



December 12, 2016

# Social Development Centre

— WATERLOO REGION —

Mayor Vrbanovic and Members of City Council  
City of Kitchener

Re: **Re: 2017 City of Kitchener Tier 1 Grant Appeal Process**

On December 5, 2016 a delegation on behalf of the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region (“SDC”) presented its appeal of the City of Kitchener Staff recommendation to the Community and Infrastructure Funding Committee (the “Committee”) that SDC Tier 1 Community Grant Funding be \$10 937 for the 2017 operating year. The City Staff recommendation had not given consideration to what SDC had proposed for 2017.

The SDC is pleased the Tier 1 grant process includes an opportunity to present an appeal. This letter is to formally share with you our concerns in regard to what our delegation viewed as several specific contradictions in the procedural operation of the appeal process and a general lack of transparency. Taken together, we maintain that these issues give rise to significant questions of procedural fairness within the Tier 1 grant funding application process.

In particular, we raise two issues of note:

First, communication from City Staff precipitated an understanding on the part of the SDC that the 2017 Tier 1 process would consider proposals independently of Council’s decision last year to defund SDC’s community information service. Our 2017 proposal did not request funding to be restored for this service but, rather, that funding be provided for a different way to provide social development services in Kitchener. Our subsequent appeal was a request for consideration of what we had proposed.

Despite several meetings with City Staff and members of Council, we were never informed that our appeal would not be allowed to go forward. On the contrary, in a meeting Michael May told our representatives that we were “doing the right thing” and that our appeal was expected.

Our proposal never requested reconsideration of last year’s decision of Council in respect of our funding from the City, but rather asked for independent consideration on the merit of the proposal itself.

The SDC respects the right of council to determine its own appropriate process to conduct its business. However, we believe that an appropriate process, in this context is one that is clearly communicated, transparent, equitable, and is applied consistently.

In preparing its grant application and appeal, the SDC at all times followed the process set by Council and City Staff for consideration of the 2017 Tier 1 funding application and appeal. We were invited by City Staff

to submit a letter of intent for 2017 funding in which we were to make note of significant changes expected in the coming year. We did this and expected our application would be considered on its merits.

In light of this we remain surprised and disappointed to have first, City Staff make no reference to the substance of our proposal in any communication to us or in their report to Committee and second, that Committee acted on our appeal by tabling, and subsequently defeating a motion for reconsideration of council's approval last year of the City Staff recommendation to discontinue funding for community information service. The result of these actions was that our application was not fully considered in the 2017 Tier 1 grant process.

In our view, the decision to defund our community information service last year is not connected to our 2017 grant request appeal. The actions of the Committee were not considerate of our request for funding in 2017.

In regards to the second issue of note, we take the position that a process, howsoever determined must be applied consistently in order to be procedurally fair. We note that there was debate in Committee concerning that body's capacity to make motions in respect of budget proposals with Councillors Davey and Gazzola, each of the belief that Committee did not have that prerogative. We further note that immediately prior to that discussion, Committee had voted by motion to deny "reconsideration" of SDC's funding level for 2017. We believe our appeal was a budget proposal.

While we do not presume to dictate to Council or Committee the appropriate manner of conducting its business, we view the actions of Committee in this instance as inconsistent, inequitable and incongruous with procedural fairness.

The SDC will appear before Council on December 12, 2016 to raise these issues with the Committee of the Whole. We ask that Council remedy the procedural unfairness by considering the substance of our application or by referring the proposal back to Committee so that our proposal can be fully vetted. We further ask that if Council elects to refer the decision to Committee, allowances be made to permit our proposal and funding as may resort therefrom to be incorporated into the 2017 budget process.

We thank you for your anticipated diligence in rectifying this procedural unfairness and affirming that the City of Kitchener is committed to fairness and due process.

Thank You,

Devon Sivill, President

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Social Development Centre

