

# Western Counties Health and Occupational Centre Grounds: Cultural Heritage Plan

Public Information Centre #2

November 14, 2012

# Purpose of the Project

## Study Purpose:

To develop a Cultural Heritage Plan for the Western Counties Health and Occupational Centre Grounds



## Goals and objectives of the Cultural Heritage Plan:

### *Natural Connections*

Recognize and respect the natural features and topography of the surrounding lands.

### *Historic Connections*

Maintain and preserve historical site features, conserve and enhance the features associated with the mid 1940s landscape design, and ensure they are a prominent element of the Plan.

### *Physical Connections*

Maintain active and passive recreation opportunities and promote site circulation and connectivity to adjacent lands.

### *Personal Connections*

Consult with the community to prepare a plan that meets the needs and objectives of the community.

# Study Area






# Study Area



Western Counties Wing Plot Plan, 1975  
Source-Victoria Hospital Archives




- 70 Guard House
- 71 Wellington Pavilion
- 72 Waterloo Pavilion
- 73 Middlesex Pavilion
- 74 Bruce Pavilion
- 75 Huron Pavilion
- 76 Perth Pavilion
- 77 Essex Pavilion
- 78 Elgin Pavilion
- 79 Lambton Pavilion
- 80 Kent Pavilion
- 81 Oxford Pavilion
- 82 Sewage Pumphouse
- 83 Shed
- 84 Fire Reel House

-  Demolished - City Owned
-  Demolished - Hospital Owned
-  Existing - Hospital Owned

Map Source: Historical Research Limited (2000)

