



overturecenter.org

-Hand Delivered-

August 1, 2016

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

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 2017 in the amount of \$2,160,682. 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 a number of diverse programs that engage and provide access for students and adults of our community, that partner with many local community and service organizations, and that employ or exhibit a number of local 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 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*, begun two years ago, provides the opportunity for several hundred Madison area performers who compete in the Capitol Theater for cash prizes and future paid opportunities to perform at Overture. This program provides an opportunity for these performing artists, representing just about every neighborhood of Madison, to perform in front of a very diverse audience, most of whom have their first experience with Overture. Another two-year old initiative is *Club10*, a program only offered to individuals and families affiliated with a number of Madison's social service organizations in which \$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 also continues to take a leadership role in the partnership with the City of Madison and the Metropolitan Madison School District with the local *Any Given Child* initiative that will provide equal access to arts experiences for students grades K-8. We know from studies in other cities that a program like this will contribute to greater educational success of students in the Metropolitan Madison School District.

Overture will also use a portion of this grant to continue funding capital improvements to the building, especially those older portions of the building that were created as part of the Madison Civic Center. This grant cannot be expedited to fund all such improvements called for in the 15-year plan commissioned by the City in 2010, which is why OCF has steadily increased its own annual budget to help make such improvements while still continuing to build its reserve fund from earned revenue to cover extraordinary expenses should it become necessary in the future. For instance, Overture will be funding nearly \$500,000 this summer to replace steam boilers after serving their useful life. In the summer of 2017 we will replace an outdated sound system in Overture Hall at a cost of approximately \$1 million from both the requested City Grant and our own budget to ensure we can continue to attract and host major touring events such as Broadway shows and the Diana Ross concert last Thursday night. These major events attract our largest audiences and they have a positive impact on business in Madison with a direct financial benefit from audience spending in Madison beyond the price of a ticket.

As I have reported for the last two years, Overture continues to implement elements of our *Racial Equity Initiative* adopted by our Board in October 2014. That plan includes, among many other goals, the diversification of its workforce and creating a new managerial position to direct the overall diversity and inclusion plans for employment, governance and volunteerism, purchasing, education and community engagement programs. The makeup of the Overture Board is now 26% persons of color. I'm also happy to report the conclusion of our search the newly implemented Director of Diversity and Inclusion position and expect to publicly announce the result of this search within the next week.

A separate report of Overture's continued success will be provided to you by September 30, 2016 and will include audited financial statements of our past fiscal year ending June 30, 2016. Those financials will show we continue to expand our access to Overture through ticket sales and free/low cost events, and increase the number of individual and corporate donors who allow us to achieve our fundraising goals. These results along with the City Grant make it possible for Overture to produce positive results.

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,



Ted DeDee
President & CEO

cc: All Alders, Madison Common Council
All Members, Madison Arts Commission
All Members, Room Tax Commission
All Board Members, Overture Center Foundation