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Using Applied Public Relations to Develop the Londonderry Rail Trail

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at
Syracuse University

Meghan Rimol

Candidate for Bachelor of Science Degree
and Renée Crown University Honors
May 2016

Honors Capstone Project in Public Relations

Capstone Project Advisor: _____
Dr. Rochelle Ford, APR
Professor of Public Relations

Capstone Project Reader: _____
Anthony D'Angelo
Professor of Public Relations
Practice

Honors Director: _____
Stephen Kuusisto, Director

Abstract

This project uses applied public relations research and theory to plan, implement and evaluate a campaign in partnership with nonprofit organization Londonderry Trailways to facilitate the development of the Londonderry Rail Trail in the town of Londonderry, New Hampshire. Using formal organizational analysis and research techniques, this project explores the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the organization relative to the Rail Trail project and outlines a comprehensive plan to address these issues. This plan, which was implemented between June 1, 2015, and January 1, 2016, includes a digital media campaign and various promotional events aimed at engaging key stakeholders and expanding local awareness of the Rail Trail project. This campaign has been effective in achieving its objectives, as demonstrated by exceeding social media engagement targets, seeing 20 new contributors (2.6 times the goal), six media placements and raising \$3,509 (\$1,000 more than the goal). Finally, recommendations are provided for future public relations efforts to continue facilitating the development of the Londonderry Rail Trail, and for organizations addressing similar issues in the construction of local community trails.

Executive Summary

In the mid-20th century following the decline of rail travel in the United States, a national “Rails to Trails” movement began, aimed at converting abandoned rail corridors into public paths for recreational use. This movement spread to Southern New Hampshire in 2003, when the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and Southern New Hampshire Planning Committee commissioned a feasibility study on the development of the former Manchester to Lowell rail line into a rail trail. Various local organizations began work on sections of this corridor in each of the member towns in following years. A nonprofit group called Londonderry Trailways was responsible for developing the section of the trail in the town of Londonderry. In 2010, my father, Bob Rimol, reached out to Londonderry Trailways to volunteer to lead the Rail Trail project. This is what led to my original involvement with the Londonderry Rail Trail and interest in pursuing this project.

From 2010 onwards, the idea for the Londonderry Rail Trail continued to gain momentum. The Rail Trail project was divided into six phases, with each requiring funds in the form of: private donations; local, state or federal grants; or local taxpayer dollars. In 2013, I recognized a need for increased publicity of the trail and approached Londonderry Trailways about forming a social media presence for the organization. The board was in support of the idea, and I created Facebook and Twitter pages to share news and information about Trailways and the Rail Trail project.

By the time I began my Honors Capstone project in January 2015, one mile of the Rail Trail had been paved and opened to the public. The Facebook and Twitter pages were fairly active, but publicity was still lacking for the organization. Therefore, I developed an idea for my Capstone project to develop a full-scale public relations campaign to increase public awareness

and support and generate funds for the development of the Londonderry Rail Trail. This project would be divided into three phases: research, implementation and evaluation.

I spent the spring of 2015 in the research phase of my project. During this phase, I studied the existing state of the Londonderry Trailways organization and the Rail Trail project, including its level of support in the community, the plan for moving forward with the development of the trail, the group's strengths and weaknesses, and the potential opportunities and threats facing the organization during this project. I also researched the Rails-to-Trails movement, with the help of contacts from a national organization called the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Using my findings, I designed a complete campaign that would target the opportunities and threats facing the organization.

This campaign included a variety of public relations efforts designed around two goals: (1) Increasing community awareness and support of the Londonderry Rail Trail and (2) Raising funds towards the completion of the trail. For each goal, I outlined specific objectives and proposed initiatives to satisfy those objectives. I developed a timeline and budget for my efforts, with the goal of starting the campaign on June 1, 2015.

Over the summer and into the fall of 2015, I put the program I had designed into action. This program included strategies targeted at two key publics: Londonderry citizens, who would be the ones to publicly support and use the trail; and Londonderry business owners, who would be potential project donors. As the campaign progressed, I chose to focus efforts on social media outreach through Facebook and Instagram, redesigning the organization's website, and hosting public events. This focus was driven by both qualitative evaluation and conversations with members of the organization who felt that these would be the most effective strategies for the goals of the campaign. This shift in focus was also beneficial for remaining under the proposed

budget for the campaign, as the organization was aiming to spend as little on this project as possible due to its nonprofit status. I was able to remain under a \$1,000 spend for this entire campaign.

Upon conclusion of the campaign on December 31, 2015, I evaluated its success using benchmarks that I had measured prior to its start. The campaign met or exceeded all of the original objectives, and was therefore a success for Londonderry Trailways. Over the course of this project, the trail was extended from one paved mile at the beginning of my work to a total of 3.2 paved miles at its conclusion.

As the Londonderry Rail Trail project continues over the next few years, my hope is that my work for the organization through this project will contribute to its success by setting a precedent for public outreach and communication. There are still 2.6 more miles of the Londonderry Rail Trail to be paved, which will require significant community support and donations. My campaign was effective in building a community of supporters, but now it will be up to Londonderry Trailways to continue using and developing that community throughout the next phases of the project.

Additionally, I believe that my campaign can serve as a model public relations process for other community development initiatives in need of local support and funds. With many similar rail trail projects currently in progress throughout New Hampshire and the rest of the United States, this project can be used as a benchmark and source of ideas for others working towards similar goals. Consistent communication and outreach is critical for these kinds of projects, and I hope that my campaign can help others design and enact public relations efforts for important community work.

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Advice to Future Honors Students

My advice to future honors students is to pick a project that you are passionate about and that you will be excited to say that you've completed at graduation. If writing a paper doesn't excite you, don't be afraid to step out of the box and try something different. Don't settle for a project that doesn't thrill you from day one, because chances are you won't make it to day 100 unless it's something you truly care about.

When choosing an adviser, think long and hard about what kind of support you need to complete your project. If you need someone who will push you to meet deadlines, then look for someone more challenging. If you need someone that's going to encourage you, then look for an adviser who is excited about your project and full of ideas. Finding an adviser that works with you and understands your needs is critical, and don't take your selection lightly.

Finally, just keep writing. Write a little bit every day, write a lot when you have a lot of ideas and thoughts, write something down even if it doesn't make sense. Once you have the thoughts and words on the page, it's a lot easier to refine them over the last few months than to feel like you still have nothing done. Even when it gets hard, my best advice is to just keep going!

Chapter 1

Introduction

During the 19th century, thousands of miles of railroad track were constructed across the United States to facilitate travel in the industrial era. However, with the decline of the rail travel industry in the mid-1900s, many towns and cities across the country were left with abandoned train tracks spanning many miles (“History of RTC,” 2015). In the years since, many of these long, flat, open sections of land have been put to use, repurposed as public recreational paths called “rail trails.” This has sprung a national rails-to-trails movement; various nonprofit organizations, citizens’ coalitions or local and state governments have taken initiative to convert thousands of miles of former rail line into public pathways.

In the town of Londonderry, New Hampshire, the abandoned Manchester-Lowell rail line left one such corridor running six miles through the northern section of the town. For many years after the railroad’s closing, this trail was left untouched; however, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the Southern New Hampshire Planning Committee conducted a feasibility study in 2003 on the conversion of this land into a paved path. The conclusion of the study supported the development of a Rail Trail in the New Hampshire towns of Manchester, Londonderry, Derry, Windham and Salem (“Progress on the Londonderry Rail Trail,” 2015). Londonderry Trailways was appointed to lead the development of the town’s section of the trail, but the group remained inactive on the project in the years following the study. In 2010, a citizen named Bob Rimol approached the organization to volunteer to lead the Rail Trail project, and work on the trail began shortly thereafter. In the early stages of the project, Londonderry Trailways was primarily focused on using volunteer labor to clear litter and debris from the

existing path to make it suitable for general use. As the project gained traction, the organization began to focus on forming public partnerships and was granted approval by the Town of Londonderry to begin construction of the trail in 2012 (“Progress on the Londonderry Rail Trail,” 2015).

At the start of this project, one mile of the Londonderry Rail Trail was paved and opened to the public. I approached this project with the goal of promoting local awareness and support of the Londonderry Rail Trail, while simultaneously attracting donations from individuals and corporations. The following document details the background research, implementation activities and evaluation methods that I used in my efforts to generate publicity for the Londonderry Rail Trail over the course of a year-long public relations campaign. It concludes with my recommendations for Londonderry Trailways in moving forward with the Rail Trail, as well as recommendations for other groups pursuing the development of a community trail.

Chapter 2

Organizational Research

About the organization

Londonderry Trailways is a nonprofit organization comprised of local citizens based out of Londonderry, New Hampshire. The goal of Londonderry Trailways is to increase and improve the availability of trails for low-impact recreational activities and active transportation in the community. A 501(c) (3) non-profit organization formed in 1999, Londonderry Trailways is made up of about 130 local families and managed by a group of volunteer citizens (“Who we are,” 2010). The official mission statement of the organization is:

“To develop a diverse network of safe walking and biking routes throughout Londonderry for all ages and abilities that connect neighborhoods, schools, businesses and points of interest, in order to encourage recreation, exercise, reduce automobile use and create a greater sense of community. To promote safe cycling and walking by educating residents, businesses and local government on the advantages of non-motorized forms of transportation” (“Who we are,” 2010).

Londonderry Trailways classifies its projects under three main categories—the Rail Trail, conservation area trails and neighborhood connections. In each of these categories, the organization is working to either develop or maintain a network of trails in a different area of the town.

The Rail Trail is a six-mile-long section of abandoned rail corridor that Londonderry Trailways is converting into a paved trail for recreational use and alternative transportation. At the start of this campaign, one mile of the path was developed and paved. The organization is

attempting to raise additional funds to develop the remaining sections of the trail. This project has been in progress since 2010. Londonderry Trailways will require approximately \$1.6 million in funding to complete this trail, which will be raised through donations from individuals, corporations, and local, state and national governments (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., 2013).

Londonderry Trailways also has built and now maintains a number of trails categorized as conservation area trails. The conservation area trails are those that have been developed through the woods and in many of the orchards around the town of Londonderry. These include the Kendall Pond Conservation Area trails, the Musquash Conservation Area trails and the network of trails in the Moose Hill Orchards and on the Mack's Apples farm. These unpaved trails are intended for recreational use only.

Finally, Londonderry Trailways has built and currently maintains a set of trails called neighborhood connections. These are paths located around Londonderry's central district that allow residents of multiple local neighborhoods to easily reach the schools and community areas at the center of town. The first of these trails is the two miles of paved pathway connecting four schools—Londonderry Middle School, Londonderry High School, Matthew Thornton Elementary School and Moose Hill Kindergarten—and providing access to these schools from two large neighborhoods. The second is the system of trails at the Londonderry Athletics and Field Association (LAFA) complex that connects the LAFA fields and playground with nearby neighborhoods. The organization is attempting to extend and improve the surface of both of these neighborhood connections, although this project is currently on hold to allow funds to be channeled into the Rail Trail project.

The Rails-to-Trails Movement

A rail trail is a multi-purpose path that is created on the site of a railroad corridor that is no longer in use. These trails are usually flat or slightly graded and can be used for walking, cycling, inline skating, cross-country skiing and a variety of other recreational activities. There are more than 1,900 completed rail trails in the United States, with at least one in every state. More than 700 additional rail trails are currently undergoing construction in both rural and urban communities throughout the country (“Trail building basics,” 2015).

Throughout New Hampshire, multiple rails-to-trails movements are currently taking place. In southern New Hampshire, the Manchester to Lowell railroad line is no longer in use and has been partially converted to a multiuse path in certain towns. Citizens and legislators in the towns of Manchester, Londonderry, Derry, Windham and Salem are currently undertaking campaigns to convert this section of abandoned rail corridor into a single paved trail known as the Granite State Rail Trail. Certain segments of the trail in Derry, Windham and Londonderry have already been completed and opened for use. This project is supported by the State of New Hampshire and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (“Progress on the Londonderry Rail Trail,” 2015).

Past, Present and Future of the Rail Trail

Although Londonderry Trailways has been working on the Londonderry Rail Trail project since 2010, the project began in a broader sense at the state level a few years prior. In 2003, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the Southern New Hampshire Planning Committee conducted a feasibility study to determine the best way of creating an accessible pedestrian and bicycle route running between Concord and Salem as a part of the I-93 expansion project. The recommendation drawn from this study was to use sections of abandoned

rail corridor running through the connecting towns to create a system of paths making intercity travel more easily accessible (Rizzo Associates, Inc. & Alta Planning and Design, 2003). The Town of Windham immediately began construction on their portion of the Rail Trail upon the conclusion of the 2003 study. In 2006, the town of Windham opened 3.5 miles of paved pathway as the first developed section of the proposed Granite State Rail Trail. Shortly afterwards in 2009, the town of Derry followed suit, completing the first paved section of the Derry Rail Trail (“Progress on the Londonderry Rail Trail,” 2015).

