



**SOUND  
DIPLOMACY**




# **HAMILTON MUSIC INDUSTRY STUDY**

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**STRATEGIC MUSIC BUSINESS PLAN  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

September 2021



# FOREWORD

**Developing a strategic music business plan for Hamilton alongside industry leaders, Sound Diplomacy, was truly an honour for our whole team.**

**Sound Diplomacy is undeniably the expert in music research and policy, and as we envisioned this project, they were the dream team we trusted to do the work and deliver a high-quality report and recommendations.**

We would like to thank the amazing partners in this project: the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Music Advisory Team, Supercrawl Productions, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton Public Library, FACTOR, and Ontario Creates. We are incredibly excited to present this report to Hamilton's music community and to continue to work towards making its recommendations a reality. Specifically, the Music Industry Asset Mapping component is one piece Sonic Unyon is looking forward to continuing as a valuable community resource.

Thank you to everyone who supported, contributed to, or takes time to read this report. It is meant to be an actionable, useful piece to better our musical community for everyone. See you at the next show!

**Lisa La Rocca, Director of Operations**  
Sonic Unyon Records/Supercrawl Productions

**It has been a privilege to partner with you on this report and build on the incredible work already happening in Hamilton.**

**As we embarked on this work, we were impressed and inspired by the reflective studies and work devoted to understanding Hamilton's music ecosystem and identifying ways to always be better by supporting equity and investment in music.**

This work would not have been possible without the experience and support provided by Hamilton Music Advisory Team (HMAT), Sonic Unyon, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, City of Hamilton, Hamilton Public Library, Supercrawl Productions, FACTOR, Ontario Creates, the Department of Canadian Heritage and Canada's private broadcasters. Working with these invested and dedicated partners has contributed greatly to a product that is informed, actionable and impactful.

We hope this report demonstrates the incredible value of music in Hamilton and supports continuing efforts to improve policy, build relationships and positively impact the music ecosystem at every level. Especially as our global music industry fights to come back stronger and better after the COVID-19 pandemic, this work is even more important and sets out to help leadership in Hamilton build back better. We hope to continue to be an ongoing partner with the Hamilton music community and invite you to reach out to our team with any questions, feedback or ideas for new initiatives through our website, [www.sounddiplomacy.com](http://www.sounddiplomacy.com).

**Kate Durio, CEO, North America**  
Sound Diplomacy



Images courtesy of Nathan Nash/  
City of Hamilton unless stated otherwise

# 1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The City of Hamilton has already taken incredible strides towards recognizing, quantifying and supporting its music industry, setting a precedent for a city of its size. This work began with preliminary research for its 2015 music strategy, and included a census, mapping, stakeholder outreach, SWOT analysis and action plan.

Now, the city is looking to implement an updated strategy, seeking to define a calculated and scalable approach that focuses on talent and business development and retention while recognizing the competition the city faces by nearby industry hubs such as Toronto and New York City.

This document contains the groundwork for a new strategy, collating all regulatory information and initiatives and further benchmarking Hamilton against cities facing similar challenges of regional competition and brand development.

It is important that the work undertaken throughout this project, as well as those new actionable items derived from the results, recognizes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Short-term goals should continue to prioritize support and recovery strategies with the understanding that much of the effect will carry into the medium- and long-term music economy as fans and professionals alike adjust to new levels of comfort in crowds and new preferences for digital integration.

To date, many COVID-19 recovery initiatives have been dependent on provincial stay-at-home orders. Fundraising and grant schemes have carried on throughout the year, but programme-based initiatives have been stop-and-go. This presents an opportunity to shift to skills development and professional support initiatives that can be carried out virtually and, thus, uninterrupted, giving Hamilton's musicians and music professionals a competitive edge as the live entertainment industry opens up and finds its 'new normal'.

Recovery will be slow, and adjustments will need to be made, but if there is any industry that has proven itself time and time again to be adaptable to changes in consumerism trends and advances in technology, it's the music industry.



