



London
CANADA

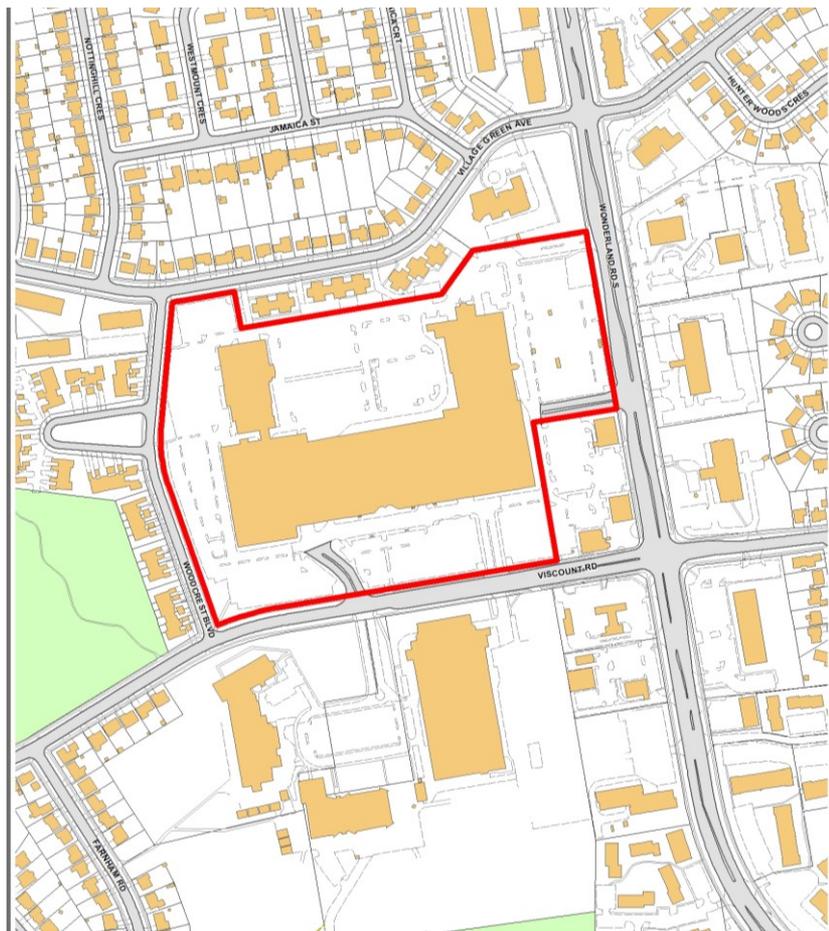
755-785 Wonderland Road South (Westmount Mall)

Z-9356/McCor Management Inc.

Planning and Environment Committee
September 20, 2021

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Location of Site



- Former Regional Mall
- Built in the 1980's
- 1989 Official Plan – Community Commercial Node
- London Plan- Shopping Area Place Type
- Zoning By-law Z-1- Regional Shopping Area Special Provision (RSA2 (2)- commercial and private schools added by ZBA

Existing Situation

Total Gross Leasable Floor Area- 41,800m²

Retail- 10,000m²

Office-type uses- 10,300m²

Public service uses- 1,500m²

Other uses- 4,600m²

Vacant- 15,400m² (approx. 36%
based on information
provided)

First floor mainly retail uses, Second Floor
mainly offices

In recent years the former Regional
Shopping Mall has been losing tenants
and has had vacancy issues partially due
to the proximity of new commercial
development to the south and changes in
retail demand.





Requested Zoning By-law Amendment

- The applicant has requested the addition of “business service establishment” to permit a call centre
- No proposed size was provided.
- ***“BUSINESS SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT” means an establishment primarily engaged in providing services to business establishments on a fee or contract basis, including advertising and mailing, building maintenance, employment services, protective services, and small equipment rental, leasing and repair.***
- That use is only currently permitted in the Light Industrial (LI) Zone in low-impact industrial areas.
- Most call centres have located in Downtown (e.g. Citi-Plaza/Galleria)



City of London Office Policies since the 1990's

- 1989 Official Plan- maximum of 5000m² for suburban office buildings.
- The London Plan- maximum of 2000m² of office space in Shopping Area Place Types.
- Policies focus on the all-inclusive term “office” which includes all forms of office whereas Zoning By-law Z-1 has various office definitions.
- Downtown Plan, Downtown CIP and Core Area Action Plan also speak to the importance of office space to Downtown.
- **Goal-** limit large floor plate, employment-based offices to Downtown
- Small-scale offices serving walk-up clients and customers allowed.



Office Space Statistics

- 2019 Office Vacancy Rates (2019 State of the Downtown Report/CBRE) prior to COVID-19

Downtown-	Class A	13.6%
	Class B	16.3%
	Class C (Older)	48.6%
	Overall Rate-	18.4%
Suburban-		16.9%

A 5-8% vacancy rate is considered a “healthy” office market.

In the last 5 years the Downtown’s share of the office space market has dropped 5% from 80% to 75%.

The City recently formed a Core Area Vacancy Strategy Team to identify ways to fill vacancies.



Importance of Downtown to the City

- Employment, Entertainment and Cultural Centre of the City- the City's gathering place for all Citizens.
- Assessment/Taxes- collect disproportionate share based on land area – 5.5% of all taxes for 0.2% of the total City land area.
- Provide spin-off benefits to other uses Downtown (e.g. retail, personal service, restaurants)



Recommendation

- **REFUSAL** of the request to add business service establishment as a permitted use.
- **REASONS**
 1. not in conformity with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (Section 1.7.1)
 2. not in conformity with the Downtown and Community Commercial Nodes policies of the 1989 Official Plan.
 3. not in conformity with the Downtown and Shopping Area Place Type policies of the London Plan.
 4. Would introduce a large floor space, employment-based office use in a suburban location.
 5. Based on the definition, could introduce a light industrial use into a shopping mall.



Options for the Site

- Focus on Non-Office Uses- community serving uses
- Introduction of High Density/Medium Density Residential- similar to Masonville Mall, Hylands Centre and London Mall in London
- Reformat the Mall- similar to Oakridge, Argyle and Northlands Malls