




INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 17, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2020 Music Strategy Update (PED21041) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Debbie Spence (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3049
SUBMITTED BY:	Carrie Brooks-Joiner Director, Tourism and Culture Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable

INFORMATION

Background

The City of Hamilton recognizes the importance of music culturally and economically. In 2013, Council approved a Music Strategy for the City. The Music Strategy's goals and principles guide City-wide efforts (e.g. by-law, planning, funding, policies, etc.) to support some of the infrastructure necessary to maintain and enhance music in Hamilton.

Hamilton's Music Strategy was developed with strong community engagement. The City continues to work with and seek advice from the local music community through a citizen-based, volunteer group called the Hamilton Music Advisory Team (HMAT).

This annual update provides selected highlights of the City's efforts to advance the Music Strategy and recognizes the work and support received from HMAT.

2020 Highlights - Key Recovery Initiatives, Projects and Accomplishments

The year 2020 saw significant negative impacts and losses to the music industry and its

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

workers due to the restrictions and impacts caused by COVID-19. These impacts were especially significant for musicians and live music venues. In response to the pandemic, staff focused on recovery efforts for the sector and worked to modify previously planned projects where possible.

Key recovery efforts led by the City, including those done in partnership with others, as well as projects that helped the City fulfil its on-going commitment to music are listed below:

Virtual Mentor Program for Musicians and Music Managers

Developed in collaboration with Canada Music Incubator (CMI), the City launched a mentorship program in late March. The goal of the program was to provide free, high-quality, hands-on professional business development tools to Hamilton musical artists and artist managers. Musicians who resided in Hamilton and met the eligibility criteria received free access to a bundle of three 60-minute one-on-one video meetings with CMI mentors. A total of 27 music sector individuals participated and received important business-related training including Grant Writing, Branding and Fee Negotiation.

Music Mondays

Music Mondays, a free lunch time music series held at City Hall each year was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions.

Musician Conference

In response to the pandemic, the fourth annual City-led musician conference shifted to a virtual format. The conference expanded from a one-day event to a five-day online event (from October 19 to 23, 2020) during national Small Business Week. Each day featured a different 60-minute panel discussion with topics providing practical business tools aligning with the overall conference theme of “How to release your next album”.

Conference attendance surpassed the 2019 event with a total of 236 conference registrations and an average of 47 attendees at each session. Panel discussions were recorded and remain online as a resource for the sector. As of January 2021, there have been 1,700+ views of these free resources.

In keeping with previous years, HMAT and the Musician’s Sub-Committee were instrumental in providing promotional assistance for the conference. Additional information and conference videos can be found at www.hamilton.ca/musicianconference

Virtual Business Coaching

One-to-one virtual business coaching opportunities for creative industries entrepreneurs (i.e. music, film, fashion, visual arts) was launched by the City in April. The City hired Capacity Creator to assist businesses (regardless of their stage of development), in pivoting, refocusing and/or scaling-up in response to the pandemic. A total of five sessions or 10 hours of business coaching assistance was leveraged by music-based businesses.

City Enrichment Fund for Artists

The City funds the creative output of artists and collectives through the Creation and Presentation stream, as well as the creative output of organizations through the Operating, Festivals and Capacity Building stream.

A total of \$894,769 in funding was provided to 40 music-based individuals and organizations, various artists, i.e. musicians and music organizations who deliver music-based programs or events to the public.

In recognition of the impact of the pandemic, the City committed to funding successful applicants and allowing modifications to their program, or for cancelled programming where costs were incurred due to COVID-19.

“Hamilton Shows Up” - Virtual Events Series

As one of the first deliberate initiatives in Hamilton to provide online content as a response to the pandemic, Hamilton Shows Up was developed and led by Cobalt Connects with the City providing funding and promotional assistance. In total, 22 artists were hired resulting in four hours of free public programming for the first evening. The City funded the first night of performances where there were 2,700 views of the video and a consistent audience of over 500 for the four-hour event.

