

Mt. Rushmore Road Group

Project Status Report 2015-2016 submitted by President Debra Jensen

Non Profit Status: The Internal Revenue Service gave final approval granting non profit 501C(6) status to Mt. Rushmore Road Group (MRRG). Casey Petersen and Associates Accounting was chosen to complete and file our yearly IRS tax returns.

Public Awareness Committee (formerly Marketing Committee): Chaired by Mike Quasney, utilized Facebook and Internet to educate local citizens and travelers of the services available along Mt. Rushmore Road during the construction season. MRRG treasury funds were used for both projects. Radio and television partnership packages were also made available to businesses along Mt. Rushmore Road.

MRRG Coneman mascot continued to make appearances in Rapid City at various events including “Summer Nights” to spread the word that Mt. Rushmore Road continues to be a viable route during construction. Coneman’s slogan “Don’t Fear the Cone” was placed on business tee-shirts.

Construction:

Project Three (Kansas City to St. James) began March 2016. MRRG sponsored a groundbreaking ceremony at First American Title parking lot. MRRG members, City officials, leaders and members of the media attended. Many businesses utilized maps to assist and direct drivers. SD Department of Transportation and contractor Reede Construction provided a taxi shuttle for businesses and residents who lost parking due to the construction. A pick-up area was established in the Civic Center parking lot.

Eco-friendly rain gardens are being installed in Project Three and for Project Two at the request of property owners. The Rain Gardens will contain environmentally appropriate plantings as well as equipped with a connector “sleeve” to irrigation should a property owner wish to irrigate the area in the future.

Information during construction is disseminated through weekly construction update meetings, periodic emails to members and monthly MRRG meetings.

Wilson Park Lighting: Generous support continues from Black Hills Energy, MRRG businesses, Rapid City Parks and volunteers for the annual Christmas/Holiday lighting of Wilson Park. Tradition includes a live broadcast with Meteorologist Mike Modrick and KOTA TV, KEVN-TV interviews and the Rapid City Journal coverage. Mayor Steve Allender and wife Shirley, flipped the switch to officially light the park for the season. A highlight again this year was the Wilson School Children’s Chorus singing Christmas and Holiday songs. Hot Chocolate and cookies make this a great kickoff to the Christmas and Holiday season.

Nutcrackers: The 8 foot wooden cutouts continue to bring uniformity to Mt. Rushmore Road and smiles to those who travel the road to see the uniquely painted “Nutcrackers” in front of businesses and buildings during the holiday season. The final Nutcrackers were purchased by another community hoping to enhance their holiday spirit. Proceeds from the sale were placed in the MRRG treasury.

