



MISSISSAUGA
FESTIVAL CHOIR
THE VOICES OF
MISSISSAUGA

**Strategic Plan
2016-2020
Year 2023**

September 19, 2016

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MISSISSAUGA FESTIVAL CHOIR STRATEGIC LONG-RANGE PLAN 2016 to 2020

INTRODUCTION

MFC'S Strategic Long-Range Plan outlines the organization's vision of the future and how it will achieve that vision. The plan is guided by MFC's values. MFC's strategic directions are outlined, with areas of focus and specific activities and performance indicators noted.

BACKGROUND

In 2012, MFC's Board of Directors approved the organization's first strategic plan. It was in effect from 2012 to 2016. Under that plan, the organization grew dramatically in many ways and became a much more vibrant and thriving member of Mississauga's arts community than ever before.

2015 Planning

In early 2015, MFC's board of directors initiated the development of a new strategic plan to guide the organization until 2020.

In February 2015, the board met with a facilitator to begin creation of a new strategic plan. Board members believed it was very important that key stakeholders had the opportunity to engage in and provide their ideas and aspirations for shaping MFC's future. Therefore, the planning process began with a brainstorming meeting of all members called MFC Membership Café. Approximately 100 members participated in this February 9, 2015 session, which resulted in a wide range of recommendations from members on desired priority areas for action for the next few years.

The MFC Café was followed by a board planning retreat on February 21, 2015. Before this meeting, board members and staff were asked to fill out surveys about the effectiveness of the board of directors, and what issues, needs, opportunities and priorities they saw for MFC, guided in large part by feedback provided at the Café.

Seven board members, two staff and facilitator Karon West participated in the retreat.

During the retreat, it quickly became apparent that, to expand the choir's operations in the way desired both by members and the board, more resources and a different board structure were necessary. The board decided to extend the 2012 strategic plan, originally meant to be in effect until 2015, until the end of the 2015/2016 season to allow time to restructure the board and decide on and source the necessary additional resources.

Following the 2015 retreat, Acting President Kyley Cano and Secretary Sue Stenton began considering changes in governance by surveying board members to gain their perspective on their specific board roles, the tasks associated with these roles as well as the kinds of supports that could be helpful in carrying out their responsibilities. They also reviewed and shared governance materials from other organizations with similar missions to those of MFC as well as articles and papers on different types of governance structures for non-profit organizations.

2016 Planning

On February 20, 2016 the board held another planning retreat, again facilitated by Karon West. Six board members and two staff participated. During this retreat, the meeting members conducted an external environmental scan. Following this exercise, participants synthesized the key messages for strategy planning:

- Do we grow MFC?
- Do we diversify the repertoire of music?
- How will we use technology for administration and music functions?
- Will we increase the diversity of people served (multicultural)?
- How do we quantify the value to MFC membership?

Participants also reviewed MFC's existing mission, vision and values, which were developed as part of the 2012-2015 strategic plan. The meeting members unanimously agreed to continue to support MFC's existing vision, mission and values.

Additionally, participants agreed on three strategic directions that originated in the 2012 to 2015 plan:

- Excellence in choral music
- Engaged membership
- Outreach (community connections)

