

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?

City Councillor - Waterloo - Ward 2

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 that many of the challenges the broader community faces, also impact the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Issues such as affordable housing and homelessness, mental health and addiction and more. Tackling these issues with a 2SLGBTQIA+ lens is important, to understand the acute impacts to the community. I am committed to building a city where everyone feels as though they belong and are welcomed and am eager to work with local organizations like SPECTRUM to tackle these issues.

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

No.

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 have prided myself on calling out racism, homophobia and xenophobia in my community when it happens. I believe it is important for leadership to highlight the problems to the broader residents so increased awareness of the challenges folks in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community face. I'm also eager to work with our neighbourhood associations and our new Equity and Inclusion team on inclusive events/initiatives to help combat these challenges.

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

Although the role of social services resides primarily at the Region of Waterloo, I'm proud that this past term of Council embedded increasing affordable housing in our 2019-2022 strategic plan. This has directly led to an affordable housing reserve fund with a stable funding source to help fund not-for-profit affordable housing projects in the City. It has also led to the creation of the city's first ever affordable housing strategy, with 6 goals and 30 actions. I'm committed to implementing this plan in the coming term of Council.

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

Yes

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 be more apt to listen to the community on motions of Council that they would like to see. An example would be the 'Conversion Therapy Ban' motion that went through a number of Council's in the Region. I would have been happy to bring that forward (although there was competition from my colleagues in who wanted to do so), ultimately not coming through due to a Federal government ban. I'm more than happy to connect with organizations like Spectrum on these topics.

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 have a broader passion for youth engagement in general and I'm pleased to see the City of Waterloo re-join the Children and Youth Planning Table in this past term. I would like to embed youth engagement in our next strategic plan and ensure that we are hearing from Youth of all ages and backgrounds.