



## CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

CANDIDATE NAME: MATT WILTSHIRE

- 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:* The creative class is core to not just our local economy but also the city's very identity. The actors, artists, dancers, and musicians give the city a unique cultural vibrancy that attracts people from all over the world to visit Nashville and support our local economy. The creative professionals in our city create job opportunities for other creative professionals, as well as those in hospitality and marketing. As Mayor, I'll work closely with Metro Arts and am committed to investing in the arts and doing-so with equity in mind.

- 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:* Nashville is a growing and thriving city, but our growth is leaving far too many people behind. Artists, yes, but also cops, firefighters, and school teachers are finding it increasingly difficult to afford to live here. While at MDHA we brought together the public sector and the private sector to form public-private partnerships and resulted in thousands of new units of affordable housing. As Mayor I will look to continue that approach.

- 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:* Tackling affordability across the economic spectrum has got to be one of the top priorities for the next Mayor. I'm the only candidate running for Mayor who has actually delivered results at scale in the area of housing affordability. During my time at MDHA we were able to redevelop areas of concentrated poverty into thriving mixed income mixed use developments and we did it all without displacing anyone.

- 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:* I'm open to this in instances where the space is not suitable to be developed into new affordable housing.

- 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:* The city's support for the arts isn't limited to funding and shouldn't be reduced to a percentage of the budget. As Mayor I will support the arts, first, by making Nashville a city where artists can afford to live and raise a family. Further, I'll work to develop public-private partnerships that direct additional resources, outside capital, toward supporting Nashville's creative class.

- 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:* I'm open to a relief fund that is meant to mitigate the effects of a large scale and long term disruption, such as COVID-19.

- 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:* I believe Nashville should have the best public schools of any city in America and that starts with every parent and child having an excellent neighborhood school. In order

to provide a world class and well rounded education, each of our schools must have arts programs.

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

*Comments:* I'm a big believer in the power of bringing people together and forming partnerships between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. As Mayor, I'll use the convening power of my office to ensure that all three of those sectors are united around a shared vision in order to maximize our collective strength. At MDHA I helped secure more than \$7 million from Amazon to build affordable housing in Nashville, I'll take that same approach to build support for Nashville's creative economy.