



Georgian Bay Symphony

Strategic Framework for 2024-2030

Tradition and Innovation: Towards the Future

Land Acknowledgement

The Georgian Bay Symphony performs on the traditional lands of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations.

The Symphony acknowledges with respect the history, spirituality, culture, enduring knowledge, and relationships with the land of the Anishinaabe peoples that continues to this day. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live, create and perform on this territory.

Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success. - Pablo Picasso

1. Introduction

Like many small, volunteer-led arts organizations, the Georgian Bay Symphony (GBS) experienced multiple challenges related to the widespread global, societal, and economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.

The previous strategic plan was built in 2018 with a four-year span to 2022. While there were many strengths embodied by its proposed goals, the plan is long out of date and does not reflect the current context and realities in a post-pandemic world.

Recognizing the need for its own post-pandemic recovery, the Board of Directors committed to a reinvigoration process to become stronger, more resilient, and relevant. To achieve this goal, the GBS Board of Directors successfully sought funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for consulting support to undertake a strategic planning process in 2023-2024, with an objective to create a new strategic framework for 2024-2030 that would set the path for the future, providing clear guidance and actions for the next six years in support of GBS' long-term strength and sustainability. *

*[The intent of the six-year timeframe is to equip the Board to have a broad long-term vision, and to establish realistic annual goals that will serve as the steps on the journey toward achieving the vision. The Framework would be reviewed annually by the Board, as it sets the next year's priorities. At the three-year mark, a process to refresh the plan would take place.]

Fast forward to the vantage point of 2024. Where are we today? Throughout the planning process, we have deepened our understanding of how the external environment is continuing to change, creating both challenges and opportunities for classical music and community arts organizations.

As stated by Ian Yeates, Board Chair of the Regina Symphony Orchestra in a February 15, 2024 article: *"The return to normal from the lingering effects from the COVID pandemic has not yet been experienced by the RSO and the Canadian orchestral world in general."*

Many community orchestras and arts organizations have struggled to regain their financial footing, to replace prior sources of revenue, and attract audiences, musicians, and volunteers. Some have accessed emergency funding support as a stopgap measure, and others have closed.

Like its counterparts in other communities, GBS faces similar challenges, ranging from an aging audience and lack of local government support, the reduction of music programs in schools, as well as societal issues including the crises of addiction and homelessness in the communities it serves. But at the same time, GBS retains an avid base of enthusiastic fans and has weathered the pandemic while building new skills and digital offerings and is still referred to with pride as a gem in the region. There are opportunities to build from, and this has been the focus of the strategic planning process.

This new strategic framework supports GBS to build on its strengths and leverage emerging opportunities. It offers a focused strategy for the future to enable GBS to align its artists, programming, fundraising, marketing, and governance. The strategy highlights the importance of continuing to foster deep connections and a community-wide interest and appreciation of music, and to build deeper and broader relationships with various audiences. It integrates the importance of outreach to youth through education and engagement programs that will inspire the next generation of musicians and audience members. It will drive organizational strength and effectiveness by attracting, developing, and retaining diverse talent for the board, volunteer, and symphony membership. And it is grounded in building a sustainable financial foundation to support future growth through donor development, strong programming, and sound financial practices.

As we look to the future, GBS is prepared to be bold and courageous about the changes that we know are needed, and committed to creating the future we aspire to for our community.

"Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it." – Alan Lakein.

2. Painting the picture of our future - Georgian Bay Symphony in 2030

At its strategy session in February 2024, the Board of Directors participated in a process to create their image of the future for the Symphony, looking ten years ahead, even further than the end date of this next strategic plan. With optimism and imagination, the process revealed an impressive commitment to a future that will be marked by growth, sustainability, relevance, innovation, partnership, and diversity.

To create their description of the future, everyone answered the following five questions:

1. **Leading:** Where should we be leading in the future?
2. **Reaching:** What audiences are we reaching in 5 years?
3. **Leveraging:** What new ways are we leveraging our strengths 5 years from now?
4. **Operating:** What scale are we operating at in 5 years [financials, orchestra, board, staff, volunteers, etc.]?
5. **Celebrating:** What are we celebrating on the 55-60th anniversary?

The following statements distill the inputs from all the responses and discussion, capturing a summary picture of the future in 2030.

In 2030, Georgian Bay Symphony is ...

LEADING

Standing at the forefront of its region within the province as a distinguished community orchestra, pioneering through inventive programming and concert experiences. It not only pushes and evolves its musicians but also captivates and involves a wide range of audiences, guiding the community towards a richer cultural landscape.

REACHING

Extending its musical embrace across the region, drawing in community members who may never have before experienced the magic of a symphony concert. Faithfully preserving its cherished 60 years old?+ audience base, GBS also inspires those aged 30-60 to discover the realm of symphonic music. It places a fresh focus on crafting performances that are accessible and appealing to families and youth, featuring programming that is as engaging as it is relevant.

