

February 11, 2020

Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC)
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON N6A 4L9

RE: London Community Grants Program Budget Allocations, 2020 – 2023

To the Chair and Members, SPPC;

Employment Sector Council (ESC) respectfully submits these comments to the Added Agenda for your Public Participation Meeting on Thursday, February 13, 2020, 6:00 pm, City Hall - Council Chambers - 3rd Floor.

For many years, ESC through its member organizations (list attached), has been an ally of the City in its work to meet the needs of our local labour market and to support transition by Ontario Works participants and other job seekers into the workforce.

While these not-for-profit organizations contribute to the operation of the ESC through annual membership fees, the City's contributions through its Community Grants Program have been critical to adding value to the work of our member agencies and, by extension, achievement of City goals. This investment provides the ESC network with the capacity and resources to:

- Increase employers' access to resources to help achieve best practices in talent recruitment and retention, through our widely-regarded regional Job Developers Network for streamlined employer access to job seekers and employee supports;
- Increase Ontario Works client participation within employment activities, as the sole provider of frontline staff Common Assessment Process training – a "Fundamental Employment Service" required by London's Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2019 to 2024; and
- Increase the employment rate for Londoners who are not currently participating in the workforce, through our network's significant collaborative work to identify and remove systemic barriers faced by employers and job seekers.

Members of Committee will know that the Government of Ontario is in the process of transformative change in the oversight and delivery of Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, and Employment Ontario services. These changes have included cancellation of employment funding to OW Service Managers and anticipated reductions in funding for our member agencies who provide these services. While we have been fortunate that our regional economy has been slowly adding jobs, these service level reductions come at a time of continued labour demand and a jobs market populated with individuals with barriers to meeting that demand.

Another change we face together is the migration to a new oversight model for Employment Ontario Services. Your administration has, no doubt, briefed you on this change as the City considers a submission to become the Service System Manager for our region. We would submit that the ESC and our member agencies are perfectly positioned to support and assist system wide efforts to re-envision efficient, effective, integrated, and locally-responsive employment service delivery.

We ask that the City of London stand by its current funding promise, as negotiated with Employment Sector Council and other London Community Grants Program partners, so that we can continue to add value to the work of our member agencies and support the work of your Social Services Department. Like many organizations supported through the Community Grants process, ESC is already facing a significantly reduced funding allocation over the coming four years through this source of funding. A further reduction in funding would critically impact our work at a vital time for the Londoners and businesses we serve.

We welcome the opportunity to provide more information about ESC and our work to support the City in building a better London for all. We will be attending the Public Participation meeting on February 13, 2020 to demonstrate our support for the City's continued and crucial investment into its remarkable nonprofit community services sector, through the London Community Grants Program.

Sincerely,



Carol Stewart
Project Manager, ESC

ESC Member Organizations, 2020

ATN Access Inc.
Centre for Employment & Learning, Avon Maitland District School Board
Centre for Lifelong Learning, London District Catholic School Board
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
City of London
CNIB Foundation
Collège Boréal
Community Employment Choices (Middlesex County)
Community Employment Services (Oxford County)
Community Employment Services, Fanshawe College (St Thomas/Aylmer)
Community Living London
Daya Counselling Centre
EMO Workforce Planning and Development Board/Local Employment Planning Council
Employment and Student Entrepreneurial Services. Fanshawe College (London)
Employment Services Elgin
Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes
Hutton House
LIUNA Local 1059 Training Centre
Leads Employment Services
Literacy Link South Central
London Community Small Business Centre Inc.
London Cross Cultural Learner Centre
London Economic Development Corporation
London Employment Help Centre
London Training Centre Inc.
March of Dimes Canada
Middlesex County Library
Middlesex County Social Services
Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities
Ministry of Community and Social Services
N'Amerind Friendship Centre

Nokee Kwe
Oneida Nation of the Thames
Pathways Skill Development
Prevention and Early Intervention Program for Psychoses
Southwestern Ontario Military Family Resource Centre
Stepping Stones Support Services Program
United Way Elgin-Middlesex
Western University
WIL Counselling and Training for Employment
YMCA of Western Ontario
Youth Opportunities Unlimited