



CAMPAIGN PLAN FOR THE MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY

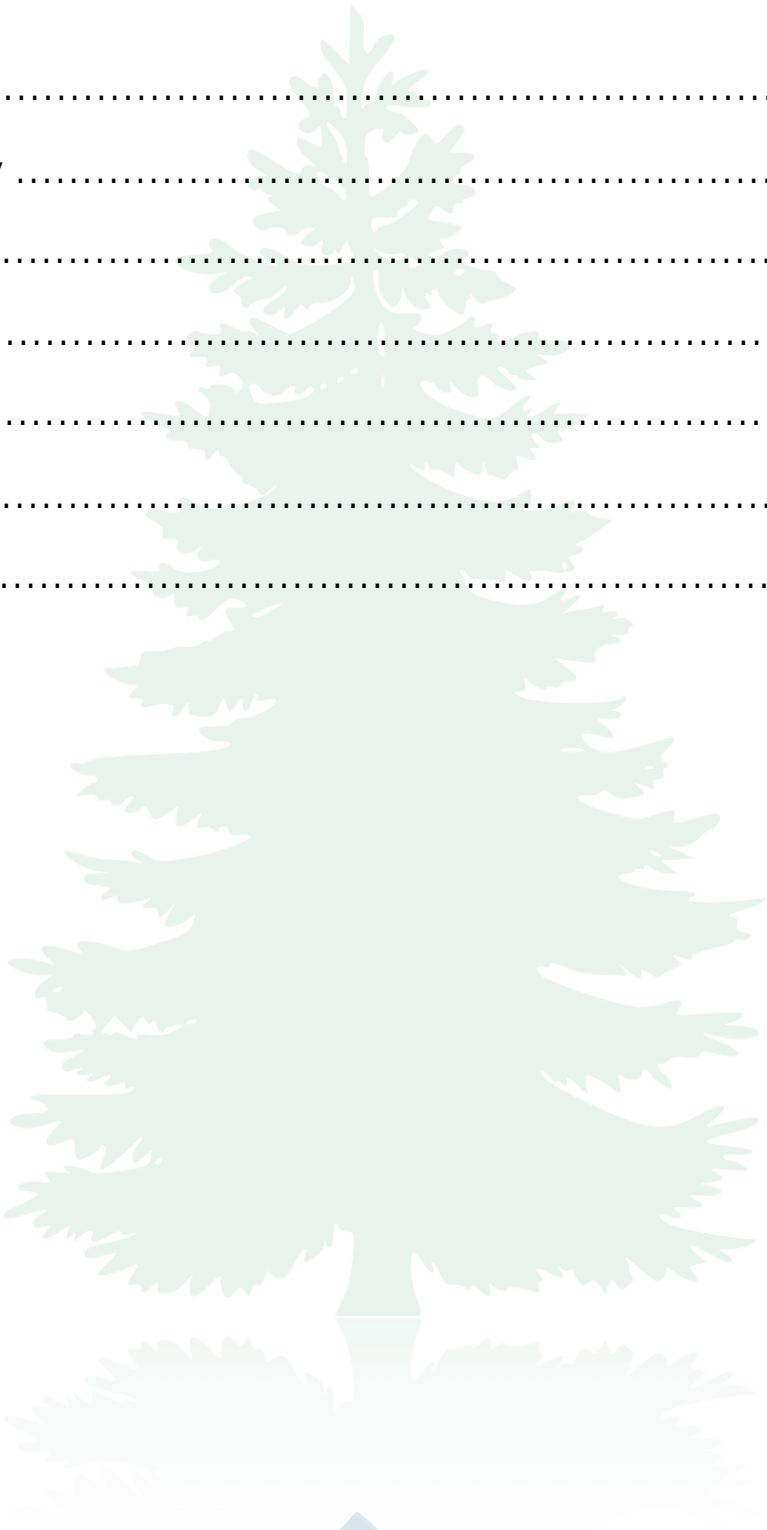
LACEY BROWN, MORGAN D'APOLLONIO, MARY HENRICKS, AUBRIANNA LOWRY, JACOB PUCKETT





Table of Contents

Letter to Donor	3
Executive Summary	4
Situation Analysis	8
Research Report	24
Campaign Plan	43
References	57
Appendices	59



Lacey Brown
Walker Hall 148
Appalachian State University
(704) 706-5233
Brownlr2@appstate.edu

December 3, 2017

Wendy Patoprsty
Middle Fork Greenway Project Director
Blue Ridge Conservancy
166 Furman Rd., Suite C,
Boone NC 28607

Dear Ms. Patoprsty,

On behalf of Generation-Z we would first like to thank you for taking the time to read our proposal for a public relations campaign featuring the Middle Fork Greenway. After months of careful research and planning, we are proud to present you with our final findings and ideas. We have made many recommendations concerning an integrated campaign for the Middle Fork Greenway that is designed to connect team members with High Country community members.

In the following pages you will find information concerning various aspects of the Middle Fork Greenway and potential steps that can be taken to bolster its fundraising initiatives. We hope that you will find our work to be thorough and well-informed as well as applicable to your vision of the Middle Fork Greenway's future.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to any of Generation-Z's team members.

Sincerely,

Lacey Brown, Morgan D'Apollonio, Mary Henricks, Aubrianna Lowry, Jacob Puckett

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Introduction

Generation Z presents the collective work specifically created to aid the Middle Fork Greenway in achieving their overall objectives and goals. After months of conducting primary and secondary research, Generation Z believes that “Keep the High Country EverGreen” will prove helpful within these following guidelines.

Situation Analysis

The situation analysis will dissect what our team’s goals are for the Middle Fork Greenway Round-Up campaign, and research into who and what could potentially be involved in the campaign process. The potential problem and opportunity is that perhaps there is a lack of understanding, education and comprehension of what the Middle Fork Greenway is and why we need it. Because of this, it could be difficult to raise the amount of money that the Middle Fork Greenway would like to raise.

Research Methods

Our research plan aims to determine many different factors, ranging from outdoor activities that research participants enjoy, to the amount of money they would consider donating to the Middle Fork Greenway project. An important task for our research, involves deriving an estimate of the amount of people who are, or are not, aware of the Middle Fork Greenway and the idea behind its construction.

Key Findings

The most significant of our findings gave us insight into donor habits and preferences, including what motivates people to donate to a certain cause. Our research discovered that people prefer to give to an organization or initiative that connects with them on a personal level. Topics relating to enjoyment,

an organization or initiative that connects with them on a personal level. Topics relating to enjoyment, knowledge, or most used platform used, in regards to the Middle Fork Greenway.

Target Publics

The publics that perhaps could be relevant to the situation are as follows: tourists, local communities, Appalachian State organizations and nonprofits in the surrounding area. Within these categories there is potential to expand on who would fit into each, but broadly speaking these are the potentially crucial publics.

Campaign Plan & Goal

The overarching objective of our campaign plan is to increase awareness and educate the public of the Middle Fork Greenway by creating an event during Blowing Rock's annual WinterFest. More specifically, we propose a figure skating show paired with "free skate" time directly following. Furthermore, we want to establish a theme of an 'evergreen future,' for the event which should be integrated into all campaign material. The concept of being 'evergreen' symbolizes Middle Fork Greenway's lasting relationship with the community as well as their commitment to nature conservation. The pine tree is a familiar sight to High Country residents and can be seen year round, making it a memorable symbol for public relations efforts.

Key Dates (Timeline & Budget Summary)

We are planning part of our campaign in conjunction with Blowing Rock's annual WinterFest, we must operate within the predetermined dates of the event. This year's WinterFest will run from January 25-29, 2018, with each day being full of activities designed to attract families, tourists and locals. A calendar is included in the campaign plan section that furthermore explains our timeline and final budget

calendar is included in the campaign plan section that furthermore explains our timeline and final budget costs of our endeavors.

Conclusion and Recommendations

After conducting research and evaluating the resources available to the organizers of the Middle Fork Greenway, Generation Z offers the following recommendations to assist the organization in operating a successful public relations campaign that generates both interest and funding for the Middle Fork Greenway. We recommend partnering with a local business in the High Country to aid in planning and implementing an ice show and “free skate” during Blowing Rock’s annual WinterFest. Our proposed event is designed to target tourists and locals, particularly those with children and will hopefully strengthen the relationship between the High Country community and the Middle Fork Greenway.

SITUATION ANALYSIS



Executive Summary

This situation analysis will dissect what our team's goals are for the Middle Fork Greenway Round-Up campaign, and research into who and what could potentially be involved in the campaign process. The organization currently operates a Facebook page and website that serve as public relations materials to inform the public and relevant parties as to what is happening with the Middle Fork Greenway project (Facebook, 2017) (Middle, 2017). Wendy mentioned that the organization has partnered with other entities in the community in an effort to raise money and awareness about the greenway (Patoprsty, 2017), and that future efforts include a Round-Up campaign in the month of July that could possibly include up to 200 local businesses (Patoprsty, 2017). This team will be addressing the public relations needs in regards to this campaign and will be developing a plan that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the organization. Our team will need to be prepared for a variety of obstacles that may range from campaign participation to general public relations crisis and issues. Perhaps, the more people talking about the Middle Fork Greenway and who understand the concept of the Round-Up campaign, the more successful it can be.

Problem Statement

The potential problem and opportunity is that perhaps there is a lack of understanding, education and comprehension of what the Middle Fork Greenway is and why we need it. Because of this, it could be difficult to raise the amount of money that the Middle Fork Greenway would like to raise.

Internal Factors

Mission:

The mission of the Middle Fork Greenway is to encourage a healthy community lifestyle for residents and visitors of Boone and Blowing Rock (Patoprsty, 2017). The close proximity to hospitals and areas heavily populated by tourists and locals allows for the greenway to be used for recreation, commuting, exercise and rehabilitation (Patoprsty, 2017). In addition to healthy living, the Middle Fork Greenway aims to facilitate economic growth by drawing more people to the area (Patoprsty, 2017). By attracting tourists and locals alike, the shops in and around Boone and Blowing Rock could flourish. While the economic and health benefits are key components of the greenway's mission, stream restoration, conservation and the growth of the trout population are also focal points (Patoprsty, 2017). The Middle Fork Greenway will not only create an ideal environment for many species of fish and amphibious creatures, but will help ensure the land involved stays undeveloped and protected (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). The trout population should flourish alongside the economy, drawing in fisherman and biologists (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*).

Vision:

The vision of the Middle Fork Greenway is centered around inclusiveness and growth. The Middle Fork Greenway will aim to be accessible to people of all ages and abilities. The greenway will be paved, allowing ease of access for bikes, wheelchairs, walkers and other guests with assisted mobility. By providing an easily accessible environment, it will allow people with a variety of different physical abilities to utilize and enjoy the greenway (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*).

Values:

As previously stated, inclusiveness is an important value to the Middle Fork Greenway (Patoprsty, 2017). Inclusiveness is what will hopefully drive the greenway's success and popularity. In addition to inclusiveness, the greenway values conservation and safety (Patoprsty, 2017). The Middle Fork Greenway will offer a safe environment for commuters by following along the busy 321 highway, creating a safe way to travel from Boone to Blowing Rock (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). In addition to providing a safe environment for people visiting the Middle Fork Greenway, conserving the streams and creating a safe environment for future and existing wildlife is also important (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*).

History and Structure:

The Middle Fork Greenway Association was started after members of the Blowing Rock community decided they wanted to better the area (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). With help from Sarah Riley's Appalachian State University Geography and Planning Project Management class, the idea to construct the greenway was feasible and their plan then acted as the foundation for early greenway construction plans (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). As word spread, the Middle Fork Greenway Association (MFGA) partnered with High Country Pathways to create an even stronger team (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). The first segment of the greenway was constructed by Tweetsie Railroad, with the help of sponsors and donors (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). The Middle Fork Greenway has grown in support, the following individuals are just some examples of the greenways support: BlueCross BlueShield, local businesses, private donors and state/federal grants (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*).

Funding:

Zapp Fitness has been a key supporter of the Middle Fork Greenway and continues to do so (Patoprsty, 2017). Zapp Fitness provides most support by funding their administrative costs and contributing to salaries (Patoprsty, 2017). In addition to the support of Zapp Fitness, many organizations such as Appalachian Ski Mountain have come together to raise money for the Middle Fork Greenway (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). Local business owners such as The Mast General Store have shown support by donating sponsor raised money to the cause (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area is also a key component in the greenway's impending success, due to the sizeable donation of land to the project (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*). BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina has also donated money to purchase land in hopes of using the greenway to better the lives of the community and their patients (Patoprsty, 2017). The Middle Fork Greenway Association (MFGA) has received a multitude of donations from private donors and sponsors as well (*Middle Fork Greenway, 2017*).

External Factors

Trends/Issues:

Outside of the organization's internal factors, there is a final draft of the Boone 2030 Plan. This document provides a way for the Middle Fork Greenway to extend a path within the means of the plan, such as watershed protection, and sustainable site planning (Boone 2030).

Relevant Environmental Factors:

Throughout the Boone 2030 Plan there are sections that discuss slope stability and water quality protection.

Competing Forces/Competitors:

Competing forces include community members agreeing to the Housing Choices section of the Boone 2030 Plan. In this section we are told the homeowners have the choice to not give away their private lands. This could potentially be an issue for the Middle Fork Greenway project because it would be necessary to switch to the alternate construction route, instead of the ideal plan mapped out now (Patoprsty, 2017).

