

**BOARDS & COMMISSIONS  
CANDIDATES MEMORANDUM**

**Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs**

|      |                                        |
|------|----------------------------------------|
| To   | Denver City Council                    |
| From | Mayor's Office of Boards & Commissions |
| Date | 06/12/2026                             |

**BOARD PURPOSE**

The Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs (DCCA) was established in 1991 to support the Mayor and act as an advisory board for Denver Arts & Venues. The DCCA is comprised of dynamic and accomplished Denver leaders who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. The DCCA and DAV staff meet on the first Tuesday of each month at various cultural organizations across the city.

**APPOINTMENT CANDIDATE PROFILES**

**Term Dates:** 9/01/2026 – 8/31/2029



**Joshua Caraballo, PsyD**  
 Managing Director,  
 Research & Evaluation at  
 NEFE and Founder, Ruby Hill  
 Productions  
 he/him  
 Latino, Puerto Rican

**Bio:**  
 Joshua is an industrial-organizational psychologist with over 13 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, including a focus on improving human flourishing, meshing science with storytelling, and conducting research methods for impact and evaluation. He has a lifelong passion for the performing arts, with substantial involvement in theatre productions since grade school. He's earned a BA in theatre performance, an MFA in motion picture producing, and a PsyD in business psychology. Joshua has also served on various nonprofit Boards for over a decade, and is a member of the Denver Foundation's Advisory Committee for Community Impact (ACCI). Most recently, he founded the nonprofit, Ruby Hill Productions, a theatre production company.

**Statement of Support:**  
 Background in psychology  
 Work in theatre arts

Cisgender man

Very articulate with regards to the intersection of psychology and the arts, driven by a “people first” approach  
Strength in his understanding of the importance of data  
Based on how Joshua self-identifies, his perspective would increase areas of need in the commission.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

I intend to draw on the culmination of experiences I've amassed through my service as an executive Board member at National Voices for Equality Education and Enlightenment (NVEEE), a nonprofit dedicated to youth leadership development and addressing bullying behaviors. Along with my colleagues, we ensured principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and justice were interwoven in all we do, from planning to decision-making and beyond. We also took the time to work past our differences, choosing compassion and empathy over ego, even when things were difficult. We were intentional in delineating what was under our direct responsibilities, and what was not, and made sure to learn and grow alongside the Executive Director to ensure we were being responsive to the changing needs of the organization. Finally, we did what was best for the communities we served by centering their voices and feedback into our processes and procedures.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

As a gay Puerto Rican residing in Council District seven, I am motivated by the explicit priorities of this administration to ensure the arts remain a crucial aspect of our beloved neighborhoods, and that the DCCA continue representing a diverse composition of appointees, including those from marginalized communities. I know how difficult it is for artists to thrive without access to resources, which can translate into public spaces and community venues that don't experience the same quality of life and economic vitality that exists in communities enhanced with the arts and cultural activities. By committing to the 1% Public Art Program, investments through Denver Creates, and other signature programs, such as the Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & Culture, the administration goes well beyond lip service to provide opportunities where they are needed the most. Personally, I've dedicated my life to finding ways of supporting neighborhood arts through the advancement of funding equity and elimination of barriers to engagement, while strengthening collaboration across disciplines, centering artists' voices, and creating the best pipeline of support to ensure sustainability for years to come.

Reappointment? NO

Term Number: 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 terms

**For New Appointments:**

Filling an Open Seat? Yes

Replacing an Expiring Seat: Damon McLeese

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:** 9/01/2026 – 8/31/2029



**Liz Gardner**

**Executive Director of DaVita Giving Foundation and Director of Village Giving/DaVita**

She/Her/Hers  
Caucasian

**Bio:**

Liz Gardner is the Executive Director of the DaVita Giving Foundation where she manages all philanthropic giving for DaVita Kidney Care. Previously Liz worked at Xcel Energy serving in both local government affairs and corporate philanthropy roles. Prior to Xcel Energy, Liz spent nearly a decade in the nonprofit sector with Mile High United Way and the American Lung Association.

