



RESONANT ENERGIES: A MUSIC CITY STRATEGY FOR CALGARY

MAY 2024

West
Anthem

ALBERTA
music 
Alberta
Government


National
Music
Centre
Centre
National
de Musique

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Denver, showing a dense urban area with numerous skyscrapers and buildings. In the foreground, there are green spaces and a river. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The image is split vertically, with the left half being a darker, more muted version of the same scene.

West Anthem

West Anthem is an advocacy organization established to stimulate conversations regarding the opportunity, growth, sustainability, and potential of Alberta's music industry and ecosystem. West Anthem's objectives are to develop a music strategy for Alberta, which includes mapping a comprehensive understanding of the economic profile of Alberta's music cluster, stimulating the business capacity of the music industry and its potential, amplifying the potential of Alberta's music industry as a key driver and vehicle for economic diversification, and establishing and implementing a live music strategy for Alberta through venue mapping and audience profiling. West Anthem is an advocate, friend, and champion of music creatives across Alberta.

An aerial photograph of the Calgary skyline, showing various skyscrapers and buildings. The city is situated along a river, with a large park area in the foreground. The image is in black and white, with a dark overlay on the right side where the text is located.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Long before the guitars, harmonicas and twang, before the big bands, the jazz bands and the radio waves, there were people making music and living lives in Mohkínsstisi (Calgary). As Calgary is located in Treaty 7 territory, the ancestral territory of the Siksikaitsitapi—the Blackfoot peoples—comprising the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani Nations, as well as the Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Îyâxe Nakoda Bearspaw, Chiniki, and Goodstoney First Nations. Today this land is home to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Districts 5 and 6 as well as many First Nations and Inuit from across Turtle Island.

We are extremely grateful for these lands on which we reside, work, and play. We make this acknowledgement as an act of gratitude and reconciliation. While championing music across Alberta, we intend for our work to contribute to the valuing of traditional musical forms and result in greater opportunity for the creative Indigenous talent who walk these lands today.

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER.

Established on this belief, the Alberta Music Cities Initiative was founded by the National Music Centre and the Scotlyn Foundation in 2012. A few short years later, these same organizations released “Fertile Ground: The Alberta Music Cities Initiative,” authored by Music Canada. While the purpose of this initial report was to instigate conversations around fostering the development of music cities in Alberta, it has ignited something much more impactful: a movement towards recognizing and cultivating music as a new frontier, acting as a catalyst for economic growth, contributing to quality of life through wellness, serving as a vehicle for tourism, developing enhanced production capacity, fostering meaningful cultural exchange in Calgary, Edmonton, and across the province, and positioning Alberta to become a global leader in music.

Today, the Alberta Music Cities Initiative is known as West Anthem. Our timely release of the 2020 West Anthem Music Ecosystem Study, authored by Sound Diplomacy, provided key data supporting federal, provincial, and municipal investment in music industry workers, venues, and musicians during what will be remembered as an unprecedented time in our history. What is now a pre-pandemic snapshot of Alberta’s music industry and ecosystem, the 2020 ecosystem study laid the groundwork for what we are excited to be releasing 10 years after our first publication: two music city strategies and a provincial toolkit!

While our major municipal regions are important hubs for live music, production, education, training, and career growth, West Anthem has always had an eye for music’s contribution to the entire province. From boosting business in local restaurants and bars, drawing crowds to town celebrations, being the center of local fundraising efforts, or headlining major festivals and arenas, Alberta’s music is both a reflection of and contributor to our prairie life. While this document focuses on developing Calgary’s music scene and ecosystem, it is part of our broader strategy to build a strong music industry and ecosystem province-wide, together. Regardless of your city or town’s size, we want every Albertan to know the benefits of music, be it economic, cultural, or otherwise.

In the following pages, our team draws from interviews, small groups, and online survey responses combined with secondary research to present a strategic plan envisioning Calgary as the go-to destination for daring music creatives and music entrepreneurs seeking to be at the forefront of a growing industry. Success will require commitment and perseverance from partners at the provincial, municipal, and organizational levels—truly growing stronger together.

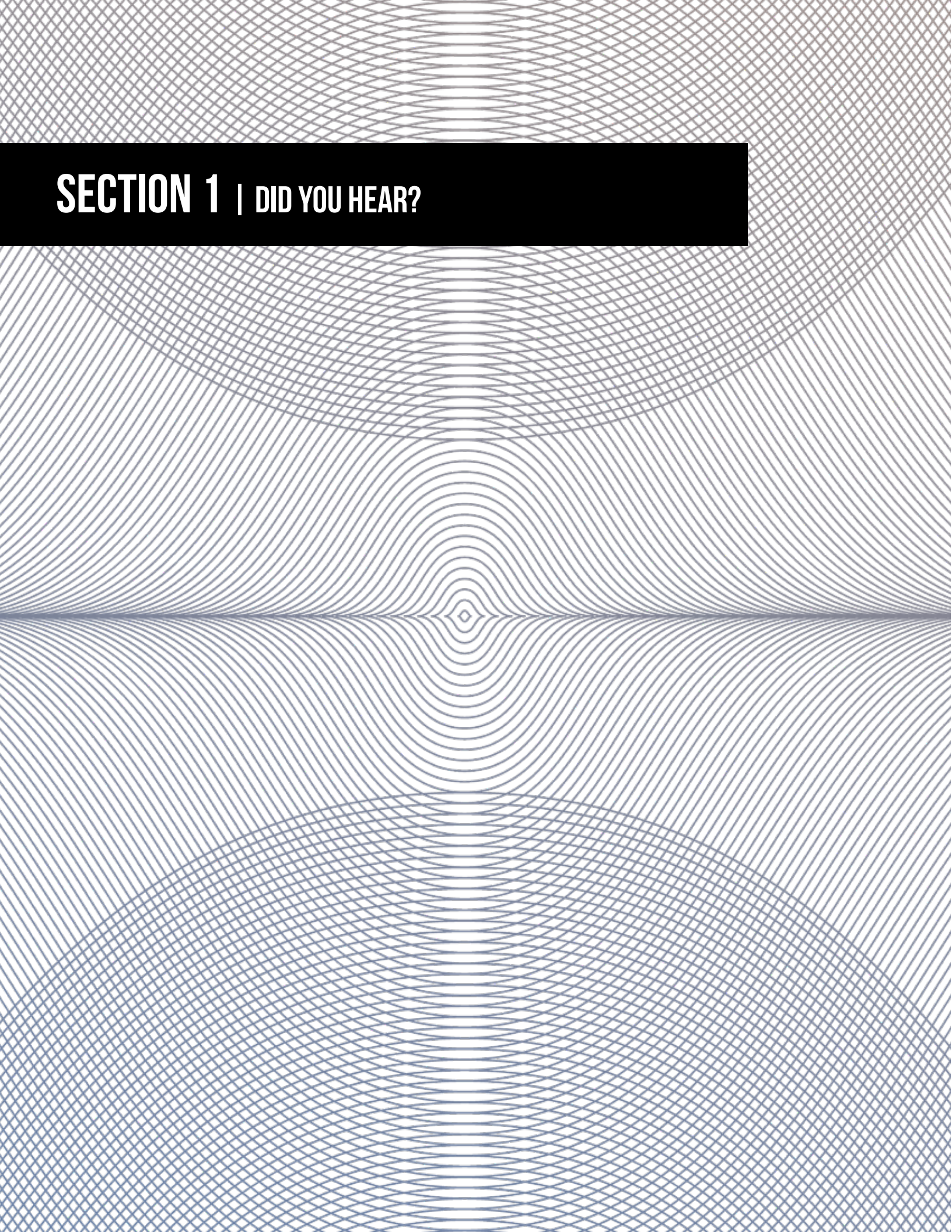
As we continue our work to influence the development of music-friendly policies in Calgary and across our province, it is our hope that this document will serve as part of the roadmap for where our province is headed as we build a more connected, diverse, resilient, and prosperous Alberta than ever before. On behalf of the West Anthem steering committee and our many committed partners, we are very excited to share the “Resonant Energies: A Music City Strategy for Calgary” strategy with you.

Sincerely, West Anthem

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SECTION 1 | DID YOU HEAR?



Music connects us. It stirs our hearts and can define moments and eras in our lives. It can also be big business. Recognizing this, West Anthem partnered with Alberta Music, the National Music Centre, and the Government of Alberta in a strategic development process starting in 2022—with this strategy being one of the ultimate goals. If you're curious about the detailed work that led to this, you're cordially invited to see our timeline and phase reports on our [webpage](#).¹

What is a Music City?

Quite simply, music cities are “communities of various sizes that have a vibrant music economy which they actively promote”.²

There is no single way to build a music city. It relies on each community's unique mixture of artists, music organizations and business activities that produce social, cultural and economic goods. The breadth and depth of impact can be heavily influenced by the presence or lack of support from audiences, infrastructure, and government.



Why a music city strategy for Calgary?

Music is Big Business

In 2013, the Ontario Music Fund saw a return of \$24MIL in additional revenue to music businesses on their \$15MIL investment, including creating or retaining 2,000 jobs.³ In 2020, the program was reimagined as the Ontario Music Investment Fund with an annual budget of \$7MIL. That same year, Ontario music publishing and sound recording employed nearly 3,000 people and contributed close to \$325MIL to Ontario's GDP.⁴⁵ In 2021-22, the OMIF reported leveraging an additional \$4.64 for every dollar invested.

In 2018, AmplifyBC was created, with an initial \$7.5MIL investment stimulating nearly \$30MIL in expenditures and supporting 3,000 jobs. The province continued their commitment in 2023 with an additional \$22.5MIL over three years to build music talent and launch careers.⁶

Hosting the JUNOs in 2016 supported \$9MIL in economic impact in the City of Calgary.⁷
Hosting the Canadian Country Music Awards in 2019 supported \$12MIL in local economic impact.⁸

Music contributed \$1.7BIL to Alberta's GDP and supported 20,577 jobs in 2020, despite being in the midst of COVID-19 shutdowns.⁹

A strategy helps direct funding and regulatory support to the most effective drivers for music growth, creating jobs and diversifying our economy.



Calgary Folk Music Festival, Prince's Island Park
Photo Credit: Jarrett Edmund, courtesy of Tourism Calgary



Music Grows With and Stimulates Other Industries

As home to nearly 1 in 8 of Canada's largest corporate headquarters¹⁰ and an expanding tech sector¹¹ Calgary is positioned at the forefront of industrial digital transformation—a good moment to note “a strong **correlation between vibrant music scenes and technology clusters** around the world and in Canada.”¹² Research indicates vibrant music scenes are an important tool to attract and retain information and communication technology companies and their workers.

Moving from tech to the visitor economy, **music tourism** presents a fantastic opportunity to leverage existing musical talent, shows, and festivals to draw in more visitors while enhancing the city's reputation for creativity and culture.¹³¹⁴ Of the almost 1.4M visitors to Stampede Park during Calgary Stampede 2023, 63% visited at least one type of music venue.¹⁵ From Stampede to snow, Calgary also harnesses music's popularity through their winter festival, Chinook Blast. Weeks of entertainment anchored around festivals (including three music festivals) infuse the downtown core with light, life, and lyrics (estimated economic impact of 8.2MIL in 2022).¹⁶ **A diverse music scene welcomes visitors all year, whether they're in hightops, hiking boots, or high heels.**

The growing success in Calgary's film and television sector opens up opportunities for expanding the services our local music industry offers as well (e.g., film scoring, music supervisor, sound designer, re-recording mixer, etc.). Anecdotally, many music industry sound and stage technicians moved into film and television during the pandemic—highlighting the **opportunity for symbiotic growth between music, film and television industries.**

A strategic investment in music can have knock-on effects across multiple industries.



