

## Report to Planning and Environment Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Planning & Environment Committee

**From:** John M. Fleming  
Managing Director, Planning and City Planner

**Subject:** City of London  
Draft Lambeth Area Community Improvement Plan  
Meeting on: March 18, 2019

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the draft Lambeth Area Community Improvement Plan (CIP):

- (a) that the attached draft Lambeth Area Community Improvement Plan **BE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED** for public review and comment to the Lambeth Community Association, the Lambeth B2B Group, the Lambeth Citizens' Recreation Council, the London Transit Commission, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, the London Police Service, the Westminster Township Historical Society, Lambeth & Community Harvest Festival, the London Small Business Centre, the Urban League of London, all City advisory committees and stakeholders who have participated in the process to date, posted on the City's Get Involved website; and,
- (b) based on the feedback received through the circulation process, the final Lambeth Community Improvement Plan and any associated Community Improvement Plan By-law(s) and Official Plan amendment(s) **BE PRESENTED** at a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee for consideration and approval.

## Previous Reports Pertinent to this Matter

August 22, 2016      PEC – Lambeth Area Community Improvement Plan Proposed Study Area and Terms of Reference

## Purpose and Effects of Recommended Actions

The purpose of the recommended actions is: to present a Draft Community Improvement Plan (CIP) with an overall direction and implementation approach that will achieve the improvement vision, goals, and objectives in the Lambeth Area; and, to receive feedback to inform revisions resulting in the final Lambeth Area CIP to be adopted pursuant to the *Planning Act*.

## Background

### What is a Community Improvement Plan (CIP)?

A CIP is a tool that allows a municipality to take actions to support improvements and redevelopment within a specifically defined Community Improvement Project Area. Section 28 of the *Planning Act* gives municipalities the ability to prepare CIPs. CIP actions can include:

- identifying changes needed to land use planning policies, zoning, and/or other by-laws, policies, and practices;
- directing funds for improvements to public infrastructure and public space;
- acquiring, rehabilitating, and disposing of land;
- providing grants and loans to owners and tenants for specific actions (which would normally be unavailable);

- in consultation with stakeholders, establishing a long-term vision, goals, objectives and an implementation strategy to provide focus and direction for continuous community improvement;
- building community capacity; and,
- supporting and strengthening economic resilience.

## **Policy Framework**

### ***1989 Official Plan***

Chapter 14 establishes that the City can designate community improvement project areas and prepare associated Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) to address identified community needs and improvement goals in these areas. Some of the community improvement goals that can be addressed by a CIP include: supporting private property (re)investment and maintenance; addressing compatibility of land uses; supporting the creation of Affordable Housing; and, supporting the retention of heritage properties/areas. The *1989 Official Plan* also outlines criteria for designating community improvement project areas and potential initiatives which Council may use to implement specific CIP recommendations, like federal and provincial government programs and financial incentive programs (grants and loans). Specific items that can be addressed by a CIP are listed in Appendix B of the Draft Lambeth Area CIP.

### ***The London Plan***

Consistent with the *1989 Official Plan*, *The London Plan* establishes that community improvement project areas can be designated anywhere in the municipal boundary, and that Council may adopt an associated Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the area to support and achieve community improvement goals. Goals for community improvement are consistent with the focus and goals for Urban Regeneration and include: stimulating (re)investment and redevelopment; inspiring appropriate infill; coordinating planning efforts; improving physical infrastructure; supporting community economic development; preserving neighbourhood and cultural heritage value; and, establishing an improved neighbourhood. *The London Plan* also identifies that CIPs can provide City Council with the tools to achieve these goals which can include grants, loans and other incentives intended to support community improvement. Fifteen community improvement objectives are included in *The London Plan* and are listed in Appendix B of the Draft Lambeth Area CIP.

### ***Southwest Area Secondary Plan (SWAP)***

The City of London adopted the *Southwest Area Secondary Plan* in 2014. The SWAP established a vision, principles and policies for the development of the Southwest Planning Area, which includes Lambeth. This Plan provides a greater level of detail than the general policies in the City Official Plan and serves as a basis for the review of planning applications which will be used in conjunction with the other policies of the Official Plan. The Lambeth Area CIP is consistent with the vision, principles and policies of the SWAP.

