

## MEMORANDUM

To: City of Clearwater – Downtown Development & Special Events Review Committee

From: The Florida Orchestra (TFO)

Re: Community Benefit and Impact – *Symphony by the Sea*

Date: February 12, 2026

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The Florida Orchestra (TFO), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization headquartered in Pinellas County, respectfully submits this memorandum to demonstrate the economic impact and meaningful community benefit of *Symphony by the Sea*, a free outdoor orchestral performance at The BayCare Sound in downtown Clearwater on May 8, 2026.

As Tampa Bay’s premier performing arts institution and the largest professional orchestra in Florida, TFO has served the region for 58 seasons. With 70 full-time professional musicians under the leadership of internationally acclaimed Music Director Michael Francis, TFO consistently delivers high-quality performances that enrich, engage, and economically benefit the communities we serve. We provide free concerts at the Park in Tampa Bay, St. Petersburg, and Clearwater.

The free *Symphony by the Sea* concert directly supports downtown activation, tourism, small business revenue, and inclusive community engagement while reinforcing Clearwater’s identity as a vibrant cultural destination.

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### Economic Impact

#### 1. Attendance & Direct Spending

- Previous attendance: 2,146 patrons
- Event admission: Free and open to the public
- Estimated per-person ancillary spending (food, beverage, retail, parking): conservative estimate of \$25–\$40 per attendee

Using a conservative midpoint estimate of \$30 per attendee:

2,146 attendees × \$30 = \$64,380 in direct local economic activity

This spending directly benefits:

- Downtown restaurants and bars
- Retail establishments

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- Parking facilities
- Rideshare and transportation providers

Because the concert is free, attendees are more likely to allocate discretionary funds to surrounding businesses, maximizing downtown economic circulation.

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### **Tourism & Destination Impact**

The Florida Orchestra attracts audiences from across Pinellas County and the greater Tampa Bay region. As a regional cultural institution, TFO's brand recognition draws:

- Out-of-area visitors
- Repeat cultural tourists
- Families seeking free, high-quality entertainment

By presenting a large-scale orchestral event at The BayCare Sound, *Symphony by the Sea* reinforces downtown Clearwater as a premier arts and waterfront destination, supporting the city's long-term economic development and placemaking goals.

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### **Equitable Access to the Arts**

*Symphony by the Sea* removes financial barriers to high-quality cultural experiences. The concert is:

- Free and open to all
- Accessible to individuals of all socio-economic backgrounds
- Family-friendly and multigenerational

This ensures residents who may not otherwise afford concert tickets can experience a live professional orchestra in a welcoming environment.

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### **Community Cohesion & Shared Experience**

Live orchestral music in a public outdoor setting creates a unifying civic experience. The repertoire is intentionally curated to resonate across demographics and generations, including:

- Patriotic selections: *The Star-Spangled Banner*, *Stars & Stripes Forever*, *Armed Forces Salute*
- Iconic film scores: *Star Wars*, *Jaws*, *Skyfall*, *Aladdin*
- American masterworks: Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*

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- Classical favorites: Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*
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#### Safe, Positive Public Activation

The event provides:

- A structured, professionally managed gathering
- A safe, welcoming, family-oriented environment
- Positive use of public space

Activating downtown Clearwater with high-quality arts programming contributes to perceptions of safety, vibrancy and civic pride.

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#### Educational & Inspirational Impact

Resident Conductor Chelsea Gallo — a nationally and internationally recognized conductor who has contributed artistically to NASA and recorded for Lincoln Motor Company commercials — leads the performance. Her professional accomplishments and visibility serve as an inspiration to:

- Local students
- Emerging musicians
- Young women pursuing leadership roles in the arts

Exposure to live orchestral performance has been shown to increase arts participation, cultural literacy and student engagement in music education.

This concert will feature other nonprofit/community organization partners. We are in contact with several partners. The list includes:

- Clearwater Library
  - Clearwater Marine Aquarium
  - The Arc of Tampa Bay
  - Community Dental Clinic
  - LiFT Academy
  - local Clearwater schools to have students perform before the actual concert.
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#### Organizational Capacity & Track Record

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TFO has a continuous history of successful large-scale performances, including concerts at Ruth Eckerd Hall and Coachman Park. With 58 seasons of service, the organization has demonstrated:

- Strong operational management
- Financial accountability
- Consistent audience attendance
- Community trust and credibility

The previous *Symphony by the Sea* attendance of 2,146 patrons demonstrates both demand and proven execution capacity.

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### **Conclusion**

*Symphony by the Sea* delivers measurable economic impact and significant community benefit to downtown Clearwater. With over 2,000 attendees generating an estimated \$60,000+ in direct local spending, the event stimulates economic activity while advancing inclusivity, cultural access, and civic engagement.

By supporting this event, the City of Clearwater partners with a longstanding nonprofit institution to:

- Activate downtown
- Support local businesses
- Provide equitable access to world-class arts
- Strengthen community identity
- Enhance Clearwater's cultural reputation

The Florida Orchestra respectfully requests approval and support for *Symphony by the Sea*, confident that it will continue to produce quantifiable economic value and lasting community benefit for downtown Clearwater.

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