Music Feeds Individual and Community Life

Listening or performing, live or recorded, **music is tied to many positive psychological, social, educational and cultural outcomes.** Personal experiences of music are tied to well-being and emotional regulation across the lifespan.^{17,18} The National Music Centre opened a permanent exhibition dedicated to the power of music on mental and physical health in 2022.

It is “well documented that the intellectual and emotional development of children is enhanced through study of the arts.”¹⁹ In particular, **students develop creative and critical thinking skills**—key in tomorrow’s changing job markets.

Music, live music in particular, can enhance a sense of belonging, cultural vibrancy, and help shape the identity of individuals, communities, and cities.^{20,21} This is all especially important in light of recent findings that “youth in Alberta, Vancouver and Toronto perceive that Alberta does not offer a breadth of career choices, that the province lacks vibrancy and that there is a lack of inclusion of diversity.”²² **Music offers the kinds of experiences and expressions of individuality that young talent value.**



“music is tied to many positive psychological, social, educational and cultural outcomes.”

Thriving Music Can Serve Calgary's Strategic Priorities

This strategy aims to increase the social, cultural and economic impacts that music has on Calgary. These aims align with a variety of existing municipal plans and strategies. In particular, alignment is easily seen in those strategies addressing year-round visitor experiences, quality of local living, the creative design of multi-use public spaces (especially for shows and events), and the evolution of Calgary's character and reputation.

The review also revealed a gap in that very few strategies or plans directly addressed music in Calgary—pointing to the value of this strategy in complementing existing plans while providing the practical tactics missing from related municipal strategies. The inclusion of music specifically is particularly important when talking of spaces and places, as music frequently comes with unique concerns in terms of noise reduction and impacts on neighbours. In [Appendix A: Music Strategy Alignment with Calgary Strategies and Plans](#), we've listed out major goals and aims from ten city strategies/plans and where they align with strategic directions from this plan.

Local Music Needs To Be a Local Priority

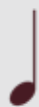
While Canada's recording and music publishing sector continues to see growth²³, many in the live music sector are still recovering from multiple years of reduced activity and profits. The 2020 economic numbers reveal a significant drop in music wages earned across the province (\$1.29BIL in 2017 to \$711MIL in 2020). All sectors of the music industry benefit from local support—companies and professionals are more likely to stay and grow where they feel valued. Local funding through programs like the [Downtown Vibrancy Program](#) and the [Arts & Culture microgrant](#) are fantastic ways to create opportunities while assuring music industry members that this is a priority for the City. A music city strategy makes that focus clear and tells the broader music industry that Calgary is the place to be.



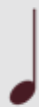
Sled Island crowd
Photo Credit: K. Hofer, courtesy of Tourism Calgary

In 2020, the [West Anthem Music Ecosystem Study](#) counted music assets in Calgary. Using those asset lists, we have reviewed key figures to examine trends since that time within Calgary city limits.

2023 Numbers



Approximately 4,700 SOCAN members based in Calgary²⁴



FESTIVALS

- 50 music festivals or festivals where music is in the mandate²⁶



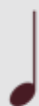
RADIO

- 22 radio stations²⁷



MUSIC PLACES²⁸

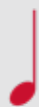
- 58 multi-purpose venues (performing arts theatres, community halls, rec centres, venues for hire)
- 53 bars, cafés and restaurants with live music performances (ticketed and free)
- 44 Venues occasionally hosting live music (incl. parks, community centres, churches, etc.)
- 10 arts hubs & coworking spaces
- 2 dedicated live music venues
- 5 nightclubs with regular music programming
- 2 multi-use arenas



MUSIC PRODUCTION LABELS, ET AL.

- 13 recording studios
- 15 rehearsal spaces (including studios available for rehearsal)
- 6 record labels

2020 Numbers



Approximately 3,800 SOCAN members based in Calgary²⁵



FESTIVALS

- 35 music festivals and/or festivals with music



RADIO

- 18 radio stations



MUSIC PLACES

- 67 multi-purpose venues (performing arts theatres, community halls, rec centres, venues for hire)
- 75 bars, cafés and restaurants with live music performances (ticketed and free)
- 51 venues occasionally hosting live music (incl. parks, community centres, churches)
- 11 arts hubs & coworking spaces
- 4 dedicated live music venues
- 10 nightclubs with regular music programming
- 2 multi-use arenas



MUSIC PRODUCTION, LABELS ET AL.

- 16 recording studios
- 15 rehearsal spaces (including studios available for rehearsal)
- 7 record labels

While festivals and radio stations showed resilience, the decline in ‘Music Places’ in Calgary reflects a trend in other Canadian cities.²⁹ The shrinking of music places—venues in particular—is a key concern to address because while it most obviously impacts artists and musicians, this also impacts the many professionals and businesses working around these spaces (e.g., booking agents, managers, promoters, recording engineers, light and sound technicians, equipment rental, etc.).

In developing a vibrant local music scene, funding opportunities need to take into account that many music spaces are for-profit. Results from a provincial funding opportunity administered by Alberta Music during the pandemic ([Stabilize Live Music Grant Program](#)) show how the vast majority of funds given to music businesses went right back into hiring local artists and services³⁰—these are small and medium-sized businesses that feed the local economy. Programs like the [Downtown Vibrancy Program](#) are a fantastic example of creating opportunities and assuring music industry members that this is the place to stay and create.

Mountains, valleys, grasslands, rivers, tenacious entrepreneurs, innovation hubs, and industry headquarters—Calgary attracts a lot because it has even more to offer. It's time folks understood this about our music scene as well. Home to unique music assets such as a wide array of music festivals, the National Music Centre, Music Mile, Mount Royal Conservatory's performance training programs, and the equivalent to Canada's largest music festival in the familiar form of the Calgary Stampede, Calgary boasts incredibly talented musicians and stages that propel them into successful careers.

Despite a respectable music history, decades of Calgary's music scene being spoken of in terms of potential, and significant music-focused events at the city level, efforts to intentionally form a music-friendly municipality have been lacking. Unaddressed gaps lead some music professionals to seek their fame, livelihood and fans elsewhere.

Supporting the music scene here can create local jobs, draw talent of all stripes, and legitimize creativity as part of Calgary's evolving reputation. A cohesive music strategy allows the City to reap the many benefits of a strong music scene.



Calgary Bluesfest
Photo Credit: Cindy McLeod, courtesy of Tourism Calgary



SECTION 2 | HOW WE GOT HERE.

To develop this strategic plan, we conducted secondary research as well as extensive engagement with artists and music industry members. This occurred over three phases, each of which resulted in a phase report sharing the main activities and findings.

Secondary research activities included:

- Literature review of strategic plans and economic impact assessments related to music in other jurisdictions across Canada (see [Appendix B: Municipal and Provincial Music Strategies and Reports Reviewed](#)).
- Review of relevant municipal strategies and reports in Calgary that complimented areas of interest arising through engagement work. This included: [2020 Municipal Development Plan](#), [Building on Our Momentum: Arts and Culture Infrastructure](#), [Calgary in the New Economy](#), [Calgary Ultimate hosts, Ultimate host city Destination Strategy](#), [Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan](#), [Calgary's Parks Plan](#) (in development), [Digital Strategy](#), [Resilient Calgary Strategy](#), [Rivers District Master Plan](#) and the [Winter City Strategy](#).
- Update of West Anthem's Music Ecosystem Study's economic indices including provincial jobs numbers and GDP using 2020 Statistics Canada data. See pages 3–4 in the [Phase One Report](#) for the results.
- Update of other music ecosystem indices including Calgary-based music venues and festivals using a systematic review of venues/festivals previously identified in the [West Anthem Music Ecosystem Study](#) (p. 16–22).
- A targeted search of ongoing music activations, festivals, and events for Albertan jurisdictions with a population of over 4K people. Find listed events here: <https://www.westanthem.com/events/>.
- Audit of opportunity areas from the West Anthem Music Ecosystem report using hand search for updates related to each opportunity area. See pages 5–12 of the [Phase One Report](#).



Ohsooto Kino, Electric Religious at Studio Bell
Photo Credit: Kaden Chynoweth

Engagement activities included:

- *Small Groups and 1:1 Interviews with 68 Music Industry Members*

One-on-one interviews (60min) and small group discussions (90min) organized by industry area, were held between April–June 2023. They all followed a pre-set list of questions based on secondary research. Two member checks were hosted after to explore the credibility of the insights. Information about objectives, implementation, and a summary of insights gleaned are shared on pages 4–8 of the [Phase Three Report](#).

Key Findings: Upon review of small group findings, participants from Calgary and Edmonton agreed that the top three drivers for growing music in their cities right now are Infrastructure, Regulatory & Government Support, and People. Overall, Edmonton and Calgary music industry members have similar concerns and goals.

- *Online Survey Targeting Current or Previous Alberta Music Industry Workers*

The online survey was administered using Google Forms and included 17 open-ended and closed-ended qualitative questions. An issue arising in the initial small groups and interviews was around the need to better capture and understand diverse perspectives and experiences in music in Alberta. Information about objectives, implementation, and a summary of insights gleaned are shared on pages 9–26 of the [Phase Three Report](#).

Key Findings: Results reflect that segments within the Albertan music industry feel less able to thrive than others based on their sexual orientation, gender, spirituality, racial and/or ethnic identity, or ability and that this is an ongoing problem (i.e., not only in the past). Responses from the three geographic groups (Calgary, Edmonton, and Rural and Small City Alberta) showed a great deal of similarity. This reflects insights from the small groups in which the proposed frameworks for each city's strategic plan were determined to be essentially the same with similar priorities.

- Additional conversations have occurred with approximately 20 more industry, municipal and provincial government contacts to get specific context and information for tactic writing.



Calgary Stampede
Photo Credit: Calin Charles, courtesy of Tourism Calgary



SECTION 3 | WHERE WE'RE GOING.

Our Vision...

Calgary is the go-to destination for daring music creatives and music entrepreneurs seeking to be at the forefront of a growing industry.

Our Mission...

By leveraging the City's entrepreneurial and can-do spirit, we will support and invest in the infrastructure and resources required to support and sustain the diverse artistic, business and production talent of Calgary's music industry. From emerging to export ready, we will foster a robust music talent and production pipeline that contributes to an economically diverse, culturally vibrant, and creatively inviting city, across quadrants and throughout the year.

Strategic Framework

Music Drivers: Through research and engagement we identified these three main drivers for Calgary's current music scene

Priority Directions: Organized under each driver, these represent high-level aims identified across engagement and review of other strategies and plans.

Tactics: Presented in Section 4, tactics describe concrete actions and ideas to carry priority directions forward.



