



July 8, 2024

To the members of the Strategic Opportunities Review Working Group,

We were dismayed last week to learn that two Councillors are seeking to have City Council cancel three years' worth of budgeted investment in community infrastructure, nonprofit innovation, and participatory budgeting for citizens.

We see that Deputy Mayor Shawn Lewis and Ward 8 Councillor Steve Lehman will make [a motion in a working group next week](#), proposing to cancel funding for the City of London Capital and Innovation Grants and the Neighbourhood Decision Making program from 2025–2027. On behalf of Humane Society London & Middlesex, I hope to demonstrate the great value of the Capital Grant stream and persuade you to continue making this program available to London organizations.

In February, 2023 we were granted \$3 million to support the construction of our urgently-needed new animal shelter and community education facility. Although these funds were ultimately awarded through a different City budget, HSLM became aware of this opportunity and submitted our initial application through the City of London Community Grants, Capital Grant stream. This grant funding was a catalyst to launch construction on our new home, and helped us leverage other levels of government funding, including \$100,000 from the federal government. We were able to receive Board approval to begin construction on our new facility, which built momentum for our capital campaign and encouraged community participation. We are now just \$100,000 from our \$7 million campaign goal and will move into our new home in November, 2024. This would not have been possible without the grant from the City of London Community Grants program.

We think a program like this should be available to any community organization who can steward community infrastructure and engagement for ongoing public benefit, and we encourage you to defeat this emergent motion soundly.

Respectfully,

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