



Central Okanagan Music Strategy

NOVEMBER 2021

Acknowledgements

The **Central Okanagan Music Strategy (COMS)** is a guiding document to advance the music industry in the Central Okanagan, including Westbank First Nation and Syilx territory, Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna, and Peachland.

We respectfully acknowledge the Central Okanagan is on the traditional, unceded, ancestral territories of the Syilx/Okanagan people. We believe that the COMS will support opportunities for Indigenous musicians.

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Developed for: The Central Okanagan Music Strategy

Developed by: Nordicity





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Executive Summary

Initiated in the fall of 2019, the Central Okanagan Music Strategy (COMS) is a community led initiative to create a music strategy for the Central Okanagan area, encompassing the communities of Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation and Syilx/Okanagan territory and Peachland.

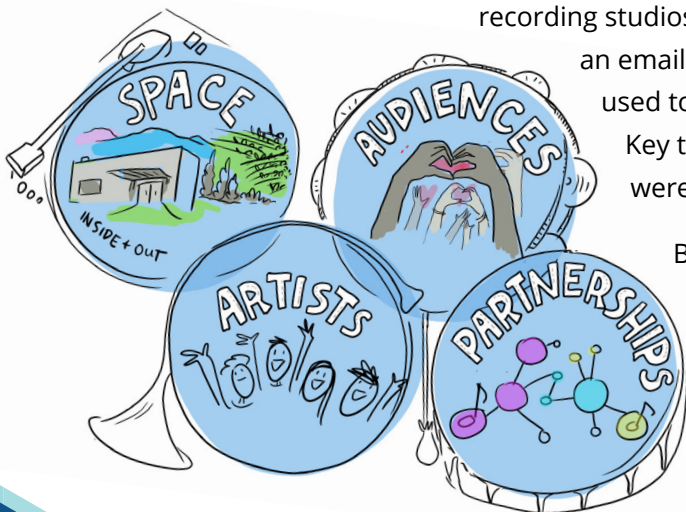
▶ **The objective of COMS is to advance the sustainability of the local music industry by:**

- **Connecting** people with similar interests so they can engage in collective action
- **Developing** community support for music
- **Increasing** support of live music
- **Creating** an understanding of the current music landscape
- **Setting priorities** for the future development of music in the Central Okanagan.

Part one of the process was released in December 2020 as the [Industry Profile and Public Engagement Summary for the Central Okanagan](#). It summarized results from a literature review and extensive public engagement which included an online survey, focus groups and interviews. It is important to note that although the work was started before the COVID-19 pandemic began most of the consultation occurred during the pandemic. Key results from the consultation include: the public wants more live shows although a lack of awareness of shows, parking, cost and convenience were some of the deterrents identified. More diversity, equity, and inclusion were often mentioned as important issues moving forward. Top priorities included new and improved venues and funding that is accessible, streamlined and flexible.

The Industry Profile identified a robust ecosystem of 460 stakeholders with broad representation from musicians, venues, non-profit organizations, educators, media, recording studios, promoters, and retail/repair. This data helped create an email database for subsequent communication and could be used to initiate an ongoing regional music information hub. Key themes and a SWOT analysis were also included and were used to guide strategy development.

Building off the research, industry profile and public



consultation, part two of the process focused on synthesis and discussion of the accumulated data. A virtual gathering called the UpBeat Music Summit was held over a 4 week period in the spring of 2021. Over 110 participants attended nine virtual sessions discussing topics such as venues, artists, access, inclusion, youth, audiences, partnerships and collaboration. Ideas discussed in this forum led to the foundational principles, four main pillars, 16 strategic goals and 48 supporting actions identified in this report.

This report concludes with an implementation section which identifies short and medium term priorities based on their estimated impact, effort and timelines. Short term objectives include creating an action committee to lead the implementation, create a terms of reference and action plan, establish funding, and assemble a diverse music advisory group for ongoing guidance. Action items would include goals related to relationship building, communication and information sharing.

Medium term objectives would focus on increasing the music industry's presence through increased integration with the tourism industry and advocating for music through urban development initiatives. Safe and accessible music spaces will be prioritized starting with a venue audit. Finally, prioritizing pathways for youth by supporting music education, mentorship and advocating for all-ages performance spaces.



Central Okanagan Music Strategy Summary

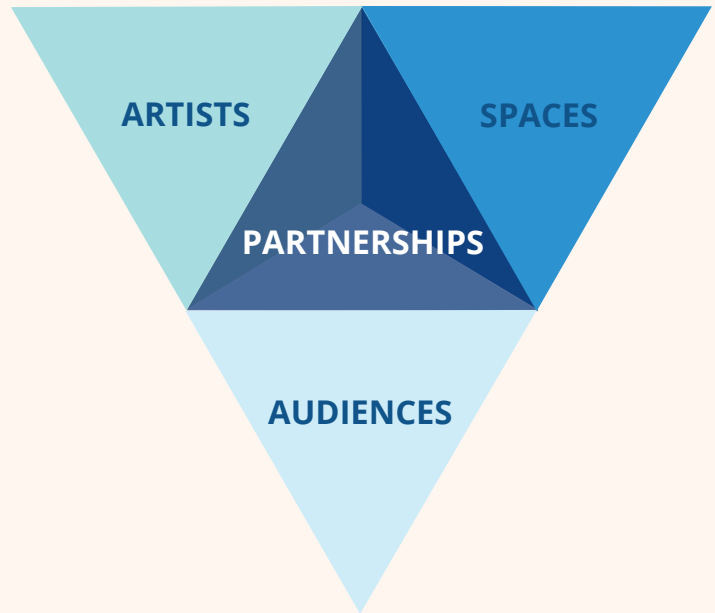
Vision:

A community-led music ecosystem that is inclusive, connected and valued by the community which encourages ample opportunities for local artistic growth and accessible, engaging music events.

Foundational Principles:

- Accessible
- Collaborative
- Diverse
- Inclusive

Pillars:



PARTNERSHIPS: A stronger, well informed music industry with greater public participation through communication and collaboration.

