



Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge
2021 Municipal Election
Arts Survey: Candidate Response

Candidate: Bridget Mearns

1. What is your vision for the arts sector within the City of Lethbridge?

My vision is that the art sector continues to grow and thrive and artists have the opportunity to make a living locally.

That the arts sector is supported by the community in a way that attracts new artists to Lethbridge.

There continues to be opportunities for amateur and budding arts to develop their talent.

That festivals and events continue to grow to showcase and celebrate Lethbridge's diverse arts community.

2. What do you believe are the benefits of investing in the arts and how do you view the role of City of Lethbridge in arts investment.

The success of the Arts in the Parks series is a prime example of how investment in arts creates vibrancy in our community. I attended a few, and they were fantastic. It brought our community together at a very challenging and divisive time. This grows our sense of community and wellbeing.

Arts sector has an economic impact that benefits our economy. It increases awareness of the importance of art, it fosters talent, it provides opportunity for professionals, and creates connection through experiences. Arts is a common language across cultures, and unites us.

The municipality can play a role in investing in arts through direct financial support like Casa, managed the Allied Arts Council, providing grants and incentives for art activities like festivals and individual projects like the Public Art Small Projects. The municipality can also assist in providing resource support for organizations and associations in the sector.

3. Please share your thoughts on public art and its role in our community.

I think public art is important to contributing to making a city unique and vital to creating an identity of a city and cultural interest. On a personal note, I have a pretty great public art tour that I give for visiting friends.

I can appreciate that in challenging times like during the last few years or for large projects, that the public art policy can increase the cost of a project (or reduce the scope) and affect its viability. It can also be seen as capital dollars that are competing with other community priorities. It is important to be aware of this and ensure that there is a balance, the policy is adaptive and the committee reports and communicates the benefits to the Council and the community.

4. Lethbridge City Council has demonstrated their commitment to building a performing arts centre in their recent Capital Improvement Program. Do you support this commitment and if so what is your proposed strategy for completing the project?

Yes, I support the inclusion of the Performing Arts Centre in the CIP and the continuation of the work to confirm the operating model and site. This project has been identified as a priority in previous councils' CIPs, and a vision in the community for decades. In the coming years, it will be important to continue to evaluate all capital funding models, grants or private partnerships to see this project move forward.