

# Strategic Plan for Essex County Community Arts Center

Nov 13, 2008

## 1. Case Statement

### a. Mission

The Essex County Community Arts Center is a meeting place and focus for our vital county and town community. Within a supportive environment, the Center responds to community issues and needs by supplying the resources and opportunities to foster intellectual, artistic and social well-being. Our primary identity as a community-focused organization helps to strengthen our commitment to welcome, serve and make links between the diverse populations of our county. It is committed to principles of accessibility, voluntarism, individual dignity and value, participation, and celebration.

### b. Goals

Through our sponsored or co-sponsored programs we aim to respond to the cultural, social, recreational, emotional needs of the many communities in our county. By providing accessible performance, art, music, dance, and meeting space, the Center creates opportunities for individuals and communities to enjoy the benefits of cultural, educational, and recreational activities. The Center's meeting space is open to everyone in our county who wishes to access it and who adheres to the space use policy.

### c. Target Population

Our priorities include programs to serve:

- Children and Families
- Seniors
- Young Adults/Teens
- Adults and Singles
- People with developmental or other disabilities
- People living on low incomes

### d. Working in Partnership

The Center addresses needs in the community by working in partnership with other service providers and allies in the community. We work with our partners to identify opportunities, identify best organizations to assist in providing programs, create service partnerships where appropriate, and advocate with governments and others to address needs.

Partners include:

TBD

## **2. Current Conditions**

### **a. Facilities**

The county owns the Beale Sanctuary and contiguous offices. They are in good condition with some necessary repairs anticipated to the structure especially with regard to water leakages in the basement and other facilities improvements. Other issues will be identified by the county engineers or qualified assignees.

### **b. Financial condition** (operating budget / reserves)

The county will identify current budget and reserves.

### **c. Staff** (quantity & skills)

Currently there is no staff assigned to the Community Center.

### **d. Services & Policies**

Programming services and operational policies have yet to be established.

## **3. Feasibility / Economic Justification**

### **i. What services? Competition.**

The Center will provide a cultural nexus for the County. As of now there is no significant competition providing community performing arts, visual arts, and music services to the public. It is the hope of the Center that the organization will stimulate interest in the arts, and provide a robust resource for cultural activities.

### **ii. Services for whom?**

Services are targeted to all members of the Essex County community, with special attention to youth patrons, elderly, and adult patrons for whom there are no commensurate cultural opportunities. In addition there will be an emphasis on providing a conduit of cultural resources to the County's schools, thereby encouraging a strong interaction between school age children and the larger arts community.

### **iii. What are the targeted outcomes?**

In the first year of operation the targets will be to renovate the Beall Sanctuary; recruit an Executive Director, recruit and train staff, establish a program of arts classes, produce at least three live plays, and establish venue protocols and provide an ongoing venue for interested community performance and arts groups.

## **4. Operating Model / Service Delivery / Prices**

### **a. Income Generating Strategy**

#### Membership Fees

TBD

#### Space Rentals

TBD

Classes Fees

One of the important missions of the Center is to bring educational opportunities in the arts to the Essex/Tappahannock Community. To that end a robust schedule of Classes is anticipated:

VISUAL ARTS

- Clay/Ceramics
- Decorative Arts
- Fiber
- Glass
- Metal and Jewelry
- Photography
- Sculpture
- Wood
- Writing
- Drawing and Painting Classes
- Printmaking and Book Art Classes
- Digital Images and Design

HOME/HOBBY ARTS

- Furniture Refinishing
- Fly Fishing
- Duck Decoys
- Quilting
- Scrapbooking
- Collage
- Antiques Appreciation

PERFORMING ARTS

- ACTING
- Improvisation
- Comedy
- Drama
- Tragedy

PERFORMING ARTS CRAFTS

- Playwriting/Scripting
- Production Design
- Lighting Design
- Costume Design
- Acting
- Directing

