

Introduction

The Edmonds Driftwood Players (EDP) Board of Directors started in 2023 creating a five-year strategic plan to help guide the non-profit Company's evolution and growth. The Board held a kick-off retreat and then established different task forces, comprised of Board Directors, EDP Members, and Staff to dive deep into "Who we are," "Living our Values," and "Defining our Programming." The group also considered survey results from Patrons of Seasons 65 and 66, as well as, EDP Members.

What follows is the outcome of those efforts, setting a five-year plan for EDP to further reinforce its position as a sustainable Community Theatre that can flourish for an additional 66 years.

History

In 1958, a passionate group of theatre enthusiasts brought EDP to life. Season after season, they enriched the community with captivating performances, presenting several productions each year. As a volunteer-driven, non-profit organization, EDP thrived on the dedication of their members and volunteers. From designing sound and lighting to building sets, acting, directing, and even selling tickets, the board directors have always been hands-on, ensuring every aspect of each production runs smoothly. This unwavering commitment cemented EDP's place as one of Washington state's oldest continuously operating community theatres, and an indispensable part of the Edmonds, Washington community. Going into our 67th season, the legacy of bringing live theatre to Edmonds continues to inspire.

In 1968, EDP embarked on an ambitious project in partnership with the City of Edmonds, building the Wade James Theatre. The City of Edmonds was later designated the state's first Certified Creative District, which includes the Wade James Theatre. This 215-seat venue, nestled on Main Street minutes from the heart of Edmonds, remains the home of EDP and a cornerstone of Edmonds.

Following the COVID shut-down in 2020, where many theatres faced difficult decisions to shutter or severely reduce their scope, EDP's thoughtful and strategic management during led the theatre to return to it's core – staging live theatre productions – in November 2021 with three captivating mainstage productions for Season 63. Even with restrictions in place, many of our pre-COVID patrons were eager to support us, as well as new; a testament to the enduring power of live theatre to enthrall and inspire.

Seasons 64 and 65 continued that momentum, resonating beyond the curtain call. Ticket sales, donations, and grants provided financial stability, when coupled with smart and frugal operating expense management. It was a victory lap, but bittersweet, as the pandemic's shadow left its mark on the EDP community, with some volunteers and Board Directors unable to return. Yet, EDP rose to the challenge, with remaining Board Directors and Members stepping alongside staff to fill gaps and ensure the theatre's smooth transition back to full-time operation. This shared burden laid bare a hidden reality - the board, traditionally hands-on and deeply involved in day-to-day tasks, was stretched thin, and the aspirations of EDP had outgrown the ability for Members to fully run EDP.

A paradigm shift was needed to ensure the theatre's long-term health, which this five-year strategic plan lays out the roadmap to expand the resources of EDP to meet the expectations and needs of its Board, Staff, Members, volunteers, and the community, forging a future that will sustain for another 66 seasons.

Vision

EDP provides quality live theatre that feeds the soul, reflects our community, and is accessible.

Mission

EDP produces entertaining and engaging live theatre, connects the community through volunteerism, and fosters learning and growth through education.

Values

Community Theatre: We exist for the community. EDP serves, engages, and reflects the community around us, across our Board, our Staff, our Members, our artists, and our volunteers.

Quality: We pursue excellence in everything we do, from productions to programs. We consistently create experiences that leave lasting, positive impressions.

Creativity: Creativity is at the heart of how EDP stands out and shows up for the community. From artistic choices to innovative problem-solving, we nurture imagination and encourage new ideas in every facet of our work.

Inclusion: EDP is a found family. We are a welcoming, safe place that values authenticity. We create space for dialogue and opportunity, even if live theatre is new to you.

Education: Education is a life-long pursuit. We educate the community, whether by creating opportunities to see live theatre or building theatre skills.

