



# ReThink London

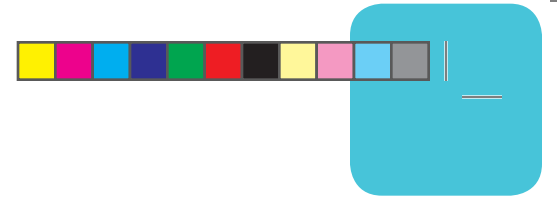
## Discussion Papers



May  
2013







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We asked...

# //What will your London look like in 2035?//

...and London, you answered.



The City of London has embarked on an important city-building initiative – ReThink London. ReThink is a community conversation about our future. It will set the goals and priorities that will influence the future growth and development of the City for years to come.

In fact...

More than 9,200 Londoners have participated in over 63 events. You have brought many thoughts and ideas, and passionately shared with us how you want your London to evolve, grow, and prosper into the city that you envision by 2035 and beyond.

The comments, information, questions and directions we received came from people of different ages, backgrounds, economic strata, ethnic origins, and lifestyles. We heard from London residents from all

over the City, large and small businesses, universities, colleges, hospitals, and leaders from all types of organizations.

Your response to our questions led the people at Lura Consulting to tell us:

“The figures we have suggest that no other official planning process in Canada has had as much exposure as ReThink London.”

And it didn't stop there.

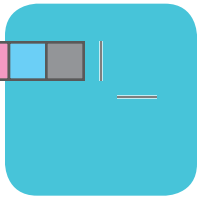
On Twitter, @Rethinkldn has more than 1,600 followers. The hashtag #rethinkldn has twice trended second highest in all of Canada since May 2012.

We also received hundreds of comment cards and thousands of emails expressing your opinions, hopes and aspirations for London.

We have also spoken with many of you. More than 3,700 individual Londoners have engaged in one-on-one personal conversations with the ReThink London Team. Information about ReThink London has reached more than 60% of Londoners.







From a public engagement standpoint, ReThink London has achieved more than expected. There has been a very tangible buzz in the community around the topic of London's future – "where do we want to go and how are we going to get there?"

To rest on these successes would be an injustice to the level of engagement we have witnessed and the amount of enthusiasm that you have brought to the process. You have provided us the starting point from where this journey will continue.

Now it's our turn to take what you've told us and deliver a Plan that will create the city that you told us that you want.

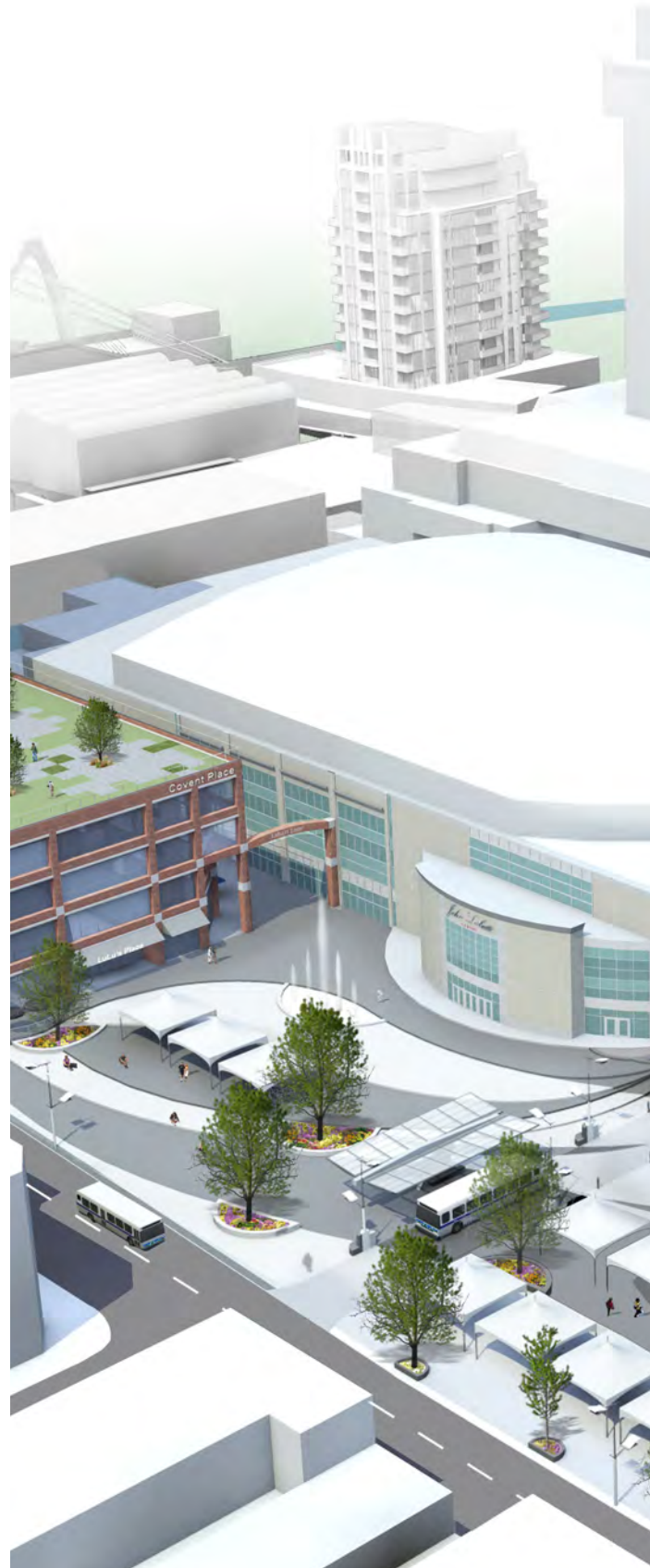
London, we asked, you answered, and this is what we heard.



### Why We Plan...

Simply put, we plan to define our collective goals and wishes and to set a course that will help us to achieve them. Put another way, we plan so that we can prosper as a community.

Planning is something that we all do. For example, planning for our future as a City is much like planning for a long trip. We must first determine our destination. There are many potential destinations, and with a long road ahead, we can easily end our trip in a place that we never anticipated or desired if we don't start with a plan. That's why it's so important to clearly define and understand our desired destination as a community – our vision for London.



ReThinking London





# Vision

## Our Future: Exciting, Exceptional, Connected London

Once we have defined our vision, the next step is to plan how we will best get there as a City. London will be faced with many challenges and opportunities. The actions we take as a community will either propel us towards our vision or take us in an alternative direction.

More than ever, it's important to understand that we are competing with other cities on the world stage. They too are preparing their own plans and making decisions accordingly. Those cities that have a clear vision and well laid plans will have a huge advantage in their pursuit for prosperity.

Without plans, the simplest things that we rely on everyday, like turning on the tap and getting clean water, or having a convenient place to shop, wouldn't happen without a plan that has policies about servicing and infrastructure or that has areas of the city identified for different kinds of land uses.

### How Do We Plan?

The most important tool that a community has at its disposal to plan a city is the Official Plan. It should contain both the aspirations of its citizens and set expectations of what is to come. It should clearly convey the vision of the future and what we must do to get there. It most often does this through a set of policies that will guide our decision-making.

The Planning Act is the provincial legislation that requires cities like London to prepare Official Plans. But what's more important is that the Act requires that **all** municipal projects and all by-laws **must** be

consistent with a city's Official Plan. That means the Official Plan sets the stage for municipal investments, regulations and actions taken by the City.

“All municipal projects and all by-laws must be consistent with a city's Official Plan.” - The Planning Act

The Official Plan is a powerful tool. A community is only as good as its Plan: a Plan is only as good as its ownership by the community it is designed to serve. That's why ReThink London is so important to our future – it needs to reflect the community's desires and set the course for our decision-making over the long-term.

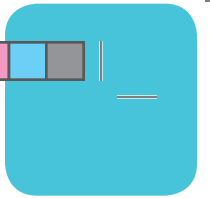
# Values

## Leadership Inclusiveness Collaboration Resiliency Accountability Innovation

### So, why now?

There are a number of reasons why the City needs to embark on this process now.

The Official Plan currently in use was completed by the City in 1989 and approved by the Province in 1991. As required by provincial legislation, municipalities must consider the need to review



their Official Plan every five years. Over the past 20+ years, the plan has been reviewed four times and important changes have been made to refine and update it. However, it's now been over 20 years since the original plan was prepared and it's time for a new Plan that better reflects the goals and aspirations of London and Londoners today.

Think of all the change that has occurred in London and, in fact, the world since the Plan was written in 1989.

The Berlin Wall came down. The Soviet Union became Russia and abandoned communism. In 1989, Prince William was seven, and today he is married and will soon be a father.

Twitter, Facebook and Google did not exist. In fact, the Internet had not yet taken hold and email wasn't yet used. Just think how this has affected the way we live, operate in our businesses, and our connection to the world.

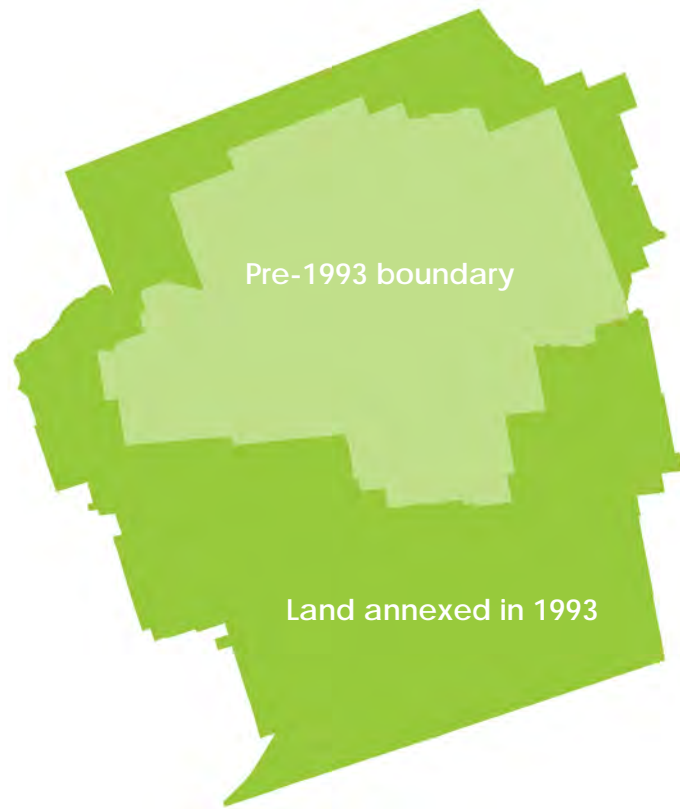
We were a year into Free Trade and more than five years away from the North America Free Trade Agreement. The globalization of commerce and industry and the rise of economies like China and the European Union were not even imagined

Cell phones looked like a brick, cost a week's salary and were only used for talking. The idea of texting, smart phones, data packages and cell phone cameras likely only existed in the minds of some very smart students.

London looked considerably different as well.

The Knights still played at the "London Gardens" which was outside of the City limits. In fact, it was not until 1993 that London annexed portions of its surrounding townships and grew from about 16,000 hectares to over 42,000 hectares. In doing so, the City took on a huge amount of agricultural land and changed its character forever.

In 1989, the tallest office buildings downtown were the Canada Trust towers, and our population was 289,557 approximately, 76,000 less than it is today.

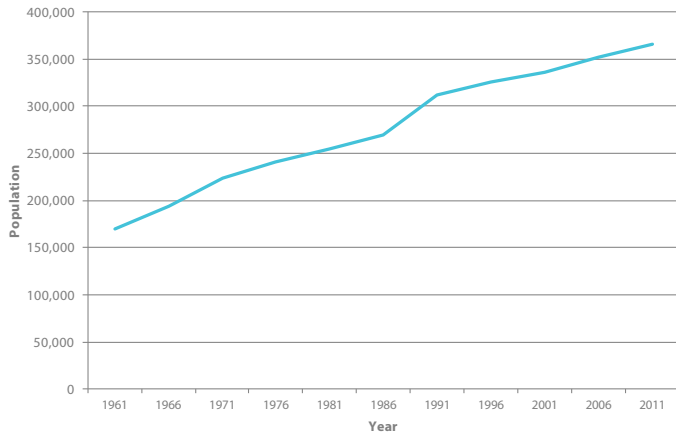


In an effort to combat the spread of commercial space to the suburbs, Galleria Mall opened with the goal of recapturing a larger share of Londoner's commercial spending Downtown.





In 1989 we had a well established trend of growing at a faster rate than the province as a whole. Our population growth rates hovered around 2% and even 3% over the two decades leading up to 1989. Over the past decade, London has grown at a rate below 1%.



The problems we faced and the opportunities available to us were much different in 1989 than they are today. Change happens, and it happens quickly. In fact, change is occurring more rapidly today than it ever has. Over the next 20 years, London will certainly face the same magnitude of change that it did since 1989. With these changes will come many new opportunities. One of the goals of this Plan will be to make sure that the City is positioned to take advantage of these opportunities.

It's for these reasons that we need to develop a new Plan. It's time to ReThink our Plan for the future for London and for its citizens to prosper.

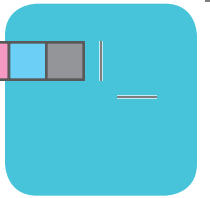
### Where we are headed... "it's all about prosperity"

From the first ReThink London event in May 2012 with CBC-TV national news anchor Peter Mansbridge, Londoners have been sending a consistent message on how London will be defined in 2035.

The prevailing theme is prosperity. Londoners clearly are concerned about our economic future. What is London's role on the world economic stage? What economic opportunities will be available to us in the future and how do we best prepare

ourselves to seize on these opportunities? How can we retain the outstanding businesses, institutions, and organizations that we have in the City and how can we best attract new ones? How do we ensure that there are jobs for everyone that can help all Londoners to be prosperous?





The messages we've heard from you go well beyond the more traditional notions of prosperity. Londoners understand the link between economic prosperity and a high quality of life. These messages are consistent with what Londoners told us during other recent City community initiatives. Quality of life, wellness and prosperity were all comments and themes that we heard through the London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy and the Age Friendly Task Force. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Cultural Prosperity Plan also promote quality of life, wellness and prosperity.

## Engaged, wellness and high quality of life. // Londoner

One Londoner told us that they were looking for "Engaged, wellness and a high quality of life". We liked this phrase. It speaks to the core values Londoners cherish and believe our City can provide. How you quantify each is as unique as you are. When you have a sense that these things are being provided, you have a greater feeling of contentment and connection to your neighbourhood, community and City.

From you, we heard that Londoner's want:

A City that celebrates, practices and encourages environmental sustainability across the board, including the preservation of natural heritage, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, energy conservation and new forms of environmentally responsible development. A City that does not contribute to climate change, but prepares us for it in reasonable and effective ways. A City that grows in responsible ways that protect our resources. A City that is affordable.

A City with a strong community image, including a fully revitalized downtown, a strong riverfront, an abundant, healthy urban forest that truly reflects our brand as "The Forest City", an international airport, and exceptional hospitals and educational institutions. A City that respects and celebrates both its natural and built heritage, with an emphasis on the Thames River corridor, recreation, parks and green spaces, with strong connections to the county, agriculture and tourism.

ReThinking London





A City that is for everyone, with great public spaces and community gathering places. A collection of great neighbourhoods with a mix of affordable housing and different housing forms that allow people to choose to remain in their neighbourhoods through all the stages of their life.

“Integrated, active transportation!” – Londoner

An “integrated, active transportation” network, was another comment that we heard. This means a transportation system that provides for automobiles but also supports viable and attractive transportation options such as walking, cycling and public transit that lead towards healthier and more complete communities for all.

A City that is connected in so many ways – including our highway linkages to the border crossings, through advanced transportation and communication technologies, and to the agricultural region that surrounds us.

A vibrant City that celebrates the importance of arts, culture, and sports and entertainment. A place that welcomes and encourages creativity, innovation and diversity.

At its core, we have heard you say that our future prosperity relies on building an exciting, exceptional and connected City that people want to live in and people want to invest in.

## So, what’s next?

We started the ReThink London process with some basic questions. Through those questions and subsequent conversations we have now developed a vision – “Our Future: Exciting, Exceptional and Connected London” -- and eight key directions that we think represent what we heard from you. They are:

1 Fostering a Prosperous City

2 Connecting the Region

3 Building a Mixed-Use, Compact City

4 Providing Transportation Choices

5 Building a Greener City

6 Supporting a Culturally Rich and Diverse City

7 Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods

8 Making Wise Planning Decisions, Careful Management



There will be discussion papers focused on each key direction. It's important to understand, though, that all of the directions are linked. We'll describe what we heard from you, focusing on those points that were most prevalent. We'll also discuss some best practices that we have learned from other communities through our own research. Finally, we'll give you a sense of where we're headed in the preparation of a new London Official Plan.

Then we'd like to check back in with you, the community, to hear if you think that we got it right.

