

# 2021-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

mca  
marion **cultural** alliance

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## The Impact of The Arts On Our Community

In 2017, Americans for the Arts prepared the Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 5 to explore the impact that the nonprofit arts and culture industry has on the economies of cities and counties across the United States of America.

Data was collected from 341 participating regions, including the city of Ocala. What they found was stunning.

According to the study, the nonprofit arts and culture industry creates \$56 million in economic impact, employs 1,422 individuals, and generates an additional \$6 million in local and state government revenue – all right here in Ocala.

In sum, Ocala's nonprofit arts groups not only enhance quality of life, act as a magnet for tourism, and stimulate creativity in our community – they also constitute a powerful economic force.

That's why the arts deserve a champion. And that champion is Marion Cultural Alliance.



## A Brief History

In the early 1990s, a group of volunteers gathered at Brick City Center for the Arts, a joint venture of the city of Ocala and the College of Central Florida. A gallery was established in the heart of historic downtown Ocala and was a catalyst for the revitalization of downtown Ocala.

The group would come to launch Horse Fever in 2001, a record-breaking public art project and charity auction. For five months, the public delighted in our herd of 53 horses, many of which still adorn the streets of Ocala. Artists and a generous business community came together to raise over \$1.5 million for the arts and 27 other local charities.

That group of volunteers subsequently formed the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) in the fall of 2001.

20 years later, MCA still facilitates programming, grants, and scholarships that promote art and cultural programs across every medium in Ocala/Marion County.



## MCA's Home: The Brick

The city of Ocala invited MCA to make its home at The Brick in 2005. Today, nearing its 4th five-year lease, and in fulfillment of the agreement made with the City of Ocala, MCA has:

- offered a monthly stream of gallery exhibits
- hosted numerous fund and friend raisers for MCA's mission including Art in the Attic and Ride for the Arts Gran Fondo events
- hosted 'live' painting by artists visible through the window or on the courtyard
- secured Drake Arnold to paint the electrical box in the courtyard
- hosted free "lunch and learns" in conjunction with the Healing HeARTS and Art of Aging Exhibits
- forged relationships with downtown businesses including cross promotion and referral
- supported the local cultural community and served as venue for same
- operated The Brick Gallery Gift Shop-a retail space for artists
- hosted arts and cultural roundtables
- in partnership with the CEP's Power Plant Business Incubator, hosted workshops on 'Making Your Art, Your Business'
- served as a unique venue for private events including book signings, graduation parties, rehearsal dinners and weddings, birthday parties, workshops, and memorial services
- completed an \$80,000 improvement project on the patio and \$30,000 on interior/exterior painting and \$7,500 for awnings in partnership with the City's façade matching grant program
- served as a venue for the City of Ocala's meetings and workshops
- funded staffing and operations for the facility over 15 years





# The Future of MCA

In 2016, MCA's Board of Directors adopted a 5-year strategic plan and vision statement. The Board and staff continue to work towards an aspirational and unifying goal: to make Ocala/Marion County one of the best, most vibrant communities in the nation for the arts. Additionally, MCA is proud to be a partner with the City of Ocala in the funding of Ocala's first Cultural Master Plan. This plan offers our community a roadmap for cultural partners, funding strategies, goals, and accountability.

The Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 5 put to rest the misconception that communities support arts and culture at the expense of local economic development. In fact, it showed that the opposite is true: when communities invest in the arts, they are investing in an industry that supports good jobs, generates government revenue, and attracts tourists. Marion County's Tourist Development Council acknowledged this as well with its decision to include Arts and Culture as a pillar for attracting visitors to Ocala/Marion County.

Sensing growing recognition of the importance of the arts, MCA has spent the last six months interviewing a broad group of stakeholders and partners representing thousands of constituents throughout Ocala/Marion County to better understand how our community views and values the arts. These efforts have resulted in the adoption of an updated strategic plan, mission, and vision for the organization. This strategic plan not only identifies the overarching goals of our organization, but also establishes clear objectives, targets, and metrics through which we will measure our success.



