



QUAD CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MARK RUSSELL SMITH, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2026



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VISION

QCSO, Where Access Meets Inspiration

ESSENTIAL GOALS & KEY STRATEGIES

We will

OPEN

community access to the QCSO.

- Develop enduring and authentic partnerships with diverse community organizations
- Unleash concert potential by creating many entry points and reducing barriers
- Increase awareness of our programming

We will

ENGAGE

with the entire community.

- Develop educational programming to meet the community's needs through equity and inclusion
- Release potential of QCSO musicians
- Nurture community relationships and strengthen the case for what we do by activating the entire QCSO Family
- Develop enhanced digital strategies to widen community networks and increase fundraising

We will

LEAD

through artistic & educational partnerships.

- Achieve diversity throughout QCSO governing structure
- Create big partnerships and be a convener
- Innovate and take risks to achieve greater impact
- Be the brand for music education

CORE VALUES



Community-focused

Serve all the Quad Cities region



Committed to innovation & risk-taking

Try new things outside of our comfort zone



Collaborative

Use music to start and continue conversations



Diverse, accessible & inclusive

Reflect the community in our organization

2. Major Events, Initiatives, Leadership, & Agreements

	TRANSITION		STRATEGY 2020-23				STRATEGY 2023-26		
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Major Events & Select Specials	Joshua Bell	Added 2nd Movie	Renée Elise Goldsberry	Karkinos	Two Remain	Emanuel Ax	Yo-Yo Ma/Giddens/Abels		
Major Education Initiatives	Group Lesson Program Established		Reformatted Private Lesson Program		YSO International Tour Concert Orchestra		YSO International Tour		
Artistic Leadership									
Music Director	Mark Russell Smith, Contract FY16-20		Mark Russell Smith, Contract Renewed FY21-26						
Associate Conductor & Youth Ensembles Music Director	Interim	Ernesto Estigarribia (At Will)				Interim	Need New Conductor/Director for FY25-26		
Concertmaster	Naha Greenholtz	Naha Greenholtz, 3-Year Contract FY19-21			Naha Greenholtz, Contract Renewed FY22-26				
Musicians CBA	3-Year CBA FY17-19		3-Year CBA FY20-22 Ratified			3-Year CBA FY23-25		Need CBA	
Stagehands CBA	5-Year CBA FY17-21 (extended FY22)					5-Year CBA FY23-27			
Administrative Leadership									
Board Chair	Tom Spitzfaden		Annette Tephly		Hov Tinsman		Darlene Steffen		
Executive Director	Brian Baxter (At Will)								
Trust Chair	Jill McLaughlin					Tom Spitzfaden			
VFS President	Kay Basham	Dave & Julie Scott			Darlene Link		George Hesse		Need New Pres.

3. Financial Forecast - Consolidated Summary

	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY25 Forecast	FY26 Forecast
Earned Revenue				
QCSO Concert Ticket Sales	628,605	728,694	650,215	784,649
QCSYE Ticket Sales	38,004	39,781	40,974	41,794
QCSO Ad Revenue	24,325	28,000	28,280	28,563
QCSYE Ad Revenue	6,840	6,000	6,060	6,121
QCSYE Tuition, etc	113,148	113,300	116,699	119,033
PLP Tuition & GLP Revenue	212,244	232,590	239,568	244,359
Other Income	117,917	44,462	44,462	44,462
Total Earned Revenue	1,141,082	1,192,827	1,126,258	1,268,981
Contributed Revenue				
Sponsorships	176,591	223,254	205,455	230,455
Grants	633,308	572,000	568,897	593,897
Annual Fund	460,603	420,000	445,578	445,578
Special Events	88,834	89,000	105,741	105,741
Scholarship & Designated Contributions	13,667	7,800	8,112	8,436
Support from Trust and VFS	674,678	678,776	734,164	734,164
Total Contributed Revenue	2,047,682	1,990,830	2,067,947	2,118,272
Total Revenue	3,188,764	3,183,657	3,194,205	3,387,252

	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY25 Forecast	FY26 Forecast
Expenses				
Artistic	990,097	1,095,842	1,056,815	1,149,850
Production	430,785	476,168	483,830	500,262
Promotion	148,118	161,212	158,481	184,372
Fundraising & Development	62,695	66,475	68,469	69,839
G&A	778,171	797,767	829,678	846,272
Ed. & Community Engagement	363,905	390,091	401,793	409,829
QCSYE	235,767	250,362	257,873	263,030
QCSYE International Tour Net	-	-	-	-
Total Expense	3,009,538	3,237,917	3,256,940	3,423,454
Net Operating Income	179,225	(54,260)	(62,735)	(36,201)
Net Other Income/Expense	20,149	54,260	14,545	59,716
Net Income	199,374	0	(48,190)	23,515

Scan the QR Code
for the detailed
Financial Forecast Tool



Finance Committee with support from other committees will champion the dynamic Financial Forecasting Tool designed with realistic projections and required revenue streams to realize the strategy. Include regular long-term finance reporting in addition to regular finance reporting to the committee to be sure we remain on track long-term, beyond just the current fiscal year. Enhance Finance Committee's collaboration and interaction with other committees in particular as it relates to long-term planning.

In-Kind revenue and expenses are not included in the Financial Forecast.

FY23 Actuals are preliminary and subject to change until the FY23 Audit is completed.

4. Strategic Framework



VISION

ESSENTIAL GOALS

KEY STRATEGIES

TACTICS

FY24

FY25

FY26

Where Access Meets Inspiration

We will **OPEN** community access to the QCSO.

Develop enduring and authentic partnerships with diverse community organizations

Unleash concert potential by creating many entry points and reducing barriers

Increase awareness of our programming

Concert Audience Development

Champion:
Marketing Committee {1a}

Subscription retention & acquisition	Refer to the separate charts on pages 11, 13 & 14.		
	Introduce QCSO Unlimited, a monthly paid subscription option that gives subscribers access to tickets all year on a monthly basis.		
Single Tickets	Refer to the separate charts on pages 11-14.		
	Audience acquisition for Sunday Masterworks with a focus on attracting young families and the brunch crowd by making the performance more family-friendly and building discount partnerships with area restaurants.		
	Begin working with dynamic pricing to increase audience size and revenue.		
	Update QCBT Riverfront Pops plot map to increase number of plots		
Concert Access Pass	300 Tickets Distributed	400 Tickets Distributed	500 Tickets Distributed
Promo Partners	3 Successful Partnerships, expand to include Up Close if applicable	4 Successful Partnerships (MW & UC)	5 Successful Partnerships (MW & UC)
Students @ Symphony	2,500 students served	2,750 students served	3,000 students served
QCSYE Concert Club	35 student participants	38 student participants	41 student participants

4. Strategic Framework

VISION	ESSENTIAL GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	TACTICS	FY24	FY25	FY26
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Where Access Meets Inspiration	We will ENGAGE with the entire community.	Develop educational programming to meet the community's needs through equity and inclusion	Education & Community Engagement Programming Champion: Education Committee {2}	Musicians in Schools	5,000 students served	5,500 students served	6,000 students served		
				Musicians in the Community (new)	1,000 community members served	1,250 community members served	1,500 community members served		
				Symphony Day	6,500 students served <i>(currently maxing out possible students in the age range served, maintain this impact)</i> Maintain and tout Carnegie Hall partnership & continue through the next 3 Link-Up Programs				
				Students @ Symphony	See above				
				Group Lesson Program	Refer to the separate chart on page 16.				
				Private Lesson Program	Refer to the separate chart on page 16.				
				Quad City Symphony Youth Ensembles (incl. orch & chm)	Refer to the separate chart on page 16.				
				QCSYE International Tour	-	Tour Year	-		
				Release potential of QCSO musicians	Plan for concert programs and associated community engagement Champion: Program Advisory Committee {1b}	Concert programming and two key guide questions	Season 110 (2024-25) final approval by Q2	Season 111(2025-26) final approval by Q2	Season 112 (2026-27) final approval by Q2
						Promo Partners	Season 111 (2025-26) complete draft for review by Q3 and preliminary approval by Q4		
Musicians in Schools	Gala Concert with Emanuel Ax	Gala Concert with TBD							
Musicians in the Community (new)									

4. Strategic Framework

VISION

ESSENTIAL GOALS

KEY STRATEGIES

TACTICS

FY24

FY25

FY26

Where Access Meets Inspiration

We will **ENGAGE** with the entire community.