## COMMUNITY THEATER PROGRAMS

Adult Theater/Community  
Young Actors Theatre Program  
Seniors Theatre Program

## MUSIC

Jazz  
Classical  
Bluegrass  
Rock Guitar  
Piano  
Violin  
Mandolin  
Bass  
Choral Arts

## DANCE

Belly Dancing  
Ballroom  
Ballet  
Tap  
Jazz  
Salsa/Rumba/Tango  
Modern  
Exercise  
Yoga

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

Art After School  
Sunrise Arts (Before School)

## ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Performing Arts  
Visual Arts

## Admission to Events

TBD

## Fundraising

Corporate Sponsors  
Individual Sponsors  
Foundation Grants  
Government Grants

TBD

**b. Target Service Quality**

The Center will be highly responsive to consumer needs, and provide fully staffed communications with regard to telephone and email during regular operating hours with immediate response to live queries. The Center will respond to financial and services queries within 4 hours.

Classes and programming services will be provided year-round.

A complete guide to services including all classes, events, and center policies will be published in print and online at least 60 days before the start of each quarter. Interactions with county citizens and patrons will follow best practice guidelines for quality customer service and laws of Essex County.

At all times, consumers, staff and service providers are to be treated with dignity and respect.

**c. Membership Benefit Packages**

Community Membership—TBD

Individual

Yearly  
Benefits:

Quarterly  
Benefits:

Family

Yearly  
Benefits:

Quarterly  
Benefits:

**d. Pricing & Constituent Access Philosophy**

Pricing will be determined by the Executive Director in conjunction with the Controller.

**e. Organizational Structure**

There shall be a Board of Directors who shall provide guidance and oversight of the Executive Director. The structure of the Board is to be determined in accordance with County policies.

The Center will use a flat organizational plan. All staff report directly to the Executive Director.

## *Projected Staff Requirements*

### **Executive and Performing Arts Director**

Theatre Programming and Education

Full time

The Executive and Performing Arts Director will be a dynamic, strategic professional with strong management skills and a talent for building partnerships and funding opportunities.

Broadly experienced in performing arts presenting, production, venue management, and fundraising.

The director will have primary responsibility for programming and managing the 200 seat theatre, all classes, and administrative needs of the Center.

The director of the Arts Center reports to the board of directors, is responsible for an employee staff of six, numerous community volunteers, and is financial manager of a budget of approximately x dollars.

### **Qualifications**

Executive administrative experience in performing arts presenting or production in a public, nonprofit, or commercial context, with demonstrated skills in leadership, strategic planning, fundraising, and communication.

Experience or familiarity with arts presenting in a community or educational environment preferred. An advanced degree in the arts or a related field is preferred.

This position serves as the chief executive for the Essex County Arts Center. The Executive Director provides high quality strategic leadership to the organization and support to the governing Board as well as any committees.

The Executive Director builds community support, liaises with local and state government, directs fundraising and compliance efforts, develops staff and volunteers and leads the organizational direction and strategy.

The successful candidate will be expected to:

- Provide artistic, academic, fiscal, and strategic leadership for the Center
- Articulate and implement an intellectual and artistic vision that integrates well with community needs
- Direct and manage overall operations, including community relations, annual fund, marketing, programming, operations, production and finance,
- Lead a capital campaign to initiate performance venues and program opportunities

- Provide Board support; work with Board leadership, to inform Board decision-making with strong analysis and clear choices, and to ensure regular communication; assess current board strengths and weaknesses, develop and execute strategies for Board improvement.
- Lead in the forging of strong, cooperative community relationships
- Manage the renovation of Essex County Arts Center
- Plan, obtain resources, and execute a performing arts program that will utilize the Beall Sanctuary stage
- Prepare planning timelines and administer scheduled projects, programs and committee activities.
- Manage the membership recruitment, retention, renewal, benefits and processing plan.
- Plan, manage, and produce periodic marketing materials
- Manage e-mail membership newsletters and other promotional mailings done throughout the year.
- Manage and update the Center website
- Strategize, plan and execute a detailed, five-year plan that creates a sustainable and replicable, county-wide, "transformational" arts education initiative.
- Plan and operate a Digital Arts Center: a classroom/learning resource center that provides computer based opportunities for art and music education and recreation.