# The Future of MCA

In Ocala/Marion County, arts and culture are essential elements to our community as evidenced by the \$3 return on investment (ROI) for every dollar spent on arts and cultural expenditures. The Community Cultural Arts Plan and the subsequent Implementation Plan (adopted by City Council on November 3, 2020), are a culmination of ideas, concepts, and strategies gathered through input from our community that will catapult us into the next level of arts and culture in a more impactful, sustainable way over the next 10 years.

The implementation of this Plan is a priority for the City of Ocala and the many partners named in the plan. Through a collective effort, this plan will become a reality, continuing the legacy of arts in the Ocala metropolitan area for every community member.

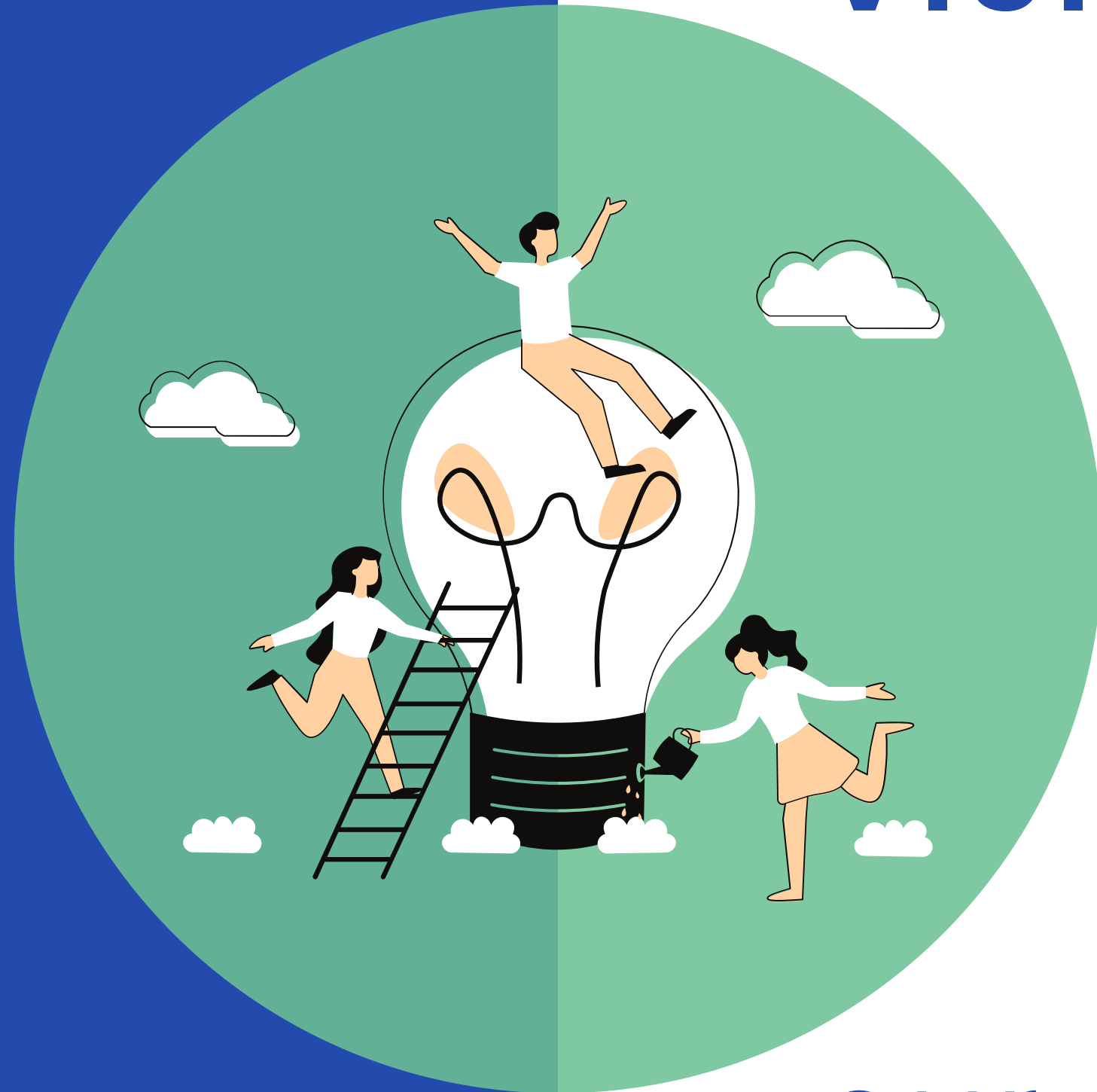
## Funding Priorities Identified in the Plan for MCA

