

# **BUSINESS PLAN**

## **Recreation Facilities – Bloomington Center for the Arts**

### **COMMUNITY VISION**

Our vision is the ongoing building and renewal of Bloomington as a vital community, whose strength is its diversity – 90,000 to 100,000 residents with 120,000 to 130,000 jobs situated in a robust metropolitan region.

### **ORGANIZATION MISSION**

Our mission is to be a positive, professional, productive, learning organization building community and its renewal by providing quality services at an affordable price.

### **FUND MISSION STATEMENT**

Our objective is to provide a variety of high quality arts and cultural experiences for participants and patrons at a reasonable price.

### **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

1. To be recognized as the premier community arts venue in the south metro area.
2. To be a desired destination for local performers, artists and arts organizations.
3. To serve an audience of at least 50,000 people in the Schneider and Black Box Theaters in 2010.
4. To provide a clean, safe, comfortable and professional caliber arts facility for the community.
5. To balance the goal of operating the Bloomington Center for the Arts (BCA) as a business with the goal of providing convenient, affordable arts experiences for the community.
6. To assist BFAC organizations to become among the highest caliber organizations of their kind in the suburban Twin Cities.
7. To maintain affordable fees for Bloomington Fine Arts Council (BFAC) groups to use the facility.
8. To operate the BCA in a cost-effective and fiscally sustainable way.
9. To support the BCA's expenditures with its own revenue stream.
10. To nurture community interest in the visual and performing arts.
11. To have residents value the BCA as an important community asset.
12. To operate as a community gathering place.
13. To maintain and enhance the aesthetics of the facility.
14. To stay current with theatrical and visual arts industry trends.

### **LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY MISSION**

This plan supports the Imagine Bloomington 2025 Strategic Plan of Preserving and, where appropriate, actively enhancing:

1. Our City controlled infrastructure.
2. The solid community core and sense of community.

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3. Our City services (and facilities).
4. Our neighborhoods' vitality and their upkeep.

## PROGRAM SPECIFICS

### Operate and Maintain Infrastructure:

**Goal:** Maximize the use of the BCA for arts activities.

**Objective 1:** Maintain the current level of BCA use throughout the school year.

#### Specific Initiatives and Challenges:

- BCA is experiencing strong competition from the City of Burnsville's new performing arts facility in addition to ongoing competition from the Edina Art Center, Community Education, etc.
- Bloomington Art Center (BAC) studio arts classes are being strategically redesigned to better provide the types of classes desired by the community.
- Changes in technology have nearly eliminated demand for non-digital photography classes. The studio is, however, frequently used as a dressing room for the BB Theater when the main dressing rooms are tied up in conjunction with concurrent Schneider Theater activities.
- Implement multi-year contracts with the BFAC groups to improve their ability to do long range planning.
- Keep BCA rental rates viable/affordable for non-profit groups.

**Objective 2:** Address the lower demand for the Schneider and Black Box theaters in the summer months.

#### Specific Initiatives and Challenges:

- Theater usage on summer weekends is weaker than during the school year due to free concerts in the parks and a myriad other outdoor activities.
- Loud air conditioning noise in the Schneider Theater hampers usage during the summer months.
- Produce an outdoor musical in the Civic Plaza amphitheater in collaboration with the BCT. The first show is tentatively planned for summer 2010.
- Consider producing a summer stock, children's theater, or similar theater piece.

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**Objective 3:** Find other potential customers for unused theater and classroom time.

**Specific Initiatives and Challenges:**

- Increase BCA studio/classroom usage during the school year by raising the caliber of classes and offering classes that are in demand with residents.
- Consider operating Parks & Recreation activities in studios/classrooms.
- Solicit activities from the Fringe Festival, Gilbert and Sullivan Light Opera, etc.

**Goal:** Keep the BCA in excellent condition to attract customers.

**Objective 1:** Continue to maintain the interior of the BCA.

**Specific Initiatives and Challenges:**

- Replace the Rehearsal Hall floor with a more durable floor that is still conducive to music and theater rehearsals. (See attached list of capital projects.)
- Create a long-range plan for capital improvements at the BCA through 2020.
- Mitigate the HVAC noise and sound from the Dance Studio that travels through the vents into the Rehearsal Hall.
- Mitigate the HVAC noise in the Children's, Drawing and Craft Studios. (estimated cost \$5,000 per studio)
- Mitigate air conditioner noise in the Schneider Theater which affects activities May - September. (Some work has been one on this, but additional steps need to be taken. See attached list of capital projects.)

**Objective 2:** Maintain and enhance the exterior of the building and grounds.

**Specific Initiatives and Challenges:**

- Add amenities to the Civic Plaza grounds such as public art, benches, a fountain, more electricity, etc. (A fountain and electricity were added in summer of 2009.)

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## Manage resources:

**Goal:** Improve the cash flow of the BCA.

**Objective 1:** Address the facility's ongoing fiscal losses.

### Specific Initiatives and Challenges:

- Finish repaying the BCA bonds by 2021.
- Increase the number of City sponsored performances in the Schneider and Black Box Theaters.  
(2007 – 7, 2008 – 8, 2009 – 9, 2010 – 10)
- Consider scheduling Parks & Recreation programs in the art studios.
- Consider cross charges to other departments and divisions (i.e. Police, Human Resources, Human Services, Public Health, etc.) for their use of BCA facilities.
- Increase General Fund tax support for the BCA.

**Goal:** Employ high-quality, knowledgeable staff focused on excellent customer service.

**Objective 1:** Ensure that staff is current with trends and innovations in theater and facility management and maintenance.

### Specific Initiatives and Challenges:

- Attend continuing education programs to remain current on industry trends and innovations in facility programming, maintenance and administration.

**Objective 2:** Provide high-quality customer service.

### Specific Initiatives and Challenges:

- Transfer Information Desk staffing from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on weekdays to Community Services and the BCA to offer enhanced and consistent, concierge style customer service.
- Hire a F/T Cultural Arts Recreation Coordinator (replacing P/T facility coordinator) to be the “Director of First Impressions” supervising Information Desk staff, improving continuity of services for rental customers, ensuring total supervision of activities at transitional times and helping to accommodate increased programming in BCA classrooms.
- Cross-train staff in the facility's various functions.
- Attend customer service training seminars as appropriate.

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**Objective 3:** Establish fees that will offset expenses while remaining viable for non-profit arts groups.

**Specific Initiatives and Challenges:**

- Price competition with nearby arts centers, school facilities and theaters will continue to be a challenge in the years to come.
- Community need for inexpensive meeting space.
- Increase fees as identified in the fee schedule.

**Objective 4:** Explore other sources of funding.

**Specific Initiatives and Challenges:**

- Consider redirecting revenue from the vending machines outside the Rehearsal Hall from the EAC to the BCA.
- Consider allowing the BFAC/BCT to get a liquor license and assign a facility fee for the service.