Challenges:

Challenges reiterate the possibility that landowners will not be willing to donate crucial pieces of land to the Middle Fork Greenway. The Boone 2030 Plan encourages landowners to ‘protect individual landmarks’ which in turn may create a stigma against the organization asking to make use of the community’s ‘landmarks’.

Relevant Publics

The publics that perhaps could be relevant to the situation are as follows: tourists, local communities, Appalachian State organizations and nonprofits in the surrounding area. Within these categories there is potential to expand on who would fit into each, but broadly speaking these are the potentially crucial publics.

First, tourists are one of the four main publics that perhaps could have one of the largest impacts on the Round-Up campaign. This is because according to Wendy, July is the month in which Boone and Blowing Rock have the largest influx in tourists (Patoprsty, 2017). Of course, since this is the month in which the Round-Up campaign is taking place, their participation could be helpful in raising funds for the greenway. Their role could be vital, because in the Round-Up campaign we would hope that

tourists are a large majority of the people who are donating to the Middle Fork Greenway. The Watauga Democrat released an article that stated, “Since the town increased the occupancy tax rate from 3 percent to 6 percent several years ago, town ordinance and state law mandate that at least two-thirds of occupancy tax proceeds must be used to promote travel and tourism in the town, and any remaining proceeds must be used for tourism related expenditures, including capital improvement projects” (Oakes, 2014). If this is the case, it means that the town of Boone and Blowing Rock understand the importance of tourism in the area. Also, educating them on why the Middle Fork Greenway is good for tourism could mean receiving help with finishing the greenway, and therefore having tourist utilize it.

Second, local communities could be a relevant public in the Round-Up campaign. This umbrella category, because it represents many different types of locals in the community. These potential local communities are as follows: families, runners, bikers, walkers, hikers, skateboarders, first and second homeowners, medical professionals, medical patients, pet owners, elderly, outdoorsmen, commuters and the Boone Tourism Development Authority. Although tourists would be a crucial public in order to raise funds, we would most likely also need the support from our local community. These are the people who would perhaps be utilizing the Middle Fork Greenway the most, possibly more than tourists who generally stay for shorter periods of time than locals do. As of now, there is a minimal amount of greenway trail available to the local community of Boone and Blowing Rock, but studies show we could benefit from having more. An article on trail demographics states, “Research shows that trails are a preferred activity setting, and that persons who use trails for physical activity are more likely to meet the national physical activity recommendations than those who rarely or never use trails for physical activity” (Price et al. 949). The local communities role involves an ample amount of understanding and

education on what the Middle Fork Greenway is and why we need it. If we lack understanding and education within the local Boone communities, we could risk that tourists will also lack understanding and education as well, and therefore be less likely to donate. An example of this could be that local businesses do not have a solid understanding or education about the Middle Fork Greenway, and therefore do not do a good job explaining it during the Round-Up campaign when tourists visit their establishments. This could cause the tourists to not donate due to the fact that the businesses lack information to give them and to educate them on in regards to the greenway project and Round-Up campaign. Perhaps, people will be less likely to donate if they are unsure what they are donating to and why.

Perhaps the Boone and Blowing Rock area locals have the same goal as the Middle Fork Greenway, which is to attract more travelers, which would therefore benefit these towns economically. The Watauga Democrat states, “tourism-related expenditures” are defined in the legislation as “expenditures that, in the judgment of the authority, are designed to increase the use of lodging facilities in the town or to attract tourists or business travelers to the town” (Oakes, 2014). This article also discusses how Boones’ Tourism Development Authority council has say to which projects from a list they wish to help fund each year and support (Oakes, 2014). Lastly, of course it is also relevant to discuss the challenges within the Boone and Blowing Rock area locals as well. Wendy discussed how eminent domain does not apply in regards to obtaining the land to finish the greenway (Patoprsty, 2017). This could mean those who do not feel like they want to donate their land for the project, feel like they should in turn discourage the campaign all together. Discouraging the campaign could falsely educate and inform the public, tourists and others who might have been willing to donate to the Round-Up campaign

prior to any discouragement. Losing even a little support from the Boone and Blowing Rock area locals could hurt the campaigns' chances of meeting its goal.

The third relevant public to the Middle Fork Greenway and Round-Up campaign are the students, faculty and staff at Appalachian State University. Although these individuals may also fit into Boone and Blowing Rock locals, they have their own classification because there is a vast majority of students, faculty and staff who do not reside in the community full-time. Students, faculty and staff would be individuals that could utilize the greenway a vast amount. Whether it be for recreation or for class projects and research, the Middle Fork Greenway would be an outlet for all students, faculty and staff to take advantage of. Also, there are faculty, staff and students who do decide to live in Boone or Blowing Rock full time. Appalachian State University affiliates' roles could seem small, such as spreading the word and creating awareness of the greenway. But if our problem statement is correct, it is important to educate and create understanding which could be a major role of this specific public. The trail user demographic article stated, "Trail users most often learned about the trail through word of mouth (54.2%) followed by the newspaper (13.8%), some other channel not listed (10.5%), or driving by the trail (10.5%)" (Price et al. 953). The role students, faculty and staff at Appalachian State University play could be crucial in the success of the Round-Up campaign. For example, word of mouth can educate and help others understand what the greenway is and why we need it. As a relevant public, students, faculty and staff of Appalachian State University could also encourage consumers such as locals and tourists to look out for businesses participating in the Round-Up campaign.

Lastly, one other relevant public is local business owners. Businesses owners are perhaps relevant because their role would most likely be to pledge to be a business that "rounds up". The goal is

200 businesses in the Boone and Blowing Rock area Wendy discussed (Patoprsty, 2017). Without participating businesses, you really could not have a campaign at all, you would just have an idea. With as many businesses as possible on board and supporting the Middle Fork Greenway there would be a possibility of educating and helping locals as well as tourists better understand what the greenway is and why we need it. When asked to round up, it's likely customers want to know what they are giving money to. This could be an opportunity to use those in the community, like these businesses owners, to help people understand why they should "round-up" and support the Middle Fork Greenway.

PEST Analysis

Political:

Building the Middle Fork Greenway requires cooperation from both Blowing Rock and Boone, as the project will cross town borders. According to Wendy's client briefing, the land on which the greenway is to be built upon has to be donated from landowners or purchased through grant money. Eminent domain is not an option in this project. All land acquired will be used for greenway construction as well as protection and conservation of the area's natural resources (Patoprsty 2017).

In addition to the local governments, the Middle Fork Greenway must also work in coordination with local businesses for fundraising purposes and the regional healthcare system as their property is expected to connect with the beginning section of the greenway. The largest potential limitation at this stage is receiving the land donations necessary to construct the Middle Fork Greenway, which may prove to be difficult. With the amount of land left to acquire, there is large potential and need for education of the greenway and its many benefits. However, if the necessary land is not donated, there are backup trail layouts in place that will be utilized (Patoprsty, 2017). This means, that although more difficult, there are

different trails that have been created in case the original trail layout ends up not working due to lack of land donations.

Economic:

The construction of the Middle Fork Greenway is fully funded by donations and grants, with the majority of money coming from the Boone and Blowing Rock communities. All administrative costs, including the salary of Wendy Patoprsty are covered by Zap Fitness (Patoprsty, 2017). This means every donation given from individuals and corporations will go straight to greenway trail development (Patoprsty, 2017). Construction of the Middle Fork Greenway is expected to generate a high level of economic development between the towns of Boone and Blowing Rock, North Carolina (Patoprsty, 2017). The Middle Fork Greenway has the potential to bring in an abundance of new local and non-local businesses including tourist attractions and enterprises and is projected that 35% of greenway users will be tourists (Patoprsty, 2017). Furthermore, construction of the Middle Fork Greenway and its subsequent natural attractions have the potential to attract trout fishers to the area, further contributing to the local economy and conservation efforts (Patoprsty, 2017).

One mile of the Middle Fork Greenway, from Tweetsie Railroad to Sterling Creek Park, has already been constructed and the Town of Blowing Rock recently secured \$2 million in grant money to construct the next 1.3 mile segment (Thomas, 2017). At this juncture, a remaining \$100,000 is needed to match the awarded grant money and continue with trail development (Patoprsty, 2017). The money must come as private donations from individuals or corporations, with the potential for naming rights of various greenway elements via certain donation tiers (Patoprsty, 2017). A potentially lucrative Round-Up campaign is set to take place in the Town of Boone in July 2018 that will encourage shoppers at almost

200 local businesses to round up their total purchase and donate the difference to greenway development (Patoprsty, 2017). The Round-Up campaign is still in the early development stages with 33 businesses on board and has a large potential for creative development expansion (Patoprsty, 2017). If the Round-Up campaign is successful, the Middle Fork Greenway could potentially secure thousands of dollars in donations and substantially increase project awareness within the community (Patoprsty, 2017).

Social:

According to Wendy's client briefing, the Middle Fork Greenway is designed with full accessibility in mind. People of all age and ability ranges will be able to enjoy the greenway and its many biking, hiking and walking trails. Furthermore, the greenway is an all-inclusive space so people of all demographics are welcome however, tourists and families are a potentially valuable audience of which to appeal.

As the Middle Fork Greenway is designed to connect the towns of Boone and Blowing Rock, it could be pertinent to the success of this project to involve both of the communities in education and awareness. Due to the highly inclusive nature of this project, it may be beneficial to focus PR campaign efforts around families and tourists as they are expected to be high users of the Middle Fork Greenway as well as key populations to consider for donations (Patoprsty, 2017). Since awareness of this project may be limited in the Boone and Blowing Rock communities, focusing campaign efforts for tourists and families could allow for a much more intentional message, thus maximizing audience reach. A limited social reach comes with many creative opportunities designed to heighten education and awareness.

Technological:

One of the main goals of building the Middle Fork Greenway is conservation of the land and water in and around the greenway as well as preserving the natural beauty of the area. Technology specifically designed for soil and water preservation will be used in the construction and development of the greenway, including soil stakes and increased population (Patoprsty, 2017). The Middle Fork Greenway was recently featured in the Watauga Democrat concerning their securing of a \$2 million grant. This, combined with semi-regular social media posts, creates a potential opportunity to increase the scope of awareness in the community. Perhaps a coordinated social media campaign could run in conjunction with the Round-Up campaign to maximize the reach of the information, but more research is needed to better understand how technology will affect this project (Facebook, 2017).

Current Situation

Current Position:

The organization has undertaken subtle public relations efforts to promote and generate awareness about the Middle Fork Greenway project. Some efforts include creating stickers and koozies, as well as creating a website for general information on the Middle Fork Greenway or how to donate. The organization maintains an active Facebook page that has roughly 800 followers (Facebook, 2017). In addition to Facebook, the organization has a very informative and user friendly website that comprehensively breaks down the many aspects of constructing the greenway. Users seeking out information about the Middle Fork Greenway project will find ample resources (Middle, 2017). The organization has partnered with local entities, such as Appalachian Ski Mountain to host fundraising events, which helps with raising awareness in the community (Patoprsty, 2017).

Through this project, the organization will be taking an effort to address this issue. By partnering with local businesses and publics in a Round-Up campaign, knowledge about the Middle Fork Greenway project should increase in both communities and the county as a whole.

Direction:

According to Wendy in the client briefing, funding for the project is based on donations and state/federal grants (Patoprsty, 2017). This factor leaves the client with two main issues that need to be addressed. The first issue is funding. The organization must raise sufficient funds in order to keep the project on schedule. The second issue is awareness. Generating more public engagement about the greenway will be crucial in order to ensure that the first problem of funding does not become a larger than necessary challenge.

The campaign will need to address both of these issues. A Round-Up campaign will possibly address the first issue, but it is important for the campaign to ensure that a maximum public relations effort regarding the Round-Up campaign is met. If the public is unaware of the Round-Up campaign, we foresee a possible lack in campaign participation as a result.

Perhaps the way to address these issues is generate more PR through material such as video/visual content. This could mean something simple such as more social media efforts, or something more complex such as sponsored activities that the Boone and Blowing Rock community can participate in. An example of visual content already utilized by the Middle Fork Greenway is a video Wendy showed during the client briefing that was informative and laid out the project in an overview (Middle, Vimeo). Similar content may be engaging to future interested parties.

Creating a sense of community and a conversation through the implementation of the Round-Up campaign will be key. A study found that most people learned about the trail/greenway system in Greenville County, South Carolina by word of mouth (Price, 954). Interactions and education might be two important pieces to ensure that the Middle Fork Greenway team finds success with the Round-Up campaign.

Potential Obstacles:

Potential problems may include producing content or materials for an unspecified amount of participants. Wendy suggested that upwards of 200 businesses may participate in the Round-Up campaign, but we currently do not have an indication that this number is final (Patoprsty, 2017). Size and scope can have an impact on the message and method of delivery. Similarly, generating public relations materials that can inform and encourage participation from consumers in participating businesses may also be an obstacle. With as many as 200 businesses expected to participate, the planning process may have to address whether or not messages and materials are different for certain participating business types, or universal. Also, which of these options has more upside and less flaws? Additionally, any unforeseen public relations issues may arise, such as resentment for the campaign and bad press. Any unexpected circumstances could alter the approach, planning or execution of any public relations campaign put forth in this class.

