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A. Macpherson

<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>UPDATE REPORT FOR THE THE LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S "BACK TO THE RIVER" DESIGN COMPETITION MEETING ON JUNE 15, 2015</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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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 selected through the Request for Proposal issued by the London Community Foundation for the Back to the River Design Competition in July, 2015 **BE AWARDED** a City consulting contract for detailed design of the inaugural project per Section 15.2 (e) of the City's Procurement of Goods and Services Policy; **IT BEING NOTED THAT** the City will negotiate a contract with the winning consultant, in keeping with standard professional fee schedules for detailed design;
- b) Approved funding from existing capital programs associated with Thames River Valley improvements (PD2123 Thames Valley Corridor Plan (\$20,000) and PD2134 Thames Valley Parkway (\$80,000)) **BE TRANSFERRED** to the approved funding in PD1215 of \$100,000 to support the preparation of detailed design for the inaugural project;
- c) The financing for this detailed design project **BE APPROVED** as set out in the Source of Financing Report attached hereto as Appendix "A";
- d) The winning design from the London Community Foundation's *Back to the River* Design Competition **BE PRESENTED** by the LCF to the Planning and Environment Committee by December of 2015 for Council endorsement prior to the City proceeding with any implementation of the design; and
- e) The scope of work and funding for construction of any components of the design **BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL** by Council through the multi-year budget process, prior to proceeding to any tender process to initiate construction.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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- June 1, 2015 Report outlining the intent, background, scope, funding and process for the London Community Foundation's "Back to the River" Design Competition and seeking approval of additional funding for detailed design of the winning submission.
- April 7, 2015 Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan. The Downtown Plan includes a strategic direction to "Reconnect with the Thames River" and a transformational project to implement "a 2015 design ideas competition for London's central riverfront, hosted by the London Community Foundation [to] inform the development opportunities associated with this project".
- March 10, 2015 Strategic Plan for the City of London, 2015 to 2019. The Strategic Plan included a strategy to "partner with the London Community Foundation on the Back to

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the River Project”.

- 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.
  
- January, 2012      Thames Valley Corridor Plan – the Master Plan called for a review Harris Park at the Forks for its potential and to develop recommendations and a plan for upgrading the park .

**BACKGROUND**

This report provides supplemental information to the June 1, 2015 Planning and Environment Committee report.

**1. Back to the River Project**

In June of 2014 the London Community Foundation proposed a community led urban design competition for the City of London’s riverfront. The project would cover the lands in three directions from the Forks of the Thames River: (1) from the Forks to Oxford Street; (2) from the Forks to Wharnccliffe Road; and (3) from the Forks to Adelaide Street. Appendix B shows this area. The project was given the name “Back to the River Design Competition”.

***Objectives of the Back to the River Project***

The high level objectives for the Back to the River Design Competition are:

- Mobilize and engage the London community in a collaborative discussion about improving our riverfront
- Create a riverfront design to improve London’s image, economy and environment by substantially improving our riverfront
- Establish a design for the riverfront that is bold and visionary, inspiring the community to improve our river as the heart of our city and increase community pride in our river
- Create a more beautiful, cleaner and attractive riverfront that will enhance our goals for downtown regeneration, residential development, labour force attraction and retention, tourism, and economic improvement

The intent is provide a Plan that Municipal Council, the London Community Foundation, UTRCA, private donors and senior government can “get behind” to develop over time as funding is available.

<b>Integrated</b>	Initiate an integrated design that fully expresses the potential of the defined River corridor
<b>Use Efforts to Date</b>	Build on the extensive work and research completed to-date on the River.
<b>Practical / Doable</b>	Focus on realistic and achievable designs and projects.
<b>Innovation</b>	Embrace creativity and innovative ideas within obtainable parameters.
<b>Environment</b>	Achieve cleaner water; improved habitats and a strengthened River ecology
<b>People</b>	Increase accessibility and use of the River for all to enjoy.
<b>A Community Partnered Initiative</b>	Support LCF, the City, UTRCA, SoHo and others working together to achieve real benefits for the community.
<b>Economic Impact</b>	Capitalize on enhancing the River’s economic development potential as an evident asset to both attract and retain people and investment in London.
<b>Leverage</b>	Use community-based funding to leverage new project specific donations, and senior government, foundation and other funding.

