



Barbara Harrington For Ward 4

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 definitely believe that education is key as part of the solution. The unfortunate side of it is that I feel that in order for an educational approach to work ALL communities and lifestyles will have to be involved. As well it will need to be approached differently at each age and maturity levels of the students'. That being said, the difficulty will be to have all parents on board with the educational plan. We would have to educate the parents as well as the student. This is where I believe that multicultural festivals, classes, open houses etc....NEED to be as diverse as possible to include ALL culture, religions and lifestyle to immerse the community into understanding and acceptance. To say it in a different manner, if you want to participate you will have to be aware that all will be in attendance. These events could occur at a community as well as all grade levels within the school systems. We already have anti violence and anti racism policies within the school system, we just need to cross educate in a collective manner.

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?

- Single, homeless women need a shelter!
- The thing is...I don't know. I don't know because I wasn't informed. The resources need to be advertised. Until I ran for council I didn't even know that "The W" existed until the Take back the Night Event occurred. I have lived in Cambridge for 52 years and have utilized many social services including being a graduate of "Small Steps To Success". We need better, more efficient ways to reach out to our women and gender diversion individuals from all walks of life. Just because someone is in a lower income bracket doesn't mean that that young person living on Lansdowne Rd or Blue Heron Ridge doesn't need help too.



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.

- Cambridge stalled over the last 5 or so years when it comes to social services other than the homeless or the addicted. Many things have slipped through the cracks because they weren't hated on social media. We need positive change and positive change will not happen if we don't change our focus from the hate of one subject to positive change on another. Yes I will support the current decision agreed upon by the current council for a CTS site, but not at 150 Main street.

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?

- Short answer, the pandemic. Long answer, the pandemic. I have personal stories of my own family members and how this shut down of the world hurt everyone and it is not over for a long time. The effects of this will be felt for years to come. The only solution I can think of is to encourage people supporting people. We have become so isolated and shut in that our social skills have to be "reset", for lack of a better word. I don't provide counseling services nor am I a social worker, this question is unfair for me to give an educated answer but I can give a heart felt answer. I will do everything in my capacity to support mental health in our community. I have an Autistic child, family members with PTSD, 2SLGBQ+ and are "60's Scoop survivors", they need supports as much as any other community member and I will do what I can to help.



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?

- Honestly, I accessed the food bank this week. I am what is called the "working poor". There is no shame in seeking help and there is no shame in not being able to provide help. A young person from the Greenway Chaplin Community center (Stephan Gagne) told me of an idea of theirs and that was to utilize unused sections of all city parks for community gardens. Cared for and maintained community members, students, or adults requiring volunteer hours or anyone in general. The garden's bounty will go to the participants and the excess will go to the food bank and community kitchens. During the pandemic, food insecurities increase beyond imagination. I am fortunate to be knowledgeable about food preservation and have the tools to do so. we could fund a program that allowed community centers to have their own set of equipment to allow community members to fill their pantry. the pressure canners are quite expensive, I lucked out and my sister found an affordable one in Timmins, ON for me. There are many ideas and skills that could be passed on from our elders to our younger generations. This is one of many other possibilities out there.

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 am one person and one vote in the horseshoe. Affordable housing is not a municipal level of government issue. All I could do in relation to affordable housing is understand, promote and encourage more rental developments that are multi-functional for singles and families. The small one and two bedroom units wont work for a family of 5 or 6 that are the main types of units being built. We could encourage more multi unit Habitat for Humanity homes as well, helping more of those larger families. For the currently homeless, one thought is to have tiny homes or a specified area for a better tent city etc. This could allow community services easier access to client for those wrap-around services mentioned earlier. A location like the old Joy Manufacturing lot on Beverly street could be a possibility or a suggestion.



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?

- I am going to quote a few facts in these articles that are 100% bang on!
- "We are not doing enough in Cambridge to support youth belonging and well-being" we are most definitely not but not only at a city level but at a community level. So many parents will not allow their children to engage in programs for fear of bullies etc. The bullying issue is rising but I fear it is causing many of our youth to not stand up for themselves. As a community we have allowed this by lack of consequence to the bully. I know this is a controversial statement but it is a fact.
- "Waterloo youth were 22.2 per cent more likely to report having access to recreation and culture facilities that are easy to get to compared to Cambridge youth." Wow this hit the nail on the head. The population of Waterloo is 121,000 compared to the population of Cambridge is 129,000 but Waterloo has more access for their youth. We need to model after them. I am planning on advocating for better entertainment for our youth. Things that are more engaging, places to burn their energies or want them to keep going. Not all kids are sports fans or sport inclined. Many don't even have the funds to enjoy them. We need other avenues besides sports plex's. Drop in centres that have gaming for parallel play or just safe spaces to chill. Skate parks or bike tracks in all three cores, not just Riverside park.
- Even older young people have to go out of town to go dancing. My generation had so many places to go like the Matador, Hooches, Johnny B Good, Little Big Horn, Highlands and Ballenger's to name a few to dance at. Not to encourage drinking but to encourage socializing. The many pool halls or arcades were places to meet new and existing friends. I know this is living in the past but we enjoyed it, now our kids need it back or something similar. We have become a bed and breakfast town for the larger cities, it is time to regain our own identity. I am not a mental health doctor/counsellor nor am I social worker but I am sure as hell a parent and I know these are things that the youth in and around my family crave!



Question 8:

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

- Web: www.barbaraharrington.com
- Email: barbaraharrington6322@gmail.com
- Twitter: @HarringtonWard4
- Instagram: @harringtonward4
- Facebook: Barbara Harrington Ward-four Candidate