

Stephen D'Amelio

Ward / Position: Ward 13 | Campaign Website: www.votestephen.ca

Question	Answer
Q6 — Biggest Challenges Facing the Sector & Actions Candidates Would Support	I've experienced many of these challenges firsthand through my own work with nonprofits and community organizations. One of the biggest issues is that we often expect nonprofits to deliver incredibly important services while operating with very little stability behind the scenes. Volunteer recruitment and retention—particularly at the board level—is becoming increasingly difficult. Organizations also spend far too much time chasing short-term project funding when what many of them really need is predictable base funding that allows them to keep the lights on, retain people, plan ahead and continue delivering the services residents already rely on. I also think there is a significant gap for new and emerging organizations. If you already know how City Hall works, know the right people to call and understand the grant system, you have an advantage. If you're a new organization with a great idea but don't have those connections, it can be extremely difficult to even figure out where to begin. At City Council, I would support creating a much clearer point of entry for London's nonprofit sector whether that is a dedicated nonprofit liaison, navigator or expanded City service that can connect organizations with municipal, provincial, federal and private funding opportunities, City departments and other community partners. I would also like to see the City put more emphasis on capacity-building. Sometimes an organization doesn't need another program grant—they need a grant writer, accountant, governance expert, communications professional or someone who can help them build the organization properly. Smaller nonprofits often cannot afford those professionals and I would support exploring funding that allows those costs to be eligible expenses or provides access to shared professional services. I would also support looking at longer-term and more predictable funding agreements for organizations providing proven community services rather than forcing them to essentially start from zero every year. Finally, I think we need to do more to strengthen London's volunteer pipeline. That could include partnerships with businesses, colleges, Western, professional associations and community organizations to connect people who want to contribute with nonprofits that desperately need board members and volunteers with specific skills. My goal wouldn't be for City Hall to run the nonprofit sector - It would be to make City Hall a much better partner to it. These organizations are doing work every day that improves neighbourhoods, supports vulnerable Londoners, creates events and cultural opportunities and in many cases; reduces pressure on municipal services. We should be making it easier for good organizations to succeed, not making them spend half their time figuring out how to navigate the system.
Q7 — Support a Formal, Ongoing Dialogue Mechanism With the Sector (Yes/No + Why)	Yes

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Q8 — Support Multi-Year Funding & Longer-Term Partnerships (Yes/No + Why)	Yes — I would also support looking at longer-term and more predictable funding agreements for organizations providing proven community services rather than forcing them to essentially start from zero every year. My goal wouldn't be for City Hall to run the nonprofit sector - It would be to make City Hall a much better partner to it. These organizations are doing work every day that improves neighbourhoods, supports vulnerable Londoners, creates events and cultural opportunities and in many cases; reduces pressure on municipal services. We should be making it easier for good organizations to succeed, not making them spend half their time figuring out how to navigate the system.
Q9 — Ensuring Nonprofits Are Included in Decision-Making	I think we need to change the way we look at nonprofits. They shouldn't simply be organizations that come to City Hall once a year asking for a grant. They are community partners that are already doing work related to homelessness, food security, recreation, arts and culture, economic development, youth, seniors, newcomers, neighbourhood development and many other areas that directly overlap with the work of the City. If we're making decisions that affect those areas, I want the organizations doing that work to have a meaningful opportunity to be part of the conversation. One idea I would support is the creation of a centralized London nonprofit and community partnership hub—an online portal supported by a mobile-friendly web app that brings a lot of what organizations currently have to search for in different places into one location. On the organizational side that could include City funding programs, application deadlines, reporting requirements, upcoming consultations, relevant Council decisions, event information, permits, training opportunities and direct links to provincial, federal and private funding programs. It could also connect organizations with resources like grant writers, accountants, governance professionals and other expertise that smaller organizations may otherwise have difficulty accessing. Organizations participating in City funding programs could provide standardized information about the work they're doing, the communities they're serving, upcoming events, partnerships, challenges they're encountering and the outcomes they're achieving. That information could then help City staff and Council identify trends before we're sitting around the Council table trying to solve a problem after it has already become a crisis. There should also be a public-facing side. If we're investing public money into an organization or funding stream, Londoners should be able to see what that investment accomplished—not simply that an organization received \$25,000, but what that \$25,000 actually did in the community. I would want that presented in an understandable way: how many people were served, what programs or events were delivered, what neighbourhoods benefited and what outcomes were achieved, while obviously protecting confidential or personal information. Most importantly, I wouldn't want the portal to become a substitute for having people at the table. I would support regular nonprofitsector roundtables and making sure relevant organizations are included early when the City is developing policies or plans that directly affect the communities they serve. That means consultation before a policy is written rather than asking organizations what they think after most of the decisions have already been made. To me, that is what partnership actually looks like: share information, listen to the people doing the work, measure what we're accomplishing and use that information when we make decisions.

