



SMITHERS DISTRICT MUSIC STRATEGY

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Planning and Community Engagement Services

creativeBC



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Smithers District Chamber of Commerce
...We Mean Business

**"KEEP
ENCOURAGING
PEOPLE TO TRY AND
GROW IN THEIR ABILITIES
AS WELL AS OPENING UP
TIMES FOR PERFORMANCES. IT
UNIFIES A COMMUNITY. IT
EXPOSES OUR MINDS TO
EXPERIENCE MORE AND MORE
STYLES OF MUSIC AND BRINGS
TOGETHER PEOPLE FROM A MULTITUDE
OF LIFESTYLES AND PREFERENCES TO
BECOME A LOT MORE ACCEPTING AND
WILLING TO EXPERIENCE NEW/
DIFFERENT STYLES OF MUSIC." MUSIC
SURVEY RESPONDENT**



ZAK

WINDLE

March 20/18

Who he is...

My name is Zak Windle and I've lived in Smithers my whole life. I'm primarily a stage performer, but I do other forms of digital media. I make videos and record albums and such.

Growing up as a young musician in Smithers...

[Smithers is] such a small town with everything is at an arm's reach. I remember seeing Alex Cuba when I was young and was like, "Oh my God." And then years later, I meet him and he's buying my album and asking me to sign it in this store [Mountain Eagle Books]. I got super teary but it was such a big moment for me. I don't know if you would get that anywhere else [than in Smithers]. It's such a warm community of people. And if you grow up wanting to be a musician here, there are a bunch of people who have been playing in the Valley for years [who are super supportive]. You just meet people and become [part of the music] scene.

Improving the music sector in Smithers...

I think inspiring up-and-comers and bringing them into the community is really important because ultimately, our youth are our future! In high school, we were playing the band concerts but we didn't want it to end because playing music is fun, and we wanted to make [a music] community for youth. So a year after I graduated there were a bunch of people who put on a Music on Main [festival]. It was all kids around my age who were involved, and it was so cool. Everyone worked so hard to put on this festival [to showcase the many youth bands]. Youth are so passionate and just want [a place] to play. From that festival [the youth music scene] snowballed and everyone just started doing more music. So what more would I like to see? A youth artist showcase would be awesome. A multimedia showcase with recorded music, music videos, and dance recitals.

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A photograph of a man and a woman performing live music. The woman, Michelle Nisbet, is on the left, wearing glasses and a light-colored top, playing an acoustic guitar and singing into a microphone. The man, Robb Nisbet, is on the right, wearing a dark t-shirt, a baseball cap with sunglasses on top, and a beard, also playing an acoustic guitar and singing into a microphone. They are both smiling and appear to be enjoying their performance. The background is a red wall with a large white star graphic.

MICHELLE NISBET

(Backroads Home)

March 25/18

Who she is...

My name's Michelle and I'm part of a band called Backroads Home with my husband [Robb Nisbet]. We write our own songs and perform lots of different places around town. Yeah, we've been playing and singing together for a long time now. We've been in the Valley for about 10 years and formed Backroads Home with a couple of friends about 5 years ago.

Her experience in Smithers as a musician...

The one word that comes to mind is just how encouraging it's been. Robb and I have been singing and writing songs together since the time we met, but doing that is Smithers has been such an exceptional experience. Everyone is so excited and so encouraging when someone takes the time to create or to learn. I don't actually think I've ever been to a coffee house or open mic when I haven't seen someone else on the [receiving] end of that [support]. It's incredible and the general message from the audience is always, "Keep going, keep going!"

We also have people that have become our friends, just by coming out to shows so

consistently, and faithfully supported us whenever we've played. When we did our CD release party it was amazing. We had a few people, we didn't even have to ask for help, people just stepped up and said, you know, "I'll run the kitchen," and "I'll set up chairs" etc. It was phenomenal!

We applied for a grant a couple of years ago, [from the BV Arts Council] and we came out with our first CD. We got that grant and it really helped us make our project possible. And you know, Mountain Eagle [Books] selling our stuff and SpeedDee Printers selling our stuff. Yeah it just all felt very possible.

What she loves about Smithers...

It [the music scene] is a really brilliant part of the community here. The music that happens, the creativity that's here and the encouragement. It's part of why we love Smithers and why we call it home. We're part of the Valley Youth Fiddlers too. We've got three kids in the fiddlers right now and one up and coming. I mean...almost every night I'm like, "I can't believe we get to do this." To have the level of mentorship here for young people still blows my mind.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recognition of the role that music plays in the culture and economy, the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce secured funding to create a Music Strategy to support and grow this economic sector. This project was initiated as part of the Music City Toolkit initiative, which was developed by Music Canada and distributed by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Together with the Chamber's leadership, a partnership with the BV Arts Council, and funding from the Province of British Columbia through Creative BC's Industry Initiatives Program, this project was initiated.

In order to advance the music sector of Smithers and to align with provincial initiatives, this project had three goals:

1. To assemble a Smithers music sector inventory that identified the sector's constituent parts and how they contributed to the sector.
2. To gather preliminary economic information that will help define a baseline assessment of how the music sector is structured.
3. To develop a set of recommendations to help grow the music sector in our region.

Engagement with the existing music sector in Smithers was central to the project. There were three points of community consultation:

- An initial gathering of music stakeholders was held in April of 2017.
- A community survey with a 41% response rate and 36 individual interviews and meetings were conducted in March/April 2018.
- A networking Open House with 27 attendees took place in May of 2018.

The project defines two key parts of the music sector in Smithers and, more generally, in Canada. They are those parts that are core and those that are supporting. Core components are defined by their relationship to a commercial music asset: a song or performance. Supporting components are those activities that flow from the creation of the commercial asset. This a vendor that sells tickets to a music concert, or a teacher that supports an artists' development. Some key highlights from the survey are as follows:

- Artists' main source of revenue is live performances; while 50% reported <\$1,000 annual income, being <10% of total income;
- Our **four major Festivals had an economic impact of \$1,101, 089 in 2017** and have the highest number of recorded volunteer hours than any other music-focused activity. This in-kind work creates substantial economic activity in the Smithers area.
- There are 36 known private music teachers, 33 identified venues, 5 radio stations, and over 83 performers and groups currently in the Smithers Area.

The strategy identifies 19 recommendations divided into three categories of action and responsibility:

1. Municipal Government recommendations focus on regulatory changes that could foster and encourage the growth of the music sector in the Smithers area and, more broadly, the arts and culture sector with which it is heavily integrated.
2. Smithers District Chamber of Commerce recommendations focus on communication and integration of the music sector through an "all things music" website. Business advocacy and attraction work focused on the music sector and building and promoting a Smithers District music brand.
3. Music sector should continue collaboration to strengthen the sector from within.

In parallel to the Bulkley Valley, On May 30, 2018, Music Canada Live, Canada's national live music industry association, launched [Here, The Beat: The Economic Impact of Live Music in BC](#). This assessment of BC's live music sector identifies a number of challenges, opportunities, and insights to the live music industry in BC. Key highlights of the study include:

- The live music contributed **6,950 FTEs, \$619.3 million in labour income, and \$815.8 million in GDP** to the BC economy in 2017.
- A vibrant live music industry provides the conditions that the broader music industry requires to thrive. It is increasingly becoming the **financial lifeblood for the wider music sector**.^{1]}

Our hope is that the work started locally, paired with provincial and national music sector initiatives, will instigate further collaboration and momentum in the Bulkley Valley in raising the profile of our thriving and rich musical community. Implementation of the Smithers District Music Strategy will need to be a collaborative effort by the local municipalities and regional district, the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce and organizations, businesses and individuals involved in the music sector. The supplementary appendices of this report provide information on the data collected and the research resources used.

¹ Music Canada Live Releases "Here, The Beat: The Economic Impact of Live Music in BC" Retrieved from: <http://musiccanadalive.ca/2018/05/music-canada-live-releases-here-the-beat-the-economic-impact-of-live-music-in-bc/>

ABOUT THE SMITHERS MUSIC SECTOR

TOWN OF SMITHERS

The Town of Smithers covers a land area of 15.27 square kilometers and is home to 5,401 residents in 2016 down from 5,404 in 2011. ²Telkwa is a neighbouring community 15 km from Smithers and is home to a population of 1,327 in 2016 down from 1,350 in 2011. Smithers is said to be the regional service center servicing approximately 20,000. Population statistics indicate that Bulkley Nechako Electoral Area A is home to 5,256 in 2016 down from 5,391 in 2011.

Smithers is in the heart of the Witsuwit'en Nation and located on Gitdumden (Wolf) Clan unceded territory. Witsuwit'en can be roughly translated as "People of the lower hills." The Witsuwit'en Nation is from the linguistic Athapaskan family. Their territory surrounds the Bulkley River in the northern interior of British Columbia. The culture is rich and has seen a strengthening resurgence in Smithers. With a theme of coming together, the Bulkley Valley Concert Association (BVCA) in partnership with local First Nations hosted ['Alhk'ikh Ts'édilh : Walking Together](#), a series of three community-building performances in 2017 that celebrated local culture and contributions to the music community.

DEFINING SMITHERS MUSIC ASSETS

Smithers has a dynamic musical community, and is home to established businesses who have grown and opened offices in other places but choose to keep their head offices here. It is Northern BC's cultural capital, with an unparalleled variety of cultural activities reflecting its diverse population.

Towns and cities like Smithers are increasingly recognizing the potential of music as a driver of employment and economic growth beyond its long-acknowledged cultural and social benefits. Studies have shown that the most successful music cities have certain elements in common. These elements are all found here in Smithers and have been included in the inventory of this project (Appendix A) and summarized in the infographic on page 7. This next section describes the essential components of a music city and how they are present in the Smithers community.

Essential Components of Smithers as a Music City

Artists and Musicians

A music city needs people who make music³. There are over 80 individuals and bands, plus many more hobby musicians experimenting with music within our community. We are fortunate to have established musicians that make Smithers their home, including Juno and Latin Grammy Award winner Alex Cuba; Mark Perry; Jenny Lester; Jake Jenne; Welkin Band; renowned Canadian saxophonist Colin Maskel; the BV Fiddlers; European award-winning violinist Simone Hug; and accomplished pianist Serge Mazerand. The notoriety of these local musicians has provided fantastic exposure for Smithers' vibrant music scene.



