

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** May 20, 2025 7:23 AM

**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca)

**Cc:** Melissa McClelland <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** PED25142- Grant for Centenary Methodist Church to Establish A Mid-Sized Performance Centre, 24 Main Street West, Hamilton (Ward 2)

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To Mayor and Council,

My name is Melissa McClelland. I'm a Hamilton- and Toronto-based musician and one half of the band Whitehorse, alongside my husband and bandmate, Luke Doucet. The Music Hall in Hamilton is exactly the kind of venue we seek out when touring — it has the capacity to welcome our audience and, importantly, offers seating, which is a key consideration for many performers and fans.

As a band that regularly plays mid-sized venues across the country, I know how vital it is for artists to have access to well-equipped, inspiring spaces to share our music. I've had the pleasure of performing at the Music Hall before, and it left a lasting impression. It's a venue that invites creativity and connection — the kind of space that fuels a vibrant music scene.

In Toronto, we've had the honour of headlining Massey Hall several times and were involved in the lead-up to its major renovation. It was a monumental project, but one that proved how investing in iconic cultural spaces pays off — not just for artists, but for audiences and the broader community. The revitalized Massey Hall now stands as a shining example of what's possible when a city supports its creative infrastructure.

Hamilton has long been known as a music city, home to a thriving arts community. But without ongoing support from the city, that identity is at risk. Artists contribute so much to the colour, vibrancy, and soul of our communities — and we need our cities to recognize and invest in that. Establishing the Music Hall as a premier music venue would not only attract artists from across the country, but it would also serve as a cultural landmark for all Hamiltonians — including marginalized groups who deserve access to inclusive, community-driven spaces. It has the potential to become a true creative hub.

The Alliance has a powerful vision: to protect this historic building while expanding its reach through community outreach, arts education, and inclusivity initiatives. The arts bring people together, and the Music Hall can be a central gathering place for music, creativity, and connection.

As a professional musician, it's incredibly heartening to see this kind of leadership and commitment to the arts. Supporting venues like the Music Hall is an investment in the cultural and social future of our city — and I'm excited to see what's ahead.

Melissa