### **Education and Experience**

- BA/BS in performing arts or related/ Masters degree preferred
- 8 + years working in community center environment or similar. Significant executive director or assistant director experience at a performing arts center

### **Community Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator**

Full time

The volunteer coordinator builds volunteering awareness, engages volunteers to serve the Essex County Arts Center, and builds volunteer capacity by recruiting and training individuals.

**Building Volunteer Awareness:** promote the volunteer activities of the Center to the community through the media and special events. Communicate to Center staff about the role of volunteers, available volunteer resources, and what volunteers are currently doing. Create an atmosphere of collaboration and trust between staff and volunteers as a communication link.

**Engage Volunteers:** target the River area and publicize volunteer opportunities directly to potential volunteers. Communicate to the surrounding community to recruit volunteer resources. Screen volunteers and provide communications to them. Advocate for the volunteers with Center staff. Ensure that volunteers have

appropriate working conditions and materials to do their work.

Build Volunteer Capacity: work with the staff, the county and other agencies to provide training and other volunteer development. Structure on-going support for volunteers that helps them work more effectively with the public. Orient volunteers to the Center building and to current county safety standards.

### **Education and Experience**

- BA/BS in liberal arts or related
- 4 + years working in community center environment or similar

### **Development Director**

Part time

Manage all aspects of the Essex County Community Art Center's fundraising and create new strategies for raising funds to meet the annual operating and capital needs. Strategize, plan, and execute a capital fundraising campaign, including making personal solicitation of funds from corporate and individual donors. Aggressively research and make application for government grants. Provide corporate relations, grant writing, and foundation relations.

- Strong interpersonal, analytical, and organizational skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills and careful attention to detail are required to communicate and interact with donors at all levels, Board members, and other staff daily.
- Responsible for fulfillment of benefits for corporate sponsors and donors, and, where appropriate, foundation grants and gifts from individuals.
- Preparation of fulfillment reports for government and corporate sponsors.
- Assist and provide support in administering the solicitation of corporate support.
- Manage the donor database.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to potential problem situations and maintain standard codes of professionalism and confidentiality regarding donor information.
- Strong computer skills using Microsoft Office, knowledge and experience with fundraising database tools, excellent organizational skills.
- Special Event planning experience is helpful.
- Knowledge of the principles of nonprofit fundraising, particularly with regard to the arts.

### **Education and Experience**

- BA/BS in liberal arts or related

- 2 + years working as a professional fundraiser, grants writing, or similar background

### **Music Programming and Education Coordinator**

part-time

Create and implement educational family and multi-audience music programming. Partner with area schools, music arts organizations and the community to engage the county in a detailed, five-year plan that creates a sustainable and replicable, county-wide, "transformational" music education initiative.

Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Provide center leadership with respect to after-school and pre-school music programs.
- Manage Digital Music Center at Essex County Arts Center; provide digital music education programming.
- Coordinate and respond to independent assessment and stakeholder directed governance.
- Direct the planning and implementation of the key components of the music volunteer program.
- Build meaningful strategic partnerships among diverse school systems.
- Manage timeline and budget requirements to meet program goals and funding expectations.

### **Education and Experience**

- BA/BFA degree in Music or Music Education, or related degree
- 2 + years working as a music teacher or music coordinator

### **Art Programming and Education Coordinator**

part-time

Create and implement educational family and multi-audience visual arts programming. Partner with area schools, arts organizations and the community to engage the county in a detailed, five-year plan that creates a sustainable and replicable, county-wide, "transformational" arts education initiative.

Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Provide center leadership with respect to after-school and pre-school visual arts programs.
- Manage Digital Arts Learning Center at Essex County Arts Center; provide digital arts education programming.

- Coordinate and respond to independent assessment and stakeholder directed governance.
- Direct the planning and implementation of the key components of the art volunteer program.
- Build meaningful strategic partnerships among diverse school systems.
- Manage timeline and budget requirements to meet program goals and funding expectations.

