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Planner: Britt O'Hagan

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING &amp; ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>DOWNTOWN DESIGN MANUAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING ON FEBRUARY 17, 2015</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner:

- (a) The following information report on the Downtown Design Manual **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
- (b) The attached DRAFT Downtown Design Manual **BE CIRCULATED** to the London Development Institute, the Urban League, the London Homebuilders Association, London Area Planning Consultants, London area landscape architects and urban designers, London Transit Commission, LACH, EEPAC, the City's Utility Coordinating Committee, Urban Design Peer Review Panel and other Advisory committees and external agencies.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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The following previous reports are pertinent to this matter:

- a) May 6, 1991 – Downtown Design Study & Design Guidelines – This document guides development in the downtown including major renovations and new construction on private land as well as streetscape work in the public right-of-way.
- b) March 26, 2012 - Downtown London - Heritage Conservation District Plan – This Official Plan Amendment is to acknowledge the heritage character and resources in the Downtown and designate downtown London as a heritage district in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.
- c) February 2, 2015 – Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan – This document is a public investment strategy intended to encourage more private investment in the downtown. It includes a downtown vision, values, strategic directions, and ten transformational projects. This has been added as a guideline document to the City's Official Plan.

<b>ANALYSIS</b>
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The Urban Design Program has been progressing since 2007 in the City of London. Subsequently, there is a need for urban design guidance to:

- Create greater certainty for the development industry;
- Establish clear guidance that is easy to follow;
- Recognise context to apply the guidelines;
- Provide flexibility while advancing the urban design policies.

Since the Downtown Design Study and Design Guidelines were adopted by Council in 1991 as a guideline document, the downtown area has experienced significant change, growth and development along with the rest of London. The establishment of the Urban Design Program in

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2007 has also brought attention to the need to refresh the 1991 Downtown Design Study and Guidelines. The review and update of the Downtown Design Study and Guidelines began in 2013, but was put on hold until the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan and London's Downtown Plan - noted in items b) and c) above, were completed and adopted by Council.

Preliminary internal discussions regarding the Downtown Design Study and Guidelines identified that changes needed to be completed on details related to technical elements (eg. transportation, urban forestry and other engineering matters) and the ease of use of the document. The Downtown Design Study and Guidelines have been further refined to make them consistent with current City policies and plans. The resulting draft Downtown Design Manual is attached.

The draft Downtown Design Manual is a revision of the 1991 Downtown Urban Design Guidelines to bring them into conformance with current best practices and the City of London's Official Plan policies regarding the Downtown. This document contains the content of the former Downtown Design Guidelines with changes as noted below:

- Existing guidelines that have been kept have been rewritten in an easy to understand and concise manner;
- Removal of guidelines that are no longer relevant based on current practices and policies;
- Content has been clearly separated into sections pertaining to private and public land;
- Patio design standards have been organised to act as a standalone document if necessary;
- Tall building guidance has been added; and,
- The document has been structured so that additional topic-specific guidelines can be added, such as those for patio design.

The Downtown Design Manual provides urban design guidance specific to the Downtown and its urban and heritage characteristics. It is broken down into the following structure:

1. Streetscape Design – provides design guidance and direction for all infrastructure lifecycle renewal work that will occur within the City-owned public right-of-way. This section has a particular focus on surface treatments and natural landscaping, and also provides guidance for the development and redevelopment of public spaces such as parkettes and plazas within the downtown.
2. Built Form & Site Design – provides design guidance and direction pertaining to development, renovations and restorations that are to occur on privately owned property. The provided guidance deals mainly with the massing, scale and architectural detail of buildings, as well as the spatial layout of the site.
3. Patio Design – provides standards and specifications related specifically to the design and layout of temporary sidewalk patios within the public right-of-way.

The draft Downtown Design Manual will be adopted as a guideline document and referenced in conjunction with the design policies of the Official Plan, London's Downtown Plan and the Downtown London Heritage Conservation District Plan to evaluate all land-use, development and infrastructure proposals from both the private sector and City initiated projects. It may also be referenced by development proponents when contemplating their plans. All planning applications within the downtown (eg. Official Plan amendments, Zoning Bylaw amendments, Site Plan applications, Plans of Subdivision, Plans of Condominium, Minor Variances and Consents) will be assessed/reviewed with the Downtown Design Manual.

Currently, the draft Manual has been circulated to internal staff only for feedback. These comments have informed the current draft. The next step is to circulate the draft Downtown Design Manual to collect feedback from external agencies, advisory committees and other stakeholders. Comments will be correlated to assist with the preparation of the final document prior to returning to Planning and Environment Committee for adoption.

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<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
<b>JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER</b>	

February 6, 2015  
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