



## ARTS & CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

Please take a moment to answer the DACAC Arts & Culture Questionnaire for City Council Candidates. Be as thorough as possible as these responses will be shared not only with the general membership, but also with the public and posted in its entirety online at [DallasNeedstheArts.com](http://DallasNeedstheArts.com). Provide your answers in the space indicated; space will automatically adjust to accommodate your complete answers.

Please return these completed questionnaires to [AVD@ArtsDallas.org](mailto:AVD@ArtsDallas.org) as soon as possible. Thank you!

#DallasNeedstheArts #ArtsVoteDallas #TXArtsMatter

### YOU AND THE ARTS

*Give us a sense about your relationship with the arts.*

**QUESTIONS:** Is there an arts genre or form you particularly enjoy, and what is it? What arts and cultural events or performances have you attended in the last year? What arts organizations or commissions have you supported as a Board member, volunteer, contribution or season ticket holder. Please list cultural groups and experiences, even if not in Dallas.

Personally, I enjoy theatre performances. I used to attend many of the Dallas Summer Musical programs prior to having children and tried to make it to Kalita Humphreys for *A Christmas Carol* once a year. These days, with a 3- and 1.5-year-old at home, we spend our time finding experiences that they will appreciate. We have a wonderful, local arts group called Color Me Empowered, which graciously accommodates toddlers and lets them explore painting and sculpting, and we have enrolled in classes there.

I also recently enjoyed the discussion with SCOTUS Judge Sonia Sotomayor at the Wyly Theatre, have attended several Oak Cliff-based cultural events hosted by Mercado 369, and we regularly attend the festivals and street parties in the Bishop Arts District.

### ADVOCACY

*The role of an elected leader is in large part being a cheerleader for the City of Dallas and the things that make our city special. Dallas mayors such as Annette Strauss and Mike Rawlings, and former Councilmember Veletta Lill understood the importance of the arts to the city's economic development, tourism, vibrancy, cultural brand and quality of life. (See attached one-pager.) They made the arts a centerpiece of their agenda and legacy.*

**QUESTION:** What role do you envision for yourself as an elected Dallas leader when it comes to the arts? Where will arts and culture fit within your priorities? And what are the ways you would advocate for the arts in and out of Dallas?

I will be a reliable advocate for sustained support on the City Council because vibrant arts and cultural experiences advance the interests of both D1 and the City. If we are working to attract corporate relocations, I want our Arts community to be part of those pitches; not only will this highlight reasons for the relo, but if the relo occurs, these corporations may end up sponsoring/supporting the arts.

I will also work to tie arts to our economic development efforts. We should be supporting incentives that create affordable housing, workshops, and exhibition space and performance spaces for artists. If we are smart, our artists and their patrons will play key roles in transforming neighborhoods.

Finally, I'd like to see a much closer working relationship between the hotel-restaurant industries and the arts and culture community. They all want the same thing – more customers. I'd like to be an advocate and facilitator.

### EQUITY

*The 2018 Dallas Cultural Plan – just approved **unanimously** by the City Council – placed Equity at the top of priorities for the arts. This includes equity in funding, providing cultural experiences in underserved parts of our*



city, supporting both the new and emerging arts community as well as our historic institutions. Additional resources will be required to reach this goal.

**QUESTION:** Given the many needs of the city, how will you support the goal of sustaining and growing the City's current investment in the arts, and ensure the Cultural Plan does not gather dust on the shelf?

I do NOT want the Cultural Plan to sit on the shelf. I will advocate to see its strategies implemented in D1 and city-wide. Increasing the arts portion of the City's Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) will certainly help close the funding gap, and I support the increase. Great communication and transparency regarding where the funds are spent and the City's ROI (not just in tourism dollars, but also in participation from all communities) is also essential.

Also, I want to support artists, including both small and large groups. I reject the false narrative that says we must fund one over the other, pitting arts groups against each other. We don't need divisiveness, but should instead lift our entire cultural ecosystem. They are all important to having a vibrant cultural community.

#### **HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX**

To help fund its implementation, the Cultural Plan calls for an increase in the arts portion of the City's Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) to align with peer cities. HOT funds are paid by tourists, not Dallas taxpayers. Currently, 2.6% is dedicated to the arts (about \$1.6M.) Houston is 19%, San Antonio is 11%, Austin is 15%.

**QUESTION:** Would you support a significant increase of the arts portion of the HOT to create and sustain a major cultural tourism marketing program, repairs and maintenance of neglected cultural venues, and increased support for arts programs that add to the cultural vibrancy and attractiveness of Dallas as a destination?

Yes, I support a significant increase of the arts portion of the HOT to expand Dallas' cultural tourism marketing program. I recognize that expansion will likely give the City the double benefit of an expanded arts/culture program and good ROI in terms of tourism dollars. For too long, the City has put too much focus on conventions and not enough on emphasis on Cultural Tourism, and this needs to change. Because of the lack of emphasis on arts, our historic arts and cultural venues have \$100M in deferred maintenance and repairs. Our arts showcases have leaking roofs and are falling apart. We have to find the funds to start chipping away at this – the HOT is a way to do that without adding pressure to the General Fund.

#### **ARTS IN YOUR DISTRICT**

Name three areas of your council district where you think arts and cultural programs and experiences are most needed and would be welcomed the most.

Although the Hampton-Illinois Library is just outside the border of D1, it is widely used by D1 residents; this library also features a black box theater which is rarely (if ever) used for performances, and is instead just used for community meetings. By hiring and placing an arts-focused individual in this building (or partnering with a non-profit organization for staffing), we could enhance the offerings of this space.

Last year, half of the DISD schools in D1 did not have after-school programs. Part of my platform includes filling the gap in after-school programs by enhancing the City's offerings at Parks & Rec and Library facilities. I would love for arts and cultural programs/experiences to be a part of these opportunities for kids.

Chad West District 1  
Received 3/28/19



Street festivals are fantastic ways to engage parts of our culturally rich community in arts and cultural programs who don't always have the resources or time to seek out arts/cultural experiences across the City. The vast majority of Oak Cliff's street festivals and (occasional) markets take place in the Bishop Arts District area, which is still not that convenient for residents in all parts of D1. I'd love to see partnerships between the City and DACAC to plan, market, and enact arts/cultural street festivals and markets in parts of the D1 that are often overlooked, like the Clarendon corridor and Illinois/Westmoreland area.

D1 also has a wealth of murals. I want to see more of these (and other public art) across D1 and the City.

*Please return completed questionnaire to [AVD@ArtsDallas.org](mailto:AVD@ArtsDallas.org) as soon as possible.*

*Join us for a Candidate Reception for all Mayoral and City Council Candidates at The Perot on 4/29 from 6:30 – 8:30 PM*