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J. Adema

<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>GREAT NEAR CAMPUS NEIGHBOURHOODS STRATEGY REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE MEETING ON TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Director, Planning and City Planner, the attached Terms of Reference for the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy Review **BE APPROVED**.

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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At its February 9, 2015 meeting, Municipal Council resolved:

*That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions be taken with respect to housing concerns in North London:*

- a) *The Managing Director, Planning and City Planner's report, dated February 2, 2015, **BE RECEIVED**; and,*
- b) *The Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to prepare a Terms of Reference, in consultation with community stakeholders, for a review of the Great Near Campus Neighbourhood Strategy, focusing on the identification of next steps and actions to implement the Strategy and the successes and challenges in the Near Campus Neighbourhoods area.*

In accordance with the Council direction that community stakeholders be consulted during the preparation of the Terms of Reference for the Great Near Campus Strategy Review, a Public Information Meeting was held on April 1, 2015. At the meeting community stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide feedback on a draft version of these Terms of Reference. The comments received were considered by staff when preparing the current Terms of Reference.

<b>HISTORY OF THE GREAT NEAR CAMPUS NEIGHBOURHOODS STRATEGY</b>
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The original Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy was the result of an initiative called "Closing the Gap: New Partnerships for Great Neighbourhoods Surrounding our University and Colleges." This initiative was presented to the Planning Committee in February, 2007 and pointed out the gaps between the vision for the near campus neighbourhoods and the state of affairs at that time.

Following the initial 2007 report, community consultations and discussions with targeted stakeholders were held in the near campus neighbourhoods. In November, 2008 the outcomes of these consultations were presented to the Planning Committee in the form of the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy and Implementation Plan, both of which were approved to address near campus planning issues.

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The Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy included 10 strategies, each with specific initiatives to achieve the objectives of the strategy. The 10 strategies were:

1. Welcome students as a vital part of our community
2. Provide for safe housing
3. Offer a higher level of public service to the community
4. Align expectations
5. Protect residential amenity
6. Provide alternatives to balance the mix
7. Create great places and spaces in our neighbourhoods
8. Invest in infrastructure
9. Level the playing field for landlords
10. Provide for affordable housing

The Implementation Plan that was also adopted in 2008 established a timeline to achieve the objectives and tasks included in the strategy. It included short, medium, and long term deadlines to complete different aspects of the plan. Various partners were included in the Implementation Plan including the City of London (including various departments such as Planning, By-law Enforcement, Police Services, Fire, London Transit Commission, Building, and Environmental and Engineering Services), and Western University and Fanshawe College (including administration and students). Each group was assigned specific responsibilities that contributed to closing the gap between the vision and existing conditions. Some of the initiatives that were included in the Implementation Plan include:

- Updated Official Plan policies and Zoning regulations (Planning)
- Rental Housing Licensing By-law (By-law Enforcement)
- Proactive by-law enforcement (By-law Enforcement)
- Project LEARN (London Police)
- Fire prevention and safety messages (Fire Department)
- Landlord information and training (By-law Enforcement, Western University, and Fanshawe College)
- New on-Campus housing (Western University and Fanshawe College)
- Joint welcome packages for students (all partners)
- Participation in the Town & Gown Committee (all partners)

Following the adoption of the Strategy, the next step was to adopt Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments in 2012. These amendments applied new planning policies specific to the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods context. The purpose of the amendments was to guide future development in the area, especially as it relates to intensification. Policies were added that:

- Established a vision for the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods,
- Set land use planning goals for the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods,
- Encouraged appropriate intensification – directed preferred forms of intensification to appropriate locations,
- Developed zoning regulations to implement the Official Plan policies,
- Implemented policies for high, medium, and low density residential areas,
- Created additional considerations for reviewing Minor Variance and Consent applications,
- Protected heritage resources,
- Included goals for intermingling and interaction between on and off campus lands,
- Facilitated public project that enhance the Near Campus Neighbourhoods area, and
- Required high quality urban design in new developments.

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The Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy has been in effect since 2008, with Official Plan policies and Zoning regulations being in effect as of 2012. Given that it has been seven years since the adoption of the strategy, it is appropriate to undertake a review to determine whether the strategy is having the desired effect and whether any changes are required to close the gaps between the vision and current conditions in the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods. Staff confirm, though, that the Zoning Amendments have only been in place for three years and their impact is difficult to assess at this early stage.

Since the strategy was adopted many of its recommendations have been implemented, and recent intensification projects have occurred in preferred locations. Comments have been received, however, from some residents of the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods indicating that not enough progress has been made. This was also expressed in the comments received at the April 1<sup>st</sup> Public Information Meeting. To address these concerns, the impacts of the strategy must be quantified and analyzed in order to determine where the strategy has been effective and where it has fallen short. This will lead to an ability to take the appropriate next steps for continued improvements in the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods.

