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## BUSINESS STRATEGY

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS TO SHARE PARALLEL 45 THEATER'S DESIRED GROWTH AND BUSINESS STRATEGY BETWEEN FISCAL YEAR 2015/16 AND FISCAL YEAR 2019/20. UPDATED MARCH 2018.

### MISSION

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Parallel 45 is a not-for-profit professional theater company that brings nationally recognized professional theater artists and performances to the northern Michigan region. We believe that by engaging in public and collective acts of imagination the theater helps us to remember where we have been, understand where we are today, and examine where we are going. By producing a repertoire of innovative new works, reinvented classics, and imaginative adaptations, Parallel 45 seeks to entertain, encourage critical thought, and inspire.

### VISION

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Northern Michigan is a premier place and destination for professional theater that entertains, encourages critical thought, and inspires both audiences and artists, who choose to live, work and play in our community.

### DESIRED COMMUNITY IMPACT

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Through our work and services we will:

- Provide residents and visitors to northwest Michigan a high-quality professional theater experience that entertains, encourages critical thought, and inspires.
- Create jobs for professional artists and the “creative class” and offer a living wage to both full-time staff and part-time artistic contractors.
- Offer a product that helps Traverse City gain position as important statewide and national player in theatre industry.

- Advance cultural tourism and contribute to the local economy, vitality, place making and the quality of life in the region by contributing to the suite of arts and cultural offerings in our community.
- Create experiences and stories that inspire and reinforce people’s connections to the City of Traverse City, the Northwest Michigan region, and our State.

We are inspired by venues around the country that are creating similar experiences within their communities. These venues include: Jacob’s Pillow Dance (<http://www.jacobspillow.org/>), the Purple Rose Theater Company (<http://www.purplerosetheatre.org/>), the Williamstown Theater Festival, (<http://wtfestival.org/>) and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival ([www.osfashland.org](http://www.osfashland.org)). Each of these “place-making” venues has helped to create a sense of place and sense of community and have been catalysts for growth and prosperity within their neighborhoods and communities.

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## NEED AND CONTEXT

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Our mission and vision align with the arts and culture and community growth and development goals and needs that have been outlined in local and regional planning documents. The “*Framework for Our Future: A Regional Prosperity Plan for Northwest Michigan*” document prepared by Networks Northwest in 2014 describes the Arts and Culture goals for the ten-county regional community. The plan was developed through an intensive community driven process. It includes information and tools that all parts of the community– including the public, community leaders, businesses, nonprofits, public agencies, and statewide stakeholders—can use as they work to address community issues in a way that also support regional goals.

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“NORTHWEST MICHIGAN IS BLESSED WITH A STRONG AND THRIVING ARTS AND CULTURAL SCENE: RESIDENTS AND VISITORS HAVE ACCESS TO WORLD CLASS MUSIC, DANCE, VISUAL ARTS, THEATER, LITERATURE, ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN, AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES AT MUSEUMS, SCHOOLS AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION.

THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE IMPORTANT ECONOMIC ASSETS, DRIVING A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF NORTHWEST MICHIGAN’S VIBRANT TOURISM INDUSTRY. IN ADDITION, ARTS AND CULTURE HELP TO ATTRACT THE EDUCATED, PROFESSIONAL TALENT THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE REGION’S TRANSITIONING ECONOMY. FOR MANY RESIDENTS, ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ARE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE, PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL ENRICHMENT AND SOCIAL INTERACTION. COMMUNITIES THAT OFFER A WIDE VARIETY OF ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL OUTLETS ARE ALSO ABLE TO BUILD ON

THESE ASSETS TO CREATE A VIBRANT, UNIQUE, AND  
RECOGNIZABLE SENSE OF PLACE FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS  
ALIKE.

