



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

Candidate: Robin Walker

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

Arts of all disciplines should be celebrated and accessible to all. We have a very culturally diverse community and it would be great to see more art installations and performances to increase cultural awareness and expression, and to celebrate the diversity in our 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.

Artistic expression is important! Art makes things more manageable, tolerable, and enjoyable. Investing in the arts is a direct investment in community and culture. While municipal funds can be limited, I believe there are many ways our municipality can increase available funding for the arts without strain on municipal cash flows or tax rates and revenues.

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

Public art is incredibly important and a great tool for civic engagement. It beautifies our physical surroundings and everyone has access to it. It provides opportunities for local artists and supports local economies through businesses that supply materials and labour as well as those that benefit from sites that attract visitors. Public art creates supportive learning environments and enlivens places where people work and play. It connects citizens to their neighbours, their shared history, cultural heritage, and raises public awareness about important community issues. I have a cousin who runs a non-profit that involves disadvantaged youth in creating public mural installations for their community to foster greater community pride, morale, and respect. I got involved in one such mural when I was younger and can attest to some of the benefits first-hand.

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?

I love the idea of a new performing arts centre in Lethbridge. I believe that a truly entrepreneurial approach to financing this project can make it a reality: lobbying for private, public, provincial and federal government investment, and exploring innovative ways to develop and utilize the space. Perhaps pooling funds by combining projects and/or other creative uses that can share the space would help to address capital requirements and provide for increased revenues to cover operating costs once the project is realized. However, if this project is to be funded, it should not come at any additional cost to the taxpayer, nor should it negatively impact any other community projects.