



SAN FRANCISCO CHORAL SOCIETY

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2025–9

Recap of 2024 Strategic Planning Process

In 2024, SF Choral celebrated its 35th anniversary, which served as an opportune time to reflect on our history and plan for the organization's future. Over the course of 12 months, a strategic plan and roadmap for the next 3-5 years was developed. This plan is the product of efforts brought about through focus groups, surveys, interviews, and workshops with key stakeholders, including singers, audience members, donors, board members, and staff who have been engaged with SF Choral for less than a year, to over 30 years. Key vision elements, objectives, and steps were identified through the guidance of a strategic planning framework and analysis of the overall landscape that supports SF Choral's vision and mission while also boldly moving us forward to pursue our community's top priorities. This document serves as a guide for our community and will hold us accountable as we move forward with clarity toward our next major milestone, our 40th anniversary, in 2029.

— San Francisco Choral Society

“A strategic plan is more than a roadmap. It is a shared commitment to stewarding this organization thoughtfully and responsibly into the future. This plan provides clarity of purpose, aligns our artistic and operational priorities, and ensures that the decisions we make today support the community we aspire to serve tomorrow. Grounded in broad stakeholder input and guided by our mission and values, it equips SF Choral to navigate change with intention, strengthen our impact, and move confidently toward our 40th anniversary and beyond.”

— Jessica House Steward

Executive Director



MISSION:

The San Francisco Choral Society is a premier symphonic chorus, presenting outstanding performances of choral masterpieces and new commissioned works. Infused with a commitment to excellence and education, our professional artistic and administrative staff, soloists, and orchestras work collaboratively with our all-volunteer auditioned singers to foster a vibrant, diverse, and interactive choral community, educate our singers and audiences, and extend our reach to youth.

Vision: To inspire and enrich people's lives through the joy and power of choral music.



... In one way or another, every one of us touched upon the idea that this community brings us joy, comfort, and a profound sense of connection to something larger than ourselves."

— Jessica Meyers, President, Board of Directors

BOLD STEPS

The following Four Bold Steps define the most critical initiatives of this strategic plan and provide the framework for the roadmap that follows. Together, they translate SF Choral's vision and values into focused priorities that will guide decision-making, resource allocation, and progress over the life of this strategic plan. These initiatives are designed to strengthen our artistic impact, deepen our connection to community, and ensure the long-term vitality of the organization. Progress in each area is essential to realizing our aspirations for SF Choral's future.

1. Artistic Voice

Become a driving force of innovation and vision for the choral arts field, while advancing SF Choral's level of excellence.

2. Community Outreach and Visibility

Extend SF Choral's outreach in San Francisco and beyond to promote the values of our choral arts community.

3. Inclusion and Accessibility

Build a more diverse and inclusive community of singers, patrons, and donors that reflects the SF Bay Area.

4. Financial Sustainability

Increase earned and contributed income through more diverse sources to support current and future goals.



BOLD STEPS

ARTISTIC VOICE

1. Become a driving force of innovation and vision for the Choral Arts field, while advancing SF Choral's level of excellence.

Roadmap:

“This strategic plan is the result of deep listening and shared imagination.

It clarifies who we are artistically today and who we are becoming – honoring the choral masterworks we love while boldly expanding whose voices and stories we bring forward. It affirms that artistic excellence and community belong together as we shape the future of SF Choral.”

— Bob Geary, Artistic Director



- Commit to more diversity in commissioned composers, projects, and programming
- Develop new, innovative ways of presenting standard masterworks to engage modern audiences and broaden the artistic perspective
- Increase collaborations with other artists/arts organizations who are aligned with SF Choral's vision
- Continue promoting expectation of a high level of musical excellence in performance



BOLD STEPS COMMUNITY OUTREACH & VISIBILITY

2. Extend SF Choral's outreach in SF & beyond to drive awareness of and promote the values of our choral arts community

Roadmap:



- Increase opportunities for the SF Choral community to engage in external events
- Provide pay-what-you-can/free ways to experience SF Choral Society performances
- Increase awareness of the Summer Festival Chorus to drive more participation from singers outside the region





"As we all shared our thoughts about the Choral Society's values and priorities, the theme of community kept emerging. It seemed clear that, in addition to believing in the importance of artistic excellence, we feel a strong connection to our identity as a community-based chorus."

— Jessica Meyers, President, Board of Directors



"The Strategic Planning sessions helped me see the Chorus as a community: our connections with each other and with the outside community have value, beyond the joy we get from singing."

— Alice Aronow, Secretary, Board of Directors



BOLD STEPS INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY

3. Continue to build a varied and inclusive community of singers, patrons, and donors to better reflect the makeup of the SF Bay Area.

“The strategic planning workshop was a great opportunity for the board to come together and re-assess the values, vision and mission of the SF Choral Society. It helped us to examine who we are, aspire to be, and the avenues to achieve those things, not only as a chorus but in and for our community.”

— Rhea Arajs, Board of Directors

Roadmap:

- Increase outreach in underrepresented areas to attract more diversity of singers who share SF Choral’s vision and mission
- Increase more diverse representation in Board membership and hiring
- Continue providing financial aid to support socioeconomic diversity in community membership



BOLD STEPS FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

4. Increase earned and contributed income through more diverse sources to sustainably support SF Choral's current and future goals

Roadmap:



- Reinstate a fundraising committee to develop support for the organization's objectives
- Build more awareness of the Concert Sponsorship Program
- Focus on deepening relationships with donors
- Increase ticket revenue and concert attendance



With gratitude, we thank:

- **Our Board of Directors for their leadership, stewardship, and vision**
- **The focus group participants, staff, and all stakeholders who generously shared their insights, experiences, and aspirations**
- **Our donors whose philanthropic support sustains and strengthens our work**
 - **Our singers, whose dedication, artistry, and commitment bring our mission to life**
- **And all who contribute to SF Choral with their time, talent, or treasure, making our community and music possible.**

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