Resources:

Resources for planning and implementing this campaign include Wendy, the Middle Fork Greenway website, social media platforms for the Middle Fork Greenway and feedback/interaction with local businesses that plan on participating in the Round-Up campaign. More resources may be available

in the future, but for now, these resources seem most apparent and relevant to the planning process. Perhaps gauging public interest and collecting data for the Round-Up campaign and the greenway in general could be useful in understanding how to plan and how to implement those plans.

References:

- “Facebook.” *Middle Fork Greenway*, www.facebook.com/middleforkgreenway/. Accessed 15 Sept. 2017.
- Middle Fork Greenway*, 2017, <https://www.middleforkgreenway.org>.
- "Middle Fork Greenway." *Vimeo*, 2017, <https://vimeo.com/188920657>.
- Oakes, Anna. “Boone TDA wants bigger tourism projects.” *Watauga Democrat*, 7 Oct. 2014, www.wataugademocrat.com/news/boone-tda-wants-bigger-tourism-projects/article_35110fe3-9b1a-52ab-a269-fa2765efdd09.html. Accessed 15 Sept. 2017.
- Patoprsty, Wendy. Personal interview. 30 Aug. 2017.
- Price, Anna E. et al. "Trail User Demographics, Physical Activity Behaviors, And Perceptions Of A Newly Constructed Greenway Trail." *J Community Health*, 2011, p. 954. doi:10.1007/s10900-011-9530-z.
- Sherrill, Thomas. “Blowing Rock nets \$2M grant for Middle Fork Greenway.” *Watauga Democrat*, 29 Aug. 2017, wataugademocrat.com/news/blowing-rock-nets-m-grant-for-middle-fork-greenway/article_13426c0b-b2c9-5c43-9b8c-1cedb530673f.html. Accessed 13 Sept. 2017.
- Boone 2030*. Project Advisory Committee, *BooneReportFinalBook110609(3).pdf*. Accessed 15 Sept. 2017.

RESEARCH FINDINGS REPORT

Executive Summary

Our research plan aimed to determine many different factors, ranging from outdoor activities that research participants enjoy, to the amount of money they would consider donating to the Middle Fork Greenway project. An important task for our research, involves deriving an estimate of the amount of people who are, or are not, aware of the Middle Fork Greenway and the idea behind its construction. If so, what is the likelihood of the individual to donate a sum of money, regardless of how small or large, identify attitudes about the greenway, and determine potential roadblocks and/or routes for success. Overall, through analysis and data interpretation, we provided the Middle Fork Greenway team with guidance and insight for an effective fundraising plan.

The most significant of our findings gave us insight into donor habits and preferences, including what motivates people to donate to a certain cause. Our research discovered that people prefer to give to an organization or initiative that connects with them on a personal level. Furthermore, it was emphasized by most respondents that they need to have a good understanding of how their money will be used as well as a significant amount of trust in an organization to use their money responsibly. Another significant finding was a higher amount of tourists visiting the area in the fall rather than the summer, as originally thought by the Middle Fork Greenway. Lastly, we discovered that Facebook and Instagram were the most popular social media platforms used by respondents.

Our official recommendations for the Middle Fork Greenway's "Round-Up" campaign is to focus PR efforts on social media to Facebook, given the high amount of people who preferred using the site. When designing the "Round-Up" campaign itself, Middle Fork Greenway should stress the

ways in which donor money is used. In other words, it should be made very clear to donors that all donations will directly fund trail development. Finally, centering the campaign around appealing to families with children and pets, would likely prove more successful than a campaign focused on other target publics.

Introduction

In order to successfully plan a PR campaign that accomplishes the financial and communal goals expressed by the Middle Fork Greenway, we conducted a collaborative, class-wide survey. This survey was used to collect critical information to the campaign's success and allow us to better understand the community's needs and desires. The following pages present the findings of both qualitative and quantitative research in addition to our analysis, interpretation and official campaign recommendations as derived from the data collected. Participants were asked 32 questions regarding daily life in Boone/Blowing Rock, willingness to donate and expectations of the Greenway. The survey was launched on September 29, 2017 and generated over 300 completed responses by October 17, 2017.

In addition to the online survey, Generation Z PR conducted a variety of interviews to supplement survey data with a deeper and more nuanced understanding of our selected target publics. Interviews featured a mix of people from our target publics including tourists, full and part-time residents of Boone and Blowing Rock, and Appalachian State University students.

Research Plan

Research Goal(s): In order to best assist the organizers of the Middle Fork Greenway project, we gauged multiple factors within our target audiences using both quantitative and

qualitative research methods. Our goal was to answer essential questions regarding the Middle Fork Greenway project, and to provide a cohesive document that derives data from our previously identified target publics.

Research Questions: Through our research, we sought to determine a variety of answers regarding the Middle Fork Greenway project. Generally speaking, we needed to determine the level of awareness among our target audience of the Middle Fork Greenway, likeliness to use the greenway, outdoor activities that interest people the likelihood of an individual to donate to the Middle Fork Greenway project. Furthermore, we needed to determine how much, if any, individuals would be willing to donate to the Greenway.

Research Objectives: Objectives for our research were as follows:

- Gauge the degree to which participants in the study are aware of the Middle Fork Greenway project.
- Determine attitudes and perceptions of the Middle Fork Greenway.
- Establish the likelihood of donating to the project and a potential average donation level.
- Identify potential limiting factors for the Middle Fork Greenway project.
- Determine the potential success of a "Round-Up" fundraising campaign for the Middle Fork Greenway.

Methodology

Overview:

- *Quantitative:* Quantitative data was collected via a survey designed to assess media uses and habits in addition to attitudes and perceptions concerning the Middle Fork Greenway. The questionnaire was created as a class and distributed to peers, coworkers, relatives, etc. and received over 300 responses. All questions were approved by Wendy Patoprsty and Matthew VanDyke before distribution.
- *Qualitative:* Qualitative data was collected via face-to-face interviews which were audio-recorded and then transcribed. Interviews were performed to complement the quantitative data and to gain a better understanding of our selected target publics. Audio recordings were later detailed to maintain confidentiality and all participants remained anonymous. All questions were approved by the Wendy Patoprsty and Matthew VanDyke before interviews could proceed.

Population:

- *Qualitative and Quantitative Population:* The target populations used in the research process for both research methods were people that live in, or frequent the Boone-Blowing Rock area. We sought out participants in the following demographics: tourists, part-time residents, full-time residents and students. The entire population included residents of Boone (18,834) and Blowing Rock (1,288) (*United States Census Bureau*), Appalachian State students (18,811) (appstate.edu) and local businesses/owners (121). It should be noted that tourists were included in our

population, but it is unknown how many people visit Boone/Blowing Rock annually and do not fall into another, more accurate demographic listed above.

Sample & Sampling Technique:

- Quantitative: A convenience sample was used, meaning the questionnaire was distributed among classmates' peers, relatives, coworkers, etc. Many classmates recruited participants via social media by posting in Facebook groups with high amounts of college students and locals. Participant responses were entirely voluntary and no incentives were used to net more participants. 16.4% of participants identified as male, 81.1% identified as female and 2.46% preferred not to answer. Participants' age ranged from 18-97 with an average age of 35.5 years.
- Qualitative: A convenience sample was also used when recruiting interview participants. Generation Z chose to interview family and friends that satisfied the aforementioned target publics for convenience and because they were more likely to give genuine and in-depth responses than strangers. Generation Z requested these interviews in person in an effort to get insightful and accurate responses. Responses were entirely voluntary and no incentives were given.

Instrument:

- Quantitative: A questionnaire was constructed as a class, with every classmate participating in the design, construction and organization of questions. The final version included 32 questions and featured a variety of responses including multiple choice and short answer. A few questions featured diagrams of the Middle Fork

Greenway to provide further context. Overall, the questionnaire collected data regarding awareness of the greenway and it's goals, role in the community, extra curricular habits, and residency information.

- Qualitative: This data was collected in the form of interviews conducted by each of Generation Z's team members. Interview questions closely mimicked survey questions and provided a deeper understanding of attitudes and perceptions concerning the Middle Fork Greenway. Interviewee's were informed that they were being audio-recorded and all responses were entirely voluntary. The interview started with general questions concerning media habits and preferences and moved to more specific questions about attitudes and perceptions of the Middle Fork Greenway. Finally, questions were asked about previous donations made to organizations and initiatives, likelihood of donating to the Middle Fork Greenway and a dollar amount for any potential donors. Interview ended by thanking the interviewee for their time. See Appendix A for interview protocol.

Data Collection Procedures:

- Quantitative: The questionnaire was launched on Sept. 29, 2017 and generated 323 completed responses by Oct. 17, 2017. All survey data was collected and recorded via Qualtrics.com, a research and survey site and distributed amongst class members. Classmates actively recruited participants via social media until Oct. 17, 2017 when the questionnaire was closed to the public.

- Qualitative: Interviews were scheduled shortly after the questionnaire was made available to the public for a time and location that was convenient for the respondent, mostly in a casual and private setting. Interviews lasted about 15 minutes but varied by length and depth of responses. Interviews began with a statement ensuring privacy and the interviewee's right to deny any question asked. Between Oct. 1 and Oct. 10, 2017 interviews were held and recorded and then transcribed shortly after.

Data Analysis:

- Quantitative: All quantitative data was compiled via Qualtrics.com and then downloaded into one, cohesive Excel spreadsheet, which was distributed to the class. Generation Z focused largely on donor habits and likelihood to give allowing team members to focus their analysis and efforts on data that would aid in increasing donations and funding. The data from the questionnaire was interpreted as a group and all group members participated in extracting meaning from the raw results. Finally, graphs and/or charts were created from the data to allow for a more digestible means of reading our results.
- Qualitative: All interview transcriptions were printed and manually coded for similar concepts and responses found in each of the eight documents. Team members then discussed as a group the significance of certain trends and how they compared to quantitative data findings. Specific quotes were pulled from the interviews to further explain certain findings and add more detail to our interpretation, all of which can be found below.

Findings

Quantitative Summary:

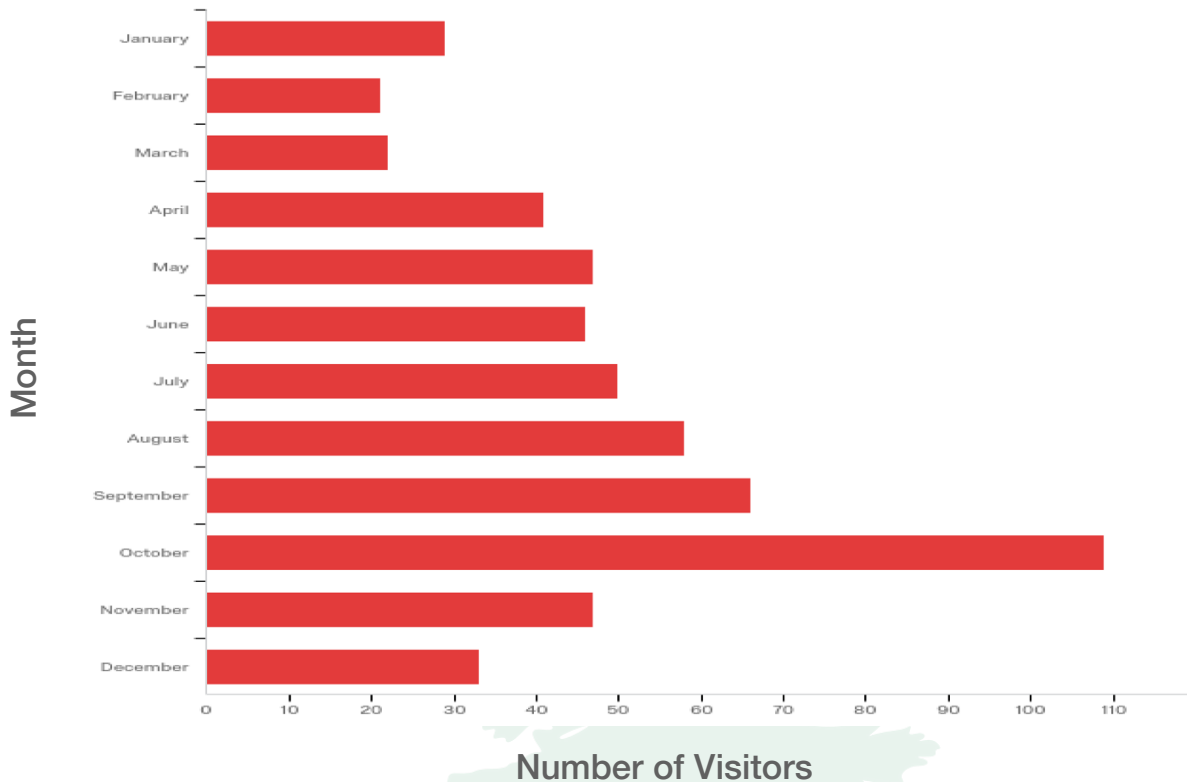
The quantitative research covered demographics, media usage and current attitudes of those being interviewed. The qualitative research revealed many interesting discoveries, some of which could be helpful for the "Round-Up" campaign, and Middle Fork Greenway project as a whole. The questionnaire received more participation from visitors, tourists and college students than any other group of participants. There was not as much participation from seasonal residents and local business owners. There were many participants who were not even aware of The Middle Fork Greenway or its objectives, and therefore had little insight on what the greenway aims to offer. These are important aspects to remember when reviewing the specific findings of the data received from the questionnaire and planning our campaign.

