

To Whom it May Concern

Strategic Investment Grant Request of Video equipment for the Great Falls Municipal Band

My name is Phillip R Burton, I am a member of this, and all it's associated bands. I am requesting that you approve this grant request. After a 30 year hiatus of playing my instrument, I began playing again in 1996 as I approached retirement. After a few years of practice, I was thrilled to become a member of this band, which provides free concerts in the park during the summer months. In addition, the Municipal Band organization also provides support for a winter community concert band, and a community Jazz band. We provide an outlet for our musicians, and our concerts, are enjoyed by members of the local community, and surrounding areas. We participate in the 4th of July Parade, and perform an annual Summer Pop's Concert in our Convention Center, in addition to weekly summer concerts in the Band Shell in Gibson Park. The concerts we provide enrich the music appreciation and participation of the community.

The Great Falls Municipal Band is a 501 C 3 non profit origination of professional and advanced amateur musicians. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all volunteered to provide concerts to the citizens of Great Falls. We are totally supported by donations from the local community. This has severely limited our ability to compensate our musicians, and maintain our equipment.

The Great Falls Municipal Band has been providing free concerts to the local community for the last 128 consecutive years, and we look forward to our 129th year with much enthusiasm. The band has promoted appreciation of the musical arts, in providing an outlet for local professional and advanced amateur musicians, and students. Several of our current members have been in the band since High School, including our recently retired principal musical director who conducted the band for 40 years. The highlight of most musicians in town, is becoming a member of this band. I might add, many of our members are also music teachers who for 11 years in a row have earned top awards by the National Association of Music Merchants, NAMM. Our School Music Department has provided outstanding quality music education to our community. These music educators encourage their advanced students to participate in the various community bands in the area, such as the Community Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Municipal Band. The entire community benefits from the connection of music in the community, and in our schools.

The band records those concerts year round, using an older iPad, recorded by the spouse of one of the band members. The sound and video quality is not capable of capturing the quality of the music being provided. Those videos are uploaded to YouTube for community members, family and friends of the band to enjoy online. A new professional quality camera and sound recording would enhance that.

Yours truly,

Phillip R Burton