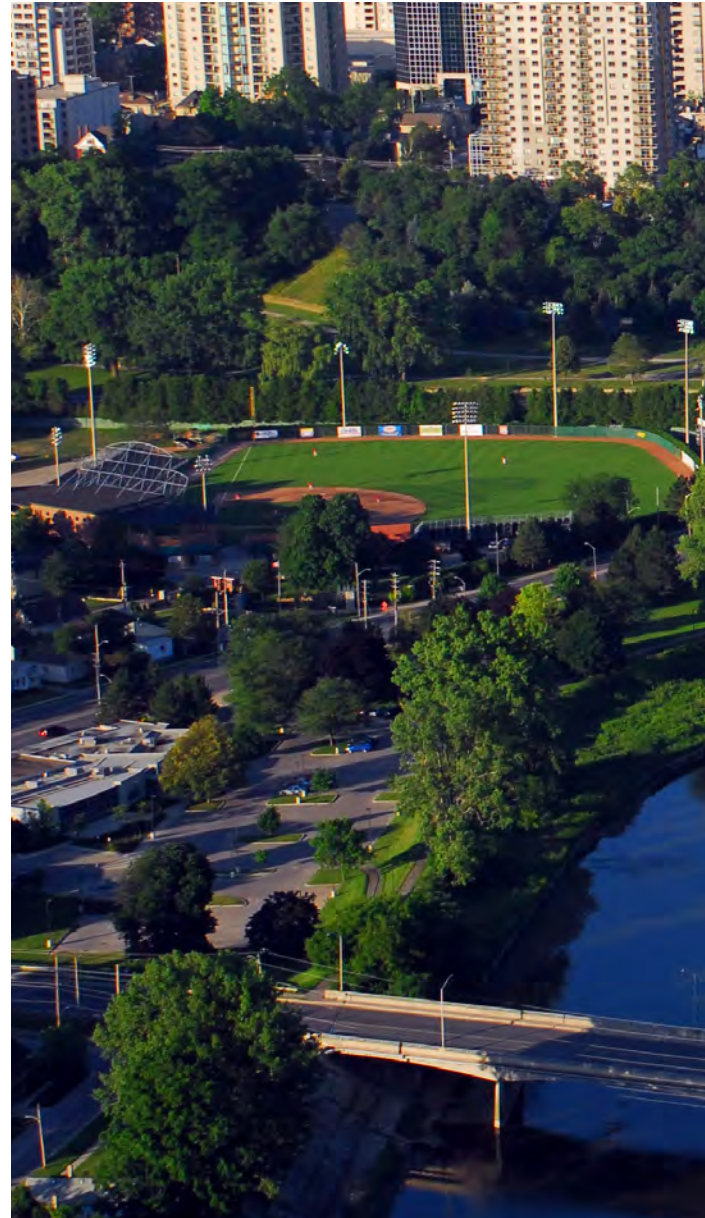
You'll notice that these discussion papers are not written in the same style as most of our Planning documents. We wanted to keep the discussion papers conversational and to keep the discussion going in the community.

### A nod to the past...

Throughout our past, city leaders have had to make many of the same decisions that London now faces. How should we grow? Where will new private sector investment come from and how it should be directed? Which public investments should we make? We have benefited from their due diligence and decision-making. Future generations will similarly be affected by the decisions we make in this plan.



For example, early investments in infrastructure, such as the wells and the reservoir at Springbank Park that were intended to ensure a secure supply of safe drinking water for the growing City, have left London with a proud legacy of high quality parks and open spaces.



Labatt Park stands, as it has since 1877, at the gateway into the Downtown. In 2011, it was voted "Canada's Favourite Ballpark." Jim Baba, Director General of Baseball Canada was quoted in the London Community News saying, "We believe that quality ballparks and baseball facilities across Canada play a major role in promoting our sport. Labatt Park is all of that along with having a rich history that many ball players, not only in London but across this country, have had the opportunity of living first hand."

In 2011, Labatt Park was voted Canada's Favourite Ballpark.



While we may bemoan them at various times during the day, try to imagine what our city would have been like had the Canadian National railway not come through London? The first steam train from Hamilton arrived in London on December 15, 1853, along what was then the Great Western Railway. The resulting influx of merchants and individuals resulted in a building boom, including the largest hotel in British North America – The Tecumseh House.

The decision to make London the district capital of Canada with the construction of the Gaol and Courthouse in 1826 served as our foundation. Later, the establishment of the Garrison in 1838 following the 1837 rebellion built on London’s administrative roots. After that, geography and technology helped to build the City. Our predecessors used natural features like the Thames River to power industry and later technology like the “Iron Horse” as ways to attract commerce and individuals to London. Their vision helped to create the foundation on which London was built and it continues to serve us today.

## The Chance of a Generation...

ReThink London represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Londoners to shape their City. The community discussion and the plan that comes from it has the opportunity to be transformational in London’s history.

A Plan of this size and scope will not happen overnight. It will continue through changes in civic and community leadership. In order for the Plan to achieve the vision that we set out and make a true difference, the community must have ownership of the Plan and participate in its implementation.

Our investment in public projects, the strategies we set, the infrastructure we construct, and the development that occurs will shape our City over the next 20 years. This Plan will describe our vision for London so that the decisions we make as a community will collectively move us towards the prosperous City that we want to become.

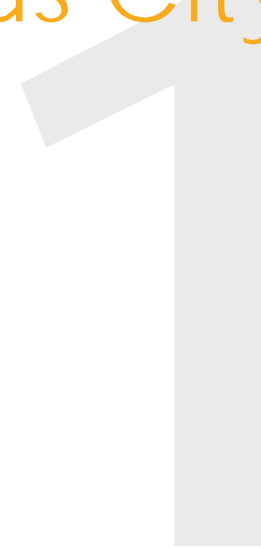






# Fostering a Prosperous City

*This paper is the first in a series of eight discussion papers.*



At every session, in every discussion, and through the thousands of comments we received through our engagement process, the idea of prosperity was consistently raised. Your over-riding voice has become our main purpose – to create a Plan that will propel London towards prosperity.

It is as simple as that. ReThink London, and the Plan that will arise from this process, is all about creating a city that builds on our existing strengths, addresses our weaknesses, and leads to a city that is tremendously prosperous. We believe that this is beyond debate – we all want a prosperous London.

## What does Prosperity look like to you?

The question then becomes, “what does prosperity mean to you”? Is it strictly a number on a balance sheet, a measure of economic activity or a statistic of financial health? Is it only about the availability of jobs? Is it about affordability, health, a feeling of involvement and connection or community contentment?

“What does prosperity mean to you? Money? Health? Community?”

When you look at a city, how can you tell if it is prosperous, a good place to live in, a good place to work and play, and good place to invest in?

Throughout the ReThink community events, a trend started to emerge in how Londoners identify and define a prosperous city. You saw civic prosperity as the result of multiple elements that, when working together, provide a high quality of life for Londoners.





Prosperous cities, you told us, are those:

Where people and businesses want to invest – that provide lots of support, opportunity and is attractive for innovation, investment, and job creation.

Where people want to live – that have a strong identity, are vibrant, affordable, offer great neighbourhoods, gathering places, culture, arts, recreation, entertainment, quality health care and plentiful and diverse job opportunities.

Where people of all ages, gender, ethnicities, languages, and economic circumstances are welcome and feel at home, are involved and included – where the services and supports that we all need are readily accessible and available when we need them.

Where people are friendly and are well connected in the city, to the region that surrounds us, and to the world through advanced communication and transportation infrastructure – and where people have plentiful access to knowledge, learning and innovation.

That are sustainable over the long term – having lasting staying power from a financial, environmental and social perspective.

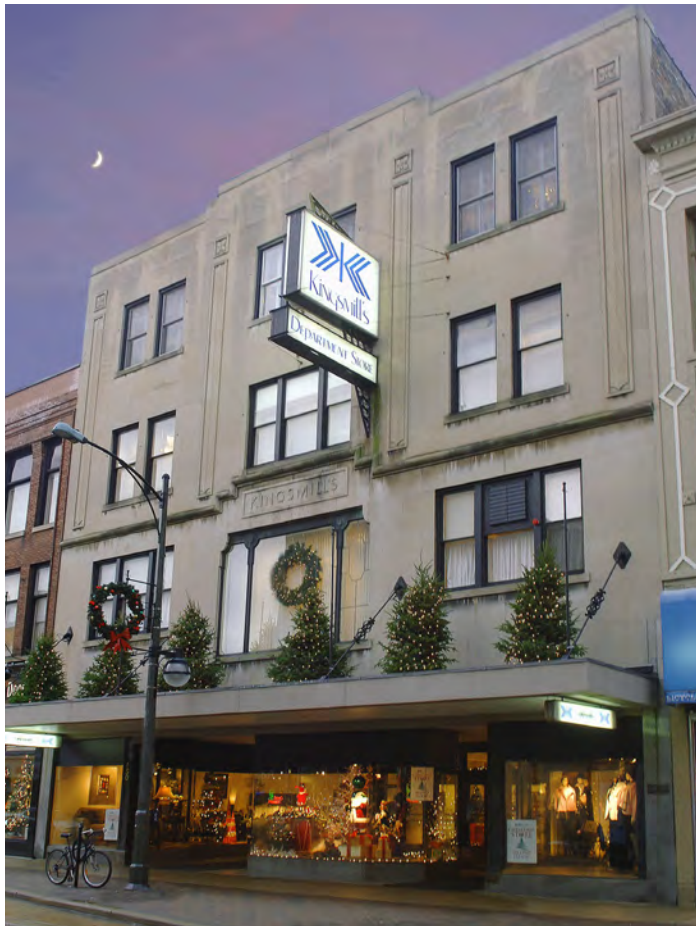
### The Burning Platform ...

London has many, many success stories to tell. Linked to the country via the CNR and CPR railways, we grew up as a centre of commerce within an agricultural hinterland. If you wanted to do business in the London region, you virtually had to have a presence in our city. This is how the likes of Canada Trust, London Life, Labatt's Brewery, Northern Telecom, Kellogg's, 3M Canada Inc, SuperTest Petroleum, EMCO, O-Pee-Chee Company, London Winery, GM Diesel, McCormick's, Trojan Technologies, and Kingmills became corporate icons in our City.

We developed proud institutions of education and healthcare that fuelled our economy and gave us a national profile. We developed a strong manufacturing base capitalizing on our position relative to massive American and Canadian markets. London has seen building boom after building boom as it grew to the eleventh largest city in all of Canada.

However, for us to move forward, we must be honest with ourselves about the last 20+ years since the last Official Plan was written. A look back to the 1970's shows that we grew at a rate of 2-3% annually. The average household size was 3.5 people per household compared to 2.9 people in today's average household size. Between 1971 and 1991, our population consistently grew at a higher rate than the province as a whole.

However, since that time, we have consistently fallen short of the province's growth rate. Between 1991





and 2011, the province had an average population growth rate 1.4%. During that same time, London grew by less than half that rate, with an average population growth of 0.6% per year .

Between 1991 and 2011, London grew by an average of 0.6% per year. During the same period, the province grew by an average of 1.4% per year.

Looking back again to 1971, the average income in London was \$5,500.00 compared to \$32,500.00 today's average. Our community's economy has been forced to re-structure based on major changes in the economic playing field, including free trade, the popularization of advanced communications technologies, the near collapse of the North American automotive manufacturing industry, the global economic crisis that began in 2008 and the restructuring of Ontario health care and government sectors. Meanwhile, we have seen the exodus of major corporate head offices and the relocation or closing of large manufacturers (such as Northern Telecom, ABB, Ford, and most recently Electromotive). Unemployment rates across Canada have remained stubbornly high even as London and other areas in Canada rebound from recession.

Over this same period, our Downtown has struggled. The retail vibrancy that existed into the 1970's and even the 80's was lost during the 1990's. The image of a vibrant Downtown was replaced by a Dundas Street that hosted many vacant storefronts.

Our social services have been strained with those needing assistance and our infrastructure requires significant upgrading. Meanwhile, in a low growth context the municipal tax base is being strained to keep up with these huge demands.

The old paradigm that people go where the jobs are is changing. They go to quality cities that have a strong attraction. Companies are not just assuming that they can find labour just by locating in a city. They look for cities where they know they'll be able to attract, and have access to, the labour with the right set of skills to satisfy their requirements today and in the future.

- Mario Lefebvre, Director of the Centre for Municipal Studies, Conference Board of Canada

Net Migration, 2005-2010

Years Age	2005-2006		2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-2010		2005-2010	
	18-24	25-44	18-24	25-44	18-24	25-44	18-24	25-44	18-24	25-44	18-24	25-44
York	1817	12384	1370	10393	1294	9427	853	8364	882	9682	6216	50250
Middlesex	855	382	927	751	1207	736	1030	620	960	1278	4979	3767
Toronto	18351	43574	15382	38539	14865	39214	14208	35262	13408	39692	76214	196281
Hamilton	255	1280	425	1230	406	1572	370	1746	810	3043	2266	8871
St. Catharines - Niagara	-42	272	-390	-169	-151	-125	-167	-163	125	267	-625	82
Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo	889	1893	907	1244	1274	1607	971	1096	1039	1579	5080	7419
Guelph	0	0	261	151	405	261	305	103	451	341	1422	856
London	1001	601	968	817	1112	685	909	536	900	1178	4890	3817
Windsor	122	-292	-71	-1243	-445	-1195	-362	-1506	-56	-593	-812	-4829
Ottawa - Gatineau, ON	2187	2696	2209	3233	2506	4194	2402	4419	2735	4888	12039	19430

Source: Statistics Canada, Income Statistics Division, Annual Migration Estimates by Census Division/Census Metropolitan Area (91C0025)







Through our consultation, we heard many Londoners lament that it is difficult for our community to retain the talent and entrepreneurship generated by our colleges and universities. Tens of thousands of students graduate each year from these institutions and many move on to other communities, which, for a variety of reasons, are more attractive to these graduates. We heard the questions repeatedly – why are our graduates leaving and how can we retain our talent and attract more to our city?



### Recent successes to build on...

London is a global player; we respect and celebrate this role. Within our city limits, we have companies creating products and supplying services around the world. They choose London as their home for a variety of reasons.

As we deal with the many challenges we face, it is important to celebrate our many successes in recent years:

London remains home to the head regional offices of many globally respected firms such as London Life, TD Canada Trust, 3M Canada, Stihl Canada and General Dynamics Land Systems.

We also enjoy sector advantages in life sciences and research, Information Technology Communications (ITC) and digital media, education, agri-food businesses and logistics.

In 2012, the total economic development investment in London was \$ 160 million, resulting in 1,600 jobs.

London has been ranked the fourth best large city in Canada in which to live. The City also improved its ranking to 15th 'Best Cities Overall' in Canada out of 200 other communities – according to MoneySense Magazine's 2013 edition of Canada's Best Places to Live.

Our colleges and university are growing in leaps and bounds – not only in enrollment, and by the quality of the programs they provide, but also venturing into new locations such as the Downtown.

Our healthcare facilities are also growing, providing outstanding services for Londoner's and leading-edge research.

Our Downtown assessed value has climbed by 60% - that's \$350 million – over the past 10 years. Between 2009-2011, the Downtown's rate of assessment growth at 15.1% exceeded the city-wide rate of 6.0%.

Building permit values hit a record \$1 billion in 2011.

We've experienced all kinds of new residential development in the Downtown - resulting in 37% increase in population growth in the Downtown.



Our Old East Village is revitalizing at an astonishing rate and moving from a food desert to a food district in the process.

We have embarked upon a variety of initiatives that invest in our quality of life of our community and plan for the future, such as the Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy, Age Friendly Plan, Cultural Prosperity Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, the Thames Valley Corridor Plan and the Climate Change Adaptation.

London's economy continues to diversify with increased employment in professional, health care, education and scientific services.

8,000 I.T. professionals work in London – London's tech sector is booming.

We have established the Investment and Economic Prosperity Committee to form a plan for investment aimed at expediting economic revitalization.

London has benefitted from significant new investments in the manufacturing sector with the addition of Dr. Oetker, Arvin Sango, Samsung, McCormick Canada, Fraunhofer and others.

Our London Home Builders have built a "Green Home" that may be a glimpse of future home building in London that is more energy efficient. Proceeds from the sale of the Home Builders Green Home are going to fund the recently constructed Cancer Survivors' Garden in McKillop Park.

## ReThinking Prosperity...

Change = Opportunity, but only for those who see it, and know how to act on it. And rest assured, other cities are thinking the same thing. We have to think in creative ways about prosperity, so businesses will want to invest in London. The benefit of becoming an international hub offers a variety of opportunities for people – more jobs, more diverse neighbours and increased potential for developing new ideas .

# Change Opportunity

But how can we make London attractive to new business investments, while retaining what we have? Similarly, how can we create a city that people desperately want to live in – a city that retains and attracts talent? What you read below is based on our review of what you told us, together with our research of what successful cities are doing in North America to become truly prosperous.

We look at the attraction of a City based on 41 indicators of what they have to offer. The result is a score that represents how strong a magnet each city is to attracting labour force. A City's score can change. For example, Saskatoon really lifted their score. Winnipeg and Regina have also really turned the corner. They have improved the attraction of their cities – not just through jobs - and their net migration flows have been positive for years now. Saskatoon and Regina used to lose people to other provinces but not anymore!!

