

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

Name: Kathryn McGarry

Email Address: ryn.mcgarry@gmail.com



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

No

What role are you running for?

Mayor of Cambridge

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?

Equity, stigma, and inclusivity. As Mayor, I agreed to a rainbow crosswalk in Cambridge, which was identified as a need in the Equity, Diversity and inclusivity advisory committee. One Council member fought against it, stating he thought the rainbow community should pay for it. He had little understanding of the significance of this global symbol of a safe community. This was a reminder to me that even some elected officials are insensitive and add to the stigma. I have built relationships with the communities and have demonstrated my support. I ensured Cambridge had the new Pride flag to raise in June, and will continue to work with everyone for a more inclusive Cambridge. Leading by example is what I want to see from everyone on the new Council.

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

Yes

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?

Leading by example, calling out individuals who use terms and speech that are inappropriate and is stigmatizing, and ensuring that Cambridge has equity in hiring practices and appointment of Advisory Committee/Task Force members of the Community and celebrating Pride month.

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 have been and continue to be a strong advocate at the Provincial level of Govt to resource social services far more robustly. Ontario is one of the only provinces on Canada to pay for these essential services through property tax rather than by the Province. I supported a Regional Homelessness Master Plan a few weeks ago. This includes all members of this vulnerable community. Decreasing stigma is another priority which is a shared goal from many agencies and service providers. Working with providers of supportive and affordable homes, and the advocates for the 2SLGBTQIA+ will be a priority for me. The over representation by this community that are homeless is unacceptable.

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

Absolutely. I support several friends as they have transitioned to be who they are.

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?

Ensuring that the City employment practices are up to date with policies that are inclusive. Our City is already a Living Wage employer.

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?

Books and lessons on any matter dealing with sexuality needs to be done at an appropriate grade level. I have read books out loud to children in our library system on this topic, at a specific age group. Myself and the City of Cambridge already support OK2BME in funding and awareness and I will continue to do so.