Strategic Goals:

- Initiate implementation with a Music Action Committee
- Foster relationship building opportunities
- Establish a centralized regional music information hub
- Strengthen the presence of the region's music scene



ARTISTS: A more diverse and inclusive group of well compensated musicians with strong and appropriate skill sets.

Strategic Goals:

- Apply Diversity, Equity and Inclusion lens to industry initiatives
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Support music education and youth career pathways
- Celebrate and compensate local artists



SPACES: A broader variety and number of quality music spaces that are safe, diverse and inclusive.

Strategic Goals:

- Ensure spaces are safe and accessible for all
- Increase purposeful and flexible music space development
- Advocate for music in urban development and regulations
- Expand the inclusion of music activities in existing spaces



AUDIENCES: A greater number of people who are aware of, value and listen to music.

Strategic Goals:

- Maximize awareness of local music ecosystem
- Promote the value and importance of music
- Attract touring artists to support local interest in music
- Support innovative and engaging music events



Introduction

Why a Music Strategy?

Music, along with the people, businesses, organizations and spaces that bring it to life is a vital part of developing a strong, culturally vibrant community. Creating a strategy to support this local music ecosystem allows us to look at each of the interconnected components in the context of a music industry that is undergoing dramatic change at global, national and regional levels. Importantly, while COVID-19 has impacted the industry and cannot be ignored, many of the trends described below existed before COVID-19 and will continue to exist after.

Value of music planning

There is a growing recognition among governments and stakeholders that music has the potential to deliver significant economic, employment, cultural and social benefits.¹ Jurisdictions around the world, from Vancouver and Hamilton to Austin and Melbourne, have recognized the benefits of supporting a thriving music ecology and industry. Music supports urban and community development, diversity and cultural identity, tourism, infrastructure, job creation, and investment. While often championed by local government, these approaches now often **encompass more than one city**, as is the case with recent approaches in Alberta² and coordinated work being done in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton areas.

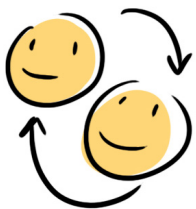
Robust music economies exist when supported by multiple levels of government, the music industry and the public, which provide the right environment for music to thrive. At a government-level, support can include **music-friendly** policies (ie. Noise and busking bylaws, musician loading zones, licensing, etc), as well as a **music office or officer** to maintain and enact those policies. A music advisory board that acts as a voice for industry stakeholders, as well as engages with **the broader music community**, can result in more public support.

A strong music economy creates value for cities through **economic growth and development**, a strengthened tourism sector, job creation across industries, and the enhancement of a city's brand in a way that fosters and **facilitates artistic growth**. A resilient and vibrant music community can also help attract investment to a city or region, along with **young, diverse, talented professionals seeking a certain quality of life**.³

1 <http://musiccanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/The-Mastering-of-a-Music-City.pdf>

2 <https://www.westanthem.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/West-Anthem-Music-Ecosystem-Study-Executive-Summary-October-2020.pdf>

3 <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/ed/bgrd/backgroundfile-90615.pdf>

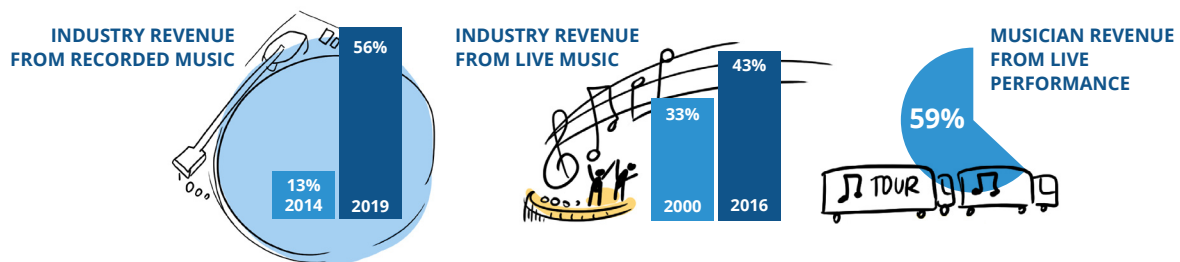


A music strategy can highlight the importance of building and maintaining relationships with the many voices, artists, and spaces that help foster the music community year-round. A regional music strategy can also support and celebrate the incredible music community that already exists in a region — and help that community share its music with others living in Canada and with the world.

There is an opportunity to make the **Central Okanagan a vibrant music hub**, given the local community's desire for a greater variety in music and all the factors that make the Central Okanagan attractive to newcomers. A blossoming music scene in the Central Okanagan and a distinct identity separate from that of larger cities such as Vancouver and Calgary make the region an attractive place for musicians and audiences alike.

An evolving music industry

How music is valued is changing alongside a rapid disruption in the music industry. Revenue from recorded music, which has been growing since 2014, is driven largely by streaming revenue and accounted for **56% of the industry's global revenue in 2019** (compared to only 13% in 2014), and **69% of the Canadian total**. Live music has also become an increasingly critically important segment of the industry, growing from **33% in 2000 to 43% in 2016**. For musicians, live performances accounted for **59% of their revenues in 2019**.



Streaming revenue has helped make up for decreasing sales of other kinds of recorded music but also reinforces **gatekeeper culture** – where curators have more influence over revenues than loyal audiences, by programming an artist on popular playlists. Thus, smaller, local artists have a **narrower opportunity to generate revenue through streaming**, increasing their reliance on the live music industry.

While the music industry has celebrated the growing awareness around **Indigenous, Black, and People of Color (IBPoC) and female** artists, only one in five top 100 songs are by female artists, and Indigenous artists across Canada face barriers that negatively impact their ability to perform.

Although this is only a high-level view of key trends, they are related directly to the Central Okanagan's music industry. The gatekeeper culture, and the diversity gap are important trends to recognize as the Central Okanagan continues to grow and attracts **new and diverse residents to the region**.