Nurture community relationships and strengthen the case for what we do by activating the entire QCSO Family

Develop enhanced digital strategies to widen community networks and increase fundraising

Annually review and update three-pronged EDI Plan

Champion:
EDI Committee {3}

Fundraising through partnership & storytelling

Champion:
Development Committee {4}

Remain committed to investing in new and ever-evolving digital marketing opportunities

Champion:
Marketing Committee {1c}

What We Are

Refer to EDI Plan (page 18), reviewed & updated annually

Who We Are

Refer to EDI Plan (pages 19-20), reviewed & updated annually

How We Connect

Refer to EDI Plan (page 21), reviewed & updated annually

Annual Fund

Refer to the separate chart on page 22.

Corporate Sponsorships

22 sponsors

24 sponsors,
secure 2nd new
multi-year agreement

26 sponsors,
secure 3rd new
multi-year agreement

Foundation Grants

Refer to the separate chart on page 26.
Secure new direct support from John Deere Foundation.

Soirée

\$100,000
Gross Revenue

\$110,000
Gross Revenue

\$125,000
Gross Revenue

Trust & Conductors Circle

Enact renewed
acquisition plan,
3 new members added

3 new members added

3 new members added

VfS

Maintain 100+ members - increasing family memberships annually
Secure successor Car Raffle co-chairs, develop and enact leadership succession plan, develop a strategic approach for Symphony Shoppe and types/amount of fundraisers to be leveraged, and activate strengths/interests of members to raise funds for QCSO's Education Programs

Docu-miniseries

Prioritize Storytelling Content Creation, Develop Season Long Content Plan, & Transition to Feathr platform, to increase efficiencies and returns.

Analyze and Review strategies from previous season, and identify new opportunities for testing.
Continue Season Long Content Plant.

Short-form videos update

Research & test new ad placements

(i.e. TikTok, dating apps, & emerging platforms, etc.)

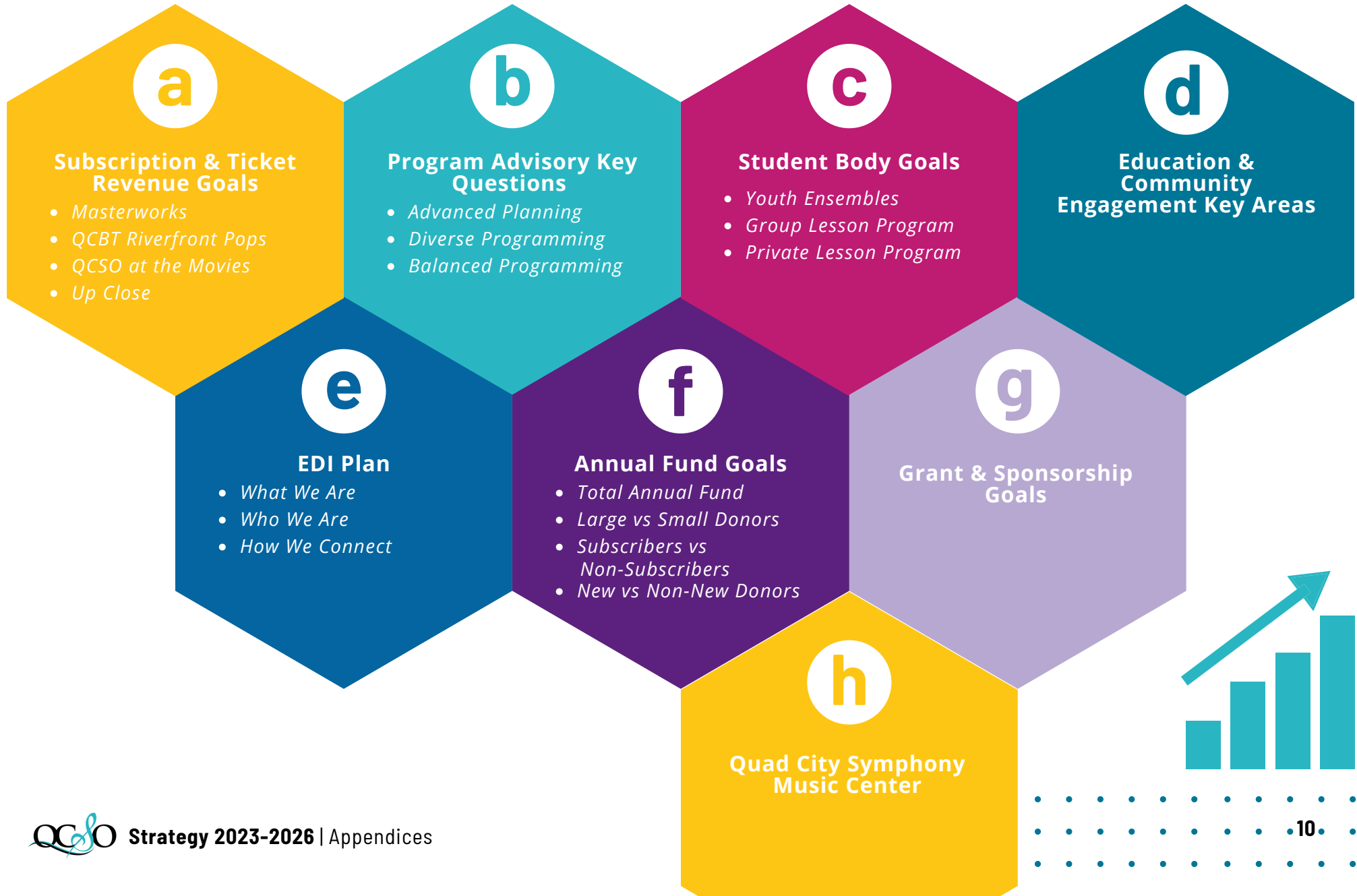
Focus on ways to increase Sunday Masterworks attendance via brunch & family crowd

