

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?

Mayor

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?

It is my understanding that transphobia, systemic issues regarding homophobia, violence and targeted discrimination are some of the most critical issues facing the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. In terms of addressing these issues, it would be important for me as Mayor to use my position as a leader to demonstrate openness to this community by attending their events, inviting them to participate on important city cttes, roundtable discussions, on the Team Waterloo Mayor's Advisory Board I want to form and enabling the use of safe public spaces across our community. As well, I will work with the staff internal staff team to review HR hiring practices and policies to remove the systemic barriers that exist.

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

Yes - through work place seminars at the municipality where I work approximately a year ago.

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 2SLGBTQIA+ community is one of the last groups who are recognized and celebrated. I would look to find ways to address that in a public way. As I noted above, I would have our HR department and other departments review and update polices and procedures that are systemic barriers across the range of functions and systems that the city provides. As well, I will work with the team to ensure that the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are included and welcomed at city events and celebrations.

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 am committed to keeping some land the city owns to create a new affordable housing and/supportive housing community in Waterloo. A portion of these new housing units could be designated for 2SLGBTQIA+ members as well as a percentage for other priority people who require affordable housing.

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

Yes, unequivocally.

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?

As I noted above, I would work with Council (Mayors don't typically table motions) to table a motion regarding holding public lands for a new Affordable Housing project in Waterloo and regarding the review of the city's broad based policies and procedures which may be a barrier with respect to accessing employment, recreation, use of space etc.

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?

Schools are outside of the scope of municipalities however, I can envision a partnership with the city's library system and the schools' libraries in order to increase the availability of books, research material and other resources for youth, parents, teaching staff, administrators and anyone seeking information.