

November 25, 2009

## **DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN DRAFT BACKGROUND STUDY**

On February 2, 2009 Council approved the Terms of Reference for the proposed Downtown Master Plan. Notice was sent November 28, 2008 and January 14, 2009 in advance of the public meeting on the Terms of Reference. We are advising you of the circulation of the next report, the Draft Background Study, to assist in identifying issues to be reviewed and to invite your comments.

<b>LOCATION:</b>	Downtown (see attached map)
<b>PURPOSE AND EFFECT:</b>	The purpose and effect of the Downtown Master Plan Background Study is to provide a comprehensive compilation of all the City's policies and programs for the Downtown and identify the current conditions in the Downtown and the historical and current issues which need to be addressed. The final Downtown Master Plan will include a Downtown vision, a Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and revised Downtown Urban Design Guidelines to guide development in the Downtown over the next 20 years.
<b>NATURE OF PLAN:</b>	<p>Since the early 1980's Municipal Council, City staff, Downtown agencies and others have spent a significant amount of money, time and effort on the enhancement and revitalization of the Downtown. Many of those efforts focused on a particular set of issues but have not dealt with the whole of the Downtown on a comprehensive basis. Through its recent discussions of Downtown revitalization incentives, design and heritage issues; Council has identified a need for a new broadly based Downtown Master Plan.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference was intended to specify the requirements, expectations, methodology and products which will be necessary for the completion of a final Downtown Master Plan, Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines. If a need for new Official Plan policies is identified, an Official Plan amendment will also be prepared.</p> <p>Following approval of the Terms of Reference, a Draft Background Study was prepared which will provide the policy, statistical and analytical basis for the Downtown Master Plan, Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines. The Background Study summarizes past efforts and identifies components of the Downtown which have been studied and are being addressed at the present time. Those issues which have not been addressed are also identified. Where applicable, any Council resolutions will also be identified.</p> <p>All of this background material will establish the current conditions in the Downtown and will serve as a basis for the preparation of the Downtown Master Plan, Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.</p> <p>One component of the Background Study is the identification of a long term vision for Downtown. A number of past studies have done this but the intent is to revisit that vision to ensure it is current. Public workshops were held July 29, 2009 and November 24, 2009. A community survey/questionnaire is one of the tools used to foster additional community input to identify that vision. The on-line survey was initiated in August 2009 on the City's website.</p> <p>Finally, based on that vision Council, staff, Downtown agencies and others will identify those areas in the Background Study where further study is required and which need to be addressed and improved through the implementation of the Downtown Master Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines. This may include new Official Plan policies, new zoning by-law regulations, changes in the site plan control by-law, the introduction of revised urban design guidelines, new or improved infrastructure, new or revised financial incentives or changes in the way the City deals with Downtown issues.</p>

**HOW TO COMMENT:**

The final Downtown Master Plan, Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and Downtown Design Guideline documents will include specific policies and guidelines; respectively, to guide Downtown revitalization and redevelopment over the next 20 years.

On November 28, 2008 and January 14, 2009 the City sent a public notice on the above project asking for input to complete the Terms of Reference. Following Council approval the City started the process of preparing a Background Study.

An electronic copy of the Draft Background Study is now available at;

**[http://www.london.ca/d.aspx?s=/Planning/downtown\\_town\\_plan.htm](http://www.london.ca/d.aspx?s=/Planning/downtown_town_plan.htm)**

Because of the size of the document a full copy has not been provided. If you wish to view a full hard copy of the entire report you can do so on-line or can download the document off the website. Please review the Draft Background Study **by Friday January 15, 2010** and provide us with any comments you may have.

The Background Study is intended to include a summary of previous studies, City policy approaches, Council resolutions and what the current situation is. We will also identify potential issues to discuss through the Master Plan process and some of the possible changes that could occur.

The next report will be Options/Alternatives and Recommendations Report where staff discuss the various issues in more detail and make recommendations on changes. If you have ideas/solutions to some of the issues please indicate them and we will include them in our next report.

The final Downtown Master Plan will incorporate these changes and is expected to be done by June 2010.

If you have any questions or want to be added to our public meeting mailing list please call Chuck Parker at (519) 661-2500 Ext. 4648 or e-mail at [cparker@london.ca](mailto:cparker@london.ca). For general information on the project please refer to [www.london.ca/Business/Planning/DowntownMasterPlan](http://www.london.ca/Business/Planning/DowntownMasterPlan) on the website. This website contains all of the information produced through the Plan process.

Your opinion on this Plan is important. Please call in, mail, e-mail or fax your comments to Planning Division, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, City Hall, Attn: Chuck Parker, P.O. Box 5035, 300 Dufferin Ave., London, ON, N6A 4L9.

Your representative on City Council, Councillor Judy Bryant (res. (519) 661-2500 Ext. 0370) would be pleased to discuss any comments and/or concerns you may have with the Downtown Master Plan process.

***Please note:*** *If a person or public body does not make oral or written submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the City of London before the proposed amendment(s) are adopted, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision of the Council of the City of London to the Ontario Municipal Board, nor will they be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal unless, in the opinion of the Board, there are reasonable grounds to do so.*