



AACTMAD Strategic Goal Areas - 2005 - 2008

Ideas and Measurable Objectives

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Introduction

What is this document?

This document replaced AACTMAD's 2001 Long-Term Plan. It grew out of the AACTMAD Board's July 2005 strategic planning retreat. Building on the long-term plan adopted in 2001 and refreshed over the second half of 2005, the board identified five goal areas:

- Marketing and communications - finding out what people want and telling our story to our members and the public
- Operations - providing stable financial, operational, and facilities management to enable a secure future
- Outreach - providing traditional music and dance opportunities for the larger community
- Programming - developing high-quality events that appeal to our audiences
- Teaching - encouraging ongoing development of dancers, musicians, singers, and leaders

Individual board members have volunteered to develop and shepherd each goal area. They have compiled wide-ranging lists of inspirational ideas; in some cases the team has included information about what AACTMAD is already doing to address each point. These idea lists give a picture of the directions that we're interested in pursuing and their many exciting possibilities. We hope they'll spark your interest.

The board also identified measurable objectives for each goal area. These reflect the board's priorities for the near- and medium-term. Measurable Objectives in this document have been discussed and agreed to by the board as a whole. This document shows the revisions made in January 2007.

How will these goals be met?

In some cases, AACTMAD committees are already in place and intentionally working on these goals. In other cases, the area teams will encourage new activities to meet these goals, or encourage existing committees to think about committing to these goals. In other words, the individual board teams for each goal area are tracking and encouraging activities that expand the organization's effectiveness, but not necessarily committing to direct organization of the activities.

What if one team deserves credit for the work of another? We don't care. Each Goal Area includes lots of overlap with the others. In fact, almost any activity AACTMAD organizes could have implications in all of the goal areas. The board has agreed not to belabor where particular activities belong; we just want to see them happen.

The rest of this document consists of the ideas and measurable objectives that have been agreed on by the AACTMAD board during 2005-2006 and updated in 2007 for each goal area, in alphabetical order.



Summary of Goals

Marketing and Communications - (Marge Cramton)

Marketing and Communications - understanding what our audiences want from us and telling our story.

- **Committee Communication.** Continue strategic two-way communication with all AACTMAD committees through 2007- 08. Work with each committee to communicate strategic goals, identify committee needs, agree on marketing goals, identify a designated marketing contact, and find out how each committee would like to participate in supporting AACTMAD's strategic goal areas.
- **Marketing support for committees.** Continue to provide help to committees with materials, marketing, and public relations on request.
- **Membership.** Grow the membership by 10% per year.

Operations - (Mark Hillegonds and Abby Liskow)

Operations - ensuring the reliable functioning of the organization to enable a secure future.

- **Volunteer Recognition.** We will hold a volunteer recognition event at least yearly, starting in calendar 2007.
- **Financial.** Our scrip program generates \$1500 in calendar 2007. We will create an emergency backup plan for AACTMAD financial systems in calendar 2008.
- **Facility.** We will have a dance facility in operation by Fall 2008 which meets multiple needs of the dance community and is under the control and ownership of AACTMAD and its partners.

Outreach - (Nawal Motawi)

Outreach: expanding the number of people touched by our mission.

General public:

- Dancing in the Streets will expose 2000 people to participative dancing and acoustic music
- Fourth Saturday Contra dance will offer caller and musician workshops and attract at least six new people to each event
- At least two "flashdance" events will be held per year

School age students and families:

- "Let's Dance!" program will be communicated to 100 public and private schools, nonprofit groups, and churches.
- Let's Dance! will facilitate six events per year, with participation by at least 200 new or non-dancers
- 100 additional previous attendees will participate in an event

AACTMAD Programming or "Inreach" (Kay Brown and Edith Burney)

Making our local dance community a great place to participate in traditional music and dance. Note that maintaining and improving the quality and quantity of dancing, calling, singing, and musicians has a lot to do with teaching, as well as with having adequate facilities.

- **Program Diversity:** Establish an English/Contra Family Dance that meets at least six times per year and involves new musicians and new groups of dancers.
- **Event Quality:** Quality of AACTMAD-sponsored events will be evaluated regularly using a measure that is determined by each committee. Each event committee will tell us their quality measure in their ARRR form submitted by May 31 2007.

