Developing Park Business Plans

Center for Park Management
National Parks Conservation Association
Today’s Agenda

• Why a business plan?
• The six steps to developing a plan
• Creating your plan
• The detail sheets
• Timeline
• Bringing strategies to life
• Walk through a business plan template
Developing Business Plans

- What is a business plan?
- What is the purpose of a business plan?
- Business plan contents
- Business plan structure
- Benefits of a business plan
What is a Business Plan?

Management tool
- Do your expenditures match your priorities?
- How do you know if the park is operating fully?
- How can your park operate more efficiently?
- What are some of the best options for financial sustainability?

Communications tool
- What is the mission of the park?
- How do you accomplish that mission?
- How do you differentiate your mission from other parks?
- How is your park organized and what are its priorities?
Dual purpose of a business plan

**Internal**
- Communicate park priorities, goals and mission to staff
- Establish a baseline for strategy and policies
- Fiscal information for better management

**External**
- Define the park for outside stakeholders (e.g., visitors)
- Attract investors by demonstrating management effectiveness and sense of direction
Park business plans are modeled after private sector business plans, and every plan addresses six central questions:

1. What is your “business?”
2. How are funds currently allocated?
3. How have inflation and other cost factors affected the buying power of the park over time?
4. How well does current funding answer the needs and expectations of the public, government, and park managers?
5. If there are unmet needs, what are they and are they justified?
6. If there is a gap between funds and need, what is the strategy to fill gap?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>- How many staff work at the park and what do they do?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- What are the park’s resources?</td>
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<td>- Where do my fees get spent?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government agencies</td>
<td>- How are you spending your money?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Why do you need additional funding?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- How should we allocate priorities among parks?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What are your priorities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners &amp; Donors</td>
<td>- Why do you need my help or support?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What are your policies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local communities</td>
<td>- Why are they set up that way?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- How does the park benefit the local community?</td>
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Business Plan Contents

Where does our money come from?

- Visitor Experience & Enjoyment
- Facility Operations & Maintenance
- Management & Administration
- Resource Protection
- Commodity & Commercial Uses

Where has our money gone?

- Park Budget
- Other Government Funding
- International Agencies
- Entrance Fees
- Donations
- Compensation Fees
- Concessions

Where else can we get money?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Money Sources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Budget allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concessioners</td>
<td>Concessions Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>Philanthropic &amp; Other Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other businesses</td>
<td>Compensation, Licensing &amp; Other Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>Park Entrance Fees &amp; Voluntary Donations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where else do we get money?

- Good Question!
- Business plan process leads you there…
Business Plan Structure

- Introduction
- Manager’s Foreword
- Executive Summary
- Park Overview
- Historical Context
- Current Park Operations
- Financials
- Priorities and Strategies
- Additional Information
- Acknowledgements
Benefits of a Business Plan

• Identifies benefits of park to local community
• Clearly defines business of the park to managers
• Integrates financial strategic decision making with better financial information
• Improves managers’ ability to express park funding needs to stakeholders