



ARTS SURVEY FOR CANDIDATES

We are writing to invite you to fill out the following questionnaire on arts and culture. Please forward your answers in Word or PDF format before 4pm, Friday October 16, to the following email : eric@ericdubeau.com

Please feel free to expand answer boxes as needed. We will compile responses and share them with our stakeholders before election day on October 26.

Thanks in advance for the time spent completing this survey and best of luck!

Candidate's name: **Derek Young**

Are you running for mayor? YES **NO**

Which ward are you running in? **10**

Question 1: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "absolutely"), to what extent do you believe arts and culture are important for the future of Greater Sudbury?

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 2: Have you ever been or are you currently a board member of an artistic or cultural organization? If so, which one(s)? How did this experience affect you?

I've been President of Sudbury Arts Council in 2025 and also in 2006. I had served as President of Theatre Cambrian from 2018 to 2020 prior to the pandemic and I was proud to serve as the founding President of the Sudbury Indie Cinema Co-op. Currently; I am the Pipe Major of the Lockerby Highlanders Band and celebrating my 40th anniversary as a member of the pipe band and Scottish community.

These experiences deepened my appreciation for the arts and my own cultural heritage. They also provided amazing opportunities for personal growth and community connections, helping to shape and strengthen my position as a community leader and builder.

Professionally, I also work in the arts as an entertainment promoter and permittee with IATSE Local 634 working as a stagehand. In 2016, I led the first Reading Town Sudbury Ville Lecture Festival in partnership with Salon du Livre prior to being hired as the operations manager for the Northern Ontario Railroad Museum and Heritage Centre.



Question 3: Which Sudbury arts or cultural experience has particularly affected you? Why?

There are many, but one of the cultural experiences that particularly stands-out is the first time I attended French Fest when it was in the parking lot near where the Place des Arts is now. I admire the creativity and the “weirdness” that comes from the Francophone arts community. It is fun, engaging, and totally unpredictable. You just never know what to expect or experience.

At my first French Fest, I recall a performance art piece where theatre performers scaled the exterior walls of SRO on Larch Street. It affected me, because it wasn’t something you would typically expect to see in Sudbury, especially in the anglophone arts community.

Up Here Festival also offers that same creativity and unpredictability, which seems to be a trend in the Francophone scene. It must come from the beer at your evening meetings to get the creative juices flowing.

Question 4: Which benefits of arts and culture are most important to you? Why?

Arts and culture truly do add to the quality of life in our community. It’s gives us a sense of identity and the places around us. It really is what makes us a city for the “creative, curious, and adventuresome.”

Art is also a form of activism, especially in film and live theatre. It provides opportunities to have important conversations on the things that matter in our community and creates a platform for engagement. When I volunteered for City Medicine this summer, I saw that happen first-hand. This play got to the core of homelessness and addictions, by bringing to life stories of residential school survivors, abuse, isolation and trauma. The answers to some of the complex issues we’re facing are as simple as having a conversation with someone in the Blue Door Soup Kitchen. “Nothing about us, without us” is an important line from the show that I learned from Angela Recollet, and other people like Sarah Gartshore and filmmaker/podcaster Ryan McMahon.



Question 5: What is your vision for the future of arts and culture in Sudbury?

I envision a rich, vibrant arts and culture community in Sudbury that is well supported and sustainable. I value partnerships across all sectors of the Anglophone and Francophone arts community and would like to see a coordinated approach to proactively make sure our arts and cultural organizations thrive, as well as protect our heritage buildings and community cultural assets.

Question 6: In 2026, the Sudbury Arts and Culture Grant Program and municipal operating support grants to certain organizations totaled just over one million dollars (0.12% of the City of Greater Sudbury's total spending for the year). Do you think municipal funding for Sudbury arts and culture should remain stable, increase or decrease over the next five years? Why?

When I first became President of the Sudbury Arts Council in 2006, I was also a member of the Civic Arts and Cultural Charter Steering Committee. At the time, the grant program was approximately \$587,000 and has not increased since then. Although more demands have been placed on the program with an increase in new applicants to the fund, to my knowledge it hasn't increased since unfortunately.

We need to make annual increases to the fund in line with increasing demand, as well as look for ways that arts organizations can share best practices and help reduce their dependency on the program. It should be seen as a hand-up not a hand-out, because for every \$1 invested in the arts, the arts generate \$9.41 in economic development and generate \$4 or more in earned revenue adding to GDP.