Teaching (Brad Battey, Neil Epstein, and David Orlin)

Teaching - encouraging ongoing development of dancers, musicians, singers, and leaders

- **Instructor List:** Create a list of traditional music and dance teachers by specialty, beginning with Ann Arbor and growing to include SE Michigan; make the list available on the AACTMAD website in calendar 2007.
- **Musician Learning Opportunities:** Emerging dance musicians receive regular opportunities for instruction and chances to play with an experienced core band.
- **Caller Learning Opportunities:** emerging callers are mentored, given calling opportunities, and encouraged to attend the guest caller workshops which are offered more than once per year.
- **Community Jam:** Create a regular event that allows anybody to drop in and call or play traditional music by ear. This open band will be anchored by one or two excellent dance musicians and will welcome many levels of musicians. An open mic for callers will allow people to dance, if desired.



Marketing and Communications

(Marge Cramton)

Marketing and Communications - understanding what our audiences want from us and telling our story.

Measurable Objectives for Marketing and Communications:

- **Committee Communication.** Continue strategic two-way communication with all AACTMAD committees through 2007- 08. Work with each committee to communicate strategic goals, identify committee needs, agree on marketing goals, identify a designated marketing contact, and find out how each committee would like to participate in supporting AACTMAD's strategic goal areas.
- **Marketing support for committees.** Continue to provide help to committees with materials, marketing, and public relations on request.
- **Membership.** Grow the membership by 10% per year.

Ideas

Goal: *Identify marketing needs, set priorities, and create a three-year plan in support of the organization's long-term objectives*

What we are doing now: We have identified that we need marketing support for the fundraising for the new facility.

Ideas for the future:

- Define our "brand," fine-tune our graphic presentation, decide on design standards to support the communication of our image
- Provide graphic design guidelines to the committees that will make quick flyer production easier (not harder!) while maintaining minimum design standards and organizational imprint
- The marketing plan will prioritize the audiences we most need to communicate with (see below).

Goal: *Create and maintain timely, accurate, and effective communication with our stakeholder audiences to support our long-term goals. Audiences may include:*

Board of Directors

What we are doing now: board@aactmad.org, monthly Board meetings; communicate agendas systematically prior to meetings to allow members to prepare for discussions

Ideas for the future:

- Survey board members periodically for suggestions and feedback.

Committee chairs and committee members

What we are doing now: Calendar, e-mail letters, website, annual report to the board, annual written request for funds, annual in-person report to the board

Ideas for the future:

- Communicate long-term goals systematically
- Survey committee chairs and committee members periodically for suggestions, feedback, and contacts
- Share ideas, problems solved, achievements among committees
- Ask each committee to designate one member as the marketing evangelist; ask each committee to identify its newsworthy activities for the year or half-year; create a publicity checklist for all committees.
- Program Coordinator/Exec Director will work actively with the committees
- Sustainable thank you system to recognize volunteers

Volunteers



What we are doing now: Calendar, e-mail newsletters, website, via committee chairs, flyers and announcements at event

Ideas for the future:

- Board or Program Coordinator/Exec Director actively works with a volunteer coordinator
- Online volunteer recruiting for specific times, dates, tasks
- Database of member skills, professional backgrounds, community organizations belonged to, preferred ways each person likes to help (working alone, socializing, developing a new process, executing something that has been figured out, etc.)
- Sustainable thank-you system

Donors

What we are doing now: membership chair sends thank-you note

Ideas for the future: Fundraising committee will suggest and execute

Members

What we are doing now: Calendar, meeting summaries, e-mail messages, website, flyers, and announcements at events; member newsletter in some form

Ideas for the future:

- Survey the members to create better understanding of their demographics, skills, preferences, and interests, and to collect general and specific feedback.

Potential volunteers

What we are doing now: one-to-one recruiting; calendar, word of mouth via current committee members, meeting summaries, email messages, website, flyers and announcements at events

Ideas for the future:

- Volunteer coordinator who can actively recruit volunteers for specific tasks and with awareness for member skills and interests
- Online volunteer recruiting application

Potential Board members

What we are doing now: calendar, word of mouth via current committee members, meeting summaries, email messages, website, flyers and announcements at events, overview "brochure," nominating committee's feedback and brainstorming events.