In 2010, Londonderry Trailways formed the Rail Trail subcommittee, authorized by the Town Council to study all aspects of the abandoned rail corridor and return with development recommendations. With the committee’s recommendation, the Londonderry Town Council voted in 2011 to support the development of the Londonderry Rail Trail. That same year, Derry completed the second phase of their Rail Trail project, connecting their path with the completed Windham Rail Trail to comprise eight miles of continuous paved pathway as the start of the Granite State Rail Trail (“Progress on the Londonderry Rail Trail, 2015”).

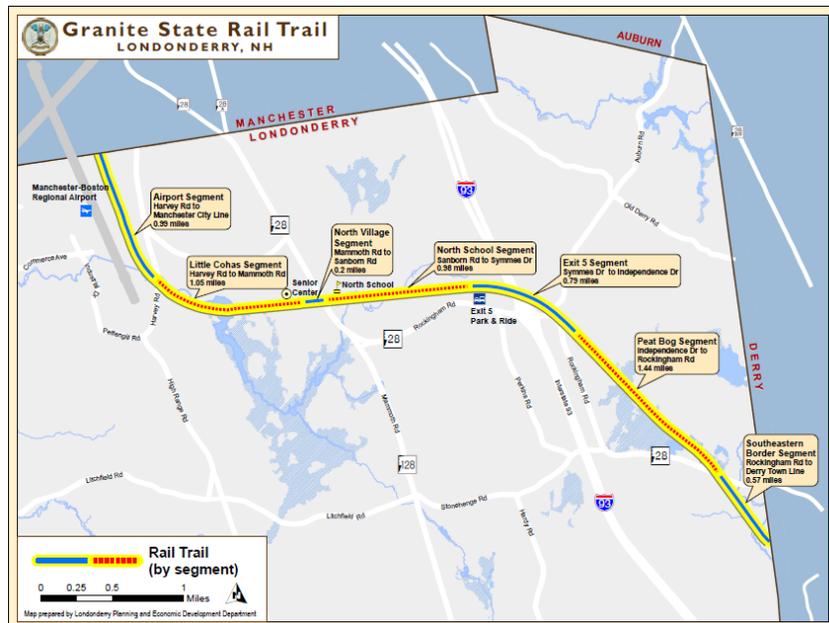
In 2012, the town of Londonderry and the State of New Hampshire signed a formal Rail Trail Use Agreement, which authorized Londonderry Trailways to use the state-owned land to develop the Rail Trail. This also allowed Londonderry Trailways to apply for development grants and to execute the preliminary engineering study. After Londonderry voters passed a warrant article in March to fund the completion of the first phase of the project, the first mile of the Londonderry Rail Trail was opened in November 2013. Throughout 2014, Londonderry Trailways worked to gather individual and corporate donations to fund Phase 2 of the project, which would pave another 0.58 miles of trail. By the end of the year, Phase 2 was fully funded,

and would be paved in spring 2015—coinciding with the start of this project (“Progress on the Londonderry Rail Trail,” 2015).

The plan for moving forward with the development of the Rail Trail is detailed below:

Phase	Location	Length	Estimated Cost
Phase 1	North School Segment	0.98 miles	\$245,000
Phase 2	Exit 5 Segment	0.58 miles	\$82,000
Phase 3	Peat Bog Segment	1.44 miles	\$382,000
Phase 4	North Village Segment	0.2 miles	\$205,000
Phase 5	Little Cohas Segment	1.05 miles	\$364,000
Phase 6	Southeastern Border Segment	0.57 miles	\$302,000
Phase 7	Airport Segment	0.99 miles	\$383,000
Total		5.81 miles	\$1,963,000

The specific locations of each of these segments can be viewed in the map below. During this project, paving was completed on Phase 2 of the trail, and Londonderry Trailways received a goodwill donation from Kinder Morgan for \$300,000 to be used to fund Phase 3 of the Rail Trail. This section was paved in November 2015. Details of the project’s progress are included throughout the rest of the report.



SWOT Analysis

Prior to developing this campaign, I researched the strengths and weaknesses of Londonderry Trailways as an organization to better understand the areas in need of improvement through my campaign activities. I also examined the opportunities and threats facing the organization to gain a sense of what activities would be most effective in reaching the organization's goals and where challenges in growth might be faced. It is important to note that the SWOT analysis was compiled during the research phase of this project, and therefore includes information about the organization as of January 2015.

Strengths

- As an organization, Londonderry Trailways and its members have a strong presence at community events and a positive reputation among other community groups. Trailways representatives regularly attend Town Council Meetings, holiday events and parades, community fundraisers and school events. Citizens of Londonderry are generally receptive to the organization as a whole.
- One mile of the Rail Trail has been paved and was opened at a ceremony in November 2013, which received significant attention from both press and members of the community. The path sees significant use by many members of the community who regularly are seen walking, running, cycling or in-line skating on the paved section of trail. Signs have been constructed to mark the beginning and end of the first mile of path, which attracts the attention of passersby who may not have previously known of the trail's existence.

- Londonderry Trailways currently has many existing partnerships and sponsorships with local businesses that have made donations in support of the Rail Trail project. As of January 2015, donors include the following businesses:
 - Derry Medical Center
 - Berkshire Hathaway/Verani Real Estate
 - Coca Cola, Inc. (Londonderry headquarters) and Dasani
 - Stonyfield Farms
- Londonderry Trailways developed a Facebook page at the beginning of 2013, which has since attracted over 500 fans. Facebook posts regularly receive strong engagement and click-through rates, attracting the attention of both members of the community and other community organizations that support the development of the Rail Trail.
- Londonderry Trailways operates an email listserv that sends email blasts to subscribers about organizational news and events. This is currently the organization's main method of communicating with members and stakeholders, reaching hundreds of dedicated volunteers and donors who have opted-in to receive communications.
- The Rail Trail is strongly supported by the Town of Londonderry and members of the town government, including the Town Councilors and Town Manager Kevin Smith.
- Londonderry Trailways has received Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grants from the government to cover some of the costs of this project. The organization continues to be eligible for these grants as it moves forward with construction.

Weaknesses

- The existing Londonderry Trailways website lacks substantial content and is not updated regularly. The design of the website is outdated and makes it difficult to read some of the

pages. Overall, the website is not a strong reflection of the organization's mission, goals or success.

- Currently, Londonderry Trailways only has a few dozen citizens registered as members. With more than 500 Facebook fans and significant visibility at events, there is clearly more support for the organization than this membership number reflects, but many supporters are not official dues-paying members.
- Londonderry Trailways lacks a strong presence on social media platforms other than Facebook. The organization has a Twitter page that was established in June 2014 with just 112 followers that is not updated regularly and receives little interaction. Londonderry Trailways does not have a presence on any other social media channels.
- Londonderry Trailways has applied for a number of grants from the government, charitable organizations and businesses, yet has not received most of the grants to which they applied. The current procedure for applying for grant funding is not effective and can be improved upon.

Opportunities

There are many opportunities within the town of Londonderry and surrounding community for Londonderry Trailways to attract support and spread its mission. In addition to garnering support from local citizens, there are many opportunities for Londonderry Trailways to work with local businesses and organizations to raise funds for the development of the Rail Trail.

- Contact local businesses based in Londonderry to see if they would consider making a donation to Londonderry Trailways for the development of the Rail Trail. The largest employers in the town of Londonderry are as follows (New Hampshire Employment Security, 2015):

- Londonderry School District (education)
- Harvey Industries (window manufacturer)
- United Parcel Service Inc. (parcel delivery services)
- L-3 Warrior Systems (laser aiming & illumination devices manufacturer)
- Shaw's Supermarket (supermarket)
- Vibro-meter (Aerospace component manufacturer)
- CTS, Corp. (electronic components manufacturer)
- Stonyfield Farms (yogurt producer)

Additionally, there are a number of businesses that are located directly on or next to the Rail Trail who would benefit from the increased traffic surrounding the development of the Rail Trail. These businesses include:

- Poor Boys Diner
 - Red Arrow Diner
 - Irving Gas Station
 - The 603 Brewery
 - The Bacon Barn
- Collaborate with other organizations in surrounding towns that are working to develop recreational trails to see how they have achieved success in their efforts. One of the best ways to gain support for rail trail projects is to show citizens examples of local projects that have been successful and the positive impact that those trails have on the community. Reach out to their supporters to gain a wider audience for Londonderry Trailways and use their projects as examples of successful rail trail initiatives.
 - Derry Rail Trail Alliance

- The Windham Rail Trail Alliance
 - Friends of the Goffstown Rail Trail
 - Friends of the Northern Rail Trail
 - Friends of the Rockingham Recreational Trail
- Partner with one of Londonderry’s public elementary schools, North Elementary School, to put on an event that publicizes the trail and encourages donations for its continued development. The first paved mile of the Rail Trail starts across from the entrance to this elementary school. Both teachers and administrators at the school have expressed support for the development of the Rail Trail and an interest in becoming involved with Londonderry Trailways to promote the use of the trail.
 - Reach out to local, regional and national organizations that promote the development of rail trails and support alternative methods of transportation, particularly the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has an “online toolbox” of resources for rail trail build projects, including studies that provide information that can be used in fact sheets or cited in news articles to gain support from local residents (C. Knoch, personal communication, February 25, 2015).
 - Provide opportunities for memorial donations. Londonderry resident and Trailways member Mark Baldwin passed away in February 2013, and his family requested that donations be made in his name to Londonderry Trailways to support the Rail Trail project in lieu of flowers. Since then, Trailways has received \$7,787 in donations in Mark Baldwin’s honor, which were added to the Rail Trail fund and used to construct a plaque in his honor on the first paved mile of the trail. Other memorial contributions have since

been made by the families of residents who supported the Rail Trail project, and there are many places along the path where such plaques or benches would be appropriate.

- Many grants exist to provide funding to support the development of recreational trails and offer financial assistance to organizations dedicated to providing alternative methods of transportations in communities. As detailed in the strengths section, Londonderry Trailways has already received some of these grants. However, there are still many opportunities to receive additional funding through government money.

Threats

- Londonderry Trailways planned to submit a warrant article to be added to the ballot for town meeting day in March 2015. This warrant article would ask Londonderry taxpayers to vote to approve or deny \$100,000 in funding from the town to develop phase three of the Rail Trail. Due to a clerical error, this article was not submitted in time to be added to the ballot for March. It will be resubmitted for the March 2016 town ballot, but will need to be reapproved by the Town Council at that time.
 - Strategy: Resubmit the warrant article for the March 2016 town election. Work with the town council directly to ensure that all processes are followed for putting the warrant article on the ballot.
- There are a number of residences and residential neighborhoods that lie along the projected path of the rail trail. Some of these citizens may be concerned with losing privacy and/or security if the area around their homes is developed into a public recreational space. One of the biggest sources of opposition for rail trail build projects is citizens who do not want these public spaces encroaching on their private property.

- Strategy: Londonderry Trailways should reach out directly to citizens whose homes lie on or near the rail trail to discuss the impact that the trail will have on their neighborhood and dispel any potential concerns. The organization should also hold public meetings open to anyone who feels that the rail trail may create safety or security issues in their community. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has completed a number of trail user surveys to determine the legitimacy of safety concerns, and has discovered that instances of neighborhood crime are not increased by the presence of a publicly accessible rail trail. This organization has a number of studies on file to address any concerns from citizens (C. Knoch, personal communication, February 25, 2015).
- A group of equestrian enthusiasts in the town of Londonderry are opposed to the development of a paved Rail Trail, as the section of abandoned rail bed would become unusable for horseback riders if paved. This is a small group of citizens who are not particularly active against the organization. If they mount more organizing power, it is a concern that will need to be addressed.
 - Strategy: Continue to monitor the support and vocalization of this group and engage in discussions with members to address their demands as needed.
- Part of the trail runs underneath an overpass on Interstate 93. This highway is currently undergoing an expansion and reconstruction process. This presents some obstacles in developing that section of pathway until the I-93 construction process is completed.
 - Strategy: Remain in contact with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation regarding this construction project, and keep open lines of communication as both projects move forward.