Regional Context

With an estimated population of 195,000, the Central Okanagan is known for its stunning scenery, four distinct seasons including a mild winter climate, and is a hub for music. The region is home to several communities including Westbank First Nation and Syilx/Okanagan territory, Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna, and Peachland. Given the interconnectedness of Central Okanagan residents and communities, a strategy for the region seemed natural. We hope the region's local governments will incorporate elements of this strategy as they embark on their own planning efforts.

Completed in 2019, the [City of Kelowna's 2020-2025 Cultural Plan](#) set a course for Kelowna's creative sector to provide accessible, diverse and inclusive experiences. The plan is innovative, forward-looking and encourages the effective use of resources, and the value of partnerships and cooperation. Given that music is a key component of the creative sector, the Central Okanagan Music Strategy is perfectly positioned to help the vision of that plan come to life.



As a result, the Central Okanagan's Music Strategy aims to advance the sustainability of the local music industry by:

1. **Connecting** people with similar interests so they can engage in collective action
2. **Developing** community support for music
3. **Increasing** support of live music
4. **Creating** an understanding of the current music landscape
5. **Setting priorities** for the future development of music in the Central Okanagan.

The timing was right for a variety of stakeholders to come together to define, design, and implement a vision for Central Okanagan as a music industry hub.

The Region's Music Ecosystem

The COMS [Industry Profile and Public Engagement Summary for the Central Okanagan](#) released in December 2020 identified a robust ecosystem of 460 stakeholders engaged in the industry, 60% of whom were musicians. The largest cohort of industry professionals have been working in the industry for more than 20 years (32%) while generating less than 20% of their annual income from music activities (63%). In addition, 32% of professionals indicated that their 2020 revenue was likely to decrease by more than half compared to 2019, as a result of COVID-19. Fair compensation, flexible funding and adequate places to play are all important issues to local artists making a living in the Central Okanagan.



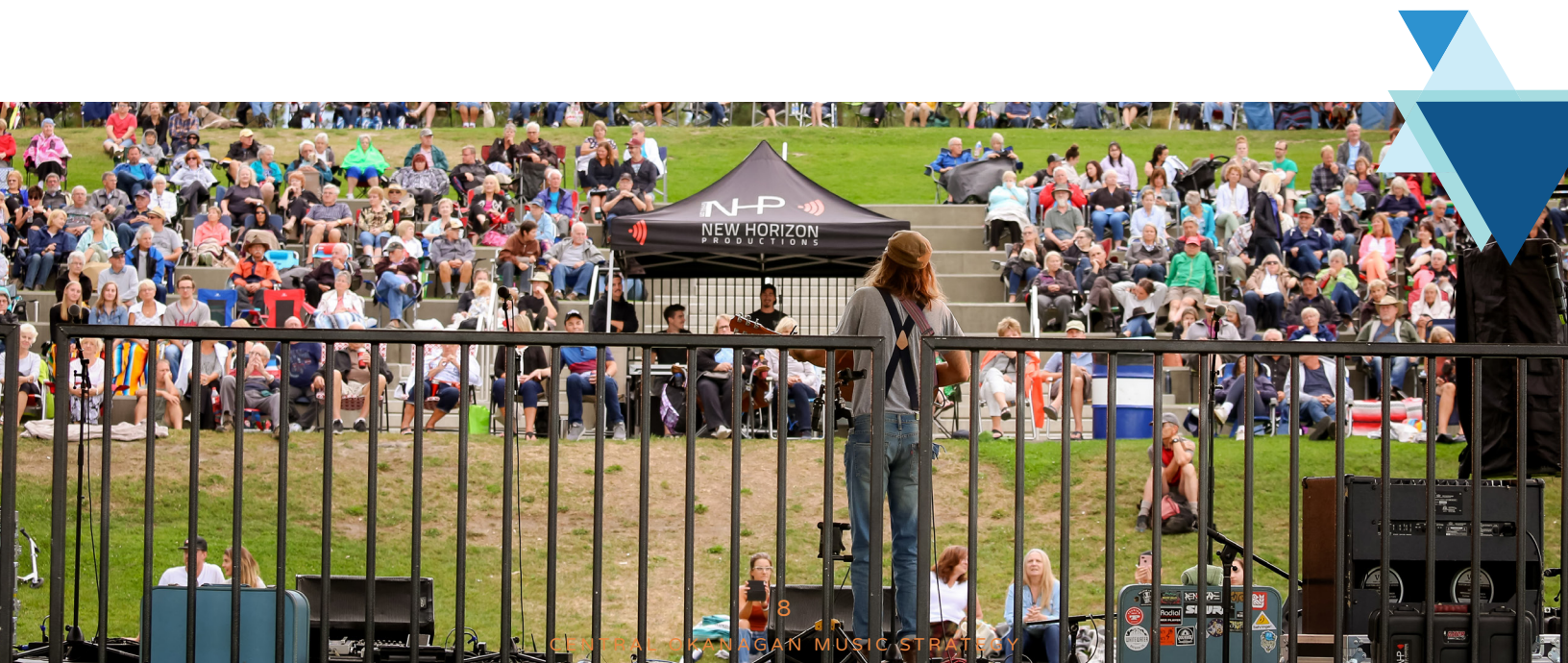
With respect to organizations in the industry, most operate as music promoters (37%) or venues (26%) and have been in the industry for over 20 years (39%). Thirty-nine per cent of organizations reported that their revenue in 2019 was less than \$50,000, and 36% expected revenue to decrease by 50% or more in 2020, as a result of COVID-19. Cost of operations (92%), a lack of consumers/audiences/members (89%), and a lack of adequate spaces (88%) were cited as the most significant challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before COVID-19, revenue, funding, and regulations were issues for existing venues, organizations and promoters. Support for the music industry is even more crucial when we move forward post pandemic.



The following are some additional themes that emerged from the COMS Industry Profile and Public Engagement Summary:

- The **importance of community** is a cornerstone of the Central Okanagan's music industry, kept strong by well-connected groups of creatives and longstanding, established organizations.
- **Audiences have an appetite for more live shows** but want inexpensive and convenient entertainment options.
- There are too **few purpose-built venues** or **spaces for rehearsal and collaboration** in the Central Okanagan.
- **Lack of awareness** is a key barrier to accessing music events in the Central Okanagan.
- There is a need for **more accessible, streamlined, and flexible funding** designed to facilitate partnerships and support artists.
- Music industry stakeholders recognize that **more diversity, equity, and inclusion** in the music industry is a key priority moving forward.