Programming

A program is an organized effort that serves a specific purpose, engages a specific group of people, and contributes to the overall Mission of the organization. EDP serves several groups of people, all of which relate to one another, to deliver the programs that serve our Mission. The specific groups our programs target are our Patrons, Members, Staff, Artists, Donors, and Organizational Volunteers:

- **Patrons** are our fans. They purchase tickets, especially season subscriptions. They champion the quality of our theatre. They are part of our community.
- **Members** are those who are invested in EDP. They pay dues. They commit time. They are passionate and dedicated to the success of EDP.
- **Staff** is the backbone of the organization. They allow us to do everything EDP aspires to do, and more. They are dedicated and passionate about our Vision and Mission.
- **Artists**, whether on the stage or behind the curtain, are core to achieving what we promise to deliver to our patrons and the community. They bring their uniqueness. They bring their skills. They bring their talent. Together, they create the magic that is theatre.
- **Donors** allow us to be the organization we strive to be. Whether an individual, a family, a business, a Trust, a Foundation, a grant, or any supporter of EDP, our donors give us the funds to deliver our Vision and Mission because we are trusted stewards of their investment in what we do.
- **Organizational volunteers** are the hidden gems to EDP. They give of their time, their skill, their knowledge, their passion, and their spirit by volunteering for the organization (e.g., front-of-house, Advisory Committees, EDP mailings, program support) to provide our community the theatre and programs it deserves.
- **The community** is who EDP exists for. Our community is Edmonds. It is Snohomish and King Counties. It is our local and regional arts organizations. It is our patrons, artists, members, donors, volunteers, and staff. It is what gives us purpose to deliver quality Community theatre.

EDP's programs are core to this Strategic Plan and serve some or all of the above specified groups. Those programs are:

- **Mainstage** attracts patrons and artists with a variety of quality live theatre productions that are broadly appealing, providing a reliable funding source.
- **Volunteerism** creates opportunities to support EDP in a non-financial manner that makes a positive impact on the community.
- **Resource Development** grows consistent, non-ticket revenue streams that help fund EDP's programs.
- **Education & Community Outreach** encourages the growth of theatre skills, knowledge, and experiences for our community and talent in ways that inspire passion for live theatre and support our non-profit status.
- **New Works** fosters the development of theatre that is unafraid to explore the full gamut of the human experience that expands our patron and talent reach.
- **Membership** creates a space for our most passionate supporters as an investment into the longevity of EDP.

Priorities

1. Rebalance EDP's share of contributed income to earned income.
2. Elevate EDP's position as a theatre where artists and volunteers want to be involved.
3. Expand EDP programming by increasing capacity across resources (e.g., budget, staff, volunteers).
4. Amplify the community's awareness of EDP so that we remain a foundational part of Edmonds's cultural identity.

Goals

Goal 1 – Fiscal Responsibility: Increase our contributed income from 30% to 50% or more of annual revenue by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2030, diversifying our annual revenue.

Goal 2 – Quality Live Theatre: Increase Season subscriber seats from 32% to 40% and average sell-through of each Season from 91.6% to 94% by FY2030 through quality main-stage productions that our Patrons enjoy.

Goal 3 – Longevity: Increase the number of auditioning actors to available roles, number of eligible backstage artists (e.g., set designers), and the number of available organizational volunteers (e.g., stage managers, front-of-house) to three times the amount needed for each by FY2030.

Goal 4 – Beyond the Mainstage: Provide a full concept-to-production loop for at least one production per Season from the New Works program by FY 2030.

Goal 5 – Giving Back: Expand our educational programming to 2 youth-focused educational programs and 6 theatre skill workshops by FY2030.

Goal 6 – Community Awareness: Increase EDP's visibility through consistent engagement with three community/government/local organizations by FY2030.

Goal 7 – Building our Membership: Increase our annual paid members by more than 275% to 150 and member dues by more than 500% to \$150 by FY2030 so that it covers the cost of a part time (20-hour per week) employee to manage the member program.