² [http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=59&Geo2=CSD&Code2=5951043&Data=Count&SearchText=Smithers&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1)

[Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=59&Geo2=CSD&Code2=5951043&Data=Count&SearchText=Smithers&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=59&Geo2=CSD&Code2=5951043&Data=Count&SearchText=Smithers&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1)

³ Clements, Alex; Horgarth, Don; Ozege, Siobhan; Terrill, Amy. 2015. Mastering of A Music City. Retrieved from: <https://musiccanada.com/resources/research/the-mastering-of-a-music-city/> pg 18

Smithers Music



The Smithers, BC area recently underwent an evaluation of its music community. Take a look at the variety of contributors to our vibrant and exciting music sector.

33
VENUES



7 Restaurant venues
8 Outdoor venues

10 Small venues <100
8 Large venues >100

83

**Performers
& Artists**

5

**RADIO
STATIONS**



**Annual
Music
Events**



- Concert Association Series
- Farmers Market
- BVFMS Coffee Houses
- Home Routes
- Round Lake Coffee Houses
- CLICK Lounge Car Sessions
- Lawn Chair Lounge



36 Teachers

MUSIC BUSINESSES

- ~ Instrument Building & Repair
- ~ Sound & Lighting
- ~ Video Production



2

**Local News
Publications**



4

**MAJOR
FESTIVALS**

- Spirit of the North
- Midsummer Music Festival

- Telkwa BBQ
- Bulkley Valley Fall Fair

A Thriving Music Scene

Live music performances build a thriving music scene. In the Bulkley Valley, there is a diversity of music contributions with support for local and indigenous cultural expression that continues to grow. The community also has an appetite for a variety of touring acts that covers classical musicians, folk, rock, and Canadian indie music. There is a strong focus on local music expression with interest in looking for inspiration from outside the community. Developing the younger music fan and audience is something Smithers has excelled at in the past but continually needs attention.

Access to Space and Places

Spaces and places for live music performances, rehearsing, recording and music education are integral to the success of a music city.⁴ The Smithers area has 33 identified live music venues ranging from small indoor spaces to large outdoor venues, and a small selection of rehearsal/studio spaces and home studios that have not been counted. Out of 33 six venues in the Valley that have sound systems available for musicians and event organizers to use, but still require a sound technician.

The business community has shown interest in and acknowledges the value and cultural experience music brings to businesses. New and existing restaurants are hosting musicians and creating regular music evenings. Some highlights are the Roadhouse with the Roadhouse Sessions, Studio 16 hosting house concerts downtown, Boston Pizza installing a sound system in order to host live music, and Bugwood Bean encouraging live busking. In addition to business, local groups host live entertainment at country community halls, and the downtown street piano installation in the summer months adds to the vibrancy of our spaces and places in Smithers.

A Receptive and Engaged Audience

The BVCA sells an average of 235 tickets for each show in their concert series of 4-6 shows per year. Smithers boasts many small events and concerts ranging from out of town attractions to local talent showcases. On any given Friday or Saturday evening, there is something happening in the Valley. From open mic, coffee houses, and touring artists to CICK lounge car sessions, electronic dance parties, local talent concerts and showcases, and community orchestra concerts.

Record Labels and Other Music Related Businesses

Music-related businesses are vital to the success of a thriving music scene. The Bulkley Valley is fortunate to have a growing business sector with a focus on music-related activities. There is Michael Nelligan with Horncraft Music, and two additional instrument makers in the area. Steve Taylor, of Taylor Sound and Light Productions, works with event organizers and festivals to create the sound stages needed to make every event a success. Also, there are small “hobby businesses” working with local

artists to record and publish records, a supportive local media, small business promoters such as Smithers Events, and community communication tools such as In the Loop.

Other Important Elements of the Smithers Music Sector⁵

Multi-level Government Support for Music

The Bulkley Valley is fortunate to have supportive political representation from all levels of government. From our provincial MLA including live music in the meeting to introduce proportional representation to municipal government representatives partnering with community groups throughout the development of infrastructure such as Bovill Square. An example of local government support for music is the recent removal of fees and insurance requirements for non-profit organizations renting Bovill Square for live music events. The Smithers Town Council recognized the barriers to hosting events at the community stage and has worked with groups to reduce the costs and obstacles associated with programming in this public space.

The Town of Smithers Official Community Plan outlines the following community goal for Heritage, Arts and Culture:

*Heritage, Arts and Culture: Celebrate our history and culture. Smithers is an important cultural centre for the Northwest. We will continue to encourage an array of arts and educational opportunities to our residents, neighbours and visitors and actively encourage participation and appreciation through our festivals, courses, workshops, shows, openings and events. We recognize the importance of arts and culture to diversifying the town and improving quality of life, and support developing infrastructure to encourage more opportunities. We value, protect and celebrate our heritage. We also acknowledge the connection that the Wet'suwet'en First Nation has to the lands on which Smithers lies.*⁶

The community goal above is further supported by three key policies found in Section 12. 2.3 Arts and Culture that support the objective *“To support and encourage the growth and appreciation of arts and culture.”* The policies found in this section state that the Town of Smithers will make decisions that recognize the efforts of the arts community, encourage the development of a vision and strategy to describe and formalize the relationships within the cultural community, and finally, support the community to continue to provide and improve the local arts and cultural opportunities.⁷

Political support is particularly important for the implementation of recommendations outlined in this strategy.

⁴ Clements, Alex; Horgarth, Don; Ozege, Siobhan; Terrill, Amy. 2015. Mastering of A Music City. Retrieved from: <https://musiccanada.com/resources/research/the-mastering-of-a-music-city/> pg 18

⁵ Clements, Alex; Horgarth, Don; Ozege, Siobhan; Terrill, Amy. 2015. Mastering of A Music City. Retrieved from: <https://musiccanada.com/resources/research/the-mastering-of-a-music-city/> pg 19

⁶ Town of Smithers Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1614, 2000. Page 8, Section 2.1. Retrieved from: http://www.smithers.ca/uploads/BL_1614_Official_Community_Plan_-_February_28,_2018.pdf

⁷ Town of Smithers Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1614, 2000. paraphrased from page 48, Section 2.1. Retrieved from: http://www.smithers.ca/uploads/BL_1614_Official_Community_Plan_-_February_28,_2018.pdf

Music Education

The skills of local music teachers have fostered the growth of Ian Olmstead and Jake Jenne, who toured with Alex Cuba; and Roxy Dykstra, who is now in the third year of organizing a significant Valley-wide classical music festival which is getting provincial recognition. The BV Fiddlers, who were on a provincial tour with their production of Alaria's Fiddle, are all students who have been creating quality entertainment.

Music education is present in Smithers in the public schools and is provided by a variety of professional music teachers who inspire musicians of all ages to continually learn. The value of music education is ingrained in the community and in community policy.

Music History

The BV Museum also holds items related to music/performance history in its archival and artifact collections. There are a few examples of musical instruments, photographs, and some items related to the Smithers Harmonettes, Bulkley Valley Players, and the BVCA.

The Telkwa BBQ beginning in 1912, is one of the oldest festivals in BC. The Midsummer Music Festival is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year. These and other events bring in tourists during the summer season by providing entertainment and attractions to those exploring the North and providing an opportunity to take a breather from the great outdoor recreation opportunities available here.

Recognition of Music as an Economic Driver

The Smithers District Chamber of Commerce recently added "Major Contributor to Arts and Culture" as one of its categories in its annual Community and Business Awards.

To market smaller, rural areas as viable places for musicians to choose to live and work, we have to promote the lifestyle benefits of our small, but vibrant mountain town, and the opportunities musicians will find by living here. Opportunities such as affordable housing; easy access to amenities like world-class skiing, hiking and fishing; and of course, places to gather an audience for performances all make Smithers an attractive place to live. These lifestyle opportunities have to be balanced with employment opportunities so that both are present and continue to be created and supported in this area.

Strong Community Radio Supporting Local Independent Music

The Smithers Community Radio Society is an incorporated non-profit that manages a locally supported, volunteer operated community radio station that provides programming with a focus on local artists, non-mainstream Canadian music, and commentary reflecting the community's diverse perspectives. Community radio is very different from traditional commercial media resources that service the Smithers community.

CICK 93.9 FM has been working to showcase local talent through their volunteer broadcaster, and through programs such as the BVFMS show, Local Yocal Hour, and most recently by engaging local artists in hosting Lounge Car Sessions. These sessions involve local and touring artists featured in a half-hour free concert hosted at the lounge car. The concert is aired live on CICK 93.9 FM and recorded for replay. This program has provided opportunities for unrecorded local emerging artists to not only share their talents on air, but also provide them with recordings they can use to promote their work and careers.

Benefits of a Vibrant Music Scene

Music builds community and friendships, and allows people to feel connected and to experience the beauty others have to offer. In addition to the social benefits of music, such arts and culture activities have significant economic benefits for communities. Jason Azmier, Senior Policy Analyst from the Canada West Foundation and author of *Culture and Economic Competitiveness: An Emerging Role for the Arts in Canada* explains:

*"It is a city's urban culture and 'livability' aspects that determine where someone decides to hang up their shingle and lay down roots... Climate, quality of public services, tax rates, crime levels, perceived opportunities, ethnic diversity, the cultural amenities of a city all these elements are factored in..."*⁸

Music has enormous potential as an economic, job creation and cultural driver. The benefits of a thriving music scene and a supportive environment that enables it to thrive have been demonstrated worldwide⁹. It is well known that the arts and culture sector of any community is a key economic driver that contributes to local economies; builds strong and vibrant communities; and promotes civic engagement and community pride¹⁰. As outlined in the publication from Music Canada, *The Mastering of a Music City*, "a thriving music scene generates a wide array of benefits for cities, from economic impacts to cultural development. Key benefits include:

- Economic impact;
- Music tourism;
- City brand building;
- Cultural development and artistic growth;
- Attracting/retaining talent and investment in the area;
- Strengthening the social fabric; and
- Validating music as a respected and legitimate industry."¹¹


The Smithers music sector and the people who participate in and create it, love doing what they do. They are passionate about music, about community and about a sense of place. Much of the work in the community is done by volunteers. They create unique experiences, opportunities, and inspiration for those around them. Participants in the Smithers music scene understand that you reap what you sow and see their efforts as an investment for the future of the community. This passion, in turn, creates more job growth and keeps people living and participating in the local economy in the Bulkley Valley.