4. Strategic Framework

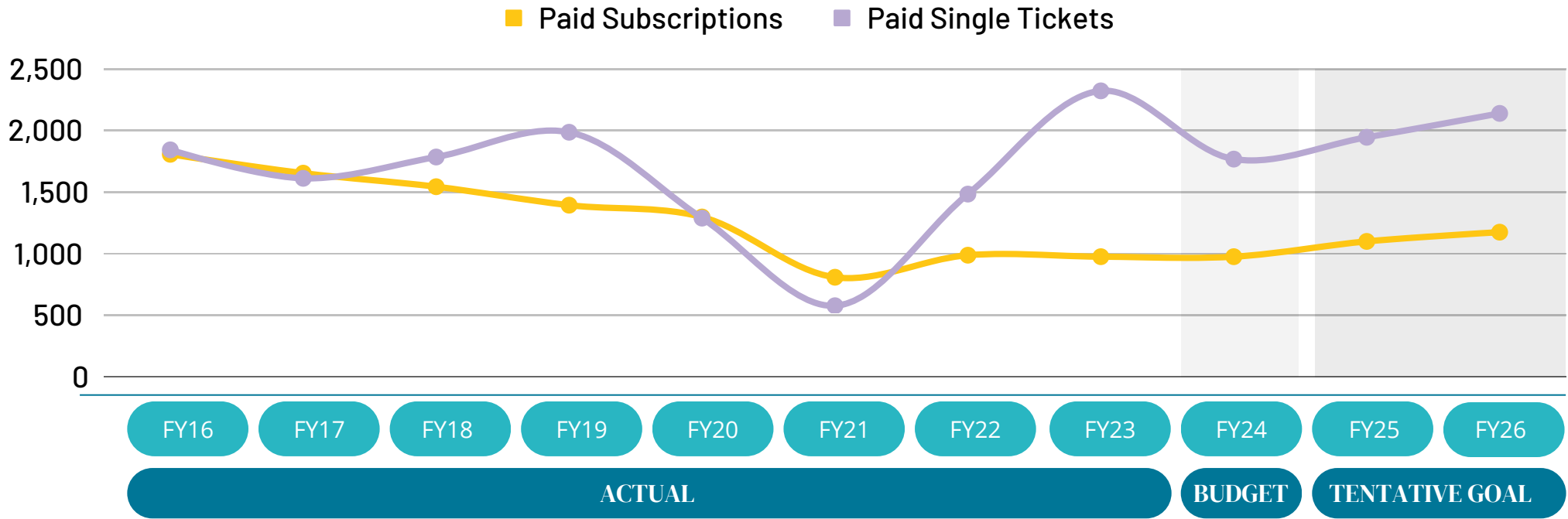
VISION	ESSENTIAL GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	TACTICS	FY24	FY25	FY26	
Where Access Meets Inspiration	We will LEAD through artistic & educational partnerships.	Achieve diversity throughout QCSO governing structure	Board, Musician, & Staff effectiveness & recruitment Champion: Governance Committee {5}	Set benchmarks and structure emphasizing capacity building and diversification	Support increasing staff capacity to meet the growing impact QCSO is making on the community. Consider additional staff as needed. Add goal targets for all categories, consider adding more non-trustee community members to specific committees, continue board leadership succession planning, evaluate results of the audition process changes prior to the next CBA negotiation.		
		Create big partnerships and be a convener	Facility plan to support our growth Champion: Executive Committee {6}	Advocate for concert hall improvements for Adler Theater and Centennial, add concert at Hancher Auditorium and explore potential for Chicago market concert	Advocacy & Relationship building (Adler/Centennial): Organize advocates and direct toward action to support concert hall improvements	Continue advocacy pushing for continuous concert hall improvements	Secure run-out performances including first concert at Hancher Auditorium and first concert in Chicago.
		Innovate and take risks to achieve greater impact		Explore a possible plan for Quad City Symphony Center - a new or retrofitted building to support our growth and strength of brand (Vision, Case, Buy-In established during FY23 - develop facility working group to ID needs, answer the questions, set vision/case)	Engage key partners, feasibility study, develop working group to explore possibilities, assess impact on regular operations, pending feasibility plan capital campaign	TBD Capital campaign, plan potential land/building purchase and begin renovation/break ground date at XYZ point in campaign	Potential construction begins/continues, set goals and benchmarks, ramp up infrastructure to support building when/if opens
		Be the brand for music education					

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APPENDICES



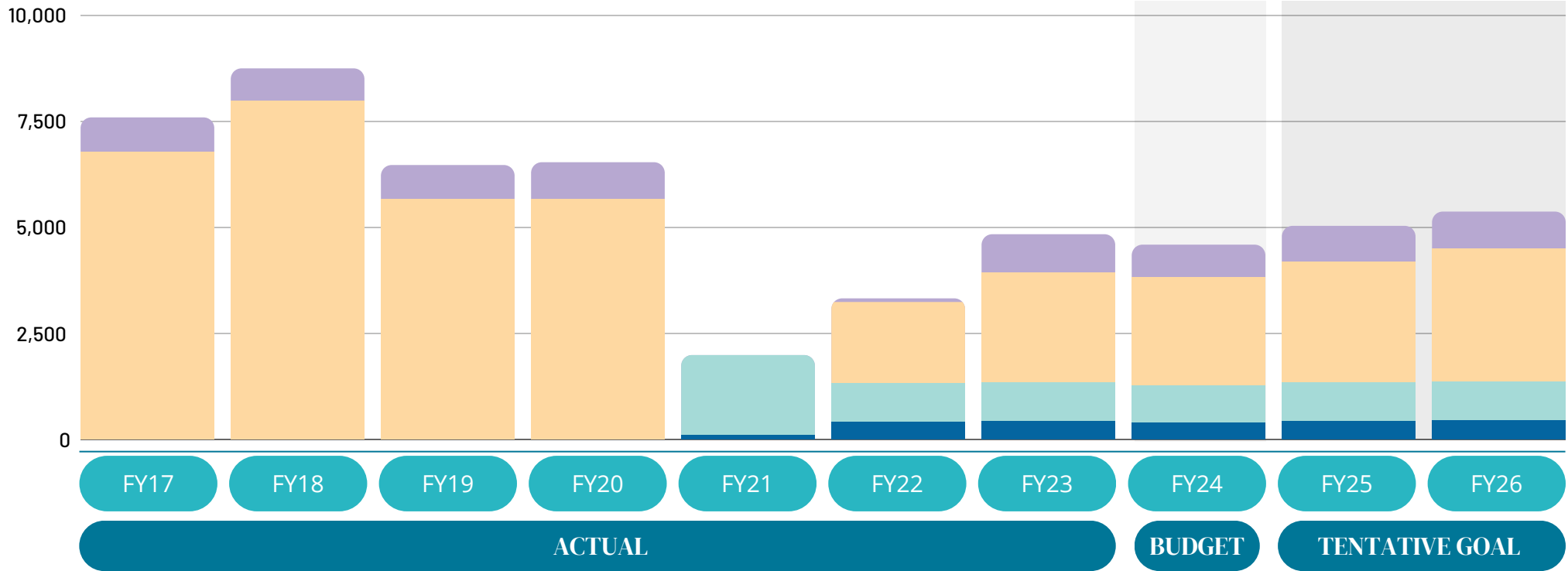
MASTERWORKS



	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Actual	1807	1654	1544	1394	1298	809	988	976	976	1100	1175
Budget	1843	1612	1785	1986	1289	578	1484	2322	1768	1945	2139
% Change		-9%	-7%	-11%	-7%	-60%	18%	-1%	0	11%	6%
% Change		-14%	10%	10%	-54%	-123%	61%	36%	-31%	9%	9%

