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<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS - PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>R. W. PANZER GENERAL MANAGER OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">1) DECIDING ON THE DOWNTOWN VISION 2) COMPLETION OF DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN BACKGROUND STUDY 3) UPDATE ON DOWNTOWN HERITAGE CONSERVATION PLAN STUDY 4) NEW IDEAS, OPTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION REPORT</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEETING ON July 19, 2010 at 4:30 p.m.</b></p>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the General Manager of Planning and Development, with regard to the submission of reports related to the Downtown Master Plan, the attached report **BE RECEIVED**;

1. The Final "Downtown Master Plan Background Study" **BE ACCEPTED** and form the basis for future Downtown Master Plan reports.
2. The report entitled "New Ideas. Options, Recommendations and Implementation" **BE RECEIVED** and direction be given to circulate the report for public comment.
3. The status report on the Downtown Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study **BE RECEIVED** for information.
4. It being noted that the attached report sets out three options for a Downtown Vision Statement and the Council is being asked to review these options and to endorse one, with modifications if necessary, as the basis for the preparation of the Downtown Master Plan

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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|----|---------------------------|--|
| 1. | Monday, November 10, 2008 | Downtown Master Plan – Preliminary Identification of Issues and Draft Terms of Reference                 |
| 2. | Monday, January 26, 2009  | Downtown Master Plan - Identification of Issues and Terms of Reference                                   |
| 2. | Monday, November 16, 2009 | Downtown Master Plan - Progress on Downtown Vision and Status Report on the Downtown Master Plan Process |

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<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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**Progress on the Downtown Master Plan**

The Downtown Master Plan process started in the fall of 2008. A Draft Terms of Reference was submitted to Planning Committee on November 10, 2008 and the Committee gave direction to circulate the draft terms of reference. Living in the City notice was provided November 29, 2008 and all 1297 landowners in the Downtown were sent individual notices on November 28, 2008. Some comments were received and the Terms of Reference was finalized. Living in the City notice was again provided January 10, 2009 and individual notice was provided to 1297 landowners for the public meeting on January 29, 2009 for the Terms of Reference. Council approved the Terms of Reference on February 2, 2009. The Downtown Master Plan Background Study was initiated following that resolution.

Public Workshops were held on July 29, 2009 and November 24, 2009. A Draft Downtown Master Plan Background Study and a separate Downtown “Vision” Report were reviewed by Planning Committee on November 16, 2009 and direction was given to circulate those reports for public review. Notice of the Draft Background Study completion was given to landowners on November 25, 2009. The public notices indicated that all reports and notices have been provided on the City’s website under Business-Planning-Downtown Master Plan.

Since November 2009, Planning staff have been finalizing the Downtown Master Plan Background Study; preparing a Draft “New Ideas, Options, Recommendations and Implementation” Report; starting the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan process; co-ordinating with the parallel “Smart Moves” Transportation Master Plan and Urban Structure Plan/Downtown Urban Design Guidelines processes; and, completing the Downtown “Vision” Report.

The degree of public notification and subsequent public involvement throughout the process has been significant. Over 1300 landowners, agencies, City Departments etc. have been notified of progress on three different occasions. Planning Staff have attended meetings with Downtown London (formerly Mainstreet), London Downtown Business Association (LDBA), Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Community Safety and Crime Prevention Advisory Committee (CSCP), London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) and Utilities Co-Ordinating Committee (UCC). Staff have also held meetings with interested individuals and e-mail notifications have been sent to over 300 interested individuals on a regularly updated master list for all public meetings. Over 250 individuals have filled out the Downtown Master Plan on-line survey on the City’s website (see attached) and approximately 40-50 individual letters and e-mails have been received providing comments. The Downtown Master Plan page on the City’s website (see attached) has been a useful tool for providing reports and notices to the public without the need for paper copies.

**Downtown Master Plan Background Study**

As indicated above, Planning Committee approved the circulation of the Draft Downtown Master Plan Background Study on November 16, 2009. The document was subsequently added to the Downtown Master Plan website for viewing and downloading. Landowners and the public were notified of the completion of the draft background study. In response we received a few comments.