⁸ Arts BC. Advocacy ToolKit For People Powering the Arts. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from: https://artsbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ArtsBC_Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf

⁹ Clements, Alex; Horgarth, Don; Ozege, Siobhan; Terrill, Amy. Feb 2016. BC's Music Sector—From Adversity to Opportunity. Retrieved from: <https://musiccanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/BCs-Music-Sector-From-Adversity-to-Opportunity.pdf>

¹⁰ Facts and Stats of BC Arts and Culture sector.

¹¹ Clements, Alex; Horgarth, Don; Ozege, Siobhan; Terrill, Amy. 2015. Mastering of A Music City. Retrieved from: <https://musiccanada.com/resources/research/the-mastering-of-a-music-city/>

A photograph of Steve Taylor, a man with glasses and a dark cap, working at a DJ booth. He is wearing a dark t-shirt and is focused on his equipment. The background shows various audio and lighting gear, including a Mackie mixer and a Tascam recorder. The date 'March 20/18' is visible on the mixer.

STEVE TAYLOR

March 20/18

What he does...

I provide audio support for musical acts and events and video and lighting as well. We do pretty much every type of production support in the industry. We can do stage management as well if you need us to...[I operate] mainly in Smithers and Telkwa.

On why his business thrives in Smithers...

Well, [Smithers] is a massively arts-and-culture-oriented area. It really is. Not just for music. The actual creative arts are also represented, like dance and visual arts. It's just a huge cultural area. Even more so than the city, I would say. I'm sure the city's got more bands... but I think per capita [there's more] up here.

On how Smithers has supported his business...

The town has hired me directly for stuff from time to time so in that respect, yes, [there's been support]. Absolutely, the [Bulkley Valley Folk Music Society] recommends me all the time. And through the references that just happen naturally...everyone gets to know me. Everyone knows my family in some way. That's what happens when you're from here. I have a few connections that way from people who knew me

growing up.

On improving the local music sector...

I think that the people who want to put on shows are here. I think that one of the struggles we have in the town are venues. We have many venues but they're limited. [A major performance venue would help the music scene in Smithers.] What that would be exactly is hard to say. Whether it's a multi-purpose room or something with versatility. It could be a meeting room, it could be a dance hall or a [live music venue]. Kind of like what the Prestige is...For outdoor venues [the town] is doing pretty good, although they are limited in their own way because of weather factors.

I'm finding that the volunteer side of things is a lot slimmer lately. And that's not just for festivals, that's everywhere- even outside of arts and culture. Even in the agricultural part of things it's hard to find people to help out these days. To make an event happen is hard. It's the old guys and they're tired. Volunteers are tough [to find] and that's just part of the day and age we're in. People are busy or...electronics. That's one of the reasons I limit how much my kids can play on their electronics. You know, go talk to people!

SMITHERS MUSIC SECTOR ECONOMIC PROFILE - SURVEY FINDINGS

PURPOSE

The scope of the project included the development of an economic baseline assessment for the Smithers music sector. A framework (Appendix B) describing the structure of the music economy in Smithers was adapted from the BC Music Industry Sector Profile.¹² The collected and verified baseline inventory of the Smithers music sector (Appendix A) was combined with web-based survey findings and local knowledge to develop:

- A structural view of the Smithers music economy;
- Preliminary economic statistics related to parts of the Smithers music economy;
- A summary of community perspectives on the strengths, challenges, and opportunities of the Smithers music sector; and
- Recommendations for the Smithers music sector.

GENERAL APPROACH AND LIMITATIONS

This project first worked to update and refine an existing baseline inventory of Smithers' participants in the music economy. This baseline inventory was combined with local knowledge, web-based searches, and targeted interviews to develop a survey that gathered baseline information to identify core and supporting components of the Smithers music sector. That data is summarized in this section of the strategy and makes up the economic profile that will be used to both outline preliminary findings of the structure and value of the Smithers music sector, and highlight areas requiring further study.

In the experience of the contractor, developing an economic assessment of a diverse and integrated economy like the music sector is an interactive process. The survey was not intended to collect the full depth of information required to assemble a complete economic baseline but rather identify its component parts in order to inform recommendations for further work.

The Smithers music economy is driven by a strong group of volunteer artists and music supporters, committed to increasing the cultural richness of the Valley. The size and value of a music economy in a town the size of Smithers is heavily dependent on the passion of the participants. The survey revealed that artists and supports contribute to the music economy in multiple ways and often on the basis of volunteerism rather than employment. This impacted the results of the survey as single respondents contributed to multiple components of the sector. These individuals rarely derived a self-sustaining economic value from the activities. This limits the economic opportunities to a few individuals who pursue professional careers in music. While it may not create a strong financial base, this volunteer approach fosters a vibrant, lively, and creative environment for emerging and hobby artists, while engaging the community in the arts.

DEFINING THE SMITHERS DISTRICT MUSIC SECTOR

A Smithers district music sector framework (Appendix B) helped to categorize how different individuals and organizations contribute to the local music economy. This framework defined core and supporting activities of the Smithers music sector and informed the survey's approach to data collection in order to determine the size and value of the music economy.

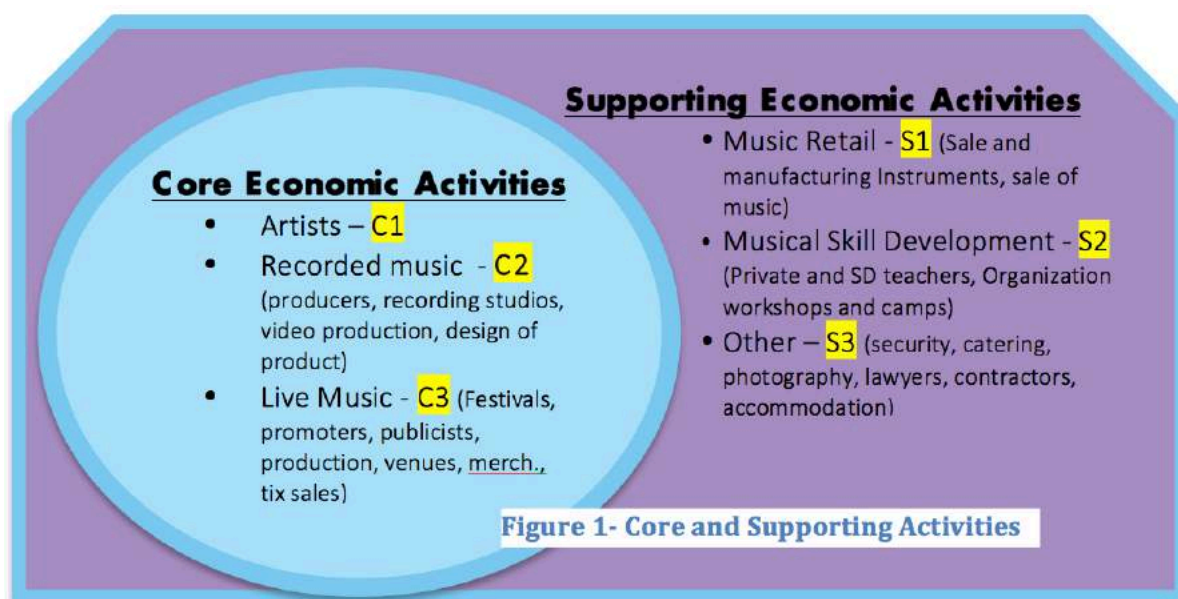
As outlined in the framework, these core and supporting activities in a small and rural community were difficult to measure. One important factor is that both core and supporting activities enhance well-being and are generally valued for their non-monetary contributions over their economic value.

According to the BC Music Industry Sector Profile, "core components of a music industry are defined by their relationship to a commercial music asset, while supporting components are those activities that flow from the creation of the commercial asset related to the core components. These commercial music assets generate economic activity that then contribute to a local economy and can be defined as a sector."¹³

Figure 1 illustrates the core and supporting activity groupings that have been used to categorize the Smithers district music sector. Artists encompass core activities being C1. The core activities further consist of recorded music including producers, recording studios, video production, and the design of products (C2). Lastly, live music including festivals and events, promoters, publicists, production services, venues, merchandise sales, and ticket sales are core economic activities being C3. The supporting activities are also broken

¹² BC Music Industry Sector Profile – Creative BC - https://www.creativebc.com/database/files/library/BC_Music_Industry_Profile_Creative_BC_Aug_2014.pdf

¹³ BC Music Industry Sector Profile – Creative BC - https://www.creativebc.com/database/files/library/BC_Music_Industry_Profile_Creative_BC_Aug_2014.pdf



down into three categories: music retail including the sale and manufacturing of instruments and distribution of music (S1); musical skill development including private and school district teachers, organization workshops, and camps (S2); and finally, a diverse variety of businesses that support the music sector but also support other sectors of the economy such as security, catering, photography, lawyers, accountants, contractors, and accommodation (S3). Teachers, businesses, organizations, and venues are assumed to have activities that contribute to both core and supporting.

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey was launched on March 9th 2018 and emailed directly to 160 individuals, businesses, and organizations in the community. In addition, a press release was sent to local media and posted on the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce's facebook page, shared by the mayor, and spread by word of mouth. The survey closed on April 13th 2018 with 65 responses, being a 41% response rate. These survey responses were analyzed and augmented with 36 interviews and meetings with community members and businesses involved in the Smithers music scene to better assess the results of all relevant activities. When breaking down the response rate in comparison with the project's inventory of music related activities in Smithers (Appendix A), the following response rates apply: 21% of all artists, 48% of all venues, 50% of teachers, 69% of organizations, and 38% of businesses.

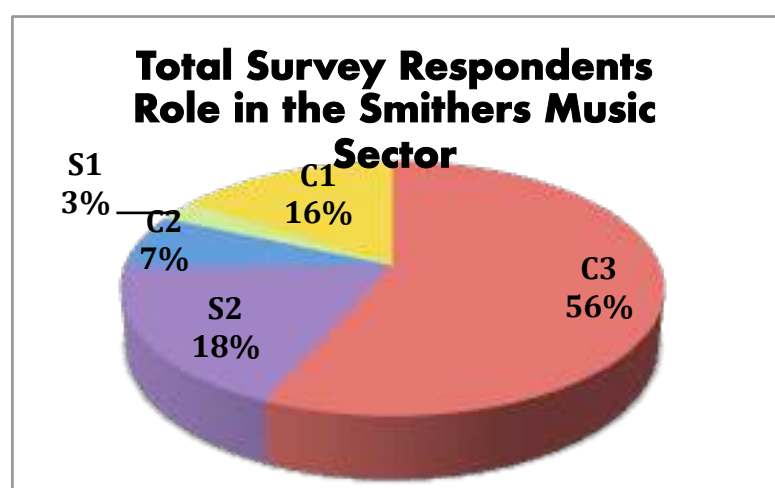


Figure 2 - Total Survey Respondents Role in the Sector (65 Responses)

The collected information further confirmed that a large number of professional and hobby artists, as well as a variety of businesses, did not participate in this survey. Therefore, the data does not provide a complete representation of the economic activity in this area.

