

**Candidate:** Mara Suchy

**Running for:** Edmonton Catholic School Board Trustee Ward 71

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To be honest, I wasn't sure how I could contribute to the questions asked regarding Art and Culture in Edmonton. Honestly, I thought this questionnaire was better served by someone who was running within City hall. After contemplating and re-reading the questions I thought I do have a few answers in response to your questions. I ask only you read with open minds and hearts.

1) Do you feel the city does enough to encourage and support an active arts sector?

I was born and raised in Edmonton. For as long as I've been in this city, Edmonton has always been known as the Art and Festival capital. I think the city is always excited about all the Art programs and Festivals that occur yearly. It brings in all kinds of diverse people and tourists. Because these Festivals and Art programs showcase Edmonton, the city is pretty positive and work to ensure that they can occur yearly.

2) What would you change in the city's current approach?

I think the city's current approach does not need to change. I think that the city works well with Festival and Art planners to ensure that these events occur and reoccur at the same if not similar areas. Sometimes compromises are made on both sides and I believe that the city tries its best to ensure the event occurs in the best way possible.

3) Do you support the city's purchase and display of public art through the Percent for Art program? If not, explain why.

I support the program to purchase art and display it in publicly accessible buildings. What I'd like to see is more art from local artist. I think the money should be reserved to promote local artisans.

4) How would you propose supporting the creation of dedicated arts districts?

Dedicated art districts ensures that art and festival events always have a venue available. As a trustee, I would support the creation of these art districts by opening up a dialogue with the city and the school boards. Art districts do not just appeal to adults or adult learners. The opportunity for students to be able to showcase their art, be it tactile or musical or theatre or dance, would be extraordinary and an experience that each student would treasure. To get the schools involved in growing an art district, to be able to provide students with a platform to showcase their talents,

would encourage the growth of students and allow for each school to create fundraising opportunities to continue this opportunity.

5) In this climate, how important is it for the city to financially support new arts facilities and activities?

It is important to financially support both art facilities and activities but I do not think that the financial burden should be on the shoulders of the city alone. Fundraising activities can be planned to make up for the short fall. Opening up spaces to students within both the public and separate school board also opens up fundraising possibilities.

6) How would you continue to enhance arts and culture in our city?

As a trustee, enhancing arts and culture starts in the classroom and schools. Supporting the arts within our schools, encouraging our students' creative juices and being able to offer a platform outside of school to showcase their talents would allow arts and culture to continue year after year.

Ensuring public school funding encompasses and supports school arts and culture would be one of my goals. Giving the students the opportunity to enhance their talents be it tactile, musical, or acting, would create well rounded global students, increase student self esteem, and continue the unending talent that lives in Edmonton.

7) What would you advocate to ensure that training in Fine Arts is an integral part of the education of young Edmontonians?

I would advocate for portions of the public funding within the Catholic School system are earmarked to ensure and encourage Fine Arts be available to the student population. Providing an opportunity for students to dance, play music, act within theatre, and visual arts not only enhances their natural ability, it will also give students an outlet to allow them to express themselves in a safe and positive manner.

### **Questions from Edmonton Festivals Consortium**

1) What do you think it would take to make Edmonton a world class city?

I think that Edmonton is already a World Class City. Having Festivals and Art programs that occur yearly only enhances the city. Edmonton's Festivals are world famous and many people from all over the world come to participate as well as watch these festivals yearly. Not only is Edmonton able to showcase the city itself and the venues where these festivals take place; Edmonton is able to showcase its people who are always enthusiastic, generous, and welcoming to the visitors who come from far and wide.

2) What role do you see local Arts playing in helping to make Edmonton a world class city?

Arts play a huge role in helping to make Edmonton a world class city. As Edmonton is already known as the Festival capital, many of its festivals and art is well known across the globe. World wide people come to participate and take part as observers within these events.

The arts bring the world to Edmonton and puts Edmonton on the map as the place to be during the summer months with events like The Fringe Festival, Whyte Avenue Art displays, The Street Performers Festival and many others, as well as during the winter months with the Whyte Avenue Ice Sculptures, the Ice Castle, and others.