

**From:** Penn Kemp  
**Sent:** Monday, January 29, 2024 2:00 PM  
**To:** [strosowa](mailto:strosowa); Budget Committee <[BudgetCommittee@london.ca](mailto:BudgetCommittee@london.ca)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] [BudgetCommittee@london.ca](mailto:BudgetCommittee@london.ca)

Hi Sam,

I am too late to add a letter to the budget committee, having just seen that it is taking place this afternoon. But if you would like to add any of my remarks to your own, please do. My consent is given for you to include any of the comments below or for them to be placed on the public agenda.

1. As London's first poet Laureate, I highly recommend the London Arts Council for their wide reach throughout our expanding community. The arts express our hearts, our dreams, our visions for the future. They are essential for the city's emotional and fiscal wellbeing. The arts are a financial driver in London, the music city, the Forest City and the capital of cardinals in Canada. The arts ensoul our citizens. The LAC's ongoing support of young and established artists is essential for them to thrive here, in continuing to celebrate London!

I have benefited from CAIP grants to write and produce 2 plays about Teresa Harris who grew up in historical Eldon House, and several collections of poetry celebrating London and our local heroes. As Poet Laureate, I was able to build community among the arts in the public sphere, with such initiatives as poems on London Transit.

2. The London Public Library is essential to London's identity as well, connecting us to the wider world through culture and the many events they sponsor, as well as an excellent wide-reaching and up-to-date catalogue. The Library is pivotal in supporting local artists as well, both through events and through buying our books. An avid reader, I absolutely depend on the Library. Given the difficulties of the last months, and their valiant efforts to return the system to normal, the Library should be especially well supported this year.

I truly hope these comments help in supporting the arts: our breath line and, for artists, our breadline!

Thanks,

Penn

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