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08 DOW H/Chuck Parker

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS - PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ON Monday, December 12, 2011 at 4:25 p.m.</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>JOHN FLEMING DIRECTOR OF LAND USE PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN DOWNTOWN HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLAN</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Director of Land Use Planning and City Planner, the attached draft Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan **BE RECEIVED** and direction be given to circulate the report to the public, landowners, agencies and LACH for review and comment prior to finalization and the holding of the formal public meeting.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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| 1. Monday, November 16, 2009 | Downtown Master Plan - Progress on Downtown Vision and Status Report on the Downtown Master Plan Process     |
| 2. Monday, November 8, 2010  | Draft Downtown Heritage Conservation District Background Study submitted to Planning Committee               |
| 3. Monday, February 14, 2011 | Downtown Heritage Conservation District Background Study completed and the Plan preparation process started. |

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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**The Downtown Heritage Conservation District Process to Date**

On November 21, 2007, as part of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy, Council directed that;

- ii) *a Terms of Reference for the creation of a Downtown Heritage Conservation District **BE PREPARED**, in consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage, to establish the limits of a Downtown Heritage Conservation District and a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines, pursuant to Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act;....*

A Terms of Reference for the Downtown Master Plan, which included the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan as one of the component studies, was approved by Council on February 2, 2009. 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 Stantec Consulting was selected to complete both the study and final 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

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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
Janette MacDonald	Manager of Downtown London
Tom Bird	Downtown Building Owner/Renovator
Joe O’Neil	Member of LACH
Sharon Hassan	Building and Business Owner
Jack Malkin	Represented Mr. Farhi/Downtown Building Owner
Jonathan Bancroft-Snell	Downtown Business Owner

The Committee met for the first time with staff and the consultants on May 20, 2010. Planning staff and the consultants appeared at LACH on June 9, 2010 to discuss the overall Downtown Master Plan process and introduce them to the consulting team.

To begin the process of preparing the **Downtown Heritage Conservation District Background Study** the Steering Committee met for the first time with staff and the consultants on May 20, 2010. Additional meetings were held August 18, 2010 (Boundary) and January 11, 2011 (Draft Background Study). Subsequently, meetings were held on September 8, 2010 (Boundary) and November 10, 2010 (Draft Background Study) with LACH.

On November 8, 2010 the Draft Downtown Heritage Conservation District Background Study was submitted to Planning Committee (now Built and Natural Environment Committee) for review and on November 15, 2010 Council resolved;

- 23 *That, on the recommendation of the Director of Land Use Planning the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Background Study **BE CIRCULATED** to the public, landowners, agencies, the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Steering Committee and the London Advisory Committee on Heritage for review and comment.”*

Living in the City notice was provided November 13, 2010 and the landowner notice was sent November 29, 2010. Both notices provided an update on the Downtown Master Plan process and indicated that the draft Downtown HCD document was available for viewing from the City’s website. The Steering Committee met on January 11, 2011 to discuss the Background Study and LACH were provided copies of the report on November 10, 2010 and asked again for comments on January 12, 2011. On February 2, 2011 Planning Staff received the final Background Study from the consultants.

On February 14, 2011 the Built and Natural Environment Committee (BNEC) reviewed the Background Study and Council gave direction on February 28, 2011 to adopt the Background Study and begin preparation of the **Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan**.

Plan preparation began immediately. A draft copy of the Plan was received September 2, 2011 and we met with the Steering Committee on October 12, 2011.

**The Purpose and Importance of the Heritage Conservation District Plan**

The Downtown Heritage Conservation District Background Study and Plan are two of the five; the Downtown Master Plan Background Study, Downtown Master Plan and Downtown Urban Design Guidelines being the others; components of the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Master Plan, Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and Downtown Urban Design Guidelines will serve as the guide for Downtown development over the next 20 years.

The Heritage Conservation District Plan, along with any heritage conservation guidelines, needs to be completed first so we know what is important from a heritage standpoint and worthy of retention. Once that is established, the remainder of the Downtown Master Plan can be completed. Planning staff are continuing to work on the Downtown Master Plan and expect a

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draft will be available for Committee review shortly following approval of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan.

**Features of the Heritage Conservation District Plan**

One of the key goals expressed to the consultants was to create a document which was easy to use and minimized the need to constantly “flip” back and forth through the document. A land owner, building owner, LACH or interested individual should be able to easily see if a building has heritage value, what features need to be retained on the building and if there are any heritage landscaping features in the front yard that need to be retained. For the Downtown, the 2006 City of London Inventory of Heritage Resources doesn’t do this because all properties are listed by street address, not by location.

The document contains a discussion of Ontario Heritage Act conformity; principles, goals, and objectives; planning tools for implementation and heritage conservation district design guidelines. One of the unique features of this Heritage Conservation District Plan is the introduction of a block by block matrix of building information and heritage information. Because this is the first London Heritage Conservation District Plan in a commercial area, all the previous HCD’s were largely residential neighbourhoods, a matrix was introduced to illustrate the complex information on individual buildings as clearly as possible. Each building was ranked and important heritage features identified.

**Issues**

The process of the preparing the Plan went smoothly, the Steering Committee had few issues with the format and introduction of the matrix. The consultants indicated that the matrix was time consuming to prepare. One issue that needs to be addressed is how to treat buildings built after 1970. Because historical features includes architectural features some buildings such as City Centre, the Provincial Court House, Bell building, 200 Queens Avenue, John Labatt Centre etc. have been ranked as “A” buildings in the matrix. Planning staff had originally expected to identify buildings which would not require a Heritage Alteration Permit in future. Further discussion needs to occur on the ranking of buildings, the criteria for ranking and process for changes within the Downtown Heritage Conservation District.

**Public Review**

Following the Planning and Environment Committee (formerly Built and Natural Environment Committee) meeting the following steps should occur;

<b>December 2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize Draft HCD Plan and circulate to PEC for release</li> <li>• LACH review starts</li> </ul>
<b>January 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter sent to Landowners - up date on Plan process</li> <li>• Downtown Landowners meeting on HCD Plan</li> </ul>
<b>February 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan completed</li> <li>• Planning and Environment Public Meeting on HCD Plan</li> </ul>
<b>March 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Downtown Master Plan and Draft Downtown Urban Design Guidelines completed to PEC</li> <li>• Fourth Public Workshop – Draft DMP and Urban Design Guidelines</li> </ul>
<b>May 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown Master Plan completed</li> <li>• Downtown Urban Design Guidelines completed</li> <li>• Final Public Meeting at PEC</li> </ul>

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<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>	

December 1, 2011  
cp/cp

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