

The RealManage Family of Brands Presents

COMMUNITY Moments

SEPTEMBER 2020



**ANTHONY
LOSTROSCIO**

Lago Vista Master Association

**KELLI
SWOPE**

Community Association Manager
RealManage Dallas / Ft. Worth

**STRATEGIC
PLANNING TIPS**

Getting Everyone On Board

FALL LANDSCAPING

Lawn Care Tips

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CONTENTS

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT
KELLI SWOPE **4**
Community Association Manager - RealManage DFW

BOARD SPOTLIGHT
ANTHONY LOSTROSCIO **10**
Board President - Lago Vista Master Association

STRATEGIC PLANNING TIPS FOR YOUR
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION **12**
Getting Everyone On Board

FALL LANDSCAPING HOA NEEDS **16**
Lawn Care Tips

BOARD PORTAL TRAINING **20**
Training Webinars with Kara Cermak

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NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

September means the start of fall (September 22nd). As we all celebrate the cooler weather, the beautiful foliage, and the reappearance of the Pumpkin Spice Latte - there are a few other important things that happen in September.

Beginning on September 15th and lasting through October 15th is Hispanic Heritage Month. Each year, Americans observe this special time by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from areas such as Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson. It was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover 30 days beginning on September 15th and ending on October 15th. You can learn more about all of the fantastic contributions to society by individuals of Hispanic origin at hispanicheritagemoth.gov where they highlight current and past influencers who made a difference in their world.

September 10th is also World Suicide Prevention Day. Depression affects millions of people worldwide and here at home, with the current pandemic isolation has led to many experiencing this mood disorder on a much broader scale. It's more important than ever to "[Take a Minute](#)" and check on your loved ones, friends and even coworkers who you may not have seen in a while. For all of those who have experienced the pain and heartache of dealing with suicide, we recognize your loss and know that they will be in your thoughts today. You can visit www.iasp.info/wspd2019 where you will find resources for those who are struggling or for those who want to help.

If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts, please call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline available 24 hours a day at 1-800-273-8255 or you can chat with someone at suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat.



Employee Spotlight **KELLI SWOPE**

Community Association Manager
RealManage Dallas/Ft. Worth

Kelli Swope is a fantastic team member and a Community Association Manager out of the Dallas/Ft Worth office for RealManage. Kelli was born and raised in the great city of Lubbock, Texas. She is a Red Raider through and through where she had the opportunity to earn an advertising degree. After college, Kelli found her way to Denton, Texas, where she lived for five years before moving to Addison, Texas. During that time, she was a drive-thru teller and became great at counting other people's money fast! Shortly after, Kelli found herself working in the apartment business, leasing units. She quickly worked her way up to the corporate office and oversaw several apartments to include handling all insurance claims. It was in 1997 when she met and married Todd, her husband, and they have been blessed with three boys. Here is a fun fact, Kelli and Todd were married by Elvis in Las Vegas, and all her boys are named John; John Conner, John Brandon, and John Michael.

”If you know anything about Kelli, you recognize quickly that she is very engaged and dedicated to what she does.

After her second child was born, Kelli was able to quit her job and stay at home with her children. Her family moved to Frisco, Texas, where she still lives today. If you know anything about Kelli, you recognize right away that she is very engaged and dedicated to what she does, so it's no surprise she became involved with PTA's, booster clubs, and team mom opportunities. When her oldest boys started high school, and she was not in such demand, she went back to work as an Assistant Portfolio Manager for a single-family management company. It was there where she learned this fast-paced industry and how different it was from her multi-family



experience. From here, she moved on to becoming an on-site Assistant Manager at Frisco Lakes. In this active adult community, she focused on social activities and became a pro BINGO caller in the process. After two years there, she found herself at RealManage. She says this was a “God thing” because it happened at the right time, right place kind of scenario.

I am thankful that Kelli Swope found RealManage, or we found her. Kelli was one of the first people I met when I first started working for the company and realized pretty quickly that RealManage would be one of the best management companies in the

”The word “no” does not exist in her vocabulary – it is this sort of tenacity makes her special and stand out with the team and the communities she serves.

