

Objective #1:

Help **visual artists** (professional and emerging) submit, exhibit and sell their art

Strategy: Provide opportunities and increase exposure for PROFESSIONAL artists who would like to exhibit artwork in juried or curated shows

- Continue to inspire artists to submit works by offering a variety of creatively-themed gallery shows
- Increase online exposure/awareness through social media platforms (see Objective #8)

Strategy: Identify the needs of EMERGING artists

- Survey artists to find out about their educational/class interests (mentorship; how to enter a show or approach a gallery, etc.)
 - Analyze survey results and then investigate opportunities that align with findings
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Objective #2:

Help **musicians** (professional, emerging and local) perform and sell their music

Strategy: Provide opportunities and increase exposure for PROFESSIONAL musicians

- Invite musicians to play at our performance venues—
Showboat Sizzlin' Summer Concerts, house concerts, Fallasburg Arts Festival, CD release concerts
- Increase online exposure/awareness of all events through social media platforms (see Objective #8)
- Research bringing in nationally-recognized musicians—explore possible supporting partnerships

Strategy: Provide opportunities and increase exposure for EMERGING AND LOCAL musicians

- Offer places for musicians to perform at and/or open for:
 - the Showboat Sizzlin' Summer Concerts on Thursday nights
 - house concerts
 - Add additional summer concerts at the showboat stage for LOCAL musicians, not on Thursdays
 - Invite musicians to play during the Holiday Artists Market in the front gallery area
 - Offer more summer LowellArts house concerts that feature EMERGING musicians:
 - utilize RyneShyne Club and WRWW Radio at Lowell High School to identify musicians to perform
 - encourage multiple acts to perform at each show to bring in a variety of audience members
 - Offer a song-writer workshop
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Objective #3:

Support **theater artists**

Strategy: Provide performance opportunities for local and emerging theater actors, directors, stage managers, producers, set designers, costume designers and technicians

- Offer acting and directing workshops
- Solicit new directors
- Intentionally cast new actors when possible
- Reach out and collaborate with the Lowell Middle and High School drama departments to audition for LowellArts plays
- Perform "sneak peeks" of upcoming theater productions at the Fallasburg Arts Festival, concerts and chamber events
- Reach out to other community theaters
 - consider attending other Playwright Festival productions, and bring to Lowell
- Debrief after each production for continual growth/evolution

Strategy: Explore different types of plays and genres

- Seek out popular/unknown/challenging plays
- Create appeal for a variety of different age groups

Objective #4:

Support **creative writers and film artists**

Strategy: Provide a space for groups of writers to meet, collaborate and perform

- Consider adding a program committee for spoken-word performances (poetry slams, storytelling events, etc.)

Strategy: Show films by emerging film artists in the gallery

- Consider adding a program committee for film

Objective #5:

Ensure the organization's **sustainability/stability/growth**

Strategy: Maintain a system of rules, practices and processes (organizational governance)

- Create Board of Directors' job descriptions and training opportunities
- Define staffing/contract labor/volunteer needs
 - budget for personnel needs with increase in programs and events
 - develop volunteer training standards
- Review and evolve membership drive needs
 - develop an easier way to remind members when their membership is expired
 - plan strategies to bring back "drop out" members
 - create a process for converting Moving to Main campaign donors to LowellArts members
 - evaluate whether all arts committee members should be LowellArts members
- Engage fund development committee
 - create year-end annual campaign for a second gift from LowellArts members
 - develop Planned Giving program
 - grow the existing endowment fund
- Improve Board of Directors fundraising engagement
 - utilize personal networks
 - "talk up" LowellArts when meeting people; introduce friends to LowellArts
 - attend annual fundraising events
- Grow Building Fund for upcoming building repairs and upgrades
 - note that a percentage of all programming budgets goes to the building fund
- Increase sponsorships for programs and events
 - evaluate what the businesses "receive" from their sponsorship
- Establish facility rental rules/needs
 - create rental agreement
 - include a security/risk management plan
 - utilize volunteers for hosting/supervising at rental events
 - add a bathroom upstairs for use when there are second floor theater rehearsals, artist residencies and rentals in order to limit access to the gallery during off-hours

Objective #6:

Connect with the Lowell business community

Strategy: Improve community relations and increase financial support from businesses

