

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

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

Prefer not to answer

What role are you running for?

Regional Councillor for the City of Waterloo

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?

I believe one issue affecting the community is architectural inclusivity. I would like to see building codes revised to give incentives to property owners that replace gendered washrooms with either unisex or private washrooms. A good local example would be Abe Erb in Waterloo for private stalls.

Another issue that I believe is more prevalent would be mental illness and youth homelessness, as more of these teens are rejected by their parents and families at a young age.

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

Not yet

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?

I think the best way to combat bigotry, is to have people meet and interact with each other. Separate from, for example, Pride, I would like to see a program where 2SLGBTQIA+ can simply share ordinary stories, and reinforce the idea that we are all just humans, and that we need to care for and respect each other. The challenge with this approach is finding ways to reach the people who need to be reached most.

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

My plan is to ensure that everyone has access to safe and dignified housing. For those who must live in tents or outbuildings, my plan is to have more very small communities, of 4 to 7 people, rather than a large "tent city". If someone is unhappy with the others around them, there must be an easy to use system where a new, safe space could be found. This process could either be initiated by the inhabitant, or a social worker they are working with.

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

Yes, I believe everyone has the right to be their authentic selves, and to be treated equally in society.

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?

I would like to change building codes to ensure that new construction contains inclusive washrooms, so that every time someone visits any public or commercial building in this region, they will know that they are welcome within it, regardless of how they present themselves. I would like to have input from architects, city staff, as well as the 2SLGBTQIA+ community on the requirements for such washrooms, to ensure privacy and dignity for everyone.

I want this Region to be referenced by other communities around the world in the future as a model for inclusivity.

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?

Yes. I believe that books, films and other teaching aids should reflect the community and world around us, and students should see themselves reflected in their curriculum material.

From a regional standpoint, I would use the tools at my disposal to encourage building codes for washrooms and change rooms which provide safety and privacy for all students.