- Build capacity of cultural arts organizations through support services rendered by MCA.
- Increase capacity of cultural arts organizations with grants to support their growth and impact their mission.
- Dedicate marketing efforts to build the community's cultural arts identity so that it expands tourism.
- Fund public art.



# our VISION

Marion Cultural Alliance envisions a Marion County in which the economy is fueled, community is strengthened, lives are enriched through cultural and artistic excellence.



To **CHAMPION** arts, artists, and arts organizations; to **CONVENE** people to appreciate art, learn about art, and build support for art; and to **CREATE** a thriving arts presence in Ocala/Marion County.

# our MISSION





## GOAL #1

CHAMPION:

Providing Arts Leadership



## GOAL #2

CONVENE:

Promoting the Arts



## GOAL #3

CREATE:

Funding for the Arts

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



# Goal #1: CHAMPION

## Providing Arts Leadership

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Facilitate communication among arts organizations to foster collaboration on shared programming, leveraging resources, and reducing redundancy in services.

Recruit arts advocates to serve on strategic city and county advisory boards.



Bring skills, expertise and personal connections to benefit the organization; recruit and retain strong and diverse board members to govern, recruit, and retain sufficient number of volunteers to support staff with various operational functions.

Promote findings of the Economic Impact study and Cultural Arts Plan to stakeholders.

Champion artists in the Ocala/Marion County community to develop resources and skills to actualize the best of their artistic abilities.



# Goal #2: CONVENE

## Promoting the Arts

Assemble a gallery advisory committee with representatives from each of the arts to promote the arts through use of The Brick.

Produce an interactive, common, online arts guide, common calendar, and map, easily accessible to the public, visitors, artists and arts organizations.



Research and develop innovative outreach tools to convene community members around the arts.

Develop an omnichannel marketing platform to promote the organization, artists, and arts within the community.

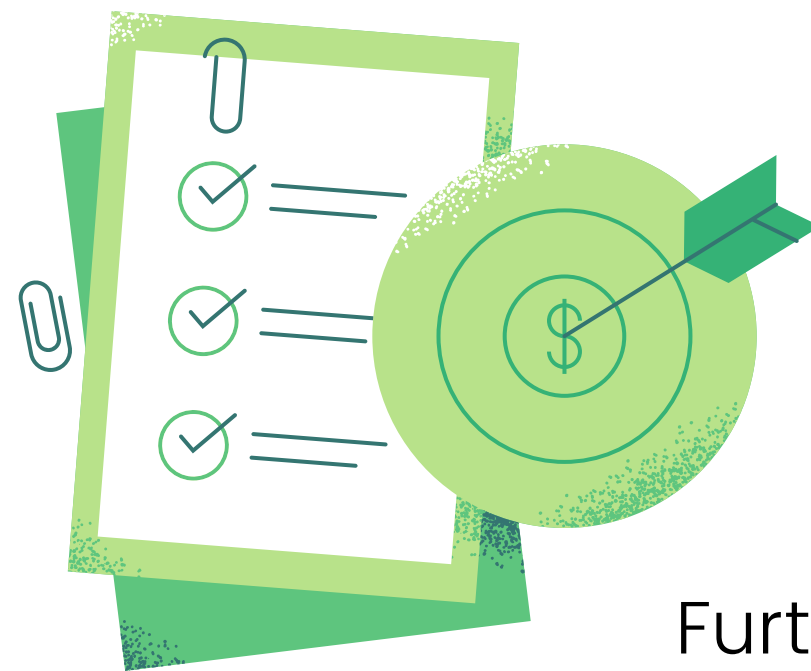
Create programs to connect art talent and resources in diverse communities.

