

Candidate Survey Results: Arts & Culture

Overview

Nine candidates answered the Alberni Valley arts and culture survey between Sep 23 and Oct 5, 2026: four running for mayor and five for councillor. Every candidate rated arts and culture as very important to the Valley's future, and every candidate rated youth arts programming as very important.

Mayoral candidates

- Don Davidson
- Sukhdev Krishan
- Charles Walter Mealey
- Sharie Marie Minions
- Todd Patola
- Don Tecson (awaiting response)

Councillor candidates

- Sam Atwal
- Debbie Haggard
- Adam Hayduk (awaiting response)
- Diljeet S. Hundal (awaiting response)
- Richard Jae Huneault
- Wendy Lee Kerr
- Nina Kossenko (awaiting response)
- Michael Moore
- Anna Perry
- Cindy Solda
- Tom Verbrugge (awaiting response)
- Chris Washington (awaiting response)

Mayoral candidates

Don Davidson



Mayor · dondavidson@mail.com · Submitted Oct 11, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Occasionally
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Strongly Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Undecided
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree

Question	Response
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Need more information
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Unsure
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Need more information
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Improved communications for a community events calendar and shared promotions to encourage more public engagement.
- Improved partnerships with festivals and events to ease permitting, planning and communications.
- Tie arts into economic development and revitalization strategies

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

My first priority would be to learn firsthand what arts and culture currently cost, what they deliver for Alberni Valley residents and visitors, and what opportunities exist to improve their value to the community.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

I strongly believe arts and culture are important to our community, particularly for children and youth.

I believe we should first understand what we already have, what it costs to maintain, and what benefits existing and proposed programs deliver before committing additional public money.

The survey allows only three priorities, but that does not mean I oppose the other opportunities listed. I would want to hear directly from the people involved, examine the facts, and understand the financial consequences before deciding which initiatives deserve support.

My responsibility as mayor would be to help worthwhile community initiatives succeed while protecting the interests of taxpayers. I will not promise spending before understanding the costs, benefits, and long-term obligations.

Sukhdev Krishan



Mayor · AlberniSukhdev@hotmail.com · Submitted Sep 29, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Occasionally
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Neutral
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Undecided
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Neutral
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Undecided

Question	Response
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Need more information
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Prioritizing arts and culture-based tourism and economic development
- Expanding youth and school arts programs in partnership with local arts and culture groups
- Tie arts into economic development and revitalization strategies

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

I would bring artists, First Nations, cultural organizations, youth, businesses and tourism partners together to identify practical opportunities that connect arts and culture with community development, tourism and economic revitalization. I would then work to pursue partnerships and outside funding so good ideas can become sustainable projects without placing the entire burden on local taxpayers.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

I believe support for the arts goes both ways. A community can support its artists, and artists and cultural organizations can give back through community connection, youth opportunities, fundraising, tourism, local identity and economic activity.

I have seen how art can bring people together, including through a community art fundraiser I was invited to attend. I can also imagine the Alberni Valley developing arts and cultural festivals capable of attracting people from across Vancouver Island and beyond,

potentially connecting with waterfront activity, cruise-ship visits, local businesses, musicians, performers and the many different kinds of artists who live here.

Our region also has an extraordinary depth of First Nations art, history and cultural knowledge. Any municipal role in that area should be built through respectful partnership, with First Nations artists and communities determining how their culture and stories are represented.

To me, arts and culture are not simply an expense. Done thoughtfully, they can give a community character, bring people together and become part of economic development and revitalization.

Charles Mealey



Mayor · Submitted Oct 5, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Occasionally
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows

Question	Response
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Prioritizing arts and culture-based tourism and economic development
- Expanding youth and school arts programs in partnership with local arts and culture groups
- Improved communications for a community events calendar and shared promotions to encourage more public engagement

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

Continue to utilize the Alberni Valley Museum to store local art pieces until a permanent home can be found. Working with the Arts Council to find a new home that works with their business plan.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

We have a rich history of arts, culture and heritage in this community. I would like to keep that history intact, and celebrate it as we see more and more people wanting to come here to experience that history, whether it be First Nations culture, industrial heritage or anything else that tells the story of this Valley.

Sharie Minions



Mayor · sharieminions@gmail.com · Submitted Oct 2, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Regularly
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Strongly support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Maintain current levels
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes

Question	Response
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Developing a cultural strategic plan
- Prioritizing arts and culture-based tourism and economic development
- Create an arts committee with dedicated staff to ensure alignment in the community and directly support arts groups

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

I think an arts and culture committee is the key to having more meaningful conversations about priorities and needs, so in my opinion that would be the best starting point.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

No response.

Todd Patola

Mayor · Elect.todd.patola@gmail.com · Submitted Sep 23, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Occasionally
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows

Question	Response
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support one
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Unsure
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Developing a cultural strategic plan
- Improved communications for a community events calendar and shared promotions to encourage more public engagement
- Tie arts into economic development and revitalization strategies

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

Include a cultural strategic plan with all physical developments to create a bespoke cultural of port alberni

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

No response.

