

## 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?**

Ward 5 City Councillor, 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 the most critical issue facing the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is the infiltration of hate group backed school board trustees throughout the region. I propose a review of all affiliations and a ban on anyone who has received money from one of these groups. Our children deserve an inclusive, safe, positive education that includes discussion about sex, gender identity, belonging, and larger issues the 2SLGBTQIA+ community face.

Aside from protecting our children; young adults and adults within the community also need support. Community is the key to belonging and I believe there is work to be done to change perceptions of the 2SLGBTQIA+ population. I truly believe that more integration with SPECTRUM in delivering programming across the region is highly beneficial in breaking down barriers. I was thrilled to see the drag queen story times at local libraries. I would encourage council to further consult and integrate ideas, programming, and suggestions from SPECTRUM and all those doing the work at a grassroots level.

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

I have not participated in any formal training. I have been an ally to friends and family within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and supported them throughout their identity journeys. I would absolutely be interested in formalized training at any time.

**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 would be a vocal ally and encourage those spewing hateful rhetoric to ask themselves why they want others to hurt. There will always be bigoted hateful people in the world but shining a spotlight on their behaviour and asking questions about their position are a great way to break down barriers, foster connection and start a dialogue to dismantle belief systems. I would also encourage local businesses to be accepting and welcoming of those within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. People are people. No matter how they may identify; everyone deserves an income, a safe place to call home, and a sense of belonging in their 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?**

I would be an extremely vocal and powerful force in shifting money away from the police budget and into mental health and homeless supports throughout the community. After attending the encampment rally in the summer, I had the opportunity to speak to some members of the trans community that had also experienced homelessness as a result of their coming out. It was only through community support that they were able to put the pieces of their life back together. It truly brought home the importance of a safe place to sleep and the wraparound supports needed to help people get back on their feet. While I am not a religious person, my mother always repeated something that has stuck with me my entire life - "there but for the grace of God go I." Most of us are a simple string of bad luck away from homelessness. I have had homeless family members and seen the fallout and how difficult it can be to get out of the cycle. I would encourage the council to look at these issues with deep empathy and an open checkbook.

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

Yes. 100%. No matter how you identify; you deserve a wonderful life.

**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 think a review of the school board trustees is critical in protecting our 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and while there is critical assistance needed for our adult population too; I truly believe kicking these anti-2SLGBTQIA+ trustees to the curb should be the number one priority. We cannot have hate infiltrating our school systems and need to act with haste to show that it's simply not acceptable to hold a public office and hateful opinions in 2022.

**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 representation matters. I would encourage the school boards to collaborate with SPECTRUM and other pro-2SLGBTQIA+ groups to host discussions, open houses, and talks for the students; as well as suggesting educational materials.