The following table provides a high-level SWOT analysis of the Central Okanagan's music industry, based on existing research and the numerous engagement activities with industry stakeholders.



STRENGTHS

- High number of talented and global quality musicians
- Natural beauty that attracts new residents and provides great outdoor venues
- Supportive communities that are passionate and trying to make positive change
- Strong tourism sector, including wineries, that often support live music
- Strong youth scene (jazz, classical, rap/hip hop) incl. educators, mentors, opportunities

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of awareness about events and opportunities
- Shortage of suitable and scalable venues for performing, jamming, rehearsing, or collaborating and mid-size acts
- Accommodation costs for touring acts
- Disconnect between funding organizations and artists (missing simple, more flexible funding)
- Collaboration can be challenging as genres and demographics have been insular (siloed), often leading to a lack of crossover
- Lack of opportunities to network or find mentors
- Challenging municipal policies and bylaws related to noise/sound and public space usage

S W
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OPPORTUNITIES

- Strengthened tourism collaboration/marketing
- Chance to grow audiences as residents express a desire for more live music events year-round
- Community building by grassroots organizations and businesses that want to invest in the community
- Leverage existing youth education, mentorship, and other opportunities

THREATS

- Short and long-term impact of COVID-19 pandemic
- Music is being devalued globally – it is seen as cheap and abundant
- Competition with other high quality, affordable, convenient entertainment
- Increasing cost of living (i.e., housing)
- Not enough support for underserved groups (Indigenous artists, LGBTQ2+ artists, etc.)
- Struggle to find experienced promoters and other talent required for live shows

Strategic Planning Process

Nordicity was hired to lead the research contained herein. The research included the following phases:

- A research design phase that used secondary research to inform the study and included a kickoff session with the COMS Advisory Group to establish objectives for the research.
- Extensive stakeholder engagement, including more than 40 interviews, nine focus groups, and 1,121 responses to an online survey.
- Strategic planning initiatives, including a community Music Summit, UpBeat, with more than 100 participants attending nine virtual sessions over a four week period discussing topics such as venues, artists, access, inclusion, youth, audiences, partnerships and collaboration.

The research culminated in the development of a strategic framework that provided the basis for further collaboration and discussions about initiatives to develop and sustain a thriving music ecosystem in the region. The framework guided the creation of a strategic vision, four pillars, and sixteen goals with related supporting actions.



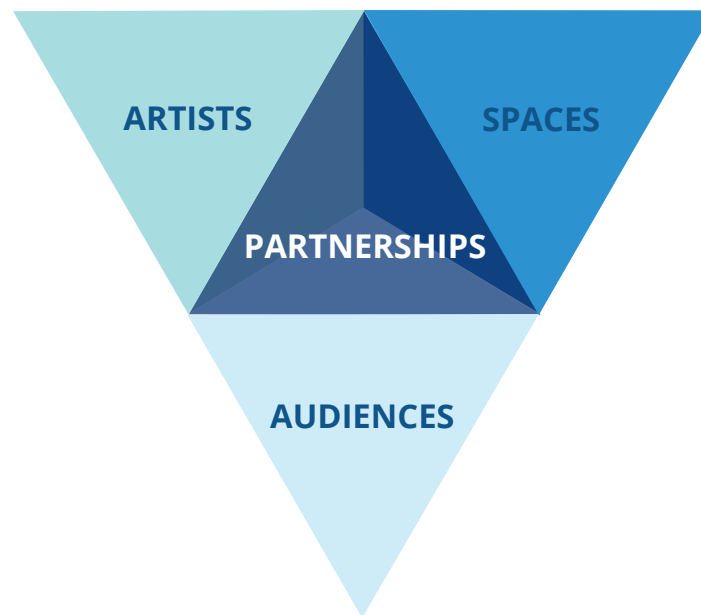
Strategic Overview

After extensive public engagement, the COMS developed the following vision, principles and pillars that were used as guides while developing the music strategy.

Vision:

A community-led music ecosystem that is inclusive, connected, and valued by the community which encourages ample opportunities for local artistic growth and accessible, engaging music events.

Strategic Pillars:



Foundational Principles:

Accessible

Collaborative

Diverse

Inclusive

Strategic Pillar: Partnerships

GUIDING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

A stronger, well informed music industry, with greater public participation through communication and collaboration.

What We Heard

Innovative and collaborative partnerships are key to strengthening the Central Okanagan's music ecosystem. Working with existing municipalities and communities is also important to streamline rules and regulations related to performances, rehearsals, applications, promotion, noise, and parking. For these partnerships to thrive, understanding **common goals and commitments will** be critical. Ultimately, **Partnerships** between the public sector, private stakeholders, and the community are critical for achieving our **Artists, Audiences and Spaces** pillars. In addition, clear communication will allow for more streamlined information for stakeholders on the various aspects of the music industry.

"It can't be up to one stakeholder group, can't be just promoters, or just be the City leading this strategy forward. The industry, including the artists, need to work together to generate creative ideas."

Interviewee

During our public engagement process, many stakeholders expressed interest in the development of a **diverse, cross-sectoral music industry committee** to support the music industry's efforts to develop partnerships with other key sectors in the Central Okanagan. It was widely agreed that strengthened partnerships, both between sectors and within the music industry, are of key importance to the Central Okanagan's music ecosystem.

For example, many stakeholders noted that there is an important opportunity for collaboration between the music and the tourism sectors in the Central Okanagan. Over the years, the promotion of high-quality food and wine has helped nurture the Central Okanagan's reputation as a great place to visit. Expanding the promotion of music is a natural fit that would help highlight more of what the region has to offer.



