



March 13, 2019

Mayor and Council Members,
City of London,
300 Dufferin Avenue,
London, ON

Re: London Downtown Business Association

Your Worship and Members of Council:

We are reaching out to you today to provide you with background information and context on the London Downtown Business Association and MainStreet London prompted by the resolution passed by council on March 5, 2019 that deferred the approval of our board.

Business Improvement Areas (BIA's) were created in 1970 in the Bloor West Area by Alex Ling. There are now over 500 in Canada and over 2500 in North America.

BIA's are mandated as follows:

- Area Marketers. Inclusive of the entire area and not individual businesses
- Public Realm Investors
- Event Facilitators
- Policy Advocates

As a member driven organization representing over 1600 members, we take very seriously the mission of working together to serve and be the voice of our members and to help create a more vibrant and prosperous downtown. This includes a commitment to openness, transparency and communication with members, community partners and the City of London.

The responsibility of stewarding the Downtown London organization both strategically and financially, is governed by our volunteer Board of Directors. We operate with rigorous controls and accountabilities, according to City mandated by-laws, with financials that are audited annually by KPMG. As defined in our 2016 strategic plan – attached to this letter - advocacy on behalf of members and our downtown is one of our four key priorities. Over the past few years, our advocacy has

LDBA Letter to Council
March 13, 2019

included regular member surveys, at times conducted by third party partners, ongoing communication through email, in-person visits, open houses and meetings to ensure that our members hear from us, have the opportunity to provide input and know about the successes of our downtown.

The LDBA has been dealing with some member frustration and issues since late 2018. Our past and proposed Boards, members at large and staff have all been working together through these challenges in an open and transparent manner. An Ad Hoc committee was requested by some of our members and has been established to review our by-laws and policies with an anticipated report in June of 2019.

We fully acknowledge that the City by-law # CP-2 (created in 2014 when we expanded our boundary) states that our board consists of 9 members and we presented 13 for approval (12 plus the past chair who will vacate the position when a new chair is internally elected.) While this seems like a glaring disregard for the Municipal by-law, it has been our practice to operate under our local by-laws which allow for 12 plus a City Councillor as we have been for the past 20 plus years. We will remain governed by our existing board and approach any by-law changes and future appointees at the conclusion of the Ad Hoc Committee's findings.

To continue moving London's Downtown forward with positive momentum having everyone working together, we respectfully request that Council approve our draft budget which is being presented to Corporate Service Committee on March 19, 2019.

Our 2019 goals and operational plan include the following which will be impacted with a delayed budget decision:

- Launch our highly anticipated recruitment plan
- Construction mitigation and communication activities
- Distribution of Downtown Dollars which put money directly into the tills of our members
- Sponsor and seed funding for new and ongoing festivals and cultural events
- Activation of Downtown spaces and places
- Funding façade grants or tenant improvement loans
- Providing member education programs
- Installing plants and other beautification or public realm investments such as murals
- Hiring SuperGuides
- Marketing and advertising campaigns outside of social media
- Additional small business supports

We have been incorrectly and unfairly portrayed as an organization that does not have its house in order. This could not be further from the truth.

We are available and willing to answer any questions you may have now or at any time in the future.

Yours truly,

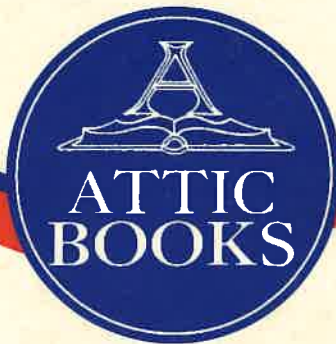
DOWNTOWN LONDON



Gerald Gallacher,
Board Chair, LDBA

Attachment:

[Downtown London Strategic Plan](#)



Antique Books, Maps, and Prints

London Downtown Business Association

Letter of Support

This letter is to compliment the LDBA on the work that they have been doing for over 35 years (including precursor BLA's). While some members have always complained they are truly in the minority. The cures for the downtown ills were a long time in the making and will continue to improve over time with the right guidance. There are no silver bullets to immediate and convenient change. Destruction is much quicker.

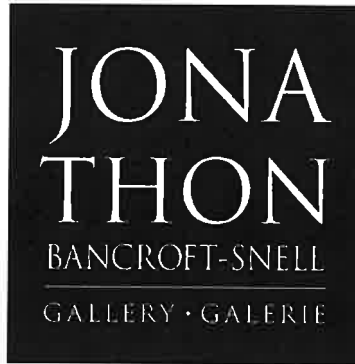
I attended the general meeting and was disgusted by the organized foment. The major sticking point was who gets to vote and how often. It would be a huge mistake to allow businesses and property owners multiple votes based on the number of business and properties they own or control allowing bully politics to prevail to the detriment of downtown and London as a whole. Two large property owners already sit on the board and that would cover the interests of large and multiple property owners more than adequately. Proxy voting already distorts the intent of a better downtown and to further dilute the small and vibrant businesses appeal for the downtown.

The dissident group has put no thought or constructive input into downtown and have not suggested any improvements other than shaving a few dollars off the levy. It seems that while picking up a few coins and having their wallets lifted by lawyers is very short-sighted. Lawyers should be mindful of the democratic process and not just to be there to provide lucrative conflict. This is especially true of lawyers with a clear conflict of interest.

The Richmond Row association joined Downtown London because it was doing something positive. Richmond Row's issues have never been properly addressed by the previous association and it will take some time to find solutions. The LDBA has the skill set and process needed to bring about positive change.