SUPPORT FOR ARTS AND CULTURE CAN BE AN IMPORTANT  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THAT CAN HELP TO RETAIN  
AND ATTRACT A WORKFORCE AND BUILD TOURISM, AND  
COMMUNITIES THAT CELEBRATE THEIR HISTORY AND PRESERVE  
IMPORTANT ICONS FROM THEIR PAST ARE ABLE TO PASS  
COMMUNITY TRADITIONS AND PRIDE ONTO THE NEXT  
GENERATION. SIMPLY PUT, THE ARTS HELP PEOPLE CREATE DEEP  
ROOTS IN AN AREA AND GIVE THEM A REASON TO STAY AND  
INVEST.” – “*FRAMEWORK FOR OUR FUTURE: A REGIONAL  
PROSPERITY PLAN FOR NORTHWEST MICHIGAN*”, 2014.

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Parallel 45 Theater’s mission and work contributes directly to the desired outcomes and impacts of the Framework for Our Future plan.

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## COMMUNITY SCAN

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There are several other theater groups operating in Northwest Michigan. Each serves an important role in serving the community’s arts and cultural needs.

- ***Traverse City Opera House:*** A presenting organization delivering out-of-town acts. Since opening its doors in 1892, the City Opera House has hosted everything from plays, concerts and operettas, to gala balls, conventions and banquets. The Opera House has a partnership with Michigan State University's Wharton Center for Performing Arts to present a diverse line-up of performing arts attractions. Including concerts and comedy acts, theatrical events, dance performances and family-friendly offerings. They offer single tickets and ticket packages for three or more shows. The City Opera House is one of six historically intact Victorian opera houses in Michigan and boasts a rich history as a cornerstone of culture in the Grand Traverse region. The City Opera House was added to National Register of Historic Places in 1972. A committed group of citizens led its restoration efforts. Its design allows the venue to function as a 700-seat theater while providing the flexibility to clear the main floor of seating for large gatherings. (<http://www.cityoperahouse.org/>)
- ***Old Town Playhouse:*** Created in 1960 to bring amateur theatre to northern Michigan. Located just three blocks from downtown Traverse City, the Old Town Playhouse season runs annually from September through May with a variety of productions. Performance areas include a 358-seat main stage auditorium and an 80-seat studio theatre. Seasonal attendance ranges from 20,000 - 23,000 patrons. The youth education arm of Old Town Playhouse, the OTP Young Company (formerly known as the Traverse City Children's Theatre) provides performance and educational activities for youth age preschool

through college. The Playhouse is primarily a volunteer-based organization, promoting quality community theatre experiences for the people of Northwest Michigan, through entertainment and educational opportunities in the theatrical arts. The mission of the Old Town Playhouse is to be a volunteer-based organization promoting quality community theatre experiences for the people of Northwest Michigan by providing educational opportunities and entertainment in the theatrical arts.

(<http://www.oldtownplayhouse.com/>)

- **Interlochen Center for the Arts:** Interlochen (<http://www.interlochen.org/>) was founded in 1928 and is located within a 20-minute drive from Traverse City. The campus and school feature a summer arts camp, an adult arts camp, an arts academy boarding high school, a public radio station (Interlochen Public Radio) and several theater venues. Interlochen serves thousands of artists and arts patrons each year. Students study music, theatre, visual arts, film, creative writing and dance. They host both professional and amateur/student performances. Their performance calendar is diverse and includes classical, jazz, pop, country and world music, classical ballet (Nutcracker), modern dance, and musicals (like Rent and Urinetown). Tickets range in price from \$10 - \$32, depending on the age of the patron and the type of production. Venues include:
  - Kresge Auditorium – An open-sided amphitheatre on the shore of Green Lake, and host to some of the Interlochen Arts Festival's biggest events.
  - Corson Auditorium – An indoor auditorium seating 952. Harvey Theatre – A 173-seat modern theatre equipped with a custom-built cable grid lighting system and home to many student theatre productions.
  - Dendros Chapel and Recital Hall - Seats 230 and hosts more intimate performances, such as student, faculty and guest artists recitals take place here. It is also home to Interlochen's 50-rank Reuter pipe organ, which was restored and rededicated in 2006.
  - Upton-Morley Pavilion - Hosts the annual Interlochen Shakespeare Festival and many summer student performances.
  - Interlochen Bowl - Built in 1928, this space serves as a rehearsal and performance venue during the summer months.
  - Phoenix Theater - 170-seat black box theatre used for classes, rehearsals and performances.
  
