



2020-2023

STRATEGIC PLAN

A photograph of children practicing calligraphy in a classroom. In the foreground, a young boy and a young girl are focused on writing Chinese characters on white paper with brushes and ink. The boy is on the left, and the girl is in the center. They are wearing jackets. In the background, other children and an adult are visible, also engaged in the activity. The scene is brightly lit and has a warm, educational atmosphere.

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I INTRODUCTION



A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oakland Asian Cultural Center (OACC), in the heart of Oakland's Chinatown, is dedicated to building a stronger, more vibrant Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) community. Our diverse public programs and cultural workshops celebrate APIA heritage and strengthen cross-cultural and intergenerational communications.

In the past few years, OACC has achieved greater financial stability, with a 50% growth in revenue and an expanded staff that reflects the diversity of Oakland and the APIA community. Based on this, OACC was ready to develop a strategic plan to stabilize operations and finances further while exploring how to better serve the dramatically changing demographics in the City of Oakland and the East Bay Asian community. With support from the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, OACC began a strategic planning process in early 2020 with consultant and facilitator Miriam Abrams.

Some key issues we identified early in the planning process included:

- What are the programmatic priorities for OACC in the next three years, and how can we solidify our position as a credible reference point for APIA issues?
- How can we broaden our support base to maximize potential earned income and contributed income?
- What facility repair and upgrade needs are necessary to serve our audience better and increase revenue potential, and how can we best leverage our relationship with the City of Oakland to achieve these capital improvements?
- How can we refine OACC's organizational identity and culture?

In March 2020, the Shelter-in-Place measure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic caused a full closure of OACC's facility, leading to a complete suspension of on-site programs for the foreseeable future. The closing of our space has placed a significant strain on our financial resources, most notably by suspending our facility rental programs, which make up 42% of our revenue, and forcing the cancellation of special events that directly engage our donors.

Fortunately, we held the strategic planning stakeholder interviews, meetings, and organizational retreat where the strategic directions were drafted just before Shelter-in-Place was implemented. As we pivoted to online programs and social media engagements to meet COVID-19 pandemic challenges, we prepared the strategic plan based on feedback gathered from our community that helped inform our decisions in this drastically changed landscape.

As we further investigated our core values and contributions to our diverse communities during this time of uncertainty, we identified OACC's Strategic Edge: OACC has created a key space—physically, as a community hub, and now virtually, as we shifted to provide

support and programming online—for safe conversations on APIA issues related to social justice, immigration, and anti-racism. We represent artistic expressions of diverse Asian heritages and the creative community. Our Strategic Edge, that is, OACC as a safe community hub for our APIA communities, very succinctly reflects our organization, to the core -- what we are passionate about, our unique qualifications, how we meet the needs of our communities through our programming and diverse services, and as a financial resource (as a popular venue that other organizations rent, which has become one of our primary earned revenue sources).



During the nine months of planning (December 2019 through August 2020), OACC's Strategic Planning Committee, made up of seven board members and three core staff members, addressed several key issues, including earned revenue and contributed income strategies; deepening and expansion of programming; and the stewardship of our relationship with the City of Oakland. Through these layered conversations, the OACC Strategic Planning Committee articulated three overarching goals for the next three years (2020-2023).

USAGE OF SPACE: Adapt OACC's physical space, as well as revise its usage guidelines and policies to accommodate events and mitigate existing risks related to COVID-19 safely.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: Cultivate and deepen relationships with community stakeholders to broaden OACC's support base for creating programs, generating revenue, and becoming an influential presence in the City of Oakland ecosystem. We will build new and strengthen existing partnerships with APIA businesses, creative community, civic and social justice groups, and cross-cultural arts and social justice organizations in the Bay Area and Oakland specifically.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS: Conduct a facility-wide upgrade to refurbish the physical space and modernize technological capabilities, positioning OACC as a competitive, flexible, rental, and community program space.

We will focus programming on identified priority issue-areas as follows:

- Immigration & Refugee Issues
- Gender/Women/LGBTQ Issues
- Gentrification & the Role of Art
- APIA Cultural Heritage
- Cross-racial, Inter-generational Conversation & Dialogue
- Anti-Blackness, Anti-Asian Biases & Xenophobia
- The Intersectionality of All the Above

To accomplish our objectives, we need to invest in human resources to ensure staff expansion and retention.