Ideas for the future: Nominating committee will suggest and carry out

Potential donors

What we are doing now: calendar, word of mouth via current committee members, meeting summaries, email messages, website, flyers and announcements at events

Ideas for the future: Fundraising committee will suggest and carry out donor communications.

General public

What we are doing now: Website, event listings sent to publicity distribution list (Observer etc), selected media relations efforts for specific events (like Dancing in the Streets, Dawn Dance Weekend)

Ideas for the future:

- A systematic media plan will result in more (non-calendar item) coverage of AACTMAD events in local media over a year.
- Consider creating local cable spots and including local cable shows in media planning (like the FYI show)

Other traditional music & dance organizations



What we are doing now: Calendar, website listing of organizations and sites; individual committees send flyers and announcements for specific events to regional organizations, we display flyers for regional events at our events.

Ideas for the future:

- Survey regional organizations and consult with them about the planned transition to online calendar submission and publishing process

Community organizations, schools, and potential partner organizations

What we are doing now: Many committees have loose relationships with other local organizations. Examples: Tuesday ECD - Steiner Lower School; DITS - Ann Arbor District Library and Main Street Ventures; etc.

Ideas for the future:

- Develop a list of potential partner organizations and set priorities for approaching them and working with them. Develop a database of partner contact information. Create a secure way to share partner info among committees and board members, so we aren't all tripping over each other. Designate an ambassador for the top-priority community organizations; share partnering status periodically so we can see potentials as well as results.
- Consider how to market our activities to each of the priority partner groups as participants. For example, if we hold a family dance, how do we communicate to the Steiner families beyond the standard event listings in local media?
- Assess the experience of the CHS Community resource program participants; promote the CHS CR; create additional CHS CRs for music, event organizing. Work with UM to offer phys ed credit for dance attendance.

Local media

What we are doing now: Monthly publicity distribution; occasional selected media relations efforts for specific events.

Ideas for the future:

- Create a systematic plan to build a relationship with local media; plan to publicize newsworthy activities through press releases and direct communications.

Lodi Township and Wagner-Waters neighbors

What we are doing now: LLC communicates with selected neighbors; LLC could have a bonfire on the property in the fall

Ideas for the future:

- Identify members who live in Lodi Township; ask them to help us build a list of contacts so we can keep interested neighbors informed about the building project as it progresses
- Facilities committee will participate in planning for this group.

Operations

(Mark Hillegonds and Abby Liskow)

Operations - ensuring the reliable functioning of the organization to enable a secure future.

Measurable Objectives for Operations:

- **Volunteer Recognition.** We will hold a volunteer recognition event at least yearly, starting in calendar 2007.
- **Financial.**
Our scrip program generates \$1500 in calendar 2007.
We will create an emergency backup plan for AACTMAD financial systems in calendar 2008.
- **Facility.** We will have a dance facility in operation by Fall 2008 which meets multiple needs of the dance community and is under the control and ownership of AACTMAD and its partners.



Ideas

Goal: Maintain Financial Stability

What we are doing now: annual budget process, regular financial reporting

Ideas for the future:

- Grow budget and general fund
- Partner with compatible organizations
- Maximize return on investment of General Fund
- Charge committees with optimizing operational costs
- Increase fundraising/grant opportunities

Goal: Engage in Fundraising to fund new projects.

What we are doing now: Membership dues and admission fees, silent auction, matching employer grants, fundraising committee assists other committees on request; create documents that outline who we are, what we do, visions, and priorities

Ideas for the future:

- Increase revenue from membership dues and admission fees
- Have Board and/or committee members attend fundraising workshops
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- Increase communication with fundraising committee
- Develop and execute a fundraising plan

Goal: Create and maintain large and diverse volunteer base.

What we are doing now: Membership development initiatives, annual volunteer interest survey forms, publicity, youth and community partnering activities

Ideas for the future:

- Create a database of current volunteers; determine where volunteers are needed
- Examine success of current volunteer interest survey. Develop new methods, if needed
- Have committee info and volunteer sign-up at dances
- Improve relationship with committees and the membership
 - Create volunteer appreciation initiatives
- Incentive system: after some number of hours volunteered, consider free or discounted entrance to dances

Goal: Continue to create and maintain strong administrative and financial systems.