LEVERAGING

Harnessing its strengths by integrating innovative digital components into its programming, forming distinctive collaborations and partnerships with arts, educational and youth organizations. This approach showcases its extensive reach and underscores its significance throughout the region.

OPERATING

A beacon of financial sustainability, operating with a robust annual budget of \$250K, powered by dedicated staff member, governed by a strategic Board that has grown from 8 to 12 members, and supported by 50-100 passionate volunteers. Numerous multi-year partnerships ensure its enduring impact and success.

CELEBRATING: Growth, Sustainability; Relevance; Innovation; Diversity

Celebrated as the Georgian Bay Region's artistic crown jewel, renowned for its vibrant and innovative performances that attract a diverse tapestry of audience and orchestra members of all ages and walks of life.

3. Our Vision, Mission, and Values

The best vision statements are inspirational, clear, memorable, and concise. They speak to the big issues that an organization is aiming to address. With this 2024-2030 strategic framework, GBS's vision and mission statements have been updated to reflect our aspirations and integral role, supported by a tagline. Values statements capture the core guidance for our organizational culture, supporting us in our aspirations.

Our Vision:

A community where live music connects people from all walks of life to inspire a more vibrant and creative region.

Our Mission:

The Sound of Grey Bruce - The Georgian Bay Symphony harnesses music's inspirational power through performances, educational programs, and community engagement, enriching the Grey Bruce region's quality of life with meaningful experiences and connections.

Tagline

Your Community, Your Symphony

Motto:

Music you love, played by people you know.

Our Values Statement:

As we look to the future, we remain committed to our values and to actively living by example. Our values guide us daily and are at the core of our organizational culture.

Our value statements reflect the essence of "The Sound of Grey Bruce". At the Georgian Bay Symphony, we believe in the transformative power of music to inspire and uplift. Our artistic integrity in performances, educational outreach, and community engagement drives us to enrich the Grey Bruce region. We value meaningful experiences, deep connections, and the enhancement of quality of life through the universal language of music.

Values Statements

INSPIRATION

We believe in music's power to inspire and uplift communities.

ARTISTIC INTEGRITY

We are committed to delivering exceptional symphonic experiences which embrace innovation to ensure relevance, impact and cultural enrichment.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We welcome and celebrate diversity, aiming to connect in a meaningful way with all members and collaborators of our community thereby fostering deeper connections and amplifying our impact.

EDUCATION

We value the role of music education in developing talent and appreciation among all ages.

SUSTAINABILITY

We are committed to the long-term sustainability of our programs and initiatives.

