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**PLANNING OPTIONS FOR THE BIGS NEIGHBOURHOOD**  
M. Tomazincic

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP DIRECTOR OF LAND USE PLANNING &amp; CITY PLANNER</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>BEAUFORT STREET, IRWIN STREET, GUNN STREET, AND SAUNBY STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING OPTIONS MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2011</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Director of Land Use Planning and City Planner, based on the Council resolution on August 29, 2011 relating to "potential actions that can be taken to stop infill and intensification in the Irwin Street, Gunn Street, Saunby Street and Beaufort Street area", that Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to initiate the following course of action to manage infill and intensification:

- i. Retain a Planning Consultant to prepare a planning study for the Essex Street Area (generally bounded by the Canadian Pacific Railway to the south, the Thames River to the east, the University of Western Ontario and Thames River to the north, and Platt's Lane to the west); this plan will consolidate the recommendations of the Essex Street Study prepared in March 1995, where appropriate, and may include a master plan and policies to direct future development within the context of the Great Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy;
- ii. Consider initiating Official Plan amendments to implement the recommendations of the planning study, as identified in clause (i) above;
- iii. Consider adding zoning regulations in conformity with the Official Plan, as amended in clause (ii) above;
- iv. Should Council wish to proceed with the above course of action, Staff **BE DIRECTED** to seek out a potential source of financing in the amount of up to \$30,000 to retain a Planning Consultant to conduct the planning study and prepare the associated planning amendments in keeping with the study.

**IT BEING NOTED** that the Planning Division does not have resources to conduct the planning study noted in clause (i) above, and there is no source of financing available in the Planning Division budget to pay for consulting services.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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April 9, 1996 Report to Planning Committee – Residential Intensification in the Essex Street Area – This report recommended that the Planning Study on Residential Intensification in the Essex Street Area be circulated for public review. On April 15, 1996, Council resolved that the study entitled "Residential Intensification in the Essex Street Area" **BE CIRCULTED** and that the Commissioner of Planning **BE REQUESTED** to expand the Essex Street Study Area to include the Beaufort Street and Gunn Street areas.

June 24, 1996 Report to Planning Committee – Residential Intensification in the Essex Street Area – This report recommended amendments to the Zoning By-law to introduce more intense residential uses for lands located along the Western Road/Wharncliffe Road North corridor as well as the introduction of new floor area ratio, parking rate, and setback regulations to lands within the larger Essex Street neighbourhood.

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**PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The recommended course of action is intended to fulfill Council's direction to "report back to the September 12, 2011 Built and Natural Environment Committee with respect to the potential actions that can be taken to stop infill and intensification in the Irwin Street, Gunn Street, Saunby Street, and Beaufort Street area" which transpired as a result of a request from resident representatives from the BIGS neighbourhood.

**RATIONALE**

1. The Staff recommendation is consistent with the policies of the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2005* that encourage efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the municipality; accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses; and, promote cost-effective development standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.
2. The Staff recommendation is consistent the Residential Intensification policies of the Official Plan which place greater emphasis on ensuring that residential intensification projects maintain the character and compatibility with the surrounding residential neighbourhood.
3. The Staff recommendation to amend the Official Plan to implement the recommendations of the planning study will provide clarity for property owners in the BIGS area regarding the appropriate forms and locations of residential intensification proposals.
4. The Staff recommendation to consider reducing the number of bedrooms is consistent with the Great Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy which recommended that the maximum number of bedrooms per unit be reduced in multiple unit dwellings.

**PLANNING HISTORY**

On July 1, 1993, the current City of London Z.-1 Zoning By-law came into force and effect. This By-law repealed the previous C.P.-953-42 By-law which regulated the zoning of lands within the subject area prior to 1993. Similar to the current Zoning By-law, uses permitted under previous zoning regimes also allowed for two dwelling units per lot (for the past 45 years). The current Z.-1 Zoning By-law did not increase the permitted intensity of the subject area, it merely continued to allow the range of uses that previous Zoning By-laws had already permitted.

