

**Seattle Music Commission**  
**Annual Report**  
**and**  
**Assessment of Inaugural Workplan**  
**September 2010 through June 2011**  
Completed July 2011

The City of Seattle's Seattle Music Commission (SMC) was created in 2010 and met for the first time in June 2010. The twenty-one Commissioners represent the rich diversity of the music industry in Seattle, with eleven appointees from the Mayor, and ten by the City Council.

The Commissioners held a retreat in July 2011 to assess the progress, accomplishments, challenges and opportunities of the SMC. Attendees shared their perspectives on the impact of the SMC's first year of operation:

*"The SMC provides an organized, unified voice for the music sector. SMC is one forum for the community: We have connected people."*

*"This year SMC successfully established a range of guiding principles and platforms upon which to advance The City of Music initiatives."*

*"We now have a better understanding of how the City operates, we have learned what is possible, and we have identified programs to move into."*

*"I find myself promoting Seattle music in the workplace in a way I have never done before. The SMC has provided a newfound sense of citizenship and responsibility for advancing Seattle music."*

The inaugural Workplan of the Seattle Music Commission set out key areas of focus and action for a ten-month period from September 2010 through June 2011. The Workplan aligns with the *City of Music: A vision for the future of music in Seattle* document that was developed by a community advisory group with the City of Seattle Office of Film + Music (OF+M) in 2007, and was intended to inform planning and strategy for the music industry and the larger community. *City of Music* frames Seattle as a city of musicians, live music and music business.

The SMC established four committees to more effectively organize its efforts toward accomplishing the goals set out by the inaugural Workplan: Executive Committee; Branding and Communication Committee; Policy and Planning Committee; and Youth and Community Committee. This document will outline the progress each committee has made based on the 2010-2011 Workplan and will note related opportunities that have emerged over the past ten months.

## **Executive Committee**

*“The Commission’s formation and roster have communicated the City’s dedication to the idea of The City of Music.”*

This committee’s work is focused on overarching SMC issues, ensuring the smooth and effective operation of the Commission, in coordination with the City of Seattle and the larger community.

Three areas of work were identified in the inaugural SMC Workplan:

### **Area 1. The Executive Committee will manage SMC affairs and meetings in cooperation with SMC staff.**

#### *Accomplishments in this area:*

- Created the inaugural Workplan reflecting the ideas and input of the full SMC.
- Finalized By-Laws and other procedural tools and held well-attended SMC meetings each month, with average attendance of 60% at regular Commission meetings and 70% at monthly committee meetings.
- Created four committees to carry out the work of the SMC.

#### *Opportunities in this area:*

- Provide additional input and resources on various committee efforts.
  - Engage the full SMC in such dialogue at commission meetings.
  - Circulate summarized meeting minutes from committees in advance of full commission meeting.
- Improve Committee structural tools and deadlines to assist committees in their work.
  - Consider other options for committee project management, such as email correspondence and conference calls.
- Further prioritize Workplan goals to better align with committee and staff capacity.
- Consider opportunities for interns and/or community members to be more involved in the work of the committees, including the possibility of adding community member seats to committees or for specific projects.

### **Area 2. The Executive Committee will work to build knowledge and communication between the SMC and key City Departments and Seattle entities that may impact the music sector. During the coming year this will include invitations to key representatives of selected City Departments for presentation and dialogue at SMC based on the priorities of this year’s SMC Workplan.**

#### *Accomplishments in this area:*

- Connected the SMC’s Policy and Planning Committee with the Port of Seattle and the Central Waterfront Committee.
- Brought Robert Nellams, Director of Seattle Center, to speak with SMC, which opened new lines of communication.

#### *Opportunities in this area:*

- Secure additional opportunities to interact with City departments including Parks, Arts and Culture, Seattle Channel, DoIT as well as civic leadership and economic organizations in Seattle.

**Area 3. The Executive Committee will oversee issues related to strong continuity of the SMC for subsequent years including nomination and orientation of SMC membership as needed, and oversight of terms. They will also track the progress of the SMC Workplan over the year, and lead the development of an SMC Workplan for the upcoming year, to be completed by June 30.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Monitored and assessed Commissioner participation, with related recommendations for continuing terms and guidelines for the selection of new commissioners.
- Organized and held a retreat in July 2011 to assess past progress on Workplan
- Planned July 2011 meeting to create the SMC's second Workplan with participation from the full SMC.

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Focus and limit the goals for subsequent Workplans to facilitate successful implementation.
- Develop strategies to track incremental Workplan progress more closely throughout the cycle.
- Develop metrics for measuring outcomes related to SMC work, including participation by community volunteers and commissioners.
- Define what it means to be an active, successful Commissioner.
- Consider whether the Workplan cycle might be more effective if it covered a different twelve-month period to better align with City of Music Awards.

## **Branding and Communication Committee**

*“SMC has increased the visibility of Seattle music within the community.”*

This committee is focused on issues of image, branding, audience development, outreach, and sector recognition in support of the City of Music Vision for 2020.

