



# SIMI VALLEY CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

2021-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN



*Photo Courtesy of Jon Neftali*

## SIMI VALLEY CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

2021-2025 Strategic Plan

### COMPLETED BY

The Simi Valley Arts Commission, City of Simi Valley Staff,  
and Community Members

## ***General Manager's Forward***

As we start the slow recovery process from the forced shutdown of the COVID-19 pandemic, I believe that for the next several years the Arts are headed for a period of Renaissance. Change is coming for the Arts worldwide – things cannot go back to the old normal, instead, a new normal will emerge that takes into account not only safety protocols but incorporates the new technologies in streaming and virtual event production that the Arts community was forced to embrace to survive the “extended intermission”.

As the General Manager of the Cultural Arts Center, I embrace these changes wholeheartedly. Having been a member of the management staff of the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center since opening our doors in 1995, I have been privileged to actively participate in the birth, nurturing and growth of our beautiful Cultural Arts Center on Los Angeles Avenue. I take pride in having helped the Center earn its regional reputation for producing and presenting outstanding musicals and live entertainment of the highest quality to Ventura, Los Angeles, and Orange county audiences. I also take pride in knowing that we have also earned a reputation for being a safe, welcoming, and artistically challenging environment for artists to work, grow and thrive. The Center has grown from a local community theater to a regionally recognized performing arts center whilst retaining the charm of a small town community arts center.

The upcoming “Renaissance” or rebirth of the Cultural Arts Center provides us the opportunity to build upon our success of the past 25 years while expanding to meet the changing needs of our community. Simi Valley has grown since 1995. We are now a much more diverse community and the Cultural Arts Center has the opportunity to better reflect and celebrate that diversity through expanded programming and engagement opportunities. The Center also has the obligation to meet the needs of ALL of our community members to ensure that access to the Center, and to the Arts, is available to all. The following five-year strategic plan was created to guide in the accomplishment of both of these goals as well as help the Center to provide support in strengthening our local arts groups, non-profit organizations, and small businesses in their struggle to recover from the pandemic. It also serves as a guide to help build and strengthen partnerships with community organizations such as the Simi Valley Unified School District, Rancho Simi Parks and Recreation, and the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation as well as creating engagement opportunities for youth through arts education, internships, and expanded targeted youth programming at the Center.

Access and active engagement in the Arts is a necessity for a vibrant, healthy, thriving community and with the creation of this strategic plan the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center is set to embark on an exciting journey full of accessibility, diversity and inclusive participation in arts programs for the entire Simi Valley and greater Los Angeles community. I look forward to you joining us on this journey!

Fred Helsel, *General Manager*

*Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center*

## Introduction:

This Strategic Plan for the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center (CAC) is the result of a comprehensive process that began in the spring of 2019. City staff assembled a planning team and began work with the Arts Commission, local arts organizations and artists, established arts administrators, community members and other stakeholders to develop an innovative strategic direction for the CAC to adapt to the evolving needs of the Simi Valley community.

The first phase of the planning process was focused on receiving feedback from residents, artists, arts organizations, arts professionals, and other stakeholders that were familiar with the facility. This phase included: informal stakeholder interviews; an online public survey; one-on-one interviews with the public members of the Arts Commission; and a community visioning forum. These efforts identified the impact of the CAC in its first 25 years, the key challenges facing the facility, and, set the foundation for a community vision.

The second phase began in January 2020. This phase included an analysis of the information obtained in the first phase, along with the identification of potential gaps. An additional round of meetings and focus groups was collected in the summer and fall of 2020, with a specific focus on hearing from groups who were not adequately represented in the first phase. A preliminary report was presented to the Simi Valley Arts Commission at the July 2020 meeting, with further supplemental information provided at the September 2020 meeting.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the renewed emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues bared significant weight over the development of this plan. Candidly, the full impact of these events on the arts, and the overall community, is not wholly understood. Two factors are readily apparent: 1. there has been significant economic disruption by COVID-19; and, 2. there is a renewed obligation to review systems and processes to identify any areas rooted in bias or resulting in exclusion, no matter how unintentional.

This plan combines community and stakeholder input with an organizational assessment and an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the CAC. Together, this information constructs a vision for the CAC to recover from the economic and social fallout resulting from COVID-19, adapt to meet evolving community needs, and to be well positioned to fulfill its mission over the next five years.

## Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center's Mission Statement:

- To provide a multipurpose facility to present performances of music, theater, dance, film, lectures and popular entertainment as well as space for conferences, meetings, seminars, and workshops; and,
- To develop, support, and encourage cultural activities and educational programs to enhance the quality of life of the citizens of Simi Valley and surrounding communities.

## Values Statement:

The work of the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center is guided by three key values:

**Community** – A commitment to the whole community, from the theatergoer to arts organizations, recognizing the role the Cultural Arts Center has in creating interpersonal connections and shared experience, empowering artists and arts organizations, and contributing to the overall wellbeing of Simi Valley and its residents.

**Diversity** - Acknowledging and respecting human qualities that are different from our own and outside the groups with which we are associated, and develop programming to enrich our community. The spectrum of diversity within our community is recognized and celebrated.

