

**RESPONSE BY: Susan Lahey Candidate for East Gwillimbury Town Council Ward 3
Mount Albert**

Community/Promotion/Access:

As a professional art appraiser for the past 18 years, specializing in Asian art, I am very familiar with the benefits of all art forms in our communities. I also teach art history, and believe that art enriches our lives.

As a Board member on the East Gwillimbury Public Library, I participate in meetings making decisions about budget and programming at the Mount Albert and Holland Landing branches, as well as planning for the future library in Queensville which will be part of the Health and Active Living Plaza. Libraries are evolving and becoming hubs for technology, cultural and artistic activities/events and education. I would be interested in spearheading the development of a local arts council in East Gwillimbury if I am elected a Town Councillor.

INTRINSIC:

I am always advocating for the arts, cultural events and programming, and have volunteered for many years in a leadership role with an organization with a group which promotes art lectures, and visits to galleries, artists' studios and museum exhibitions. I often attend music concerts, book sales, visit artist's studios, and admire the artwork on display from the local art groups. Yes, I have taken ceramics classes with the local EG artist Barb Eland, which was an amazing experience.....loved getting my hands in the clay!

PLATFORM:

I would put supporting the arts in the top 5 because, after the obvious priorities of having clean safe water and infrastructure for functioning in daily life, the arts bring so many benefits to communities, whether through improved mental health in our very busy lives or through the financial benefits it brings to local businesses and self-employed artists in our economy.

SPACE:

I envision public sculpture in park space, as well as expanding upon the facilities of local communities such as our two local community centres, which should both be expanded and renovated, taking into consideration creating specific space which could be used by artists and art events.

EDUCATION:

In my platform, I see arts education fitting into all three areas- in school programming, health programs and community programs. As a member of the East Gwillimbury Public Library Board, I advocate for the library to be used as a community hub and resource for the arts.

FUNDING:

Yes, I agree its vital to have municipal granting programs to fund local artists and art organizations. Funding should also be provided to increase the spaces where artists can be creative.