I INTRODUCTION B. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS



OACC provides dynamic, affordable, unique, and easily accessible programming that embodies our APIA community's diversity. This includes multi-ethnic and multidisciplinary art and cultural performances, workshops, festivals, school tours, classes, and exhibitions. Each year, our programming engages a diverse audience of more than 25,000 attendees. OACC promotes local artists and their cultural art forms and fosters inter-generational and cross-cultural dialogue and understanding, community collaboration, and social impact vis-à-vis three pillars of programming: (1) Cultural identity, festival, and special events; (2) Performing and visual arts; and (3) Social justice and community.

INTRODUCTION C. HISTORY



In 1984, Oakland community leader Reverend Frank Mar of the Chinese Methodist Church conceived of the Oakland Asian Cultural Center (OACC). Forming a coalition of volunteers and artists, he proposed a pan-Asian cultural center to affirm the Chinese, Filipino, and Japanese cultures that had flourished in the Oakland Chinatown area. Since opening its facility in 1996 in the heart of Oakland's Chinatown district, OACC has thrived as the only pan-Asian community arts organization in the East Bay that builds inclusive and culturally diverse communities.

I

CORE VALUES

We're Here

We're Queer

We're Muslim

We're Arab

We're Iranian

We're Black

We're Brown

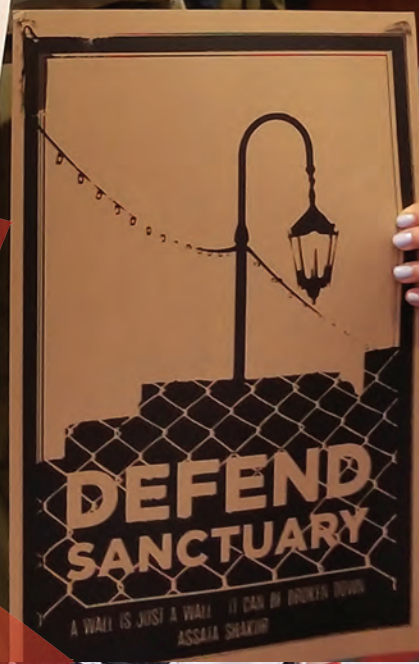
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II CORE VALUES

MISSION

OACC builds vibrant communities through Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) arts and culture programs that foster inter-generational and cross-cultural dialogue, cultural identity, collaborations, and social justice.

STRATEGIC EDGE

OACC is an intergenerational community hub and anchor, supporting the creative community, social justice, and APIA Issues. We provide a vital communal space and cultural, artistic programming that expresses our APIA communities' rich diversity.

VISION

OACC envisions vibrant, healthy, and just communities where diverse APIA identities and heritages are affirmed and celebrated through cross-cultural exchange, intergenerational dialogue, and educational programming.

III KEY GOALS & STRATEGIES

PROGRAMMING
EARNED INCOME
DEVELOPMENT
MARKETING
STAFFING
CITY RELATIONSHIP



III PROGRAMMING

OACC hosts arts and cultural programs addressing key issues and topics of concern to our local APIA communities in its centrally located space. However, while literary discussions, cultural classes, and creative exhibitions have been the mainstays of OACC programming, the strategic planning discussions revealed a relative lack of performing arts programming and the need for a more intentional focus on social justice. OACC's strategic planning seeks to prioritize closing these programmatic gaps. In addition to addressing these core priorities, the impact of COVID-19 on OACC's youth outreach programs, particularly the school tour program, has also brought to light the importance of developing online educational content to continue serving young audiences that typically participate in our on-site school tour program. OACC staff will continue to monitor and adapt to external factors like the pandemic while making progress towards the goal, strategies, and outcomes.