Both the survey and interviews helped to confirm that the music economy in Smithers is heavily subsidized by grants from provincial sources, and is elevated by a strong volunteer core working to enhance the cultural experience and livability of Northern British Columbia. The survey results and findings also help to populate the framework and provide a profile, or snapshot, of what the music sector in Smithers looks like today.

The survey results in the next section are reported on using the approach illustrated in figure 3. These results make up the economic profile (proportion of core and supporting) of this sector.

The survey results were then applied to the framework illustrated in figure 1, which created the structure for reporting the survey results. As seen in figure 2, the survey showed that 76% of the respondents are involved with core activities and 24% with supporting activities. While this level of core participation indicates a solid foundation for growth, a closer look at the survey results and follow-up interviews revealed that many of the core activities generated little to no economic activity or value.



Figure 3 - Survey Results Applied to the Framework

Smithers Music Sector Economic Profile

SURVEY RESULTS 2018

Survey closed with **65 responses**, being a **41%** response rate, augmented with **35 interviews**.

Response rate in comparison with the project's inventory:
21% of all artists, **48%** of all venues,
50% of teachers, **69%** organizations and
38% of businesses.



ARTISTS - C1

#1 Source of revenue was live performances

50 % of artists report <\$1,000 annual income, being <10% of total income

3 largest expenses: Supplies and Equipment, Travel, Space Rental

21% of known Smithers musicians (83 known performers & Artist) report 239 live performances in 2017.



RECORDED AND LIVE MUSIC - C2 & C3

67% interest in increasing employment in the business of recording music

Employment was reported at **17%** full-time equivalent and **83%** part-time equivalent (includes production businesses, 2 radio stations based out of Smithers, 2 local news publications)

Highest reported expenses staff, artist fees, and insurance

48% of venues (total out of 33) reported 202 live performances in 2017

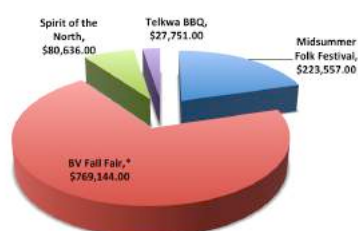
Festivals - C3

festivals have the **highest number** of recorded **volunteer hours** than any other activity, in-kind work creating an industry

Economic impact of four major festivals = **\$1,101,089**



Total Economic Impact of 4 Major Festivals in the BV Yates Spreadsheets



SKILL DEVELOPMENT - S2

36 known private music teachers = 36 part-time equivalent jobs

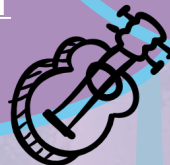
Employment was reported at **83%** full-time equivalent jobs and **17%** part-time equivalent jobs

Highest reported expenses venue cost, being rehearsal and class room space with the next being insurance



INSTRUMENT MAKERS - S1

Instrument makers indicated **50%** interest in job growth.



SURVEY FINDING

Fair compensation for musicians needs to be considered when the community leans on artists and performers to create culture and activity.

SURVEY FINDING

Space rental is the number one expense that can be addressed through municipal arts and culture space subsidies, the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa could consider making more space available for musicians and artists through cultural planning.

SURVEY FINDING

Growth potential for businesses involved in recording music C2 and instrument makers and sales S1

SURVEY FINDING

Grants heavily support the music sector in the Smithers area, with individual artist, business and organizations dependent on them as a source of income. Without external funding and support this sector would see a substantial reduction in size and diversity.

SURVEY FINDING

Insurance is a reported expense. There are opportunities for those within the industry to work with the BV Community Arts Council in becoming members and obtaining group insurance.

CORE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES SMITHERS MUSIC SECTOR
ARTISTS - C1 RECORDED MUSIC - C2 LIVE MUSIC - C3

SUPPORTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES SMITHERS MUSIC SECTOR
MUSIC RETAIL - S1 MUSICAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT - S2 OTHER - S3



Survey Results– Artists

This section provides a profile of professional and developing or hobby artists, all of whom represent a core activity (C1) within the Smithers music sector. 18 artists and performers responded to this section of the survey out of an inventory list of 83 individual and band artists/performers (21 % response rate). The low response rate was primarily due to that fact that artists typically have ‘day jobs’ that provide the majority of their essential income, which limits their time and capacity – a factor highlighted in the follow-up survey responses.

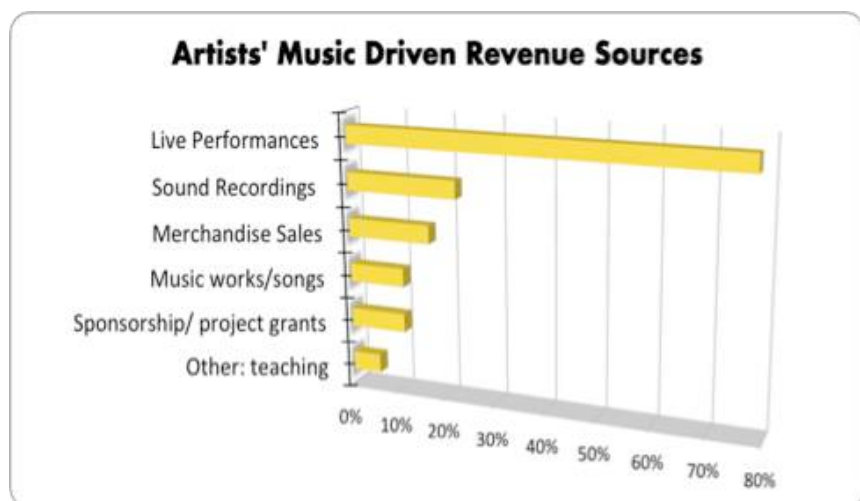


Figure 4 - Artists Income Sources

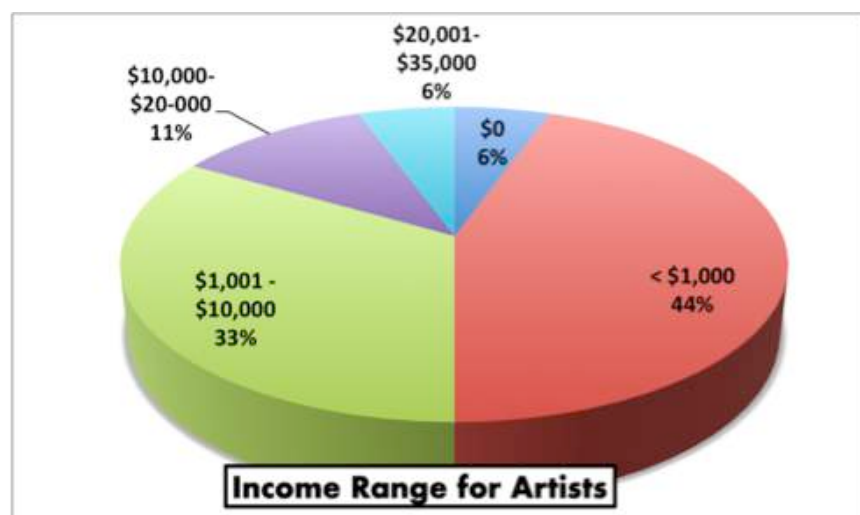


Figure 5 - Artists Income Range

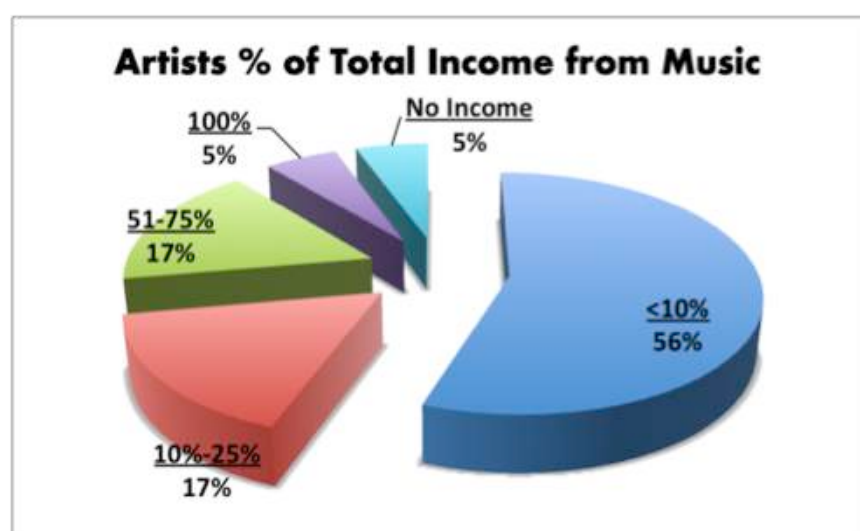


Figure 6 - Artists % of Total Annual Income

Artists' Role in the Smithers Music Sector

Out of these 18 artists, 82% identified as performers and 18 % as songwriters/composers. The survey identified a wide spectrum of music talent in the community from professional artists to hobby artists. These artists have a varying degree of education, involvement in community projects, and personal projects that keep them engaged and inspired by music.

Artists' Income In Smithers

78% of artists responding to the survey indicated live performances are the number one source of revenue (figure 4). Results show that 50% of artists are reporting a total income of less than \$1,000 annually (figure 5) generated from their music activities. Of the artists responding, 61% indicated that music makes up less than 10% of their annual income, while only one respondent indicated that 100% of their total income is derived from music (figure 6).

For an extremely active music community, one can see how earning a living through a music career in Smithers would be very challenging given the income findings. Many musicians play music as a hobby and keep full-time jobs in order to support their lifestyles in the Smithers area. Individual artists have indicated that music is largely a volunteer activity in the Smithers area, a hobby that reflects their passion for a culturally rich community. This challenge is partially due to the size of the community and proximity to larger centres with stronger music sectors and larger populations.

An inference drawn through the development of this strategy is the low monetary value that general community members place on the efforts of musicians and other professionals involved in creating quality music and their contribution to community well-being. This is a well known trend for many small community organizations and entrepreneurs in Canada. Fair compensation for musicians needs to be considered when the community leans on artists and performers to create culture and activity. There is an opportunity to work as a community to identify fair compensation rates for performers and other music professionals. Examples from larger centres, such as “The Fair Trade Music Program;” founded in Portland, Oregon; certifies venues that fairly compensate performing artists¹⁴.

