

# Build to Last

## 2021-23 Strategic Plan



OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

SPRING 2021



# Introduction



In Jim Collins' 1995 business book *Built to Last*, he stated in a world of constant change, the fundamentals are essential. The COVID-19 pandemic leveled the arts and live entertainment industry, shuttering venues and keeping artists and audiences at home in the name of public health for nearly 18 months. Change will remain a constant as our industry recovers.

This period has been filled with significant challenges – lost revenue, social unrest, massive staffing reductions and decreased city funding. However, it has also confirmed the economic, societal and personal value of the arts, which has manifested in increased funding from individuals, foundations, state, and federal sources. Staff innovated to keep the mission active through digital formats and partner relationships – locally, regionally, and nationally – were strengthened through thought-sharing and creative collaborations.

In short, these challenges brought us back to our why:

## **Our Mission**

Overture Center for the Arts supports and elevates the community's creative culture, economy and quality of life through the arts.

## **Our Vision**

Extraordinary experiences for all through the arts.

Overture Center stands at an important crossroads. After reducing staff and expenses by over 70% and the building sitting dormant for more than a year, the organization is beginning to see a timeline to reopening. Health, safety, and security concerns must be addressed for artists, staff, and patrons to return. Investments must be made in our aging center to continue to serve as the "home for the arts" for Overture's programs, resident arts companies, promoters, and local arts. The infrastructure must be rebuilt thoughtfully, including recruiting, hiring, and training employees and intentionally creating an organizational culture to inspire an engaged, curious, and effective workforce. The civil unrest of the past year affirms Overture must continue to elevate equity, diversity and inclusion in our practice and seek to promote the ideals of racial and social justice in our community. Overture must remain a strong financial steward, replenishing reserves while preparing for long-term financial needs.

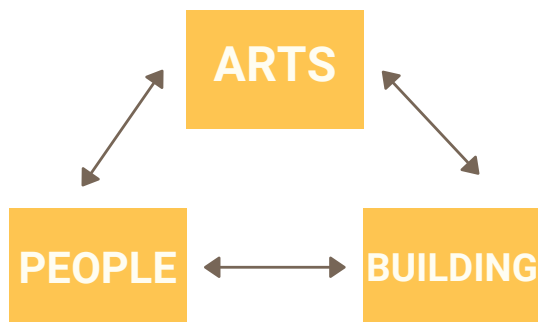
It is a tall order, but we can do it. The arts industry, and our community, will take two to three years to recover from this extended closure, and Overture must resist the urge to return to “business as usual.” This is an opportunity to consciously rebuild Overture by focusing on the internal structures to support our greatest asset – our relationship with the community. Investing in the fundamentals now will lead to measured, intentional growth to achieve long-term sustainability, increased mission impact and an environment that truly provides extraordinary experiences in the arts for all people.

**We seek to build to last.**

## Organizational Pillars

Organizational pillars are our foundation; Overture cannot exist without them. Our pillars of “Arts”, “People” and “Building” reflect why we are here, who we serve and where we do it. Organizational values and strategic priorities may change over time; however, these pillars will remain steadfast, and we will take disciplined action to keep them strong.

**ARTS:** The **Arts are why we exist.** Art is our passion, what we can do better than anyone else and our economic driver. It is the means of our mission, including presenting performances, education and engagement programs, and supporting resident arts companies, local arts, artist development and employment. **The arts are central to all we do.**



**PEOPLE:** **Relationships drive our work.** Patrons, partners, program participants, donors, employees, and volunteers are integral to the artistic process. The arts unite people across humanity, celebrating shared experiences and supporting a compassionate understanding of our differences. People drive our community’s creative culture, benefit economically and experience improved quality of life through the arts. **People are who we serve.**

**BUILDING:** **The building is where our magic happens.** While programs can take place anywhere, what sets us apart is our world-class facility that brings people together to experience and participate in the arts onstage, backstage, front of house, in our galleries and in the audience. **The building is the home for our arts.**



# Values

Our value statements define the heart of Overture – the importance of our work and why Overture is essential:

- **The arts are not a luxury, they are a necessity**
- **A lifelong engagement in the arts creates happier and healthier individuals and communities**
- **As a cultural magnet, we unite people across the spectrum of humanity**

We will live our values throughout the organization, resulting in an active mission that brings our vision into reality.