Calgary Skyline
Photo Credit: Sherpas Cinema, courtesy of Tourism Calgary



Infrastructure	Regulatory & Government Support	People
...encompasses the basic facilities and systems that underpin the development, creation, marketing, selling and export of music. A thriving local music scene has stable facilities (e.g., venues, rehearsal spaces, recording studios, work and collaboration spaces) and accessible systems (e.g., music associations, funding streams, networks, industry pipeline, etc.) supporting the plethora of artistic and business activities that are necessary to the success of Calgary's music scene.	...refers to the integral role policymakers and funders play in intentionally cultivating the conditions under which music can thrive. Ongoing liaising between the music industry and government ensures city planning (e.g., zoning, bylaws, placemaking) permit processes, and funding supports growing, thriving artistic and music business pursuits.	...captures the range of folks involved and impacts made through music. Music offers a broad range of individual, social, cultural, economic and employment benefits, enhancing Calgary's livability. To thrive, people in diverse music industry roles have access to professional development through training and mentorship to develop their craft or business skills.
Priority Directions	Priority Directions	Priority Directions
<p>Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities</p> <p>Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources</p> <p>Forge connections between music and other industries</p>	<p>Implement music-friendly bylaws, policies, and programs</p> <p>Increase music-dedicated funding</p> <p>Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders</p>	<p>Leverage the strength of diversity in the growing music industry</p> <p>Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability</p> <p>Maximize the impacts of music businesses and entrepreneurs</p>
Success looks like...	Success looks like...	Success looks like...
<p>Multiple pathways for emerging artists and entrepreneurs to enter the music industry</p> <p>A stable "venue ladder"³¹ supports growth across the career span.</p> <p>Increasing revenue locally and through music exports.</p> <p>Increasing stable employment opportunities in the music industry.</p>	<p>A mixture of annual and new music events and festivals attract locals and visitors across the city and throughout the year.</p> <p>The City takes an active role in advocating for policies that support artists and the music industry as a whole.</p> <p>Industry and municipal partners address concerns and respond to challenges in a timely and effective manner.</p>	<p>Mentorship and training opportunities are available across music industry roles.</p> <p>Music business workers and artists choose to come to and remain in Calgary because they can experience rich careers and an exceptional quality of life.</p> <p>Music events actively connect Calgarians and visitors to new cultures and languages.</p> <p>Calgarians credit music and music events with enhanced livability and quality of life.</p> <p>Our inclusive music scene reflects the diversity of Calgary's population, from emerging musicians to established leaders.</p>












Calgary Folk Fest, Prince's Island Park
Photo Credit: Kelly Hofer, courtesy of Tourism Calgary



SECTION 4 | THE WAY THERE.

The following section explores the three drivers independently and looks at implementable tactics beneath each priority direction. Each priority direction has been assigned a small coloured token. The tokens appear beside all tactics that relate to the corresponding priority direction—showing how many of these tactics are aimed at addressing a plethora of issues simultaneously.

-  1. Priority Direction | Increase use of and access to available spaces in Edmonton for diverse music activities
-  2. Priority Direction | Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources
-  3. Priority Direction | Build connections between music and other industries
-  4. Priority Direction | Implement Music-Friendly Bylaws, Policies, and Programs
-  5. Priority Direction | Protect music-dedicated funding
-  6. Priority Direction | Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders
-  7. Priority Direction | Leverage the strength of diversity in the music industry
-  8. Priority Direction | Foster Music Professionals' Development for Long Term Career Viability
-  9. Priority Direction | Maximize the Impacts of Music Entrepreneurs and Businesses

West Anthem has taken care to suggest tactics that might be implemented in many ways and identified potential partners who can share the burdens and benefits. Success requires partnerships and participation from the province, the city, local music businesses, organizations, and leaders. A flourishing Calgary music scene offers opportunities that can also alleviate issues and create new pathways for Calgarians to find jobs, joy, and meaning in their lives.

The intertwining nature of the three drivers was emphasized by participants. For example, music venues struggle to succeed without music-friendly regulations or the people to activate and fill them.

Finally, many of the suggested tactics can be expanded to support other creative sectors (e.g., a funding database for all artistic fields, not only music, etc.). Investing in the development of these tools for music can act as a springboard from which other creative industries can build and benefit.

We suggest possible partners for these tactics. Some are key to moving tactics forward (i.e., the City of Calgary addressing permitting concerns or Alberta Gaming Liquor Cannabis [AGLC] addressing liquor licensing restrictions). We occasionally mention specific organizations to offer concrete examples or highlight work being done. This is intended to kick start thinking about who can be involved, not limit any possibility of additional partners joining in the action. It is not an exhaustive list of possible partners.¹

¹ Possible partners are listed alphabetically, not by importance.

Music Driver | Infrastructure



1. Priority Direction | Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities

1.1 Create a music spaces directory

- Use the up-to-date information to track trends, identify gaps (i.e. in performance or rehearsal spaces), and connect talent and businesses to underutilized music spaces.
- Use searchability to maximize useability for a wide range of music industry members (e.g., building accessibility information, rental rates, purposes, smudging allowed, etc.).
- Contribute to a province-wide version to support touring and increase space utilization across the province.
- In our engagement work, access to affordable music performance, rehearsal and work spaces was a common concern across regions.
- Connect/build on the work of CADA in [listing spaces](#) and their previous work with [Spacefinder Alberta](#).

Possible Partners: Granting and Funding Bodies, Municipal and Provincial Organizations, Music Industry Organizations

Timeline: by 2025, recommended with annual updates

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●

1.2 Increase music use of empty or underutilized City and province-owned spaces

- Prioritize City-level support for groups aiming to repurpose city-owned buildings for arts/music purposes (e.g., spaces appropriate for music could be leased to an organization, with expertise in music, which could then rehab, lease and manage the space for music uses at below market rates).
- Provide grants to offset rising music event costs (e.g., increasing permit costs, supplies, production, etc.).

Possible Partners: Granting and Funding Bodies, Municipal and Provincial Organizations

Timeline: by 2030

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ● ●

1.3 Facilitate private spaces to make affordable rental options available for individual artists and musical groups

- Review outcomes of cSPACE's [SPACEPILOT](#) project implementing meanwhile leases.
- Create and share a simple model of sliding scale fees for spaces to implement.

Possible Partners: Developers, Municipal Organizations, Nonprofit Rental Spaces, Private and Public Music Education Institutions, Property Owners

Timeline: by 2027

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ● ●

1.4 Build capacity for year round music programming of outdoor spaces—leveraging the combined attraction of the outdoors and music events

- Co-create solutions to address issues for outdoor music events and performances (see list in [Appendix C: Common Issues At Outdoor Activations](#)).
- When building or upgrading public outdoor spaces, consider infrastructure that can support events and performances: electrical, water, drainage, WIFI service, loading zones, portable washrooms, planned spaces for covered performance shelters, and waste receptacles and waste collections.
- Leverage industry knowledge and presentation skills at permanent music venues by building in opportunities or incentives for collaboration into funding or permitting processes for outdoor events.

Possible Partners: Municipal Organizations; Presenters, Promoters, and Venues

Timeline: by 2026

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●

1.5 Review the report Building on Our Momentum: Arts and Culture Infrastructure, determine what tactics have been implemented and what still requires follow-up³²

- Report covers issues like land use bylaw incentives for art space development, "Artist studios" designation and usage, addressing lack of arts and culture infrastructure.
- Consider how municipal funds aimed at repurposing vacant offices downtown could be used to create more studio and rehearsal spaces.

Possible Partners: CADA, City of Calgary, Local Studio Organizations

Timeline: by 2028

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●




2. Priority Direction | Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources

2.1 Create an annually updated, search-friendly database of music industry funding opportunities

- Consider how design and search capacities can maximize utility for diverse individuals.
- Build on the existing work of Rozsa Foundation's [Alberta Grants Calendar](#).

Possible Partners: Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Industry Organizations


Timeline: by 2025 

Priority Directions:     

2.2 Consolidate and centralize show listings, annual music festivals, and music events information to a single online source to streamline the audience experience of finding shows (for both locals and visitors)

- Promoters, managers, bands etc. can access for planning tours and gigs.
- Organizers can access to avoid conflicts and find opportunities to share/align resources, marketing, advertising.
- Local businesses can access to inform patrons, create specials/promotions, and direct advertising/sponsorship.

Possible Partners: Presenters, Promoters, and Performers, Organizations with Existing Event Listings, Organizations Promoting Music Events


Timeline: by 2026 

Priority Directions:    

2.3 Create an annually updated, search-friendly database of professional development opportunities (locally and online) for different roles and career stages within the music industry

- Ensure inclusion of training on music royalties, intellectual property rights, online tools and platforms for merchandise and album sales, marketing/promotion, and project management, alongside more traditional training.³³

Possible Partners: Business-focused Support Organizations, Music Industry Organizations, Private and Public Music Education Institutions and Programs

Timeline: by 2026 


Priority Directions:   

3. Priority Direction | Forge connections between music and other industries

3.1 Integrate music into Calgary's unique identity to maximize its impact on tourism and talent attraction

- Highlight and leverage Calgary's music assets (e.g., National Music Centre, Music Mile, Bella Concert Hall, Arts Commons, Saddledome, Stampede Park, multiple festivals etc.) in City marketing and brand building throughout the year.
- Conversely, leverage Calgary's hosting prowess to attract music focused events that can strengthen the local scene through training and networking opportunities (e.g., music export seminars, fairs and conferences).

Possible Partners: Municipal Organizations, Organizations Promoting Local Tourism


Timeline: 2026 

Priority Directions:      

3.2 Expand connections between the local music community and the broader business community

- Target music businesses and entrepreneurs for membership in the local chamber of commerce (it may help if membership fees take into account that the majority of Canadian artists—25% of which are in the music industry—are self-employed and earn less than the average Canadian).³⁴
- Leverage music conferences and music industry gatherings to incubate relationships between the music industry and other industries (e.g., SoundOff Summit, Breakout West, YYC Music Awards, etc.).
- Develop a "How To" guide for bars and restaurants to set up occasional live music shows and events.
- Explore the collection of impact data to support the case for integrating music into business events and services.

Possible Partners: Business-focused Organizations; Local Restaurants, Bars and Occasional Venues, Music Industry Organizations


Timeline: by 2026 

Priority Directions:     

3.3 Enhance collaboration between Calgary's film and television industry and the music industry

- Leverage where there is skill overlap (e.g., composer, music editor, sound effect editor, production sound mixer, soundtrack engineer, etc.).
- Explore how the Film & Television Tax Credit or a similar program can be used to increase use of Alberta-based music recording, (post)production, and publishing companies.

Possible Partners: Calgary Economic Development [CED], Film Industry Organizations, Local Film & Television/Sound Production/Post-production Studios


Timeline: 2026 

Priority Directions:   

3.4 Seek and support collaborations between music businesses/organizations and technology and innovation companies to develop key digital tools or databases with advanced searchability

Possible Partners: Local Tech Companies, Municipal and Provincial Organizations, Music Businesses and Organizations

Timeline: 2027 

Priority Directions: 





4. Priority Direction | Implement Music-Friendly Bylaws, Policies, and Programs

4.1 Work with the music community to identify liquor and business licensing issues that impede business growth³⁵

- Support licensed venues in addressing barriers to presenting all-ages events.
- Improve access of music venues and events to participate in exclusivity agreements and sponsorship deals that can support larger-scale local events.
- Consider how increasing access to public consumption of alcohol at outdoor performance sites may support viability of events (the success of recent pilot projects has led to some permanent designated sites³⁶).

