

Building a strategic plan for CMC's future By Keegan Young

More than 100 years. That's how long the Colorado Mountain Club has been a central force in our mountain community. How does that come to be? What's the secret of our staying power?

It's you. Through the generations, our work has been guided by devoted members who are passionate for the mountains—and passionate for sharing community, knowledge, stewardship, and adventure with others.



Every five years or so, CMC members and leaders revisit and rework our strategic plan. This plan is essentially the trail map we use to remind us of our legacy, identify new opportunities, and draw out priorities for the coming years. It's how we stay true to our roots while also ensuring we will be relevant for another 100 years.

In 2019, we're hard at work on the next CMC strategic plan. You might have noticed already! Or even participated in its development (more details below). Crafting organizational priorities might sound like the sort of thing that takes place in a stuffy board room, but that's not how we like to do things here at the CMC. Instead, we went all over the state to ask our members an important question: What should be next for the CMC?

We asked



In January, we held five member engagement sessions with 124 members across the state. We traveled to the Roaring Fork Valley, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Boulder, and Denver to hear from members who have more than 1,400 collective years of membership with CMC!

During those sessions, we asked members what they think of our existing programs, where we should be focusing our educational efforts, who CMC should be serving, why they value their membership, and how the state office can better serve them locally and organizationally.

We learned a ton from those sessions, and we used the results to build a survey for all our members to chime in about where we should be focusing our energy over the next five years and beyond.

- Top member priorities include safe recreating, activity-specific trips, and learning mountain-adjacent skills like fly-fishing and photography.
- Tons of you are interested in becoming trip leaders, and we need to create more opportunities for you to do so!

This is a tiny sampling of the information we gathered this year. You provided us with hundreds of insights about CMC programming, benefits, and structure that will form the basis of our plan. (More on that soon—we'll be sharing previews of the plan's key elements over the coming months.)

What's next

Now that our members (and future members) have given us all this incredible data, it's time for the board of directors to review it closely and use it to formulate the basis of our trail map to CMC's future. In April, the board met in Winter Park to do just that. Your input has been essential—thank you for helping inform our work!

This summer, CMC staff and board will continue to reach out to you as we construct the pillars of our new strategic plan. Over the next three months, we are processing all of the information, drafting the strategy, and drawing out an operational plan. You've identified our priorities for us, and now it's our job to figure out how to make them a reality both in strategy and in practice.

Stay tuned for spotlights and previews of the plan in the coming months, as well as a rollout of our new strategic plan in the fall. Then, the exciting work of implementing the plan will finally begin!