



## Kathryn McGarry - Mayor

### Question 1:

Over the last two and half years it feels as if we have become a less compassionate and caring community and are seeing increased incidences of racism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia and sexual and gender-based violence, not only in the broader community but in our schools. If elected, what are steps you would take or policies you would propose/support to begin addressing this troubling trend?

- Supporting organizations that raise awareness and educate the public is something I continue to do. eg., OK2BME, Spectrum, ACCKWA, YWCA and others. I have focused on amplifying their Social Media, speaking about it in forums/media/panel discussions and ensuring City Hall is a safe place for all. I will continue to work with the City Equity, Diversity and Inclusion staff and communications at the City, in creating messages that this behaviour is not tolerated, and perhaps a social media campaign. The Community Wellbeing Advisory Committee that was started under my leadership this past term, will have the mandate reviewed, as I think there could be more of a focus on this troubling trend. I would like to add an "every Child Matters" crosswalk in Cambridge. This is a complex issue that needs much collaboration with the Region and Partners for solutions.

### Question 2:

What is one decision made by Cambridge/Regional Council in the last four years that you believe has had the most impact on the lives of women and gender-diverse individuals? What more would you like to see?

- Cambridge has added a staff person dedicated to Reconciliation issues, and has continued to support the YWCA's programs regarding gender based violence, and worked to have the KW Urban Wigwam project proceed. That housing project will have 16 units dedicated to Indigenous women. The Region has also added staff dedicated to Reconciliation work in the Region. I would like to see more work done with men, by the Male Allies of Waterloo Region for example, in teaching boys how to build respectful relationships.



### Question 3:

Data from neighbouring municipalities and cities across the globe show that Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) reduce the risk of overdose and drug poisoning. Waterloo Region currently ranks as having the eight highest rate of overdose deaths in Ontario. This is a crisis and punitive “war on drugs” models of managing it have failed time and again, causing countless preventable deaths. If elected, are you prepared to support a CTS in Cambridge as it has been proposed and agreed to by Council? Please explain your rationale.

- Absolutely. Council's role was to propose a site. The applicant, ACCKWA and OHT will submit it. After I visited Guelph and Kitchener's CTS, I learned that there were fewer issues with discarded needles and drug paraphernalia near their CTS, fewer incidences of using in our streets, and no deaths. As Cambridge Memorial Hospital declined to build one, and the services were at the Regional building already, I supported Council's decision to endorse it. It is the Consumption Services that bring people in, then they can connect with other services.

### Question 4:

From children to seniors, adults and couples, people across the community are facing mild to severe mental health challenges. We have heard many stories of people not being able to access the mental health supports they need. From community counselling to crisis and residential supports, organisations and institutions are lacking the resources to meet the community need (<https://www.cambridgetoday.ca/local-news/cmha-still-seeing-high-demand-for-mental-health-supports-5559717>), and waiting lists are significant. Why do you believe this to be the situation, and if elected, what will you do in your capacity to support the mental health needs of the community?

- There are multi layered reasons for the MH crisis: childhood funding trauma, social media, the pandemic, few prevention programs in place, inadequate funding. In my capacity as Mayor and a member of the Big City Mayors, I have met with Minister of MH &A, Michael Tibollo, several times. I have a commitment that he will come to Cambridge in early November and meet with Providers too. Along with Regional Colleagues, I will continue to demand Provincial resources to address this crisis, call out stigma, and run a "Be Kind campaign."



### Question 5:

More than 5,500 individuals living in Cambridge visited the Food Bank this year for emergency food assistance. Of those, 1,200 individuals accessed the food bank for the first time in their lives. What will you do to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry?

- This is a multi layered issue. Affordability is a big factor. I led Council to keep electricity costs from rising, for 10 years, because Cambridge and Brantford energy merged, saving people money. Building more homes to meet demand should help reduce costs of housing. Providing more good paying jobs, such as the 1000 jobs for the Amazon warehouse, and increasing revenue to the City with more businesses and residents moving here, will help keep taxes as low as possible. Amplifying social media campaigns to donate to the Cambridge Food Bank helps them to distribute more food to those in need.

### Question 6:

An unprecedented number of people are experiencing homelessness, either accessing shelter or living unsheltered. This is happening across the country, and we know that no one level of government can fix this issue.

What will you:

- a) do, in your capacity, to support the people currently experiencing homelessness?
- b) do, in your capacity, to ensure that everyone has access to affordable housing?

- I voted in favour of the Regional Homelessness Plan which is seeking 4 potential sites in Waterloo Region for a sanctioned encampment, such as A Better Tent City. I will continue to work with the Region and others to try creative solutions, such as the Tiny Home dwelling that UW School of Architecture designed. I have developed good relationships with housing providers: Habitat for Humanity - Cambridge is getting about 20 new homes for families, Indwell is making investments in supportive housing, Cambridge invested \$700,000 for 55 new affordable homes at 195 Hespeler Rd. Continue to advocate to the Region/Fed/Prov govts to build more homes.



### Question 7:

Last year's Child and Youth Planning Table survey of the Region's youth, particularly the report with disaggregated data by municipality (<https://childrenandyouthplanningtable.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CYPT-YIS-GEOGRAPHY-SNAPSHOT.pdf> and <https://www.cambridgetimes.ca/opinion-story/10651359-the-kids-aren-t-all-right-cambridge-youth-are-sounding-the-alarm/>) showed youth in Cambridge experiencing more significant challenges than their peers in other parts of the region. This includes lower outcomes in their sense of belonging, mental health, support from family and community, and access to recreational facilities. Youth in Cambridge have clearly identified significant issues growing up and becoming successful adults in our community. Why do you believe this is the case, and what will you do to improve child and youth wellbeing and outcomes in our community?

- The results of this survey greatly concerns me. I believe there has been a lack of focus and support for youth and families, stigma attached to new Canadians, inherent racism and not enough youth activities in Cambridge that has contributed to this outcome. This term, Council and I have delivered on providing more and upgraded recreation facilities such as new soccer fields, the Cambridge Recreation Centre (underway), new and upgraded icepads etc. My vision is to provide more activities to all youth, provide subsidies for those who need it, and to have a Child and Youth worker or Social Worker to help run the programs, especially in areas with kids that are more at risk. This is part of the Iceland Model to help reduce problematic substance use. Better use of the Youth Advisory Committee to assess the solutions could help make decisions that will reduce loneliness, and isolation. More education is needed in a public awareness campaign against bullying.

### Question 8:

Do you have a candidate page or social media you would like to direct people to for more information?

- [www.votemcgarry.ca](http://www.votemcgarry.ca).
- IG:kathryn\_mcgarry
- FB: Kathryn McGarry/votemcgarry
- Twitter: @Kathryn\_McGarry