In March 1995, Planning Staff undertook an Area Study for the neighbourhood surrounding Essex Street. Initially, the Essex Street Area Study did not include the lands located on Beaufort, Irwin, Gunn, and Saunby Streets (BIGS) nor did the Area Study include specific recommendations for these Streets. Residents from the BIGS neighbourhood provided comments and expressed similar concerns as those occurring within the Study Area relating to residential intensification pressures occurring in their neighbourhood. As a result of these concerns, Council resolved in April 1996, that Planning be requested to expand the Essex Street Study Area to include the Beaufort Street and Gunn Street areas. In June 1996, Planning Staff recommended that the zoning for the lands on Beaufort, Irwin, Gunn, and Saunby Streets be amended to include a Floor Area Ratio regulation, consistent with the lands identified in the Essex Street Study Area.

The purpose of the Essex Street Area Study was to, "... identify the areas where redevelopment is encouraged and where conservation of the existing housing stock is encouraged." To implement this stated purpose, many of the Area Study's recommendations focused on Zoning By-law amendments for the lands within the surrounding Low Density and Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential designations. A key direction of this Area Study was to direct higher intensity residential uses to the Western Road/Wharnccliffe Road North corridor while providing

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for lower intensity residential uses in the interior of the neighbourhood. However, Official Plan amendments to implement the Area Study's recommendations were not introduced at that time.

Notwithstanding the omission of specific recommendations for the BIGS neighbourhood in Area Study, a recent Ontario Municipal Board decision at 4 Saunby Street, in response to an appeal of Council's refusal to amend the Zoning By-law to permit a total of 5 dwelling units, upheld Council's decision on the basis that the requested zoning does not conform to the Essex Street Area Study and would create instability in the neighbourhood. This validated the applicability of the Essex Street Area Study recommendations for properties located along Beaufort, Irwin, Gunn, and Saunby Streets.

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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Since January 2010, a total of five, 10-bedroom duplexes have been redeveloped within the BIGS neighbourhood on lands that had previously accommodated single detached dwellings. Given the size of the lots, these redevelopments were constructed in conformity with the regulations of the Zoning By-law. Two concerns emanating from the community are that there is no opportunity for public input in response these redevelopment projects and that these projects represent just the "tip of the iceberg" as more properties are being acquired.

On August 13, 2011, resident representatives from the BIGS neighbourhood presented to the Built and Natural Environment Committee their concerns about the level of intensification occurring in the BIGS neighbourhood (see letter attached as Appendix "A"). Their concerns included such matters as:

- Single dwellings being replaced by 10-bedroom duplexes
- Lack of City by-laws to consider "balance"
- No assessment of the potential impacts these redevelopments may be creating
- Influx of transient populations which seek dwellings for the purposes of short-term accommodation

The resident representatives suggested that Council adopt an Interim Control By-law for a period of one year to prohibit further intensification until such time as the above issues can be examined. The resident representatives further suggested that a possible "down-zoning" be considered as a possible outcome.

As a result of this request, Council resolved, "*That the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to the September 12, 2011 Built and Natural Environment Committee (BNEC) meeting with respect to the potential actions that can be taken to stop in-fill intensification in the Irwin Street, Gunn Street, Saunby Street, and the Beaufort Street area*".

The concerns about over-intensification and loss of balance in the BIGS neighbourhood are not unlike the challenges being faced in other Near-Campus Neighbourhoods such as the North London/Broughdale neighbourhood. Some of the similarities between the BIGS neighbourhood and the North London/Broughdale Neighbourhood include:

- both neighbourhoods face intense redevelopment pressures given their proximity to the University of Western Ontario;
- both neighbourhoods have been the subject of area studies to address the intensification pressures;
- both neighbourhoods have special zoning regulations to restrict the floor area ratio to limit the "bulk" of a building; and,
- both neighbourhoods had originally been constructed as predominantly low-rise, low-density residential neighbourhoods.

However, despite their similarities, the land use planning tools intended to promote neighbourhood stability have not been consistently applied within each neighbourhood. First, the recommendations of the North London/Broughdale Neighbourhood Area Study have been incorporated into the Official Plan which recognizes that neighbourhood as a special policy area. These North London/Broughdale Neighbourhood special policies provide clear direction with

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regard to the form and location of residential intensification projects that may be supported. Furthermore, the special policy area status acts to moderate the Official Plan general Infill and Intensification policies which give precedence to the more specific neighbourhood special policy areas.