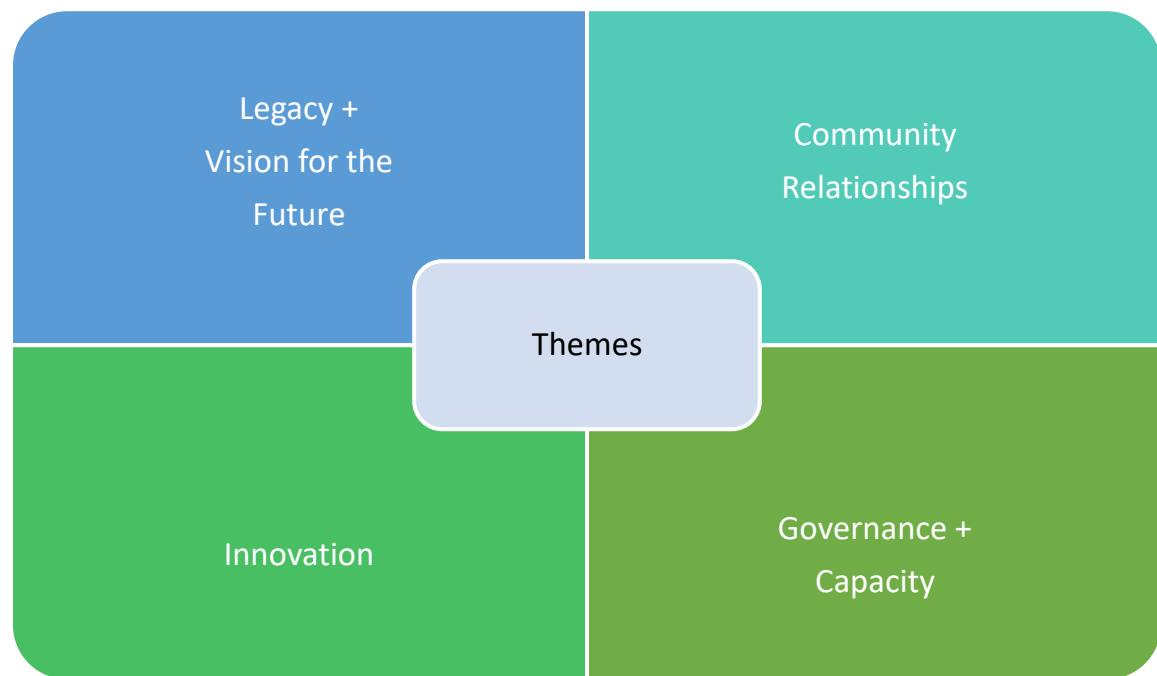
4. Key emerging themes and issues

In the face of a rapidly evolving cultural landscape, the Georgian Bay Symphony stands at a pivotal juncture, poised to embrace the future with vigor and vision. The comprehensive SWOT analysis, external scan along with the brainstorming session conducted with the Board have underscored the critical importance of innovation, community engagement and leadership in navigating the challenges and seizing the opportunities that lie ahead.

As GBS looks to expand its legacy and enrich its community cultural fabric, it recognizes the need to expand its reach and relevance, strengthen its organizational leadership including governance and build upon its strong legacy which is at its foundation. This strategic plan is the roadmap to a vibrant sustainable future, outlining the organization's commitment to revitalizing its artistic integrity, deepening its community connections, and cultivating a resilient and forward-thinking organization.

By addressing these key emerging issues and themes, GBS is dedicated to not only sustaining its esteemed tradition of artistic integrity but also ensuring its relevance and impact for generations to come.

We can distill the above into the following core themes:



From these core themes, three distinct Strategic Directions become evident. These directions represent strategic focus areas critical to the long-term success of the organization. They serve as a framework for action, guiding the organization's objectives and activities. Each direction addresses a specific aspect for the organization's overall strategy.

- ***Nurturing Vitality:*** This direction focuses on enhancing the artistic integrity, financial health and overall vitality of the organization and its community. It implies investing in resources, activities and practices that promote innovation, sustainability, and longevity.
 - **Themes:** Innovation, Legacy, Capacity
 - **Core issues addressed:** Financial instability, Aging Audience, Limited diversity in programming
 - **Values aligned:** Inspiration, Artistic Integrity
- ***Cultivating Community:*** This direction emphasizes the importance of creating and sustaining strong relationships among members of the organization and its broader community. It involves fostering a sense of belonging, partnership, and mutual support, which are vital for achieving collective goals.
 - **Themes:** Community relationships, Future Vision, Capacity
 - **Core issues addressed:** Connection to local music scene, Audience Engagement, Brand Awareness/Enhancement
 - **Values aligned:** Inclusive Community Engagement, Education
- ***Strengthening Leadership:*** This direction emphasizes the enhancement and capacity development of leadership in governance, artistic direction, and operations, all which are crucial for the organization's long-term impact. It implies either making necessary changes, investing in building capacity or cultivating leadership potential to ensure the organization is well-equipped to face future challenges and opportunities with resilient, visionary, and strong leadership.
 - **Themes:** Governance & Capacity, Legacy
 - **Core issues addressed:** Lack of strong leadership (artistic and board), lack of resources (people power), Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)
 - **Values aligned:** Sustainability, Inclusive Community Engagement

In Section 7, the three Strategic Directions will be further described, with the accompanying proposed Objectives and sample Actions.

5. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The consultants interviewed each Board Director and the Business Manager to surface a range of issues related to the current reality and future aspirations of the Georgian Bay Symphony. The content from the interviews and additional background information from document review was summarized into the categories of internal Strengths and Weaknesses, and external Opportunities and Threats.

The master overview below has guided the development of the Strategic Framework, which strives to capitalize on GBS's strengths, address its weaknesses, leverage emerging opportunities, and mitigate the threats GBS faces.

a. Internal Strengths and Weaknesses identified: (see table below)

STRENGTHS: <i>What are the top differentiating strengths of our organization today?</i>	WEAKNESSES <i>What are the top strategic weaknesses of our organization today?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong community connection and pride in the symphony. Desire to leave a legacy• Dedicated musicians and a devoted patrons• Successful online programming during the pandemic• Small group of committed board members and volunteers• Good standing amongst amateur musicians• Legacy organization, 52-year history• Given demographics, area primed for classical music• Only game in town, no other orchestra in the region, Symphony's presence is part of the vibrant arts community in Owen Sound (and communities in the catchment area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizational challenges, including challenges in recruitment of volunteers and new musicians• Absence of artistic leadership position• Organizational culture with an Us vs Them mentality• Shift downward in wider audience engagement• Geographical limitations, over-reliance on the Owen Sound area• Governance issues, including lack of clarity on goals and leadership, need for board rejuvenation• Reactive rather than proactive management• Limited variety in programming and audience• Not connected enough to local music scene, eg. Kiwanis• Dependence on small number of personnel and/or funders• Challenges in adapting to new technologies or trends in music• Weak to no government relationships

b. External Opportunities and Threats identified: (see table below)

At the strategy session on February 12, 2024, the Board confirmed the highest priority opportunities and threats from a longer list that had been developed. The table below focuses only on the highest priority topics, based on the voting and discussion during the session.