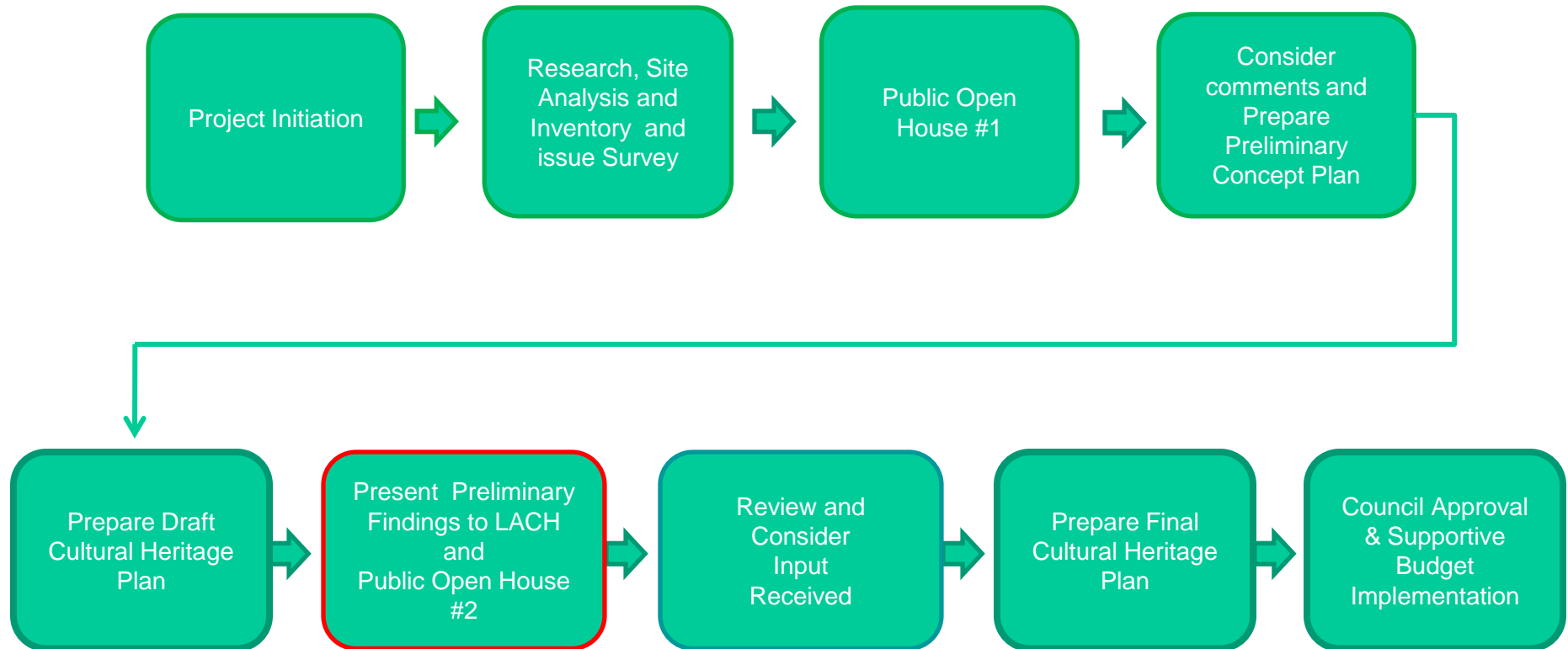
# Study Area – Property Boundaries



-  Lands Owned by London Health Sciences Centre
-  Lands Owned by City of London
-  Study Area

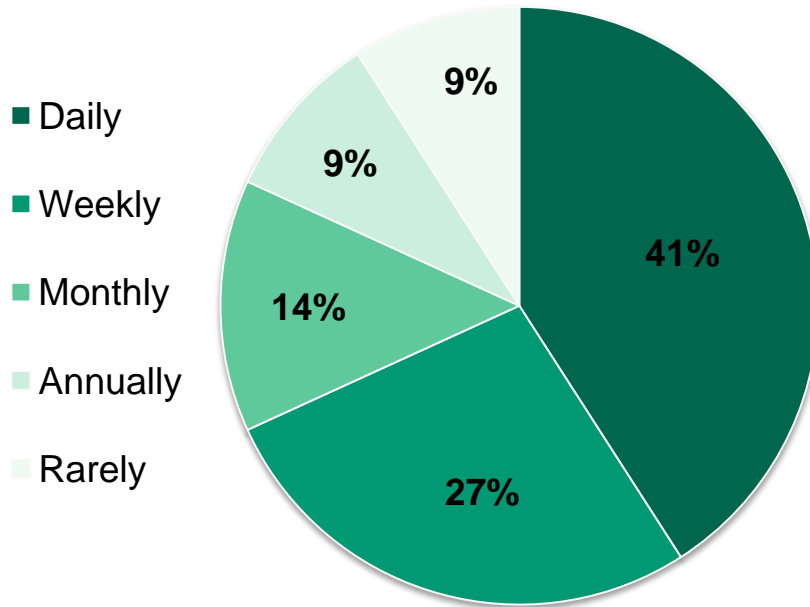
Map Source: City of London (2012)

