



April, 5th, 2026

Dear Members of London City Council (CPSC Committee),

I am writing in my capacity as the Executive Director of 519Pursuit working within London's Whole of Community Response to homelessness to express my strong call for a contract extension for 519Pursuit for the year forward to ensure there is consistent support at street level and in encampments.

I want to first take the time to thank, acknowledge and applaud the hard work that has gone into making the Micro Modular Shelters a reality creating pathways for individuals with less barriers in our community. We have had the opportunity to celebrate and support the transition from encampment to shelter with many of our friends. This has been an incredibly exciting opportunity and we have seen many people move from encampment to shelter. We commend the hard work that took place making these spaces.

The reality however, is that as those units opened up many emergency shelter beds across our community closed down. With the cold weather response coming to a completion and the loss of the federal funding we are hearing and seeing the effect it is having on the community.

Over the past several years, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication, consistency, and impact of our (519Pursuit's) outreach work. The team shows up—day in and day out—on the front lines, building trust with individuals facing homelessness and extreme poverty, often in the most complex and challenging environments. This consistent presence is not only meaningful, it is essential - it is at street level.

519Pursuit plays a critical role within the broader system of care. By providing food security, care packages, survival gear, and system navigation, we are often the first point of contact for individuals who are not yet connected—or who have become disconnected—from traditional services. Our work creates a bridge into the system and strengthens the effectiveness of other services operating within it.

Without this level of proactive, street-level outreach, we can expect to see increased strain across multiple sectors. Emergency Medical Services will continue to respond to preventable, crisis-level situations that could otherwise be mitigated through early engagement. Food programs will experience increased demand without the decentralized distribution that 519Pursuit provides directly in encampments and across the community. Shelters and other supports will feel the pressure of individuals entering the system later, with more complex and urgent needs - if there is capacity to support indoors.



In contrast, 519Pursuit helps to stabilize individuals earlier—meeting basic needs, building trust, and supporting navigation into appropriate services. This not only improves outcomes for individuals but reduces pressure on emergency and downstream systems.

Equally important is our ability to create pathways forward. Behind the scenes our model is supporting individuals into a different form of stability and care. Individuals are going from receiving outreach support to becoming volunteers and, in some cases, employees. This approach builds capacity within the system, strengthens peer-led engagement, and contributes to long-term community resilience.

The Whole of Community Response relies on coordination, trust, and consistency across all partners. 519Pursuit is a key contributor to that ecosystem. Our absence would not only leave a gap—it would create a ripple effect that impacts the entire system and, ultimately, the broader community.

519Pursuit may have started as a grassroots effort however, over the past several years 519Pursuit has been part of the City of London's Homeless Response. Due to the nature of having a grassroots effort our operations are cost effective, our staffing is minimal as we are supported by volunteers each day, our meals are donated through incredible community partnerships and our operation costs are low as we work from storage lockers and focus our efforts in community - street level.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Committee and the whole City Council to consider a contract extension for 519Pursuit. Option #3 of the staff report would be the favourable path forward for a contract extension to ensure that operations continue and give capacity to source practical and supportive partnerships for food security. Continued investment in this work is not only compassionate—it is practical, preventative, and necessary for the health and stability of our community as a whole.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to addressing homelessness in London.

Sincerely,

Allison DeBlair

Executive Director

519Pursuit

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