OPPORTUNITIES: <i>What key opportunities could we leverage over the next 5 years?</i>	THREATS: <i>What key threats might inhibit our progress over the next 5 years?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilizing technology for innovative concert experiences• Collaborations with other cultural organizations and educational institutions• Developing new generations of musicians and increasing GBS's profile through school outreach and potential establishment of a GBS music school (recognizing local music programs are closing, leveraging GBS to address an important issue)• Participate in regional arts planning through enhanced relationships with local, provincial and federal offices• Expanding geographical reach and outreach into nearby growing communities through partnerships and expanded programming/attracting funders committed to community outreach• Government relationships to help the cause of healing the spirit of the region = how symphony can NOW be seen = as opportunity for social cohesion, positive connection of community and music• Relevance of mission - identify ways to provide community healing/addressing social problems through music/ integrating social impact, a vision that brings hope to the region and communities• Reach new residents of the region who don't yet know about GBS or haven't yet attended a concert.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downward shift in audience engagement due to factors like more home bodies, aging audience members, economic issues such as decreasing disposable income for entertainment purposes• Us vs Them mentality between musicians and the Board, potentially hindering collaboration and progress, potentially affecting the existence of the orchestra in five years due to the challenges• Importance of securing the Music Director position• Board and volunteer renewal - Lack of skilled volunteers to serve on the Board, and as volunteers• Lack of innovation in programming and strategy• Changing demographics and cultural interests in the region

6. Environmental Scan Themes – GBS - 2024

No organization, group, program, or neighborhood is immune to outside events and forces. The following themes surfaced during the strategic planning process related to the forces and facts that the GBS does not control, including political, economic, social, and technological factors.

As context, it is helpful to recognize that other similar community arts groups are facing challenges arising from these current day realities. The Strategic Framework takes these topics into account in how the directions, objectives and actions are framed.

Political Factors	Economic Factors
<p><i>-government type and stability; changes in the political environment; policies affecting organizations</i></p> <p>-Activism needed to increase financial support for arts organizations (eg. submissions to provincial and federal budget consultations)</p> <p>-Difficult time for the arts across Canada – massive disruption occurred</p> <p>-Role of Community Services Recovery Funds (federal CSRF) to support upgrading and modernizing operations.</p> <p>-Government emergency funding has ended</p> <p>-Important relationship with provincial, federal and municipal governments across catchment area served by an organization</p> <p>-Relationship with education – school boards and trustees</p>	<p><i>-stage of business cycle; impact of globalization; labour costs; likely changes in the economic environment (local, national); funding sources; where the business is located (physical space)</i></p> <p>-Post-COVID recovery is gradual</p> <p>-Funding challenges for arts organizations</p> <p>-Physical space challenges for venues</p> <p>-Affordability crises in Canadian cities</p> <p>-Bankruptcy filings for some arts organizations</p> <p>-New strategies for funding required</p> <p>-Need to increase focus on patrons, donors and sponsors to augment ticket sales</p> <p>-Partnership potential with other non-profits</p> <p>-Financial challenges from multiple directions affecting all arts organizations – costs are up; revenues from customers are down; infrastructure, staffing, creative and artistic costs all affected</p>

<u>Social Factors</u>	<u>Technologic Factors</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -demographics/changes; future trends in the field/culture; population health, education, and social mobility; lifestyle choices and attitudes; buying patterns -Audiences are returning, but not to the same extent as pre-pandemic -Turnover and vacancies in orchestras -Live performance matters for community engagement -Orchestras with a blend of volunteer and paid members may be better able to adapt -Need for experimentation with different experiences to attract new residents (eg. people relocating to the region from urban centres) and demographics – program innovation -Importance of increasing reach and diversity to orchestra sustainability – youth, racial diversity, economic diversity, etc. -Attracting new audiences through guest appearances of relevant artists from diverse backgrounds -Engaging local talent in new ways -Understanding of regional demographics -Arts as catalyst for social impact – improve the life of the community; reduce isolation, increase belonging; increase access to education for young people -Solve or mitigate a community issue and increase relevance -A ‘whole and healthy community’ must have a relevant, vibrant symphony orchestra that gives meaning to people’s lives and contributes to overall community health -Opportunity to address the disconnect between classical music listeners and local orchestra patrons -Lasting change will require active participation of all members of the organization (staff, volunteers, Board, musicians) and strong, consistent, strategic leadership in the planning and implementation of transformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -research and development activity; impact of emerging technologies; impact of technology transfer; innovation -Digital strategies used during COVID no longer the focus (digital pivot used to retain audiences) -Online concerts produced activity, without a sufficient revenue model to be sustainable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – need to determine the role digital performance/livestream should play -Digital initiatives require a significant investment in skills and infrastructure, and marketing to draw attention to their availability -Digital tools support adaptability as the world in which the arts exist keeps evolving

