



STRATEGIC PLAN

PETER KIEWIT
FOUNDATION

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Letter from the Board and Executive Director

DEAR VALUED PARTNERS:

Over the past year, we have worked hard to develop a strategic plan that builds upon our values and strengths, incorporates the perspectives of our partners and the broader community, and takes into account the most critical challenges and opportunities our communities face. To do so, our trustees and staff have reviewed considerable data about greater Nebraska and the Omaha metro area. We commissioned an anonymous survey to solicit feedback from current and recent grantees. We also visited a number of communities and spoke with engaged citizens, public officials, philanthropic funders, nonprofit leaders, business owners and others, to get their views on community needs and input on Peter Kiewit Foundation's future direction. Between individual interviews and over 18 roundtable discussions, we spoke with more than 500 stakeholders. We are grateful to the thoughtful people who made time to offer input and advice.

The foundation's board and staff engaged in numerous working sessions to discuss the needs identified by the data and reflect on our historical grantmaking and on Mr. Kiewit's intent. The resulting strategy reaffirms many of our long-standing commitments, and identifies some new opportunities to increase our impact. First and foremost, we codified our deep belief in the importance of community and quality of life through the following mission statement: *To create opportunities for people to live in and help build strong, vibrant communities, achieve economic success, and enjoy a high quality of life.*

To pursue that mission, we will focus on three impact areas that reflect the foundation's values, align with community needs, and incorporate our historical support of such issues as the arts, education, children and families, community development, economic opportunity, and human services::

- **Youth Pathways to Success:** Increase the number of youth who progress in their education and secure meaningful employment.
- **Economic Growth and Opportunity:** Bolster a vital, diverse and growing economy that advances individual and community prosperity.
- **Strong and Vibrant Communities:** Support local efforts to build thriving communities.

In each of these areas, we will seek to contribute to and hold ourselves accountable for achieving progress toward tangible and measurable outcomes through our grantmaking, as well as other levers for change, including capacity building, convening, research and advocacy. While our strategy expresses a point of view on the issues we will prioritize, we don't presume to know the answers; so we will remain focused on supporting local, community-driven solutions. We are excited to meet regularly and work collaboratively with partners across Nebraska and the Omaha metro area to pursue common goals.

Implementation of this strategic plan will not happen overnight. We expect that it will take several years for us to build our capacity, more deeply understand the focus areas we've identified and align the foundation to most effectively pursue the work. We also expect that external forces, input from the field and what we learn from working with our partners will inevitably lead us to adapt our strategy and improve our effectiveness along the way.

As we look ahead, we are inspired by the passionate and dedicated individuals and organizations doing great work to make our communities stronger. We view this strategic plan as a tool that will help us ensure we are doing everything we can to contribute to community vitality and build on Mr. Kiewit's legacy. We are grateful for everyone's help in developing our strategy and we look forward to working together in the years ahead. Finally, please feel free to contact the foundation at any time with questions or feedback.

Sincerely,



MOGENS C. BAY

Trustee



MICHAEL L. GALLAGHER

Trustee



JOHN W. HANCOCK

Trustee



JANE E. MILLER

Trustee



G. RICHARD RUSSELL

Trustee



JEFF KUTASH

Executive Director

About Peter Kiewit Foundation

HISTORY

The foundation was established in 1979 by Peter Kiewit, a lifelong Omahan who grew a small family construction business into one of the largest employee-owned companies in the United States. Mr. Kiewit valued the work ethic of Nebraskans and wanted to return his wealth to their communities. Upon his death, he directed that his personal estate be used to establish an independent foundation to support public-purpose projects, primarily in Nebraska and the Omaha metro area.

Peter Kiewit Foundation (PKF) has honored his legacy by awarding over \$540 million in grants and over \$40 million in scholarships since our founding. Our investments are inspired by Mr. Kiewit's belief in the importance of hard work, individual opportunity and building community.

VISION

Engaged citizens. Thriving communities.

MISSION AND IMPACT AREAS

To create opportunities for people to live in and help build strong, vibrant communities, achieve economic success, and enjoy a high quality of life.

To pursue this mission, we have established the following impact areas and goals:

- ***Youth Pathways to Success:*** Increase the number of youth who progress in their education and secure meaningful employment.
- ***Economic Growth and Opportunity:*** Bolster a vital, diverse and growing economy that advances individual and community prosperity.
- ***Strong and Vibrant Communities:*** Support local efforts to build thriving communities.