- **Mitten Lab** – This Detroit-based group gives artists from around the country the opportunity to connect with Detroit's artistic legacy and with each other. In the summer of 2016, The MITTEN Lab plans to launch a theater artist-in-residence program on 60 acres of rural land in Bear Lake, MI (located 20 miles from Interlochen) Housing, studio space, and food will be provided. The facilities will include a 10-bedroom home and a theatre barn. The MITTEN Lab focuses on the advancement of works in the performing arts and thus is aimed at cultivating early career playwrights, theatre composers, lyricists, librettists, choreographers, and performance artists. Artists from all across the country can apply to attend, although the Lab will consistently support at least one Michigan artist per year. The MITTEN Lab will work with three artists in 2016, expanding to include more artists and longer residencies in subsequent years. Participation will

begin by invitation only, and ultimately lead to an open application process.  
(<http://www.themittenlab.org/>)

- **ISLAND:** This Bellaire-based non-profit organization owns and operates the Hill House and manages an artist-in-residence program that includes a focus on performing arts such as music, dance and theater. (<http://artmeetsearth.org/artist-residency>)
- **SEEDS:** This Traverse City-based non-profit fosters local solutions to global issues related to social justice and ecology. They manage a Youth Corp and after school programs that provide hands-on experiences for young people, including those who are considered “at risk” or underserved within the regional community. Their School of Rock and Quest programs connect young people to opportunities for self-expression and performance art such as music, writing and poetry. (<http://www.ecoseeds.org/>)
- **“Old Town Playhouse” splinter group:** A loose affiliation of amateurs who produce and host a show for the public, generally once a year. We have found that people often associate their productions with Parallel 45 because the shows are held in same venue.
- **Great Lakes Center for the Arts:** the Great Lakes Center for the Arts in Bay Harbor will break ground in 2016, and the curtain will go up on its first performance in 2018. The Center will be a regional, national and international destination for the cultural arts and intellectual dialogue. Programming will include popular, classical, jazz and country music performances, theatrical productions, music festivals, opera, films, dance, lectures and children’s series. The future architectural landmark of Bay Harbor will include a 500-seat theater with private box areas, an exclusive donor lounge, rooftop patio and more—all providing limitless possibilities for the arts to inspire, entertain and educate within the Northern Michigan community. (<http://greatlakescfa.org/>)

We recognize that our current and prospective audiences may not understand the distinction between the different offerings provided by the organizations and entities listed above. Parallel 45’s lack of a dedicated physical facility has been a barrier to our brand and positioning, particularly since we often used space that is also used by other theater groups, such as the Inside Out Gallery. We saw this brand confusion and our need for product differentiation as one of our biggest threats and opportunities as an organization. We are also exploring ways to partner with other professional groups who have aligned or complementary visions, goals and objectives.

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# OUR PRODUCT

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## THEATER PRODUCTIONS

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Parallel 45 believes the timeless tenet that you can look at the past, but you shouldn't stare. Theatre provides the opportunity to examine the present and explore the future through a re-imagining of the past. Parallel 45 reinterprets classic plays and musicals that speak to today, as they help us to imagine tomorrow. Parallel 45 has been producing 3-4 individual plays in succession during a fall-spring season common among regional theatres.

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## EDUCATION PROGRAMS & SERVICES

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In the past, Parallel 45 has hosted seasonal workshops and the New Opera Project. These programs were designed to engage people in the art and craft of professional theater production. Parallel 45 will continue to explore cost-effective ways to deliver programs and will use a partnership and project-based model, rather than a fee-for-service model to deliver these programs in the future. Parallel 45 seeks to focus its education effort to engage community members who are considered to be "at risk" and/or who are currently underserved as an audience or participant in art.