Dallas/Ft. Worth market because of team members like her. She has an unbelievable work ethic, with always being the first to arrive at the RealManage office each morning, and the word “no” does not exist in her vocabulary for both her clients and company. It is this sort of tenacity that makes her special and standout with the team but, more importantly, the communities she serves. She is always willing to take on more to help her teammates and consistently leads in branch performance metrics. She has won Community Association Manager of the Month Awards on more than one occasion, but Kelli does not do what she does because of the recognition or awards she may gain from her efforts. She does it because she loves to do her job. She loves to take care of her customers, and she only knows how

to give 100% in everything that she does. I am grateful to have Kelli Swope on my team and part of the RealManage family.

Kelli will say she is more thankful for her opportunity with RealManage because she has been able to excel in ways she did not believe possible. She gives credit to two creeds she lives by that have helped her achieve success, and has made a point to teach her children as well, “activity breeds success,” and “never let them see you sweat.”

When Kelli is not working, she is following her other passion, her family. If she is not at home, she is on a football field somewhere watching her sons play football. They play both college, and high school ball, and her eyes light up every time she has an opportunity to share what her boys have done on the gridiron. Kelli does have other interests, such as baseball

and golf, and Kelli’s husband, who has not yet retired, recently picked up golf, and she is also trying to learn the game with him. They also love to spend time on the lake in their backyard, creating a small piece of heaven for themselves and family.

She summarizes her path in life with, “I am surprised daily at where I am and who I am. Never disavow your experiences because it makes you who you are today. I am thankful beyond words for my experiences, good and bad.”

Written by Rolando Coronado
Region President, Texas

”Never disavow your experiences because it makes you who you are today.

