

## Report to Planning and Environment Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Planning & Environment Committee  
**From:** John M. Fleming  
Managing Director, Planning and City Planner  
**Subject:** 185 Queens Avenue Parking Lot Redevelopment  
**Meeting on:** October 7, 2019

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions be taken:

- (a) The report entitled “185 Queens Avenue Parking Lot Redevelopment” **BE RECEIVED**; and
- (b) The Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to undertake a procurement process to find a potential partner to redevelop the parking lot at 185 Queens Avenue for the purposes of a mixed-use development including a municipal parking garage.

## Executive Summary

### Summary of Request

The purpose of this report is to seek direction to undertake a procurement process to find a potential partner to redevelop the municipal surface parking lot at 185 Queens Avenue into a mixed-use development that includes a municipal parking garage as a component of the development.

### Purpose and the Effect of Recommended Action

The redevelopment of 185 Queens Avenue is intended to expand the provision of public parking in the central downtown to meet demand, and helps to implement the policy direction of The London Plan and Our Move Forward: London’s Downtown Plan by making a higher and better use of a surface parking lot.

### Rationale of Recommended Action

The Downtown Parking Strategy identifies a need to add an additional 200 to 300 parking spaces in the central and southwest downtown to meet demand over the short, medium, and long term. The existing municipal surface parking lot at 185 Queens Avenue presents an opportunity to help meet this demand through the provision of additional public parking spaces. The parking currently provides 74 public parking spaces. Redeveloping the site in partnership with a developer into a mixed-use building including a multi-level municipal parking garage could allow more parking to be provided on the site than currently exists and could also contribute to downtown intensification, helping to implement the policy direction of The London Plan and Our Move Forward: London’s Downtown Plan.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Opportunity for Additional Public Parking Provision

#### 1.1 Need to expand public parking in the Downtown

The Parking Strategy Report and Action Plan for Downtown London (“Downtown Parking Strategy”) was adopted by Municipal Council in December 2017 and sets the basis for future actions with respect to parking in the Downtown. The Downtown Parking Strategy identifies a need to increase the provision of parking in the central downtown,

recommending adding an additional 200 to 300 public parking spaces in the central and southwest downtown to meet short, medium and long-term demands. The Downtown Parking Strategy also recommends that this additional public parking be integrated into new developments through joint venture projects with participating developers. This is consistent with the policy direction in The London Plan which encourages the construction of mixed-use buildings in the downtown and discourages surface parking lots.

### 1.2 Opportunity at 185 Queens Avenue

The City of London owns a surface parking lot at 185 Queens Avenue which has 74 public parking spaces. This site, located in the central downtown, presents a potential opportunity for the City to partner with a developer to construct a mixed-use building that incorporates a multi-level municipal parking garage that provides a greater number of public parking spaces than currently exist on the site. This could help to meet the future parking demands for the central downtown. It would also make a higher and better use of a downtown site in a way that is consistent with the policy direction in The London Plan and Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan by promoting downtown intensification. As the site at 185 Queens Avenue is in the Downtown Heritage Conservations District, this mixed-use building would need to be compatible with the Downtown Heritage Conservation District.

## 2.0 Site at a Glance – 185 Queens Avenue

### 2.1 Property Description

The subject site at 185 Queens Avenue is located on the south side of Queens Avenue, west of Clarence Street. The site is currently used for a 74 space municipal surface parking lot, which is accessed from Queens Avenue.

The site is subject to several access easements in favour of neighbouring properties.



Figure 1: 185 Queens Avenue

### 2.2 Current Planning Information

- The London Plan Place Type – Downtown Place Type
- 1989 Official Plan Designation – Downtown
- Zoning – Holding Downtown Area Special Provision (h-3 DA2 D350) Zone
- Heritage Status – Part V Designated, part of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District

