

Rocco Yeargin Green

In Summit County, a healthy and fully leveraged arts and cultural sector will **attract and retain talent** to our region, **build jobs** in the creative sector, **add significant value to the education** of our community's children, and serve a leading indicator of **economic prosperity and impact**.

The creative industry in the Akron MSA supports over **17,000 jobs and drives \$1.4 billion in economic activity**.

To learn more about the vibrant arts, culture, and environmental sector in Summit County, visit:

ArtsNow.org

SummitLive365.com

akronculturalplan.com

[Arts and Culture Questionnaire for Summit County Mayoral Candidates](#)

Below, you will find information and prompts related to important issues that impact the creative sector. ArtsNow respectfully requests that you complete this questionnaire by 5PM on Thursday, April 6th, 2023 so your constituents can learn more about your arts and culture platform. Please respond as thoroughly as possible, as responses will be shared with the public and posted in their entirety online at artsnow.org.

Responses will be published at artsnow.org

Questions/responses begin on the next page.

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ONE: YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ARTS AND CULTURE

Please give us a sense of your relationship with the arts and culture sector. Keep in mind that our sector is made-up not only of nonprofit organizations, but also artist entrepreneurs and creative businesses and venues.

Response Prompt(s):

- What arts and culture events, performances, or experiences have you attended in the last year?
- What arts/culture organizations or commissions have you supported as a board member, volunteer, donor, or season ticket holder?

Please list cultural groups and experiences, even if they have not taken place locally.

Candidate Response: ROCCO YEARGIN

My family and I enjoy the many art and cultural events located in the area on a regular basis. We have, once again, enjoyed live performances at the Goodyear Theatre, Kent Stage, and, of course, Green High School. Some of our favorite museums in the area are the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Akron Art Museum, Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, MAPS Air Museum (located right in Green) and the Pro Football Hall of Fame. We really are blessed to have these gems right in our own backyard and enjoy taking out of town friends and family to experience them when they visit.

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TWO: ADVOCACY

The role of mayor includes in large part being a cheerleader and advocate for your city and the assets that make our communities special. During the process of creating the [Akron/Summit Cultural Plan](#), we heard loud and clear that residents want an administration that will make the arts and culture a centerpiece of their administration and legacy and who understands the importance of the arts to the city's economic development, tourism, public spaces, vibrancy, cultural brand, and quality of life.

Response Prompt(s):

- As mayor, how will you use your position to strengthen the arts and culture sector in the city?
- Where will arts and culture fall within your priorities?

Candidate Response: ROCCO YEARGIN

As mayor, I will use my position to encourage patronage of the arts by continuing to showcase local artwork at the Central Administration Building and incorporating art into our city's public spaces in and around parks, streets, city buildings, and sidewalks.

One recent example of public art in the community is the high school senior student parking space painting. Originally started in response COVID, the parking space art has become an annual tradition celebrating the creativity of students, while adding flavor to the school campus. In another part of town, student art is used to take the edge off a construction zone.

I also favor using art as a tool for public engagement by seeking artistic expression from residents. In addition to traditional methods, I favor asking residents to respond creatively to the question of how to build a stronger community by using drawing or writing to express their vision. Finally, I would love to see the summer concert series return to Green.

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THREE: RESOURCES

A healthy cultural sector requires sustainable funding sources in order to maximize its potential for community impact. We must invest in our cultural hubs and venues. We must investigate and leverage new funding sources, and we must explore new resources for our sector.

Response Prompt(s):

- What leadership would you provide to ensure sustainable funding of the arts and culture sector?

Candidate Response: ROCCO YEARGIN

I would ensure sustainable funding of the arts by first taking advantage of available grant funding. I have also worked with community leaders to create a Green Community Fund. I support the long-term maintenance of such a fund to, among other things, potentially support the local art scene.