Councillor candidates

Sam Atwal



Councillor · samforcouncillor@gmail.com · Submitted Sep 23, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Regularly
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree

Question	Response
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Developing a cultural strategic plan
- Prioritizing arts and culture-based tourism and economic development
- Expanding youth and school arts programs in partnership with local arts and culture groups

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

Developing a program to increase how art can be experienced by local residents and enjoyed by all.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

I believe that having a strong arts community helps develop, retain and expand economic viability for Port Alberni. Having programs for youth keeps them busy and engaged, and out

of trouble. Arts programs for seniors keeps them active an involved in the community. A strong arts and culture in the Alberni Valley also helps attract the professionals we need in health care, something we vitally need.

Debbie Haggard



Councillor · debbiehaggard@shaw.ca · Submitted Sep 28, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Regularly
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Maintain current levels
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Neutral
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes

Question	Response
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support one
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Prioritizing arts and culture-based tourism and economic development
- Expanding youth and school arts programs in partnership with local arts and culture groups
- Improved communications for a community events calendar and shared promotions to encourage more public engagement

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

Support more arts and culture events for the community

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

No response.

Richard Huneault



Councillor · Richard4pacouncil@gmail.com · Submitted Oct 4, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Occasionally
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows

Question	Response
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Need more information
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Some potential
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Establishing a dedicated micro grant for artists to invigorate the community with public art
- Improved communications for a community events calendar and shared promotions to encourage more public engagement
- Improved partnerships with festivals and events to ease permitting, planning and communications

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

By volunteering and going to events. I believe participation is the best thing anyone can do.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

South, the city's job to tell people what art is. It's the city's job to make sure that there's space invisibility and accessibility. So artists can be creative, and people can appreciate.

Wendy Kerr



Councillor · wendyleegirbav@gmail.com · Submitted Oct 8, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Occasionally
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Strongly Support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes

Question	Response
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	A priority for me
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support one
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong Opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Prioritizing arts and culture-based tourism and economic development
- Supporting the return of a public art gallery with partnerships, funding and subsidies
- Improved partnerships with festivals and events to ease permitting, planning and communications.

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

Participate Engage with community Explore opportunities to showcase the artists

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

I remember art rave and I would love to see more events of this type.

Michael Moore



Councillor · islandmikemoore@gmail.com · Submitted Sep 23, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Regularly
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Strongly support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes

Question	Response
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	A priority for me
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Developing a cultural strategic plan
- Tie arts into economic development and revitalization strategies
- Support creative industries and the local "creative economy"

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

I would let me pick more options for question 12 :)

I believe that arts and culture can be the bases for building and developing a community and culture, tourism and economic development for the city. By including art at the beginning of the conversation means it will become a focus and not an afterthought.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

Arts isn't just painting and sculpture, arts is the foundation for science, technology, engineering, and math. It is the creative energy that can drive a community forward.

Anna Perry



Councillor · sneltrain90@gmail.com · Submitted Oct 10, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Regularly
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Strongly support
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Yes
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree

Question	Response
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	A priority for me
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Yes
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Developing a fee for service agreement with the Arts Council to provide grants, public arts and other arts community initiatives
- Supporting the return of a public art gallery with partnerships, funding and subsidies
- Developing partnerships and subsidies to utilize the Rollin building for arts and culture use (the old Rollin Art Centre)

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

As city councilor, I would work with all council members and First Nations and the province to restore and expand the Rollins Art Centre, reducing the gardens to do so, as a hub for art and culture with an added permanent gallery, with art storage facility, to showcase First

Nations and other local artists' work. I would support public concerts, public art, and an annual juried art show like the Sooke Art Show.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

I work with the Arts Council on two committees, and have donated and purchased artworks, and am a member of the Arts Council. I am a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and Design and am devoted to art and music.

Cindy Solda



Councillor · cindysolda@me.com · Submitted Sep 23, 2026

Question	Response
1. How often do you attend local arts and cultural events?	Regularly
2. How important are arts and culture to the future of the Alberni Valley?	Very important
3. Do you support municipal (public) funding for arts and culture?	Neutral
4. Would you support increasing current levels of arts and culture funding?	Undecided
5. Some argue the arts are a "frill" or that taxpayers shouldn't fund them if they don't attend. Do you agree?	Disagree
6. Would you support developing or strengthening a cultural strategic plan for the community?	Yes
7. What is your position on maintaining and upgrading existing arts and culture facilities?	Support if budget allows

Question	Response
8. Would you support a public art policy and/or an arts advisory committee?	Support both
9. Do you see arts and cultural tourism as an economic opportunity for the Valley?	Strong opportunity
10. Would you support partnerships between the municipality, businesses, and arts organizations?	Need more information
11. How important is arts programming for children and youth to you?	Very important

12. If elected, which arts and culture priorities would you focus on? (Select up to three)

- Developing a cultural strategic plan

13. In one or two sentences, what is the most important thing you would do to support arts and culture in the Alberni Valley?

All the above I would want more information but a strategic plan is a great start and bring all the players to the table. Please don't think if I did not check the boxes I would not support. I just need more information.

14. Anything else you'd like voters to know about your position on the arts?

The arts have always been in my life and continues to be