

**From:** Rebecca St. Pierre

**Sent:** Sunday, February 12, 2023 8:54 PM

**To:** Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tuesday, February 14 Agenda: Item 6.1 Exotic Animal Establishments

To Whom It May Concern:

Please include the letter below in the formal Added Agenda for the Tuesday, February 14, 2023 city council meeting.

Thank you,

Rebecca St. Pierre

Dear London City Council:

I am a London resident and taxpayer requesting that you do **not** permit Class 7/exotic animal establishments in the City of London. I am opposed to the proposed amendments to the Animal Control By-law and the Business Licensing By-law. They endanger Londoners and London's reputation, contradict the draft Strategic Plan, and support antiquated animal imprisonment.

Why would councillors consider inviting dangerous animals into a shopping mall when "Wellbeing and Safety" is one of the eight pillars of the draft 2023-2027 Strategic Plan? Dismissing safety concerns and animal abuse as provincial government issues is promoting perilous situations, especially when Provincial Animal Welfare Services is already overwhelmed with requests and unlikely to conduct regular inspections.

Prohibiting Class 7 animals in the city is not living in fear. It is acknowledging practical concerns regarding residents' and wild animals' wellbeing. Disregarding potential harm because it hasn't happened elsewhere is risky and irresponsible. Unique horrific events have harmed London residents.

The recent report regarding exotic animal establishments highlights a long list of operational regulations the City of London would need to create to ensure housing exotic wildlife would be safe for both Londoners and the animals, for example an Emergency Management and Public Safety Plan, and an Animal Accommodation Plan. Councillors' time would be better spent not making any amendments to the Animal Control and Business Licensing By-laws and instead directing their expertise towards homelessness and housing issues.

There is a growing worldwide demand for animal protection. The Jane Goodall Act (Canadian Federal Bill S-248), recently reintroduced in the Senate, would prohibit using exotic animals for entertainment purposes, including the crocodiles and venomous snakes that could be housed at Westmount Mall. Imprisoning wild animals is archaic and cruel. Exotic animal establishments are not spas, just as penitentiaries are not resorts.

Councillors do not need to accept every potential source of tourism revenue. If you choose to amend the bylaws, you are essentially converting London into the new home for exotic animal zoos. Your decision would promote what could be considered illegal activities for new businesses if the Jane Goodall Act becomes law.

London could be seen as desperate, greedy, and ignorant. I am concerned by the significant amount of resources council has invested in responding to a business that has lost CAZA accreditation, harassed the City of London for six years, and been rejected by St. Catherines and Toronto.

Londoners voted on behalf of the voiceless. We speak for children and wildlife. Once again, I ask that you do not permit Class 7/exotic animal establishments in the City of London. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

Rebecca St. Pierre