– Mario Lefebvre, Director of the Centre for Municipal Studies, Conference Board of Canada

Fostering a Prosperous City



## Building the City that People “Want to Work In” and Businesses “Want to Invest In”

There are many factors playing into any person’s or company’s decision to invest in a community. After “quality of life”, some of the factors that are mentioned are:

- The availability of affordable land and/or buildings
- The quality of municipal services and infrastructure
- Affordable taxes, levies and fees
- An open-for-business culture
- Ease and speed of regulatory approvals
- The proximity to complimentary businesses
- The presence of an untapped market or market niche

But there is more than that. And we often ignore some of the most basic and important factors that lead to business investment in any community over the longer term.

World-renowned urbanist Jane Jacobs said that “dull, inert cities...contain the seeds of their own destruction and little else. But lively, diverse, intense

cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves.”

In short, Ms. Jacobs suggests that the quality of a city can play a large role in its long-term economic success. How can that relate to London?

Our Downtown is our calling card to the world. It sends an image of us to potential investors, giving them signals about our economic vitality. Think back to the best Downtowns you have been in. Did they send you the message that the community is thriving and vibrant? Now think about the most unpleasant Downtowns you have visited. Didn’t they suggest that the economy of that community is sagging?

The point is that smart communities recognize that investment in Downtown and the revitalization of our urban areas should be part of any long-term economic development strategy. When these areas are thriving, they send strong signals that a community’s economy is vibrant and strong.

Many successful cities are integrating knowledge institutions with their most important urban environments. Cities like Waterloo, Windsor, Brantford, Sudbury and Peterborough are bringing their schools, health care facilities, and research







functions to their Downtowns. This not only serves as an opportunity for revitalizing and adding vibrancy to their cores, it offers a tremendous urban environments that many knowledge workers are seeking. Creating clusters of innovation generates new synergies that add to their power of attraction.

Successful communities also know that a community's ability to attract and retain talent, entrepreneurialism and creativity is absolutely fundamental to attracting business investment over time. The knowledge-based economy that is so critical to our future relies on our ability to keep our graduates here and our ability to attract talent from not only other parts of Canada, but North America as well. Understanding, and then delivering on, what this demographic is looking for in a city is what Jane Jacobs is referring to. If we can create the city that people "want to live in," we are well on our way to encouraging new business investment and retaining existing businesses.

## Building The City That People "Want to Live In"

Knowing how important it is to our economic future that we build a city that people want to live in, we have to ask ourselves "what will our London offer to the world as an outstanding place to live?" It should not be enough that we need to live in London, but that we cannot imagine ourselves living anywhere other than London.

Through the ReThink London engagement process, we heard many of the same principles that represent best practices in other North American communities. You said that the London of 2035 should be

- A city that has a clear, strong and unique identity. A revitalized Downtown and the surrounding urban neighbourhoods can play a major role in strengthening our image and identity. And the preservation of our heritage buildings and landscapes is also important to ensure that London does not become a faceless community has no distinction or sense of place.
- A city brimming with opportunity – including plentiful opportunities for employment,

investment, innovation, and creativity.

- A vibrant city that is full of culture, arts, entertainment and recreational opportunities - where there is a palpable sense of energy and excitement.
- A beautiful city that is inspiring, fulfilling, and attractive through its streetscapes, architecture, parks, urban spaces, and natural areas.
- A safe city that offers great urban environments that is comfortable, clean and secure for everyone.
- A city that is affordable, with access to quality housing and health care.
- A city that is the composite of many great neighbourhoods, all linked to one another, but with their own identity and social connections.
- A city for everyone – as has become the movement in many cities, an "Age-Friendly" city is a city that is friendly for everyone, no matter the age.
- A city that is easy to get around in – where there are "complete streets" that offer real and practical choices for walking, cycling and transit.

This is what we heard from you. These are the things that you believe London should be striving toward to make it a place that people want to live in. Through the upcoming ReThink discussion papers we will describe how we believe we can make these goals a reality as we shape and build our city over the next 20 years.

## Building The City "For Everyone"

To truly be prosperous, our future London needs to include all of its citizens, and do so in a way they feel connected, considered, safe, and comfortable. It should promote and practice equity and inclusivity, including the provision of quality affordable housing regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, or socio-economic status.

Our London 2035 will seek to include all of its citizens.



The London neighbourhoods of 2035 “...will be empowered, sustainable, safe and active communities. We will care for and celebrate each other while encouraging diversity and inclusiveness. Our neighbourhoods will be environmentally and socially responsible and will have available green space, vibrant local economies and accessible amenities of daily life.” (London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy, 2009).

## // . . empowered, sustainable, safe and active communities //

– Londoner Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy

Our London of 2035 will be an Age Friendly City – “A diverse, vibrant, caring and healthy community which empowers all individuals to age well and have opportunities to achieve their full potential”. An Age Friendly city is a people friendly city. A city that has strong neighbourhoods where people can choose to “age in place”- where services and programs are readily available and universally accessible (The Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)).

// A diverse, vibrant, caring and healthy community which empowers all individuals to age well and have opportunities to achieve their full potential. – AODA //

The London of 2035 will see more seamless and integrated support networks and services for our children, youth and families in the neighbourhoods in which they live, work and play. Providing more opportunities for Londoners to live healthy, active lives.

The London of 2035 will continue to find solutions for successful integration of immigrants to London. This will enable our community to put immigration on its overall planning agenda and benefit from the successful social and economic integration of immigrants. “Working together for a welcoming community” (London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership) we will become an attractive option for new Canadians – allowing London to benefit from the skills, energy and entrepreneurialism they bring with them.

## // Working together for a welcoming community //

– London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership







## Building The City “That Is Connected and Accessible”

An accessible city is one that offers easy and affordable mobility and connectivity.

Our London of 2035 will be one where “complete streets” are the norm. It will include a world-class transportation system that provides safe, accessible and attractive options for getting from point A to point B. In its design, transportation mobility will allow for the future expansion and integration of different modes including light rail. London will be connected to other economic regions and will have the connectivity needed for all of its citizens to access knowledge and learning.

Our London will also have a greater virtual connection that enables Londoners to access knowledge and learning, it will be as significant to city growth as the planning of roads and sewers. To foster the growth of innovative knowledge-based firms and through our partner universities, colleges, research centres and hospitals: our London will develop technological and communication capabilities to support an embedded information structure that further connects local businesses with global knowledge.



Fostering a Prosperous City

## Building The City “That is Sustainable”

Sustainability is a big word and it has big meaning. We heard that you want London to more fully embrace the concept of sustainability.

You would like our London to grow in a compact way that avoids gobbling up agricultural land, preserves our natural resources, and gives us attractive alternatives to using the car. You want London to impose a smaller footprint on the planet, reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gases.

You have told us that you love the Forest City brand that London has established for decades and you want London to preserve our wooded valleys, ravines and woodlands and you want us to plant more trees to renaturalize and to transform barren parking lots and streetscapes into lush green spaces.

You also told us that we need to look at new ways of developing our neighbourhoods and buildings to introduce new sustainable building technologies, including the preservation of heritage buildings as “green buildings”. Meanwhile, you see the need for London to adapt to climate change.





Finally, you told us that we need to be a socially sustainable London by promoting and supporting a city that is compatible with all cultures and socially diverse groups through social integration and improvements to our quality of life.

### Pathways to Prosperity...

Recently Council adopted an investment strategy, entitled "A Path to Prosperity". After reviewing almost 50 proposals, five major investment projects were prioritized for further evaluation. They include:

- Revitalizing a major brownfield site in London's core (London Hydro), for the purpose of developing a new urban mixed-use neighbourhood;
- Establishing a mixed-use development including residential, commercial and a performing arts centre within Downtown;
- Developing strategically located serviced industrial lands;
- Creating a medical research fund; and

- Funding a joint proposal from two employment support programs for one year on a pilot basis.

It's easy to see that our Council is already strategically investing in projects to create the city that people want to live and invest in.

### Making it happen...

There is so much going on in London right now to grow and develop our City's prosperity, that it would be impossible to track and document it all. What's important to understand is that we've focused on the City-building elements of prosperity and what we can do to lead the way through the Official Plan. There are many, many important programs and initiatives underway that are making a real difference to our prosperity. We haven't focused on programming, but rather City-building.

The following summarizes the direction that we're headed, based on what we've heard from you, and the research we've completed to date.

## More of this...

Building the City that is connected and accessible

Integrate our plans for land use with our plans for transit

Become a "smart city" and create a competitive advantage in doing so

## Less of this...

Do not place a focus on mobility or the ability to be connected with the world

Consider transit to be a lower priority way of travelling throughout the City

Disregard the importance of communications infrastructure



## More of this...

Building the City that people and businesses want to invest in

Successful City image

Cost efficient growth patterns to keep DC's, taxes and cost of services low

Quality infrastructure and services

Quality strategic growth opportunities

Support for both existing and emerging sector development

Quality City that businesses know will be able to draw quality workforce

## Less of this...

Focus on short-term needs without thinking of our long term prosperity

Focus on operational needs of business only and disregard importance of City image to attracting investment

Grow in ways that are expensive to service and result in higher DC's, taxes and fees

Allow the infrastructure gap to widen

Consider only a narrow band of growth opportunities

Plan for the "old economy" without considering the needs of emerging sectors

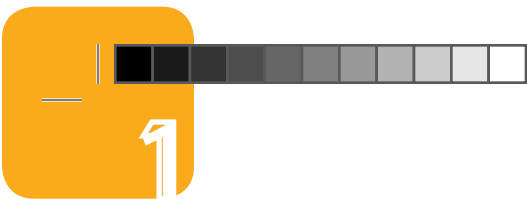
Consider quality city building a "frill" and disregard the critical need for potential investors to feel they can attract & retain quality workforce in London

Building the City for everyone

Build an age-friendly city

Build a City for a narrow demographic or limited socio-economic group

Do not consider and plan for the unique needs of some groups, such as seniors



## More of this...

## Less of this...

Building the City that people want to live in

Build a City that is functional and operational, but not enticing to live in

Positive City image

Consider City image a non-critical factor in economic development and prosperity

Strong Downtown

Allow Downtown to deteriorate, undermining our "calling card to the world"

Great neighbourhoods

Build bland, faceless new neighbourhoods and disregard the potential and need to continually invest in our existing neighbourhoods

Outstanding public spaces including streets, gathering places, parks, etc.

Consider investment in public space a frill, rather than an important part of attracting and retaining

Quality development

Disregard the fact that each development is part of our City building legacy and part of our offering to attract and retain

Culture and arts opportunities

Consider arts and culture investment a frill, rather than an important part of retaining and attracting people to London

High quality recreational facilities

Consider recreational facilities as "nice to have" rather than a key part of our plan to attract and retain

Building the City that is sustainable

Do not consider the long term social, economic and environmental considerations of our City-building activities





# Connecting the Region

*This paper is the second in a series of eight discussion papers.*



Recently, astronaut Commander Chris Hadfield snapped a photo of London from space and tweeted it out to the world. In this photo, it's clear to see that London can be thought of as an "Island City" - a stand-alone city in the context of its geography.

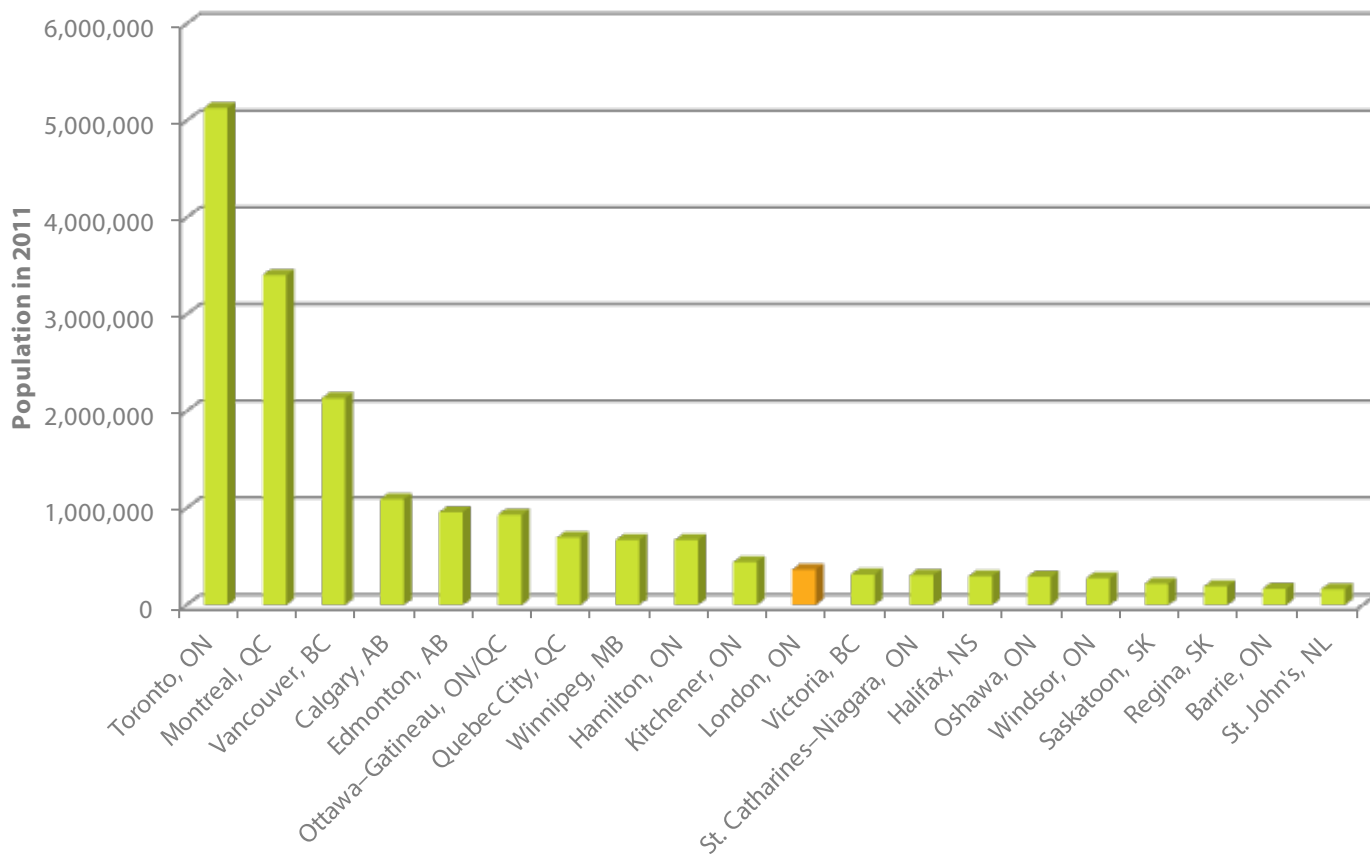
Take a look at a map, or an aerial photo view of the broader southwestern Ontario region and you will see London as the largest urban centre, positioned midway between two of the Great Lakes: Erie and Huron. Drive 30 minutes in almost any direction from Downtown and you will find yourself in some of the richest farmland in the province. These farms not only feed us, but ship their produce to the rest of the world.

And if you look really close, you will see something else. There are major roads, railway lines and an airport. We may be geographically separated from other major cities, but we have the infrastructure to bring goods, people and commerce into London and physically connect us to the world. We are also well connected by communications infrastructure - allowing us to flow ideas and innovation into and out of the City to all parts of the globe. We are not part of a multi-area government or region like Chatham-Kent, Kitchener-Waterloo, Hamilton-Wentworth, Ottawa-Carleton or the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). We are the largest city and major leader in Southwestern Ontario, and the 11th largest city in all of Canada.

During our conversations regarding ReThink London, we heard your ideas and concerns about how you



London is an "Island City" as can be seen from space. Photo courtesy of astronaut Chris Hadfield, 2013.



would like to see us better connect to the region that surrounds us. From the traditional connections like the Thames River and concession roads to high speed rail and the NAFTA super highway, these are some of the linkages that benefit both Londoners and those living outside of our city limits. These linkages are ones that we need to pursue if we are to be competitive with other regions.

In this paper, we will look at why we need to connect with the region surrounding London and identify the benefits that these connections will bring. We may be an island city, but it does not limit us from working with our partners in the County and surrounding cities and towns in order to become collectively stronger and smarter.

### What We Heard, What We Learned...

Throughout the ReThink London community consultation, we heard a number of different areas you identified as needing attention to better connect London to our region. Many of these comments

related to transportation within the region. They include:

Improved road connections outside the City to Woodstock, Ingersoll, Strathroy and St. Thomas.

Better road access to beaches in the region.

The need for a Regional Transportation Plan.

The need for a ring road allowing for cars and bikes around the entire City.

Extend Wonderland Road through to Hwy 401.





Innovative ways of commuting like community car-sharing that connects to Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto and Hamilton.

A desire to move freight railway lines to the edge of the City and to find an alternative use for the existing railway corridors in the City.

A desire to use the Port Stanley Railway for commuters and tourists.

A desire to incorporate integrated bike path/walking trail between London and St. Thomas.

A need to connect to the GO rail system.

High speed rail through London, to make even better connections to the Windsor – Quebec City corridor.

