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<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE OCTOBER 1, 2012</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>WILLIAM C. COXHEAD MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CENOTAPH PLAZA LAY-OUT ALTERATIONS</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
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That the following report on minor modifications to the Cenotaph Plaza in Victoria Park to support Remembrance Day ceremonies **BE RECEIVED** for information.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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August 21, 2012      Community Services Committee - Request from the London Remembrance Day Planning Committee to the City to remove trees around the Cenotaph to better facilitate the November 11 ceremony.

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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In response to the request from the London Remembrance Day Planning Committee to the City to remove 5 trees around the Cenotaph and transplant them around the Dutch Memorial in Victoria Park to better facilitate the ceremony, City Council referred the matter to Civic Administration "to review, and report back to the Community Services Committee as to the feasibility of the request."

The original layout of the upgrade to the Cenotaph Plaza was carried out in 1999 with full input from Veterans groups on how the new Plaza would be used. The Plaza was greatly enlarged, and formalized with decorative paving, seating walls and park entrance pillars. Many trees were added in "columns" to support the military theme. These trees (Chanticleer Pear) were carefully selected to have spring flowers and spectacular fall colour at the time of the November 11 ceremony. The City has received many compliments on the look of the Plaza and on these trees in particular.

Staff met with the members of the London Remembrance Day Planning Committee on site to better understand their concerns regarding the current placement of the trees around the Cenotaph and how they were now impacting the ceremony. The pear trees have now matured and are affecting how the plaza is used for the ceremony: many lower branches are blocking the view to the Cenotaph from the park and restricting the flag procession into the plaza and the placement of trees near Wellington Street is impeding the procession into the area.

The requested tree removal was put forward with the idea of transplanting the trees from the Plaza to elsewhere in the park, as the Planning Committee appreciated the value of the pear trees to the park entrance. This is technically impossible at this time, as the trees would not survive transplantation from within the small concrete area that they are growing in presently.

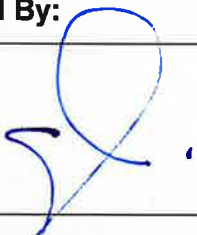

With the benefit of a site walk and understanding of the issues and limitations on transplanting the trees, the following actions will take place:

- only one pear tree needs to be removed to greatly improve access to the Plaza from Wellington Street, and
- all other trees will have their lower branches trimmed to improve views and permit better movement between them, without greatly impacting their unique shape and health.

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Other minor modifications have taken place over the years to improve the plaza for the ceremony and the proposed changes are consistent with an approach to work with stakeholders to enhance our parks. To further improve the Plaza, we are also considering a curb cut on the Wellington Street side to improve accessibility for the ceremony, without opening up the park to illegal vehicular access. It was agreed that this portion of the work may not occur until 2013.

With the assistance of the Forestry Operations Division, the agreed upon works will be undertaken in time for the November 11, 2012 ceremony.

<b>Prepared By:</b>	<b>Recommended By:</b>
	
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