QUAD CITY BANK & TRUST RIVERFRONT POPS

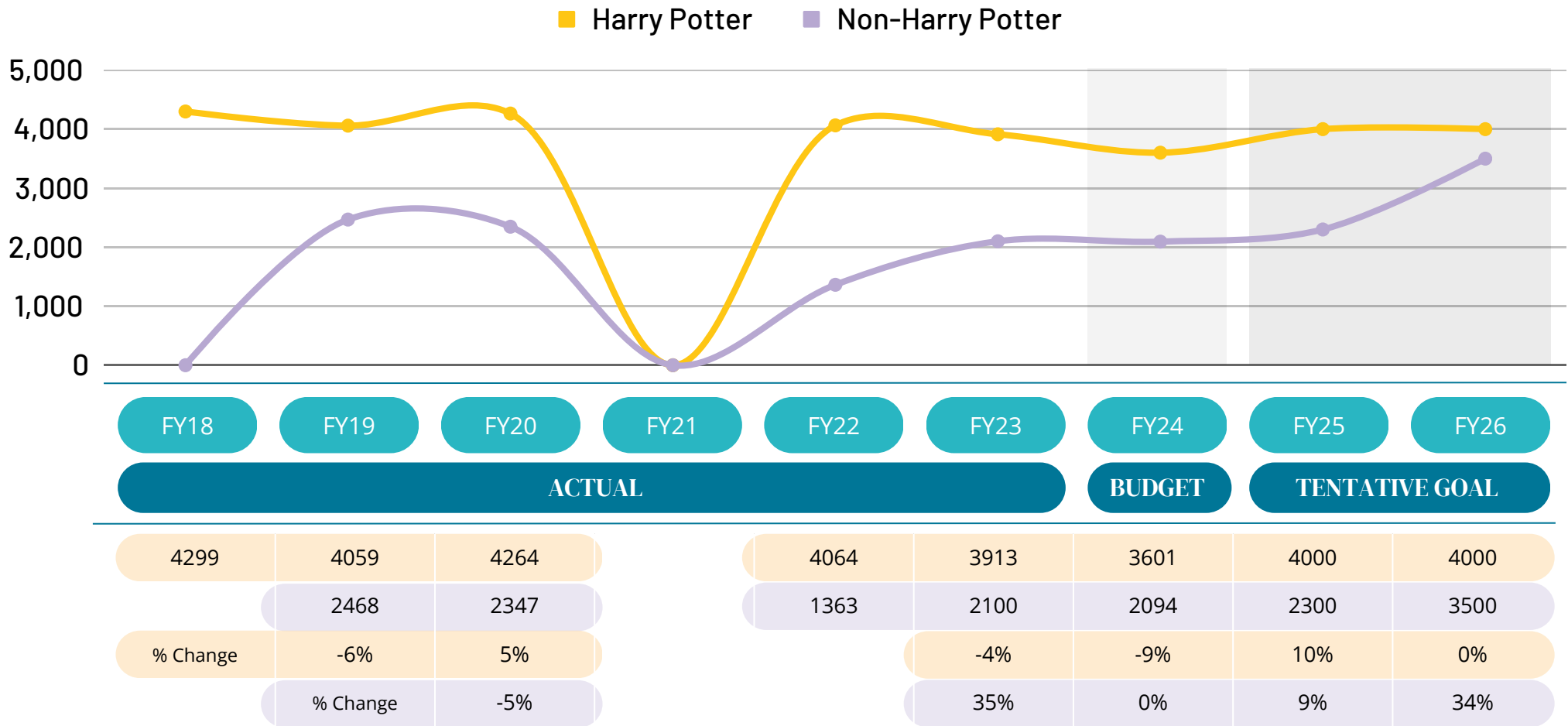
■ Paid Bandshell Seats ■ Paid Reserved Plots (counted in # of people) ■ Paid General Admission ■ Paid QCBT Discount



				105	411	430	399	443	452	
				1882	922	918	878	912	912	
6767	7959	5656	5641			1905	2572	2541	2821	3131
808	771	797	878			85	914	770	855	872
				% Change	74%	4%	-8%	10%	2%	
				% Change	-104%	0%	-5%	4%	0%	
% Change	15%	-41%	0%			100%	26%	-1%	10%	10%
% Change	-5%	3%	9%			100%	91%	-19%	10%	2%



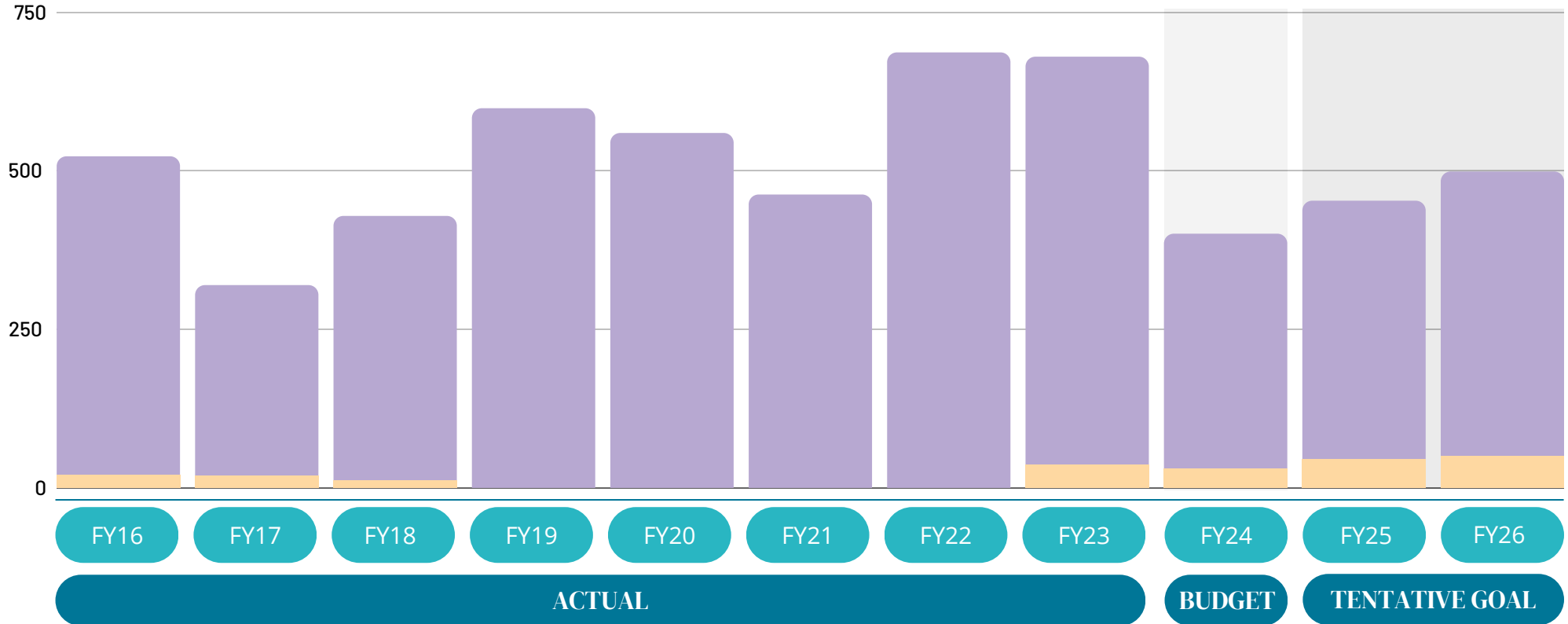
QCSO AT THE MOVIES



UP CLOSE

formerly known as Signature Series

■ Paid Subscriptions ■ Paid Single Tickets



	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Paid Subscriptions	20	19	11	597	558	461	685	36	30	45	50
Paid Single Tickets	502	300	417	0	0	0	0	643	370	407	448
% Change		-5%	-73%						-20%	33%	10%
% Change		-67%	28%	30%	-7%	-21%	33%	-7%	-74%	9%	9%

Tactic 1b Champion: Plan for concert programs and associated community engagement

Interacting with and supporting Tactic 1a – Concert audience development



01

Are we maintaining a strong sequence of advance planning for all programming?

- Are we enhancing our partnership with the Marketing and Finance Committees?



02

Is our programming diverse?

- Both within series' and across our total offerings?
- Does it provide ample opportunity for us to **OPEN** community **ACCESS** to the QCSO and **ENGAGE** with the ENTIRE community?
- Are we open to new types of program offerings?

