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BLUEPRINT TO DRIVE LIVE MUSIC AND PARTNERSHIPS

Boosting our arts and culture scene through live music is a key outcome of the City’s Music Action Plan.

For a city of 600,000, we are blessed with incredible talent both on, and off, the stage.

The Plan ensures we recognise musicians as valuable contributors to the city’s growing cultural reputation and economy and provide the support and investment needed to build capacity within the local music community.

The coast is home to amazing on-stage talent as well as industry practitioners and tertiary institutions who all feed off the city’s creative and entrepreneurial spirit.

This Plan provides a blueprint that will positively impact the music sector on the coast by providing investment, access to resources and strong partnerships across all tiers of government, peak bodies and private enterprise.

Key actions in the Plan will mean we are in a stronger position to manage regulatory issues, connect with industry and encourage the creation, performance and export of quality music.

Embracing the local sector will lead to meaningful and sustainable careers, attracting and retaining a key creative workforce on the coast.

I can’t wait.

TOM TATE
MAYOR
This Music Action Plan places music at the centre of the Gold Coast’s evolution as a vibrant, creative city that defies perception and expectation.

THE VISION FOR GOLD COAST MUSIC IS ONE WHERE ARTISTS AND THE MUSIC INDUSTRY ARE VALUED; AND PROVIDED WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE CAREERS WHILE CONTINUING TO LIVE IN THE CITY.

It is a vision where the community of the Gold Coast, and the region’s visitors, have easy access to world class music that brings economic, cultural and social benefits to everyone.
MUSIC IS IN THE CITY’S DNA

The Gold Coast has a long history as a live music centre and has been home to a host of iconic venues – from the Chevron Hotel of the 1950s to iconic venues like The Playroom, Bombay Rock, The Rose and Crown, and the Coolangatta Hotel. The city has also hosted numerous major festivals including The Big Day Out and Summafieldayze throughout its history.

Known for its vibrant night-life, the Gold Coast has long attracted major touring acts, with many still visiting to perform at festivals like Bleach* Festival and Blues on Broadbeach. Venues like HOTA, Home of the Arts and Miami Marketta continue to host major national tours, while a number of smaller venues provide opportunities for emerging talent.

The past decade though has seen a reduction in the number of acts touring through the region due to a range of factors including competition for shows with Byron Bay, proximity to Brisbane, and a perceived lack of appropriate venues or local promoters to assist in presenting shows. Encouragingly, over the past few years, several new venues have emerged on the Gold Coast that have the capacity to attract national talent.

Building a thriving music scene on the Gold Coast reconnects with an important creative element of the city’s DNA.
BUILDING A THRIVING MUSIC SCENE ON THE GOLD COAST RECONNECTS WITH AN IMPORTANT CREATIVE ELEMENT OF THE CITY’S DNA
BUILDING OUR MUSIC FUTURE

As a music city, the Gold Coast is humming with opportunity. From the bush to the beach, the region is home to a diverse range of spaces that support cultural activation and a community of passionate artists and industry workers committed to the creative growth of the city.

Developing and delivering this Plan is about embracing that opportunity. It provides a clear and strategic investment framework for identifying needs within the sector, combating challenges and leveraging emerging opportunities.

The long-term vision is for the Gold Coast to be recognised for making a national and global contribution to music. This is a city where artists can maintain sustainable careers creating new music, and are supported by a strong, connected, and informed network of music industry businesses driven by the entrepreneurial tradition of the Gold Coast.

Music will be embraced by the broader community – as much a part of the city’s identity as our celebrated lifestyle. The Gold Coast will be home to a growing population of artists who maintain national and international careers, but live locally. Ultimately, through support from the City, music businesses will meet the needs of their market in a thriving and innovative environment.

To achieve the City’s vision, this Plan outlines actions that lay the groundwork for continued self-sustaining growth across the local music sector. The aim is to build the ‘ecology’ of the local music scene and recognise the numerous interconnected components of the industry that operate hand-in-hand to support growth.