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●

Possible Partners: AGLC, City of Calgary, Government of Alberta, Local Music Presenters, Promoters, and Venues

Timeline: by 2028

4.2 Address parking issues around music venues and recording studios in high traffic areas

- Consider permanent active loading/unloading zones.
- Explore parking permits or zones for tour buses, vans, and equipment trailers.

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●

Possible Partners: City of Calgary, Music Mile YYC, Music Venue and Recording Studio Owners and Operators

Timeline: by 2026

4.3 Consider adapting a form of the Agent of Change³⁷ principle that can support existing music venues in densifying neighbourhoods³⁸

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ● ●

Possible Partners: Business Improvement Areas, City of Calgary, Developers, Local Performance & Music Venues

Timeline: by 2026

4.4 Explore the creation of after-hours venue permits or late night noise zoning bylaws (or both) to support after hour venues in continuing entertainment offerings

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●

Possible Partners: Business Improvement Areas, City of Calgary, Local Business Associations, Local Performance & Music Venues

Timeline: by 2026

4.5 Ensure music venues and after-hour venues are considered in future transit planning (e.g., later service or creative service options for night-time activity participants and workers)

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●


Possible Partners: City of Calgary, Local Performance & Music Venues

Timeline: by 2026

5. Priority Direction | Protect music-dedicated funding

5.1 Where possible, increase funding for musicians and music organizations—engagement revealed Calgary-based music industry members consider music funding generally lacking in the city


Possible Partners: City of Calgary, Government of Alberta, Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Industry Organizations

Timeline: by 2026 

Priority Directions: 

5.2 Expand funding options to music businesses (e.g., venues, recording studios, promoters, music publishers, artist managers, record labels, etc.) to increase capacity in Calgary's music industry

Possible Partners: City of Calgary, Government of Alberta, Granting and Funding Bodies, Local Music Businesses, Music Industry Organizations, Private Investors and Sponsors


Timeline: by 2025 

- A [BC example](#)³⁹: funding to attract out-of-province artists into local recording studios.
- In 2021-22, the Ontario Music Investment Fund was able to leverage an additional \$4.64 for every dollar invested.⁴⁰
- Alberta's existing [Music Organization Operating Grant](#) is helpful, but has a narrow focus on sound recording.
- Funding can mitigate risks and reduce barriers to addressing EDIA concerns (e.g., promoters and venues able to take on the perceived risk of booking lesser known and/or more diverse acts).

Priority Directions: 

5.3 Collaborate and advocate across all three levels of government to increase dedicated funding to arts and culture, in particular music

Possible Partners: City of Calgary, City of Edmonton, Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Industry Organizations

Timeline: by 2026 


Priority Directions: 

6. Priority Direction | Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders

6.1 Ensure navigable channels at the municipal and provincial government levels

- Consider a dedicated Music Office or Officer⁴¹ embedded in the City of Calgary that works as liaison with the industry as well as the provincial government; key position for pushing tactics and following through with the music city strategy.
- Better communication of the unique challenges faced by the sector.
- Create clear pathways for industry to approach both levels of government, while giving local governments an effective channel through which to reach music industry members.

Possible Partners: City of Calgary, Government of Alberta, Music Industry Organizations and Members


Timeline: by 2025 

Priority Directions: 

6.2 Implement mechanisms for ongoing feedback from music industry professionals to ensure programs and policies reflect industry realities (e.g., licensing for venues, granting processes, busking guidelines, etc.)

- Consider a volunteer music advisory board (there is potential to strengthen West Anthem as the volunteer music advisory board representing Alberta's music sector).⁴²
- City representative(s) could host "listening sessions" to hear from industry members (incorporated into music events such as major award shows, music conferences, large-scale music festivals, etc.).

Possible Partners: City of Edmonton, Government of Alberta, Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Industry Organizations and Members

Timeline: by 2025 

Priority Directions: 






8. Priority Direction | Foster Music Professionals' Development For Long Term Career Viability

8.1 Practice and encourage transparent and fair pay policies

- Increase knowledge of industry pay standards/practices and union rates so artists and other music professionals have a firm base for negotiation (see an example from the UK's Musicians' Union [The Fair Play Guide](#)).
- See efforts at the provincial level with the adoption of the [Arts Professions Recognition Act](#) in 2021.

Possible Partners: City of Calgary, CADA, Government of Alberta, Music Industry Organizations


Timeline: by 2026 

Priority Directions:     

8.2 Facilitate and fund mentoring opportunities between new and established musicians and other music professionals

- Examples include Women in Music Canada's [Mentorship Program](#), or [Immigrant Arts Mentorship Program](#)⁴⁶ provided by Immigrant Council for Arts Innovation.

Possible Partners: Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Industry Organizations (both general and those focusing on equity-denied communities), Private and Public Music Education Institutions and Programs


Timeline: by 2026 





Priority Directions:    

8.3 Address affordability issues for musicians

- Expand housing strategies to include creative economy workers alongside vulnerable groups—the majority of Canadian artists are self-employed and earn lower income than the average Canadian.⁴⁷
- Affordable studio, rehearsal and collaborative spaces can be just as important as they support self-employed musicians and other music professionals in creating marketable products and completing work.

Possible Partners: CADA, City of Calgary, Developers, Government of Alberta, Government of Canada

Timeline: by 2030 

Priority Directions:    

8.4 Increase pathways for musicians and other music professionals to become export-ready or take advantage of export-ready products (e.g., music release, physical products, music videos, merchandise, etc.) while pursuing a Calgary-based career

Possible Partners: Business Link, Government of Alberta, Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Industry Organizations

Timeline: by 2028

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ●

8.5 Address industry talent gaps by working with music education providers (public and private) to develop local training and professional development opportunities that match industry skill gaps (i.e., sound technicians, artist managers, promoters, and business skills for musician entrepreneurs, etc.)

Possible Partners: Music Industry Organizations, Private and Public Music Education Institutions and Programs

Timeline: 2025

- Where possible, leverage skill overlap with other creative industries (i.e., film & television, tech & innovation, visitor economy, etc.).

Priority Directions: ● ● ● ● ● ●




Chinook Blast, Calgary
Photo Credit: Neil Zeller, courtesy of Tourism Calgary





9. Priority Direction | Maximize the Impacts of Music Entrepreneurs and Businesses

9.1 Create a search-friendly music business directory

- Music professionals can easily locate local service providers.
- Gaps and opportunities in industry services are clearer.

Possible Partners: CADA, Calgary Chamber of Commerce, CED, Music Industry Organizations, Businesses and Entrepreneurs


Timeline: by 2025 

Priority Directions:    

9.2 Improve music industry data collection and dissemination

- Support comparisons across jurisdictions to track program and funding success.
- Select measures to track annually and show progress over time (e.g., # of music venues and capacity; provincial GDP contributions, etc.).
- Increase public knowledge of the impact of music.

Possible Partners: CADA, City of Calgary, CED, Government of Alberta, Music Industry Organizations


Timeline: by 2027 

Priority Directions:    

9.3 Prioritize and promote funding, subsidies and tax incentives that attract and retain music businesses

- Businesses able to provide affordable services allows artists to maximize output by focusing on creation.

Possible Partners: CED, City of Calgary, Granting and Funding Bodies, Music Businesses

Timeline: by 2026 

Priority Directions:     

Measuring Music

An ongoing challenge across the plans and strategies we reviewed was determining measures of success. Even highly organized guides lack defined metrics, arguing that measures should reflect local priorities. “How each city defines success will vary. Some cities have set very ambitious goals for the delivery of economic, cultural and other benefits. For others, it comes down to creating a sustainable environment for music creation, for the sake of music, pure and simple.”⁴⁸ While economic impact assessments offer different ways of capturing the economic contribution of music, few addressed social or cultural metrics. Using the strategic framework chosen by local music industry members, we’ve mapped a combination of qualitative and quantitative performance indicators that can serve to track growth in Calgary’s music industry over time.

Driver	Type of Data	Proposed Key Performance Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullet points suggest a potentially helpful level of detail of data 	Frequency; Method
Infrastructure	Qualitative (sentiment or context)	% of artists/musicians who feel available music business services are sufficient to their needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorize types of artists/musicians (e.g., touring/recording/cover, part-time/full-time, genre, etc.) and music businesses/services (e.g., marketing, recording, legal, financial, venue, management, etc.) 	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey
		% of music businesses find demand is sufficient for their services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide by local (Alberta-based) and external demand (national/international) as these can be uniquely affected by established infrastructure, programming support, various economic development initiatives, etc. 	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey
		% of artists/businesses expecting to remain in Alberta over the next 5 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect basic context on why they feel a particular way to try to get ahead of trends (e.g., track why venues close) 	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey
		% of artists/businesses expecting career or company growth over the next 5 years	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey



Driver	Type of Data	Proposed Key Performance Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullet points suggest a potentially helpful level of detail of data 	Frequency; Method
Infrastructure	Quantitative (industry statistics and #s)	Total economic impact of music in Calgary (direct, indirect and induced) ⁴⁹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakdown of direct input by domain (live music, sound recording, broadcasting) Highlight economic impact of key music events 	Annually; analysis of StatCan Culture and sports indicators **
		GDP contribution to the city and province	Annually; analysis of StatCan Culture and sports indicators**
		Full-time equivalent (FTE) and part-time equivalent (PTE) jobs supported by music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakdown of job by domains (e.g., live music, sound recording, broadcasting) 	Annually; analysis of StatCan Culture and sports indicators**
		# of music festivals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakout by genre # of music festival attendees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakout by local and out of town visitors Consider diversity metrics that can indicate inclusivity and representation within the music festival scene 	Annually; online searches + standardized shared data collection with music festival partners
		Spending on music industry goods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakout by local and out of town visitors 	Every 4-6yrs; public survey* (could coincide with every 2nd industry survey)
		# of music events featured/promoted via Tourism Calgary	Annually; review of Tourism Calgary website or shared data collection
		Map local music infrastructure assets and related trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See the 2020 West Anthem Music Ecosystem Study (pp. 16-22) for an example of mapping assets: # of music festivals, # of radio stations, # of music spaces (e.g., music dedicated venues; bars, cafés and restaurants with live music performances; multi-purpose venues, etc.) # of music businesses (e.g., recording studios, talent managers, record labels, etc.), and # of educational resources (e.g., music teachers, schools, music associations, etc.) Consider mapping digital and online “spaces” as well such as streaming studios or locally available booking sites. Utilization rates of key music spaces and places 	Every 2-3 years; industry survey + existing databases
		# of visits to key online music industry resources (i.e., grant/funding list, music business listing, professional development list, etc.)	Annually; shared data collection with resource hosting organizations

