

Colleagues,

As the Economic Development Strategy (2026--2030) moves toward final endorsement, I am writing to propose the addition of a focused initiative on **City Assets as an Innovation Testbed**. I ask that staff review this concept and consider whether it warrants incorporation into the final strategy before it returns for endorsement.

The Opportunity

The draft Economic Development strategy is clear in its focus on innovation and commercialization pathways for economic growth. London operates water and wastewater systems, transit infrastructure, and other municipal assets that can provide live operational environments for firms testing new and innovative technologies.

London has historically served as a test market, and the City has experience providing access to municipal infrastructure for testing purposes. The opportunity here is to build on that foundation with a more deliberate, visible, and scalable model that can be promoted to firms as part of London's innovation architecture.

Firms get access to proving grounds they cannot replicate elsewhere; the City gains early visibility into service innovations while supporting local innovators and entrepreneurs.

The initiative would require robust governance and risk frameworks to protect municipal assets and service continuity, including coordination mechanism between economic development and the service departments that operate the assets.

The Ask

I am asking that staff consider adding a **City Assets as an Innovation Testbed** initiative to London's economic development strategy, including priority asset classes that balance opportunity and practicality, what governance framework is needed to protect service continuity, and whether there is demonstrated demand from local firms before scaling the initiative further.

The Expected Outcome

The expected outcome is that London builds its reputation as a centre for innovation and commercialization that supports area entrepreneurs and attracts new ones.

Strategy Alignment

Pillar	Strategic Relevance
Pillar 1: Talent and Innovation	Strengthens the commercialization pathway by supporting testing as a step toward market readiness.
Pillar 2: Investment Attraction and Retention	Positions London as an active innovation enabler with support for technology-focused firms.

Sincerely,



Mayor Josh Morgan
City of London