



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

CANDIDATE NAME: JIM GINGRICH

- 1) **CREATIVE WORKFORCE VALUE** - What impact does Nashville's creative workforce - actors, artists, dancers, musicians and the overall creative class - have on the city's identity and well-being?

Comments: Nashville's creative workforce accounts for billions of dollars in our annual economy, yet even that statistic does not fully quantify their impact. Our creatives and artists are the soul of our city. It is why many of us relocated to Nashville and why we stay. It's at the heart of why people visit Music City and are the core of our tourism and hospitality industry.

Across the country, we've seen what happens when rent and the cost of living go up- the creative class is priced out of town, and the city is left far poorer as a result. As we manage the problems in our city, and the growth that has affected all of us, we need to make sure that we preserve what makes Nashville unique - our actors, musicians, and creative class. As Mayor, I promise to work with diverse voices in the artistic community and to fight to make sure Nashville stays affordable and unique.

- 2) **CREATIVE CULTURE CRISIS** - Do you believe Nashville is currently facing a crisis, in which its creative workforce can no longer afford to sustainably work and live here? If so, what strategies do you have for addressing the crisis?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: For far too long, Nashville has been an ATM for out-of-town developers and it's pricing our creative workforce out of the community. Now is the time we start building our city for our families. We can't wait. The soul of our city depends on it.

- 3) **CREATIVE WORKFORCE HOUSING** - Would you prioritize the development of creative workforce housing (for example, through an MDHA initiative such as the Ryman Lofts)?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: We're on our 4th affordable housing study. Each one tells us the problem is worse than the last time we studied it. It's a shame that the unrestrained growth has priced

so many people out of our city. Ryman Lofts is a good start, but there are other things we must additionally do:

- Properly invest in the Barnes fund to create more affordable housing here in Nashville.
- Make use of the land the city owns that is ripe for affordable housing development.
- Harness the power of the private sector to make the multibillion dollar investments in housing and make it easier for affordable housing to be built.

4) **CREATIVE SPACE** - Would you support publicly owned, unoccupied space to be transformed into creative development or presentation space for music and the arts in Nashville? What additional solutions to the lack of creative space would you explore as Mayor (such as preserving existing spaces through a land trust for historic venues and the like)?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: We must revitalize efforts to build a strong cultural trust, creating spaces that support artists and arts organizations, and helping preserve historical and iconic cultural buildings.

5) **CITY ARTS FUNDING** - This city's arts budget has not kept up with the growth of the artists and arts organizations in Nashville despite the growth of the city. Would you support funding Metro Arts at 1% of the combined Metro and MNPS budget? (Roughly \$30 Million of support annually.)

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: In Austin, their cultural trust has dedicated funding to leverage public and private partnerships. With the creative class accounting for so much of our culture and economy, it is a no brainer to dedicate funding from Nashville's budget to support the city's art budget.

6) **CITY RELIEF FUNDING** - The Arts & Business Council launched an Artist Relief Fund in 2020 to compensate for the cancellation of scheduled gigs or opportunities (such as a commission, performance, etc.), or due to layoff/furlough as a result of the March 2020 tornados and/or COVID-19 pandemic. It experienced such high demand that only half the applicants could be funded. Would you support the creation and funding of an ongoing emergency relief fund for Nashville's creative workforce (similar to the Austin Music Disaster Relief Grant)? If so, at what level would you fund it?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: 2020 ushered in unprecedented times and also exposed how vulnerable our arts community is, not only during the pandemic, but also the tornados that struck many parts of our community. Serving on the board of the nonprofit which led COVID and tornado relief, I saw first hand how important it is we have a relief program ready the moment disaster strikes. We should absolutely have a program in place to step in immediately.

7) **MUSIC EDUCATION** - Do you commit to working toward the establishment of fully funded music, visual art, and/or theater arts programs in every Metro Public School? If so, what strategies would you employ?

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. PREFER NOT TO TAKE POSITION

Comments: There is nothing more important than investing in our children and their futures. As a city, we're spending nearly 60% more per student than we were ten years ago, yet we're not achieving the outcomes we aspire to. This lack of funding impacts our ability to offer music, visual art, and/or theater arts programs. Every student deserves the opportunity to study the arts and we must prioritize it in our school funding.

8) What other strategies are you exploring to support the creative economy in Nashville?

Comments:

- We need to ensure that we are supporting the next generation of artists with serious arts and music education in the classroom
- We also need to focus on the restaurants, small businesses, and arts venues that have served our neighborhoods.
- We have to support our parks, greenways, and public spaces that complement our cultural institutions.
- We have to balance our tourism economy with support for local artists