

Ohavi  Zedek Synagogue

IMAGINE 2025

OZ's Road Map
for the Future

Board of Directors, May 2021

IMAGINE 2025 BEGAN AND CONTINUES TO BE
INSPIRED BY OHAVI ZEDEK'S MISSION STATEMENT:

**To provide a welcoming home for a diverse Jewish community,
offering both traditional and innovative spiritual practice,
learning for all ages and a commitment to social action.**

As will become apparent in this report, Imagine 2025 strives to harness the power of “welcoming,” together with outstanding programming in the areas of religious practice, community learning, and social action, as foundations upon which to deepen congregants’ engagement and grow our community.



Summary

Today Ohavi Zedek finds itself at a key juncture. Over the past 10 years OZ has seen a steep decline in membership, an aging membership population, and a decline in participation by members of all ages still calling OZ home. There are multiple reasons for this, including:

Nationally, we are witness to major cultural shifts in the Jewish community. We are drifting away from participating in legacy organizations, whether they be community centers, non-profit organizations or synagogues in ever larger numbers. There are many cultural factors driving this phenomenon, several are:

- The majority of Jews no longer belong to a synagogue,
- Today, the majority of Non-Orthodox Jews are choosing interfaith marriages,
- Younger Jews are more inclined to see themselves as “spiritual” seekers vs. religious,
- Jewish individual and family life is being altered by consumerism and digital technology and
- Ever increasing demands from other areas of life such as careers, schools, volunteerism and more.

Locally, OZ was protected for many years from outside cultural changes due to lack of attractive Jewish communal options. That is no longer the case. Today, OZ is one of 5 vibrant synagogue options:

- Chabad
- Ruach haMaqom
- Temple Sinai
- Jewish Community of Greater Stowe (JCOGS)
- Ohavi Zedek

And now, after one year of Covid, we have experienced even more dramatic change, mostly visible in:

- Digital technology platforms have been embraced fully.
- Our being able to access almost every synagogue in any part of the country for religious, spiritual and learning options directly into our home, and all for free.
- An acceleration in the rates of already declining synagogue participation.
- The shifting values of our local community.

As a consequence of these and other major shifts nationally and locally, the Ohavi Zedek board has undertaken Imagine 2025, Ohavi Zedek's visioning for the future. Sitting firmly on the foundation created through Tikvah 2020 (OZ's strategic plan developed in the early 2000's).

The Imagine Planning Process

Starting in December 2020 and continuing through February, 2021 (Phase 1), Imagine 2025 set out to critically assess and plan for the future of OZ. This included:

- 20 focus groups/150 OZ participants.
- Hebrew School quantitative study.
- USCJ/Other synagogue outreach.
- Membership financial modeling.
- Board conducted, strengths, weakness, opportunity and threats analysis,
- Over a dozen 1:1 staff interviews,
- 6 task groups, comprising over 70 members, meeting regularly over the past 8 weeks,
- Countless Imagine 2025 leadership meetings.

Research and Planning Findings

As we reported in our Final Phase 1 report to the Board in late January, our research identified areas of strength where OZ is meeting members' needs including:

- The theme of "Community" - Members have made deep connections or felt OZ was "my home" (the most commonly cited OZ "strength" in focus groups).
- Full Circle - A highly successful and in-demand program, and universal praise for Erika, staff and program.
- Hebrew School - Confidence in Naomi and Cantor; Appreciation of OZHS being a connection to a Jewish community.
- Social Action - Key to OZ's identity, strong community reputation and core of volunteers.
- Adult Education - Broad and strong programming.
- Certain Jewish spiritual and religious needs - Core Shabbat and Minyan group; Rabbi strengths with Torah, Parshas and being visible in Community; Cantor's warmth and musical talent; opportunity remains to better religiously engage (especially) families.



The research also identified challenges and opportunity areas to address including:

- Dramatic Declining Membership – 30% downward trend over the past 10 years (with an aging demographic, not recruiting and retaining younger age groups, challenges for empty-nester segment participation, and competition from 4 other area congregations, new online options and ever-growing secular options).
- Communications – Congregants feel disconnected from OZ, do not feel they are being sufficiently informed on what is going on.
- Religious and Spiritual Engagement:
 - > *A need for family friendly services,*
 - > *A desire for music and joyful spiritual services,*
 - > *A warmer, more inviting sanctuary experience, and*
 - > *Accessibility for families including inter-faith families.*
- Community Engagement & Connectedness - Opportunity to activate low-engagement members; Connect and engage segmented membership groups and siloed functions; Widespread desire specifically for a JCC (Jewish Community Center) style model.
- Financial Sustainability - Need for new revenue and cost management to reach a long term sustainable financial operating model.
- Operating Challenges - Need better ways of working and work culture. Need to address execution challenges stemming from bandwidth (resource constraints) and processes.