# Study Process

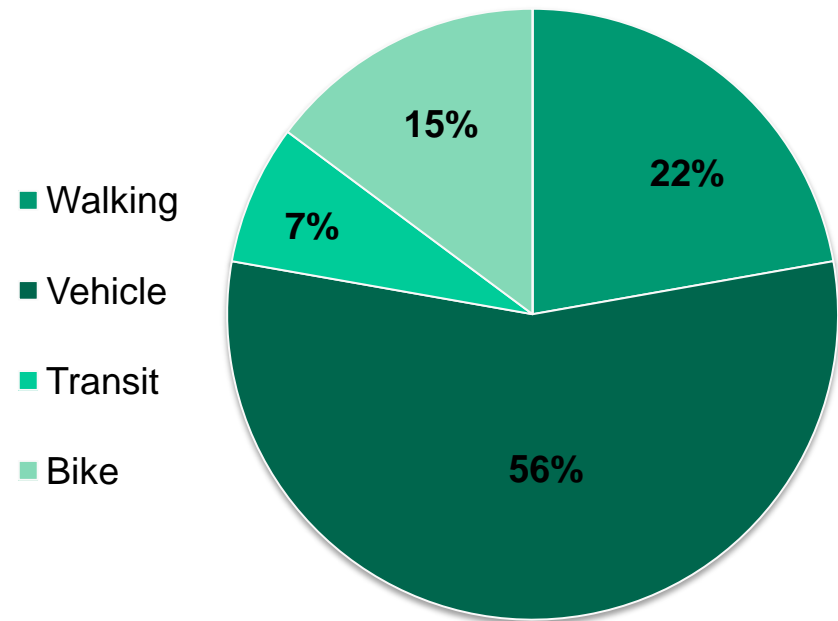


# What We Heard, Comments from PIC #1

## Q1. HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE SITE?

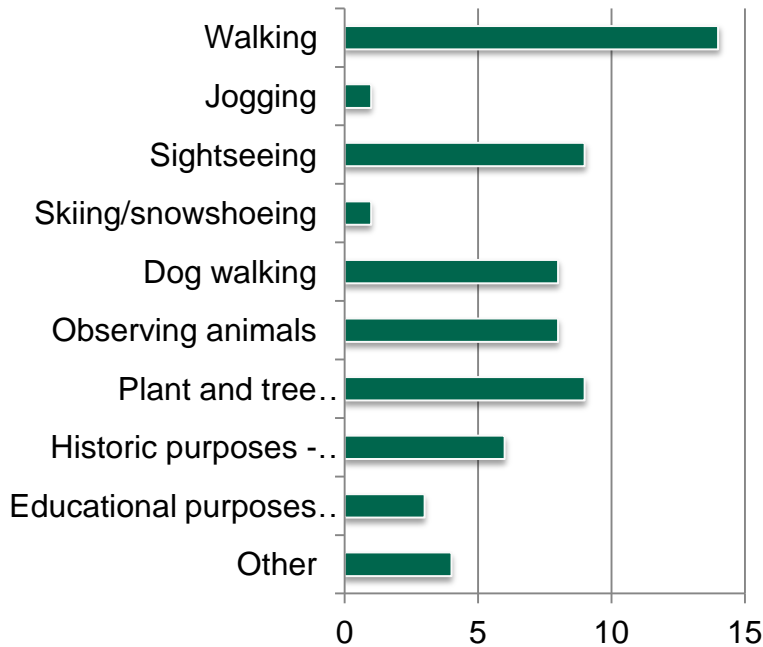


## Q2. HOW DO YOU TRAVEL TO THE SITE?



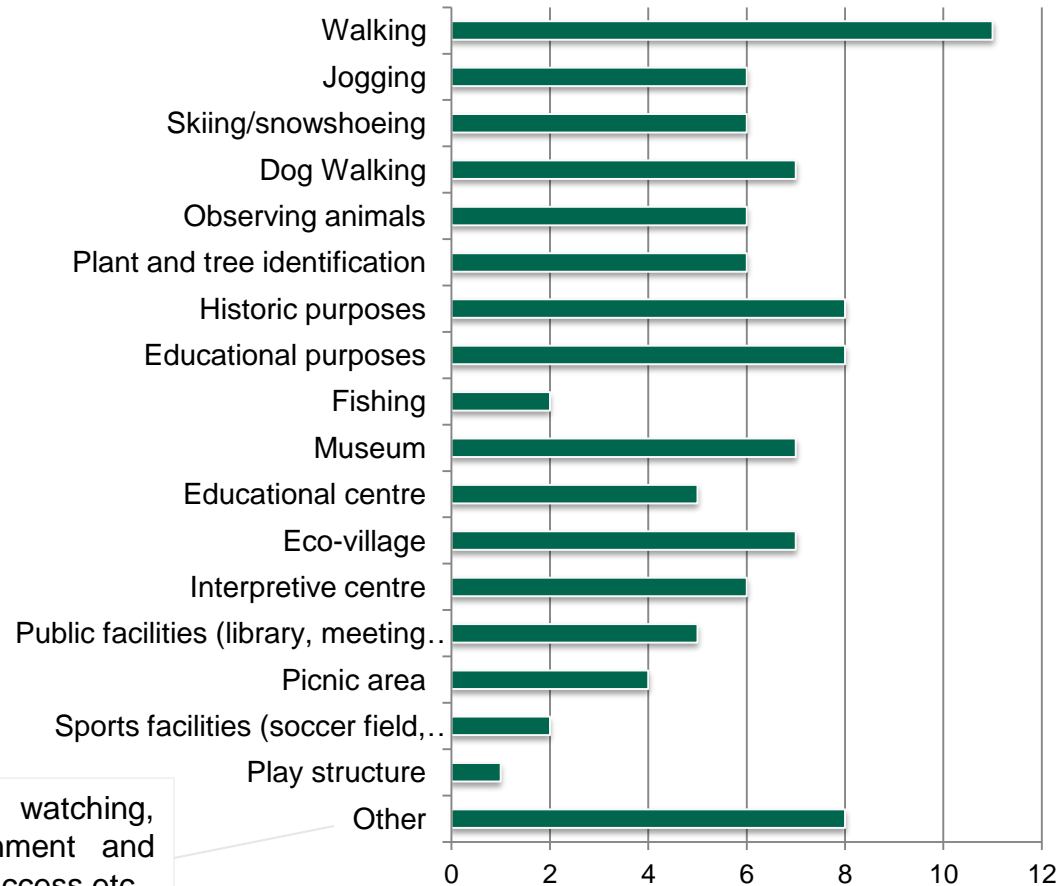
# What We Heard, Comments from PIC #1

## Q3. WHAT DO YOU USE THE SITE FOR?



Solitude, passive recreation, bird watching, cycling, protected space, environment and historic education, boat and canoe access etc.

## Q4. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO USE THE SITE FOR?





## What uses do you feel are incompatible with the site or should not be permitted?

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Motorized vehicles (i.e. bikes, ATVs etc.)</li><li>▪ Public Facilities (i.e. library, sports area/fields, play centre, picnic area etc.)</li><li>▪ Uses posing risk to natural environment</li><li>▪ Residential or commercial uses</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Hunting or fishing</li><li>▪ Loud noises or disturbance</li><li>▪ Pavement</li><li>▪ Active recreation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Off-trail