



April 9, 2026

Subject: Support for Continued Property Tax Levy Funding – Old East Village BIA Planning & Environment Committee

City of London

To the Chair and Members of the Planning & Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Old East Village Business Improvement Area (BIA), I am writing to express our strong support for the continued property tax levy funding provided by the City of London.

The funding currently provided to the Old East Village BIA is not simply supplemental — it is essential to our ability to operate and deliver services that directly support businesses, property owners, and economic revitalization within the district. As outlined in the staff report, the Old East Village BIA receives \$141,102 annually in property tax levy funding, compared to a municipal special levy of approximately \$42,000. This means that only about 21% of the BIA’s total revenue is generated through the municipal special levy, demonstrating the organization’s significant reliance on City funding to maintain operations.

This reliance is not a reflection of a lack of effort or financial discipline. Rather, it reflects the economic realities of the Old East Village. The district consists primarily of small, independent businesses and smaller-scale properties, with no major retail centres to support larger assessment values or absorb levy increases. As noted in the report, Old East Village has one of the lowest total billable assessment bases among London’s BIAs, which limits the ability to generate meaningful revenue through levy increases alone.

At the same time, the Old East Village faces some of the most complex operational challenges in the city. Businesses in the district continue to deal with the ongoing street-level crisis, including open drug use, mental health challenges, encampments, property damage, and increased demands for cleanliness and security. These realities place additional pressure on business owners and create a greater need for BIA-led supports such as private property cleanup, graffiti removal, beautification efforts, safety initiatives, and business retention activities.

The property tax levy funding allows the Old East Village BIA to provide these critical supports. Without this funding, the BIA would be forced to make significant reductions to core services, including cleaning programs, safety initiatives, business support efforts, and marketing activities. The report clearly indicates that without this municipal funding, BIAs such as Old East Village would need to make difficult trade-offs between staffing, programming, beautification, and safety initiatives — all of which are essential in a district undergoing revitalization.

It is also important to recognize that the Old East Village BIA has not increased its municipal special levy since 2019. This reflects the limited capacity of local businesses to absorb additional costs. Many businesses are still working toward stability and continue to operate within a challenging economic environment. Increasing the levy at this time would place additional financial pressure on businesses that are already navigating significant operational challenges.

Council's original decision to provide property tax levy funding recognized that areas such as Old East Village require additional support to achieve revitalization goals. That need continues today. The ongoing street-level challenges, combined with lower assessment values and a small business base, mean that continued municipal investment remains critical to sustaining progress.

The property tax levy funding allows the Old East Village BIA to remain focused on business retention, attracting investment, improving the public realm, and supporting economic growth. These outcomes align directly with the City's Strategic Plan goals related to economic growth, revitalization, and strengthening core-area neighbourhoods.

On behalf of our businesses and property owners, we respectfully request that Council maintain the property tax levy funding for the Old East Village BIA. Continued support will allow us to sustain momentum, support local businesses, and continue working toward long-term economic revitalization in one of London's most important main street districts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Morrison
Executive Director
Old East Village BIA