Next Steps:

- The VC would like to continue to provide input through the design details phase of the project. They would like to continue to work with engineers/architects to choose specific elements of the design details.
- The VC requests that the Trustees make a timely decision and that we continue to work together to move the process forward.
- The VC recommends that the Trustees make personal contact with Bob Gydesen (and his company) for possible in-kind assistance (in addition to professional consultation).

- The VC would like some details about the bidding process required for obtaining an engineer/architect to move the process into the design details phase with professional schematics and engineering specifications.



PLANNING PROCESS – PART FOUR

Step 4: Implementation of the visioning plan

Throughout 2009 several action steps from the Final Action Plan were initiated. Below is a listing of the additional SDRP Action Plan outcomes that have been accomplished since the Action Plan was approved.

Physical Changes & Improvement efforts that have sprung from the Action Plan:

- The Town has signed a Letter of Intent with the Hammel family to begin investigation into a possible purchase of the Hammel Superette building at the north end of 4th Street. The Hammels have agreed to give the Town twelve months to try to obtain the funding to purchase and renovate the building into a Visitors Center and rental office spaces for a business incubator.
- ScSEED, on behalf of the Town, submitted two matching fund grants totaling \$20,000 for the support of the Physical Changes and Improvements goal implementation including: \$10,000 for matching toward the purchase of the Hammel Superette (Visitors Center) property; and, \$10,000 for matching funds for the renovation of 4th Street. These funds will be used to leverage other dollars from state and federal sources. The County Commissioners awarded the Town of Saguache \$10,000 to be used for matching funds toward the purchase of the Hammel Superette property site. The Town received \$5000 from El Pomar Foundation SLV Regional Council toward the 4th Street renovations.
- Colorado Brownfields Foundation completed a first phase and second phase environmental assessment of the site in November 2009. Final reports are on file at the Town Hall. An appraiser was hired and completed an appraisal on the property in August 2009; the Town received a final report in early September 2009. This is also on file in Town Hall. In 2010 the Town will begin negotiations on a purchase price and agreement with the Hammel family. At this time no purchase price or agreement has been signed or agreed upon.

- ScSEED (in partnership with the Town of Saguache) applied for, received approval and hired an AmeriCorp **Vista Volunteer**. The Vista, Devon Pollack, began working on July 27, 2009 at Town Hall. She oversees the alternative energy and solar development initiatives by working directly with the Saguache Planning Commission's Ad Hoc Solar Committee, Colorado Harvesting Energy Network (CHEN) and Colorado Brownfields Foundation. Devon has already collected a great deal of information about weatherization programs currently available to Saguache residents.
- The Visioning Committee has received final approval from the Town Trustees to move forward with the conceptual design. From April through September 2009 the Visioning Committee (VC) met to develop a conceptual plan for the renovation of 4th Street; their recommendations were compiled from months of data collection, site visits, public input and consultation with professionals. A final report was presented to the Trustees at the September 8, 2009 meeting at Town Hall. The VC recommendations for the renovation of 4th Street were unanimously approved by the Town Trustees with one amendment (to change the VC's recommendation of 10 foot sidewalks to 11 ½ foot sidewalks).
- ScSEED has recently applied for four grants (totaling \$40,000) to move the visioning phase into the implementation phase by obtaining a professional architect and planner to create schematic plans and cost estimates for the physical changes and improvements to 4th Street and to acquire and renovate the Hammel Superette property. ScSEED received notice that the Saguache BOCC has awarded \$7,000 to ScSEED for support of the SDRP (Phase II – Implementation) in 2010.
- ScSEED wrote a \$17,000 DOLA grant letter to support the hiring of a regional engineer (Williams Engineering, LLC), to complete the design development, construction documents, bidding/negotiations and on-site review of the 4th Street renovation project. DOLA awarded the full \$17,000 and as of January 2010 the work has already begun.