Specific Findings:

- As demographics are concerned, more tourists and visitors took the questionnaire than any other group, making up 37.38% of responses. This was followed by college students at 34.71%, year-round residents at 24.03%, local business owners at 2.18% and finally seasonal residents at 1.7%. The majority of people who took the questionnaire were female, 81.15% to be exact. This left 16.39% as male, and 2.46% who preferred not to answer. It is also important to note that respondents could place themselves in more than one category.
- According to the data, October is the month that most tourists reported visiting the area, which is illustrated in the following graph.

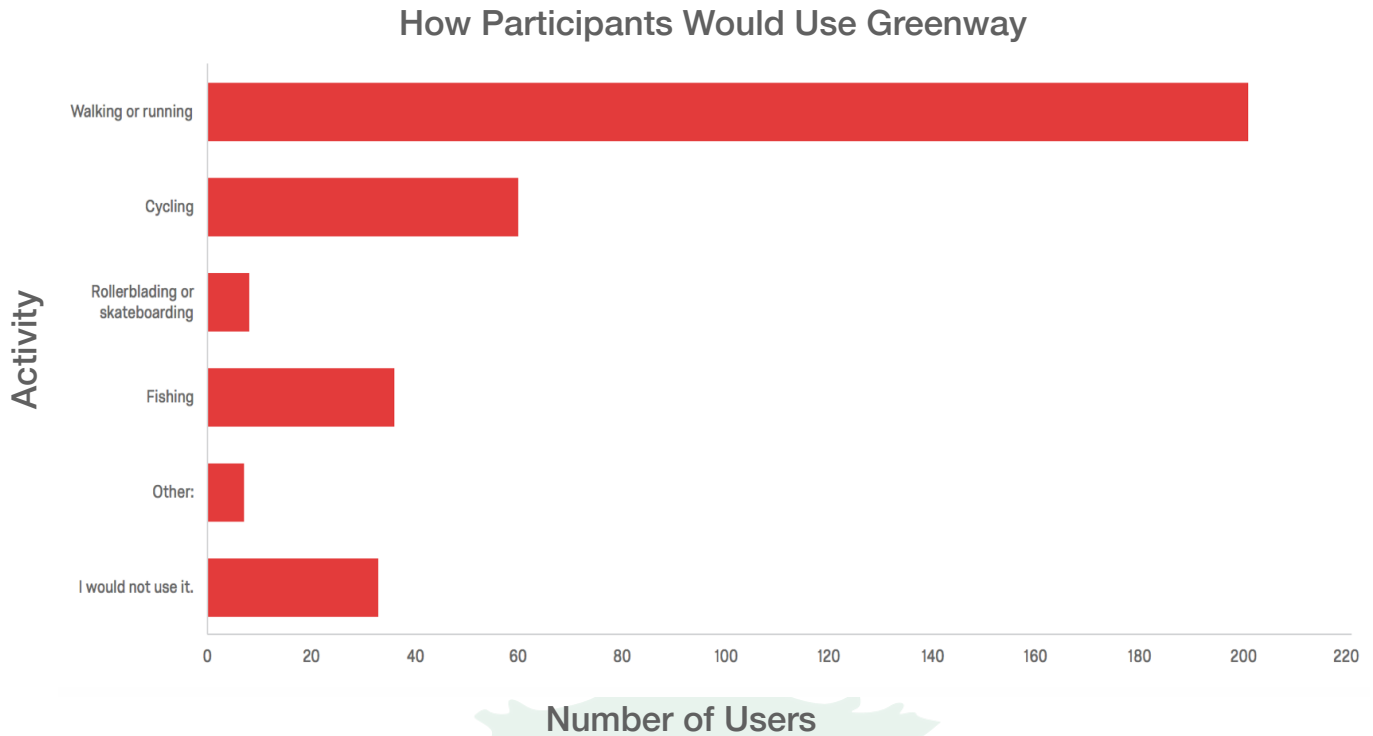


When Tourists Report Visiting Boone/Blowing Rock



- While asked what outdoor or recreational activities they enjoy, four activities ranked higher than the rest. The information was collected as follows: 15.58% of people selected walking and or running, 15.05% of people selected hiking, 13.40% of people selected picnicking and 10.92% of people selected rafting canoeing or tubing. A question which relates closely to this one was asked to see how individuals who utilize the Middle Fork Greenway. As Graph 2 demonstrates, over half, 58.26% of people, said they would use the greenway for walking and or running. The data for this graph can be seen below.

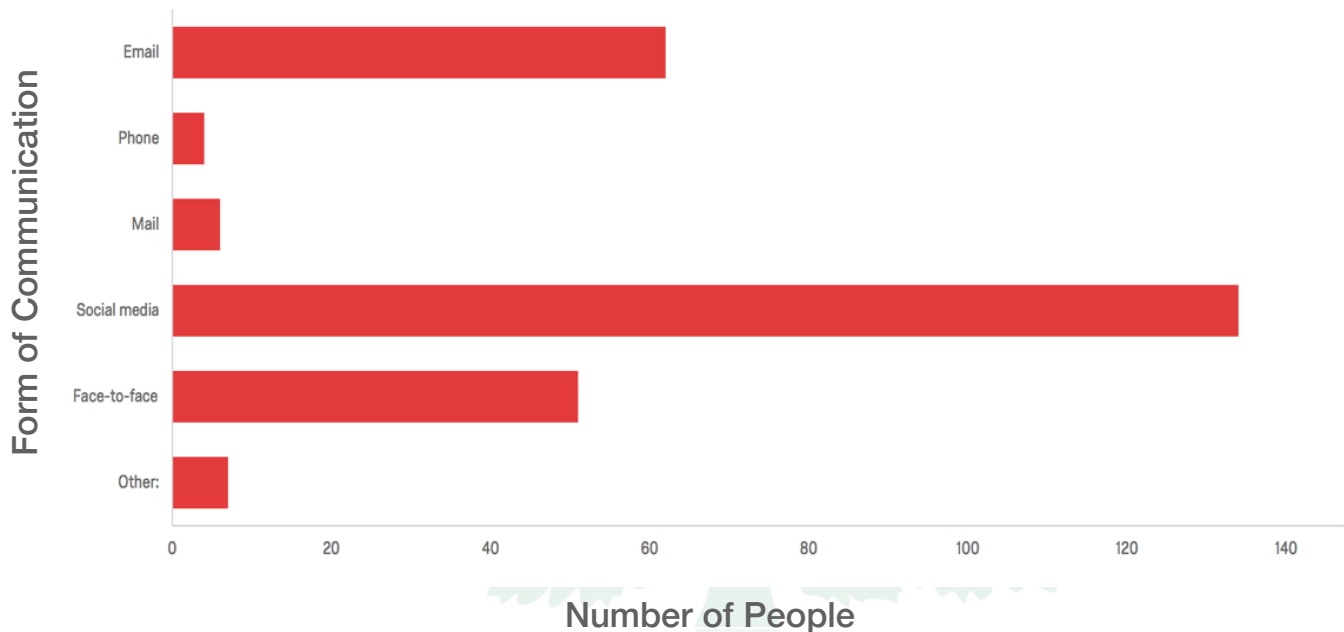




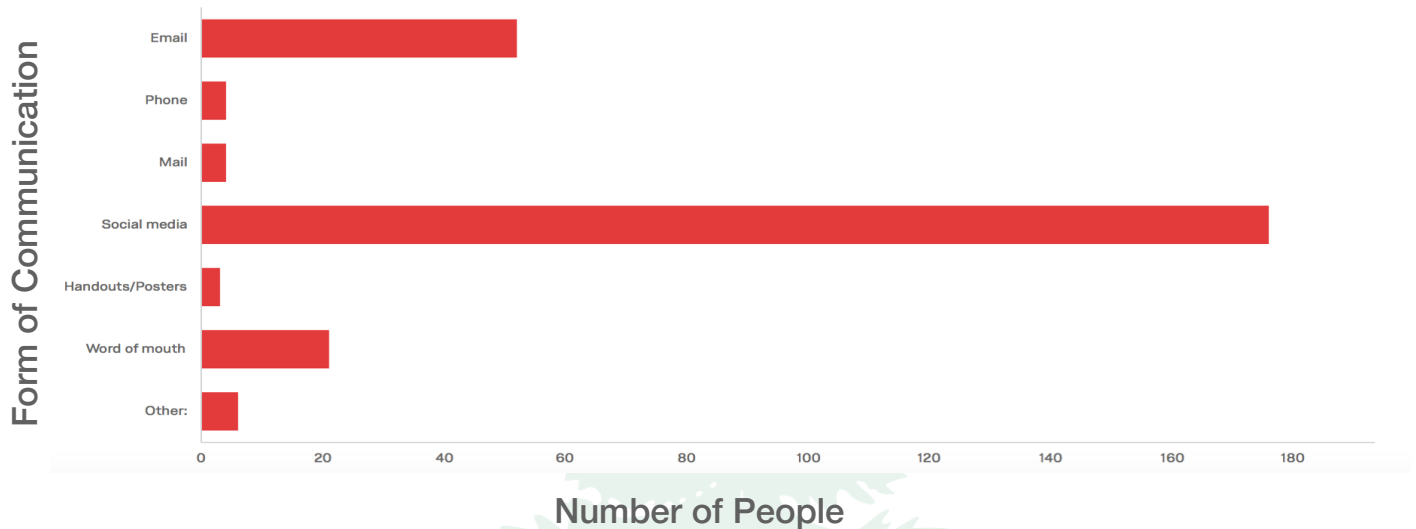
- Related specifically to the “Round-Up” campaign, there was a question related to what stores individuals frequent most often in the Boone/Blowing Rock Area, and the majority of people recorded grocery store, supermarket type establishments, such as Publix, Walmart, Food Lion, Lowe’s and Harris Teeter. As Retail is concerned, there was a large majority of people who recorded that they shop at TJ Maxx, and other stores located in the Boone Mall area. Local shops which people frequented, were almost entirely located on King Street.
- A question related closely to the one above was asked to see which restaurants people frequented the most often. The results were more local than were the shops recorded in the data. Restaurants such as The Local, Lost Province, Cobo, Macado's, Our Daily Bread, and Dos Amigos were all mentioned multiple times by participants.

- When asked how people preferred to interact with organizations such as the ones above, social media was the most popular totaling over half, 50.76 percent. Email was next in preference, totaling 23.48% and face-to-face at 19.32%. Phone, mail and other made up the remaining 6.44% and proved to be the least preferred way to interact with organizations and or initiatives in the Boone/Blowing Rock area by individuals who took the questionnaire. Related to this question, how people preferred to stay informed about events and initiatives in the Boone/Blowing Rock area matched closely to the last question. Both graphs can be seen and compared below for similarities. The graph referring to interactions is graph #1, and the graph referring to staying informed is graph #2.

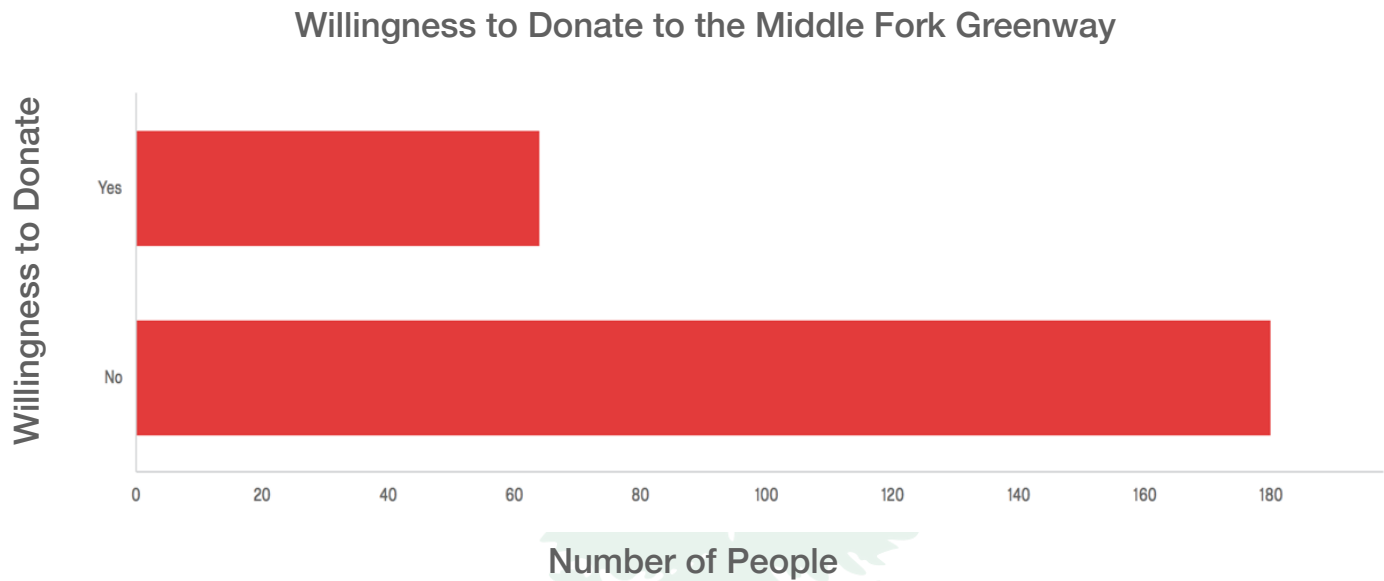
1. How Respondents Prefer to Interact with Organizations