hiking</li><li>▪ Swimming</li><li>▪ Off-leash dog area</li><li>▪ Active uses or services</li></ul> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for the Site?

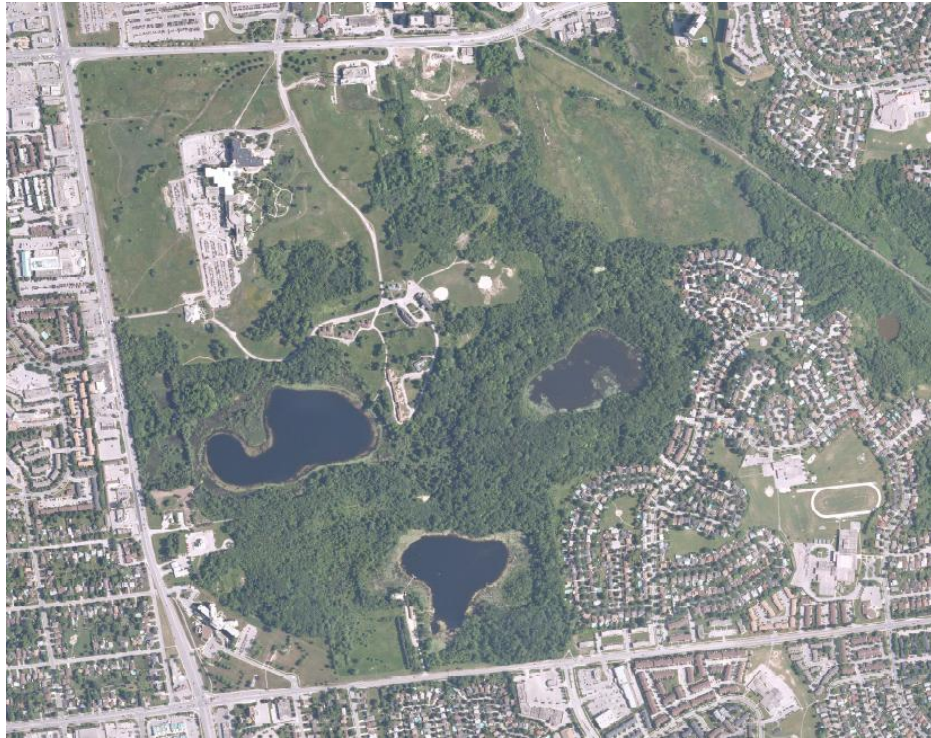
- Maintain water, trails and ponds
- Balance manicured landscapes and natural settings; control invasive species
- Educational or interpretative centre required; occupant needed for former dining hall
- Safety, security and monitoring:
  - Close park at night;
  - Install alarms to prevent theft/vandalism;
  - Vehicle access restricted to emergency only
  - Increase safety measures if patients to use site
- Maintain washrooms, provide garbage containers and clean site regularly
- Provide and maintain services including: water spigot, washrooms
- Initiative to maintain the grounds to ensure site and features are preserved for future enjoyment
- Monitored off-leash dog park
- Separate active and passive uses to ensure tranquil uses are not disturbed
- Provide connections between Commissioners/ Wellington Road to link building access vs. bicycles
- Honour Veterans and show Canada's commitment to history and their service