Affordable and accessible spaces for artists to perform, experiment and develop new work are vital. The Gold Coast will become recognised as a viable touring destination for national and international acts. To achieve this, the City must provide certainty with regards to land use and regulation that fosters growth for creative evening economies.

Creative skills development - song writing and performance skills, as well as the business acumen of those operating local music businesses such as management companies and record labels is a priority.

Support will be provided for our artists and industry to live local while thinking global – developing positive and productive relationships with the national and international music industry. This will be the chance for Gold Coast creatives to expand their horizons and collaborate with interstate industry drawn to the opportunities across the city.

This Plan is one of creative investment – making smart and targeted interventions now in order to foster sustainable growth well into the future.
THE GOLD COAST IS A COMMUNITY OF PASSIONATE ARTISTS AND INDUSTRY WORKERS COMMITTED TO CREATIVE GROWTH
The complex music ecology and its inter-dependent functions must be supported and developed to foster growth.

For artists to develop careers, a broad network of services from management and independent record labels, to producers, publicists and local promoters are required. Similarly, a skilled, knowledgeable and well-equipped industry maximises opportunities to activate, utilise and support the diverse range of venues across the Gold Coast.

It is this ecology that drives the significant economic impact of the music community. It is an industry that revolves around the creation and performance of new work which requires ongoing capital investment. Artists, for example, will support everything from instrument retailers to recording studios and specialist professional services such as legal and accounting. This Plan will create an environment where that investment is captured and retained locally.
TRENDS AND ISSUES

The Gold Coast music industry is faced with several challenges as a result of a swiftly changing industry environment, and the disruption of traditional business models – particularly the changes to how people consume music and new opportunities for artists to distribute music digitally to a global audience. While that presents challenges for the entire industry, it also offers a unique set of opportunities for local artists and industry.

Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT TREND</th>
<th>INNOVATIVE MODELS TO CHANGE CURRENT RESTRICTIVE REGULATIONS AROUND LIVE MUSIC ARE IN PROGRESS ALL OVER AUSTRALIA</th>
<th>CAPACITY FOR MUSICIANS TO TOUR ECONOMICALLY COMBINED WITH NEW GLOBAL MUSIC DISTRIBUTION MODELS</th>
<th>GROWING NUMBER OF CAFES, SMALL BARS, AND RESTAURANTS HOSTING LIVE MUSIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>Venue sustainability and future investment into venues is negatively impacted due to the current regulatory environment.</td>
<td>Artists can enjoy the lifestyle and social benefits of the Gold Coast, while continuing to develop their career without having to relocate to more traditional industry powerbases in Sydney or Melbourne.</td>
<td>The appetite for live performance on the Gold Coast is growing through the initiative of small business.</td>
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<td>and</td>
<td>The City is identifying a unique plan to deliver regulatory change and growth initiatives, leveraging music as a key vehicle for the cultural revolution.</td>
<td>A focused City investment that attracts and retains a skilled and creative workforce demonstrates the Gold Coast’s commitment to cultural growth.</td>
<td>The City will continue to play a supporting role in the activation of urban spaces and sustainable employment creation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities</td>
<td>Leadership by the City provides certainty for live music venues and artists; and will build a stronger economy through increased jobs, attracting a creative workforce and increasing vibrancy.</td>
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</table>
## Diverse Lifestyle of the Region and a Business-Friendly Commitment by the City

Artists and music businesses are attracted to the Gold Coast, creating jobs, increasing investment and introducing new skills, experience and knowledge.

The City’s commitment to nurturing growth within the local industry contributes to the Gold Coast’s reputation as a culturally vibrant destination.

## Major Facilities and Venues as Part of GC2018 Legacy Program

Potential to attract major international acts that would traditionally perform in Brisbane.

Investment will accelerate local music industry reputation and growth beyond the region.

## The City’s Growing Knowledge Sector

Local universities and TAFE Queensland offer music courses and training across all areas of the music business.

