

From: Jo Paterson
Sent: Saturday, December 30, 2023 8:42 AM
To: Budget Committee <BudgetCommittee@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Libraries are critical infrastructure

Dec 30 2023

Subject: The Importance of Libraries as Critical Infrastructure in London

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong belief in the critical role that libraries play as essential infrastructure in our beloved city of London. As members of the City Council, you hold a crucial responsibility in shaping the future of our community, and I urge you to consider the invaluable contributions that a thriving library system can make to the well-being and progress of our city.

Libraries are more than just repositories of books; they are dynamic spaces that serve as the foundation for literacy and lifelong learning. These institutions play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of education and intellectual exploration among residents of all ages. By providing access to a wide range of resources, including books, multimedia materials, and educational programs, libraries empower individuals to expand their knowledge and skills, promoting personal growth and development.

As an amateur musician in this city, I am able to perform at a decent concert venue the Wolf Hall due to the support of the Library who runs and manages a series for performers like me.

In addition to being centres for learning, libraries function as vital community hubs that bring together people from diverse backgrounds. They serve as inclusive spaces where newcomers, long-time residents, and everyone in between can connect and engage with one another. A strong library system contributes to the social fabric of our city, promoting a sense of unity and belonging among its residents. Furthermore, libraries are catalysts for creativity and innovation. They provide a supportive environment for individuals to explore new ideas, embark on entrepreneurial endeavours, and contribute to the cultural richness of our community. In a world that is constantly evolving, a thriving library system is instrumental in encouraging a spirit of innovation among our residents.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that [City] is one of the few major cities in North America without an archive. As a result, our city's history is not adequately preserved and made accessible to current and future generations. Establishing a comprehensive archive within our library system would not only rectify this gap but also enhance the cultural heritage of our city.

Moreover, it is essential to recognize the economic impact of libraries. Library users are not only consumers of information but also avid supporters of authors and local bookstores. The symbiotic relationship between libraries and the literary ecosystem creates a ripple effect that positively influences the local economy.

As we contemplate the future of our city, I urge the City Council to prioritize and invest in the development and expansion of our library system. By doing so, we are not only investing in education and culture but also laying the foundation for a more connected, informed, and vibrant community.

I would like to bring to your attention a report titled "Borrow, Buy, Read: Library Use and Book Buying in Canada" by Booklet Canada. This report underscores the significant impact of libraries on book consumption and local economies, further emphasizing the importance of a robust library system. In conclusion, I am confident that with your support, we can ensure that our city's library system remains a cornerstone of our community. Let us work together to preserve our history, foster lifelong learning, and build a stronger, more resilient London.

A final note, I wrote this letter with significant help from CHatGPT and I learned about AI with support from my local library; from the the advantages and pitfalls of Large learning models, to how to write a prompt all from materials found at the library.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to witnessing the positive impact that a renewed commitment to our library system will have on our city.

Sincerely,
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