## **CIPs in London**

At present, the City Council has adopted eight (8) CIPs. The CIPs are intended to stimulate targeted reinvestment, reveal and inspire select infill and intensification opportunities, coordinate planning efforts, preserve neighbourhood and heritage character, enhance industrial and other business opportunities, and aid in the cleanup of contaminated sites. The geographically-based CIPs include: the Airport, Downtown, Hamilton Road, Old East Village and SOHO CIPs; the criteria-based CIPs include the Brownfield, Heritage and Industrial CIPs.

## Rationale for the Lambeth Area CIP

Ontario's *Planning Act* defines a community improvement project area as "a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason." Additional information about CIP legislation in the *Planning Act* is included in Appendix A of the Draft Lambeth Area CIP. The rationale for creating the Lambeth Area CIP is summarized below.

- A long-term vision, goals, objectives and an implementation strategy for the area will be developed through the CIP process providing focus and direction for continuous community improvement. Specifically, a vision and plan encompassing the Lambeth Village Core will help to reinforce this area as the hub of Lambeth, support cultural heritage and its unique identity, and strengthen the local economy.
- Implementing a CIP can result in benefits at both a city-wide and neighbourhood scale including: supporting a positive image for the City; supporting local cultural heritage; illustrating how a pedestrian-oriented core enhances the sense of place of an area; and, providing overall support for the improvement of one of London's unique neighbourhoods.
- The CIP process can bring light to local concerns and needs regarding the pedestrian environment and connectivity (especially in terms of walking and cycling) and goals including streetscaping and developing a connected transportation network.
- A Lambeth Area CIP can provide tools to encourage and support (re)investment and regeneration of buildings and properties.
- A Lambeth Area CIP can help to develop community capacity and encourage collaboration which will assist with successfully implementing the CIP.

## Lambeth Area CIP Study Area & CIP Project Area

### Study Area

When a CIP is being prepared, a Study Area is established early in the process to provide a geographic focus for the project. An initial Study Area for the Lambeth Area CIP presented at the first community meeting in July 2016. It was revised based on comments from stakeholders and approved by Council in August 2016. The Study Area is described as: Kilbourne Road and the future Kilbourne Road extension to Wonderland Road to the north; Wonderland Road, Hamlyn Street and Dingman Creek to the east; Greenhills Country Club to the South; and, Dingman Creek to the west.

