

Joe Panzarella | District C

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture in Houston?

I am a lover of the arts, especially music, and am a regular concert-goer to some concerts by some of the many small ensembles that call Houston home. In particular, I am a regular attendee of KINETIC Ensemble's concerts; they are an unconduted string orchestra that just celebrated their 10th anniversary. I live in Freedman's Town, and I am also a grateful neighbor and visitor of the exhibits hosted by the Freedman's Town Conservancy.

2. What specific strategies would your office undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector by making it possible for individual artists to live and work in District C and the City?

First and most importantly, we must make it more affordable to live in Houston. Specifically, we must do everything we can to lower rent. When the cost of housing soars, our artists and creative people so often cannot afford to live here and are displaced. District C in particular has the highest median rent of any district in the city. We need to build enough housing for new families, crack down on international shell companies and big corporations bidding up homes, and lower the price of rent. Everyone deserves a safe, affordable place to live without going broke and to be able to buy a house to build wealth for their family, including the artists who make our city beautiful and meaningful. We can make this happen by reducing parking minimums, implementing single stair reform, and updating our setback requirements.

3. Would you and if yes, please provide two (2) examples, of ideas that you would offer for city departments to include arts and culture in their work?

Public Works: Safe streets has been a cornerstone of my campaign. There are numerous opportunities to integrate art into public works projects, and even to expand the scope of those projects through artistic, tactical urbanism. Including art, whether that is through painted crosswalks, bump outs, or accompanying murals is an exciting way to highlight new traffic patterns and their contributions to the surrounding neighborhood.

Parks Department: We should be integrating music and performance art into our parks and outdoor spaces as much as possible. I am enthused by the work already being done on this throughout Distirct C, including by Buffalo Bayou Partnership, I Heart 11th, and a Tale of Two Bridges. I would challenge my office to integrate live music into our events, and to look at how the parks throughout Distirct C can be better equipped for music and theatre performances.

4. Do you support public art at the airport?

Yes, and I especially support work by local artists. Our airports are the first glimpse of Houston for many people. There is no better introduction to the values and vibrancy of Houston, than uplifting our talented creative community. Every space can be activated for art and music, and I would be eager to challenge us to continue to expand what those spaces can be, including and beyond the airport.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Although HOT funds continue to grow as the number of hotel rooms expand, the arts and

culture field is growing more quickly, thus putting pressure on the amount of funding that is available to the field. Would you consider an additional funding mechanism, and if so, please explain?

I would absolutely consider additional funding to the arts, potentially through budget amendments for signature events.