¹⁴ Fair Trade Music Program: https://www.payscale.com/research/CA/Job=Musician_or_Singer/Salary

<https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/27-2042.02> (American website.)

Top Three Reported Expenses Related to Artists Music Activities

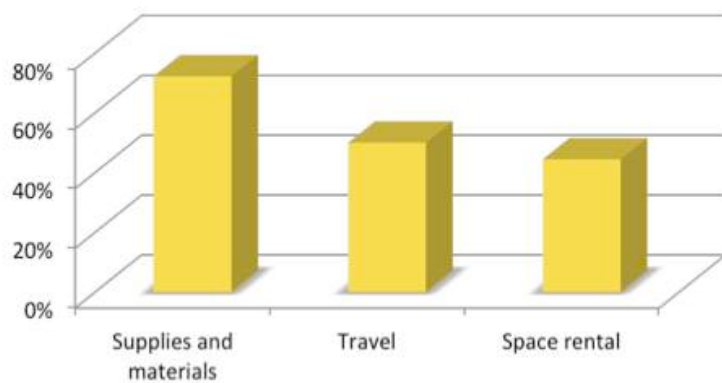


Figure 7 - Artists Reported Expenses

Three Largest Reported Expenditures Music Related Activities

The survey examined the type and level of expenses that artists encounter in order to help determine potential supports that can be provided. Artists who participated in the survey reported the top three expenses as:

- supplies and equipment;
- travel; and,
- space rental.

Space rental (figure 7) is the number one expense that can be addressed through municipal arts and culture space subsidies. This can be seen currently in Smithers with low rental rates at the Central Park Building. This is also an area that the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa could address by making more space available for musicians and artists through cultural planning.

Live Performances

18 Artists reported a total of 239 live performances in 2017. When comparing this to artist's income, once again the finding that artists generally volunteer their time in performances is supported.

Survey Results – Music Teacher, Business, Organization or Venues

This section provides a profile of the 45 music teachers, businesses, organizations and venues responding to the survey. Out of 45 surveys; 16 were identified as venues; 11 as organizations; 9 as businesses; and 18 as teachers.

Based on the framework, venues represent a core activity (live music C3); teachers represent a supporting activity (musical skill development S2); and businesses represent both core and supporting activities (recorded music C2, live music C3, music retail S1, musical skill development S2 and other S3).

Role in the Smithers Music Sector

When asked to describe their primary role in the music sector, 72% of respondent's activities indicated core economic activities while 28% of respondent's activities indicated supporting activities (figure 8).

The survey indicates that in addition to artists, the top three activities in the core of the Smithers music sector are promoters, music festival/event organizers, and venues.

Employment & Average Annual Income

Respondents were asked to identify the number of employees/contractors working on a full-time or part-time basis in 2017. The responses were adjusted to assume that private music teachers responding employ themselves on a part-time basis and have no other staff. The results show that full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs focus on supporting activities (83% of supporting is FTE), while core activities result in more part-time equivalent (PTE) opportunities (82% of core is PTE) (figure 9).

Teachers, Business, Organizations and Venue Respondents Role in the Smithers Music Sector

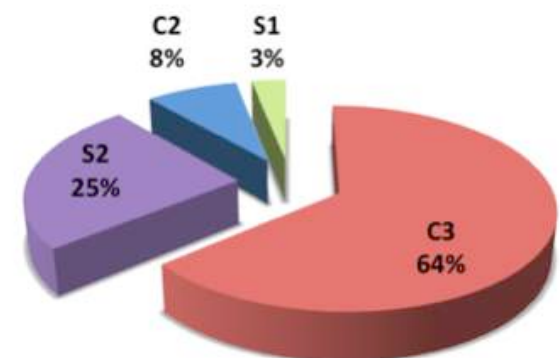
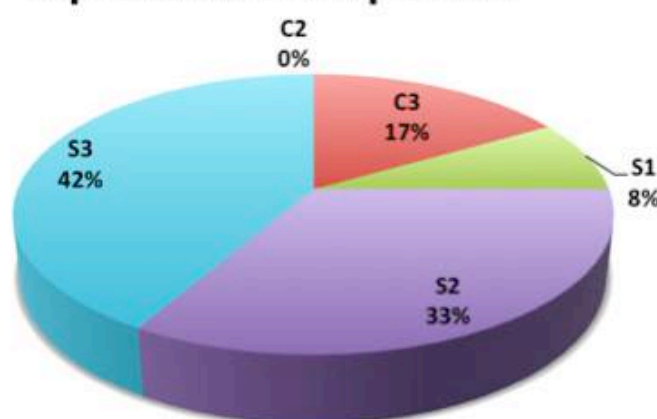


Figure 8 - Respondents Role in the Smithers Music Sector

Reported Full Time Equivalent



Reported Part Time Equivalent

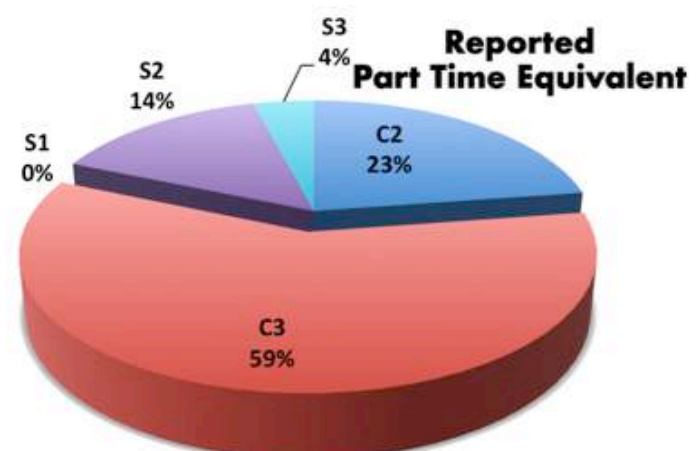


Figure 9 - Full-time and Part-time Equivalent



MARK PERRY

March 26/18

Who he is...

I'm Mark Perry and basically I'm a performer songwriter kind of and the area that I live in inspires me to write songs. Songwriting is the big chase. You do something over and over and sometimes you catch on to something.

Why he loves Smithers...

I think living in this area gives me an advantage because, you know, I think it's fairly unique. The people, the characters around here from Rupert to Prince George. I try to get the feel for it [and incorporate it into my songs].

Yeah I'm pretty frickin fortunate to have the support that I do. To play a hall and have people come out is just incredible. I think that kind of support is unique to Smithers. You can just tell that people are proud of where they live.

Why he thinks the Smithers music scene thrives...

There's countless live music opportunities...it's almost like its snowballed. There are people who have moved to this community because of that. And you meet performers and people like that and they say, "Well I like living here because there's a live

music scene and art matters."

The music program in school has to be a big part of that too. Like Alex [Cuba] toured with two kids from here that went through the music program...it's a tribute to the [quality of the] program, definitely. When music is ingrained that early, instead of being afraid of it, it just becomes this thing that you do naturally. If you are allowed to, if that's nourished, that art, then you're gonna get a fricken genius out of that. It's just a very nurturing artistic community.

On community support for music...

Well they [the community] put up with me. I've played a lot of dances- Elks hall, Driftwood hall. I've played a lot of great big rooms, and they've tolerated me for years. They've always supported live music and it's grown even more over the years. Writing wise, people here seem to get what I do and I'm honoured and I'm very lucky. And I think Smithers has an amazing support base. If you put something in you'll get it back for sure. The support has been incredible...And as far as the local organizations in town- the BVFMS and the people in it- the way they've nurtured us all. They've had coffee houses and you can come up and play your songs.

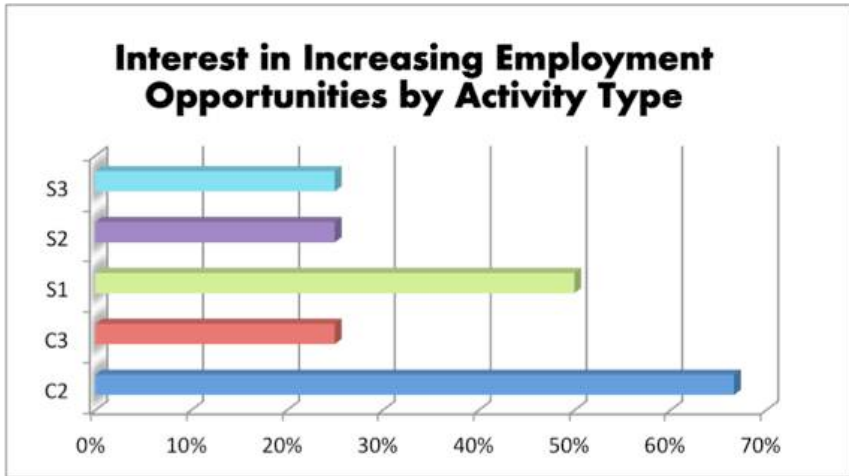


Figure 10 - Interest in Increasing Employment

These findings again highlight the challenges both artists and core music-based businesses and organizations face in generating FTE employment through the music economy. Supporting businesses seem to have a more diversified portfolio. This allows them to retain FTE's in support of the music sector, and also to support other non-music related business activities. These trends are in part driven by the demand for music in the local economy. The core of the music sector creates more part-time opportunities or contracts, which can help subsidize hobbies and create opportunities for diversified income sources for those choosing the Northern lifestyle. Further study that identifies key barriers for musicians and other core activities preventing full-time music sector employment would help inform recommendations.

Respondents were further asked if they had plans to increase or decrease employment opportunities in the coming years. As seen in figure 10, 67% of businesses involved in recording music (C2) have an interest in increasing employment opportunities in the coming year, indicating a potential for growth. Respondents in music retail (S1), including instrument makers and sales, expressed similar growth interests.

Music Revenue

Respondents were asked, "What music-related revenue in the Smithers area was received in 2017?". 39% of respondents involved in core activities and 23 % in supporting activities indicated less than \$10,000 in annual revenues. 18% of supporting activity respondents indicated average annual revenues of \$35,000-\$60,000 (figure 11).

Figure 11 illustrates that higher music related revenues are generated from supporting activities than core activities in the Smithers music sector. This is partially due to the size and popularity of musical skill development in the Smithers area.