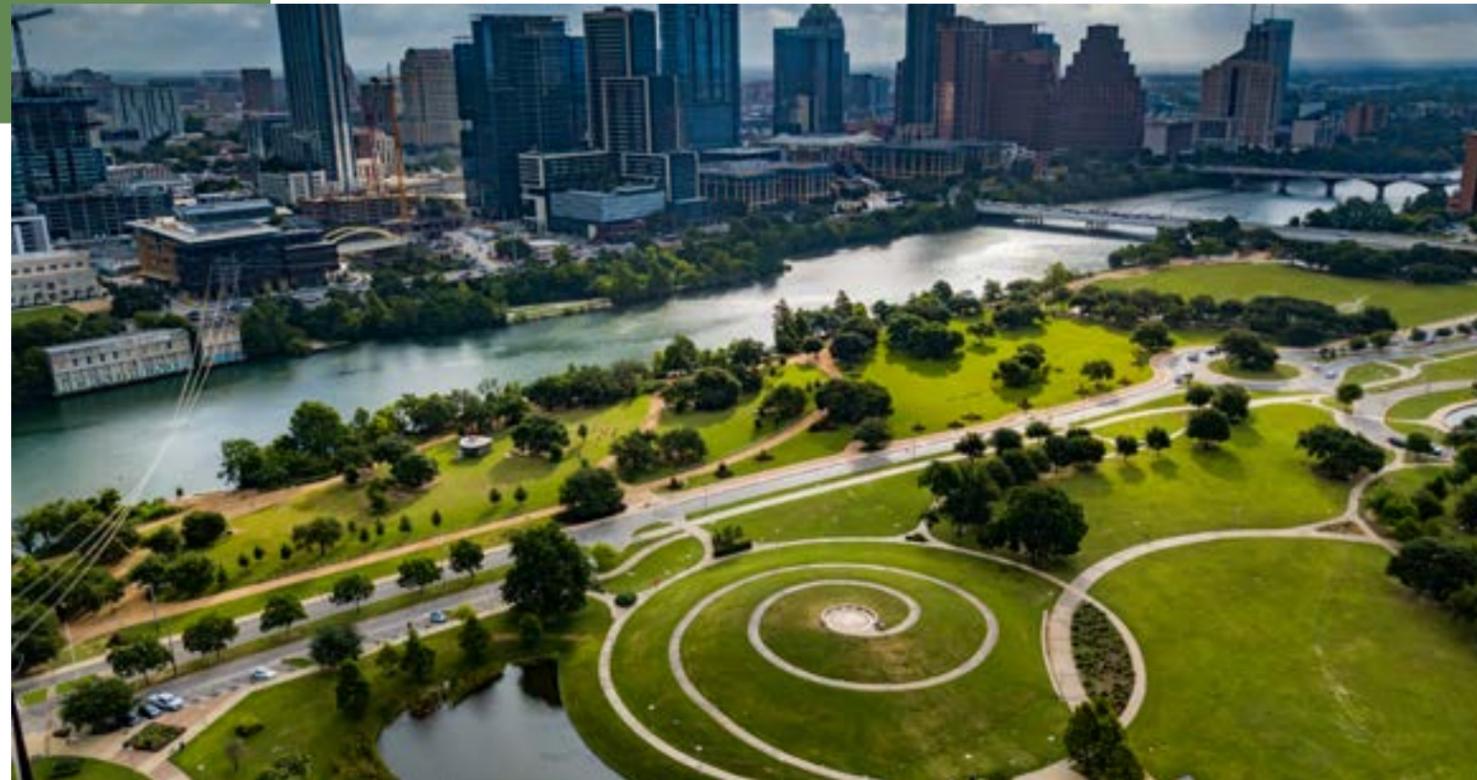


Board Spotlight **ANTHONY LOSTROSCIO**

Board President

Lago Vista Master Association

”Each challenge brings an opportunity to solve a problem and make things a little better for everyone.



RealManage is proud to manage Lago Vista Master Association, which is a gated, over-55 community that consists of five sub-associations. Anthony Lostroscio is the president of the Lago Vista Master board of directors. Anthony was born in 1947 and raised in the city of Chicago and lived in or near the city his entire life. He is retired from the local electric utility where he was a power plant mechanic, water chemistry assistant, and retired as a maintenance coach/foreman.

New to community association living in 2007, Anthony decided to attend a master board meeting and view what was happening for himself. It was an eye-opening experience that led to his desire to get involved in the community operations and run for an open position on the board. Once on the board, he held the position of secretary, and, in 2013, when the president decided to resign, Anthony was elected to serve as the president, and still serves in this officer capacity today.

Over the years, along with the other four members on the board, many enhancements to the community occurred along with the routine maintenance and upkeep that comes with a functioning clubhouse with swimming pools, hot tub, fitness center, lounges, a library, and a grand room. The community is also responsible for its roads and street lighting, landscaping, and several ponds.

While working side by side with the community manager, Chris Kelly, Anthony, and the members of the master board have worked diligently at managing their 1.5 million dollar budget, with regular maintenance and capital projects, while still thinking of the future, Anthony is fiscally responsible. By listening to everyone's opinion, even those that differ from his, Lago Vista continues to build up reserves while maintaining affordable assessments. Chris says, "Tony has been an instrumental resource and a huge source of knowledge to help manage the community over the last five years. His leadership, due diligence, and selflessness have led Lago Vista to be a flagship community for the developer, which highlights this community as a focal point in their advertisements."

Anthony is delighted to be a part of the Lago Vista community and serving on the master board. With the many challenges the Association and the world have faced recently, he believes each challenge brings an opportunity to solve a problem and hopefully make things a little better for everyone.

Written by Kimberly Sutherland, MBA,
CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®
Vice President of Operations - Illinois

and
Christopher Kelly, CMCA®
Director of Community
Association Management

STRATEGIC PLANNING TIPS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

GETTING EVERYONE ON BOARD



Community organization boards always have something new to handle every day. It can all pile up and prove overwhelming, so formulate a strategic plan to ensure that everything runs smoothly no matter what comes up. [Strategic planning](#) essentially involves setting and scheduling the organization's affairs and activities in an organized manner to maximize efficiency and organization.

We had previously discussed the importance of mental planning to help you set goals. Strategic planning is the next step after mental planning. Here are tips on how to make a comprehensive strategic plan for your community organization.

IDENTIFY YOUR ORGANIZATION'S GOALS

Your organization's goals, visions, and mission statements will make up the strategic plan's pillars. They will provide guidelines for all of the organization's responsibilities and policies. As such, start by brainstorming to identify your organization's goals, visions, and missions. Be thorough to ensure that you [cover everything](#) as mistakes in this initial phase will lead to complications down the road.