Economic Vitality & Tourist efforts that have sprung from the Action Plan:

- SLV Small Business Development Center Director, Donna Wehe came to Saguache on the third Thursday of the month during 2009 to provide free, one-on-one, confidential business counseling to any interested Saguache resident. By the end of 2009, she conducted 35 counseling sessions and met with over 40 individuals.
- Donna Wehe also hosted the Business Roundtable on the same Thursday that she came to Saguache. The meeting times varied between 12:00 and 5:00 PM each month to accommodate a variety of schedules. The following topics were covered: "Tax Tips for Businesses", "How to Start a Business" and "How to Finance Your Business", "Guerilla Marketing for your Business," and "Managing Your Credit".
- ScSEED coordinated the reestablishment of the Saguache Chamber. Members of the Chamber have met and have developed a strategy for moving forward with the Chamber goals. To this end, the Chamber initiated a Business After Hours (BAH) event. To date the following businesses have hosted the BAH: Dessert First Kitchen, Bear Medicine & Wellness Retreat Center, Nielson Real Estate, Hazard House, USPS, the Ute Theater and Grandma's Bed & Breakfast. Refreshments and social networking take place from 5-6 p.m., followed by a Chamber Action Committee report on their efforts from 6-7 p.m. BAH takes place on the second Tuesday of each month.
- ScSEED submitted and received a \$4,000 grant application (on behalf of the Chamber) to support several Chamber efforts including: logo design competition, tablet map production, and hiring a coordinator to move these efforts forward. Darryl Reinsel was hired to act as Chamber Coordinator and complete the goals established by the Chamber Action Committee. Darryl worked directly with ScSEED staff to develop a plan of

action for the Chamber during this six month period. He was able to accomplish the following action items:

1. Recruitment and development of the Chamber membership and individual meetings with business owners to determine needs.
 2. Organization of the monthly Business After Hours potluck meetings and speaker(s).
 3. Creation of a logo competition including rules and participation criteria, advertising the contest, collection of submissions, review of submissions (with other Chamber members), presentation of awards to winners (at Saguache Fall Festival).
 4. Development of a Chamber (and Town of Saguache) website including, website domain registration, obtaining web hosting, creation of website design for Chamber and Town, information collection from Saguache business owners for website content, and editing and content management.
(www.townofsaguache.org)
 5. Development of several business website sites for Chamber members; and links to the Chamber page for those who did have their own sites.
 6. Production of a Saguache Chamber business tablet map including, working with the graphic designer on the final printable map, obtaining price quotes from local printers, and final printing and distribution coordination.
 7. Assist ScSEED staff with recruitment of business owners to meet with Donna Wehe, SBDC, for counseling sessions during her monthly visits to Saguache.
 8. Attended valley-wide meetings of Chamber representatives to network and share information.
 9. Coordination and discussion with the Saguache County Business Association to discuss possible partnerships in the future.
- ScSEED submitted and received a \$2500 County Sales Tax grant to conduct a feasibility study on starting an Artist Co-op in Saguache. Local artist, Marty Mitchell has completed the feasibility study. Results from Marty's survey can be found at www.scseed.org.
 - At the SLV Energy Fair in late August, ScSEED announced the winners of the first Biomass & By-Product Innovation Competition and awarded two checks; the winner, Nick Chambers (Living Arts Systems) received \$3,000 for his Biogas Digesters and runners-up Frederick Dunets and Peter May (Windhorse Botanicals) \$2,000 for their fire mitigation wood essential oils. Financial supporters for this project included the Saguache County Commissioners (Sales Tax Grant) and El Pomar Regional Council through a special grant from the SLV Development Resource Group.
 - The Town of Saguache applied for and received a GOCO grant to acquire approximately 250 acres of land to create a recreational park; the project is called Vista Grande. There will be hiking and biking trails, camping and other recreational elements to the project. This may also be integrated into the Hammel Superette project which could include parking and kiosks (with trail information) at the Hammel property visitor center site.