### **Education and Experience**

- BA/BFA degree in Art Education, or Studio Art, or related degree
- 2 + years working as a teacher or arts center coordinator

### **Graphic & Web Designer**

part-time

Provide creative services and strategic input with regard to marketing a multi-arts community center.

### **Qualifications and Skills**

- Mastery of Adobe software: InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Dreamweaver, Acrobat and a high level of skill in MS Office including PowerPoint, Word and Excel all in a Mac OS X environment (CS3); working knowledge of FLASH
- Working knowledge of web design, user interface design and development, file preparation and online requirements
- Advanced understanding of fundamental print design principles and processes, color theory, space and typography
- Consumer marketing experience
- Experience developing new visual identity and guidelines for branding
- Thorough knowledge of various print. prepress, and reproduction processes
- Thorough understanding and experience with file preparation for printing, Pantone and process color, from one to 4+ colors
- Project and process management expertise with excellent project planning and organization skills
- Strong English language and proofreading skills

### **Education and Experience**

- BA/BFA degree in Graphic Design
- 2 + years working as a Graphic Designer, within the design industry either at an in-house creative/marketing communications department or marketing/advertising agency

## **Accountant/Bookkeeper**

part-time

Record and analyze the financial information of the Essex County Community Arts Center. Perform budgeting, performance evaluation, cost management, and asset management. Prepare financial reports for Executive staff, the Board of Directors, creditors, regulatory agencies, and tax authorities.

- Provide budget analysis, cash flow, and source and use forecasts.
- Provide accounts receivable bookkeeping services, accounts payable, and cash management.
- Reconcile financial and bank accounts.
- Ensure that revenues are received and expenditures are made in accordance with laws and regulations.

## **Education and Experience**

- Bachelor's degree in accounting or a related field
- 4+ years working as bookkeeper and/or accountant in a government environment

## **Hiring Schedule**

An executive director will be recruited, hired, and on board by February 1, 2009. This individual will identify and hire additional staff as approved, by May 1, 2009.

## **f. Recruiting Strategy**

The County will use all available means to recruit staff including web and newspaper sources, trade publications and web sites, community networking, and listing opportunities within the Essex County government communications.

## **g. Contracting Strategy (in-house vs. outsourced capacities)**

The Executive Director, in consultation with the Board, will decide the proper ratio of in-house to outsourced capabilities. Much of the Center needs may be provided by existing County resources.

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## **Marketing and PR Plan**

### **a. Advertising/Media Plan**

The Center will engage in a modest advertising plan to announce the opening and popularize available classes. Using local newspapers and tourist targeted tabloids, the advertising will consist of an early opening phase, and a periodic insertion schedule for maintenance, ongoing calendar events, and announcements of performances.

**b. Direct Mail Plan**

The direct mail plan will include quarterly mailings to County residents to announce class availability, scheduled events, and performances.

**c. Patron Development / Customer Service Communications Plan**

The center will produce several patron communications including a series of introductory pamphlets, safety instructions and class announcements as required.

**d. Public Relations Plan**

The Center will engage in an aggressive public relations and media relations plan. As part of the Executive Director’s duties, that individual will spend a significant amount of time in the first year writing press releases, and conducting interviews with news and feature press outlets. The goal will be to obtain press coverage from every available print or media outlet in the River area. Additionally there will be a great deal of community outreach to other community and social organizations.

**d. Website Plan**

A robust website will provide up-to-the-minute information to the public regarding Center offerings, classes and performing arts opportunities.

**d. Technology Infrastructure**

The center will require a complete technology plan. Areas that will need attention include Information Technology for staff, the Physical Plant to include Stage Lighting and Sound, Music rooms, Art rooms, a Digital Arts Center consisting of networked PC’s, telephones, and data ports.