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***Utilizing the Plan to attract funding and donations***

Implementing a plan to improve London’s riverfront is a long-term endeavour. It is expected that improvements to the river will be implemented in a variety of stages, at different locations, and subject to the availability of funding over the coming decades. Individual projects will be completed over time, with the overall riverfront revitalization plan in mind for each. It is also expected that funding for such improvements will come from a variety of different sources over time, including the City, senior levels of government and private sector donors.

The London Community Foundation has been clear in its goal to help create an inspiring riverfront plan that can be used to prompt private sector donations. They have indicated that private interests – individuals and corporations – may be willing to contribute to components of a motivational plan that will establish a legacy for current and future generations. The London Community Foundation has already had success in this regard as private donors have contributed significantly to the project and have expressed ongoing interest.

Senior governments offer funding, from time to time, to municipalities for a variety of initiatives. Typically, these funding envelopes are offered to those communities that have “shovel ready” projects that meet their funding criteria. It is intended that the inaugural project at the Forks of the Thames will be moved to a detailed design stage so that it is shovel ready for both government grant applications and private sector donations.

***Consistent with City Plans***

The Back to the River Design Competition is consistent with a number of the City’s approved plans, including:

1. **Council’s Strategic Plan – 2015-2019** approved by Council in 2015: Under the “Growing our Economy” area of focus, Council has established a strategy to “Partner with the London Community Foundation on the Back to the River Project”; and under “Building a Sustainable City”, Strategy 4E - “Invest in making London’s riverfront beautiful and accessible for all Londoners.” While this strategy was set by Council, the important step remains to assess where riverfront improvements fit in, relative to all other strategies within the Plan, and the pace by which Council may wish to proceed with such improvements. That assessment will occur through the multi-year budget process.
2. **London’s Downtown Plan**, approved by Council in 2015: Strategic Direction #2 is “Reconnect with the Thames River and Transformational Project #3 establishes that “A 2015 design ideas competition for London’s central riverfront, hosted by the London Community Foundation, will inform the development opportunities associated with this project.”
3. **London’s Current Official Plan**: “The valley lands of the Thames River and its tributaries shall continue to be regarded as the primary open space resource in the City of London, and programs to increase public ownership, accessibility and use of these lands shall be pursued”.
4. **Draft London Plan**: Several policies speak to urban regeneration in the Downtown, which the Forks plays a major role: “We will connect strongly to our birthplace, at the Forks of the Thames River, where we will create beautifully landscaped “people places” that Londoners will gravitate toward.”

***Other Cities Having Design Competitions***

Design competitions have been conducted for a variety of purposes in many cities across North America and the world. The London Community Foundation’s consultant, Urban Strategies, has led several of them, including some very large competitions such as:

- Dundas Square – Toronto, Canada
- Landsdowne Park – Ottawa, Canada
- Exchange Square – Manchester, England

In all three cases, the designs have been implemented or are underway.

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As shown in the below “clip” regarding Milwaukee’s recent riverfront design competition, the winner is typically commissioned to undertake the detailed design work following the competition. In essence, the design competition is treated as a procurement process to hire the successful designer. Urban Strategies sees this as an imperative and indicates that the commitment to commission the competition winner to undertake the detailed design work is fundamental in getting the best firms to enter the competition. The same technique was used for the Market Lane design competition, where the RFP indicated that the winner of the competition would be commissioned to do the detailed design and construction administration.



**TLS/KVA Named Winning Design Team!**

With their selection as the winning team, TLS/KVA will be awarded a riverfront parks commission and become part of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s Minneapolis Riverfront Initiative, of which the design competition was the first phase. While the team’s RiverFIRST proposal contained many specific design schemes, no particular location, project or feature has yet been identified for development. As the design competition concludes, the Park Board and its partners will engage in a four-month transition phase to identify next steps.



Tom Leader Tom Leader Studio (Berkeley), Sheila Kennedy and Frano Violich, Kennedy & Violich Architecture (Boston)

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**Steering Committee**

The Back to the River Steering Committee is made up of the following people:

- Fred Galloway (Steering Committee Chair) – London Community Foundation Board Vice President
- Martha Powell – London Community Foundation, President and CEO
- Ulyana Kordyuk – London Community Foundation, Secretary
- Vanessa Dolishny – London Community Foundation, Communications
- Tom Cull – Community Representative, Thames River Cleanup
- Hank Vander Laan – Community Representative, Trojan Technologies
- Sheila Simpson – Community Representative, Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Al Day – Community Representative, N’Amerind First Nations Centre
- Ian Wilcox – Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
- Theresa Hollingsworth - Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
- John Fleming – City of London, Planning Services
- John Braam – City of London, Engineering and Environmental Services
- Andrew Macpherson – City of London, Planning Services
- Pat Donnelly – City of London, Engineering and Environmental Services
- Rob Paynter – City of London, Communications
- William Pol – Fanshawe College

**Jury**

The Design Competition Jury is arms-length from all of the project partners, with none of the jury members being from the London Community Foundation, UTRCA, or City of London. The jury members are well-recognized experts in their field and bring international and local knowledge to the selection process. They include:

Joni Baechler	Chair of the Jury - Former London Councillor and Former Mayor
Paul Bedford	Urban Mentor, Adjunct Professor of City & Regional Planning, former Chief Planner for Toronto
Dave Harvey	Founder and Director, Parks People, Baltimore
George Kapelos	Associate Professor in the Department of Architectural Science, Ryerson University
Alissa North	Director of the Landscape Architecture Program, University of Toronto
Don Pearson	General Manager, Lower Thames River Conservation Authority
Carolyn Woodland	Senior Director of Planning, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Barbara Wilks	Principal and Founder, W Architecture and Landscape Architecture, New York

**2. Process**

The process for the Back to the River Design Competition and selecting a successful proponent team involves two stages, with a key role for City Council in endorsing the winning design and determining a suitable level of funding for the inaugural project.

**RFQ** Issuing a Request for Qualifications (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 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 the jury established by Back to the River Steering Committee. As of closing, 19 submissions were received.

**RFP** On the basis of these submissions, between 3 and 5 qualified Proponents will be commissioned to prepare designs at three different scales of detail (described below).

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This will be done through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. As a commission for these designs, each design team 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 designs for three scales of detail explained below.

**Scale 1: 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 upon 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 represent 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.

**Scale 2: 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.

**Scale 3: The Inaugural Projects**

Scale 3 will have the design teams identify two smaller 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. To support Council’s Strategic Plan and the Downtown Plan, it is proposed that one of the Inaugural Projects will be along the City’s downtown waterfront – Ivey and/or Harris Park.

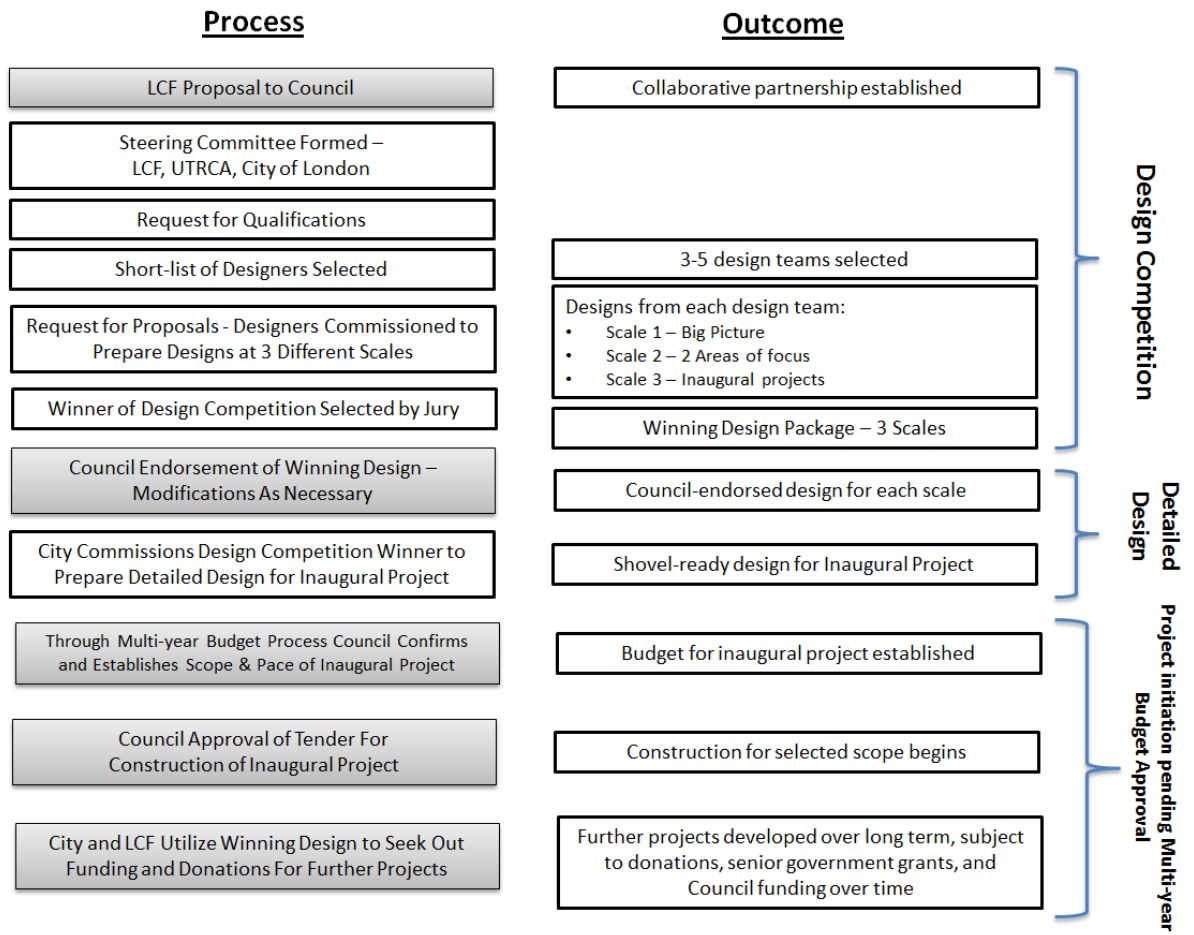
The process for completing the Back to the River Design Competition is summarized below in Figure 1. The outcomes of each process are also shown. The City’s Purchasing and Supply Division and Legal Division have reviewed and approved of LCF’s RFQ/RFP design competition process as being open, fair and 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 Waterfront Inaugural Project under Section 15.2 (e) of the City’s Procurement of Goods and Services Policy. The following points are noteworthy from Figure 1:

- The short-listed designers will be judged on their qualifications – note that they are not judged simply on their creative abilities and vision, but also on based on such things as their experience, the quality and abilities of their team, and their demonstrated experience with projects of similar size and scope.
- The design competition concludes when the winner is selected. Thereafter, the output of the design competition can be used by Municipal Council and the London Community Foundation in accordance with their objectives.
- From the design competition, the City will have waterfront redevelopment designs, at three different scales, from 3 to 5 highly experienced and skilled design teams.

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Figure 1 – Back to the River Design Competition and Subsequent Processes



Note: Shaded boxes indicate Council decision-point

### 3. Council Control

The City of London owns a significant amount of the land along the central forks area within the scope of this project. However, there are several other owners of this land, including the Middlesex County, the Upper Thames River Conservation Area, London Hydro, and others. In addition, many other parties own the lands adjacent to the Forks river valley, where improvements and new development may occur in response to the eventual riverfront improvements. Following the design competition, the Municipal Council will be in control over what happens next on city-owned lands:

- Staff will bring the results of the design competition forward to Council for review and consideration. Council may choose to endorse the plans, endorse them with modifications, or decide that they would like to go in a different direction.
- As noted, riverfront improvement and the Back to the River Design Competition has been identified within Council’s strategic plan. However, Council still needs to consider the funding of this work relative to its other priorities through the multi-year budget process.
- In doing so, Council will establish the scope of the work that it wants to initiate through this term of Council.

### 4. Contributions from Partners

The London Community Foundation, and its donors, are playing the lead role in the Back to the River Design Competition. They are partnering with the City of London and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority in doing so. TD Friends of the Environment have also provided significant funds to assist in the community engagement process.

The cost of the design competition for such things as the commission of the designs from the teams selected through the RFQ stage, the jury expenses (2 trips to London), project management, web site and communications, digital resources, and community engagement sessions is significant – totalling over \$350k. **The London Community Foundation and its private donors have committed to, or have paid, for approximately \$270k of this total amount.** TD Friends of the Environment have donated \$15k to this London Community Foundation contribution. The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority is also contributing

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dollars to the design competition project. All three partners have put in significant amounts of time and in-kind value into the process through their efforts.

**5. London Community Foundation Project Management**

Conducting a design competition is an involved process. It isn't a process that is executed with frequency in any municipality. Recognizing the need for expertise in managing such a process, the London Community Foundation hired Urban Strategies to do so. Urban Strategies has managed, and participated in, many design competitions. They have a good understanding of how such processes are successfully conducted so that they generate high quality and meaningful results. Working with the Steering Committee, Urban Strategies has led the design of the process, the preparation of the request for qualifications and will lead the preparation of the request for proposals.

**6. Shovel-ready Inaugural Project – Detailed Design**

In order to seek senior government funding, and to prepare for construction of some or all of the inaugural project, the City will need to undertake detailed design. This will transform the design drawings and concepts established through the design competition into workable construction drawings. In essence, this effort will make the project "shovel-ready". As noted above, senior government funding projects are often launched with absolute requirement that proposed projects be shovel ready; application timelines for such funding are typically short – as little as 3 weeks.

For example, the current Federal Government **Canada 150 Infrastructure Fund** selects projects with filters that require specific information about the project:

- Are plans and specifications prepared? Y/N or N/A (if yes, give dates)
- Is the project ready for tender? Y/N or N/A (if yes, give dates)
- Have necessary environmental approvals been secured? Y/N or N/A (if yes, give dates)

Getting the inaugural project shovel-ready is important so that the City may access these funding opportunities.

When Council decides to move forward with all or part of the inaugural project, with any changes that Council may want, detailed design drawings will be necessary. Even if Council decides to defer the project in the short-term, the design drawings will be useful in attracting government funding and private donor contributions. Recognizing this, \$100,000 was approved by Council through the 2015 budget to establish a capital account that will be used to prepare detailed design when the design competition is completed. Staff believe that this amount should be augmented to \$200,000 to better reflect the detailed design costs associated with a meaningful inaugural project. Detailed design and construction administration is typically 10-12% of the total project cost for an initiative such as this and the detailed design component usually represents half of that amount.

Based on their experience, the London Community Foundation's consultant (Urban Strategies) who is project managing the design competition believes it is important to offer the commission of preparing the detailed design to the winner of the competition. Urban Strategies has indicated that this approach is commonly used and will play a significant role in encouraging quality design submissions through the RFP process. Staff agree with this approach. A similar approach was used by the City in its last design competition for Market Lane, where the request for proposal indicated that "The winner of the RFP will then be invited to enter into a contract with the City to produce construction and tender documents for Market Lane, and to supervise construction".

It is proposed that the additional \$100,000 in funding for the detailed design be transferred from two existing approved capital accounts:

PD2123 – Thames Valley Corridor Plan - \$20,000 which was identified for Heritage Interpretive Signage for our Heritage River. This Project can be deferred, awaiting refinement of the riverfront design and inclusion of heritage interpretation opportunities.

PD2134 Thames Valley Parkway - \$80,000 which can transferred from the project and still complete the pathway project as planned through the recent Environmental Assessment. It is also expected that CN Railway will contribute funding to the pathway project cost and lessen the municipal funding requirement further.



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**7. Progress to Date**

The RFQ stage has recently closed with nineteen submissions being received from five countries. Those submissions will be reviewed by the jury against the selection criteria to create a short-list of teams who will be invited to the next step – Design Competition (RFP).

The LCF has begun their community consultation process to seek input from Londoners into their vision/wishes for the project. Six sessions are planned, including one for adjacent land owners. The information received will be collated by LCF for use by each of the short-listed teams in their design process.

The Back to the River web site is under development and will be in place by the time that the Request for Proposals is released.

A video of the site and its unique cultural, ecological, recreational and other important features is being prepared and will be provided to the design teams for their use in tailoring their designs to London and the Thames River.

A background library of all relevant documents and studies related to the Thames River Corridor in the study area is being collected and will be made available to the design teams. It will also serve as an ongoing resource to be retained by the City of London and Upper Thames River Conservation Area.

**8. Next Steps**

The Design Competition will wrap up in November, 2015 and then provide a presentation to Planning and Environment Committee of the winning design for Council’s consideration and endorsement. The main steps in the process are outlined in Figure 1, but the immediate next steps are:

- The LCF will complete their planned community consultation meetings
- The Jury will short list the RFQ submissions to 3-5 who will be invited to participate in the design competition, starting mid-July, through the RFP process.

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

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

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**APPENDIX A  
SOURCE OF FINANCING SCHEDULE**

**APPENDIX 'A'**

#15093

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:

<b><u>ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES</u></b>	<b><u>Approved Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Additional Funding</u></b>	<b><u>Revised Budget</u></b>
Engineering-detailed design	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000
City Related Expenses	50,000		50,000
<b>NET ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES</b>	<b><u>\$150,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$100,000</u></b> 1)	<b><u>\$250,000</u></b>
<b><u>SOURCE OF FINANCING:</u></b>			
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
<b>TOTAL FINANCING</b>	<b><u>\$150,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$100,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$250,000</u></b>

**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

  
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 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**

