



McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra

2025 Grant Report

Submitted to the McKinney Community Development Corporation

The 2025–2026 season marked the McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra’s (MPO) twelfth consecutive year of service to the City of McKinney. Since its founding, MPO has remained committed to enhancing the cultural vitality of McKinney by presenting professional orchestral performances, expanding arts education access, and contributing to the city’s economic and community development.

During the 2025–2026 season, MPO successfully delivered a broad range of programming, including seven subscription orchestra concerts, two chamber music concerts, and two free recital performances. In addition to public performances, MPO continued its annual educational outreach tour, reaching 15 schools throughout the DFW region, including multiple McKinney ISD campuses. These educational initiatives introduce students to live classical music, many for the first time, and serve as a gateway to long-term arts engagement within the community.

Artistic Growth and Venue Transition

The artistic quality of the McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra continues to strengthen. Audience feedback, guest artist remarks, and peer evaluations indicate that this season’s performances represent some of the highest artistic standards achieved by the organization to date. As MPO grows artistically, so does its reputation within the North Texas arts ecosystem, enhancing McKinney’s profile as a city that supports and values professional cultural organizations.

Due to ongoing challenges securing consistent access to the McKinney ISD auditorium—primarily scheduling conflicts and late notifications regarding venue availability—MPO transitioned the majority of its performances to Trinity Presbyterian Church on Virginia Parkway. This transition proved to be highly successful. The venue’s acoustics have been widely praised by audiences and musicians alike, contributing to an improved concert experience. Additionally, the site offers convenient parking and is located within close proximity to numerous restaurants and retail establishments, encouraging patrons to dine and shop in McKinney before and after concerts.



Audience surveys and anecdotal feedback indicate that concert attendance often coincides with visits to nearby restaurants, reinforcing MPO’s role as an economic driver that supports local businesses and evening activity within the city.

Attendance Trends and Audience Development

Attendance and ticket revenue increased modestly this season compared to the prior year. While the 2023–2024 season represented a high-water mark with record-breaking attendance, the 2024–2025 season experienced a slight decline due to a combination of broader economic pressures and programming variability. Encouragingly, the current season rebounded, reflecting renewed audience engagement and stabilization.

Season ticket sales have demonstrated consistent upward growth:

- 647 subscriptions in 2023–2024
- 787 subscriptions in 2024–2025
- 833 subscriptions in the 2025–2026 season

This steady increase reflects growing audience loyalty and confidence in MPO’s programming and artistic quality. A strong subscription base is critical to long-term sustainability and provides reliable foot traffic to McKinney venues throughout the season.

Single-ticket attendance also showed a slight increase compared to last season, indicating healthy engagement from both returning and new patrons. Chamber music performances offered at a \$10 admission price experienced a modest decline; however, attendance remained respectable and consistent with regional norms for smaller ensemble concerts.

Free recital concerts provided valuable insight into audience behavior. Despite being offered at no cost, attendance did not significantly exceed ticketed chamber concerts, reinforcing that programming content and format play a larger role in attendance decisions than ticket price alone.

Programming Assessment and Strategic Planning

Programming remains one of the most significant factors influencing audience attendance and community engagement. Feedback from the Texas Commission on the Arts’ evaluation process indicated that this season’s programming was perceived as less adventurous compared to the previous year. This assessment aligns with MPO’s internal analysis and reflects a deliberate strategic decision.



While MPO remains committed to artistic growth and expanding musical horizons, our experience suggests that the McKinney community and surrounding region maintain relatively conservative musical preferences. In response, programming during the 2025–2026 season focused on maintaining audience stability by emphasizing familiar repertoire and composers while continuing to build trust and long-term engagement.

Smaller ensemble recitals, particularly those featuring no more than two performers, consistently attracted lower attendance levels—even when offered free of charge. This pattern suggests that audience interest correlates more strongly with perceived scale, familiarity, and event experience rather than price accessibility alone.

Community and Economic Impact

The McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra contributes meaningfully to McKinney’s economic and cultural ecosystem. MPO concerts generate regular evening foot traffic, supporting nearby restaurants, retailers, and service-based businesses. Many concerts are scheduled during peak dining hours, intentionally encouraging patrons to incorporate dining and shopping into their concert experience.

