



Karen Redman For Regional Chair

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?

- I am committed to us working towards an inclusive, equitable, thriving and sustainable community fosters opportunities for all residents.

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?

- Community Safety and Wellbeing plans were mandated across the Province by the Solicitor General. In Waterloo region, we collaborated with community partners to identify the gaps in service. The community conversations about violence, exclusion and a feeling of being safe were authentic and difficult but they led to a process that provides space for leadership from Indigenous, Black, racialized communities as well as providing a safe place for the LGBDQ2S+ to voice their concerns. The decision to take a longer time in order to facilitate an effective platform for these voices to be heard and leadership from the community was significant in providing a plan that reflects community needs.



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.

- I support the role that CTS play in harm reductions. I support one in Cambridge. We have a successful local example operating in Kitchener from which to learn. CTS are one of the tools available for harm reduction and treatment for our community members. The trusted relationships that form between the outreach workers, staff and the clients using CTS provide stability for people who are using drugs.

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?

- The Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan demonstrated that better solutions can be achieved when processes are led by community and with community to seek holistic solutions. The Region needs to continue to work collaboratively with community to engage in meaningful consultation.



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?

- My priorities for the Region are housing attainability; supporting future prosperity with infrastructure investments; and working with community and government partners to ensure mental health supports/health services are available for residents. Waterloo Region is one of the fastest growing communities in Canada and it's important for the region's leadership to improve opportunities for growth, prosperity and social responsiveness.

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?

- The system solutions for our unsheltered population are complex and require a variety of interventions along the housing continuum to be successful and sustainable—mental health supports, interim housing, addiction services and affordable housing. I continue to work with provincial and national organizations to lobby for additional funds as well as for a national rental strategy.



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?

- Throughout the Smart Cities initiative and with the formation of the Children and Youth Planning Table, the Region has facilitated conversations using technology that are led by youth to meet their needs. These conversations need to continue to be facilitated in order that youth feel heard and that initiatives that are implemented meet their needs.

Question 8:

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

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