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**Risk Mitigation Plan**

a. Identification of Potential Problems

TBD

i. Market demand shifts

TBD

ii. Fee base (enrollment stability)

TBD

iii. Increased competition

TBD

iv. Increased operating costs (utilities, salaries, replacements)

TBD

**b. Contingency Plans**

i. Pre-opening period  
TBD

ii. Start-up period  
TBD

**7. Implementation Schedule**

a. Pre-opening period  
TBD

i. Design & construction  
TBD

ii. Staff development (recruitment, training & contracting)  
TBD

iii. Systems development & integration (marketing, memberships, service delivery)  
TBD

iv. Program development  
TBD

v. Marketing & public relations  
TBD

b. Start-up period  
TBD

**b. Services & Policies**

TBD

Complete plans for programming will be in place by Apr 15, 2009.

TBD

The Center will become operational on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2009.

**FINANCE & OPERATING**

Detailed Assumptions  
TBD

## 1st Year Pro Forma (Summary Approximation)

### EXPENSES

#### Staff Salaries

Executive Director*	\$70,000	
Community Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator	\$50,000	
Development Director	\$25,000	
Music Programming and Education Coordinator	\$25,000	
Art Programming and Education Coordinator	\$25,000	
Graphic & Web Designer	\$25,000	
Accountant/Bookkeeper	\$22,000	
<b>Subtotal Staff Expenses</b>	<b>\$242,000</b>	
Employee Charges	\$60,500	
<b>TOTAL Staff Expenses</b>		<b>\$302,500</b>

#### Other Administrative Human Resources (County and Outsourced)

Janitorial	\$30,000	
Building Engineer	\$10,000	
		<b>\$40,000</b>

#### Programming Expenses

Human Resources (Contract)	\$50,000	
Supplies	\$50,000	
		<b>\$100,000</b>

#### Building/Physical Plant

Renovation and Furnishings/Theater	\$150,000	
Operating Expenses		
Utilities	\$40,000	
IT Infrastructure	\$20,000	
Marketing and Communications	\$50,000	
		<b>\$260,000</b>

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<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$702,500</b>
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### REVENUES

Venue Rentals		
Theater		12000
Meeting Rooms		12000
Classes Fees		50000
Grants and Gifts		100000
County Contribution		528500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$702,500</b>

\*Salary Source:  
SalaryExpert.com (Wall Street Journal)

“The Community Center Director/U.S. National Average now earns an average annual salary of \$84,967. Half of those in this position would earn between \$57,081 and \$112,904 (the 17th and 67th percentiles). These numbers are derived from area-specific government survey data.”

[http://www.salaryexpert.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Free\\_Salary\\_NA.Report&Co brandID=95&job=17500&area=700000&zip=&x=26&y=16&JobAvailabilitySourceVar=42](http://www.salaryexpert.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Free_Salary_NA.Report&Co brandID=95&job=17500&area=700000&zip=&x=26&y=16&JobAvailabilitySourceVar=42)

### **Links of interest**

Community Center Performing Arts

[http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/arts\\_center.shtml](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/arts_center.shtml)

<http://www.childrenstageadventures.org/>

Facilities Rental

<http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/facilities.shtml>

### **Other Resources**

*ART-RELATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN SMALL ART TOWNS:  
Impacts on Downtown Economic Revitalization*

Small towns and cities with modest populations are facing their own downtown revitalization dilemmas. With mountains of good intentions, civic leaders from Quincy, IL to Moscow, ID are grappling with the same beasts that their big-city peers are confronting: the underutilization, deterioration and even destruction of the downtown architectural legacies handed down to today's leaders by community founding fathers.

<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/conference/PresentationArchive/jvillani.htm>

*ACHIEVING AGILITY:*

*Adaptive Capacity in Ontario's Small Town Performing Arts Facilities*

Discusses the ability of an organization to respond to its environment and evolve over time. This type of adaptation requires organizations to allocate resources towards more effective and efficient delivery of current services, as well as towards the exploration and development of new services and delivery methods. Focuses on clarifying the key components of adaptive capacity for small town and rural performing arts facilities.

<http://www.artsadministration.org/node/995>