Historic & Cultural Preservation efforts that have sprung from the Action Plan:

- The 4th Street Business District has been recognized as one of Colorado's Most Endangered Places through Colorado Preservation, Inc. (CPI) The 4th Street Business District has been placed on Colorado's Most Endangered Places list for 2009.
- CPI staff members have been working hard on inventorying historic buildings in Saguache. The work, inventorying an additional eight buildings for eligibility to the State and National Registers, has been wrapped up. The forms were submitted for review and comments to the state in March 2009. Once formally accepted by the state, CPI will arrange for a historian to visit Saguache and field-check the accuracy of CPI's work.

After this time (which could be 1-6 months), CPI staff would like to host a community meeting to present the findings and make recommendations for further work.

- Kate Vasha collected information about Certified Local Government (CLG) status in other communities in Colorado that are similar to Saguache. The Town used this information as a model to craft an ordinance to create a Historic Preservation Commission. Kate presented her findings at the April 20, 2009 meeting of the Town Trustees. The Town approved an ordinance to form the Commission and accepted applications throughout the summer 2009 months.
- The Trustees appointed the following members to the Saguache Historic Preservation Commission (HPC): Lindy McDaniel, Rick Barandes, Leslie Griffith, Jane Martin, Burt Wadman, Tina Serna and Kate Vasha. The HPC has met several times and is well on their way to crafting a Historic Preservation Ordinance and designating a Historic District for Saguache. Several members attended training in Breckenridge, CO to learn more about the CLG and their role as a Historic Preservation Commissioners.
- On October 3, 2009 over sixty (60) volunteers rolled up their sleeves and got to work revitalizing buildings in historic Saguache. The project was coordinated by the newly created HistoriCorps and by the Endangered Places Program, both initiatives of Colorado Preservation, Inc. Partner groups included the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Saguache Public Library's RSVP Volunteer group and the ScSEED. In one day, volunteers:
 - painted the facades of five commercial buildings of 4th Street (the Main Street of Saguache)
 - replaced four rotten vigas on two 1930s CCC-constructed historic Forest Service buildings
 - scraped and painted windows on the historic 1930s Forest Service garage
 - cleaned up vacant lots on 4th Street with pruning and mowing

The fact that all of these action steps were taken during the planning process demonstrates the power of a professional planning process. The Phase I planning process of the SDRP has been extremely successful due mostly to the congruency of all other actions listed above; and of course, teamwork. The strong foundation that was laid by this planning process has attracted a great deal of funder support and resources including: private foundations, government and even individuals. In January 2010, ScSEED received an additional \$7,000 grant from the BOCC to push the project into Phase II Implementation; with 4th Street renovations beginning, when funding is secured, in late summer or early fall 2010.

The learning history you just read and the following list of recommendations are based on interviews with eight (8) individuals who participated in the SDRP planning process. Their input on what they have learned throughout this planning process is valuable.

