

# Memorandum



Date: April 2, 2026  
To: Buchanan Downtown Development Authority  
From: Tony McGhee  
**Subject: The Common Concert Series Funding Request**

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## **Background**

In anticipation of the Downtown Development Authority's consideration of the \$20,000 funding request from the Common Concert Series, several Board members requested that staff obtain additional detail regarding how the requested funds would be allocated, as well as a broader overview of the Series' total operating budget and expenses. Staff subsequently reached out to the Concert Series planning group to gather this information. Attachment A includes both the request for additional details and the information provided in response. Representatives from the Common Concert Series will be present at the Board's April 8 meeting to provide further context, discuss their programming, and answer any questions the Board may have regarding funding needs, anticipated outcomes, and community impact.

## **Recommendation**

The Board may proceed with consideration of the funding request based on the information currently provided. If the Board determines that more detailed financial information is necessary, particularly in cases where certain contractual or vendor-specific details may need to remain confidential and not part of the public record, the Board could consider appointing a small working committee. This committee could review sensitive financial information in greater detail and provide recommendations to the full Board.

Additionally, the Board may wish to consider a more coordinated oversight approach, as multiple organizations and initiatives, including the Tin Shop Theater, Common Concert Series, and Farmers Market, are either currently receiving or anticipated to receive DDA funding. Establishing a working committee or structured oversight process could help ensure consistency, accountability, and strategic alignment across these efforts while maximizing the overall impact of DDA investments in downtown programming.

**Attachment A:** Communication of Request for Additional Information

# Attachment A



## Tony McGhee

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**From:** Michael Rowland <mrowland@mgcf.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 2:26 PM  
**To:** Tony McGhee  
**Cc:** Randy Hendrixson; Kalla Langston  
**Subject:** Re: Common Concert Series Request  
**Attachments:** DDA Deck - Common Concerts - 1.14.26.pptx

Hi Tony,

Hope you're doing well. We're thrilled with the support and look forward to one of our best years yet! Attached is the deck we provided to the DDA previously, and on the final page it outlines a broad outline of our budget. Now that we are through with booking, I can actually provide some hard numbers below.

Artists Fees - \$37,650  
Sound and Lights - \$10,500  
Hospitality (hotels, food, etc) - \$2000  
Marketing - \$2500  
Common Improvements (wish list) - \$5,000  
Total - \$57,650

As you can see, we have a substantial lift from individual legacy donors and the community foundation to get us to our funding levels. Next comes in our vital support from the city, then the gap is made up of individual sponsorships from community partners through our committee's fundraising efforts and distributions from the John Beckwith Dale Endowment. Due to confidentiality, we cannot share the individual artist fees negotiated with the specific acts in the series. I am happy to answer any other questions the group may have though. Please note, I am out of the office from today until my return on Monday, April 6th. Randy is the co-chair and can answer any questions in my absence though. We look forward to an amazing summer and appreciate the support.

All the best,

**Michael P. Rowland**  
**President & Chief Executive Officer**  
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**Michigan Gateway**  

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**community foundation**<sup>SM</sup>

On Fri, Mar 27, 2026 at 10:44 AM Tony McGhee <[TMcGhee@cityofbuchanan.com](mailto:TMcGhee@cityofbuchanan.com)> wrote:

The DDA has asked that we put the \$20,000 request from the Common on their agenda for the next meeting. As part of that, they asked if staff would reach out for a detailed review of the sources and uses for the Common budget for the season including the cost of each act. If you guys can get that to us by noon on the second, we will be able to include it the packet for their meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> and get this wrapped up. Much appreciated and please holler if you have any questions,.

# SUMMER CONCERT SERIES BUCHANAN COMMON



OVERVIEW & FUNDING REQUEST

**M** mark alstott

# HISTORY OF BUCHANAN COMMON

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- Buchanan Common has long served as a central gathering place for the community. Built through community fundraising, community foundation support and city collaboration in 1996.
- It has hosted civic events, cultural celebrations, and public performances for decades.
- The Summer Concert Series has become a signature tradition held at The Common.



# 2025 SUMMER CONCERT SERIES HIGHLIGHTS

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- Sixteen free outdoor concerts held throughout the 2025 summer season.
- Featured a diverse range of eight different musical genres and local/regional/national performers.
- Strong attendance from families, seniors, and visitors across the region. Over 10,000 visitors.
- Many businesses rely on continual traffic and we could use support with helping businesses market to our guests.



# OUR MISSION

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- To provide free and equitable access to live music for the entire community.
- To support local artists while fostering connection and shared cultural experiences.
- To ensure Buchanan Common remains a welcoming, inclusive public space.
- To create opportunities for local businesses to thrive.



# CITY OF BUCHANAN SUPPORT

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- Since 1996, the City of Buchanan has supported the concert series.
- Annual contribution of \$10,000 has been critical to sustaining the program.
- This partnership has helped ensure concerts remain free and accessible.
- Show planning, logistics and show curating is all done on a volunteer basis.



# 2026 FUNDING REQUEST

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- Requesting \$20,000 from the City of Buchanan through the DDA for the upcoming season.
- Increased costs include artist fees, sound production, and event logistics. All Common Committee members volunteer to run shows at no cost, but every cost we do have has increased significantly.
- Additional funding will also support needed updates and improvements to Buchanan Common. (Light truss, sound improvements, drapes, etc)



# PROPOSED DONATION BUDGET OVERVIEW

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- **Artist Fees & Hospitality: \$10,000** Covers all Thursday shows, a local preference, but these shows have our lower attendances. So, this funding meets that important community need. The total cost of this year's series will exceed \$50,000 in total. The remainder of which, will be covered through historical donors, our endowment and community support.
- **Sound, Stage, & Technical Production for our three festivals: \$5,000**
- **Marketing & Promotion: \$2,000**
- **Buchanan Common Updates & Improvements: \$3,000**
- **Total Requested Funding from DDA: \$20,000**



# QUESTIONS?

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