<b>PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>
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The purpose of preparing these terms of reference and for completing a review of the Great Near Campus neighbourhoods Strategy is to examine the changing planning and neighbourhood contexts, review the effectiveness of the first GNCN Strategy and other initiatives that have been implemented, establish a new collective vision for the GNCN, and determine what policies or processes are appropriate to close the gaps between current conditions and the collective vision for the GNCN.

The objectives of the Strategy review as outlined in the Terms of Reference are to:

- Establish a new collective vision and goals for the GNCN;
- Evaluate the success of the 2008 GNCN Strategy and Implementation Plan, and the 2012 amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law;
- Analyze and evaluate changing trends in the GNCN since adoption of the Strategy;
- Develop new strategies and/or initiatives to fill any gaps found between the current vision and policies;
- Maintain working relationships between all partners in the GNCN, which includes the City of London, Western University, Fanshawe College, Police and Fire Services, and community members. Ensure there is collaboration in addressing the GNCN planning challenges; and
- Prepare and Implement any necessary revisions to the strategy, which may include amendments to City policies and procedures, and actions by other partners in the GNCN.

The proposed Terms of Reference include a three phase work plan. The proposed phases are:

- Phase 1: Review Current Conditions & Background Information
- Phase 2: Review 2008 GNCN Strategy & Establish a New Vision and Goals
- Phase 3: Prepare the GNCN Strategy-2.0

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Because data has not been collected to measure the changes in the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods or determine the effectiveness of the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy, it is necessary that the first phase in the study consist of a review of the current state of affairs, to determine what changes have occurred since the strategy was implemented. Phase 1 will provide a foundational understanding of whether the general approach in Strategy-2.0 should be to carry on with the current basic strategy while making minor changes, or if more substantial changes are required. Planning processes often take many years to be fully implemented, so it must be understood that the strategy may be working even if its full impact has not been felt at this time.

Pending the outcomes of the Phase 1 review, Phase 2 will include a thorough review of the 2008 Strategy and preparation of a new vision and goals for the neighbourhood. Two Public Information Meetings are planned for Phase Two to ensure that community input is received for guidance throughout this process. There will also be discussions and research of possible new strategies and initiatives that could contribute to closing the gaps between the collective vision that will be developed and current conditions.

Subject to the results of Phases 1 and 2, Phase 3 is the final part of the Strategy review. It will include preparing a new strategy with initiatives and policies to address the current issues facing the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods.

<b>SUMMARY OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION</b>
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Part of the direction given to City staff by Council was to develop the Terms of Reference “in consultation with community stakeholders.” To ensure that community stakeholders had input, a draft Terms of Reference was prepared on March 17, 2015, and a Public Information Meeting was held on April 1, 2015 to discuss that draft and receive comments. Feedback was received through the discussion that occurred at the meeting as well as through comments sent in to City staff afterwards.

The Terms of Reference have been updated in consideration of the comments received and are included in Appendix 1. Some comments were received that applied to current issues or City procedures and were not specific to the Terms of Reference. These comments have been recorded and will be considered during later phases of the study.

Some of the changes that have been made to the Terms of Reference in response to community feedback include:

- Framing the study as a new Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy and more than an update to the previous version, thereby allowing for greater consideration of the goals and objectives that set the stage for the strategy.
- Greater emphasis on visioning and goal setting exercises, to ensure that Strategy-2.0 reflects current community values.
- Addition of a second Public Information Meeting in Phase 2, to ensure there is community ownership of the vision and input into new and updated strategies.
- Review opportunities to attract diverse new residents to the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods.

The outcome of the public consultation during the preparation of the Terms of Reference is that they reflect the community’s values that were expressed to City staff. The expression of interest received from the public has also resulted in an increase in the public participation component of the study to provide more opportunities for public input throughout the study process.

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<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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The Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods are an important part of the City of London that have been the focus of many planning discussions since the mid-1980s and continuing to today. While the strategy implemented in 2008 is thought to have made some progress in these neighbourhoods, it is necessary to undertake a review of the strategy now to assess the level of success and determine what new policies or procedures should be implemented.

The Terms of Reference in Appendix 1 propose a rigorous review of the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy and will result in a new Strategy that moves the Great Near Campus Neighbourhoods towards closing the gap between the collective vision and current conditions.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
<b>JUSTIN ADEMA, MCIP, RPP PLANNER II, LONG RANGE PLANNING AND RESEARCH</b>	<b>GREGG BARRETT, AICP MANAGER, LONG RANGE PLANNING AND RESEARCH</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
<b>JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER</b>	

May 6, 2015  
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