Secondly, a large portion of the interior of the neighbourhoods in proximity to the University of Western Ontario are zoned Residential R1 which restricts the permitted uses to one single detached dwelling per lot, whereas the BIGS neighbourhood is zoned Residential R2 permitting two-unit dwellings. While there have been requests to create additional residential units in the North London/Broughdale Neighbourhood, these have typically required *Planning Act* applications, such as Consent, Minor Variance, and Zoning By-law amendments, which initiate a public participation process. This is unlike the BIGS neighbourhood where many intensification projects have been completed in conformity to the requirements of the Residential R2 zoning applied to the area (i.e. "as of right") and therefore not subject to a planning application which includes public participation.

Thirdly, the BIGS neighbourhood is subject to a special zoning regulation which limits the Floor Area Ratio of dwellings in the area. Although this does regulate one aspect of *intensity* of development, it was initially adopted to regulate the *bulk* of buildings to ensure that the form of new development is compatible with the form of existing development. However, the special zoning provisions applied to the North London/Broughdale Neighbourhood have gone further to also include: maximum floor areas; minimum rear yard depths, and, alternative parking standards.

**ANALYSIS**

Regardless of the current zoning and the length of time it has been in force and effect (45 years), the Zoning By-law was never intended to facilitate neighbourhood instability. After all, it is entirely conceivable that one- and two-unit dwellings can co-exist within the same neighbourhood while maintaining neighbourhood stability. However, given the intensification *pressures* experienced within Near-Campus Neighbourhoods, single detached dwellings may be more easily susceptible to redevelopment in the BIGS neighbourhood than in other areas of the City where one- and two-unit dwellings coexist because the intensification pressures are more moderate. And the *levels* of intensification tend to be maximized in neighbourhoods near the University of Western Ontario and Fanshawe College whereas they are more tempered in other areas of the City. This level of maximum intensity is most evident in the number of bedrooms per unit. Although the Zoning By-law does permit a maximum of 5-bedrooms per dwelling unit, the vast majority of multiple unit dwellings in London are constructed with less than 5-bedrooms. However, in the Near-Campus Neighbourhoods, there is a concentration of 5-bedroom units.

In order to restore stability to the BIGS neighbourhood there are number of options available to Council. These options may be undertaken individually or combined to achieve different objectives.

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**OPTIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD**

The following section presents options for moving forward in the BIGS neighbourhood:

<b>OPTION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<p><b>INTERIM CONTROL BY-LAW</b></p>	<p>Section 38 of the <i>Planning Act</i> allows municipalities to pass an Interim Control By-law, to prohibit the use of land or buildings that would otherwise be permitted by the Zoning By-law, for a period of one year where Council has directed, by by-law or resolution, that a review or study be undertaken in respect of land use policies in the municipality. The Interim Control By-law may be extended for a subsequent year provided the total period of time does not exceed two years from the date of the passing of the initial by-law.</p> <p>The purpose of an Interim Control By-law is to provide time for a municipality to undertake a study of the policies relating to a subject matter within the entire municipality or a defined area therein. The Interim Control By-law prevails over the provision of the current Zoning By-law thereby limiting the use of land so as to avoid the continuation or exacerbation of the issues that are the subject of the study, until the results of the study are known and actions to amend policy and/or the Zoning by-law, or restore the status quo have been completed.</p> <p>Policy 19.9.1 of the Official Plan provides for Interim Control By-laws in the City of London as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Where Council has, by by-law or resolution, directed that a study be undertaken regarding its land use planning policies for the City or any defined area or areas thereof, it may pass an Interim Control By-law prohibiting the use of land, buildings or structures within the area defined by the By-law, except for such uses as are set out in the By-law. An Interim Control By-law shall apply for a limited period of time subject to the provisions of the Planning Act.</p> <p>Requirements for the Interim Control By-law include Council directing through a by-law or resolution, that a study be undertaken, and that the by-law must specify the period of time that it will be in effect, not to exceed one year. In addition, the interim control by-law must specify the area to which the by-law applies.</p> <p>An Interim Control By-law may be amended to extend its period for an additional year by by-law however, the maximum total length of the by-law cannot exceed two years. If at the end of the effective period for the interim control by-law, policy and/or zoning by-law amendments have not been adopted pursuant to the study that is undertaken, the original zoning returns to effect and no further Interim Control By-laws can be undertaken thereafter for a period of 3 years.</p> <p>Passing an Interim Control By-law does not require any notice requirements. However, the notice of adoption must be given within thirty days of the passing of the by-law by means of publication in the newspaper or by first class mail to the property owners within 120 metres of the lands to which the by-law applies. Anyone who receives notice can appeal within sixty days of the passing of the by-law. However, unlike Zoning By-law amendments the Interim Control By-law is in effect during the period of the appeal.</p>

