



[overture.org](http://overture.org)

August 1, 2018

The Honorable Paul R. Soglin, Mayor  
City of Madison  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Room 403  
Madison, WI 53703

*-Hand Delivered-*

Dear Mayor Soglin,

On behalf of the Overture Center Foundation (OCF) Board of Directors and staff, I respectfully and formally request an Annual Grant from the City of Madison for Fiscal Year 2019 in the amount of \$2,220,882. This request is made in accordance with the intent of the Structural Agreement between the City of Madison and Overture Center Foundation dated December 31, 2010 that provides for an annual adjustment of the Annual Grant based on the change in the Consumer Price Index methodology in the State's Expenditure Restraint Program ("ERP").

The City's Grant will support diverse programs that engage and provide access for students and adults of our community, that partner with many local community and service organizations, and employ or exhibit a number of Madison area performing and visual artists. For instance, Overture's *OnStage* program continues to provide opportunities for students to experience live professional performances during the school year. A portion of the City Grant allows Overture to fully subsidize the cost of a ticket and school bus transportation to any student or school in Madison Metropolitan School District qualifying for Title 1 funding. Our annual *Rising Stars Talent Search*, now in its fifth season, provides the opportunity for several hundred Madison area performers, representing just about every neighborhood of Madison, to have their first experience with Overture by performing in front of a diverse audience. Another initiative beginning its fifth year is *Club10*, a program offered to individuals and families affiliated with a number of Madison's social service organizations where \$10 tickets for many Overture events, including some Broadway shows, are made available to those who never thought an affordable Overture experience was possible.

Overture Center continues to be the #1 entertainment destination in the State of Wisconsin for attracting visitors to Madison, providing direct financial benefit from audience spending for items such as overnight lodging, meals, souvenirs & gifts, and ground transportation beyond the price of a ticket. Arts and culture tourists spend more and stay longer, according to studies by Americans for the Arts.

Overture continues to be deeply invested in our equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives. That plan includes, among many other goals, the diversification of its workforce, governance and volunteerism, purchasing, education and community engagement programs.

In January, the Overture board approved our 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, and we are currently working on objectives and deliverables that will further our mission of supporting and elevating our community's creative culture, economy and quality of life through the arts. Staff and board are looking forward to the fresh leadership and vision that will come with the hire of Sandra Gajic, who will begin work as Overture's new President & CEO on September 24.

The Overture Center Foundation is extremely grateful to the City of Madison for its financial support and commitment to the success of Overture. We fully appreciate and look forward to our partnership with the City of Madison to continue engaging a greater number of Madisonians at Overture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Betty Harris Custer", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Betty Harris Custer  
Chair, Overture Center Foundation Board

cc: All Alders, Madison Common Council  
All Members, Madison Room Tax Commission  
All Members, Madison Arts Commission