

FIVE YEAR PLAN

Strategic Plan 2021–2026







BACK BAY CHORALE

THE POWER OF VOICE™

Mission

Share the power of voice, advancing the spirit of community.

Vision

A thriving community of musicians dedicated to the best in the choral arts, Back Bay Chorale will be a valued and leading participant in our region's musical, cultural, and civic conversation.

Statement of Priorities

Artistry | *Transformational and unifying*

Strive for dedication, rigor, accessibility, and generosity in all artistic endeavors, affirming music's transformational capacity to bridge societal divides and reveal our commonalities.

Chorale Membership | *Connected, supported, and inclusive*

Foster a community of musicians that shares a commitment to high standards of vocal artistry as well as to each other and to the organization.

Audience | *Engaged and loyal*

Strengthen and build enduring relationships with existing and new audiences.

Community Engagement | *Welcoming and uniting*

Engage with the larger society in performance, partnership, and service.

Organization | *Innovative and adaptive*

Maintain a robust and flexible Board and staff structure, fully equipped to meet the needs and aspirations of Back Bay Chorale's articulated vision.

Priority 1 — Artistry

Recognizing that the Arts, and particularly the Chorale’s repertoire of vocal/choral music, have a unique ability in our society to advance the spirit of community, Back Bay Chorale strives for dedication, rigor, accessibility, and generosity in all our artistic endeavors. In our performance and programming, Back Bay Chorale affirms music’s transformational capacity to bridge societal divides and reveal our commonalities.

To that end, Back Bay Chorale will:

GOAL A — perform revered masterworks with freshness and immediacy, commit to engagement with living composers to actively contribute to the future of the choral art, and though anchored by the core repertoire of the Western choral tradition, program with boldness, imagination, and curiosity.

GOAL B — leverage technology to broaden access to and engagement with the Chorale’s growing community, building on The Complete Chorister, the digital ESL Chorus, and the potential for meaningful connection with a virtual audience and community.

GOAL C — continue to support the musical and artistic development of our singers, supporters, and audience, with respect to the historical origins and musical structure of our choral repertoire, building on the success of The Complete Chorister.

GOAL D — assess the feasibility of making the Chorale’s performances more widely available through videorecording, live-streaming, or other digital technologies.

GOAL E — develop a three-year plan for the Chorale’s artistic activities, identifying major works to be performed, commissions, and other artistic projects in order to facilitate logistical and financial planning.

membership

Priority 2 — Chorale Membership

With the understanding that a vibrant organization derives its strength from and owes equal allegiance to its membership, Back Bay Chorale fosters a community of musicians that shares a commitment to high standards of vocal artistry as well as to each other and to the organization.

To that end, Back Bay Chorale will:

GOAL A — prioritize retention of current members and welcoming of new members to the community.

Objective 1 — Hold extracurricular social events for members that are accessible to all and foster new relationships.

Objective 2 — Provide support for new members to facilitate first-year navigation.

Objective 3 — Engage with the broader Boston choral community as a means of attracting potential new members and promoting awareness of the Chorale.

Objective 4 — Establish a process that incorporates the members' portal as a means of orienting new members to Chorale policies, practices, and expectations.

GOAL B — enhance efforts to engage with Chorale alumni.

GOAL C — encourage adoption of the members' portal of the Chorale's website to facilitate communication and community building.

Objective 1 — Request that each member upload a photo to his/her profile, or offer to take and submit an approved photo on the member's behalf.

Objective 2 — Request that each member upload a brief biography to his/her profile.

Objective 3 — Post rehearsal and concert logistics to the members' portal and encourage members to use the site.

Objective 4 — Evaluate the feasibility of using the website's Discussions capability to foster more communication and information sharing amongst Chorale members and as a partial replacement for the Chat list.

Objective 5 — Define a campaign of regular content updates to ensure that the website's materials are current, useful, and valuable to members.

audience

Priority 3 — Audience

With knowledge of the fact that musical performances depend on the existence of concertgoers with whom to communicate great art, Back Bay Chorale strengthens and builds enduring relationships with existing and new audiences.

To that end, Back Bay Chorale will:

GOAL A — grow our audience base through expanded relationships and broader exposure in the community, developing new and diverse audiences.

GOAL B — cultivate, delight, and engage the Chorale’s existing audience through sustained communication and connection.

Objective 1 — Provide an improved level of in-concert audience/customer service.

Objective 2 — Take steps to ensure that potential audience members are informed of measures taken by the Chorale to ensure audience safety at its performances.

GOAL C — develop a strategy to make the Chorale’s performances and other activities more accessible and attractive to our community.

Objective 1 — Expand accommodation for audience members with vision, hearing and/or mobility challenges.

community

Priority 4 — Community Engagement

Honoring the place where music meets mission, Back Bay Chorale engages with the larger society in performance, partnership, and service.

To that end, Back Bay Chorale will:

GOAL A — seek to align and converge community engagement priorities with state and local initiatives.

GOAL B— develop a multi-year plan for Bridges, including intended partnerships, calendars, and communities.

GOAL C — ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided to support the Chorale’s engagement aspirations.

Objective 1 — Provide dedicated administrative support for the Chorale’s engagement activities.