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*Advantages*

- An Interim Control By-law will immediately stop planning approvals and building permits which request an increase in residential intensity
- Maintain the status quo for the duration of the Interim Control By-law period
- Allow Staff time to undertake a review of the policies applied to the area

*Disadvantages*

- An Interim Control By-law restricts the zoning rights of property owners in the area
- There are no Staff resources available to prepare these amendments
- Would likely attract a legal challenge that would detract from resources available to undertake the study together with the consultant

ESSEX STREET  
PLANNING STUDY  
(Master Plan and  
Policies)

The current Essex Street Area Study has been effective in directing medium density forms of residential development toward the Western Road/Wharnccliffe Road North corridors while limiting the intensity within the interior of the neighbourhood. However, this study was undertaken in 1995 and changing trends may require that this area study be revisited.

While not intended to prejudice the outcome of any potential area study review, some of the changing trends in the BIGS neighbourhood include pressures for redesignation/rezoning of lands along the Western Road/Wharnccliffe Road North corridor to higher density uses, which are more conducive to on-site property management, transit friendly, and purpose-built to accommodate the anticipated level of intensity, and conversely there are opposing pressures from neighbouring residents that seek to reduce the intensity within the interior of the neighbourhood.

The Essex Street Area Study includes several references with regard to the need for a review of the Area Study in the event that certain conditions evolved. The conditions which warrant a review of the area study include:

- a considerable change in the housing occupancy
- a decrease in housing conditions
- a loss of residential amenity and character in the neighbourhood
- pressures for residential intensification
- consensus of property owners that change to the Zoning By-law is required

The concerns expressed by the resident representatives of the BIGS neighbourhood highlight the presence of these conditions thereby justifying the need for a review.

*Advantages*

- An updated Essex Street planning study could explicitly include the BIGS neighbourhood in its analysis
- The planning study recommendations may be incorporated into the Zoning By-law to implement the planning study findings

*Disadvantages*

- Possible neighbourhood apprehension in revisiting this Area Study which has been an effective tool at directing higher forms of intensification to appropriate areas over the past 16 years

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**OFFICIAL PLAN  
AMENDMENTS**

Similar to the North London/Broughdale Neighbourhood special policy, an Official Plan special policy may be adopted for the lands identified in the Essex Street Area Study as well as the BIGS neighbourhood which incorporate the planning study recommendations as part of the Official Plan. This course of action can be undertaken by adopting the recommendations of the current Essex Street Area Study or by adopting the recommendations of a potential revised Essex Street planning study outlined above.

*Advantages*

- Augment the Area Study recommendations from “guideline” to “policy” status
- Provide a greater level of expectation to the neighbourhood and additional guidance to developers as to the forms, locations and levels of intensity that may be supported
- Increased effectiveness at the Ontario Municipal Board to defend Council’s position upon appeal for development proposals that are contrary to the policies

*Disadvantages*

- There are no Staff resources available to prepare these amendments

**APPLICATION OF  
HOLDING  
PROVISIONS**

Given that one of the concerns raised by the resident representatives is the lack of public notification and participation in the redevelopment of lands in their neighbourhood, a Holding Provision h-5 may be applied to the BIGS neighbourhood which would require intensification projects to be presented at a public site plan meeting and enter into agreements with the City of London specifying the Site Plan issues prior to the removal of the Holding Provision.

*Advantages*

- Reintroduction of public participation into redevelopment proposals in this neighbourhood by facilitating the ability for residents to provide input and potentially influence the proposed development project

*Disadvantages*

- There is no appeal ability by the community to challenge proposals that do not implement the community’s recommendations or mitigate a perceived impact above and beyond that which is not regulated by the City’s by-laws

**REZONING OF  
LANDS TO DELETE  
DUPLEX, SEMI-  
DETACHED,  
CONVERTED  
DWELLING USES**

Given the concerns raised by the resident representatives of the BIGS neighbourhood related to increasing intensity and changing character of the area, an amendment to the Zoning By-law to restrict permitted uses to just one single detached dwelling per lot would be an effective way of addressing these concerns. However, it must be noted that that this course of action represents a removal of permitted uses (i.e. down-zoning). The Zoning By-law currently permits: single detached dwellings; semi-detached dwellings; duplex dwellings; and, converted dwellings (maximum 2 dwelling units). An amendment to the Zoning By-law to permit only single detached dwellings would effectively be removing the latter three uses listed above.