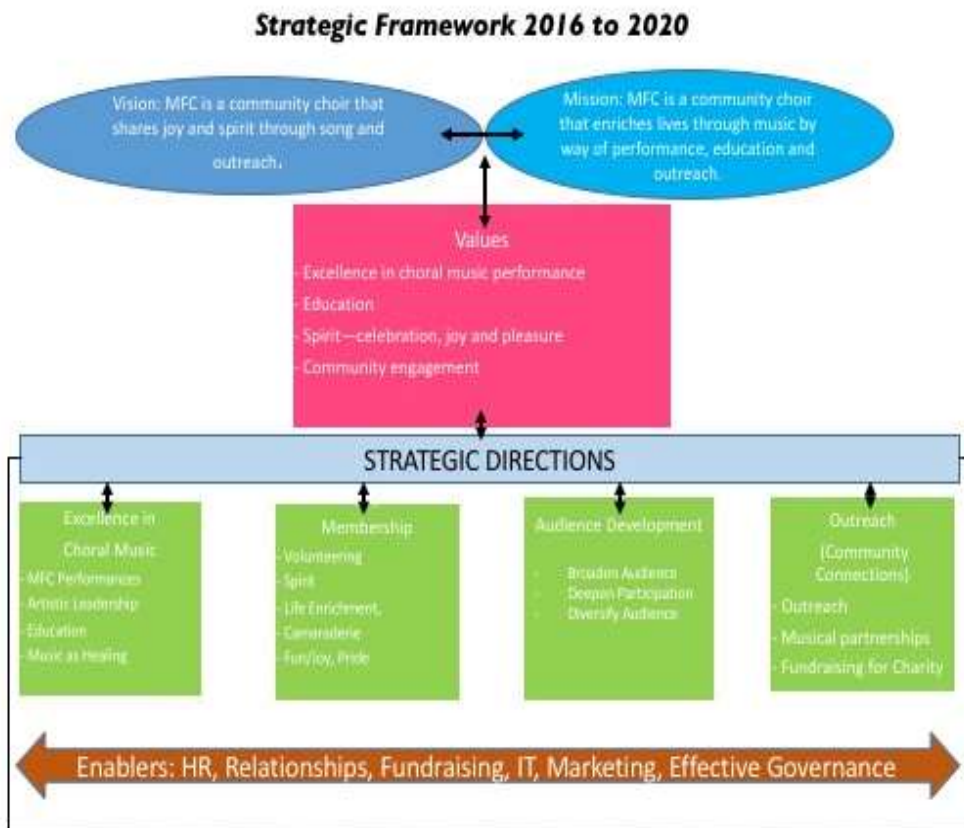
The fourth original strategic direction, Healthy Organization, was moved to support the three business directions. "Healthy Organization" strategic goals will enable the success of the three strategic directions and will include governance, human resources, technology, finance and other administrative initiatives.

During the February 21 retreat, participants decided that consulting support was necessary to complete the work on governance started by Kyley Cano and Sue Stenton. A new board committee with the same two members, plus Treasurer Wendy Chant, was formed to seek consulting support. IL Consulting was hired in April, 2016 and board restructuring is currently underway.

Additionally, during the retreat, members developed the foundation of a strategic plan. A

small committee was formed to build on the work of the retreat to create MFC’s strategic long-range plan for 2016 to 2020. The committee members were Administrative Director Susan Ritchie, Board Secretary Sue Stenton and Membership Director Ewa Romanowicz.

In summer 2016 the committee proposed adding a fourth strategic direction, “Audience Development.”



This strategic plan is intended to provide clear and measureable goals and outcomes, yet be flexible enough to respond and adapt to changes in MFC’s environment based on factors such as funding, marketing and outreach.

Key Trends

At the February 21 retreat, members conducted an external environmental scan with the goal of identifying key trends that would pose as opportunities and/or threats to MFC's future.

Opportunities for focus include:

- Choir member's longing to belong to a community with common interests and goals
- Growing interest of youth/young adults
- Use of technology for purposes of reaching greater numbers of people and application of technology in all aspects of music creation
- New music genres and styles
- Becoming more politically savvy
- Corporations looking for ways to engage with community
- The many grants available for vibrant community organizations

Potential threats as perceived by members include:

- Competition for grants available for community organizations
- Competition from Toronto music community
- Aging population may not be tech-savvy enough to be able to deal with tech demands
- Declining priority to Arts – education/funding etc.
 - City support
- New generation = different music styles from MFC's traditional repertoire
- Increased diversity of multi-ethnic populations
- Assessing monetary value of MFC to members
- Increasing costs of running choir

VISION OF THE FUTURE

MFC's vision and mission provide a common rallying call for all members to work together, feeling inspired and focused on what is possible to accomplish.

MFC Vision

Mississauga Festival Choir is a community choral organization that shares joy and spirit through song and outreach.

MFC Mission

Mississauga Festival Choir is a community choral organization that enriches lives through music by way of performance, education and outreach.

CORE VALUES

MFC's core values are shared beliefs among stakeholders that form the critical decision-making framework for what the organization does, with whom and how it goes about its business.

MFC Core Values

1. Excellence in choral music performance
2. Spirit – celebration, joy and pleasure
3. Education
4. Community engagement

FINGERPRINT

MFC's "fingerprint" communicates the primary feature or unique characteristic of the organization. Explaining MFC's uniqueness in an explicit, visible and compelling manner to others is an essential component of the marketing strategy.

MFC Fingerprint

For the love of singing. For the love of sharing song and music. For the love of building a community through music. This is Mississauga Festival Choir.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

As shown above, the collaborative planning process identified three key priority areas for goal setting over the next four years. These strategic directions are:

Strategic Direction 1: Excellence in Choral Music

Objective 1: To promote excellence and increase diversity in MFC's choral music performances.

- Partnerships with other music/arts groups
- Guest performers
- Repertoire...continue and increase diversity and doing "big, exciting stuff" such as Barra MacNeils concert to appeal to wider audience including different ethnicities
- Improve rehearsal quality

Objective 2: To increase educational opportunities for MFC members to enhance musical performance.

- Improve rehearsal quality
- Webinars
- Annual major workshop
- Enrichment opportunities
- Participate in large regional music festivals
- Organize a large music festival by 2020

Strategic Direction 2: Engaged Community***Objective 1: Inspire an inclusive/diverse feel of community within the choir***

- Ensure that MFC is a true, positive community in which members are active, informed and engaged participants

Objective 2: Recruit more members to help.

- Job descriptions
- Develop and execute marketing plan to publicize opportunities
- Use volunteers effectively
- Value and recognize volunteers

Strategic Direction 3: Outreach (Community Connections)***Objective 1: Have an established network of political/community contacts, organizations and businesses that can help MFC succeed***

- Political champion/advisor
- Partnerships with other organizations

Objective 2: Improve and increase community outreach activities

- Find new ways to serve the community
- Strengthen current projects (Festival of Friends and Raising Voices)

Strategic Direction 4: Audience Development***Objective 1: Broaden Audience***

- Continue to draw an increasing number of people to MFC concerts each year.

Objective 2: Deepen Participation

- Encourage existing audience members to attend more concerts each year
- Provide more opportunities for audience members to engage with MFC

Objective 3: Diversify Audience

- Broaden audiences, membership and board so they better represent our community in terms of cultural groups and ages

STRATEGIC ENABLERS FOR A HEALTHY ORGANIZATION***Operations***

- Enhance role clarity for staff
- Professional development

- Access experts to develop corporate relationships/champions
- Improve fundraising, including understanding of what MFC needs money for and how to get it
- Continue to professionalize the organization through IT management and initiatives and make IT a formal part of the organizational structure
- Marketing

Increase governance effectiveness

- Develop new governance model, capabilities and goals
- Revise governance structure
- Develop governance roles (terms of reference)
- Develop processes and accountabilities

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING CHART – STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Direction 1: Excellence in Choral Music

Objective 1: To promote excellence and increase diversity in MFC's choral music performances.

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Increase partnerships with other music/arts groups	Develop new partnerships	Artistic Advisory Committee	Ongoing	Minimum of one new partnership each year
Capture audience interest with dynamic, diverse repertoire	Continue to select dynamic, diverse repertoire	Artistic Director, Artistic Advisory Committee	Ongoing	Annual audience research indicates majority of audience enjoyed concert repertoire

Strategic Direction 1: Excellence in Choral Music

Objective 2: To increase educational opportunities for MFC members to enhance musical performance.

