



June 13, 2012

Mayor Fontana and Members of City Council

Corporation of the City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue, London ON

RE: KEEP LONDON GROWING COALITION

Maximizing Our Potential:

Developing a Vision for Growth and Opportunity for London and Region

London is at the crossroads for its economic future. We commend the City for a number of initiatives currently being undertaken that will have a major bearing on how London meets the challenges of growing our economy and creating new jobs for the future.

The Keep London Growing Coalition, formed in 2007, is prepared to support the City as it works to bring new industry and jobs to London and we ask to be included to give feedback. Please accept the following industry perspective on the current situation in London.

- **Official Plan** - The recently launched review of the Official Plan (O.P.) under the ReThink London banner, includes a monumental task of engaging the public to rethink how we see London and where we want London to be in the future. The KLGCC is prepared to participate and support this initiative to create a successful plan for our City. It will be critical that the municipal budget and real economic growth be balanced with public expectations. The O.P. should consider the following:

- Review growth management policies
- Livable city/creative city initiatives
- Population/Growth projections
- Expand urban growth boundary
- Simplify land use designations
- Industrial land needs Strategy update
- Cost/benefit analysis for urban design initiatives
- **Our industry needs to be involved in the process**

- **Reorganization** - The last year and a half has been a time of prolonged reorganization at the City due to major changes in senior management. Implementation of the new City org chart and facilitation of staff buy-in, will need to be a priority for the new City Manager.

- **Development Approvals** - Part of the reorganization at City Hall has been a realignment of Development Services (formerly named DABU) which is responsible to approve applications for new subdivisions and site plans. We appreciate the efforts made by the City to improve the speed of the approval process permitting new development to get underway and we are encouraged with the move of Development Services under the management of George Kotsifas. The approvals systems is still a work in progress and we are committed to working with staff towards refinements to ensure that it meets its objectives of improving approval times.

- **Expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary** along the 401 / 402 corridor is a critical piece in the City's ability to bring new industry and jobs to our city. The KLGCC will be supporting and monitoring the progress of this initiative.

- **Industrial Development** - The City's strategy to promote industrial development has been a great success and currently the City has no large tracts of land for new industrial clients to purchase. We support the effort to extend the Veterans Memorial Parkway to Wilton Grove Road as well as the interchange improvement and the 401/ Wonderland Road interchange construction.

- **London Regional Review**

- * London's regional context should be part of the OP update
- * The cost of roads to handle traffic from surrounding communities needs to be reviewed
- * Review the Suburban Road agreement
- * Federal and Provincial roads funding for municipalities from gas tax dollars should be used for roads not roofs
- Social services should be Provincially funded based on regional service area
- A regional jobs strategy needs to be developed; South West Economic alliance needs to be supported

- **SWAP – South West Area Plan**

- Complete the plan linking land use with the servicing strategy

- **Development Charges**

- 2014 DC review should be started now
- Need to meet with LDI/LHBA to discuss the philosophy of the basis of the DC update
- Scope the issues for the DC update
- Who will be in charge of DC update for the City
- Who is doing the DC background studies
- Timing of reviewing the update
- Review GMIS (Growth Management Implementation Strategy) project list
- Compare Development Charges of adjacent municipalities
- Keep London affordable
- Our industry needs to be involved in the process from an early start.

- **Transportation Master Plan**

- Ask all levels of government to contribute dollars to London Transit
- Adds to livable Cities
- Bus access to industrial areas needs to be implemented

- **Taxes**

KLGC offers support for a limited tax increase so we don't fall behind on service levels. Regional support for London services used by adjacent communities' residents need to be addressed.

Background:

The KLGC was formed in June of 2007 to raise serious concerns regarding engineering and planning approval system delays and development approval backlogs at City Hall that was a contributing factor to a downturn in the construction and home building industry and thousands of job layoffs. The Coalition acts as a coordinated industry resource to highlight current industry issues and to explain their long term impact on London's economy.

The KLGC represents more than 50,000 taxpayers in the City consisting of construction workers, labour unions, contractors, business owners, home builders, land developers, REALTORS®, manufacturers, suppliers, professionals and their employees and their families.

Since 2007 when the Coalition was formed there have been many changes to the London employment landscape. The Canadian economy has suffered the worst recession since the Great Depression in the 1930's, a new City Council was elected in 2010, numerous city staff changes have taken place and a major reorganization of City Hall is underway.

City Council has proposed job creation and assessment growth as their main objectives for the City to expand and prosper. Industrial and residential development are being promoted to create new jobs to make up for the jobs lost in the recession and to provide the assessment growth required to fund the revitalization plans for the downtown core proposed by the Mayor.

The KLGC supports City Council's actions towards job creation and prosperity for our community and wish to participate in initiatives as listed above and to be given notice and kept apprised as discussions continue.

Yours sincerely,



Jim MacKinnon
Keep London Growing Coalition

Coalition Supporters:

