

February 25, 2024

Budget Committee Chair Elizabeth Peloza, and Committee Members,

For us here at the Midtown Community Organization, this Multi -Year Budget started back in early October of 2022, with a letter that was sent into the city, about the Community Improvement Plans and Financial Incentives 5-Year Review. That was posted on the Get Involved webpage.

Months later into the Spring of 2023, we had the opportunity to speak with city staff, in a virtual meeting to discuss in more detail about the Community Improvement Plans, and what would be beneficial to help the Midtown Community and the Core Area. We very much appreciated Staff, taking the time to listen to us, on what was lacking and what was needed in Midtown.

Around this same time last year, Council was creating and completing their 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, and we very much appreciate the time and effort that was put in by our Ward 13 Councillor, in having Midtown specifically mentioned in that plan.

The current budget that was presented by the Mayor, and has since been amended, has left the middle of the core area out, when it comes to providing the community with additional items such as a “Façade Improvement Loan Program”, it is disappointing that this has happen, however this Multi-Year Budget does provide for funding a “Complete a new Downtown Master Plan” found in Business Case #44, initiative #7, and we have been assured by our Ward 13 Councillor, that it will also include Midtown and the Core Area, as it is currently defined.

We hope that once this “Master Plan” is complete, it will provide a great vision for Midtown, as it is in the Core. Also, we certainly hope, that during this process of creating the Master Plan for the Core Area, that all the” Values” that this current council decided on in their 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, are followed and amplified.

Midtown Community Organization supports the entire London Police Service Budget, as Mayor Morgan, has presented to the Budget Committee.

We have watched what has happened to the middle of the Core Area, within the last 15 years. The impact that crime is having on the lives of residents, visitors and on our small independent businesses is enormous. It is hard to create a vibrant community when people are afraid to leave their homes, and where community members have been victims of crime. People should not live in fear.

We trust that the London Police Service, along with their board, to be the experts in safety and support them in getting the resources that they are asking for in this 2024-2027 Multi - Year Budget.

Sincerely,

Deanna Brown, Coordinator

Warner Thomas, Coordinator

Cheryl Watson, Coordinator

Midtown Community Organization (MCO)