The city is becoming home to a student demographic traditionally most interested in live music. A strong live music scene will attract students to the city.

The City’s ongoing support of the knowledge sector and live music will strengthen the Gold Coast’s future as a live music capital.

## Strong Tourism Sector

The Gold Coast’s high number of visitors provides the local industry with a unique opportunity to showcase distinct product offerings.

Leveraging this captured audience builds upon the city’s live music reputation beyond the region.
The Gold Coast is not alone in confronting the evolving challenges or in its commitment to growing the local music industry. Today, there is a global movement by cities making strategic, planned investment to strengthen the music industry in a bid to add cultural depth while also building the economic contribution a thriving scene brings.

**Issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT STRATEGIC ISSUE</th>
<th>DEFICIT OF VENUES AVAILABLE FOR ALL-AGES MUSIC EVENTS</th>
<th>DEFICIT IN CREATIVE AND BUSINESS SKILLS</th>
<th>LACK OF CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN LOCAL ARTISTS, MUSIC BUSINESSES AND ASSOCIATED CREATIVE SECTORS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implications and opportunities for the city and its music culture.</td>
<td>The Gold Coast is home to young, aspiring event producers, who would benefit from opportunities to deliver all-ages music gigs. An investment into the next generation of industry professionals will cement the Gold Coast’s future as a hub for live music excellence.</td>
<td>The industry requires support and training to build and sustain careers and businesses. The City will continue to source opportunities that build the capacity of the industry and foster increased connectivity between artists and industry workers.</td>
<td>Disconnection means creative hubs, cross-skilling, and new ideas and projects occur less often. Bringing the sector together with a new holistic and integrated approach will create new opportunities across all levels of the community.</td>
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<td>Limited National and International Awareness of the Region’s Cultural Output and Emerging Music Scene</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artists from this city are creating great music. Building the city’s music brand will help promote their music and the city nationally and internationally.</td>
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<th>Acts that Perform Alternative Styles of Music Have Limited Opportunity to Perform</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gold Coast is missing out on accessing some of the most popular genres of music. Many attribute this issue to sound restrictions placed on venues. Changing regulatory laws around sound, where possible, will provide greater access to music experiences for the broader community.</td>
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<tr>
<th>The Linear Geography of the Gold Coast and Limited Evening Public Transport Options Place Barriers Between Artists and Audiences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying precincts and creative hubs throughout the city will allow businesses to respond to residents’ needs. Identifying that the regions creative output is important to the fabric of the community.</td>
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This Plan is built around a range of key principles:

- deep and continued engagement by the City with local artists and industry to accelerate growth;

- the music industry is complex, evolving and capable of taking ownership of its future development;

- music drives important social and economic outcomes for the broader community;

- music has a role in demonstrating and celebrating the Gold Coast’s commitment to cultural growth and cultural tourism; and

- a whole of city, integrated approach will deliver impactful outcomes.
PRIORITIES

• Advocate for the regulatory changes identified by the Live Music Taskforce in order to provide certainty for live music venues and artists.

• Address the identified business and creative skills deficit through the facilitation of training and mentoring programs.

• Foster a connected music community that encourages and rewards communication and collaboration between artists and industry workers.

• Increase national and international profile of the Gold Coast music sector through engagement with national industry, developing business and creative opportunities.
MUSIC DRIVES IMPORTANT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES FOR OUR COMMUNITY
THE CITY’S ROLE

The City’s Culture Strategy 2023 places the arts front and centre in the evolution of the Gold Coast. More than a holiday strip known for ‘sun and surf’, the region is humming with creative endeavour covering a diversity of art forms.

No art form is better placed to foster the evolution than music.

Music is well positioned to become a rallying point for a Gold Coast community that values innovation, entrepreneurship and a sense of excitement. Music is best placed to represent a distinctly Gold Coast experience.