While transportation was a dominant theme, there were other ideas, including:

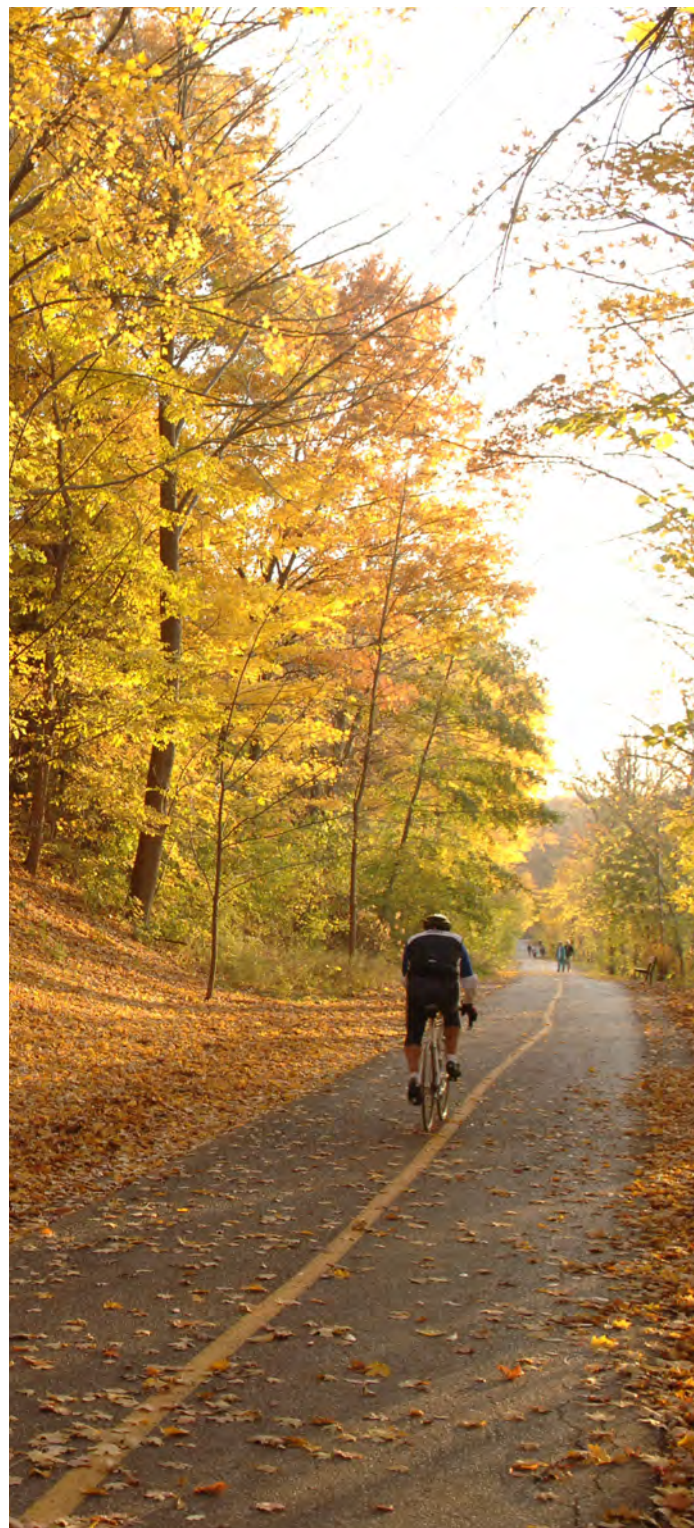
Develop London as a stronger regional food hub for the surrounding agriculture region.

Protect farmland.

Promote eco-tourism (hiking, birding, cycling) in the region.

Construct gateways at major entryways into the City.

Create a regional world identity for economic development purposes.





In addition to these ideas, there are other things that will need to be both addressed and included in a plan for reconnecting the region.

**Tourism:** Benefit from the tourism and eco-tourism opportunities within the region. From the submarine in Port Burwell to the beaches of Lakes Huron and Erie, Southwestern Ontario has many unique and entertaining points of attraction.

**Agriculture:** Since the first “Western Fair” hosted in 1868, agriculture has provided a tangible connection between the region and the city. Today the agricultural community continues to host and promote events within London. By leveraging this history and established connection, we can discover and support new and traditional methods of farming within our region. We can support “Community Supported Agriculture” (CSA), the smaller organic farms that produce a “basket” of produce on a weekly basis for individual families. One of the largest and most successful CSA projects is Orchard Hill Farms, located in Sparta. In addition, we can support lavender farms, grape and fruit wineries and an abundance of roadside market stands.

**Natural Heritage:** We have the Thames River, the Great Lakes, natural areas like Sifton Bog, and the Carolinian forest. The region has much to offer not only for its residents but also for its visitors.

**Economy:** London is positioned at the Forks of Southwestern Ontario. Passing through London are two vital economic corridors linking the American mid-west, Windsor and Sarnia to the Golden Horseshoe, the Greater Toronto Area and beyond. The economy is an important element of connecting with the region. In order of all of us to grow, prosper and benefit from provincial and federal funding, as well as economic investment, we need to present ourselves as a single and united region.

### Where We Are Today...

Throughout the years there have been a number of initiatives brought forth that were designed to kick-start discussions and explore options for connecting the region. A number of these plans are still in process at varying stages. They include:







### Southwestern Ontario Growth Plan

This idea is in the formative phase. The goal is to initiate discussions with our neighbours and the Province for the purpose of preparing a growth plan for the region. It has seven Strategic Directions:

- 1 Identify growth principles and objectives for Southwestern Ontario.
- 2 Identify places where growth would be directed to.
- 3 Noting our strengths, identify economic development opportunities for the region.
- 4 Identify supply-side and demand-side growth strategies for the Southwestern Ontario region.
- 5 Align municipal planning documents across the region.
- 6 Align municipal and provincial infrastructure plans.
- 7 Develop a strong, efficient, multi-modal inter-city transportation network.

### Cultural Prosperity Plan

This plan was approved by Council in December 2012, and the implementation of the Plan will occur in the coming years. Some of its goals are related to our connections with the region, such as “A world class transportation network, and improved visitor and residents attractions”. The plan includes the

# A world class transportation network, and improved visitor and residents attractions.

– Cultural Prosperity Plan

strategic direction that states: “London needs to have access to air, road and rail for its markets”. Further, transportation links represent a key element when companies make decisions for the ideal location.

Three major areas were identified as priorities to be addressed:

- VIA service cuts to London and region,
- The need for more air connections, and
- The desire for the provision of High Speed Rail through London.

The plan includes two recommendations related to connecting the region:

- Capturing Tourism Potential: Better promotion of the City’s cultural assets outside its border would help take advantage of our strategic location.
- Food & Agriculture: Take advantage of our strategic location in an agriculture region to support initiatives year round which market London as a vibrant, year round culinary tourist destination.

### A Pathway to Prosperity: Community Business Ideas to Help Stimulate Our Economy

The recent initiative of Council and the Investment and Economic Prosperity Committee (IPEC) brought forward five recommendations to support the Committee’s goal of developing a 10-year plan to move London’s economy forward faster and to ensure longterm prosperity for the future.



# 2

## Connecting the Region

The five recommendations are:

- Development of strategically located serviced lands for LEDC to market.
- The City of London enter into more formal discussions with Kilmer Brownfield Equity Fund and London Hydro regarding the potential sale of and redevelopment of the land at 111 Horton Street East.
- A mixed use development/investment in the downtown be considered.
- Investigate the possibility of committing \$1 million year over 10 years to support a medical research fund.
- Consider funding the joint proposal from 2 employment support programs for one year on a pilot basis.

The IEPC is currently reviewing projects and proposals that will advance these recommendations.

Mayor's Economic Prosperity Council

This plan, adopted in June 2011, has two goals: (1) Advocate for improved access to and from the City. (2) Build on London's strengths.

The Strategic Directions for the plan are:

- Be a destination on any Quebec-Windsor high speed rail corridor;
- Direct air connections to and from London;
- Establishing a regional transportation hub;
- Positioning the Airport as a "gateway";
- Ensure the train station is welcoming and attractive.; and,
- Concentrate on agri-business and food processing.

48% of all Canadian exports pass by London's door.

The Creative City Task Force Report

Approved in 2004, the report contains a singular objective: to encourage regional thinking, planning and promoting for economic and cultural benefits to secure a major role for London in Southwestern Ontario.



As you can see, the idea of, and more importantly, the need for strong connections with the region is not new, and is an important part of ReThinking London.

## A look at what Other Cities are Doing – "Best Practices" ...

York Region, located north of Toronto, as part of their "Vision 2051" Plan states:

The goal is to create a Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System. In 2051, York Region natural systems are connected, protected and enhanced through communities; they provide opportunities for recreation and support biodiversity. Agricultural areas are thriving and provide healthy food and resources to a growing population.

– York Region , Vision 2015





The plan also calls for improved mobility throughout the region by having “Interconnected Systems for Mobility.” In 2051, a seamless network for mobility provides access to all destinations using diverse transportation options for people in all communities and it promotes active, healthy living, safety and it efficiently moves people and goods. And it calls for “an accessible region.”

#### Toronto – Official Plan (2009)

A goal of the City of Toronto Official Plan is to “build a more liveable region” with the idea that events that happen in the region affect the quality of life in the city. Toronto’s Plan recognizes that the Downtown has the most accessibility to employment and education, business, government, service industry, shopping, restaurant, arts and cultural venues, entertainment, and is the tourist attraction destination for the greater Toronto area (GTA). Higher education and research and hospital facilities are all identified as important components of this concentration. Toronto’s Plan recognizes the Downtown as the GTA’s regional centre for many activities .

#### Edmonton – The Way We Grow – Municipal Development Plan (2010)

Edmonton’s Plan focuses on regional co-operation and partnerships and inter-municipal planning, which includes:

- The physical growth strategy, which acknowledges the role Edmonton plays in the region;
- Downtown is the centre of art, culture, entertainment, employment and transit for the region;
- Future urban growth areas correspond with regions priority growth areas;
- Trying to grow in a financially, environmentally and socially sustainable way in the region;
- Improvements to the interface/connections between urban and rural;
- Mapping that shows relationships with adjoining municipalities and a schedule which outlines joint planning referrals and notifications; and,
- A Regional Context Statement.

#### Calgary – Plan It Calgary (2009)

The role of Calgary in Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) is to look at future growth scenarios, which includes:

- The identification of points of alignment, opportunities and challenges and shared resources, and
- Consideration of a regional commuter connections, and high speed rail.

#### Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006

As one of the fastest growing regions in North America, the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is a significant destination for people and businesses. The GGH region covers most of Central Ontario, including Peterborough and the Kawartha Lakes, Greater Toronto, Barrie and Simcoe County, Kitchener-Waterloo, Hamilton and Niagara. As a result of its fast growth, the GGH sees significant land use pressures for economic development and building. The Growth Plan assists in planning for





significant economic investment by centralizing people, businesses and services into centres across the region and connecting those centres with transportation networks that efficiently move people and goods.

The Growth Plan directs growth to “urban growth centres” and former-industrial brownfields. These “urban growth centres” are cities’ downtowns and regional centres, and are planned as the location for major offices, institutions and regional services, as well as major retail areas, and cultural and entertainment districts. The growth centres must be planned to serve as a city’s major employment centre and to support transit hubs.

To achieve the investment, population, and growth goals of the Urban Growth Centres, the Growth Plan requires the following:

Employment and housing with a minimum number of jobs and residents per centre.

Economic and transportation linkages by designating “corridors” between the Urban Growth Centres that will provide the employee and residential populations to support public transit.

Create a network that is supported by regional transportation routes and transit systems, and Require minimum populations around major transit stations.

Thriving, livable, vibrant and productive urban and rural areas will foster community and individual well-being.

– Places to Grow

## Goals and Key Directives...

All of these plans have a common theme: the importance of regional thinking, whether it’s about transportation, culture, the economy, or even when just thinking about a individual city - how you connect to your surrounding region is key to the future prosperity.

Connecting the region takes place at many different levels with different partners. From the individual businesses to community groups to the various local governments, we all have a stake in how this plan will evolve and take shape. We have learned through your comments and our research that in order for London to be successful, there are number of key initiatives that we need to pursue.

As citizens of London, we will partner with our neighbours through co-operation and collaboration to promote, encourage and pursue sustainable and cost effective regional growth.





### Regional Transportation Improvements:

In 2012 Prime Minister Harper announced the construction of a new bridge linking Canada to the United States in Windsor, and the talk of a “NAFTA Superhighway” began to take shape in Canada. Whatever form it takes, it is critical that London and the region be at the table. Just as the arrival of the Iron Horse in the 1800s began to transform London, this opportunity is its modern day equal. Not to be included is too big of a risk to take. Just being on the route is not enough. London and its neighbours need to ensure that the improvements along this corridor benefit the region, and that we work together to take advantage of our location along the superhighway.

Re-establish the rail service, or establish a multi-use pathway, linking London to Port Stanley with stops connecting to the Trans Canada Trail and other tourist linkages.

Leverage connections to the Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac high-speed passenger rail corridor. The intent of the Michigan State high-speed rail corridor is to improve intercity mobility by providing an improved passenger rail service that would be a competitive transportation alternative to automobile, bus and air service between Chicago and Detroit/Pontiac, Michigan.

Explore opportunities for the concept of connecting Highway 7 extension to the Highway 402 corridor and to link the regional highways and communities north and east of London, including Stratford and the Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge area, with the intent of opening opportunities for economic growth for London and the municipalities north of London.

Strengthen London’s north/ south road connections to explore the opportunity for linking to a future Highway 7/Highway 402 corridor.



### Regional Economic Growth:

As a single-tier city, we may be perceived as being at a disadvantage when compared to other regions. By leveraging all the features and benefits of the entire region we can all present a unique option to potential investors. We are also a city that supplies labour to a number of manufacturing facilities in the region, such as CAMI in Ingersoll and Toyota in Woodstock. While they may work there, they live and shop within our city. As these facilities continue to grow we need to position ourselves to better serve and support them.

The manufacturing sector in London remains our largest employer (16%) by sector. London boasts a highly educated, skilled and experienced manufacturing workforce that is committed to long-term growth. London has recently been selected as the new home for significant manufacturing investments by Korean, German, Austrian and U.S. industry leaders. London will continue to pursue and cultivate growth in manufacturing to ensure that this important sector remains healthy and competitive.





Food processing is the second largest manufacturing industry in Ontario. London and Region can benefit from the continuing success of our agri-food sector and recognize the long term need to remain competitive with other food processing manufacturing jurisdictions by capitalizing on the combination of high-quality local food ingredients, a skilled and educated workforce, low business costs, central location, world class research facilities and convenient access to a significant transportation system.

London and region will continue to build on work that Southwest Economic Alliance (SWEA) is doing to transform the southwestern Ontario economy, such as, a single regional brand narrative; promoting ultra high speed broadband for all parts of the region to enable creative “new economy” growth in all communities; for leveraging the power of information and communications technologies and being recognized as an “Intelligent Region” by 2017; and continuing the promotion and support of sustainable food systems project.

Work and partner with our surrounding First Nations communities to pursue significant and sustainable economic opportunities for jobs, skills development and tourism.

Agriculture & Agri-business:

The potential that the agriculture and agri-business sector provides the region is tremendous. Within a 30 minute drive from London you can pick up a locally produced bottle of wine, freshly grown fruits and vegetables, locally prepared meats and locally produced maple syrup, apple cider, honey, chocolate and desserts. We know this. And now it is time for us to share this gem. Through our city markets we have an established local food system that needs support and encouragement to continue to grow and thrive. Better co-ordination enables local producers to get food from the field, to the truck, to our tables. This will not only provide for a healthier lifestyle, it will keep dollars in our region. This will also be a better connection between the foods we eat and where it comes from through “feet on the farm” agri-tourist experiences for children, adults and visitors to our region is needed.





Regional Tourism:

Lake Erie, Lake Huron, the Thames River, Fanshawe Lake, the Stratford Festival, the Trans Canada Trail, the Wine Trail, Inns and Bed and Breakfasts are only a few of opportunities for tourists that exist both within London and within a very short distance of London. There are also biking trails, a culinary trail, birding opportunities, the rail link between London and Port Stanley. As a city we have also done extremely well in bringing people to London through a variety of sports-related events. The dollars which these events bring in to local merchants cannot be overlooked. How we position our region and new tourist experiences to visitors is of great importance. We also need to enhance the “staycation” concept and provide options for a complete experience in our region.

Expand on other tourism opportunities such as artists and crafts, packaging and joint marketing, and creating tourism infrastructure and collaboration.

Regional Planning & Infrastructure:

We will not only conserve and enhance the region’s natural and built heritage, we will develop systems and policies for growth and development and the infrastructure to support it. We will explore options and plan for waste management, including the

planning for the London landfill facility which presently accepts waste from Middlesex County, and Orgaworld, who process green bin waste from Toronto, and a Material Recovery Facility designed to serve six surrounding municipalities.

Within the 20-year time frame that this report addresses, we will see the construction of the new bridge between Canada and The United States, the possible design and construction of both a super highway, and a high speed rail link along the Windsor-Quebec corridor. There is also the possibility of being included within the GO Transit system of destinations. At the present time, rail and bus services extend as far west as Kitchener. As a city and region, we need to be part of this transportation system.

