

# Syntal Capital Partners, LLC

## **ADV Part 2A, Firm Brochure**

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**This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Syntal Capital Partners, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (432) 262-8111 or [Robert.Carlyon@syntal.com](mailto:Robert.Carlyon@syntal.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.**

**Additional information about Syntal Capital Partners, LLC also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).**

**References herein to Syntal Capital Partners, LLC as a “registered investment adviser” or any reference to being “registered” does not imply a certain level of skill or training.**

## **Item 2            Material Changes**

Since last year's Annual Amendment filing on March 31, 2022, this ADV 2A Disclosure Brochure has been materially amended at:

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## Item 4            Advisory Business

- A. Syntal Capital Partners, LLC (“the Registrant”) is a limited liability company formed on February 27, 2012 in the state of Texas. It has been a registered investment adviser with the Securities and Exchange Commission since April 13, 2012. The Registrant is wholly owned by Syntal Heritage, LLC and Syntal Global Holdings, LP, which in turn is principally owned by Chad Clary, CIMA<sup>®</sup> and Dane Crunk., CFP<sup>®</sup>, CIMA<sup>®</sup>. Mr. Clary is the Registrant’s Managing Director.
- B. As discussed below, the Registrant offers to its clients investment advisory services on a discretionary basis, which do not include financial planning and related consulting services.

### INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

The client can engage the Registrant to provide investment advisory services on a wrap fee basis only. (See discussion below). If a client engages the Registrant on a wrap fee basis, the client will pay a single fee for investment advisory services, brokerage and custody, inclusive of commission and transactions costs. The services included in a wrap fee agreement will depend upon each client’s particular need. Certain of the Registrant’s legacy clients still may have agreements in place with the Registrant for advisory services on a non-discretionary wrap-fee basis.

Before engaging the Registrant to provide investment advisory services, clients are required to enter into an *Investment Advisory Agreement* with the Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement describing the scope of services to be provided and the compensation to be paid to the Registrant.

Registrant’s wrap fee shall include investment advisory services and generally does not include consulting services. In the event that the client requires planning or consulting services, the client may request the Registrant to perform such additional services pursuant to a stand-alone *Consulting Services Agreement* (see below). In limited instances, Registrant may be engaged to provide investment advisory and consulting services for a single fee. In such instances, the fee payable by the client shall be the greater of the client’s annual asset-based fee or a separately negotiated minimum annual fee. If a client is subject to the negotiated minimum annual fee, such client’s fee will exceed the fee referenced in Item 5 below.

To begin the investment advisory process, an investment adviser representative will first determine each client’s investment objectives and then invest client’s assets consistent with their investment objectives. Once invested, the Registrant provides ongoing monitoring and review of account performance and asset allocation as compared to the client’s investment objectives and may periodically rebalance an account based upon these reviews. As appropriate in accordance with the client’s investment objectives, the Registrant primarily invests or recommends that client invest in: various independent investment managers, open-end mutual funds, exchange-traded funds (“ETFs”), private funds, individual debt and equity securities, options, securities components of variable annuities and variable life insurance contracts.

## SYNTAL CAPITAL PARTNERS WRAP PROGRAM

The Registrant also provides investment advisory services on a wrap fee basis in accordance with the Registrant's investment advisory wrap fee program (the "Program"). The services offered under, and the corresponding terms and conditions pertaining to the Program are discussed in the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, which is presented to all existing and prospective Program participants. Under the Program, the Registrant offers participants discretionary investment advisory services and certain non-discretionary advisory services for legacy clients for a single specified annual Program fee, inclusive of trade execution, custody, reporting, and investment advisory fees. Fidelity Brokerage Services, LLC member NYSE/SIPC ("*Fidelity*") or Pershing Advisor Solutions, LLC ("*Pershing*") shall serve as the custodian for Program accounts. However, certain of the Registrant's legacy clients still may have agreements in place with the Registrant for advisory services on a non-discretionary wrap-fee basis.

**Wrap Program-Conflict of Interest.** Registrant provides services on a wrap fee basis as a wrap program sponsor. Under Registrant's wrap program, the client generally receives investment advisory services, the execution of securities brokerage transactions, custody and reporting services for a single specified fee. Participation in a wrap program may cost the client more or less than purchasing such services separately. The terms and conditions of a wrap program engagement are more fully discussed in Registrant's Wrap Fee Program Brochure.

Because wrap program transaction fees and/or commissions are being paid by Registrant to the account custodian/broker-dealer, Registrant could have an economic incentive to maximize its compensation by seeking to minimize the number of trades in the client's account. See separate *Wrap Fee Program Brochure*.

## CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)

To the extent specifically requested by a client, the Registrant may provide consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on either an hourly basis or a stand-alone separate fee basis. Before engaging the Registrant to provide stand-alone consulting services, clients are required to enter into a separate *Consulting Services Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement, describing the scope of the services to be provided, the portion of the fee that is due from the client prior to Registrant commencing services and when the engagement is complete.

In performing its services, Registrant shall not be required to verify any information received from clients or from the clients' other professionals and is expressly authorized to rely thereon. If requested by the client, Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for implementation purposes, including certain of the Registrant's investment adviser representatives in their individual capacities as licensed insurance agents. (See disclosure at Item 10.C.). The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any recommended professional.

The client retains absolute discretion over all implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. If the client engages any professional (i.e. attorney, accountant, insurance agent, etc.), recommended or otherwise,

and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from the engaged professional. At all times, the engaged licensed professional(s), and not Registrant, shall be responsible for the quality and competency of the services provided. Clients are responsible for promptly notifying the Registrant if there is ever any change in their financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating or revising Registrants' previous recommendations and/or services.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Non-Investment Consulting/Implementation Services.** If requested by the client, the Registrant may provide consulting services regarding non-investment related matters, such as estate, tax and insurance planning. Neither the Registrant, nor any of its representatives, serves as an attorney or an accountant and no portion of the Registrant's services should be viewed as legal or accounting services. Accordingly, Registrant does not prepare estate planning documents or tax returns. To the extent requested by a client, the Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for certain non-investment implementation purposes (i.e., attorneys, accountants, insurance agents), including certain of the Registrant's investment adviser representatives in their separate registered or licensed capacities as discussed below.

The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any recommended professional. The client retains absolute discretion over all implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. If the client engages any professional (i.e., attorney, accountant, insurance agent, etc.), recommended or otherwise, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from the engaged professional.

At all times, the engaged licensed professional(s), and not Registrant, shall be responsible for the quality and competency of the services provided. Clients are responsible for promptly notifying the Registrant if there is ever any change in their financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating or revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Stone Castle FICA Program.** The Registrant may recommend the FICA For Advisors cash management program ("FICA Program") offered by StoneCastle Network, LLC ("StoneCastle"), an affiliate of StoneCastle Cash Management, LLC. The FICA Program is designed to protect client money by placing it in deposit accounts at banks, savings institutions and credit unions (collectively, "Insured Depositories") in a manner that maintains full insurance of the funds by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC") or National Credit Union Administration ("NCUA"), as is applicable. Clients who choose to participate in the FICA Program will have their funds deposited within StoneCastle's network of Insured Depositories ("Deposit Network"). StoneCastle does not require a minimum deposit to open a FICA Program account. The Registrant will assist clients in signing up for the FICA Program and facilitating the transfer of funds between the client's like-named accounts.

