

15 November2016

Chair and Members of the Strategic Planning and Policy Committee
City of London

Sirs:

I am writing in support of the request by the Upper Thames Regional Conservation Authority for an increase in financial support within the 3 year City budget currently under review by Council. The funding increase requested by the UTRCA has not yet been approved, but is “flagged” for consideration.

The quality of water in the Thames River is important to all citizens of London, as well as our neighbours along the watershed. The four environmental targets identified and costed by the Authority are critical to improving that quality. This in turn will support economic growth in London, improve human and environmental health and support sustainable agriculture. Particularly important to Council and to all Londoners, it will enhance and increase the achievement of the goals of the City’s Master Plan – particularly those relating to the role the river plays in downtown revitalization! The natural beauty and recreational value of the beautiful river winding through our city is a priceless asset for all Londoners of significant economic value. It deserves protection and, indeed, enhancement. This, in turn, requires public investment.

The UTRCA request would require additional funding amounting to 40 to 60 cents per year per family in London. Surely this is a bargain considering the real benefits the river NOW brings to the city, and the even greater potential that is yet to be achieved. The funding will also leverage significant contributions from other levels of government and so multiply the value of our tax dollars.

I urge your committee to recommend approval of the UTRCA funding request to City Council. I would further request that this letter be added as an agenda document for your next committee meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Berry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Berry" clearly legible.

Dr. John W. Berry
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