Liz has a Masters in Non-Profit Management from Regis University and Bachelors degree from Marquette University. Liz serves on the Leadership Council of the Denver Zoo and is on the Board of Directors for the Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation. She is also actively involved with the Women's Foundation of Colorado, Children's Museum of Denver and Graland County Day School.

Liz has been recognized as a Denver Business Journal 40 Under 40 recipient and DJB Top Women in Business. Liz is married and is a mom to two elementary-aged sons.

**Statement of Support:**

Works at DaVita

Female

Strong knowledge of community investments based on her work with the DaVita Giving Foundation & Director of Village Giving

Brings familiarity with funding and grant processes

Expressed understanding of EDI and the importance of “who is at the table”

Metro Chamber board would bring the private and business sector lens

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

As a Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, I would approach the role with the same ownership and collaborative leadership I brought to Girls Inc. of Metro Denver as Board Chair during an Executive Director transition. Knowing this was a critical responsibility, I actively led the process to prevent any angst among staff and the board. I prioritized transparency, sending regular updates with clear timelines and deliverables.

Recognizing that people engage differently, I designed various discussion formats, meeting members where they were—accommodating both those who thrive on the spot and those who need reflection time. I also purposefully brought fun into the work, using the transition to build a stronger board community rather than just completing a transaction. I will bring this inclusive, proactive, and community-centric approach to the Commission, ensuring diverse perspectives are valued and our shared goals are achieved.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

As someone who lives and works near Denver's City Center, I am deeply invested in this administration's "Vibrant Denver" priority. I passionately support the focus on cultivating memorable places and a strong economy with quality jobs. I was specifically drawn to the Commission on Cultural Affairs because arts and culture are the essential engines for creating those vibrant, shared spaces that drive downtown revitalization. Furthermore, the administration's urgent commitment to reducing street homelessness and improving safety has already been felt citywide. This progress brings a renewed sense of calm to my daily life and a greater confidence in Denver's future. By integrating cultural initiatives into these revitalization efforts, we can foster deeper community connections. I am eager to help the Commission leverage Denver's cultural assets to support the Mayor's vision for a safe, thriving, and inclusive city.

Reappointment? NO

Term Number: 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 terms

**For New Appointments:**

Filling an Open Seat? YES

Replacing an Expiring Seat: Paola Correa-Nava

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:**

09/01/2026

8/31/2029



**Bio:**

SUCH is a singer, songwriter, actress, entrepreneur, real estate investor, and host of *The Such Experience* on SoulHer Radio. A dynamic creative and community advocate, she has dedicated her career to using art, storytelling, and conversation to inspire connection, representation, and cultural celebration. Music has been at the center of SUCH's life since she first sang in her father's church at just two years old. Her latest album, *Wide Nose Full Lips*, a powerful love letter to Blackness and identity, rose into the Top 25 on Billboard's R&B charts. She has performed on stages throughout the United States and Europe, captivating audiences with her soulful sound and authentic artistry. In addition to her music career, SUCH has made a lasting impact in theater and entertainment, including her acclaimed portrayal of Celie in *The Color Purple*. She also made history as the first Black American woman to receive an All Africa Music Awards (AFRIMA), often regarded as Africa's version of the Grammys. As the host of *The Such Experience*, SUCH creates a

**Such Charles**

**Singer/Songwriter/Actress/  
Entrepreneur, Real Estate  
Investor**

She/Her

Black/African American

Female

space where music, stories, and soul collide. Blending feel good sounds with authentic, unfiltered conversations and inspiring interviews, the show celebrates passion, resilience, culture, and purpose. More than a radio show, *The Such Experience* is an uplifting and engaging platform that leaves listeners feeling connected, reflective, and inspired long after the music fades. Beyond the arts, SUCH is a licensed real estate agent and real estate investor who is passionate about building community, creating opportunities, and helping others establish generational stability and ownership. Whether on stage, on the air, in business, or through community service, SUCH brings authenticity, vision, compassion, and joy to every space she enters.