# Context: Natural Environment



- The site is adjacent to the Westminster Ponds / Pond Mills Environmentally Significant Area.
- Land formations of the area were created over 12,000 years ago as the glaciers retreated.
- Adjacent kettle ponds (Saunders Pond, Spettigue Pond, Tumbelson Pond) were created by melting glaciers and are the best examples of kettle ponds in the London Area.
- A variety of vegetation communities including forest, swamp, marsh and bog communities support a wide variety of plant and animal species.
- Areas of planned plantings evident and still exist around remaining buildings and foundations. Invasive species have also become established.

# Context: Urban Environment



- Located within the urban area of the City of London
- Road connection through London Health Sciences Centre
- Trail connections
- Commitment of London Health Sciences Centre to continue use of buildings



# Site Chronology



- Archaeological assessments on lands adjacent to the site have identified aboriginal artifacts. It is likely that the site was used or traveled by aboriginal people.
- The lands were used for agriculture in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Aerial photos indicate hedgerows and tree lines defining field patterns. Although due to the topography of the site it is likely that the lands were not cultivated extensively.
- W.E. Saunders purchased land adjacent to Saunders Pond beginning in 1913. Lands used as a bird sanctuary and wildlife preserve.
- The federal government expropriated the site in 1943 for a veterans' care facility.

# Site Chronology



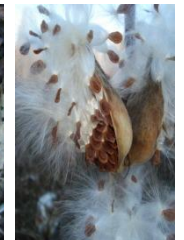
- In 1946, Western Counties Health and Occupational Centre opened with 196 beds as a rehabilitation centre for veterans re-entering civilian life.
- In the 1980s the last patients were moved from Western Counties Centre to Parkwood Hospital. The buildings and the site were then used by London Health Sciences and the Board of Education.
- In the 2000s the City of London took ownership of a portion of the site. Some buildings were demolished and the lands used for passive recreation.

# Heritage Value and Interest



Interpretation and treatment of cultural heritage resources:

- Existing buildings and layout pattern
- Landscape features: vegetation, views, and circulation routes
- Foundations and chimneys
- History/stories



# Heritage Value and Interest

## Ontario Heritage Act: O. Reg 9/06

A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
  - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
  - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
  - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. The property has historical or associative value because it,
  - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
  - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
  - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. The property has contextual value because it,
  - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
  - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
  - iii. is a landmark.

## Design or physical value

- Ornamental plantings representative of “therapy through landscape” approach to health care in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century

## Historical or associative value

- Direct association with Veterans’ Affairs and the veterans of both the First and Second World Wars.
- Direct association with the occupational therapy profession and the work towards veterans return to civilian life.