In 2026, city council removed the Civic Arts and Culture Fund from the tax levy and it's negatively impacted organizations, with Northern Lights Festival Boreal taking a giant hit among others. To make up for it, this year's funds were dispersed from arts fund reserves, tourism development grants, and the topped by community economic development grants. I would like to see the Fund reinstated and revised to allow for a more streamlined application process, multiple intake periods for smaller project submissions.



Question 7: If you are elected, do you pledge to support and vote in favor of increased municipal funding for arts and culture throughout your term?

Yes	No
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Question 8: In Sudbury and across Canada, participation in cultural activities is often dependent on a person's or a family's ability to pay for tickets. What could the City of Greater Sudbury do to help address this issue?

I am aware of some programs through the library as an example where discounted or free tickets are made available to events like the symphony. In the past the Sudbury Arts Council and ROCS used to have a "Passport to the Arts" which would provide opportunities for discounts or a variety of incentives to experience the arts.

The onus is really on the arts organizations individually. Many offer different levels of ticket price, pay-what-you-can, BOGOs etc. to help make arts accessible. The organization's ability to attract donors, sponsors and funders also helps with offsetting operating costs to help make tickets more affordable.

The city, through tourism and communications departments can also provide tools for marketing, professional development, strategic planning etc. to help smaller arts organizations look for ways to help make the arts more accessible.

Ward 10 encompasses several cultural assets such as Place des Arts, The Ref, STC, Knox Hall, the new Cultural Hub and Event Centre as well as Bell Park/Grace Hartman Amphitheatre. I would like to advocate for enhancements to Bell Park such as additional washrooms, a band shell, accessible parking, decorative fencing, shade, available power supply, public water and a cover over the amphitheater. These things which would better the patron experience and greatly reduce operating costs for non-profit arts organizations and external promoters, helping to make tickets more affordable.



Question 9: Sudbury residents benefit from the talent and hard work of hundreds of artists and cultural workers. What should the city do to strengthen Sudbury's cultural workforce?

The city needs to work with these arts organizations to create a more sustainable work environment and assist with professional development. Many of the jobs in the arts are not sustainable as they are mainly contract or gig work. For example, even with Economic Development's film officer working hard to attract production companies and directors towards Sudbury as a shooting location, film workers must find other jobs when projects aren't in Sudbury.

Things like multi-year funding through the Civic Arts and Culture program will create more predictability, helping to sustain those jobs longer. We need to recognize that jobs in the creative and cultural industries are real jobs and should be seen as such.

The city has hired an external arts consultant from outside Sudbury to develop a plan to work with the community and commission a new public art/monument to recognize individuals in our community who have passed away from overdose. We have many great, dedicated artists and activists in our community, and they would be very capable of doing this work to keep it local. The Crosses for Change have already been a polarizing topic in our city, and it's almost shameful that an outside artist was hired to make something of such importance to the community.

Through organizations like ArtsVest and the Council for Business and Arts, we do see new partnerships developing between arts organizations and the business community. When possible, the city should have a buy-local policy as part of their procurement process, or public art policy to encourage local art in municipal buildings, offices, streets, parks and playgrounds.

Question 10: Sudbury has a number of vibrant cultural spaces including *Place des arts*, *Galerie du Nouvel-Ontario* and *Yes Theatre*. What should the City of Greater Sudbury do to better support these cultural spaces and to support access to the arts for everyone?

Firstly, the city should recognize these spaces as cultural assets and be less reliant on the hard work being done by arts organizations and their volunteers. We have assets like the Fraser Auditorium at Laurentian University which could serve as Greater Sudbury's largest performance arts venue. In some communities like Barrie, they have a Department of Tourism Arts and Culture that manages the Mady Centre and the auditorium at Georgian College outside of the academic schedule. Through tourism development and community economic development grants, the Fraser could use a major upgrade if the university was open to



allowing Sudbury to attract different touring acts. For some of these acts, the arena is simply not the right venue even when they only use half the bowl to create an intimate concert setting.

I had an opportunity to visit the TCU Place Convention Centre in Saskatoon, which is a 104,000 sq ft modern convention center with a 2074-seat theatre. This center is managed by a board of directors with representatives from the arts, municipality and community. Programmed by municipal staff, they attract local productions, international touring artists, Broadway, ballet, musical acts, children's shows and comedians. They have also hosted the Junos twice. In this scenario, the city's major event officer, tourism development, convention bureau etc. are working together to ensure the space is always full. I would like something like this for our community, although a shared space for the anglophone arts organizations like Places des Arts or the North Bay Capitol Centre would be a great start.

Thank you for your time and for your responses!