**Accountability** – Understanding the responsibility of the CAC to provide arts experiences for all Simi Valley residents while maintaining a balance of fiscal stewardship, community impact, and the highest level of service.

## Organization Assessment and SWOT Analysis:

Over its 25 year existence, the CAC and its programs have been successful in creating a venue for arts exposure, entertainment, and shared intergenerational experience. Entering into 2020, the CAC held a relative position of strength. There was demand for the programs; numerous opportunities to innovate and expand; and operating revenue was on pace to increase three years in a row. Weaknesses seemed to be rooted in dated policy and practices. At that time, the assessment indicated that the most likely external threats to CAC operations were economic downturns and local socio-political issues.

Category	Summary
Strengths	The reputation and history of the CAC, combined with the skill and dedication of staff, signal a position of strength in the community. Support from City Council provides the resources necessary for service delivery.
Weaknesses	Weaknesses in SVCAC operations stem from reliance on policy, practice, and organizational components that may no longer be effective or performing at an optimal level.
Opportunities	Opportunities to collaborate with outside organizations are numerous and seem to be desired. These can be coupled with opportunities for innovation.
Threats	The social and economic outlook post COVID-19 is uncertain. The political and social environment (local and national) may impact CAC operations.

As 2020 progressed, the world saw the COVID-19 pandemic cause an economic shutdown which forced the closure of the CAC in March 2020. There was also a massive reprioritization of social justice and equity issues that followed the killing of several African Americans by law enforcement in cities across the United States, including George Floyd in Minneapolis. The scope and magnitude of these events have resulted in societal changes well beyond what was originally ascertained during the initial SWOT analysis for the CAC. The scale of these events alone give reason to pause for reflection and betterment to understand the role of the CAC, and the arts overall, in our collective recovery.

Reopening the CAC and the opportunity to rebuild from the events of 2020 is a call for a renewed sense of optimism. The position of the CAC, continued support from City Council, numerous opportunities, limited competition, and demonstrated resilience through the pandemic, creates an environment where positives outweigh the negatives. While the CAC can be aggressive in strategy development and implementation, *risks must be understood, well-calculated, and connected to the mission of the organization and goals of this plan.* The uncertain landscape over the next five years necessitates flexibility and consistent evaluation.

## Financial Model and Performance:

The CAC operates on a hybrid financial model and sees revenue and subsidy through the City of Simi Valley, CAC programming, the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation, grants, and other contributions.

The City of Simi Valley General Fund provides for the salary and benefits for 3.5 FTE positions: Community Services Manager; Assistant Community Services Manager; Office Assistant II; and .5 of the Technical Coordinator position. The General Fund is also responsible for the building's physical plant, including custodial services and supplies, utilities, capital projects, and some office expenses.

The CAC Operations Fund is responsible for 1.5 FTE positions: the salary and benefits of one box office manager and .5 of the Technical Coordinator position. This fund is also responsible for all production, including production related capital equipment expenses, and operating costs not covered by the City's General Fund.

Operating Fund revenue is primarily a combination of box office; rental fees; reimbursed technical costs; grants and contributions; and concessions income. The Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation supports the Operations Fund with quarterly contributions of approximately \$8,000 (increasing annually based on the cost of living index formula).

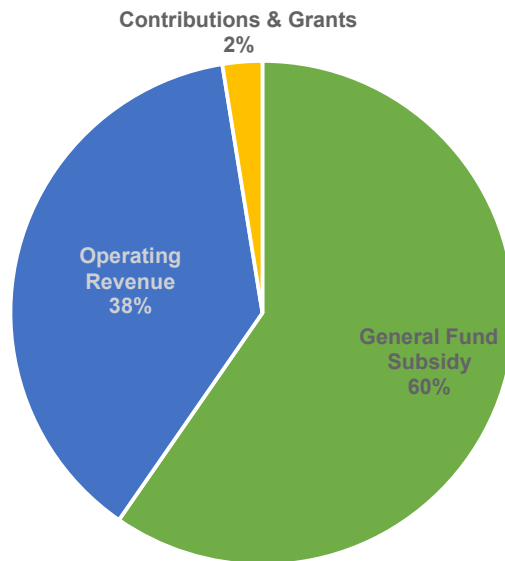
The CAC operations fund reimburses the City's General Fund every fiscal year. This reimbursement includes the 1.5 FTE positions and 10% of earned income, less any non-profit subsidies.

3-Year Operating Fund Performance	FY 2019-20	FY 2018-19	FY 2017-18
Income	\$432,190	\$526,565	\$500,023
Expense (Before Reimbursements To City)	\$283,121	\$364,407	\$360,880
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$140,069</b>	<b>\$162,158</b>	<b>\$139,143</b>
Staff Reimbursement to General Fund	\$128,495	\$119,123	\$105,156
10% Reimbursement to General Fund	\$28,972	\$30,933	\$23,499
<b>Net Income to SVCAC</b>	<b>\$8,398</b>	<b>\$12,102</b>	<b>\$10,488</b>

