

## Strategic Direction 1

# Make Dundas Street the most exciting place in London

Dundas Street is London's original main street and a place once lively with activities of trade and commerce. Times have changed significantly since the street's origin, but Dundas Street can reestablish its place as London's preeminent street. This can be achieved through investments that provide people-oriented infrastructure that is focussed on creating neighbourhoods and a unique and diverse range of experiences, boulevard tree planting, event programming and providing the highest level of maintenance in the city.

Dundas Street presents the opportunity to create a stronger entrance into the downtown and a more pronounced linkage to the Forks of the Thames through the development of a public plaza space where Dundas Street meets the Forks.

## Strategic Direction 2

# Reconnect with the Thames River

During London's infancy, the Forks of the Thames was a major area of activity. It has played an important role in the city's history and development. Once a valued resource, the river slowly became disconnected from the daily life of Londoners. Recently, however, the Thames River is again being viewed as a community asset.

Previously a transportation corridor and strategic advantage, the Thames River now provides passive and active recreational opportunities.

Water has a calming influence on the human spirit through both visual and acoustic qualities and provides the opportunity to escape from the bustle of downtown life for residents and downtown workers. The river is also a draw for events and represents an opportunity for new active uses. In reestablishing the connection to the Thames River, we can help to create a London that is a vibrant and dynamic city that embraces both its cultural heritage and natural environment.

## Strategic Direction 3

# Forge connections with the downtown neighbourhoods

The downtown is a growing neighbourhood that is surrounded by healthy, vibrant, established neighbourhoods, including Talbot North, Woodfield, Old East, SoHo, Old South/Wortley Village, Riverforks, and Blackfriars/Petersville. There is a reciprocal relationship between these neighbourhoods and the downtown, which provides a greater range of services, uses and housing options available to their residents. Enhancing this relationship through improved physical connections benefits not only the downtown as a neighbourhood, but also the attractiveness of the surrounding neighbourhoods. A synergy is realized by the regeneration of the urban neighbourhoods which can be credited for the strength of the downtown.

## Strategic Direction 4

# Green our downtown

There is an opportunity for the downtown to lead the way in terms of sustainable development, adaptive reuse, green initiatives and tree canopy cover. Increasing the tree canopy has the benefits of reducing the heat-island effect, improving air quality and enhancing the pedestrian environment.

Large-scale development, which often occurs within a downtown setting, provides opportunities to implement green infrastructure and construction techniques and create a more sustainable future. These methods will ensure the downtown promotes London as a progressive city and reflects its identity as the “Forest City.”

## Strategic Direction 5

# Build a great neighbourhood

The downtown is London’s original neighbourhood and the location of many historic buildings and sites protected for future generations through the adoption of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District. Over the many decades of its existence, this area of the city has seen great changes both in architecture and in neighbourhood development.

The downtown is the “hub” for the city, but it is also a neighbourhood where people can live and be social. It is imperative for the downtown’s success to ensure that it is designed to be a neighbourhood first, by providing for the local needs of the residents in the area. Once the neighbourhood functions have been established, the larger city-wide elements can be better supported by the local population, ultimately ensuring a more prosperous downtown.

## Strategic Direction 6

# Create the buzz

London’s image both locally and abroad is found in its downtown. The downtown is a distinct cultural district that can help to create a unique cultural ambiance that strengthens the identity and pride in Londoners. The diversity, intensity and density that uniquely characterize the core makes it ideally suited to consider unconventional ideas and fertile ground for testing new ways of doing things. New businesses not only need this positive creative environment to thrive, they also need the physical infrastructure. Forward thinking on upgrades such as fibre optic systems can place London’s downtown a step ahead.

As cities compete in today’s economy, their image to the world is one of their most important tools for prosperity and economic development, especially in the research and development and education sectors. To continue to attract post-secondary students, graduates and new business to London, creating a positive image and delivering on a reputation that “things are happening,” will go a long way to attracting the best and brightest to move and invest in London.

## Strategic Direction

# 1 Make Dundas Street the most exciting place in London.

- 1.1 Turn Dundas Street into a flexible street between Wellington Street and the Thames River.
- 1.2 Ensure all public realm works and planning applications support Dundas Street as the city's premier destination street.
- 1.3 Create an exceptional pedestrian experience along Kensington Bridge that signifies its role both as a primary pedestrian entrance to the downtown and a link between parkland.
- 1.4 Relocate bus routes from Dundas Street to create a more flexible public space and promote pedestrian activity.
- 1.5 Animate Dundas Street with a variety of programmed events and activities.
- 1.6 Develop a downtown maintenance program that sets Dundas Street as the highest standard in the city.