# 1.1 METHODOLOGY

Sound Diplomacy deployed its unique four-pronged methodological approach to deliver a comprehensive assessment of Hamilton's music ecosystem. This was pan-genre, pan-sector and diverse across community, culture and geography.

## 1. REGULATORY ASSESSMENT OF THE MUSIC ECOSYSTEM

A Regulatory Ecosystem section analyzing the administrative and governing environment affecting Hamilton's music sector.

## 2. MEASURING HAMILTON'S LEADERSHIP AS A MUSIC CITY

A comparative analysis to successful music cities initiatives and other music cities case studies (London, ON, Kingston, ON, Brooklyn, NY, Huntsville, AL, Austin, TX), across a number of topics pertaining to the actionable findings derived from this research.

## 3. MUSIC CITY ASSESSMENT

A SWOT assessment based on a series of surveys and workshops as well as extensive research, comparing and assessing how the strengths and weaknesses identified for Hamilton perform against the opportunities and threats on its way to become a globally-recognized music city.

## 4. KEY ACTIONS & STRATEGIES

An actions and recommendations plan resulting from the analysis of findings. This plan should serve as a rubric for the Hamilton Music Community to advocate for, create, support, and/or adjust existing and future practices, which will ultimately lead to a thriving music economy.



# 2. HAMILTON AT A GLANCE



Image © Vivek Trivedi/Unsplash

# 2. HAMILTON AT A GLANCE

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY THAT SUPPORTS THE MUSIC INDUSTRY	IN PLACE?	HAMILTON'S INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY	BEST CASE
NIGHT TRANSPORT	No	Most transport ends around 10pm, with busier routes ending around midnight or 1am.	<b>Toronto, Canada</b> – Toronto's Blue Night Network is the most extensive nighttime transportation service in North America, with routes picking up after trains cease service between 1am-2am. Routes run approximately every 30 minutes until morning service resumes, and are spaced in order to keep 99% of the city within a 15 minute walk of a stop. <sup>1</sup>
AGENT OF CHANGE	No	While not called "Agent of Change," Hamilton has policies that protect live music venues from residential complaints.	<b>San Francisco, CA</b> – San Francisco Mayor London Breed's amendment to Chapter 116 of the local ordinances states existing venues, so long as they are in keeping with existing noise laws, are protected from the complaints of any new residences, hotels or motels built nearby. <sup>2</sup>
MUSIC OFFICE	Yes	Hamilton's Creative Industries and Cultural Development section oversees a number of functions including, but not limited to, music industry development, programming and industry engagement through their facilitation of the Hamilton Music Advisory Team (HMAT).	<b>London, Canada</b> – London, ON's Music Office coordinates promotional, educational and financial resources and initiatives for a similar sized local industry. <sup>3</sup>
CITY-LED GRANTS	No / Yes	The City Enrichment Fund is accessible to musicians and events organizers via the broader 'arts' category for individual artists or groups, festivals, events, and nonprofits, but this funding is only available once/year.	<b>Vancouver, Canada</b> – The Vancouver Music Fund, a collaboration between the City of Vancouver and Creative BC, works to disperse its \$300,000 to projects serving minority communities within Vancouver and nearby Indigenous lands. <sup>4</sup>
EVENT PERMITTING	Yes	Event planning information is listed on the city website, although costs are not transparent.	<b>Ottawa, Canada</b> – The City of Ottawa maintains a 61-page PDF document outlining the event planning process from start to finish, with hyperlinked text to make additional information convenient and accessible. Topics include vendor licenses, crowd management, site plan drawing and environmental sustainability. <sup>5</sup>
LIQUOR PERMITTING	Yes	Permits are issued through the provincial body, The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.	Because permits and laws are controlled provincially, there is no relevant local best practice example.
NOISE BY-LAWS	No / Yes	Events with exemption permits must not exceed 60 dB(A) at point of reception or 90 dB(A) 10m from source. Hamilton's Entertainment on Outdoor Patios Pilot Project allows certain geographic areas to have music on patios, but even then the sound limit is lower than most other Canadian cities.	<b>Toronto, Canada</b> – Toronto's 2019 amendment to its noise bylaws quantified measurement strategies by implementing specific decibel limits (the greater of 55dB(A) or ambient between 7am-11pm), redefining the point of measurement and taking ambient noise into consideration. <sup>6</sup>

