

Results of November 24, 2009 Public Workshop

Breakout Session 1 – Moving Towards a Downtown Vision

Participants were asked to use the descriptive terms and elements identified at the first visioning session on July 29, 2009 and through the on-line survey, and reproduced in the workbook, to produce a vision statement for Downtown London. Planning staff indicated that the statements could include other terms not identified before. Participants at this workshop were asked to produce one or more vision statements for each of the 12 tables. Some participants also produced their own vision statements. Background notes for the vision statement have also been included.

The results were;

1. *“London’s Downtown, heart and soul of the City.... I want to be part of it!”*
 - 24 hours/7 days – activities
 - clean and safe
 - green initiatives – roofs
 - liveable
 - vitality
 - sets tone for the whole City of London
 - pedestrian walkways
 - commutable – reduced congestion
 - welcoming
 - each person finds what they want
 - good impression for tourists
 - affordable

2. *“Downtown is a vibrant, welcoming destination; an organically growing place where Londoners live, work and play.”*
 - where we spend our weekends
 - constant activity

3. *“The downtown should be a place to live for young and old where communities are connected through green, public pedestrian places that are vibrant and constantly changing!”*
 - connected communities
 - people-watching
 - safety, but excitement too
 - public space to exist in, walk through
 - vibrant
 - colourful
 - street performers
 - works in winter

4. *"We want a Downtown that has a wide range of arts and entertainment, retail and commercial and public services and public spaces that welcomes a diverse population."*
5. *"Downtown London will be an eclectic and vibrant neighbourhood, a surprising and explorable destination that emanates community pride through the rest of the city, where everyone feels safe and welcome."*
6. *"A Place where people want to be, that's easy to access with a lively street life, a Downtown that values its heritage buildings and its history, a Downtown that's safe, clean and welcoming."*
7. *"Create a heart of the City the beats with diversity and acts as an inclusive and welcoming destination."*
 - diversity in age groups, demographics
 - improved public transportation – central bus depot
 - better lighting
 - public safety
8. *"London... where the world lives"*
"London... alive at the forks"
"London... alive from the river rising"
"Central London... dynamic destination"
"London centre... alive, dynamic and growing"
9. *"Downtown London should be the heart of London, an active, attractive and unique community with an engaged and creative population. The variety of green spaces and arts and culture destinations attract, support and sustain the population of the core and surrounding areas."*
10. *"Downtown London will be a neighbourhood - lively, dynamic, eclectic and vibrant; a destination - surprising and explorable; and a centre – emanating culture and progress."*
 - livable
 - diverse
 - pride
 - cultural/social centre
 - creative
 - forward thinking
 - progressive
 - walkable, active and accessible
11. *"Welcome to Downtown London – where people can live, work and play – have access to services (groceries, pharmacies, banks) within walking distance."*

12. *“A community comprised of diverse people, social services, entertainment opportunities and retail stores that support as well as promote social justice, economic vibrancy and safety.”*
13. *“We want a walkable downtown that has a wide range of retail, arts and entertainment, commercial and public services to serve the population.”*

The last group didn't have a final vision statement but included clauses which should be included in a vision statement or suggested improvements/options/alternatives. These clauses include;

- a place that people come to rather than flee from – a destination.
- has small scale grocery stores
- continue building residential downtown – family scale, more density
- less surface parking but parking facilities that look nice and hold a lot of cars. Beautify the existing parking lots – parking stall tax gets redirected back into the properties
- relocation of social services
- Dundas Street more pedestrian friendly
- move buses to other streets
- two way traffic on King Street
- rethink transit – service or business?
- clean up Richmond
- heritage is highlighted, its an asset
- safe, clean, pedestrian friendly
- Dundas more pedestrian friendly, sidewalk cafes on Dundas
- new buildings should have a relationship to the street
- continue mixed use development
- safe and integral, clean, beautify downtown
- business incentives for store front improvements
- staggered tax structure (0-100% in 5 years)
- performing arts centre
- culture, arts, gathering places
- vibrant, better lighting (safety)
- move buses to the periphery
- Dundas remains main street
- learn from mistakes of Richmond Street – street of bars
- not enough diversification of business on Richmond Street
- anchor along Dundas around Kingsmills
- amenities for bicycles
- very few customers live Downtown
- just how far will people walk from their cars to their destination
 1. 6-8 blocks
 2. 5 blocks
 3. many, many blocks
 4. too optimistic
- identify several anchors around city core

Breakout Session 2 – Issues/Options/Alternatives and Implementation

The purpose of this exercise was to use the issues identified in previous Downtown studies which have not been implemented, issues identified in the first public workshop and the Mainstreet/LDBA workshop and issues identified in the on-line survey and identify possible options, alternatives and implementation measures to deal with them. Some issues require that a choice be made which will impact how it is dealt with. A collection of the all the comments are provided below.