Three areas of work were identified in the inaugural Workplan:

**Area 1. Music History and Awareness Campaign --The healthy development of the music sector in Seattle is dependent on sharing knowledge and information about the unique history, characteristics and assets of music in Seattle. This Committee will create an integrated set of efforts to enhance understanding and appreciation of the past and current breadth of music in the community.**

### *Accomplishments in this area:*

- Outlined and began developing the scope of a “Seattle Music History Project”
- Began outlining a plan for marketing the Seattle Music History project to the public.
- Commissioned historical essay to be featured on City of Music Website. “Seattle: The City of Music” by Pete Blecha explores the highlights of Seattle’s rich music history and what may be “in the water” that keeps Seattle a cutting edge music city.
- Initiated development of expanded ‘Seattle Music History’ webpage on existing City of Music website, which will include the commissioned essay by Pete Blecha.

### *Opportunities in this area:*

- Continue developing website and content for the history project. Pursue funding and/or creative solutions to further website development, and explore possibility for an intern to take on management of this project.

**Area 2. Visitor and Tourism Marketing Campaigns --There are strong areas of alignment in the goals of the SMC, the Port of Seattle and the SCKCVB in building a strong and welcoming experience for visitors and tourists. This Committee seeks to develop effective cooperative efforts that take full advantage of the power of the music sector as a dynamic asset of this region, and to encourage access to an array of live music in Seattle.**

### *Accomplishments in this area:*

- Partnered with Hard Rock Café to create music venue brochure
- Worked with Port of Seattle to promote Seattle music in SeaTac Airport (also see Policy and Planning Committee and Executive Committee section)

### *Opportunities in this area:*

- Explore opportunities for partnership with SCVB

**Area 3. Seattle City of Music Initiative Community Partnerships and Events --The City of Music initiative, including the Seattle City of Music Awards and related activities and events, are built on a foundation of strong and active partnerships with public, private and non-profit entities. All events, partnerships and activities must be examined and evaluated to build on and maintain the intentions of the City of Music 2020 vision, and strengthen the positive potential in the community.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Confirmed 10 new City of Music Civic Partners who go above and beyond their everyday business to impact the local music community.
- Developed criteria and value offering for Seattle City of Music (SCOM) civic partnerships.
- Administered SCOM 2010 awards nomination process. SCOM 2011 awards event pre-production is underway for October 2011.
- Connected and initiated conversations with Rock & Roll Marathon regarding SCOM branding in 2012.

*Opportunities and challenges in this area:*

- Streamline the SCOM Awards event planning and implementation processes.
- Continue pursuing new partnerships for SCOM Civic Partnerships.
- Continue conversation with Rock & Roll Marathon and identify specific areas for collaboration.

## **Policy and Planning Committee**

*“SMC has connected people in a diverse industry, establishing momentum and making an impact on a local level.”*

This committee is focused on providing information and insight regarding City and regional planning and policy and how the music sector can participate and contribute to the vibrancy of the city.

Five areas of work were identified in the inaugural Workplan:

**Area 1. Representation on City-wide Initiatives and Redevelopment --There is a need to have informed representation from the music sector on decision-making and advisory bodies that can benefit from, or may impact, the vitality of music in Seattle. This committee will serve as a liaison in identifying and providing representation on existing and newly formed bodies of relevance. The SMC seeks to identify such bodies and put forward SMC members, or sector representatives, to be active on such bodies, and to receive periodic reports to help the SMC track and assist with planning and policy issues.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Secured SMC seat on the Waterfront Redevelopment Committee and its Outreach Committee
- Identified how SMC policy work may be best advanced by getting additional SMC voices into key positions on music-related decision-making boards, commissions, and committees

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Uncover specific opportunities where SMC can add members to other key organizations and discussions, such as the Downtown Seattle Association, Chamber of Commerce and the Seattle Nightlife and Music Association.

**Area 2. Port of Seattle: Music in SeaTac Airport --The music sector has the capacity to enhance the operational climate of SeaTac Airport, managed by the Port of Seattle. This gateway to the region plays an important role and can be supported by the goals of the City of Music vision, and the resources of the music sector.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Advanced four key projects with SeaTac Airport, which will be well on the path to completion by October 2011. The four projects involved:
  - Integration of SCOM branded local streaming music playlist with the Sea-Tac Airport’s free WIFI splash page
  - Production of in-terminal overhead announcements with local music celebrity voices
  - Development of ambient music playlist of Seattle musicians for airing over Airport in-terminal sound system
  - Creation of video content promoting local music for display in areas like baggage claim and CNN monitors

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Continue with development and execution of the four SeaTac Airport projects, with implementation by end of 2011.

**Area 3. City-wide Busking Program --Research conducted by the OF+M and other sources note interest in enhancements to bring busking musicians to more parts of Seattle. Additional research is needed to build a sustainable and well-managed approach to this egalitarian form of access to live music.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

Consulted with Parks Department and Department of Transportation (“SDOT”) to identify potential areas and feasibility of expanding existing city busking programming. Determined many existing locations could be included, and that there is potential for working cooperatively. Currently, OFM is seeking funding sources to begin moving the project forward.