The ability to generate revenue is key to the success of an economy. In conversations with individual businesses and organizations, revenue generating activities included grants, ticket sales, cd sales, services, products, rental of space, ads, sponsors, live concerts, manufacturing instruments, music lessons, music journalism and advertising, and radio programming. Of these activities, grants were highlighted as essential to support and create income. Without external funding and support this sector would see a substantial reduction in size and diversity.

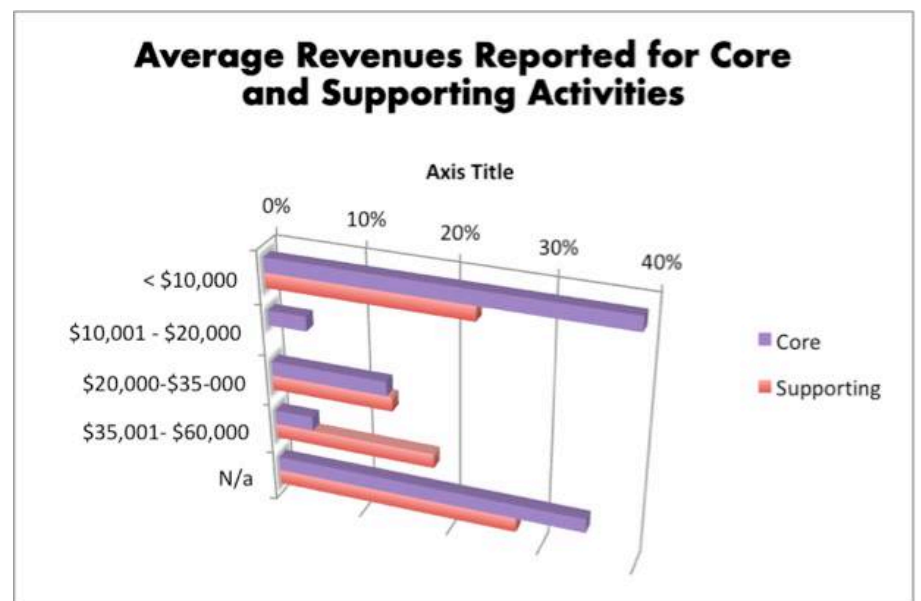


Figure 11-Average Revenues Core & Supporting

Music Related Expenses

Revenues and expenses are important to understand when considering what supports are necessary to drive growth within this sector. Given the small margins of revenue reported, it is important to identify opportunities for both direct subsidies and funding to develop stronger support structures for the arts.

Musical skill development supporting activities (i.e. teachers) reported the widest variety of expenses, with venues as the number one expense, and insurance a close second. Venues in this case can also be considered as teaching and studio space rentals. This segment of the Smithers music economy works to inspire and create emerging artists, the core of any music sector. There is value in this segment of the music economy, indicating opportunities for additional support to ensure its strength, presence, and growth.

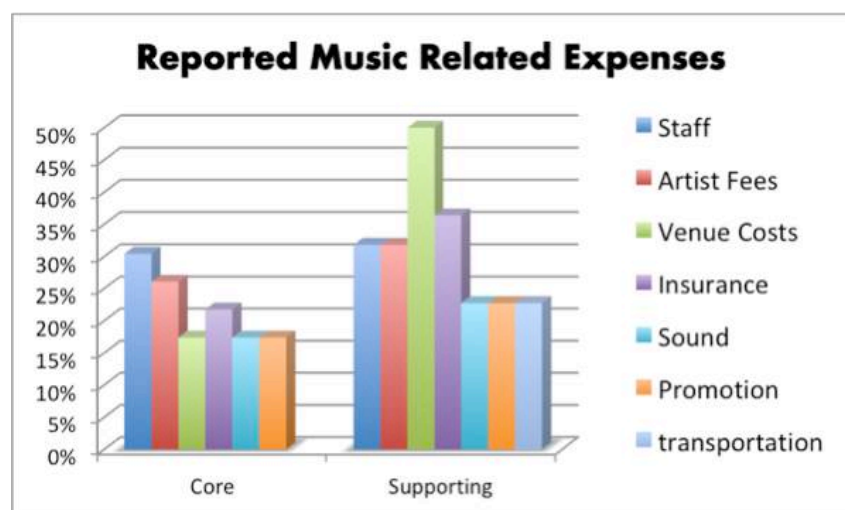


Figure 12- Music Related Expenses

Live Music Venues

Out of the 16 venues responding to the survey there was a total of 202 music related bookings in 2017.

6 venues responded as having a PA in place. These 6 include the Old Church, CICK Lounge Car, Round Lake Hall, Fairgrounds (BVFMA Sound System), Boston Pizza, and the Telkwa Pub.

Venue costs range from free, to partnerships, to hourly rates. This information will be included in the Music Smithers website directory (Appendix A). It will be updated by the Chamber of Commerce annually, dependent on summer students funding. This inventory does not include house concert locations, as this tends to change regularly.

Music Festivals

Festivals are considered separately in the analysis because they are a micro-music sector onto themselves. A music festival brings together every aspect of the core and supporting music sector into one community effort.

The Bulkley Valley has the longest standing festival in British Columbia. The Telkwa BBQ started 106 years ago and continued strong throughout both world wars. This festival is still happening with live concerts and a community dance, wrapped into a weekend of derby madness. For the past decade the BV Kinsmen have used the Telkwa BBQ grounds to add the element of big country and rock bands touring to Telkwa, a community of 1,700 residents. They've showcased big names such as Kim Mitchell, Myles Goodwyn, April Wine, and Emerson Drive in 2013; Loverboy, Headpins, Dallas Smith, One More Girl in 2014, Prism, Honeymoon Suite, and Brett Kissel in 2015; and Barney Bentall, Colin James, Jordan McIntosh, and Chan Brownlee in 2016. The festival went local in 2017 with the Rats from Kitimat, and East West & Dr. Awkwa.Rd from Smithers. The Telkwa BBQ in 2016 was a \$135,000 budget event, with \$60,000 reserved for bands. This budget was then reduced in 2017 to \$20,000, with the main act paid \$2,500, opening acts \$1,000 each, and a dance with a DJ the second night. A major cost of this festival was reported as security. Attendance in 2016 for the concerts was 1700-2000. In 2017 it was estimated that 600 people attended the concert.

In addition to the Telkwa BBQ the BVFMS is celebrating its 35th year of the Midsummer Music Festival. During the early years of Midsummer the BVFMS was able to share their success and experience in hosting festivals with groups across the North who wanted to start their own. BVFMS offered seed funding and training to help start the Robson Valley Folk Festival, Edge of the World, Kispiox and Rosswood Festivals.

| Music Festival | Budget in 2017 | # Tix in 2017 | # of artists | % of tix out of region | Highest & lowest artist Fees | Music related volunteer hrs |
|--|--|----------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Midsummer | \$81,529 | 2,1000 | 253 (24 non-local Artists) | 15% | \$100 \$2000 | 4150 |
| BV Fall Fair | \$82000 | 18,000 | 100+ | 40% | \$200 \$8,000 | 200 |
| Telkwa BBQ | \$20,000 (down from \$135,000 in 2016) | 600 | 10 | Unknown | \$2,500 \$1,000 | 100+ |
| Spirit of the North Classical Music Festival | \$35,000 | Estimated 800~ | 40 | | | 600 |

In 2013 the Town of Smithers commissioned Bob Yates to draft the "Fairgrounds Business and Land Use Plan." As a part of this project, Yates created an "Economic Impact Spreadsheet" to help the Town understand the economic impact of the volunteer-run Midsummer Music Festival. This economic impact spreadsheet was created by Yates, Thorn & Associates for the BCRPA in 2002, based on research from Fort St John. Permission was granted for the use of this spreadsheet in this study (Appendix C). The numbers for daily spending are out of date, but the methodology is still appropriate. According to Yates, in 2013 the economic impact of the Midsummer Festival was reported at \$199, 491. This spreadsheet was updated with average Canadian inflation rates, and when current data was entered, the spreadsheet shows the BVFMS Midsummer Festival in 2017 had a similar economic Impact of approximately \$223, 557. Using Yates spreadsheet, numbers were entered to understand the economic impact of the three other major festivals in the Bulkley Valley, and can be seen in the adjacent Pie Graph.

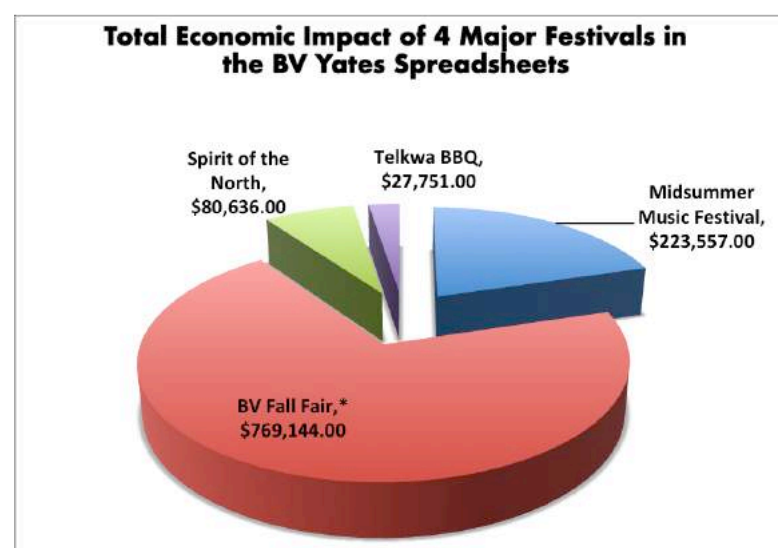


Figure 13 - Economic Impact Bob Yates Template

*BV Fall Fair numbers are based on the Total Economic Impact estimating only 25% of audience is there for the music.