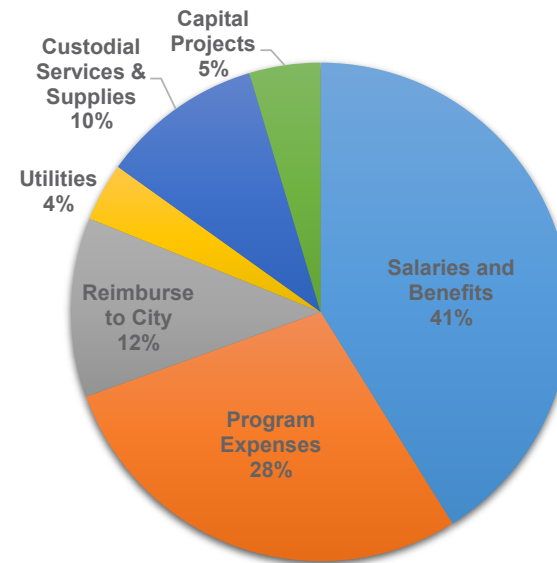
## 2018-19 CAC Income, Subsidy, and Resource Utilization

In FY 2018-19, the last complete fiscal year before COVID-19 caused the closure of the facility, the CAC received \$775,428 in subsidy from the City's General Fund and \$35,142 in contributions and grants, while it generated \$491,423 in operating revenue, for total income and subsidy of \$1,301,993. The estimated total cost of CAC operations for the year was \$1,289,891, with \$530,543 spent on salaries and benefits, \$365,547 on programs and production costs, \$135,355 (estimated) on custodial services and supplies, \$59,589 on capital projects, and \$48,801 on utilities. The CAC also returned \$150,056 to the General Fund for the salary and benefits, and 10% of earned income reimbursements.

**2018-19 Total Income & Subsidy**



**2018-19 Total Resource Utilization**



### Outputs and Community Impact:

Through the combination of Main Stage, Mutli-Purpose Room/DownStage Theater, and Gallery events, the CAC averages nearly 400 events and 37,000 visitors on an annual basis.

CAC Facility Use	Main Stage Events	Main Stage Attendance	MPR Events	MPR Attendance	Gallery Events	Gallery Attendance	Total Events	Total Attendance	Public Hours/Week
<b>Annual Total 2017</b>	168	25,740	165	7,435	53	3,556	386	36,731	70
<b>Annual Total 2018</b>	179	26,969	132	6,672	53	3,529	364	37,170	69
<b>Annual Total 2019</b>	222	25,537	157	6,565	51	2,909	430	35,011	65



Impacts are seen on both an individual and community level. Individual impacts included personal joy, inspiration, and wellness. Community impacts include the creation of shared experience, opportunities for youth, and making Simi Valley a better place to raise a family. These sentiments are collectively expressed through this word cloud generated from the survey:



## **Vision Statement:**

During its 25 year history, the CAC has established itself as a respected community theater facility with a reputation of providing high quality musical theater productions. These productions have been supplemented by plays, concerts, dance performances, arts education programs, and visual arts exhibits. Many local arts groups and schools rent the facility. It also serves as a community space, hosting meetings, lectures, and special events, primarily for non-profit and community based organizations.

The operational landscape has changed significantly during the past 25 years. Simi Valley has experienced a shift in its demographics, with an influx of new cultures and communities. Audience preferences and tastes have also evolved, with new ways for people to engage with the arts. Technology furthers this shift, as there are new methods to present the arts and communicate and engage with audiences. Although the ultimate outcomes are uncertain, it is anticipated that the COVID-19 pandemic and the modern social justice movement will accelerate these shifts.

The CAC will face several challenges over the next five years. These challenges include: recovering from the economic fallout and social disruption caused by COVID-19; ensuring that systems and processes facilitate diversity and welcome new creative endeavors; creating culturally relevant and inclusive programming; remaining responsive to changing community needs; bridging social divisions; supporting the local arts community; and balancing a demand for services that likely will outpace available resources.

The strategic direction, as outlined through the six strategic priorities of this plan, provides a path for the CAC to meet these challenges. Through the successful execution of the elements of this plan the CAC will expand its audiences, celebrate the spectrum of diversity, deepen community engagement, balance fiscal stewardship with community impact, support and empower the local arts community, and ultimately increase the understanding of the importance of the arts and culture in Simi Valley.



## Strategic Priorities:

This strategic priorities of this plan were formulated from recurring themes found in the community survey, visioning forum, stakeholder meetings, and SWOT analysis. These themes were assessed for validity and developed into Strategic Priorities as accompanying goals and objectives, strategies, and tactics were considered. Together, these elements communicate the strategic direction of the CAC over the next five years.

An implementation model accompanies each of the strategic priorities, proposing tactics, staff assignments, resource allocation, and timeframes. Timeframes are color coded by year of target completion: 2021 - Red; 2022- Orange; 2023 – Yellow; 2024 – Blue; 2025 - Green. Strategies that are connected to COVID-19 Recovery or Equity/Diversity are noted by a \* or \*, respectively.

## I. Quality of Life

*Leverage the impact of the arts to enhance the quality of life for all Simi Valley residents*

An essential element of the CAC's mission is "enhance the quality of life for Simi Valley residents and the surrounding communities". The CAC has allowed for intergenerational and community connections, and has been a source of joy, relaxation and leisure for many. Stakeholders across the board expressed a desire to build on this success by welcoming new audiences to the CAC through developing arts experiences that meet the changing demographics and artistic tastes of today's Simi Valley.