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Clarify if this project, originally championed by the Office of the Mayor, is a priority, and if so, continue moving forward.
- Continue pursuing potential funding sources/sponsors.

**Area 4. Exploration of Local and National Music-related Best Practice Policies and Opportunities -- The City of Seattle is a leader in music, but can also learn from the experiences of communities of many sizes. Policies can impact music businesses, non-profit music schools and organization and individual musicians. The committee will inventory policies and opportunities used in selected cities to consider how such practices might enhance the vitality and contributions of music to Seattle.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Limited formal activity but informal tracking and sharing of information nationally.

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Conduct additional research as needed.

**Area 5. Parking Zones for Live Music Venues --The SMC has been invited by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to assist in developing ways to work more effectively with live music venues and to investigate options to eliminate unnecessary impediments based on parking access for presentation of live music in Seattle.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

Preliminary research has been conducted and a program of interest identified in Austin, TX. Their live music venue parking initiative could be a model for us to begin conversations with SDOT. *Opportunities in this area:*

- Determine if this is an area in which the SMC can realistically exert influence.
- Consider organizing a meeting with representatives from Seattle live music venues to understand their particular traffic/parking issues and needs, perhaps working with Seattle Nightlife and Music Association.
- Consult and advise SDOT in exploring how best to identify and share relevant parking zone related information.

## Youth and Community Committee

*“The Seattle Music Commission is fully committed to supporting music education for all youth whether private or public, and promoting Seattle as a “city of music.”*”

This committee is focused on assessing, creating and encouraging action in support of activities and programs that enhance access, education, life-long learning, recreational and neighborhood benefits of music in Seattle.

Three areas of work were identified in the inaugural Workplan:

**Area 1. Identify music education resources, programs and needs within Seattle Public Schools --The Seattle Public Schools (SPS) are the key point of potential music learning for youth in Seattle. To meet the vision of the City of Music in 2020 it is essential that SPS be part of the effort to equitably provide music instruction and access for students. The SMC recognizes that there are many challenges and competing needs faced by the SPS. SMC seeks to support SPS and to examine how to bring resources from the larger music sector to assist SPS efforts.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Connected with SPS and affirmed aligned interest in working on equitable access to music programming, as well as clarified understanding of SPS stakeholders and internal challenges.

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Build on communication to date, and develop better ongoing communication between SPS and SMC.
- Align with and support SPS in execution of SPS Wallace Grant. Consider how best to participate, exploring the possibility of SMC representation on the grant advisory committee.

**Area 2. Identify Seattle’s public and private music education resources, programs and needs -- The music sector in Seattle includes a broad array of public, nonprofit and private music resources and programs that currently contribute to music education, learning and recreation for youth and adults. It is desirable to look at the totality of these resources and to understand their strengths, opportunities and needs so that the SMC can effectively support and build on their efforts.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Met with key groups providing music focused services in Seattle, such as Youngstown Cultural Arts Center and Totem Star Records, to share information, assess needs and explore opportunities for collaboration.
- Identified various existing databases, and evaluated the capacity of SMC to manage such tools on an ongoing basis. Explored other options for information sharing.

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Continue to connect with organizations and groups providing music services.
- Reconsider how best to connect resources, such as an interactive community-powered resource rather than an SMC database.



**Area 3. Establish a framework for music industry career opportunities for Seattle youth -- The future vitality of the music sector goes beyond education and must provide opportunities for career paths in the field. It is important to link the efforts of the SMC to jobs and careers. This will be an ongoing area of importance in at least two directions: to inform youth (as well as older workers) of potential music careers; and to work with the music industry to enhance and communicate opportunities now and in the future.**

*Accomplishments in this area:*

- Planned a music industry-wide Career Day for youth to take place in the Summer of 2012.
  - Created a working budget and reserved space for the event.
- Researched possibilities for creation of a “super” internship program that would build knowledge and experience for interns across the music sector.

*Opportunities in this area:*

- Execute 2012 Career Day.
  - Consider ways to expand Career Day so that it incorporates technology careers that link to music.
- Set up pilot internship program.
- Explore increased opportunities for Seattle youth to participate in live performances.

## **Summary**

In its first ten months the Seattle Music Commission has made significant progress. It has developed a committed and active group of Commissioners representing the diversity of Seattle's music sector and it has established methods and systems that provide a solid foundation for moving forward. The 2010-11 Workplan has guided the creation and activities of four committees. New initiatives and relationships are underway, and there is growing awareness of the potential of the SMC to advance and leverage efforts with City government as well as the private and non-profit sectors.

The SMC is now in the process of creating a Workplan for its second year. This new document will outline a focused plan for 2011-12 informed by the lessons learned from the SMC's inaugural year.

\*This Assessment Report was completed in July 2011 by the Seattle Office of Film + Music and members of the Seattle Music Commission. Claudia Bach, AdvisArts Consulting, facilitated the assessment process with assistance from Sofia Harwell.