Question	Answer
Q10 — The City's Role in Supporting Nonprofit Infrastructure	Yes, I believe the City has an important role in creating the infrastructure that allows our nonprofit sector to succeed, but that does not necessarily mean the City has to build or operate everything itself. The London Plan already recognizes the importance of accessible community facilities and partnerships and I would like to see us build further on that direction. The new Downtown Plan provides some good examples, including shared and co-located spaces, partnerships with nonprofits and institutions, temporary use of vacant properties and incentives to help activate underused spaces. I would also work with organizations such as Pillar, the London Public Library, post-secondary institutions and the private sector to expand shared training, technology, governance and administrative supports rather than unnecessarily duplicating services. Importantly, support cannot be limited only to organizations that own property. Many smaller and frontline nonprofits do not, which is why flexible operating, programming and capacity-building support must remain part of the City's approach. Ultimately, I see the City's role as a connector and facilitator - bringing organizations, businesses, institutions and government together. Making existing resources easier to access and helping nonprofits spend more of their time delivering results in our community.
Q11 — The Nonprofit Sector's Role & What Success Looks Like	I see London's nonprofit sector as an important part of both our economic vitality and our community wellbeing. These organizations employ Londoners, purchase goods and services locally, attract outside funding, support arts and culture, help people enter or re-enter the workforce and provide services that make our neighbourhoods stronger. Over the next four years, I would like the City to treat nonprofits as partners in investing in Londoners, not simply as organizations that apply for grants. That means better coordination with the City, businesses, educational institutions and other community organizations; greater access to shared spaces and resources; and making it easier for organizations to collaborate rather than compete or duplicate services. Success at the end of my term would mean our nonprofits are spending less time navigating bureaucracy and more time serving people. I would want to see stronger partnerships, more outside investment coming into London, better use of existing spaces and resources, and clear evidence that City-supported programs are achieving measurable results. Most importantly, success would mean Londoners can actually feel the difference stronger neighbourhoods, more opportunities, better access to supports, a more vibrant arts and cultural sector, and a nonprofit sector that is sustainable enough to continue doing that work long after a particular grant or Council term ends.
Q12 — Other Priorities Candidates Wanted the Sector to Know	I would want London's nonprofit sector to know that I see its work as an important part of how we build a stronger city. One of my priorities is investing in Londoners and that means recognizing the organizations already doing important work in our neighbourhoods; making sure they have a meaningful voice when City decisions affect the people they serve. I also believe City support should come with transparency and measurable outcomes, while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy that takes organizations away from their actual work. Over my term, I would want to build a relationship with the sector based on communication, collaboration and mutual accountability. If something is working, we should help it succeed - If something can be improved... we should be willing to have that conversation and find a better way forward together.

Question	Answer
Q14 — Commit to Engaging With & Supporting the Nonprofit Sector (Yes/No + Why)	Yes — On a personal note ; I currently sit on 2 boards (LUSO & LACA) and was President, VP, Bylaws & Governance Chair & Entertainment Director of Pride London over the years the nonprofit sector holds a special place in my heart over the years. Page 4: Authorship Declaration