**Figure 1: Lambeth Area CIP Study Area**

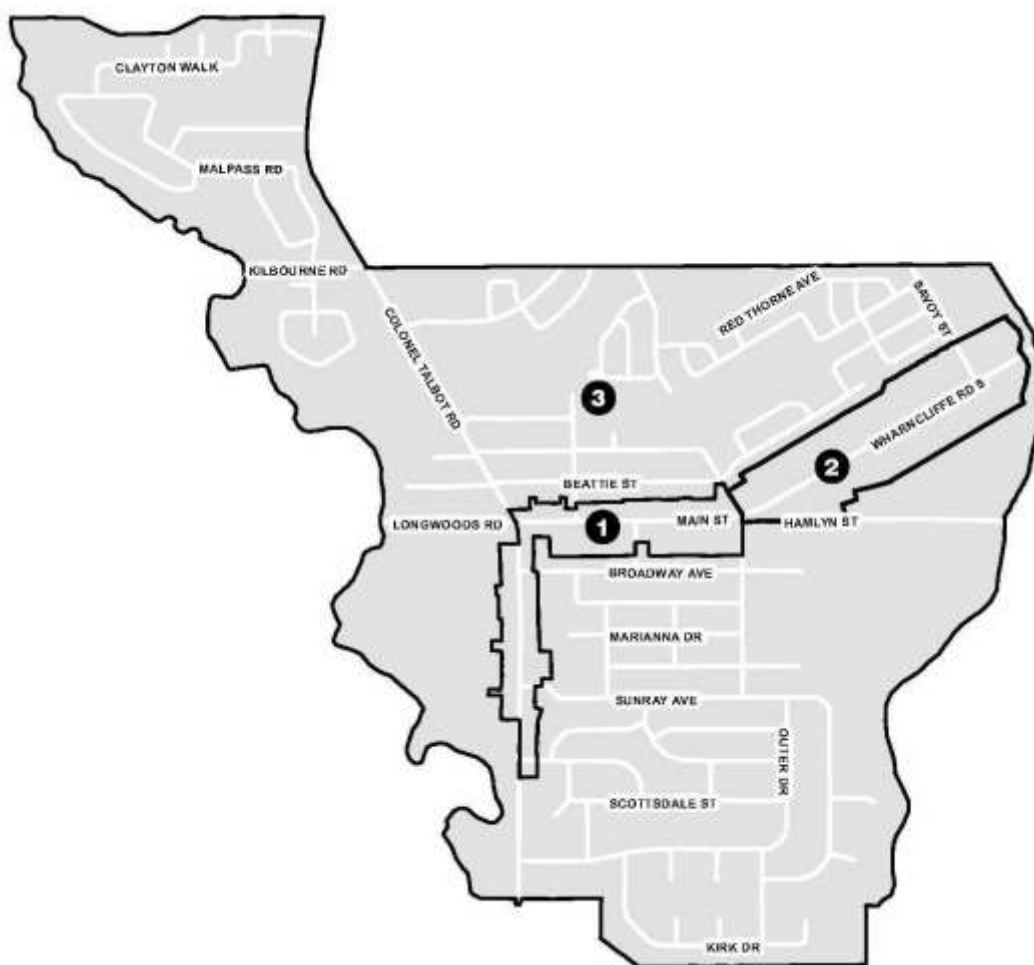


## Project Area

Figure 2 illustrates the Project Area included in the Draft Lambeth Area CIP. The Project Area is slightly different than the Study Area in that it includes the Clayton Walk and Malpass Road subdivisions north of Kilbourne Road and west of Colonel Talbot Road; it does not include the area north of the future Kilbourne Road extension east of Colonel Talbot Road; and, it is bound by the Dingman Creek corridor on the east (i.e. does not continue to Wonderland Road). The Project Area has been divided into three Project Sub-Areas which were determined based on each area's conditions and characteristics inventoried during the preparation of the CIP. The Sub-Areas are noted on Figure 2 below as:

1. Lambeth Village Core;
2. Lambeth Wharncliffe Road Corridor; and,
3. Lambeth Residential Area.

**Figure 2: Lambeth Area CIP Project Area**



## Consultation and Process to Date

### Purpose of this Community Improvement Plan

Development of the Lambeth Area CIP was initiated in 2014 by the Ward Councillor and the Lambeth Community Association (LCA). The purpose of the Lambeth Area CIP is to:

- articulate a vision, goals, and objectives for the Lambeth Area CIP Project Area;
- illustrate how existing strategies, plans and initiatives tie into the CIP vision, goals, and objectives;
- identify Action Items and priorities for implementation;
- identify who is responsible for Action Items; and,
- provide incentive programs to encourage and support private-sector investment in buildings and properties.

## Process Used in Developing this Community Improvement Plan

Municipal Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Lambeth Area CIP in August 2016. The Terms of Reference provided structure for the project and helped to guide the following key phases of the project:

- develop a vision for the CIP with the community;
- examine and evaluate the existing conditions;
- identify the gaps between existing conditions and the ideal situation (the vision); and,
- develop initiatives and a course of action to guide community improvement in the Lambeth Area.

This graphic illustrates the overall process used for this project.



### Consultation & Communication: Community-led Process

Community consultation was a significant part of this project, and many people were involved in a number of ways. The section below provides a summary of the communication and consultation conducted and planned for this project. Additional details are provided in Appendix D of the Draft Lambeth Area CIP.

- **City Website Project Webpage:** Planning Staff established a Lambeth Area CIP webpage on the City's website to provide regular project updates.
- **Project Updates:** City Planning Staff created a Contact List and emailed project updates which included information about upcoming Community Meetings, Meeting Summaries, City Council Approvals, and a link to the Project webpage.
- **Project Pulse Team:** A Pulse Team comprised of residents, business owners and members of the Lambeth Community Association was formed to help guide the preparation of the Lambeth Area CIP.
- **Community Meeting and Workshop No. 1 (July 7, 2016):** The purpose of the first community meeting was to provide general project information, identify strengths, community needs, desired improvements and a vision for the Lambeth Area, and to obtain input on the CIP Study Area and the Terms of Reference.
- **Community Meeting and Workshop No. 2 (October 18, 2016):** The purpose of the meeting was to define objectives, establish a vision, confirm what stakeholders identified as requiring improvement, and prioritize identified improvements.
- **Community Meeting and Workshop No. 3 (March 28, 2017):** The draft Strategic Initiatives were discussed and a workshop was conducted to review and prioritize proposed Action Items.