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Increase musical ability of members	Education program: webinars, workshops enrichment opportunities; improve rehearsal quality	Artistic Advisory Committee (subcommittee)	Development to begin January, 2017 Implement by 2018	New ed. program rollout takes place according to program plan; musical ability of members increases each year in AD'S judgement

Strategic Direction 2: Engaged Community***Objective 1: Inspire an inclusive/diverse feel of community within MFC choir***

- Ensure that MFC choirs is a true, positive community in which members are active, informed and engaged participants

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Increase understanding of member retention/attrition	Develop a process to understand causes of retention and attrition of members	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2017	Completion
	Develop a process to follow up with members who are missing rehearsals	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2017	Process will provide information about why members are missing rehearsals
Increase members sense of belonging (integration/commitment)	Developing new opportunities to become involved in the organization	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2018	Have at least 2 brand new member volunteering
	Develop financial assistance for members with lower income	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2017	Completion
	Develop additional social/integration activities outside of rehearsals	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2019	Organize at least one inclusive integration outing per year
Keep members informed and engaged in governance	Develop communication process between the board and choristers	Board; Choir Administrator	Implement by 2019	Completion

Strategic Direction 2: Engaged Community

Objective 2: Recruit more community members to help.

- Job descriptions
- Develop and execute marketing plan to publicize opportunities
- Use volunteers effectively; Value and recognize volunteers

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Increase member volunteering	Develop a program to track volunteer positions and their descriptions	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2017	Completion
	Engage members into volunteering	Membership Development Comm.	Implement by 2018	Increase the volunteer work of members by 10%
Increasing awareness of volunteer’s skills, abilities and willingness to become involved.	Develop a program to track skills inventory of all members	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2017	Completion
Increase number of outsourced volunteers	Develop and execute marketing plan to publicize opportunities	Communications and Marketing Committee	Implement by 2019	Minimum of 2 volunteers from outside of the organization
Value and recognize volunteers	Develop a program to track and measure volunteer effectiveness	Membership Development Committee	Implement by 2018	Completion

	Develop a program for recognizing volunteers	Finance and Administration Committee	Implement by 2018	Completion
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Strategic Direction 3: Outreach (Community Connections)

Objective 1: Have an established network of political/community contacts, organizations and businesses that can help MFCP succeed.

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Increase MFC’s presence, priority and cachet in Mississauga	Develop program to methodically create mutually beneficial relationships with key political/business and community leaders/organizations	Marketing Communications Committee (sub-committee or individual)	Relationship building program to begin January, 2017 and program to be ongoing thereafter	New program rollout takes place according to program plan; minimum of two new relationships with political leaders, two new relationships with business leaders and two new relationships with community leaders/organizations each year

Strategic Direction 3: Outreach (Community Connections)

Objective 2: Improve and increase community outreach activities.

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Ensure continued success and sustainability of Festival of Friends	Review event annually to consider results, improvements and changes, and set fundraising goal for following year	Concert and Events committee	Ongoing	Event achieves its fundraising goal each year.
Ensure continued success and sustainability of Raising Voices	Bring operations of the Raising Voices in line with MFC operations and organizational vision, mission and values	Finance and Administration Committee	Implement by 2017	Operations of Raising Voices is aligned with overall organization by end of 2016/17 season
	Include raising money for RV in fundraising plan	Fundraising Committee	Ongoing	Fundraising objective met each year
Develop new ways to serve the community	Review outreach efforts annually to consider result and changes and discuss ideas for and viability of new initiatives.	Board	Implement annually	In MFC board’s evaluation, the organization is serving the community at an appropriate level.