Driver	Type of Data	Proposed Key Performance Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullet points suggest a potentially helpful level of detail of data 	Frequency; Method
Regulatory & Government Support	Qualitative (sentiment or context)	Music industry members know pathways and key players to communicate concerns at the municipal level	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey
		Analyze qualitative streaming data for local artists to inform/update a provincial music export strategy (e.g., reviews, fan feedback, media coverage, local artist feedback, etc.)	Every 4-6 years; industry survey, public survey (for different information) and industry reports
		New music-friendly policies, programs or initiatives adopted municipally	From implementation of this strategy; review of City documents/policies
	Quantitative (industry statistics and #s)	Total funding and grants (municipal, provincial and federal) awarded to musicians and music businesses in the city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of funding applications approved (at least from major municipal partners like Calgary Arts Development) Breakdown funding by domain (live music, sound recording, supporting & broadcasting) Breakdown by demographics of applicants and successful recipients Recognize limited ability to capture gig information # of first-time applicants and first-time grant recipients 	Every 2-3 yrs; collaboration between organizations & review of pertinent annual funding reports
		Amount of private investment in music	Every 2-3yrs; explore purchasing access to a database showing investment value (explore if municipal partners already purchase, e.g., Calgary Economic Development)
		# of fines or warnings given to music businesses connected to liquor and business licensing compliance issues	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey (potentially annually if the City is willing to track)
		# of policy/strategic documents identified as in need of update as they relate to the music sector	Baseline and then every 4-6yrs; review of City documents/policies (could coincide with every 2nd industry survey)
		Analyze quantitative streaming data for local artists to inform/update a provincial music export strategy (e.g., play counts, listenership, geographic location, trends over time, etc.)	Every 4-6yrs; data from streaming platforms and industry reports



Driver	Type of Data	Proposed Key Performance Indicators	Frequency; Method
People	Qualitative (sentiment or context)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullet points suggest a potentially helpful level of detail of data 	
		% of music industry members who feel unable to thrive based on various demographics (e.g., race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, etc.)	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey
		Information about ongoing challenges faced by artists and music businesses (e.g., barriers to participation)	Every 4-6 years; industry survey, public survey (for different information) and industry reports
		Positive sentiment regarding Calgary's music scene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about key personal, social and cultural impacts Frequency of participation in music events Sense of safety at and around music events/venues 	Every 4-6yrs; public survey* (could coincide with every 2nd industry survey) & sentiment analysis on social media platforms
	Quantitative (industry statistics and #s)	Information about audience/consumer barriers to participation/consumption	Every 4-6yrs; public survey* (could coincide with every 2nd industry survey) or focus groups
		# of SOCAN members based in Calgary	Annually; from SOCAN members services
		# of Albertans working in the music industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of Alberta workforce in the music industry 	Annually; analysis of StatCan labour force characteristics by industry
		Profile of Alberta's music industry members including diversity information (e.g., gender identify, racial identity, (dis)ability status, etc.) and income levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break out by industry role (capture diversity in music leadership) Breakdown by employed or self-employed status % who earn the majority of their income in the music industry 	Every 2-3yrs; industry survey and review of pertinent StatCan data
		Profile of Alberta music audience/consumers including diversity information (e.g., gender identify, racial identity, (dis)ability status, etc.) and income levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate of participation in music events in the past 12 months 	Every 4-6yrs; public survey* (could coincide with every 2nd industry survey)

* With City support, the proposed public survey questions might be integrated into the City's ongoing engagement work (e.g., annual Fall Survey of Calgarians).

** Statistics Canada [StatCan] updates [Culture and sports indicators](#) annually. However, a breakdown of municipal level figures is not provided, requiring estimations to be made based on the ratio of music participants and proportion of economic weight of a given city. The economic impact assessment would also require the use of multipliers. Economic multipliers are provided sporadically by the province ([link](#)), but can also be calculated more regularly by economists taking into account inflation.



SECTION 5 | PROVINCIAL DIRECTIONS

For all the friendly—occasionally gloves off, fists flying—rivalry between Alberta’s two largest cities, a shared prairie landscape has shaped similar issues and priorities in their unique music scenes. Additionally, initial comparisons between urban and rural respondents to our provincial survey showed common ground in terms of the strengths and limitations selected by folks across the province. This offers an advantage to our provincial government in that, with the right policies and targeted funding, it could have widespread impacts across provincial music scenes. At the same time, a well-supported music industry can help Alberta meet provincial strategic priorities. Music can enhance many facets of living, working, and raising a family in Alberta, strengthening the [Alberta Advantage](#).

Although cities have a great impact on their local music scenes, there are many areas important to music over which the Government of Alberta holds greater influence. Additionally, while the provincial government has increased its recognition of the creative industries, music is rarely mentioned or cited in particular. In this space of rising awareness, yet unformed plans, we present the following considerations at the provincial level.



Sugaray Rayford, Calgary Bluesfest
Photo Credit: Cindy McLeod, courtesy of Tourism Calgary

Infrastructure

The province is already making inroads to support infrastructure that will serve the music industry well, as evidenced by their support for the new Calgary arena and entertainment district project. Additional steps the GOA can take:

- **Spearhead music data analysis** — Using StatCan data, the province can offer important updates on GDP contributions and direct, indirect and induced economic impact across the province and at the municipal level. Taking a wider view, there may be an opportunity to work with neighbours in British Columbia who have developed the Creative Industries Economic Results Assessment model (CIERA)⁵⁰ that measures five major sectors of the creative industries. Alberta could take the lead on getting other provinces and territories to align on measurements, enabling everyone to improve on the interpretation of music data and trends across the country.
- **Explore bringing more purpose-built and/or adapted music spaces to rural Albertans** — For example, through the province's administration of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program⁵¹, local recreation facilities, community centres and hubs could come to house rehearsal, performance, and teaching/studio spaces, creating the local infrastructure for small music businesses and entrepreneurs to flourish while providing greater access to these resources to the whole community. The proposed Community Recreation Centre Infrastructure Fund⁵² could support the small city partners we spoke with who expressed interest in making their arenas more adaptable to shows and concerts.
- **Leverage skills overlap between the music industry and other industries** — Music industry skills and professionals offer value across multiple other industries. For example, sound and light technicians, rigging, production, backline work, sound engineering and so on can all play roles in Alberta's expanding film and television sector. Composers, musicians, and recording engineers can supply Alberta-made content for video games, films and online platforms. Increasing and highlighting the presence of this creative talent locally can serve to convince other industries they will find the necessary talent in Alberta. Additionally, helping industry professionals develop their skills across industry lines may attract more creative economy workers who are frequently faced with short-term gig-work.



Regulatory and Government Support

Reducing red tape and finding synergy to grow the music industry across the province would help propel Alberta to compete with provinces that have worked to secure their music sectors provincially for several years such as Ontario and British Columbia—the same places Albertan talent move to when hitting roadblocks locally. Regulatory support and provincial funding are key for positioning Alberta (and its cities) as a music destination within Canada, and globally. Steps the GOA can take:

- **Provide dedicated funding to Alberta's music sector** — Alberta is not alone in wanting to grow their music sector. Other jurisdictions have seen success investing in their music industry and partners in a number of ways.
 - » In 2020, Ontario created the **Ontario Music Investment Fund (OMIF)**. In 2021-22 the OMIF invested \$7MIL across 149 projects, leveraging an additional \$4.64 for every dollar invested.⁵³ This excludes opportunities available to musicians and music businesses through other provincial funding streams (e.g., AcceleratiON, Industry Development Program, etc.). Current OMIF funding streams support different parts of the industry with a focus on developing talent (e.g., recording and production, marketing and promotion, touring and showcasing, publishing), industry initiatives that build capacity (e.g., training, export activities, industry analysis/data collection, etc.), global market development for music managers, and production and promotion of live music events.⁵⁴
 - » In 2023, British Columbia dedicated \$22.5MIL to support provincial music and sound recording programs over three years. As with Ontario, their programs support both music businesses and musicians including a career development program supporting artists across their career span (funding sound recordings, music videos, and marketing initiatives, etc.), a "Record in BC" program attracting established out-of-province talent to record in local studios and work with local producers, funding support for industry development initiatives, and live music programming.⁵⁵ This builds on the success of Amplify BC, established in 2018 with an initial \$7.5MIL investment that stimulated nearly \$30MIL in expenditures and supported 3,000 jobs.



- » Manitoba Film & Music, funded by the Government of Manitoba, has multiple program foci including: funding support for music recording of local artists as well as to attract out of province artists; assistance in marketing and promoting a completed music recording (i.e., hiring a publicist, marketing team, create website, advertise, etc.); support for local musicians to tour locally and internationally; and finally funds supporting growth and development of competitive, sustainable and commercially viable companies within Manitoba's music industry.
- » Committed funding also supports the development of programs dedicated to artists and/or businesses owned by people identifying with systematically excluded groups.
- **Improve communication and cross-city initiatives by funding the creation of Music Offices or Officers at the municipal level** — Alberta lacks musical representation within legislative offices, creating challenges in terms of promoting, advocating and implementing music-friendly policies. For Alberta to maximize its music potential, musicians, organizations and companies need a say alongside decision-makers and policy-creators. The positive impact of strong communication with industry partners can be seen in the success of film and television within Alberta—funding opportunities brought in by the provincial government had been lobbied for by industry members for many years.
- **Work with AGLC to ensure the success of music venues** — AGLC continue to work with municipalities and music industry members to ensure regulations protect safety and promote wellness without limiting business opportunities to further ensure the Alberta Advantage is supporting the creative economy (e.g., improving access to exclusive agreements and sponsorships for music venues, supporting the viability of all-ages events and venues, etc.).
- **Leverage symbiosis between music, technology and innovation to simultaneously attract business and address music industry issues** — The presence of vibrant music scenes has been well connected to attraction and retention of information and communication technology companies and workers, “Canadian cities that have vibrant music scenes attract and retain these workers”.⁵⁶



Ashley Ghostkeeper
Photo Credit: Jacob Barton

Additionally, musicians and music businesses are increasingly reliant on technology (e.g., revenues connected to streaming, use of platforms and apps for event production, networking, etc.). The Government of Alberta could help direct the province's strong tech sector to explore development of digital tools and systems that support music growth across the globe, confirming that "Alberta continues to be the economic and job creation engine of Canada, and a world hub for technological innovation in multiple sectors".⁵⁷ Digital tools/databases identified as priorities in this strategy include a music spaces database, professional development opportunities database, music funding opportunities database, and municipal music event listings.

