

Securing the Legacy, Passing the Torch 2022: The Strategic Plan for the Zen Community of Oregon

Our 2022 Vision:

Our vision is a Zen Community of Oregon that has secured the legacy of our founding teachers. We are a vibrant and engaged community committed to passing the light of Zen Buddhism to future generations. Our monastery and temple inspire people to realize their Buddha-nature, actualize the Buddha-dharma, and meet the challenges of an ever-changing suffering world.

Goals:

1. **Secure the legacy of our founding teachers, passing on the light of Zen to the next generation:** finish the founding of Great Vow, establish a leadership transition plan, and take care of our teachers.
2. **Strengthen our Places of Practice:** taking good care of our monastery and temple and developing them to meet the needs of our growing practice community.
3. **Cultivate a Stable and Mature Organization:** ensure that we have the leadership, policies, structures, best practices, and finances to provide authentic Zen Buddhist practice long into the future.
4. **Establish Strong Paths of Practice for Lay and Ordained People:** Continue our core zazen offerings with an emphasis on long retreats, develop practice matrix and structured paths for the wider Sangha, and cultivate those who will become Zen Teachers.
5. **Nurture a Heart-Connected and Engaged Spiritual Community:** develop a community that brings people together to explore their

deep intentions and truth and expresses wisdom and compassion in the world.

Goal 1 - Secure the legacy of our founding teachers, passing on the light of Zen to the next generation: finish the founding of Great Vow, establish a leadership transition plan, and take care of our teachers.

- Pay off the monastery by September 1, 2022.
- Establish a Leadership Transition Plan so Chozen and Hogen can retire.
- Develop current and future housing that allows our founders to age supported by community.
- Clarify ZCO commitments for the explicit support of long-term ordained people who remain after their novice period.
- Articulate the Founding Vow from which the work toward equity, diversity, and inclusion naturally grows.

Goal 2 - Strengthen our Places of Practice: taking good care of our monastery and temple and developing them to meet the needs of our growing practice community.

- Establish a single ZCO Capital Projects Plan and Timeline for new development at Great Vow Zen Monastery and Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple, setting priorities year by year.
- Maintaining what we have by establishing maintenance priorities and timelines, training and utilizing volunteers, and making sure we don't lose the knowledge of maintaining our places.
- Ensure our places of practice are welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all individuals.

Goal 3 - Cultivate a Stable and Mature Organization: ensure that we have the leadership, policies, structures, best practices, and finances to provide authentic Zen Buddhist practice long into the future.

Strategies:

- Ensure adequate funding for operations and capital expenditures; priorities set by the board of directors with community input.
- Establish the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion as Board priorities for time and resources.
- Strengthen the board with training, leadership development, and recruitment, with an emphasis on welcoming members who are Black,

- Indigenous, and People of Color into leadership roles.
- Clarify decision making structure and organizational processes, and evolve them and ZCO bylaws as needed.
 - Establish transparent pathways of leadership development so that people can grow into leadership.
 - Adopt policies, best practices, and codify procedures for the board, committees, monastery, and temple.
 - Utilize online tools to ensure people can find our offerings including online video, podcasts, and a website optimized for mobile phones.

Goal 4 - Establish Strong Paths of Practice for Lay and Ordained People:

Continue our core zazen offerings with an emphasis on long retreats, develop practice matrix and structured paths for the wider Sangha, and cultivate those who will become Zen Teachers. Include a specific focus on cultivating teachers who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and/or LGBTQ+ given that they are underrepresented among current ZCO teachers.

- Provide offerings at Great Vow Zen Monastery that meet the diverse spiritual needs of many people while balancing the needs of monastic practice.
- Continue and create offerings at Heart of Wisdom that bring spiritual practice into everyday life and social engagement, with zazen at the heart.
- Prioritize sesshin as the core offering at Great Vow, continuing to bring creativity and adaptability into its expression, while addressing barriers to accessibility.
- Develop practice/training matrix and structured paths of practice that entail a cycle of offerings which meet the needs of people as beginners, middle, and long term practitioners and include relating the Dharma to Engaged Buddhism.
- **Evaluate** how the teaching and practice tradition of ZCO could be supported and sustained by *the establishment of a religious order*.
- Develop system for the training and development of Zen Teachers when Chozen and Hogen are no longer doing this.

Goal 5 - Nurture a Heart-Connected and Engaged Spiritual Community:

develop an engaged Buddhist community that brings people together to explore their deep intentions and truth and expresses wisdom and compassion through social engagement.

- Facilitate and support Engaged Zen Buddhist practice on issues like climate change and race, with efforts rooted in communities where we practice.
- Develop relationships with communities and teachers of Color to expand our perspective and awareness.
- Strengthen the internal Sangha by providing opportunities for community connection through practice support, classes, inviting dialogue and feedback, and having an eye toward inviting people into greater connection within the ZCO community.
- Cultivate an environment of transparent dialogue regarding issues of equity and oppression.
- Respond to the changing practice needs of people in different phases of life, on one end continuing to speak to young practitioners and at the same time ensure that as people age we are a place where they can continue to practice.