Strategic Direction 4: Audience Development***Objective: To increase our audience***

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Diversify our audiences to better reflect our community, in terms of culture, ethnicity, and age	Development and implementation of new marketing strategies	Marketing Director	Implement by 2019	A 10% growth in audience from diverse communities
	Repertoire choices that reflect diversity (culturally and musical styles)	Artistic Director	On-going	Inclusion of repertoire that reflects diverse cultural groups
	Recruitment of community members to Board and committees of the Board	Past-President And Committee Chairs	Implement by 2019	Increase in the number of Board members and committee participants who reflect the diversity in Mississauga
Deepen audience participation	Increase the number of subscription holders	Fundraising Committee Chair	Implement by 2019	Increase in audience for all three choirs
	Increase number of audience cross-over opportunities	Artistic Director Advisory Comm. and Concert/Event Comm.	Implement by 2019	As above
	Increase the number of tickets that choir members sell	Marketing and Communications committee	Implement by 2019	Increase member ticket sales by 20%

APPENDIX 2: PLANNING CHART – STRATEGIC ENABLERS

Strategic Enabler: Marketing

Objective: To increase the effectiveness of our marketing

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Develop new target markets	Make contact with other organizations and culturally diverse groups that operate in Mississauga	Marketing and Communications Director	Implement by 2019	Increase in significant contact with at least three culturally diverse arts organizations
Increase awareness of MFC and its associated choirs	Develop marketing strategies that promote links to associated choirs and opportunities for cross-fertilization Increase online presence	Marketing and Communications Director	Implement by 2019	Increased traffic on website and Facebook page
Develop individualized marketing tools	Develop tools that will support individual choir members' promotion of concerts and other MFC events	Marketing and Communications Director	Implement by 2018	Increase in the number of tickets sold by members

Strategic Enabler: Administrative and Operations

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Clarify staff roles	Review and update job descriptions	Finance and Administration Comm.	Implement by 2017	Job descriptions in keeping with actual duties and contractual expectations
	Develop policies related to HR including things such as prof. development, contractual obligations etc.	Board of Directors	Implement by 2017	
Manage IT and new initiatives	Identify areas where IT development is most needed in the organization	Membership Director	Implement by 2018	Completion of identification
	Develop/document policies & procedures for managing IT systems	Membership Director	Implement by 2018	Completion of policies and procedures
Improve fundraising capacity	Find resources to help us develop corporate relationships/champions	Fundraising Committee	Implement by 2020	Yearly fundraising targets will be met or exceeded

	Develop yearly fundraising plans that set an overall yearly target and specific targets for each fundraising activity	Fundraising Committee	Implement in 2017 and yearly thereafter	Yearly fundraising targets will be met or exceeded
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Strategic Enabler: Governance

Objective: To improve the capacity and the effectiveness of the organization's governance structure

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	EVALUATION
Adopt a new governance structure	Recruit Board members for newly created Board positions	Past President	Implement by Spring 2017	All positions filled with qualified members
	Populate new committees with the required membership	Committee Chairs/Vice Chairs	Implement by Fall 2017	All positions filled with qualified members
	Identify and address any gaps not captured by new governance structure	Board of Directors	Ongoing	
Develop processes and accountabilities	Develop work plans that will guide the implementation of committee goals	Each committee responsible for developing their own work plan	Implement by Dec. 2016	All goals successfully implemented

	Review and revise planning guidelines/ time frames	Finance & Administration Committee	Implement by Dec. 2016	All governance processes are identified and timelines for completion adhered to
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APPENDIX 3: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2023

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2023

CHANGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT – OPPORTUNITIES

“Hopeful” is the word that characterized our expectations as we faced this past year. While COVID -19 vaccines and other health strategies helped to ease the impacts of the pandemic, it was still necessary to exercise caution. We continued to provide online rehearsals (in real time and recorded) providing a flexible option to people who were ill or unavailable to attend rehearsals because of occasional time conflicts. The additional positive impact of having recorded access to rehearsals was that members also used them as tools to increase their practice opportunities.

