



## 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.

During my middle and high school years, I played the trombone and participated in All-Region competitions, Solo and Ensemble contests, marching band, and concert performances. I even built a trombone out of PVC pipes for a school project! I have always enjoyed musical performances. I also really enjoy paintings and sculptures. In the last year, I have visited the DMA and the Nasher Sculpture Center. I also enjoy the artwork on display in various shops at the Bishop Arts District. I have also been to small art galleries throughout the metroplex, especially those located on old town squares. I also like the galleries on Dragon St. Lastly, I would say that I love live theater performances. My favorite theater is the Pocket Sandwich Theater. I enjoy the environment they create when they perform their melodramas.

I have been involved as an advocate for the arts over the years. For example, I participated in the Cultural Plan Focus Group for the Office of Cultural Affairs in February of 2018. I had the opportunity to provide feedback to the OCA about what arts and cultural options are available to District 12. I also offered feedback on what new arts and cultural amenities could be added to improve the quality of life and property values in our neighborhoods. In addition to my participation in the Focus Group, I was able to vote for improvements to arts and cultural facilities during my time on the 2017 Bond Program Facilities Committee. I supported funding for the Dallas Museum of Art, the Kalita Humphreys Theater Center, the Meyerson, Music Hall, and the Majestic Theater, among other facilities. These funds invested in everything from roofing to plumbing and electrical work to improve these facilities for the public.

### 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 believe that arts and cultural amenities add to the quality of life for our residents and promote tourism to boost our economy. Therefore, I would like to promote more arts and cultural opportunities in District 12 and in all of Dallas. Unfortunately, one conclusion reached by the people in our local focus group was that our District, in particular, does not have any identifiable art or cultural installations. That would change under my leadership!

Specifically, I would advocate for art installations as a part of economic development. According to research on redevelopment and gentrification, the creative class is usually the first to move into an area that is ripe for



redevelopment before rents escalate. Think of the Bishop Arts District 10 years ago. I would like to promote arts districts within District 12 and all of Dallas in emerging areas. As mixed-use development eventually occurs, I would like to focus on affordable housing to retain creative class workers and minimize displacement problems from gentrification. At the same time, we can negotiate with developers for art installations to be included in public spaces within new redevelopments. Next, I would also advocate for artistic works to be displayed in public parks, similar to Houston's Buffalo Bayou Park. The 2017 Bond Program included funding for neighborhood parks, and I think small sculptures in neighborhood parks would add a lot of value to residents. Also, I would be interested in trying a rotational sculpture idea. What if sculpture installations in neighborhood parks all had the same dimensions at their base and could be detached and rotated to other neighborhood parks on a monthly or quarterly or semi-annual basis? That would draw residents to public spaces more regularly to view new art. I would like to bring unique ideas like that to the table. I would also promote Dallas as the city for emerging artists. Instead of spending a lot of money on commissioning famous artists, the city could focus more on rising artists. The city could save costs on commissions and the artists would gain more exposure.

### 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?

To sustain and grow our investment in the arts, we can increase the share of the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) that is allocated to funding the arts. Also, similar to Parks funding in the 2017 Bond program, we can incentivize private investment in the arts through a matching program from the city. I would also continue to support our current funding programs, including our Cultural Organizations Program, Cultural Projects Funding, Cultural Vitality Program, Community Artist Program, Cultural Facilities Program, and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant funding.

As a leader, I would ensure that the Cultural Plan does not gather dust by identifying action items from the Plan and setting completion milestones for the Office of Cultural Affairs. Through effective oversight and follow-up, we can achieve our objectives.

### 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! VisitDallas utilizes about \$15.6M of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) each year. VisitDallas has not been responsible with its current funding, but Spectra believes that it can save Dallas \$3.9M in the first year by increasing revenues and decreasing expenses. I think we could start by reallocating all or most of those savings to the arts. Also, Dallas is able to allocate HOT funding to historical restoration and preservation. This could be used for cultural destinations in Dallas, like Heritage Village, which is in desperate need of repairs.

### 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.



First, I believe that arts and cultural programs are needed most in our public neighborhood parks. Outdoor art installations have been very successful in Houston's Buffalo Bayou Park. These open spaces would also be great for art and cultural demonstrations, such as live performances. Second, I would promote arts being incorporated in new mixed-use developments. That may include sculptures, wall art, or live performance spaces. Lastly, I would pursue organizing community associations to carry out art and cultural events. This will give residents in District 12 a reason to come out and meet other neighbors and establish a greater sense of community. I would use Go Oak Cliff as an example since it has been successful with events such as Bastille on Bishop, the Mardis Gras Parade, and Blues, Bandits & BBQ.

*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*