



April 2, 2026

City of London
Community and Protective Services Committee
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON

Dear Chair and Members of the Community and Protective Services Committee,

Re: Outreach Services Funding and Continuity of Care

I am writing on behalf of Pillar Nonprofit Network (Pillar) to express our strong support for sustained and adequate funding for outreach services in London, including the request currently before you regarding 519Pursuit.

Pillar is a nonprofit network that connects, supports, and advocates for organizations working to strengthen our community. We work across the sector to build capacity, reduce barriers, and elevate issues that affect both nonprofit organizations and the people they serve. In this role, we are speaking to the importance of maintaining a coordinated, well-resourced outreach system in our city.

Outreach services are a critical part of London's Whole of Community System Response to homelessness and poverty. Organizations such as 519Pursuit, London Cares, Ark Aid Mission, Regional HIV/AIDS Connection London, and others working at the street level provide essential frontline supports including food, water, basic necessities, and survival supplies. These are not peripheral supports - they are foundational to health, safety, and dignity.

Over the past nine years, 519Pursuit has evolved from a grassroots initiative into a critical contributor within this system, particularly at the street level and within encampments. Their consistent presence and approach have helped to build trust with individuals who are often disconnected from traditional systems of care. They also play an important role in identifying gaps in service utilization, reducing stigma, and strengthening pathways between individuals and broader community supports. This is one example of how outreach organizations contribute not only to individual wellbeing, but to the overall functioning and cohesion of our community.

Across the sector, outreach providers collectively help reduce strain on emergency services, support safer and more coordinated responses, and create pathways for individuals to access longer-term supports. This is not work that can be paused, scaled back, or delivered inconsistently without consequence.

As of March 31, 2026, there is currently no clear contingency plan to ensure the continuity of outreach services at the level required. Continued reliance on short-term, uncertain, or precarious funding creates instability - not only for the organizations delivering these services, but for the broader system that depends on them.

This is not solely an issue for those experiencing homelessness. The impacts of underfunded or disrupted outreach services are felt across the community - increased pressure on emergency and health systems, heightened community tensions, and missed opportunities to respond early and effectively to complex needs. A well-supported outreach system benefits all Londoners.

While the item before you relates specifically to 519Pursuit, we encourage the Committee and Council to consider this decision within the broader context of the outreach ecosystem. Ensuring adequate, stable funding for all organizations providing street-level outreach is essential to maintaining a coordinated and effective response.

At Pillar, we see firsthand the critical role these organizations play and the challenges they face in sustaining this work. We urge you to support the continuation and strengthening of outreach services in London through stable and sufficient funding.

Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maureen Cassidy', written in a cursive style.

Maureen Cassidy (she/her)

CEO | Pillar Nonprofit Network

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