



Crystal Whetham For Regional Council

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?

- As the current school board trustee for Cambridge & North Dumfries and now running for Regional Councilor in Cambridge; I think a public education of these phobias and trends should be addressed. I think the school board has an excellent sense of teaching our children diversity and inclusion so we have a growing population with better thinking towards caring and compassionate communities.

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?

- I think these are two separate questions. The one thing the region has done that is going to have the greatest impact on women, especially those of modest income is to place menstrual products in public washrooms just as they do toilet paper... free of charge.
- The region has demonstrated it is forward thinking by flying the rainbow flag in numerous buildings indicating that this region is inclusive of all persons.



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 personally think the current regional cts location is way too close to our schools. I can support this, but I would rather see it in a more conventional spot.

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?

- We need more provincial help to cover costs and people, which would incur costs with the possibly the relocation of professionals into our region.



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?

- Support our local food banks and luncheons like the trinity community table. Make sure these types of programs and drop ins are available and properly funded

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 like the idea of short term housing in the storage containers/tiny homes that having been popping up in some of our neighbouring cities. We need to do better as a community then the current tent cities. We are not a third world country and we need to start treating our citizens as citizens even in their hardest of times. I am dedicated to finding proper locations for these types of short term homes to be built. Possibly abandoned factories that are sitting vacant and could be put to better use.



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?

- We need more reasonably priced youth programs, when I was a teen there were local drop in centre at the malls and being able to have a social and meet other teens from around Galt, Preston and Hespeler even KW, helped with my sense of belonging and I made some great friends along the way from all different communities. Our youth need a sense of belonging and that starts at their schools, yet having after-school and evening programs put on by the city and region at a reasonable to free cost would make them more community aware

Question 8:

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

- Twitter: CrystalWhetham
- Phone: 226-755-1616
- Email: crystalwhetham85@gmail.com