SDRP Planning Process (Phase I) Learning History RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Establish a clear and transparent relationship with the governmental municipality with which you partner. At the outset establish a set of goals and objectives from which to base the relationship.
- Immediately, up-front, get buy-in from the town governmental officials, the Mayor, the Trustees, the administrative staff, etc. You need to know that you have their full support and that they intend to participate fully in the process.
- Make sure, if you decide to do the community organizing in-house, to have a strong "champion" or project manager who has the comprehensive communications skills necessary to facilitate meetings, analyze data, attract participation, and is accountable to everyone involved. This is probably the MOST IMPORTANT thing you can do. It helps if they have thick skin and stamina too.
- If you do not have someone on staff to be the professional organizer managing your project, be sure to hire or find other professionals who can play this very important role. If they are local to the community, even better; and make sure if they are not local, you find someone who has a personal stake in the outcome of the project to act as champion in support of the manager.
- Take a team-approach to organizing and managing the project; success will depend on the ability of the project manager/champion to develop strong community support with town residents as well as other NGO partners.
- Do your homework, find out what other communities have done to accomplish their goals and develop successful downtown revitalization projects. Be sure to find example communities with similar demographic and geographic (household incomes, cultural, racial, and rural) qualities to your community.
- Try to organize meetings when the most citizens can attend; this may require presenting twice in one day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Find ways to accommodate the community members' wide range of availability. Getting a strong turnout at the outset of the project is a key component to its success.
- **Ask** the community if they want or need a revitalization project. Don't assume that everyone thinks it's a great idea. By asking citizens what they think, you are inviting them into the planning process; again, this is a key to keeping them interested and willing to support and participate in the project.
- Use other community outreach mechanisms to obtain community input, including: surveys, personal meetings with property owners, social gatherings, other community meetings, etc. Don't rely solely on survey results for making assumptions about the views of a community.
- Listen carefully and **acknowledge** those who challenge the idea. You may later get the opportunity to win them over to the project if you remain open to their objections and validate their opposition.
- **Start by developing strategic partnerships** with select and broad-reaching organizations. These should include: community members; NGOs; businesses; property owners; local, county, state and even, federal governmental agencies and departments; politicians, county commissioners, and local municipal department members.
- The partnerships you develop early in the process will yield large benefits as you get further along in the planning process. By having these supporting partners it helps to solidify and legitimize the project in the eyes of funders and other resource providers.

- Find out if there are ways to bring recognition and subsequent support to your revitalization project. Apply for awards, designations, and other forms of acknowledgment that will also help build a strong foundation of support and identification to the community and subsequently the project. It demonstrates to the community members that you are committed to the success of the project; they can also obtain a sense of pride from successful recognition that will encourage their involvement to continue.
- Consider breaking your larger groups of community volunteer participants into smaller groups. It is much easier to navigate through the maze of input when the groups are a manageable size (8-12 people).
- Set a clear agenda for community input meetings but remain flexible and open to the participant's input steering some of the discussion and ultimate outcomes. Hold your public meetings in community buildings like the library, town hall or other public facility with good parking and plenty of space.
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY** as meeting facilitator, do NOT lose control of the meeting flow. There will be citizens who have a different agenda; acknowledge their input, mention that this is an off-agenda item, ask them to see you after the meeting and move along! Community members who are there to provide input and feedback want meeting structure; but remember to let attendees contribute and stay present to the time and length of their remarks.
- If you have a committee member or someone at a meeting who is insistent on interrupting or dominating the discussion, try to get control of the situation. Seek out that person after the meeting and explain to them why you had to cut them off and ask them to be respectful of others who want to participate in the future. There are nice and compassionate ways to deal with difficult people. Some training might help.
- It does help maintain meeting control, to mention at the onset of the meeting that you will be interrupting and stopping people who drag the conversation into places it does not belong. Participants seem to be more self-conscious about their own behavior at the meeting if you mention this up front.
- Let the community input be your guide! **Listen** carefully to what is being said, objections, challenges, and what is being supported and presented by the participants in the process. Begin to develop your planning strategy and goals around what they are saying. Ask a staff member to capture input in notes.
- Try to get a good cross-section of community members to participate; not just the STP – Same Ten People. Don't forget to include students and younger volunteers in your committees and planning groups.
- By all means, bring in professionals with expertise to assist with the process. Architects, historic preservationists, contractors, planners, etc. Try to find these professionals within the community itself. It may be difficult in a small, rural and poor community, but it's important to look for them just the same. If you cannot find qualified local experts than turn to other regions or even the state.
- Any time you can feed people – Do it! By providing snacks and beverages at shorter meetings, and meals at longer ones, participants feel appreciated and valued for their time and contributions. It's a very small and easy way to say thanks.
- If community members are willing to host meetings in their home, take advantage of this. It is a nice way to keep the interaction informal and relaxed; people tend to share more in a homey environment. ALWAYS remember that these are volunteers giving you their time and input, so thank them accordingly and often. Also, provide whatever assistance they need to host the meeting (i.e., snacks, easel, paper, etc.)
- Networking with state-wide NGOs and resource providers is very important. These groups generally have information, technical assistance, expertise and sometimes funding which

they can provide to your project. Attend a state conference or workshop where you'll have an opportunity to network with these groups.