*Advantages*

- Result in the reduction of development of higher intensity dwellings given that the Zoning would no longer permit as-of-right intensification

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- Requirement for future intensification projects to apply for amendments to the Zoning By-law, thereby triggering public participation
- Individual applications for increased density are decided upon by Council
- Potential to restore appreciation to single detached dwellings in the BIGS neighbourhoods which are presently being perceived as an underutilization of the site
- Effective way of halting the instability felt in this neighbourhood

*Disadvantages*

- Represents a lost opportunity and a capital reduction to property owners who have purchased properties in the BIGS neighbourhood in order to avail themselves of the current Zoning. This is especially true if the purchase price of the property reflected the current zoning and the ability to intensify the site.
- This course of action would immediately create multiple legal non-conforming land uses. Any legally constructed two-units dwelling would be permitted to remain in perpetuity. The general approach to uses that do not conform to the Official Plan is to encourage their transition to, or replacement by, conforming uses. However, it is not anticipated that the existing two-units dwellings will transition to single detached dwellings in the short term and will therefore continue to remain
- The *Planning Act* and Official Plan provide for the extension or enlargement of legal non-conforming land uses, using criteria that mainly evaluate a proposed enlargement on the basis of compatibility, by making application to the Committee of Adjustment. This removes Council from any decision making ability pertaining to extensions and enlargements and establishes a different set of criteria by which to measure expansions and enlargements to existing two-unit dwellings
- There are no Staff resources available to prepare these amendments

**ADDITIONAL  
ZONING  
REGULATIONS**

Another option is to include additional Zoning By-law regulations for lands in the BIGS neighbourhood. For example, zoning regulations can be introduced in the BIGS Neighbourhood which apply maximum floor areas; minimum rear yard depths, and, alternative parking standards to complement the existing floor area ratio regulation. This direction would also be consistent with the regulations applied in other Near-Campus Neighbourhoods such as North London/Broughdale.

Other regulations can also be applied which reduce the level of intensity permitted within each dwelling unit such as reducing the maximum number of bedrooms by dwelling type. For example, the maximum number of bedrooms per unit can be reduced from 5 bedrooms to 3 bedrooms in two-unit dwellings. The effect would be that the maximum level of intensity between a single detached dwelling and a two-unit dwelling would be one extra bedroom in the latter form of development (i.e. single detached dwelling permits a maximum 5 bedrooms whereas duplex/semi-detached/converted dwelling permits a maximum of two, 3-bedroom units).

Another concern typically raised by residents of Near-Campus Neighbourhoods is that the new dwelling units being constructed are geared toward short-term, transient residents and are not conducive to accommodating a longer-term, single housekeeping establishment. Reasons which are often cited to support this concern are the lack of



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outdoor amenity areas as well as the proportion total floor area occupied by bedrooms.

The former concern arises when large parking areas are constructed to accommodate the required number of parking spaces in combination with driveway and drive aisles which are excluded from the overall parking coverage calculation. These hard surfaced driving areas typically come at the expense of landscaped open space. Therefore, another option is to add regulations which apportion the lot coverage requirements differently between buildings, parking areas, and landscaping.

The latter concern arises from the estimation that the proportion of floor area devoted to bedroom space in a typical dwelling comprises one-third of the total floor area, with two-thirds allocated toward common living areas, whereas these ratios tend to be reversed in dwellings constructed in Near-Campus Neighbourhoods. To alleviate these concerns, Council may consider adopting a regulation which assigns a maximum bedroom gross floor area as a percentage of the dwelling.

