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A. Macpherson

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S "BACK TO THE RIVER" DESIGN COMPETITION MEETING ON JUNE 1, 2015

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions **BE TAKEN** in regards to the London Community Foundation's *Back to the River* Design Competition:

- a) The winning design team from the London Community Foundation's *Back to the River* Design Competition **BE AWARDED** a City consulting contract for detailed design, tendering and contract administration of the inaugural project as per section 15.2 (e) of the City's Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, and;
- b) The 2015 approved funding of \$100,000 for the detailed design contract **BE INCREASED** to \$200,000 by utilizing approved funding from existing capital programs associated with Thames River Valley improvements; and,
- c) The financing for this project **BE APPROVED** as set out in the Source of Financing Report attached hereto as Appendix "A".

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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June 9, 2014 London Community Foundation's presentation to the Investment and Economic Prosperity Committee regarding their proposed *Back to the River* Design Competition. Council endorsed the project and provided \$50,000 to support the planning and coordination of the design competition.

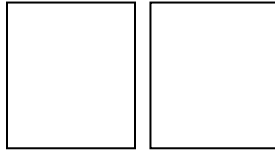
BACKGROUND

The London Community Foundation's (LCF) impetus for the project and vision for the Thames was greatly influenced by the hugely successful efforts of a similar project in Pittsburgh that transformed the City's downtown waterfront from a derelict, unsafe, unvalued landscape to one that has made enormous impacts on the economy, aesthetics, health and vibrancy of the City.

LCF's *Back to the River* project has set a program that will establish an overall design and functional vision for the river corridor, define area-specific strategies for the long term development of community assets along the river and identify implementable inaugural projects will utilize the river as a catalyst for economic development and regeneration. This program is in keeping with the City's overall vision for the Thames River in the Thames Valley Corridor Plan as determined through extensive community engagement:

The Thames Valley Corridor is London's most important natural, cultural, recreational and aesthetic resource. The City and community partners will preserve and enhance the natural environment, Thames River health, vistas, beauty and cultural heritage while accommodating compatible infrastructure, accessibility and recreation.

Grant Oliphant, past CEO of the Pittsburgh Community Foundation, presented at both the first and second London X Events and reconfirmed the huge value of the Pittsburgh experience. The benefits achieved are outlined on the Pittsburgh Riverlife website (<http://www.riverlifepgh.org/>) :



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ECONOMICALLY:

Since 2000, every dollar of Riverlife operating support (totaling \$12.5 million) has leveraged \$11 additional dollars invested in riverfront projects, totaling \$130 million. Every dollar invested in riverfront parks has in turn lured \$32 in adjacent related investments along the riverfronts, totaling \$4.1 billion. Pittsburgh’s riverfront trails and parks draw people from around the globe to experience some of the most breathtaking urban scenery in the world.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

The riverfront can become a new symbol or expression for a modern and progressive city, like a sustainable spine that moves through the urban setting. Through Riverlife’s own public planning processes as well as with partners, we ensure that riverbanks once choked by industry are developed in a way that reinstates riparian ecology and increases habitat. We know that environmental reclamation can be done while continuing to encourage recreation and commerce.

RECREATION/HEALTHY CITY

Riverfront trails and greenways provide an inexpensive and accessible exercise option for people living in urban communities. Riverfront parks and trails are also about building connections. Three Rivers Park will provide continuous access for tourism and visitors experiencing Pittsburgh’s downtown amenities. It’s not just about recreation. It’s about quality of life. Outdoor urban trails, walkways and public parks encourage people to get outside and be active. The U.S. Surgeon General estimates two-thirds of American adults and nearly one in three children are overweight or obese and calls for communities to become more actively involved in creating healthier environments that improve resident’s access to outdoor recreation.

The area of the Thames River that has been identified as the subject of this design competition is the downtown portion of the river corridor emanating from the Forks - roughly five kilometers long, stretching north to Oxford Street, west to Wharnclyffe Road and east to Adelaide Street South - a similar area to Pittsburgh (refer to Appendix A). Many other mid-sized cities have undertaken major riverfront improvement projects with similar City-building results: St. Louis, Winnipeg, Columbus and Cincinnati.

Very early in the process, the LCF made contact with the City and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority to partner in this venture. Both are bringing a wealth of background knowledge and experience in working within the river valley and are participating on several of the project sub-committees: communications, public engagement and technical.

Working from the Pittsburgh situation and tailoring the project for London, the *Back to the River* project is built upon the following principles:

1. The Thames River is a designated Heritage River, touching all areas of the City and residents’ lives;
2. The River is a compelling community resource through its own presence, its adjacent parklands and the opportunities and contributions it makes to the quality of community life in London;
3. The River represents an economic opportunity in terms of tourism, recreation, compatible and development and related initiatives;
4. The River is a unique opportunity in community building, being a catalyst to engage the community in setting and investing in its future;
5. Water quality – The River is valued for its biodiversity and is to be protected to support the natural ecosystem as well as human uses both locally and downstream, and;
6. The Working River - The River has been, and continues to be, a meeting place, a source of water and a transportation corridor connecting communities throughout Southern Ontario to the Great Lakes.

DESIGN COMPETITION

The process for selecting a successful proponent team involves two stages. A Request for Qualifications process (RFQ) is the first stage of the process and provides an overview of the project, outlines the background and context of the project, a project description and the

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objectives for the project. Submissions from proponents are to demonstrate an understanding of the project expressed in a concise vision statement and to provide their relevant qualifications and experience. RFQ submissions will be short-listed based on an evaluation process by a jury established by LCF with input from the City and UTRCA. The full RFQ and information about jury members is available at: www.lcf.on.ca.