7. Strategic Directions, Objectives and Actions

Building on the groundwork laid within the prior strategic plan, three Strategic Directions have been confirmed for 2024-2030: Nurturing Vitality; Cultivating Community; Strengthening Leadership.

The Directions relate to the vision and mission of the GBS, its core purpose, and to the picture of the future developed together. Each Direction outlines commitments to this area of focus, as well as overarching objectives.

The Objectives and Actions build on the content in the SWOT analysis and the environmental scan. Each Objective will require an action plan to support annual implementation. Sample actions are shared below.

At the implementation planning stage, key Performance Indicators will be created to track and report on progress over the period of the plan.

A. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Directions	1. <i>Nurturing Vitality</i> Enhance artistic integrity, financial health, and organizational vitalness	2. <i>Cultivating Community</i> Foster, create and sustain long-lasting, responsive connections to our geographic, demographic, and societal communities	3. <i>Strengthening Leadership</i> Enhance leadership in equity, governance, and operations, equipping the organization to face future opportunities and challenges
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B. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2024-2028

Direction 1- Nurturing Vitality Enhance artistic integrity, financial health, and organizational vitalness.	Objectives for 2024-2030
Our Commitments: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We are committed to the highest possible artistic standards and creative programming by consistently producing symphonic programs with exceptional quality.2. We are committed to strengthening our resources to build capacity and resilience.3. We are committed to creating enriching musical experiences for a variety of audiences and artists, using performances to build	Artistic Integrity & Innovation: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop initiatives to increase diversity in orchestra membership and programming, thereby increasing relevance and reach.a. Create art that challenges our musicians, offers greater artistic opportunities, and captures the audience's imagination.b. Create opportunities for local artist development.c. Expand audience and donor cultivation initiatives

<p>community, musical understanding, and enjoyment.</p>	<p>to connect with a variety of supporters year-round.</p> <p>Financial health and sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengthen the resources needed to build capacity and develop sustainably by increasing revenues from existing sources and diversify revenue streams. b. Advocate for increased public funding. c. Manage rate of change to ensure financial sustainability. <p>Audience development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Deepen audience understanding and connection to the music through education and outreach initiatives. e. Increase the variety of audiences served by expanding the range of inspiring offerings, including the number of people experiencing our performances and engaging in our activities. f. Enhance organizational vitality and sustainability through strategic partnerships and geographic expansion. g. Enhance GBS website and social media presence to improve engagement and attract broader audiences.
<p>Direction 2: Cultivating Community</p> <p>Foster, create and sustain long-lasting, responsive connections to our geographic, demographic and societal communities</p>	<p>Objectives for 2024-2030</p>
<p>Our Commitments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are committed to sharing music widely with the Georgian Bay region communities through community-based programming and education activities. 	<p>Educational Programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support music education by establishing and cultivating viable relationships with school districts.

<p>2. We are committed to collaborating, taking the time to understand the needs, build and develop relationships, and propose programs that are accessible and link to existing community activity.</p> <p>3. We are committed to long term action with well thought out programs that offer consistency and growth for all participants.</p>	<p>b. Advocate for support for music education and creative youth development with Council and government funding.</p> <p>c. Invest in young artists to create pipeline for Youth Orchestra.</p> <p>Social impact/Partnership development</p> <p>a. Enhance and expand community relations efforts to increase engagement and accessibility. Expand role in civic life through learning what the community values.</p> <p>b. Expand collaborative partnerships to enhance impact in the greater Grey Bruce region based on identified priorities.</p> <p>c. Fulfill role as an anchor organization, musical leader, key collaborator, and partner, that is as a resource for the Georgian Bay cultural community.</p> <p>d. Act as allies for those seeking equity, diversity, inclusion, access, and reconciliation.</p>
<p>Direction 3: Strengthening Leadership</p> <p>Enhance leadership in equity, governance, and operations, equipping the organization to face future opportunities and challenges</p>	<p>Objectives for 2024-2030</p>
<p>Our Commitments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are committed to expanding our awareness, valuing new voices and perspectives, and addressing equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and reconciliation within our work. We commit to regular reflection and ongoing accountability by implementing actions in a spirit of collaboration and respect. 2. We commit to embracing good governance and 	<p>Enhance diversity, equity and inclusion</p> <p>a. Review organization's strengths and gaps with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring consideration of the region's diversity of cultures and artists.</p> <p>b. Develop priority areas for action related to each area of the operation (from Board to audience, partnerships, and performance) and a statement of commitment to these actions.</p>