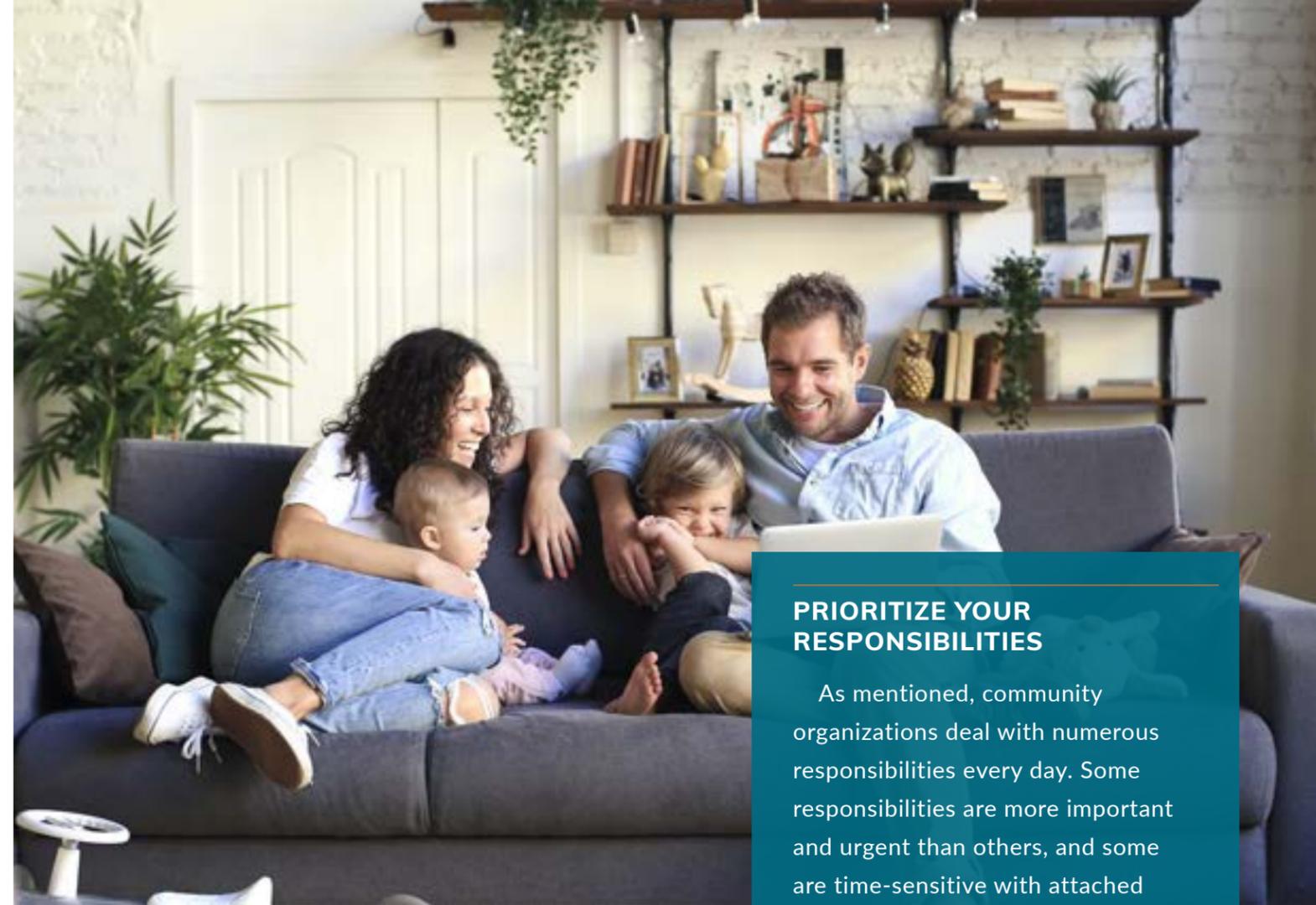
FORMULATE EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

How do you intend to achieve your set goals and fulfill your mission and vision statements? This particular phase of creating your strategic plan involves [figuring out the answers](#) to this question by formulating efficient tactical goals. These tactical goals should offer a practical and reasonable plan for achieving your organization's goals. They should also come up with solutions to any unforeseen challenges. They should be intricate and comprehensive as they essentially serve as the wheels on which the organization runs.

PRIORITIZE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

As mentioned, community organizations deal with numerous responsibilities every day. Some responsibilities are more important and urgent than others, and some are time-sensitive with attached consequences for delays or failure. As such, it is important to categorize your organization's responsibilities, missions, goals, and tactical goals based on their importance.

Important responsibilities should be prioritized over the less urgent ones. It is also prudent to factor in emergencies and other unplanned responsibilities as they can disrupt your operations if you are not ready.



GET EVERYONE ONBOARD

You have a decent draft for your final strategic plan, assuming that the initial phases were successful. The next step is to share the plan with [homeowners](#) and [community](#) members to ensure that everyone is aware of how the plan impacts them. Make sure that everyone gets a copy of the plan. It would also help if you simplified it so that everyone can understand, and there should be an open line to answer any queries from members of the community.

