

City of London  
300 Dufferin Avenue,  
London, ON,  
N6B 1Z2

Attention: All City Councillors  
Re: Opposition to Proposed Homelessness Hub at 705 Fanshawe Park Road

Good evening councillors,

As a long time Londoner and Ward 7 constituent, I am writing today to put forth my opposition to the proposed homeless hub at 705 Fanshawe Park Road. As representatives of the City of London, residents and key decision-makers on council, I ask that you consider my concerns and those of my neighbours and community. My reasons for opposing the hub are as follows: First and for most residents and local businesses in this area were not given community participation in this plan in any meaningful way. Prior to announcement of the location there was little information given and little exposure for how to participate. How can a community participate if they aren't informed of the details, most importantly the Hub's location. It has only been days since some of us know of this, and many others are still in the dark. How will we voice our concerns in the zoning process. Our voice is being attempted to be taken away from us. We have valid concerns and questions about safety that we would like heard and responded to.

1. **Re-zoning** - the original plans for the first 3-5 hubs required that the new locations would not need rezoning. The proposed location is not zoned to accommodate a homelessness hub. Why is council circumventing its own guidelines and making an exception for this particular location? To the public, this may bring the integrity of council and its members into question, which is obviously not ideal when such a contentious issue is at play.
2. **Safety and Security of Area Residents and Businesses** - In the *Report To Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee*, July 24th, 2023, the location criteria was to ensure, "a feeling of safety and security within this new system for all Londoners, including individuals being served, business owners and customers, and community members in neighbourhoods". As was made obvious in the meeting that was held on September 25th, residents in the area of the proposed hub feel very uncertain about the details of this hub. Originally it was intended to house women transitioning to more permanent housing. Now it is possibly going to be used for respite and

short-term housing. As per the *London's Health And Homelessness Response: Proposed Hubs Implementation Plan, July 2023*, each hub will support a No Wrong Door policy. The hub at this location has been repeatedly touted as, "a transitional hub for 20 women". According to the city's own aforementioned documents, there is a distinct possibility that this location will host other homeless individuals on its property. One example of this concern can be seen at My Sister's Place, located at 566 Dundas Street. This location is often the home of encampments which serve as an unorganized extended hub. As you can see, decisions for this location have changed often and the city has not been completely forthcoming and transparent about the realistic future of this location. This, as you can imagine, leaves area residents uneasy and feeling ironically insecure about the future of their neighbourhood. I request that council table any further decisions regarding this location until area residents have ample time to both understand the updated role of this hub and to allow for public consultation with regard to the changes that have recently been unilaterally made.

3. **The Black Pearl Pub and Area Businesses** - The existing business at 705 Fanshawe Park Road houses The Black Pearl Pub. This is a thriving business that has been at this location for decades. As was mentioned in the *Community Engagement Results*, published July 14th, 2023, Section 3.0, *Criteria For Where Hubs Should Not Be Located*, residents clearly responded, "Hubs should be away from where they may have a negative impact on business operations." As you are aware, the proposed hub at this location will cause the forced and unanticipated closing of this business. It is short-sighted and, quite frankly, unfair of the city to cause a family-owned, local business to close or relocate (at great expense to the business owner). In the *Hubs Presentation Slide* dated August 30th - September 7th, one of the slides posed the question, "Why is this moving so fast?" One of the reasons given was, "businesses are closing". How is it that the city recognizes that businesses are closing but sees fit to force the closing of a business to meet the city's goals? Why is the city allowing yet another business to close as a casualty of this process? Why is the city putting other businesses along the Fanshawe corridor in jeopardy of closing? London's unemployment rate is 5.6% and it seems council is not concerned with driving that number up as more and more hubs are opened.
4. **Child and Youth Safety and Security** - As per the location criteria of *London's Health and Homelessness Response: Proposed Hub Implementation Plan*, hubs should not be in close proximity to elementary schools or daycare centres. In essence, hubs should not be

near child-centric centres within the community. The proposed location is next door (170 metres) from the Thames Valley Children's Centre location that services children with autism. This location is also next door (within 110 metres) to a children's toy store, notably, Mastermind Toys. Long & McQuade, a business that offers music lessons to children, is also in close proximity (150 metres) to the proposed hub. As was mentioned in the *Health And Homelessness Movement For Change* document sent via email on September 21st, 2023, open drug use will not be forbidden at any hub, "A low barrier and harm reduction approach recognizes that some people will use drugs and so practices need to be in place to ensure this happens in the safest possible way." We can all agree that there is never an appropriate situation wherein a child should be exposed to, or witness, illicit drug use. Location criteria were included in the guidelines for a reason - to limit exposure of vulnerable segments of the population. Please keep our children safe and allow them the right to access services and businesses in a safe and secure manner.