Goals

Reflecting on what we learned during Phase 1, our leadership team has collaborated during the past few months (Phase 2) to identify goals to shape our 2025 planning.

- **Community engagement:**

- > *Increase welcome and belonging.*
- > *Provide friendship-building relationships in all programming/events.*
- > *Maximize new database to speak to individual needs.*
- > *Strive to maximize membership retention.*

- **Community growth:**

- > *Reverse membership decline and target real growth by 2025.*
- > *Encourage community ambassadorship and invite friends/neighbors/workmates with common interest to programming/events.*
- > *Prioritize families with children, target 50% growth for this group for 2025.*

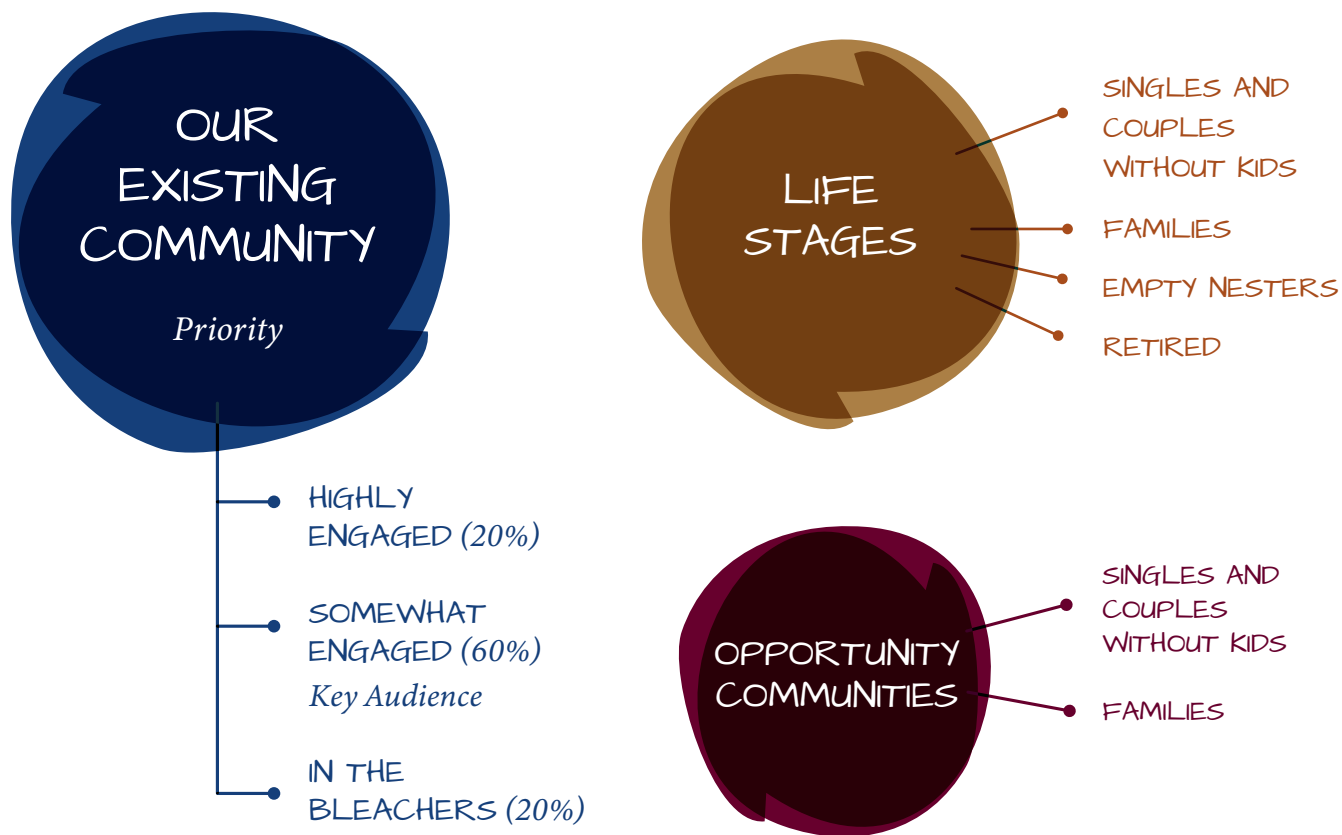
- **Financial sustainability:**

- > *Develop an operating model that grows revenue and balances expenses.*
- > *Seek extraordinary quality and value in everything OZ does.*
- > *Develop a new revenue model that grows voluntary annual donations, and increases special funding, endowment income and new revenue opportunities.*