Hopefully, your strategic plan will get approval from the majority of community members. However, be ready to take in differing opinions and be open to making changes, depending on the majority's sentiments.

It would also help if you involved more community members in the initial planning phases. Community member involvement will help you get the ordinary member's insights and reduce points of conflict when unveiling the plan.

Involve more community members in the initial planning phases – this helps get the ordinary member's insights.



MONITOR & MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

No plan is ever 100% fool-proof, especially one involving a community organization with multiple responsibilities. As such, expect and be on the lookout for challenges and complications that may arise when implementing the plan.

Monitor the plan's performance and efficiency closely for the first three months, focusing particularly on emerging issues that are not planned for in the plan. Additionally, perform regular audits moving forward as complications may arise much later – besides, communities are dynamic, and things can change drastically. Finally, be ready to make all changes necessary to overcome any identified complications.

FOR A SERENE & ORGANIZED COMMUNITY!

A strategic plan is essential for keeping the community operating and interacting smoothly. As such, be thorough in your planning and ensure that it is to the benefit of all community members.

FALL LANDSCAPING HOA NEEDS

LAWN CARE TIPS

As summer ends, we all know that soon the cool crisp fall weather will be here soon if it hasn't already chilled your area. Believe it or not, but fall is the best time to start working on your lawn to ensure luscious green grass come next spring. If you're part of a community association, and looking to spruce up community spaces or find tips or guidance for homeowners, check out these lawn care tips.



KEEP MOWING

At the first sign of cooler weather, you might be tempted to put that lawnmower away. Try to resist! While summer brings frequent mowing, grass doesn't become dormant until the first frost. While you'll probably be able to mow less, maybe every 2-3 weeks instead of every week, regular mowing will maintain your yard's health.

Cut grass to the appropriate height, too short, and the roots are endangered, too long, and you risk fungi and mold diseases.

After a long summer, it's important to inspect your lawnmower and [perform fall and winter maintenance on it](#). Not only will this keep it running efficiently through autumn lawn care tasks, but it'll be ready when springtime hits.

RAKE LEAVES

A community association's fall landscaping doesn't stop at mowing. While changing-colored leaves are pretty to look at, they can be a chore to remove. However, it's critical to rake often. Falling leaves [can block out sunlight and create moisture that leads to lawn fungus](#). Try to rake up the colorful leaves at least once a week, so the grass below isn't in poor condition when springtime comes.

If you're crafty about it, you can use those [leaves to your advantage](#). Mowing the leaves and grinding them up or setting them aside in a composting pile can kill two birds with one stone. It'll get rid of the leaves, and you'll be able to use the compost as a natural fertilizer for your lawn.

AERATION

During the summer months, there was probably a lot of traffic in grassy areas. All of that activity compressed and compacted the grass and soil. This prevents water, air, and fertilizer from settling into the grassroots resulting in thin, patchy grass.

[Aeration](#) combats this and loosens the soil below enabling, the water and air to filter through. There are different types of aerators to help get this job done, but homeowners may need to consult their association board or ACC/ARC committee before starting work. Leaving the work to the fall landscaping professionals might be a good idea.

FERTILIZE

[Fertilizing](#) during the cooler fall weather will ensure your lawn has plenty of nutrients to help it get through winter. It also goes hand in hand with aeration. Since aeration loosens the soil, adding fertilizer afterward will allow it to travel deeper, creating a healthier lawn.



REMOVE PESTS AND WEEDS

Taking care of pests and weeds that live in your lawn during fall time is best before new spring growth. Eliminating pests may require professional help, so homeowners need to be mindful of association rules surrounding their use.

As for weeds, it's best to try to remove them in fall as they're easier to kill. Whether pulling them from the root or using a weed-killer, removing in cooler weather helps keep them from coming back in the spring.

WATER AS NEEDED

Even though autumn provides more moisture for grass to survive and thrive, it's essential to keep tabs on rainfall and your lawn condition. If it hasn't rained in a while, water it, or set up a sprinkler system for its overall health.

KARA'S CORNER

BOARD PORTAL TRAINING SESSIONS

KARA CERMAK CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

Community Manager Success Group



BOARD MEMBER TOOLKIT TRAINING

Thursday, September 10th

8:00 PM, Central Time

[Register Here](#)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BUDGETING TOOLS

Wednesday, September 16th

7:00 PM, Central Time

[Register Here](#)

BOARD PORTAL TRAINING

Wednesday, September 30th

7:00 PM, Central Time

[Register Here](#)