

From: Laura
Sent: Tuesday, October 3, 2023 10:41 PM
To: Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: HUBS Plan

3 October 2023

Proposed HUBS Plan, London City Council

Please circulate and attach to agenda

Mr Mayor and councillors:

i am writing to express to council my support for London's hubs plan.

Finally, after an increasingly serious problem with numbers of those residents experiencing homelessness, we have the rubrics of a system which deals with neighbours in a kind and ethical way, providing shelter, healthcare and other resources whilst fighting stigma which has become seriously hostile of late.

i have lived in London nearly all my life. Two of my grandparents were born here and one lived 104 years in her own home. My family has the privilege which comes from generational wealth and the security of not being threatened with losing shelter.

Another part of my family fled unrest and poverty to reach Canada and has known hunger, lack of shelter and the temporary relief of self-medicating.

The inflammatory rhetoric posed on social media lately by politicians, local, provincial and national is deeply concerning.

It's senseless save to drive fixed agendas. It does absolutely nothing for those living rough and merely stirs up greater enmity against them.

The worst tropes are being trotted out to rouse folks' worst instincts.

Most people living rough are trying to find a roof without having an address. They're trying to find safety and comfort as temperatures drop and politicians complain that police won't simply cart them away. And much of the time, what they fear does happen: tents and blankets which are begged or borrowed are destroyed.

Myths are peddled: homeless people are violent, abuse drugs and are mentally ill. They're immigrants or they're people we used to "lock up."

Nobody mentions the young adult in a lean-to. The mom in a car moving from driveway to driveway one step ahead of a repo man who fears reporting domestic violence for fear she'll lose her kids. Nobody speaks of the trans youth whose parent tossed her out because she's "going to hell."

These individuals are primarily that: individuals.

i have one friend a hair's breadth from homelessness. Her abusive partner was arrested and her rent is approximately 98% of her income after a renovation from another home during shutdowns. Our provincial government cut funding to the law students who helped with tenancy issues so she's all alone right now, living in yet another poorly-maintained place but glad she has any type of roof over her head.

Another friend left social housing because she couldn't deal with the chronically low temperatures in winter and lack of repairs. When she was unable to maintain payments for a market-rate apartment, she couch-surfed and lived rough.

All people deserve housing. All people deserve access to robust wrap-around services. All people deserve to be seen as whole people. Absolutely nobody lives rough because that's all they deserve.

These hubs comprise the start of a long-overdue movement to acknowledge the people in our city who have, for far too long, been sleeping on the increasingly-hostile streets where common amenities like water fountains, public washrooms and resting benches have gone the way of the dodo.

I am writing today to say that the hub at 705 Fanshawe Park Road West, which will serve women and children, should be given the green light. If we are a compassionate community, we should do that with intention, with professionals who are experts in mental healthcare, addiction, domestic abuse and other comorbidities and who stand ready to help people transition to safety without imposing value systems upon them.

Sincerely,

(Ms) Laura Williscraft (she/her)

Ward 4

Sent from Gmail Mobile