

Strategic Planning

Flag Route Proposal

The foundation of any Optimist Club sits upon four pillars:

- 1) New membership recruitment
- 2) Membership retention and engagement
- 3) Fund raising
- 4) Community awareness.

These four components are both interlinked and interdependent. Failure of any of these components will adversely affect the others. This will lead to the ultimate collapse of the Club's foundation. New clubs are particularly vulnerable and at risk.

The Iowa District should institute a program to ensure the success and lessen the risk for new clubs. The Iowa District should provide any new club with \$500.00 in a re-payable loan. This loan could only be used to purchase flags to establish a flag route in their community. This would provide enough for approximately 25 flags. The loan should have a two year length of repayment. Default on the loan would result in the flags being returned to the Iowa District for redistribution to new clubs or sale to existing clubs. This loan would pose little risk to the Iowa District as it would retain ownership of the flags until the loan was repaid.

The establishment of a flag route would support all four pillars of an Optimist Club's foundation.

- 1) New member recruitment: A flag route will expose the club to a new pool of prospective members. The individuals that receive the flags and any sub-contractors the club may choose to use. The flags will also increase exposure the Optimist Club in the community.
- 2) Membership retention and engagement: Club members are most engaged when they are involved. Individuals remain members when they feel that they are part of the process. A flag route could be a common goal for the club. Revenue from the flag route will provide opportunities for club members to finance new projects.
- 3) Flags routes provide the opportunity for increasing revenues with minimal effort. Clubs can sub-contract the labor requirements and in turn support local organizations.
- 4) Community awareness: A flag route not only exposes the club to the community by the flags themselves, but also through supporting other community organizations. The support can be through donation or using other organizations as sub-contractors. The flag route can also be used as a media event for both print and visual media.

The Iowa District should offer organizational as well as financial assistance to new clubs when starting their flag routes. A best practices manual should be developed with input from those clubs currently with successful flag programs and provided to new clubs. A "boots on the ground" approached should be considered as well.