



**Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge**  
**2023 Provincial Election Arts Survey Questions**

**Candidate: Shannon Phillips and Rob Miyashiro**

- 1) What do you believe the Provincial Government's role is in fostering the arts in small urban centers and rural communities.

*The arts are vital to our sense of community, particularly in smaller centers like ours. Arts provide outlets for young people, ways of communicating and building community with those new to our city and are also a valuable driver in our local economy. Rachel Notley and our team understand that the arts are critical to the fabric of our communities, and we have made investment in arts and culture a significant centerpiece of our plans to revitalize downtowns and rural communities throughout the province.*

*Because Rachel and our team value the arts as both an economic driver and a community builder, we have set out a real plan to help make sure Alberta's creative communities have the support that they need to do their work and build their profile. This plan includes:*

- *50% increase in funding for Alberta Foundation for the Arts*
- *A standalone Arts Capital Grants Program to support a range of projects in urban centres*
- *Creating a Live Entertainment Advisory Council to showcase and amplify Alberta talent, and coordinate and attract world-class shows and events to Alberta.*

*In addition to this, arts and culture facilities will be eligible for funding through our Hometown Alberta program, which builds on the current Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP), while adding a new \$100-million annual capital investment funding stream, so communities can build new spaces to gather at and enjoy.*

- 2) The impacts of Covid-19 were felt across all sectors of our community, with the performing arts being particularly hard hit. Many organizations across the province did not survive. What do you consider to be the important next steps in assisting artists and arts organizations to return to pre-pandemic activities.

*The Covid-19 pandemic was incredibly challenging for many small businesses, non-profits, and communities. The Alberta NDP knows that those in the cultural industry whose work relies on audiences, performances, and tourism were incredibly hard hit by the extended isolation. The Government of Alberta cannot stand by and risk losing incredible creative voices from our province, and needs to take action to ensure that those artists and performers have a clear pathway to continue pursuing their work in Alberta.*

*There are many ways in which Rachel and our team are committed to building a better future for Alberta and Alberta artists – from ensuring that our post-secondaries are fully funded to improving supports for cultural infrastructure. A particular part of our plan that will help to ensure that those most impacted by pandemic restrictions is the creation of the Live Entertainment Advisory Council, which will be tasked with ensuring that we showcase Alberta talent to the world and leverage our arts venues to create new opportunities for worldclass events.*

*In addition to this specific support for the performing arts, our commitment to increasing funding to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts by 50% will help to ensure that there are new and exciting opportunities for creators in our province.*

- 3) In the City of Lethbridge Recreation and Culture Master Plan a new performing arts theatre is one of the key priorities identified by Household Questionnaire respondents and is part of the next steps highlighted in the plan. A facility such as this would require funding from all levels of government, as well as from private contributions. How would you actively promote support for provincial funding of a new, regional Performing Arts Centre in Lethbridge?

*Lethbridge is one of the fastest growing communities in the country. That growth has made our city and our region incredibly diverse, with new communities making this part of Alberta home. The diversity of perspectives and backgrounds that we now see in Southern Alberta will inevitably create increased demand for performance space in our community.*

*As with all infrastructure investments, capital support for a new regional performing arts centre would have to be undertaken in line with the City of Lethbridge's capital priorities and strategy. Currently, the City has the Performing Arts Centre (PAC) listed in the 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan, with construction beginning around 2027. If the municipality moves this project forward and is able to harness funds from the federal government in addition to its own investments, an Alberta NDP government would work with the City of Lethbridge to understand costs and what supports would be needed from the province to bring this project to fruition.*

- 4) The Rozsa foundation has outlined that Alberta's expense budget has increased 86.1% over the last 14 years and yet arts funding has been reduced by 26.6%. Considering the growth in population and rising inflation, the arts sector has had to serve more people with less funding and at a higher cost of business. How do you believe this chronic under-funding of the arts sector can be resolved?

*As with many sectors in our province, the arts and culture sector has been subject to the whim of nonrenewable resource revenue. Rachel and our team, in partnership with former ATB Chief Economist Todd Hirsch, have developed a fully costed plan to help our province move away from the resource revenue rollercoaster and provide our province with stable, predictable funding for important priorities.*

*To help offset the historical underfunding of the arts and culture sector, we have pledged to increase funding to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts by 50%, and establish new capital granting programs that will help communities build and improve new spaces where Albertans can create, perform, and experience the work of our incredible creative community.*