From tourism to agriculture, to natural and built heritage, it is key that city, county, business and community leaders to work together to capture the attention, imaginations, and capital of investors and tourists to London and the region. Regional collaboration that celebrates the unique qualities of Southwestern Ontario will be the calling card for future business, tourism and residents alike.

The following summarizes the direction that we’re headed, based on what we’ve heard from you, and the research we’ve completed to date.

## More of this...

Collaborate with regional partners to develop a growth plan.

Promote agri-business industry.

## Less of this...

Disregard the importance regional unity to achieve long term growth and prosperity.

Plan for the “old economy” without considering the needs of emerging sectors and attracting investment.

## More of this...

Promote and develop regional tourism and economic development.

Conserve and enhance the regional natural heritage system.

Enhance connections and invest in the Quebec-Windsor corridor to benefit London.

Establish strong transportation and communication linkages with regional municipalities.

Build on our strong connections to the globe.

## Less of this...

Take a London-centric view of tourism and do not consider the broader tourism offering of the region.

Do not consider the long term social, economic and environmental benefits of integrating the regional natural heritage system for our plan to attract and for eco-tourism opportunities.

Do not place a focus on mobility or the ability to be connected with the rest of Canada and with the world.

Disregard the importance of transportation and communication infrastructure to meet needs of emerging sectors in the region.

Disregard the critical need to attract and retain potential investors & quality workforce to London and the region.





# Building a Mixed-Use, Compact City

*This paper is the third in a series of eight discussion papers.*



It was 1971. City Council held their first meeting in the new City Hall on Dufferin Avenue on April 5, 1971. Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau visited on November 11, and later that year became the father of a new baby named Justin. Council was also in the process of adopting a new Official Plan.

In 1961, the City annexed large areas of London Township, including the neighbourhoods north of Huron Street and Oakridge and Byron to the west. The new 1971 Official Plan included these lands. The plan suggested that the lands within the 1971 boundary could accommodate a population “in excess of 500,000”. Wow! We have really strayed from that 1971 objective.

So, where are we in 2013? The fact is that we’ve already surpassed the former 1971 city boundary and we’re only at a population of 366,000. What does this mean? At the densities we’ve been growing at since 1971, we estimate we’d need another 6,500 hectares of land to reach that 500,000 population number.

How much additional land is this? Well, it’s equal to the entire land area of the City of Waterloo!! Compared to our expectations in 1971, we would need to add lands equal in size to all of Waterloo to accommodate 500,000 people. In other words, over the past 40 years we’ve been growing in a very spread-out pattern and we’re consuming much more land than we ever dreamed we would need when we set our plans in 1971. If this doesn’t concern you... it should!

We estimate that in the next 50 years our population will grow by more than 50%, with an additional 200,000 people calling London home.





We estimate that in the next 50 years our population will grow by more than 50%, with an additional 200,000 people calling London home.

Where will they live? How much are we prepared to pay for it? How will we move around a city of that size? Do we push out our boundaries, consuming some of Canada's most valuable farmland along the way? Or, do we look to a new more balanced vision? At what point do we draw that proverbial line in the sand and say, "the old approach just will not work anymore".

There are alternatives to how we grow in the future. The need to better conserve our lands as we grow is something that you have told us. While still offering plentiful options for suburban growth, do we want to also look inward and upward, rather than just focusing outward?

But it's not just about changing our pattern of growth; it's also about looking towards new mixes of land use as we grow. Traditional planning techniques, such as zoning regulations, focus on separating uses from one another, which results in subdivisions that offer large tracts of houses that are similar in lot area, similar in height, similar in building size, similar in style. These traditional planning techniques often result in neighbourhoods with little variety, or where different housing types and different uses are not found.

It's time, now, to take stock and look at how we do things. The decisions that we make and actions that we take now will have an impact on future generations of our families. These impacts include: How we will live? How we will work? How we will move? How we will adapt to climate change? How will this affect our ability to attract talent and investment? How much it will cost us?

We have heard much from Londoners about how you would like to see growth in the future. We've also heard from our development community and they want to work with us to develop the London of the future.

## Good News About Growth in London

There's lots of good news relating to growth and development in London. While our pattern of growth has generally been at lower densities than were imagined in 1971, over the past 40 years, development densities have jumped by 20% in single family homes over the past 10 years. Additionally, over the past 10 years, almost 40% of all our residential units have been developed within the built up area of the City – that's what we would call "infill development". That means 40% of our residential development didn't occur on new Greenfield lands.



As well, more attention is being paid to urban design, placemaking, and sustainability. The development community is integrating affordable housing and sustainable green technologies in their development projects. London's longest-standing developer, Sifton Properties, in association with the London Home Builders Association, recently constructed a Green Home that demonstrates how new green technologies can be incorporated into new houses constructed in London. Sifton is also developing a new model for mixing retail, office and residential uses in the Riverbend Heights area. This development which incorporates the potential for district energy and a new form of integrated "main street" mixed-uses.

We are doing things differently:

We've seen affordable housing play an important role in doing things differently as well. While meeting an important need in the community, affordable housing has also led the way for green technologies, quality design, and revitalization. The project at Nelson and Adelaide is a high quality building that incorporates roof top solar panels. A project on Dundas Street in the Old East Village mixes commercial uses fronting the street, with mid-rise apartments above and high-rise apartments behind. This project, which will play a big role in revitalizing the Old East Village Corridor, also incorporates geo-thermal energy.

In the Old East Village, Medallion Corporation has introduced a new form of high rise development in London, complete with a ground level podium of garden apartments that access directly onto the street. Meanwhile, Tricar has had a huge impact on Downtown revitalization by adding hundreds of new apartment units in the core – complete with rooftop amenity area and public art. Drewlo is planning an innovative form of mid-rise apartment building in the City's north-east and York Developments has built some recent infill projects taking advantage of vacant or underutilized sites within London's existing built up area.

Two more recent projects highlight the change that is occurring in the development landscape. Hampton Group recently developed a mixed-use mid-rise building in Wortley Village, which has commercial on the ground floor and luxury apartment buildings above. This project has turned a long-time vacant lot into an urban use that adds vitality and quality form to one of London's favourite streets. Meanwhile, Old Oak has revolutionized the mid-rise market in London by introducing "Nuvo", a completely new form of garden apartment unit that has direct access to the street, and creates a very urban feel in a suburban location. They've also developed a neighbourhood centre complete with private gym and a cafe that extends out onto the adjacent park.

Several other developers in London are raising the bar. Richmond Village North, by Auburn Developments, is a good example. A pedestrian-oriented main street, centered on a village green is planned to be the focal point for the community. Placemaking concepts have been woven into the design of the community to create a distinct neighbourhood with character and identity.

For London to become the City that you told us you wanted it to be, our development community will need to lead the way and be an important partner as we explore new development approaches and sustainable technologies. The City also plays an important role by ensuring balance and variety of choice for Londoners.

Smart development won't happen unless it makes financial sense for a developer to build it. That's what we would expect from any investment or business enterprise and it's no different when it comes to investment in a development project – there needs to be an adequate return on that investment. What is encouraging though, is that we're moving in the right direction, showing that it is financially viable for us to achieve the goals of compact city, high quality urban design, placemaking features, and sustainability right here in London.





## Growth is good! But not all growth is equal...

It's important that we, the Planner, clarify our opinion on the matter of growth. We believe that growth is good, and, in fact, critical for the long-term prosperity of London. In our pursuit of a prosperous London, growth can allow us to increase our tax base, reach populations adequate to support rapid level transit and other public services, bring new ideas and innovation to our community, enhance diversity, support quality arts and entertainment venues, social programs, and help generate economic activity and jobs for everyone. The development community employs a great number of people and supports an important job sector – in 2011, 14,700 people were employed in construction.

.. quality growth, smart growth, sustainable growth, and growth that contributes to our quality of life. // Londoners

We definitely didn't hear messages from Londoners asking us to stop growth. Rather, we heard messages about quality growth, smart growth, sustainable growth and growth that contributes to our quality of life as a City.

### We can't afford "dumb" growth...

You've heard the term smart growth. Well, perhaps it's crass to say so, but we believe that there is "dumb growth". This is the kind of growth that yields us the same revenues to the City as smart growth, but costs us infinitely more to service. It's the kind of growth that disrespects natural heritage, unnecessarily consumes large tracts of farmland, is disconnected from active transportation, and offers little sense of community or identity. It's the kind of growth that



hurts our economic opportunities in the long term, by detracting from our goal of building a city that people want to live in and invest in.

This is not the kind of growth we're looking for in London's future!

### Consider this example...

Let's do some visioning that can help us make this point. As we noted in this paper, we expect we'll add almost 200,000 people to our City over the next 50 years (that's a population increase of over 50%).

We've prepared three different example growth scenarios to illustrate different ways we could accommodate that new 50 year population – being a bit more precise it's just over 190,000 people. In each of these examples, the number of people, the number of jobs and the number of homes is the same. The intent of these options is to look at what kind of homes we build, at what densities, and where.



Scenario 1

### Spread pattern of growth

- New population 191,000
- New employment – 116,500
- New residential units – 101,800
- 70% single detached houses;
- 15% townhouse and mid-rise;
- 15% high-rise;
- Broad majority of growth in greenfield areas; infill development is limited
- Residential densities are very low



Scenario 2

### Compact pattern of growth

- New population 191,000
- New employment – 116,500
- New residential units – 101,800
- 30% single detached houses;
- 35% townhouse and mid-rise;
- 35% high-rise;
- Broad majority of single detached homes in greenfield areas, but majority of townhouses, mid-rise and high-rise are in built-out areas of City (infill)
- Residential densities are very high



Scenario 3

### Hybrid pattern of growth

- New population 191,000
- New employment – 116,500
- New residential units – 101,800
- 50% single detached houses;
- 23% townhouse and mid-rise;
- 27% high-rise
- Broad majority of single detached homes in Greenfield areas, but half of townhouses, mid-rise and 90% of high-rise are in built-out areas of City (infill)
- Residential densities are slightly higher than recent history



Green represents the current area within the Urban Growth Boundary. Orange denotes the scale of expansion that would be required to accommodate the residential growth scenario. The location of this growth is for illustration only and does not represent support for any particular growth boundary expansion.



## The differences are enormous...

The differences are staggering and they show how important our decisions on growth really are. The SPREAD scenario will require more than 6,400 ha of land outside of our current growth boundary to accommodate the 190,000 residents and 116,000 jobs that we expect in the next 50 years. This is equal to filling all of the land within our current growth boundary *and* adding a land area equal to the size of Waterloo in the next 50 years.

The COMPACT model would allow us to accommodate all of those new residential units and jobs with absolutely no addition to our current growth boundary. In other words, under this scenario we would be able to collect all of that new tax revenue and enjoy all of the advantages of growth without venturing beyond the limits of our current urban boundary. Think of the savings relative to the SPREAD scenario where we would have the same number of jobs and residential units, but would have to service an additional land area equivalent to the City of Waterloo – 6,400 ha (that’s equal to the area of 10 Central London areas – the area bounded by Oxford, Adelaide and the Thames River).

The HYBRID model would develop beyond our current urban growth boundary over the next 50 years, but requires only 17% of the additional land area required (1098 hectares) under the SPREAD scenario.

## Let’s talk about costs...

The numbers demonstrate that it costs a lot more to grow in a spread development pattern. Remember, all of the scenarios allow for the same amount of growth in terms of new housing and employment. The only difference is the pattern of growth.

We estimate that the COMPACT model would require roads, sewers, storm ponds, and other services that would amount to over \$1.5 billion of one-time capital costs over 50 years.

The HYBRID model would cost us \$2.2 billion – that’s about \$700 million or 45% more than the compact model over 50 years.

The SPREAD model would cost a whopping \$4.2 billion - and that’s \$2.7 billion or 180% more than the compact model over 50 years. Think of it. \$2.7 billion of additional costs to the development community, the City, and the tax payer. It’s an incredible sum!

But wait! These are just the initial costs to develop. We also need to talk about operating costs.

Over the 50 year projection period, the COMPACT scenario would cost approximately \$452 million. This climbs to about \$886 million for the HYBRID model – that’s almost double the operating costs of servicing the compact model! What’s more, it’s estimated we’ll spend about \$2.17 billion under the SPREAD model – about 4 times the cost of servicing the compact model.

These operating costs represent municipal tax dollars – money that comes from all our pockets. Depending on the way we grow, we could spend billions of dollars more – yes, that’s a “B” for billions!

To drive the point home, in the 50th year, we estimate that the operating costs of servicing the 50 years of new growth in the SPREAD scenario would be about \$88.5 million per year. That’s about 2.5 times or \$52 million more than the annual servicing costs of the HYBRID model.

Think about it. Every year, we would be paying an additional \$52 million to service this new growth than we would be paying under the Hybrid Model and \$70 million more than the compact model – that’s staggering annual costs! What could our London of the future do with an additional \$50-\$70 million each year, every year!?

The results of our scenario analysis is consistent with the findings of a study comparing the cost effectiveness of a dispersed city versus one employing a compact growth model undertaken by the Canada





Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC). Their study concluded that compact growth plans generated life cycle savings of \$11,000 per household. As stated above, we expect about 200,000 people and 100,000 homes will be added to our City over the next 50 years. Using the CMHC assumptions, the potential savings using a compact approach as opposed to a dispersed approach would be \$1.1 billion in today's dollars for 100,000 homes.

Simply put, we can't afford to SPREAD, and this type of growth will certainly affect our tax rates. We need to continue to grow, but in a way that is smart and affordable. While still providing for reasonable outward expansion and some greenfield development, we need also look inward and upward as we grow in the future.

### Let's talk about agriculture...

Did you know that according to a University of Guelph study, only 5% of Canada is classified as prime agricultural land? And, according to a Dalhousie University study only 0.5% of all Canada qualifies as Class 1 agricultural land according to the Canada Land Inventory.

Did you also know that 90% of the land that we annexed from surrounding municipalities in 1993 is Class 1 agricultural land (including sub-classes of this Class 1 land). We're sitting on one of Canada's and, in fact, the world's most valuable resources - rich, fertile land that will grow quality and plentiful crops. When we develop on this land, the topsoil layers that are rich in nutrients are often removed and, once we do, it's gone forever.

Only 0.5% of all Canada qualifies as Class 1 agricultural land. 90% of the land that we annexed from surrounding municipalities in 1993 is Class 1 agricultural land.

As we noted in the first discussion paper, things change quickly. Look at all those changes that have occurred over the past 20 years. We don't know with certainty what will happen over the next 20 or 50 years. It is possible, though, that climate change and the escalating cost of energy and transportation would make food grown close to our homes even more important. The loss of valuable farmland could have a major impact on our economic future.





Let's go back to our three scenarios. To accommodate the same population, housing and employment, we will need 5,300 hectares more land in the SPREAD scenario than the HYBRID scenario and 6,400 hectares more land in the SPREAD scenario than the COMPACT scenario. Just think, over the next 50 years we could be consuming 6400 hectares more of our precious agricultural land resource, simply based on our chosen pattern of growth.

## Mixing it Up - The Case for Mixed-Use Development

Not only is our pattern of growth important, but so is the composition of this growth. Since the 1950's, planners have looked to separate land uses as a way to minimize land use conflicts between certain sensitive uses and uses that generate contaminant discharges, and to create "stability" within neighbourhoods.

Unfortunately, in doing so, Planners have played a role in creating homogenous communities that lack diversity, character and often identity. What's more, these communities tend to support a demographic mono-culture, whereby it is really difficult to stay in the same neighbourhood when advancing through

different ages and stages of your life. Older adults feel it the most when they are no longer able to maintain a house and they seek alternative living like a townhouse or apartment. They often have to move outside of their neighbourhood to do so, leaving behind their long-standing friends and neighbours and familiar social connections they know and love.

By separating land uses, we've created a need to travel significant distances to get even the most basic of commercial goods within a neighbourhood. The result is that most often people are compelled to use their cars to "get out" of their neighbourhood to carry on basic neighbourhood functions such as picking up milk, getting their hair cut, receiving advice on their tax return, or dashing to the nearest grocery store for important ingredients to prepare their favourite meal.

You've told us so - at both the Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy sessions, and at the Age Friendly London Task Force and also during ReThink London that you want neighbourhoods that mix uses and mix different forms of housing. You want more complete neighbourhoods. We know that there are limits to this mixing of uses and it will have to be







handled with care to avoid real land use conflicts. We also know that not every neighbourhood will want or need to be different, but it is time that we start to breakdown the homogeneity of our neighbourhoods and in an effort to move more deliberately towards a greater mix of housing types and scales, and a reasonable mix of uses within communities.

### Viability of Transit...

It's sometimes difficult for Londoners to imagine our City as a truly viable transit city. We aren't intensely urban and it's difficult, if not impossible, to afford frequent, convenient, quality transit services to all parts of the City. Transit can play a more significant role in serving Londoner's needs in the future if we are smart about the way we develop over the next 20 and even 50 years.

While a separate discussion paper will explore transportation choices and importance of transit in more detail, it's important to understand the impact of our growth patterns on transit viability in this paper, at least at a high level of discussion.

Our most recent Census tells us that there are over 85,000 people living within a 10-minute walk from our future bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor. The BRT corridor is a route planned by the Transportation Master Plan. Almost 50,000 people work within this same area.

