

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?

Councillor

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?

What I am hearing that is impacting the local queer community is that gay students are not coming out at the local high school. They don't feel safe to do so. Additionally the queer people in the farming community are feeling very isolated. I have had adults and youth explain that their families are not supportive and are often part of Christian faith that are not accepting to queer folks. I want to continue to find ways to connect the queer community to each other and find supports to amplify their voices.

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

Yes, and I am committed to this for life. I will continue to take courses to ensure that I am always staying informed with the best way to demonstrate allyship to the queer community.

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?

Amplifying the queer communities voices and listening to the needs that they share with me is how I see the best path forward. I will continue to amplify and bring the needs shared with me to the forefront. Additionally within the organization itself I will continue to for better HR practices and bring that lens to every policy.

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

I frequently check in with the Wilmot Family Resource centre. In Willmot this is where our local food bank is. I check in to see how I can use my position to amplify their voice and needs. Vote for affordable housing and support queer people in farming as in this rural community they are the most isolated and distant from support and strong social supports.

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

ABSOLUTELY!

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?

In this past term of council I have brought the motion to have the pride flag raised. It was defeated the first time but another council member brought it to the floor and it passed. I also brought a motion to the floor to have our staff participate in safe space training and to have our facilities identified as safe spaces. I also advocated for a queer child in the community to have a safe space to change for hockey. She didn't feel safe changing in the boys change room with her peers.

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?

Children need to see people who look like them as they grow up. They need to hear and see it in stories, see educators and peers lead the way. I am the current chair of the school council at New Dundee Public School. We have queer children in our kindergarten to grade 6 school.

Connecting with their families is important to me to see what we can do to support and make the school feel safe from the top down even when some peers can be rude. We used to have the rainbow flag but with trans children in the Wilmot school community we advocated for the rainbow flag that was more inclusive to make trans children feel welcome and proud to be themselves.