Music on Patios

To further support the music sector and facilitate public access to live music, in August Council temporarily revised the Music/Entertainment on Patios By-law and extended it to December 31, 2020. The revised By-law permitted music on patios in all Downtown areas and lands zoned D1, D2 and D3. Following this change, many live music venues leveraged the revised By-law and were able to make music part of their offerings to customers.

York Boulevard Live Performance Series

Through a competitive bid process, the City offered access to the top level of the York Boulevard Parkade along with seed funding of \$7,500 to create a temporary, outdoor performance venue for public programming. The successful proponent, Supercrawl

Inc., developed a live performance series that included live music, fashion and visual arts.

The series took place over four days (September 24 to 27, 2020) with six separate performances, four of which sold out. This series assisted with the live music/gig economy and resulted in the hiring of musicians, their support teams, artists, production crews, vendors, facility and security staff as well as utilizing the services of local James Street businesses.

Creative Enterprise Facilities Property Tax Sub-Class

In November 2020, the Arts and Creative Industries working group of the Mayor's Task Force for Economic Recovery recommended consideration of a property tax relief or reduction for creative industries, specifically live music venues.

A motion asking the Province for approval to create a Creative Enterprise Facilities Property Tax Sub-Class was approved by Council in December 2020. In January 2021, the Mayor of Hamilton sent correspondence to the Premier requesting this approval. If approved, the Creative Enterprise Facilities Property Tax Sub-Class would provide a reduction in property tax for eligible creative enterprises and live music venues in Hamilton and contribute to their on-going viability.

Anne Foster Music Window Displays

The Anne Foster Music Window Displays are in the original Anne Foster music shop window at the Lister Block building located at 28 James Street North. The City issues a call for artists then contracts an artist to create a display that celebrates and recognizes an element of Hamilton's musical past, present or future. The displays for 2020 included:

- "World Records" by Juliana LaChance
- "PUSH! An Exhibition of Analog Music Machines" by Todd Murray
- "Some Outsider Music Hamilton" by Becky Katz and Aaron Hutchinson with featured artists Charli, Sahra Soudi and Katie McDonald

Photos and information about this project can be found at www.hamilton.ca/annefosterwindows

Live Music Research

Live music helps create and support a strong urban core and quality of life. On June 15, 2020 an Information Report (PED20112) was shared with Council providing information on economic impact data and key issues impacting live music venues. Though the research was based on 2018 data and completed pre-pandemic in 2019, it

detailed the importance of the music sector in Hamilton.

Music Blog Series

The City of Hamilton website (www.hamilton.ca/music) hosts a music blog series written by local, contracted subject matter experts. In 2020, the topics for the articles focused on assisting and promoting Hamilton musicians. Three articles were created on the following topics: Improving Your Home Show; How Hamiltonians Can Help and Support Local Musicians; and Marketing Tips for Indie Artists. An article was also written and posted to the Invest website highlighting musicians and music businesses (<https://investinhamilton.ca/blog/2020/11/09/music-loves-hamilton/>).

HMAT Member Updates

The City continues to value and appreciate the efforts of HMAT in providing advice to the City on music, and in supporting the implementation of the Music Strategy. Many thanks to Kojo Dampety (Music Artist/Music Curator) for his work and support as HMAT Chair in 2020, and to Janna Malseed (Hamilton Musicians Guild) for her efforts and support in her role as Co-Chair in 2019 and 2020.

The new Chair and Co-Chair of HMAT for 2021 to 2022 are Tricia LeClair (Hamilton Children's Choir) and Lisa LaRocca (Sonic Unyon/Supercrawl).

HMAT welcomed one new member, Marie Cassidy (Mohawk College - The Hawk) who replaced Bry Webb (Mohawk College - The Hawk). Mr. Webb was a valued member of HMAT and has retired from Mohawk College.

Looking Ahead - Selected Examples of Up-Coming Projects for 2021

The City will continue to focus on recovery efforts for the music sector in response to the on-going effects of the pandemic. Several projects and initiatives will support these efforts including:

- Virtual mentoring for musician and music managers
- Development of a fifth Annual Musician Conference (October 17 to 23, 2021)
- Development of a Strategic Music Business Plan in collaboration with various local partners that will drive a refresh of the City's current music strategy

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None

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