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July 24, 2023

City of London
Municipal Council
c/o Community and Protective Services Committee

Re: Security needs for 448 Horton St – London Cares Resting Space Program

The property of 448 Horton St is operated by London Cares Homeless Response Services for our Resting Space Program. This program is contracted through the City of London to operate 20 hours per day including overnight hours. We were required to move our Resting Space program out of Old East Village (OEV) as our temporary lease was up with Unity Project. We located a new space on Horton St. with the correct zoning just before needing to vacate OEV and moved into the new location at the end of April.

Prior to moving in, senior service leadership of London Cares did door knocks within the surrounding block of the new location to introduce ourselves, answer concerns and questions, and leave contact numbers. A number of neighbours utilize the contact numbers frequently. We also modified our service to minimize the traffic coming onto property and intentionally doing the referral for resting space daily off property to further minimize traffic on site.

Despite multiple neighbourhood engagement strategies and implementing suggestions—such as peer support program to pick up garbage in the 2-block radius around the property—there continues to be tension from neighbours. At the request of neighbours, and to keep the peace, we employed security for 12 hours (5:30 PM to 5:30 AM) nightly to mitigate any external concerns that may arise on the property.

In the past few months, despite everything we have implemented, a few neighbours have instigated some aggressive actions on the property, including: spraying people with a hose; throwing ice at people; and coming on the property, screaming and yelling at both staff and clients, tipping over shopping carts, and threatening to bear mace staff and follow staff and clients off the property.

For these reasons, we are requesting to continue with security to try and manage the tensions in the neighbourhood and keep the property safe for staff and clients alike.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Armstrong".

Anne Armstrong
Executive Director
London Cares Homeless Response Services