# Goal #3: CREATE

## Funding for the Arts



Expand grant funding to local artists, arts educators, and arts organizations by increasing the endowment to \$900,000 by 2023 and identify and provide information on state and federal funding opportunities.



Develop a mechanism for continuous and consistent funding for operational needs.

Advocate for a dedicated funding source for public art projects through community improvement funds or impact fees.

Further build the gift shop, creating an additional revenue stream by selling not only local artists' works but other marketable art-related merchandising.

Increase amenities to enhance the value of 'The Brick' as a rental venue and utilize the location as an additional revenue contributor.

# Strategic Timeline

## 2021

- Develop a structured volunteer program
- Create bi-annual arts leaders roundtables
- Develop formal marketing program for arts in Marion County
- Advocate for bed tax funds to marketing the arts
- Research & develop a plan for dedicated funds for public art capital improvement projects
- Provide \$30,000 annually in arts grants and awards
- Annual arts educators roundtable
- Artist business workshops 2 times per year
- 12 artist seminars annually
- 10% increase in gift shop revenue every six months
- Redesigned membership program with 500 members
- Signature annual Spring fundraiser and Fall Applaud the Arts

## 2022

- Provide \$40,000 annually in arts grants and awards
- Receive a portion of the bed tax for marketing the arts
- Increase marketing expenditure and breadth of marketing programs for arts in Marion County
- Bi-annual arts leaders roundtables
- Annual arts educators roundtable
- Artist business workshops 2 times per year
- 18 artist seminars annually
- 10% increase in gift shop revenue every six months
- Reach 750 members
- A Spring fundraiser and Fall Applaud the Arts
- 4 arts Professionals' "Happy Hours" per year
- Live performance in studio space 6 times per year
- Develop "Arts in Business" program to connect artists to local businesses
- Implement a young professionals giving program

## 2023

- Provide \$50,000 annually in arts grants and awards
- Receive a portion of the bed tax for marketing the arts
- Increase arts marketing budget to \$4,000 per month to cover print, postage, social media
- Bi-annual arts leaders roundtable
- Annual arts educators roundtable
- Artist business workshops 2 times per year
- 24 artist seminars annually
- 10% increase in gift shop revenue every six months
- Reach 1,000 members and \$50,000 in membership dues
- A Spring fundraising event and Fall Applaud the Arts
- 4 arts Professionals "Happy Hours" per year
- Live performance in studio space 6 times per year
- Create a community-art guide and app
- Achieve endowment balance of \$900,000



