

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

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Do you identify as a member of a 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

No

What role are you running for?

Regional Chair

What do you believe are the most critical issues for the local 2SLGBTQIA+ community? If elected, how would you work with the local community to address these issues?

With the ever evolving landscape across North America, I know there is still stigma associated with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, which may lead to difficulties integrating in the Region, or accessing resources that would normally be available to residents. I've been platforming on listening to the needs of the residents and being open to dialogue surrounding all concerns - if elected, I intend to continue support for this community by engaging in discussions around their needs and identifying ways in which the Region can assist.

Have you ever participated in 2SLGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training?

Perhaps in my university days, but not to recent memory.

Systemic homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are still prevalent in our community, resulting in significant socioeconomic disparities within 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. If elected, how will you combat homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia?

The Region of Waterloo, much like most of Canada, has become divided - we need to work as a community to support our fellow members where needed. By listening to all voices, I hope to encourage more acceptance on a broader scope in the hopes that every resident can feel heard and part of the overall community.

If elected, how would you address the ongoing issues of homelessness and mental health, especially as they disproportionately affect members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

Mental health and addiction, especially as it relates to homelessness, is becoming a national crisis - if elected, I have a plan to invest in a fully staffed mental health and addiction facility, develop interim and semi-permanent housing solutions, remove red tape to developments of affordable housing, and through engagement with those experiencing homelessness, reduce stigma by developing a shelter for service system that provides dignity, support, and community participation to these residents.

Do you agree with the statement that "trans rights are human rights, and must be protected as such?"

Of course - all people are fundamentally guaranteed rights in Canada. No exceptions.

What is one motion would you bring to council that you think will improve the lives of specifically queer people, racialized individuals and/or marginalized residents and why?

Minority groups of residents receive the short-end of the stick when it comes to how they are impacted by wide-sweeping policy decisions. A critical component of my platform is to improve affordability across Waterloo Region - because data shows that marginalized groups are most susceptible to poor economic conditions, an approach that focuses on uplifting the most vulnerable economically, will almost certainly improve the lives of minority represented peoples.

When thinking about our schools, do you agree that 2SLGBTQIA+ representation in books and lessons is critical at all grade levels? How would you support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in schools?

We have to be deeply considerate of how we work through our school systems with children, as they are the most precious of our society, and also the most vulnerable. With a degree in psychology, I understand the developmental processes of children, and know that certain elements of learning are best suited at specific grades, when a deeper understanding can be achieved. I agree that 2SLGBTQIA+ representation should exist as a foundation of learning, but I believe it should be carefully assessed as to when it is most appropriate. I would support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in schools by equipping teachers, the school boards, and parents with the ability to correspond jointly on how best to approach education.