



April 17, 2026

Dear Members of Council,

On behalf of Downtown London, I am writing to express our support of Councillor Ferreira's request for advocacy to higher levels of government and the relevant professional regulatory bodies for changes to the current system governing high volume, for profit addiction treatment and dispensing models. Our request is rooted in the experiences of the downtown businesses and property owners we represent, who continue to face the street level impacts of the current approach.

Downtown London supports compassionate, recovery focused approaches to addiction and recognizes the importance of access to treatment. However, we continue to hear serious concerns from businesses about the fallout of current service delivery models when they are concentrated without sufficient oversight, wraparound supports, accountability, and coordination. These impacts include loitering, public drug use, litter, disorder, and other antisocial behaviour that undermine business operations, employee and customer experience, and public confidence in the core.

Our main goal is a safe, clean, walkable downtown that supports business growth and success, fosters a positive business environment, and is a place where Londoners and visitors alike feel safe coming to work, shop, invest, and spend time. We therefore ask the City to advocate to the Province and appropriate professional organizations for a review of the current model, with a stronger focus on recovery, integrated care, oversight, accountability, and the broader community impacts of these practices.

At the same time, we believe the City has an important local role to play. We request stronger bylaws related to loitering and other antisocial behaviour, more visible and consistent enforcement by the London Police Service related to public drug use, additional bylaw enforcement officers in the downtown core, particularly in areas where these behaviours are most concentrated, and greater authority to issue fines in response to these behaviours. We need compassionate accountability that builds on the recovery focused work the City is already implementing, while also sending a clear signal that public drug use and related disorder in shared public spaces will no longer be tolerated. This is essential to creating cleaner, safer, and more welcoming streets.

Downtown London will continue to do its part by sharing member feedback, addressing public realm concerns, supporting enhanced cleanliness and maintenance efforts, contributing to cross sector coordination, and working with partners on positive use strategies that help strengthen confidence in the downtown. We remain committed to being a constructive partner in efforts that support both community well being and a stronger environment for business.

We appreciate Council's attention to this issue and your continued leadership in advancing results-oriented solutions, and we urge you to take action in support of the businesses, employees, residents, and visitors affected by the current system. Downtown London remains committed to working constructively with the City and other partners to help create a safer and more successful downtown for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicki Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Vicki Smith
Interim Executive Director
Downtown London