- **Leadership:**

- > *Reorganize our current board and committee structure to support the OZ/Imagine 2025 road map.*
- > *Revise staff structure and responsibilities to support the OZ/Imagine 2025 road map.*
- > *Build lay leadership capacity so that they can be equal and productive partners with the staff and clergy.*
- > *Explore new operating and structural models.*

OZ Audiences



Imagine 2025 Vision

As we heard repeatedly from many congregants who are among those most highly engaged, OZ is a “home,” and the relationships they share within our community is one of “family.” Our vision strives to deliver that experience to all OZers, through a simple and powerful message:

*Belonging -
Through Welcoming,
Meaningful and Joyous
Jewish Experiences*

What follows is a road map that provides more areas and welcoming doorways, through which current and future congregants can undertake journeys leading to belonging. Finding ways to be more welcoming, offering meaningful experiences through prayer, learning, and social action, and growing deep and meaningful relationships with others is the pathway through which OZ can grow and flourish.

Imagine 2025 Strategy:

3 KEY Pillars

Honoring our past, while looking to the future to foster deep and meaningful connections.

- Religious and Spiritual services.
- Community programming.
- Social Justice.

Imagine 2025 is not about building from scratch or reinventing the wheel; Rather, we propose to move forward in these three programmatic areas through new and compelling actions and practices.

2 STRATEGIC AREAS

- Family engagement, especially for young families, the future lifeline for our community.
- Financial sustainability.

Addressing these two strategic areas is critical to OZ's future: we have not properly done so in the past decade.

3 KEY OPERATIONAL AREAS:

- Lay and staff leadership.
- Our physical AND digital home.
- Welcoming/Engagement/Communications.

In part, we need to address current operational shortcomings; and, at the same time, anticipate and address future needs.

Our long-term goal is to reverse the decline in participation and membership through creating a community wide, bottoms up approach, to developing robust paths of community engagement, relationships and meaningful and joyful Jewish experiences.

OZ in 2025
will be a more
welcoming, joyful
and meaningful home
for Jews and
those who love Jews
to belong to.

Solidifying Social Justice as a Key Pillar.

OZ has a deep history of social activism inspired by our sacred texts and forebears who strove to lead us with a deep understanding of kindness, connection and social action. That deep tradition continues today and is an ever-growing strength of who OZ is as a community, as we meet the social justice challenges of our times.

Our extensive research has indicated a deep desire on the part of many in our congregation to become more involved with OZ's social justice initiatives. The opportunity is for small and large group engagement that provides a sense of true satisfaction in participating in social action that is both personally fulfilling and contributes to a better world. Enhancing and strengthening this pillar is essential to membership value and community growth.



The effectiveness of OZ's social justice activities, in mobilizing large numbers of congregants, as well as in communicating to the larger community how OZ's love of justice translates into tangible and positive social change, will be enhanced as a cornerstone of our community by:

- Rededicating OZ to our name – Lovers of Justice.
- Developing a social justice leadership team and structure that will drive our commitment deeper within our community and outside.
- Aligning our present social action initiatives, G'Mach, Shuk, and Social Action (formally Interfaith Social Action) under a new "Social Justice" committee.
- Integrating social justice initiatives across all educational programming, including preschool, Hebrew School, and adult learning.
- Creating stronger and consistent programming, communication and engagement.
- Three intersecting paths of engagement:
 - > *Engage in learning and current activities,*
 - > *Initiate and participate in cultural change to increase inclusion, and*
 - > *Participate with the larger community on social justice actions and initiatives.*

Moving forward and building a stronger social justice, lived experience, as a core of who we are, will deepen belonging to our OZ community in support of nurturing a joyful intergenerational community committed to loving kindness, human connections and social justice.