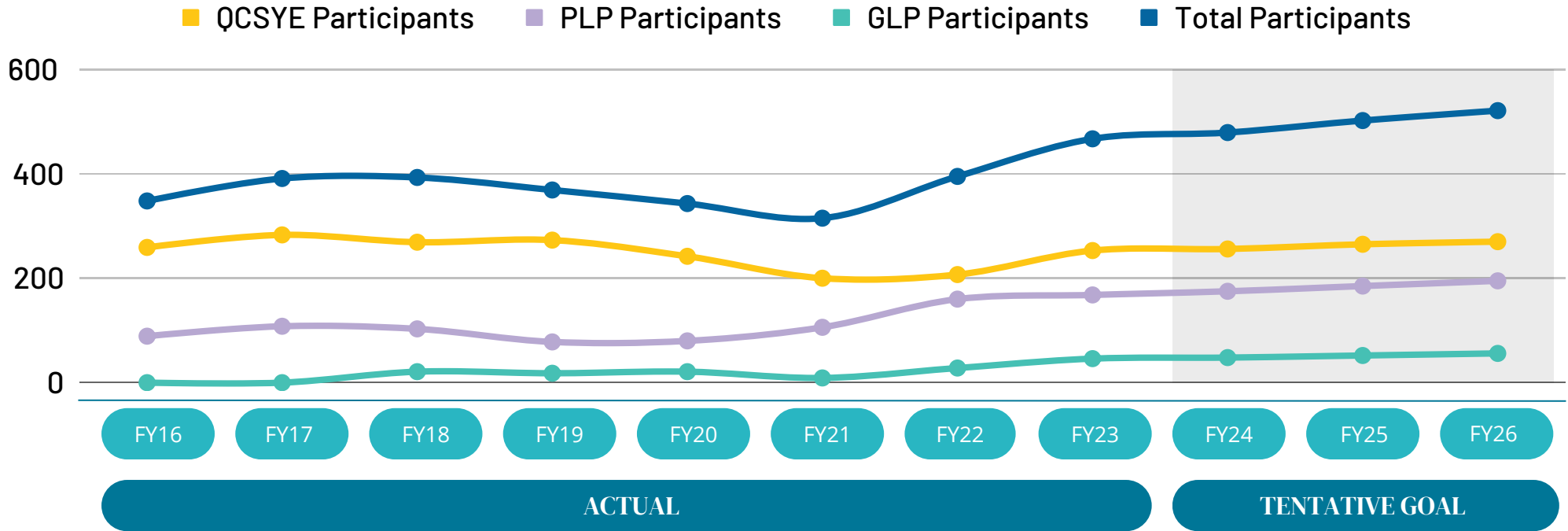


03

Is our programming balanced?

- Do we have enough shows that will be strong contributors to our earned revenue line?
- Are we regularly maintaining and reviewing metrics on how well different programs sell and how popular they are with the public? Both within series' and across our total offerings?
- Are we open to new types of program offerings?

Appendix | c. Student Body Goals



	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Total Participants	348	391	393	369	343	315	395	467	479	502	521
QCSYE Participants	259	283	269	273	242	200	207	245	256	265	270
PLP Participants	89	108	103	78	80	106	160	180	175	185	195
GLP Participants			21	18	21	9	28	36	48	52	56
% Change (Total)		8%	-5%	1%	-13%	-21%	3%	16%	4%	3%	2%
% Change (QCSYE)		18%	-5%	-32%	3%	25%	34%	5%	4%	5%	5%
% Change (GLP)		100%	-17%	14%	-133%	68%	39%	4%	8%	7%	
% Change (PLP)		11%	1%	-7%	-8%	-9%	20%	15%	3%	5%	4%

Tactic 2 Champion: Plan for actualizing efficiency and excellence in education and community engagement programs



Students @ Symphony

- Digital Access will be a critical part of maintaining the impact we can tout currently – will need to consider how to incorporate into funding requests since Digital Access will be challenging to offer categorically in the future.
 - Consider offering Digital Access with Commentary
 - Commentary by MRS, local educators, composers, etc.
- Consider ways to further incentivize in-person participation
- Pair in-person concert attendance with QCSO Musician Visit



Symphony Day

- Continue partnership with Carnegie Hall Link Up Program – Go through the next 3 shows over the term of this strategy.
- Create pathways to accessibility:
 - Busing challenges
 - Access to recorders
- Engage local music groups in programming
- Engage YSO members in the performance
- Continue engaging QCSO as the Symphony Day orchestra



Musicians in Schools

- Create Lesson Plans for Educators
 - Evergreen lesson plans that include QCSO musicians.
 - Ex: Learning about different eras of music with selections performed by a QCSO musician.
- Engage Guest Artists annually
- Up Close Residency



Group Lesson Program

- Add one new class each season
- Continue to train teachers in Suzuki
- Create tuition-based version of GLP
- Create and sustain pathways to PLP + QCSYE
- Promote end of year recitals
- End of year gifts



Musicians in Community

- Develop partnerships with one or two non-school organizations in the first year.
- Add one new each season.
- Develop focus on special needs projects, retirement communities, and libraries.



Private Lesson Program

- Annually recruit new instructors including consideration of adding a second FTE violin instructor and possibly other instruments pending demand and further study of potential expansion.
- Offer 1-2 learning opportunities for students
- Encourage MW + UC Attendance
- Offer student recitals
- Consider adding to offerings:
 - Piano studio(s)
 - Voice studio(s)



QCSYE

- Hire new QCSYE Music Director
- Tour Bi-Annually
- Guest Artist Residency
- Commission new works
 - Concert Orchestra Commission in Year 1
 - Goals for new works – addressing gaps



WHAT WE ARE

AREA OF FOCUS	TACTIC	CHAMPION	NEXT STEPS
Survey and Assessment	Implement an Association-wide survey and assessment encompassing all constituencies every two years	EDI Committee	Engage Diverse Strategies Now to facilitate survey and assessment again to assess progress against 2021 survey and assessment, use self-identified demographics survey to input in LAO demographics annual survey
Organizational Policies/Structures	Review EDI Plan	Governance Committee	Annually review plan with EDI Committee
	Review Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy in Employee Handbook and Collective Bargaining Agreement to match up-to-date legal standards every two years	Compensation Committee	Compensation Committee review and consider updates to pass on to EDI Committee for input then to Executive Committee
	Determine how issues related to advancing EDI in the Association will be addressed structurally long-term	Executive Committee	With EDI Committee established, consider ways the EDI Committee can better serve as a resource to all Committees of the Board, consider increasing membership of Committee, ask for additional participation in meetings depending on topics discussed
Continuous Learning	Invest in substantial EDI workshops over time for staff, musicians, board, and volunteers to positively impact organizational culture and build from our current strengths	EDI Committee	Implement a structure for annual ongoing workshops supporting continuous learning. Engage multiple community resources (other NPOs, consultants, community leaders, etc) further building internal and external connectivity. Give careful consideration to informality v. formality of these and how they engage all constituents. Consider offering enhanced opportunities to smaller groups and building up from that (i.e. local musicians?)
		EDI Committee	Develop on-boarding deliverables to be provided to all new members of each constituent groups.
Budgeting, Expenditures and Investments	Determine ways to ensure decisions about resources and fund allocations properly support EDI initiatives and consider how to eliminate barriers and create fair processes when it comes to vendor procurement and contracting	Finance Committee	Consider other models as far as how programs are funded, assess vendor and contractor procurement