<p>responsibly developing and stewarding our resources (human, financial and artistic), ensuring our long-term sustainability and capacity to deliver on our vision and mission for the community.</p> <p>3. We commit to communicating with transparency and seek to build leadership throughout our organization, incorporating the voices of artistic leaders, Board, musicians, staff, and volunteers in our decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Increase the diversity (age, gender, geography, ethnicity, income, education, cultural background) of people experiencing our performances and engaging in our activities. d. Equip and support musicians, staff, board, and volunteers to have transparent and respectful dialogue with each other. <p>Strengthen Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review governance best practices to identify priorities for action to support the Board in its next stage of development. b. Review current By-Laws and Board's governance policies to confirm priority areas to support Board composition, succession planning, nominations, and policy development. c. Build a Board and volunteer base whose composition reflects the diversity of the community we serve. d. Enhance Board development and ongoing learning to support effective governance leadership. <p>Enhance operational effectiveness (digital capacity, communications, organizational culture, impact measurement)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengthen digital capacity, platforms and training for staff and volunteers. b. Create and foster a culture that includes a consistent and transparent communications process and internal collaboration across the organization (Board, staff, committees, orchestra). c. Ensure communications reflect values and priorities.
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	<p>d. Develop clear objectives and measurable impact statistics for all programs.</p> <p>e. Ensure compliance with legal requirements, internal objectives, and processes.</p> <p>f. Lead, champion, and sustain the changes needed.</p>
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C. OBJECTIVES AND SAMPLE ACTIONS FOR 2024-2030

The 2018-2022 Strategic Plan included six Goals, each with a series of actions. An important exercise will be to review this list, determine which actions have been completed; identify any which should be carried forward; and to clarify which are a good fit as actions within the new Directions and Objectives of the 2024-2030 plan. This process to review the prior plan and integrate actions for the new plan is included as an action in the Direction 3: Strengthening Leadership.

<u>Direction 1: Nurturing Vitality -- Objectives</u>	<u>Sample Actions 2024-2030</u>
<i>Artistic Integrity and Innovation</i>	
Develop initiatives to increase diversity in orchestra membership and programming, thereby increasing relevance and reach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the objectives from Goal 3 in the 2018-2022 strategic plan related to resourcing the artistic music direction function and finalize the staffing plan to implement these areas. • Seek fresh ways to present traditional favourites. • Partner with creative artists who bring new and deeper experiences. • Create space for diverse artists and new music, expand repertoire choices to include lesser-known excellent works and composers. • Research Canada Council Strategic Initiatives program to assist in funding for digital presentations. • Maintain membership and affiliation with Orchestra Canada, sharing ideas with the smaller orchestras in Ontario and Canada.
Create art that challenges our musicians, offers greater artistic opportunities, and captures the audience's imagination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster ongoing relationships with guest artists / conductors to expand skill and capacity. • Enhance support for professional development.
Create opportunities for local artist development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with local artists and music groups for joint concerts and/or events, promoting diversity in programming.

Financial Health and Sustainability	
Expand audience and donor cultivation initiatives to connect with a variety of supporters year-round.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design clearly delineated and integrated development campaigns, such as corporate and or chair sponsorships, Monthly Giving, Planned Giving, Major Donor, Estate, etc
Strengthen the resources needed to build capacity and develop sustainably by increasing revenues from existing sources and diversifying revenue streams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore and expand project funding from a range of sources. EG; Foundations, Trillium for Civic Engagement, Ontario Creates, Canadian Experiences Fund. ● Create a Board-designated Reserve Fund (an action of the 2018-2022 plan - was this completed?)
Advocate for increased public funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore ways to turn the strength of its profile into tangible support. Meeting with BIA, local council to make case for GBS funding, given its presence and significance for the region. Possible dollars. ● Meet with relevant government leaders at all levels to share updated strategic plan, vision, mission – and seek inclusion in the process of cultural plan development.
Manage rate of change to ensure financial sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build a library of financial planning resources from the broader non-profit sector.
Audience Development	
Deepen audience understanding and connection to the music through education and outreach initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide opportunities for the community to engage with music outside the concert hall. ● Pursue programs including Artist talks in schools, retirement homes. ● Pitch to local radio stations to have a 20-minute feature.
Increase the variety of audiences served by expanding the range of inspiring offerings, , including the number of people experiencing our performances and engaging in our activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect feedback post event surveys, focus groups and online forums to gather qualitative insights on audience experiences and engagement levels.
Enhance organizational vitality and sustainability through strategic partnerships and geographic expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and pursue partnerships with local businesses, cultural institutions, and educational identities to expand orchestra's reach and impact. ● Explore opportunities for performances in neighbouring communities to build regional presence. ● Develop targeted marketing strategy to attract audiences from a wider geographic area.