**Our most recent Census tells us that there are over 85,000 people living within a 10-minute walk from our future bus rapid transit corridor.**

Under our 50-year growth scenarios, the SPREAD scenario would increase this residential population by only about 2,500 people over the next 50 years - that's not enough to support a rapid transit system!

The HYBRID scenario, though, would lead to more than 75,000 new residents within 10 minutes of a BRT route and another 85,000 new employees in that same area. The COMPACT scenario would lead to over 140,000 new residents and about 100,000 new employees within a 10 minute walking distance of the BRT.



Building a Mixed-Use, Compact City

Rapid transit needs ridership in order to be an affordable and efficient service. If we're serious about rapid transit in London's future, we need to grow in a way that will support it, and a SPREAD pattern of growth just won't do it.

### Let's talk about air quality emissions...

Climate change is upon us. We don't know the full implications for London and the world yet, but smart, sustainable communities understand that climate change will be one of our greatest challenges in future years.

The good news is that London has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in recent years. Between 1990 and 2002 our GHG emissions increased







by 15%. However, after 2002 our GHG emissions stabilized and dropped by 18% to 2011 levels. Bravo London!

Since 2002, green house gas emissions in London have dropped by 18% to 2011 levels.

Can we keep up with this recent trend? Our pattern of growth will have a major impact on the production of GHG emissions – those gases that lead to global warming. Consider the SPREAD scenario. If we develop those 6,400 hectares of land beyond the urban growth boundary over the next 50 years, we'll be spreading out at a density that would make a viable transit system an absolute impossibility. The down-side of this spread will be further worsened if we continue to separate land uses and housing types with the same approach as we have in the past, because as we continue to grow in this way, we will be further separated from many of the other uses that we need every day.

Not only will transit viability struggle, cycling and walking will be less likely too. People will be compelled to use their cars for most of their trips.



With less public transit, less cycling and less walking comes a greater reliance on the use of the personal automobile. And, with that, there will be far greater generation of air emissions, including green house gases.

Much like we have done, the City of Calgary looked at three potential directions for growth in their City. They found that transportation air emissions could be as much as 33% lower depending upon the chosen pattern of growth – with a spread pattern generating much greater emissions than a compact pattern of growth.

The Federal government's Climate Change Action Plan for Canada calls for a 17% reduction in the 2005 greenhouse gas emissions levels by 2020. Meanwhile, Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan calls for a 6% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2014, 15% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. We can't hope to contribute to these Federal and Provincial targets if we follow a SPREAD pattern of growth.

Referenced in the Middlesex-London Health Unit's 2012 report entitled Health Index, Air Quality:

London was appreciably below the Ontario Ministry of the Environment Ambient Air Quality Criteria in 2010.

Ambient Air Quality levels in the City of London were observed to be completely lower than several other places in Southern Ontario.

Over time, the City of London reduced its average annual Ambient Air Quality concentration levels at relatively similar rates of change as other locations in Southern Ontario.

The City of London met the Canada-Wide Standard for Ambient Air Quality for the period of 2008-2010.





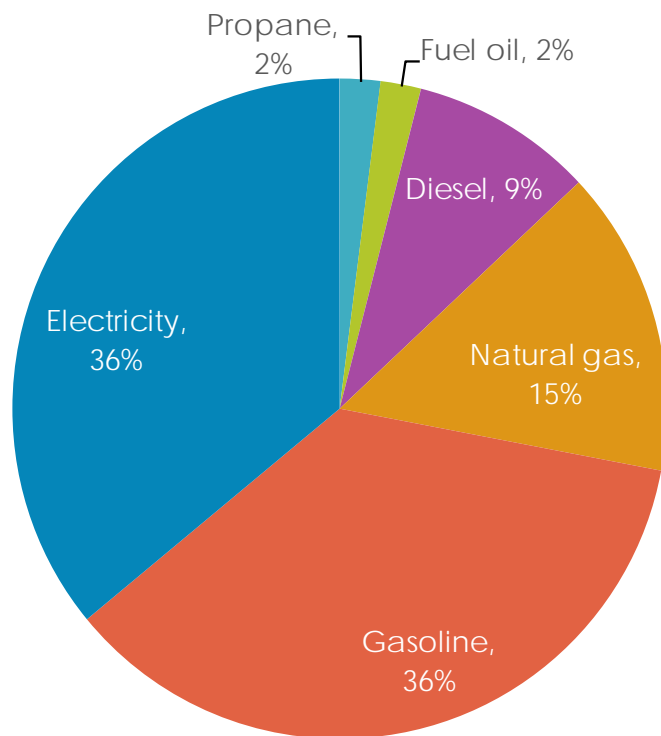
## The increasing cost of energy...

There has been a lot of work done through London's ReThink Energy program over the past couple of years to understand how we are using energy and where we need to go in the future. The work has a lot to say about how we grow and the impact of this growth on London's energy consumption future.

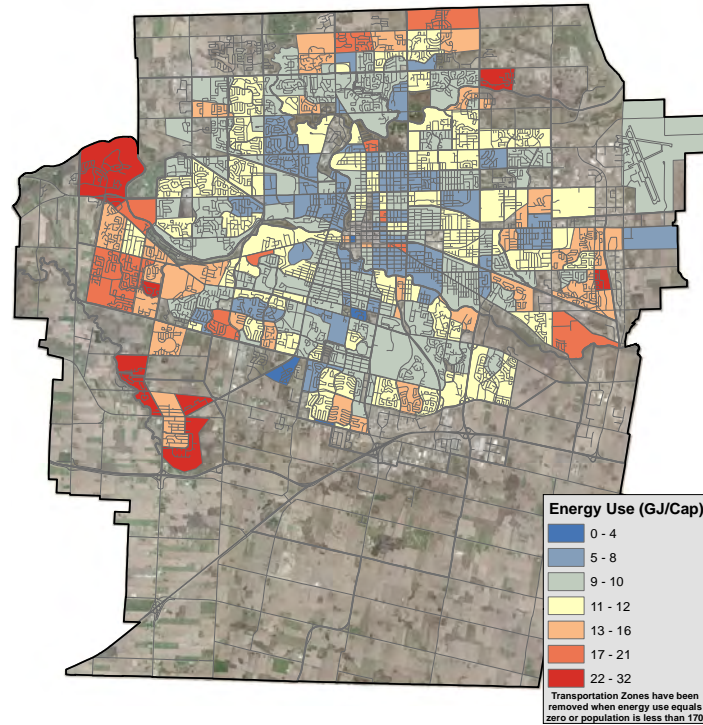
We estimate that Londoners spent about \$1.2 billion on energy in 2011.

We estimate that Londoners spent about \$1.2 billion on energy in 2011. We know that energy prices have increased dramatically in the past, and they will likely continue to increase in the future. As shown in the pie chart below, 36% of Londoner's energy cost comes in the form of burning gasoline. A majority of this relates to the use of cars, buses, trucks and other vehicles.

The diagram below shows it quite clearly; the further a neighbourhood is from the core, the more likely that neighbourhood is to be a high transportation energy consumer. The situation gets even worse with the separation of land uses – particularly when



Transportation Energy, 2010



communities don't have the most basic of needs within easy and convenient walking distance of their home.

Take a look at the neighbourhoods of Riverbend, Byron, Lambeth and the out reaches of North London. Per capita transportation energy consumption is much higher than it is in core neighbourhoods, such as Old North, Old South, and Old East. The evidence is obvious. The outermost neighbourhoods use the most energy for transportation purposes – the further that you live from work, school or shopping, the more likely you'll need your car to get there.

London's ReThink Energy program set out three different scenarios that blended growth forecasts with assumptions relating to future fuels and fuel efficiency for personal and public transit vehicles. They found that annual fuel costs were more than double in the scenario that assumed a "business as usual" form of development, fuel efficiency, trip length, and transportation mode versus a more compact form of development, which showed greater fuel efficiency, lower number of trips and a higher number of transit trips. Greenhouse gas emissions were almost triple under the "business as usual" model!





The City we build today will have a big impact on whether we're an attractive City to live in and invest in should energy prices spike dramatically in the future. What if oil and gas prices shoot upwards? How will Londoners afford to get around if gas prices rise to, for example, \$4 per litre? If we can't make transit viable given our low urban densities and lack of land use mix, what are our alternatives? How will we compete with cities that are less reliant on the automobile?

It's easy to start seeing the linkages between how our prosperous future could depend on smart city-building.

### How about our health...

We don't think about it often, but our pattern of growth has an impact on our health. How? Well, in many, many ways.

As we've described above, the pattern of growth, and the degree to which land uses are mixed, can have a significant impact on how you get around in a City. Spread out cities that separate land uses make it almost impossible for people to carry out their daily errands and routines without the use of the car – like going to stores, offices, services, restaurants and schools.

It's been shown that in communities designed primarily for travel by automobile, commuters spend 3 to 4 times more hours driving than individuals living in compact, mixed use communities. (The Health Impacts of Sprawl, V4 Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2005)

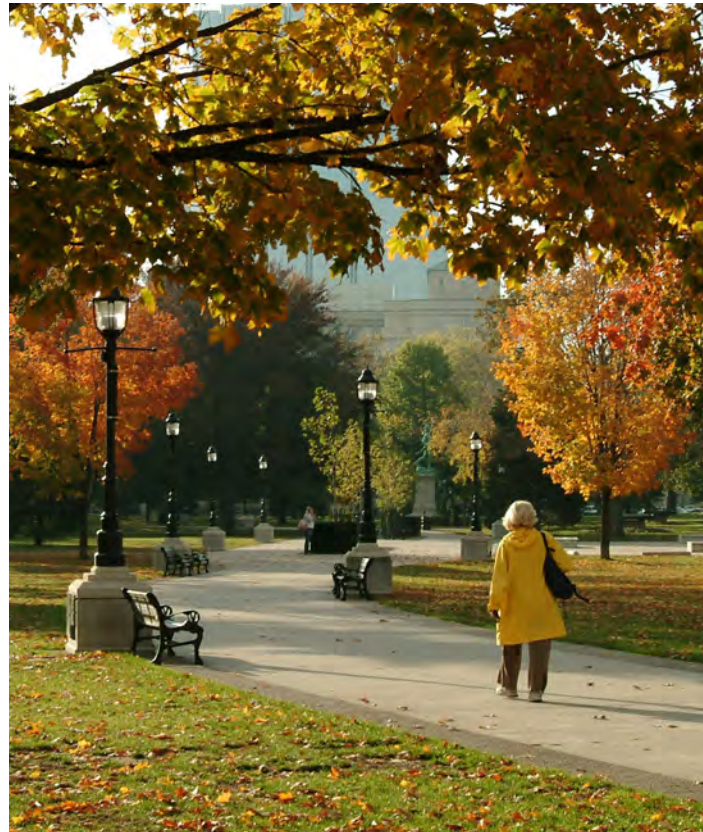
Think about all the impacts that using cars more, and using our bodies less to get around, has on our health.

Almost 50% of Canadians are overweight and 1 in 6 is obese. The number of obese children has tripled over the past 20 years and 10-25% of all teenagers have a weight problem.

Almost 50% of Canadians are overweight and 1 in 6 is obese. The number of obese children has tripled over the past 20 years and 10-25% of all teenagers have a weight problem. For the first time in Canadian history, today's children are, on average, expected to have a shorter life-expectancy than their parents. (Report on Public Health and Urban Sprawl in Ontario, College of Family Physicians, 2005)

Heart and Stroke Foundation research has found that each additional kilometer walked per day reduces the likelihood of becoming obese by nearly 5%. Each hour per day spent in a car increases the likelihood of becoming obese by 6%.

Obesity is killing us! It can lead to high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease. Furthermore, overweight people die prematurely as much as 2.5 times the rate of others and walking 10 blocks per day or more is associated with a 33% lower risk of cardio-vascular disease. (Understanding Sprawl, A Citizens Guide, 2003)







London's Child and Youth Network priority area of Healthy Eating and Healthy Activity is working hard on London's neighbourhoods to get families more active and making healthy food choices easier. Mixed-use neighbourhoods are places where kids can safely walk to school, where families can shop for healthy food and play and recreate more within their own neighbourhoods.

In 2005, the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) used an "Illness Cost of Air Pollution" model to estimate the impact smog and air pollution was having on the residents of the province. The model suggested that in 2005:

- 5,829 premature deaths could be attributed to effects of smog.
- 59,696 emergency room visits were the result.
- \$506,612,700 in health care costs, relating only to the effects of smog.
- \$374,342,400 in lost productivity.

The OMA report concluded that: "There is an abundance of evidence linking air pollution to increased rates of illness and premature death in populations. In Canadian cities, vehicle emissions such as nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and fine particulates are an important factor in local air quality. By creating neighbourhoods that are far from the core and necessitate automobile travel, urban sprawl contributes to poorer air quality and its related impacts." (Urban Sprawl and Health, Alberta Health Services, 2009)

There is an abundance of evidence linking air pollution to increased rates of illness and premature death in populations. // Urban Sprawl and Health, Alberta Health Services, 2009



Middlesex - London Community Health Status Resource , Middlesex-London Health Unit 2012

Nearly half the population reported being inactive during their leisure activities despite nearly 90% acknowledging that they knew the location of local recreational trails. Similarly, nearly half the adult population reported a body mass index that classified them as overweight or obese. In the same time frame, nearly a quarter of the adult population in Middlesex-London were current smokers and more than a third exceeded the low risk drinking guidelines. Over a third of the adult population reported having a sun burn in the year prior to the survey while only 40% reported taking protective measures such as applying sun screen. About one quarter of the population found life to be quite or extremely stressful and nearly 30% found work to be quite or extremely stressful on most days.



## Housing that is Affordable

One of London's great strengths is that it offers a tremendous quality of life at an affordable rate. Housing costs are generally lower than most medium and large sized cities. Taxes and services are affordable and the cost of living overall remains reasonably low relative to comparator cities. As explained, above, we need to grow smart to keep London affordable and make wise planning decisions as we build our City of the future.

In addition, London has led the way, in many regards, on affordable housing programs in Ontario, such as:

The Community Plan on Homelessness, a "toolbox" of approaches ensures that all members of the community have access to housing that is safe, secure, and suitable to their needs and ability to pay.

The toolbox includes: a Convert-To-Rent/ Rehabilitation Program, new construction, housing supplements to landlords, down payment assistance for affordable homeownership, housing with supports and a renovation program that allows seniors and persons with disabilities to remain in their homes.

Since 2004, we have created 1,316 affordable units to-date, through the various City programs.

Approximately 400 units of these affordable units are located in the Downtown and Dundas East Corridor.

We heard many Londoners through the ReThink process speak about affordable and low cost housing. They want to see more affordable housing and they want it to be the kind of affordable housing that does not concentrate, or stigmatize low income families, but instead respects and values all members of the community equally.



It's time that we looked at opportunities for better mix of housing types and integration of affordable housing into all neighbourhoods. This can come in many forms.

While there are many factors at play, it can be generally said that higher density housing improves the opportunity for low cost housing – as the cost of land is defrayed amongst more units.

A City form that relies less on the car helps with affordability, significantly reducing transportation costs.

Cities that lead to healthier life-styles lead to less illness that also helps with affordability.

Allowing for, and encouraging, a mix of different housing types within neighbourhoods not only allows for aging in place, but provides for housing that is affordable within different ages and stages of one's life.

Integrating affordable housing components into market-rate development projects is also critical to providing low cost housing to families and individuals that need it.







For us to maintain our outstanding quality of life at an affordable cost of living, we'll need to be deliberate in the way we build our City. Like other mid-sized and large cities in Canada, we'll need to think of intelligent ways to integrate affordable and low-cost housing seamlessly into our neighbourhoods.

## Making it Happen

This discussion paper has been a long one. Why? Because we heard so much about the way we grow from Londoners and because our future depends so heavily on making smart choices about how we'll develop in the future. We need to build on the many successes we're currently experiencing and push the envelope on our new thinking. Our prosperity relies on it.

One of the best ways to achieve our goals is to establish an "urban structure plan". At a City-scale, this plan will identify growth centres and corridors where we'll encourage higher density housing such as row houses and apartments and a mix of office, retail and service uses. This plan for centres and corridors

will be linked to rapid transit so that we encourage a concentration of residents and businesses around these convenient transit services. This will help us to raise transit ridership and make rapid transit viable and affordable in London.

Most of the lands within these centres and corridors are already developed. This means that we'll have to take wise planning actions that allow for infill development on vacant lots and the re-development of strategically located properties over time. This is going to be tricky because we'll need to balance the concerns of existing neighbourhoods, with our needs to look inward and upward. We'll have to make these centres and corridors some of the most livable, connected and desirable neighbourhoods in the entire City.