## Goal

To recreate Dundas Street as the preeminent public place in London -- beyond just a space to move through and instead to become a destination to arrive at for shopping, leisure, civic activities and celebrations.

## Why Is This Important?

As Dundas Street is a long-time commercial artery and a spine of civic activity in London, the condition and uses along Dundas Street have a direct reflection on the health of the downtown as a whole. Dundas Street has experienced an evolution of uses and activities over time, and the street continues to evolve as economic conditions and demographic trends change. It is important to strengthen the ability of Dundas Street to serve multiple purposes. Right-of-way improvements which optimize versatility of use, subject to refinement following conclusions from a project-related Environmental Assessment, will better define the feasibility and limitations of this project. These improvements will create a positive and compelling experience that will attract businesses and visitors.



A conceptual rendering of Dundas Street showing widened sidewalks with patios.



A conceptual rendering of Dundas Street with on-street parking.



An example of a flexible street in downtown Kitchener, Ontario.

## Strategic Direction

# 2 Reconnect with the Thames River.

- 2.1 Close Dundas Street to vehicular traffic between Ridout Street and the Thames River to create a public plaza space between Museum London and the former Middlesex Court House integrating with Dundas Place and the top of the banks of the Forks of the Thames.
- 2.2 Enhance portions of the Forks of the Thames to introduce an urban riverscape edged with restaurants, retail, recreational and residential opportunities designed to acknowledge the natural and cultural heritage significance of the river.
- 2.3 Transform Riverside Drive, between Wharncliffe Road and Kensington Bridge, to serve as a primary pedestrian linkage to the downtown; this linkage provides the opportunity to celebrate noteworthy moments of various sporting events and athletes in the city in the Labatt Park area.
- 2.4 Enhance views of the Thames River from Ridout Street to establish a visual connection to the river.
- 2.5 Provide better pedestrian access to the river at Fullarton Street and Dufferin Avenue to strengthen the connections between the downtown and the river.



## Goal

To strengthen the connections of Londoners with one of the city's most noteworthy natural assets; to create a strong public realm connection between the Dundas flexible street and the Forks of the Thames.

To ensure convenient, comfortable and safe pedestrian connections are provided between the downtown and the river's edge; and to attract people closer to the river's edge

with a wider array of year-round activities, including consideration of seasonally-appropriate venues such as an urban beach in the summer and a toboggan hill and ice sculpture park in the winter.

## Why Is This Important?

One of the most important assets of the city is its river system. The Forks of the Thames was the city's point of origin. The river's meandering path has shaped the layout of London and provided

many recreational opportunities. Over the years this great asset had become disconnected from the daily life of Londoners in the downtown. However, in recent years Council has begun the process of reconnecting the downtown with the Forks. In the 1980's, a major investment was made at Ivey Park and through this and other projects such as the splash pad, fountains and civic spaces, positive steps have been made toward reestablishing the connection.



Current view of the Thames River.



An example of an urban beach in Brisbane, Australia. Source: Tourism Queensland



A conceptual of rendering of Riverside Drive with Labatt Park in the background.



Ivey Park splash pad in the summer.

## Strategic Direction

# 3 Forge connections with the downtown neighbourhoods.

- 3.1 Create an intermodal hub that can connect high-speed intercity rail with local transit at the train station, centred on a new public square and pedestrian connections to surrounding neighbourhoods and business districts. These areas include Old East Village, Old South/Wortley Village, Woodfield, Richmond Row and SoHo.
- 3.2 Create a Clarence Street Connector forming a tree-lined connection linking Richard B. Harrison Park in SoHo and Victoria Park in the downtown.
- 3.3 Implement a rapid transit loop that circulates through the downtown to Queens Station.
- 3.4 Upgrade the Richmond Street and Wellington Street underpasses to create more inviting pedestrian connections.
- 3.5 Balance pedestrian and vehicular movement along Richmond Street between Queens Avenue and York Street by more equitably distributing the right-of-way to enhance the pedestrian experience and commercial environment.
- 3.6 Implement a downtown wayfinding program that makes it easy to get to downtown and effortless to navigate through it.