## Contextual value

- The site is physically, functionally and visually linked to the surrounding natural area
- The site is an integral part of the hospital campus

# Heritage Value and Interest

## Ontario Heritage Act: O. Reg. 10/06

(1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purpose of clause 34.5 (1) (a) of the Act. O. Reg. 10/06, s. 1(1).

(2) A property may be designated under section 34.5 of the Act if it meets on or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest of provincial significance:

1. The property represents or demonstrates a theme or pattern in Ontario's history.
2. The property yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of Ontario's history.
3. The property demonstrates an uncommon, rare or unique aspect of Ontario's cultural heritage.
4. The property is of aesthetic, visual or contextual importance to the province.
5. The property demonstrates a high degree of excellence or creative, technical or scientific achievement at a provincial level in a given period.
6. The property has a strong or special association with the entire province or with a community that is found in more than one part of the province. The association exists for history, social, or cultural reasons or because of traditional use.
7. The property has a strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organization of importance to the province or with an event of importance to the province.
8. The property is located in unorganized territory and the Minister determines that there is a provincial interest in the protection of the property.

1. Represents a theme or pattern . . .
  - Representative of early occupational therapy principles of the healing benefits of landscape
2. Contributes to an understanding of Ontario's history . . .
  - Contributes to the understanding of treatment for returning war veterans and understanding of the early years of occupational therapy
3. Demonstrates a unique aspect . . .
  - The naming of the buildings for each of the counties in southwestern Ontario is unique
6. Association with entire province . . .
  - The facility was one of 7 located in Canada to treat injured veterans and is directly related to the therapeutic use of landscape
7. Association with life or work of person, group, or organization. . .
  - The property has a strong association with Veterans' Affairs and the treatment of injured soldiers



# Issues Identified



## Accessibility

- Connections to existing trails
- Vehicle access and parking

## Maintenance

- Trash collection
- Removal of invasive species
- Maintain buildings, ruins, landscape features

## Sustainability

- Security and safety
- Maintain and find users for buildings

# Cultural Heritage Plan



Waterloo Pavillion Pool, Grand Opening  
Source: *The London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, Western Collection, 2012*



Occupational Therapy Uniform  
Source: *Cockburn, 2001*



Occupational Therapy Evolution  
Source: *Friedland et al., 2010*



Middlesex Pavillion Print Shop  
Source: *The London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, Western Collection, 2012*