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## FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

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Parallel 45 is currently hosting shows at Inside Out Gallery. The condition of the facility and the brand confusion that results from being in a facility where amateur and other performance are held creates a situation that is not ideal and that creates risks and challenges for Parallel 45's reputation and strategic position. We desire a permanent production facility and stable and affordable artist housing.

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## PRICING STRUCTURE

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In its first years operating, Parallel 45 focused on providing a value for customers by providing food and drinks for free with \$15 tickets. Now, tickets are at \$20. The price is relatively low compared to other similar professional art and theater products in the marketplace. One reason that the price has remained low is due to the limitations of the current facility. Our current facility's "package" does not match our product.

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## WHO WE SERVE

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We directly serve our customers and we serve artists and the arts community. We indirectly serve the community as a whole and our region's economic prosperity, as defined by the desired outcomes and impacts in the previous section.

## DESIRED CUSTOMER

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Our current customer base is relatively small and includes several hundred local fans, including educated arts lovers who have lived or have homes in urban settings and who are excited to find something that reminds them of that urban experience, environment and culture here in Traverse City. Parallel 45 hears things like this from patrons: “We lived in Seattle and loved ‘Seattle rep’ and we’re so glad to find that here.”

Our customers tend to be year-round residents who live in the Traverse City area, although some of our patrons live in Elk Rapids where our organization was founded. We intend to expand our reach to more year-round resident customers, while capturing visitors and—most importantly—seasonal residents. Seasonal residents have been unable to enjoy our artistic product due to the previous timing of our programming. Summer rotating-repertory will make it possible to serve this demographic that causes our overall population to quadruple in the warmer months. Shoulder season programming will ensure local patrons feel valued.

Our desired customers are young retirees (50s and 60s), older retirees, hipster Gen-Xers and Millennials who value the professional arts and have sufficient incomes to pay for entertainment.

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### WHAT SIMILAR PRODUCTS DO THEY BUY/SERVICES TO THEY USE IN TRAVERSE CITY?

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- Little Fleet
- BLK MKT
- Boutique stores for food and clothing
- Low Bar
- The Parlor
- Oryana
- Subscription to *Traverse Magazine*
- Cold-pressed juice, Higher Ground coffee, local craft beer and spirits
- “Upscale” or urban bed and breakfast locations or overnight accommodations
- Read or follow “Northern Swag” or the “Conscious Entrepreneur” online

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### WHERE DO THEY LIVE AND TRAVEL?

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- Downtown and in-town neighborhoods
- Lakefront property owners within the five-county region
- People who live elsewhere in Michigan who travel to our region to experience food, arts and cultural tourism. This may include participation in events like the Traverse City Film Festival, wine tours, craft beer tours, and eco-tourism.

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### WHAT DO THEY LOOK FOR OR VALUE IN A PRODUCT SERVICE?

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- Quality
- Uniqueness
- Trendiness
- Edginess

- Authenticity

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## PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS

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Parallel 45 will provide employment for professional artists. The paid professional positions include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director</li> <li>• Music Director</li> <li>• Choreographer</li> <li>• Stage Manager</li> <li>• Technical Director</li> <li>• Set Designer</li> <li>• Light Designer</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projections Designer</li> <li>• Costume Designer</li> <li>• Rotating Actors</li> <li>• Star contracts</li> <li>• Sound person</li> <li>• Dresser</li> <li>• Band</li> </ul> |
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## ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Parallel 45's staff and Board completed a Core Capacity Assessment Tool process in April 2015 with support from the North Sky Non-profit Network and funding from Rotary Charities of Traverse City. The independent process and organizational assessment resulted in a report that revealed organizational strengths and challenges. The tables below are excerpted from the report and illustrate the top five strengths and challenges for the organization.

