

## Candidate Information

### Your name as it appears on the ballot

Dharma Akmon

### Mailing Address

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

### I am a candidate running for

City of Ann Arbor – City Council – Ward 4

### Party Affiliation - I am running as a/an

Democrat

### I am currently an elected official and hold the office of:

Ann Arbor District Library Board Trustee

### As an elected official, you have an opportunity to lead and influence public policy and investment in the arts + creative industries.

### What are your personal beliefs, interests and investments in the arts + creative industries? Please check all that apply.

- I believe that the arts + creative industries are important and that they enhance and improve the quality of life, place and economy in our community making it a great place to create, live, work, learn, play and visit.
- People living in my community should have access to excellent and affordable art, creative, cultural and heritage offerings in our community.
- I believe every child in Washtenaw County should have access to excellent arts and creative education at every grade level.
- I serve on the board or volunteer at an arts, creative, cultural or heritage-based nonprofit business.
- I regularly make financial contributions to nonprofit art, cultural and/or heritage organizations.

### Government/Municipal Planning - Integrating the Arts + Creative Industries

- Government/Municipal Master Plans
- Government/Municipal Economic Plans
- Government/Municipal Arts + Creative Industries Plan

### Commissions - Establishing & Investing in an Arts + Creative Industries Commission

- An arts + creative industries commission charged with developing, implementing, maintaining and evaluating a comprehensive arts and creative industries plan (including public art and design). This commission will have proper resources including a budget and qualified staff resources.

### **Public Investment & Policy - Arts & Creative Industries**

- Appropriations - direct spending on arts & creative programs such as including funding for commissions and qualified staff.
- Establishing a program that dedicates a determined percent of municipal construction budgets to be invested in public art & design projects.
- Economic development support/grants specific to arts and creative industry projects/programs.
- Disaster relief funds and services should be afforded the arts + creative industries (for and nonprofit) as it is other Michigan industries.

### **Emergency Relief and Restoration**

- Yes, I will work to require that the arts + creative industries are included and have equitable decision-making responsibility at economic development agencies.

### **Arts + Creative Education Integration for Student Excellent (ACEISE) in Washtenaw County**

#### **My pre-K-12 education included arts + creative education.**

- Yes, my pre-K-12 education included arts + creative education.

### **Arts + Creative Education**

Yes, I will be an advocate in support of arts & creative education.

### **What role do you believe elected officials and government agencies should play in leading arts and creative industry development and sustainability in their communities?**

Arts and cultural ecosystems, comprised of artists, creatives, cultural bearers, and the organizations that support them, are critical infrastructure that benefit our communities socially, intellectually, creatively, and economically. These ecosystems foster connectivity, give voice to underrepresented and historically marginalized communities, promote economic development, and advance community wellness. To that end, I believe elected officials and government agencies play a vital role in supporting and sustaining these ecosystems. This includes finding new and innovative ways to weave arts and culture into our comprehensive, economic development, and transportation plans; working collaboratively with artists and creative industries to promote placemaking/placekeeping; and ensuring both artists and the organizations that support them can thrive in our communities

### **If elected, what role will you take in leading arts & creative industry development and sustainability in your community?**

I have proudly supported artists and creative industries both directly and indirectly for almost twenty years. Further, I have benefited intellectually and financially from these industries (my husband is a respected cultural leader here in Michigan and derives his income from these industries). Therefore, I have a vested interest in ensuring the arts and cultural ecosystems remain strong. As an elected official, I will work to address the affordability issues that have been driving artists and creatives out of our community; collaborate with nonprofit arts and cultural organizations to champion a municipal arts plan; and advocate for an arts and cultural commission at the municipal level here in Ann Arbor.

**If elected, I will be a leader and champion for the arts + creative industries in sessions, committee meetings and in my district. I look forward to working with and learning from those in my community practicing in, championing and advocating for the arts and creative industries.**

- Yes, I will be a leader and champion for the arts + creative industries.

**If elected, would you join a legislative arts, humanities and/or creative industries caucus?**

- Yes, I would join.