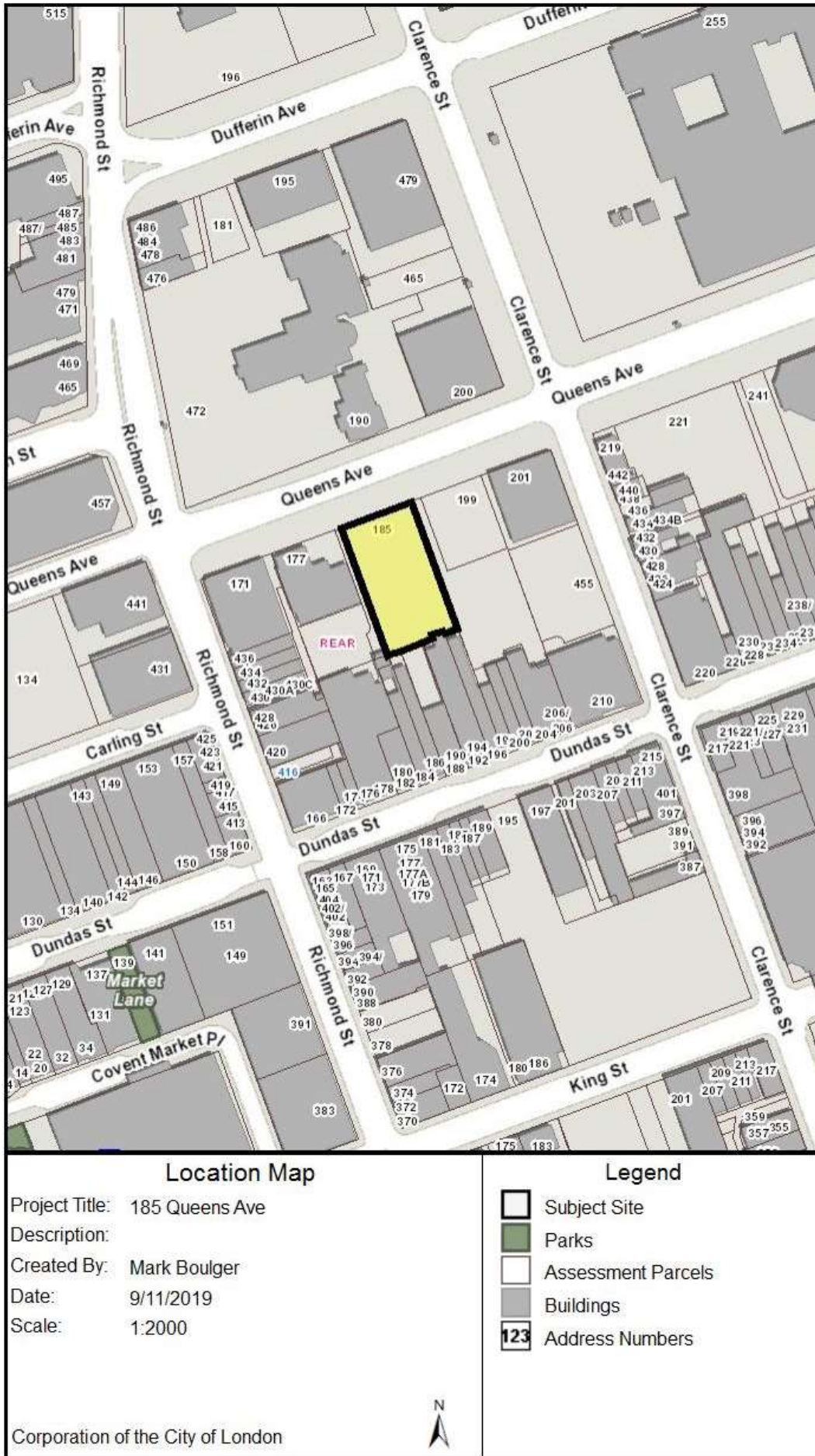
### 2.3 Site Characteristics

- Current Land Use – Municipal surface parking lot
- Frontage – 36.3 metres (119 feet)
- Depth – 60.4 metres (198 feet)
- Area – 0.21 hectares (0.53 acres)
- Shape – Rectangular

**2.4 Surrounding Land Uses**

- North – Place of worship (St. Paul's Cathedral)
- East – Surface parking lot
- South – Retail, restaurants, entertainment venue (London Music Hall)
- West – Private club (The London Club), surface parking lot

**2.5 Location Map**



### 3.0 Relevant Background

#### 3.1 Policy and Guideline Documents related to Downtown Parking

The redevelopment of a municipal surface parking lot into a mixed-use building that includes a municipal parking garage is consistent with the direction of a number of Council-adopted documents including the Downtown Parking Strategy, the Strategic Plan for the City of London 2019-2023, The London Plan, the 1989 Official Plan, and Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan.

A detailed overview of how the direction in each of these documents is supportive of redeveloping 185 Queens Avenue into a mixed-use building that includes a municipal parking garage can be found in Appendix A.

### 4.0 Next Steps

#### 4.1 Procurement Process

This report recommends that Staff be directed to undertake a procurement process to find a developer to partner with the City to redevelop the municipal surface parking lot at 185 Queens Avenue into a mixed-use building that incorporates a municipal parking garage.