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY THAT SUPPORTS THE MUSIC INDUSTRY	IN PLACE?	HAMILTON'S INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY	BEST CASE
BUSKING	No / Yes	Though Hamilton has a busking policy, it requires additional promotion and educational outreach as the affected population is not necessarily aware of its terms or conditions. <sup>7</sup>	<b>Vancouver, Canada</b> – Vancouver operates a permit program allowing amplified performances between 10am-10pm in certain high-traffic areas. Permits cost \$45 for four months or \$135 for one year. Permits are not required for unamplified busking throughout the rest of the city. <sup>8</sup>
ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT	No	Hamilton does not have an entertainment district.	<b>Montreal, Canada</b> – Montreal's Quartier des Spectacles contains 43 performance venues and an additional 31 exhibition spaces within 1 square km. Visuals, lights shows and art installations are integrated into previously unused or dilapidated spaces, and several open spaces now host free shows throughout the year. <sup>9</sup>
MUSIC WORKSPACE/HUB	No	There is currently no dedicated music workspace or Music Hub in Hamilton.	<b>Fort Collins, CO</b> – The Music District in Fort Collins CO has 10 music-related businesses, and its offices are 80% music-related. Tenants have below-market rent. The district has soundproof rehearsal spaces, a variety of practice rooms, a beats lab, educational resources, networking opportunities and an Airbnb for touring artists. <sup>10</sup> Though it is currently closed due to COVID-19, The District still hosts online events to support the creative community.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES	No	There are currently no incentives in place specifically for music-based businesses. Hamilton's incentives are mainly based on geographic location rather than sector or business type.	<b>Nashville, TN</b> – The Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau has an official music marketer that makes sure music and nightlife are at the forefront of visitor platforms. <sup>11</sup>
MUSIC TOURISM POLICY	No	There is no formal music tourism policy in place, although the Hamilton Music Strategy touches on the sector.	<b>Austin, TX</b> – Austin, TX branded itself as 'The Live Music Capital of The World', and has a cultural tourism plan that is implemented alongside a music marketing strategy from the City's tourism agency. City-led music programs include concert series, local artist performances at trade shows, a comprehensive website with gig listings and professional contacts and support with regulatory challenges via the Austin Music Office. <sup>12</sup>
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & RECYCLING	Yes	Hamilton aims to achieve an 80% energy reduction by 2050. The city is a member of the Sustainable Business Initiative to reduce greenhouse emissions. In terms of music, all events must have a waste management plan in place in order to be issued a permit.	<b>Lollapalooza</b> has committed to sustainability and net zero emissions by placing recycling, composting and water bottle refill stations frequently across their festival site, promoting sustainable and socially responsible merchants on its grounds, calculating and offsetting carbon emissions, <sup>13</sup> and donating portions of their profits to Chicago's parks projects. <sup>14</sup>