### Quality of Life Goal 1

Attract new artists, arts organizations, and audiences to ensure facility use and attendance figures better match Simi Valley demographics by 2025

#### Supporting Strategies

- a. Intentionally and authentically ensure that experience and stories of ethnicities that comprise Simi Valley are fully represented in the programming decisions of the CAC\*
- b. Create opportunities for free expression, personal connections, and dialogue to bridge community divisions\*

### Quality of Life Goal 2

Include the arts in more aspects of life in Simi Valley, reaching beyond the walls of the CAC, seeing an increase of opportunities for all Simi Valley residents

#### Supporting Strategies

- a. Integrate CAC programs and activities with strategic priorities of the City\*\*
- b. Demonstrate the importance of the arts in creating healthy and safe communities\*\*

Strategic Priority 1: Quality of Life					
Goal and Objective	Strategies	Tactics	Assignment	Project Period	Resources
Attract new artists, arts organizations, and audiences to ensure facility use and attendance figures better match Simi Valley demographics by 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intentionally and authentically ensure that experience and stories of ethnicities that comprise Simi Valley are fully represented in the programming decisions of the CAC*</li> <li>Create opportunities for free expression, personal connections, and dialogue to bridge community divisions*</li> </ul>	Dedicate prime weekend dates for the presentation of diverse, multicultural productions outside of traditional musical theater	CSM ACSM	Q3 2021 - Ongoing	Staff PA
		Establish Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, & Accessibility Committee	AC CSM	Q3 2021	Staff
		Develop regular talk back and panel discussion series to discuss the social context of performances where applicable	CSM ACSM	Q1 2022	Staff
		Expand parameters of rental application process to encourage dance, music, and other non-theatrical performances	CSM DCSD	Q3 2021	Staff
		Update Arts Commission recruitment process to ensure appointees are qualified and experienced in the development of relevant multicultural programming	CSM DCSD	2021	Staff
Include the arts in more aspects of life in Simi Valley, reaching beyond the walls of the CAC, seeing an increase of opportunities for all Simi Valley residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate CAC programs and activities with strategic priorities of the City*</li> <li>Demonstrate the importance of the arts in creating healthy and safe communities**</li> </ul>	Plan art market, art walks, outdoor concerts or other types of community arts events to support economic and community development (place making)	CSM ACSM	2023	Staff Sponsorships Fees
		Develop specific arts programs for those with disabilities, mental illness, or who are experiencing poverty and homelessness	CSM ACSM	2023	Staff PA Grants
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<b>ACM</b> - Assistant City Manager	<b>CM</b> - City Manager	<b>CSM</b> - Community Services Manager	<b>OAB</b> - Office Assistant Box Off.	<b>SVCACF</b> - Foundation	
<b>ACSM</b> - Assistant Community Services Manager	<b>CSM</b> - Community Services Manager	<b>GF</b> - General Fund	<b>OB</b> - CAC Operating Budget	*COVID Recovery *Equity/Diversity	

## **II. Sustainability**

*Ensure stable revenue streams, maximize efficiency, and provide transparent, accountable, and accurate reporting.*

As a unit of local government, the CAC has an obligation to deliver its services in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Sound financial performance is necessary for sustainability, but an overemphasis on profit may dilute organizational impact. While the economic fallout associated with COVID-19 is severe, there is an opportunity to work with together with local arts organizations, and the community as a whole, in recovery efforts. Reopening the CAC, combined with the emergence of new priorities, allows for a rethinking of systems and processes to maximize, measure, and better communicate the impact of programs.

### **Sustainability Goal 1**

Safely reopen the CAC to full operational capacity, restoring revenue and facility use figures to at least 2019-20 projections by June 30, 2023

#### **Strategy**

- a. Ramp-up online and virtual programs, while planning for reopening the CAC with the successful participation of local arts organizations\*

### **Sustainability Goal 2**

*Ensure transparent, accountable, and sustainable operation of the CAC while achieving a cost recovery rate of at least 10% to the General Fund*

#### **Strategy**

- a. Update systems, processes, and reporting to provide effective service delivery in the most efficient ways possible to maximize impact and achieve cost recovery goals\*
- b. Ensure optimal revenue and expense performance and explore new revenue generating opportunities\*
- c. Establish reporting format that accurately communicates the purpose and impact of the CAC

### **Sustainability Goal 3**

Develop collaborative fundraising initiatives with the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation to increase the size of the endowment on an annual basis.