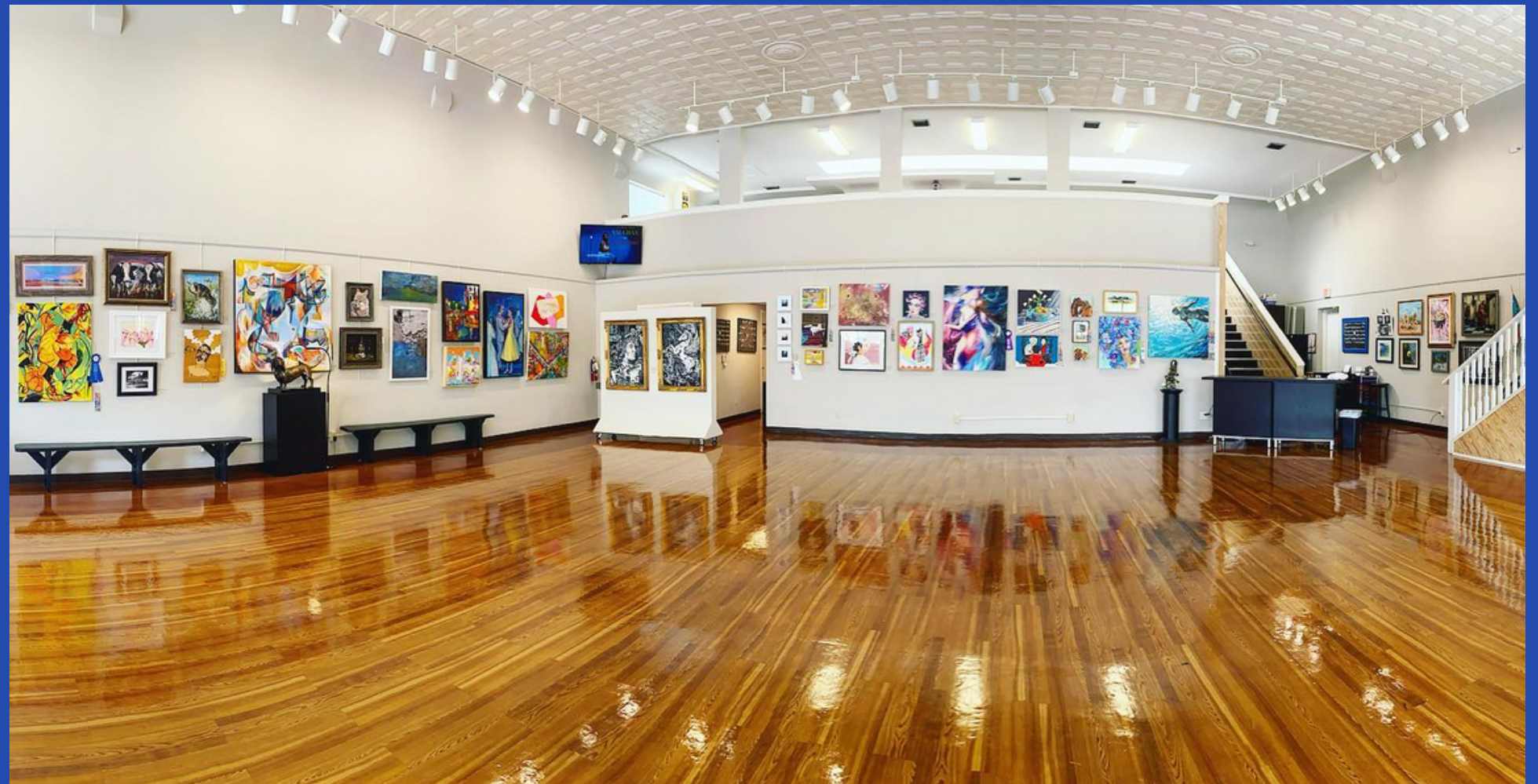
# Budget

Significant capital will need to be raised in order for MCA to reach its financial goals. Over the next three years, the organization endeavors to grow its annual operating budget from \$359,500 to \$447,105 – an increase of almost 25%.

Membership and dues, donations, grant revenues, and receipt of a portion of tourist development tax proceeds will fund most of the increase in revenue as MCA shifts its focus from a event-based fundraising model to more sustainable mechanisms for income generation. This increase in revenue will allow the organization simultaneously to increase grants to local artists and arts organizations and to bolster marketing of the arts in the Ocala/Marion County community.

|               |                         | 2021      | 2022      | 2023      |
|---------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| INCOME        | Brick/Gallery           | \$43,500  | \$53,400  | \$61,480  |
|               | Event/Fundraiser Income | \$163,500 | \$122,000 | \$130,625 |
|               | Dues and Contributions  | \$62,500  | \$75,000  | \$87,500  |
|               | Grant Revenue           | \$60,000  | \$72,500  | \$87,500  |
|               | Bed Tax                 |           | \$50,000  | \$50,000  |
| Total Income  |                         | \$329,500 | \$372,900 | \$417,105 |
| EXPENSE       | Brick/Gallery           | \$56,450  | \$58,870  | \$61,424  |
|               | Special Events          | \$8,500   | \$8,740   | \$8,987   |
|               | Other Operating         | \$44,503  | \$45,643  | \$46,817  |
|               | Grant Awards            | \$60,000  | \$70,000  | \$80,000  |
|               | Marketing               | \$7,500   | \$25,000  | \$50,000  |
|               | Payroll                 | \$144,375 | \$148,706 | \$153,167 |
| Total Expense |                         | \$321,328 | \$356,959 | \$400,396 |
| Net Income    |                         | \$8,172   | \$15,941  | \$16,709  |





## Brick City Center for the Arts

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Ocala, Florida 34471

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