

The Brighter Side...

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by Carol Bower Foote

I love this illustration of an optimistic approach to life: "A little girl opens the door to a room in anticipation of finding a present. She finds the room full of fresh manure. She looks around, pauses, and then dives in exclaiming, *'There's got to be a pony in here somewhere!'*" Sometimes that faith along with initiative, patience, and passion is what it takes to manifest the bright potential of a person, place, or situation.

Jim Wheeler, former Executive Director of RioVision and currently of the Chamber of Commerce, reminds us that *"2018 marks 160 years since our founding and 125 years since the incorporation of Rio Vista as a town."* A series of events throughout the year, culminating in a ceremony on December 30, 2018, will allow our citizens to both celebrate our past and prepare for our future. In that spirit, RioVision looks forward to focusing on projects around town this year, continuing to take action on recommendations resulting from in-depth study and analysis by R/UDAT four years ago. The opening of the Visitor Center and Art Gallery, the 2nd street mural, and the installation of the downtown planters and landscaping were big steps toward revitalization of our downtown area. There is more to do.

While continuing larger projects/programs begun in 2017 like the Riverview School Garden, the Youth Center sign, and maintenance of our downtown planters through the Trim N Tidy program, we are adding some smaller projects in 2018. We have seen that addressing "low hanging fruit" can be completed more quickly at lower cost and still have a big impact. This year will include painting concrete benches downtown and the utility box at 3rd and Main, as well as an outdoor mural at the Rio Vista Museum.

New, more ambitious projects are also on the table to begin this year. They include providing a welcoming and impactful gateway to downtown from Highway 12 and Main, advocating the city for shade covers at the Promenade, and helping to find a good business manager to open up the renovated downtown cinema property for movies, live performances, and events.

To make the bright potential of these projects a reality, RioVision needs volunteer Project Leaders and participants. If you see something here that you'd like to work on or perhaps give leadership a try, we will help you set it up, organize it, and carry it through to completion. Our volunteer coordinator Kathy Hill is experienced, knowledgeable, and full of ideas. We have been heavily relying on the time and energy of Trilogy retirees, but would love to draw in younger citizens from our larger community. Some of these projects have a smaller scope which is a great place to start out as a project manager and volunteer.

At our next RioVision General Meeting on Monday, January 15th, at 5:30pm in the Vets Hall, we will be sharing more information about these projects and invite anyone who might be interested in volunteering for one of them to attend. Join us in continuing to bring the brighter side of Rio Vista to life in 2018 as we celebrate our 160 year journey to get here.