Our Celebratory Bridge to 2025

2021/22

- Reorganize under a new Social Justice Committee.
- Build a Social Justice leadership team that owns the obligation and responsibility for action.
- Integrate and continue to support three strategic areas:
 - > *Shalom Shuk*
 - > *G'Mach*
 - > *Social Action*
- Increase our opportunities to communicate our purpose, initiatives and successes within and outside our community.
- Organize a series of Social Justice events within our community to:
 - > *Build awareness.*
 - > *Increase community participation.*
 - > *Integrate with young families (both FC and HS).*
- Dedicate staff resources in support of processes, structure, policies, and communications.
- Reach a participation goal of 30% of our community in social justice initiatives.

2022/23

- Organize in support of three possible strategic areas:
 - > *Hunger/poverty.*
 - > *Discrimination/anti-racism.*
 - > *Environmental issues.*
- Deepen our commitment to integrating social justice through other committees, initiatives and programs such as Hebrew school, preschool, B Mitzvah projects, educational opportunities, and event planning for the whole synagogue.
- Intentionally embed social justice activities with young families.
- Develop small teams of engaged congregants for each strategic area of focus that can quickly mobilize to meet new social justice needs.
- Reach a participation goal for 50% of our community in social justice initiatives.

2023/24/25

- Be the pre-eminent Jewish social justice center in our region.
- Celebrate a deep social justice culture and experience as part of the day-to-day fabric of OZ.
- Reach a goal of 75% of our community participating in social justice initiatives.

Enhancing our Community/Cultural Center as a Key Pillar

When OZ's current building was opened in 1952, it was a modern Jewish Community Center, which included on-site classrooms, a multipurpose social hall/basketball court with changing and shower rooms. Over the past 70 years as the community spread across Chittenden County and beyond, the practicality of its functionality as a Jewish Community Center has diminished. And efforts at community center programming have diminished as OZ's community cultural needs have evolved. Today an actively engaged Adult Education committee, Events committee, along with targeted efforts by the Rabbi and the Cantor (i.e., Iengage, Making Prayer Meaningful, Havdalah Coffee House, etc.) drive most of the community centered programming.

Our community wide focus group research indicated that congregants wanted to further engage with one another through ongoing programming and events. "Getting together to just be together" is a sentiment of shared cultural identity we heard over and over in our research.

Congregants wanted a meeting place that fosters meaningful engagement and involvement through:

- Intergenerational engagement opportunities.
- A welcoming environment for all Jews, and those that love Jews.
- Diverse cultural, educational and fun opportunities to foster self-growth and community connections, engagement and relationships.

The future opportunity is to further support aspects of Jewish experience and cultural identity which, evidenced by our foods, our music and musicians, our comedy, our theatre, our artists, our adult education programming, etc., helps us come together to build and celebrate community while also enabling us to better understand and deepen who we are.

And, albeit simple and seemingly mundane, a modern coffee shop or café in our building (with fresh goodies from the OZ kitchen) would offer a powerful symbol of welcoming, connecting, and building relationships.

Now is the time to create new experiences that enable OZ to grow through non-religious/non-spiritual programming. Growing from our existing diverse community programming and events to creating an intentional community/cultural center pillar. Owning a strategic position in equal partnership with our two other key pillars, religion/spirituality and social justice.

A Community/Culture Center Pillar Would:

- Open new "welcoming" doors and encourage those who currently see OZ as an exclusively religious organization, to be able to celebrate their Jewish selves with others in diverse and non-religious ways.
- Foster interactions and subsequent connections and belonging among Jews, interfaith couples and non-Jews, connections that would strengthen and develop over time and help foster OZ's identity as a center for joyous Jewish life.

Our Welcoming Bridge to 2025

2021/22

- Integrate all present community centered programming under one umbrella that speaks to learning, to play, to exploring – “Center for Jewish Life”.
- Build out a leadership structure.
- Organize in support of four strategic areas:
 - > *Education*
 - > *Arts and Culture.*
 - > *Outdoor Life*
 - > *OZ Community Events*
- Dedicate staff resources in support of processes, structure, policies, and communications.
- Build relationship into each programming/event opportunity.
- Enhance our hybrid delivery model for using technology and our physical space.
- Reach a participation rate of 30% of our community in activities.

2023/24

- Teach ourselves and our kids about different aspects of Jewish culture.
- Collaborate and create one Jewish cultural calendar with Temple Sinai and Ruach haMaoom.
- Add non-synagogue venues to content delivery model.
- Reach a participation rate of 50% of our community in activities.