- **Lambeth & Community Harvest Festival (September 10, 2016):** City Staff hosted a casual outreach session about the CIP process.
- **Lambeth Community Association Annual General Meeting (June 18, 2018):** Staff provided an update on the progress of the Lambeth Area CIP.
- **Lambeth Business-to-Business Group (B2B) Meeting (December 13, 2018):** Staff from City Planning, Service London Business and Environmental & Engineering Services provided an update on the Lambeth Area CIP and Main Street Infrastructure Renewal Project.
- **Stakeholder Meeting (March 21, 2019):** At the request of Councillor Hopkins, a Community Information Meeting will be held on Thursday March 21, 2019 to present the Draft Lambeth Area CIP to stakeholders.

## Key Findings

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) identified by Stakeholders

Part of developing the Lambeth Area CIP was asking participants to identify what they perceive as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) that require action and/or improvement. A brief summary of what people identified is provided below; more detail is provided in Appendix E of the Draft Lambeth Area CIP.

Stakeholders feel that Lambeth's greatest strengths are its uniqueness, sense of community and history, and the feeling that Lambeth is an authentic village. The range of independently owned and operated businesses and the fact that the area has almost everything residents require are also seen as strengths. Although Lambeth is seen as a unique and strong community, stakeholders identified that the lack of a clear community identity and lack of sense of place are key weaknesses. Others commented that there is a need for arts and culture, and promotion and celebration of Lambeth's cultural heritage. The strong desire for connected cycling routes, trails and amenities, and pedestrian trails, pathways and amenities within Lambeth and connected to the rest of London were identified as priorities. Many participants identified the need to better understand municipal processes and policies and connect with City Hall. The lack of a coordinated approach to business support and attraction, and the goal to foster a broad range of uses in the Lambeth village core were highlighted as issues requiring action.

Many participants expressed concerns and frustration with vehicular congestion and the current state of some of the roads in the Lambeth Area. Although the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is updated every 5 to 10 years and updates reflect needs in the growth areas of the City, participants asked questions about how transportation planning occurs at the City of London and whether Lambeth's anticipated growth has been considered and incorporated into transportation plans. Most recently, the Main Street Infrastructure Renewal Project highlighted the need for road improvements in other parts of the Lambeth Area including Bainard Street, Kilbourne Road, the intersection of Kilbourne Road & Colonel Talbot Road, and Pack Road. There were also concerns for the state of some of the roads outside of the CIP Project Area.

In terms of opportunities, the potential for infill development and redevelopment was highlighted. Other opportunities identified by stakeholders include the desire to establish a clear identity, maintain culture and heritage, and develop the Lambeth Village Core as a traditional pedestrian-focused main street environment and a focal point for the community and events. This would further differentiate Lambeth within the City of London. The natural environment and public spaces were highlighted as an opportunity - the Dingman Creek corridor in particular. However, stakeholders also commented on the threats to the natural environment from development. General development pressures and the development along Southdale Road and the Wonderland Road corridor are seen as threats to businesses and to the existing character of Lambeth. Stakeholders commented that without support for small businesses and entrepreneurs, and improved bus service, Lambeth will continue to lose businesses.

## Issues identified by Staff

In addition to the needs and concerns identified by stakeholders, City Planning staff identified items requiring attention. Staff's findings are summarized below; more detail is provided in Appendix B of this report.