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY THAT SUPPORTS THE MUSIC INDUSTRY	IN PLACE?	HAMILTON'S INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY	BEST CASE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING	Yes	Since 2017 Hamilton has held an annual Musician Entrepreneur Conference which offers practical career assistance to musicians. The City also hires local music businesses to offer free one-on-one mentoring and support for musicians, further aiding their development.	<b>Toronto, Canada</b> – Located in Ryerson University, The Music Den is a free incubation program that provides guidance and support to entrepreneurs and innovators focused on the music industry. Anyone with an innovative idea for music businesses, technologies and services is eligible to apply to the Music Den and pitch their concept to the steering committee for consideration. The benefits from this incubator include mentorship, workspaces, audio and video facilities, and editing suites and equipment. <sup>15</sup>
LOADING ZONES	Yes	Hamilton installed "Musicians Welcome" signs outside of local music venues across the city. In addition, venue owners have been provided with signs which musicians can place in their windshields to defer law enforcement while unloading. <sup>16</sup>	<b>Austin, TX, USA</b> – Austin's Musician Loading Permits allow musicians to park in designated areas outside venues for 30 minutes before and after the show. Venues can apply for the permits online and are responsible for issuing them to and retrieving them from artists. <sup>17</sup>
FAIR PAYMENT POLICY	Yes	Hamilton's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force, in collaboration with the Hamilton Musicians Guild, instituted a fair payment for city-contracted musicians. "Fair payment" is stipulated by the Canadian Federation of Musicians. <sup>18</sup>	<b>The Musician's Union (UK)</b> developed a Fair Play Guide and Fair Play Venue Scheme which seeks to "recognize good practice and stamp out the unfair treatment of musicians" by encouraging venues to adhere to their publicly accessible fair play guidelines, advising musicians on how to avoid exploitative performance expectations, and allowing musicians space to report on their positive and negative experiences with venues. Compliant venues received badges to publicly display. <sup>19</sup>
RESOURCES FOR MUSIC HISTORY AND RESEARCH	Yes	The Hamilton Music Archives at Central Library launched in 2019. This archive chronicles Hamilton's diverse music history across a multitude of styles and genres. <sup>20</sup>	<b>Liverpool, UK</b> – Liverpool uses its musical heritage to gain millions in tourist revenue each year. <sup>21</sup> Liverpool has tours, exhibitions, and hotels that highlight The Beatles' legacy. The British Music Experience Museum displays memorabilia from artists and groups like Freddie Mercury and the Spice Girls, and has a specific section dedicated to music attractions on their tourism website. <sup>22</sup>
TRADEMARKED BRANDING	Yes	The City of Hamilton developed a logo, officially owned and trademarked by the city, illustrating its embrace of music as a cultural and historical asset. In addition, there are city-managed social media accounts which promote and support the local music scene.	<b>The Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp</b> "sells and markets Nashville as Music City to the world...". Music is incorporated in everything from tourism campaigns to local architecture and signage. <sup>23</sup>

# 3. MUSIC ECOSYSTEM SWOT ANALYSIS



### 3. MUSIC ECOSYSTEM SWOT ANALYSIS

#### STRENGTHS



Hamilton's proximity to Toronto is convenient for touring shows and traveling audiences to stay and/or visit the city

There is a large pool of high caliber talent in Hamilton

Hamilton's existing music strategy has helped improve the music ecosystem which has benefited many businesses and artists overall

The City of Hamilton, the Tourism Department and Economic Development understand the value of music as a part of an economic development strategy

#### WEAKNESSES



The economic impact recovery of the music sector does not seem to be prioritized by the City

There is a perceived small contribution of private investments to the music ecosystem

There is a lack of local music promotion in local radio stations and university stations need more support

Artist's financial sustainability has decreased. Although the city has passed a fair-wage policy for its own events, it is still outpaced by increasing property values and living costs

Lack of rehearsal spaces, creating-leaning office or coworking spaces and recording studios

While there is branding to promote Hamilton as a music city, the music community is unaware or has not fully adopted and utilized the branding offered

Lack of awareness for professional development infrastructure

Lack of mid-sized venues, which decreases the availability of performance space for artists that draw mid-level audiences

#### OPPORTUNITIES



The performing arts activities in bigger cities are an opportunity for Hamilton to strengthen relationships with their music and cultural ecosystems

Targeting traveling audiences from surrounding bigger city events to stay and participate in Hamilton's nighttime economy can increase local talent visibility

Hamilton is less expensive than bigger cities like Toronto and Vancouver which poses opportunities to incentivize more work and accommodations in Hamilton

#### THREATS



The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on local venues has been a major challenge for live performances and events to plan for future functions

Public transportation services (including bus routes) make nighttime businesses inaccessible to some communities

The COVID-19 crisis has affected the platforms in which entertainment events are promoted and therefore, the depletion of media coverage or informed critique of the entertainment sector has decreased local events' and artists' visibility