- **Leverage the attractive cultural and social value of music to enhance Alberta's visitor economy** — As the Travel Alberta Bootstrap Plan comes to a close, ensure the next iteration incorporates music as a specific feature in designing experiences to meet the demand for experiential travel. Include Indigenous Tourism Alberta in this work. Some ideas to achieve this:

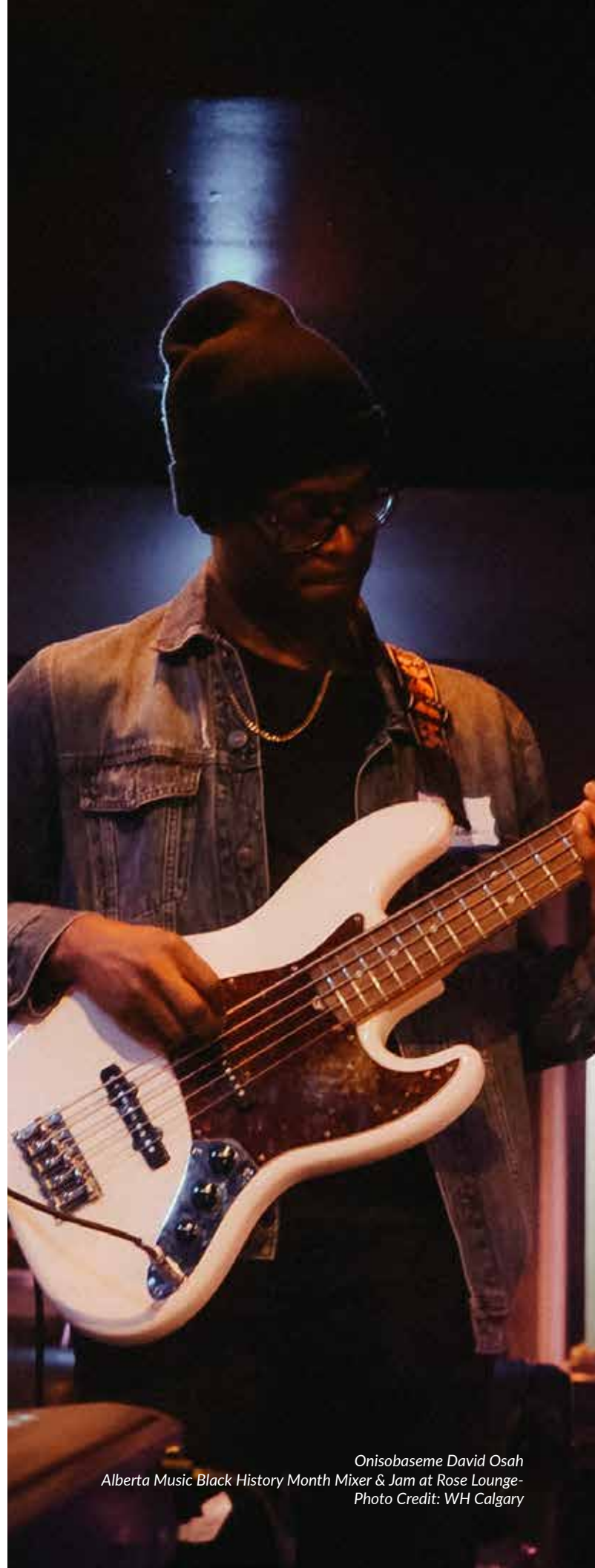
- » Consistently promote music offerings that dovetail with other big events across Alberta (not necessarily music-focused). Support both cross-promotion of events as well as alignment.
- » Package and promote Albertan music festivals as experiential travel opportunities. For example, take advantage of the existing camping-friendly festivals and strong camping culture in Alberta to develop a truly unique musical camping circuit (e.g., outline a suggested

route, integrate "other sites to see", playlists, recruit campgrounds/sites on route as marketing partners, etc.). Similar types of marketing 'packages' could be created around resonating themes (e.g., seasons, genres, etc.).

- » Highlight "family-friendly" or all-ages music festivals. Create an electronic badge that organizations and venues can use on marketing material or websites to communicate quickly and effectively that they are "family-friendly" based on a list of basic criteria (could be determined alongside Tourism Alberta/Indigenous Tourism Alberta and promote use of the badge across events and venues outside of music).

- **Diversify Alberta's economy by targeting the music industry for growth** — Not only can music create opportunities in other industries, but it is a growing industry itself. According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, Canada's music market grew by 8.1% in 2022, to a total of \$608.5 million USD⁵⁸ continuing a growth trend seen even during the pandemic. This highlights that, although the negatively impacted live performance sector is a key method for growing talent, the music industry is much larger than only live music, granting it resilience even in times of uncertainty. Alberta can increase its share of this growing industry and support its own diversifying economy by:
 - » Ensuring existing funding streams and opportunities—particularly those targeting business and talent attraction, creating Alberta talent and content, increasing export readiness (e.g., through the Alberta Media Fund)—are inclusive of music industry professionals and businesses.

- » Developing a music export strategy for the province, increasing demand for Alberta-made content.⁵⁹ Contribute to reconciliation by working with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit musicians and music professionals around export work. Highlight their skills and positive artistic and cultural contributions on a global stage and co-create new revenue streams for Indigenous artists and communities.
- » Including music professionals on trade missions. Highlight music assets (e.g., the National Music Centre, Music Mile, the Jubilee Auditoria, world-class music festivals, multiple post-secondary music programs, etc.) as well as the success of large-scale music events (e.g., 2023 JUNOs in Edmonton, 2019 and 2022 Canadian Country Music Awards in Calgary). This supports Edmonton and Calgary in establishing themselves as highly desirable host locations for national and international conferences and events. This also serves to enhance the creative reputation of the province, making it more attractive to workers even outside the music industry (i.e., tech and innovation).
- » Working with the music industry to explore creative and exciting apprenticeships and work projects related to the trades. Raise the profile of trades among youth by connecting them to unique and meaningful projects that showcase unique skill applications. For example: roles for electricians, carpenters, framers and welders in set building and production for tours, concerts and festivals; application developers tackling the use of AI to track local music events; or technicians doing musical instrument and equipment repairs. Highlight these career paths in existing trades programs that help Albertans train for and pursue creative, rewarding careers.⁶⁰ This could be applied across creative industries.



Onisobaseme David Osah
 Alberta Music Black History Month Mixer & Jam at Rose Lounge-
 Photo Credit: WH Calgary

People

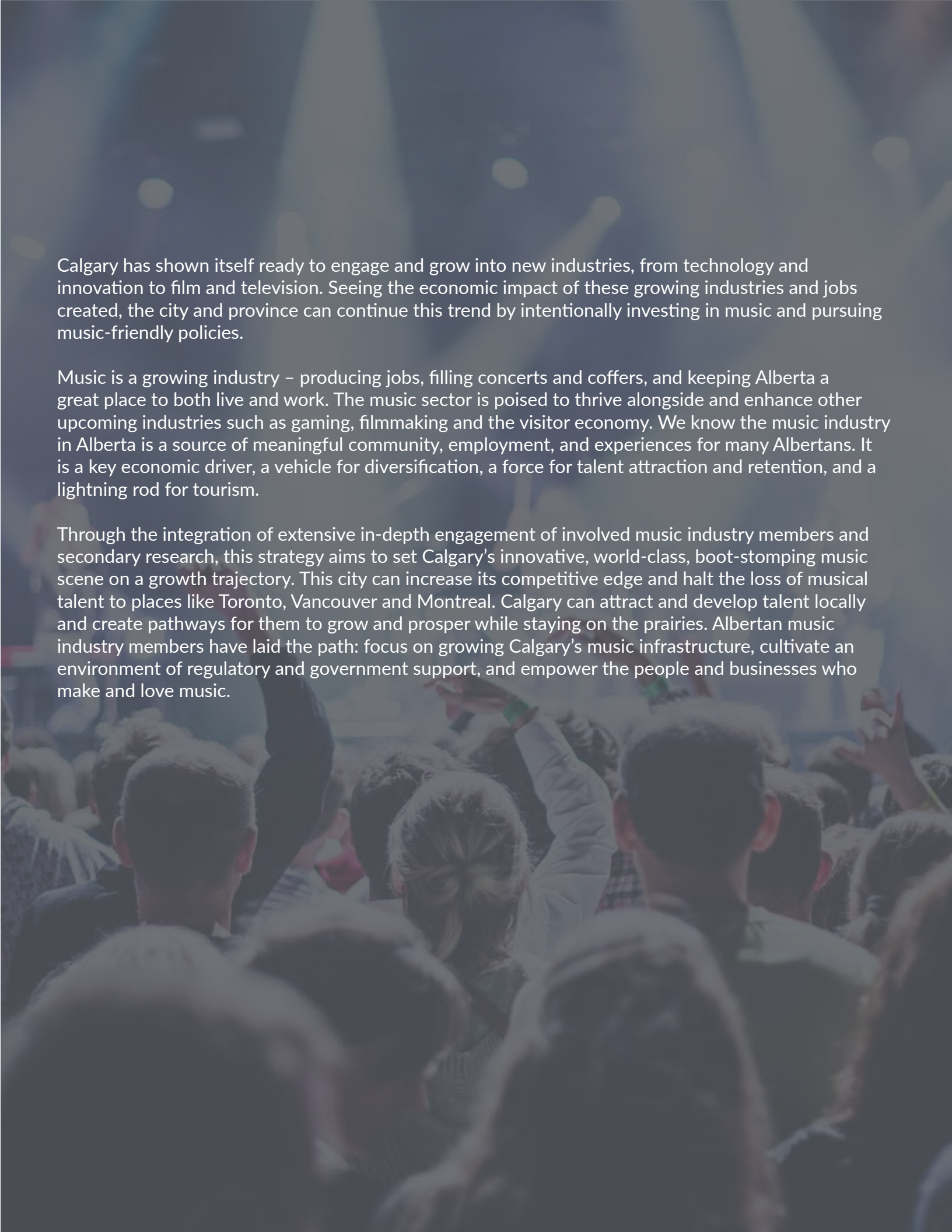
Music supports the well-being of Albertans in many ways as part of the fabric of healthy and vibrant communities, a contributor to individual mental well-being, an attractor and retainer of talent for other industries and a bridge to connect and bring people together. Taking action to support Albertan artists is crucial, exemplified by Alberta Foundation for the Arts' prioritization of Alberta artists and art. Supporting the music industry more specifically in Alberta is complementary to the GOA's aim to support and bolster the Alberta Advantage. Steps the GOA can take:



- **Empower equity-denied communities within the music industry** — Diverse musicians and professionals bring irreplaceable perspectives and creativity to music in Alberta, as well as unique skills and abilities. Despite this, various industry reports and our recent industry member survey reveal that many feel unable to thrive in their music careers based on their sexual orientation, gender, spirituality, racial and/or ethnic identity, and/or ability.⁶¹
 - » Form and support a working group of diverse members of Alberta's music industry, including Indigenous, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+, and differently-abled members, to consult at provincial and municipal levels in support of the review, creation and promotion of inclusive music-related programs, resources, and policies.
 - » Explore how music (with a focus on multiculturalism) might be employed as an innovative mechanism for settlement and integration support, recognizing "the contribution and diversity that newcomers bring to Alberta and our communities".⁶²
 - » Include music-targeted programming in short-term skills development initiatives enabling racialized and Indigenous Peoples in Alberta access to training to acquire skills they need to find good, long-term jobs.⁶³
- **Lead the prioritization of music education provincially** — The province plays a pivotal role in cultivating music at elementary, middle school and high school levels. The presence of music programs and trained music teaching professionals is core to growing Alberta's music industries for the long term. Additionally, music education helps Albertan children develop skills that can adapt to a fluctuating and changing job market.
 - » Calculate and set goals for music instruction time at the elementary and middle school year levels.
 - » Based on music industry engagement, increase the inclusion of Indigenous partners and knowledge in Alberta's music curriculum.
 - » Create an Indigenous-specific stream for the AFA's [Artists and Education Funding](#)⁶⁴ program, covering 75% of artists fees across all regions (increasing the ability of all schools to work directly with Indigenous musicians).
 - » Ensure provincial funding for growing the creative industries (including music) supports professional development opportunities in both artistic and business skills.



