

Mayor and Councillor Candidate Questionnaire

This questionnaire is prepared on behalf of 2SLGBTQ+ voters in Kelowna based on community input regarding issues that are important to them regarding the October 2022 election. All candidates for mayor and council are invited to complete the questionnaire. Results will be published on Advocacy Canada's website as well as on social media. In the spirit of transparency, results will include a mention of any candidates who do not complete the questionnaire.

The deadline for completion is September 30, 2022. Thank you in advance for your response.

Email *

loyal@loyalkelowna.com

Your First and Last Name *

Loyal Wooldridge (he/him)

What do you believe are the most critical issues for the local 2SLGBTQ+ community? If elected, *
how would you work with the local community to address these issues?

We know that marginalized populations including 2SLGBTQ+ and BIPOC folx are disadvantaged in many ways. Based on my lived experience I've listed some critical issues, along with proposed actions within the community:

1. Sense of safety- ensuring Kelowna creates public spaces where the 2SLGBTQ+ folx are free to express themselves and are supported by RCMP with elevated training to support the queer community.
2. Intimate Partner Violence- ensure the RCMP's training fully integrates sensitivity into investigations of violence and sexual assault specifically in the trans community (who are over represented victims).
3. Youth Upstream programs- ensure there is a 'situation table' to identify at risk youth early and connect with appropriate programs to intercept abuse or discrimination before it happens.
4. Cultural space- continue to bring to life new cultural spaces for events and gatherings to connect people of both 2SLGBTQ+ and allies, to break down barriers and further enhance the cultural fabric of Kelowna.

Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are still prevalent in Kelowna, resulting in significant socio-economic disparities within 2SLGBTQ+ communities. If elected, how will you combat homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia? *

First and foremost it is everyone's responsibility to speak out and hold those accountable that prey upon the 2SLGBTQ+ community or any marginalized group. I firmly believe that overcoming socio-economic disparities starts with putting the needs of underrepresented voices first when making decisions that impact the city. To homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia I support:

1. Leveraging the City of Kelowna's Grant Manager to seek out new grant opportunities to assist local lived experience groups to hold educational workshops and events.
2. Ensuring all city spaces are declared safe spaces with the appropriate training for staff.
3. The continued commitment from the RCMP to train police officers sensitively in supporting 2SLGBTQ+ folx.
4. Ensuring engagement with lived experience groups when building new recreational facilities to ensure the design is conducive to all users (ie. non-gendered change rooms).
5. Continued support and engagement in 2SLGBTQ+ events.

Have you ever participated in 2SLGBTQ+ cultural competency or equivalent training? *

I recognize my relative privilege as a Caucasian, gay male and understand many have been impacted far more than me in the 2SLGBTQ+ community. However, I too have lived experience of growing up gay in the Okanagan and have been deeply involved in the community since 2001.

Recently with the Okanagan Regional Library on cultural competency with 2SLGBTQ+ and BIPOC folx. This resulted in an episode of the Doc Project, summarized here:

<https://loyalKelowna.com/cbcs-the-doc-project-how-a-b-c-librarys-drag-queen-story-hour-turned-into-a-nationwide-fight-for-intellectual-freedom/>

If elected, how would you address the ongoing issues of homelessness and mental health, especially as they disproportionately affect members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community? *

As previously mentioned socio-economic factors have dramatically affected the 2SLGBTQ+ community. In terms of social challenges I would support:

1. Appropriate emergency shelter spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ people, especially youth.
2. Identifying at risk youth early within the school system leveraging the Kelowna Outreach & Support table.
3. Build appropriate safety net housing for 2SLGBTQ+ people.
4. Specialized youth housing for young people kicked out of their homes along with life skills training with local NGO's.
5. Further support of the Etcetera Youth Program to include more counselling services.
6. Create a peer response program within the new NextGen 911 system for mental health crisis to reduce the reliance on policing.

If elected, how would you address issues impacting 2SLGBTQ+ seniors, particularly with regard to affordable housing? *

Many 2SLGBTQ+ seniors are forced back into the closet when they are no longer able to live on their own. Special attention needs to be paid to:

1. Food security planning community wide to support well being.
2. Appropriate long term care spaces with cultural programming best suited for 2SLGBTQ+ people.
3. Partnerships with technology evolutions like HappiPad which pairs seniors with young people in homes for intergenerational connection.
4. Safety net housing funds, or bolstered rent banks to support seniors in the events that additional funds are needed to pay monthly rent or bills.

Do you agree with the statement that "trans rights are human rights, and must be protected as such?" *

☒ Yes

☐ No

If elected, would you support funding for 2SLGBTQ+ community and social services? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

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