**Conflict of Interest:** The Registrant may earn a fee, in addition to its advisory fee charged on client assets participating in the FICA Program, from StoneCastle, based upon client participation in the FICA Program.

**Affiliated Private Funds.** The Registrant is affiliated with and the advisor to the Wolfcamp Credit Fund I, LP, the Wolfcamp Credit Fund II, LP, the Syntal Real Estate Fund, LLC Series 1, Syntal Real Estate Fund, LLC Series 2 and Syntal Real Estate Fund, LLC Series 3 each, a private investment fund (together the “Funds”), the complete description of which (the terms, conditions, risks, conflicts and fees, including incentive compensation) is set forth in the Funds’ offering documents. The Registrant, on a non-discretionary basis, may recommend that certain qualified clients consider investment in the Funds. If a client determines to become an affiliated private fund investor, unless indicated to the contrary, in writing, by the Registrant, the amount of assets invested in the fund(s) shall be included as part of “assets under management” for purposes of Registrant calculating its investment advisory fee per Item 5 below. Registrant’s fee shall be in addition to the Funds’ fees. Registrant’s clients are under absolutely no obligation to consider or make an investment in the Funds.

Private investment funds, including the Fund, generally involve various risk factors, including, but not limited to, potential for complete loss of principal, liquidity constraints and lack of transparency, a complete discussion of which is set forth in each fund’s offering documents, which will be provided to each client for review and consideration. Unlike liquid investments that a client may maintain, private investment funds do not provide daily liquidity or pricing. Each prospective client investor will be required to complete a Subscription Agreement, pursuant to which the client shall establish that he/she is qualified for investment in the fund and acknowledges and accepts the various risk factors that are associated with such an investment.

Because the Registrant and/or its affiliates may earn compensation from the Funds (both management fees and incentive compensation) that may exceed the fee that the Registrant would earn under its standard asset based fee schedule referenced in Item 5 below, the recommendation that a client become an investor into the above mentioned private fund presents a conflict of interest. The Registrant waives its advisory fee for investments made by clients into the Funds and investors in the Funds are responsible for the payment of management fees disclosed in the Funds’ offering documents. The recommendation that a client become a Fund investor presents a conflict of interest. No client is under any obligation to become a Fund investor. Given the conflict of interest, Registrant advises that clients consider seeking advice from independent professionals (i.e., attorney, accountant, adviser, etc.) of their choosing prior to becoming a Fund investor. No client is under any obligation to become an investor in either Fund.

**Valuation:** In the event that the Registrant references the Fund(s) owned by the client on any supplemental account reports, the values for the Fund(s) will generally reflect the most recent value provided by the fund sponsor. However, if subsequent to purchase, the fund has not provided an updated valuation, the valuation shall reflect the initial purchase price. If subsequent to purchase, the Fund provides an updated valuation, then the statement will reflect that updated value. The updated value will continue to be reflected on the report until the Fund provides a further updated value. As result of the valuation process, if the valuation reflects initial purchase price or an updated value subsequent to purchase price, the current value(s) of an investor’s fund holding(s) could be significantly more or less than the value reflected on the report. Unless otherwise indicated, the Registrant shall calculate its fee based upon the latest value provided by the fund sponsor. If the Fund has invested in a third-party fund, the investment manager of that fund is responsible for determining the value of interests in that fund. The Registrant will rely on values provided by the third-party fund’s manager.

**Inverse/Enhanced Market Strategies.** The Registrant may utilize long and short mutual funds and/or exchange traded funds that are designed to perform in either an: (1) inverse relationship to certain market indices (at a rate of 1 or more times the inverse [opposite] result of the corresponding index) as an investment strategy and/or for the purpose of hedging against downside market risk; and (2) enhanced relationship to certain market indices (at a rate of 1 or more times the actual result of the corresponding index) as an investment strategy and/or for the purpose of increasing gains in an advancing market. There can be no assurance that any such security will be profitable or achieve its objective. To the contrary, such funds and/or strategy(ies) can suffer substantial losses. In light of these enhanced risks, a client may direct the Registrant, in writing, not to employ any or all leveraged or inverse ETFs.

**Independent Managers.** The Registrant may allocate (and/or recommend that the client allocate) a portion of a client's investment assets among unaffiliated independent investment managers ("*Independent Manager(s)*") in accordance with the client's designated investment objective(s). Some or all of such *Independent Manager(s)* may be exclusively available through certain turnkey asset management platforms ("TAMPS"). In such situations, the *Independent Manager(s)* shall have day-to-day responsibility for the active discretionary management of the allocated assets. The Registrant shall continue to render investment advisory services to the client relative to the ongoing monitoring and review of account performance, asset allocation and client investment objectives. Factors which the Registrant shall consider in recommending *Independent Manager(s)* include the client's designated investment objective(s), and the Independent Manager's management style, performance, reputation, financial strength, reporting, pricing, and research. The investment management fee charged by the *Independent Manager[s]*, as well as the platform access fees charged by certain TAMPS, are separate from, and in addition to, Registrant's advisory fee as set forth in the fee schedule at Item 5 below.

These investment management fees charged by *Independent Manager[s]* and platform access fees charged by TAMPS are typically calculated based on the notional value of the client's account, and not in the same manner that the Registrant calculates its advisory fees. The timing, frequency, and manner in which such *Independent Manager[s]* collect fees may vary from Registrant's practices. Clients are advised to carefully review the Form ADV Part 2A of any engaged *Independent Manager* for further details.

**Non-Discretionary Service Limitations.** Clients that determine to engage the Registrant on a non-discretionary investment advisory basis must be willing to accept that the Registrant cannot affect any account transactions without obtaining prior consent to such transactions from the client. In the event Registrant would like to make a transaction for a client's account (including in the event of an individual holding or general market correction), and the client is unavailable, Registrant will be unable to affect the account transaction(s) (as it would for its discretionary clients) without first obtaining the client's consent.

**Client Retirement Plan Assets.** If requested to do so, Registrant shall provide investment advisory services relative to 401(k) plan assets maintained by the client in conjunction with the retirement plan established by the client's employer. In such event, Registrant shall allocate (or recommend that the client allocate) the retirement account assets among the investment options available on the 401(k) platform. Registrant's ability shall be limited to the allocation of the assets among the investment alternatives available

through the plan. Registrant will not receive any communications from the plan sponsor or custodian, and it shall remain the client's exclusive obligation to notify Registrant of any changes in investment alternatives, restrictions, etc. pertaining to the retirement account. Unless expressly indicated by the Registrant to the contrary, in writing, the client's 401(k) plan assets shall be included as assets under management for purposes of Registrant calculating its advisory fee. The Registrant does not maintain client 401(k) passwords.

**Pontera.** The Registrant uses Pontera, a third-party platform to facilitate the management of held away assets such as defined contribution plan participant accounts, with discretion. Those clients who choose to engage the Registrant to service their held away accounts will be provided a link to connect their outside accounts to the platform. Once the client's account(s) is connected to the platform, Registrant will review the client's current account allocations. Registrant will rebalance the connected outside accounts consistent with the client's investment goals and risk tolerance. Client account(s) will be reviewed at least quarterly. Assets managed by the Registrant through Pontera are subject to a separate and additional fee of 0.30%.