This procurement process would be a two-stage process including a Request for Qualifications (RFQUAL) followed by a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The RFQUAL process would seek to find qualified proponents who would then be invited to submit for the subsequent RFP.

The RFQUAL would look to find qualified proponents by requiring proponents to demonstrate their ability to undertake the redevelopment of 185 Queens Avenue as demonstrated through their previous experience, including their experience with the successful completion of past projects of a similar scale. Proponents would also be required to provide a letter of credit to demonstrate their financial capacity to undertake the project. Proponents would be required to submit only conceptual site plans for the RFQUAL, with more detailed plans being required at the RFP stage.

Qualified proponents identified through the RFQUAL process would be invited to submit proposals for a subsequent RFP. The RFP would require applicants to provide a detailed proposal, including the detailed design of their proposed development with information on the number of public parking spaces that would be provided. This public parking garage would also be required to include space for bicycle parking, space for carpool vehicles, space for electric vehicle charge, and space for carshare vehicles. The design of the mixed use building would need to implement the city design policies in The London Plan. Proponents will also be required to demonstrate compatibility of their proposed development with the Downtown Heritage Conservation District. Proponents would be required to undertake their own due diligence associated with the property, including determining how the existing easements would be addressed through redevelopment.

The London Music Hall is adjacent to 185 Queens Avenue. It is a major entertainment venue for the Downtown and for London as a whole. Over the course of a year, the Music Hall attracts tens of thousands of patrons. Any proposed development will need to show how the Music Hall's operations could be addressed in the spirit of community economic development and collaboration.

The evaluation for declaring the property surplus to municipal needs would occur concurrently with the procurement process.

## 4.2 Implementation

Following selection of a successful proponent through the procurement process, Staff would undertake a City-initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to rezone the property to permit the selected proposal. The successful proponent would be responsible for preparing the submission materials for the Zoning By-law Amendment, but the Amendment would be initiated by the City and would be considered by City Council through the standard public process for Zoning By-law Amendment applications.

Following the rezoning of the property, the successful proponent would have a set period of time to obtain the other necessary approvals (site plan, heritage alteration permit, building permit etc.) and construct the mixed-use building including the municipal parking garage. The agreement of purchase and sale would include clauses such that if the development is not constructed in a set period of time, penalties would apply and ownership would revert back to the City of London.

## 4.3 Timeline

It is anticipated that the RFQUAL would be released in Q4, 2019, followed by the RFP in Q1, 2020. Should this procurement process be successful, it is anticipated that a successful proponent would be selected by Municipal Council in Q2, 2020.

## Financial Impact

Civic Administration will establish a funding source to support the Downtown Parking strategy as part of the Multi Year Budget process. The procurement process will be supported with existing internal resources.

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<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>Britt O'Hagan, MCIP, RPP Manager, City Building and Design, City Planning</b>
<b>Recommended by:</b>	<b>John M. Fleming, MCIP, RPP 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 Planning Services	

September 30, 2019  
MT/mt

## Appendix A

The following provides an overview of Council-adopted documents that provide direction that is supportive of the potential redevelopment of 185 Queens Avenue into a mixed-use building that incorporates a municipal parking garage.

### **Downtown Parking Strategy**

At its meeting of December 4, 2017, Municipal Council accepted the Parking Strategy Report and Action Plan for Downtown London (“Downtown Parking Strategy”) as the basis for future actions with respect to parking in the Downtown. The Downtown Parking Strategy includes a review of existing parking and conditions and future development potential based on the relevant aspects of the London 2030 Transportation Management Plan, the Rapid Transit EA and Business Case Analysis, the Cycling Master Plan, the 2014 Development Charges By-law and Background Study, and Our Move Forward: London’s Downtown Plan.

It identifies that the key to future development in the downtown will be the replacement of existing surface parking lots with new developments. The study notes that determining how much parking is required, how it is provided, what role the City should play in meeting future parking demand, the financial implications associated with providing new parking and the most appropriate municipal service delivery model to employ in order to maximize the return on investment of public funds are critical considerations in the development of a parking management strategy for the downtown. The Downtown Parking Strategy provides recommendations regarding:

- The City’s future role in the provision of shared public parking resources
- The integration of Transportation Demand Management considerations into the parking strategy, focused on increasing mobility options and reducing parking demand over time
- Parking supply requirements in the Zoning By-law
- Discontinuation of temporary zoning for surface commercial parking lots
- The payment in lieu of parking by-law
- A funding plan
- A parking system management structure
- A Vision, Mission, Key Goals and Objectives for the strategy