Hamilton's proximity to Toronto is challenging for Hamilton due to radius clauses, and the possibility of being overshadowed

# 4. KEY FINDINGS





## 4. KEY FINDINGS



### OPERATIONS AND ZONING

The City of Hamilton assists the music industry through its Creative & Cultural Industries section, which includes a collection of staff who oversee a number of functions such as business development, programming, and industry engagement through their facilitation of the Hamilton Music Advisory Team (HMAT). HMAT provides advice and guidance to the city on music related issues.<sup>25</sup>

Most of Hamilton's entertainment is clustered in the core downtown area. Though not called Agent of Change, Hamilton has a policy in place which protects music venues from residential noise complaints. Hamilton is serviced by Hamilton Street Railway, which operates bus routes that connect the downtown and outlying neighbourhoods, although the last service of each night usually

leaves around 1am (with less busy services ending around 10pm).<sup>26</sup> GO Transit connects Hamilton to Greater Toronto via train and bus services, with services ending around midnight.<sup>27</sup> In August 2021 all-day transit between Toronto and Hamilton via GO Train service in West Harbour began, exposing a whole new audience to Hamilton's musical ecosystem.<sup>28</sup>

### LICENSING AND REGULATIONS

Hamilton defines community events as those open to the public with less than 1,000 attendees.<sup>29</sup> Major events are defined as those expecting crowds of 1,000 or more, requiring road closures and including tents or temporary structures large enough to require permits, fireworks or other open flames, alcoholic beverages and amusement rides. Hamilton does not have zone-based dBA limits. Certain activities are exempt from noise permit requirements (or the specifications are included within the terms of other permitting).<sup>30</sup>

**In June 2021, the city finalized a new policy which requires City-led (not City funded) events to pay musicians a fair wage, in accordance with the wage standards set out by the Canadian Federation of Musicians.<sup>31</sup>**

In 2010, a recommendation was submitted to the city by its Emergency & Community Services committee, calling for a strategy to be introduced. The recommendation called back to the Organized Street Buskers Program, which had been put in place as part of the Positively Downtown initiative, but was no longer active.<sup>32</sup> A follow-up submission outlined recommended guidelines and best practices for the proposed strategy.<sup>33</sup> **Though Hamilton passed this busking policy, it requires additional promotion and educational outreach** as the affected population is not necessarily aware of its terms or conditions.<sup>34</sup>

Hamilton follows the Corporate Energy Policy, a city-established standard last updated in 2014, to work towards its goals of a 45% energy reduction by 2030 and an 80% energy reduction by 2050, including greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>35</sup>

**The city has published a post-pandemic reopening guide for events held on public property,** alongside an appendix listing provincial, national and global reopening guidelines from trusted organizations.<sup>36</sup>

Liquor licenses are issued through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, and applicants must complete both the Liquor License form and the Municipal information form. According to the Vision for Ontario's Live Music Industry, **alcohol regulations are unevenly enforced and lack transparency, making it difficult for venues to navigate the territory and uphold the rules.<sup>37</sup>**



## MUSIC EDUCATION

Hamilton's public schools are serviced by the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. The district recognizes the value of arts education in creative, social and intellectual growth and strives to create equal access for all students in elementary and secondary schools.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to municipal curriculum, there are educational opportunities initiated at the provincial level or from the private and non-profit sectors. There are three tertiary programs for music in Hamilton. Redeemer University offers a Bachelor of Arts in Music, as well as music as a minor, but none of the curriculum's classes cover music business fundamentals.<sup>39</sup> Outside of formal education, there are several extra-curricular instrumental and orchestral programs at institutes such as the Hamilton School of Music, Hamilton Conservatory for the Arts and Hamilton Suzuki School of Music.