Enhance GBS website and social media presence to improve engagement and attract broader audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada Council Strategic Initiatives program to hire someone to do marketing. Make a case how digital programming was a success and works for the region, something to build upon.
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Direction 2: Cultivating Community -- Objectives	Sample Actions - 2024-2030
<i>Educational Activity</i>	
Support music education by establishing and cultivating viable relationships with school districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with area schools and survey to understand their needs. Use key learnings to develop programs either live or virtual. • Help low-income students with access to instruments, potential corporate sponsorship opportunity with Long and McQuade.
Advocate for support for music education and creative youth development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make case for more arts funding with local council and school boards. Create a new way of talking about the impact of GBS using data points, reframing the understanding of the value to the community. • Research appropriate foundations to fund educational programs and/or to reinstate Youth Orchestra, mentorship programs, Guest Artist mentorship programs
Invest in young artists to create pipeline for Youth Orchestra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and assess current ways of connecting to and attracting young people (eg. awards programs, etc.) to determine strengths and gaps. • Incorporate the voices and leadership of young people in GBS' work, including "think tanks" and advisory groups. • Partner with local schools and youth organizations to offer workshops, in school performances, discounted ticket prices / or free, youth-oriented concerts. • Create youth targeted engagement opportunities such as Open Dress Rehearsals for specific age groups and audiences. Strengthen partnership with local youth groups
<i>Social Impact / Local Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form Education/Outreach Committee to assist GM with this work
Expand collaborative partnerships to enhance impact in greater Grey Bruce area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct needs assessment with existing community relationships to determine gaps and opportunities. • Develop strategies to build relationships in those

	areas. Performances help to increase awareness and promote GBS to broad range of community organizations.
Enhance and expand community relations efforts to increase engagement and accessibility. Expand role in civic life by finding out what the community values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find new ways of engaging in meaningful dialogue to build collaborative long-term relationships with diverse and under-resourced communities.
Fulfill role as an anchor organization, musical leader, key collaborator, and partner, that is as a resource for the Georgian Bay Cultural Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research foundations and government grants to assist in programs which will support GBS' work and its contributions to Grey Bruce region and its civic responsibilities eg: Trillium or to use as an angle in all funding, OAC, CC, etc.
Act as allies for those seeking equity, diversity, inclusion, access, and Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segment, personalize and improve communications with all groups and people.

Direction 3: Strengthening Leadership -- Objectives	Sample Actions - 2024-2030
<i>Enhance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</i>	
Review organization's strengths and gaps with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion, ensuring consideration of the region's diversity of cultures and artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external resources within Orchestra Canada (their Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility declaration for Canadian orchestras) and the wider non-profit community, including the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) to support an assessment of EDI within the operation's context. Use results to develop priorities. Identify potential partner groups from whom to seek input regarding EDI priorities for GBS.
Develop priority areas for action related to each area of the operation (from Board to audience, partnerships, and performance) and a statement of commitment to these actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a statement of commitment to EDI to be approved by the Board and shared externally on the website. Create an action plan and progress measures based on the statement of commitment. Identify resources, training and other supports needed to equip the organization to increase its reach and effectiveness.
Equip and support musicians, staff, board, and volunteers to have transparent and respectful dialogue with each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With external support, assess the barriers to effective dialogue across the organization, and implement measures such as facilitation, training, skills-building, and role modelling to effect changes identified.

Strengthen Governance	
Review governance best practices to identify priorities for action to support the Board in its next stage of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access resources from governance experts such as Ontario Non-profit Network, Imagine Canada Standards, CPA Canada, and Board Source and review recommended governance practices. Identify gaps to address, based on what is realistic for the size and scale of the organization. Introduce systems including Board's own performance evaluation.
Review By-Law and existing governance policies to confirm priority areas to support Board composition, succession planning, nominations, and policy development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current practice for Terms of Office on the Board; propose any required By-Law updates to support strengthening board composition and succession planning by ensuring term renewal limits are implemented. Consider 'Building a Better Board' content to support the recruitment and nominations process, such as outlined in Appendix. Develop succession planning policy for Board, committees, and the operation as a whole
Build a Board and volunteer base whose composition reflects the diversity of the community we serve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an inventory of the current Board (skills, competencies, diversity, etc.) Identify areas of expertise and diversity that are needed on the board. Recruit at least xxx new board members, who fulfill professional expertise goals and provide new perspectives on what we do. Consider ways to develop volunteers who have future potential to serve as board members, and who bring the mix of skills, expertise, experience, and diversity identified.
Enhance Board development and ongoing learning to support effective governance leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Board development plan to integrate learning sessions into Board meetings and individual Board learning, accessing available resources through ONN, Orchestras Canada, Imagine Canada.
<i>Enhance operational effectiveness (digital capacity, communications, organizational culture, impact measurement)</i>	
Strengthen digital capacity, platforms and training for staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize knowledge required by staff and volunteers