WHO WE ARE

AREA OF FOCUS	TACTIC	CHAMPION	NEXT STEPS
Musicians	Seek new ways to leverage our membership in the Sphinx Organization's National Alliance for Audition Support	Executive Committee	Explore possibilities with Sphinx staff, attend Sphinx conferences
	Re-assess and improve as necessary the musician audition process to ensure a diverse applicant pool and substitute lists which are governed by the Musician's CBA	Compensation Committee & Musicians' Committee	Work on ways to consistently diversify the applicant pool, and increase the diversity of our substitute lists
		Compensation Committee & Musicians' Committee	Work on benchmarking and measuring progress
	Consider some type of QCSO musician fellowship program	Executive Committee & Musicians' Committee	Research best practices across the orchestra industry and begin internal discussions around what might work best for QCSO. Work toward implementation as a part of the next Musician CBA negotiation.
	Review performance dress codes	Compensation Committee & Musicians' Committee	Review with musicians during next Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiation
		Education Committee	Review the student handbook before publishing the next version in 2024
Staff	Continue incorporating EDI Plan objectives into employee goals reviewed annually and as relevant to the position – provide a sense of clarity, comfort, proficiency, and support in enacting EDI goals into work plans	Compensation Committee & EDI Task Force	Work into employee reviews
	Insure a diverse applicant field for any open positions.	Executive Committee & EDI Task Force and/or successor	When positions come open, address how we confront the challenge of getting a robust qualified applicant pool? Consider community partnerships, how we broadcast opportunities and make positions more attractive to a wider applicant pool? Develop internship programs?

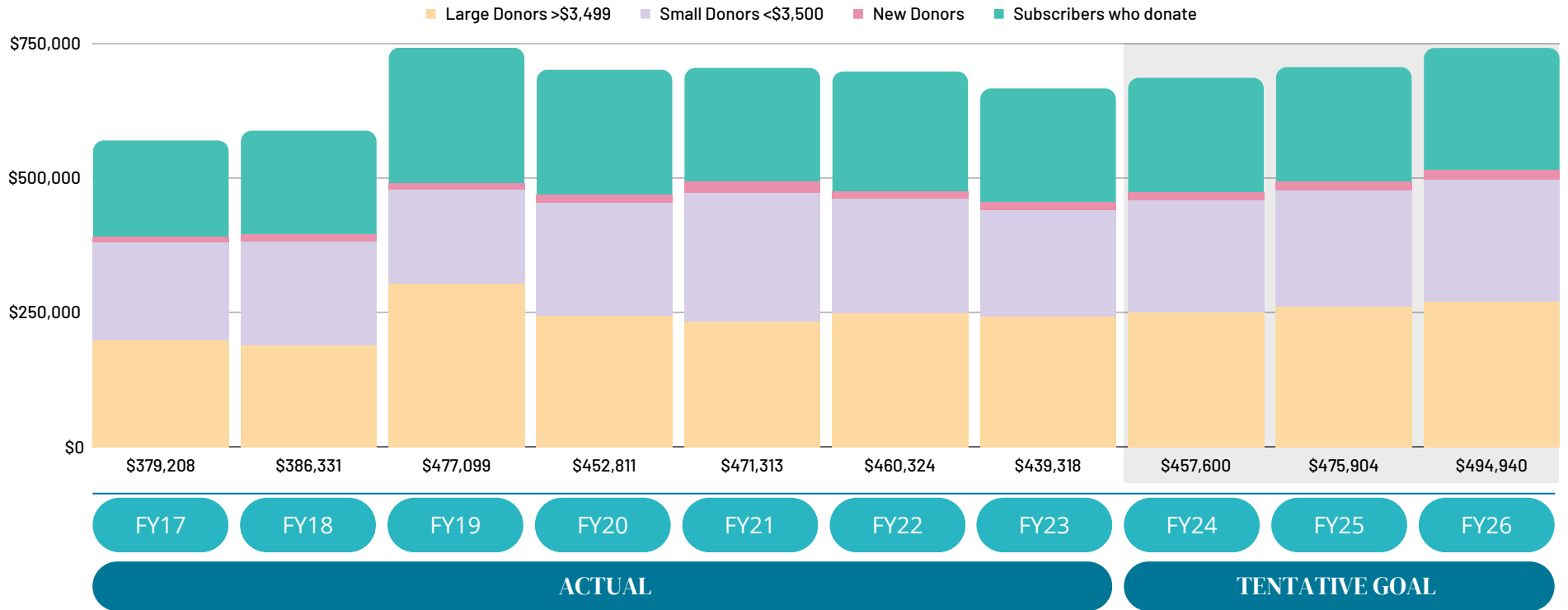
Appendix | e. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Workplan

AREA OF FOCUS	TACTIC	CHAMPION	NEXT STEPS
Board	Continue including Race, Ethnicity, Cultural Background, Gender, and Age in addition to professional expertise, experience, financial support, and other characteristics assessed as key considerations for new trustees seeking to increase broad representation from the whole community. This will support stronger decision-making by the board with more diverse viewpoints represented as well as more diverse support for and ownership of our mission.	Governance Committee	Formalize the manner in which it implements key considerations as a part of its recruitment and retention strategies for Trustees, how do we benchmark and measure progress
Programming and Representation	Ensure that season programming at all levels reflects the diversity we seek in the Quad Cities. Commit to presenting underrepresented composers and guest artists every season for QCSO and QCSYE	Program Advisory Committee & Education Committee	Assess and review mechanism and prime questions being used to advise on all programming from this perspective to ensure diversity of output, artistic flexibility, providing committee tools to ask right questions and analyze in support of quality programming
Data	Tracking demographics more deliberately and specifically as benchmarks for improvement over time – long term and connected to specific efforts, relate to core programs. Including concert audiences, and students enrolled in our programs. Musicians, staff, board, and volunteers through survey/assessment mentioned in What We Are.	Marketing Committee, Education Committee, & Executive Committee	Leverage our demographic data through the TRG Arts data partnership, and update our ongoing tracking of student demographics. See the What We Are survey for musician, staff, board, and volunteer self-identifying demographics tracking.

