

## 2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

**Name:** Mary Lou Roe

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

No

**What role are you running for?**

Ward 6 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?**

After conversations with members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, I believe belonging, inclusion, and safety are the most critical issues. The rise in anti-diversity and hate language in public spaces and across media platforms threatens to disrupt the growing acceptance, understanding, and inclusion of the 2SLGBTQIA+ members of our community and puts their safety at risk.

In my role as councillor, I would continue to support the 2SLGBTQIA+ community through my core values of belonging and community. I would bring an inclusion and diversity lens to Ward 6 and council conversations and support progressive policies. I would stand in solidarity with diverse communities, actively speak out against anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hate speech, and continue my work of building bridges between communities through public education and events.

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

No, but I would like to participate regardless of the election's outcome. I have personal experience supporting family members in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and as a mom, I actively engage with my children about gender identity, acceptance, and inclusion topics.

**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?**

By reaching out directly to the community and service providers and building open, trustworthy, supportive relationships. By asking what they need and how I can help. By being a vocal supporter of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Ward 6 and the city and speaking out against these phobias through direct conversations, on social media platforms, and in council.

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

Through Project Willow (YMCA) research findings, I've learned that women and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are disproportionately impacted by domestic violence and that the standard co-ed shelter system is not always a safe option. I would address this issue by advocating for innovative shelter options and longer-term solutions that specifically address the needs of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

**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?**

I would propose that more diverse voices are represented when making council decisions. I would continue to reach out to the community, listen to diverse experiences and needs, and support that input on council decisions.

**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?**

I agree that 2SLGBTQIA+ representation in books and lessons is critical at all grade levels. As a mother, I am encouraged by how accepting, non-judgmental, and resilient kids can be when they are informed. Representation in books and lessons at school is critical to ensuring everyone from diverse backgrounds, gender identities, and perspectives feel welcome, accepted, and belongs.