

KINGSTON VOTES 2026:
Candidate Survey on the Arts and Culture in Kingston

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How do you see the role of arts and culture in Kingston?

Arts and culture are a big part of why Kingston feels like Kingston. The festivals, the music, the theatre, the galleries, the murals and the local makers are what turn a city into a community people want to live in, raise kids in, and come back to.

As a small business owner, I also see the economic side. Arts and culture bring visitors downtown and into our neighbourhoods, keep restaurants and shops busy, and help us attract and keep young professionals, students and families. When people are deciding where to build a life or start a business, a lively cultural scene matters.

And it matters for residents in ways that are harder to measure: kids finding something they're good at, seniors staying connected, newcomers finding their people. A city that invests in those connections is a stronger, healthier city long term.

What role should the City of Kingston play in supporting a sustainable arts and culture sector?

The City's job is to be a reliable partner. That means predictable, stable funding so organizations can plan more than one year at a time, instead of scrambling every budget cycle. It means making City spaces, parks and facilities easier and more affordable to use. And it means getting out of the way where the City's own processes are the obstacle: permits, event approvals and red tape shouldn't be the hardest part of putting on a show or a festival.



I also believe in accountability for public dollars. Funding should be transparent, measured fairly, and open to new and smaller groups, not just the established names. Done right, that's good for taxpayers and for the sector.

If elected, are there any actions you would take to help strengthen Kingston's arts and culture sector?

Yes. Specifically, I would:
- Support stable, multi-year funding for the arts so organizations aren't living year to year.
- Push to simplify and speed up permits and approvals for festivals, events and public performances.
- Bring more arts and culture into our parks, waterfront and neighbourhoods, including Loyalist-Cataraqui, so it isn't all concentrated downtown.
- Look at underused City-owned spaces as affordable places for artists to create, rehearse and perform.
- Make sure arts and culture have a seat at the table when we plan parks, waterfront and public space projects, not as an afterthought.
- Support paying artists fairly when the City commissions their work.

Additional Comments

Thank you for what you do. A lot of the work in this sector happens on thin budgets and a lot of volunteer hours, and the whole city benefits from it.

My approach is simple: listen first, then act. I'm not going to pretend I know your sector better than you do, so if I'm elected, I want to hear directly from the people doing the work about what's getting in your way and what would actually help. My door and my phone are always open.