The Background Study was intended to provide a historical, statistical and policy basis for the Downtown Master Plan, answering the question “**where are we now**”. Past successes, justification and purpose for/of the Plan process and a description of the various land use components of the Downtown were also provided. Public issues raised through the public participation process were also identified. Other unresolved issues from previous Downtown studies were also included to provide a comprehensive list of outstanding issues on the Downtown.

Planning staff have reviewed all of the comments and have made some changes to the original document. Issues raised by the public, agencies and other City Departments have been

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identified in the Background Study but are not discussed. The discussions and consideration of new ideas and options have now been included in the “New Ideas, Options, Recommendations and Implementation” Report.

**Draft “New Ideas, Options, Recommendations and Implementation” Report**

This report is intended to discuss issues raised by the public through the Downtown Master Plan public process, reconsider issues raised in previous Downtown-related reports but not implemented and provide new ideas. Planning staff in the next few weeks will be reviewing other municipalities Official Plans, Zoning By-laws and Downtown documents to identify new ideas, different approaches or processes which the City could employ to assist Downtown revitalization. Where possible, implementation measures are identified. The preliminary recommendations that have been provided are not final, but were included to indicate a preference based on current information and to start the discussion on the various new ideas and options. The report has not been reviewed by the public and should be made available through the City’s website for review and comment.

**Arriving at a Downtown “Vision”**

Following Council approval of the Terms of Reference, Planning staff started the process of preparing a Downtown “Vision”. Planning staff had indicated that a Downtown vision should be the first step in the completion of a Downtown Master Plan. By determining the vision first, the policies and implementation measures to arrive at that vision can be developed.

Initially, a number of other municipalities “vision” statements were reviewed. On July 29, 2009 the City and Mainstreet/LDBA held a public visioning exercise for the Downtown at Museum London. One of the exercises asked the participants to come up with a vision statement for the Downtown and produce a map showing their “vision” of Downtown London. Approximately 150 people were in attendance.

On August 25, 2009 the City implemented an on-line survey through [www.zoomerang.com](http://www.zoomerang.com) posing the same questions to the public that were used during the public visioning session; 1) What are the constraints/weaknesses of the Downtown?; 2) What are the Strengths/Opportunities of the Downtown?; 3) What type of Place would you like Downtown to be?; and 4) Provide a Vision Statement for Downtown. There were 170 responses to the last question requesting a vision statement.

On October 14, 2009 the City also met with the Board of Directors for both Mainstreet (now Downtown London) and the London Downtown Business Association (LDBA). Seventeen members were in attendance. The format for the visioning exercise was similar to the public visioning session but excluded the final mapping exercise.

On November 24, 2009 the City held another public workshop. Topic #1 at the workshop was “Moving towards a Downtown Vision”. Common adjectives and elements were extracted from the previous public comments to give the public and Planning staff some “building blocks” for a possible Downtown vision statement. Sample vision statements were provided to start the discussion and move the participants closer to completing a Downtown vision statement.

A report was presented to Planning Committee on November 16, 2009 summarizing the public input received to date. There is a need now to decide on a final Downtown “vision” so that it can form the basis for the final Downtown Master Plan. Vision statements can come in various forms; one short sentence, long statements or comprehensive multi sentence statements. To this end Planning staff have reviewed all of the input and have produced three possible options. These include;

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**Option 1 – “Downtown London is recognized as the centre of the City, a gathering place for the City’s residents and the focus of the City’s revitalization efforts. Downtown London will be a thriving, bustling and attractive place that offers numerous distinctive culture, arts, recreation, entertainment, niche retail, restaurant, employment and service uses during the morning, day and evening. These uses will create a continuous streetscape that is attractive, interesting, well maintained and comfortable for pedestrians. Heritage buildings will constitute a large portion of the streetscape to provide architectural interest, a unique identity and a strong tie to our past.”**

This option is based on a draft statement produced by planning staff as a basis for the recent changes to the City’s Downtown incentive programs.

