

This is our submission to the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee.

Item 4, 4.2 Health and Homelessness Whole Community System Response RFP 2023-199 Hubs Implementation Plan Results.

September 21, 2023

Chair Mayor Morgan and Council Members of the SPPC

After reading the report, which is in front of this committee regarding the Hubs Implementation Plan. Specifically for 566 Dundas Street, which is proposed to be operated by the Canadian Mental Health and Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services.

We have concerns to express about this Specific location and how they intend to operate.

Hindsight is 20/20, Residents in the immediate vicinity of 566 Dundas Street. We are reminded of when CMHA hosted just over ten years ago the Coffee House that was located on the northwest corner of William and Dundas Street, and the undesirable outcome it created in the Midtown Neighbourhood at that time. Also, long time residences still remember the effects this organization has had when they operated the respite program during the 2021-2022 year during the Winter Response Homeless Program.

During the Winter Response Homeless Program, some of their clients who needed the services, found themselves to be locked out and left to be alone in the frigid winter nights, screaming for help, in hopes to get staff's attention. This became a nightly occurrence, and such matters would last many hours at a time. To the point where nearby residents had to call CMHA and My Sisters Place staff. To respond to the cries of help.

Given the short amount of time that we have had to digest what is in this report.

We would like to see, enhanced neighbourhood services for that specific block of Dundas Street. Between William and Adelaide Street North. Such as Enhanced Cleaning, no loitering, and the hiring of private security (same security firm the city hires and has for Dundas Place) that will operate during the same time that this respite program at 566 Dundas Street is open.

The neighbours near by, have called the London Police Services, in the past, when problems have arisen, only to be met with no response from the police, or that it has taken police over 12 hrs to respond to a call. In addition, residents have been asked by the LPS to take matters into their own hands, because the police at that moment are overwhelmed by other calls that are in the system.

Members of this Committee might not be aware of this, but the Midtown Neighbourhood has young adults that attend the two Secondary Schools in the Area, such as Beal and CCH. Also, there are many young children who live in the neighbourhood and walk past 566 Dundas Street, to get to their Elementary school bus stops, so they can attend schools.

[REDACTED]

During the time of the Winters response respite program, of 2021/2022, the child and mother, encountered verbal and physical abuse from the clients that were accessing the services at 566 Dundas Street.

This facility at 566 Dundas Street. Also backs on to a residential building that has many of its tenants, as being seniors.

We also inquire if the clients of this respite program, if they will be allowed to use illegal drugs, (street drugs)? We ask that they not be allowed to use "Street Drugs on or near the site, for the Carepoint and Counterpoint Harm Reduction Programs facility, at 446 York Street, is already located in the neighbourhood, where they can consume their drugs in a safe manner.

We find that this entire process has been rushed, but we understand that winter is coming, and we do not want to see anymore people dying on our streets.

We are in the middle of the Core Area, and going forward, Midtown Community Organization would like to have a voice in what happens in our Midtown Community. This can happen, by having us included in decision making process regarding what happens at this facility. Also, we would also like to discuss the addition of a Neighbourhood agreement that we are creating to go along with this facility, and we look forward to our Ward 13 councillor to support us in this initiative.

Please find below the attached letter that we were not able to submit last time to this committee regarding this same matter, where criteria of location of the homeless hubs were being discussed, for it was created past the deadline for submissions. And it provides even more detail about this area surrounding this location at 566 Dundas Street.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Deanna Brown

Warner Thomas

Cheryl Watson

Coordinators

Midtown Community Organization

Please consider this and added agenda submission with respect to item 4.1 on the SPPC agenda for July 24-London's Health and Homelessness Whole of Community System Response Proposed Hubs Implementation Plan.

July 23, 2023

Chair Mayor Morgan -Council Members

After reading the report that was produce, we her at the Midtown Community Organization. Would like to remind the SPPC committee. That Midtown is in the Middle of the Core Area. We are situated between the Downtown and Old East Village. (The London Police Head Quarters) is in Midtown.

This Crisis in our opinion has been happening for at least the last 7 years. I believe all the retail store fronts, residential buildings and even a Church, on our stretch of Dundas Street, has seen a broken Window, or some form of Damage to their building, and this might be a surprise to some on the committee to learn that the London Police Head Quarters building, has not been excluded from such acts of violence, and it to, has seen its share of vandalism to its building.

Because of the direction that past City Councils have taken, the Midtown Neighbourhood, now finds itself to be oversaturated (given its size) with Social Services agencies and its time for other neighbourhoods to do their share, Homelessness and opioid crisis is City Wide, and so having these hubs located throughout the city is a good first step.

We would like to see any proposal for any hubs to be at least ½ Km, from Midtown. Residents and businesses are already having a challenging time, some businesses are barely surviving, and we do not want to see anymore empty store fronts facing on to Dundas St. Also, residents are tired of the yelling, being physically assaulted and harassed by individuals, who also show the same disregard to the law. Many in the neighbourhood are afraid to go outside. We do not want to be victimized anymore. Adding any Hubs here, would not be a positive and we strongly believe, would hinder any form of revitalization and progress in the middle of the Core Area.

**The criteria of where Hubs should not be located. Page 41 of the report.**

We would like to see added, "Elementary School student bus stops" also "senior residences" or where a residential buildings population, has over 50% seniors residing within it.

**Also, continuation on page 41, Brings us to**

What this means specifically, for the first 3-5 Hubs:

**Hubs should be located outside of the Old East Village and not on Dundas**

**Flex Street or Richmond Row (contingent on zoning, available properties, physical space requirements and ability to deliver functions and standards effectively)**

We again, would like to see this committee add Midtown, to the above list. We feel we would have been added to the above list, but no one reached out to us, to hear our feedback or to take part of any meetings, during the creation of this report. So again, the voice of residents, and Midtown Core Businesses were not communicated within this report.

The only input they were able to provide, were at five community open houses. With none of those open Houses located within London's defined "Core Area". The nearest one was outside the Core Area, across the Thames River at the Kiwanis Seniors' Community Centre. The other avenue to give feedback was with the surveys that were on the city's "Get involved website."

To end we would strongly suggest that there be a public participation meeting for this matter. Because we have a lot more questions to ask, about this report.

On behalf of Midtown Community Organization

Thank you,

MCO Coordinators,

Deanna Brown

Warner Thomas

Cheryl Watson