**Availability and Use of Mutual and Exchange Traded Funds.** Registrant utilizes mutual funds and exchange traded funds for its client portfolios. In addition to Registrant's investment advisory fee described below, and transaction and/or custodial fees discussed above, clients will also incur, relative to all mutual fund and exchange traded fund purchases, charges imposed at the fund level (e.g. management fees and other fund expenses).

Registrant also utilizes the mutual funds issued by Dimensional Fund Advisors ("DFA"). DFA funds are generally only available through registered investment advisers approved by DFA. Thus, if the client was to terminate Registrant's services, and transition to another adviser who has not been approved by DFA to utilize DFA funds, restrictions regarding additional purchases of, or reallocation among other DFA funds, will generally apply.

**Retirement Plan Rollovers – No Obligation / Conflict of Interest.** A client or prospective client leaving an employer typically has four options regarding an existing retirement plan (and may engage in a combination of these options): (i) leave the money in the former employer's plan, if permitted, (ii) roll over the assets to the new employer's plan, if one is available and rollovers are permitted, (iii) roll over to an Individual Retirement Account ("IRA"), or (iv) cash out the account value (which could, depending upon the client's age, result in adverse tax consequences). If Registrant recommends that a client roll over their retirement plan assets into an account to be managed by Registrant, such a recommendation creates a conflict of interest if Registrant will earn a new (or increase its current) advisory fee as a result of the rollover. If Registrant provides a recommendation as to whether a client should engage in a rollover or not (whether it is from an employer's plan or an existing IRA), Registrant is acting as a fiduciary within the meaning of Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act and/or the Internal Revenue Code, as applicable, which are laws governing retirement accounts. No client is under any obligation to rollover retirement plan assets to an account managed by Registrant.



**Portfolio Activity.** Registrant has a fiduciary duty to provide services consistent with the client's best interest. As part of its investment advisory services, Registrant will review client portfolios on an ongoing basis to determine if any changes are necessary based upon various factors, including but not limited to investment performance, financial circumstances, and changes in the client's investment objectives. Based upon these and other factors, there may be extended periods of time when Registrant determines that changes to a client's portfolio are neither necessary nor prudent. Notwithstanding, there can be no assurance that investment decisions made by Registrant will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s). Clients remain subject to the fees described in Item 5 below during periods of account inactivity.

**Cash Positions.** Registrant continues to treat cash as an asset class. As such, unless determined to the contrary by Registrant, all cash positions (money markets, etc.) shall continue to be included as part of assets under management for purposes of calculating Registrant's advisory fee. At any specific point in time, depending upon perceived or anticipated market conditions/events (there being no guarantee that such anticipated market conditions/events will occur), Registrant may maintain cash positions for defensive purposes. In addition, while assets are maintained in cash, such amounts could miss market advances. Depending upon current yields, at any point in time, Registrant's advisory fee could exceed the interest paid by the client's money market fund.

**Cash Sweep Accounts.** Account custodians generally require that cash proceeds from account transactions or cash deposits be swept into and/or initially maintained in the custodian's sweep account. The yield on the sweep account is generally lower than those available in money market accounts. To help mitigate this issue, Registrant generally purchases a higher yielding money market fund available on the custodian's platform with cash proceeds or deposits, unless Registrant reasonably anticipates that it will utilize the cash proceeds during the subsequent 30-day period to purchase additional investments for the client's account. Exceptions and/or modifications can and will occur with respect to all or a portion of the cash balances for various reasons, including, but not limited to, the amount of dispersion between the sweep account and a money market fund, an indication from the client of an imminent need for such cash, or the client has a demonstrated history of writing checks from the account.

**Client Obligations.** In performing its services, the Registrant shall not be required to verify any information received from the client or from the client's other professionals and is expressly authorized to rely on the information in its possession. Clients are reminded that it remains their responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in their financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, or revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Cybersecurity Risk.** The information technology systems and networks that Registrant and its third-party service providers use to provide services to Registrant's clients employ various controls, which are designed to prevent cybersecurity incidents stemming from intentional or unintentional actions that could cause significant interruptions in Registrant's operations and result in the unauthorized acquisition or use of clients' confidential or non-public personal information. Clients and Registrant are nonetheless subject to the risk of cybersecurity incidents that could ultimately cause them to incur losses, including for example: financial losses, cost and reputational damage to respond to regulatory obligations, other costs associated with corrective measures, and loss from

damage or interruption to systems. Although Registrant has established its systems to reduce the risk of cybersecurity incidents from coming to fruition, there is no guarantee that these efforts will always be successful, especially considering that Registrant does not directly control the cybersecurity measures and policies employed by third-party service providers. Clients could incur similar adverse consequences resulting from cybersecurity incidents that more directly affect issuers of securities in which those clients invest, broker-dealers, qualified custodians, governmental and other regulatory authorities, exchange and other financial market operators, or other financial institutions.

**Disclosure Statement.** A copy of the Registrant's written Privacy Notice, ADV Disclosure Brochure as set forth on Form ADV Parts 2A, 2B, 2A Appendix-1, and Form CRS (Client Relationship Summary) shall be provided to each client prior to, or contemporaneously with, the execution of the applicable form of agreement between Registrant and the client. Any client who has not received a copy of Registrant's written Brochure at least 48 hours prior to executing such agreement shall have five business days subsequent to executing the agreement to terminate the Registrant's services without penalty.

- C. The Registrant shall provide investment advisory services specific to the needs of each client. Prior to providing investment advisory services, an investment adviser representative will determine each client's investment objectives. Once invested, the Registrant provides ongoing monitoring and review of account performance and asset allocation as compared to the client's investment objectives and may periodically rebalance an account based upon these reviews. The client may impose reasonable restrictions, in writing, on the Registrant's services.
- D. Unless otherwise agreed, the Registrant does not manage any non-wrap fee accounts. However, as stated above, if a client determines to engage the Registrant on a wrap fee basis the client will pay a single fee for investment advisory services, brokerage services and custody, inclusive of commission and transaction costs (See Item 4.B.). The services included in a wrap fee agreement will depend upon each client's particular need. When managing a client's account on a wrap fee basis, the Registrant receives as payment for its investment advisory services, the balance of the wrap fee after all other costs incorporated into the wrap fee have been deducted. Because wrap program transaction fees and/or commissions are paid by Registrant to the account custodian/broker-dealer, the Registrant has an economic incentive to minimize the number of trades in the client's account. See separate Wrap Fee Program Brochure for additional information on this conflict of interest and how the Registrant mitigates this conflict of interest. Our Chief Compliance Officer, Robert Carlyon, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the corresponding conflict of interest a wrap fee arrangement may create.
- E. As of December 31, 2022, the Registrant had approximately \$361,456,810 in assets under management on a discretionary basis and \$80,102,389 in assets under management on a non-discretionary basis.

