



THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Route 66 Road Ahead Plans for Financial Sustainment

The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership has entered into an agreement with The Sweeney Group (Madison, Wisconsin) to develop and implement a strategic financial sustainment plan to help ensure ongoing funding. The Sweeney Group is a nationally recognized consulting firm that specializes in working with organizations that are conducting their first major gifts fundraising campaign. They have assisted a variety of not-for-profit organizations with many aspects of resource development, including both capital and annual campaign planning and implementation, feasibility studies, retreats for Boards of Directors and staff, and resource development department audits.

Since its incorporation, the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership has accomplished a lot. The organization established its mission and identified outcomes needed to achieve that mission. The Road Ahead determined specific goals to accomplish desired outcomes and established working groups and task forces to take specific actions to achieve those goals. The organization developed principle-based policies to guide its actions and crafted annual budgets to support achievement of its desired outcomes. As a result, these actions established an organizational foundation for the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership.

During its first year of operation, the Road Ahead mapped out a five-year budget plan that relied on two primary sources of revenue: Funding from the National Park Service via a 5-year Master Cooperative Agreement and a 3-year commitment of corporate financial support from State Farm Insurance Company. Based on strategic budgeting practices, and an annual set-aside of funds into a Reserve Account, the Road Ahead is funded through 2023 – assuming present funding and annual expense levels. Though the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership is financially stable for the next several years, it lacks a plan for ensuring the long-term financial sustainability.

To ensure financial sustainability beyond 2023, the Road Ahead voted to craft the following financial management strategic plan at its March 28, 2020, Board teleconference meeting.

- Engage a professional fundraising firm to conduct an analysis of the feasibility of the Road Ahead raising funds to sustain itself on a long-term basis and develop funding opportunities including the Route 66 100th Anniversary in 2026.
- Set aspirational - but achievable - fundraising goals.
- Engage a professional fundraising firm to assist in implementing and achieving the plan's goals.

The strategic plan The Sweeney Group creates could focus on a variety of fundraising tactics, including: seeking major gifts and grants to fund specific aspects of the Road Ahead's plans, establishing an endowment campaign, seeking corporate sponsorships, an annual membership program, or any other number of fundraising ideas. Whatever tactics are employed will be based on what is determined to be the best strategy for ensuring the Road Ahead's long-term financial sustainment.

Established in 2015, with the support of the National Park Service and the World Monuments' Fund, The Road Ahead Partnership's mission is to revitalize and sustain Route 66 as a national and international icon through partnerships focused on promotion, preservation, research and education, as well as economic development.

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