## FUNDING SUPPORT

**The only municipal fund accessible to the industry is the City Enrichment Fund, which offers monetary support across six areas: Agriculture, Arts, Communities, Culture & Heritage, Community Services, Environment and Sports & Active Lifestyles.<sup>40</sup> Ontario Creates oversees the execution of the Ontario Music Investment Fund, a \$7 million fund granted by the government in May 2020.<sup>41</sup>**

Due to COVID-19, eligible activity shifted in order to cover costs such as salaries, virtual events or networking fees and marketing materials. No plans have been published to replenish the fund since it was first announced.<sup>42</sup> The Ontario Arts Council funds music via five pathways: Music Creation Projects, Music Organizations Operating, Music Production and Presentation Projects, Music Recording Projects, and Musique - projets francophones. Starting

in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the federal budget will allocate CAD\$70 million over three years to go towards Canadian Heritage for the Canada Music Fund.<sup>43</sup>

FACTOR (The Foundation Assisting Canadian Talent On Recordings) oversees the distribution of federal funds from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the country's private radios.<sup>44</sup> The Canada Cultural Spaces Fund provides funding for renovation and construction, including equipment costs and feasibility studies, for cultural spaces.<sup>45</sup> There are no municipal incentives or tax credits for creative enterprises, although this has not always been the case. Creative Industries and Cultural Development maintains a full list of both financial and in-kind COVID-19 relief initiatives available to local musicians.

## MUSIC TOURISM AND BRANDING

Most music venues are clustered in Hamilton's downtown core, with a few dotted around outlying neighbourhoods. There are also several festivals in the area, including Festival of Friends, Supercrawl (which won Tourism Event of the Year in 2015<sup>46</sup>), and the Sound of Music in nearby Burlington, as well as many additional festivals, fairs and events that feature live music even if their programming does not revolve around it.

Tourism Hamilton is the city's agency for promoting Hamilton as a destination for leisure visitors as well as business visitors. Their website contains an 'arts & culture' page, with results that can be further specified to list 'music venues', although no other reference to the local music scene is made. Sports tourism, however, has its own main category within the site-wide hamburger menu.



# 5. RECOMMENDATIONS



# 6. RECOMMENDATIONS (AND IMPLEMENTATION TIERS)

- 1. CITY POLICY AND SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE
- 2. TALENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- 3. MARKETING AND BRANDING
- 4. COVID-19 RECOVERY AND LONG-TERM FUNDING

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<b>RECOMMENDATION #1</b> Investigate/Define the Role of a Music Officer Position		
<b>RECOMMENDATION #2</b> Review Music in Hamilton Webpage		
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #3</b> Conduct Periodic Audits of the Local Industry	
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #4</b> Advocate for Friendlier Noise Ordinances	
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #5</b> Review Agent of Change Policy	
<b>RECOMMENDATION #6</b> Enforce City-Wide Artist Compensation Policy		
<b>RECOMMENDATION #7</b> Promote The City's Busking Policy		
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #8</b> Maximize Spaces Around the City	
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #9</b> Improve Transportation around Local Shows

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<b>RECOMMENDATION #10</b> Create a Working Group for Minority and Indigenous Musicians		
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #11</b> Advocate for Incentive Schemes for Music Businesses and Projects	
<b>RECOMMENDATION #12</b> Create a Series of Professional Development Resources		
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #13</b> Support Accelerator and Incubator Programmes
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #14</b> Implement Affordable Housing and Creative Space Opportunities
<b>RECOMMENDATION #15</b> Create a Music Industry Jobs Board		
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #16</b> Expand Access to Music Industry Internships and Apprenticeships	
<b>RECOMMENDATION #17</b> Promote Local Music amongst Locals, Young Professionals, and Visitors		
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #18</b> Create a Music Destination Campaign
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #19</b> Organize a Music Export Programme
<b>RECOMMENDATION #20</b> Extend and Expand Existing Investment and Recovery Plans		
	<b>RECOMMENDATION #21</b> Create a Funding Pool from Existing Revenue Streams (Hotel Tax)	

# CONCLUSIONS



# CONCLUSIONS

Hamilton's early work in music policy laid a strong foundation to make it an innovative and supportive city for growing and nurturing talent. The challenge now lies in defining the strengths and uniqueness of Hamilton's music offering to set itself apart from nearby competitors such as London as well as industry hubs such as Toronto and New York City.