In addition to direct economic activity, MPO enhances McKinney’s reputation as a destination for professional arts and culture. This cultural branding supports broader city goals related to quality of life, talent retention, and community pride. Visiting musicians, guest artists, and educators further contribute to local economic activity through dining, lodging, and related expenditures.

Educational outreach programs expand MPO’s impact beyond ticket buyers, fostering early exposure to the arts and strengthening long-term community engagement. These programs align closely with MCCDC’s goals of workforce development, educational enrichment, and sustainable community growth.

Conclusion

The 2025–2026 season reaffirmed several key insights that will guide future planning:

- Smaller-scale ensembles and less familiar programming generally attract smaller audiences.
- Free admission does not inherently result in higher attendance.
- Familiar repertoire and composers—such as Beethoven, Brahms, and Mozart—remain the most reliable drivers of attendance.
- Pops programming, including film music and John Williams–style concerts, generates interest but has identifiable limits in audience growth.



Moving forward, MPO will continue refining its programming strategy to balance artistic exploration with audience preferences, while maintaining a strong commitment to community impact and economic contribution. With continued support from the McKinney Community Development Corporation, MPO will remain a vital cultural asset that enhances McKinney's vibrancy, visibility, and quality of life.

McKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

SOCIAL MEDIA AD IMAGES

McKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

PRESENTS

Night at the Movies

Featuring *Chloe Lang* performing
Defying Gravity, The Wizard and I and Never Enough

OCTOBER 4, 2025 7:00 PM
Christ Fellowship Church, McKinney

Logos at the bottom: Arts, MCDC McKinney Community Development Corporation, Texas Commission on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Arts Council of McKinney, H-E-B Helping Here.

McKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

PRESENTS

Masterworks Series Concerts

SERENADE AND SYMPHONY

Rossini: Barber of Seville Overture
Dvorak: Serenade for Winds
Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2

NOVEMBER 1, 2025 7:00 PM
Trinity Presbyterian Church, McKinney

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McKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

McKINNEY
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA
Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

WICKED THE GREATEST SHOWMAN

Night At the Movies

October 4, 2025. 7:00 PM
Featuring Chloe Lang performing Defying Gravity,
The Wizard and I and Never Enough

McKINNEY
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA
Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

PRESENTS
Holiday Pops Series Concerts

*8th Annual
All Star Christmas Concert*

Featuring
Tatiana Mayfield and Friends

DECEMBER 6, 2025 7:00 PM
Trinity Presbyterian Church, McKinney

MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
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PRESENTS

'70s & '80s Rock Pop Hits

Music from Abba, Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Styx, Madonna, Elton John, Tina Turner, Queen, The Beatles and many more

Featuring: Georgia Barge and Trenton Hull

FEBRUARY 7, 2026 7:00 PM

arts
MCKINNEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Great Commission on the Arts
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
ARSCO FOUNDATION
H-E-B Helping Here

MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

PRESENTS

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES CONCERTS

With the
February 23, 2026. 6:30 PM

MPO Piano Trio

Marina Dichenko, violin, Emmanuel Kwok, cello and Xinzhou Li, Piano

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MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor



MCKINNEY
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

PRESENTS

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES CONCERTS

With the
Odysseus Chamber Players
of the McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra

FEBRUARY 14, 2026. 6:30 PM



MCKINNEY
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

8th Annual All Star Christmas Concert
featuring
TATIANA "LADYMAY" MAYFIELD
and FRIENDS
December 6, 7:00 PM



MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Jason Lim, Artistic Director & Conductor

MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
PRESENTS
Masterworks Series Concerts

MOZART

Clarinet Concerto in A Major
Symphony No. 38
Steven Robinson, clarinet

March 14, 2026 7:00 PM
Trinity Presbyterian Church, McKinney

MCKINNEY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
presents

NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Featuring Chloe Lang, performing Defying Gravity, Wizard and I and Never Enough
Evening performance also includes music from Harry Potter, Mission Impossible, Star Wars and many more.

October 4, 2025. 7:00 PM
For tickets, visit: www.mckinneyphilharmonic.org