## Item 5 Fees and Compensation

- A. The client can determine to engage the Registrant to provide discretionary investment advisory services on a wrap *fee* basis. However, certain of the Registrant's legacy clients are still invested on a non-discretionary wrap fee basis. The Registrant's annual investment advisory fee does not include consulting services. Clients can engage the Registrant to perform these additional services and the dollar amount charged for these services will be included in a separate written notice to the client.

### INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

#### Syntal Capital Partners Wrap Program

The terms and conditions of the Program are located in the Wrap Fee Program Brochure, a copy of which is presented to all prospective Program participants. Under the Program, the Registrant offers participants discretionary investment advisory services, for a single specified annual Program fee, inclusive of trade execution, custody, reporting, and investment advisory fees. The Registrant charges an annual wrap fee for participation in the Program. The wrap fee is charged as a percentage of assets under management, on a non-graduated basis, as follows:

<u>Market Value of Portfolio</u>	<u>Annual Fee %</u>
Accounts valued \$5,000,000 and below	Up to 2.00%
Accounts valued between \$5,000,000 and \$10,000,000	Up to 1.65%
Accounts valued between \$10,000,000 and \$24,999,999	Up to 1.40%
Accounts valued at \$25,000,000	Up to 1.25%
Accounts valued in excess of \$25,000,000	Negotiable

**Fee Dispersion.** Registrant, in its discretion, may charge a lesser investment advisory fee, charge a flat fee, waive its fee entirely, or charge fee on a different interval, based upon certain criteria (i.e. anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar amount of assets to be managed, related accounts, account composition, complexity of the engagement, anticipated services to be rendered, grandfathered fee schedules, employees and family members, courtesy accounts, competition, negotiations with client, etc.).

As result of the above, similarly situated clients could pay different fees. In addition, similar advisory services may be available from other investment advisers for similar or lower fees.

As discussed above, a limited number of Registrant's ultra-high net worth clients require Registrant to provide ongoing business consulting services. For those clients, their investment advisory agreement shall reflect a deviation from our standard percentage of "assets under management" fee structure referenced above. As described in the client's investment advisory agreement, the client shall pay Registrant the greater of the Program Fee (based upon a percentage of assets under management) or a separately negotiated annual minimum fee. No client is required to enter into this alternative fee arrangement, and once commenced, any client is free to terminate the arrangement, upon written notice to Registrant. If a client is subject to the negotiated minimum annual fee, such client's fee will exceed the asset-based fee referenced above.

### CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)

The Registrant may provide consulting services (on investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning or insurance planning) on a stand-alone fee basis. Registrant's consulting fees are negotiable, and the Registrant may be engaged on a fixed fee or hourly basis, but its hourly fees generally range from \$150 to \$500, depending upon the level and scope of the services required and the professionals rendering the services.

- B. Clients may elect to have the Registrant's advisory fees deducted from their custodial account. Registrant's *Wrap Fee Agreement* and the custodial/clearing agreement may authorize the custodian to debit the account for the amount of the Registrant's investment advisory fee and to directly remit that management fee to the Registrant in compliance with regulatory procedures. In the limited event that the Registrant bills the client directly, payment is due upon receipt of the Registrant's invoice.
- C. As discussed below at Item 12, unless the client directs otherwise or an individual client's circumstances require, the Registrant shall generally recommend that *Fidelity* or *Pershing* serve as the broker-dealer/custodian for client investment advisory assets.

Broker-dealers such as *Fidelity* and *Pershing* charge brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (i.e., transaction fees are charged for certain mutual funds, commissions are charged for individual equity transactions, and mark-ups and mark-downs are charged for fixed income transactions).

The Registrant negotiates a fixed fee with Pershing and Fidelity for all transactions for the client's accounts. Under this fixed fee arrangement, Registrant can make as many transactions as it deems necessary for the client's accounts. Advisory clients who choose to engage the Registrant on a wrap-fee basis will not incur transaction fees and commissions in addition to the Registrant's wrap-fee. However, all client accounts may invest in mutual funds (including money market funds) and ETFs that have various internal fees and expenses (i.e., management fees), which are paid by these funds but ultimately borne by clients as a fund shareholder. These internal fees and expenses are in addition to the fees charged by the Registrant.

- D. Registrant's annual investment advisory fee is prorated and paid monthly, in arrears, based upon the market value of the account on the last business day of the previous month. Except as discussed above, the Registrant does not require any minimum annual fee for investment advisory services. The *Wrap Fee Agreement* between the Registrant and the client will continue in effect until terminated by either party by written notice in accordance with the terms of the *Wrap Fee Agreement*. Upon termination, the Registrant shall refund the pro-rated portion of the advanced advisory fee paid based upon the number of days remaining in the billing month.

### Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-by-Side Management

Neither the Registrant nor any supervised person of the Registrant accepts performance-based fees, except with respect to a performance allocation that the Registrant is eligible to earn as a result of its management of the Funds.

A conflict of interest exists because the Registrant generally charges advisory clients an asset-based fee for the advisory services it provides, but the Registrant (or its affiliates) are entitled to receive performance-based fees or allocations from the Funds. As a result, we have an incentive to recommend that an advisory client invest in the Funds, as opposed to holding assets only in separate accounts and allocating those assets to investments where the Registrant (or its affiliates) would not be entitled to receive performance-based fees or allocations.

We also have an incentive to offer investments that we believe will be more profitable than others to the Funds in order to earn more compensation. This arrangement may also be in conflict with the client's current investment objectives and tolerance for risk. We seek to address these conflicts of interest by emphasizing our duty to place the interests of our clients first. In addition, the performance of the Funds does not drive the compensation structure of our representatives, though certain representatives who have an equity interest in the Registrant will derive indirect benefits from performance-based fees or allocations received by the Registrant (or its affiliates).

Performance-based fees may only be offered to clients who meet one of the following criteria:

- A natural person who or a company that immediately after entering into the contract has at least \$1,100,000 under the management of the investment adviser;
- A natural person who or a company that the investment adviser entering into the contract (and any person acting on his behalf) reasonably believes, immediately before entering into the contract, either:
  - o Has a net worth (together, in the case of a natural person, with assets held jointly with a spouse, excluding principal residence) of more than \$2,200,000, at the time the contract is entered into; or
  - o Is a qualified purchaser as defined in section 2(a)(51)(AA) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-2(51)(A)) at the time the contract is entered into; or
- A natural person who immediately before entering into the contract is:
  - o An executive officer, director, trustee, general partner, or person serving in similar capacity of the investment adviser; or
  - o An employee of the investment adviser (other than an employee performing solely clerical, secretarial, or administrative functions with regard to the investment adviser) who, in connection with his or her regular functions or duties, participates in the investment activities of such investment adviser, provided that such employee has been performing such functions and duties for or on behalf of the investment adviser, or substantially similar functions or duties for or on behalf of another company for at least 12 months.

## **Item 7            Types of Clients**

The Registrant's clients shall generally include individuals, high net worth individuals, the Funds, pension and profit-sharing plans, charitable organizations, and corporations or other businesses.