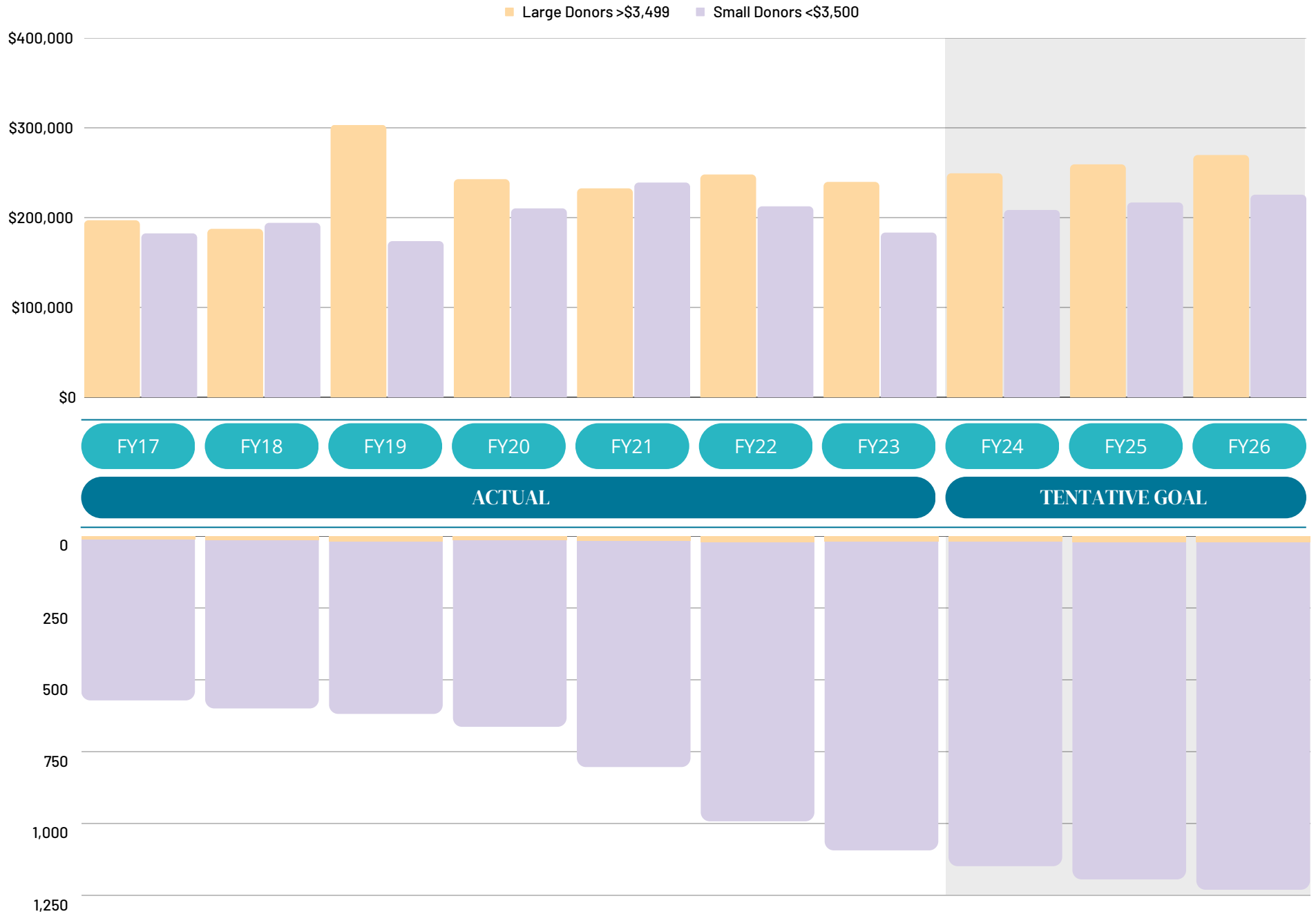
HOW WE CONNECT

AREA OF FOCUS	TACTIC	CHAMPION	NEXT STEPS
Internal Communication	Internal communication about what we are doing (aka programming, initiatives, HR procedures, etc) is a key opportunity for growth. This seems to be especially important to strengthen in relation to the musician cohort but also the Board. Increased opportunities for involvement in processes will improve internal understanding and awareness of the association's vision, strategy, and goals in action.	Executive Committee	Continue to hone a communication plan that is more inclusive of musicians. Integrate intentional engagement and dialogue of musicians during concert cycles including considering specific topic sessions or round tables to enhance the idea exchange and tie back to Continuous Learning
	Governance Committee	Continue implementing trustee engagement plan	
	Provide further consideration to non-internal community members on various committees.		
External Communication	Intentional and authentic community partnerships around concert programs, and educational programs, to help build a pipeline interest and investment in our programs, invest in more involvement from internal constituents in other community groups	Marketing Committee & Education Committee	Examples of this underway include Concert Access Pass, Promo Partners, and Students @ Symphony – need to continue these and grow them and grow communication of them to the public.
	Make the case to funders of our commitment to advancing EDI – made the case internally, now need to make the case to funders, demonstrate plan and that we are doing the work	Development Committee	Continue to hone message in grant applications and in relationships with individual donors
	Communicate Plan to the public – transparent, understandable, connecting with people where they are at	Marketing Committee	Create aesthetically pleasing materials with careful intentionality about the imagery demonstrate diversity – enable the public to see themselves participating with the QCSO focus on social proof and loss aversion: webpage similar to our strategic vision page, social media features highlighting goals, etc Feature EDI progress in Impact Report and other publications

