

Background

Introduction: The Anchorage Rotary Club (“Downtown”) is pleased to submit this request offering to work in partnership with the Victims for Justice, organization. This proposal spans two projects and encompasses the needs of the Past, Present and Future of our community in relation to victims of violent crime. We aim to restructure our community’s approach to violent crime from reactionary to proactive. Through focusing on victim and survivor healing, educating today’s at-risk population and preventing future crimes, we hope to develop a safer community and reduce the risk of violent crime in the future specifically focusing on children and the impact to family.

History of Organization: Victims for Justice (VFJ) is a local nonprofit organization founded in 1985 by Janice Lienhart and Sharon Nahomey after their family members were brutally murdered. Court hearings regarding the case were closed to the public, denying family members the right to be heard. Lienhart and Nahomey have been instrumental in the victims’ rights movement in Alaska, creating a place where victims of violent crime can get professional assistance while also coping with their grief and trauma.

Geographic Area Served: Alaska

VFJ Mission: Victims for Justice provides vital assistance for victims of violent crimes. By championing victims’ rights, we help those affected to heal from trauma and grief, while advocating for change within the criminal justice system.

VFJ Services Provided: Victims for Justice serves and advocates for victims of all violent crimes, including homicide, assault, robbery, kidnapping, arson, elder abuse, bullying, and drunk driving. They also help surviving family members and friends, ensuring that their rights are respected within the judicial system.

Victims for Justice works hard to advocate for a balanced justice system that respects the rights and needs of the victims, and we also support violence prevention community programs. They provide services free of charge, accepting only donations to support our advocacy programs. These programs include:

- Crisis Intervention Services to victims of violent crimes and surviving relations of homicide victims
- Assistance with violent crimes compensation applications
- Education regarding the criminal justice process, protective orders, trial proceedings, victim impact statements, and restitution
- Remembrance ceremonies for families and friends of homicide victims
- Community education regarding victim issues, rights, and resources
- Grief support and referrals

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- Court advocacy and accompaniment

Project Details

Description of Funding Request: Our request includes two (2) distinct project parts that will benefit those who have experienced violent crime and those who are working to prevent crime in our communities.

Part A: Remembrance Park Rejuvenation

Background: Hostetler Park was created when L Street had to be relocated after the 1964 earthquake, and a small space was allocated for a park. The park was dedicated in 1967 and additional property was purchased in 1974 for a parking lot. The park was named in honor of a former city councilman.

In 1994, the organization Victims for Justice requested the use of Hostetler Park to house the Alaska Victims' Memorial, which recognizes victims of homicide. In 2001, Victims for Justice requested permission to enlarge the monument, as it was almost already full.

In 2014, Bree Moore was murdered in her family's home in Anchorage, AK. In 2015, her mother, Cindy Moore, appealed to the Municipality of Anchorage in an effort to restore the Hostetler Park. In response to her appeal, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department did not have sufficient funding appropriate for the project. Since that appeal, the budget continues to be reduced, further hindering the opportunity for this project to advance.

Description: The vision for this project is to give hope and presence to the victims and their families, and to help defeat the rippling impact of violence throughout our community while developing a safe place for community development.

Close to a decade ago, the Municipality of Anchorage established a city park to recognize and remember victims of violent crimes. This park is meant to be a place where victims' families and friends can join together and reflect not on death, but on the lives of those who were taken from them. The park includes the Alaska Victims Memorial Monument. While its presence allows survivors of victims to mourn their loved ones, we would also like to add an additional memorial structure that would allow victims and survivors of victims to ponder on hope and healing.

In addition to the stone memorial, the Tree of Life is located at the park strip, where people gather each spring to tie colored ribbons to the branches to represent those who have been impacted by violent crime.

“The tree stands as the “living, breathing symbol of our tragic past, our love and support for those in need today, and the future hope that someday the tree will no longer hold even a single ribbon on its many outstretched branches.”

-Glen Klinkhart, Author of [Finding Bethany](#).

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Moreover, the Tree and the ribbon ceremony play a vital role in the healing process for survivors of victims of homicide. In a recent interview with Alaska Dispatch News, Teresa Akers, a mother whose child was taken from her in the wake of a crime four years ago, admits, “The ceremony helps; these other families have gone through it [...] you get to see the healing process; it helps me get to the next step.” The event, hosted this month, was featured on our local news.

http://www.youralaskalink.com/news/victims-for-justice-tree-ceremony/article_0cc24414-004b-11e6-a1a6-6f5330dcb798.html

However, the park’s location in downtown Anchorage is along a busy street, and through the years it has experienced damage and disrepair. The park is no longer a quiet place for remembrance, reflection, and respect. Because there is no retaining wall, snow has been graded into the park, causing damage to the grounds and the memorial. A small plane crash adjacent to the park added additional damage to the area and to the monument as well. Additionally, the park does not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as there is no disabled access and no accommodations for disabled persons to visit the area.