What we are doing now: Documentation (AACTMAD Guide, By-laws, Policies, Board meeting minutes, NEW Center, website), Board orientation and long range planning sessions, **Ideas for the future:**

- Purchase financial system software, like "Quick Books"
- Train back-up for Ray and Kay
- Determine Ray and Kay's "wish list"
- Hire professional assistance, such as CPA or accounting help
- Hire an executive director

Goal: Provide a facility that is under AACTMAD control, is well utilized, and is designed to help achieve the mission.

What we are doing now: Facility Committee has facilitated the purchase of land (by an independent LLC and is developing plans for building; documenting facilities requirements; ongoing detailed process oversight; developing financial and business plan

What needs to be done: Continuing development of partner relationship, fundraising relationships, building design, and business planning.

Goal: Improve the communication between the board and committees and between committees.

What we are doing now: Annual ARRR report from committees to board on successes, problems, finances, etc. Board provides feedback to committees. Periodic in-person report from committee to board or board member to committees.



Future: work with committee chairs to develop workable reporting mechanisms for 2007.

Outreach

(Nawal Motawi)

Outreach: expanding the number of people touched by our mission.

Measurable Objectives for Outreach:

General public:

- Dancing in the Streets will expose 2000 people to participative dancing and acoustic music
- Fourth Saturday Contra dance will offer caller and musician workshops and attract at least six new people to each event
- At least two "flashdance" events will be held per year

School age students and families:

- "Let's Dance" program will be communicated to 100 public and private schools, nonprofit groups, and churches
- Let's Dance will facilitate six events per year, with participation by at least 200 new or non-dancers
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Ideas

Goal: Involve students in traditional music and dance

University: Change from 2006: AACTMAD's on-campus contra dance events in 2005-2006 did not draw enough attendees to make the project worth continuing. The Contra at U of M committee has merged with the 4th Saturday committee, and with limited resources we are not placing particular emphasis on attracting university students to contra dancing this year. However, many college-age people are involved through the Ann Arbor Swing Dance Association's weekly events.

What we are doing now: Hold AACTMAD sponsored/supported events on UM campus (Swing committee puts on weekly dances on UM campus).

Ideas for the future:

Have students on the Board;
Provide transportation to AACTMAD sponsored events.
Partner with current student groups to stage events

Public and private elementary schools

What we are doing now: "Let's Dance!" holds events at schools; **the Community High School CR program** allows high school students to receive Phys. Ed. Credit toward graduation; AACTMAD members who are high school students will be fully supported in their attempts to make traditional dances happen at their school, quite possibly with the help of the **Let's Dance** committee.

Goal: Share traditional music and dance with people in other organizations, such as:

Churches; social groups, such as the Jaycees and Ski Club; performing organizations, such as Fiddlers Restrung, The Ark, RiverFolk Festival, Saline Celtic Fest; Professional groups, such as Washtenaw Living Economy Network, merchants associations; and other dance groups, such as U of M International dancers and U of M Ballroom dancers

What we are doing now: Being a community resource for leaders, teachers, musicians & performers of traditional music and dance; **Let's Dance** (formerly known as Youth Outreach and as the Community Fundraising Dance Project) will continue to bring dance events and residencies to organizations, including schools, churches, businesses, non-profits, and others

Ideas for the future:

Be an even better resource (more organized, web accessible info, more detailed info)
Have AACTMAD supported activities at their events



Community Fundraising Dance Project
Provide transportation from their event to AACTMAD sponsored events

Goal: *Share traditional music and dance with the public at large, including people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, orientations, family status, and economic statuses*

What we are doing now:

Dancing in the Streets will be held annually

All our events are public and listed regularly in local media; The Fourth Saturday Dance will continue its outreach focus

- Change: We found that combining emerging musicians and emerging callers in the way we initially tried, was not desirable, thus different approaches to both are being pursued.
- Goal: An average of six new people (never attended a dance before) will continue to attend the event each month.

"Flashdance" events, where dancers gather in various public locations and dance for a while, involving the public as spectators or as spontaneous participants, will be held at least twice during the year.

Being a resource for one-of-a-kind events; requests come through our website.

Ideas for the future:

Sponsor or support more frequent street dances

Be an easier to find resource with more visibility in the local press editorial content

AACTMAD Programming or "Inreach"

(Kay Brown and Edith Burney)

AACTMAD Programming or "Inreach": continuing to make our local dance community a great place to participate in traditional music and dance.