Demographics

Londonderry, New Hampshire, is a medium-sized town in Southern New Hampshire with a total population of 24,269 as of 2013. The median household income is \$90,920, with 2.9% of citizens living below the poverty rate. The median age of citizens is 39.9 years, with 26.5% of the population classified as “school-aged” (5-19 years old) and 34.8% of the population aged 35 to 54. Much of the town’s focus is on a strong educational system, with three public elementary schools, one public middle school and one public high school that regularly are recognized as some of the top-performing schools in the state. The municipal budget for 2015 was \$28,054,908 (New Hampshire Employment Security, 2015).

Target Audiences

Londonderry Trailways has two main target audiences for the Rail Trail project. The first is citizens who live and/or work in the town or Londonderry, New Hampshire. These are the people who will be using the Rail Trail and whose daily lives will be impacted by its development. The second target audience is organizations and businesses who can provide sponsorship or funding to develop the Rail Trail, particularly those headquartered in Londonderry. These organizations are likely to be the ones who make the largest donations to the Rail Trail’s development, and thus, a portion of the communications effort for Londonderry Trailways needs to be targeted toward them. With both the support and praise of Londonderry’s citizens and the financial support of local organizations and businesses, the goal of paving the entire Rail Trail can become a reality.

Media List

The following sources are the most prominent local media outlets in the region of critical importance to this campaign. These will be the sources that are most likely to reach the campaign's target publics:

Publication Name	Audience	Contact Person	Information
The Londonderry Times (Nutfield Publishing)	Local residents of Londonderry	Leslie O'Donnell, Editor	londonderrytimes@nutpub.net (603) 537-2760 http://londonderrytimes.net/
Derry News	Residents of Derry, Windham, Chester, Hudson, Londonderry and surrounding communities	Julie Huss, Derry/Londonderry news reporter	jhuss@derrynews.com (603) 421-3847 http://www.derrynews.com
The New Hampshire Union Leader	Residents of Manchester and surrounding communities, including Londonderry	April Guilmet, Community News Correspondent	news@unionleader.com (603) 668-4321 http://www.unionleader.com
WMUR News	New Hampshire residents	Alisha McDevitt, News Director	amcdevitt@hearst.com (603) 669-9999 http://www.wmur.com

The secondary research that I conducted prior to planning my campaign allowed me to focus efforts on the people and projects that would most successfully contribute to the development of the Rail Trail. In understanding the key publics that I will need to reach with my public relations efforts, I will be able to focus time and resources on reaching critical audiences. The specifics of my campaign plan are detailed in the following chapter.

Chapter 3

Campaign Plan

Londonderry Trailways has made progress toward their eventual goal of creating a six-mile paved path for recreational use in the town of Londonderry along the site of an abandoned rail corridor. However, more community awareness and support of this project is needed to raise the remaining funds for the completion of the trail. The following goals and objectives are critical to ensuring that this campaign is successful in solving this problem for the organization.

Goals and Objectives

All of the goals and objectives listed below have an expected date of completion of December 31, 2015, unless otherwise specified:

Goal 1: Increase awareness and support of the Londonderry Rail Trail in the community of Londonderry, New Hampshire.

Objective 1A: Obtain 1,000 “likes” on the Londonderry Trailways Facebook page.

Objective 1B: Attract 100 new followers to a newly established Londonderry Trailways Instagram page.

Objective 1C: Add ten new dues-paying members to the Londonderry Trailways organization.

Objective 1D: Receive coverage in two local media outlets for each major event that the organization holds and each construction milestone achieved.

Goal 2: Raise the funds to be used towards the completion of the Londonderry Rail Trail, which in total amount to an estimated \$1,963,000.

Objective 2A: Raise \$2,000 in individual donations.

Objective 2B: Obtain three corporate donations in amounts of over \$500.

Campaign Recommendations

1. Maintain open lines of communication with all key publics, including both supporters and opponents of the Londonderry Rail Trail project. Communication efforts should include press releases, email newsletters, regular social media updates and open meetings where residents can attend and ask questions.
2. Increase awareness and support of the Londonderry Rail Trail by hosting a community event that takes place on the paved section of the trail. Suggested events include a run/walk or a festival that incorporates local businesses. The event would be donations-only and welcome to all members of the community.
3. Establish relationships with local media outlets and regularly share news and information on the development of the Londonderry Rail Trail with local reporters. This should include print, television and radio outlets.
4. Create a web and social media strategy to increase online communication and ensure that all news and information is shared with the web audience. Share a variety of content, including photos of the trail, user-submitted content and news updates, on a regular basis.

Messaging Strategies

Key public #1: *Londonderry residents, particularly residents from the ages of 35 to 54.*

Comprising the largest percentage of the population of the town of Londonderry, this public contains those people who will be likely to use the rail trail a significant amount. Many of the members of this public have children in the Londonderry School District and are raising their families in the Londonderry community. These residents are in a position to make small

monetary contributions to the Rail Trail fund and will also be important voters when articles to provide town funding to the Rail Trail are raised on town ballots.

Message strategy #1: The Londonderry Rail Trail will enhance the quality of life for all Londonderry residents and their families by providing a safe recreational space for citizens of all ages and abilities. This trail can be constructed at little cost to residents, and it can provide economic gains for the town as a whole in the long run by providing increased tourism, opportunities for new businesses and a higher property value for homes nearby the trail.

Strategies and tactics:

1. Increase awareness of the Londonderry Rail Trail project through a digital and mass media campaign.
 - a. Update and improve the Londonderry Trailways website at www.londonderrytrails.org.
 - b. Regularly post updates of the progress of the Rail Trail project on the organization's Facebook and Twitter pages.
 - c. Encourage current fans and followers to share the pages with their friends to build a steady online following.
 - d. Include links to the Facebook and Twitter pages on all promotional materials.
 - e. Develop an Instagram account and share original and user-submitted photos of the Rail Trail.
 - f. Create news releases, fact sheets and backgrounders that can be posted on the website and disseminated to local media outlets promoting the potential benefits of the trail specifically for taxpayers and residents.

2. Increase support of the Rail Trail by showcasing the benefits that the trail will have on residents of Londonderry through a series of events.
 - a. Host a community walk or race on the completed section of the trail.
 - b. Host multiple trail cleanup days to encourage citizens to visit the trail and invest themselves in its development.
 - c. Work with schools in the Londonderry School District, especially the North School that is located directly on the trail, to create an event on the Rail Trail promoting a healthy lifestyle for children.
 - d. Hold a public meeting to address concerns raised by citizens who are worried about safety, accessibility, financing or other issues that might create opposition
3. Raise funds for the Rail Trail project by asking for small donations from individual supporters of the trail through engagement strategies.
 - a. Encourage families to become members of Londonderry Trailways, and provide a regular email newsletter with project updates to those who have made donations by becoming members.
 - b. Include the names of individuals who make donations to the Rail Trail project on the Londonderry Trailways website and the email newsletter.
 - c. Create a graphic on the Londonderry Trailways website that shows how donations are contributing to the eventual goal of the campaign.

Key public #2: *Owners and managers of local businesses based in Londonderry.*

There are a number of businesses that lie along the path of the Rail Trail, as well as those whose operations depend on the economy of the town of Londonderry. Additionally, there are potential opportunities for new businesses to move into the spaces that will be opened for development if the Rail Trail is completed. These businesses can make substantial contributions to the Rail Trail, including monetary donations, sponsorship or providing materials or labor.

Messaging strategy #2: The construction of the Londonderry Rail Trail will provide economic benefits to the town of Londonderry and to the businesses on and around the trail. By increasing tourism in the town of Londonderry, attracting new customers to nearby stores and restaurants and increasing the property value of the land around the trail, the Rail Trail is worth the investment for local businesses.

Strategies and tactics:

1. Reach out to local business owners and managers to let them know how the Rail Trail will be beneficial to them and their company.
 - a. Add a section on the website that describes the economic benefits that the Rail Trail will have on the town of Londonderry.
 - b. Create a fact sheet that can be distributed to businesses that explains how the Rail Trail could potentially benefit their company.
 - c. Write an op-ed for local media outlets about the economic benefits of the Rail Trail and why Londonderry business owners should support it.
2. Individually contact local businesses to let them know what opportunities they have for making a monetary donation to contribute to the Rail Trail project.

- a. Create a packet of information that can be easily distributed to local businesses that includes a fact sheet on the rail trail, a map of the trail, frequently asked questions and a donation request form.
 - b. Provide information on the website for corporate donors, including suggested donations from companies of varying sizes (gold, silver, bronze, etc).
 - c. List the names of corporate donors and their donation level on the website.
 - d. Provide an incentive for top-tier donors, in the form of a plaque and/or recognition on one of the trail signs.
3. Provide information to companies on alternative ways that they can support the Londonderry Rail Trail project, other than monetary donations.
 - a. Provide them with a list of upcoming Londonderry Trailways events for which they could provide volunteers, materials or event space.
 - b. Specifically target local construction companies to see if they would be willing to provide discounted materials or labor for the paving projects.

Evaluation

The success of these objectives will be evaluated using the following methods after the conclusion of the campaign on December 31, 2015:

Objective 1A: The number of “likes” on the Facebook page will be tracked and recorded.

Objective 1B: The number of followers on the new Instagram page will be tracked and recorded.

Objective 1C: The number of dues-paying members will be tracked and recorded.

Objective 1D: Media coverage online, in print and via broadcast will be monitored, and all clips covering the Londonderry Rail Trail will be maintained in a clip book.

Objective 2A: The number of donations made by individuals will be monitored and recorded.

Objective 2B: All corporate donations and their amounts will be monitored and recorded.

Planned campaign calendar

The following calendar details which strategies and tactics of this campaign will be enacted each week during the implementation phase, which runs from June to December, 2015.

	June					July				August					Sept.				Oct.				Nov.						
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			
Public: Londonderry citizens																													
<i>Strategy: Digital media campaign</i>																													
New website content	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X														
Social media postings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ask to share social pages	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Instagram account	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<i>Strategy: Promotional events</i>																													
Community walk/race												X	X	X	X	X													
Trail cleanup days	X					X				X					X				X										
Event with schools															X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
<i>Strategy: Individual engagement</i>																													
Newsletter for donors	X					X				X					X				X										
Donor names on website	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Website fundraising graphic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Public: Londonderry business owners																													
<i>Strategy: Outreach</i>																													
New website content	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Fact sheet						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X															
Op-Ed															X	X	X	X											
<i>Strategy: Awareness of opportunity</i>																													
Information packet						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X															
New website info for businesses	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Names of donors on website	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Plaque for top donors	X	X																											
<i>Strategy: Alternative donations</i>																													
List of events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Contact construction companies															X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Evaluation																										X	X	X	X

Planned Campaign Budget

	Per item cost	Total projected	Sponsored credit	Actual projected
Public: Londonderry citizens				
<i>Strategy: Digital media campaign</i>				
Website content development (photography/copywriting)	\$8/hour	\$80	\$80	\$0
Social media postings	0	0	0	0
Ask to share social pages	0	0	0	0
Instagram account (photography)	15/hour	45	45	0
<i>Strategy: Promotional events</i>				
Community walk/fun run				
T-shirts (500)	2	1,000	0	1,000
Refreshments (donated by Stonyfield/ Coca Cola)	100/case	2,000	2,000	0
Security/Medical	150/hour	750	0	750
Banners/posters (100)	1.50	150	0	150
Trail cleanup days				
Trash bags (donated by Benson's Hardware)	10/box	200	200	0
Refreshments (donated by Coca Cola)	100/case	300	300	0
Event with schools				
T-shirts (300)	2	600	0	600
Refreshments (donated by Stonyfield)	100/case	300	300	0
Flyers/handouts for students (500)	.25	125	0	125
<i>Strategy: Individual engagement</i>				
Newsletter for donors (copywriting)	8/hour	24	24	0
Donor names on website	0	0	0	0
Website fundraising graphic (design)	12/hour	48	48	0
Public: Londonderry business owners				
<i>Strategy: Outreach</i>				
New website content	0	0	0	0
Fact sheet	8/hour	16	16	0
Op-Ed (writing)	8/hour	24	24	0
<i>Strategy: Awareness of opportunities</i>				
Information packet	0	0	0	0
New website info for businesses (writing)	8/hour	32	32	0
Names of donors on website	0	0	0	0
Plaque for top donors	10	100	0	100
<i>Strategy: Alternative donations</i>				
List of events	0	0	0	0
Contact construction companies	0	0	0	0
Evaluation	8/hour	240	240	0
TOTAL		\$6,134	\$3,309	\$2,825

Chapter 4

Campaign Activities

Digital Media Outreach

Throughout my campaign, I employed numerous digital media strategies to enhance awareness and engagement with my target audiences of Londonderry residents and local business owners. The day-to-day interaction with people in the community using social platforms seemed to be highly effective in gaining attention for Londonderry Trailways and the Rail Trail, and therefore much of my efforts were concentrated on ensuring that I was staying up to date on digital communications efforts. In my campaign plan, five main activities were categorized under the digital media campaign: creating new website content; maintaining updated social media postings; asking followers to share our social media pages; developing an Instagram account; and creating new public relations materials. Prior to the start of the campaign, Londonderry Trailways had existing accounts on Facebook and Twitter, both of which I personally established and have managed for a number of years. However, there was not a regular stream of content coming from these accounts, and follower counts and engagement remained low. For the campaign, my plan was to increase the number of postings on these accounts and focus on creating more engaging content to build a steady follower base.