#### **Strategy**

- a. Strengthen the collaborative effort between the City and the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation to ensure the financial stability and success of the CAC\*

Strategic Priority 2: Sustainability					
Goal and Objective	Strategies	Tactics	Assignment	Project Period	Resources
Safely reopen the CAC to full operational capacity, restoring revenue and facility use figures to at least 2019-20 projections by June 30, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ramp-up online and virtual programs, while planning for reopening the CAC with the successful participation of local arts organizations*</li> </ul>	Develop cleaning, social distancing, and facility setup/maintenance protocols	CSM DCSD	Now - Q4 2021	OB COVID Funds Fundraising
		Launch COVID-19 recovery rental rate/grant program to assist arts organizations with returning to the CAC	AC DCSD CSM	Q2 - Q4 2021	PA OB
		Develop revenue producing virtual and outdoor programming	CSM DCSD	Now to Q2 2022	OB COVID Funds Fundraising
Ensure transparent, accountable, and sustainable operation of the CAC while achieving a cost recovery rate of at least 10% to the General Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update systems, processes, and reporting to provide effective service delivery in the most efficient ways possible to maximize impact and achieve cost recovery goals*</li> <li>Ensure optimal revenue and expense performance and explore new revenue generating opportunities*</li> <li>Establish reporting format that clearly communicates the purpose of the CAC</li> </ul>	Initiate Balanced Scorecard (Triple Bottom Line) budgeting in reporting to the Arts Commission that includes financial, innovation, and impact metrics for the CAC (program evaluation)	AC DCSD CSM	Q3 2022	Staff
		Develop grant research, database, planning, application and reporting process to supplement current operations	ACSM	Ongoing	Staff
		Analyze and recalibrate staff roles and assignments to increase efficiency and adapt to plan needs	DCSM CSM	Q2 2022	Staff
		Complete revenue and expense analysis to optimize current revenue and expenses, also identifying new sources of revenue and efficiencies	DCSD CSM	Q2 2022	Staff
		Develop season ticket or subscription model	CSM	Q4 2022	Staff
Develop collaborative fundraising initiatives with the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation to support the growth of their endowment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the collaborative effort between the City and the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Foundation to ensure the financial stability and success of the CAC*</li> </ul>	Work with the SVCACF to align fundraising and programming goals each fiscal year	CSM SVCACF	Q2 2021 - Ongoing	Staff SVCACF
		Establish dedicated rental rates and policy for the SVCACF to encourage fundraising	CSM ACSM SVCACF	Q2 2021	Staff
		Explore collaborative models between the SVCACF and the CAC to advance shared objectives	AC DCSD SVCACF	Q2 2023	Staff
<b>Abbreviations</b>					
AC - Arts Commission	CC - City Council	DCSD - Deputy Community Services Director	OA - Office Assistant	PA - Performance Account	
ACM - Assistant City Manager	CM - City Manager	CSM - Community Services Manager	OAB - Office Assistant - Box Office	SVCACF - Foundation	
ACSM - Assistant Community Services Manager	CSM - Community Services Manager	GF - General Fund	OB - CAC Operating Budget	*COVID Recovery *Equity	



### **III. Programming**

*Providing arts programming, experiences, and opportunities to meet the diverse community needs of Simi Valley*

Musical theater productions are the core programming element and the CAC's primary source of revenue. Stakeholder feedback expressed the desire to supplement the musical theater offerings by expanding program choices. Arts education and training programs, multicultural programs, children's' theater, film screenings, new works, open mic nights, and music events all have the potential to reach new audiences and allow the community to engage with the arts in new ways. Many of these programs are relatively low risk and create the opportunity to increase facility use during the week and outside of the peak weekend demand.

#### **Programming Goal 1**

Ensure the CAC provides overarching program choices and arts experiences that represent the tastes of all Simi Valley residents, increasing new audience attendance by at least 10% every year

#### **Programming Goal 2**

Increase Tuesday - Thursday facility use levels through the development of low risk, high engagement arts experiences

##### **Strategy (Goals 1 & 2)**

- a. Develop a well-rounded program calendar that provides diverse, intergenerational, inspirational, and thought provoking arts experiences for the community\*\*

#### **Programming Goal 3**

Establish the CAC as the foremost arts education resource in the Simi Valley, increasing the amount of arts education and as well as programs to support emerging artists

##### **Strategy**

- a. Create unique arts education opportunities that complement existing opportunities in the community\*\*
- b. Support the development of emerging artists\*\*

Strategic Priority 3: Programming					
Goal and Objective	Strategies	Tactics	Assignment	Project Period	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the CAC provides overarching program choices and arts experiences that represent the tastes of all Simi Valley residents, increasing new audience attendance by at least 10% every year</li> <li>Increase Tuesday-Thursday facility use levels through the development of low risk, high engagement arts experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a well rounded program calendar that provides diverse, intergenerational, and thought provoking arts experiences**</li> </ul>	Determine new target audiences and develop programs to meet their anticipated tastes and preferences	CSM ACSM	Q3-Q4 2021	Staff
		Present low risk projects and performances such as open mic nights, story telling, talent shows, poetry readings, and film screenings	CSM ACSM	Ongoing	Staff
		Create RFP for Saturday Morning Children's theater program	CSM ACSM	Q4 2021	Staff OB
		Develop a contemporary lecture series that encourages knowledge and civic engagement on local issues and topics	CSM ACSM	Q1 2023	OB PA
Establish the CAC as the foremost arts education resource in the Simi Valley, increasing the amount arts education programming as well as programs to support emerging artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create unique arts education opportunities that complement existing opportunities in the community</li> <li>Support the development of emerging artists*</li> </ul>	Study feasibility and interest of arts education programs such as playwriting, poetry, electronic music production, creative coding, and other arts ed. programs not offered in the region	ACSM	Q2 2022	Staff
		Develop weeknight/summer arts education programs in theater, dance, music, painting and more	ACSM	Q1 2023	Staff OB Grant Funding
		Create an internship or professional experience program that provides technical experience in live performance venue operations	CSM ACSM TC	2024	Staff Grant Funding Program Fees
		Develop a formal program to support the creative and professional development of emerging artists	CSM ACSM	2024	Staff Grant Funding
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## **IV. Marketing, Outreach, and Community Partnerships**