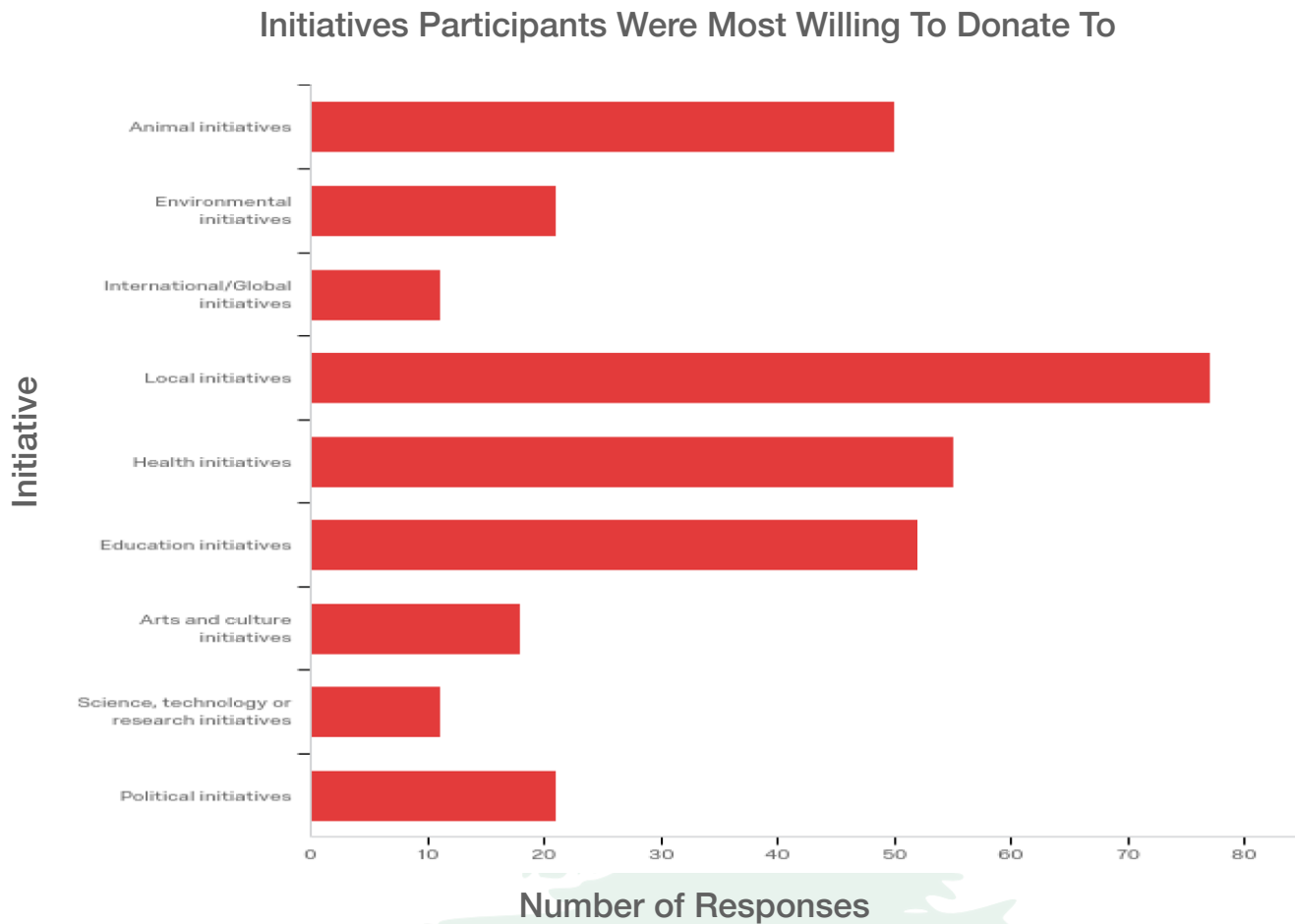
2. How Respondents Prefer to Stay Informed About Initiatives



- As social media is concerned with these two questions, it was also found that most people who use their social media multiple times a day are doing this mostly with Facebook. Instagram and Snapchat are in close competition in regards to checking their social media accounts multiple times a day. On the opposite side of the scale Tumblr, LinkedIn and Twitter ranked highest for social media that individuals rarely use.
- Of individuals who responded to the questionnaire, 73.5% had previously donated to an organization or initiative in the past. However, when asked if they would donate to the Middle Fork Greenway 73.7% of individuals said they would not, which is illustrated in the graph below.



- Those who said they would donate to the Middle Fork Greenway were redirected to a question asking how much they would donate, and 61 people of the 64 who said they would donate responded with dollar amounts. The average dollar amount someone was willing to donate totaled to be about \$49.60. In order for individuals to donate to an organization or initiative: 30.9% said they need to know how the donation will be used, 27.7% said they have to care about the initiative to donate, 24.5% said they need to clearly understand the goal or initiative, 16.2% said the donation process had to be easy and .5% said other. Related to this finding, is that the majority of individuals said they would be most likely to give money to local initiatives, which you can view the graph below. It is important to also note that 44.9% of individuals said they strongly agree that they support land conservation, and 41.5% said they support land preservation.



Qualitative Summary

The qualitative research covered demographics, media usage and current attitudes of those being interviewed. Demographics we targeted in our interviewing process included tourists, part-time and full-time residents, and students. To aid in information dissemination and recruit interviewees, we primarily used social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. Most participants reported using media platforms daily for “personal and social use” (Tourist, 4). Social media platforms are also used by our participants to keep track of organizations and nonprofits through event e-invites and posts. Many of our interviewees mentioned that their preferred way to

be informed of events and updates was through an organization's social media platform or word of mouth. Students, who are often already on their laptops, phones, and tablets for classes, find it more convenient to stay informed through social media (Student, 6). Social media has proven to keep up with their fast paced lifestyle, making it a highly effective resource. According to one tourist, "I will just follow them on Facebook, I hate getting junk mail," (Tourist, 2). Current attitudes found in the interviewing process were transparency of the overall use of donations within the organization.

"Trust is a big factor because I need to know I can trust the organization to use my money responsibly," (Tourist, 5). As for the current attitude towards donating, all interviewees answered 'yes' when asked if they have ever donated to any organizations of interest before this interview. The organizations that were most often mentioned pertained to children or animal-related initiatives. "I usually donate when a store asks me to donate to children organizations or any animal organizations," (Tourist, 2). The overall attitude for donating appears to correlate with initiatives that pertain to the donating party. For example, one participant said, "I guess causes that align with what I'm interested in. Health ones that affect family like Alzheimer's and autism are the big ones that I give to" (Tourist, 5). Most donations are given to the parties containing an emotional appeal that coincides with the donators' personal experiences.

Interpretation

Qualitative Interpretation:

A reoccurring theme amongst the qualitative data from our interviews and surveys alike is a desire for interview participants to receive information via social media (Student, 6). This is an important development in regards to the logistical concerns involving a public relations campaign.

If social media outlets are a preferred method for information and news about the Middle Fork Greenway, this can gear future efforts and resources towards a campaign that emphasizes social media. This could also save money for the organization, as mailers and fliers can prove to be costly and harmful to the environment. By utilizing online resources, such as Facebook, information can be shared with followers for virtually no cost.

Among the same group of interviewers, we also found that our sample population has a history of donating to charitable causes in the past, but stresses the importance of feeling that their money is going to an organization that will use the money solely for the cause. There also seems to be an emphasis on donating money to charitable causes that would emotionally affect the person donating. For example, in an interview with a 23 year old tourist, the interviewee cited that he prefers to, “donate to children's organizations or animal organizations,” (Tourist, 5). Future campaign planning may want to consider this point. The approach to a "Round-Up" campaign may need to utilize qualities that target individuals emotionally. By creating a sentimental connection between the mountains/streams, the towns of Boone and Blowing Rock, and the target audiences, it will motivate more people to contribute.

Another finding that may impact future public relations planning were the types of activities that our sample preferred to participate in. Overall, most participants in our interviews preferred a leisurely exercise, such as walking (Tourist, 7). Obviously, a greenway could offer many different accommodations for outdoor activities, but future campaign plans, may need to consider or gear information towards walkers/hikers and emphasize other activities to a lesser degree.

It is important to note that the following interpretation is based on two limited methods of gathering data. While we can hope that the views of our sample populations for the questionnaire and interviews are consistent with the views of those who would be targeted in a public relations campaign, we cannot guarantee that the data collected is indeed consistent with the entire targeted population because our research relied on a convenience sample. Despite its limitations, the data can still be exceptionally useful as it provides insight on the greenway's most valuable potential donors.

Quantitative Interpretation:

Assessing the specific findings previously discussed, we can interpret several things about the quantitative data from the questionnaire. With 73.5% of individuals in the questionnaire saying they had donated to charitable causes and 73.7% saying they would not donate to the Middle Fork Greenway project, issues would likely need to be addressed in regards to the presentation and wording when requesting donations through the "Round-Up" program to increase confidence of fund allocation. Looking at the reasons for why they felt this way, one thing seems to be clear. The Middle Fork Greenway organizers might want to consider the methods in which donation requests are presented, explaining how the money will be used, and explaining benefits of donating. Judging by the data listed in the research findings, these elements seem to have importance to the population that was sampled.

Over 40% of individuals who responded to the questionnaire also noted that land conservation or preservation was considered important to their concerns. Middle Fork Greenway organizers should note that these percentages may represent similar sentiments in comparison to larger target audiences, leaving organizers with an appropriate outlet to emphasize the

larger target audiences, leaving organizers with an appropriate outlet to emphasize the environmentally conscientious efforts of the Middle Fork Greenway team.

On a final note, according to the chart in the research findings, only four months rank higher in visitation popularity among tourists than July. This would leave us to believe that while July might not be the best month for a "Round-Up" campaign, it still remains as an attractive month for visitors, especially when compared to the other eleven months of the year.

References

1. Interview with student, October 4, 2017.
2. Interview with tourist, October 2, 2017.
3. Interview with resident, October 4, 2017.
4. Interview with tourist, October 8, 2017.
5. Interview with tourist, October 7, 2017.
6. Interview with student, October 9, 2017.
7. Interview with tourist, October 9, 2017.
8. Interview with local, October 7, 2017.

CAMPAIGN PLAN

Executive Summary:

As noted in our research findings report, one of the main issues involving the Middle Fork Greenway is a lack of awareness and understanding of its existence and purpose. After weeks of research, planning and strategizing, Generation-Z presents the following campaign plan for the Middle Fork Greenway. We have identified our primary target public as families, especially those with young children as they pair well with our theme of making the High Country evergreen. We hope to stress the importance of the Middle Fork Greenway and other conservation efforts to younger generations in the High Country as they are the ones who will be most impacted by it and its effects seeing as how the project will come to completion in their lifetime. This was our reasoning behind hosting an ice show and subsequent "free skate" because we believe that families with children are the most likely to participate in an event of that nature given its inclusive and fun nature. We recommend partnering with a local business in the High Country to aid in planning and implementing the event. Furthermore, by using the following slogan on all advertising and educational materials surrounding the WinterFest event, we plan to help make the experience more memorable and to leave a lasting impression: "Keep the High Country EverGreen this winter, go skate the greenway."

Generation-Z decided to make this issue a primary focus of our campaign. By utilizing different social media platforms to promote our skating event to the public we will provide an online presence for the Middle Fork Greenway. In our research findings report survey, many interviewees stated that they looked to a nonprofit's social media platform when researching more information. By improving the social media presence of the Middle Fork Greenway we will allow it to gain a larger audience.

Introduction:

The overarching objective of our campaign plan is to increase awareness and educate the public of the Middle Fork Greenway by creating an event during Blowing Rock's annual WinterFest. More specifically, we propose a figure skating show paired with "free skate" time directly following. Furthermore, we want to establish a theme of an 'evergreen future,' for the event which should be integrated into all campaign material. The concept of being 'evergreen' symbolizes Middle Fork Greenway's lasting relationship with the community as well as their commitment to nature conservation. The pine tree is a familiar sight to High Country residents and can be seen year round, making it a memorable symbol for public relations efforts.

The first objective that will ensure success of this goal, is to increase social media followers and likes. Secondly, the creation of an event that raises awareness, educates and raises money for construction of the greenway. Various strategies will be used in our campaign plan, such as utilizing already existing relationships with the local community to help make our event a success. Furthermore, our research informed us that social media will be most successful in reaching large audiences to inform, particularly on Facebook and Instagram. The tactics involved in this campaign include establishing the relationship with Appalachian Ski Mountain, hosting an ice show and "free skate" and using an unpaid intern to consistently monitor and keep up with social media needs.

