



**Festival Hall
Greensboro, Georgia**

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For just under 15 years, Festival Hall has been a central component of life in downtown Greensboro, Georgia. It has attracted theater and entertainment events, promoted arts enrichment, and been a central gathering place for the community. At its core, Festival Hall has always been and will always be a facility that brings arts to the area while ensuring accessibility for all throughout Greensboro, Greene County, and the surrounding area.

The time has come to put into motion the first multi-year strategic plan to enhance and strengthen our position as the heart of the community for arts, education, and other local events. The 2023/2025 strategic plan reflects our passion to remain a go-to venue for the community while expanding the offerings we bring to the community through our own events geared toward arts and arts education. We will continue to be a venue available and accessible for many other uses in our area - weddings, business meetings, and civic events.

This three-year strategic plan is a concrete declaration that we will continue to strengthen our operating position while also growing and thriving as an institution. We will welcome artists and performers from far and wide while always being available for our local community.

We will maximize our community impact by engaging with the community, our vast and varied audiences, and we will expand and deepen our adult and youth arts programming.

We will build a strong foundation by maintaining and improving the facility, its infrastructure, and technology to amplify the many different artistic performances and events we will host each year.

A very special thank you to our treasured community, whose outstanding support continually inspires us to address our challenges and strive to achieve our mission.

On behalf of our Board and Executive director, thank you for entrusting this historical treasure to us for the benefit of everyone in and around Greene County and Greensboro, Georgia.

We look forward to welcoming you to an ever-evolving Festival Hall and we are excited to celebrate 15 years of success with you in 2025. Until then, visit, sponsor, or attend our events and watch Festival Hall grow over the next 3 years.

BACKGROUND

Festival Hall, located in the heart of downtown Greensboro, Georgia, was originally constructed in 1939 as a Public Works Administration project. It had various uses before the vision to create a cultural center was solidified.

The dream to acquire and restore the auditorium into a cultural center started years before the 2009 Groundbreaking and 2010 Inaugural Season when a group of organizations and individuals combined their efforts to write a letter to the Greene County Board of Commissioners. They requested, should the building ever be vacated, the opportunity to renovate it and make it into a cultural center.

In 2005, the county offices moved into new locations; and, in 2006, the Greene County Board of Commissioners deeded the building to the City of Greensboro's Downtown Development Authority for the creation of a cultural center.

The \$2.5 million dollar renovation of Festival Hall was the result of partnership between businesses, government, local civic groups, and citizens. The funding partners are The City of Greensboro, Greensboro Downtown Development Authority, Greene County, Reynolds Lake Oconee, The Oconee Performing Arts Society (OPAS), and One Georgia Authority.

Since 2010, Festival Hall has been the site of many public and private events. The facility hosts weddings, family reunions, brings arts from around the country, serves as a learning space for youth, and even supported city operations during the COVID-19 pandemic (due to its large and flexible space). Festival Hall is currently in its second decade providing a home for the arts in Greene County and the surrounding areas. As part of its next 10 years, the organization is working to craft a long-term strategic plan which will guide its next decade of expansion.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Festival Hall has a unique ownership and management structure for a facility of its size:

1. The building is owned by the City of Greensboro's Downtown Development Authority.
2. The only paid, full time position is the Executive Director.
 - a. The Executive Director is a paid employee of the City of Greensboro.
3. The organization has a nine (9) member Board of Directors made up as follows:
 - a. Three (3) members affiliated with OPAS (Oconee Performing Arts Society)
 - b. Three (3) members affiliated with the Downtown Development Authority
 - c. Three (3) members affiliated with Reynolds Lake Oconee
4. The annual budget is funded by both the City of Greensboro and revenues generated from use of the facility (inclusive of event proceeds).
5. The fiscal year is October 1 to September 30.

Festival Hall has bylaws and operating agreements that govern its organizational structure, funding sources, and the operation of the venue between the non-profit organization and the City of Greensboro.

PLANNING PROCESS

In May of 2022, Festival Hall's Board of Directors and Executive Director began a formal strategic planning process. The Board leveraged APG Emerging Tech, a creative, strategy and digital consulting firm based in Greensboro, Georgia, to lead the organization through a strategic planning process.

The Board's goal was to create the first strategic plan for Festival Hall by early 2023. The three year (3 year) strategic plan period was selected because it leads up to the 15th anniversary of Festival Hall's opening which will be in 2025. Due to the international pandemic in 2020, Festival Hall was unable to

take memorable steps to recognize its 10th year anniversary. As such, the Board recognizes the need for a well-planned series of events, fundraising, and engagement opportunities for its 15th year anniversary.

The strategic planning process incorporated the following components:

1. Board working sessions
2. SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
3. Engagement with the City of Greensboro Downtown Development Authority
4. Review and modifications to the current Bylaws
5. Definition of Vision, Mission and Values
6. Establishment of strategic objectives and actions to achieve the goals set forth

VISION, MISSION, and VALUES

VISION

Festival Hall is the historic and premier venue providing a space for arts enrichment and new and traditional entertainment through events that are accessible by all audiences.