*Increase awareness of, and participation in, Cultural Arts Center activities through updating communications and building relationships in the community.*

The CAC is fortunate in that it has a highly engaged audience base that regularly supports CAC programs and events. There is a substantial opportunity to increase awareness of the CAC and grow audiences as new programs are developed. Understanding how to communicate and engage with these audiences will be of vital importance. This can be furthered through strengthening connections and collaborations with artists, arts organizations, and other mission aligned stakeholders.

### **Marketing, Outreach, and Community Partnerships Goal 1**

Develop and execute a marketing and outreach strategy to ensure that 100% of Simi Valley residents have participated in a CAC activity by 2025

#### **Strategy**

- a. Update marketing initiatives to increase awareness and participation of CAC activities\*\*

### **Marketing, Outreach, and Community Partnerships Goal 2**

Increase formal (small and large scale) relationships with Rancho Simi Recreation and Parks Districts, Simi Valley Unified School District, the Ventura County Arts Council, and local arts organizations.

#### **Strategy**

- a. Establish open lines of communication between partner organizations and work together on specific mission aligned objectives\*\*
- b. Expand facility rental and use policy to encourage rentals from both established and emerging arts organizations\*\*

Strategic Priority 4: Marketing, Outreach and Community Partnerships					
Goal and Objective	Strategies	Tactics	Assignment	Project Period	Resources
Develop and execute a marketing and outreach strategy to ensure that 100% of Simi Valley residents have participated in a CAC activity by 2025	Update marketing initiatives to increase awareness and participation of CAC activities**	Create CAC specific marketing plan that reaches the diverse audiences found in Simi Valley	CSM Consultant	Q3-Q4 2021	Staff \$10,000 OB or Pro Bono
		Develop a brand statement for the Cultural Arts Center and support branding efforts of the City organization	CSM	Q4 2021	Staff
		Post easy to understand reports and metrics on CAC activity for public consumption	CAC Staff	Q1 2023	Staff
Increase formal (small and large scale) relationships with Rancho Simi Recreation and Parks Districts, Simi Valley Unified School District, the Ventura County Arts Council, and local arts organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish open lines of communication between partner organizations and work together on specific mission aligned objectives**</li> <li>Continue to develop, clear, transparent facility rental and use policy to encourage rentals from both established and emerging arts organizations**</li> </ul>	Update stakeholder database and contact list	CAC Staff	Q2 2021	Staff
		Convene regular regional Theater/Arts Organization Roundtable meetings	CSM	Ongoing	Staff
		Include SVUSD schools, local dance studios, and other arts facilities on casting notices	ACSM	Q1 2022 - Ongoing	Staff
		Research opportunities to partner with organizations on community events, performances, and arts education programs.	CSM ACSM	Q1 2022 - Ongoing	Staff
		Develop partnerships with visual arts organizations to curate lobby gallery space	CSM	Q1 2022	Staff
		Conduct rental policy review to identify unseen barriers that may restrict community access	CSM DCSD AC	Q2 2021	Staff
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## V. Facility and Experience

*Leverage the historical importance of the CAC building and adapt to meet the future needs of the community.*

The CAC is housed in a historical landmark building designated by the County of Ventura, indicating the importance of the building itself to the Simi Valley community. The building has served as a church, temple, school house and funeral home, prior to becoming the CAC. While some may see the size as a limitation, the intimate setting is highly conducive for community-based arts programs. The key opportunity is to build upon the building's intimacy and the connection to the community to create a definitive arts experience for the CAC. This can be done through optimizing facility use and defining the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center experience.

### Facility and Experience Goal 1

Create a Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Experience, compatible with Simi Valley's small-town feel, where audience members report a 100% satisfaction rate

#### Strategy

- a. Integrate communications, technology, customer service, programming, and operations to create a positive customer experience from ticket purchase to performance\*
- b. Strive to create meaningful and memorable arts experiences unique to Simi Valley\*\*
- c. Create a pricing structure that ensures financial stability of the CAC, while allowing every Simi Valley resident to participate in CAC activities regardless of ability to pay\*\*

### Facility and Experience Goal 2

Ensure the facility stays in prime condition to maximize public use and accomplish the mission of the CAC

#### Strategy

- a. Maintain facility and annually update Capital Improvement Plans to create a contemporary theatre experience for audience and renters\*
- b. Develop creative solutions to adapt the facility to changes in programming taste and demand\*

