



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

October 29, 2008

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Mayor unveils Seattle City of Music™ initiative

New strategy promotes Seattle as home to musicians, live music and music business

SEATTLE, WA – Joined by hundreds of members from Seattle’s music community, Mayor Greg Nickels today launched the Seattle City of Music initiative, honoring Seattle’s rich music history and celebrating its ongoing importance to the city’s economy and culture.

“Music is a part of Seattle’s identity; it gives our city soul,” said Nickels at a public celebration at Seattle’s Paramount Theatre. “Music of all genres, whether classical or hip hop, rock or jazz, thrives in our city. We don’t just make or listen to music, we live it.”

The event included the release of a new economic impact study on music in Seattle, which shows that in 2008, the music industry in Seattle directly created 11,155 jobs, with 2,618 businesses generating an annual \$1.2 billion in sales and \$487 million in earnings. It is estimated that the Seattle music industry generates \$90 million annually in state and local sales and B&O taxes.

“The economic impact study reveals once again that music is more than just entertainment, it is a vital part of Seattle’s economy and cultural identity. The study creates a benchmark for Seattle to grow,” said Ben London, local musician and Director of the Recording Academy Pacific Northwest Chapter. “The Seattle City of Music effort is an exceptional way to celebrate our success and leverage it to create a music community and industry for the future.”

One of the key findings in the study is that exports represent \$495 million or 40% of the sales for the industry, bringing in new money to our regional economy and supporting jobs that would not be here if the music industry were not present.

“Seattle has long enjoyed a reputation as a distinctive city that embraces the inspiration and innovation of its music scene,” said Nickels. “This is a proud day for our city and the businesses, musicians and live music venues that make Seattle their home.”

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The Mayor announced the formation of a Seattle Music Commission, charged with overseeing the development of a 12-year strategy. This group will work together to develop the future music industry in Seattle. The plan will encompass the city's commitment to build upon and provide resources to make Seattle:

- 1) A **city of musicians**, with enhanced music learning opportunities for children, professional development opportunities for musicians, and access to programs to support making a living as a musician;
- 2) A **city of live music**; with more opportunities to experience live music performance;
- 3) A **city of music business**, with increased support for innovative and independent music businesses.

Leading up to the launch of the Seattle City of Music, many private and non-profit organizations along with local governments have already taken steps to boost the music industry:

- Mayor Nickels' proposed admissions tax exemption for live music venues and a venue assistance program to encourage more venues to start up in Seattle;
- Expanding K - 12 music education in Seattle Public Schools;
- Rotary Seattle's mission to expand music education for all children;
- The Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau's campaign to make Seattle a destination for a live music vacation;
- Sub Pop Records' generous music donations and music/arts scholarship program; and
- Sea-Tac Airport and the WA State Ferries launching live music programs for visitors.

While Seattle already has the distinction of being a great music city with exceptional talent and entrepreneurs who got their start and live here, the Seattle City of Music initiative will capitalize on this success and enhance it to be even greater in the future.

"Music is a part of our identity that supports other initiatives as well," said Susan Shannon, Director of Seattle's Office of Economic Development. "We know that having a great music industry and music culture leverages us to grow other sectors such as biotech, research, digital media, film, and other industries."

At the free opening celebration for Seattle City of Music, guest performances included *Vince Mira*, *New Faces*, *Blue Scholars* – with special acknowledgment to music education featuring *Garfield High School Dance Team's* tribute to Quincy Jones and nationally-renowned *Eckstein Middle School Jazz Band*, *Garfield High School Jazz Quintet* and *the Seattle All-City Marching Band*.

"Seattle has always been a great place to make music," says James KEBLAS, director of the Mayor's Office of Film + Music. "The Seattle City of Music initiative is going to make Seattle a great place to make a living making music."

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