**Additionally, there is an opportunity to directly address the concerns of artists' radius clause by making it a year-round tour stop as well as an attractive place for artists to reside, thus retaining their cultural contributions during the 'off-season'.**

Much of this objective lies in branding and marketing Hamilton as a music destination for fans and creatives alike. Of course, it's important to maintain infrastructure which supports that claim, such as strong programming, music-friendly noise and licensing policies and affordable housing and business costs. There is a large opportunity in professional development initiatives which can be addressed even in light of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. Education and skills resources are vital to not only strengthening the existing industry, but in building a well-rounded and sustainable next generation of artists and professionals, driving scaleable and feasible growth that will define Hamilton as a welcoming and opportunity-filled city for musicians and music industry stakeholders.

The long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still unknown, but they must be acknowledged first and foremost. Recovery work is a top priority, as it is the most immediate need, and Hamilton must understand that it is no longer creating a strategy built off of the stopping point of the old strategy. It is building Hamilton's music scene back up to its 'new normal' in order to then launch its envisioned future.

Hamilton's music industry is set to thrive, because it has one of the most valuable assets working for it: a city that is consistently looking for ways to provide more support to its music industry and involve itself in support mechanisms and communication. As the Music Cities movement grows, Hamilton will continue to provide an example to smaller cities around the world looking to maximize their local industries in order to help musicians, music professionals, fans and their local economies.



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Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Ontario Creates or the Government of Ontario. The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by the recommendations contained in this document.

## ABOUT SOUND DIPLOMACY



We are the global expert in delivering economic growth to cities and regions, and the tourism and real estate sectors using strategies focused on music and the night time economy.

[www.sounddiplomacy.com](http://www.sounddiplomacy.com)

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Novakovic (2017)
- 2 City and County of San Francisco (2017)
- 3 City of London (2021a)
- 4 Creative BC (2021a)
- 5 City of Ottawa (2019)
- 6 Rancic (2019)
- 7 Priel (2011)
- 8 City of Vancouver (2021a)
- 9 Quartier des Spectacles Partnership (2021)
- 10 The Music District (2021)
- 11 Tennessee Entertainment Commission (2021)
- 12 Visit Austin (2021a)
- 13 Hieggelke (2014)
- 14 Rolling Stone (n.d.)
- 15 Ryerson University (2021)
- 16 City of Hamilton (2017)
- 17 City of Austin (2021)
- 18 Hamilton Musician Media (2021)
- 19 Musicians Union (2019)
- 20 Hamilton Public Library (2021)
- 21 UK Music (2017)
- 22 Visit Liverpool (2019)
- 23 Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp (2021)
- 24 Hristova, Bobby (2021)
- 25 City of Hamilton (2021d)
- 26 City of Hamilton (2021e)
- 27 GO Transit (2021)
- 28 Peesker (2021)
- 29 City of Hamilton (2021h)
- 30 City of Hamilton (2021i)
- 31 City-led means: in-person events, virtual events or activities for the public or for City staff that are initiated by City Staff, or at the direction of Council, or under the guidance of City boards or committees; organized by City staff or contracted to a 3rd party vendor (i.e. Victoria Day, Winterfest) and where a musical performance is a component of the event or activity.
- 32 Priel (2010b)
- 33 Priel (2011)
- 34 City of Hamilton (2021d)
- 35 City of Hamilton (2021n)
- 36 City of Hamilton (2020b)
- 37 City of Hamilton (2021f)
- 38 Ontario Government (2012)
- 39 Redeemer University (2021)
- 40 City of Hamilton (2021p)
- 41 Government of Ontario (2021b)
- 42 Ontario Creates (2021c)
- 43 Canadian Association for Performing Arts (2021)
- 44 FACTOR (2021a)
- 45 Government of Canada (2021b)
- 46 Canadian Press (2015)

# MARKELLS

*Touring Band*



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