Evaluating our objectives for this campaign are both long-term and short-term. Our proposed event during WinterFest is opportune for creating relationships with local businesses and organizations in the surrounding community. Not only will it be immediately beneficial for the "Round-Up" campaign in July, but also well into the Middle Fork Greenway's future. There is a large opportunity to gain the trust

and build relationships with locals, tourists and families who will participate in our event and ideally the “Round-Up” in July as well.

Our timeline for this campaign plan begins in preparation for our WinterFest event in late January and continues to the "Round-Up" event in July. First, however, the focus should be the WinterFest event, which we will begin in November, and finish in January. Because of the greenway’s already established relationships with businesses such as Appalachian Ski, our event is going to be more reliant on donations than out-of-pocket expenses. The total cost of our WinterFest figure skating event would cost \$226.00, but if the tree is donated, as we expect it could be, the total cost would drop to \$101.00.

Target Publics:

The primary target publics for our campaign plan include families that live in or visit the Blowing Rock and Boone area. Our secondary publics are tourists and local residents of these two regions, which can be but are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Families, especially those with children, are the primary target public because we plan to impact the lives of a younger generation to inspire them to be active within their communities’ preservation and environmental projects. Parents/guardians are also a priority as they are the ones most likely to bring their children to the greenway. Moreover, We are primarily focusing on this target public because it aligns with our theme of an ‘evergreen future’ that we are concentrating on through our planned partnership with WinterFest in Blowing Rock. The ‘evergreen future’ is also a message that we will convey to the families that partake in WinterFest by educating them about the Middle Fork Greenway, and its purpose. Our strategy is to provide an event that is family-friendly and educational, which will help families understand the importance of the Middle Fork

Greenway and its construction. The secondary publics will be tourists and local residents. This campaign plan is particularly appealing for members of our target publics as WinterFest is a High Country tradition made specifically for tourists and locals, and is well-advertised in the months preceding it. WinterFest has many events and activities that highlight the positive attributes of the High Country like local shops, restaurants and the natural beauty of its landscape. Partnering with WinterFest gives the Middle Fork Greenway the opportunity to connect directly with locals and tourists in the High Country in a setting that promotes local ties and organizations.

The theme of an ‘evergreen future’ is important to our secondary target publics because they live in the Boone/Blowing Rock area and therefore are likely more inclined to be interested in how their future can be improved by the greenway. This group of people are likely to be most affected by the construction of the Middle Fork Greenway and it is their children who will continue the efforts to make the High Country ‘evergreen.’ By making a pledge to help make the High Country ‘evergreen,’ one is making a pledge to help make lasting and positive change in their community, which we believe will resonate well with locals. Many residents and tourists of the Boone/Blowing Rock area value its natural beauty and strong sense of community, which is the sentiment that we aim to capture in our campaign.

Key and Supporting Messages:

An “evergreen future” or “Keep the High Country EverGreen this winter, go skate the Greenway” are messages that support the overall theme of awareness and education, while including our plan for a family-centered event. It should be noted that “Keep the High Country EverGreen this winter, go skate the Greenway” should only be used in correlation with the ice show and “free skate.” The slogan for our overall campaign is simply “Keep the High Country EverGreen,” which is appropriate to use in all other

campaign messages. Our objective for these messages is to inform families of the Middle Fork Greenway as a place to gather and be outdoors together. The strategy we will use to inform others of our event is to use social media platforms or news sites to target and reach a large amount of families, locals and tourists. By holding an event at Winterfest that will educate the public about the Middle Fork Greenway, our message of an evergreen future will reinforce the overall end goal of our campaign; to educate the community and receive donations.

Campaign Plan:

Goal: To increase awareness and individual donations to the Middle Fork Greenway project.

Objectives:

1. To raise awareness and understanding about the Middle Fork Greenway project among our primary and secondary target publics by 25% by the conclusion of WinterFest on January 29.
2. To raise money for the construction of the Middle Fork Greenway via individual donations by the conclusion of WinterFest on January 29.

Strategies:

1. Through our previous interview-based qualitative research, we found that a little over half of our interview participants preferred social media as their primary avenue for learning more about local events or news (Generation, 10). That being said, we advise increasing the frequency of social media posts regarding the Middle Fork Greenway project and hire an unpaid intern to spearhead electronic communication, particularly on Facebook and Instagram.
2. We also advise that the organizers of the Middle Fork Greenway project partner with a local organization that attracts both local and tourist interests in the area, in order to increase an overall

←—————→

awareness for the Middle Fork Greenway project. Research from Eberts shows that the success of many local organizations depends on leadership from local business people (1). Thus, we believe that tapping into local business interests for an event would strengthen the interests of Middle Fork Greenway project.

3. Host an ice skating show and "free skate" during their annual Winterfest. The ice skating show and "free skate" would aim to increase awareness for both locals and tourists, while also raising money for the Middle Fork Greenway project via ticket sales and individual donations.

Tactics:

1. The unpaid intern would be largely responsible for updating and maintaining social media content on the Middle Fork Greenway's Facebook page. Many posts should be used to promote WinterFest and its partnership with the Middle Fork Greenway, but this should not by any means limit overall social media efforts. We have included a mock flyer that can be used to advertise the ice show and "free skate" than can be easily distributed via social media or printed in hard copy form and distributed by hand.
2. Reach out to Appalachian Ski Mountain and attempt to establish a partnership for WinterFest by Wednesday, December 27 via info@appskimtn.com or (828) 295-7828. As previously mentioned, Appalachian Ski Mountain has expressed significant interest in a partnership with the Middle Fork Greenway; therefore, we recommend Wendy making direct contact with Appalachian Ski Mountain. Partnership should include Appalachian Ski Mountain's commitment to assist the Middle Fork Greenway and the donation of an ice skating rink for the event.

3. After establishing a partnership with Appalachian Ski Mountain, it should be officially announced on social media and tickets should be made to sell immediately. Tickets should sell for at least \$5 each with at least half of the proceeds going directly to trail construction. The ice skating show and “free skate” should take place during the Friday and Saturday evening of WinterFest and an official time should be decided with Appalachian Ski Mountain. At the event, a photo booth should be set up that features an evergreen tree in the background for families to take winter-themed pictures in front of. Those individuals who bought an ice show and/or “free skate” ticket should be given a donation card with the Middle Fork Greenway’s logo to be placed on the tree as well as a “Donor to the Middle Fork Greenway” button.

Evaluation and Stewardship:

Evaluating objective one should be a long-term priority. Ideally, the first objective is to reach completion before the July "Round-Up" campaign, thus it should be evaluated at the conclusion of the pre-"Round-Up" campaign period. Since July 2018 is less than a year away it should be considered a priority to host an event that raises awareness and money for the Middle Fork Greenway project. Given that this objective is a priority, it should be evaluated in the short-term, to ensure that the task has been planned and completed. One week following WinterFest, the Middle Fork Greenway should send a short, optional, follow-up questionnaire to those who attended the ice show and/or "free skate." Questionnaire should be brief and should focus on measuring attitudes and perceptions of the Middle Fork Greenway. Here it is appropriate to reassess people’s attitudes towards donating to the Middle Fork Greenway and their potential to stay connected with the initiative. Reminders and incentives should be sent to people as needed if the response rate is low. Contact info should be collected at the time of ticket sales in the form

of emails and phone numbers, which will later be the pool of people selected to take the follow-up questionnaire.

The organizers of the Middle Fork Greenway project have an opportunity to build and maintain many new relationships in the community by utilizing the ideas suggested in this plan. Creating deeper ties with local organizations, such as Appalachian Ski Mountain will serve as a building block for future public relations efforts. These relationships will be important during the "Round-Up" campaign, as the greenway organizers are working to secure "Round-Up" campaign participants, as per the client briefing. These relationships will also be important in future years, if the greenway continues to expand and further impact the community. Additionally, by using an aggressive approach to raising awareness on social media, people will hopefully become more educated on the Middle Fork Greenway project and its effects on the area. Relationships built through social media may lead to easier recruitment of future volunteers, organizers, donors or advocates for the Middle Fork Greenway project. Social media effects should be measured by the number of increased likes, comments and shares as well as new followers to the Middle Fork Greenway's Facebook page. The simplest means of measurement for our second objective would be to look at the number of ticket sales for the ice show and "free skate" in relation to the number of tickets bought for other WinterFest events. Consider also sending information on the "Round-Up" campaign to other community leaders and small business owners in attendance and begin compiling a list of committed partners to the "Round-Up".

Timeline:

Since we are planning part of our campaign in conjunction with Blowing Rock's annual WinterFest, we must operate within the predetermined dates of the event. This year's WinterFest will run

from January 25-29, 2018, with each day being full of activities designed to attract families, tourists and locals. The first tactic in implementing our aforementioned goals and objectives is to reach out to Appalachian Ski Mountain and establish a partnership for WinterFest. This should be accomplished as early as possible, so we recommend having a partnership finalized by Wednesday, December 27; this date is reasonable as App Ski has already expressed high interest and commitment in helping the Middle Fork Greenway connect with the High Country community. Furthermore, hiring an intern should be considered a top priority because the sooner Middle Fork Greenway has a consistent and unique social media presence, the better the impact will be on awareness later in the campaign. The intern chosen for hire would reach out to figure skating clubs around North Carolina, for instance Extreme Ice in Charlotte, to personally invite individuals to skate in the WinterFest ice show and should aid in additional research as needed.

Included is a calendar of the strategies and tactics needed to accomplish our aforementioned goal. Once an intern is hired, it is strongly recommended this calendar be modified to include a basic outline of social media posts, particularly surrounding major events. Please note that the calendar is not a final product and is merely intended to serve as a visual aid, so it should be modified as needed to better accommodate the needs of the Middle Fork Greenway team. Also note that the calendar is representative of the next few months, and it does not include the “Round-Up” campaign that will take place in July 2018.

DECEMBER 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
					Campaign Plan pitched-final book and recommendations made by Gen Z to MFG.	Begin search for Intern (consider canvassing on App's campus and utilizing social media)
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Reach out to App Ski about their involvement with WinterFest (Wendy)					
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			Happy Holidays post on social media (Intern)			Deadline to hire intern. Begin today or earlier if possible. (Wendy)
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
			Finalize partnership with App Ski concerning their involvement with WinterFest. (Rink rental and space, commitment to event, etc.) (Wendy)	Have intern begin reaching out to potential ice skaters in the area. (Charlotte, Asheville, Johnson City, Etc.)		
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

JANUARY 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31	1 Announce partnership with App Ski via social media and being selling tickets for ice show and "free skate" via WinterFest website	2 Include a link to purchase tickets on MFG's social media.	3	4 WinterFest promo on social media. (Intern)	5	6
7	8 WinterFest promo on social media. (Intern)	9	10	11	12	13
14 Have a figure skater committed to performing at WinterFest. (Wendy and intern)	15	16	17	18 One week until WinterFest- Make promo post and consider a small giveaway/prize drawing for those who share social media content. (Wendy and intern)	19	20
21	22	23	24 WinterFest is tomorrow. Make reminder post and share ticket link again. (Intern)	25 WinterFest 10am-9pm	26 WinterFest 10am-9pm Show and "free skate" 5-7pm (Finalize with App Ski)	27 WinterFest 10am-9pm Show and "free skate" 5-7pm (Finalize with App Ski)
28 WinterFest 10am-10pm	29 Thank you post on social media for all who attended/gave to the Greenway. (Intern)	30	31	1	2	3 Evaluation begins- send first questionnaire Request (Wendy or intern)

Budget:

The budget for this event is relatively low. We hope that Appalachian Ski Mountain would be able to donate the space used for the "free skate" and ice show, since they have already shown significant interest in helping the Middle Fork Greenway initiative (Patoprsty, 2017) . For the ice show, the performers would be donating their time and talent at no cost to the Middle Fork Greenway. Figure skaters who actively compete are not able to receive any form of compensation for performing in shows, which is why their performance would be unpaid (Athletes). We would use a stamp to signify payment and admission to the "free skate" which would prove more cost efficient than tickets. To encourage donations, we propose a tree with paper ornaments that can be “purchased” through donations. The tree would have a dual purpose, as it will also be the backdrop for the photobooth. By having a photo booth, we will create a social media presence and gain awareness of our cause. We would go to local tree farmers and ask for donations in hopes of keeping the budget low. Below is a breakdown of the costs:

- Appalachian Ski Mountain Ice Rink Rental Time: \$0.00 (Donated by App Ski)
- Ice Show Figure Skaters: \$0.00 (Time Donated)
- Snapchat filter: \$15 (May vary depending on size of area used)
 - <https://blog.bufferapp.com/snapchat-on-demand-geofilters>
- Stamp used for "free skate" admission: \$10.00 (amazon.com)
- Large tree: \$125.00, ideally donated (Circle C Tree Farms, NC)
 - <http://www.circlectreefarm.com/> (828-265-7504)
- Middle Fork Greenway “I donated” buttons: \$10 for large orders (APPS office-Appalachian State University)

- Paper flyers for WinterFest event: \$135 (For 501 if printed in color at Staples and if not provided by ZapFitness)
- Paper Middle Fork Greenway logo cards for donations:
 - Prints: \$63.00 (200-staples.com)
 - Twine: \$8.00 (walmart.com)
- Photo props: \$20.00 (amazon.com)
 - Includes various winter-themed paper cutouts and decorations.
- 10% contingency allowing for fluctuations in price and item availability: \$38.60

Total cost: \$424.60 (\$287.10 if tree is donated)

Conclusion:

By hosting an event at WinterFest, we hope to gain awareness of the Middle Fork Greenway and give both tourists and locals the opportunity to donate to the cause. WinterFest is a high-traffic event as it attracts tourists and locals alike. We are proposing an ice show and “free skate” to create a family-friendly and inclusive atmosphere at both WinterFest and for the greenway. The mission of the Middle Fork Greenway is to encourage physical activity, connect Boone to Blowing Rock and ensure conservation of the area’s natural resources and beauty. We proposed the theme “evergreen” because the evergreen tree personifies the idea of preservation and vitality, while also being a relatable symbol in the High Country. Because the Middle Fork is still in need of additional funding, we hope to create an easy way for the community to contribute through pressure-free and voluntary donations. While generating revenue is an important objective, keeping the overall budget low is also important to ensure the cost of admission to the show and “free skate” is affordable for everyone. By relying on donations from

Appalachian Ski Mountain, professional ice skaters and a local tree farm, we can maintain a cost effective budget with ease. By utilizing our campaign suggestions, the Middle Fork Greenway has the potential to make lasting connections within the High Country that will only serve to aid in their future fundraising endeavors.