The total estimated economic impact of these four festivals, according to Yates economic impact spreadsheets (Appendix C), would be **\$1, 101, 089.**

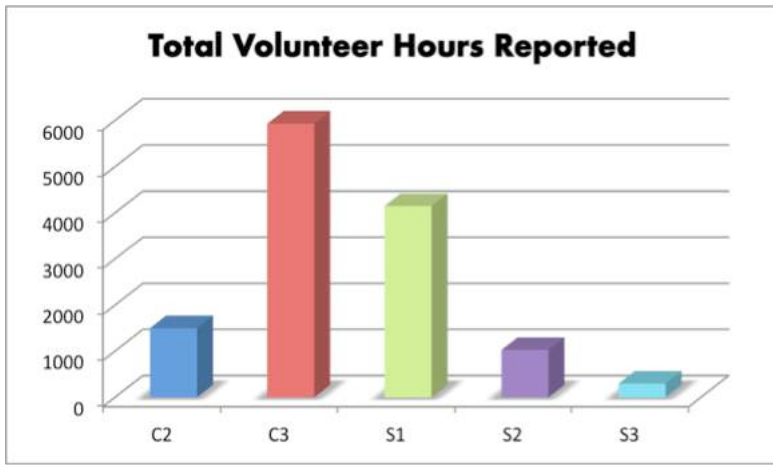


Figure 14 - Total Volunteer Hours

Volunteer Hours

Volunteer hours reported are mainly concentrated around Midsummer Festival. Other elements of the Smithers music sector are heavily subsidized and dependant on volunteers, as illustrated by the survey results. Out of 30 respondents over 13,000 music related volunteer hours were estimated to be leveraged in 2017 (Figure 14). This estimate does not include artist's contributions to the community or other events and organizations that did not respond to this survey.

Survey Results – Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

A key component of the survey and follow up interview process was focused on participant's views on the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the sector, which are summarized below. These findings have been used to help guide the recommendations of this Smithers music sector strategy.

“You have to create it to have it, that is why I am satisfied as a result of establishing a charitable organization – Driftwood Foundation – that incorporates music and cultural events to expand the awareness of the value and vulnerability of that beauty. Some of the events that we were able to create as a result of this organization included: Tribute to the Babines, Valentino's Cabaret, River in Three Themes Festival of Nations, Alberta Tarzans, Salmon Symphony Pine Cycle, The Love Project, 4000 Reasons Festival.”
~Dorothy Giesbretch, composer and performer

Smithers Music Sector Strengths

Many of the strengths reported by survey participants and interviewees highlight the perspective that Smithers is a culturally rich and diverse community, in large part because of its thriving music scene. Key findings on the strengths of the sector are summarized below:

- A strong core of talented musicians across multiple genres
- Iconic music professionals
- Established festivals: Midsummer, BV Fall Fair, Telkwa BBQ, Orchestra North, Spirit of the North Classical Music Festival
- Established organizations who foster the music sector: BV Folk Music Society, BV Concert Association, BV Community Art Council, Round Lake Community Association, CICK 93.9 FM Smithers Community Radio Society, Smithers District Chamber of Commerce
- Local media support
- Approximately 30 venues in the Bulkley Valley all with strong interest in hosting live music that is supported by technicians, sound professionals, and available equipment (e.g. Steve Taylor, BVFMS, CICK, Old Church with Sound System)
- Quality music instruction in both public schools and private with excellent enrolment combined with subsidized studio rentals (e.g. Central Park Building)
- Heavy investment by parents in music activities
- High levels of skill in leveraging funding for the arts and culture sector, augmented by policy support for arts and culture in community planning documents
- Group insurance available through the BV Community Arts Council

Smithers Music Sector Challenges

The following are the key challenges reported by survey participants, interviewees, and other research. These findings have been summarized and grouped as representations of the key challenges in the community.

Public and Government Support: The lack of regional government funding for music events and festivals, with recognition of tax revenue pressures, is forefront in the comments. Although the Town of Smithers has been engaging in a number of large-scale infrastructure development planning activities, there has been little attention focused on the development of a comprehensive arts and culture regional plan. This is highlighted by the lack of funding for the arts from the regional and local governments, compared to many other jurisdictional models. The Smithers community has a strong appetite for arts and culture planning as was seen in the recent central arts and culture centre feasibility study. Survey results further support this challenge, showing that artists' number one income source is live performances. This is something that is heavily subsidized by funding sought out by non-profit organizations organizing festivals and events. Government funding can help to support a volunteer base that drives economic growth for artists, music related businesses, and organizations. In addition, restrictive bylaws and home-based business regulations limit the growth of the creative and small manufacturing business. For example, there are no clear bylaw regulations for buskers. There is a clear need for bylaw development to support the arts.

Smithers Music Sector Challenges Cont...

Venues: Lack of all ages venues; aging venues and equipment; sound conditioning in venues; few permanent PA's and lights; trained technicians; affordability; accessibility both from a booking and physical access perspective, and limiting Provincial liquor licensing laws were the main venue challenges indicated by survey respondents. In addition, it is known that there is a lack of street and nightlife in the Smithers area unless an organization or business create it. Currently, there is only one top 40 dance and strip bar in town that is open late. This nightlife is augmented by special events hosted by community groups within the Valley. There are only 6 venues with semi-adequate PA and lighting systems in place for shows so that musicians do not have to haul their equipment. Event organizers need to seek the support of sound and light production businesses to help make their events successful. Often, having a limited budget creates a constraint on both the production company and organizers. When new restaurant venues open there is not always consultation with music professionals to find out what could be helpful.

Space for the Arts: Tying in to both industry support and venues, the lack of affordable rehearsal space and space for private music teachers to teach students in the community is a reported challenge.

Fair Compensation: Music is a highly valued cultural asset but is undervalued financially in the community. People often draw on artists to create meaningful experiences at various events but at the same time are unwilling to compensate them appropriately. Providing appropriate compensation to artists needs to be discussed and implemented in the community. This also relates to volunteer burnout as a major challenge amongst event/festival organizers in the community.

Audience Attendance: The Bulkley Valley has a limited population base and personal budgets to support competing music events, venues, and organizations. This creates challenges for audience attendance at certain events. Some reported challenges are last-minute ticket buyers, an insular community challenged to open to the outside and not just celebrate the "home-grown favourites", demographics and technology shifting cultural interests, and a continually reported lack of central promotion amongst a small population base.

Transportation: The Bulkley Valley is geographically spread-out and is far from larger city centers. Travel and transportation costs can be high.

Smithers Music Sector Opportunities

Survey participants were asked to describe opportunities and activities that could support the growth and enhancement of the music sector in the Smithers district. The most frequently mentioned opportunities are grouped and summarized below.

Local Government Support: Land use planning: opportunities for regional arts and culture planning; central infrastructure or community hub for arts and culture with accessible performance and practice space; busking regulations to encourage live music; and home-occupation regulation relaxation for instrument makers and teachers. Financial assistance: prospect of new local and regional investments in music, i.e., arts and culture functions separated from recreation in the Regional District.

Access to Music Education and Networking: Increased support for music education and artist-entrepreneur training; increased effort for interaction between artists and educators; and development of a community music school.

Chamber of Commerce Related Opportunities for Support: Establish a central registry (web) to link performers, venues, visitors, promoters, bands, etc. with frequent updating and links to existing community listings; an effort to build music tourism in the region and build a local Bulkley Valley music brand for tourist season; Opportunity to participate in the creation of a community promotion/event planning toolkit for those organizing events in the area - this could help to build branding for the music sector; Chamber could ID gaps in the music business (i.e., recording studio) and nightlife market to attract new business; and advocate for government support of the music and creative sector.

Supporting Music Within Our Community: Create financial opportunities for artists and provide fair compensation; evolution and collaboration on music festivals; First Nations and cross-cultural collaboration through music; program Bovill Square with more music and comedy; youth engagement to inspire participation in the local music economy; collaboration with local radio, both non-profit and commercial; and new events such as a cross-genre Midwinter Festival; Create stronger regional networks to increase opportunities for both our artists and regional audiences; Advocate for a paid position, possibly through the Town or Regional District, to coordinate, link, and support arts, music, bookings, promotions, etc. across all the communities.

Access to spaces and places: Non-profit venue development i.e. Legion and Old Church; opportunities for community volunteers to work with these non-profit venues to seek funding for permanent PA's, sound treatment and tech training; and more opportunities for venues can be pursued with the School District and private businesses such as the Roi Theater, the new local breweries, and others.



THERESA MICHELLE MOHR

March 23/18

Who she is...

My name is Theresa Michelle Mohr and I started really getting into music in 2006 and just started playing as much as I could. I'm now working on a five year plan to make my income solely off music. I mainly play guitar and sing, but I experiment with all kinds of other instruments as well.

What it is about Smithers that allows her to be a musician...

Well I think it started in my neighbourhood, actually, with my neighbour Keith [Cummings]. They were so encouraging when they found out we [my husband, Dave and I] were both musicians. They were just like, "Wow! You're amazing!" [laughs] Yeah, they really encouraged me. I had just played a coffee house and everyone was really supportive. There's lots of musical performance opportunities like that [open mics and coffee houses] for beginners.

I got a grant from the BV Arts Council in 2008 to make an album that I don't want to sell [laughs], but it was a good learning experience. And I got another \$500 grant from the BV Arts Council for the CD that I'm just about to

put out now. So that's super supportive. The BVFMS has lots of coffee houses and festivals and there's lots of people there who are willing to tell you what they think and which direction they think you should take your music... People in the BVFMS community who have had a lifetime of experience going to shows and appreciating and facilitating music here. I mean, I just take from it the stuff that works for me. Some of it is really useful.

Her vision for a better music economy in Smithers...

When James Hay was here he told me he felt that every musician should get paid \$100 per gig and that was his goal. And if there was a band, everyone in the band would get \$100 per show. Since then I've heard that from many musicians in some online groups that I'm a part of. I think that's a very fair amount.

I was reading an article online about how the health of the arts community is reflected in the financial health of the whole community. I don't really know how that works but it makes sense to me a healthy community is built on people creating and sharing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A STRATEGY TO FOSTER AND GROW THE SMITHERS MUSIC SECTOR

When attempting to support and grow a rural community music sector like we have in Smithers, there are no simple answers. A strategy that provides support for the grassroots nature of this vibrant community must be central to the approach. The volunteer-based culture of the music sector contributes to the cultural and economic vibrancy of our community in many ways and informs the recommendations noted in this report.

There are 19 recommendations that are divided into three categories being municipal government, Smithers District Chamber of Commerce, and artists supporting the growth of the sector. Municipal government recommendations involve the Town of Smithers, Village of Telkwa, and the Regional District of the Bulkley-Nechako and are broken down into two recommendation sections being plans and regulations, and financial assistance.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Plans and Regulations

Municipal plans, bylaws, regulations, and policies can work to encourage growth in a specific economic sector. The creative economy has the disadvantage of smaller margins because of demand and is extremely dependent on the health of other employment sectors in the community. Municipalities can use regulatory tools such as tax incentives to enhance their downtowns and encourage industrial development, but rarely, especially in the rural BC context, are regulatory tools used to encourage growth and diversification in the creative sector. Below is a summary of recommendations focusing on regulatory changes that could foster and encourage the growth of the music sector in the Smithers area and, more broadly, the arts and culture sector with which it is heavily integrated.