ISSUE	OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES	POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES
1. Should Downtown have its own policies in the Official Plan, and what should they say?	YES	Revise OP policies – be specific to Downtown core -focus on the creative nature of London Zoning Incentives Detailed urban design guidelines Growth targets Land Use Plan Transit Plan Protection of the Thames Corridor Street-level public use Wide sidewalks Make it less technical –principles, vision statement and design based
2. What should we do when policies and approaches conflict? What are the priorities?		Priorities List* - the public interest and the sustainability of future life and culture should take precedence - good design, architecture and heritage should prevail - pedestrians, bikers, transit then cars - citizens first, developers last Ad-hoc Committees (experts, stakeholders, public)
3. Dealing with negative publicity and public perception? - crime and safety - parking - cleanliness - empty stores - people begging - street vendors	- varies by demographics	Better PR** - counteract with effective and active publicity strategies - positive stories in LFP and Londoner More information* Program for positive development (awards, free marketing)

<p>4. Should the Downtown Boundary be changed?</p>	<p>YES –bigger - include Eldon House and Victoria Park, Harris Park YES – smaller - focus and then spread</p>	<p>Change OP and Zoning - should go to Thames River and to Oxford and should include all parks - increase to Oxford/Richmond and include Victoria Park and Harris Park - up to Oxford and over to Wharncliffe</p>
<p>5. Should we establish character areas in Downtown where we have different policies or investment strategies?</p>	<p>YES -restaurant district -bar district -arts district NO – let it happen naturally, we need to think about variety and diversity</p>	<p>Encourage not demand** Use incentives Demand Consistent historic look or creative vision Based on heritage significance Better signage</p>
<p>6. Should a Downtown Building Conditions Study be prepared? This study would provide information on the condition of buildings in the Downtown to help future tenants and investors. Who should do this?</p>	<p>YES NO</p>	<p>City should pay for it City money to restore buildings Separate Heritage department Downtown Historic Protection By-law and Standards Mainstreet should pay for it Should have a database on Downtown building conditions, availability for prospective tenants Could it turn investors away if they know the costs up front</p>
<p>7. Should the City be more proactive in improving building conditions with both local and absentee landlords?</p>	<p>YES - people should not have to live in substandard conditions</p>	<p>Stricter Enforcement* Proactive Review City investment – fix condition and appearance of buildings Need a stricter, more proactive Downtown property standards by-law</p>
<p>8. Should absentee landlords be surveyed to determine their future development plans or to make them aware of City incentives?</p>	<p>YES - we can only plan for the future if we knew where everyone is going - at the minimum NO</p>	<p>Mail survey Should be a Land Tax Require active development plan Identify the landlord Marketing to let them know City plans</p>
<p>9. Should the City petition the Province to change tax laws which encourage building demolition and vacant structures?</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Meetings Formal request</p>
<p>10. Should the City's existing office location policies be strengthened?</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Reduce GFA permitted Reduce Height* Restrict locations Incentives Keep it flexible so high tech businesses that cannot fit in Downtown still locate in London</p>

<p>11. Should the predesignated height and density of office and residential development be reduced?</p>	<p>NO – less “red tape”</p>	<p>Restrict height to 3 storeys along Dundas and Richmond with higher behind Restrict size Need more mixed use/density development Restrictions only in certain areas Restrict height</p>
<p>12. How to encourage new office tenants Downtown?</p>		<p>Policies Tax Incentives Targeted Emphasis – Downtown Economic Dev. Officer etc. Better information of whats available – easily accessible Create a centre for social innovation</p>
<p>13. Should we continue to restrict offices on the ground floor in the Downtown?</p>	<p>NO-let restaurants and homes be on ground floor YES-only retail, arts and restaurants on lower level -anything that does not engage individual citizens and enhance their quality of life should not be there (eg. Gov’t bldgs) - anything that is not accessible and excludes interaction with individuals should not be zoned at ground level Downtown</p>	<p>Mandate public use on the ground floor Temporary permit in short term</p>
<p>14. Should we encourage more residential growth?</p>	<p>YES- seniors apt. bldgs.</p>	<p>Density Height Incentives</p>
<p>15. Should we encourage affordable housing?</p>	<p>YES – but attractive -mixed residency</p>	<p>Density Height Tax Incentives* Make use of existing buildings more Subsidies Rent supplements to private landlords</p>
<p>16. Should the existing major entertainment policies be stronger?</p>	<p>YES NO</p>	<p>Limit choices Limit size Prohibit Restrict to certain areas</p>
<p>17. Should entertainment uses be concentrated in certain areas Downtown?</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Direct** Encourage* Incentives Certain districts to limit noise and traffic Fewer bars Dispersed and balanced in Downtown* Need movie theatres</p>

