

October 23, 2023

Mayor Josh Morgan and London City Council  
City of London  
300 Dufferin Ave.  
London, Ontario  
N6B 1Z2

Dear Mayor Morgan and Councillors,

As the 4th largest school board in Ontario, Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) serves over 83,000 students. This number is growing rapidly as development intensifies and new families move to area. TVDSB requires many new schools in London to meet the needs of our growing community.

At the September 26, 2023 Board Meeting, TVDSB Trustees passed the following motion:

THAT the Chair write a letter to the City of London Mayor and Council requesting a review of the City's timelines for reserving land for schools in new developments.

The motion followed Trustees' review of TVDSB's submissions to the Ministry of Education's 2023-24 Capital Priorities Program.

School boards rely on the Ministry's Capital Priorities Program to fund the construction of new schools. TVDSB's funding submissions to the Ministry represent the school board's most critical and urgent needs.

The City of London's current 3-year timeframe for school boards to acquire land for new schools poses significant challenges. The Ministry usually gives school boards only one opportunity per year to apply for funding for new schools. The Ministry must approve funding for a new school before TVDSB can acquire land for a school. For the Ministry to approve funding for a new school, students must already live in a new development area.

Consequently, TVDSB is facing situations where a new school is pending approval from the Ministry, as the land acquisition deadline is imminent or expired, as occurred in northwest London. If the school board cannot acquire land for a new school within an appropriate

timeframe, construction is delayed, and funding may be withdrawn. The school board must then use temporary measures to accommodate students. These measures divide neighborhoods and lengthen commute times for families. They also result in more portable classrooms at existing schools.

On behalf of TVDSB's Board of Trustees, I respectfully request that Council review London's current site acquisition timelines and following collaboration with us, consider adjusting these timelines so that school boards can better meet the growing needs of London families.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this ongoing and critical issue.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. Pizzolato".

Lori-Ann Pizzolato  
Chair of the Board  
Thames Valley District School Board