**Option 2 - “Downtown London is and must be the heart and soul of the City. We want a Downtown:**

- **that serves as the business, cultural and entertainment focus of the entire City.**
- **that is unique, welcoming, inviting and pleasant where the City’s residents can live, work, shop, visit and play.**
- **that includes a vibrant, diverse residential community which is a great place to live.**
- **filled with energy, passion, excitement, creativity and people and emanates community pride.**
- **where people want to spend time at any hour of the day, any day of the year.**
- **that vibrates with music, tantalizes the taste buds, offers sweet smells and resonates with joyous abandon.**
- **that captures the London we believe this city can become – a city where people of all cultures, ages and abilities are welcomed. Where they can be productive citizens in jobs and opportunities of their choosing. Where there is a community mandate for action and a spirit of success that permeates our City.**
- **that has a vibrant, successful Arts District, is celebrated for its unique architecture and commitment to daring public art and where the citizens of London feel engaged in arts and culture.**
- **where emerging young businesses begin and are encouraged to grow.**
- **with lots of things to do, where people have fun and mix socially in a clean, safe and secure environment.**

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- ***with charming, walkable streets and sidewalks that provide accessibility for everyone and an attractive streetscape that celebrates our heritage.***
- ***that serves as a place of community focus and destination of national interest.***
- ***that anchors a 21<sup>st</sup> Century City of which every Londoner is proud. A city that is vigorous, robust and dynamic and is a leader in the world.”***

This option draws on the statement prepared for the document “A Blueprint for Action” prepared by the Downtown Task Force chaired by Controller Hume. This statement has been augmented to reflect many of the ideas raised through our public consultation process. This statement captures the broad ideas and elements that are part of a great Downtown and shows the breadth of functions and roles that Downtown plays for the residents of London.

***Option 3 - “Downtown London ... a place where people want to be”***

This option, while simple, attempts to capture what we have heard from Londoners; if we do the right things, Downtown will be a place where all Londoner’s will feel welcome.

**Update on the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study/Plan Process**

The process of hiring a consultant to undertake the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan started in late 2009. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was circulated in November 2009 and three separate groups expressed interest. Interviews and assessments were held and Stantec Consulting was selected to complete both the study and plan. The project team includes;

Dan Young	Project Manager	Stantec Consulting
Mike Baker	Historian	
Ed Vandermaarel	Principal Architect	SJMA Architecture
Jim Vafiades	Landscape Architect	Stantec Consulting
Sylvia Behr	Landscape Heritage Consultant	

An initial start-up meeting with the consultants was held on April 22, 2010. The first initiative was the formation of a Steering Committee to oversee the preparation of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan. The Steering Committee members include:

Greg Thompson	Chair – Member of LACH
Judy Bryant	Downtown Ward Councillor
Jonathon Bancroft-Snell	Downtown Business Owner
Tom Bird	Downtown Building Owner/Renovator
Jack Malkin	Represents Mr. Farhi/Downtown Building Owner
Joe O’Neil	Member of LACH
Sharon Hassan	Building and Business Owner
Janette MacDonald	Manager of Downtown London

The Committee met for the first time with staff and the consultants on May 20, 2010. On June 1, 2010 the consultants attended the Downtown London Façade Panel meeting to observe how those meetings can be used as an implementation tool to help retain heritage structures. Planning staff and the consultants also appeared at LACH on June 9, 2010 to discuss the overall Downtown Master Plan process and introduce them to the consulting team.

The timeline for the completion of the study and plan is ambitious. Currently, the consultants are accumulating all of the background information to provide the justification for retention of significant buildings and for establishing the boundaries of the HCD. The HCD Study is

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expected to be completed and submitted to Planning Committee by September 2010 and the HCD Plan completed and submitted to Planning Committee by February 2011. Other than those two public meetings, additional public meetings will be held to get input and discuss the results. Living in the City notice in the London Free Press for the HCD Study was given on May 29, 2010 and June 5, 2010. Similar to the Downtown Master Plan process, individual notice to landowners will be given when draft documents are available.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
<b>W.J. CHARLES PARKER SENIOR PLANNER – CITY PLANNING AND RESEARCH</b>	<b>GREGG BARRETT MANAGER – CITY PLANNING AND RESEARCH</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
<b>JOHN FLEMING DIRECTOR OF PLANNING</b>	

July 21, 2010  
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