We support efforts primarily in Nebraska and the Omaha metro area. We also make grants in a portion of Western Iowa and other geographies of interest to Mr. Kiewit.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We engage in activities and apply our resources guided by Mr. Kiewit's ideals and the following principles:

- ***Seek the Greatest Impact:*** We are driven to deliver community-wide benefit, significantly improve people's lives and reduce disparities.
- ***Support Community-Driven Solutions:*** We invest in the efforts of individuals, organizations and communities dedicated to improving their circumstances through hard work and the application of local resources.
- ***Foster Collaboration:*** We support collective approaches and partner broadly to address complex issues. We respect the expertise and viewpoints of our partners and work with them to achieve shared goals.
- ***Take Action:*** We make challenge grants to fund capital projects, support promising and proven programs, and improve nonprofit performance. We convene and build capacity within the fields we support. We launch initiatives. We use research, communications and advocacy to advance practice and improve policy.
- ***Commit to Outcomes:*** We believe in setting bold goals and recognize that we may need to take risks and commit to longer-term solutions to make significant progress.
- ***Learn and Improve:*** We use data and evaluation to learn, hold ourselves accountable for achieving goals, improve our performance and share what we learn with our partners.

GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

We appreciate, respect and celebrate the diversity of the communities we serve. Each community has its own unique strengths and challenges; yet many face similar issues that might benefit from sharing successful practices or regional solutions. We also recognize that we may need to pay particular attention to communities that face disproportionate challenges.

To pursue our mission, we invest in efforts to develop and implement statewide solutions for Nebraska, and regional solutions in the Omaha metro and other key Nebraska regions. We also make grants to support high-potential projects in communities throughout our areas of geographic interest.

While our office is located in Omaha, Nebraska, our staff is committed to regularly visiting communities across our areas of geographic interest. To make well-informed decisions and be an engaged partner, we believe it is imperative to develop relationships with community leaders and understand local context and priorities.

Strategic Planning Overview

MOTIVATIONS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

For 35 years, PKF has funded capital projects, programs and nonprofit operations through an open-access grant process to help many worthy organizations address a broad range of issues. In recent years, the landscape of funders has evolved considerably, as have community needs. We too must evolve if we are to continue to contribute to the greatest possible impact. With that in mind, we hired Public Equity Group (PEG), a social-sector consulting firm, to guide us through a data-informed strategic planning process to determine priorities that would build on our past work and strengthen our contributions to the community.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Over eight months, PKF trustees and staff engaged in multiple working sessions to develop a roadmap for the foundation's future. To do so, we assessed data and stakeholder feedback on community issues and needs; reviewed our founding trust and historical grantmaking; listened to grantee feedback; and reflected on our strengths, values and opportunities.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Data and perspectives on needs: By reviewing external data and interviews, trustees and staff identified six notable themes: economic growth, community quality of life, education and workforce development, rural sustainability, working poverty and racial/ethnic disparities. PEG's summary of findings can be found at <http://peterkiewitfoundation.org/news/news/>

PKF's founding trust, values, and grantmaking history: We felt it especially important to remain faithful to Mr. Kiewit's intentions. Mr. Kiewit had an explicit commitment to his hometown of Omaha, the surrounding region and the state of Nebraska. Mr. Kiewit believed strongly in the value of hard work, reflected in his desire to see the foundation's grants "matched" by community fundraising. During his lifetime, Mr. Kiewit demonstrated particular interest in downtown Omaha revitalization, economic development, civic culture, and youth and education. These priorities are reflected in the foundation's grantmaking:

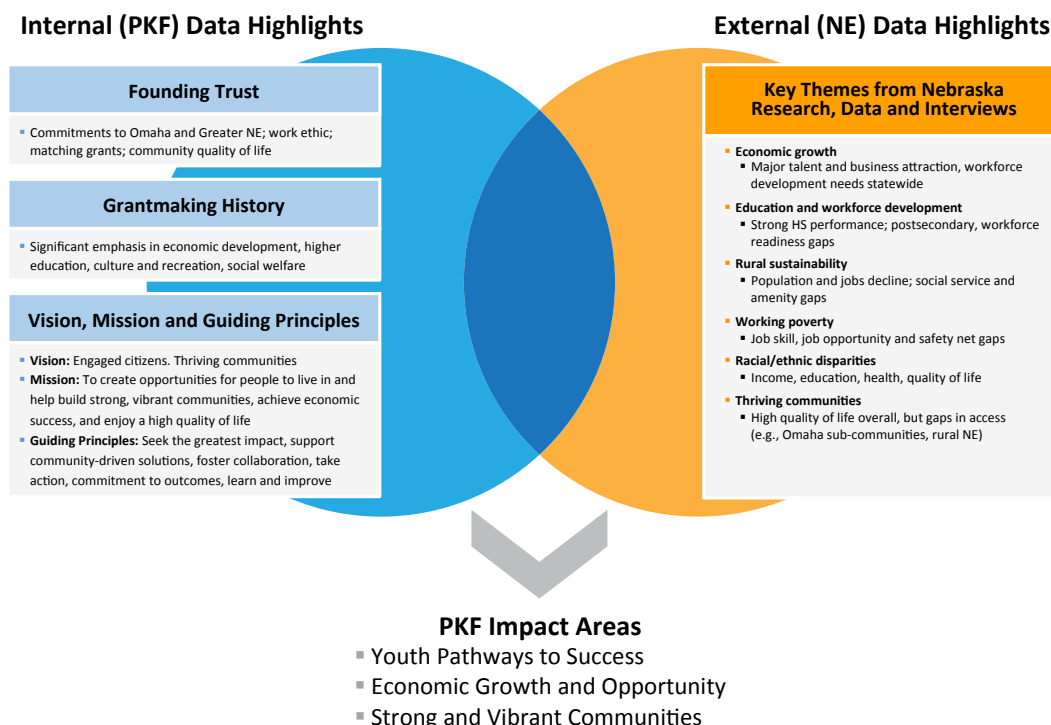
- In the past 10 years, the foundation made ~1,200 grants (~\$190M), 58 percent in the Omaha metro and 41 percent in greater Nebraska and a part of Western Iowa.
- Seventy-one percent of grant dollars supported capital projects; 16 percent funded nonprofit programs and operations; 10 percent supported scholarships; and 3 percent supported other project types (emergency response, research, events, etc.).
- PKF has invested in a broad set of issues, with particular emphasis on economic development, higher education, culture and recreation, and social welfare.

