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## Bipartisan Music Everywhere Initiative Releases Charlotte Music Strategy to Strengthen, Diversify Local Music Scene

CHARLOTTE (May 6, 2019) – The Charlotte music community, as well as music fans, city leaders, and residents now have a concrete, collaborative, data-driven strategy to develop an even stronger, more equitable, and more vibrant music scene. The Charlotte Music Ecosystem Study and Action Plan, created by Austin-based consulting firm Sound Music Cities and commissioned by a group of bipartisan city leaders and music industry professionals as part of the Music Everywhere initiative, provides an in-depth assessment of the health of the local music industry and more than three dozen strategic action recommendations for the Charlotte music community, along with city leaders and music fans, to work together to grow the local music industry..

“I’m excited to now have data that demonstrates the demand for an even stronger music scene in Charlotte,” says Charlotte City Council member Larken Egleston. “We have the talent, we have the fanbase, and now we have a roadmap to expand, promote, and support a more robust music ecosystem in Charlotte.”

“With this action plan, we have made a great first step in becoming a well-known destination for music,” says Charlotte City Council member Tariq Bokhari. “This provides the data and framework for the music community to collaborate, organize, and lead the efforts, with the support of city leadership and, we hope, all Charlotteans.”

Charlotte is the first North Carolina city to embark on this initiative of analysis and goal-setting for music. The survey reveals that musicians’ and music fans’ think that Charlotte’s music scene is heading in the right direction; however, the data also shows many challenges for the people creating and booking local music, from low incomes to difficulties maintaining and renovating venues.

“Through interviews with more than 70 Charlotte music people and an extensive online survey, we took a deep dive into challenges facing musicians and the overall music industry in Charlotte,” says Don Pitts, founder of Sound Music Cities. “We found struggles, but also a lot of opportunity that music can and will flourish in Charlotte, and we created a strategy to turn that opportunity into reality.”

In the action plan, Sound Music Cities presents overarching goals that will build the music community, including audience development, increased support and organization for music makers, music industry development, and increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in local

music. The Action Plan presents more than three dozen action items to help achieve those goals, such as the creation of a Charlotte Musician’s League to organize and lobby for musicians, a Charlotte music venue alliance, a short-term grant to fund music journalism positions, hosting a regional music conference, advocating for policy changes that will prevent further losses of small venues that incubate new talent, and creating a “Charlotte Up Close” festival that capitalizes on Charlotte’s emerging popularity of loft sessions and listening parties.

“As both a venue owner and a music fan, I am proud that Charlotte is taking the initiative to strengthen the foundation of what can be a fragile industry,” says Joe Kuhlmann, owner of The Evening Muse. “I look forward to working with city leaders and my colleagues in the industry to put it into action.”

The full Charlotte Music Ecosystem Study and Action Plan is now available on [musiceverywhereclt.com](http://musiceverywhereclt.com). Anyone interested in gaining more knowledge about Charlotte music and the action plan, or becoming involved, are invited to attend the free “Charlotte: Making of a Music City” panel discussion at Charlotte SHOUT on May 9, 2019, 10 - 11:30 a.m. at Discovery Place, or participating in one of the Music Everywhere roundtables at 4:00 p.m. that day in the Discovery Place Education Studio. The 13-day Charlotte SHOUT festival also features a variety of concerts by local and national talent, including headliners Anthony Hamilton, Bleachers, and Umphrey’s McGee, and many other performances throughout Uptown. For complete information, visit <http://charlotteshout.com/music/>.

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#### ABOUT MUSIC EVERYWHERE

Music Everywhere is a long-term economic development initiative that will enhance Charlotte’s music scene and industry so that it becomes a force for tourism, a means of building community, a differentiating talent attractor, a significant source of new jobs, and a cultural asset of which all of Charlotte is proud. To learn more, visit [www.musiceverywhereclt.com](http://www.musiceverywhereclt.com).

#### ABOUT SOUND MUSIC CITIES

The leading US -based provider of music ecosystem studies and music census work, Sound Music Cities serves as a passionate partner to cities seeking to measure and grow their music and entertainment economy. Sound Music Cities looks deep within each city, handcrafting music ecosystem strategies that speak to the city’s unique, local dynamic. They bring decades of music industry experience and working from within city government on music issues.