<b>Summary of Core Capacity Assessment Process Outcomes</b>	
<b>TOP 5 CHALLENGES</b>	<b>TOP FIVE STRENGTHS</b>
<b>1. Facilities:</b> <i>The proper facilities to run efficient operations</i>	<b>1. Leader Vision:</b> <i>Leaders formulate and motivate others to pursue a clear vision</i>
<b>2. Organizational Learning:</b> <i>Self-assessing and using data to plan and follow-through</i>	<b>2. Managing Program Staff:</b> <i>Ensuring staff have skills to deliver services</i>
<b>3. Leadership Sustainability:</b> <i>Cultivating organizational leaders, avoiding an over-reliance on one leader, planning for leadership transition</i>	<b>3. Service Delivery Skills:</b> <i>Ability to ensure efficient and quality services</i>



<b>4. Financial Management:</b> <i>Managing org finances</i>	<b>4. Internal Leadership:</b> <i>Organizational leaders apply a mission-focused approach to decision making and inspire action</i>
<b>5. Financial Management Skills:</b> <i>Ability to ensure efficient financial operations</i>	<b>5. Staff Development:</b> <i>Coaching, training, etc. staff</i>

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## STRATEGY FOR GROWTH & IMPACT

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In just a few short years Parallel 45 has grown from a start-up to an organization with an established annual production calendar. Over the next five years, our strategic goals and priorities include:

- Hosting high quality, professional and successful shows.
- Increasing the number of shows that we offer.
- Increasing our number of customers and the value of our ticket sales.
- Improving our facilities, including artist housing and theater space.
- Helping to develop plays and artists-in-residence, perhaps through partnerships with other local arts and culture organizations.
- Building strong relationships with donors and maximizing opportunities for financial stability and sustainability.
- Expanding our education programs and increasing access to theater education for under-served and/or “at-risk” members of our regional community.
- Building and maintaining a strong Board, hiring more professional staff, formalizing operational management practices.

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## GOALS & ACTION STEPS

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### GOAL 1: HOST SUCCESSFUL SHOWS

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A successful show will have:

- Excellent industry positioning.
- Artistic relevance.
- Well-positioned media exposure and opportunities to connect with new and returning audiences.
- Ticket sales that align with our annual revenue benchmarks.

#### ACTION STEPS:

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- Implement a Rotating Rep model for productions in years 2016/2017 – 2019/2020\* (*see appendix A*) – **IN PROCESS. INAUGURAL ROTATING REPERTORY SUMMER: 2019.**
- Develop production selection criteria to help guide and monitor the creation of annual production line-ups, as well as to use as decision-making criteria for react and respond to groups who approach us to host or deliver productions. (FY 2016/17) - **COMPLETE**
- Develop a list of benchmarks related to the customer experience we want to create. Use this benchmarking tool as a planning tool before shows, and as a resource for reflection, evaluation, and team and organizational learning after shows. (FY 2016/17) - **COMPLETE**
- Create a customer and audience feedback mechanism. Use this tool to evaluate audience, artist, and team members' experiences. (FY 2016/17) - **COMPLETE**
- Invest in facilities and capital improvements. See Goal 4. **IN PROCESS**
- Through the annual budgeting and work plan development processes:
  - Ensure that appropriate levels of staffing, volunteer, and other resources are available and committed to shows, in order to enable their success - **ONGOING**
  - Ensure that marketing budgets are sufficient to promote shows and connect with new and returning audiences – **ONGOING W/MARKETING MANAGER**
  - Ensure that staff and volunteers have appropriate levels of support to connect with artists and other theater professionals at the state and national level - **ONGOING**

#### GOAL 2: INCREASE REVENUES.

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Parallel 45 wants to increase both its contributed and earned incomes over the next five years.

