Community and Economic Impact Study
Executive Summary

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in association with arts/axis consulting
Americans for the Arts

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Entertainment
Industries

Overture Center
FOR THE ARTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Impact of Overture Center and Its Resident Companies [1]

Overture Center for the Arts and its resident companies are substantial contributors to the overall viability of the city of Madison and Dane County. They are catalysts for development and investment downtown as well as key drivers of "cultural vitality." Beyond the primary benefits of increased quality and diversity in cultural opportunity, evidence and expert opinion suggest that Overture has encouraged significant improvement in a range of public benefits — from a more vital downtown to improved quality of life; from increased year-round residential presence to the attraction and retention of a creative workforce for the region.

Overture and Its Resident Companies as Contributing Catalysts for Redevelopment Downtown

Growth in Property Value

- More Value: Aggregate property value in downtown[2] has increased by $1.9 billion in the decade between the announcement of the Overture project (1998) through its opening and full operations (2008) — a gain of 176% as compared to an increase of 116% in the balance of the city.
- More Year-Round Residents: Condominiums in downtown alone gained nearly one-half billion dollars in taxable value in that same period — an increase of more than 1,500%.
- Neighborhood Impact: Property values in the four square blocks immediately surrounding Overture Center grew by 392% over the decade from $75.6 million in 1998 to $372.1 million in 2008.

Gains in Property Tax Receipts

- More Taxable Parcels: The number of tax-paying parcels in downtown grew from 2,425 to 5,433 over that same decade from 1998 to 2008.
- More Taxes Paid: Net annual property taxes paid downtown grew by $18.9 million from $18.1 to $37.1 million in the period.
- Neighborhood Impact: Property taxes generated in the four-square-block area surrounding Overture generated $5.2 million more in 2008 than in 2003.

Overture and Its Resident Companies as Generators of Activity

- More People: Activity by Overture Center and its resident companies drew more than 541,000 people in 2008[3] — an increase of 35% from 1998.
- More Direct Spending: Audiences at Overture Center purchased tickets for slightly more than $12.3 million.
- More Related Spending: In addition, audiences and visitors also spent nearly $10 million exclusive of admissions related to their attendance including meals and lodging downtown.
- Wider Reach: Overture Center draws guests to downtown from a wider circle than typical downtown businesses, bringing citizens from the entire county to the area. Overture's primary trade area[4] is two to three times as large as that of Madison's typical downtown business — drawing 50% of its customers from 10 – 15 miles from the Center. This means Overture is drawing county residents to downtown, while providing entertainment and education options to the entire area.
- More to Do: Total events at Overture increased 25% over the decade, to 681 per year.
- More Service to Community and Education: Community programs saw a three-fold increase with 640 education programs being offered by the Center and its resident companies.

Operating Impact of Overture Center and Its Resident Companies

As they produce and present cultural opportunities and serve a regional community, Overture Center and its residents generate significant economic activity.

- Overture Center and its resident companies spent $27.6 million in FY 2008.
- Combined audiences and visitors spent another $9.8 million, exclusive of admissions, related to their visit to Overture Center.

The activity of these organizations and the spending by their audiences and visitors:

- Supports 1,471 full-time equivalent jobs;
- Generates $26.39 million in household income to local residents;
- And returns $4.47 million in local and state government revenue annually.

Delivering a Broad Range of Public Benefits

Community, business and civic leaders interviewed for this report identified a full range of public benefits they expected Overture Center could deliver and those that are particularly effectively accomplished. The comments of these leaders, not directly affiliated with Overture Center, illustrate Overture's value as a public resource for advancing community goals. Among the most important public impacts identified by these leaders were:

1) Providing citizens of the Madison region with better entertainment options (9.3 on a scale of 1 – 10)
2) Enabling more access to the arts for adults (9.2)
3) Creating a sense of place and pride in the city (8.9)
4) Enabling more access to the arts for young people (8.8)
5) Contributing to a more vital downtown (8.8)
6) Improving the resident arts organizations who make Overture Center their home (8.8)

Community leaders felt that Overture Center was particularly effective at:

1) Enhancing Madison's "quality of life" (8.3 on a scale of 1 – 10)
2) Creating a sense of place and pride in the city (8.3)
3) Enabling more access to the arts for adults (8.3)
4) Attracting and retaining a creative work force (7.9)
5) Increasing real estate development and upgrades downtown (7.9)
6) Contributing to a more vital downtown (7.8)

The Economic Impact Study explores the details and the drivers of these many public benefits and explores the positive opportunities ahead for Overture Center and its resident companies to advance these impacts.

[1] Resident companies in 2008 were: Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society, Children's Theatre of Madison, Li Chiao-Ping Dance, Kanopy Dance, Madison Ballet, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Madison Opera, Madison Repertory Theatre, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Together, Overture Center and its resident companies are referred to as "Overture Center activity." [2] 'Downtown' for this report is defined at the three census tracts most closely aligned with the Downtown Madison Inc. boundaries: 55025001601, 55025001602 and 55025001701. [3] Including free and subsidized admissions to Overture Center's programs, community galleries and scheduled free performances as well as the activity of the Center's resident companies. [4] The "primary trade area" is the geography that draws 50% of customers.