Partnership Goals and Supporting Actions

Strategic Goals	Initiate implementation with a Music Action Committee	Foster relationship building opportunities	A centralized regional music information hub	Strengthen the presence of the region's music scene
Supporting Actions Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Prioritize Supporting Actions into short, medium and long term goals ▶ Develop a diverse, cross-sectoral advisory group of music industry stakeholders to support the MAC ▶ Seek sustained funding to support activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Coordinate curated and inclusive networking events ▶ Promote and attend events organized by a diversity of artists, cultures and genres ▶ Use easily discovered communications to inform the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Support the development of a shared searchable regional database of musicians, venues, accommodations, etc. ▶ Facilitate knowledge sharing of relevant industry practice. ▶ Ensure opportunities for information sharing are open to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Integrate music with regional tourism brand ▶ Enable stakeholders to represent the Central Okanagan or host music conferences and events. ▶ Support music alliances or music city partnerships



Strategic Pillar: Artists

GUIDING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

A more diverse and inclusive group of well compensated musicians, with strong and appropriate skillsets.

What We Heard

The Central Okanagan's music industry is ripe for growth, in part because of the **unique lifestyles that musicians can lead in the region**. The geography, community size, climate, and music community of the Central Okanagan are key attractions for young and emerging artists who wish to develop their skills and build their audiences. While many stakeholders noted barriers related to a **lack of awareness**, others noted that it can be easier for artists to get noticed and succeed in smaller sized cities.

It is essential to ensure that emerging artists who chose the region for affordability reasons are able to stay. Our SWOT analysis identified a need for adequate spaces, simple, flexible funding and the ability to grow audiences as important issues that need to be addressed. We also know that breaking down barriers and supporting **Indigenous artists** and **equity seeking groups** is critical for success. This work will require the intentional application of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion lens to ensure such supports are provided.

In the Central Okanagan, stakeholders said they want opportunities for **professional development** workshops to bridge the persistent gap between artists and the 'business-side' of the music industry (e.g., through webinars, wellness and leadership groups, and retreats). In addition, stakeholders noted the importance of ensuring youth are engaged with music, that young artists have suitable, all-ages venues to perform and to keep burgeoning talent connected to the region by supporting them as young professionals.

As discussed earlier, music is being devalued globally. For local artists to thrive, they need to be fairly compensated utilizing public funding, appropriate ticket prices, sponsorship and promotion. When municipalities organize events featuring musicians they have the opportunity to be a leader in fair compensation.

"[I] can be a pro musician, and the community supports that choice/her livelihood – don't have to seek additional jobs here – ability to live and afford life here!"

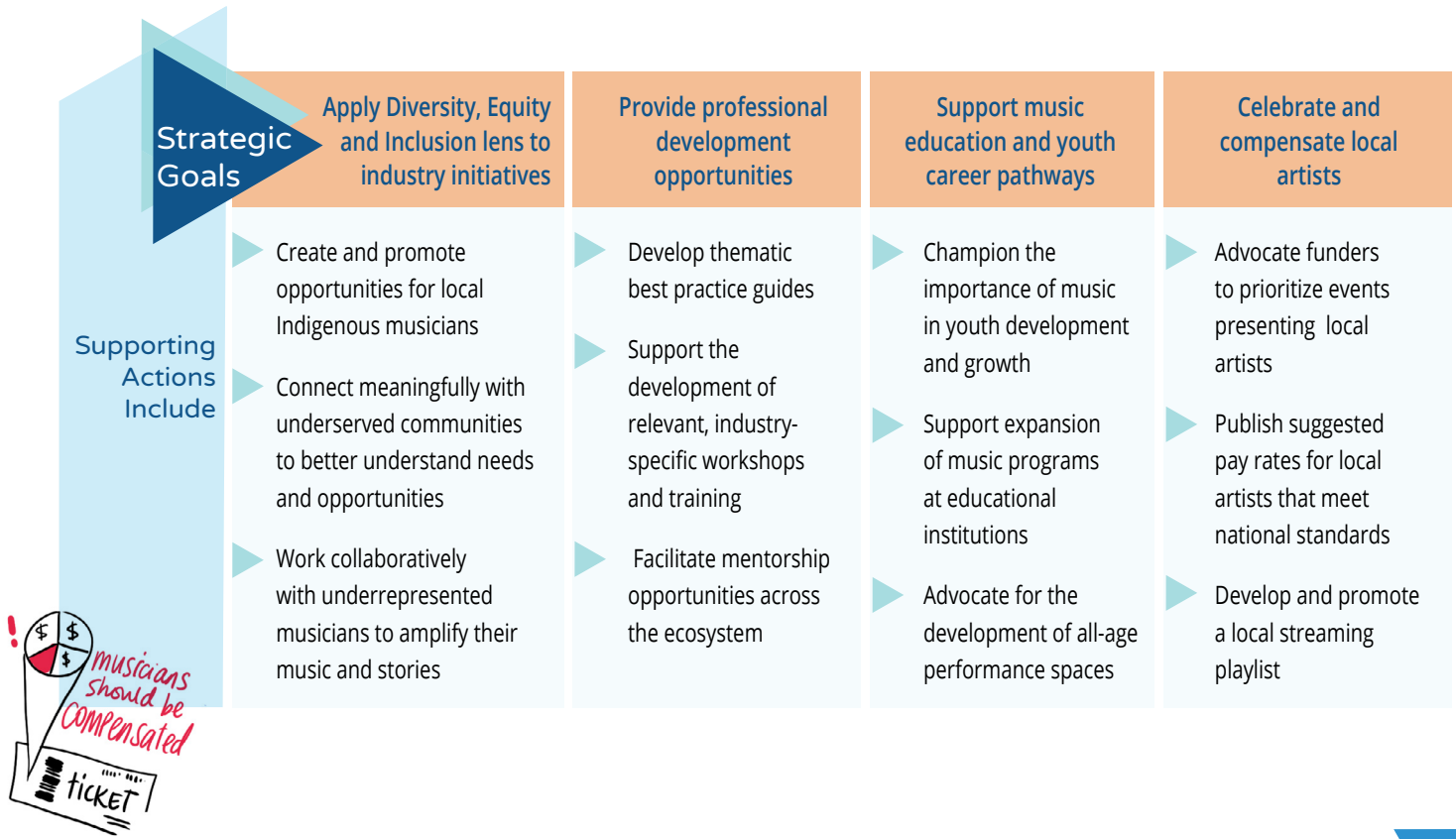
Advisory Group Member

"Music needs to be recognized and valued for youth as much as hockey and soccer. Playing an instrument grows the brain, at any age, more than pretty much any other activity."