## Strategic Priorities

This strategic plan focuses on a two-year period to set the course for reopening and recovery. It is intentionally focused on specific tactics and plans to set a new way of doing, a new way of being, as we recommit to our important and necessary role in the community with equity, diversity, and inclusion at our core. This is an opportunity to shed “traditions” – organizationally and culturally - that no longer serve us, to eliminate inequitable systems and build an environment where people of all backgrounds are invited, welcome and engaged in our organization and mission. We will chart a new way of working to support what our organization can do better than anyone else: bringing people together through shared experiences in the arts.

### The Arts: Why we exist

#### *Priority 1: To be arts centered*

When a performing arts organization is art centered, departmental silos are reduced. Activities are prioritized by how they support and elevate the arts, focusing on mission-aligned growth opportunities to reduce mission-creep and overtaxing resources. This attitude focuses our work to be the best in our field in terms of quality, diversity, and relevancy. We will leverage our activities to support long-term patron, donor, and partner loyalty strategies. The arts are why we exist and our first commitment. We will become arts centered through the following objectives:



- **Align programming with organization mission and economic reality**
- **Refresh Overture’s brand to reflect our mission and align with our values**
- **Create new, mission-based revenue stream that fulfills constituency’s desire for commemorative gifts**

## **Building and Infrastructure: Where the magic happens and how it gets done**

The building is central to our mission and our service to the community as “the home of the arts.” We must invest in the short- and long-term care of the building to serve our own programs as well as resident arts companies and local arts groups. We require a strong infrastructure to give our employees, patrons and partners the tools and resources to facilitate a healthy, safe, welcoming environment to achieve extraordinary experiences for all. We will protect our building and build a sound infrastructure by focusing on the following priorities:

### ***Priority 2: Stewarding our Building***

- **Prioritize capital projects and budget for building and systems**

### ***Priority 3: Open for Business***

- **Safely reopen the building to the public**

### ***Priority 4: Financial Stability***

- **Forecast long term financial health**
- **Achieve solvency through earned and contributed revenue**

### ***Priority 5: Technology***

- **Align technology offerings with staff needs and organizational processes**



## People: Strong external relationships begin with strong internal relationships



Exciting, groundbreaking work happens when people feel engaged in something bigger than themselves. Our employees, board members and volunteers are our biggest cheerleaders. An optimistic work environment that welcomes and celebrates diversity, paired with clear values and strategic priorities to align our work, will lead us to new dreams and opportunities. If we are not inspired by our work, how can we expect others to want to join us in our mission? We will create an environment that supports our people by prioritizing:

### *Priority 6: Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*

- Enmesh Equity and Innovation commitments across the organization through education, policy, procedures, and staffing and seek to promote social and racial justice in our community

### *Priority 7: Shared Leadership*

- Ensure Executive Leadership Team is prepared, supported, and accountable
- Align staffing structure with shared leadership principles and practices

### *Priority 8: Healthy Organizational Culture*

- Assure Overture's calendar of activity has full organizational support
- Assure organization is consistent in our business practices
- Live the brand through a vibrant organizational culture

# Strategic Beliefs

Positive change is achieved through clear direction and discipline. A recommitment to our pillars, mission, vision, and values will align our internal stakeholders' daily actions to work towards organizational priorities that are larger than any one person or department, yet dependent on all doing their part. If we are successful in bringing this intentionality to our everyday work, it will be integrated into our culture and the way we interact with others, leading to more meaningful, genuine, and valuable relationships with external stakeholders. Success of this plan will look like:

- **The success of resident companies, local artists, promoters, businesses, and community groups is supported and celebrated.**
- **The facility is considered “state-of-the-art” and meets the needs of the programs presented here and the people who attend them.**
- **Patron and donor loyalty grows in response to outstanding customer experiences.**
- **Audiences are developed through relevant, quality education and engagement programming.**
- **Overture is viewed as inclusive, genuine, and accessible by our diverse community.**
- **Overture’s workforce, board and volunteers reflect the diversity of our community and offers an equitable, creative work environment that reflects our mission, vision, and values.**
- **A broad spectrum of relevant high-quality programming is presented, offering arts experiences for all people throughout their life stages.**

In short, **Overture Center for the Arts will be built to last.**

