



January 6th, 2014.

City of London,
300 Dufferin Ave.,
London, Ontario.

Attention: Mayor Fontana and Council Members.

Re: 2014 Budget.

Dear Mayor Fontana and Council Members:

We fully appreciate that these are difficult times that require difficult decisions to be made and we would like to take this opportunity to thank this council for their diligence and financial stewardship of the City's finances. However it is the understanding of the Board of Directors of Downtown London (the umbrella organization for the London Downtown Business Association and MainStreet London) that a zero budget would not require a reduction in services.

Clearly this is not the case.

Downtown is the fastest growing neighbourhood in the City of London – residential growth alone over the last ten years is **37%** as opposed to **8%** in the entire municipality. The taxable assessment in Downtown has grown by **59%** in the same time span. London's Downtown represents **0.2%** of the geographic area of London yet collects **9%** of the property taxes.

There are two very critical components to Downtown Revitalization, one is that the area be clean and well maintained and two is that it be safe and be perceived to be safe.

Two very prominent budgets, from our perspective, are the Police Budget and the budget for the additional cleaning and maintenance in the Downtown. These are constant targets for slashing. It makes no sense to us to cut either of these budgets since we are experiencing rapid growth in the London's downtown and any reduction of services reduce our chances of attracting the type of investment we require to continue with this growth.

The Downtown Foot Patrol is a critical factor not only for residential and retail attraction but to give our existing residents and businesses a feeling of security. We cannot begin to measure what their presence does for crime prevention but we know it is significant.

Clean is just as important as safe since the two go hand in hand. Clean has the perception of well cared for and safe.

Referring to the numbers above and that Downtown building owners pay 9% of the City's property taxes – we don't feel it's unreasonable to leave these two critical budgets intact – they are services paid for by the area they are deployed in and we feel that is fair to all concerned. We are not asking for the taxpayer at large to pay for "extra services" merely requesting that the taxes collected be utilized in the Downtown.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,
DOWNTOWN LONDON

Robert T. Usher
Chair
London Downtown Business Association.

Janette MacDonald
Executive Director
Downtown London.

c.c. Chief Brad Duncan
John Parsons
John Fleming
Downtown London Board.