



**United Way**  
London & Middlesex  
Change starts here.

February 16, 2012

City of London  
300 Dufferin Ave  
London, ON N6B 1Z2

Dear Mayor Fontana and Council Members,

**Subject: Affordable Housing Reserve Fund**

United Way London & Middlesex has long worked in partnership with our community – donors, service providers, business, and government – with a shared commitment to improving the lives of residents and building a strong community. Our vision is a community where everyone matters.

The culmination of research and extensive community-wide consultation, United Way London & Middlesex's *Community Impact Agenda* articulates key issues in our community. We produced this document so we could focus our limited resources and reflect the interests of our stakeholders. Amongst the issues identified in this document was the importance of obtaining and maintaining safe and affordable housing for all members of our community. It is for this reason that I write to you today.

United Way was pleased to participate in the development of our community's plan to address housing and homelessness. Along with the unfortunately necessary temporary measure of rent supplements, the importance of building new affordable housing was clearly identified as an integral part of the strategy. The balance of these measures identified by the plan, which both city council and United Way endorsed, was appropriate at the time and in our view and continues to be appropriate. The recent proposal to reduce the annual investment into the pool for construction of affordable housing units disrupts this balance.

This is of particular interest to United Way, as we believe strongly in investment in the root causes of our community's pressing social challenges. While our primary role in this regard is funding programs that address root cause, we are dependent on public and private sectors to make important capital investments in infrastructure.

In summary, construction of affordable housing is a good investment. It reduces the future requirements for rent supplements and produces greater long-term stability for vulnerable people, which in turn reduces future demand for social service supports. We acknowledge of the complexity of dynamics that contribute to matters such as these, but respectfully urge you to reconsider reducing the City of London's investment in the construction of affordable housing as recommended in our mutually endorsed plan to address housing and homelessness.

Sincerely,

Andrew Lockie  
Chief Executive Officer  
United Way London & Middlesex

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Change starts here. | L'heure est au changement.  
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