**Statement of Support:**

Such continues to be a valuable and engaged member of the DCCA. Her vast array of professional and lived experiences brings a broad perspective to the group. Such has deep roots in the cultural landscape of Denver and shows a commitment to the overall Public Art process as well as to arts in Denver.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

My overarching purpose in everything I do is to hold space for people. To make them feel seen, heard, and appreciated. That has been true whether I was sitting at a patient's bedside as a nurse, performing on stage, or facilitating a room full of Denver artists of color finding their footing. Serving on the Board of NU-World Contemporary Dance Theatre deepened that purpose. I walked in as an artist and quickly realized the role called for genuine listening. I focused on making sure the people in the room reflected the fullness of Denver's creative community and that every voice felt like it mattered.

That is exactly how I approach my role as a DCCA Commissioner. I listen before I lead. I ask whose voice is missing. And I make decisions that put people first, always.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

Everything I do comes back to one thing: holding space for people. As a nurse I held space for patients in their most vulnerable moments. As an artist and radio host I hold space for stories and souls that deserve to be celebrated. As a real estate investor I hold space for families building something lasting. And as a community advocate I hold space for the voices that are too often left out of the room. Mayor Johnston's focus on housing, equity, and a Denver that works for everyone resonates with me deeply because those are not just policy goals. They are acts of care. When people feel stable, supported, and seen, they can fully participate in the cultural life of their city. Serving on this commission is an extension of that same calling. To make sure every Denverite feels like this city was built with them in mind.

Reappointment? Yes

Term Number: 2nd

Appointment Process for Seat: (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:**

09/01/2026

8/31/2029



**Bio:** Jada Suzanne Dixon is an award-winning actor, director, playwright, and arts leader, currently serving as the Producing Artistic Director of Curious Theatre Company, where she advances a mission to engage the community in vital contemporary issues through bold, provocative theatre. Named Colorado's 2022 Theatre Person of the Year and a four-time True West Award recipient, her work has been seen across leading Colorado stages. She believes the most powerful art is rooted in respect, collaboration, and an unapologetic spirit of curiosity and play. Driven by a passion for storytelling that is daring, authentic, and deeply human, Jada creates work that challenges perspectives, sparks conversation, and leaves a lasting impact.

**Jada Suzanne Dixon**

Producing Artistic Director/Curious Theatre Company  
 She/Her  
 Black/African American  
 Female

**Statement of Support:**

Until relatively recently, Jada has been the Commissioner on the DCCA that represents a theatre perspective. She comes to the table with an interesting and impressive background in fine arts, business, and education, which establishes her as a foundational member with interesting connections across multiple disciplines. She is a highly valued member of the DCCA and remains active and engaged.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

In my role as Producing Artistic Director at Curious Theatre Company, I regularly hold space for a wide range of perspectives—artistic, organizational, and community-driven. Whether selecting a season, navigating complex conversations around programming, or responding to audience feedback, I approach decisions with curiosity, active listening, and a commitment to shared understanding. Theatre, at its best, is a dialogue, not a monologue—and I carry that belief into how I lead. I've learned that the strongest outcomes come from making room for voices that challenge your own, while staying anchored in mission and values. This approach has helped me build trust across artists, staff, board members, and audiences with differing viewpoints. It's the same mindset I bring to civic service: thoughtful, collaborative, and rooted in

the belief that multiple perspectives lead to stronger, more inclusive decisions.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

I believe the arts are essential to creating a vibrant, safe, and affordable Denver. A strong arts ecosystem not only fuels economic vitality, it brings people together, activates public spaces, and helps build a sense of belonging across communities. In my work, I'm committed to making the arts more accessible and reflective of the full spectrum of Denver's residents—while also supporting artists as key contributors to the city's economy. I'm especially excited by the focus on a vibrant downtown, where arts and culture can play a meaningful role in reimagining and energizing shared spaces. For me, it's about helping shape a city where creativity and community intersect—where investment in the arts supports connection, inclusion, and a more resilient Denver.

