

April 8th, 2026

Dear Members of London City Council - CPSC,

I am writing to express my strong support for the extension of 519Pursuit's contract as a vital component of London's Whole of Community Response to homelessness.

Over the past several years, 519Pursuit has established itself as a consistent, trusted presence for individuals facing homelessness and extreme poverty in our city. Through street-level outreach, the team provides essential support including food security, care packages, survival gear, and system navigation—meeting people where they are, often in encampments or in moments of urgent need.

What makes 519Pursuit uniquely impactful is not only what they provide, but how they provide it. Their approach is rooted in dignity, relationship-building, and trust. These relationships are often the first step in connecting individuals to broader systems of care, including housing, healthcare, and social services.

As part of the Whole of Community Response, 519Pursuit fills a critical gap. They operate on the front lines, often reaching individuals who are not yet connected—or no longer connected—to formal systems of support. Without this consistent outreach presence, many of our most vulnerable community members risk being left behind, and the broader system loses an essential entry point for engagement.

In addition, 519Pursuit's model fosters long-term impact by creating pathways for individuals to move from being supported to becoming contributors—many eventually volunteering and even working within outreach efforts themselves. This cycle of support and empowerment strengthens not only individual outcomes but the resilience of our community as a whole. I know this because I have successfully used this pathway to stability celebrating recovery, employment and independence.

Approximately five years ago, I was living on the streets of London, where I experienced homelessness for over three years while struggling with intravenous substance use and a profound sense of isolation. During that time, I had lost hope and any sense of belonging. I was surviving day-to-day, often sleeping outdoors in unsafe and inhumane conditions, including on a heat grate in the downtown core where I had, in many ways, become invisible to those around me.

It was during this period that I first connected with 519Pursuit. Through consistent, compassionate outreach, I was met not with judgment, but with genuine kindness, dignity, and friendship. What stood out most was not just the immediate support—such as clothing, food, and care—but the unwavering commitment to showing up. Day after day, I was met with reliability, patience, and a willingness to listen, even in my most difficult moments.

That consistency began to change how I saw myself. For the first time in a long time, I felt seen and valued, and it gave me the strength to believe that I was worth fighting for. With their support, I made the decision to seek detox and begin my recovery journey. Throughout that process, 519Pursuit remained alongside me—meeting me where I was at every step, offering encouragement, and continuing to build a relationship grounded in trust.

Today, I am proud to be sober and in a position to give back. I began volunteering with 519Pursuit and, through continued commitment, was eventually offered employment with the organization. To now be part of the outreach team—supporting others in the same way I was once supported—is deeply meaningful. It represents not only personal growth and stability, but a full-circle moment of purpose.

This experience is a testament to the power of consistent, relationship-based outreach. 519Pursuit did not just meet my immediate needs—they helped transform my life, now I am in a position to transform others.

I respectfully urge the City Council to approve a contract extension for 519Pursuit, ensuring that this essential work continues uninterrupted. Supporting 519Pursuit is not only an investment in individuals experiencing homelessness—it is an investment in the health, safety, and well-being of our entire community.

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

Sincerely,

Michelle Boissonneault

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