- When working with other professionals, who will be paid for their work, be sure to review and agree upon expectations for work to be accomplished. Clear goals and objectives will be important for maintaining a good relationship between the professional and the volunteers. Make sure they have time to work on this project; and that they are not just fitting you in between their other work.
- Ask volunteers serving on your committees to remember that this is a community project; it's not about personal agendas. This is sometimes difficult to do, but it could mean the difference between being pulled off track and staying the course.
- Don't let negative feedback (especially if it's a small minority of community members) steer you off course. There will ALWAYS be opposition to your project from someone; they are sometimes referred to as CAVE people – Citizens Against Virtually Everything. As long as most people (and your partners) continue to support what you are doing – stay strong, and push forward. If you do fall off the horse, try to get back on. Take responsibility for your role in the breakdown and present a strong and positive plan for pushing ahead.
- Think about personally meeting with CAVE people; ask them to get involved, give them some responsibility in the process, and try to convince them that we're in this together. They may end up surprising you and becoming your best ally.
- Consider one-on-one conversations with opponents. Find family or friends of the person and ask them to make an introduction or facilitate a discussion to address issues up front.
- If pressure starts to build or a committee begins to breakdown, remind the members that it is 'normal' group behavior and dynamic to: form, storm, norm and perform.
- Continue throughout the entire planning process to maintain a **high level of transparency**. Provide lots of information and visual examples of the project to the public by whatever means available including: public meetings, newspaper articles, newsletters, emails, listserves, websites, etc.
- Make sure that your public presentations fit your audiences. Don't overdo it with technical details, fancy technology, and information overload, especially if your project is in a rural, small community. Don't "dumb it down." Be respectful that there is a wide range of levels of understanding and aptitude in any given community.
- Be sure to continually report to the partners, especially the governmental entity with which you are connected. Attend a monthly town trustee or board meeting to report on the latest activities within the project. When a goal has been attained or a step completed make sure they have provided the appropriate approvals.
- It cannot be said enough, that the champion or project manager must be a go-to person; someone who takes responsibility for the entire process; someone people can go-to for answers to their questions, provide input and get feedback. This person will need to have a great deal of tenacity and consistency.
- From the beginning of the project it is critical to make sure that everyone involved, volunteers, partners, committee members, etc., knows that this is a process which may take time to fully complete. If you can lay out any timeframes at the start you should do so. Otherwise, be clear with people that foundation-building during the planning process takes time and the outcomes and implementation may be a whole other phase.
- Remember from a town government perspective, you are collecting valuable information about the needs and desires of the citizens of the community. The more people you can draw into the input process the better for everyone involved.
- It's important to have some tangible successes during the planning process. People get tired of talking, talking, talking about what might happen; they want to see results. Try to

create opportunities to show people things are happening. Organize a volunteer day to paint buildings on Main Street.

- Be very clear to absolutely everyone about where your funding is coming from; if you raise project funds through grant writing be sure to let folks know that. And, most importantly, ALWAYS mention and thank your funders at every opportunity.
- Tax paying citizens like to be clear about where their tax dollars are going. If you are using any tax money toward this project; be sure to disclose this information up front.
- Set an aggressive schedule for getting the process started and to keep it moving along. Try not to get bogged down at any one place along the way. Sometimes if the momentum is stopped or appears to the public to have stopped, or even slowed, you may lose some supporters and volunteers.
- Take the time to CELEBRATE your accomplishments along the way!! Thank volunteers, supporters, staff, community members and funders; make sure they know how much their assistance is appreciated!