Survey Respondent



Artist Goals and Supporting Actions



Strategic Pillar: Spaces

GUIDING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

A broader variety and number of quality music spaces, that are safe, diverse, and inclusive.

What We Heard

Supporting existing music venues is critical. Recent closures of several key music venues has exacerbated an already deficient number of indoor venues for local and touring artists to perform throughout the year. Community responses suggested that there are too few purpose-built venues for music.

There is a need for a variety of venues, including a specific need for mid-sized and large (800+) venues to attract and support touring acts. Local artists also need to have more intimate spaces to meet, practice and collaborate to foster organic growth, mentoring and partnership opportunities. These needs align well with the goals of Kelowna's **2020-2025 Cultural Plan to commit to developing new facilities**, including production space for local artists.

Audiences and artists emphasized the need for both more music events and for more suitable venues. The need for increased variety in venues and events, including in different neighbourhoods, was noted by many stakeholders who want to see a mix of indoor and outdoor venues that are accessible to all who wish to attend. Challenges include accessibility, safety in neighbourhoods where venues are located, as well as the cost of parking and a lack of public transit to music venues. Existing venues require support to address such challenges, including incentives and the clarification and/or modification of rules and regulations associated with live music.

When discussing the possibility of new venues, stakeholders noted the need to advocate for collaborative music and urban development initiatives, as well as the importance of working with those who may be opposed to new music venues in their neighbourhood. While the industry awaits the return of audiences (see Strategic Pillar: Audiences), collaboration and support will be critical for ensuring that existing venue owners can succeed and that other local business leaders can see the opportunity for establishing new spaces.

The Central Okanagan is recognized as having a vibrant summer (May-October) music scene highlighted by numerous outdoor venues in various parks and wineries. This seasonal nature means that musicians and audiences lack



“[I’d like to see] more year-round support for musical events. Most accessible events are just summer/park type events.”

Survey Respondent



the vibrancy they desire from November-April. Efforts to make the local music industry year-round are seen as key to its long-term growth and sustainability. This could include bringing artists and audiences together in more intimate settings, including youth and families at all-ages concerts and festivals. With this need in mind, the strategy places particular priority on supporting **appropriate and adequate indoor space for events** to take place throughout the year.

Space Goals and Supporting Actions

Strategic Goals	Ensure spaces are safe and accessible for all	Increase purposeful and flexible music space development	Advocate for music in urban development and regulations	Expand the inclusion of music activities in existing space
Supporting Actions Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct venue audits to include accessibility and safety considerations ▶ Work with industry professionals to ensure a safe experience at music events, including safe travel to and from the venues ▶ Develop venue safety, accessibility, cultural and inclusion training for venue staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encourage spaces to provide opportunities for Indigenous musicians ▶ Support the creation of a community music hub with jam space ▶ Support niche venue development (e.g., neighbourhood- level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work collectively with municipalities to review bylaws affecting the music industry ▶ Share information regarding bylaws that impact music activities ▶ Establish processes for music industry needs to be included in municipal planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Champion the opportunity and value music can generate for existing spaces ▶ Canvas music interest from unconventional spaces and share the options ▶ Promote opportunities to include music in under-utilized spaces



Strategic Pillar: Audiences

GUIDING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

A greater number of people who are aware of, value and listen to music, especially local artists.

What We Heard

As the music ecosystem recovers from the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that attention to audience preferences and trends will be important. Although many people are keen to return to live shows, the public has access to abundant, low cost, convenient, and high-quality music and entertainment options now more than ever. This means retaining existing and developing new audiences will require better, more diverse, and engaging ways for them to experience music.

Stakeholders noted that audiences increasingly expect to pay little to no money to attend local, live music events. That said, with the COVID-19 pandemic, the loss of live music has demonstrated its importance to our quality of life and cultural vibrancy in addition to the economic and social value it brings. A music strategy needs to increase the awareness of the value and richness that music brings to the community.

Relatedly, the ever-quickening advancement of the **digital age** has resulted in people **wanting and expecting to engage with music differently**. This is both a challenge to artists and an opportunity to be creative in how they share their music. While audiences can engage with music passively through streaming services, a theme that emerged in our stakeholder engagement is a renewed desire for in-person engagement with a wider diversity of music. It was also noted that attracting more touring acts is an important way to generate excitement and attract new audiences to local music events. Ultimately, the acceleration of digital technology use also means that artists and organizations need to adapt to **maximize awareness of the local music ecosystem** in order to compete with a growing digital space.

Challenges related to developing audiences exist alongside opportunities. Some stakeholders are concerned **that previously committed audiences may not or take longer to return** to in-person events until they feel it is safe to do so, despite lifting of restrictions. While it is also possible that demand will be high after restrictions are lifted, most stakeholders noted that the music industry will need to provide **engaging events and safe, accessible spaces** for the audience to come back once restrictions are lifted.