Facebook

Facebook has always been the organization's most active form of social media, with the Londonderry Trailways page attracting just over 500 followers at the start of the campaign. On Facebook, I aimed to post one to three times per week, focusing on news, events and photos of the trails (see Appendix A). Because the website was not being regularly updated prior to my

campaign, the organization's Facebook page became the main medium that members of the community used to find information about upcoming events and updates on the Rail Trail project.

While the number of weekly postings that I made varied over the course of the campaign, I was able to substantially increase the overall frequency of postings. For each event, I aimed to post once during the two weeks prior to the event, once on the day of the event, and once afterwards with a photo or video from the event. For any news, particularly about the Rail Trail, I shared a short summary of the news and included a photo that contextualized the news and provided visual interest to followers. If there was no current news or upcoming events to post, I would post photos from the trails, especially the Rail Trail. These photos garnered significant engagement, as many of them were user-submitted and showcased members of the community out using the Rail Trail or other trails that the organization maintains. I occasionally made posts promoting other social media pages (including cross-promoting Londonderry Trailways content from other social media channels) or posting a link to an article that our followers may find interesting. However, I took note that these posts had significantly less engagement from followers, and thus I tried to limit this strategy to times when I was lacking current content.

In addition to regularly posting on the Londonderry Trailways Facebook page, I used the page to engage with other community members, local businesses and organizations and rail trail projects. I monitored the page at least once per day to check for any wall posts or private messages and respond to them in a timely manner. I liked and commented on posts made by other pages that Londonderry Rail Trails follows, especially the Derry Rail Trail Alliance as they are a frequent poster and have a very similar audience to Londonderry Trailways.

Twitter

Prior to the campaign, I had also started a Twitter account for Londonderry Trailways, although engagement seemed fairly limited compared to other forms of social media. I attempted to post more frequently on this page to reach a different audience than on Facebook, but found it difficult to source content appropriate for this form of social media. I posted on Twitter on an as-needed basis, focusing on promoting news and events both from the organization and from other groups around the town of Londonderry (see Appendix C). I followed more local businesses and organizations that might be of interest to Londonderry Trailways' Twitter followers, making an effort to favorite or retweet any relevant content that they posted. Although I continued to use Twitter throughout the duration of the campaign, I quickly found that it was simply not the form of social media on which Londonderry Trailways' primary audience would be found, and thus I chose to focus my efforts on other forms of digital communication.

Instagram

As part of my digital media campaign, I started an Instagram account for Londonderry Trailways. After creating the account and building a profile, I first searched for relevant accounts to follow that would be posting similar content to Londonderry Trailways, such as other trail organizations, cycling groups and alternative transportation activists. I made an effort to log on to Instagram regularly to see what these people were posting and engage with their content when appropriate. I used numerous hashtags to attract more followers to our posts, including #londonderrynh, #londonderryrailtrail, #railtrail, #newhampshire, and #TBT. I also searched these hashtags regularly and liked any relevant photos with these hashtags attached, which seemed very effective in gaining the attention of rail trail users and supporters from other areas of the country. Finally, I used Instagram's location services to tag our posts and made sure to

monitor the Londonderry Rail Trail location tag so that I could engage with content about the trail. Anytime the Londonderry Rail Trail was tagged or mentioned, I liked or commented on the photo.

I also followed a number of Londonderry residents that I found by connecting the account with our Facebook page. This allowed me to target people that I knew were interested in Londonderry Trailways to follow the new Instagram page. I used Facebook and Twitter to make our existing followers aware of the new Instagram account and then started making posts. I aimed to post once per week, to strike a balance between overwhelming our few followers with too many posts and ensuring that we were providing enough content to be worth following (see Appendix B). Most of my posts were photos of the trail, although some were promoting events or volunteer opportunities with the organization. Throughout the campaign, our Instagram account continued to grow and became a great way to communicate with publics that were difficult to reach through other channels, especially younger members of the community.

Email Newsletter

Prior to this campaign, Londonderry Trailways regularly emailed members with news and information upcoming events or meetings. However, the news blasts were not on any regular schedule and had no graphic appeal. Using an online tool called MailChimp, I worked to design a template that could be used to send email updates to Londonderry Trailways members (see Appendix E). After discussing the idea with the Trailways board, we determined that quarterly updates would be the most appropriate for our needs and resources. Using their existing email list, we built out the email newsletter using this template and will begin using this method to send out news and information to all of our current members and subscribers in 2016.

Website Content

Prior to the start of this campaign, the website for Londonderry Trailways was over ten years old and was not regularly maintained with relevant content. Due to the lack of information on the website, it seemed that community members were visiting the Facebook page rather than the website to look for relevant information about the trails or contact the organization. Part of my original campaign plan included various updates to the existing website, mostly in the form of additional information about using, donating to, or volunteering on the Rail Trail. However, when I tried to begin making these updates, I realized that the structure of the website was so outdated that it would make more sense for me to build an entirely new website from scratch on the WordPress platform. While much of the information would be the same, this would allow me to restructure the site and use a more modern design that was customized to the needs of the organization.

Because the members of the organization that would be responsible for maintaining the website were already familiar with the WordPress platform, I chose to continue using that content management system for the new site. Using a customized WordPress template, I designed and developed the site to be more in line with the caliber of content that is distributed through social media. I included significantly more photos on the new site and removed redundancy from the navigation system with updated menu information. In the process of the redesign, I made sure to incorporate the changes I had originally intended to make on the existing site, including information for donors and businesses as well as links to the social media pages.

The process of rebuilding the website turned out to require significantly more time than I originally intended to expend on changes to the existing site. It was not completed by the end

date of my campaign, and therefore could not be included in my evaluative efforts. I continued to work on the site following the official end date of my campaign, and it was launched in April 2016 (see Appendix D). Many of my other campaign activities, such as social media postings and public outreach, would be continuing past the December 31st deadline, which allowed me to launch the website in a secondary campaign during spring 2016.

Promotional Events and Public Outreach

Throughout this campaign, I also was able to enact various strategies categorized as promotional events and public outreach. While these events and activities were not implemented exactly as originally specified in my campaign plan, they used the same critical framework as those which I had designed in the planning phase. My method of creating donor plaques for public outreach is also included in this section.

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

In May 2015, Londonderry Trailways opened Phase 2 of the Rail Trail to the public. On May 27, Londonderry Trailways held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the trail and recognize the donors that funded this section. This event was free and open to the public. It was advertised on the Londonderry Trailways Facebook and Twitter pages, and a press release was sent to multiple local news outlets. At the ceremony, Londonderry and Derry Family Practice, Verani Realty, the Fitzgibbons Family and Continental Paving were each recognized for their contributions and presented with a plaque. Project manager Bob Rimol opened the ceremony with a short speech, followed by Dr. John Daley, Londonderry Trailways board member and physician at Derry Family Practice. Finally, town manager Kevin Smith spoke on behalf of the town of Londonderry, expressing his support for the project. The event was relatively small in scale, with only about 25 attendees, but it received coverage in local news outlets. A reporter and

photographer from the Londonderry Times attended to photograph the ceremony and speak with various attendees about the project. This generated local awareness of the newly paved section of trail and provided an opportunity for members of the public to engage with the Londonderry Trailways board members.

Trail Days

On Saturday, June 20, 2015, Londonderry Trailways held an event called “Trail Days” which was the main event of this campaign. The event was held on the Londonderry Rail Trail, incorporating a variety of activities for families and individuals to engage with the trail and organization. The event was free to all participants and sponsored by Stonyfield Yogurt and Coca Cola, who both donated refreshments. Stonyfield Yogurt representatives also attended the event, providing attendees with free yogurt squeezers from their truck. Activities at the event included free Segway rides and demonstrations (donated by a Trailways member), live music by local artists and aerobics sessions. The event was advertised through an email blast to members and supporters, on social media and through media coverage from multiple local news outlets. The event was attended by dozens of families and numerous individuals.

Donor Plaques

In order to incentivize high-volume donors, I worked with Londonderry Trailways to develop a plaque and signage system that would recognize businesses that made substantial donations to the Rail Trail project. We also hoped to recognize businesses that provided Londonderry Trailways with discounted or complimentary services to develop the trail, such as paving and railroad tie removal. Working with members of the Londonderry Trailways board, we developed two different methods of donor recognition. The first was a plaque that contained a map of the Rail Trail and a spike from one of the old sections of rail that had been removed to

make the trail. This plaque is to be presented to donors and contributors at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for each section that is completed. Recipients of this plaque will include companies and individuals who made substantial financial contributions, as well as those who gave of their time and resources to complete the physical paving of the trail.

Londonderry Trailways also developed an on-trail signage system to recognize corporate donors, incentivizing donations for publicity purposes. The organization had signs created for Berkshire Hathaway Verani Realty and Derry Medical Center on Phase Two of the trail and Kinder Morgan and Angus Group Insurance on Phase Three. Any additional corporate donations will be recognized in this manner on future sections of the trail.



Major Events and Milestones

During my campaign, there were three major milestones that the organization reached on the development of the Rail Trail that significantly bolstered awareness and support of the trail, providing significant opportunities for publicity.

Phase 2 Completed

In early May 2015, the paving on Phase Two of the Rail Trail was completed. This added approximately 0.8 miles of trail to the existing path. This section of the trail begins at the town's bus station and runs under Interstate 93, next to a local restaurant and alongside a main road.

While the first paved mile of the trail is located mostly in the woods, this section was much more

visible to those driving or working in the area, and therefore attracted significant attention during construction and opening. This section was funded entirely by private donations; Berkshire Hathaway Verani Realty, one of the businesses located on the trail, and Derry Medical Center and Londonderry Family Practice both made substantial donations. Jeanette Fitzgibbons and family also made a large donation on behalf of her late husband, who was a supporter of the trail prior to his passing the previous year. The opening of Phase Two marked a major milestone for the Rail Trail, as it increased visibility and use among residents that may not have previously known about the trail.

Kinder Morgan Donation

Kinder Morgan is a large energy infrastructure company that is currently undertaking a project to build a natural gas pipeline in New Hampshire that would supply energy to many homes throughout the state. Part of this proposed pipeline would run through the town of Londonderry. In recent years, there has been pushback from residents who oppose the construction of this pipeline, citing safety and environmental concerns. In July 2015, Kinder Morgan representatives approached Town Manager Kevin Smith about making a donation to a reputable local organization. Smith proposed that the donation could go to Londonderry Trailways for the completion of another section of the Rail Trail. After meeting with the board members of Londonderry Trailways, Kinder Morgan approved a \$300,000 goodwill donation to the organization to complete Phase Three of the trail. This was a “no-strings-attached” donation, meaning that Kinder Morgan did not request signatures, support for the pipeline project, or anything else in return for the money.

I announced the donation on Facebook (see below) and was immediately met with mixed reactions from residents and other Facebook followers. While many expressed their excitement

for the completion of another section of trail, many people made comments or sent messages stating that they were disappointed in Londonderry Trailways for accepting this donation. My strategy in addressing these commenters was to delete any posts that were unsolicited personal attacks on Londonderry Trailways board members or Kinder Morgan officials, or any posts that used inappropriate language. I then allowed commenters to continue any conversations, positive or negative, that were taking place on the post. I noticed that while many dissenters were making negative comments, some of our supporters were starting conversations with them to refute their arguments and show support for the Rail Trail. I made sure to fully and accurately answer any questions on the post, and I responded to every personal message that was sent through the Facebook page. The controversy on the page lasted for approximately two weeks after the original post was made, after which time essentially no comments were made about the donation.