The study identifies that there are a total of 15,436 parking spaces in the downtown including on-street municipal (public), off-street (owned by the City), commercial (public), and private off-street parking (not available for public parking), of which 9,897 spaces are available for public use. During peak periods 77% of this parking is occupied, however this is not evenly distributed throughout the downtown with certain areas having higher parking utilization rates. The central and southwest downtown have been identified as areas potentially facing parking deficits in the future. To address these deficits, the Downtown Parking Strategy recommends providing 200 to 300 new public parking spaces in the central and southwest downtown over the next 20 years through investing in joint venture projects by participating with developers to integrate public parking in new developments in the central and southwest downtown, in order to facilitate meeting City growth targets and urban design objectives (recognizing that surface parking lots are not the highest and best use of downtown sites).

It is also recommended that these new public parking facilities be strategically located to facilitate economic development, maximize utilization, minimize development cost, may incorporate mixed-use development and grade level commercial spaces, and must be designed to reflect The London Plan policies. Leveraging the municipal ownership of existing surface lots to facilitate the provision of public parking in garages that are integrated with new development projects.

Based on the recommendations in the Downtown Parking Strategy, Municipal Council also directed staff to look for opportunities to invest in joint venture projects by participating with developers to integrate public parking in new developments within the next 20 years in the central and southwest downtown.

Redeveloping the municipal surface parking lot at 185 Queens Avenue helps implement the direction of the Downtown Parking Strategy, by expanding the provision of public parking in the central downtown.

### **Strategic Plan for the City of London 2019-2023**

The Strategic Plan for the City of London 2019-2023 ("Strategic Plan") was adopted by Municipal Council in 2019. Under the strategic direction of Building a Sustainable City, the Strategic Plan identifies the need to direct growth and intensification to strategic locations. One of the strategies identified in the strategic plan to accomplish this is to replace surface parking with efficient, convenience, and cost-effective public parking resources to support business, personal, and social activity in the downtown. The redevelopment of the 185 Queens Avenue surface parking lot into a mixed-use building that provides public parking supports of this Strategic Plan direction and action.

### **The London Plan**

The London Plan is the new Official Plan for the City of London and has been adopted by City Council in 2016 and approved by the Ministry with modifications. The majority of The London Plan is in-force and effect, while a portion of the Plan continues to be under appeal at the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal.

The subject site at 185 Queens Avenue is in the Downtown Place Type in The London Plan. The Downtown Place Type is the highest-order mixed-use centre, allowing the tallest buildings and highest densities in the City. The Downtown Place Type permits a range of residential, retail, service, office, cultural, institutional, hospitality, entertainment, recreational and other related uses; and encourages that these uses occur within mixed-use buildings. Commercial-oriented streetscapes, retail and service uses are encouraged at grade, with residential and non-service office uses that do not serve a walk-in clientele directed to the rear of buildings and to upper floors. New surface commercial parking lots are not permitted, and the extension of temporary zoning on existing surface commercial parking lots is discouraged.

The redevelopment of the subject site from surface parking to a new mixed-use development incorporating public parking conforms to the policy direction of The London Plan and would help to make the highest and best use of a surface parking lot.

The London Plan also identifies the need to prepare a parking strategy for the downtown to coordinate municipal parking supply and provide for public parking at strategically advantageous locations. The redevelopment of the site at 185 Queens Avenue helps to implement this parking strategy.

### **1989 Official Plan**

The 1989 Official Plan remains in-force and effect as an Official Plan for the City of London, as portions of The London Plan are currently under appeal to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal.

The subject site at 185 Queens Avenue is in the Downtown Area designation in the 1989 Official Plan. The 1989 Official Plan promotes the continued development of the downtown as the primary business, administrative, institutional, entertainment and cultural centre of the City of London, and also encourages the growth of the residential population in the downtown through new development and the renovation and conversion of existing buildings. Commercial parking structures are identified as a permitted use in the downtown, and the creation of new surface parking lots is discouraged. The development of mixed-use buildings is encouraged.

The 1989 Official Plan also identifies that the City, on its own or in co-operation with private landowner, may participate in the acquisition and development of land within the Downtown for the purposes of public off-street parking.

The redevelopment of 185 Queens Avenue into a mixed-use building that incorporates a municipal parking garage is consistent with the policy direction in the 1989 Official Plan as it would redevelop a surface parking lot in the Downtown into a mixed-use building and help to expand the provision of off-street public parking in the Downtown.