## Goal

To provide safe, convenient and comfortable access between the downtown and the surrounding neighbourhoods and the city; to enhance existing connections and provide new opportunities to move people between these areas; to optimize London's vitality as a rail travel point of origin/destination linking London to surrounding cities.

## Why Is This Important?

As the hub of the city it is important to ensure safe, convenient and comfortable access between the downtown and the city's neighbourhoods and business districts. In particular, these connections are important for neighbourhoods directly adjacent to the downtown to ensure a vibrant commercial environment and

energize the core with activity day and night and minimize the use of automobiles.

A Downtown Transportation Assessment and project-related Environmental Assessments will be undertaken for these projects to define their scope, feasibility, and limitations.



An example of a wayfinding system.



A conceptual of rendering of Richmond Street with rapid transit service.



An example of a transit hub within a downtown.



A conceptual rendering of a pedestrian overpass to Clarence Street from SoHo.



## Strategic Direction

# 4 Green our downtown.

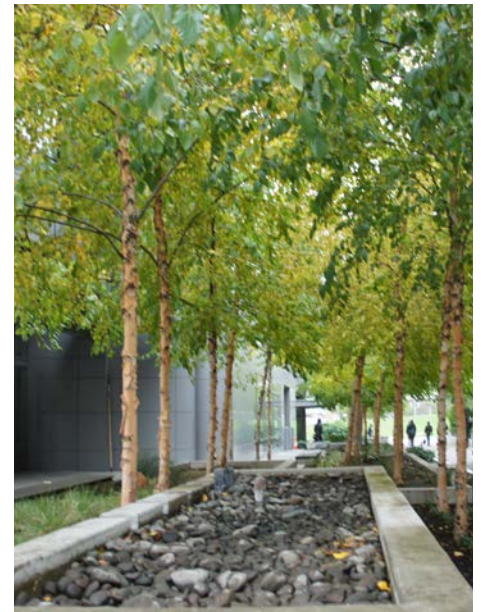
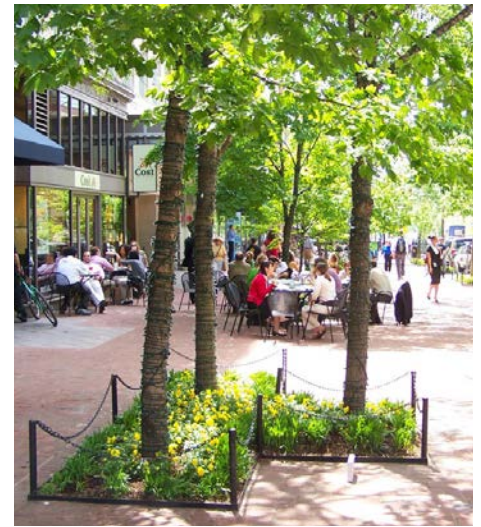
- 4.1 Reduce Richmond Street from four vehicular lanes to three vehicular lanes between Queens Avenue and York Street to provide an opportunity to allow for larger tree planting.
- 4.2 Expand the boulevard along King Street to enhance tree growth opportunities.
- 4.3 Increase the number of street trees planted along the Clarence Street Connector and Dundas Place.
- 4.4 Use new tree planting technology to ensure a healthy and adequate growing environment.
- 4.5 Improve tree planting opportunities by removing right hand channelized turns at intersections.
- 4.6 Promote green infrastructure and construction techniques and materials during the construction and renovation of buildings.
- 4.7 Increase the level of tree maintenance to protect the investment in the downtown's tree canopy.
- 4.8 Collaborate with MainStreet London to develop and promote programs for downtown property owners related to container plantings, waste reduction and management, and efficient energy.

## Goal

To improve the pedestrian environment and the downtown's image with enhanced landscaping and tree planting; to emphasize energy and environmental sustainability in refuse collection, building rehabilitation, and new construction; to foster local market opportunities for green jobs.

## Why Is This Important?

Livability and pedestrian comfort in a street environment is enhanced by the green elements of that space. Trees and plantings promote a positive image of the downtown. These elements also help to provide shade on hot days and provide some shelter on rainy days. Green infrastructure delivers a positive pedestrian experience, which supports a vibrant and successful downtown.



Examples of alternative stormwater management systems that slow the rainwater intake into the system, relieving pressure from the system during large storm events.



A conceptual rendering illustrating King Street with increased boulevard widths and tree planting.