Phase 3 Completed

Kinder Morgan's donation of \$300,000 was essential in allowing Londonderry Trailways to enter Phase 3 of the Rail Trail project. In early November 2015, this 1.44 section of the trail was closed to the public to begin construction. Although the trail was initially supposed to be

completed by Thanksgiving, cold weather slowed down the construction process. In mid-December, the Rail Trail project manager met with the paving company and determined that the final coat would not be able to be completed until the spring. However, even without the top coat, the trail was completed for all intents and purposes, and therefore was reopened to the public in mid-December. I announced the opening of the new 1.4-mile section of trail on the Londonderry Trailways Facebook and Instagram pages, and both posts gained a lot of attention among our supporters. One of the photos from the new section of trail was shared by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy on their Facebook and Instagram accounts, which offered Londonderry Trailways a huge publicity boost. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Facebook post attracted over 1,000 likes, and we gained a number of new followers in the week after their post was made. Once the top coat is completed, there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open this section of the trail in spring 2016, bringing the total length of completed trail to 3.2 miles.

Actual Campaign Budget

	Per item cost	Total projected	Sponsored credit	Actual projected
Public: Londonderry citizens				
<i>Strategy: Digital media campaign</i>				
Website development (volunteer)	\$8/hour	\$800	\$800	\$0
WordPress Premium	99/year	99	0	99
Website hosting	4.99/moth	59.88	0	59.88
Instagram account (photography)	15/hour	45	45	0
Social media postings	0	0	0	0
Ask to share social pages	0	0	0	0
<i>Strategy: Promotional events</i>				
Ribbon cutting ceremony	0	0	0	0
Trail Days event				
Refreshments (partially donated)	400	400	250	150
Giveaway items	50	50	0	50
Entertainment (volunteer)	\$50/booth	250	250	0
<i>Strategy: Individual engagement</i>				
Newsletter for donors (copywriting)	8/hour	24	24	0
Donor names on website	0	0	0	0
Public: Londonderry business owners				
<i>Strategy: Outreach</i>				
New website content	0	0	0	0
<i>Strategy: Awareness of opportunities</i>				
New website info for businesses (writing)	8/hour	32	32	0
Names of donors on website	0	0	0	0
Plaque for top donors	45	225	0	225
<i>Strategy: Alternative donations</i>				
List of events	0	0	0	0
Evaluation	8/hour	240	240	0
TOTAL		\$2,224.88	\$1,641.00	\$583.88

Chapter 5

Evaluation and Conclusions

Following the conclusion of the campaign on December 31, 2015, I used the methods of evaluation discussed in previous chapters of this report to assess the completion of campaign goals.

Evaluation of Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Increase awareness and support of the Londonderry Rail Trail in the community of Londonderry, New Hampshire.

Objective	Evaluation
1A: Obtain 1,000 “likes” on the Londonderry Trailways Facebook page.	As of December 31, 2015, the Londonderry Trailways Facebook page had 1,013 likes. This exceeded our original target of 1,000 likes, and therefore this campaign objective was met.
1B: Attract 100 new followers to a newly established Londonderry Trailways Instagram page.	As of December 31, 2015, the Londonderry Trailways Instagram page had 141 followers. This exceeded our target of 100 new followers, and therefore we met this objective.
1C: Add ten new dues-paying members to the Londonderry Trailways organization.	Over the course of the campaign, Londonderry Trailways received 26 individual donations from new donors (see Appendix F). Under the membership structure of Londonderry Trailways, these individuals are considered

	<p>dues-paying members of the organization. Therefore, this objective has been met.</p>
<p>1D: Receive coverage in two local media outlets for each major event that the organization holds and each construction milestone achieved</p>	<p>During this campaign, Londonderry Trailways held one major event and reached two construction milestones. The first event was the Trail Days celebration, which took place on June 20, 2015. The New Hampshire Union Leader and the Londonderry Times both wrote articles covering this event (see Appendix G). The first construction milestone was the Kinder Morgan donation, received in July 2015. This donation was covered by numerous local media outlets, including the New Hampshire Union Leader, Londonderry News and the Derry News (see Appendix G). The final construction milestone was the completion of Phase 3 of the Trail in December 2015. Although this milestone was achieved prior to the completion of the campaign, it was not widely publicized by Londonderry Trailways as the section of the trail has not been officially opened to the public with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Therefore we did not receive media coverage of this milestone. Because our target coverage was met for two out of three milestones, both of which were the most important events for Londonderry Trailways during this campaign, we can conclude that this objective was met.</p>

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Goal 2: Raise the funds to be used towards the completion of the Londonderry Rail Trail, which in total amount to an estimated \$1,963,000.

Objective	Evaluation
2A: Raise \$2,000 in individual donations.	Between June 1 and December 31, 2015, Londonderry Trailways received \$3,509.54 through 29 individual donations. This includes donations made on behalf of an individual or family. It should be noted that donations made from collection jars at Londonderry Trailways events are included in this total. This substantially exceeds our campaign objective.
2B: Obtain three corporate donations in amounts of over \$500.	Between June 1 and December 31, 2015, Londonderry Trailways received 18 corporate donations totaling \$313,263.37 (see Appendix F). It should be noted that the previously discussed Kinder Morgan donation of \$300,000 accounts for the majority of this figure. However, including the Kinder Morgan donation, there were six corporate donations of more than \$500. Therefore, we can conclude that this objective was met.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The work completed throughout this campaign was highly successful in contributing to the main goals of attracting awareness, support and donations for the development of the Londonderry Rail Trail. During the course of this project, the physical trail grew substantially, from just one paved mile at the start of the project to 3.2 miles at its conclusion. While this growth can be largely attributed to the hard work and dedication of the volunteers working with Londonderry Trailways, there is certainly something to be said for the momentum that the project gained when public support and visibility began to increase throughout the course of my public relations campaign.

In examining the quantitative measures of success that were defined above, the project achieved success in reaching all of the milestones for publicity that were established at the start of the campaign. Through a combination of digital media outreach, promotional events and interactive public outreach, Londonderry Trailways was able to facilitate communication with a wide audience of individuals and businesses that contributed to the success of the Rail Trail project. There is a clear path for moving forward with the development of the trail in months ahead, and public awareness and usage of the trail is at an all-time high. While there is still more work to be done to encourage donations and continue gaining local and regional support for the trail, this public relations effort was highly successful for Londonderry Trailways as a whole.

During the planning process of the campaign, I developed a wide variety of strategies to facilitate communication with target publics. These strategies fell under the following categories: digital media outreach, promotional events, individual engagement, outreach, awareness of opportunities and alternative donations. However, once I actually began my campaign it became clear that as a one-person public relations operation, I would not have the resources to complete

all of the tactics over the duration of my campaign. I was able to pass on some of my research recommendations to other members of Londonderry Trailways so that the organization could complete these public relations activities on their own time, such as contacting construction companies and handing out information packets to local businesses. I chose to focus my efforts on those strategies which appeared to produce the most measurable impact: digital media outreach and promotional events. By focusing my time and resources on specific work within these categories, I was able to more successfully achieve the milestones that I had set at the beginning of the campaign. It was more important to me to go in depth with a few targeted strategies than attempt many different projects and not be able to complete any of them.

Digital Media Outreach

By the conclusion of this campaign, Londonderry Trailways was highly effective as a digital media entity. The strategies used to enhance the organizations digital media efforts proved to be successful in attracting awareness and support of the Rail Trail project and can provide lessons for other community organizations, particularly those pursuing trail development projects. Prior to the start of the campaign, Facebook was the organization's primary way of disseminating information to a wide audience. Throughout implementation, Facebook became the central hub for communications and supporters were directed to the page for news and information. The primary audience for this campaign was Londonderry residents aged 35 to 54. As of March 2016, out of the 1,060 likes on the Londonderry Trailways Facebook page, 64% were residents of Londonderry and bordering towns, and 60% were aged 35 to 54. The alignment in our target and measured demographics shows that Facebook is a highly effective social platform to communicate with a local, middle-aged population. A 170% increase in Facebook

likes over the course of this campaign demonstrates that the public relations strategies used were resonating most with our target population of Facebook users.

On Facebook, there were a variety of engagement strategies that seemed to be most effective. Out of all the posts published from May through December, 2015, those that received the most engagement were photos of the trail that included some news or recent development in the post. For example, the news of the completion of Phase 3 along with a photo from the trail reached over 4,300 people and had 307 likes, comments and shares. In comparison, a similar photo of just the trail posted a month later reached only 1,646 people and had 93 likes, comments and shares. Other news from the organization also received significant attention, such as milestones reached on social media sites or developments of other local projects. Supporters are inevitably more likely to engage with newsworthy content, and thus community development organizations should work to generate newsworthy content throughout the year—even if physical developments are stagnant.

The Londonderry Trailways Instagram account was created at the start of the campaign, and managed to gain 141 followers in just over six months. Photos generate an average of 24.5 likes per post, which is a high engagement rate for a new account. The best time to post is around 3:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, which is when the majority of posts were scheduled. I aimed to post once per week, although this occasionally became once every two weeks as trail usage and interest reduced through the winter. Posting more often could have been even more beneficial, but a lack of new content limited the number of postings that I was able to make. Out of all the hashtags used, #newhampshire received the most post engagement. For other community organizations, using a variety of hashtags to determine which are most active can be a beneficial strategy for attracting engagement. I also regularly searched the #railtrail hashtag to find users

that were active in visiting, photographing or developing trails and liked their photos or followed. Often after going through the #railtrail hashtag, the Londonderry Trailways account would see a small bump in followers. Using hashtags proved to be an effective way to seek out those who were interested in the general trail-focused content that Londonderry Trailways was posting, in addition to residents specifically interested in Londonderry's organization.

For Londonderry Trailways, Twitter did not appear to be an effective platform at any point before or during the campaign. Out of 163 followers, 70% were based in New Hampshire, but most of our top followers were businesses or other local organizations. These followers did not seem to be engaging with any of the content that Londonderry Trailways shared, and many were following and engaging with Londonderry Trailways on other social media platforms as well. Social media efforts seemed to be more effective through other platforms, and thus Londonderry Trailways and other similar community organizations should dedicate resources to maintaining updated Facebook and Instagram pages instead.

Promotional Events and Public Outreach

The promotional events and public outreach initiatives enacted during this campaign were more difficult to quantitatively track and measure than the digital media activities, but media placements as previously described show that these events did have some impact on how the Rail Trail project was perceived by the public. The Phase Two ribbon cutting ceremony was advertised on the Facebook page following the announcement of the new milestone of completed trail. While this was the best way to target an audience that was likely to attend to event, it was not an effective way of reaching those who may not have heard of the trail or the Rail Trail project. Key donors and supporters of the Rail Trail were in attendance at the ceremony, but there were noticeably fewer attendees at the Phase Two ribbon cutting ceremony than at the

Phase One ceremony that was held in November 2013. The Phase One ceremony was advertised significantly more through social channels and local media, and in addition to the ribbon cutting the event included a community walk following the ceremony. This seemed to draw out more citizens who were excited to see the new portion of trail. For future ribbon cutting ceremonies, it will be important to advertise further in advance to a wider variety of audiences. Including some type of additional event, such as a community walk or booths from local organizations would also make this event more dynamic and encourage more people to attend.

The Trail Days event that was held in June was successful in reaching a wide audience of Londonderry residents, partially in thanks to the media coverage that it received prior to the event. This event was targeted towards families in Londonderry and surrounding communities with young children. Attendees could visit the trail and take a walk, go for a Segway ride, listen to live music, play games and enjoy free food. Multiple corporate donors also supported the event through donations of food, supplies and activities, which reflected positively on Londonderry Trailways. In addition to generating positive exposure of the trail and local media coverage, this event was also successful in raising \$164.00 for the Rail Trail project. Although this is a relatively small amount, it represents significant local support, as this was mostly comprised of small cash donations from new donors.

Londonderry Trailways should replicate this type of event in the future on different sections of the trail, as it was covered by multiple local news outlets and attended by many members of the target public. It demonstrates the power that the existing trail can have to be used for fun and engaging events that showcase the benefits of community development to local citizens and their families. Other organizations working towards community development projects should consider using similar tactics to generate exposure of existing work and attract

support for future projects. By using existing developments and resources, organizations can demonstrate the benefits and potential uses of their community spaces to local citizens and encourage support from residents. Additionally, these types of events typically attract coverage from local media outlets and can be an excellent way to showcase community support to a wider audience than those in attendance at the actual event.

Budget

As detailed in Chapter 4, the original projected budget for this campaign was \$2,825 for the costs of labor, materials and space to enact various public relations activities. While the estimated cost of the campaign was \$6,134, Londonderry Trailways expected to receive many of the goods and services required through donations and thus these items would not need to be expensed. Overall, this campaign was significantly under budget, with expenses coming to a total of \$583.88. Most of the events and activities that were expected to be the most costly were not executed during the campaign, which significantly reduced expenses. The Trail Days event, which was expected to cost upwards of \$700, was actually almost entirely covered through donations. An unexpected cost of the campaign was the development and launch of the new website for Londonderry Trailways. The costs for hosting services and WordPress development products added up to \$158.88, which was still significantly under budget. My campaign had also called for the creation of t-shirts following each event, but after discussion with Londonderry Trailways board members it was determined that this would be a large cost to take on for little publicity gain, and therefore this was removed from the budget.