MISSION

To serve as a gathering space for curated performances and private events that enhances the range, quality, and accessibility of cultural arts in the Greensboro, Greene County, and Lake Oconee region.

VALUES

Community: Provide an engaging environment welcoming diverse audiences and host programming that creates shared experiences.

Quality: Deliver high quality arts education and entertainment leaving audiences excited to return for future events.

Accessibility: Foster an environment where everyone feels they are truly comfortable attending the many varied events hosted within our premier facility.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>The building is incredible</p> <p>The community feels ownership of the space</p> <p>The community feels proud of the space</p> <p>Affordability (of the events that come)</p> <p>City and County Support</p> <p>Executive Director’s ability to do a lot with a little</p> <p>Only large scale facility in the city/county</p> <p>Its space is flexible for many uses</p> <p>Sharing a joint calendar with the area lake country arts alliance</p> <p>Its own Steinway piano, donated in 2023</p>	<p>Budget is very limited, most dollars go to maintenance</p> <p>Lack of advertising</p> <p>Décor is not refreshed</p> <p>Technology (AV, Lighting, Sound) is antiquated</p> <p>Acoustics are not great</p> <p>Lack of awareness to all the facility can host</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>More and intentional advertising which could drive more revenues</p> <p>Seeking/discovering untapped talent (local)</p> <p>Begin a capital campaign for improvements</p> <p>Working more closely with nearby or affiliated organizations (e.g., Lake Country Players)</p> <p>Create strategic, long-term partnerships</p> <p>Refresh Bylaws</p> <p>Engage the Movie/TV industry</p> <p>Create a ‘regular’ event series</p> <p>Finding best way to manage the City ownership and Non-Profit organization charter</p>	<p>Having other venues in the area creates a talent competition</p> <p>Other events in other neighborhoods/venues</p> <p>Competing for the same audiences</p> <p>Divide between the Counties</p> <p>Not engaging a diverse and engaged audience who are comfortable at the venue</p> <p>Not establishing a clear and consistent stand-alone identify for Festival Hall</p>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. To sponsor, recruit, or host recurring seasons of dynamic programming and seasonal, engaging traditions. **Our events season** would host content appropriate for families, children, and general arts audiences.
2. To **inform and excite** the community with premier events available to all audiences.
3. To **tell the story** of how Festival Hall is the region’s multipurpose facility for events and the performing arts.
4. To **reinvest in the facility** for current and future generations.
5. To **create familiarity** with the facility and **grow our audiences** because our patrons have great experiences leaving them excited to return and support our growth.

KEY ACTIONS

Our Events Season

- 2023 - create event-level sponsorship opportunities to connect local individuals and businesses with Festival Hall.
- 2024 - create season and annual sponsorship opportunities to attract ongoing commitment to Festival Hall and its programming.
- 2025 - host a full and rich season of arts and other events and deliver a large, 15th year signature anniversary event.

Inform and Excite

- Create and consistently tell the story of who we are and what we are here to do. This includes creating verbiage to utilize across all types of mediums (from social media to newspaper).
- Develop an infographic that outlines the impact of Festival Hall on the community.
- Identify the best advertising opportunities and measure the results with each event to inform the best use of our limited funds.
- Reach out to the community and create business partnerships that promote Festival Hall along with all of Greensboro and Greene County.

Tell the Story

- Share with the community how Festival Hall is making a difference. Broadcast our events, our history, and our mission at every opportunity.
- Update our bylaws so they protect the facility and ensure it will be around for many generations.
- Create awareness in the community of how Festival Hall can be utilized. Reach more audience and potential audience members on a regular basis.

Reinvest in the Facility

- Create a Piano Fund to fundraise for our own grand piano to support our and other entities' events.
- Obtain more feedback from our audiences and facility renters. Utilize surveying and follow up contacts to garner more information about likes, dislikes, and ideas for the hall.
- Take steps to invest in core infrastructure improvements needed to put on first-class arts and entertainment along with private rental events and meetings. This includes, but is not limited to, building and theater lighting, audio/visual, sound, paint, and furniture.
- Complete a reserve study to evaluate the long-term maintenance and replacement costs of such a dynamic and large facility.
- Set in motion the changes required to move to a position where Festival Hall is carrying a majority of the costs of the facility each year.
- Pursue grant investments that will enable modifications to improve the facility.

Create Familiarity and Grow our Audiences

- Engage with our arts community and business partners to significantly increase the number of annual events at Festival Hall.
- Become the premier venue for a large, annual showcase such as a Home Show, Wedding Show, or other Industry Event to draw in more individuals to Festival Hall.

For More Information

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Thank you to our Strategic Planning Corporate Partner for the gift of their time and expertise.

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