



Port Hope Votes

October 26, 2026



2026 Candidate Arts & Culture Survey — Port Hope

Critical Mass is asking every Mayoral and Council candidate in Port Hope's October 26, 2026 municipal election the same questions about how art and culture fit in your platform. All responses will be published in full and unedited so residents can compare them. Critical Mass does not endorse any candidate. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with Port Hope's creative community.

Candidate name: Miranda Lukaniuk

Running for: Councillor

Ward: 1

Context & Background:

The arts are a major economic driver of the economy, with a \$131 billion dollar impact nationally. The 2025 *Artworks* report from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Business Data Lab found a \$29 return in economic activity for every federal arts dollar invested. The study also identified that the arts and culture sector growth rate (8%) was double the rate of growth (4%) for the entire economy. Arts and culture creates about 13 jobs per \$1 million of output, more than traditional sectors like oil and gas, manufacturing or agriculture.

Critical Mass recently completed a community survey, where 195 residents rated the arts as essential to a thriving community, scoring them 9.8 out of 10. Funded by a Work-In-Culture grant, we also led more than 82 hours of consultation, with regional and local arts organizations, artists, community partners, elected officials and municipal staff – where the need for stable funding, year-round space, coordinated advocacy and more paid opportunities for working artists were raised. Artists named making a living, exhibition opportunities, and recognition as their biggest challenges, and most also identified the need for an arts council or umbrella arts organization in Port Hope that could offer support.

The Municipality of Port Hope is increasingly incorporating arts and culture into its strategic pillars, including its new Tourism Strategy and the review of its Public Art Policy, with recommendations forthcoming from Critical Mass. Updating its decade-old Cultural Plan and preparing for potential growth from Wesleyville will also require a strong, well-supported arts community. The next Council will play a key role in turning these priorities into funded, actionable commitments.



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Please take a few minutes to complete the 2026 all candidates arts & culture survey.

Part 1: Please rate the following statements:

Please mark one box per statement.

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Arts and culture are essential to Port Hope's quality of life and identity.	x	☐	☐	☐	☐
Investing in arts and culture helps Port Hope attract and keep workers, families and businesses.	x	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arts and culture contributes to residents' health and well-being.	x	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Municipality currently invests enough in arts and culture.	☐	☐	☐		x
Port Hope would benefit from an arts council or umbrella arts organization that supports and amplifies the work of local artists and arts organizations.	x	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Municipality should prioritize hiring artists, rather than using generative AI tools as a substitute for human designs which undermine and exploit the local creative economy.	x	☐	☐	☐	☐
The arts are enjoyed by some people, but they don't need public support.	☐	☐	☐	☐	x



Port Hope Votes

October 26, 2026



Part 2: Open questions

Please keep each answer to 100 words or fewer.

1. **Role of the arts.** Do you think art and culture add value to Port Hope? If so, how? Where do arts and culture fit in your platform?

Arts and Culture is the meat of my platform. Arts and culture is essential to community and society.

2. **Health and well-being.** How do you see arts and culture supporting residents' health, especially seniors, youth and/or people facing isolation? How would you support that role?

The last sentence of my last answer is where I start with this and now I can expand. Arts and culture is what I truly believe keeps people inspired to be alive and to live happy lives. All art forms whether it be music, theatre, visual, dance, film enrich the lives of the people who live here right now. Art is an important way to facilitate learning, address mental health issues of individuals and groups. Art can be very social and interactive and can be a very affordable way to solve problems of isolation, depression and other social challenges that our most vulnerable. I would definitely move toward incorporating art into social programs in our community. If we did have an arts council in the area I would definitely move to connect art organizations with social organizations to provide arts programming.

According to data from the [Ontario Arts Council](#), **79% of Ontarians** state the arts are crucial to their mental health, and **90%** agree an active local arts scene makes communities safer and better places to live

3. **Economic growth.** As Port Hope prepares for future growth (especially with the potential Wesleyville project), how will arts and culture feature in your plan to attract and keep workers, families and businesses? How would you support arts and culture as an integral part of Port Hope's local economy?

The film industry alone is a 2.7 billion dollar industry in Ontario and provides 30,000 active jobs. This is the area of my expertise in careers for artists in film. Port Hope really has a great



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October 26, 2026



opportunity to support the incubation of local talent and careers for local artists by being film ready to bring in more grants for infrastructure through heritage and culture for film readiness. Funding can come from the ministry of heritage as it has been poured into North Bay, Hamilton, and of course Toronto. This will contribute to supporting local jobs but not leave stress on the taxpayer for funding.

4. **Access.** How would you improve access to arts and culture across rural and urban wards, including addressing cost, transportation and disability-related barriers?

I really like the idea of potentially partnering with the OMCA as a municipality to draw more touristic transportation options to facilitate and support the reach and access to arts events for tourists and locals who are experiencing mobility issues to reach urban and rural wards. This is one idea I had for Port Hope Festival but we ran out of time. I was able to learn a lot about this option and I would suggest this be expanded to all arts and cultural events.

<https://www.omca.com/join-omca/tourism-supplier-membership/>

5. **Affordability.** What municipal tools and support would you implement to make accessible, year-round arts spaces more affordable?

Affordability is a difficult term to address. Because it is relative. What is affordable for some is not affordable to others. When is it fair?. One idea I had when organizing events in the past was to team up with social support organizations that work with people who have financial barriers in the community. I would suggest we have a subsidized program that rewards local industry to sponsor the purchase of a certain amount of tickets for events that are happening in the community and connect those tickets to people in the community experiencing financial barriers through those social organizations. That way we are not putting stress on the event organizers or taxpayers for this funding.

6. **Stable arts funding:** Do you support predictable, multi-year municipal funding for local arts and cultural organizations? If so, would you maintain, increase, or reduce that investment, and why?

My answer to #5 is one example of many. But to elaborate on this, I would love to have a built-in policy to have a requirement for all proposals of investors that reward them with brownie points where they make a financial commitment to directly fund the arts through their investment before they are approved to operate in our community. This funding and budget recommendations could also be facilitated by an arts council of some kind that is resident run but has a councillor sitting in on the board.



Port Hope Votes

October 26, 2026



7. **Advocacy.** Would you support the creation of a local arts council to help artists and cultural organizations access funding, share resources, and pay artists professional (CARFAC) fees? What Municipal support would you advocate for?

I would love it if there was a municipal staff from the economic development office / Tourism office that would have a minimal requirement to help facilitate local arts organizations or individual artists to receive funding from all levels of government, and agencies like the OAC and Ontario Creates. It would be very helpful for this to be an actual job in the municipal offices dedicated to facilitate this.

8. **Commitment to the arts.** If elected, can the arts community count on you to advocate for it at Council? Name one concrete action you would take in your first year.

I would definitely fight for the county to have a regional Film Commissioner that would advocate on a county level to facilitate bigger film industry presence that hires artists for proper ACTRA, NABET, IATSE873, and DGC fees.

9.

Please return by Friday, October 16, 2026 to info@criticalmassart.com.

Responses will be posted on the Critical Mass website and social media sites before election day.

Thank you kindly for taking part!

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criticalmassart.com