

Creating a Vibrant and Competitive Downtown

Janette MacDonald

Downtown London

CEO and General Manager



Current Situation

- Historically, the City has given up parking revenue at meters in December. We have no metrics to prove the success of this concession.



Dundas Street



Current Situation

- MainStreet London, a downtown revitalization organization, was created by the City in 1998 to participate in strategic leasing along with many other revitalization initiatives.

OUR MOVE FORWARD

LONDON'S DOWNTOWN PLAN

Council adopted April 14, 2015



Vacancies and Non-Targeted Uses



Richmond Street

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Retail - 150

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Dundas Street



181

King Street

LONDON'S
LARGEST
SELECTION



2 Floors
of Inventory

GLASS PIPE
GRINDERS
SHEESHA

PAPERS
SCREENS
SCALES

2 FLOORS OF INVENTORY
COMING TODAY!

Richmond Street

State of the Downtown

Based on the previous investments the City made through the 1998 Millennium Plan, the downtown residential population grew

37%

compared to

8% city-wide.



private condominium residences
renaissancetwo.ca

renaissance II
PRIVATE CONDOMINIUM RESIDENCES

walk. shop. dine. play. explore.
renaissancetwo.ca

renaissance
PRIVATE CONDOMINIUM RESIDENCES

York Street



über

State of the Downtown

An average of

11

new businesses
opened each year.

Über Cool Stuff | Design Decor
122 Dundas St.

Carling Street



JONATHON

CANADA'S LARGEST
CERAMIC GALLERY

LONDON WELCOMES

DOMINION LOFT
APARTMENTS
1 BEDROOM
APARTMENT
AVAILABLE
657-5662

COFFEE
CAPS

Dundas Street

State of the Downtown

Taxable assessment
grew from
624 million to
**more than a
billion dollars**
between
2004 to 2013.

SAFFRON ROAD

brati

Holiday Hours

Close
Mon 10am-6pm
Tue 10am-6pm
Wed 10am-6pm
Thurs 10am-6pm
Fri 10am-6pm
Sat 10am-5pm
Sun 12am-4pm

SAFFRON ROAD
Mon - Wed 10AM to 6PM
Thurs - Sat 10AM to 8:30PM
Sun - Sat 10AM to 3:30PM
Sunday - By Appointment
www.saffronroad.ca
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Richmond Street

Lifestyle

WOMEN'S WEAR

Lifestyle

Lifestyle

WOMEN'S WEAR
Suits • Casuals • Dresses • Coats • Shoes

Christmas
Weekend
Special

ACCESSORIES

20% OFF

ENDS SUNDAY

Richmond Street

EMPORIUM OF FINE
CRAFT BEER
AND FRESH
LOCAL FOOD

Milo's

FARM
to
TABLE
FRESH



Talbot Street



JEFFERSON



FIREROASTED
* COFFEE COMPANY *

FIREROASTED
* COFFEE COMPANY *

FIREROASTED
* COFFEE COMPANY *

King Street



Dundas Street



Richmond Street



King Street

Return on Investment

More metrics, updates and results will be reported to the City to show the success of the investment.



Return on Investment

Users of the downtown will invest in **game-changing strategic recruitment** which will bring tax dollars into the City coffers.

A festive window display featuring two mannequins. The mannequin on the left is dressed in a black sleeveless top and a large, voluminous black afro wig, holding a white pom-pom. The mannequin on the right is wearing a black sequined dress and a colorful, fringed shawl. The background is a vibrant mix of red, yellow, and green, decorated with confetti and circular patterns. A semi-transparent dark red box with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

The Gap We Need to Address

- Action to attract **targeted businesses.**

Talbot Street

The Gap We Need to Address

- Continued growth of the **current value assessment** (tax base).

Talbot Street

The Gap We Need to Address

- More progress towards **urban regeneration** in Downtown London.



Dundas Street



**Budweiser
Gardens
\$52 M**



**Central
Library
\$25.9 M**



Improvements
**Forks of
The Thames
\$4.6M**



The City has invested in game-changers before.

“FEELINGS MIXED ON ARENA:

**MERCHANTS DIVIDED ON HOW MUCH
DOWNTOWN WILL BENEFIT”**

May 15, 2000 – London Free Press

“ARENA OPPOSITON FIRES UP:

**PETITION WILL FORMALIZE OBJECTIONS
TO THE TALBOT BLOCK LOCATION”**

June 21, 2000 – London Free Press

**“TALBOT BLOCK
LOCATION
WRONG SITE
FOR ARENA”**

October 16, 1999 – London Free Press

ENTERTAINMENT THEN...



ENTERTAINMENT NOW!



“THE DOWNTOWN ARENA WILL SIT QUIETLY EMPTY MOST NIGHTS”

October 10, 1999 – London Free Press



Adapting to new economic structure

By Adrian Cammaert

As any first year geography or urban planning student can tell you, traditional downtowns and main streets historically provided for the daily needs of their local residents. In this sense, they were subsistence downtowns and their form was a direct result of their function.

Without the use of personal automobiles, these were naturally pedestrian-oriented places as people were simply not willing to live too far from where they worked or shopped, thereby assuring their continued commercial success.

However, this pre-automobile era is now over. The automobile boom in the early/mid-20th century combined with the advent of zoning regulations that separated land uses, fundamentally changed people's spatial awareness by increasing their tolerance to live in a more dispersed manner. It became normal to travel greater distances for daily groceries whereas travelling such distances for such an ordinary activity would have been unthinkable in the past.

For better or worse, it is unlikely there will be a full-scale return to the subsistence downtown that previously assured the survival of these commercial areas. The economy has shifted away from this model and as a result it has become exceedingly difficult for many downtowns to remain economically viable. Investment has moved away from traditional downtowns and main streets and into auto-centric retail centres and industrial complexes that are farther removed from where people live. Meanwhile the traditional main street is left struggling to remain relevant.

But, there is hope. Millennials do not desire suburbia; they desire hip, urban places. Retirees are increasingly fitting into this profile as well; shunning the retirement communities once built in quiet suburban settings for those built in compact urban places surrounded by a variety of accessible activities and amenities. So while there may never again be the functional need for main streets and traditional



Adrian Cammaert

downtowns, there is a growing desire for these areas. However, for main streets and traditional downtowns to not only survive but thrive in this new economic reality, they must adapt their function from one that is subsistence-based to one that is amenity-based.

Municipal economic development departments, chambers of commerce and Business Improvement Area boards play a leading role in this adaptation. They provide the required guidance and structure necessary to actively manage these areas. However, downtowns cannot rely on the surrounding residential areas as their only market because their densities are typically too low to support its commercial areas. In short, attracting visitors is essential.

The most successful downtowns have over-arching marketing campaigns, consistent hours of operation, actively controlled retail mixes, planned and managed events that attract visitors, well-designed pedestrian-based places and strategic parking plans.

Historically, local shopping malls were seen as the foremost competitor of traditional downtowns and today malls are joined by big-box retail plazas, lifestyle centres and online shopping. But these perceived threats can be neutralized by a traditional downtown embracing its new role as a unique pedestrian destination. This adaptation ends the competition and focuses on a different market based on leisure rather than subsistence.

Although specific attributes differ from downtown to downtown, they commonly include outdoor meeting places, boutique-style retail choices and a heritage ambiance. As part of its transformation, it is essential that downtowns develop a unique identity and brand it. They must communicate what makes their community unique and worth visiting.

Downtowns are works in progress and must continually adapt to the changing economic and social context. Creating identity-driven destinations is an effective strategy to keep traditional downtowns and commercial main streets vibrant.

Adrian Cammaert, MCIP, RPP, CNU-A is an urban planner specializing in destination placemaking for traditional downtowns and commercial districts. He is also the chair for the Ontario Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism (cnuontario.org).

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- Adrian Cammaert, Main Street Revival



Solutions

- More focus on recruitment of **targeted** businesses.
- More strategic, specialist approach to recruiting the **right mix** of businesses and programming.
- Position Dundas Place and Richmond Row as the premier business locations in downtown.
- **Live Work Learn Play** brings together multiple stakeholders for a **targeted leasing and casting program**.

MainStreet London Request

- Remove the free on street parking in the month of December (Approx. \$200K per annum) for the next four years. Total \$800,000.00.
- Invest these funds in our new recruiting program with LWLP, estimated at \$540,000 plus implementation, advertising and other costs.
- Semi-annual reports will be provided to the City to demonstrate our progress.





MAINSTREET

LONDON