**Reappointment? Yes**

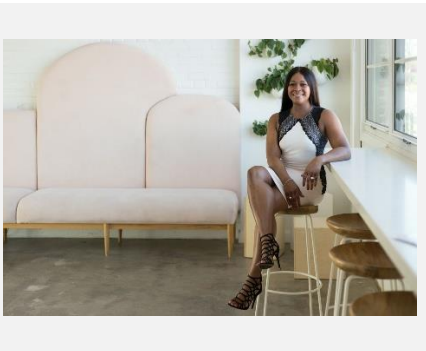
**Term Number: 2nd**

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:**

09/01/2026

8/31/2029



**Marissa Hollingsworth**

Executive & Artistic  
Director/Presenting Denver  
She/Her  
Black/African American  
Female

**Bio:** Marisa Hollingsworth is from Detroit, Michigan where she began her dance training. She later graduated from Spelman College in Atlanta Georgia, with a Bachelor of Arts in History and a minor in Dance. She spent her summers in New York City at the Dance Theater of Harlem. After college, she danced five seasons with Ballethnic Dance Company in Atlanta, Georgia and later joined the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble for four seasons in Denver, Colorado. After Cleo, she danced with 7Dancers and then joined the Hannah Kahn Dance Company for eight seasons. She has also performed with Nu-World Contemporary Dance Theatre, New Breed Dance and Chadash Contemporary Dance Movement. She has taught all forms of dance throughout the Denver area and has been a judge for the Ms. Colorado Pageant and the Denver Bronco Cheerleaders. Her board service includes The Children's Museum of Denver, Davis Contemporary Dance Company, Presenting Denver, and serving as an Advisor for the New England Foundation for the Arts (nafa) for dance. Marisa currently serves on the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs for Denver Arts and Venues for the next 6 years. She is

currently the Executive and Artistic Director of Presenting Denver since 2020. She is a wife and a mother of two.

**Statement of Support:**

As another highly engaged and dynamic member of the DCCA, Marisa brings a valued perspective to the table in all that she touches. She is a leader in both the Black community as well as the many creative circles she touches, especially within her specialty of Dance. She has an impressive background outside of dance as well, and as such, lends important context to the group as a whole.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

As Executive and Artistic Director, I managed the collection of community feedback for Presenting Denver's SCFD grant, which perfectly illustrates my approach as a Commissioner. Recognizing that policy decisions must be grounded in community experience, I requested testimonials from staff, volunteers, and board members on topics like how the organization could better serve its diverse dance community. This experience showcases my commitment to drawing on my professional knowledge of arts management while actively soliciting, integrating, and championing the varied voices of the Denver dance community to inform strategic direction.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

As a former dancer with the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, I am honored to "always be a dancer at heart". My personal priorities are for Denver and the Denver Metro area to build a city characterized by access, equity, and belonging in the arts, and I see strong alignment with the administration's focus on community stability. Creating stable and thriving communities is the foundation for meaningful cultural engagement. The Child-Friendly Denver goal is to connect 5,000 young people to quality out-of-school programming. This creates pathways for arts education, including dance which allows the DCCA to broaden access to arts & culture and cultivate future creative leaders from every neighborhood.

**Reappointment?** Yes

**Term Number:** 2nd

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:**

09/01/2026

8/31/2029



**Rachel Garcia**

Executive Director/Mexican Cultural Center

She/Her/Ella

Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin

Female

**Bio:** Rachel Garcia is a nonprofit executive and cultural leader dedicated to advancing arts, culture, and community engagement in Colorado. As Executive Director of the Mexican Cultural Center, she leads programs that celebrate and elevate the cultural heritage of Mexico and Latin America, creating spaces where communities feel represented, connected, and valued. Rachel brings over 30 years of experience in business operations and holds a degree in Business Management from the University of Colorado Denver. She has completed executive and leadership training through the Latino Leadership Institute at the University of Denver and is a fellow of multiple leadership programs, including The Civic Governor’s Fellowship (2026) Leadership Denver (2025), the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts Leadership Arts Fellowship (2025), and the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures (NALAC) Leadership Institute (2024). Her work includes leading signature cultural programs such as Latin Beats in partnership with the Colorado Symphony, Día del Niño collaborations across Colorado institutions, and multiple Día de los Muertos celebrations statewide.