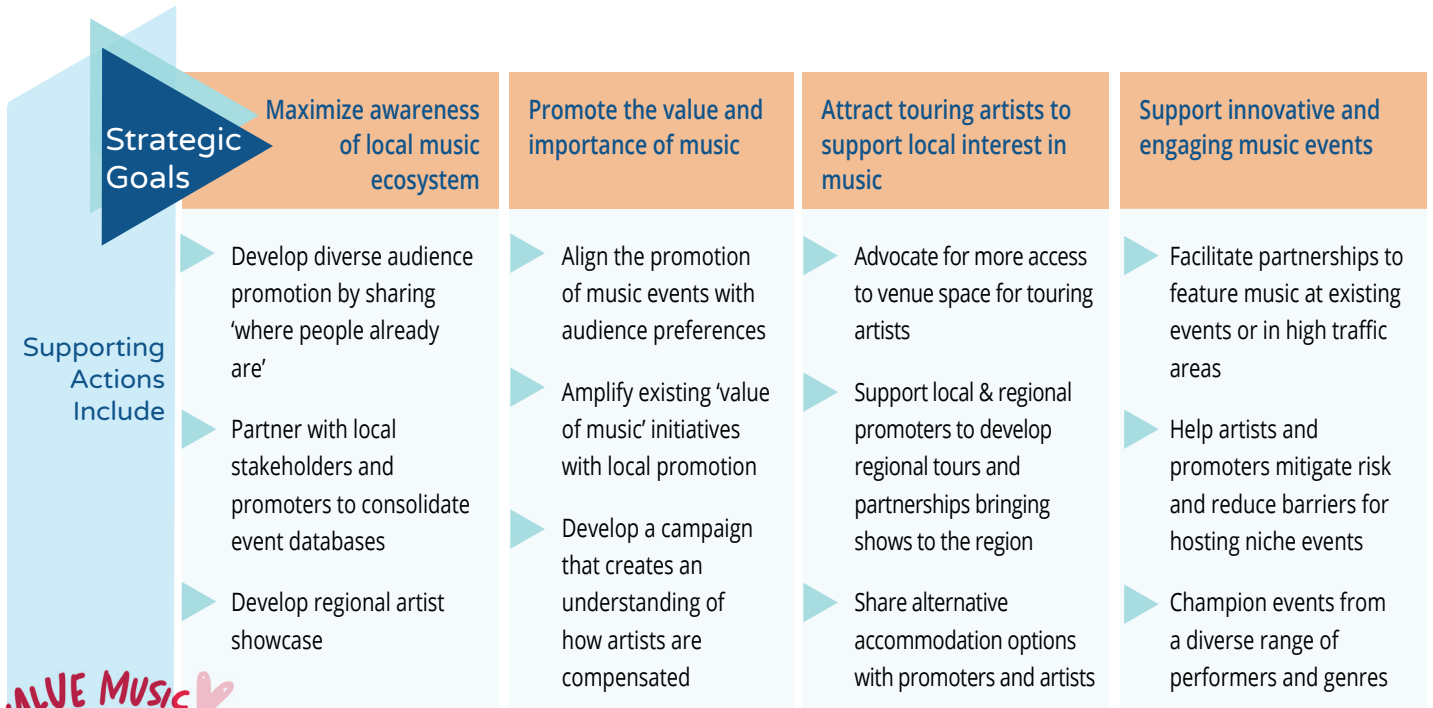
“I’d love to see more diversity in the types of music that are played at live events.”

Survey Respondent

BUILD A LOYAL AUDIENCE



Audience Goals and Supporting Actions



Implementation

The **Central Okanagan Music Strategy** has been developed with the valuable contributions of a wide variety of community members and industry stakeholders. Its purpose is to serve as a foundational document that guides support for the region's music ecosystem. In an attempt to facilitate the implementation phase of the strategy, the supporting actions for each goal were reviewed with respect to their potential impact, effort required and likely timeline. We would suggest the following priorities.

The **short-term priority** (6-12 months) would be to maintain the momentum generated by the COMS process and to build a strong network of support for the region's music ecosystem through continued partnerships and relationship building. A key first step would be establishing a Music Action Committee (MAC) that would focus on:

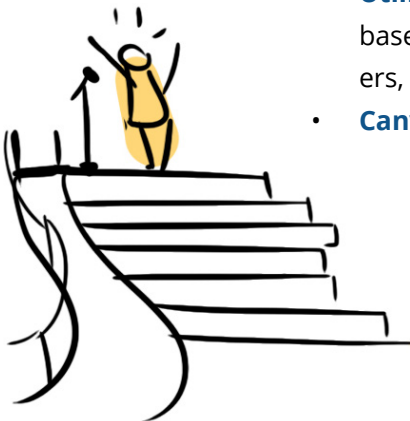
- **Creating** a terms of reference and action plan for the MAC
- **Seek** funding for the activities in the action plan
- **Develop** a diverse music advisory group to get feedback and gain ongoing industry/public support

The MAC would foster relationship building through:

- **Communicating** results with stakeholders
- **Coordinating** curated and inclusive networking events, which would include reaching out to people within under-served communities to share and amplify their stories
- **Sharing** information from our data collection, to help align music events with audience preferences
- **Promoting** and attending events organized by underserved communities

Lastly, the MAC would work with existing stakeholders to help share information through:

- **Utilizing** the Industry Mapping to help develop a shared and searchable database of musicians, venues, and services. In addition to helping music stakeholders, this would be useful to help identify gaps and measure results
- **Canvas** music interest from unconventional spaces and develop a list of options





The **medium-term** (1-2 years) priorities would be to strengthen the region’s music scene through:

- **increased** integration with the tourism industry
- **advocating** for music during urban development initiatives
- **communicating** the value of music through awareness campaigns that meet people where they are
- **ensuring** the availability of safe and accessible music spaces starting with a venue audit
- **prioritizing** pathways for youth through initiatives such as championing the importance of music, supporting music education and advocating for all-ages performance spaces



To **measure strategic progress**, the plan will be supported by a measuring and reporting process. This means:

- **Developing** frameworks for ongoing evaluation such as action plans for each priority area with SMART metrics for each goal
- **Defining** clear roles and responsibilities for key stakeholders including potential leads and likely partners for each goal
- **Reporting** back regularly on progress including identifying key strengths and potential challenges for each goal

In addition to tracking progress at the priority and goal levels, indicators to **assess broader ecosystem improvements** may include:

- **Levels** of satisfaction with the region’s music offerings
- **Number** of music events or programs for local artists
- **Proportion** of IBPoC artists featured in local music events or programs
- **Per capita** density of music venues
- **Frequency** of engagement with the region’s music ecosystem

Importantly, ongoing tracking will ensure the identification of what is already happening in relation to a goal and what may need to occur to advance progress.