Arts and Culture Planning

Communities and regions in rural BC are prioritizing the development of plans to support arts and culture sectors as part of economic diversification in rural BC. Music is but one strong sub-sector in a community's arts and culture landscape, and planning for synergies and collaboration opportunities is key to the growth of this sector.

The Town of Smithers has been exploring infrastructure development in the arts, but there have been no formal steps taken to develop a more comprehensive regional arts and culture plan that such infrastructure could fit within. Planning can support collaboration within this diffuse sector and assess priorities and critical needs, which can lead to stronger public support that generates economic opportunities.

1. Initiate a regional arts and culture planning process: planning would integrate music with broader arts and culture needs to focus on key gaps identified through the music strategy process. These include:
 - Subsidized space rental for rehearsal and teaching space;
 - Financial assistance through a possible arts and culture tax function;
 - Exploration of music sector liaison supports that can enhance the capacity of a volunteer-based music sector, lead the implementation of the music strategy, coordinate networking and educational events, facilitate a music advisory committee, and act as an advocate for music tourism.

Home Occupation

Currently the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw regulates home occupations and limits a home-based business by stating, "no person shall employ any non-resident employee in the home occupation."¹⁵ The survey identified a potential for growth in home-based businesses with employment restrictions being a barrier. When looking to other municipal bylaws, one can see that this rule varies between communities. For example, Kitimat permits an additional employee beyond the principal homeowner, and Telkwa permits a non-resident employee (more examples in Appendix D).

2. Amend the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw to permit non-resident employees for arts/music home-based businesses.

¹⁵ Zoning Bylaw No. 1403 permits home occupations. Retrieved from: http://www.smithers.ca/uploads/BL_1403_ZONING_-_January_12,_2017.pdf

A man with long brown hair and a beard, wearing a purple shirt, is smiling and working on a violin in his workshop. The workshop is filled with various tools, materials, and finished instruments. The background shows shelves with more tools and a workbench with a violin. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

MICHAEL NELLIGAN

March 16/18

Who he is...

My name is Michael Nelligan. I have a business called Horncraft Music that's been open since 2007. The business itself focuses on repairing music instruments, in particular brass and woodwind. I have now branched out into violins and stringed instruments as well. A big portion of my business is rentals and I also do all the sales associated with that.

What it is about Smithers that allows his business to thrive...

From a support viewpoint, I think the community is really supportive. I think the community, in general, appreciates that the service I offer exists in a town of this size...Because it's the only service of its kind that exists here and it's a very specialized niche of course...It's certainly not a business you can just plunk into any town of five thousand and expect to go anywhere with it.

I think that the combination of the strong school programs and the presence of these other large entities like the Valley Youth Fiddlers and the Classical Strings Society and Orchestra all lends itself to a community that can support at least a part-time business of this nature. All of these music programs feedback and create business for me.

His vision for a stronger local music sector...

For a while now there are some people who are drumming up the idea of creating a music school

or academy or program in Smithers. So certainly, if that happened that would be an incredible thing to support the community. I've been trying to pitch that idea to the college [Northwest Community College].

There is already a pool of qualified musicians who could fill the roles for instructors at a music academy... Of course [a music school] would attract high-quality musicians [to Smithers]. And a student base would contribute to the culture. They would have performances and attend them. It's fantastic. ... A music school would be a perfect compliment to what is already here.

On volunteers creating opportunities...

So what I think plays a huge role are certain key players in that machine. So you think about the high school program and how Mike Doogan Smith has worked super hard to build that into a successful program. There is Leslie Jean Macmillan who for 20 years has run [Valley Youth Fiddlers], which has been a huge draw [for aspiring musicians]. I know so many people who have said the only reason they play fiddle is they went and watched a show and were so inspired by that [to try it themselves]. And Laura Hols with the [Smithers Community] String Orchestra...just taking the initiative to start it and putting all that energy into it.

Really when I see how the community is structured this way it really does fall on some key people and key roles. So it begs the question what happens when they decide it's too much for them? So much of that depends on volunteer effort.

Busking Regulation

Many communities have developed busking rules and regulations to encourage the animation of streets with live music, changing the name of noise bylaws to sound bylaws. These rules establish a clear code of conduct with positive connotations to music and the sounds of urban life. Busking regulations can address liability issues in terms of use of public property, outline permitted locations, and establish hours and amplification rules to minimize conflict and complaints. Currently, there are no regulations around busking in Smithers other than the noise bylaw limiting amplified music. Any complaints received require the busker to stop.

3. Create simple and clear busking regulations at no cost to the performer, which encourages the animation of streets in the downtown of Smithers. Ensure that the Noise Bylaw is consistent with busking regulations and promotes and encourages fun and live music.

Financial Assistance

Grants heavily support the music sector in the Smithers area with individual artists, businesses, and organizations dependent on them as a source of income. Without external funding and support this sector would see a substantial reduction in size and diversity. Provincial funding for the arts is highly competitive and often times needs leveraging dollars to support projects to be awarded grants. The survey identified opportunities for increased local funding support that would help to encourage and add capacity to the volunteer sector to continue creating music and culture events.

Currently, the Regional District of the Bulkley-Nechako collects a tax for culture and recreation from Area A rural residents within the Smithers fire protection district. This tax is administered and paired with funding from the Town of Smithers, a portion of which is distributed to three arts and culture organizations within the community: the Museum, Art Gallery and the Bulkley Valley Community Arts Council (BVCAC). The BVCAC portion of funding is then matched with BC Arts Council funding and distributed in the arts community through their community granting process. This BVCAC community grant model provides a solid foundation for stimulating the local arts in general. However, if the community wants to grow the music sector, a more robust funding structure and budget needs to be in place.

4. Review other approaches to arts and culture funding to inform potential revisions to the Smithers Rural Recreation and Culture tax structure (see Appendix D for examples). Specifically, look to the Central Cariboo Arts and Culture function established in 2009, where the Cariboo Regional District became the first rural BC Regional District to develop an arts and culture function, passing a bylaw allocating tax revenue to arts and culture.¹⁶
5. In order to provide immediate support to the Smithers music sector, consider:
 - Increasing funding support for the BV Community Arts Council to support their established grants programs;
 - Continuing administrative assistance for grants through the NDI Community grant writers and provide training for grant writers on effective arts and culture grant writing skills;
 - Exploring further opportunities in the Bulkley Valley for increased subsidized rental space for musicians and teachers in addition to Central Park Building;
 - Exploring opportunities within the Town, Village and Regional District budgets to support event hosting grants and incentives (see Appendix D for examples).

SMITHERS DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Development of a Music Website

Survey results identified the potential for increased communication and integration of the core and supporting components of the music sector. Increased online integration can build off established websites including Smithers Events, the artist resource listing on CICK's website, and the teacher directory on Horncraft Music's website.

6. Establish a central registry website that connects existing music sector hubs and events, lists artists, venues, and organizations to a central location, and connected to a social media hub. This website will serve as a tool to promote Smithers as a music-friendly place. Maintenance of this web resource will be key to its success.

¹⁶ Central Cariboo Arts and Culture Society. Referenced from the About page: <http://www.centralcaribooarts.com/about/>

Business Advocacy

The Smithers District Chamber of Commerce can be an effective advocate to attract key businesses to the Smithers area to fill gaps identified in this strategy. For example, the survey indicated that there is growth potential for businesses involved in recording music C2, instrument makers and sales S1, and nightlife entertainment C3. The Chamber could also play a key role in building stronger networks within the music community by assisting with business education for artists, and encouraging current businesses and individuals to budget for live music and workshops and treat music like skilled labor.

7. Advocate for the attraction and retention of music based businesses and individual artists to the region.
8. Work to build stronger networks within the music community, assisting with business education for artists. This could include sharing information about new provincial funding resources such as the recent announcement from Amplify BC of \$7.5 million in funding for 2018-2019.
9. Advocate and encourage current businesses and individuals to budget for live music and treat music like skilled labor.

Smithers Music Brand Building

There is potential for recognition of the music sector and local talent in marketing and promotion for the Smithers area. Developing a brand and slogan for marketing music in the Smithers area could be beneficial for recognition across a number of events and publication, and encourage the brand and slogan to be used collectively amongst all things music in the Smithers area. This brand can be applied to Tourism Smithers and the Chamber when promoting the local music culture in related advertising.

10. As part of arts and culture planning, develop a brand and slogan for all things music in the Smithers area. Work to encourage its use in tourism, events, and organizational promotion in the community.

SUPPORTING THE GROWTH OF THE SECTOR FROM WITHIN

Survey responses indicated a need for growth and coordination within the music sector. Given the sector is dependent on volunteers to create cultural experiences within the community, action will need to be taken by the core of this sector. Survey responses indicated needs for further improvements and development of venues, a need for regional coordination for touring artists and local talent, cost reductions in insurance, greater youth involvement and the evolution of existing events, and the creation of new events that attract audiences by providing fun and unique experiences. Action on the following recommendations could have significant impacts in strengthening the music sector in the Bulkley Valley:

11. Create stronger regional networks to increase opportunities for both local artists and regional audiences. These regional networks have the potential to be formed through the local BVCAC or Chamber networks that exist across Highway 16.
12. Promote the BVCAC membership benefits including cost savings for group insurance.
13. Work with non-profit venues to seek funding for permanent PA's, sound treatment, and tech training; and particularly pursue venue improvements with the Legion and the Old Church.
14. Encourage further development of First Nations and cross-cultural collaboration through music.
15. Create a community promotion/event planning toolkit that can be used by organizations and individuals organizing music events in the community. This could include tool to book dates, a list of community bar tenders, etc.
16. Create new events such as a cross-genre Midwinter Festival or a "Bulkley Valley Got Talent" local talent competition to encourage youth engagement and to inspire participation in the local music economy.
17. Work towards fair compensation for artists, promoters, organizers, and other professionals involved in creating quality music within our community.
18. Continue collaboration amongst organizations to share skills, talents and strengths within the community. In addition, work collaboratively with the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce to both raise the profile of the music sector in Smithers and support the relevance of the new website being created to promote and network all things music in the area.
19. In partnership with the Bulkley Valley Museum, work to collect and archive the musical history and key individual contributions within the Bulkley Valley.



MUSIC STRATEGY SOCIAL MAY 30, 2018



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Project Team

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Liliana Dragowska - Planning and Community Engagement Services - Music Strategy Project Coordinator.

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