2025

- OZ is leading the way in creating joyous, meaningful Judaism, opening new doors for Jews and non-Jews of all backgrounds to experience and engage with Jewish life.
- Reach a participation rate of 75% of our community in activities.

Deepening our Spiritual/Prayer Services as a Key Pillar.

Our community research revealed a deep and passionate desire to connect religiously and spiritually with others at OZ. As well, many congregants expressed an interest in exploring new entryways for participation in our rituals, from Shabbat services, to minyan, to life cycle rituals.



Our religious and spiritual
diversity is a community asset.

A large portion of our
congregant's desire to be
more actively engaged in
prayer and spirituality.

*The key to our continued success is in celebrating
and honoring BOTH traditional prayer AND other
spiritual/contemplative prayer experiences.*

*As well as in finding new entry ways for those seeking
prayer and spirituality in their life, but less inclined to
enter the front door of a synagogue.*

We can learn from one another as we embrace that diversity in order to feed our personal and communal prayer and spiritual needs.

Moving toward 2025 we have the opportunity to foster different joyful religious and spiritual practices that:

- Embrace tradition and nurture innovation.
- Welcome all of us into communal worship.
- Inspire us to open our hearts and be our best selves.
- Engage, comfort, and explore mind, body and soul.

Our research indicates the desire for meaningful participation within a community that fosters a deeper sense of connectedness and celebrates belonging through “prayer”. And we have evidence of this through the experiences that OZ has developed, including:

- Joey Weisenberg/Scholar in Residence (singer/songwriter).
- Rosh Hashana on the lake.
- Friday night services in the park.
- Tot Shabbat.

Imagine 2025 invites our congregation to join in developing a path for increasing joyous, meaningful prayer and other spiritual experiences that can guide us for the next 5 years.



Our Joyful Bridge to 2025

Fostering a welcoming, praying, caring and inspiring community where everyone feels they belong.

2021/22

- While standing within our Jewish tradition, expand our service offerings to meet the diverse spiritual needs of our community.
- Welcome and celebrate our diversity.
- Make our prayer and spiritual spaces more welcoming.
- Explore, study, experiment and innovate new pathways to inclusivity for interfaith families and Jews of different religious backgrounds.
- Develop the centrality of “25 Hours of Shabbat”. A community wide program that celebrates from Tot Shabbat through Havdalah.
- Redefine, reinvigorate and expand the Religious Committee to become the “Religious and Spiritual committee”.
- Study “Relational Judaism” with Dr. Ron Wolfson.
- Create a collaborative partnership with the clergy.
- Reach a community participation level of 30% (not including holidays).

2023/24

- “25 Hours of Shabbat” has expanded and become central to our community.
- Our full calendar of Jewish cultural events and religious holiday services are well attended.
- Collaboration between Temple Sinai, Ruach haMaqom and OZ are evident throughout the larger Jewish community.
- Quarterly spiritual and prayerful retreats are well attended.
- Our focus on inclusivity and friendliness has increased our levels of participation to 50% of our community.
- Our “25 Hours of Shabbat” is a magnet for our members and the larger Jewish community.
- Minyan is recognized as an important component of our community.

2025

- OZ is the place to go for a joyous and meaningful traditional and innovative celebration of Shabbat.
- OZ is opening up its two new sanctuaries for the upcoming High Holidays.

Enhancing Young Family Engagement

OZ leadership has identified the need to enhance overall engagement throughout our community. It is recognized that OZ provides an abundance of diverse services, events, and programming to meet community interests. The opportunity for the future is to deepen the personal relationship, connections and engagement in the community through this treasure trove of offerings. Of special importance are young families – the life blood for the future. It is through our focus on intentionally listening to and caring for the needs of the young; children, parents, singles and couples, that OZ will be a thriving and welcoming community for all.

Our research revealed the opportunity for enhancing community value for young families is through three excellent programs OZ provides, and intends to expand and enrich - Hebrew School, Full Circle and Nadav (our teen program). For the most part, families are very satisfied with the content and opportunities the programs provide for their children. We also have received constructive feedback from a range of young families that we still must do important work to meet our goals of being a welcoming home, and even more importantly, creating a sense of belonging for our diverse Jewish community.

The opportunity for OZ is to add more value through our programs to integrate young families, not just the children, into the overall community. Key areas to focus on:

- Supporting parents of diverse backgrounds and Jewish practices.
- Creating more welcoming opportunities for interfaith families and less religious families.
- Providing specific intergenerational programming and events.
- Engagement both with our community and to the broader Jewish community.
- Intentional support and programming for families as they transition between their life stages – pre-school to Hebrew school to post b' mitzvah teens.