On the basis of these submissions between three and five qualified Proponents will be invited to respond to the Request for Proposals stage. Each qualified Proponent who is invited to and submits a qualified response to the RFP will be awarded \$40,000 from the LCF. In the RFP stage of the process, Proponents will be asked to elaborate upon their vision and approach to the Back to the River project and produce a design for three scales of detail:

Thames River Valley:

A high-level, twenty year plan and accompanying sets of actions, integrating existing and new venues and developments consistent with the principles of the Back to the River program for the complete study area. The intent of this scale of activity is to build on the significant research and study work that has been completed to-date, preparing a design proposal for the contiguous river area and identify a “string of pearls” that representing primarily public lands, but also opportunities for community and private sector improvement and development. The design focus would be on the common elements of landscape architecture, park spaces, river-edge treatments and related features to be found along the length of the river corridor.

Focus Areas:

Scale 2 will focus on the development of area design plans for two specific sections of the River: the Forks area bounded by the Blackfriars Bridge, the Wharncliffe Bridge and the Stanley Street Bridge and the SoHo Area from the Wellington Street bridge to the Adelaide Street bridge. The short-listed design teams will be asked to undertake a more detailed design to accommodate more intensive events and activities and tied to recent development plans in each area – the Downtown Pan and the SOHO Plan / Old Victoria Hospital Plan.

The Inaugural Projects:

Scale 3 will have the design teams identify two inaugural projects, one in each focus area, that they believe would be the most important initiative in advancing their design vision. This will involve outlining the design elements, connections, linkages and related components that would result in a project brief, prepared to the point where once a decision is made and funding secured, an inaugural project could be moved to detailed design and implementation. One of the Inaugural Projects will be along the City’s downtown waterfront – Ivey and/or Harris Park.

The design competition jury will select a winner from the submissions – a design that best addresses these key criteria at a minimum:

- An integrated design that fully expresses the potential of the defined River corridor;
- Build on the extensive work and research completed to-date on the River;
- Focus on realistic and achievable designs and projects;
- Embrace creativity and innovative ideas within obtainable parameters;
- Achieve cleaner water, improved habitats and a strengthened River ecology;
- Increase accessibility and use of the River for all to enjoy;
- Support the LCF project team working together to achieve real benefits for the community;
- Capitalize on enhancing the River’s economic development potential as an evident asset; to both attract and retain people and investment in London, and;
- Use community-based funding to leverage new project specific donations, senior Government funding, Foundation and other funding.

This design competition process is similar to the one that was used for the City’s Market Lane Design Competition where the winner was awarded a consulting contract for detailed design, tendering and contract administration. In this case, the difference is that an outside organization will be leading the *Back to the River* design competition. The City’s Purchasing and Supply Division and Legal Division have reviewed and approved of LCF’s RFQ / RFP design competition process as being open, fair and competitive and would result in a preferred consulting team and winning design. This would allow the City to then award to the winner a consulting contract for detailed design, tendering and contract administration of the Downtown

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Waterfront Inaugural Project under Section 15.2 (e) of the City’s Procurement of Goods and Services Policy.

The design competition is anticipated to wrap up in early November, 2015, at which time, the City would negotiate a contract with the winning consultant in keeping with standard professional fee schedules for detailed design of the inaugural project along the City’s downtown waterfront. Funding to start the detailed design was approved in the 2015 budget, but will now be augmented by funding from two existing capital accounts for Thames River Valley improvements to ensure that the detailed design process can be fully completed as soon as possible. Completing the detailed design step ensures that the City’s inaugural project is ready to go to tender if an infrastructure funding program or other alternative funding source is identified. The City’s portion of the project has been identified in the draft four year budget submission for Council’s consideration. The inaugural project could be delayed or constructed in phases to suit Council’s priorities.

PREPARED BY:
ANDREW MACPHERSON, OALA MANAGER, ENVIRONMENTAL & PARKS PLANNING
RECOMMENDED BY:
JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER

Appendix A – Source of Financing
Appendix B - Study Area Map

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APPENDIX 'A'

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Chair and Members
 Planning & Environment Committee

May 22, 2015
 (Revise Budget)

**RE: Implementation of the London Community Foundation's
 "Back to the River" Design Competition
 Capital Project PD1215 - Downtown Waterfront**

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT ON THE SOURCES OF FINANCING:

Finance and Corporate Services confirms that the cost of this project cannot be accommodated within the financing available for it in the Capital Works Budget and that, subject to the adoption of the recommendations of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the detailed source of financing for this project is:

<u>ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>Approved Budget</u>	<u>Additional Funding</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u>
Engineering-detailed design	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000
City Related Expenses	50,000		50,000
NET ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES	<u>\$150,000</u>	<u>\$100,000</u> 1)	<u>\$250,000</u>
<u>SOURCE OF FINANCING:</u>			
Drawdown from Economic Development R.F.	\$50,000		\$50,000
Drawdown from Operating Budget Contingency Reserve	100,000		100,000
Capital Levy-Tsf. From PD2123-Thames Valley Corridor		20,000	20,000
Capital Levy-Tsf. From PD2134-Maintain Thames Valley		80,000	80,000
TOTAL FINANCING	<u>\$150,000</u>	<u>\$100,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>

Financial Note:

- 1) The additional funding requirement of \$100,000 is available as a transfer of capital levy in the amount of \$20,000 from capital projects PD2123 - Thames Valley Corridor and \$80,000 from PD2134 - Maintain Thames Valley.

EH



 Larry Palarchio
 Director of Financial Planning & Policy

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APPENDIX B

BACK TO THE RIVER
MAP 1: STUDY AREA AND AREAS OF INTEREST