Future Work

Following the conclusion of this campaign, there are further strategies that can be enacted to continue working towards the goals of generating awareness, support and donations for the

development of the Londonderry Rail Trail. Some of the strategies and tactics that were outlined in the original campaign plan were not implemented during this campaign due to limited time and resources, but would still be effective to facilitate future development of the trail.

Due to time and budget constraints, I did not have the opportunity to organize a community walk or run on the trail. As noted previously in this chapter, one of the most effective resources that Londonderry Trailways has for generating support of the Rail Trail is the trail itself and the people that use it. If more local residents were encouraged to enjoy the trail at this kind of event, it would generate conversation in traditional media, on social media, and on a peer-to-peer level. The late summer of 2016 would be the best time to organize such an event, as it would provide enough time to plan and fundraise while still ensuring that the weather would be conducive to an outdoor activity on the trail. With no upcoming plans for construction in the near future, a community walk or run would also be an excellent way to revitalize this campaign and ensure that the Rail Trail remains a topic of conversation among Londonderry residents.

Another strategy originally planned for this campaign was a series of upgrades to the content of Londonderry Trailways' website. As discussed in Chapter 4 of this report, these changes were not enacted in their entirety, as the website was redesigned and redeveloped in reflection of some critical structural issues. While many of the proposed changes were incorporated into the new design, there were some such as the fundraising graphic that were not included in the new site. A future recommendation for website work would be to include more graphics and ensure that all of the photos and copy on the site is current and frequently updated. The new layout and content management system of the website is intended to make it even easier for members of the organization to add and update content on the site.

While my campaign has concluded, I have continued to make regular social media postings to the Facebook and Instagram accounts for Londonderry Trailways to keep followers engaged. However, as I am not local to the trail and will no longer be actively engaged in this project, these postings have become less frequent. To continue reaching out to a social media audience and increase engagement among younger populations in the town of Londonderry, Londonderry Trailways should consider offering a social media internship or volunteer position with the organization. There are numerous high schools and universities in and around Londonderry, many of them with media and communications programs, where Londonderry Trailways would be likely to find students interested in being a part of the organization. Londonderry Trailways could reach out to local guidance counselors or career development coordinators to find one or more students who would be interested in this role. This would be an excellent way to continue generating content about the Rail Trail for digital use while also increasing engagement among youth populations.

A final recommendation for the continued development of the Londonderry Rail Trail is to initiate efforts for more substantial media placements of trail news and information, particularly at a state, regional or national level. During this campaign, host Jamie Staton from New Hampshire's leading television news station, WMUR News 9, posted a photo of himself going for a run on the Londonderry Rail Trail. After cross-posting this photo to Facebook and Twitter, it received significant engagement and interaction from fans due to the high-profile nature of the user who posted it. Similarly, one of the photos posted from the Londonderry Trailways Instagram account was shared on the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Facebook and Instagram accounts. The post from this national trail development organization received hundreds of likes and shares, and the Londonderry Trailways Facebook page subsequently

experienced a jump in followers. This kind of high-profile media attention is critical for continuing to develop the audience of supporters for Trailways and the Rail Trail, and it would be in the organization's best interest to continue pursuing these kinds of media placements. A feature article about the Rail Trail in a regional newspaper or magazine, such as the Boston Globe or New Hampshire Magazine, would be highly effective in increasing the reach of Londonderry Trailways' influence.

Final Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Overall, this campaign was successful in reaching the goals established at the beginning of the planning phase in increasing awareness, support and funding for the Londonderry Rail Trail. Digital media was particularly effective in generating positive publicity of the trail and increasing the audience of supporters for the Londonderry Trailways organization. While there continue to be further steps to be taken to ensure the continued success of the organization and the Rail Trail project, this publicity campaign was highly effective as a first-level effort. Other organizations enacting similar campaigns to develop recreational trails for public use should consider leveraging the strategies discussed in this report. As digital media continues to see increased user bases, it is important for community organizations to continue reaching their publics through these platforms. Additionally, tried-and-true public relations strategies such as media outreach, events and one-on-one interaction with community members continue to be essential for community-oriented projects. By actively engaging with members of the public through different digital and interpersonal channels, community organizations can be effective in influencing public sentiments and policy towards community development.

From a personal standpoint, there were many takeaways from this project. For me, one of the most important lessons learned was understanding the level of collaboration required to make

a public relations campaign effective. When planning a campaign, it is important to work closely with the organization who will be implementing the strategies to ensure that they are feasible and in line with the organization's mission and resource capabilities. There were certain components of my public relations campaign plan that were simply not feasible to implement for Londonderry Trailways, and thus had to be left out of my final strategic plan. Similarly, there were parts of the plan that I designed and realized that I personally could not implement, due to constraints on time, resources or subject knowledge, such as writing grants, contacting construction companies or soliciting donations from local businesses. While I was still able to implement some of these strategies, it was only because I was able to ask members of the organization for assistance in doing so. Public relations must be highly collaborative to be successful, which can be especially difficult when working with an organization where everyone's time and interest is purely on a volunteer basis.

Finally, this project demonstrated the importance of flexibility in public relations work, especially when working with nonprofit organizations. Sometimes due to my schedule or the schedule of the members of the organization, projects would simply not be completed on time. Our budget was often stretched, and donations were essential for allowing us to move forward on projects in any capacity. Flexibility and creativity were essential tools for keeping members and supporters engaged with the project and ensuring the continued development of the trail, even in the face of challenges. Overall, this project served as an excellent learning experience for public relations work with a community organization, while simultaneously creating positive results for my community of Londonderry in the form of 3.2 miles of paved pathway.

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Appendix A Londonderry Trailways Facebook

The screenshot shows the Facebook page for Londonderry Trailways. The page header includes the name 'Londonderry Trailways' and navigation options like 'Page', 'Messages', 'Notifications', 'Insights', 'Publishing Tools', 'Settings', and 'Help'. The main cover image is a scenic view of a paved trail winding through a lush green forest. Below the cover image, the page name 'Londonderry Trailways' and the category 'Travel & Transportation' are displayed, along with 'Contact Us' and 'Share' buttons.

On the right side, a 'Promote' dropdown menu is visible, showing statistics for 'THIS WEEK': 6 Page Likes, 164 Post Reach, 0 Contact Us, and 0 Website Clicks. Below this is a 'Recent' list of years from 2015 to 1999.

The main content area features a post from Londonderry Trailways, published by Meghan Rimol on December 29, 2015, at 12:30pm. The post text reads: 'We did it... 1,000 likes! 2015 has been a great year for Londonderry Trailways, with new sections of the Rail Trail paved, many donations from local friends and businesses, and a huge outpouring of support from the community. We'd like to say THANK YOU to all those who have shown your support for us this year. We're grateful for our awesome community and looking forward to what 2016 will bring!'. The post includes a large image with the text '1,000 Likes!' and 'Thank you, Trailways supporters!' over a background of the forest trail. Below the image, it states '631 people reached' and has a 'Boost Post' button.

On the left side of the page, there are several utility sections: '2 people visited this week', '1,021 likes +8 this week', '164 post reach this week', 'View Pages Feed', 'Invite friends to like this Page', 'Let People Find Londonderry Trailways' (with a 'Promote Local Business' button), 'ABOUT' (listing 'PO Box 389, Londonderry, New Hampshire' and a 'Boost Website' button), and 'PHOTOS' (displaying a grid of images related to the trail).

Londonderry Trailways added 2 new photos.

Published by Meghan Rimol [?] · December 16, 2015 at 12:30pm · 🌐

We finally have the news that you've all been waiting for... Phase 3 of the Londonderry Rail Trail is completed and officially open to the public! This adds an additional 1.4 miles to the trail. Thank you to all whose support and donations made this possible. Get outside and enjoy the new trail while the warm December weather lasts!



4,324 people reached Boost Post

👍 Like 💬 Comment

Bernadette Jarvis, Bob Rimol, James Basbas and 111 others like this. Top Comments -

22 shares 18 comments

Write a comment...

Elaine Munnis Doherty Rail Trails are a great thing! I have a question???? I thought it was going to be going up Scobie Pond Rd in Derry??? Is it still?
 Unlike · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 1 · December 16, 2015 at 3:17pm

Londonderry Trailways Elaine, the trail doesn't go quite that far up RT 28--the next section is across the street, which we'll tackle further down the line once we raise more funds!
 Like · Reply · Commented on by Meghan Rimol [?] · December 16, 2015 at 7:06pm

Londonderry Trailways added 2 new photos.

Published by Meghan Rimol [?] · October 20, 2015 · 🌐

Look who stopped by the Londonderry Rail Trail for a run this morning-- Jamie Staton, Sports Anchor at WMUR-TV! Sounds like he had a great day out on the trail!



1,280 people reached Boost Post

👍 Like 💬 Comment

Susie Mirabedini Jaramillo, Amanda Marett, Bob Rimol and 59 others like this. Top Comments -

1 share 2 comments

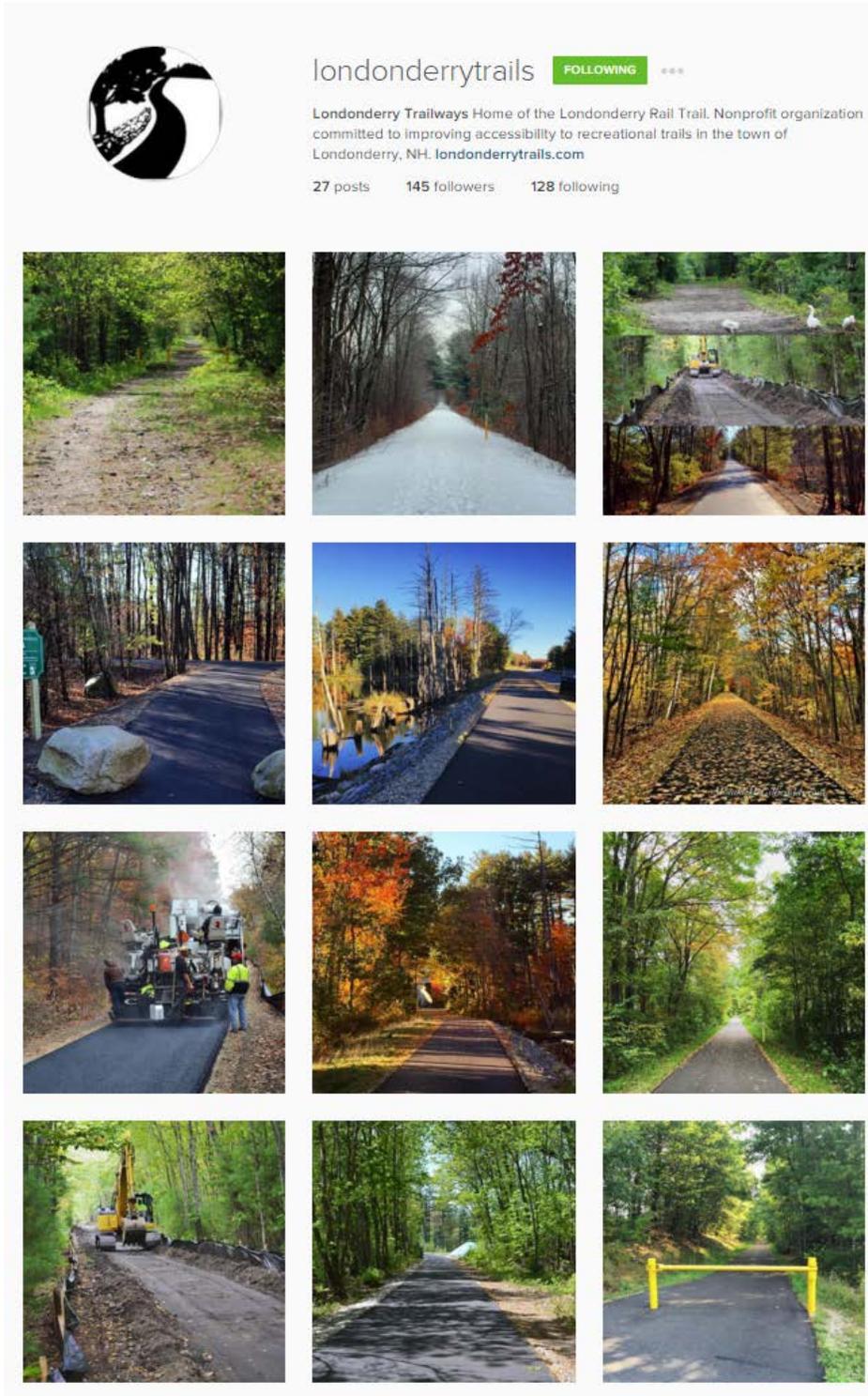
Write a comment...