18. Do we need to actively encourage more retail Downtown?	YES - general not specialized - unique shops	Let market decide Incentives*
19. Should social services continue to be concentrated in the Downtown?	YES - if that is where the population is - move, but still accessible UNDECIDED NO – where clients live	No change Other locations Downtown Outside Downtown* Not at major gateways Centralized in quadrants of the City
20. Are there other types of parks/plaza which should be included Downtown?		Major Park “Pocket Parks” Plazas Dundas Plaza Green corridors Embellish anchors Mirror plaza at library with ones on both other blocks Dundas block across from Kingsmills Dundas block across from Old Capital Theatre Dog friendly routes Off-season leash free parks 1 bench parks on City corners
21. Is there enough parking Downtown?	YES – too many empty lots NO - need short term parking and long term parking	More surface lots if hidden More parking garages More emphasis on transit and other transportation forms* Concentrate more on walking
22. Should there be on-street parking on Dundas Street?	NO YES – brings life	Replace with large public sidewalks with room for greenery Only when businesses are open, close for events Angled parking Limited times Multiuse for cafes Remove some and create wider pedestrian walkways Turn into park space Perhaps removal limit for festivals
23. Should a Downtown Municipal Parking Authority be started?	YES NO	Standard flat parking rate System to monitor parking availability Standard design structures Parking tickets and meters need to come back Downtown

<p>24. Should Dundas Street be turned into a pedestrian mall?</p>	<p>YES MAYBE NO</p>	<p>Full time** Seasonal* Event Driven* Trial basis Boutique shopping west of Wellington, plaza Glass over Dundas Street and/or Richmond Street Saturday local market Full summertime trial Dundas – Clarence to Talbot with a different mix of businesses – services, galleries, sidewalk cafes, planters, trees, benches</p>
<p>25. Are there streets in the Downtown which could be better used by pedestrians?</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Covent Garden Lane **** Carling Street** Fullarton Street Thames Street* Wellington St north of Dufferin Talbot Street Clarence St. Dundas West Dundas*** King*</p>
<p>26. Should a Downtown Transit Hub be built?</p>	<p>YES NO</p>	<p>Leave at Dundas/Richmond Move to another street intersection Off-street transit terminal** Near Train Station on York Street Several small hubs Outdoor roundabout at York/Wellington Bus only roads In PUC parking lot with shuttle to Downtown</p>
<p>27. Is there too much traffic moving through Downtown? Should it be minimized?</p>	<p>YES- Dundas too busy for parking NO – “Congestion is our friend”</p>	<p>More right and left turns on Dundas Street* Less bus traffic Move bus transfer station to York Street Have a dedicated lane through Downtown for buses and cabs Relocate buses to periphery Need electric buses</p>
<p>28. Should Richmond Street have only two lanes for traffic?</p>	<p>YES- once we have BRT/LRT line NO</p>	<p>Maybe reduce lanes between Queens and York, but not further north, and one lane for public transit</p>

<p>29. How can the City improve its incentive programs to encourage more development?</p>		<p>Annual lucrative awards and urban design night Tax incentives Prizes – free advertising, promotion, 5 years tax free Underutilized properties in the core, land tax instead of property tax Better communication of incentive programs Lower taxes</p>
<p>30. Other Ideas?</p>		<p>More schools in Downtown for young children (NEW) More Family-friendly policies (NEW) Signature Destination for Downtown London (NEW) Wireless everywhere in Downtown Allow views of the river and maybe good buildings from many viewpoints Tear down CIBC building and make a public plaza</p>
<p>31. Is Downtown representative of the Downtown ? (NEW)</p>		<p>Corridors for public spaces with natural features Greening plazas, streets and parking lots Opportunity for art Greening of empty lots</p>
<p>32.</p>		