SECTION 6 | CONCLUSION



Calgary has shown itself ready to engage and grow into new industries, from technology and innovation to film and television. Seeing the economic impact of these growing industries and jobs created, the city and province can continue this trend by intentionally investing in music and pursuing music-friendly policies.

Music is a growing industry – producing jobs, filling concerts and coffers, and keeping Alberta a great place to both live and work. The music sector is poised to thrive alongside and enhance other upcoming industries such as gaming, filmmaking and the visitor economy. We know the music industry in Alberta is a source of meaningful community, employment, and experiences for many Albertans. It is a key economic driver, a vehicle for diversification, a force for talent attraction and retention, and a lightning rod for tourism.

Through the integration of extensive in-depth engagement of involved music industry members and secondary research, this strategy aims to set Calgary's innovative, world-class, boot-stomping music scene on a growth trajectory. This city can increase its competitive edge and halt the loss of musical talent to places like Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Calgary can attract and develop talent locally and create pathways for them to grow and prosper while staying on the prairies. Albertan music industry members have laid the path: focus on growing Calgary's music infrastructure, cultivate an environment of regulatory and government support, and empower the people and businesses who make and love music.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX A | MUSIC STRATEGY ALIGNMENT WITH CALGARY STRATEGIES AND PLANS

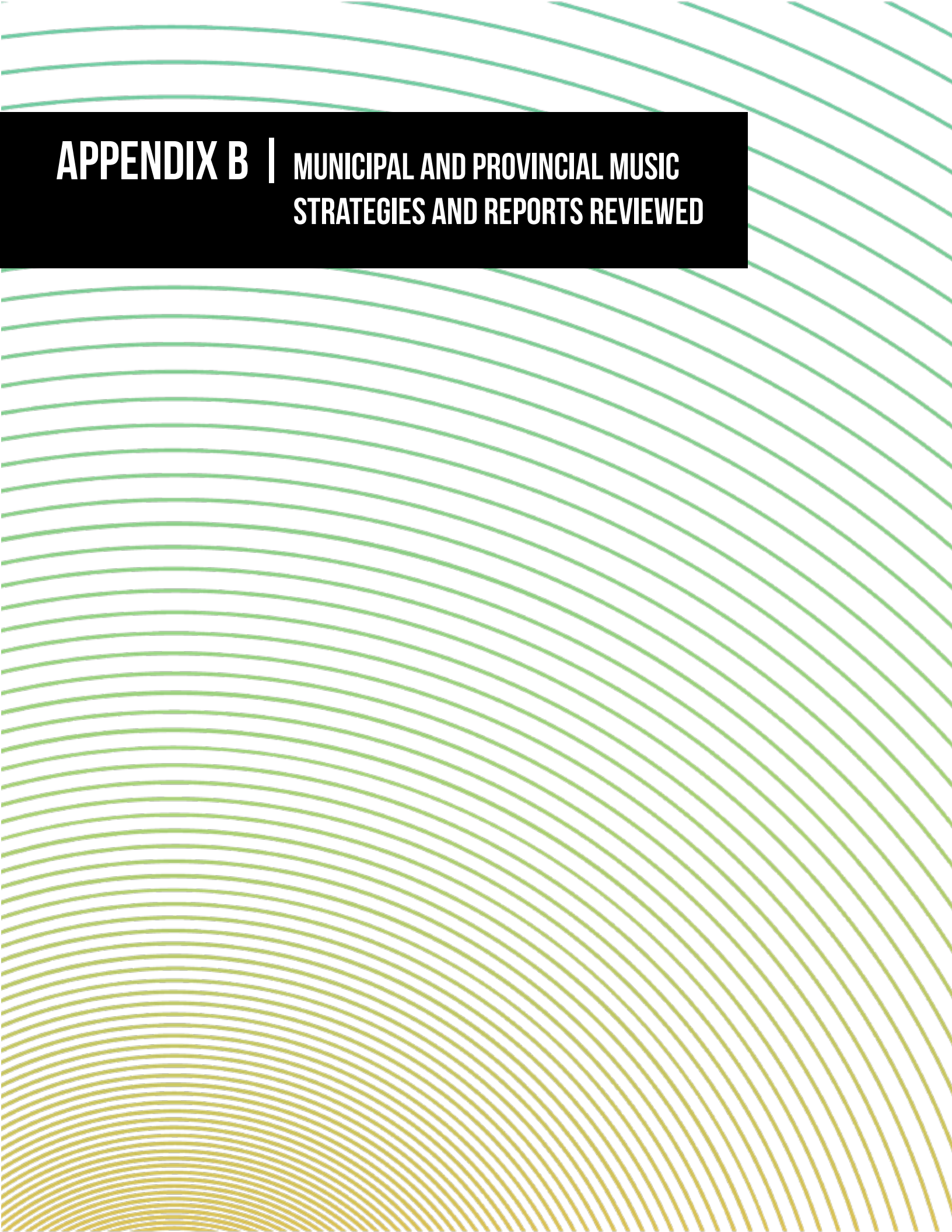
City Strategy/ Plan	Stated Aim or Goal with Alignment to Music Strategic Priorities	Alignment Specific tactic (explanatory note, "plan" referring to the city strategy/plan reviewed)
2020 Municipal Development Plan	2.1 A Prosperous and Diverse Economy Goal: Build a globally competitive city that supports a vibrant, diverse and adaptable local economy, maintains a sustainable municipal financial system and improves the quality of life for current and future Calgarians. (p. 23)	Implement music-friendly bylaws, policies, and programs (<i>especially as these increase the competitiveness of Calgary's music industry</i>)
		Increase music-dedicated funding (<i>especially as this increases the competitiveness and attractiveness of Calgary's music industry</i>)
		Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability (<i>contribute to a diverse economy and improving quality of life</i>)
		Maximize the impacts of music businesses and entrepreneurs (<i>contribute to a diverse economy and improving quality of life</i>)
	2.2 Shaping a More Compact Urban Form Goal: Direct future growth of the city in a way that fosters a more compact efficient use of land, creates complete communities, allows for greater mobility choices and enhances vitality and character in local neighbourhoods. (p.28)	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>outdoor/indoor, temporary/permanent, music activations increase vibrancy and contribute to a distinct sense of place; music can support interest in densification by providing entertainment and cultural value both within and without the downtown</i>)
	2.3 Creating Great Communities Goal: Create great communities by maintaining high-quality living and working environments, improving housing diversity and choice, enhancing community character and distinctiveness and providing vibrant public places. (p. 38)	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>particularly as expanded performance opportunities bring vibrancy and build a unique sense of place; unique use of parks and open spaces</i>)
		Leverage the strength of diversity in the growing music industry (<i>as the plan refers to building an equitable and inclusive Calgary</i>)
		Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability (<i>particularly as the plan addresses housing forms and affordability</i>)
Building on Our Momentum: Arts and Culture Infrastructure	2.4 Urban Design Goal: Make Calgary a livable, attractive, memorable and functional city by recognizing its unique setting and dynamic urban character and creating a legacy of high-quality public and private developments for future generations. (p.50)	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>symbiotic relationship in that safe, well-designed public spaces increase foot traffic to public performances and public performances can make public spaces more attractive</i>)
		Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders (<i>insofar as urban design takes into account physical characteristics and public amenities that industry members say facilitate live performances</i>)
	RECOMMENDATION I: Ensure arts and culture infrastructure reflects demographic changes and population growth	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities
		Leverage the strength of diversity in the growing music industry
		Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability (<i>in this case especially developing live-work spaces for artists</i>)
		Maximize the impacts of music businesses and entrepreneurs (<i>particularly building spaces that meet sound-control needs of music activities</i>)
	RECOMMENDATION II: Infuse neighbourhoods throughout the city with creativity through accessible and vibrant spaces	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities
		Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability (<i>in this case creating performance opportunities across the City</i>)

City Strategy/ Plan	Stated Aim or Goal with Alignment to Music Strategic Priorities	Alignment Specific tactic (explanatory note, “plan” referring to the city strategy/plan reviewed)
Building on Our Momentum: Arts and Culture Infrastructure	RECOMMENDATION III: Protect and sustain our current arts and culture infrastructure	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities
		Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources (<i>in this case, maximizing current infrastructure use by using digital tools to connect music industry members with available space</i>)
		Increase music-dedicated funding (<i>in this case, particular in supporting programming and operating/maintenance of existing music spaces</i>)
	RECOMMENDATION IV: Continue to invest in the creation of new arts and culture infrastructure	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities
		Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders (that music industry needs are accounted for in the ongoing infrastructure plan)
Calgary in the New Economy	Driver: Talent Goal: Home to Bright Minds	Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>particularly as music connections to tourism and city branding support talent attraction</i>)
		Foster musicians and other music professionals' development for the long term (<i>especially in regard to traditional and nontraditional music-related training programs</i>)
	Driver: Livability Goal: The Best Place to Build a Life	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>particularly as it supports more free/inexpensive music events in public spaces</i>)
		Implement music-friendly bylaws, policies, and programs (<i>creating the conditions for a vibrant music scene which, in turn, enhances the livability of the city</i>)
		Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability (<i>especially in regard to the plan prioritizing affordable housing</i>)
	Driver: Business Environment Goal: Top Location for Business	Increase music-dedicated funding (<i>in particular seeking ways to support music businesses</i>)
		Implement music-friendly bylaws, policies, and programs (<i>particularly as these create the conditions for music businesses to thrive</i>)
		Maximize the impacts of music businesses and entrepreneurs (<i>particularly in terms of prioritizing funding, subsidies and tax incentives that attract and retain music businesses</i>)
	Driver: Innovation Goal: A Creative Hub	Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources (<i>the growing capacity to develop and test these digital tools locally</i>)
		Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>in particular with technology and innovation companies that can support the creation of key digital databases and tools supporting the music scene</i>)
	Driver: Brand Goal: An Iconic City	Leverage the strength of diversity in the growing music industry (<i>enhancing and supporting diversity in the music scene reflects Calgary's inclusive community</i>)
		Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>in particular connecting music to tourism and city branding as a meaningful year round offering of Calgary</i>)

