

London Development Institute

March 23, 2012

By Email

Chairman and Members
Planning and Environment Committee
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, Ontario
N6A 4L9

Re: Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan

Dear Committee Members:


The LDI is aware of the importance of an attractive and vibrant downtown for the City of London and the need to recognize it as a distinct and unique area in the City. It is also important as highlighted in the report to realize that the downtown has evolved through five stages in its development from its founding to recent times and that it will continue to evolve into the future.

An important part in keeping the downtown vibrant is to allow new investment and redevelopment that reflects the function and architecture of the day. The Heritage Conservation District Plan will play an important part in recognizing the past but it should not be used to limit new or redevelopment in the future.

While the plan seems reasonable in cases where new development will take place on vacant land, it seems that once this plan is approved, it will be more difficult to assemble properties and demolish existing buildings for redevelopment. If Council wants to encourage new development in the downtown it should allow redevelopment provided that the design of the new development will be sympathetic to the streetscape and adjacent buildings even at the cost of demolishing existing buildings.

Keeping the downtown of a modern city viable today requires striking the right balance between the old and the new and having procedures in place to analyse the cost benefits of the proposals being presented. We can't forget the past but we shouldn't limit the future.

Sincerely,
London Development Institute


Jim Kennedy
President, LDI

c.c. Don Menard, Heritage Planner

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..... developing and planning for a strong London

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