

**From:** Ross Rains  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 28, 2024 4:32 PM  
**To:** Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>  
**Cc:** Hall, Jasmine <jahall@london.ca>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] June 4 Council item

Dear Council members,

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC), Item 3.3, voted 4-1 in favour of endorsing our rezoning application to expand the list of permitted uses for 743 Wellington Road, with the exception of removing the emergency care use. I, hereby, would like to confirm my acceptance of the PEC recommendation, for two reasons:

1. Our original application for 'emergency care' was intended to offer the site as a potential Hub in light of the call for an 'all community response' toward the homeless crisis in our city. When it became clear in April that there was no pathway forward to receive our offer,\* we re-applied to expand to other uses that are now before you for consideration.
2. The risk of 'appeal' of the rezoning application should the emergency care inclusion be approved by Council, could tie us up in 'appeal' for up to two years, we learned at the PEC meeting, which would delay all the other uses. A delay from which we could not recover.

Based on the above, we respectfully request that you approve the rezoning application, as recommended by PEC, so we can proceed with securing tenants within this building which has remained vacant for the past several years before we acquired it.

Sincerely,

Ross Rains

\*Our goal was to provide this property for 6 months at our risk for consideration under the Hub Plan, including re-zoning. What we discovered was:

1. Staff and Council are not aligned on key points in Hub rollout.
2. A Hub application process is not yet defined.
3. 'Emergency care' zoning criteria may be flawed as a Hub pre-requisite.
4. City messaging on the Hub Plan has fallen behind seriously.
5. There is no clear path for property owners/business to participate.
6. Operator agencies are holding back because there is no commitment of Provincial/Federal funding for operating of same.

We think that the current Hub plan has a lot of merit and deserves a reboot, with a clearly identified chain of leadership. My hope is that our experience will serve to make the dire situation of the homeless in London a kitchen table conversation again, as well as cause Council to evaluate/update/reboot the entire plan. An old proverb goes this way: "He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself cry out and not be heard." (Proverbs 21:13) Its time for us to listen again and do better ...