Grantee and stakeholder feedback on PKF: In fall 2013, PKF commissioned the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to anonymously survey foundation grantees. According to CEP, PKF is rated higher than the typical funder for responsiveness and for impact on grantees’ fields, organizations and communities. CEP shared that grantees encourage PKF to develop deeper expertise in grantees’ fields and the context that impacts their work, provide more multi-year grants, more clearly communicate PKF’s mission and strategy, and ensure that foundation processes add value commensurate with the time grantees spend to apply and report on grant outcomes. The full report can be found at <http://peterkiewitfoundation.org/news/news/>

PEG also collected feedback on the foundation from PKF grantees and stakeholders across the state. According to PEG, stakeholders appreciate the foundation’s long history of funding in Omaha and across Nebraska; PKF’s commitment to enhancing quality of life; and the strength of the foundation’s brand in securing other funding. Stakeholders would like to see PKF tackle specific issues beyond quality of life broadly, take more risks, use the foundation’s voice to drive change, serve as a leader and convener, pilot new initiatives and forge more partnerships.

SYNTHESIS AND RESULTING IMPACT AREAS

Trustees and staff synthesized the findings above within the context of our vision, mission and guiding principles to arrive at three “impact areas” going forward:



Impact Areas

Peter Kiewit Foundation has historically supported a broad range of issues that includes the arts, education, children and families, community development, economic opportunity, and human services. Those issues are incorporated in the following impact areas in which we fund and support proven and promising programs, systemic solutions, capital projects, planning and capacity building, and policy development.

YOUTH PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Increase the number of youth who progress in their education and secure meaningful employment.

- ***Cradle-to-Career Alignment:*** Better connect P-16 education systems, community and family supports, and employers.
- ***Academic and Personal Support:*** Ensure youth, particularly vulnerable youth, have access to the personal development, life skills, education access and readiness supports they need to attain post-secondary and career success.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Bolster a vital, diverse and growing economy that advances individual and community prosperity.

- ***Economic Development:*** Support initiatives and projects with the potential to significantly improve state, regional and local economies across Nebraska and the Omaha metro area.
- ***Talent Development:*** Cultivate a skilled workforce that fuels economic growth by developing and recruiting talent for high wage jobs, fostering entrepreneurial activity and supporting efforts that engage and retain professionals.
- ***Economic Opportunity:*** Expand opportunities for low-income workers to develop skills, secure and sustain higher paying jobs, build assets and achieve greater economic independence.

STRONG AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Support local efforts to build thriving communities.

- **Community Empowerment:** Support leadership development, capacity-building and planning efforts that increase communities' abilities to pursue their own futures.
- **Quality-of-Life Projects:** Help communities implement projects that increase access to quality civic, cultural and recreational amenities, improve community health and well-being, and meet crucial needs during times of crisis.
- **Emergent Issues and Opportunities:** Sponsor research on emerging issues and seed innovative projects with high potential for impact and learning.

Implementation Implications

As PKF begins to implement this strategic plan, we are focused on and want our partners to be aware of the following key implications:

Grantmaking and Evaluation Processes: We will be updating our grant application and evaluation processes and will communicate changes in the coming months. In the meantime, we will continue to use our current application. To receive an application, please contact the foundation office and ask to speak with one of our program officers.

Flexibility: While our strategy is the result of diligent research and thoughtful consideration, it is not written in stone. External forces, input from the field and our own ongoing learning will inevitably lead to further evolution in our approaches and priorities. We will also maintain flexibility to support important community efforts that may fall outside of the areas we have identified for focus.

Timeline: Implementation will not happen overnight. We expect it will take several years for us to build our capacity, more deeply understand the impact areas articulated and align the foundation to most effectively pursue the needed work.

Communication: We are pleased to be able to share this strategic plan with the community and we will continue to communicate proactively with our stakeholders. We encourage our grantees and partners to contact the foundation at any time to provide feedback or to ask clarifying questions.