



Councillor Shawn Lewis
Ward 2, City of London
Phone: 519-661-2489 ext 4002
Email: slewis@london.ca
facebook.com/ShawnLewis.Ward2/

Feb 13, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

When first elected in 2018, my first meeting priority was to meet Deputy City Manager Ms. Scherr to bring to her attention a long list of grievances from Ward 2 regarding road infrastructure. Quite a number of those grievances were on no immediate horizon at that time. A review of conditions resulted in a number of the worst problems added to work plans, and I am extremely grateful for the work staff has done to address those.

However, the most high profile arterial road and gateway into our city, Dundas St. east of Highbury, has had delays. The initial commitment was to undertake the entire stretch from Highbury to Beatrice St. in the 2019-2024 work. In 2019 the first phase was completed from Highbury to First. In March of 2021 it was communicated that the remainder of the project would take place in 2022. By September of 2021, the 2022 work had been reduced to the section from First St. to Burdick Pl., understandable given the complexities of the work in that section and the challenges experienced with respect to COVID. The “mill and pave” from Burdick Pl. to Beatrice St. was moved to a “tentative” for 2022 but did not happen. At the end of 2022 it was communicated that the remainder of the project was scheduled for summer of 2024.

The summer of 2024 is behind us and the work has not started. There is now more patch than pavement in long sections of this road. A week ago, I went out and submitted photos to staff of some of the worst of the potholes in need of immediate attention and with full credit to Mr. Gillard’s team, they dispatched crews to patch the worst spots. Again, I’m grateful for their work. However, through that process, I was informed that the road rehabilitation had been put off yet again to 2026. The reason this time was because we approved through PEC the “*Dundas Streetscape Master Plan for the Argyle Core Area*”, that requires a more detailed design effort, additional cost allocations in the program, and more community engagement, instead of it being a routine pavement rehabilitation.

Argyle residents don’t need another year to discuss center medians and planter boxes—that we have no budget to maintain—we need our road repaved! The Argyle BIA, a key partner in the streetscape planning does not support this unnecessary delay either. We need to have the commitment to get this done honoured in 2025.

I think it is important to note that the Dundas Streetscape Master Plan for Argyle’s purpose was to provide guidance, for future capital projects, not delay plans already on the books. The Council direction included an Official Plan Amendment to add this plan to the Urban Regeneration Guidelines of the London Plan—that is not yet done, and should not be considered to be in force and effect guiding staff today and delaying work that was originally to happen in 2022.

Just as important, funding for the Argyle Streetscape CIP—a part of this overall plan—was not included in the Multi-Year Budget, nor the annual Budget update. As the Ward 2 Councillor, I supported that not moving forward, because I recognized with the budget pressures we have, we need to focus on the nuts and bolts, the need to haves, not the nice to haves. Spending an additional year looking at the nice to haves, with not budget for them is not an exercise I believe we should be undertaking at this time.

I am asking for your support to provide clear direction to staff that guidelines which are not in force and effect in the Londo Plan not hold up already planned work with the following motion:

That Civic Administration be directed to suspend any further considerations of the “Dundas Streetscape Master Plan for the Argyle Core Area” with regard to the immediate need for road rehabilitation in 2025 of Dundas Street between Burdick Place and Beatrice St. due to extremely poor pavement condition (low PQI rating) and proceed with the rehabilitation planned prior to this plan.

It being noted that funding for the Dundas Streetscape Master Plan CIP was not included in the 2024-2027 MYB or annual updates.

It being further noted that reducing costs on capital projects for non-essential elements is consistent with the “Strong Mayor” direction to Civic Administration to bring forward options for a budget rate of under 5% for 2026.

Sincerely,

Shawn Lewis
Ward 2 City Councillor