*Advantages*

- Reduces the intensity of residential dwellings by decreasing the overall floor area allocated for bedroom uses
- Allows the BIGS neighbourhood to continue to fulfill its planned function by continuing to permit a maximum of two-unit dwellings
- Alleviates the pressure to redevelop single detached dwellings into higher density dwellings given that the marginal utility of redeveloping a single detached dwelling into a two-unit dwelling represents just one additional bedroom
- Potential to restore a sense of balance between long-term and short-term residents as well as duplex and single detached dwellings
- Consistent with the Great Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy adopted by Council on November 17, 2008

*Disadvantages*

- There are no Staff resources available to prepare these amendments
- Effectively represents a Zoning By-law amendment for these lands
- Regulations would effectively represent a lost opportunity and capital reduction to property owners who have purchased properties with the intention of constructing a certain level of intensity. Since income in Near-Campus Neighbourhoods is generally calculated on a dollar-per-bedroom basis, the loss of bedrooms represents a loss in revenue
- Additional regulations would also create multiple legal non-conforming land uses comprised of two-unit dwellings with more than 3 bedrooms per dwelling unit as well as dwelling units that have a larger proportion of floor area allocated to bedroom uses than may be permitted

*However...*

- Unlike the previous section where the amendment to the Zoning By-law is intended to remove lands uses, there is greater potential for these legal non-conforming uses to transition to conforming uses over time since conformity involves less onerous adaptations, such as the elimination of bedrooms, versus elimination of entire residential units

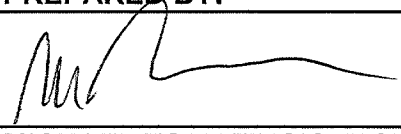
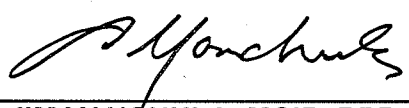

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<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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As a result of the request from the resident representatives from the BIGS neighbourhood to stop residential infill and intensification in their neighbourhood, several options have been outlined as a possible course of action.

In order to be consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2005* as well as Official Plan policy that supports residential intensification, while providing opportunities for balanced redevelopment opportunities, Planning Staff recommend that: the Essex Street Area Study be reviewed and updated; the recommendations of the Essex Street Area Plan be adopted as Official Plan policy; and, that additional zoning regulations be added to lands in the area to reduce the level of residential intensity currently being developed.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
	
<b>MICHAEL TOMAZINCIC, MCIP, RPP PLANNER II, COMMUNITY PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN</b>	<b>JIM YANCHULA, MCIP, RPP MANAGER – COMMUNITY PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
	
<b>JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP DIRECTOR OF LAND USE PLANNING &amp; CITY PLANNER</b>	

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APPENDIX "A"

August 8, 2011

BIGS Community Association request delegation status and the opportunity to provide a brief presentation to the Built and Natural Environment Committee, City of London at their August meeting so that our request can be brought forward at the August meeting of City Council.

The BIGS community association represents the residents of Beaufort, Irwin, Gunn and Saunby Streets, a quiet and isolated neighbourhood just north of Oxford Street and bordered by the Thames River to the east, Gibbons Park on the north and Wharncliffe Road to the west. BIGS is seeking council action to address the unique and urgent situation in the neighbourhood described below.

Family homes are being demolished to be replaced by 10 bedroom duplexes at a pace of three or more per year. The combination of R2 zoning and a lack of city bylaws to consider issues of balance, is allowing this to take place, house by house at a feverish pace without public notice or a pause of any kind that would allow professionals and those impacted a moment to assess the cumulative impacts on the neighbourhood or the implications for the city.

There are only 18 owner occupied homes left out of 42 properties in this "block of concern" (Irwin, Gunn, Saunby and Beaufort Streets). Since 2010, five, 10 bedroom duplexes have been added to this single block which already has a five-plex, two four-plexes, three duplexes and a 9 bedroom Children's Aid Society group home. Add to this the twenty-eight five bedroom student townhouses built in 2005 at the end of Beaufort St (Varsity Mills) and most would agree this neighbourhood has provided more than its share of student housing. However, the developers think we need more student rentals and are particularly aggressive this summer in their approaches to obtaining properties including 61 Gunn which had utilities disconnected last week in preparation for demolition and conversion to a 10 bedroom student rental.

This is a great neighbourhood for families that is affordable, near the core and has safe pedestrian access to Gibbons Park. The intensification has reached a point where there is no balance in the neighbourhood. Professional planners suggest we need an interim Bylaw placing a hold on further development until the issues can be examined with a view to possibly downgrading the zoning.

We are asking Council to place this interim Bylaw on Beaufort, Irwin, Gunn and Saunby Streets now for a period of one year and direct administration to examine the situation and provide recommendations back to council on a permanent solution to achieving some balance through planning control in this family neighbourhood.

Regards

BIGS Community Association  
James Corcoran