Registrant, in its discretion, may charge a lesser investment advisory fee, charge a flat fee, waive its fee entirely, or charge fee on a different interval, based upon certain criteria (i.e. anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar

amount of assets to be managed, related accounts, account composition, complexity of the engagement, anticipated services to be rendered, grandfathered fee schedules, employees and family members, courtesy accounts, competition, negotiations with client, etc.). As result of the above, similarly situated clients could pay different fees. In addition, similar advisory services may be available from other investment advisers for similar or lower fees.

## **Item 8            Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss**

- A. The Registrant may use any combination of the following when analyzing securities or third-party managers:
- Research
    - i. The Registrant's research processes include public, private and proprietary information
    - ii. Quantitative market analysis using proprietary models
    - iii. Reviewing third party fundamental & macro analysis
    - iv. Investment committee reviews academic research papers
    - v. Technical research following price momentum and trade volume
    - vi. Formulating views and opinions around economic and geopolitical developments
  - Strategy Development & Implementation
    - i. Identify preferable investment space in the market
    - ii. Focus on styles and market segments where the dispersion between managers is significant – hire active managers for these pieces
    - iii. Where the dispersion between managers is minimal, allocate funds to passive managers
    - iv. Proprietary strategies are also managed next to external managers
    - v. Quantitative risk signal determines the process and timeline of implementation of client funds
  - Risk Management
    - i. Quarterly review of external managers based on performance and investment mandate
    - ii. Disciplined risk budgeting and position size management for proprietary strategies
    - iii. Investment committee reviews market themes and risk factors weekly and reserves the right to override fund allocations in extreme markets

The Registrant may utilize the following investment strategies when implementing investment advice given to clients:

- Long Term Purchases – securities purchased with the intention of being held for at least a year;
- Short Term Purchases – securities purchased with the intention of being sold within a year;
- Trading – securities purchased with the intention of being sold within thirty (30) days; and
- Derivatives – the use of swaps, forwards, futures, options on futures and other options

**Investment Risk.** Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and it should not be assumed that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by Registrant) will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s). Investors generally face the following investment risks:

- **Interest-rate Risk** – Fluctuations in interest rates may cause investment prices to fluctuate. For example, when interest rates rise, yields on existing bonds become less attractive, causing their market values to decline.
- **Market Risk** – The price of a security, bond, or mutual fund may drop in reaction to tangible and intangible events and conditions. This type of risk may be caused by external factors independent of the fund's specific investments as well as due to the fund's specific investments. Additionally, each security's price will fluctuate based on market movement, which may, or may not be due to the security's operations or changes in its true value. For example, political, economic and social conditions may trigger market events which are temporarily negative, or temporarily positive.
- **Inflation Risk** – When any type of inflation is present, a dollar today will not buy as much as a dollar next year, because purchasing power is eroding at the rate of inflation.
- **Reinvestment Risk** – This is the risk that future proceeds from investments may have to be reinvested at a potentially lower rate of return (i.e. interest rate). This primarily relates to fixed income securities.
- **Liquidity Risk** – Liquidity is the ability to readily convert an investment into cash. Generally, assets are more liquid if many traders are interested in a standardized product. For example, Treasury Bills are highly liquid, while real estate properties are not.
- **Financial Risk** – Excessive borrowing to finance a business' operations increases the risk of profitability, because the company must meet the terms of its obligations in good times and bad. During periods of financial stress, the inability to meet loan obligations may result in bankruptcy and/or a declining market value.
- **Regulatory Risk.** Changes in laws and regulations from any government can change the market value of companies subject to such regulations. Certain industries are more susceptible to government regulation. For example, changes in zoning, tax structure or laws may impact the return on investments.
- **Mutual Fund Risk.** Mutual funds are operated by investment companies that raise money from shareholders and invests it in stocks, bonds, and/or other types of securities. Each fund will have a manager that trades the fund's investments in accordance with the fund's investment objective. Mutual funds charge a separate management fee for their services, so the returns on mutual funds are reduced by the costs to manage the funds. While mutual funds generally provide diversification, risks can be significantly increased if the fund is concentrated in a particular sector of the market. Mutual funds that are sold through brokers are called load funds, and those sold to investors directly from the fund companies are called no-load funds. Mutual funds come in many varieties. Some invest aggressively for capital appreciation, while others are conservative and are designed to generate income for shareholders. In addition, the client's overall portfolio may be affected by losses of an underlying fund and the level of risk

arising from the investment practices of an underlying fund (such as the use of derivatives).

- **Exchange Traded Fund Risk.** ETFs are marketable securities that are designed to track, before fees and expenses, the performance or returns of a relevant index, commodity, bonds or basket of assets, like an index fund. Unlike mutual funds, ETFs trade like common stock on a stock exchange. ETFs experience price changes throughout the day as they are bought and sold. In addition to the general risks of investing, there are specific risks to consider with respect to an investment in ETFs, including, but not limited to: (i) an ETF's shares may trade at a market price that is above or below its net asset value; (ii) the ETF may employ an investment strategy that utilizes high leverage ratios; or (iii) trading of an ETF's shares may be halted if the listing exchange's officials deem such action appropriate, the shares are de-listed from the exchange, or the activation of market-wide "circuit breakers" (which are tied to large decreases in stock prices) halts stock trading generally.

- B. The Registrant's methods of analysis and investment strategies do not present any significant or unusual risks. However, every method of analysis has its own inherent risks. To perform an accurate market analysis the Registrant must have access to current/new market information. The Registrant has no control over the dissemination rate of market information; therefore, unbeknownst to the Registrant, certain analyses may be compiled with outdated market information, severely limiting the value of the Registrant's analysis. Furthermore, an accurate market analysis can only produce a forecast of the direction of market values. There can be no assurances that a forecasted change in market value will materialize into actionable and/or profitable investment opportunities.

The Registrant's primary investment strategies – Long Term Purchases, Short Term Purchases, and Trading – are quantitative investment strategies. However, every investment strategy has its own inherent risks and limitations. For example, longer term investment strategies require a longer investment time period to allow for the strategy to potentially develop. Shorter term investment strategies require a shorter investment time period to potentially develop but, as a result of more frequent trading, may incur higher transactional costs when compared to a longer-term investment strategy. Trading, an investment strategy that requires the purchase and sale of securities within a thirty (30) day investment time period involves a very short investment time period but will incur higher transaction costs when compared to a short term investment strategy and substantially higher transaction costs than a longer term investment strategy.

**Borrowing Against Assets/Risks.** A client who has a need to borrow money could determine to do so by using:

- **Margin-**The account custodian or broker-dealer lends money to the client. The custodian charges the client interest for the right to borrow money, and uses the assets in the client's brokerage account as collateral; and,
- **Pledged Assets Loan-** In consideration for a lender (i.e., a bank, etc.) to make a loan to the client, the client pledges its investment assets held at the account custodian as collateral;

These above-described collateralized loans are generally utilized because they typically provide more favorable interest rates than standard commercial loans. These types of



collateralized loans can assist with a pending home purchase, permit the retirement of more expensive debt, or enable borrowing in lieu of liquidating existing account positions and incurring capital gains taxes. However, such loans are not without potential material risk to the client's investment assets. The lender (i.e. custodian, bank, etc.) will have recourse against the client's investment assets in the event of loan default or if the assets fall below a certain level. For this reason, Registrant does not recommend such borrowing unless it is for specific short-term purposes (i.e. a bridge loan to purchase a new residence). Registrant does not recommend such borrowing for investment purposes (i.e., to invest borrowed funds in the market). Regardless, if the client was to determine to utilize margin or a pledged assets loan, the following economic benefits would inure to Registrant:

- by taking the loan rather than liquidating assets in the client's account, Registrant continues to earn a fee on such Account assets; and,
- if the client invests any portion of the loan proceeds in an account to be managed by Registrant, Registrant will receive an advisory fee on the invested amount; and,
- if Registrant's advisory fee is based upon the higher margined account value (*see* margin disclosure at Item 5 below), Registrant will earn a correspondingly higher advisory fee. This could provide Registrant with a disincentive to encourage the client to discontinue the use of margin.

