



Press Release: December 20, 2022

Shelby Joins N.C. Music Friendly Communities Program

Shelby has been selected as one of three cities in North Carolina to participate in a program that would designate our community as a certified Music Friendly Community. The city is excited to partner with the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, N.C. Hometown Strong and consultancy firm Sound Diplomacy to pilot the North Carolina Music Friendly Communities program.

“This program is an important part of our goal to put the spotlight on our community as a destination in North Carolina for great music and great music venues, as well as expand opportunities for local music artists, and others involved the music industry”, said Shelby City Manager, Rick Howell. Participation in the Music Friendly Community program demonstrates the city’s level of commitment in supporting and developing the local music industry to boost job creation, tourism, and economic growth. Shelby will join a global community of cities that work to promote and celebrate the music industry as part of their unique local culture and economy.

Shelby is currently working to develop strategies that will help strengthen the local music-based economy by establishing a committee to steer the program work, inventorying local assets such as live music venues and music education programs, engaging stakeholders, reviewing relevant policies, and identifying key recommendations for the most effective and impactful ways to support the local music economy. Sound Diplomacy, an international music policy consultancy and global expert in developing long-term and sustainable music strategies for cities, is helping to guide this work through its partnership with N.C. Hometown Strong.

Obtaining designation as a certified Music Friendly Community is no small task and requires a tremendous amount of work from a group of dedicated committee members challenged with helping throughout the various phases of the project. “We are thankful to our committee members for their enthusiasm about the program, and for their work in helping our community obtain this designation”, said Chip Nuhrah, Public Information Officer with the City of Shelby. Communities that obtain this designation will receive state recognition and will have the opportunity to participate in program specific events and networking opportunities.

“We have a rich musical history, and there is such an amazing array of musical talent right here in our own community today”, stated Shelby Mayor, Stan Anthony “Whether it’s a solo artist or a band, this program will not just assist in highlighting that local talent but provide a central source for networking them together. And the program goes beyond that by identifying other important elements associated with that talent such as venues where musicians perform, recording studios, music instruction, music producers, DJs, and more.”

The City of Shelby has created a special page on their website at <https://www.cityofshelby.com/about/music-friendly-community-initiative>, with information about the Music Friendly Community initiative. They are currently working through the process of identifying the individuals, groups, and businesses that make up the musical nucleus of our community. Local musicians and others in the music industry interested in being included on the database are encouraged to visit this page and complete a short Online Submission Form. The city will continue to work through the various stages of the process, and is hopeful to receive designation as a certified Music Friendly Community by the summer of 2023. A special ceremony will be planned when the city officially receives this designation.

About Hometown Strong

Hometown Strong, Governor Roy Cooper's rural initiative, engages with small towns and communities in all 80 rural counties across the state. Hometown Strong creates a partnership between state agencies and local leaders to champion rural communities. The initiative leverages state and local resources, identifies ongoing projects and community needs, and implements focused plans to boost the economy, improve infrastructure and strengthen NC's rural hometowns. <https://hometownstrong.nc.gov/>

About Sound Diplomacy

Sound Diplomacy is a global research and strategy consultancy, committed to building and supporting sustainable ecosystems that bring economic development to people, places and cities. We provide research and recommendations to businesses and policymakers to help them make informed decisions on the best use of places and how to stimulate economic, social and cultural growth. Learn more at www.sounddiplomacy.com