## Interpretive Themes:

### 1. Natural History

- Surrounding natural system
- Vegetation and habitat

### 2. Cultural landscape

- Aboriginal and early settlers
- Veterans' hospital

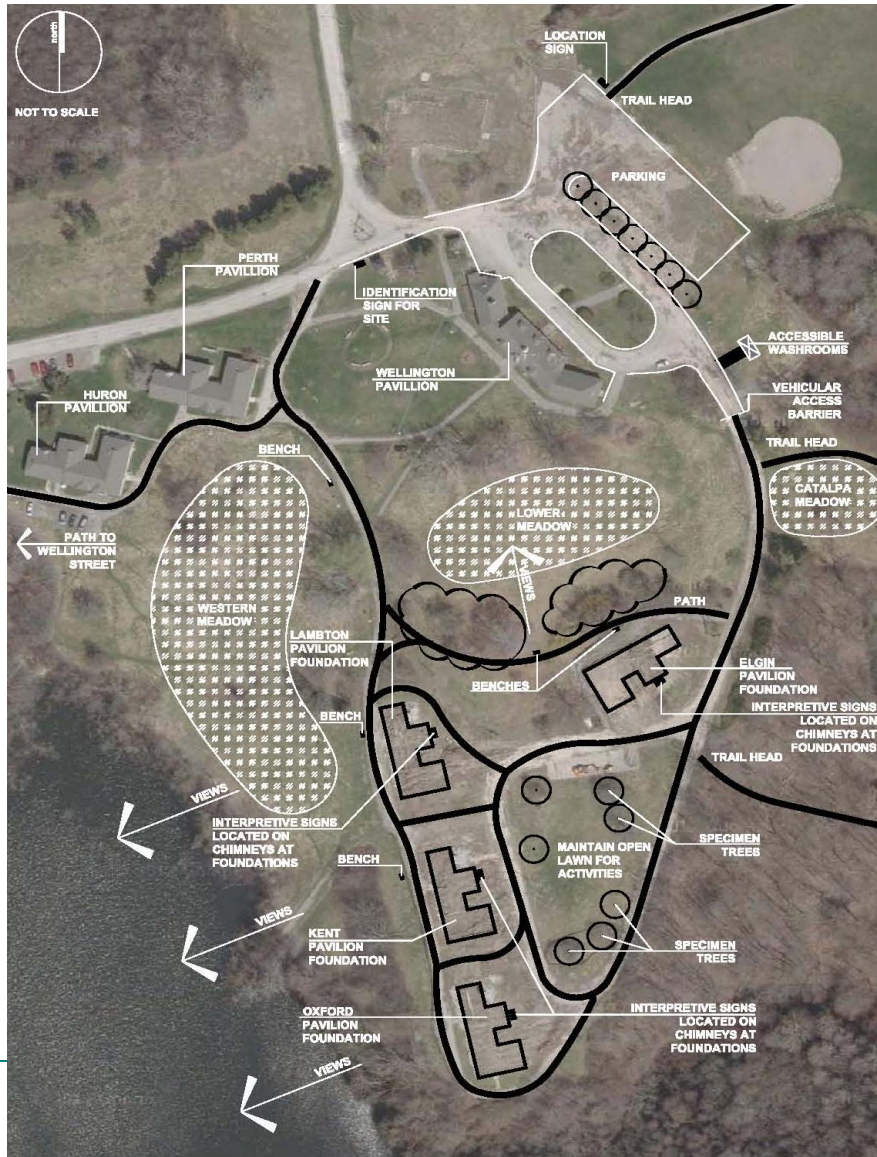
### 3. Veterans' Story

- London's contribution to war effort
- Rehabilitation

### 4. Occupational Therapy

- History of occupational and recreational therapy
- Role of women in OT

# Cultural Heritage Plan: Options



## Option 1: Minimal infrastructure

- Interpretative signage at ruins
- Benches and trash receptacles
- Parking at location of former Waterloo building
- Washrooms
  - Portable or permanent; or
  - Arrangement to use washrooms in existing buildings
- Orientation signage at entrance and trailheads
- Invasive species removal to open views
- Vehicle access limited to Hospital lands





# Cultural Heritage Plan: Options

## Treatment and interpretation of ruins:

### 1. Minimal intervention

- Ruins permitted to weather
- No maintenance of vegetation
- Interpretative signs on chimneys

### 2. Moderate

- Infill paving in one (ruin) pavilion with benches or short bridge
- Interpretive signs adjacent and on bridge

### 3. Maximum

- Capping/stabilization of all ruins
- Grass/vegetation maintained
- Regrading if necessary for accessibility



# Cultural Heritage Plan: Options



## Circulation

1. Retain and improve existing links to existing trails including bike barriers
2. Develop path (accessible) to new dock
3. Improve pedestrian 'promenade' around ruins and connecting to hospital lands (stone dust)
4. Improve main loop for vehicles (asphalt)
5. Improve path connection to Wellington Street
6. Improve vehicle parking