Marvin Post

Business Owner – Attic Books
Property Owner – 240 Dundas St.



January 30th, 2019

Ref: Downtown London

To the Board Members of Downtown London

I have owned and operated my current business, Jonathon Bancroft-Snell Gallery, in downtown London since 2000. I was one of the beneficiaries of the Culture, Commerce, Community initiative spearheaded by David Hall Manager of the then Galleria London, currently Citi-Plaza. The creativity of the small business creation plan was a catalyst to the growth of the gallery into the premier gallery of its kind specializing in Contemporary Canadian Ceramics.

Janette MacDonald, from the beginning, supported the growth of the gallery and advocated strongly my moving on to Dundas Street. In 2005 when my lease was up it was Janette and her team that assisted me in locating new premises on Dundas. The interest and support that Main Street, now Downtown London, provided facilitated the move and the connection with a landlord that has enabled my business to flourish. The Downtown London team assisted with a façade improvement grant, promotion through their website of in-house events and valuable assistance when navigating the intricacies of city hall bureaucracy.

The relationship that I have enjoyed with the Downtown London team is immeasurable. It is not easy owning a small business. The vagaries of economy, weather and changing downtown demographics are the aspects that need to be dealt with as a business owner. Downtown London has been constant and continual in their professional and personal response to my needs.

I think that Downtown London and the current team led by Janette MacDonald should be commended and supported for their ongoing support of downtown businesses. I have complete faith in the ability of Downtown London as a worthy advocate of the needs of downtown businesses. I support them 100% in their continued efforts to infuse our core with a strong sense of identity and trust them to lead us to a prosperous future.

Yours Truly,

Jonathon Bancroft-Snell



digital echidna

Jan. 29, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

I am presenting this letter as a show of my support for Janette MacDonald, the Board of Downtown London, and its staff. Our interactions with the organization have always been professional and we believe strongly in its ongoing efforts to improve the downtown core.

Digital Echidna has long been established in downtown London. In 2008, we opened our first downtown location at 207 King St. (a venue I continue to own and have made available to the London Fringe Festival). In 2011, we moved to 365 Talbot -- the second floor of the venerable Burrigge Block. And two years later, we expanded into the connected storefront location at 103 King St.

In fact, we went to great lengths to ensure that our most recent move in February 2018 was to a location that was of suitable size for our growing company. The only "must" was that it had to be in the downtown core.

That is to say that we have a vested interest in a healthy downtown and we see no evidence that the current team is doing anything less than its best to facilitate that.

Both personally and professional, we have partnered with Downtown London on activities, events, and partnerships to support the area. From participating in videos and advocacy efforts to our most recent partnership with Downtown London, YOU, and local merchants to address vagrancy issues, we've found Downtown London to be committed to downtown businesses.

We appreciate that the core has significant challenges, but we're committed to working together to help restore downtown's vibrancy. I'm confident in Downtown London's ability to work towards that goal and they have my support.

Andrew McClenaghan
Digital Echidna

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Jan 27, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

My first encounters with Downtown London, AKA LDBA, were upon my return to London from studying and working abroad; largely in urban centres in the US such as Los Angeles, New York, and Tampa, Florida.

It took no time to realize that, given my disposition towards population density and the sophisticated and culturally intense lifestyle that comes from living in an urban core, London's downtown would hold similar interest for me. Moreover, I became increasingly certain that there was one place I would be able to find the people, places, and experiences that I craved. I was not disappointed.

Since 2003 I have either lived, or worked, or both, downtown (even my current residence is a short walk away in Wortley village), and I have seen the face of Downtown London change. I've watched empty lots spring skyscrapers, boarded-up buildings become exciting new businesses. I've watched an evolving Downtown attract gaming companies, digital software firms, and next-generation digital content companies. When the challenge of bringing high-speed fibre Internet to heritage buildings in the core arose, Downtown offered support. I have seen Downtown London play host to the World, and am excited to be a member of a team bringing the best in Canadian music to our community. Finally, and most importantly, I have met and built relationships with a broad, diverse range of individuals who have become my clients, my colleagues, and my friends.

I have served on the Boards of Museum London and the Grand Theatre, both venerable arts organizations vital to London's cultural heritage and future. I have worked as a member of our digital creative industries at multinational companies and startups that have grown to national acclaim. I have enjoyed culinary experiences unrivalled by those I've had in larger cities, and I have shopped for local produce at our Covent Garden Market.

My own culinary adventures at home have benefitted tremendously from the counsel and products offered by Jill's Table, and my musical tastes have been expanded by Grooves Records - but two of the many shops and services I enjoy


web.isodes

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Downtown; and, when I meet friends, colleagues, and others involved in exciting and adventurous endeavours, we meet at Milos's and revel in the flavours and good cheer that make that place great.

None of these things happened overnight, and none due to the sole actions of any one person; but, these are the experiences that bring me home, no matter how frequently I travel (or to where), and they are born of the careful and deliberate stewardship of a group of dedicated staff and volunteers at Downtown London. It is through their work that partnerships have been forged to bring us new horizons in education, culture, and our economy.

I am pleased and proud to work alongside the other tenants and land-owners of the downtown core with the staff and volunteer board at LDBA to further this work in a consistent, considered, and collaborative manner that can bring delight and prosperity to all.



Adam Caplan
Founder and Principal
web.isod.es, Inc.