City Strategy/ Plan	Stated Aim or Goal with Alignment to Music Strategic Priorities	Alignment Specific tactic (explanatory note, “plan” referring to the city strategy/plan reviewed)
<u>Calgary Ultimate hosts, Ultimate host city Destination Strategy</u>	Enhance Calgary's hosting infrastructure Build purposeful hosting facilities Build community gathering and walkable spaces	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities <i>(in particular if building or modification of facilities results in spaces more useable for multi-season music performances and events)</i>
	Articulate and emotionalize Calgary's unique personality	Forge connections between music and other industries <i>(in particular, having city branding partners highlight music as an important creative aspect of Calgary's vibrant personality; creatively communicate the City's personality through local playlists or a song contest)</i>
	Attract, develop, promote, and activate year-round experiences Create and implement a plan to attract or enhance premier cultural experiences in Calgary Develop and market products that create vibrancy during the shoulder seasons Enhance the activation of existing cultural experiences, events, conferences and festivals	Forge connections between music and other industries <i>(in particular, having tourism and visitor economy partners see the music industry as a key partner in providing year round premier experiences to visitors and locals alike as well as something that can enhance events with other foci—e.g., the incredible amount of music integrated in the Calgary Stampede)</i>
<u>Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan</u>	Strategic move 1: Neighbourhoods for vibrant urban life	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities <i>(e.g., support for temporary uses of public spaces, activated spaces enhance the vibrancy of downtown and other areas)</i>
		Leverage the strength of diversity in the growing music industry <i>(especially as performers represent diversity and encourage foot traffic to stay to experience the location, activities and culture of an area)</i>
		Foster musicians and other music professionals' development for the long term <i>(create performance opportunities for music to cultivate key gathering places and shift the image of Downtown)</i>
	Strategic move 3: Streets for people	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities <i>(multiple plan suggestions could support musical activation of public spaces and making them more useable for performance)</i>
	Strategic move 4: Transit for all	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities <i>(e.g., use buskers to create welcoming experiences for riders)</i>
		Implement Music-Friendly Bylaws, Policies, and Programs <i>(opportunity to take music events and businesses into consideration in transit development)</i>

City Strategy/ Plan	Stated Aim or Goal with Alignment to Music Strategic Priorities	Alignment Specific tactic (explanatory note, “plan” referring to the city strategy/plan reviewed)
Calgary's Parks Plan *in development	What We Heard Report notes included mentions of music/ concerts in park spaces as well as amenity improvement	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>improving amenities could make parks more useable as performance spaces</i>)
		Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders (<i>there is an opportunity for future plan engagement to incorporate artist/musician perspectives on developing park spaces for events and performances</i>)
Digital Strategy	We pursue and build partnerships	Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources (<i>supporting citizens in the digital economy, e.g., music streaming, as well as solving music-related digital problems, improving open data practices and collection of music-related measures</i>)
	We value innovation	Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>products/platforms that allow for effective, searchable databases and listings at the municipality could be applied to fill information gaps in the music industry</i>).
	We provide and support platforms for citizens to participate	Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders (<i>effective engagement platforms are beneficial to Calgary music industry members alongside all Calgarians</i>)
Resilient Calgary Strategy	Pillar 1 The Future of Calgary's Economy	Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources (<i>particularly as this plan intends to address the digital disparity, making any tools used effective for a wider range of people</i>)
		Maximize the Impacts of Music Entrepreneurs and Businesses (<i>particularly as this supports a diversified Calgary economy and developing talent for emerging economies</i>)
	Pillar 2 Inclusive Futures	Leverage the strength of diversity in the music industry (<i>particularly empowering equity-denied musicians and other music professionals and ensuring a diversity of perspectives in consultation processes, and encouraging investments and/or funding that addresses inclusion</i>)
		Foster music professionals' development for long term career viability (<i>particularly as the plan addresses issues of affordability and equitable economic development</i>)
Rivers District Master Plan	Primary Circulation Framework	Maximize the Impacts of Music Entrepreneurs and Businesses (<i>better connections to this area can maximize the success and impact of the concentration of music businesses along Music Mile and at Stampede Park—those businesses are part of what will make this a successful Culture + Entertainment District</i>)
	Open Space Framework	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>e.g., the plan recognizes that music adds vibrancy to streets; proposes open spaces/public plazas that could serve for formal and informal outdoor music performances/events</i>)
		Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders (<i>there is an opportunity for future plan engagement to incorporate music industry perspectives on developing spaces for successful events and performances year round</i>)
	Additionally, many of the “Design Principles” (pp. 48-52) can contribute to the success of these music city strategic directions and tactics (e.g., creates a year-round destination that cultivates culture and entertainment, builds an inner-city community of trend setters and event enthusiasts who crave being at the centre of attraction, connects the people to the community and through the community, creates a network of parks and open spaces, attracts private investment and sustains a destination and local economy)	

City Strategy/ Plan	Stated Aim or Goal with Alignment to Music Strategic Priorities	Alignment Specific tactic (explanatory note, “plan” referring to the city strategy/plan reviewed)
Winter City Strategy	Pillar 1:Economic Diversification GOAL 1: Support the development of outdoor winter activities and events	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities
		Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>in this case, tourism and visitor economy related businesses</i>)
	Pillar 1: Economic Diversification GOAL 2: Promote local, national, and international tourism value propositions of being a winter city	Maximize the positive impact of digital tools, particularly for sharing industry information and resources
		Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>in this case, tourism and visitor economy related businesses</i>)
		Maximize the impacts of music businesses and entrepreneurs (<i>in this case especially music presenters, promoters, and organizers of winter time music events and festivals</i>)
	Pillar 2: Accessibility and Equity GOAL 4: Increase opportunities for all Calgarians to embrace winter	Leverage the strength of diversity in the growing music industry
	Pillar 3: Infrastructure and Design GOAL 7: Apply a year-round lens to future design or use of public spaces GOAL 8: Implement winter public realm improvements to increase comfort, beauty, and user-friendliness during winter	Increase use of and access to available spaces in Calgary for diverse music activities (<i>in this case developing outdoor spaces that support music performances year round</i>)
		Improve ongoing communication between the music industry, policy makers, and funders (<i>inform how spaces can be designed to support music performances year round</i>)
	Pillar 4: Calgary’s Winter Story GOAL 12: Officially designate Calgary as a world-class winter city	Forge connections between music and other industries (<i>in this case leveraging winter time music events to demonstrate Calgary’s year-round vibrancy for tourism and the visitor economy</i>)



APPENDIX B | MUNICIPAL AND PROVINCIAL MUSIC STRATEGIES AND REPORTS REVIEWED

Link to Strategy, Plan or Report	Geographic Level	Place	Year
Where music strategies were unavailable, we reviewed arts, culture and creative industries strategies or music economic impact reports that could still indicate a direction of growth and included potential measures.			
LINK	City	Toronto, ON	2022
LINK	City	Vancouver, BC	2019
LINK	City	Victoria, BC	2022
LINK	Region	Central Okanagan, BC	2021
LINK	City	Ottawa, ON	2018
LINK (website only)	City	London, ON	No date
LINK	Province	Manitoba, CAN	2016
LINK	Territory	Northwest Territories, CAN	2021
LINK	Territory	Yukon	2021
LINK LINK	Province	Newfoundland & Labrador	2022 2018
LINK	Province	Prince Edward Island	2022
LINK	Province	New Brunswick	2015
LINK LINK	Province	Ontario	2015
LINK	Province	British Columbia	2015
LINK	Province & City	Alberta (Calgary and Edmonton)	2020
LINK	Province	Saskatchewan	2022
Link now defunct. Showed a program overview, no strategy.	Territory	Nunavut	2021
Reviewed later in subsequent searches			
LINK	Province	British Columbia	Starting 2019
LINK	Province	Nova Scotia	2021-2024
(organization of interest) LINK	Territory	Nunavut	Est. 2022



APPENDIX C | COMMON ISSUES AT OUTDOOR ACTIVATIONS

These 'common issues' reflect feedback from organizers and artists (majority musicians) from a combination of 4 outdoor activation programs: RISE UP Calgary: 2021 Community Pop-ups, 2021 RISE UP Weekends, 2022 Downtown Vibrancy Program, and the 2022 Parking Lot Activations. Activities occurred outside community halls, in parks, and in parking lots. The majority of events took place in the summer, with some in the shoulder seasons.

Lack of Visibility: In order to draw foot traffic to activations in public spaces, temporary spaces need options in terms of signage on and around the site, particularly if hidden by surrounding buildings or occurring in a space where locals are not accustomed to seeking out entertainment. This can be improved by activating spaces that have high visibility already, providing signage infrastructure, or allowing increased signage use with event permits. Related to this, participants shared it was difficult to determine the best start times to maximize walking/drop-in traffic.

Load-in/Load-out: Activating temporary spaces often requires bringing in equipment and resources. Even a simple set-up (e.g., tent and single speaker PA system), goes better and faster when there is an easily accessible load-in and load-out area for equipment and vehicles.

Permit Timelines: The tight timeline between funding being awarded and when the events needed to take place created several challenges for organizers and artists. Since many outdoor activations require permits, a tight timeline can create additional stress and roadblocks as organizers attempt to get proper permits in place. In particular, with parking lot activations requiring Calgary Parking Authority approvals, some events only received final approval within days of the event. This sometimes resulted in smaller events (as they did not have time to coordinate with potential partners like food trucks or vendors), delayed key marketing activities (in case the event needed to be cancelled), and created added stress for presenters/artists.

Ensuring a clear permitting process (applicants know which permits to seek) and a transparent timeline (setting realistic expectations) could help. However, the possibility of quick turnaround on some permits or flexible dates for certain permits could be worth considering in light of weather dependent events (e.g., hosting winter time events).

Site Amenities: While shows were adapted to various levels of amenities, it was generally expressed that the presence of more amenities could make the shows more enjoyable and likely improve accessibility. Amenities mentioned to improve outdoor event experiences for both performers and audiences: power (for event equipment), water, bathrooms, seating, tables, and a stage area. A mix of amenities were seen as important to address the unpredictability of weather (e.g., shade and water on hot days, access to a sheltered area on cold/wet days, etc.). As a city with distinct seasons and weather conditions, provision of the right amenities in public spaces can improve the success of year round outdoor events. It would be worthwhile to discuss the "right" amenities with performers, organizers, and audiences.

Crowd Control/Safety: Overall, only a few participants raised safety-related issues. A few mentioned hecklers in their crowds. There was an acknowledgement that outdoor performances in spaces frequented by people experiencing various instabilities (e.g., homelessness, mental health issues, drug addiction, etc.) could face additional challenges. Consider what training, steps and support can help performers prepare to maximize their success. Additionally, consider how activations are an opportunity to invite people into experiences rather than pushing them out of spaces.

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28 Hand searches were performed to check the status of listed assets in spring 2023. If websites and social media accounts were non-functioning or showed no activity since 2020, assets were categorized as closed. Music spaces and businesses new since 2020 are not included. These numbers reflect what happened among established music assets since 2020. Festivals and radio stations new since 2020 are counted.

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35 While changing AGLC legislation is a provincial level activity, having City support would be important to music industry partners as well as ensuring any changes would be effectively incorporated into city policies.

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42 See "Music Advisory Boards: Making a Powerful Ensemble" in The Mastering of a Music City.

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43 See "Core Theme 5: Finances and Funding" of [Action Plan & Framework](#) (pp. 25–26); "Grant Funding" of [Breaking Down Racial Barriers](#) (p. 13); "Fundors and Granting Bodies" of [Closing the Gap](#) (pp. 45–49)

44 Full Link: <https://www.sledisland.com/saferspaces>

See also "Creating a Safer Space Program" by the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton [SACE]

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A more recent local survey showed "Arts professionals in music were more likely to report that they were compensated poorly for their work" (p. 29)

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Having comparable economic assessments with other Canadian regions is valuable to determining trends and/or assessing the impact of local changes to policy and funding, etc.

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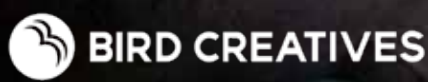
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Prepared by



ZENON
Alberta Music International Women's Day Calgary Showcase, Prairie Emporium
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