- Develop an annual sponsorship program for local businesses/corporations
 - demonstrate the value that LowellArts brings to the community
 - create bi-yearly or quarterly calendar with schedule of events
 - have an open house at LowellArts (after business hours) for businesses to hear about sponsorship opportunities
- Create a corporate membership program and showcase on website
 - provide cost/benefit analysis (What additional benefits can businesses receive?)
 - recognize businesses in our communications
 - offer supporting businesses use of LowellArts for a private party
 - highlight business employee participation in the arts community
 - offer free tickets to employees for local events
- Network with members of the Chamber of Commerce downtown merchants group
 - expand partnerships with these merchants for more downtown events (Girls' Night Out, Chocolate Stroll, Art Hop, etc.)
 - offer artist demonstrations and sales opportunities during these events
- Connect with local economic leaders
 - explain economic impact that LowellArts has on the community
 - explain the value of the arts for community residents
 - demonstrate how the arts helps to retain talent in our community

Objective #7:

Increase audience engagement with LowellArts programming

Strategy: Engage youth with the arts

- Create artist mentorship program for special needs youth and seniors
 - partner with Gilda's Club and Lowell Senior Neighbors
 - invite senior living residents to come in for tours
 - work with Lowell area schools to identify youth with special needs
 - learn how to identify, evaluate and screen mentorship instructors
- Partner with Flat River Outreach Ministries' summer "lunch buddies" program to bring art program to youth during these non-school months
- Identify classes offered by skilled art instructors
 - partner with Lowell Area Schools to identify which classes to offer and provide extension opportunities after school and during the summer at LowellArts
- Offer studio open houses for teen youth
- Offer preschool art program

Strategy: Provide interpretive materials for gallery exhibitions

- Train staff and volunteers to engage visitors at these exhibitions

Strategy: Offer classes that are related to the current art exhibition

- Utilize exhibiting artists who are instructors to teach these classes
- Offer resident artist program on second floor for artists to do demonstrations and classes

Strategy: Explore Public Art Projects

- Partner with the City of Lowell for an annual rotating public art program utilizing the Midwest Sculpture Initiative
- Research what other communities have done

Objective #8:

Increase the awareness and visibility of LowellArts in Lowell and surrounding areas to reach a broader audience (marketing)

Strategy: Expand our use of social media

- Engage with these platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (expand to more platforms as the world changes and our capabilities improve)
- Develop a consistent brand voice for social media
- Develop a process/schedule/rules for getting messaging out on all platforms
- Hold social media training/create social-media-user manual
- Create promotional YouTube videos
- Take more event photos

Strategy: More clearly define our target cities/communities

- Identify those surrounding cities that have “arts gaps”
- Keep track of LowellArts patrons/visitors

Strategy: Apply more creative elements to the front of our building so that from the street, people are drawn in

- Interior window displays for events/shows
- Exterior window graphics for events/shows
- Event signage
- Consider signage or mural on the west side of the brick building
- Utilize upstairs windows
- Install outside lights to turn on when LowellArts has events
- Keep messaging welcoming, inviting... for everyone

Strategy: Make sure volunteers are equipped with basic information about LowellArts when interacting with the public

- Design business-sized cards to keep with them to hand out (Board members, other volunteers)
- Update trifold brochures as needed

Strategy: Cultivate and keep the interest of exhibiting artists

- Define specific ways of engaging this audience
- Request that exhibiting artists become members, promote LowellArts events, and become more involved with our active group of volunteers

Strategy: Increase awareness of our “fun” factor

- Ask volunteers and Board of Directors to meet-and-greet visitors and guests at events
- Create “welcome-to-LowellArts” speaking/interacting guidelines for volunteers
- Gather testimonials
- Encourage more social media engagement

Strategy: Keep all communications updated regularly

- Prioritize and figure out scheduling and content of all communications:
 - Website
 - Email
 - Press releases
 - Newsletter
 - Media calendar listings
 - Program posters
 - Ads
 - Social media (see section above)
- Develop processes/timelines/rules/guidelines for writing consistent content for each program area
- Create Google Calendar for ease of updating content for all users

Strategy: Increase our exposure at the Fallasburg Arts Festival

- Create awareness of our social media presence at Fallasburg so that our audience can share and post event happenings
- Research the possibility of producing a giveaway item (tote bags, pins, etc.)
- Advertise the Fallasburg Arts Festival at the Showboat Sizzlin’ Summer Concerts

Strategy: Recognize our donors

- List all Moving to Main campaign donors together on one large, new sign
- List donors on website

Strategy: Brainstorm more ways to get our name out there

- Put our brochures in Michigan tourist information racks
- Investigate if we should put our brochures or a handout in any of the West Michigan hotels
- Investigate how realtors distribute welcome packet information
- Do a yearly mailing to all Lowell residents

Strategy: Gather visual assets at every opportunity

- Investigate the need for new media equipment
- Develop photo/video library system for easy accessibility