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Donor Journey Audit

[Client Organization]

Executive Summary

[Client Organization]'s donation pathway has real strengths: the Donate link is consistent across the header, homepage, and footer, all pointing to the same giving destination; the donation page clearly states [Client Organization]'s 501(c)(3) status and tax-deductibility; and the page includes a genuinely strong, specific beneficiary story (a local small-business owner) that makes the case for giving concrete.

The main gap is that the entire transaction hands off to an external, older-style PayPal donate button, with nothing about the actual giving experience visible or controllable from the [Client Organization] site itself. There's no gift amount guidance, no tribute-giving option, and no promoted case for recurring giving before a donor leaves the organization's website.

The opportunity here is less about fixing broken mechanics and more about [Client Organization] reclaiming more of the donor experience for itself: doing more of the persuasive and stewardship work before and after the PayPal hand-off, rather than leaving nearly the entire journey to a generic third-party button.

1. Donation Landing Page Is Outdated

Every Donate link on the site (header, homepage banner, footer, and the Donate page's own buttons) points to the same PayPal “donate” button URL. This is PayPal's legacy hosted-button format rather than a modern giving platform (Donorbox, Classy, GiveButter, Blackbaud, or PayPal's newer Giving Fund tools), and once a visitor clicks through, they leave the organization's website entirely and land on a PayPal-branded page [Client Organization] has limited ability to customize.

Why this matters: It means nearly everything about the actual giving experience — suggested amounts, recurring options, messaging, and confirmation — is out of [Client Organization]'s hands. A modern donation platform would let [Client Organization] customize the gift array and messaging and capture richer donor data.

2. No Gift Amount or Impact Guidance Before the Hand-off

The [Client Organization] donation page itself shows no suggested gift amounts and no “what does \$X accomplish” language; it moves straight from the beneficiary story to a single “Donate Now” button. Any gift array that exists lives on the PayPal page, out of [Client Organization]'s control and outside what we can verify.

Why this matters: Gift arrays paired with impact language are one of the most effective tools for guiding donor decision-making and encouraging larger gifts. Right now, [Client Organization] is not using that tool at all before sending donors elsewhere.

3. Recurring Giving Is Mentioned but Not Promoted

The page notes donors can give “with a one-time or recurring donation,” but that's the only mention. There's no explanation of why monthly giving matters, no named recurring-giving program, and no distinct monthly gift array.

Why this matters: Recurring donors are typically an organization's most valuable and highest-retention supporters. Treating recurring giving as an afterthought, rather than a clearly promoted option, likely leaves real revenue and

donor stability on the table.

4. No Tribute Giving Option Surfaced

There's no "in honor of / in memory of" option visible anywhere in the donation flow on the [Client Organization] side.

Why this matters: Tribute giving is a common and meaningful motivation for donors, and its absence closes off a pathway some supporters would otherwise use.

5. No Alternative Giving Methods Mentioned

The donation page doesn't mention giving by mail or check, or any planned/legacy giving option.

Why this matters: Not every donor wants to give online, and higher-capacity or older donors in particular may look for these alternatives. Even a brief mention would broaden the giving invitation.

6. Checkout-Specific Details Require a Live Test, and the Checkout Currently Appears Broken

The available payment methods have been confirmed: Venmo, credit/debit cards, and PayPal are the only ways to donate now. A test donation is still required to confirm the confirmation page wording, as well as the content and signer of any thank-you email or letter.

Three test donation attempts were made and all three were met with this message: "We're sorry that we are experiencing temporary difficulties. Please try again later. We apologize for the inconvenience."

Why this matters: If this error is consistent rather than a one-time glitch, the donation flow may currently be broken for real donors, not just untestable. This should be treated as an urgent, not just informational, finding.

Recommendations

- 1 Evaluate whether [Client Organization]'s giving experience would benefit from a modern donation platform (Donorbox, Classy, GiveButter, or similar) instead of a legacy PayPal hosted button, to regain control over branding, gift arrays, and donor data.
- 2 Add a suggested gift array with brief impact language directly on the [Client Organization] donation page, before any hand-off to PayPal. As an example starting point based on patterns across similar audits: one-time amounts of \$25 / \$50 / \$100 / \$250 / \$500 / \$1,000 plus a custom field, and a distinct, lower monthly array of \$20 / \$50 / \$75 / \$100 / \$250 / \$500 plus a custom field. These are illustrative only and should be calibrated against [Client Organization]'s actual donor history where possible.
- 3 Build out a real monthly giving proposition, explain why recurring support matters, and consider a named recurring-giving program with its own distinct amount tiers.
- 4 Add a tribute-giving option ("In honor of / In memory of") to the giving experience.
- 5 List alternative giving methods (mail/check, planned giving) directly on the donation page.
- 6 Retest the donation flow immediately and, if the error persists, treat it as an urgent fix, not a routine finding, since it may be blocking real donations right now. Once resolved, confirm the confirmation page wording and the content and signer of any thank-you email or letter.
- 7 Preserve what's working: the consistent Donate links across the site, the clear 501(c)(3)/tax-deductibility language, and the specific beneficiary story.

Sample deliverable — the client's identity, website, and other identifying details have been redacted/anonymized for illustration.