Rachel serves on several civic boards and commissions, including Mayoral appointments to the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs (Co-Chair), the Denver Latino Commission, and the Denver Women’s Commission.

She is recognized for her collaborative leadership, commitment to cultural equity, and dedication to expanding access to arts and cultural experiences across Colorado.

**Statement of Support:**

Rachel has brought an important business-related acumen to the DCCA as well as a creative one. She is grounded in operations work, finance, and policy implementation, while at the same time has a wide arts related background. She has deep roots within the Latino community and brings that knowledge and lived experience to the table with commitment and rigor. Rachel also has experience in mental health and wellness areas which proves highly valuable to all the work

she does both in community and with the DCCA. She has also been connected to the city and DAV through her varied paths and we are grateful that she serves as the commission's co-chair as well. Rachel is a true leader.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

In my work as a civic and cultural leader in Denver, I have learned that effective decision-making requires both lived experience and disciplined consideration of multiple perspectives. As

Co-Chair of the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs, I have participated in discussions where funding priorities, community needs, and institutional constraints all had to be weighed carefully.

One example was reviewing applications that impacted smaller, under-resourced cultural organizations. I brought my experience as a nonprofit executive serving diverse communities, but I also made it a point to actively listen to fellow commissioners, artists, and city partners whose perspectives differed from mine. This often meant challenging assumptions I personally held and asking whether our decisions were truly expanding access and equity.

That experience reinforced my belief that strong public service requires humility, curiosity, and accountability. If appointed to another Denver Board or Commission, I would continue to center community voice, evaluate issues from multiple angles, and work collaboratively toward solutions that are both practical and equitable.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

Several goals of the current Mayoral administration strongly align with my personal priorities for the City of Denver, particularly around advancing equity, expanding access to opportunity, and strengthening community-centered investment in the arts and cultural sector.

I am especially aligned with the administration's focus on creating a more inclusive and accessible city, where underserved communities have meaningful access to resources, representation, and decision-making power. This directly reflects my own work in cultural leadership, where I prioritize elevating Latino heritage, supporting local artists, and ensuring that cultural institutions reflect the diversity of Denver's residents.

I also support efforts to strengthen neighborhood vitality and invest in community-driven solutions. Through my work with the Mexican Cultural Center and civic commissions, I have seen how cultural engagement builds connection, belonging, and civic pride.

As a representative of the City of Denver, I would continue to advance these shared priorities by promoting equity-centered policies, fostering collaboration across sectors, and ensuring that cultural investment reaches all communities.

Reappointment? Yes

Term Number: 2nd

Appointment Process for Seat: (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:**

09/01/2026

8/31/2029



**Bio:**

I have built a life defined by resilience, creativity, and service. My path has been far from linear. I rose from the challenges of being a homeless teenager to becoming a devoted young parent alongside my husband Josh, and every step of that journey shaped who I am and how I show up for others. Early hardship didn't break me. It gave me a lens that I carry into every room I enter.

For over two decades I have managed and owned small businesses in Denver, including retail shops, restaurants, art galleries, and non-toxic nail salons. These ventures were never just storefronts. They were gathering places that honored diversity, sparked real conversation, and advocated for safe, fair, and dignified conditions for workers and neighbors alike. I learned early that a business can be a form of community care, and I built mine that way on purpose. Today I serve as Deputy Director of Outreach for the City of Denver, working at the intersection of policy and lived experience to foster meaningful, inclusive change. As the daughter of immigrants, a former business owner, and a longtime community organizer, I bring a perspective that is both personal and practical. I know what it feels

**Tran Nguyen-Wills**

Deputy Director of Outreach,  
City & County of Denver

She/Her

Vietnamese American

Female

like to be on the outside of a decision that affects your life. That knowledge drives everything I do.