- **Business Attraction, Retention & Expansion:** The Lambeth B2B Group, formed in 2015, is comprised of business representatives who meet on a regular basis to discuss issues, network, and learn from guest speakers. Lambeth does not have a Business Improvement Area (BIA), and there is currently no mechanism in place to provide sustainable funding for items that support local businesses and the local economy (e.g. promotion & advertising campaigns, branding, events, education & training, Wi-Fi, beautification). Without an understanding of the current local economy (e.g. sector statistics), a plan and a source of long-term sustainable funding focused on business attraction, retention, expansion, the local business environment will not reach its full potential.
- **Coordination & Communication:** The Lambeth community is very fortunate to have many volunteer organizations and individual volunteers who are dedicated to improving their community. At this point, there does not appear to be a regular event and/or forum to help with coordinating and communicating the wide range of initiatives in Lambeth.
- **Growth & Change:** Like many communities in London, the Lambeth area is growing and undergoing change. Most of the growth will be controlled by the property owners and developers (e.g. timing and phasing of development). Although growth can have positive impacts like increased customers to businesses and participation in local events and organizations, growth also puts pressure on existing infrastructure (e.g. roads) and community facilities (e.g. community centre, parks, schools). Feedback and questions received throughout the Lambeth Area CIP project point to a need to provide the community with education and information regarding approved and planned City and private sector projects (parks, trails, roads, residential), prioritization and timing of projects, how to find and connect with City resources, how the planning and development process works, and how to get involved/stay informed. Essentially, people want to know what is planned, approved, and forecasted for Lambeth from now to 2035.
- **Identity:** Lambeth's distinctiveness as a unique village resonates positively with the community. There is an opportunity to further position Lambeth's identity and distinctive village core as a destination within the City of London. Strengthening the Lambeth village core's unique sense of place would lend support to businesses, organizations, and bolster community pride.
- **Signage and Wayfinding:** There is an opportunity to create and implement a unique, comprehensive and consistent wayfinding and identification signage program in Lambeth to develop a sense of place, reinforce community identity, attract visitors and customers, and direct and inform people about unique features, landmarks and amenities.
- **Wharnccliffe Road Corridor:** There is an opportunity to develop a Streetscape Plan for Wharnccliffe Road as part of future infrastructure projects which could include a gateway to the Lambeth village core. This project would assist with supporting local businesses, providing orientation, strengthening Lambeth's identity as a unique area within the City of London, and addressing concerns about safety and traffic speed.

## Format and Content of the Community Improvement Plan

### Lambeth Area CIP Vision, Goals & Objectives

The Lambeth Area CIP begins with the Draft Vision, Goals & Objectives developed through consultation with the community. The Lambeth Area CIP Draft Vision states:

**Our Lambeth will be a place for others to visit and well known for its history. Lambeth comes alive through the charming historic main streets, unique shops and services, Dingman Creek, parkland, and community events.**

### Lambeth Area CIP Goals & Objectives

Six goals were defined for the Lambeth Area CIP. The Goals and Objectives align with the Southwest Area Plan (SWAP) and feedback received from stakeholders during consultation. The detailed objectives for each goal are provided in the attached Draft Lambeth Area CIP document.

1. **Supporting Businesses & the Local Economy:** Lambeth will have resilient, strong, connected and diverse businesses and a business environment that serve the local community, attract visitors, and support business retention, expansion & investment.
2. **Strengthening Community & Connections:** The Lambeth community will continue to develop and maintain strong connections within the community and the City, and build capacity to work strategically with stakeholders to achieve community goals.
3. **Improved Mobility & Safety:** Lambeth will have an interconnected community-wide transportation network that is safe, multi-modal and prioritizes walking and cycling.
4. **Developing High Quality Public Realm & Recreation Opportunities:** Lambeth will have a range of recreational amenities, programs and supporting infrastructure, and a connected network of pedestrian-oriented streetscapes and public spaces that are interesting, accessible, safe, beautiful and clean.
5. **Strengthening & Conserving Cultural Heritage:** Lambeth will have a distinct sense of place that reflects and supports local cultural heritage values.
6. **Enhancing & Conserving Natural Heritage:** Natural features and systems are a defining feature of Lambeth and are enhanced, conserved and celebrated.

### Lambeth Area CIP Action Items

All recommended CIP actions are identified in an Actions Items table in the Draft Lambeth Area CIP, attached to this report as Appendix A. Action Items align with the Draft Vision, Goals and Objectives defined through the Lambeth Area CIP process. The table identifies proposed lead(s) and partners, a suggested priority for implementation, and relative funding requirements (high, medium, low, no cost) for each Action Item.

The success of the Lambeth Area CIP requires coordination of the efforts of many stakeholders over time. There is not one person or organization which has the sole responsibility of managing and implementing initiatives or ensuring success. Ideally, champions will emerge to lead identified actions. Implementation is contingent on a number of factors including costs, availability of funding, priorities, and willingness and motivation of the stakeholders and the community to lead projects.



The Action Items table is divided into the following three categories:

1. **Municipal Actions:** These are Action Items that are the responsibility of the Municipality. Many of these Action Items are part of existing projects or programs.
2. **Community Opportunities:** Leading these Action Items is the responsibility of community stakeholders (individuals or groups).
3. **Action Items Identified & Completed during the Lambeth Area CIP Project:** These items were completed because they were part of an existing project already underway (e.g. Main Street Infrastructure Project, Parks & Recreation Master Plan), part of an ongoing program (e.g. Lifecycle Renewal), or completed by City Planning Staff during the CIP project.