Of course, there will continue to be a healthy amount of growth outside of these centres and corridors in lower density neighbourhoods. In lower density neighbourhoods, we will need to plan for new communities that are better suited to walking, cycling and using transit. We'll need to allow for a greater





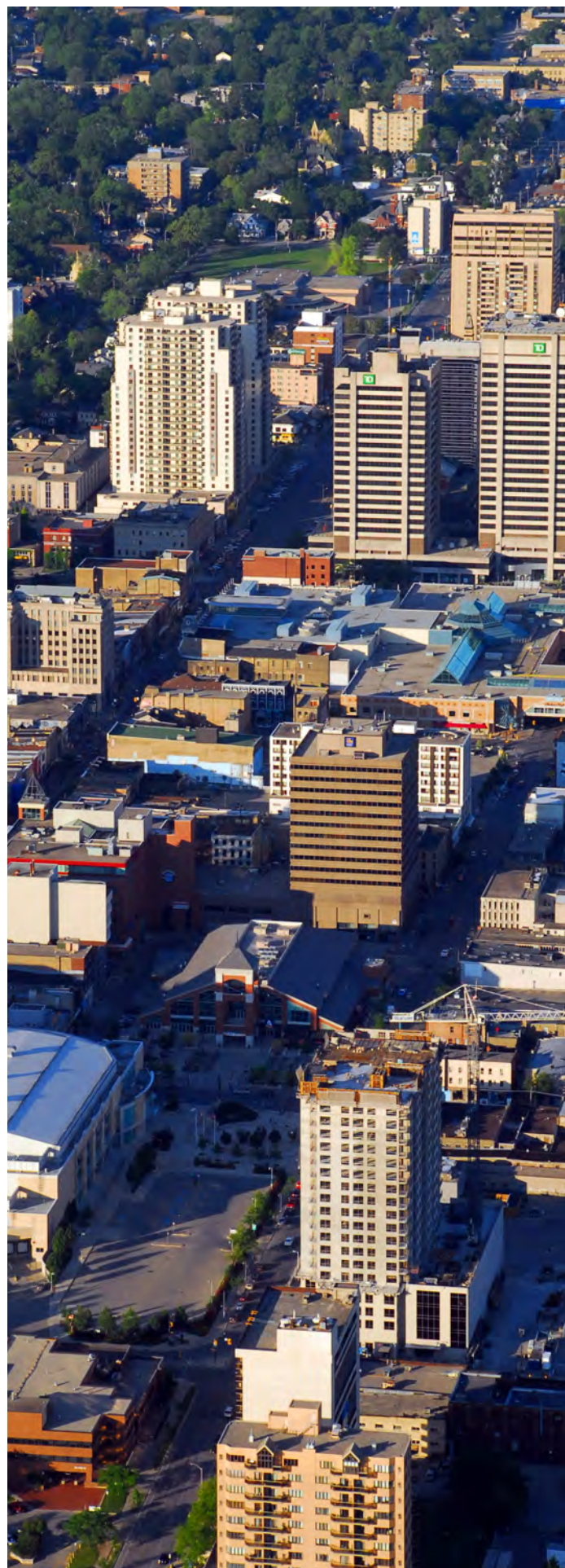
mix of housing types, and also more deliberately plan for everyday shopping and service needs within our neighbourhoods. We'll have to think of street patterns, parks, social gathering places, and quality pedestrian environments that get people out of their cars and entice people to walk not only for recreation, but also for their every day routines.

The strong desire for using the car to get around and wanting a single family home are part of London's culture. It may even be the reason why some people choose to live in London. Some have suggested that we need to work harder as a community to develop townhome, mid-rise and high-rise housing forms that are of a quality that can be attractive alternatives to single detached housing. With housing prices comparably low in London, we need to assess how likely it is for Londoners to increase their demand for medium and high density forms of housing. Many point to the aging of the baby boomers and the demand for higher density housing forms that is being expressed by the Millennial population (those in their 20's) as a strong sign that there will be a greater mix of housing types desired in the future.

You may have heard of the NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) phenomenon. NIMBY does not relate to legitimate concerns regarding a proposed development project within a neighbourhood. Rather, it relates to a situation where residents object to any change in their neighbourhood, or where they support infill and intensification as a concept, but don't want to see it occur in their neighbourhood. NIMBY attitudes and political pressures could pose a major stumbling block for the type of London that we hear you're asking for - our ability to grow inward and upward, and to achieve an integrated mix of uses.

Our decisions on growth are paramount to address issues like climate change, increasing energy costs, preservation of agricultural land, impacts on our health, affordability, the need for a competitive tax structure, and our ability to retain and attract a quality workforce.

We know London is up to the challenge as a community just as other cities have been successful in growing smarter. In summary, we too can do a little more of this and a little less of that to make a difference.





## More of this...

Strong and consistent growth

Compact growth – looking inward and upward

Quality infill and intensification to take advantage of existing services

Mix of housing types within neighbourhoods - allow live-work opportunities

Mix stores, restaurants, and services in an appropriate way within neighbourhoods

Build high density, mixed use centres and corridors linked to rapid transit

## Less of this...

Slow and stagnant growth

Low density, spread out development

Reliance on greenfield development

Homogenous neighbourhoods

Separate out all non-residential land uses from residential neighbourhoods

Non-strategic “shotgun” approach to planning high density housing



## More of this...

Build great public spaces and pedestrian environments that support walking

Continue to support and invest in a strong Downtown as the City's primary centre connected to other centres via rapid transit

Promote low cost and affordable housing in new and innovative ways; minimize costs of growth

Protect valuable agricultural land

Conserve natural heritage

## Less of this...

Build primarily for the automobile, with walking, cycling and transit a distant second priority

Weaken the Downtown by spreading employment and residential density in non-strategic locations that are not linked to the Core by rapid transit

Increase housing costs & taxes and reduce affordability by growing in financially detrimental ways

Build on agricultural land when alternatives growth opportunities exist

Eliminate natural heritage elements and put severe pressure on those elements that are kept





# Providing Transportation Choices

*This paper is the fourth in a series of eight discussion papers.*



675,000! That’s a big number and it represents the number of person trips that occur in the City of London on an average weekday. The sheer volume of trips occurring within our municipal boundary shows just how important transportation and mobility is to Londoners.

This travel occurs for all kinds of different reasons, but the point is that there is an incredible network of trips from hundreds of thousands of origins to hundreds of thousands of destinations in London every day and if we don’t build our City to make these trips easy, convenient and affordable, we’ll never get to that goal of prosperity that we’re collectively striving towards.

Many people don’t realize just how important transportation is to the success of a City. But if you think about cities in history, you’ll recognize that movement is a “make it or break it” factor that we need to understand more completely. Have you ever heard the term “all roads lead to Rome?” Well, it was once true. The Roman Empire was founded on a system of roads that linked all cities and allowed their armies to move effectively from one to another. These streets supported the movement of food, goods and services. Meanwhile, the Romans systematically established a grid network of streets that allowed for maximum connections within cities and provided easy access to the city centre where the market, cultural and entertainment hub existed.

But enough of the history lesson. Transportation is equally as important today as it was in ancient times.

Most people recognize that access to our City is largely defined by the different ways that a person can get to London from other reaches of the world – planes, trains and automobiles. And within our City, our transportation network services people, businesses and institutions in a way that allows them to prosper.



What many people don't recognize is that the way we build our transportation network in London shapes our City in many ways – the location of uses, the intensity of development, and the form that development may take along those roads. Furthermore, the way we build our land uses has a big impact on the way that people will choose to move from place to place. It's an interesting and important linkage that hasn't been given a huge amount of consideration until recently. This paper explores this connection in more detail and considers its implication for what Londoners told us was important to them about transportation.

### Talking about Smart Moves...

Through ReThink's discussions in the community, it became quite obvious that Londoners are more than ready to talk about planning for transportation in the City of London. Why? Well, because the London community has spent the last two years discussing and shaping a new transportation master plan, entitled Smart Moves. This discussion paper picks up where Smart Moves left off as the Transportation Master Plan intended. It ties the results of the Smart Moves discussion into our City building conversation and identifies those directions recommended by the Plan as approved by City Council.

It's amazing how closely aligned the feedback has been between Smart Moves recommendations

and the comments we received through ReThink London. So, please consider this discussion paper a direct link between Smart Moves and our directions for moving forward on transportation issues through the ReThink London process.

### What we heard...

So, what did Londoners tell us through our ReThink sessions? Here's a summary of the most commonly raised topics:

Improvements to Public Transit – there are a number of improvements you would like to see accomplished within the service London Transit Commission (LTC) provides. This includes longer service hours, past midnight as well as earlier start times including on Sundays. More frequent service, expanded routes, express routes (north to south and east to west) and dedicated bus lanes or queuing priority to increase the speed and reliability of the service. There is a strong desire to invest in light rail transit and move away from buses. This option is often thought to be a more forward-thinking approach that will allow London to compete with other communities in both retaining and attracting younger demographics.







**Improve Transportation Options in Employment Areas** – The present lack of service to employment areas, particularly industrial areas is a significant concern. Many of you find the only way to access these regions of the city is with a vehicle, as the bus service that is provided is not geared to shift work, or simply does not service the location you need to travel to.

**Bicycle Network Improvements** – The network of off-road paths are consistently one of the features Londoners love the most about their city. Your desire for these pathways to be both expanded and maintained is one of your top priorities. In addition, you feel more work needs to be done to improve the city-wide bicycle network. Dedicated on-street bike lanes are also a regular request in an effort to make cycling a viable and safe option for cross-city travel. You have many safety concerns for the current network of on-street bike lanes. These include general maintenance including snow and debris removal and locations where bicycle lanes suddenly end forcing cyclists to merge with vehicle traffic. In addition, there were a number of comments indicating that battery powered scooters, e-bikes and cyclists should not use sidewalks as they pose a danger to pedestrians of all ages.

**More Desirable Walking Environments** – A continuous and maintained sidewalk network is strongly desired. You regularly note that no new communities should be built without a complete sidewalk network, and sidewalks should be added to communities that presently do not have them. In addition, you would like walkable communities with destinations within walking distance of where you live. Grocery stores are often cited. There are many places within the city, where people feel unsafe walking, particularly certain intersections where multiple modes of transportation intersect.

**Transportation Conflicts** – The frequent trains that run through London is a common source of frustration, and you believe much of the traffic flow issues stem from the timing of the trains passing through the city, particularly at peak travel times. Your comments indicate that the level train crossings are a constant cause of delays and congestion. It is primarily freight trains travelling through the city that is the focus of the issue. Rerouting the trains around the city and converting the existing rail corridors into pathways or a LRT system are some of your suggested options. In addition, overall improvements to traffic flow is desired. Your comments indicate a need to focus on resolving conflicts between traffic and rail, expanding current road network and the ability to travel cross-city quickly by car.





**Transportation Connection** – There is a desire to have a central transit hub. Many suggest the downtown as the appropriate location for a transit terminal in order to link London and other cities, as well as linking both train and bus service and addressing the congestion of people at the Dundas and Richmond Streets intersection, the City's current primary transfer point. A regional transportation plan is desired to link London with surrounding communities, the airport and other cities along the Windsor-Quebec corridor - for the movement of both people and goods.

**Parking Options** – An overall improvement in parking for personal vehicles is desired. Parking downtown is noted as an issue particularly in terms of cost and accessibility. On-street parking in neighbourhoods is also desired.

**De-emphasize Cars**—Many of the comments we received noted that the use of the car should be more balanced to make London a healthier and more environmentally conscious community. More should be done to reduce the impact transportation has on the natural environment. Londoners want the option to make transportation choices other than the car and to have a city that is not so dependent on it. Designing streets to be more inclusive of walking and cycling is often cited as one of the ways to achieve this. As well, general upgrades and improvements in public transit service, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and parking facilities are some of the ideas on how to achieve this.

## The Cost of Transportation

Accommodating our 675,000 person trips in London each weekday is expensive! Widening the roads requires a large capital budget as well as a larger operating budget to maintain these roads. Our



Car



Bus



Bike

This graphic provided by the Münster, Germany Planning Office provides an interesting comparator of the space that is consumed by the same number of people (72) using different modes of transportation.



Transit system has a high operating budget per year. A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system requires higher budget than the traditional bus system to establish. Light Rail Transit (LRT) can cost as much as four times BRT. The way that we grow and the mobility choices residents make has a direct impact on our budget. The amount of funding needed to maintain our roads is increasing and the transportation funding gap is growing.

The numbers look like this:

The capital cost to widen a road from 2 to 4 lanes is \$4 to \$5 million per km.

Our transit system has an operating budget of \$64 million (\$25 million tax supported).

The cost to widen a road from 2 to 4 lanes is \$4 to \$5 million per km.

2011 OMBI operating cost for roads was \$28,654,049 (hard top maintenance \$17,469,543 + Winter Roads \$11,184,506).

The operating cost per lane km is \$8,287, therefore widening a road from 2 lanes to 4 lanes costs \$16,574 / lane km.

Our Engineering team has provided us more perspectives on the cost of automobiles. In 2012 they determined:

31% of London's energy is used by transportation activities.

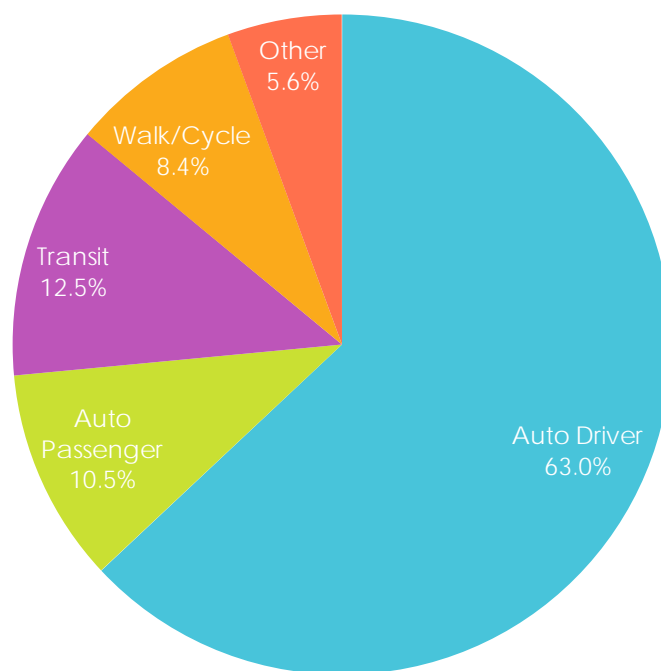
39% of London's greenhouse gases are generated by transportation activities

On average, Londoners emit 3 tonnes of greenhouse gas per year generated by their transportation activities.

## The Big Shift - balancing the street design hierarchy

Smart Moves revealed that the private automobile dominates as the preferred choice for daily travel in London, accounting for about three-quarters of weekday travel (2009 data). However, this same survey shows that transit ridership is rising significantly in London, with the current 12.5% modal share for transit greater than the target of 10% stated in the 2004 Transportation Master Plan. Smart Moves sets a target of 20% transit mode share by the year 2030.

2009 PM Peak Period Mode Shares



There appears to be a shift going on in many cities across North America – a shift towards less reliance on the automobile and an increased likelihood that people will choose other forms of transportation to move from place to place in the future.

Calgary is a good example for illustrating the shift in philosophy. They have inverted their hierarchy of transportation importance which once placed the automobile at the “top of the list”. Now they consider pedestrians at the top of the list. Second in the hierarchy is cycling and third is transit usage. At the bottom of the hierarchy is the personal automobile. While they are clear that they do not want to undermine or diminish the importance of





the automobile, they believe that streets should be designed first for people to use, and then designed around those parameters to accommodate cars.

Mobility has defined new expectations for Millennials. They are used to getting what they want, when they want it and mobility solutions are changing the way they decide how to get from one place to another. Having transportation services on-demand is becoming essential to serve the expectations of this new generation. //

– Jonathan Yarmis,  
Principal Analyst at Yarmis Group

Similarly, there has been an apparent shift in people's attitudes towards walking, cycling, and transit. For example, a February 2013 survey completed by Zipcar found that given the choice of losing their phone or their computer or their car, 65 percent of Millennials, ages 18 to 34, would go without their car. Many people are seeking alternative ways of getting from "A" to "B" without using a car, recognizing that cars consume significant amounts of energy, generate harmful air emissions that contribute to climate change, and are less healthy than more active forms of transportation.

Smart Moves has similarly indicated that London needs to shift towards a more multi-modal form of transportation planning for the future. It emphasizes the need to take a balanced approach, which recognizes the continued need for automobiles, but strives to see a shift towards other forms of transportation that are more positive.





# Complete Streets

What is a complete street? Well, it relates heavily to our discussion above. Incomplete streets are those that are designed to reasonably support only one or two modes of transportation. Below is a graphic used in the Smart Moves Transportation Master Plan. It shows the same street, but with different design conditions. The top illustration shows an incomplete street. There is no room for pedestrians, buses or cyclists. It is a totally car dominated landscape. Try to picture yourself walking on this street. Think about walking to or from a bus stop on this street. It's just not going to happen.

The bottom image shows the same road segment, but illustrates how it can transform to a complete street by introducing sidewalks with significant trees to provide comfort and a pleasant environment for pedestrians. It also shows dedicated transit lanes that allow buses to move more quickly through the flow of traffic. You can see that some apartment buildings have also been added, to illustrate that such uses are likely to be attracted to these types of streets that allow for convenient and comfortable bus access. Unlike the top photo, the bottom picture shows auto parking somewhat hidden by landscaping that creates a more pleasant and less auto-dominated environment.