5. **Lack of Previous Data** - During the pandemic many of London's homeless were placed in hotels at a considerable cost to taxpayers. Does the city have any analytical data on how this measure alleviated the homelessness crisis? Were those individuals housed in hotels able to move on to more permanent housing? Were any of those individuals who might have been addicted and receiving help while living in, what could be considered transitional, housing successful in overcoming addiction and finding permanent housing and employment? One would think it prudent of the city to have data to follow the success or failure of those measures implemented during the pandemic since public funds were used to house these individuals. If there was no data collected, how can the public be assured that city will be collecting proper and complete empirical data thus measuring the success or failure of this plan so that the plan can be expanded or rolled back?

I ask that my concerns are taken into account as well as the concerns of my neighbours and community at large. I hope and trust that all the residents of this fine city be represented in a proportionate and equitable manner.

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel to reach out to me directly via email.

Thank you,

Adriana Escudero

**From:** Adriana Mallo Escudero

**Sent:** Monday, October 2, 2023 4:19 PM

**To:** City of London, Mayor <[mayor@london.ca](mailto:mayor@london.ca)>; Lehman, Steve <[slehman@london.ca](mailto:slehman@london.ca)>; McAlister, Hadleigh <[hmcAlister@london.ca](mailto:hmcAlister@london.ca)>; Lewis, Shawn <[slewis@london.ca](mailto:slewis@london.ca)>; Trosow, Sam <[strosow@london.ca](mailto:strosow@london.ca)>; Hopkins, Anna <[ahopkins@london.ca](mailto:ahopkins@london.ca)>; Franke, Skylar <[sfranke@london.ca](mailto:sfranke@london.ca)>; Pelozo, Elizabeth <[epelozalondon.ca](mailto:epelozalondon.ca)>; Ferreira, David <[dferreira@london.ca](mailto:dferreira@london.ca)>; Pelozo, Elizabeth <[epelozalondon.ca](mailto:epelozalondon.ca)>; Cuddy, Peter <[pcuddy@london.ca](mailto:pcuddy@london.ca)>; Stevenson, Susan <[sstevenson@london.ca](mailto:sstevenson@london.ca)>; Pribil, Jerry <[jpribil@london.ca](mailto:jpribil@london.ca)>; Rahman, Corrine <[crahman@london.ca](mailto:crahman@london.ca)>; Van Meerbergen, Paul <[pvanmeerbergen@london.ca](mailto:pvanmeerbergen@london.ca)>; Hillier, Steven <[shillier@london.ca](mailto:shillier@london.ca)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed Homeless Hub @ 705 Fanshawe Park Rd.

Dear Mayor and Councils for the City of London.

I am writing to you today to express my concerns on the topic of a Homeless Hub at 705 Fanshawe Park Rd. and Wonderland.

I am deeply worried about this situation. Although I understand we must take care of the homeless, I truly believe that bringing them into residential neighborhoods (any neighbourhood) is not a good idea. It seems to me that like a wildfire, we should try to contain it and not spread.

We all know that attached to these facilities come drugs, violence, vandalism, theft, tents, mental illness, etc. As politicians you know better than I, that these have proven to be exactly what I have just mentioned, troubled areas, and many have had to close for these exact reasons.

Has anyone considered that the Lighthouse Inn is occupied and those tenants, whom have affordable housing, are being thrown out to the street?

The Black Pearl? A well-established local business of many years. They will have to force close. They will not be opening at another location since this is not financially feasible, this implies 11 workers and families without a job, that is if only Black Pearl closes.

Mastermind Toys? Do you know that they hold events for children? What will happen to them?

What about the autistic centre for Children? Will they have to close down? Parks and schools in the area?

What about the other many businesses that are in close proximity? Did you know that many will not provide statements because they are scared and fear revenge, criticism and boycott?

This site doesn't even meet the guidelines set out for Londons Health and Homeless. Shouldn't it be by an emergency facility?

Now, the cost!! The cost of \$2,500,000 per year to hold 20 beds. That is about \$125,000 per bed! An astonishing amount considering others cost approximately \$13,000 - \$16,000 a bed. Will the general public have access to see statements? This is no longer a neighborhood issue but City wide. Many households combined income isn't 125,000/year and the City wants to spend it per bed. Even with this kind of ridiculous spending, the problem will not be fixed. This is only a band aid fix.

We must dedicate our hard-earned tax dollars to rehabilitation, not facilities where they are welcome to bring in and do drugs. Not a facility where they are welcome to bring in there guests and have it turned into a prostitution centre.

I ask those that have voted for this Hub, to please reconsider. Don't spread the fire. Let our teens walk to the store, our elders wander the streets without us having to fear the worst.

Sincerely grateful that you are taking the time to read this.

Adriana Escudero

P.S. I grant permission to add this email on the agenda.