In terms of general implementation priorities for the Municipal Actions, Action Items identified as 1<sup>st</sup> priorities can be implemented with existing resources. Action Items identified as 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> priorities have higher costs and may require future budget considerations, longer-term implementation plans and/or coordination with stakeholders.

Before being incorporated into the Draft Lambeth Area CIP, the Action Items table was circulated to City staff for feedback. Additional feedback is anticipated as part of the circulation process.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The Draft Lambeth Area CIP features a Monitoring and Evaluation section which provides a framework for regularly tracking the progress of the CIP, and ensuring that priorities and assumptions remain relevant to achieving the Vision, Goals, and Objectives.

A number of baseline conditions were determined during the preparation of the Draft Lambeth Area CIP against which future information can be compared. This provides a consistent framework for evaluating the ongoing change in the Lambeth Area CIP Project Area. Variables/measures may be added to the baseline conditions. The financial incentive programs made available through the Lambeth Area CIP will also be monitored and the information will be stored in a database.

Staff are recommending that a Monitoring Report is prepared every five years to evaluate the Community Improvement Plan and its individual programs. This report and evaluation will be based on the changes to the baseline conditions, feedback from stakeholders, and any new issues, conditions, or opportunities that have emerged.

## Next Steps

A Community Information Meeting will be held at the Lambeth Arena on Thursday March 21, 2019 to present and discuss the Draft Lambeth Area CIP. Community groups and organizations will have the opportunity to display materials highlighting their activities and achievements in the community.

Project participant comments will be received and addressed in the coming months to provide opportunity for stakeholder and community feedback. Based on comments and feedback received, Staff will modify the Draft Lambeth Area CIP as required.

A public participation meeting is planned at a Planning & Environment Committee meeting in summer 2019 when the final Lambeth Area CIP and applicable By-laws, Official Plan amendment(s) and Financial Incentive Program Guidelines will be brought forward for approval and adoption.

## Conclusion

The attached Draft Lambeth Area Community Improvement Plan represents Staff's best efforts to unite the community's vision for improvement into one comprehensive plan. Staff recommends that the Draft Lambeth Area CIP is circulated to stakeholders and the public for comments and feedback.

<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Laurel Davies Snyder, MCIP, RPP</b> <b>Urban Regeneration</b>
<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>Britt O'Hagan, MCIP, RPP</b> <b>Manager, Urban Regeneration</b>
<b>Recommended by:</b>	<b>John M. Fleming, MCIP, RPP</b> <b>Managing Director, Planning and City Planner</b>

Note: The opinions contained herein are offered by a person or persons qualified to provide expert opinion. Further detail with respect to qualifications can be obtained from City Planning.

March 6, 2019  
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# **Appendix A**

## **Draft Lambeth Area Community Improvement Plan**

# Appendix B

## Issues in the Lambeth Area Identified by Staff

### **Business Attraction, Retention & Expansion:**

Formed in 2015, the Lambeth B2B Group meets on a regular basis to discuss issues, network, and listen to guest speakers. Lambeth does not have a Business Improvement Area (BIA) and there is no mechanism in place to collect ongoing fees from stakeholders to fund items that support local businesses and the local economy (e.g. promotion & advertising campaigns, branding, events, education & training, Wi-Fi, beautification).

The CIP process revealed that people value the local businesses in Lambeth and see them as an integral and positive part of the community. Additionally, a key part of the community's vision for Lambeth is a healthy, vibrant, and successful "Main Street" and core. However, without a plan and a source of long-term sustainable funding focused on business attraction, retention, expansion, the local business environment will not reach its full potential.

### **City Projects & Planning Processes**

The CIP process revealed that there is a need to provide education and information on City resources, projects and planning processes. Specific questions posed to staff during the project include:

- How will Lambeth change/develop in the next 5, 10, 20 years?
- Why are projects initiated?
- How do projects incorporate local issues and priorities?
- How/where can I get on a notification list and/or find information on projects and plans that affect the Lambeth Area?
- How can the Lambeth community stay up-to-date with projects?
- Who can the Lambeth community contact with questions and concerns?
- What is zoning?
- How does "planning" work and how can I get involved?

Coordinated outreach and education by City Planning and Service London Business was initiated at the December 2018 Lambeth B2B Group meeting.

### **Signage and Wayfinding**

There is an opportunity to create and implement a unique, comprehensive and consistent wayfinding and identification signage program in Lambeth to direct and inform people about unique features, landmarks and amenities.