The Client must accept the above risks and potential corresponding consequences associated with the use of margin or a pledged assets loans.

**Risks Associated with the Use of Derivatives.** Certain of the ETFs and mutual funds the Registrant recommends or purchases on a discretionary basis for client accounts may use derivatives. Such strategies may be considered aggressive. Investing in derivatives may expose the clients to greater risks than investing directly in the reference asset(s) underlying those derivatives, such as counterparty risk, liquidity risk and increased correlation risk (each as discussed below).

When the recommended funds use derivatives, there may be imperfect correlation between the value of the reference asset(s) and the derivative, which may prevent the funds from achieving their investment objective. The funds may use a combination of swaps on an index (such as the Dow Jones US Health Care Index) and swaps on an ETF that is designed to track the performance of an index. The performance of the funds may not track the performance of an index due to embedded costs and other factors. Therefore, to the extent the funds invests in swaps that use an ETF as the reference asset, these funds may be subject to greater correlation risk and may not achieve as high a degree of correlation with an index as it would if the funds only used swaps on an index.

In addition, with respect to the use of swap agreements, if an index has a dramatic intraday move that causes a material decline in the funds' net assets, the terms of a swap agreement between the funds and its counterparty may permit the counterparty to immediately close out the transaction with the funds. In that event, the funds may be unable to enter into another swap agreement or invest in other derivatives to achieve the desired exposure consistent with the funds' investment objective. This, in turn, may prevent the funds from achieving their investment objective, even if an index reverses all or a portion of its intraday move by the end of the day. Any financing, borrowing and

other costs associated with using derivatives may also have the effect of lowering the funds' return.

**Leverage Risk.** Certain of the funds recommended by the Registrant attempt to obtain investment exposure in excess of its assets in seeking to achieve their investment objectives—a form of leverage—and will lose more money in market environments adverse to its daily objective than a similar fund that does not employ such leverage. The use of such leverage could result in the total loss of an investor's investment.

**Compounding Risk.** The Registrant may recommend or invest certain clients in leveraged ETFs. As a result of mathematical compounding and because particular ETFs may have a single day investment objective, the ETF's performance for periods greater than a single day is likely to be either greater than or less than the Index it may be tracking for performance times the stated multiple in the ETF's objective before accounting for fees and ETF expenses. Compounding affects all investments but has a more significant impact on a leveraged fund. Particularly during periods of higher volatility, compounding will cause longer term results to vary from the stated multiple in the ETF objective (e.g., 2x) of the return of the Index. This effect becomes more pronounced as volatility increases. ETF performance for periods greater than a single day can be estimated given any set of assumptions for the following factors: (a) Index performance; (b) Index volatility; (c) period of time; (d) financing rates associated with inverse exposure; (e) other fund expenses; and (f) dividends or interest paid with respect to securities in the Index.

**Options Risk** The Registrant may engage in options transactions for the purpose of hedging risk and/or generating portfolio income. The use of options transactions as an investment strategy can involve a high level of inherent risk. Option transactions establish a contract between two parties concerning the buying or selling of an asset at a predetermined price during a specific period of time. During the term of the option contract, the buyer of the option gains the right to demand fulfillment by the seller. Fulfillment may take the form of either selling or purchasing a security, depending upon the nature of the option contract. Generally, the purchase or sale of an option contract shall be with the intent of "hedging" a potential market risk in a client's portfolio and/or generating income for a client's portfolio.

Certain options-related strategies (i.e. straddles, short positions, etc.), may, in and of themselves, produce principal volatility and/or risk. Thus, a client must be willing to accept these enhanced volatility and principal risks associated with such strategies. In light of these enhanced risks, client may direct Registrant, in writing, not to employ any or all such strategies for their accounts.

There can be no guarantee that an options strategy will achieve its objective or prove successful. No client is under any obligation to enter into any option transactions. However, if the client does so, he/she must be prepared to accept the potential for unintended or undesired consequences (i.e., losing ownership of the security, incurring capital gains taxes).

**Covered Call Writing.**

Covered call writing is the sale of in-, at-, or out-of-the-money call options against a long security position held in a client portfolio. This type of transaction is intended to generate income. It also serves to create partial downside protection in the event the security

position declines in value. Income is received from the proceeds of the option sale. Such income may be reduced or lost to the extent it is determined to buy back the option position before its expiration. There can be no assurance that the security will not be called away by the option buyer, which will result in the client (option writer) to lose ownership in the security and incur potential unintended tax consequences. Covered call strategies are generally better suited for positions with lower price volatility.

#### Long Put Option Purchases.

Long put option purchases allow the option holder to sell or “put” the underlying security at the contract strike price at a future date. If the price of the underlying security declines in value, the value of the long put option can increase in value depending upon the strike price and expiration. Long puts are often used to hedge a long stock position to protect against downside risk. The security/portfolio could still experience losses depending on the quantity of the puts bought, strike price and expiration. In the event that the security is put to the option holder, it will result in the client (option seller) to lose ownership in the security and to incur potential unintended tax consequences. Options are wasting assets and expire (usually within months of issuance).

- C. As appropriate in accordance with the client’s investment objectives, the Registrant currently invests client assets among various independent investment managers, mutual funds, ETFs, individual debt and equity securities, derivatives, securities components of variable annuities and variable life insurance contracts.

As disclosed above, the Registrant may use leveraged or inverse ETFs. Leveraged ETFs are securities that attempt to replicate multiples of the performance of an underlying financial index. Inverse ETFs are designed to replicate the opposite direction of these same indices, often at a multiple. These ETFs often use a combination of futures, swaps, short sales, and other derivatives to achieve these objectives. Most leveraged and inverse-leveraged ETFs are designed to achieve these results on a daily basis only. This means that over periods longer than a trading day, the value of these ETFs can and usually does deviate from the performance of the index they are designed to track. Over longer periods of time or in situations of high volatility, these deviations can be substantial. There can be no assurance that any such security will be profitable or achieve its objective. In light of these enhanced risks, a client may direct the Registrant, in writing, not to employ any or all leveraged or inverse ETFs.

Finally, Registrant may also allocate investment management assets of its client accounts, on a discretionary basis, among one or more of its ETF and mutual fund and asset allocation programs (i.e., Aggressive, Moderately Aggressive, Moderate, and Conservative).

## **Item 9           Disciplinary Information**

The Registrant has not been the subject of any disciplinary actions.

## **Item 10          Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

- A. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer.