Goal: By 2023, OACC produces and presents bold, consistent, thought-provoking, creative works by contemporary artists to advance equity and social actions in crucial issue areas.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify and engage in at least 4-6 partnerships on sustained program collaborations, including relevant off-site public arts & cultural projects
- Consistently publish virtual content on existing online platforms starting with YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram and integrate physical performances/activities with virtual ones
- Explore feasibility of hosting blockbuster, headliner artist(s) to boost revenue and/or OACC visibility
- Create virtual school tour resources while being mindful of the digital gap of target audiences
- Improve audience and community data collection to better inform future program planning

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- At least one nationally acclaimed artist/group performs during Year 3, drawing at least 200+ on-site viewers per event* and/or 300+ off-site views per recording (*depending on COVID event restrictions)
- Audience numbers including virtual attendees return to pre- FY20-21 levels by Year 3
- At least 4-6 partners have been involved for 3+ years with OACC programs addressing priority issue-areas listed at the end of the Introduction section (pg. 3)
- Event data collection processes have been established and produce a baseline to evaluate future programming
- A virtual school tour educational content collection with at least one resource designed for each grade (K-12)

III EARNED INCOME

Historically, earned income supported nearly half of OACC's income; this was accomplished primarily through long-term and short-term rental opportunities. However, OACC faced growing challenges to increase clientele due to limited staff capacity steadily. To address this capacity issue, in 2016, OACC hired a dedicated Facilities and Rentals Manager, which helped steadily grow this revenue stream. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, OACC was on track to exceed its FY 19-20 budget for rental income by initiating new marketing strategies, such as hosting a "Fusion Wedding" Event Expo with local vendors. However, the Shelter-in-Place mandate unexpectedly shut our doors and significantly decreased this revenue stream.

As a silver-lining to the pandemic cloud, this "lull" period is being used to modernize and improve our facilities and explore new marketing strategies to attract clients. Our long-term goal is to increase our earned income each year. Also, during the first two years of the strategic plan, OACC will focus on recruiting and retaining long-term rentals until the facility can safely re-open to properly host and accept short-term rental opportunities such as meeting conferences and weddings.

Goal: OACC increases earned income by 6-8% annually.

STRATEGIES:

- Modernize all conference rooms with the latest technology (e.g., green room/studio)
- Recruit 4-6 additional preferred vendors and event planners as partners to help word-of-mouth marketing
- Develop sources of earned revenue that are not dependent on rentals
- Present virtual and on-site wedding/event expo
- Initiate 2-3 new kinds of rental opportunities
- Utilize outdoor space or consider overflow space

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Phase 1 and 2 of capital improvements are initiated and continued throughout year 1-3.
 - Priority capital repairs (Phase 1) by year 1
 - Phase 2 capital repairs in year 2
 - Assess the need of a capital campaign for Phase 3 improvement in years 2-3
- Four additional rental clients
- Four additional vendor relations
- Two new rental opportunities such as expanding space at OACC through outdoor usage and partnerships to offer alternative space capacity
- Earned income from non-rental sources
- 5% growth in client list from Year 2 to Year 3

III DEVELOPMENT

Since its founding, the nature of OACC's operations has varied, with large staff turn-over every three to five years. As a result, due to staffing gaps and lack of institutional knowledge among staff, OACC did not have a robust, diverse portfolio of contributed income sources; on average, individual contributions only made up 2-4% of annual income.

OACC now has a more substantial staffing infrastructure. In the next three years, we will expand and diversify OACC's sources of contributed income, with a specific focus on growing a successful annual giving program (e.g., individual donors). We will achieve this by increasing the Development Department.

Goal: OACC maintains a steady 5-10% annual growth from contributed income in the next three years.

STRATEGIES:

- Research, develop, and solicit a prospect list of major donors, foundations and government grants, and corporation sponsors
- Produce special fundraising and donor cultivation events
- Host corporate networking event
- Expand and deepen a donor-segmented program, which will also lead to the development of a planned giving and/or monthly giving program
- Research and determine the feasibility of a capital campaign
- Grow our Development Team from a 1 to 1.5-2.5 staff department

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Net 5-10% annual increase of contributed income
- Net 2.5% annual growth of total donors/sponsors
- 25-45% retention rate of donors over three years

III MARKETING

OACC refreshed its logo and the website in 2019. We are in an ideal place to reposition our brand and increase our brand awareness through strengthened, multi-prong social media engagements, and systematic outreach efforts. We will reach out to our communities (and new communities) by streamlining systems in which OACC's programming, events, and services are effectively promoted and communicated. We hope, in turn, will increase and expand our reach and partnerships.