# Cultural Heritage Plan: Options



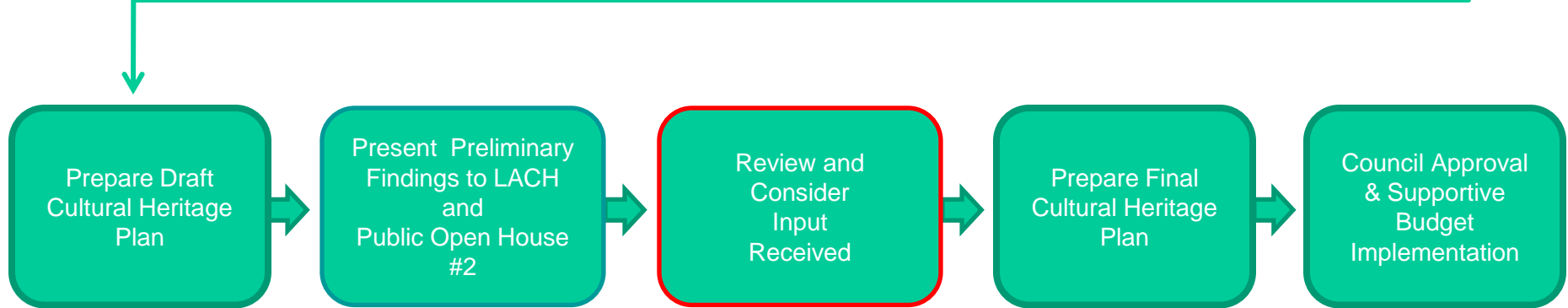
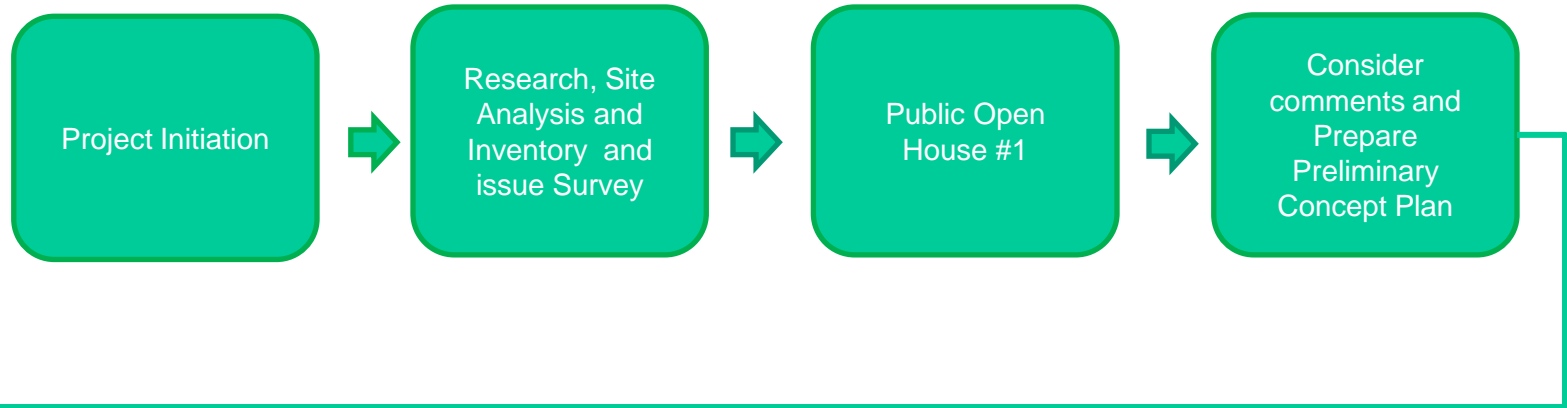
## Furniture and signage

1. Benches and trash receptacles
2. Bike racks
3. Interpretive signs
4. Public use areas, i.e. picnic shelter
5. Orientation signs at key points
6. Identification signs on buildings, parking lot
7. Regulatory signs – No Parking etc.





# Next Steps



# Sources

## Image Sources:

*Slide 16, Top Left:*

The London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, Western Archives (2012) [Image].

*Slide 16, Bottom Left:*

Cockburn, L. (2001). *The Professional Era, CAOT in the 1950's & 1960's*. Retrieved November 12, 2012 from: <http://www.caot.ca/otnow/may01-eng/may01-history.cfm>

*Slide 16, Middle Right:*

Friendland, J., Robinson, I., & Cardwell, T. (2010). *In the Beginning CAOT from 1926-1939*. Retrieved November 9, 2012 from: <http://www.caot.ca/otnow/jan01-eng/jan01-history.cfm>

*Slide 16, Bottom Right:*

The London Free Press Collection of Photographic Negatives, Western Archives (2012) [Image].