

**RESPONSE BY: CARMINE PERRELLI, REGIONAL COUNCILLOR CANDIDATE,
RICHMOND HILL**

COMMUNITY / PROMOTION / ACCESS:

What will you do to ensure the general public has greater access to experience and enjoy the arts in your municipality?

People lead busy lives and going specifically to see arts can sometimes be a challenge. I believe that we need to create more public art and integrate it into people's everyday experiences for maximum exposure and enjoyment.

What is one small concrete example of supporting the arts that you can do on a monthly basis?

Richmond Hill has a great Recreation Centre and library system with a new one just weeks away from completion in Oak Ridges. I will ask staff to come forward with a report to utilize these networks to offer weekly or monthly programs and performances.

With many jobs being developed in media arts related fields, what are your plans to ensure talent stays in the region instead of moving to innovative hubs like Waterloo, Vancouver and Silicon Valley?

Richmond Hill has done a poor job of attracting and keeping many innovative companies that provide good paying jobs for our residents including universities and Honda. In the case of Honda, long delays and red tape forced Honda to locate just outside of Richmond Hill diminishing our tax base and making it harder for us to provide services including the arts.

How will you contribute to growth of the arts in the future for the next generation of artists?

Richmond Hill Council and the Mayor provide many grants to groups and individuals, I believe less of it should go to individuals and more of it should go promoting innovation and the arts.

INTRINSIC VALUE:

What municipal arts and culture events/programming do you attend and support, and have you purchased work created by local artists?

I attend open mic nights showcasing and supporting local artists and sometimes participate. I was instrumental in ensuring that the Richmond Hill Curtain Club received necessary funding in order to continue.

PLATFORM:

In your list of the ten top priorities of your platform, where would supporting the arts place on your list? Why there?

Part of my answer is actually in your next question. “Arts and culture are a barometer of the health of a community, town, or city”. The arts should be incorporated into our Economic Development Strategy and a good place to start would be in revitalizing and promoting our downtown.

Arts and culture are a barometer of the health of a community, town, or city. How will you profile/give a place to arts and culture in your municipal structure, strategic planning, marketing and reporting of achievements?

The arts should be incorporated into our Economic Development and revitalization strategy and that a good place to start would be in revitalizing and promoting our downtown. I believe that as part of this revitalization, we should look at creating some work/live lofts or workspaces for artists. This strategy has proven very successful in gentrifying other jurisdictions and I believe that this plan will be the catalyst for Richmond Hill downtown transformation as well.

What kind of municipal policy would you propose to encourage artists to be able to work and live in your municipality?

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SPACE:

How will you ensure that artists in your municipality receive affordable space to create and showcase their work?

I would start with creating affordable live/ work spaces for the arts in a revitalized downtown. I would then use this success to expand the programme to the rest of Richmond Hill. This can easily be achieved through section 37 and grants from the other levels of government.

Do you think artist studio space rentals should be added to the new Richmond Hill Public Library expansion and other similar community venues?

This sounds like a great idea. I would want to do community and stakeholder consultations and ask staff for a report before making a final decision, but at this point I would say yes.

How do you envision the inclusion of local art in the public realm?

I think we have some fine examples of this in Richmond Hill already but I think we can do much more. For example, we can get local artists to beautify our street furniture;

mailboxes, hydro- bell-garbage bins, and I would like to look at holding competitions for artists to create murals in some of our public spaces.

EDUCATION:

Where do you see arts education fitting into your electoral platform - in school programming, health programs and/or community programs?

I would work with the School Board Trustees to create a partnership between the school system and the Town of Richmond Hill but I would like to include the two senior levels of government as well.

FUNDING:

Do you believe that it's vital to have municipal granting programs to fund local artists and arts organizations to create and present work in your municipality? If so, how will you advocate for this funding?

Yes, I think the arts contribute so much to our community that we as a community need to show them our support which also includes financial support. Many other municipalities set arts funding based on a dollar figure per number of residents, I would be in favour of that model as it is predictable and would allow groups to plan ahead.

There is a noticeable gap between arts spaces (studio, exhibition, performing, etc.) for emerging and professional artists in York Region, making it challenging for artists to stay in the area while growing their professions. What do you think the municipality's role is in funding spaces for emerging to mid-career artists?

The Town of Richmond Hill needs to take an active role and I would start with creating affordable live/ work spaces for the arts in a revitalized downtown. This can easily be achieved through section 37 and grants from the other levels of government. I don't look at this action as a burden, I believe that incorporating these spaces into a larger revitalization plan will have a huge benefit and help spur the renewal of our downtown.