Goal: OACC develops a standardized PR/Marketing guideline to promote public programs and rental programs. OACC will also build a Standard Operating Procedure for the marketing process, schedule for social media posting, and program promotion.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop the strategic edge message for OACC's target audience
- Develop and finalize Creative Briefs and marketing methodology
- Develop flexible tools to be able to adapt marketing needs to programs and rental program on various platforms
- Create a series of short videos for online platforms
- Find resources to fund more marketing activity, including dedicated staff managing marketing, communication, and social media

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Adaptable set of program collateral and rental brochures in various formats and contents (multimedia marketing suite)
- Social Media engagement increases by 100% from Year 1
- The advertising budget increases by 25% from Year 1

III STAFFING

OACC has expanded its staffing to 6 FTE from 1 full-time and several part-time staff and volunteer interns in 2016. The current OACC staff, including the Executive Director, is relatively new, and reflects Oakland's/Bay Area's diversity. People of African American, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Laotian and Vietnamese heritage make up the OACC staff.

We recognize the need to offer compensation and benefits that align with those offered by non-profits of comparable size and reflect OACC's commitment to our staff and grow activities and community engagement efforts to enhance staff professionalism and retain highly qualified staff members.

Goal: OACC attracts and retains high-quality staff members, expands our departments, and refines our organizational culture to embody diversity, equity, and belonging (DEB).

STRATEGIES:

- Build Development, Program, Rental Department, PR/Marketing teams (add F/T Program Assistant, P/T Development Associate, Facilities & Rentals Assistant, PR/Communication Associate)
- Increase salaries of department heads (reclassified as Directors) and other staff
- Increase staff benefits, provide 403(b) company matches, and provide commute and professional development stipends. Provide on-going anti-racism and other anti-oppression staff training

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Expand staffing to 10 FTE from 6 FTE
- Hire Directors for Program, Development, Rental departments
- Staff compensation increased by 10% from Year 1, and staff compensation increases align with COLA increases each year

III CITY RELATIONSHIP

The OACC facility is owned by the City of Oakland and managed by OACC under a long-term Management Agreement signed in 2003 that guarantees OACC's activities, including facility rental programs and APIA cultural programming. However, the current agreement lacks clarity on responsibility for improvements, upgrades, repairs, and maintenance beyond normal wear and tear. It is also premised upon OACC operating fundamentally as a commercial property manager, with little recognition of OACC's essential contribution to Oakland's civic life as an anchor for the celebration of APIA heritage in the East Bay.

In 2016, OACC had to petition the City to address the need for crucial facility upgrades and repairs. While City funds were committed, no disbursement process has been set up yet, so OACC has never received these City dollars. Simultaneously, the City and OACC recognize that many of the terms in the Management Agreement are obsolete and need revision to reflect today's circumstances. We are committed to working with the City to re-draft terms to enable OACC to flourish and benefit the public, both as a community-focused facility and as a mission-driven organization.

Goal: OACC is recognized as an integral part of the City with a fixed allocation in the City of Oakland budget that supports facility operations, maintenance, repairs, and upgrades.

STRATEGIES:

- Sign a new management agreement with the City in Year 1
- Build relationships with and advocate through City Councilmembers' and City Administrator's office
- Create community partnerships that build support for OACC with City and invite partners beyond the API community (including cross-city and cross-cultural collaborations)
- Include community members who have strong relationships with City leadership within OACC's structure as Board and Advisory Board members

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- OACC's facility improvements expenses is a City budget line item
- Visit Oakland markets OACC as a Culture Keeper
- Start priority capital repairs (Phase 1) by year 1 with the City funds and continue Phase 2 of capital improvements through Year 3

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Wendy Lin, Front Desk Receptionist
Sohkham Senthavilay, Custodian

** Strategic Planning Steering Committee members*



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Photos courtesy of Stan-the-Rocker and OACC.