



Manuel da Silva For Ward 7

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 have been a trustee with Waterloo Catholic School Board since 2003 and these topics have been part of our conversations throughout the years. I believe that all people matter and deserve to be treated with respect. I came to Canada at the age of 10 and I know what it's like to be a little different, sound a little different but want to be treated like the majority and with respect and dignity. In many situations, I try to put myself in the other persons space and always think, what if this was me or someone I care about? How would I expect and want them to be treated?

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 don't believe that decisions made by City & Regional council, with regards to the homelessness and those most vulnerable has addressed the problem in our communities. We are a growing region and have experienced an increase in population with refugees and immigration and have taken steps to make sure that these families are well looked after. We also need to make it a priority to look after people who are living in our streets.



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 do support a CTS in Cambridge because I see it as a safe place to help people and give them the necessary tools/treatment to help them and ultimately, reduce consumption.

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 to better understand where the barriers/road blocks are that keep our most vulnerable from getting the help that they need. We are not the only community that are experiencing this challenge and we need to collaborate with other communities and look at what has worked and not worked so that we don't reinvent the wheel. We need to focus on positive outcomes and if we can learn from communities and policies to help us become better, we should move in that direction.



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?

- We need to better understand the needs of our community. When people are coming to the Food Bank, we need to know why. What can we do to help individuals and families be better able to become self sufficient? No one in our community should be struggling to meet their basic needs.

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?

- Again I know that we are not the only community experiencing homelessness and affordable housing. We need to work with other communities and look at positive results which they have experienced in tackling the issues of homelessness and affordable housing. In response to question a & B, one of the reasons I decided to run for Cambridge Ward 7 is because I see our homelessness issue and affordable house, getting worse not better. This needs to become a focus.



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?

- My children grew up in Cambridge and now my grandchildren. We often hear people say that children are our future. If we expect our children to grow up to be responsible citizens, we need to ensure that they have all the tools necessary so that they succeed. Council needs to have dialogue with our school boards so that we all understand the needs of our communities and especially our children.

Question 8:

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

- www.ManueldaSilva.ca