#### ACTION STEPS:

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- Implement a Rotating Rep model for productions in 2019/20 in order to increase ticket sale revenues\* (*See Appendix A*) **IN PROCESS. INAUGURAL ROTATING REPERTORY SUMMER: 2019.**
- Research opportunities and develop a plan to increase targeted paid advertising. **COMPLETE – PLAN TO BE IMPLEMENTED 2018/19**
- Create a written revenue development plan that aligns with the organization's annual budget. The plan should be developed by staff and approved by the Board and should include annual goals and benchmarks for fundraising (contributed) and earned income, as well as action steps to achieve goals. **COMPLETED ANNUALLY.**
- Adopt, learn and use Salesforce as a platform for communicating and connecting with current and prospective donors, audience members, partners and other community members. **COMPLETE**
- Organize a fund development team including staff, volunteers and Board members - **COMPLETE**
- Ask Board members to create their own annual personal plans and goals for fund development; create a Board process to coordinate and support each other and staff in fund development goals and activities **COMPLETE**

- Develop a fundraising training or orientation program for staff and Board members - **COMPLETE**
- Consider a mix of productions that enables space for “passion” projects and also more well-known or familiar offerings in order to increase ticket sales or sponsorship opportunities. **COMPLETE**
- Consider a relationship and explore the feasibility of working in collaboration with City Opera House. They are an established venue and have experience working with outside theater acts. They have a solid and positive reputation in the community and strong brand recognition. The facility’s quality and size seems suitable for Parallel 45’s use in the short-term. **COMPLETE – presented by City Opera House in December 2016**
- Have one-on-one conversations with businesses such as Little Fleet, Parlor, Low Bar, Warehouse MKT, Hotel Indigo, Aberdeen Bed and Breakfast, etc. for cross-promotion and marketing opportunities. **COMPLETE**

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### GOAL 3: INCREASE NUMBER OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS SERVED

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Parallel 45 will expand its audience and increase the number of customers for its productions.

#### ACTION STEPS:

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- Implement a Rotating Rep model for productions in years 2016/2017 – 2019/2020 \* (*See Appendix A*) **IN PROCESS. INAUGURAL ROTATING REPERTORY SUMMER: 2019.**
- Establish annual targets for number of audience members and tickets sold as part of an annual work plan and budget. **COMPLETED ANNUALLY.**
- Increase advertising budget in order to address opportunities for organizational relevance and product positioning **COMPLETE**
- Develop a detailed marketing plan that aligns with the organizations mission, strategy and priorities - **COMPLETED ANNUALLY W/MARKETING MANAGER**
- In order to connect with new audiences and customers, pursue earned media opportunities through *Traverse Magazine* and MyNorth, as well as through Traverse City Tourism. **COMPLETE. TRAVERSE MAGAZINE/MY NORTH ROUTINELY COVERS, WITH FEATURE STORY IN OCT. 2016 TRAVERSE MAGAZINE. TC TOURISM ON-BOARD TO PROMOTE 2019 SUMMER SEASON**
- Explore potential marketing partnerships and opportunities for packaging services and experiences with businesses like Little Fleet, The Parlor, Low Bar, Hotel Indigo, Rare Bird, Seven Monks, and others **IN PROCESS**
- Connect in a personal way with potential customers. Identify three to five well-connected and well-networked local champions who are passionate about professional arts, theater and community building. Ask these champions to host in-home gatherings with their friends and colleagues where Parallel 45 can share information and get feedback about its mission, vision, strategy, programs, and productions. **COMPLETE – 7 IN-HOME EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR MID-JULY 2018**

## GOAL 4: IMPROVE FACILITIES

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Parallel 45 will improve the quality of the facilities where its shows are held and will create a plan for its long-term production facility and housing needs.

### ACTION STEPS:

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- Develop a facilities plan that outlines annual and projected production and housing needs and defines Parallel 45's criteria for physical space (FY 2015/2016) **COMPLETE**
- Create and approve an annual operations budget and fundraising plan that supports capital improvement and housing needs in the short-term **COMPLETE**
- Using facilities plan and criteria as a guide, explore marketplace and initiate exploratory conversations with property owners and managers **COMPLETE**
- Develop cost projections for long-term facilities scenarios and solutions. **COMPLETE**
- Executive Director and Board identify preferred scenario, develop case statement, and initiate capital campaign planning by hosting feasibility conversations with prospective donors and community champions **IN PROCESS**
- Based on the outcomes of feasibility work, launch facilities capital campaign **IN PROCESS**

## GOAL 5: EXPLORE PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

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Parallel 45 will connect with other organizations with aligned missions and visions and will explore ways to work together to deliver services and maximize community impact.