Thank You!

Music brings us together, it is important to us as individuals and as a community. Each experience is affected by many interconnected variables, from the obvious: the performer(s), the space, the audience, to the (hopefully) not so obvious: the equipment, the techs, promoters, suppliers, teachers, and more. When music works, it can help define us and our relationships.

Through the process of creating this music strategy, we felt it was important to reach out and listen to as large and diverse a number of people as possible. The process was completed over two years and was sometimes challenging as we navigated a global pandemic. Despite the obstacles, it has been extremely rewarding. We believe working collaboratively and striving towards common goals will be a great benefit to our local music industry and ultimately help elevate music experiences in the Central Okanagan.

The enthusiastic response from our community to our survey, passionate views expressed in the interviews, focus groups and the UpBeat Music Summit, displays a community that shares a love for music. Hearing all the different thoughts and ideas was illuminating. Bringing all these views together into one cohesive strategy challenged us to incorporate as many opinions and ideas as possible and because people care, we know there will be points of contention. However, the Central Okanagan has a strong foundation of talented and passionate music stakeholders. We feel confident that together, we can achieve our vision of an inclusive, connected, valued music scene where local artists and venues can flourish and the entire community can benefit from the joy of music.

Thank you to all who shared their views with us in our survey, focus groups and all those who helped guide, edit and provide encouragement to the Leadership Ensemble through the process!



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Special thanks to the Creative Okanagan Board of Directors for taking the lead as the organization facilitating this project.

And lastly, to you the reader. We look forward to working together as a community who values music.

With Gratitude,

The Central Okanagan Music Strategy Leadership Ensemble
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CENTRAL OKANAGAN MUSIC STRATEGY

at a glance

Vision:

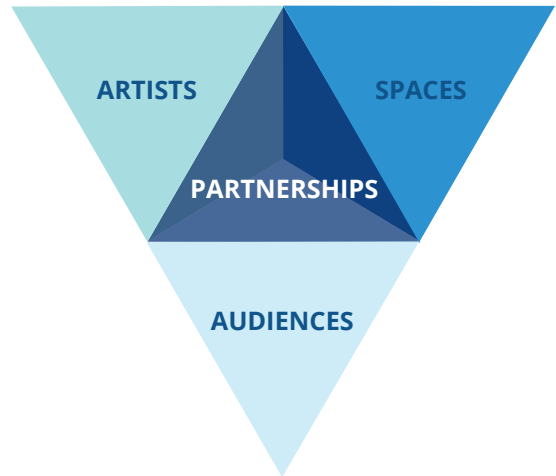
A community-led music ecosystem that is inclusive, connected and valued by the community which encourages ample opportunities for local artistic growth and accessible, engaging music events.



Foundational Principles:



Pillars:



Partnership Goals and Supporting Actions

Strategic Goals	Initiate implementation with a Music Action Committee	Foster relationship building opportunities	A centralized regional music information hub	Strengthen the presence of the region's music scene
Supporting Actions Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize Supporting Actions into short, medium and long term goals Develop a diverse, cross-sectoral advisory group of music industry stakeholders to support the MAC Seek sustained funding to support activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate curated and inclusive networking events Promote and attend events organized by a diversity of artists, cultures and genres Use easily discovered communications to inform the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of a shared searchable regional database of musicians, venues, accommodations, etc. Facilitate knowledge sharing of relevant industry practice. Ensure opportunities for information sharing are open to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate music with regional tourism brand Enable stakeholders to represent the Central Okanagan or host music conferences and events. Support music alliances or music city partnerships



Artist Goals and Supporting Actions



Strategic Goals	Apply Diversity, Equity and Inclusion lens to industry initiatives	Provide professional development opportunities	Support music education and youth career pathways	Celebrate and compensate local artists
Supporting Actions Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and promote opportunities for local Indigenous musicians Connect meaningfully with underserved communities to better understand needs and opportunities Work collaboratively with underrepresented musicians to amplify their music and stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop thematic best practice guides Support the development of relevant, industry-specific workshops and training Facilitate mentorship opportunities across the ecosystem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion the importance of music in youth development and growth Support expansion of music programs at educational institutions Advocate for the development of all-age performance spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate funders to prioritize events presenting local artists Publish suggested pay rates for local artists that meet national standards Develop and promote a local streaming playlist

Space Goals and Supporting Actions



Strategic Goals	Ensure spaces are safe and accessible for all	Increase purposeful and flexible music space development	Advocate for music in urban development and regulations	Expand the inclusion of music activities in existing space
Supporting Actions Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct venue audits to include accessibility and safety considerations Work with industry professionals to ensure a safe experience at music events, including safe travel to and from the venues Develop venue safety, accessibility, cultural and inclusion training for venue staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage spaces to provide opportunities for Indigenous musicians Support the creation of a community music hub with jam space Support niche venue development (e.g., neighbourhood- level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collectively with municipalities to review bylaws affecting the music industry Share information regarding bylaws that impact music activities Establish processes for music industry needs to be included in municipal planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion the opportunity and value music can generate for existing spaces Canvas music interest from unconventional spaces and share the options Promote opportunities to include music in under-utilized spaces

Audience Goals and Supporting Actions



Strategic Goals	Maximize awareness of local music ecosystem	Promote the value and importance of music	Attract touring artists to support local interest in music	Support innovative and engaging music events
Supporting Actions Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop diverse audience promotion by sharing 'where people already are' Partner with local stakeholders and promoters to consolidate event databases Develop regional artist showcase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align the promotion of music events with audience preferences Amplify existing 'value of music' initiatives with local promotion Develop a campaign that creates an understanding of how artists are compensated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for more access to venue space for touring artists Support local & regional promoters to develop regional tours and partnerships bringing shows to the region Share alternative accommodation options with promoters and artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate partnerships to feature music at existing events or in high traffic areas Help artists and promoters mitigate risk and reduce barriers for hosting niche events Champion events from a diverse range of performers and genres



Learn more about the
Central Okanagan Music Strategy
and find related research at
creativeokanagan.com