The role of the City is not as a producer or programmer of music. The City provides strategic support and investment to create an environment where music businesses thrive. Music businesses need confidence in the City’s vision to support their business needs and their ability to meet their market’s needs. It is those businesses that are critical to supporting artists living and creating on the Gold Coast. The City’s important role focusses on:

- nurturing growth within the local industry;
- creating visibility for live music and the industry architecture that supports it; and
- recognising creative output is important to the fabric of the community.

This Plan incorporates previous studies and analysis including Griffith University’s report ‘Accessing Live Music on the Gold Coast’, insights from extensive consultation with the music industry and the recommendations of the Live Music Taskforce. Notably, a significant focus of the Taskforce was to understand the impact planning and licensing regulation has on venue viability and a venue’s capacity to support live music.
OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

The City will deliver on four strategic outcomes.

01  Everyone can experience great music

02  Gold Coast artists and music businesses thrive

03  Positive national and international perceptions

04  Coordinated City commitment and delivery
EVERYONE CAN EXPERIENCE GREAT MUSIC

From the small halls of the hinterland to the bars and clubs along the beach, the Gold Coast is home to a uniquely diverse music scene.

With its wide range of venues and seemingly endless styles of music on offer, the Gold Coast is truly a city with music around every corner. The range of genres written and performed by local artists reflect the diverse community that makes the region home.

The city is also home to numerous music festivals including Bleach Festival, the successful Blues on Broadbeach, Groundwater Country Music Festival and numerous local community festivals.

We have an opportunity to highlight music from across the region while developing new ways to build the connection between the community and their home-grown music scene.

**Grow places**

1.1 Provide facility and equipment upgrades to City parks to increase usability and embrace the city’s outdoor lifestyle.

1.2 Address gaps in the local venue mix to expand the diversity of music offerings.

1.3 Rebrand and promote City-owned spaces that are suitable for gigs, concerts, rehearsals and cultural activation to increase reputation and usage.

1.4 Identify and activate industrial spaces for creative enterprise hubs, spaces and networks for incubator and creative usage to grow creative output.

**Music engagement**

1.5 Co-host music industry networking events to engender a sense of industry pride and collaboration.

1.6 Identify special City-owned Music Bills Zones to enrich the profile of music and encourage ownership.

1.7 Advocate for all-ages gig programs at City-owned venues to encourage participation, access and opportunity in live music.
GOLD COAST ARTISTS AND MUSIC BUSINESSES THRIVE

A growing and robust network of talented artists, skilled managers, emerging new record labels, and other committed professionals working across the industry underpin live music venues.

The music industry is built on a spirit of entrepreneurship that aligns with the Gold Coast’s tradition of being home to an innovative and forward-looking business community.

The City can support an environment where music businesses can thrive, and artists are valued and supported. While the music industry must ultimately work collectively to become self-sustaining, now is the time for the City to exercise leadership through investment. The City has a long history in providing support for a range of industries – from education to tourism – and is positioned to offer similar support to the music industry. This investment will support growth in jobs and the economic impact of the sector across the Gold Coast.

Industry skills development

2.3 Partner music bodies to deliver artist-focussed skills development to build creative and business acumen.

2.4 Provide business skills development programs for music businesses and connect them with professional services to build industry capacity.

2.5 Coordinate a mentoring program for artists and supporting music business services to grow industry knowledge and opportunities.

Grants program

2.6 Direct Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) grants to support musicians to develop new work, tour and promote career.

2.7 Establish the Music Business Improvement Grant for venues to undertake live music acoustic audits.

Live music friendly city

2.1 Investigate the creation of a planning framework that supports a strategic balance between cultural land use and other uses within identified areas of the city.

2.2 Undertake Local Government Act required steps to transfer the regulation of noise from licenced premises within Special Entertainment Precincts to the City to provide business owners with greater certainty and consistency for live music programming.
The Gold Coast has a proud history of being a live music hub; however key national music industry personnel require updating regarding the growth and vibrancy of the music culture, and the range of professionally operated venues and industry infrastructure. Perceptions are not necessarily reflective of the breadth of music across the Gold Coast or changes to the region’s cultural makeup over the past decade.