### ACTION STEPS:

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- Initiate exploratory conversations with staff at up to five local, regional and/or statewide groups in FY2016/2017, such as:
  - MittenLab – **COMPLETE – CO-PRODUCTIONS IN 2016, 2017 & 2018 (PLANNING)**
  - Crosshatch - **COMPLETE**
  - City Opera House – **COMPLETE. PRESENTED BY COH IN DEC. 2016**
  - Interlochen Center for the Arts – **COMPLETE. ICA WILL BE KEY STAKEHOLDER IN NEW MODEL, WITH STUDENTS GIVEN APPRENTICE PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES**

## GOAL 6: BUILD AND NURTURE A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION

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Parallel 45 will develop processes and procedures that will position the organization for professional success and that will clarify roles and expectations for all team members and partners.

### ACTION STEPS:

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- Define the Board's role and the roles of Board members roles and the staff's role and the roles of each staff person and contractor. Develop job descriptions for all roles. (FY 2015/16)- **COMPLETE**

- Create an organizational chart that shows the lines of authority, decision-making, management, and supervision, as well as the flow of communication, consultation, and information sharing. **COMPLETE**
- Staff Development
  - The Fund Development Committee and Executive Director to identify funding for the staffing model and compensation needs **COMPLETE**
  - The Board will establish a Human Resources Committee **SLATED FOR FALL 2018**
  - In FY2015/2016, the Human Resources Committee and the Executive Director will develop organizational policies and procedures for staff management and support, including:
    - A compensation plan that includes industry-appropriate wages for all positions, including actors and production team members - **COMPLETE**
    - A process for conducting performance reviews - **COMPLETE**
    - A Human Resources manual with policies and procedures – **IN-PROCESS. FINAL DRAFT TO BE BOARD-APPROVED IN DEC. 2018**
- Board and Volunteer Development
  - The Human Resources Committee and the Executive Director will:
    - Develop goal and purpose statements and a list of behavioral and communications expectations for all committees - **COMPLETE**
    - Recruit and populate committees - **COMPLETE**
    - Create a professional development plan and budget for volunteers – **IN-PROCESS. TO BE FINISHED BY MARCH 2019 FOR USE IN SUMMER 2019.**

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## HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

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- Parallel 45 meets or exceeds its Board-approved and budgeted revenue goals.
- Parallel 45 has a strong and engaged staff with retention rates at 90% or greater.
- Public recognition of Parallel 45 increases as measured by increased tickets sales, website hits, and Facebook friends.
- Earned media coverage of Parallel 45 Theater’s productions and impact increases.
- Traverse City gains position as important player in the theatre industry and Parallel 45 Theater is positioned within the marketplace as an asset that contributes to the community’s identity as a true arts & culture destination.
- Parallel 45 offers a living and market-based wage to both full-time staff and part-time administrative and artistic contractors.
- Parallel 45 attracts sufficient volunteers, including Board members, to populate its committees and meet programming and operational needs. Annual goals for sufficiency are established in the Board-approved work plan and staffing plan.
- Parallel 45 wins a Regional Tony Award.

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# RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR IMPLEMENTATION

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## FUNDING MODEL

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Parallel 45 relies on sources of contributed and earned income to create its theater productions and implement its mission and vision. The organization has developed a five-year operating budget that includes projected expenses and sources of income.

To achieve this, Parallel 45 will refine its production schedule in FY2016/2017 and will adopt a Rotating Rep model for its productions by 2019/2020. **COMPLETE**

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## STAFFING MODEL

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Parallel 45 is currently led by a volunteer Board of Directors and managed by 2 full-time staff—Executive Director and Producing Artistic Director—and several part-time staff: Marketing Manager, Communications Director, Finance Manager and Production Manager. Board, staff and contracted artists perform separate and distinct functions.