Objective 2 — Seek dedicated and renewable funding for the Chorale’s engagement activities.

Objective 3 — Establish a Board-level committee focused on engagement opportunities.

GOAL D — encourage reliable participation in engagement activities.

Objective 1 — Expand external (non-Chorale member) participation in Chorale sponsored or organized events.

Objective 2 — Expand internal participation in Chorale sponsored or organized events.

GOAL E — increase the visibility of the Chorale and expand its attraction to diverse communities.

Objective 1 — Develop and maintain up-to-date collateral, in both print and digital formats, focused on Bridges, ESL chorus, and other successful engagement activities.

Objective 2 — Identify desirable relationships and develop targeted outreach strategies.

Objective 3 — Fund, advertise, and expand successful programs with cross-cultural appeal.

GOAL F — seek one or more peer organizations, outside of the Greater Boston area, with whom the Chorale can connect its engagement activities and “create a national thread.”

GOAL G — endeavor to make the Chorale’s performance activities and resources accessible to community participants in Bridges activities.

organization

Priority 5 — Organization

Acknowledging the need to support all other priorities with operational stability, Back Bay Chorale maintains a robust and flexible Board and staff structure, fully equipped to meet the needs and aspirations of the organization’s articulated vision.

To that end, Back Bay Chorale will:

GOAL A — maximize the effective use of technology to manage and increase resources, enhance recruitment and retention, coordinate communications, develop new opportunities for engagement, broaden awareness of the Chorale within and beyond the Greater Boston area, and support organizational decision-making.

Objective 1 — Enhance and sustain robust internal communication and engagement, using effective and appropriately updated technology, to deliver attentively curated content, provide easily accessible information and resource repositories for staff and members, and create opportunities for interaction with and between members.

Objective 2 — Enhance and sustain robust public-facing marketing and communications, by way of a consistently curated, intuitively designed, modern, attractive, and easily discoverable website, along with related cloud-based services, providing up-to-date resources for audiences, membership, current and potential donors, artistic and business partners, the media, and other constituents.

Objective 3 — Define a clear social media and digital content strategy, along with any necessary supporting roles, to promote and provide access to Chorale news, music, services, and engagement opportunities.

Objective 4 — Implement electronic/mobile ticketing technologies, where available, to provide enhanced data collection opportunities and to improve end-to-end convenience and efficiency in the concert-going experience for both audiences and staff.

Objective 5 — Review, refine, and where practical, consolidate the list of technology tools used to support Back Bay Chorale and its mission, to foster clarity, reduce the need for disparate training, and increase the interoperability of systems.

Objective 6 — Where available, practical, and consistent with artistic goals, elevate the concert experience through the use of visual and audio enhancements, such as supertitles or Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs).

GOAL B — enhance and sustain a vigorous program of institutional advancement.

Objective 1 — Establish and maintain an annually repeatable timeline for the Executive Director’s and Development Committee’s collaborative drafting of a combined individual and organizational fundraising plan for the next fiscal year, and for the presentation of that plan to the Board, for its consideration.

Objective 2 — Implement a campaign to promote awareness of the importance of the annual fund campaign and to increase membership in the Larry Hill Society.

Objective 3 — While seeking to sustain and grow the current levels of member and non-member individual giving, formulate an aggressive plan to seek multi-year corporate/business giving and partnerships.

Objective 4 — Conduct a feasibility study and, to the extent possible, establish a diversified portfolio of giving methods and opportunities, potentially including but not limited to planned giving and directed giving opportunities.

Objective 5 — Explore the feasibility of initiating a capital campaign in support of the establishment of an endowment fund and/or dedicated reserve fund for special projects and concerts.

GOAL C — commit to a robust program of care and education for current Board members to optimize each member’s term of service, and to underscore and preserve the governance role of the Board.

Objective 1 — In addition to identifying future Board members, the Board President, in partnership with the Leadership Committee, will guide current Board members to outline goals for each year of their term of service, identifying possible committee placement as well as potential leadership positions.

Objective 2 — While properly executing the Board’s fiduciary and stewardship obligations, structure Board meeting agendas to also maximize the time spent in creative, long-range discussion and planning.

Objective 3 — Strongly encourage the active participation of every Board member and employ innovative strategies to support the Leadership Committee in identifying, fostering, and where appropriate actively recruiting new internal and external prospects for Board membership and/or participation in Chorale committees, task forces, advisory panels, and other leadership roles.

Objective 4 — Review and revise the criteria for Board membership to ensure that the Board is broadly representative of the communities the Chorale serves, while continuing to support the organization’s financial well-being.

Objective 5 — Establish a recurring schedule to review and, as necessary, update the Board manual.

GOAL D — hire a full-time Executive Director to supervise Chorale operations and serve as the public face of the organization, and do so at the earliest possible time in FY22, with a plan for full funding for the first three years.

GOAL E — commit to a robust program of care and education for staff members, to maximize individual and collective knowledge and efficiency and to support the effective execution of the operational role of the staff.

Objective 1 — Enable and support access to appropriate professional development opportunities for staff, to encourage growth and enhance understanding of and facility with the tools, practices, and policies encountered in support of the organizational mission.

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