Strategic Priority 5: Facility and Experience					
Goals and Objectives	Strategies	Tactics	Assignment	Project Period	Resources
Create a Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center Experience, compatible with Simi Valley's small town feel, where audience members report a 100% satisfaction rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate communications, technology, customer service, programming, and operations to create a positive customer experience from ticket purchase to performance*</li> <li>Strive to create meaningful and memorable arts experiences unique to Simi Valley**</li> <li>Create a pricing structure that ensures financial stability of the CAC, while allowing every Simi Valley resident to participate in CAC activities regardless of ability to pay**</li> </ul>	Implement new box office system that includes customer relationship management to support eventual marketing plan goals	CSM	Q2 2021	\$25,000 COVID Funds/OB
		Define the CAC experience and train CAC staff, FOH volunteers, and others on experience delivery	CSM OA-II	Q4 2021	Staff OB GF (Training)
		Create CAC signature options, promotions and packages in areas like concessions and partnerships with local restaurants.	CSM ACSM	Q1 2022 - Ongoing	Staff
		Develop a recurring audience survey tool to understand patron experience and tastes	ACSM	Q3 2022	Staff
		Convert OA-II position to Patron Experience Specialist position	ACM DCSD	Q2 2022	Staff OB
		Formalize and Expand the Share the Arts Program	CSM	Q1 2023	Staff OB
Ensure the multipurpose facility stays in prime condition to maximize public use and accomplish the mission of the CAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain facility and annually update Capital Improvement Plans to create a contemporary theatre experience for audience and renters*</li> <li>Develop creative solutions to adapt the facility to changes in programming taste and demand*</li> </ul>	Complete equipment, props, and supplies audit and properly dispose of outdated and non-functional equipment	TC	Q3 2021	Staff
		Organize and digitize documents and paperwork	OAB	Q2 2021	Staff
		Update inventory storage and tracking systems to manage equipment, props, and other supplies	TC	Q3 - Q4 2021	Staff
		Annually prioritize CIP to accommodate for safety, accessibility, and revenue potential	CSM DCSD	Ongoing	Staff
		Work with SVCACF and Naming Rights campaign to include facility improvements	DCSD CSM SVCACF	Q2 2021	Staff SVCACF
<b>Abbreviations</b>					
<b>AC</b> - Arts Commission	<b>CC</b> - City Council	<b>DCSD</b> - Deputy Community Services Director	<b>OA</b> - Office Assistant	<b>PA</b> - Performance Account	
<b>ACM</b> - Assistant City Manager	<b>CM</b> - City Manager	<b>CSM</b> - Community Services Manager	<b>OAB</b> - Office Assistant - Box Office	<b>SVCACF</b> - Foundation	
<b>ACSM</b> - Assistant Community Services Manager	<b>CSM</b> - Community Services Manager	<b>GF</b> - General Fund	<b>OB</b> - CAC Operating Budget	*COVID Recovery *Equity/Diversity	

## **VI. Arts Leadership and Advocacy**

*Support emerging arts organizations and establish the arts as an integral component of life in Simi Valley*

The arts community in Simi Valley is primarily made up of grassroots, volunteer led groups who dedicate personal time and resources to their respective projects. There is no shortage of passion and commitment. Limited resources and the absence of unifying arts leadership has contributed to fragmentation among the arts community. The CAC and the Arts Commission can work with these organizations to develop a cohesive vision for the arts in Simi Valley, and empower them by providing the resources, training, and administrative know-how necessary for shared growth and success.

### **Arts Leadership and Advocacy Goal 1**

Reinforce the arts as a vital, integral, and necessary component of life in Simi Valley by strengthening local artists, arts organizations, and cultural groups through increased consideration and presence of the arts in policy decisions and legislation

#### **Strategy**

- a. Evolve the role of Arts Commission and its jurisdiction to oversee the development of the Simi Valley arts community through the creation of policy to support the financial and professional development of cultural projects and organizations\*\*
- b. Advocate for funding models to ensure sustainable funding to support the artistic community of Simi Valley\*\*
- c. Develop the Arts Commission as an advocate and leader for all arts based projects, programs, and organizations in Simi Valley\*\*
- d. Encourage the development and professionalization of the Simi Valley Arts Community, serving as a resource for arts organizations and projects in all stages of development\*\*