The attached budget illustrates the timing, programmatic and budgetary impacts of these staff positions, as well as plans and projections for actor and production team contracts that align with the number of productions that Parallel 45 will deliver in the rotating repertory model.

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## PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

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Parallel 45 will thrive as a member of a community comprised of strong arts and cultural organizations, including professional and amateur theater and educational opportunities such as internships, fellowships, residences and workshops that engage youth and adults and celebrate and advance the theater. We will pro-actively connect with some of the organizations identified in the community scan section of this report. We will also react and respond with an open mind to those who seek to connect with us. We will prioritize partnerships that strengthen our focus on our mission and goals while supporting the arts and culture community and the people and audiences we serve as a whole.

## APPENDIX A - ROTATING REPERTORY

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Rotating-repertory will make it possible to produce several different plays over the course of the summer, utilizing one company of professional actors, directors, designers and technicians, alternating performances daily. The efficiency of this model, and the size of our summer population, will allow us to reach more than 10 times as many patrons, as well as generate exponentially more theatre and more earned revenue, which will help ensure our sustainability.

When fully underway, summer rotating-repertory will facilitate ticket revenue at the industry appropriate level of 35% of our operating budget. It will allow us to reach approximately 15,000 people per season and will provide our community with an economic impact of \$2.4 million. Most importantly, this model provides consistent access to artistic experiences otherwise unavailable in northwest Michigan.

Additionally, a summer-focused model allows us to enhance our educational offerings, training the next generation of performing arts leaders via a robust apprentice program. A select group of high school- and college-aged artists will be chosen to support all aspects of operating a professional repertory theatre, making Parallel 45 Theatre the only place within our region where this training can be accomplished. Students who receive training at the college or conservatory level rely on Parallel 45 as the only professional theatre opportunity bringing them back to the region.

While our former model—comprised of a season of single high-quality shows in succession—was challenging, repertory presents even greater logistical and artistic challenges for the company, its artists and its administrators. However, these challenges lead to greater rewards revealed in the final product. According to Kimberley Jean Barry, director of stage management at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, “There’s a strange kind of alchemy with repertory.” She adds that rotating repertory provides “enormous benefits and great joys” to those who tackle its challenges. “The actors develop a shorthand and trust each other, becoming better artists in the process. Repertory deepens the work in indescribable ways.” Theatre is inherently a collaborative medium, and repertory demands exponentially more teamwork. Having one play in rehearsal while another is running “brings an artistic vibrancy to the process and creates a conversation between the plays that energizes us, whether consciously or not.”

Repertory also nurtures actors, breeding better performances. Julia Rodriguez-Elliott, producing artistic director of A Noise Within theatre says actors often get pigeonholed into types, but repertory, with its requirement that actors to work in multiple plays, allows them to demonstrate what they can do with other kinds of parts, even if they may be smaller roles. The benefits of this go beyond the artists themselves.

David Ivers, artistic director of the Utah Shakespeare Festival, contends, “There’s a kind of magic” for audiences, when they witness the acting virtuosity inherent in the rotating repertory model and say, “Wait, didn’t I see the guy in this comedy playing Romeo this afternoon?”

Many theatre professionals believe repertory can bring out the best in an actor. As Jim Warren, artistic director at the American Shakespeare Center, describes it, “Having more than one play at a time in your brain and body means everything has to fire more fully and on different cylinders. It makes each piece better...the plays are enhanced and more vibrant in repertory, and are not compromised.” Warren believes that performing a particular play just once a week in repertory brings each performance “a little more adrenaline, an extra level of urgency.”

The rotating repertory model, which requires elasticity on the part of the artists and imaginative courage on the part of the audience, allows for a transcendent connection between story, storyteller and audience. Parallel 45 artists will excel within the creative boundaries the rotating repertory model places on the process. Rather than relying on expensive illusions—scenery and visual aids—to realize the play, they will rely on the imaginative landscape of the space itself and the imagination of the audience who shares that space. Parallel 45 is eager for the opportunity to create this rotating repertory playground on which the play, the performers, and the audience meet.