and volunteers.	to fully deploy /maximize /leverage the existing digital tools and confirm approach to training and skill development.
Create and foster a culture than includes a consistent and transparent communications process and internal collaboration across the organization (Board, staff, committees, orchestra), and ensure communications reflect values and priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify best practices from Orchestra Canada and other similar organizations regarding approaches to strengthen communication. Share the process underway to create the new strategic framework and seek input to the final draft from internal audiences. Review agreed organizational values and develop new approaches to ensuring consistent, transparent communications. Seek culture champions or ambassadors from each of the bodies to serve on a communications and culture task force to focus on continuous improvement.
Ensure performance review and feedback systems integrate deliverables articulated in the strategic plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update existing / develop new performance review tools that link directly to the strategic plan with goals and measures related to the plan's deliverables. Involve staff in the process of updating the tools and introduce quarterly review conversations of progress towards goals.
Develop clear objectives and measurable impact statistics for all programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the actions outlined in the 2018-2022 strategic plan to determine which should be incorporated into the 2024-2030 strategic framework and action plan. Identify the areas within the plan that are best aligned for impact measurement/statistics to be tracked. Confirm the baseline statistics for these items for 2023. Create a templated scorecard to capture the measures for the Board's regular review of progress against the targets established.
Ensure compliance with legal requirements, internal objectives, and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create checklists for all aspects of the operation requiring compliance and measurement. Establish a schedule to ensure ongoing compliance reporting to the Board.
Lead, champion, and sustain the changes needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a strategic plan implementation support team, task force or committee, to provide guidance, support, and encouragement to ensure the agreed changes move forward. Access available change management tools and resources to support the entire organization to manage through change effectively.

8. Barriers to consider in 2024-2030

While the imperative to deliver on the proposed strategic directions is clear from the consultation process, the SWOT analysis and environmental scan – we recognize the limitations posed by GBS's current financial and human resource constraints. Its relatively small operating budget belies its aspirations and potential to achieve greater impact, extending beyond its current level of activity.

Developing a realistic and phased approach to implementation of the strategic framework will be essential, including a review of the 'Stop-Start-Continue' recommendations in the Appendix, and the development of criteria for taking on new areas of work (what will come off the list to bring forward new work? what other ways can the important new activity be supported? etc.).

For the first year of the plan 2024-2025, given the current staff and Board capacity, the number of priorities that could be accomplished could be limited, while ensuring a focus on those priorities that will support building capacity. For each successive year, the annual planning process will involve determining the realistic focus areas for the year ahead, based on capacity.

9. Evaluating our success: Key Performance Measures to track progress

Implementation planning will involve developing Key Performance Indicators for each Direction, based on the objectives and actions confirmed as priorities. A Scorecard can be used to capture the highest-level measures and progress for each area, by quarter, compared against a baseline year – eg. 2023. Examples of measures that GBS could track include data related to:

1. Funder targets for reporting purposes, and within staff's control to measure (eg. increasing the donor list by category, as outlined in the 2018 to 2022 strategic plan)
2. Audiences reached overall, compared annually (eg. ticket sales, other measures)
3. Program offerings
4. Partnerships developed, compared annually
5. Goals established for building the Board and volunteer base (from baseline year of 2023)

Annual targets can be set to build towards the long-term objectives for 2030. For example, a goal by 2030 is to have audiences of xxx number; for 2024-2025, the growth target is x%, etc.; for 2025-2026, it is y%, etc.

10. Conclusion

The Georgian Bay Symphony Board of Directors believes that our 2024 - 2030 Strategic Plan equips us to stand at the forefront of our region as a distinguished community orchestra, pioneering through inventive programming and concert experiences. Our plan supports us to not only push and evolve with our musicians but also to captivate and involve a wide range of audiences, guiding the community towards a richer cultural landscape. We look forward to sharing our progress and achievements towards our aspirations with our community over the next four years.

Additional Resources: These supporting documents are available for reference, and are on file at GBS:

1. Summary of the Strategic Framework for 2024-2030 in a PowerPoint slide deck
2. Board Nominations Cycle - Sample approach to Building a Great Board
3. February 12 Strategy Session Report