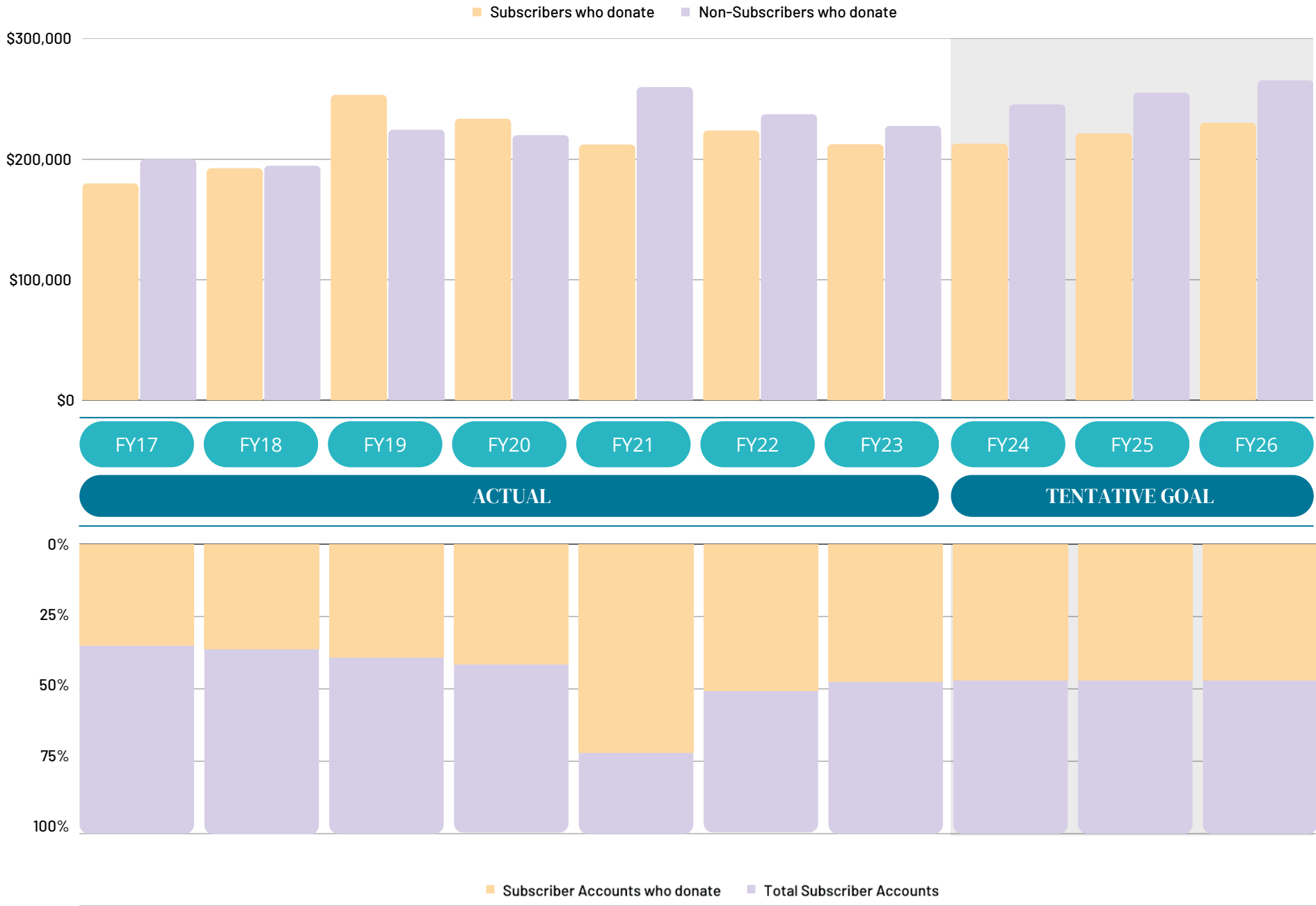
TOTAL ANNUAL FUND



LARGE DONORS VS SMALL DONORS

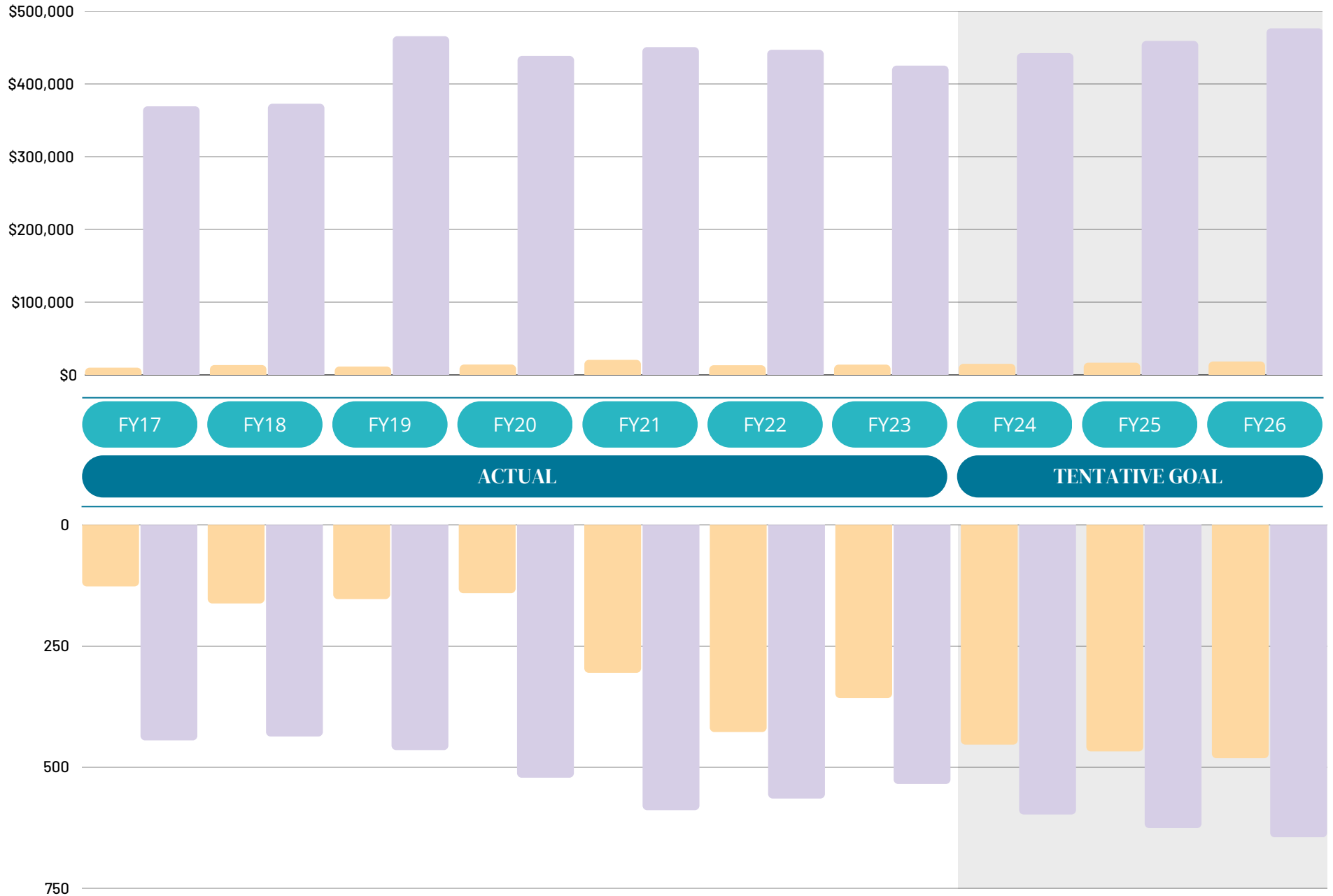


DONORS WHO ARE SUBSCRIBERS VS NON-SUBSCRIBERS

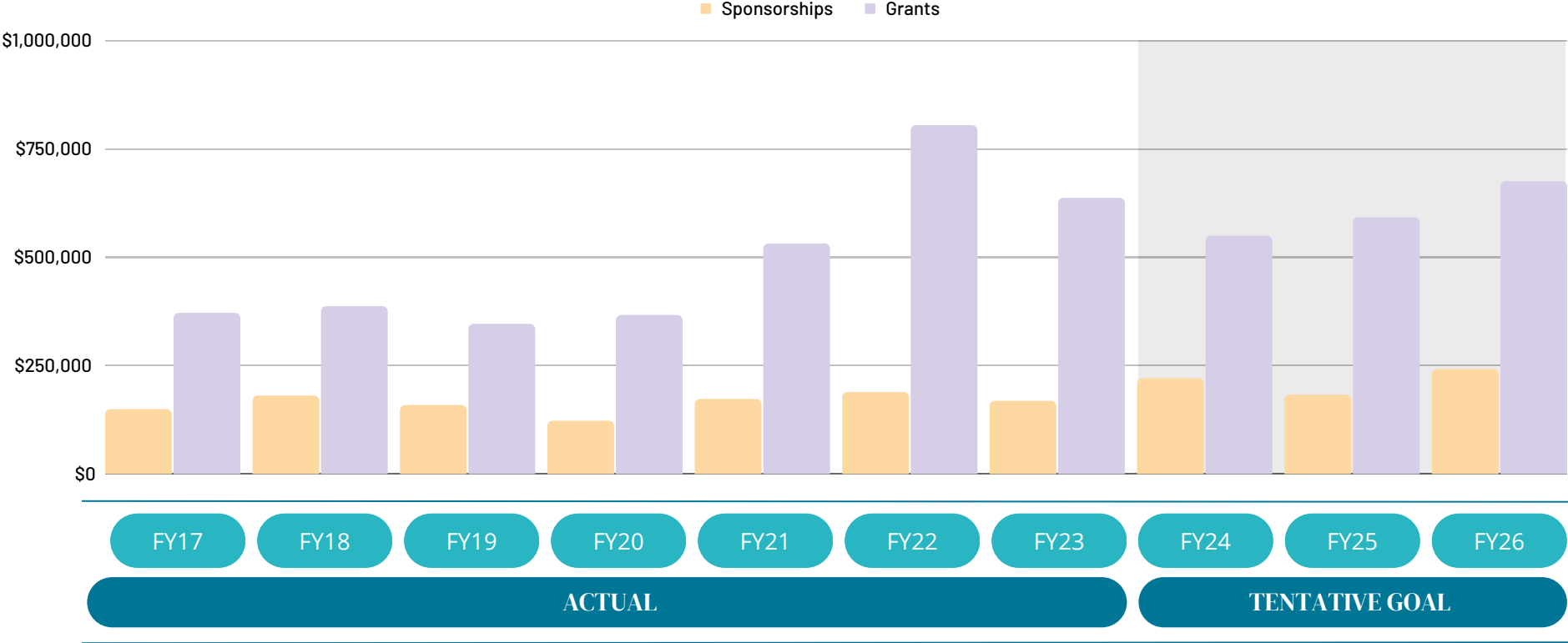


NEW VS NON-NEW DONORS

■ New Donors ■ Non-New Donors



SPONSORSHIPS & GRANTS



QUAD CITY SYMPHONY MUSIC CENTER

This is an initial guiding case framework for a facility plan to support our growth and strength of brand.

