

# London Development Institute

April 30, 2018

By Email sppi@london.ca

City of London  
300 Dufferin Avenue  
London, Ontario  
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Attn.: Chair and Members of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

## **Re: Growth Management Implementation Strategy (GMIS) 2018 Annual Review & Update**

Chair and Members of the Committee,

We thank Staff for meeting with stakeholders and to listen to the Industry recommendations for the timing of 2018 GMIS projects. The City of London is continuing to experience a significant increase in the demand for new homes in 2018. Permit ready building lots continue to diminish much quicker than forecast. Revisions to the forecasted inventory in accordance to the recent Watson housing forecast report have provided some relief to this disparity.

LDI is pleased to note that our request to revise the GMIS forecast from 950 units to 1200 units in 2019 has been accommodated in the 2019 GMIS. This adjustment to the annual SF detached housing unit starts has translated to adjustments to the timing of construction for certain capital projects.

LDI also notes that a reformed, streamlined approach to the development approval process has been implemented and our preliminary results have indicated that the reformed process has reduced the time from submission to final approval by several months. LDI believes that these reforms are sustainable and continuous improvements to this process will provide positive benefits to both the industry and the City.

LDI and LHBA have expressed a concern to staff that the current housing demand forecasting model falls short in recognizing the actual number of uncommitted building lots available. The industry has confirmed to staff that once a development is approved for construction most of the lots within that development have already been purchased by builders and therefore should be removed from the vacant land inventory. Staff have committed to developing an improved model to forecast the 'vacant lot inventory' that will address this anomaly.

LDI is requesting that Council consider several recommendations for the 2019 GMIS Update that will permit the City to benefit from the current economic upswing and to ensure the sustainability of the housing market in London:

- The capital works infrastructure required to service the identified growth areas must be available prior to final approval of the subdivisions. Although the draft 2019 GMIS

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

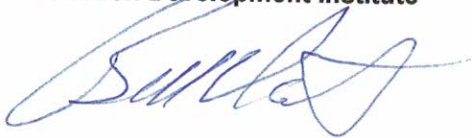
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identifies that the proposed works will be sufficient to meet the housing demands based on the reforecast 1200 units per year, LDI recommends that the City carefully monitor the rate of building permit requests to ensure that the forecast is attained. Additionally, the location and completion of capital projects should be monitored to verify that the DC monies are spent when and where there will be the highest housing demands.

- LDI supports the City reformed and streamlined development approval process. The subdivision reform process has started to eliminate some of the redundancies in the approval process by placing the more strenuous and time sensitive studies to the beginning of the process and combining the generic design studies with the drawing review part of the process. Although the new development process has provided some positive benefits, LDI recommends that further refinements to the approval process be implemented including the current initiative to streamline draft plan approval clauses and subdivision agreements.
- LDI supports the implementation of a project that will provide a more accurate model of available lot supply. This tool will greatly improve the City's ability to forecast the requirements for location and timing of infrastructure projects.

LDI wishes to thank Development Services for their significant efforts to address the concerns expressed with respect to lack of supply – 'permit ready lots'. The continued efforts to forecast and proactively be prepared for changes in growth demands in the City will provide for the proper balance between supply and demand for future housing in London.

Sincerely,  
**London Development Institute**



**Bill Veitch**  
**Interim President, LDI**

- cc LDI Members
- cc Martin Hayward, City Manager  
cc Kevin Edwards, Development Services  
cc George Kotsifas, Development Services  
cc Matt Feldberg, Development Services