In-Text Citations & List of Reference Material

“Athletes.” *Welcome to U.S. Figure Skating*, www.usfsa.org/story?id=84043.

Eberts, Randall W., and George Erickcek. 2002. “The Role of Partnerships in Economic

“Athletes.” *Welcome to U.S. Figure Skating*, www.usfsa.org/story?id=84043.

Boone 2030. Project Advisory Committee, BooneReportFinalBook110609(3).pdf. Accessed 15 Sept.

2017.

Development and Labor Markets in the United States.” Upjohn Institute Working Paper. No02-75.

Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. <https://doi.org/10.17848/wp02-75>

Eberts, Randall W., and George Erickcek. 2002. “The Role of Partnerships in Economic Development and Labor Markets in the United States.” Upjohn Institute Working Paper. No02-75. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. <https://doi.org/10.17848/wp02-75>

“Facebook.” *Middle Fork Greenway*, www.facebook.com/middleforkgreenway/. Accessed 15 Sept. 2017.

Generation-Z, (2017). *Research Findings Report*. Unpublished manuscript, Appalachian State University.

“Home.” *Blowing Rock WinterFest*, blowingrockwinterfest.com/.

Middle Fork Greenway, 2017, <https://www.middleforkgreenway.org>.

"Middle Fork Greenway." *Vimeo*, 2017, <https://vimeo.com/188920657>.

Oakes, Anna. "Boone TDA wants bigger tourism projects." *Watauga Democrat*, 7 Oct. 2014, www.wataugademocrat.com/news/boone-tda-wants-bigger-tourism-projects/article_35110fe3-9b1a-52ab-a269-fa2765efdd09.html. Accessed 15 Sept. 2017.

Patoprsty, Wendy. Personal interview. 30 Aug. 2017.

Price, Anna E. et al. "Trail User Demographics, Physical Activity Behaviors, And Perceptions Of A Newly Constructed Greenway Trail." *J Community Health*, 2011, p. 954. doi:10.1007/s10900-011-9530-z.

"Pricing." *Circle C Farms*, 2017, www.circlectreefarm.com/pricing.html.

Read, Ash. "Snapchat Geofilters: The Easy Way to Create Your Own Snapchat Geofilter." *Social*, Buffer Social Blog, 14 Mar. 2017, blog.bufferapp.com/snapchat-on-demand-geofilters.

Sherrill, Thomas. "Blowing Rock nets \$2M grant for Middle Fork Greenway." *Watauga Democrat*, 29 Aug. 2017, wataugademocrat.com/news/blowing-rock-nets-m-grant-for-middle-fork-greenway/article_13426c0bb2c9-5c43-9b8c-1cedb530673f.html. Accessed 13 Sept. 2017.

References

1. Interview with student, October 4, 2017.
2. Interview with tourist, October 2, 2017.
3. Interview with resident, October 4, 2017.
4. Interview with tourist, October 8, 2017.
5. Interview with tourist, October 7, 2017.
6. Interview with student, October 9, 2017.
7. Interview with tourist, October 9, 2017.
8. Interview with local, October 7, 2017.

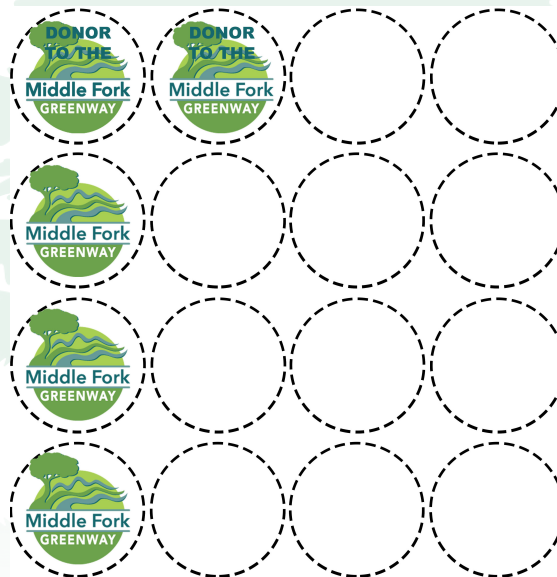
APPENDICES

Appendix A - Implementation Materials/Tactics

I Support the Middle Fork Greenway • Winterfest 2018



Snap Chat filter for event to increase social media presence (Above).
Buttons for Donors to wear (Below).





**Skating the
Greenway**

Tickets Sold at the door:
Show + Skating: \$10
Skating: \$5

**Appalachian
Ski Mountain:
January 28th**



**Half of all proceeds go
to the Middle Fork Greenway and support its construction**

Promotional card to hand out to local businesses and the public.

Appendix B - Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol:

“Thank you again for agreeing to participate in an interview today. Your responses today will remain confidential, and your name will not be linked with your answers. This also means that our conversation between us today is strictly confidential. You should feel free to speak your mind without any judgment; in fact, it is very important that you be as honest and candid as possible. With that being said, your participation is completely voluntary, so you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to and you may discontinue participation at any time.

I would like to note that this study is being audio-recorded so we may review our conversation later and use the findings for our final report to our client. The recording will be transcribed into written form. Transcriptions will be anonymized and the audio recording will be destroyed so that your name or identity will not be connected with your responses. Are you ok with our conversation being audio-recorded?”

[Allow interviewee to respond. Address any questions.]

Interviewer: “Let’s get started.....”

1. What social media platforms do you use most often?
2. How often do you use those social media platforms?
3. Do you currently live in the Boone/Blowing Rock area?
4. Do you support land preservation/conservation?
5. What outdoor or recreational activities do you enjoy?
6. Have you donated money to an organization or initiative in the past?

- 
7. What types of initiatives are you most likely to give money to?
 8. Which factors are important for you when deciding if you will donate to an organization or initiative?
 9. What are the top 3 stores you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?
 10. What are the top 3 restaurants you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?
 11. Do you stay informed about events and initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area? If so, how?
 12. How do you prefer to interact with organizations or initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?
 13. Do you spend time on the Blue Ridge Parkway or existing Greenway?
 14. How important to you is accessibility when using a greenway?
 15. Are you aware of Middle Fork Greenway?
 16. Do you understand what Middle Fork Greenway is?
 17. How likely will you be to use the Middle Fork Greenway?
 18. Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway?
 19. How likely would you be to donate money to the Middle Fork Greenway project?
 20. How much money would you be willing to donate to the Middle Fork Greenway project?
 21. What is your current age in years?
 22. What is your gender?

Interviewer: “Again, thank you for your participation today.”

Appendix C - Research Instruments

Q1 We are students at Appalachian State University creating a public relations campaign for our community partner this semester. We appreciate your time completing this survey. If you have any questions, contact our instructor at vandykems@appstate.edu.

Q2 How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply):

- ☐ Year-round resident (1)
- ☐ Seasonal resident (2)
- ☐ College student (3)
- ☐ Local business owner (4)
- ☐ Visitor/Tourist (5)
- ☐ None of the above (6)

Skip To: End of Survey If How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = None of the above

Q3 How often do you use the following types of media?

	Multiple times daily (1)	Daily (2)	Multiple times weekly (3)	Weekly (4)	Less than weekly (5)	Never (6)
Social media (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local television (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-local television (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local radio (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-local radio (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Print newspaper (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital newspaper (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

GENERATION Z

Q4 How often do you use the following types of social media?

	Multiple times daily (1)	Daily (2)	Multiple times weekly (3)	Weekly (4)	Less than weekly (5)	Never (6)
Facebook (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
YouTube (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tumblr (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

*If How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): =
Year-round resident*

*Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): =
Seasonal resident*

*Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): =
College student*

*Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): =
Local business owner*

Q9 Do you currently live in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Display This Question:

If Do you currently live in the Boone-Blowing Rock area? = Yes

Q8 How long have you lived in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Number of years (1)	
---------------------	--

Display This Question:

If How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Seasonal resident

Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Visitor/Tourist

Q10 When do you visit the Boone-Blowing Rock area? (select all that apply)

- ☐ January (1)
- ☐ February (2)
- ☐ March (3)
- ☐ April (4)
- ☐ May (5)
- ☐ June (6)
- ☐ July (7)
- ☐ August (8)
- ☐ September (9)
- ☐ October (10)
- ☐ November (11)
- ☐ December (12)

Display This Question:

If How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Seasonal resident

Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Visitor/Tourist

Q11 How long do you generally stay in the Boone-Blowing Rock area when you visit?

- ☐ One day (1)
- ☐ A few days (2)
- ☐ One week (3)
- ☐ A few weeks (4)
- ☐ One month (5)
- ☐ More than one month (6)

Display This Question:

If How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Seasonal resident

Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Visitor/Tourist

Q12 Approximately how many times have you been to Boone-Blowing Rock this year?

Display This Question:

If How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Seasonal resident

Or How would you classify yourself in relation to the Boone-Blowing Rock area (check all that apply): = Visitor/Tourist

Q14 Approximately how many times have you been to Boone-Blowing Rock in the past 5 years?

Q15 Land *conservation* is concerned with the proper use of nature, while land *preservation* is concerned with the protection of nature from use. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I support land conservation. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I support land preservation. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q16 Which outdoor or recreational activities to you enjoy? (select all that apply):

- ☐ Gem mining (1)
- ☐ Playing golf (2)
- ☐ Hiking (3)
- ☐ Caving (13)
- ☐ Rafting, canoeing or tubing (4)
- ☐ Walking or running (5)
- ☐ Snow skiing, tubing or skating (6)
- ☐ Biking (7)
- ☐ Fishing (8)
- ☐ Zip lining (9)
- ☐ Roller blading or skating (10)
- ☐ Horseback riding (11)
- ☐ Rock climbing or bouldering (12)
- ☐ Picnicking (14)

Q17 Have you donated money to an organization or initiative in the past?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q18 Which type of initiative are you most likely to give money to?

- ☐ Animal initiatives (1)
- ☐ Environmental initiatives (2)
- ☐ International/Global initiatives (3)
- ☐ Local initiatives (4)
- ☐ Health initiatives (5)
- ☐ Education initiatives (6)
- ☐ Arts and culture initiatives (7)
- ☐ Science, technology or research initiatives (8)
- ☐ Political initiatives (9)

Q19 Which factors are important for you when deciding if you will donate to an organization or initiative? (select all that apply):

- ☐ I need to know how my donation will be used. (1)
- ☐ I need to donate to an initiative I care about. (2)
- ☐ I need the donation process to be easy. (3)
- ☐ I need to clearly understand the goal of the initiative. (4)
- ☐ Other (5) _____

Q22 What are the top 3 stores you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

- ☐ Store 1: (1) _____
- ☐ Store 2: (2) _____
- ☐ Store 3: (3) _____

Q23 What are the top 3 restaurants you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

- ☐ Restaurant 1: (1) _____
- ☐ Restaurant 2: (2) _____
- ☐ Restaurant 3: (3) _____

Q25 How do you prefer to stay **informed** about events and initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

- ☐ Email (1)
- ☐ Phone (2)
- ☐ Mail (3)
- ☐ Social media (4)
- ☐ Handouts/Posters (6)
- ☐ Word of mouth (7)
- ☐ Other: (5) _____

Q27 How do you prefer to **interact** with organizations or initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

- ☐ Email (1)
- ☐ Phone (2)
- ☐ Mail (3)
- ☐ Social media (4)
- ☐ Face-to-face (6)
- ☐ Other: (5) _____

Q24 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
When I'm in the Boone-Blowing Rock area, I spend time on the Blue Ridge Parkway. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I'm in the Boone-Blowing Rock area, I spend time on the Boone Greenway. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q40 How important to you is access to other recreational activities, shops or restaurants when using a greenway?

- ☐ Extremely important (1)
- ☐ Very important (2)
- ☐ Moderately important (3)
- ☐ Slightly important (4)
- ☐ Not at all important (5)

Q41 How important to you is physical accessibility when using a greenway?

- ☐ Extremely important (1)
- ☐ Very important (2)
- ☐ Moderately important (3)
- ☐ Slightly important (4)
- ☐ Not at all important (5)

Q32 Are you aware of Middle Fork Greenway?