Maureen Carro Looks like a great place for a run...but watch out for wet leaves!
 Unlike · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 1 · October 20, 2015 at 7:39pm

Justine Oates Wow! Go figure ...
 Unlike · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 2 · October 20, 2015 at 6:09pm

The full page can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/LondonderryTrails/>.

Appendix B Londonderry Trailways Instagram



The full page can be accessed at <https://www.instagram.com/londonderrytrails/>.

Appendix C Londonderry Trailways Twitter

Londonderry Trails
@Trailways_NH FOLLOWS YOU

Londonderry Trailways is a non-profit organization of citizens committed to improving and increasing accessibility to recreational trails.

Londonderry, NH
londonderrytrails.com

TWEETS 47 FOLLOWING 145 FOLLOWERS 157 LIKES 17

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

LondonderryTrails Retweeted
Boston Bikes @bikeboston · 2 Nov 2015
Heading home? Don't forget your lights! #BeBrilliant

you'll need more than moonlight to get home
#BeBrilliant
use lights at night

LondonderryTrails @Trailways_NH · 27 Oct 2015
We can't wait until it's finished... hopefully the weather cooperates with us!

Jamie Staton @JamieStatonWMUR
Paving looks imminent for the South portion of the Londonderry rail trail! @Trailways_NH @DerryRailTrail

LondonderryTrails @Trailways_NH · 20 Oct 2015
Glad you enjoyed the trail-- we can't wait, either!

Jamie Staton @JamieStatonWMUR
Thanks @Trailways_NH for a great morning run. Can't wait until you connect with @DerryRailTrail and @flymanchester

The full page can be accessed at https://twitter.com/trailways_nh.

Appendix D Londonderry Trailways Website



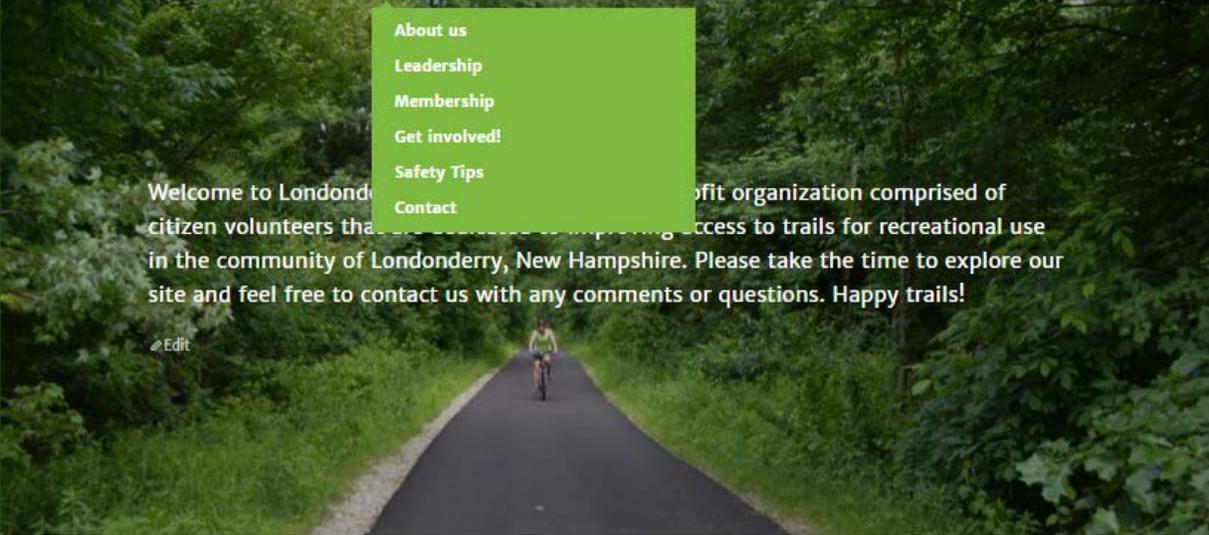
Londonderry Trailways

- HOME
- RAIL TRAIL
- CONSERVATION AREA
- NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS
- NEWS & EVENTS
- ABOUT US**
- DONATE
- FIND US ON SOCIAL!

- About us
- Leadership
- Membership
- Get involved!
- Safety Tips
- Contact

Welcome to Londonderry Trailways, a non-profit organization comprised of citizen volunteers that provides access to trails for recreational use in the community of Londonderry, New Hampshire. Please take the time to explore our site and feel free to contact us with any comments or questions. Happy trails!

[Edit](#)



FIND US ON FACEBOOK



Londonderry Trailways
1,094 likes

Like Page Contact Us

Be the first of your friends to like this

TRAILWAYS NEWS

Phase 3 paving underway!
October 12, 2015

Londonderry Rail Trail Phase 3 Funded for Development
September 1, 2015

Rail Trail Celebration June 20th!
August 28, 2015

MAKE A DONATION

Donate





Londonderry Trailways



- HOME
- RAIL TRAIL ▾
- CONSERVATION AREA ▾
- NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS ▾
- NEWS & EVENTS ▾
- ABOUT US ▾
- DONATE ▾
- FIND US ON SOCIAL! ▾



About the Rail Trail

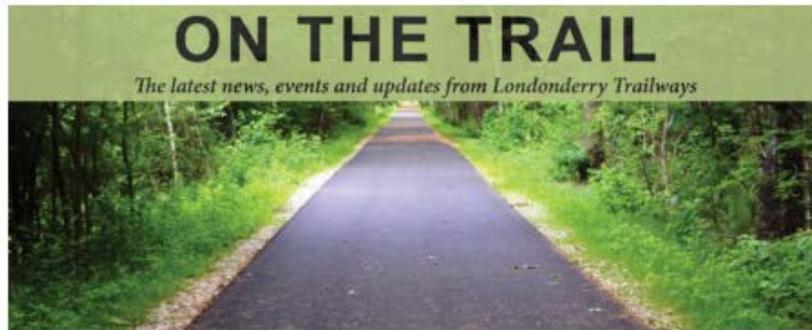
The Londonderry Rail Trail is a cooperative effort between Londonderry Trailways and the Town of Londonderry to pave 6 miles of abandoned rail corridor that runs through North Londonderry. This project has been an ongoing effort since 2010 to create a multi-use recreational path that enhances the quality of life for Southern New Hampshire residents and provides opportunities for economic development in the town of Londonderry.

The trail is part of a greater network of Rail Trails that run through the state of New Hampshire, a project known as the [Granite State Rail Trail](#).



The full page can be accessed at <https://londonderrytrails.org/>.

Appendix E Email Newsletter



Upcoming Events:

6/22: Rail Trail cleanup
day
10:00 a.m. at 1 Verani
Way

7/10: Rail Trail
community walk
12:00 p.m. at North
School

8/12: Old Home Days
booth
2:00 p.m. on the Town
Common

[Make a donation!](#)

Updates: July 2015

Phase 2 of the Rail Trail is now paved and open to the public!

Londonderry's paved/completed Rail Trail now runs from North Elementary School, past the Exit 5 Park & Ride, under 93, past Poor Boys Restaurant to Liberty Drive!

Where can I park?

North Elementary School, 19 Sanborn Rd, Londonderry, or Exit 5 Park & Ride, 4 Symmes Drive, Londonderry

How long is it?

The paved/completed section is now 1.75 miles one way from North School to Rt 128, and 3.2 miles round trip.

Is it a loop?

No. It follows the old rail road corridor, it is an out and back straight stretch.

What can I do to help?

Fundraising for Phase 3 has now begun! 1) make a donation to support Phase 3 online or mail a check, 2) if you have employee matching gift at your company, utilize that to double your gift. 3) If you have a relationship with a local business, talk to them about supporting the Rail Trail.

Thanks for your support!!!



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Our mailing address is:
PO Box 389 - Londonderry, NH 03053

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Appendix F
Londonderry Trailways 2015 Donations

Date	Name	Amount	Type
6/1/15	Jeff Young: Angus Agency Insurance	\$500	Corporate
6/1/15	Amerigas/Barry Crawford	\$250	Corporate
6/1/15	Jeannot Chenard	\$100	Individual
6/15/15	Chinburg Builders	\$250	Corporate
6/23/15	Linda & Paul Margolin	\$25	Individual
6/23/15	Mark Jacobson	\$50	Individual
6/23/15	Robert & Deborah Lievens	\$50	Individual
6/23/15	Cash donated at Trail Days event	\$164	Individual
6/23/15	Berkshire Hathaway	\$1,500	Corporate
6/24/15	Donovan Equipment	\$100	Corporate
6/27/15	Ron Collins	\$20	Individual
6/30/15	Coca-Cola	\$500	Corporate
6/30/15	Londonderry Self Storage	\$250	Corporate
6/30/15	Thomas Sumner	\$50	Individual
6/30/15	Daniel & Gretchen Hicks	\$25	Individual
6/30/15	David & Denise Glass	\$100	Individual
6/30/15	Jeanne & D.A. Hicks	\$25	Individual
6/30/15	Bruce & Fahne Stern	\$25	Individual
7/1/15	Amanda Luzar	\$5	Individual
7/13/15	Raymond & Margaret Fraser	\$20	Individual
7/13/15	United Way of Tri-County	\$33.84	Corporate
7/14/15	Francis Rougeux	\$100	Individual
7/21/15	Stephanie & Doug Miville	\$500	Individual
7/21/15	LOCO Sport (via Stonyfield 5K Race)	\$500	Corporate
7/22/15	United Way of Portland	\$164.34	Corporate
7/24/15	Granite Ridge Energy LLC	\$500	Corporate
7/29/15	Stonyfield Farm Inc.	\$1,000	Corporate
7/30/15	Ann Collacchi	\$20	Individual
7/31/15	John Merck	\$2,800	Grant
8/11/15	Jeff Young: Angus Agency Insurance	\$1,000	Corporate
8/14/15	Kinder Morgan	\$300,000	Corporate
8/18/15	Curtis & Linda Boles	\$100	Individual
8/18/15	Richard & Patricia Fawcett	\$20	Individual
8/18/15	Cash donated at Old Home Days	\$80.45	Individual
8/20/15	Michael & Carol Wellfare	\$50	Individual
9/14/15	JoEllen Dunne	\$100	Individual
9/18/15	Ahern Nichols Ahern & Hersey	\$250	Corporate
9/20/15	Charles Wilkes	\$500	Individual
9/22/15	Webster U Walker Jr. Foundation	\$1,000	Grant
10/2/15	Jean & William Rossi	\$25	Individual

10/4/15	Proceeds from Benson's Hardware Bucket Sale	\$397	Corporate
10/21/15	United Way of Portland	\$115.39	Corporate
11/4/15	HAAS Dental Associates	\$100	Corporate
11/4/15	John Daley	\$1,000	Individual
11/15/15	James Dunigan	\$50	Individual
11/18/15	Jeff Young: Angus Agency Insurance	\$2,500	Corporate
12/1/15	Scott & Kelly McIntire	\$30	Individual
12/1/15	James & Colleen Schwalbe	\$20	Individual
12/1/15	Eversource	\$2,500	Corporate
12/1/15	Jack Draghi, Boy Scout Troop #426	\$5.09	Individual
12/15/15	Surgical Associates of Southern NH	\$500	Corporate
12/18/15	James & Tara Furlong	\$250	Individual
12/18/15	Samuel P. Hunt Foundation	\$10,000	Grant
	TOTAL	\$662,855.75	

Appendix G
Media coverage clippings



June 16, 2015 12:02AM

Rail trail takes center stage on Fun Day in Londonderry

By PAMELA CYRAN

Union Leader Correspondent

LONDONDERRY — Londonderry Rail Trails is having a Family Fun Day Saturday, June 20, to celebrate the completion of its second phase: a scenic three-quarter mile stretch from the exit five park and ride to Liberty Drive.

The second section of the trail was actually completed at the end of May and a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the town hall and businesses that helped make the addition possible. Pollyann Winslow, who helps with community outreach for Londonderry Rail Trails, said Family Fun Day is to educate the community about the trail.

“That’s what this day is about,” said Winslow. “We have a trail, it’s here, come explore with us.”

The central point of Saturday’s event will be at the park and ride parking lot off Interstate 93 exit 5. There will be free Coca-Cola and water, free hot dogs, and the Stonyfield Yogurt Truck will be passing out free frozen yogurt.