My leadership extends well beyond my official title. I have led community fridge initiatives to address food insecurity, organized walk-in vaccine clinics to protect essential workers, and built fundraisers to support families in crisis. I am a committed advocate for reproductive rights, equitable pay, and better conditions for working people. By bringing together nonprofits, small businesses, artists, faith leaders, and grassroots organizers, I have helped build coalitions that don't just make noise but move things forward. I believe community is both a safety net in hard times and a catalyst for transformation in better ones. When we build spaces where everyone truly belongs, we build spaces where everyone can thrive.

#### Statement of Support:

Tran is one of the most dynamic members of the DCCA in terms of her experiences, both professional and lived. Tran has been a highly valued member of the many varied communities: art, entrepreneurship, Vietnamese, immigrant and even government communities, to name just a few. As Tran has had to balance work, life, and health, she has remained committed to the DCCA and rarely misses any meetings or Public Art panels that she is part of, meaning her dedication is incredibly strong and her work has earned her a great deal of respect both internally and externally throughout Denver.

#### Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

When I ran my gallery, I made it a point to show work by artists who weren't getting picked up by the bigger spaces, people whose stories didn't fit the mainstream mold but whose work was just as powerful, if not more so. That meant building trust with artists, figuring out what the community actually wanted to see on their walls. It wasn't always tidy. People had different needs and I had to hold all of that at once. That experience plus years of community advocacy, often on behalf of immigrant families and small business owners who felt like the city wasn't talking to them, shaped how I make decisions. I listen first. I try to understand whose voice is missing from the room. That's exactly how I continue to show up for Arts & Venues.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

I care deeply about making sure Denver's arts scene reflects the people who actually live here, not just the people who've always had access. As a Vietnamese-American woman who's owned a small business and advocated for communities that often get overlooked, I know how much it matters when a city invests in culture that feels like yours. I'm aligned with this administration's push for more equitable economic development and making Denver livable for longtime residents. Arts and culture are part of that. When we fund programming that speaks to immigrant communities, artists of color, and neighborhoods outside of downtown, we're saying everyone belongs here. That's what I want to help build through this role.

Reappointment? Yes

Term Number: 2nd

Appointment Process for Seat: (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

**Term Dates:**

09/01/2026

8/31/2029



**Alicia Bruce Trujillo**

Executive Director/Mexican Cultural Center

She/They

Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin

Female

**Bio:** Alicia "Bruce" Trujillo is an arts and music professional in Denver, CO. Known professionally as Bruce, she has been working in music and arts organizations since 2006, with a mission to collaborate with communities who are systematically excluded, with a focus on independent and locally made music and art. Trujillo is the founder of Manos Sagrados, a cultural connector offering boutique booking, production, and promotion in the Rocky Mountain Region. Trujillo is also the Executive Director and Host for Colorful Colorado Collaborations, bringing together Colorado BIPOC musicians, entrepreneurs and local businesses for a unique concert series that celebrates collaboration, creativity and commerce. She's the founder and host of Whiskey, Women and Song, which pairs local female-identifying musicians with locally crafted whiskeys for performances, interviews and whiskey tastings. Trujillo is also a talent buyer for The Underground Music Showcase. Trujillo proudly serves on the Board of Directors for Biennial of the Americas and D3 Arts; is a 2023 appointee to the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs, a member of the Civic Center Park Community Activation Collaborative, and an advisor for Control Group Productions. Trujillo is a Professional Member of the Recording Academy, and serves on the Advocacy Committee. Additionally, she hosts sessions, panels, and other live events with partners across the city, does voice work and audio production, and sometimes writes for Denver Westword, with a focus on local art. Trujillo was born and raised in Colorado, with roots in Denver, Glenwood Springs, and Palisade. In addition to Manos Sagrados, she is a visual artist, yoga instructor, and Danzante in Westwood.