- ☐ Definitely aware (1)
- ☐ Somewhat aware (2)
- ☐ I'm not sure (3)
- ☐ Somewhat unaware (4)
- ☐ Definitely unaware (5)

Q33 Do you understand what Middle Fork Greenway is?

- ☐ Definitely understand (1)
- ☐ Somewhat understand (2)
- ☐ I'm not sure (3)
- ☐ Somewhat do not understand (4)
- ☐ Definitely do not understand (5)

Q34 The Middle Fork Greenway is a project led by Blue Ridge Conservancy and High Country Pathways to build a greenway path from Blowing Rock to Boone.

The Middle Fork Greenway will be around 6.5 miles. It will connect with the existing Boone Greenway, creating over 10 miles of contiguous trail. It will connect to The Blue Ridge Parkway, the Mountains-to-Sea trail, Shoppes on the Parkway, Tweetsie, Mystery Hill, Appalachian Regional Health's hospital and new acute care facility, 3 pocket parks and other natural areas. Walking, jogging, cycling, rollerblading and skateboarding will be permitted on the greenway. There will be no motorized vehicles permitted other than wheelchairs.

To date, approximately 1 mile of the greenway has been completed. The completed one-mile section was funded by NCDOT, Appalachian Healthcare System, Tweetsie and many generous private donors. Funding for the remainder of the project is being secured through public grants and private donations. Private donations are critical to providing matching funds to attract public dollars.

Q35 How likely will you be to use the Middle Fork Greenway?

- ☐ Extremely likely (1)
- ☐ Somewhat likely (2)
- ☐ Neither likely nor unlikely (3)
- ☐ Somewhat unlikely (4)
- ☐ Extremely unlikely (5)

Q36 Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway? (select all that apply):

- ☐ Walking or running (1)
- ☐ Cycling (2)
- ☐ Rollerblading or skateboarding (3)
- ☐ Fishing (4)
- ☐ Other: (5) _____
- ☐ I would not use it. (6)

Display This Question:

If Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway? (select all that apply): = Walking or running

Or Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway? (select all that apply): = Cycling

Or Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway? (select all that apply): = Rollerblading or skateboarding

Or Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway? (select all that apply): = Fishing

Or Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway? (select all that apply): = Other:

Q37 Where would you spend most of your time on the Middle Fork Greenway?

- ☐ Mostly on the Boone side. (1)
- ☐ Mostly on the Blowing Rock side. (2)
- ☐ I plan to use the entire greenway. (3)

Q43 Would you be likely to donate money to the Middle Fork Greenway project?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Display This Question:

If Would you be likely to donate money to the Middle Fork Greenway project? = Yes

Q42 How much money would you likely donate to the Middle Fork Greenway project?

- ☐ \$ (1) _____

Q44 Would you like to provide additional information?

Q28 What is your current age in years?

Q29 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer (3)

Appendix D - Transcripts

23-Year-Old Male Boone / Blowing Rock Tourist

Interviewer: Thank you again for agreeing to participate in an interview today. Your responses today will remain confidential, and your name will not be linked with your answers. This also means that our conversation between us today is strictly confidential. You should feel free to speak your mind without any judgment; in fact, it is very important that you be as honest and candid as possible. With that being said, your participation is completely voluntary, so you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to and you may discontinue participation at any time.

I would like to note that this study is being audio-recorded so we may review our conversation later and use the findings for our final report to our client. The recording will be transcribed into written form. Transcriptions will be anonymized and the audio recording will be destroyed so that your name or identity will not be connected with your responses. Are you ok with our conversation being audio-recorded?

Interviewee: Yeah, that is totally fine.

Interviewer: Awesome, well then let's get started... what social media platforms do you use most often?

Interviewee: I actually don't have much social media, I only have a Facebook.

Interviewer: How often do you use Facebook, if that is your only social media?

Interviewee: Well, I don't really care about social media, which is why i don't have much of it. But my girlfriend and my family use it, so I check it maybe once a day just to see what they are up to.

Interviewer: Awesome, alright so next... do you currently live in the Boone or Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: No! I actually live and work in Wilmington currently.

Interviewer: Do you support land preservation and or conservation?

Interviewee: Yeah I'd say so. Since I live at the beach, I would say I am more aware of land preservation and conservation there, but in general terms yeah I do.

Interviewer: Next, which outdoor or recreational activities do you enjoy?

Interviewee: While I am in Boone to visit my girlfriend, I like taking her dog on walks and hikes on the Greenway. The only other outdoor activities I'd say I enjoy outside would be grabbing food and enjoying it out on the parkway.

Interviewer: Have you donated money to an organization or initiative in the past?

Interviewee: Yeah, for sure.

Interviewer: What types of initiatives are you most likely to give money to?

Interviewee: Well, I am in law enforcement... so usually anything involved with that. Or I usually donate when a store asks me to donate to children organizations or any animal organizations. I don't

donate when a store asks me to donate to children organizations or any animal organizations. I don't think it matters, I just donate if I think it's a good cause.

Interviewer: Which factors are important for you when deciding if you will donate to an organization or initiative?

Interviewee: Like I said before, I really don't care... as long as I think I am actually helping a cause and my money isn't going to be used for something pointless. I just need a good cause.

Interviewer: Okay so, what are the top 3 stores you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: Uhm, I almost always go to Mast General Store for myself. And then for my girlfriend we will go to Lucky Penny and Lililu on King Street.

Interviewer: What are the top 3 restaurants you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: Usually Rivers Street Ale House, ODB, and Sunrise Grill.

Interviewer: Do you stay informed about events and initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area? If so, how?

Interviewee: No, not on my own. The only way I know what's going on is because my girlfriend tells me about stuff since she lives there.

Interviewer: How do you prefer to interact with organizations or initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: Uhm, I am not really sure and haven't really thought about it. I don't use social media, so in person would probably be my preference.

Interviewer: Do you spend time on the Blue Ridge Parkway or existing Greenway?

Interviewee: Yeah, both of them almost every time I am in the area.

Interviewer: How important to you is accessibility when using a greenway?

Interviewee: Not really important, at least not now in my life.

Interviewer: Are you aware of Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Do you understand what Middle Fork Greenway is?

Interviewee: I think so, I'm guessing it is similar to the Greenway that is already in Boone. I have used different Greenways before.

Interviewer: How likely will you be to use the Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: If it is dog friendly, than very likely.

Interviewer: Why would you use the Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: My girlfriend and I like to go places and walk her dog. It sounds like it would be closer to Boone than the Parkway is, plus it would be nice to do something different than the existing Greenway.

Interviewer: How likely would you be to donate money to the Middle Fork Greenway project?

Interviewee: I wouldn't go out of my way to donate, but if they asked me like they do for other fundraisers at stores or something I would do it.

Interviewer: How much money would you be willing to donate to the Middle Fork Greenway project?

Interviewee: Uh, probably a couple dollars or something when I was checking out somewhere if they gave me the option.

Interviewer: What is your current age in years?

Interviewee: Twenty-three

Interviewer: What is your gender?

Interviewee: Male

Interviewer: Again, thank you for your participation today.

26-Year-Old Male, Full-Time Resident of Boone, NC

Interviewer: Thank you again for agreeing to participate in an interview today. Your responses today will remain confidential, and your name will not be linked with your answers. This also means that our conversation between us today is strictly confidential. You should feel free to speak your mind without any judgment; in fact, it is very important that you be as honest and candid as possible. With that being said, your participation is completely voluntary, so you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to and you may discontinue participation at any time.

I would like to note that this study is being audio-recorded so we may review our conversation later and use the findings for our final report to our client. The recording will be transcribed into written form. Transcriptions will be anonymized and the audio recording will be destroyed so that your name or identity will not be connected with your responses. Are you ok with our conversation being audio-recorded?

Interviewee: Yes, sounds good to me.

Interviewer: Great. To start, what is your most used form of social media?

Interviewee: Probably Facebook.

Interviewer: How often would you say you use it?

Interviewee: Probably like, roughly an hour per day I would say.

Interviewer: Do you currently live in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you support land preservation/conservation?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Which outdoor recreation activities do you enjoy?

Interviewee: I play golf, I hike, and sometimes play tennis.

Interviewer: Have you donated money to an organization or initiative in the past?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Which types of initiatives are you most likely to give money to?

Interviewee: My university. So I give back to the University of South Carolina, my alma mater to their Carolina Fund. I give to the Appalachian Fund, so all those university based donations, and I have given to the Red Cross before, and I give blood but I don't know if that counts. There's a couple of other specific organizations like Camp Joy is one of them, and that has to do with like special needs stuff.

Interviewer: What factors are important to you when deciding if you should donate to an organization or initiative?

Interviewee: First of all I guess just the recentness of communication. I guess like how long it's been since I've been engaged with that organization. So a lot of the times the ones that's most fresh in my mind kind of gets more consideration of giving to them or something like that. Also, the other biggest factor is having some concrete ways I can see that they're going to utilize my gift. So if I can see the results of my contribution.

Interviewer: What are the tops three stores you frequently visit in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: Probably TJ Maxx, Walmart, and then Big Lots.

Interviewer: What are the top three restaurants you frequently visit in this area?

Interviewee: Cha Da Thai, Cookout, Chik fil a.

Interviewer: Do you stay informed about events and initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock Area, and if so, how?

Interviewee: Somewhat. I sometimes seek them out, on the local events calendars, but hear about university related ones via email and word of mouth.

Interviewer: How do you prefer to interact with organizations or initiatives in the Boone-Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: I like to actively seek them out, I like getting an email and a phone call. I don't mind texts, as a reminder and keeping info fresh in my mind.

Interviewer: Do you spend time on the Blue Ridge Parkway or existing Greenway?

Interviewee: Yes to both.

Interviewer: How important to you is accessibility when using a greenway?

Interviewee: Extremely important.

Interviewer: Are you aware of the Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: I was not aware of that particular part before today.

Interviewer: Do you understand what the Middle Fork Greenway is?

Interviewee: I think I do. Essentially it's a connection to other greenway pieces from Blowing Rock to Boone.

Interviewer: How likely will you be to use the Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: I've been wanting to do some more biking, so very likely. I really like to ride bicycles.

Interviewer: Why would you use the Greenway?

Interviewee: Biking for sure, but maybe running. My girlfriend runs on the current greenway all the time, so maybe I would join her one day.

Interviewer: How likely would you be to donate money to the Middle Fork Greenway project?

Interviewee: I would be fairly likely. It would be less than \$100 just because I don't frequent the greenway and there are things I spend a little more time in.

Interviewer: What is your current age in years?

Interviewee: 26.

Student Interview: Age 23, Student at Appalachian State University

Interviewer: Thank you again for agreeing to participate in an interview today. Your responses today will remain confidential, and your name will not be linked with your answers. This also means that our conversation between us today is strictly confidential. You should feel free to speak your mind without any judgment; in fact, it is very important that you be as honest and candid as possible. With that being said, your participation is completely voluntary, so you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to and you may discontinue participation at any time.

I would like to note that this study is being audio-recorded so we may review our conversation later and use the findings for our final report to our client. The recording will be transcribed into written form. Transcriptions will be anonymized and the audio recording will be destroyed so that your name or identity will not be connected with your responses. Are you ok with our conversation being audio-recorded?

Interviewee: Yeah, I don't mind.

Interviewer: Let's get started... How often do use the following types of social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter?

Interviewee: Everyday

Interviewer: Of the social media platforms which one do use most often?

Interviewee: Instagram.

Interviewer: Do you currently live in the Boone or blowing rock area?

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer: If so, how long have you lived there?

Interviewee: Two years.

Interviewer: Do you support land preservation and conservation?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Which outdoor or recreational activities do you enjoy?

Interviewee: Kayaking.

Interviewer: Have you donated money to an organization or initiative in the past?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What types of initiatives are you most likely to give money to?

Interviewee: St. Jude's, National Kidney Foundation

Interviewer: Which factors are important for you when deciding if you will donate to an organization or initiative?

Interviewee: What the organizations actually do and if they are well known for doing what they say they are going to do.

Interviewer: What are the top three stores you frequently visit in the Boone or Blowing Rock area?

Interviewee: TJ Maxx. Old Navy. Boone Belles.

Interviewer: What are the top three restaurants you frequently visit in the Boone and blowing rock area?

Interviewee: Comeback Shack, Panera Bread, Macado's

Interviewer: Do you stay informed about events and initiatives in the Boone and Blowing Rock areas, if so, how?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: How do you prefer to interact with organizations or initiatives in the building of blowing rock area?

Interviewee: I don't.

Interviewer: Do you spend time on the Blue Ridge Parkway, or existing greenway?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: In what capacity?

Interviewee: NA.

Interviewer: How important to you is accessibility when using a green way?

Interviewee: NA.

Interviewer: Are you aware of the Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Do you understand what the Middle Fork Greenway is?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: How likely will you be, to use the Middle Fork Greenway?

Interviewee: Not likely.

Interviewer: How much money would you be willing to donate to the Middle Fork Greenway project?

Interviewee: NA.

Interviewer: Do you have a specific amount in mind?

Interviewee: NA.

Interviewer: What is your current age in years?

Interviewee: 23.

Interviewer: What is your gender?

Interviewee: Female.