There is a clear understanding of how to build this going forward within the families of Hebrew School, Full Circle, staff, clergy and committee leadership. What will be critical going forward is:

- Breaking down the organizational structural barriers that have evolved in synagogue life for generations.
- “Radical Welcoming” to create a true sense of belonging – identifying barriers in OZ’s practices, materials and policies that have prevented families from feeling more welcome and improving upon them through collaborative work with others (congregants, staff, clergy).
- Financially supporting this key initiative with community wide donations of money and time. This work will ensure creating a warm and welcoming environment to support continuity of involvement through congregant life stages and bringing new families to our community.

Building a WELCOMING bridge to 2025

2021/22

- Create supportive membership engagement teams supported by staff/clergy for each young family life stage:
 - > *Pre-School*
 - > *Hebrew School*
 - > *Post Hebrew School*
- Form a task group to review and make meaningful recommendations to practices and policies that support the welcoming and belonging for interfaith and less religious families.
- Increased collaboration among strategic pillar and board leadership to integrate young families through programming and events opportunities.
- Enhance overall communication options in support of family and community wide engagement.
- Review of financial options for young families in support of lowering the cost of participation.
- Pilot 2-week summer day camp program.
- Increase participation in FC by 10%. Increase participation in Hebrew School by 15%.

2023/24

- Establish membership engagement teams supported by staff/clergy to reach out to:
 - > *Non-member young families*
 - > *Young professionals (singles and couples)*
- Enhanced learning relationships for all children through programming with others such as PJ Library, Living Tree Alliance, Hillel, Temple Sinai and Ruach haMaqom.
- Expand summer programming available for children in and out of our community.
- Growing focus on teenage programming.
- High-level of family satisfaction.
- Growing percentage of Pre-school students moving to Hebrew School.
- Increase participation in FC by 10%. Increase participation in Hebrew School by 20%.

2025

- New vibrant community leaders involved in FC/HS committee.
- 3 board members represent young families.
- Full enrollment for FC/HS – 100 children and teenagers.
- Robust engagement and deep welcoming of diverse families on their Jewish journey.
- More families will find meaning and connection at OZ and with Judaism; and will have increased comfort supporting OZ with money and time.
- Parents will be OZ ambassadors, introducing unaffiliated families to OZ.

A High-level Approach to Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability is driven by two drivers, revenue and expenses. Imagines' work indicated we have opportunities to both improve our revenue profile and cost management. By enriching and improving the OZ experience, Imagine seeks to sustain membership, grow revenue, and drive continuous improvement of cost management. This work will include a long-term financial model with annual benchmarks, to ensure we follow a path of long-term financial sustainability.

We seek a reverse in membership trends and target growth for the future:

- Leading from our community's values.
- Providing valued and inspiring experiences.
- Financially modeling inclusivity and affordability.

We seek to shift our revenue model by:

- Increasing our annual voluntary donations.
- Increasing endowment income.
- Increasing special fundraising channels.
- Developing new revenue opportunities.

We seek to ensure our long-term financial sustainability by:

- Developing a long-term financial revenue and cost model with multiple pathways to sustainability.
- Define annual benchmarks and define accountability to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Scenario plan so OZ is ready to pivot and accelerate forward as we encounter new or unforeseen changes.

Development committee expands its focus on creating revenue opportunities through four key areas:

- > *Imagine Fund task group.*
- > *Planned Giving fund task group.*
- > *Annual membership donation task group.*
 - Annual donation.
 - Planned fundraising (High Holiday/Annual Appeal).
- > *New Revenue task group.*
 - Revenue opportunities from OZ's assets (e.g., extending use of facilities, brand awareness, exclusive properties).
 - Explore new commercial partnerships including with local businesses that align with OZ values.
 - Special events (Jewish summer festival, religious/spiritual retreats, etc.).
 - OZ products (Kosher products available at local farmers market, pop-up Kosher take-out, etc.).
 - Center for Jewish Life digital programming.

Enhancing our membership model for 2022

Today OZ has a voluntary membership model, although we provide specific donation opportunities, we are guided by a fair share philosophy – all members are welcome and donate to the level that you can afford. While we will continue under that direction we recommend expanding and:

- Creating 2 “Anchor Member” financial categories:
 - > *Visionaries*
 - > *Prophets*
 - Requesting both a time and a financial contribution.