While we have had members who have not returned to MFC over the pandemic, largely due to issues around use of technology or life changes, our numbers have remained stable. Over the past year we have continued to attract new members. These new members have brought an energy, enthusiasm and range of skill sets to the organization.

In 2023 we began to look at specific ways that we could celebrate MFC’s 40th anniversary. We wanted to find ways to celebrate and remind the community of our longevity and commitment to making music in Mississauga. We have in the past commissioned works by upcoming composers to add to our repertoire and premiere them in Mississauga. This past year we decided to set a 40th anniversary goal to commission and debut one new work at every 2024 concert pending successful fundraising efforts.

In weathering this pandemic, we have become acutely aware of our wise decision making and adeptness at finding new opportunities along with a flexibility in adapting to difficult circumstances.

CHALLENGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

There was a continued sense of caution in 2023 regarding new waves of COVID. Our sponsorship program still had not returned to its pre-pandemic level of giving. As a result, we had to postpone last year’s goal (2022) to reactivate the other choirs in our family (Resonance, Chamber Choir, Raising Voices) until the fall of 2023.

The decision to indefinitely postpone Choral Mosaic was made at the end of 2020 due to the changes in the environment that

would require considerable efforts in 2023 to meet the tight time lines necessary to launch the event. Other difficulties created by the length of time of the previous postponements due to COVID included establishing a new organizing committee, recruiting volunteers, finding new dates in 2023 available for both performers, workshop leaders and participants and acquiring new corporate sponsors. We were also experiencing difficulties with the venue in obtaining dates for 2023. We decided that until we had completed a rebuilding phase of the organization, we would not add to our workload and tax our energy and resources. Most importantly we felt that under the circumstances we could not deliver the full experience for Choral Mosaic that we had originally envisioned. However, we have already made important connections and have a road map of what needs to be done to ensure success of such a venture. We still have an interest in Choral Mosaic and a belief in its value to our organization and the City of Mississauga.

GOAL COMPLETION

Our 2023 spring concert was an important event as we were able to create a multi-media experience involving visual artists, videography and choral music that focussed on the environment, benefiting a local community environmental organization. This was in keeping with one of our previous year's goal to work collaboratively with other artists.

We also collaborated with the Mississauga Symphony orchestra, participating in their presentation of Star Wars and Gustav Holst's The Planets concerts. This gave us an excellent opportunity to enrich our musicianship and expand our reach into the community of Mississauga. In turn they enhanced our December concert with their beautiful orchestral accompaniments.

We have been successful at securing a new funding source. Due to advocacy on the part of our Board of Directors, we became eligible to apply for funding from the Ontario Arts Council. As a result, we were able to secure funding for a year with a subsequent opportunity for re-applying for continued funding.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2024 -2027

In May of 2023, we began the process for establishing MFC's new strategic directions for the next five years. Our first membership "Café" in spring of 2023 had two goals: to familiarize members with the vision, mission and goals of MFC and to have members begin to share with us the most important ways that they connect to the organization

The results of the initial process were very positive as members had much to share regarding their experiences as choir members. We learned a lot about what brought each choir member to join Mississauga Festival Choir and what is important to them in order to have a positive and valuable experience. The next stage of the process again involves getting the membership to reflect on the mission and values of the organization, identifying what aspects are the most important to them. In addition, they will be asked to reflect on how they currently connect with MFC and what other opportunities they might want to engage in. Lastly, we will be asking them for their dreams or "big ideas" for the organization. This is scheduled to happen at the beginning of October, 2023. We will then have a

planning day with our Board of Directors and staff in the new year to take this member information, along with the information, feedback and priorities we have ascertained from our funders and community supporters to determine our key strategic directions for the future, the goals relevant to each of them and the action plans and timelines to ensure their successful completion. The draft Strategic Directions will be taken to the membership for approval at our Spring Annual General Meeting in May, 2024. As we move through this process we are excited to plan for a future that shares choral music throughout our Mississauga community with respect, inclusivity and a joyful, vibrant energy.