- B. The Registrant is registered with the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (the “CFTC”) as a commodity pool operator. The Registrant is also a member of the National Futures Association (the “NFA”). The NFA and CFTC each administer a comparable regulatory system covering futures contracts, swaps and various other financial instruments in which certain clients and pooled vehicles may invest.

The Registrant maintains a notice of claim for exemption pursuant to CFTC Rule 4.7. Rule 4.7 exempts a commodity trading advisor and a commodity pool operator that files a notice of claim for exemption from having to provide a CFTC-mandated Disclosure Document to certain highly accredited clients known as Qualified Eligible Participants (“QEPs”) who consent to their accounts being Rule 4.7-exempt QEP accounts. Accordingly, the Registrant is exempt from the requirement to provide a Disclosure Document with respect to its Rule 4.7-exempt QEP accounts. In accordance with Rule 4.7, the Registrant must prominently display the following CFTC-specified disclosure statement in this Brochure.

PURSUANT TO AN EXEMPTION FROM THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION IN CONNECTION WITH ACCOUNTS OF QUALIFIED ELIGIBLE PERSONS, THIS BROCHURE IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE, AND HAS NOT BEEN, FILED WITH THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION. THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION DOES NOT PASS UPON THE MERITS OF PARTICIPATING IN A TRADING PROGRAM OR UPON THE ADEQUACY OR ACCURACY OF COMMODITY TRADING ADVISOR DISCLOSURE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION HAS NOT REVIEWED OR APPROVED THIS TRADING PROGRAM OR BROCHURE.

In addition, certain of the Registrant’s management persons are registered with the NFA as Associated Persons as appropriate to perform their responsibilities

- C. **Licensed Insurance Agents.** Certain of the Registrant’s representatives, in their individual capacities, are licensed insurance agents, and may recommend the purchase of certain insurance-related products on a commission basis.

**Conflict of Interest:** The recommendation by Registrant’s representatives that a client purchase an insurance product presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend insurance products based on commissions received, rather than on a particular client’s need. No client is under any obligation to purchase any commission products from the Registrant’s representatives. Clients are reminded that they may purchase insurance products through other, non-affiliated insurance agents.

**Affiliated Private Funds.** As disclosed above in Item 4, the Registrant is associated with the affiliated private funds. For a complete description of this relationship and the conflicts of interest it poses, clients and prospective clients should review the disclosures and associated conflicts of interest disclosed in Items 4 and 6.

**Other Investment Adviser Firms.** The Registrant is under common ownership with Eight 31 Financial, LLC (“*Eight 31*”), an affiliated SEC registered investment advisor firm. The Registrant does not refer clients to *Eight 31* for advisory services and the

Registrant shall not receive any compensation for any referral made to *Eight 31*. No client is under any obligation to engage the services of *Eight 31*.

- D. Registrant and its representatives may refer clients to BlackRock, Inc. (“BlackRock”) (a “Receiving Party”). The Registrant may refer clients to a Receiving Party to evaluate the possibility of opening investment advisory, custody, and trust accounts, entering into lending transactions, investing in mutual funds and private investment funds, opening money market insured savings account and entering into other types of investment transactions where such would be consistent with those clients’ needs and objectives.

Registrant may receive from BlackRock a percentage of the gross revenues before taxes received by the banking division BlackRock generated by the client. The Registrant may receive up to five basis points of revenues generated by BlackRock for clients referred to BlackRock for various services. Registrant shall share in interest income from bank deposits, i.e., checking accounts savings accounts, certificates of deposit, money market accounts. In addition, Registrant may receive custody fees, excluding any commissions or credits related to the execution of the transaction(s) for accounts opened BlackRock’s custody department. The Registrant may share in revenue on all loans (excluding mortgages) and capital markets transactions to be agreed upon on a case-by-case basis.

Conflict of Interest: The recommendation by Registrant’s representatives that a client choose a Receiving Party’s products or services presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of commissions, interests, or revenues may provide an incentive to recommend services or products based on compensation received, rather than on a particular client’s need. No client is under any obligation to purchase any products or services from the Registrant’s representatives or from any Receiving Party. Clients are reminded that they may purchase or select other products or services recommended by the Registrant through other, non-affiliated agents or entities or parties in which the Registrant does not stand to receive any additional benefit.

## **Item 11            Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading**

- A. The Registrant maintains an investment policy relative to personal securities transactions. This investment policy is part of Registrant’s overall Code of Ethics, which serves to establish a standard of business conduct for all of Registrant’s Representatives that is based upon fundamental principles of openness, integrity, honesty and trust, a copy of which is available upon request.

In accordance with Section 204A of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, the Registrant also maintains and enforces written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse of material non-public information by the Registrant or any person associated with the Registrant.

- B. Except for the Registrant’s affiliated private funds, neither the Registrant nor any related person of Registrant recommends, buys, or sells for client accounts, securities in which the Registrant or any related person of Registrant has a material financial interest. However, the affiliated private funds allows the Registrant and associated persons to earn compensation in excess of what they stand to earn under a separately managed account as a result of incentive allocations. For a complete description about the incentive allocation and the conflicts of interest they create, please see Item 6 above and the terms and

conditions for participation in the affiliated private fund(s), including management fees, conflicts of interest, and risk factors set forth in the funds' offering documents.

- C. The Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities that are also recommended to clients. This practice may create a situation where the Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a conflict of interest. Practices such as “scalping” (i.e., a practice whereby the owner of shares of a security recommends that security for investment and then immediately sells it at a profit upon the rise in the market price which follows the recommendation) could take place if the Registrant did not have adequate policies in place to detect such activities. In addition, this requirement can help detect insider trading, “front-running” (i.e., personal trades executed prior to those of the Registrant's clients) and other potentially abusive practices.

The Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transactions and securities holdings of each of the Registrant's “Access Persons.” The Registrant's securities transaction policy requires that an Access Person of the Registrant must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of their current securities holdings within ten (10) days after becoming an Access Person. Furthermore, Access Persons must provide the Chief Compliance Officer with a quarterly transaction report, detailing all trades in the Access Person's account during the previous quarter; and on an annual basis, each Access Person must provide the Chief Compliance Officer with a written report of the Access Person's current securities holdings. However, at any time that the Adviser has only one Access Person, he or she shall not be required to submit any securities report described above.

- D. The Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities, at or around the same time as those securities are recommended to clients. This practice creates a situation where the Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a conflict of interest. As indicated above in Item 11.C, the Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transaction and securities holdings of each of Registrant's Access Persons.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

- A. In the event that the client requests that the Registrant recommend a broker-dealer/custodian for execution and/or custodial services (exclusive of those clients that may direct the Registrant to use a specific broker-dealer/custodian), Registrant generally recommends that investment advisory accounts be maintained at *Fidelity* or *Pershing*. Prior to engaging Registrant to provide investment advisory services, the client will be required to enter into a formal *Wrap Fee Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions under which Registrant shall manage the client's assets, and a separate custodial/clearing agreement with each designated broker-dealer/custodian.