What does your annual voluntary membership donation provide?

Your donation supports our home, all the physical things that are associated with that, and enables the centrality of our community. The place where we come together to celebrate, care for one another, care for our community, pray, learn, laugh, eat and enjoy one another’s company. Your donation helps pay OZ forward. Our goal is to be an inclusive community, regardless of one’s means.

Together we pay forward, together we ensure that all can participate. Below you will find many specifics that your annual donation provides:

- All religious/spiritual rituals.
- Holiday programming and events.
- Hebrew School.
- Access to all Life-Long Learning programs.
- Pastoral care.
- Vote at community meetings.
- 50% of all special event programming.
- Life cycle events.
- Full digital access.
- High Holiday tickets.
- Access to all outdoor adventure programs.
- Priority seating for special events.
- 20% all items at the Judaica store.

PLUS, your contribution supports:

- Jewish education for our children.
- The Shuk.
- OZ mural.
- OZ archives.
- Social justice programming/events.
- G'mach (caring committee).
- OZ Cemeteries.

Operational Priorities for 2021/22

Lay/staff leadership

Critical to the future success of OZ is a full review and plan forward for lay leadership. Today, we have many congregants involved with committee and Board work, but without a clearly defined operating structure and roles, we are not always benefiting from this voluntary participation. The opportunity is to reorganize with clear roles, responsibilities, expectations and support for board membership, committee leadership and developing a path for future leadership. Our recommendation is to create a governance structure that is a fulfilling and rewarding experience to participate in. In addition, a commitment needs to be made to training and providing written materials to support all volunteers.

OZ board/staff structure

- Lay and staff leadership align around roles and responsibilities for the success of Imagine 2025

- > *Develop accountability, communications, organization.*
 - > *Bridging the gap between vision and action.*
 - > *Annual operating plan (i.e.: top priorities and goals for the year).*
 - > *Rolling 90-day key objectives.*
 - Specific measurable priorities.
-

- Lay leadership structural alignment

- > *Key roles:*
 - Strategic leadership
 - Operational management/oversight
 - Staff/Clergy/Committee*
 - Center for Jewish Life Committee
 - Religious/Spiritual Committee
 - Social Justice Committee
 - Hebrew School/Full Circle Committee
 - Membership Welcoming and Engagement Committee
 - New member outreach*
 - Member in-reach*
 - Marketing/communications*
 - Financial Committee
 - Expenses/budget*
 - Development Committee
 - Revenue/budget*

- Staff/clergy leadership structure

- > *In partnership and support of OZ Imagine 2025 plan and lay leader structure.*
- > *Align job descriptions with strategic plan.*
- > *Create a supportive work environment focused on:*
 - Collaboration and engagement.
 - Professional development support.
 - Reducing burnout.

Digital/Physical home

There are concrete needs for additional classroom space, and bathrooms to accommodate Full Circle's vision for a Preschool that will almost triple the number of children who can be served; There are other recommendations for creating a self-contained and identifiable educational wing that highlights OZ's commitment to the preschool, the HS, and parents. And we need to be planning for a more advanced digital and broadcast capability.

As well, there are ideas for creating more welcoming entryways, hallways, and lounge, reimagining the sanctuaries, and creating a Lost Mural/museum space that more effectively celebrates this unique "International Treasure in Vermont" and our 100-year history.

At the same time these conversations for adapting the existing building to accommodate the modern needs of a vibrant Jewish community center, there are ideas for developing OZ's currently unused properties. Such development may directly expand OZ's service offerings to its congregation and/or to the larger area Jewish community. Alternatively, recognizing the value of property for residential housing, it may be possible to generate Endowment or other ongoing forms of income from sale or rental of property.

A task group, including an architect and several contractors, are meeting with various building and campus constituents and will be developing a long-term plan for the overall future of our campus.

Welcoming/Engagement/Communications

Our congregational research revealed time and again the need to increase the effectiveness of our:

- Welcoming
- Engagement
- Communications

A small task group is working on these three areas to:

- Create welcoming from curb (entry) to the woods (departure).
- Support a marketing mindset.
- Increase touch points with all members.
- Provide robust social channel presence.
- Develop community in-reach and outreach programs.
- Inaugurate welcoming protocols for new members.

Ohavi Zedek Synagogue

Belonging Through Welcoming, Meaningful and Joyous Jewish Experiences