There will also be musical performances and a free yoga class at 10:30 a.m. If you don’t have a yoga mat, no worries, they have extras.

The conservation commission is hosting a nature-themed “seek-and-find,” similar to a scavenger hunt where participants check off the plants and trees they see along the trail. If you return with a completely checked-off list you get a prize, a container of trail mix.

“It’s an educational place and a recreational place,” said Winslow about the rail trail.

Family Fun Day begins at 10 a.m. and ends at 1 p.m. but the rail trail is open all day, every day, all year round.

The current trail is 1.75-miles long. It begins at the North School Elementary parking lot, crosses Symmes Drive, goes underneath Interstate 93, travels behind Berkshire Hathaway Verani Real Estate and Poor Boy's Diner, and ends at Liberty Drive behind Irving Gas Station.

"There are people walking, biking, skateboarding — you name it, all day long," said Giovanni Verani, president of Berkshire Hathaway Verani Real Estate.

Verani said he has both biked and walked the trail and his employees tend to take their lunch break out on the trail. Some will also bring a change of clothes and go out on the trail before or after work, he said.

"They've done a really good job on it. It's really pretty; really scenic," he said.

The first mile, phase one, was completed in November of 2013 with a price of \$227,000, which the town voted to pay for. Phase two started with an estimated finish in November of 2014, but the region's harsh winter delayed paving. It opened May 27 with a significantly lower cost, \$95,000. Winslow attributed the lower cost to in-kind donations from local businesses, such as Continental Paving. Londonderry Rail Trails also held fundraisers and received donations from businesses and private citizens in the community.

They are currently raising funds for phase three, another 1.6-mile stretch through Peat Bog. The trail is there but it needs to be paved. Winslow said paving the trails is what makes them accessible to everyone.

"Toddlers to seniors can use the trail, people can come with wheel chairs, walkers, with roller skates," said Winslow. "If you're trying to learn to take the training wheels off of your bike, the rail trail is a great place for that," said Winslow.

Londonderry's rail trail is part of a larger plan in New Hampshire called the Granite State Rail Trail that hopes to stretch from Lebanon, NH to Salem, Mass. Londonderry's section will eventually be 6.4-miles once completed and connect with Derry's rail trail and the future trail up north by Manchester-Boston Regional Airport.

"Each community is working at their section and eventually it'll all come together," said Winslow.



Trailways Fundraising Progresses for Phase Three of Rail Trail Paving

Posted on [July 8, 2015](#) by [Kaitlyn G Woods](#)

After the grand opening celebration for Phase Two of the Rail Trail on June 20, the Londonderry Trailways saw a surge of donations come in for the next portion of the trail.

The group received about \$900 in donations by June 30, according to Trailways spokesperson Pollyann Winslow.

“People are recognizing they like it and they want to see it go further,” she said of the Rail Trail.

At the grand opening celebration, which was held in the parking lot of the Park and Ride Center at Exit 5 off Interstate 93, Winslow said “everyone was anxious to ask when the next section is going to be done.

“A lot of people who use the trail are anxious to get into the next section, with its pristine waterways and heavily wooded areas. The section we last completed was a connector section. It’s not as interesting because it goes behind some businesses. Once we get the next section in, it will go back into a really beautiful area,” she said.

But Winslow notes it’s important for patrons of the Rail Trail to understand new segments are only possible with the support of the community.

“We’re trying to make sure people understand that’s how it’s getting funded. The first section was paid through funding of the Warrant Article, and the next section by private donations,” she said. “If the Trailways ask for funds on the ballot, they could do that, but every donation helps. We would want that article to pass at the lowest price possible. It’s not right to ask for the full amount of something, because that doesn’t show community support. If you can say people are contributing, we only need this much more to make it happen, that’s the way to be part of a community. We want this to be a community process.”

And with people using the second portion of the trail to get closer to Manchester, the Trailways are hoping frequent patrons, particularly those who ride their bikes, will want to make a big effort.

“Everyone from the other communities are working on their trails. It feels like a bigger community than just our own town. Let’s make New Hampshire a destination for the Rail Trail,” she said.

If the Trailways are to bring enough money in before next spring, Winslow said it's possible the community could celebrate another grand opening event next year.

The project will require engineering work, but the trail is mostly clear and paving won't take long, according to Winslow.

"We want people to know we have a goal. It's important to be moving ahead," she said, noting the group has some money available from a grant they secured last year, and Stonyfield Farm has committed to a donation.

"Stonyfield is just so interested in seeing this because organic yogurt lends itself to people who want to get outside, and healthy, and fit. And they are seeing the sooner the trail gets closer to Manchester, the sooner their employees will be able to utilize it," she said. "We have submitted all the paperwork, and we expect the donation to be forthcoming."

The Londonderry Conservation Commission has also committed \$100,000 of the Town's Land Use Change Tax toward construction costs to complete the 1.4 mile stretch connecting Liberty Drive to Seasons Lane. The segment will run past a peat bog and other conservation land in town, providing access to all residents, notably the elderly, disabled and families with strollers.

The Conservation Commission funding is contingent upon Londonderry Trailways obtaining the balance of the funding needed to complete the project.

Trailways Chairman Bob Rimol estimates the total cost of the project will be \$400,000.

With construction on I-93 moving north toward Londonderry and plans for Woodmont Commons moving forward, Rimol has said it's important they raise the funds as soon as possible, as construction services can often be contracted at a reduced cost when done in conjunction with another project.

The Trailways will have a booth at the Old Home Day celebration on Aug. 15, and residents are encouraged to stop by and ask questions about the trail, view maps showing where the Rail Trail is located and new portions are proposed, or offer suggestions.

"We are going to just keep going, one step at a time," Winslow said.

Londonderry Rail Trail to Receive Sizable Donation for Completion

Bob Rimol, Rail Trail Committee Chair will receive a trail donation from Allen Fore, Vice President of Public Affairs for Kinder Morgan, on Wednesday, July 15, 2015 at 10:30 AM at the trail head for Phase Three of the Rail Trail. The \$300 thousand dollar donation will enable Trailways to complete Phase 3 of the Rail Trail this fall.

Kinder Morgan is the largest midstream and third largest energy company in North America. The new extension will connect to the exiting trail at Liberty and Independence Drives and continues 1.3 miles through wooded areas and pristine waterways. When the extension is completed the Londonderry Rail Trail will be 3.2 miles long.

This entry was written by [admin](#), posted on July 13, 2015 at 2:00 pm.



July 15, 2015 9:30PM



Bob Rimol, left, project manager for Londonderry Trailways shakes hands with Allen Fore, right, vice president of public affairs for Kinder Morgan after they each take a swing at hammering an old railroad spike into wooden beams celebrating the \$300,000 donation from Kinder Morgan to Londonderry Trailways. (Pamela Cyran)

Londonderry rail trail nets donation from Kinder Morgan

By PAMELA CYRAN

Union Leader Correspondent



Margaret Huard Margaret Huard from Hudson speaks to Bob Saur, president of Londonderry Trailways, about her concerns with Kinder Morgan and the proposed gas pipeline. Pamela Cyran

LONDONDERRY — Londonderry Trailways, the volunteer-run organization responsible for the Londonderry Rail Trail, received a donation Wednesday from Kinder Morgan, the energy company seeking approval for its proposed gas pipeline. The \$300,000 donation will allow the group to complete phase three of the rail trail.

“It’s so wonderful, and it’s only now that it’s sinking in,” said Pollyann Winslow, a volunteer for Londonderry Trailways. Winslow said the group just found out about the donation a few days ago.

The current trail is 1.75-miles long. It begins at the North School Elementary parking lot and ends at Liberty and Independence Drive behind Irving Gas Station. This is where phase three will begin, or as Londonderry Trailways calls it, the peat bog segment.

The segment will run from Independence Drive to Rockingham Road and will add 1.44 miles to the paved trail. The estimated cost is \$400,000 and Londonderry Trailways had already raised \$100,000. Kinder Morgan donated the remaining \$300,000.

“Community investment is very important to us,” said Allen Fore, vice president of public affairs for Kinder Morgan.

Fore spoke at an old-fashioned celebration Wednesday morning with Londonderry Trailways. He and Bob Rimol, project manager and rail trail committee chairman, both took swings at hammering in an old

railroad spike found on the rail trail into wooden beams.

However, not everyone was happy with Kinder Morgan's presence in Londonderry. Margaret Huard, a CPA from Hudson, came to protest Kinder Morgan, who she feels lacks in business ethics. Huard said that she is very happy to see the next segment of the rail trail paved ahead of schedule, but questions Kinder Morgan's true reasoning behind donating to Londonderry Trailways.

"On the surface, Kinder Morgan is just a nice company helping out," said Huard. "Personally, I feel that Kinder Morgan and many other companies with questionable ethics make nice contributions on one side so they look good and get acceptance and recognition, yet on the other side they are hurting people and committing other questionable acts."

The pipeline proposed by Kinder Morgan and the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company originates in New York and passes through western Massachusetts before traveling through 17 New Hampshire communities and then terminating in Dracut, Mass. The goal of the project is to expand natural gas energy capabilities to the Northeast. The exact route of the pipeline won't be determined until Kinder Morgan files with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in November.

Bob Saur, president of Londonderry Trailways, said they have not been asked to take a position on the pipeline in order to accept the donation. Officially the group remains neutral. "Our job is to put the donations to good use for the community," he said.

Current existing gas pipelines connect with the rail trail in two locations. A Kinder Morgan pipeline crosses under the trail that runs by North School and a pipeline by one of Kinder Morgan's customers, Granite Ridge Energy, runs lateral along the unpaved rail trail that starts by the senior center on Mammoth Road.

Fore said the existing pipelines show the compatibility between pipeline infrastructure and the community.

"It's a system that's been here and delivering natural gas successfully for decades," said Fore. "You can have natural gas infrastructure and it can be very non-impactful."

That pipeline runs close to Saur's home and though he personally doesn't have a problem with the new pipeline, he understands the concerns people may have.

"The biggest concern I have, if they put this pipeline in, is how Kinder Morgan will treat the abutters," said Saur.

Saur said there are pros and cons to every situation and the completion of the peat bog segment one year ahead of schedule is something positive for Londonderry.

The final engineering plans for the segment will be completed by Aug. 1. Rimol hopes the project will be bid out by the end of August with construction starting sometime in September.

“Hopefully, if the weather cooperates, we’ll have it done by November,” said Rimol. “When we finish with this segment, it’ll be about half the trail done in Londonderry.”

Londonderry’s rail trail will eventually be 6.4-miles and connect with Derry’s rail trail and the future trail up north by Manchester-Boston Regional Airport.

Kinder Morgan gives \$300,000 to rail trail

By Jacqueline Mundry jmundry@derrynews.com | Posted: Thursday, July 23, 2015 12:30 am



STAFF PHOTO/Jacqueline Mundry

Kinder Morgan VP of Public Affairs, Allen Fore ceremoniously adding first spike.

Two more miles down, three more to go.

Last week, the Londonderry Trailway Committee accepted a \$300,000 donation from Kinder Morgan toward completing the Londonderry portion of the Granite State Rail Trail. The committee is a nonprofit organization passionate about paving trails for people to walk, run and bike on in the community.

Eventually the trail will run from Salem to Lebanon, with a 6-mile stretch in Londonderry.

Right now, Londonderry has 1.3 miles already paved and with a donation of from Kinder Morgan, the trailway will be 3.2 miles long. The Trailway Committee hopes to pave 1 mile every year. It raises money mainly through donations and grants.

The project began in 2010, with the first mile paved in 2013. The money from Kinder Morgan will complete phase three of the seven phase project.

Phase two was completed this past April and phase three is set to begin in September and run through late fall.

When Kinder Morgan reached out to New Hampshire communities for a service project, the rail trail was mentioned by several people, Kinder Morgan Vice President of Public Affairs Allen Fore said, making the donation an easy choice.

"Across the United States, community investment is very important to us. Whether it be constructing a new playground in Mandeville, Louisiana, donating to the anti-littering campaign in Savannah, Georgia, or here in Londonderry today donating for this important rail trail project," Fore said.

Though the majority of the people present on Wednesday were happy with the rail trail news, there are still some people questioning Kinder Morgan's intentions.

"What does this mean? Are they buying affection?" asked Hudson resident Peggy Huard about the donation.

Huard, who attended the ceremony, is personally affected by the Kinder Morgan pipeline because it will pass into her neighborhood. She's concerned about the environmental and health issues the pipeline may bring.

"We planned on retiring at 60 with our house fully paid off and financing my son's college with that, and so that dream will be gone if I have to buy a new house and start over again or if I have to walk away from this house and suffer a loss," Huard said.