



## 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.

This question makes me realize just how limited my life experiences were growing up in Pleasant Grove. Like many people in District 5, my parents struggled to provide the basic necessities of life – there was no time (or money) for cultural events, except what little we were exposed to in public school. Even as a student at UT Law, I could not relate to the artistic and cultural experiences in which many of my classmates were involved.

Although my experiences with the arts and culture have been limited throughout my life, I totally understand the importance of such experiences to the development of a well-rounded individual. As such, I've made a diligent effort to expose and broaden my daughters' awareness of the arts and culture around them. I've enrolled my 10-year-old daughter in theatre arts classes at Dallas Children's Theatre in the past and we recently attended a Sesame Street Live! performance at the Allen Event Center with our 2 year-old daughter. In the last year, I have also attended a Cirque du Soleil performance and a Dia de Los Muertos event at the Latino Cultural Center.

### 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 approach the importance of the arts from two distinct perspectives. The first is for the city at-large. We have very little to offer in the way of tourist attractions other than the JFK Memorial and 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Museum. Especially in the area of attracting convention business, we need to have attractions that appeal to visitors. Maintaining and expanding our cultural events and art offerings would help with that goal.

The second perspective is specifically for the constituents I would be representing. District 5 has one of the fastest growing populations in Dallas and many of our residents are blue-collar, working class families. Those families have the same challenges as did my parents. The biggest disadvantage that children from lower socio-economic brackets face is lack of exposure to different lifestyles and career opportunities. If we are ever to achieve equity in our city, we must provide our children with a good education and opportunities to be exposed to things outside the narrow confines of their neighborhoods. I am proud to say that DISD has made huge strides towards improving the schools in District 5, but I also believe that we need to improve the availability of art and cultural events that broaden our children's knowledge of the world and other cultures.

### 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?

The fundamental elements of the cultural plan (equity, diversity, space, support for artists, sustainable arts ecosystem and communications) are right in line with what I believe. I will work to find opportunities to bring the arts to District 5 and to support and vote for projects that align with the goals of the Cultural Plan, both in District 5 and in other parts of the city.

#### **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, particularly if it benefits District 5 in a significant way. It would be interesting to compare the arts scene at peer cities to determine the impact of the additional money in those cities.

#### **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.

I would like to see these kinds of programs in all of our District 5 schools, parks and recreation centers. It would be particularly inspiring to have some artists who came from similar backgrounds do an arts presentation that included talking about their past and how they got to where they are now. The Urbandale area (Military Pkwy. and Urban Ave.) has become a very active neighborhood and would, I think, be very interested and receptive to arts and cultural programs. I would be happy to host a district wide meeting to reach out to all identified neighborhood groups to present various options and determine their interests in such programs.

*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*