Given its relevance to a wider audience, music can be a driver to ‘develop the story’ about the Gold Coast by highlighting the scope of the music scene as part of a broader cultural emergence.

The nature of the music industry today means music business and artists can be based anywhere and the Gold Coast’s lifestyle, assets - including access to an airport - and its responsive business environment can be leveraged to ensure artists and industry stay located in the region, while attracting new entrants to the market.

As the growing opportunities within the city gain attention, best outcomes for sustained cultural tourism will be derived from ensuring events and festivals contain distinctly Gold Coast experiences.

**Grow profile**

3.1 Host inbound music industry delegations that showcase the Gold Coast music industry and demonstrate the city’s creative and economic capacity to host international acts and events.

3.2 Partner Gold Coast Music Awards and invest in Gold Coast artists’ presence at Bigsound conference and other recognised national music forums to deliver touring and distribution outcomes.

3.3 Partner with Gold Coast music presenters and Gold Coast Tourism Corporation to create a GC Music brand that packages and promotes Gold Coast music experiences including Gold Coast Music Awards to a national audience.

**Build business**

3.4 Harness the City’s business incentive package to entice established music businesses to relocate to the Gold Coast, encouraging local business growth.

3.5 Build relationships with Screen Queensland, Screen Producers Association and other film delivery agencies to leverage opportunities in the film industry for Gold Coast music talent.
While the aim must be the creation of a sustainable and growing music industry, the City will use its reach and resources to develop and deliver a range of initiatives to support building the sector, as it has done with other industries working across the region.

With resources and commitment, the City will offer a strong return on investment from a cultural, social and economic perspective.

**Provide leadership**

4.1 Resource a dedicated music unit as a single point of contact within the City to more effectively interface with the local industry and build partnerships.

4.2 Create a GC Live Music Events Resource Handbook to convey practical information on the City’s coordinated, strategic approach to the delivery of music events and activities.

4.3 Establish the Gold Coast Music Advisory Board, representing a cross-section of the music community and industry leaders, to identify opportunities, act as a sounding board for policy and programs, and provide expert sector advice.

4.4 Implement a policy that embeds locally produced music in all city-supported marketing campaigns and prioritise Gold Coast artists for engagement at City events to demonstrate commitment to the sector.

**Research and evaluate**

4.5 Include music activity in the City’s Capturing Culture Impact program to build aggregated data around investment impact.

4.6 Conduct a biennial audience survey to service the sector’s understanding of audience behaviour and needs and support targeted audience development strategies.
WE ARE DEVELOPING NEW WAYS TO BUILD A CONNECTION BETWEEN HOMEGROWN ARTISTS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES
PROGRAMS FOR GROWTH

The delivery of this Plan will be built around four programs – each aimed at addressing identified issues and capitalising on opportunities. The programs are our toolkit for delivering short term outcomes that will build the platform for ongoing, self-sustained growth of the sector.

**EXCEED**
Developing the skills of artists and music industry

**UNLOCK**
Develop a planning framework to support live music

**JOLT**
Building our reputation as a music city

**LEAD**
Harnessing the City’s capacity to provide leadership and investment
PARTNERSHIPS

The strength of the Music Action Plan 2021 lies within the establishment and fostering of partnerships across all tiers of government, peak music services and education institutions, regulatory bodies, festivals and events, venues, arts organisations, businesses and private enterprise, and of course our artists and musicians.

This partnering approach will positively impact the music sector on the Gold Coast by providing inclusive and coordinated access to resources, promotion and planning.
MEASURING IMPACT

The City will assess the impact and growth of the region’s music industry through a comprehensive data capture and analysis process that incorporates qualitative and quantitative metrics. Gold Coast residents, visitors, artists, venues and industry will contribute their understanding of the social, cultural and economic impact of the music industry.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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