The following photos illustrate the hazards that are currently present at the park, and the need for repairs to the monument:

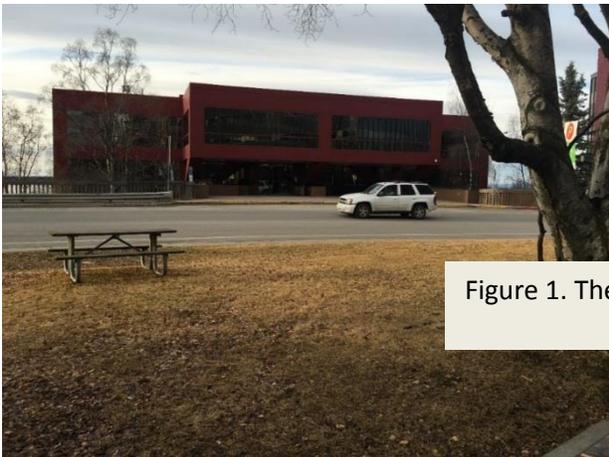


Figure 1. The Park is close to busy street.



Figure 2. The Tree of Life is located more than a mile away from the memorial.

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Figure 3. The memorial requires repairs.

Project Approach: In preparation for this proposal, we have collaborated with a local architect, Spark Design LLC, who donated 4-5 hours of their services in order to develop a preliminary plan for this project. In addition, we called upon a landscaping company to review our plan and provide additional recommendations. As a collaborative effort, we are requesting a funding of \$100,000 for this important project, with distributions of the funds as follows:

Municipal Park Restoration

Item	Action Items	Portion of Funds
Comprehensive Planning & Re-Designing of the park space to create a safe area away from the street for families and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hiring of architecture firm - Obtaining Permit for work on-site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spark Design, LLC: Pro-Bono - Permit: \$7,000
Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination of efforts - Project Timeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bradison Management Group: Pro Bono
Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flower beds - Shrubbery - Retaining Wall - Drainage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some Labor provided by Rotarians and others' volunteer efforts - Professional Landscaping: \$45,000

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Installing ADA-compliant walkways and access points, including grading and paving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plaza Dedication - Memorial Walkway 	- \$30,000
Placing the Tree of Life within the park space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replanting tree 	- \$3,000
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Illuminated walkway 	- \$5,000
Repairing and adding names to the Alaska Victims Memorial Monument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating and installing additional plaques 	- VFJ Contractor: Pro Bono
Installing benches for those who visit the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission of design and construction 	- \$10,000
Installing an honorary plaque recognizing the Rotary for its contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission and placement of plaque 	- TBD
Installing a second memorial structure based on a design by a local artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission of design and creation 	- TBD

****Estimated budget for Project 1 is: \$100, 000 for the comprehensive process of Design, Planning and Excavating. Costs over the initial budgeted amount will be solicited via local fundraising, or in-kind donations.***

Part B: Education and Outreach

Background: Anchorage and the State of Alaska is currently suffering a rise in violent crimes—primarily aimed at women and children. While many not-for-profit organizations are trying to respond, efforts are not coordinated between agencies, nor with local law enforcement. This grant would provide the financial vehicle to platform a coordinate effort to respond to and hopefully prevent future violence.

Description: The vision for this project is to target a youthful audience to promote awareness, education and prevention of violent crimes. Sadly, the Anchorage community has suffered several well-known incidents of elementary age bullying in the past two years alone, coupled with at least three known domestic violence cases involving teenagers each ending fatally. (1—Big Lake, 2—South Anchorage)

In preliminary research, VFJ has found that during times of crisis our youth victims and their families aren't always aware of resources readily available to them. With the recent passing of Bree's law, while there are government strategies to address such crime, there is no current strategy to coordinate efforts or educate agencies where there may be opportunity to broaden the scope of effort by working together and then promoting education through a comprehensive media plan.

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Through Rotarian efforts, our goal for Part B of this project is to gather the Alaskan non-profit groups and individuals who work for the welfare of victims of crime, so that these parties may coordinate their resources towards a prevention and educational program. This is a politically-charged, but vital issue that we must tackle in order to ensure that our community may grow into a safer environment, and that our victims and their survivors are served as holistically as possible.

Working in tandem with these organizations and individuals, our Rotarian Project Committee will then work to bring key groups together to first identify at risk youth and others in our community. Then once a collaborative forum has been committed, they will work in a community wide, and hopefully state wide effort to provide a well-developed educational plan. Rotarians with the assistance of Victims for Justice will collaborate with these other groups, and municipal and state agencies, including law enforcement, to provide violence prevention education programs in schools and throughout the community. These programs will provide important information to students about health issues as they relate to topics such as anti-bullying, date rape, and teen domestic violence.

Project Part B Approach:

Rotarian Committee Organization

- Recruit a robust Volunteer pool
- Develop a project plan, including identification and invitation to community not for profits providing services to at risk youth

Agency Coordination

- Compiling data and facts regarding violence in Alaska
- Develop a collaborative model so that efforts are coordinated between not for profit agencies to the benefit of at risk or youth victims of violent crimes

Develop an Educational Program

- Creating presentations

Promote a Media Campaign

- Develop Multi-Platform Media Campaign
- Organizing and scheduling presentations
- Developing a Student Advocacy Program

Estimated Budget for Project 2 is \$20,000.00 for the facilitation and documentation development, with unknown additional cost to develop and distribute media.

Project Timeline

Our plan will allow for a four month organization and materials development plan commencing in May of 2016. This will allow coordination and development of program collateral during the summer months so that in-school activities can commence in September as the school year starts.

This timing will lend itself well, as we know statistically that violent crimes incidents peak during winter months. Our goal will be both to educate preventatively, while also distributing the contact information of trained agencies and individuals, in the case that their services are needed.