

Statement on the Arts

Ryan Trout, District 5 (D)

Votetrout.com

Art isn't just an accessory to public life — it's essential to community well-being, neighborhood connection, and local identity. I believe deeply in the transformative power of both visual and performing arts. Art strengthens our economy, improves mental and physical health, brings people together, and makes our public spaces more vibrant, safe, and welcoming.

And as a Fredericktonian, I know that in every corner of our city — from sidewalks to park stages — art has the power to spark belonging, joy, and pride. That's why, as a candidate for Frederick City Council – District 5, I'm committed to expanding access to community-centered arts across Frederick.

My Vision for Arts in Frederick

1. Bring Art to Every Neighborhood

Beyond our city's vaunted but centralized arts venues, the engine of creativity here in Frederick ought to spread art to every neighborhood throughout the city, and ensure that more places have access to creative outlets, performance, and public art. To that end, as a City Council member, I'd advocate for:

- Mini-grants for neighborhood art projects
- Murals on utility boxes, buildings, in alleyways and beyond
- Poetry and storytelling installations in public spaces
- Street and sidewalk art that reflect the attributes, culture or history of each community

2. Activate Parks with the Arts

Our parks can be more than green space and recreational playgrounds — they can be cultural venues as well. I'll support:

- Community theater and performance series in parks
- Mobile art studios and maker carts
- Local artist residencies in public spaces
- Public art that also functions (benches, lighting, play structures)

3. Invest in Arts for Public Health and Belonging

Research from the National League of Cities shows that the arts reduce social isolation, lower stress, and improve well-being — especially for youth and seniors. I'll champion partnerships between artists, educators, and health providers to:

- Create art-based programming in schools and senior centers
- Support trauma-informed art projects in neighborhoods affected by violence or disinvestment
- Foster the use of art to connect intergenerational communities

4. Embed Art in Planning and Infrastructure - I will advocate for policies that integrate art into city planning — including zoning and transportation — so public art is treated as essential infrastructure, not an afterthought.

Frederick deserves an artistic community that stretches from downtown galleries to neighborhood collectives and is a vibrant, essential part of daily life for every resident.

Art helps us see one another — and imagine a better future together. I believe in a Frederick where every neighborhood is creative, every park is alive, and every resident has access to the arts — not as a luxury, but as a community right.

Let's invest in creativity as infrastructure, and make art an essential part of how we grow, connect, and heal.