An integrated signage program can support many community development goals including but not limited to:

- developing and strengthening identity and sense of place (brand visibility and reinforcement);
- improving the urban realm and pedestrian safety;
- enhancing the visibility of specific landmarks, features, and amenities (resulting in increased visits and greater support for local businesses);
- assisting with ease of navigation (pedestrian and vehicular);
- promoting temporary events;
- improving the quality of experience/increased confidence to walk in the area; and,
- reducing visual clutter (i.e. unnecessary signage; coordination of design).

Sign types/sign families can include: primary gateway, vehicular directional, pedestrian directional, identification (e.g. parking, parks, trails, etc.), informational (e.g. cultural heritage landmark), event signage, banners, district-specific (e.g. heritage), and others.

### **Wharncliffe Road Corridor**

Wharncliffe Road South (east of Campbell Street and Wharncliffe Road intersection) can be described as a commercial strip; it is a relatively wide road with a range of individual businesses spaced fairly far apart and accessed primarily by vehicular traffic. Participants mentioned that walking along the road is not enjoyable or seen as safe due to vehicular traffic (volume and speed). There are many freestanding signs in this area which do not contribute to a sense of place or complement the vision that project participants have for the Lambeth Area CIP Project Area.

Although Wharncliffe Road is an entrance/gateway into a traditional main street area, there is no infrastructure/design treatment providing cues regarding what lies ahead on Main Street, nor are there any prompts to alter driving behaviour and drive at a speed appropriate for a main street / village core area (e.g. landscaping, signage, road width changes, lighting standards, banners).

As part of future infrastructures, there may be opportunity to develop a Streetscape Plan for Wharncliffe Road which could include a gateway into the Lambeth village core area. This project could assist with addressing concerns about traffic speed, support local businesses, provide orientation, and strengthen Lambeth's identity as a unique area within the City of London.

### **Change**

Like many communities in London, the Lambeth area is undergoing change. Although the population in the Lambeth Planning District declined by 5% between 2011 and 2016, the population of the City of London increased by 4.8% during the same timeframe. From 2014 to 2018, there was an increase in the number of new residential units constructed in the Lambeth Area and more are forecasted for the future. Although growth can have positive impacts like increased customers to businesses and participation in local events and organizations, growth also puts pressure on infrastructure (e.g. roads) and community facilities (e.g. community centre, parks, schools).

Growth in the Lambeth village core has been limited in part due to the lack of municipal sanitary and storm sewer connections. A significant component of the 2018 Main Street Infrastructure Renewal Project was installing new sanitary sewers and storm sewers along Main Street and part of Longwoods Road. This transition from a septic system to sanitary sewers is paving the way for future development in the area. This is especially important given the proximity and continued growth of the Wonderland Corridor which is less than 5 km away from the Lambeth village core. Figuring out how the Lambeth village core stays relevant and viable will be a challenge for the community.

### **Identity**

Similar to other rural villages in Ontario, Lambeth developed as a compact and walkable community with a traditional main street at its core. The Lambeth village core still contains a mix of small-scale and independent retail shops, restaurants, and service establishments, and a number of civic, institutional, and community anchors that remain important to the community (e.g. post office, places of worship, community centre, banks). The village core is surrounded by low-density residential areas, established over time. Also similar to other Ontario communities, the overall Lambeth area has lost some original buildings and has adapted to accommodate auto-oriented development. This has resulted in new development being built around and further from the original core, and growth of a commercial strip along Wharncliffe Road.

Although Lambeth was incorporated into the City of London in 1993 and the community fabric is changing with new residents, new infrastructure, and new businesses, its distinctiveness as a unique village resonates positively with the community. Factors contributing to this identity are: the relatively small size and geographic autonomy of the community; the long-standing active community organizations and places of worship with high levels of engagement (e.g. they bring people and events to Lambeth village core like the successful Lambeth & Community Harvest Festival); and, the strong sense of cultural heritage of Lambeth.

Building on and developing a community's identity typically involves working with an area's unique history, natural features, culture(s) and sources of community pride. This can be especially challenging in areas undergoing major changes and consideration must be given to building an identity that is representative of the current and changing

community members. There is an opportunity to further develop Lambeth's identity and distinctive village core within the City of London. Strengthening the Lambeth village core's unique sense of place would lend support to businesses, organizations, and bolster community pride.