**Statement of Support:**

Alicia comes to the table with deeply unique voice and lived experiences that span art, business, and social circles. This experience bridges communities across many avenues – Latino, queer, and music. She has deep connections and work within various music circles/scenes throughout Denver and is a highly valued and respected member of the DCCA.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

My lived experiences shape how I show up to the Commission on Cultural affairs, beginning with my identity as a Queer Chicana from Denver with roots in the city, and include my role as an artist, a music industry professional, an entrepreneur in the arts, and an advocate and organizer for artists. Whatever my job is, I know that my Work is to assist and advocate for creatives, and creative perspectives, particularly those who identify as BIPOC, femme, 2SLGBTQ+, and/or Disabled. These voices and perspectives need to be heard in any rooms that are filled with decision-makers, where funds are being allocated, and policy is being crafted with artists and creatives in mind.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

I appreciate that Mayor Johnston has stood up for immigrant's rights and safety within the city of Denver. This affects our community in so many ways, and for the purpose of this Commission, arts selected by members of migrant communities (or First Generation artists, etc...) fosters further safety and inclusion for our relatives and community members. With the City of Denver supporting these artists, and direct support from The Mayor, this aligns with my work in the community on a deep level.

**Reappointment?** Yes

**Term Number:** 2nd

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation

Term Dates: 9/01/2026 – 8/31/2029



**Alexander Markovich**  
Architect at Perkins&Will  
He/They  
White  
Male

**Bio:**

Alex Markovich is an architect and community-builder dedicated to shaping vibrant and accessible urban environments through informed, inclusive, and regenerative design. His path began as an AmeriCorps VISTA and Housing Coordinator at a housing-first program where he discovered the power of policy and the built environment as tools for systemic change. Now practicing architecture with a focus on sports, recreation, entertainment, and mixed-use multifamily projects, he remains rooted in community organizing and nonprofit leadership. He serves on the AIA Colorado Government Affairs Committee and is active in Denver's civic life through Denver Democrats and JEWISHcolorado. Outside the office, Alex is a painter and printmaker drawn to invented landscapes and scenes of Colorado's people, places, and wildlife. Most importantly, Alex enjoys spending time at home and out exploring with his husband, dogs, friends, and family.

**Statement of Support:**

Excellent application  
Architectural background  
Artist  
Has done work in sustainable urbanism and affordable housing  
Knowledge and familiarity with Denver arts and cultural organizations  
Familiar with the intersection of arts and policy, Live/Work spaces, and access  
Knowledgeable of the 1% Public Art Ordinance  
Concerned about artists' displacement  
Council 5 & 7  
Based on how Alexander self-identifies, his perspective would increase areas of need in the commission

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

Early in my career, I served as an AmeriCorps VISTA and Housing Coordinator at a housing-first program in the East St. Louis area. The most enduring lesson from that experience was how meaningful progress begins with genuine listening. When you take the time to truly see someone and let them know they're seen, they open up. You begin to understand their lived experience and their goals in ways that no form or report can capture. And when people from across a community come together around shared challenges, a remarkable consensus often emerges that no individual or expert could come up with alone. I'll bring this same

orientation to the DCCA by leading with curiosity, prioritizing community voices, and trusting that the people of Denver hold the most important answers about what their cultural life should look like.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

As an architect with experience designing civic spaces where communities gather and the homes where they unwind, I believe that cultural investment and housing stability are inseparable goals. You can't have a vibrant creative city without first ensuring people can afford to live in it. I'm enthusiastic about Mayor Johnston's goals for building more affordable housing, and equally excited by the cultural initiatives laid out in DENVER CREATES. I want to support this administration's efforts to expand access to arts venues, pilot artist-in-residence programming, and bring arts and cultural opportunities to every corner of the city.

**Reappointment?** NO

**Term Number:** First

**For New Appointments:**

Filling an Open Seat? YES

Replacing an Expiring Seat: Lisa Kennedy

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation;