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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	FIBRE OPTIC CONNECTION GRANT PILOT PROGRAM FOR DOWNTOWN LONDON- ONE YEAR UPDATE MEETING ON MONDAY, MAY 9, 2016

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, and with the concurrence of the City Manager, the following actions **BE TAKEN**:

- a) That the proposed by-law attached hereto as Appendix "A" **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting on May 17, 2016 to replace Schedule "A" of By-law No. C.P.-1467-175 being "A by-law to establish financial incentives for the Downtown Community Improvement Project Areas" with a new Schedule "A" entitled "'Last Mile"/Fibre Optic Connection Grant Program".

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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March 23, 2015, Fibre Optic Connection Grant Pilot Program for Downtown London, Planning and Environment Committee

BACKGROUND

On March 25, 2015, the City, in conjunction with the London Economic Development Corporation and Downtown London/MainStreet London, proposed the Last Mile/Fibre Optic Connection Grant program. The pilot program would focus on providing financial assistance to property owners and multi-year tenants in designated areas of the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area with high capacity fibre-optic broadband service. This new program would fund 50% of the eligible costs to a maximum of \$20,000 to fund the installation and connection of high capacity fibre-optic broadband service. The target area for this two year pilot program was the central core of Downtown, focused on Dundas and King Streets between Wellington and Ridout Streets. In response, Municipal Council at its meeting on March 31, 2015 adopted the Fibre Optic Connection Grant Program for Downtown London.

Eligible businesses for this grant program include creative industries, digital marketing and gaming, information technology, medical technology, and similar industries. The program includes criteria to monitor both the take-up and success of the program, and requires reporting information from applicants regarding job growth, expansion, and the ratio of London area and external sales. Like the City's other incentive programs, funds are not disbursed until the eligible works have been completed. For a more detailed background discussion on the pilot program please refer to Appendix "B".

DISCUSSION

A one year review of the two year pilot program was conducted in the first quarter of 2016 by the City and the program partners. The review concluded that the targeted area and eligible businesses for the grant program were too limited and that amendments should be made to the program in order to increase uptake before the program's second year review.

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APPENDIX “A”

Bill No.
2016

By-law No. C.P.-1467(__)-_____

A By-law to amend C.P.-1467-175 entitled “A by-law to establish financial incentives for the Downtown Community Improvement Project Areas”.

WHEREAS by Subsection 28(2) of the Planning Act, the Council of a municipal corporation may, by by-law, designate such an area as a community improvement project area;

AND WHEREAS by Subsection 28(4) of the Planning Act, the Council of a municipal corporation may adopt a community improvement plan for the community improvement project area;

AND WHEREAS Municipal Council adopted By-law C.P.-1356-234 to designate the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area;

AND WHEREAS Municipal Council adopted By-law C.P.-1357-249 to adopt the Downtown Community Improvement Plan;

AND WHEREAS Municipal Council adopted By-law C.P.-1467-175 to establish financial incentives for the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area;

AND WHEREAS the Official Plan for the City of London contains provisions relating to community improvement within the City of London;

Therefore the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. Delete Schedule “A” of By-law C.P.-1467-175 entitled “A by-law to establish financial incentives for the Downtown Community Improvement Project Areas”, and replace with the new attached Schedule “A” entitled “Last Mile”/Fibre Optic Connection Grant Program”, and renumber pages as required.

2. This by-law shall come into force and effect on the day it is passed.

PASSED in Open Council on May 17, 2016.

Matt Brown
Mayor

Catharine Saunders
City Clerk

First Reading – May 17, 2016
Second Reading – May 17, 2016
Third Reading – May 17, 2016