Note that maintaining and improving the quality and quantity of dancing, calling, singing, and musicians has a lot to do with teaching, as well as with having adequate facilities.

Measurable Objectives for AACTMAD Programming:

- **Program Diversity:** Establish an English/Contra Family Dance that meets at least six times per year and involves new musicians and new groups of dancers.
- **Event Quality:** Quality of AACTMAD-sponsored events will be evaluated regularly using a measure that is determined by each committee. Each event committee will tell us their quality measure in their ARRR form submitted by May 31 2007.

Ideas

Goal: *Provide good music for events*

What we are doing now: Provide ongoing opportunities for musicians to learn, interact, practice, and play via the Tuesday ECD and 4th Saturday, First Saturday Series, Pittsfield Open Band, and Tuesday English jam projects.

Ideas for the future:

Market those ongoing opportunities to a wider audience of potential dance musicians.

Provide room on the new building stage for sitting in.

Provide lesson/practice rooms in new building

Offer jams focusing on other styles of music (like English country, swing, oldtime, etc.)

Goal: *Encourage good calling/leading*

What we are doing now:

Providing ongoing opportunities for novice and experienced callers to learn, interact, practice, and call via the Tuesday ECD, 4th Saturday and First Saturday Series Projects.



Ideas for the future:

Market those ongoing opportunities more.

Goal: Offer diverse and high quality programs

What we are doing now: Many types of dances are sponsored which cater to people of varied experience and ability. These include the series dances: First Saturday, 4th Saturday, Tuesday English and Friday Advanced English, as well as other events: Dancing in the Streets, Dawn Dance, and outreach events. Offer occasional singing sessions.

Ideas for the future:

Sponsor family music nights

Establish an English/Contra Family Dance series that involves new musicians and dancers.

Be open to working with other groups, like international, swing, etc. to provide diverse, interesting programming

Establish an after-school music & dance program for school age children

Teaching

(Brad Battey, Neil Epstein, and David Orlin)

Teaching - encouraging ongoing development of dancers, musicians, singers, and leaders

Measurable Objectives for Teaching:

- **Instructor List:** Create a list of traditional music and dance teachers by specialty, beginning with Ann Arbor and growing to include SE Michigan; make the list available on the AACTMAD website in calendar 2007.
- **Musician Learning Opportunities:** Emerging dance musicians receive regular opportunities for instruction and chances to play with an experienced core band.
- **Caller Learning Opportunities:** emerging callers are mentored, given calling opportunities, and encouraged to attend the guest caller workshops which are offered more than once per year.
- **Community Jam:** Create a regular event that allows anybody to drop in and call or play traditional music by ear. This open band will be anchored by one or two excellent dance musicians and will welcome many levels of musicians. An open mic for callers will allow people to dance, if desired.

Ideas

Goal: Bring new ideas and new styles to the community.

Increase awareness of scholarship program and the number of scholarship applications

Bring in new styles of dance and music at least twice a year

Invite local or national demo groups to several events a year

Goal: Create ample opportunities for teaching new dancers, dance leaders, event organizers and musicians.

- Offer beginner's workshops a half hour before non-advanced dances
- Sanction several jam sessions per month targeting various styles and levels
- Rotate committee/event leadership more frequently and actively invite new dancers to participate on committees.
- Have one or two critiqued slots for new callers at dances.
- Investigate and report on local caller or dance leader development activities available or in planning stages; recommend additional steps needed.

Goal: Increase the proficiency of the community's current dancers, dance leaders, event organizers, and musicians.

- Add more workshops of different types (caller, musician, dancer)
- Encourage private or small group lessons



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- Special events
 - Concerts
 - Experimental or teaching oriented dances (somewhere between workshop and dance)
 - Schedule time to jam or socialize as part of events
 - Bring in local or national event organizers for talks, workshops, retreats, etc
 - Assemble a directory of people who teach traditional styles of instrumental music; include information about what styles of music they teach and what types of students they work best with. Make it friendly to people with no experience studying music and open to anyone in the community. Make the list available on the website or on request through the webmaster.
 - Encourage the series committees to hold beginner dance workshops before AACTMAD dance series. If appropriate, help package beginner workshop content for contra dancing to make it easy for visiting callers to do a good job.