Strategic Priority 6: Arts Leadership & Advocacy					
Goal and Objective	Strategies	Tactics	Assignment	Project Period	Resources
Reinforce the arts as a vital, integral, and necessary component of life in Simi Valley by strengthening local artists, arts organizations, and cultural groups through increased consideration and presence of the arts in policy decisions and legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolve the role of Arts Commission and its jurisdiction to oversee the development of the Simi Valley arts community through the creation of policy to support the financial and professional development of cultural projects and organizations**</li> <li>• Advocate for funding models to ensure sustainable funding to support the artistic community of Simi Valley**</li> <li>• Develop the Arts Commission as an advocate and leader for all arts based projects, programs, and organizations in Simi Valley**</li> <li>• Encourage the development and professionalization of the Simi Valley Arts Community, serving as a resource for arts organizations and projects in all stages of development**</li> </ul>	Assess, develop, and formalize the role of the Arts Commission and adopt bylaws	CC AC DCSD CSM	Q3 2021 - Q2 2022	Staff
		Develop a municipal arts grant funding program proposal to support Simi Valley arts organizations	CC AC DCSD CSM	Q3 - Q4 2021	Staff PA GF
		Develop plan to become eligible as NEA Granting organization	AC DCSD CSM	Q2 2022	Staff
		Develop a Cultural Plan for the City of Simi Valley	AC CM Contract	2025	\$50,000 GF (RFP)
		Research and Propose Percent For Art Program	ACM DCSM	2024 - 2025	Staff
		Host granting writing, governance, and budgeting workshops for arts organizations	CSM ACSM OA	Q1 2022 - Ongoing	Staff
		Establish designated arts liaison to support artists and arts organizations in Simi Valley	ACSM DCSD	Q1 2022	Staff
		Develop Quarterly Arts Focused newsletter for the City	CSM ACSM OA	Q2 2023	Staff
<b>Abbreviations</b>					
<b>AC</b> - Arts Commission	<b>CC</b> - City Council	<b>DCSD</b> - Deputy Community Services Director	<b>OA</b> - Office Assistant	<b>PA</b> - Performance Account	
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<b>ACSM</b> - Assistant Community Services Manager	<b>CSM</b> - Community Services Manager	<b>GF</b> - General Fund	<b>OB</b> - CAC Operating Budget	*COVID Recovery *Equity/Diversity	



## Evaluation and Reporting Structure:

This Strategic Plan is intended to implement a strategic direction for the CAC that best encompasses the current and future needs of Simi Valley residents. The goals and objectives that have been identified will require regular evaluation and monitoring to ensure progress is being made and to determine if adjustments are necessary. The uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic only reinforces the need for continual monitoring and evaluation.

The CAC's annual Operating Budget and Operating Plan will serve as the primary documents to monitor plan progress over the next five years. The Operating Budget will measure resource allocation and ensure the CAC has the appropriate resources to accomplish its goals. The Operating Plan will evaluate progress and outline the goals for the upcoming year. The Arts Commission reviews both the Operating Budget and Operating Plan prior to City Council review and approval.

A strategic plan update will be a standing agenda item at each Arts Commission meeting. Monthly monitoring of progress will be completed by CAC staff and reported to the Deputy Community Services Director and Assistant City Manager.

## Appendix A: Strategic Plan Participants

### Simi Valley Arts Commission:

Mayor Keith Mashburn  
City Council Member Elaine Litster  
Commissioner Becky Savell  
Commissioner Rebecca Rosen  
Commissioner John Dantona  
Commissioner Phillip McBride  
Marie Bennett, President, SVCACF

#### *Former Commissioners:*

Dennis Lorencz (2018-2020 Term)  
Nick Palky (2018 – 2020 Term)  
Alexandra Walker (2018 – 2020 Term)

### Meeting Participants and Interviewees:

Peter Cervantes, *Danza Azteca Nezualpilli*  
Margaret Cortese, *Teatro De Las Américas*  
Anil Garg, *Rotary Club of Simi Valley*  
Jan Glasband, *Simi Valley Cultural Association/Actors Repertory Theatre of Simi (ARTS)*  
Steven Hayes, *It's A New Day/Lit Live*  
Kimberly Kiley, *Simi Valley Cultural Association/ARTS*  
Pat Lewis, *It's A New Day/Lit Live*  
Christina McCarty, *Dance Creations*  
Sara Moguel, *Ballet Folklórico Cielito Lindo De Simi Valley*  
Kameren Chase Neal, *Musician/Actor*  
Paul Panico, *Panic Productions*  
Ralph Santitoro, *Los Robles Master Chorale*  
Jonathan Serret, *Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Thousand Oaks*  
Irene Silbert, *Santa Susana High School Theatre & Simi Valley Arts Conservatory*  
Natalia Stenava, *New West Symphony*  
Gary Thomas, *SVCALF*  
Kaelia Winterstein, *It's A New Day/Lit Live*

### LGTBQ+ Focus Group Participants:

Sarah Hollock, *Spectrum Collaborative*  
McColley Wilk, *Spectrum Collaborative*  
Cindy Lanzuna, *Spectrum Collaborative*  
Turner Dowhan, *Spectrum Collaborative*  
Joshua Stapel, *Spectrum Collaborative*  
Forest Holt, *Spectrum Collaborative*

### Youth Focus Group Participants:

Paige Barrella, *Simi Valley Youth Council*  
Rikka Tignac, *Simi Valley Youth Council*  
Abhishek "AJ" Jagannathan, *Simi Valley Youth Council*  
Ashlyn Ro, *Simi Valley Youth Council*  
Lura James, *Performer & Santa Susana High School Student*

### Community Visioning Forum Participants:

Gloria Bowman  
Tracy Engle  
Kyle Cooknick  
Persy Evans  
Tom Evans  
Jan Glasband  
Elise Franklin  
Gina Gooding  
Steven Hayes  
Seth Kamenow  
Rev. Andy Mattick  
Kris Mikita  
Michael Mikita  
David Ralphe  
Terry Watson  
Kaelia Winterstein



**Strategic Planning Team:**

Anna Medina, *Deputy Community Services Director*

David Yoshitomi, *Community Services Manager*

Fred Helsel, *Community Services Manager*

Kelly Tinker, *Management Analyst*