Factors that Registrant considers in recommending *Fidelity* or *Pershing* (or any other broker-dealer/custodian to clients) include historical relationship with Registrant, financial strength, reputation, execution capabilities, pricing, research, and service. Broker-dealers can charge transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (*See* Item 4 above). To the extent that a transaction fee will be payable by the client, the transaction fee shall be in addition to Registrant's investment advisory fee referenced in

Item 5 above.

To the extent that a transaction fee is payable, Registrant shall have a duty to obtain best execution for such transaction. However, that does not mean that the client will not pay a transaction fee that is higher than another qualified broker-dealer might charge to affect the same transaction where Registrant determines, in good faith, that the transaction fee is reasonable. In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer's services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, transaction rates, and responsiveness. Accordingly, although Registrant will seek competitive rates, it may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible rates for client account transactions.

1. Research and Additional Benefits.

Registrant receives from *Fidelity* and/or *Pershing* (and potentially other broker-dealers, custodians, investment platforms, unaffiliated investment managers, vendors, or fund sponsors) free or discounted support services and products. Certain of these products and services assist the Registrant to better monitor and service client accounts maintained at these institutions. The support services that Registrant obtains can include investment-related research; pricing information and market data; compliance or practice management-related publications; discounted or free attendance at conferences, educational or social events; or other products used by Registrant to further its investment management business operations.

Certain of the support services or products received may assist the Registrant in managing and administering client accounts. Others do not directly provide this assistance, but rather assist the Registrant to manage and further develop its business enterprise.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected or assets maintained at *Fidelity* and/or *Pershing* or other broker-dealers and custodians because of these arrangements. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to any broker-dealer or custodian or any other entity to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products because of the above arrangements.

2. The Registrant does not receive referrals from broker-dealers.
3. The Registrant does not generally accept directed brokerage arrangements (when a client requires that account transactions be affected through a specific broker-dealer). In such client directed arrangements the client will negotiate terms and arrangements for their account with that broker-dealer, and Registrant will not seek better execution services or prices from other broker-dealers or be able to "batch" the client's transactions for execution through other broker-dealers with orders for other accounts managed by Registrant. As a result, client may pay higher commissions or other transaction costs or greater spreads, or receive less favorable net prices, on transactions for the account than would otherwise be the case.

In the event that the client directs Registrant to effect securities transactions for the client's accounts through a specific broker-dealer, the client correspondingly acknowledges that such direction may cause the accounts to incur higher

commissions or transaction costs than the accounts would otherwise incur had the client determined to effect account transactions through alternative clearing arrangements that may be available through Registrant. Higher transaction costs adversely impact account performance. Transactions for directed accounts will generally be executed following the execution of portfolio transactions for non-directed accounts.

- B. To the extent that the Registrant provides investment advisory services to its clients, the transactions for each client account generally will be affected independently, unless the Registrant decides to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. The Registrant may (but is not obligated to) combine or “bunch” such orders to obtain best execution, to negotiate more favorable commission rates or to allocate equitably among the Registrant’s clients differences in prices and commissions or other transaction costs that might have been obtained had such orders been placed independently. Under this procedure, transactions will be averaged as to price and will be allocated among clients in proportion to the purchase and sale orders placed for each client account on any given day. In addition, the Registrant has adopted a trade rotation policy to provide a fair method of trade rotation in placing trades for all “bunched” trades for clients’ accounts. To meet this objective, the Registrant maintains procedures to rotate bunched orders between *Fidelity* and *Pershing*. The Registrant shall not receive any additional compensation or remuneration as a result of order aggregation. Firm shall not receive any additional compensation or remuneration as the result of such aggregation.

### **Item 13          Review of Accounts**

- A. For those clients to whom Registrant provides investment advisory services, account reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis by the Registrant’s Principals. In addition, Registrant contacts investment advisory clients at least annually to review previous services, recommendations and to discuss the impact resulting from any changes in the client’s financial situation and/or investment objectives. All clients are advised that it remains their responsibility to advise the Registrant of any changes in their investment objectives and/or financial situation.
- B. The Registrant may also conduct account reviews on an other than periodic basis upon the occurrence of a triggering event, such as a change in client investment objectives and/or financial situation, market corrections and client request.
- C. Clients are provided with written transaction confirmation notices, and a written summary account statement directly from the custodian, at least quarterly. The Registrant may also provide a written periodic report summarizing account activity and performance.

### **Item 14          Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

- A. Clients and prospective clients should review Item 12.A.1 above for a discussion on the economic benefits that Registrant receives from *Fidelity*, and *Pershing*. Clients and prospective clients should also review Item 10.D for information about parties that the



Registrant may refer clients to and additional compensation that the Registrant may receive from these parties.

- B. The Registrant does not compensate individuals or entities who are not Registrant's supervised persons for prospective client introductions.

## **Item 15           Custody**

Registrant shall have the ability to deduct its advisory fee from the client's custodial account. Clients are provided with written transaction confirmation notices, and a written summary account statement directly from the custodian (i.e., Pershing, Fidelity, etc.) at least quarterly. To the extent that Registrant provides clients with periodic account statements or reports, the client is urged to compare any statement or report provided by Registrant with the account statements received from the account custodian. The account custodian does not verify the accuracy of Registrant's advisory fee calculation.

The Registrant engages in other practices and services on behalf of its clients that require disclosure at ADV Part 1, Item 9. Some of the practices and services subject the affected account(s) to an annual CPA examination in accordance with the requirements of Rule 206(4)-2 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. In addition, certain clients have signed asset transfer authorizations which permit the qualified custodian to rely upon instructions from the Registrant to transfer client funds to "third parties." These arrangements are also reflected at ADV Part 1, Item 9, but in accordance with the guidance provided in the SEC's February 21, 2017 Investment Adviser Association No-Action Letter, the affected accounts are not subjected to an annual surprise CPA examination.

## **Item 16           Investment Discretion**

The client may engage the Registrant to provide investment advisory services on a discretionary basis. Before the Registrant may assume discretionary authority over a client's account, the client is required to execute a *Wrap Fee Agreement*, naming the Registrant as the client's attorney and agent in fact, granting the Registrant full authority to buy, sell, or otherwise effect investment transactions involving the assets in the client's name found in the discretionary account.

Clients who engage the Registrant on a discretionary basis may, at any time, impose restrictions, in writing, on the Registrant's discretionary authority. (i.e. limit the types/amounts of particular securities purchased for their account, exclude the ability to purchase securities with an inverse relationship to the market, limit or proscribe the Registrant's use of margin, etc.).

## **Item 17           Voting Client Securities**

- A. The Registrant does not vote client proxies. Clients maintain exclusive responsibility for: (1) directing the manner in which proxies solicited by issuers of securities owned by the client shall be voted, and (2) making all elections relative to any mergers, acquisitions,

tender offers, bankruptcy proceedings, or other type events pertaining to the client's investment assets.

- B. Clients will receive their proxies or other solicitations directly from their custodian. Clients may contact the Registrant to discuss any questions they may have with a particular solicitation.

## **Item 18      Financial Information**

- A. The Registrant does not solicit fees of more than \$1,200, per client, six months or more in advance.
- B. The Registrant is unaware of any financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair its ability to meet its contractual commitments relating to its discretionary authority over certain client accounts.
- C. The Registrant has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition.

The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Robert Carlyon, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding this Part 2A.