## Making the link – land use and transportation

The illustration on page 59 makes an important point. The way we design our streets will have a major impact on what kind of development can be supported. Don't expect garden apartments, street-oriented commercial uses, mixed-use development, or high quality buildings that front the street where these streets have been almost exclusively designed for the automobile. It's not reasonable to expect a developer to construct these types of uses and built forms if we don't deliver a street that supports them.

Streets like those shown in the top photograph (on pg 59) will result in a form of development that is set well back from the street, turns its functional back to the street, and presents significant amounts of parking between the street and the building. Even with sidewalks, these streets will be uncomfortable to walk on and, because every transit trip begins and ends with a walk, will also be uncomfortable and inconvenient for transit users. These streets will not support high levels of transit usage and will not support our goals for reducing energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing active forms of transportation.

But it's not only important to recognize that the design of a street will shape the form and type of development along that street. There is also a link the other way. That is, the form of development will shape and determine how viable various forms of transportation will be. Where development is sparse (low density) and there is very little mix of uses, it will be difficult to maintain a viable transit system. There just won't be enough ridership revenue to pay for the service. Herein lies one of London's most significant problems when it comes to its transit network. Our City is very spread out. Our development covers a broad area, but does not offer a density of housing that generates the kind of ridership needed to support transit services to this broad area.

As noted in Smart Moves, this form of development leads to a transit system that is difficult to fund, cannot afford to offer highly regular service on most routes, and can be inconvenient for people to use. Under such circumstances, it's difficult for transit to become



the preferred choice of transportation and grow its mode share over time. Supporting rapid transit can be even more difficult to afford and support under these circumstances.

## Grids vs. loops and lollipops

"Loops and lollipops" is a term often used to describe neighbourhoods with lots of cul-de-sacs and crescents. In general, this road pattern forces pedestrians to take less direct, more circuitous routes to get to their destinations. In many cases, linkages that would be offered by a road in a typical grid pattern, are "clipped" by cul-de-sacs and crescents, relying upon narrow walkways to re-establish those linkages. Such walkways are often bordered by landscaping designed to screen views to adjacent yards, are often unlit and also are often not cleared of snow in the winter, making them less attractive. These are poor replacements for street linkages that are lit, have lots of casual surveillance from fronting houses, and are often cleared of snow.

While often popular with prospective new home purchasers, loops and lollipop subdivision designs don't support walking and transit use, and will not contribute well to Council's goals expressed in the Smart Moves Transportation Master Plan.





## An urban structure plan

Smart Moves is clear. If we are to build a transit system that Londoners want – a convenient, regular, safe and rapid system – we will have to intensify at strategic locations. This is where an “urban structure plan” can help us. Such a plan considers the entire City and establishes key “hubs” where we should be allowing for, and encouraging the most intense mixed-use development. These must be some of the most livable and comfortable urban environments in London – creating the context for people to want to live, shop, work and play within these “centres”.

It’s just as important to link these centres with great streets, lined with interesting development, so that people can comfortably and conveniently walk to transit stations and their destinations. As Smart Moves points out, it will be important to support infill and intensification within the built-up parts of the City.

## Rapid transit

Rapid transit is an important component of most medium and large sized cities. It reduces congestion (reducing the number of automobiles using the street as transit ridership increases), and allows

for the quick, convenient and easy flow of transit users to and from central employment areas. Just as important, rapid transit can act as a catalyst for development – giving developers an incentive to build more intense development and a broader mix of uses, anticipating demand that will come with good proximity to a rapid transit route.

But it’s not cheap! To make it work takes commitment and a smart plan for city building. Smart Moves advocates for a bus rapid transit system, with a cost of over \$350 million. In the longer term, the Smart Moves Transportation Master Plan contemplates a possible shift to light rail transit.

## Healthy and active

The Middlesex London Health Unit completed a study titled “Health City – Active London”. Contained in this plan are evidence-based recommendations for policies to promote walking and biking in London.

Active Transportation should be the preferred mode of travel for London. Active transportation plays a critical role in the development of an environmentally stable, economically viable and healthy city. It is defined by the City of London and the Public Health Agency of Canada, as any form of human powered transportation, (walking, cycling, skateboarding). A rapidly growing body of research based in the City of London indicates that increased rates of active transportation will improve the viability of the City as it continues to grow.

Adults who walk or cycle to work are significantly more likely to have lower body mass indexes (BMI) and smaller waist circumferences and an overall higher fitness level. Students who walk to school, average and additional 24 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) per day compared to non-walkers, satisfying nearly half of the required 60 minutes of MVPA per day. Young adults who actively commute to work or school have significantly healthier bodyweights and fitness levels and experience a reduced risk of obesity and high blood pressure.



Investment in the construction of bicycle facilities such as multi-use paths yield an economic return approximately nine times the initial expenditure for the local economy. Cycling infrastructure projects create a total of 11.4 local jobs for each \$1 million spent, and pedestrian-only projects create 9.9 jobs per \$10 million, while road only create 7.8 jobs per \$1 million.

Neighbourhoods with dense development, high street connectivity and access to transit opportunities will produce up to 25% less energy from motorized vehicles compared to those areas built without active transportation in mind. A 5% increase in walkability of residential neighbourhoods will decrease exposure to toxic air pollution from nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds by 6%.

## Ring road

We heard about the desire for a ring road at several of our ReThink sessions. In general terms, Londoners who expressed a desire for a ring road to us cited the desire to get around the City easier or the desire to get from the north end of the City to the south end.

In 2001, the City conducted a study to determine the opportunity for a ring road. That study clearly showed that a ring road would not be beneficial for London. The cost of such a road would be in the order of \$500 million, \$150 million more than the BRT system. Even more importantly, it wouldn't do much at all to help Londoners to move more easily around the City. The road would be too far removed from the built-up part of the City to be a useful time saver – even 75 years into the future. Traffic modelling showed very little traffic generated on this ring road at this long-term future date. The need for a separate freeway “ring road” is not precluded in the longer term; however, the City, Middlesex County, and possibly MTO would have a role in determining the need for, location, and timing for a facility of this nature.

## Better North-South Connections and New Opportunities for the Region

There is, however, a need for better connections to and from the northern part of the City to and from Highways 401 and 402. This can benefit London, as well as those communities to the north of the City within the region. There is a plan in place to establish interchanges along the Veterans Memorial Parkway that will improve transportation flows to a future extension northward that will join with Clarke Road. A similar long-term opportunity should be identified and protected on the west end of the City to allow for strong north-south movements.

As described in the “Connecting the Region” discussion paper, opportunities should be explored, working with the province and our neighbours to the north, for an extension of Highway 7 connecting to Highway 402. This could support new economic opportunities for the region as a whole, creating a strong linkage with St. Mary's, Stratford and Waterloo to the northeast and the Sarnia-Port Huron border crossing to the west.





## NAFTA super-highway

Our location on the NAFTA super-highway is a significant opportunity for London. But we don't take advantage of this proximity the way that we could. We do very little to create an attractive and noticeable image along the highway to promote our City. Some have suggested that we plant significant distinctive trees along the corridor, where possible, to mark our identity as the Forest City. We could also work with the Ministry on the new interchanges to be constructed along the highway, such that we create a unique marker along the corridor.

All development that occurs along the corridor should be designed to strengthen its image. "Back of house" areas (e.g. loading areas), poorly designed buildings, weak landscaping plans, etc. undermine our opportunity for making a statement along this important exposure. A unified plan for our 401 exposure could help us to make a significant statement that London is thoughtful, creative, enthusiastic, vibrant and vital, and worth a look as a prosperous city to live and invest in.

## Our inner-city railways

London's prosperity revolved around its railway connections in its early years. The railways continue to play an important role in connecting our City to other locations in Canada and North America. That's the very positive element of our railways and it can't be taken for granted. That said, there is a negative side to our rail lines running through our City. They serve as barriers to the free flow of cars, buses, bikes and pedestrians. Most Londoners will have experienced the long wait on Richmond Street or Adelaide Street for a train to pass through – usually when we're in a rush.

Some have suggested that we explore overpasses and underpasses to relieve this conflict between the train and our inner-city transportation flows. It's important that we all understand the consequences of overpasses and underpasses before we make such decisions. The reality is that these structures can divide neighbourhoods and can undermine streetscapes. How? Well, think of some of those that exist in London. One that most people can think of

is on Wellington Street, just south of our Downtown. Think about how the streetscape for a significant length north and south of the underpass beneath the tracks is devoid of any frontage. Now think of the overpass on Wonderland Road, north of Oxford Street. There is a lengthy stretch of Wonderland that just can't support a streetscape.

Think of what this might look like Downtown. An overpass or underpass on Richmond Street south of Oxford Street would destroy the streetscape and the character of the entire street would be transformed. There's also the cost. A 1999 review by the City looked at moving the lines. The preliminary costs were identified at a \$300 million range, plus property, all of which would be the responsibility of the municipality.



## Cycling

In 2005, Council adopted a Bicycle Master Plan. It recognized that there are two separate, but integrated, bicycle networks within our City. One is a commuting network and the other is a recreational network. The commuting network is designed to get people, on road, from an origin to a destination as quickly as possible. The safest means for providing this network is in a widened curb lane, with striping



and signage. Since the adoption of the plan, such striping and signage have been established in a deliberate program to expand these facilities across the City.

The recreational program is to allow for off-road cycling in a slower context, allowing for riders of various abilities and experience to ride safely, separated from automobile traffic. London is blessed with the Thames Valley Parkway (TVP) that has continued to expand over time. There are several key linkages that remain to be established that will further connect various parts of the City and allow for a more complete and very extensive recreational network along the river.

Smart Moves has identified four priority on-street cycling routes. Two of the priority routes are north/south and two are east/west, with one tying into the TVP system west of the downtown. All priority routes serve the broader central area, key city destinations, and the proposed intensification areas.



## Downtown and the train station

Downtown is the main employment, entertainment, cultural and office hub in the City of London. It's important that it is incredibly well connected by car, bike, foot and transit to all areas of the City. The upcoming Downtown Master Plan will be recommending that buses continue to concentrate in the Downtown, but that they be directed to a loop that revolves around Queen and King Streets, rather than Dundas Street. This is intended to allow for the creation of a high quality pedestrian, restaurant, shopping and "lingering" environment on Dundas Street.

London's train station was once a prominent part of London's urban framework. It linked the City to the nation and the rest of North America. The station's prominence needs to be re-captured by giving it a high priority as a major gathering place and focal point of transit service in London. We heard often how important it is to continue and strengthen train service to our surrounding region. Strengthening the transportation linkage between the train station and key hubs in London will be critical.

## Thinking big and looking forward - high speed rail

Over 100 years ago, London earned a place on the Grand Trunk Railway that cemented the railway as a major player on the municipal landscape of Canada. Just as important to London's future is to ensure London's place on a high speed train rail line. This would open up considerable economic opportunity, drawing residents, business investors, and job opportunities to London. Imagine getting to Toronto within an hour or less. Think how easy it would be to live in London and work in Toronto or live in Toronto and work in London. This would allow London to be a part of the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and open up new growth and development opportunities that could significantly benefit our City.

The following summarizes the direction that we're headed, based on what we've heard from you, and the research we've completed to date.





## More of this...

## Less of this...

Link land use and transportation to focus density where transit is located; promoting health and well-being of Londoners; and foster economic benefits of a well-connected city.

Don't consider the links between transportation and land use; growth not directed towards areas of higher transit accessibility; continued low density; and single use development.

Invest in transportation alternatives like walking, biking and transit to make them more attractive and desirable and continuing to provide suitable road corridors for the car as a transportation choice by designing complete streets for viable, convenient and affordable transportation choices.

Car-focused "road plans" that have less consideration for alternative transportation choices.

Think of streetscapes, residential and business environments before moving forward with overpasses and underpasses.

Think of overpasses and underpasses only in terms of time shared saved for automobile trips.

Create more desirable walking environments through better designed streets and development along streetscapes.

Expect nothing to occur as a preferred alternative when streetscapes are attractive and destination are not well connected.

## More of this...

Develop a transportation system based on “centres” and “corridors” and focusing mixed-use development at these locations; directing intensification to centres that can ultimately support rapid transit services; and locating major destinations along routes and near major transit stops.

Efficient movement of goods and services through the City by providing transportation choices to keep London competitive – both to businesses and attracting new residents; minimizing traffic conflicts; and establishing strong and identifiable north/south and east/west connections through the city.

Strengthen north-south connections and consider a linkage from Highway 402 to Highway 7 at Stratford.

Develop subdivisions with a variety of road networks and with a preference for a grid or modified grid pattern.

## Less of this...

Build a City that doesn't adequately support the importance of centres and corridors to city building, and consider transit to be a lower priority way of travelling throughout the City.

Less focus on efficient and convenient movement of goods and services within the city, or strong connections to the region.

Ignore opportunities for better connections to surrounding economic “hot spots.”

Continue with “loop and lollipops” road networks for all new subdivisions.



# Building a Greener City

*This paper is the fifth in a series of eight discussion papers.*

Green. It's the colour of nature. It's the symbolic colour of growth. It's the colour of environmental awareness and stewardship. Green is the colour of our signature tree logo. In London, we celebrate our identity as the Forest City and support the protection of our rich natural, cultural, recreational and aesthetic heritage.

But we need to do more.

The climate is undergoing some notable changes that are affecting how we live and will affect how we will grow. These are the facts and they are undisputable.

We know that as a city we will grow in the next 50 years. We need to be smart about how we grow to ensure we protect those elements of our city that are of most value to us.

We have heard from you that London is a great city. One of the many things that you said makes London such a great city is our unique natural environment that contributes to our high quality of life.

London sits in the Carolinian Forest, which contains the fragmented remnants of one of the most biologically diverse forest ecosystems in the temperate world. Our city's founding location at the Forks of the Thames was chosen not only for the water supply and river transport, but also for the rich forest and soils that now support our Forest City and a booming agricultural economy. Where else in the province can you drive 25 minutes in any direction from the centre of the City and are in the heart of prime agricultural land?







This is the time for London to “think globally, act locally and plan bioregionally” (Reed Noss 2004). We need to plan and ensure as a city that we are “future ready” by taking steps today to ensure future generations will enjoy a healthy life in our city.

Think globally, act locally, and plan bioregionally.

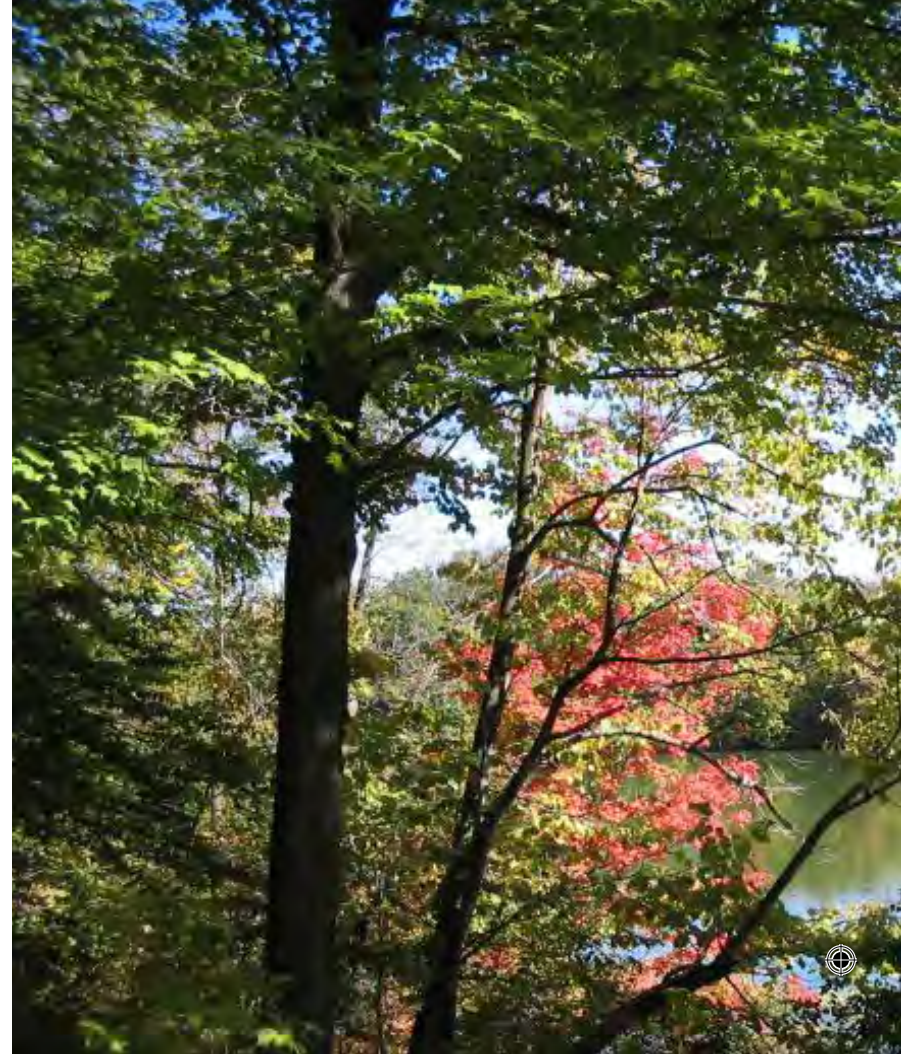
– Reed Noss, 2004

### What We Heard...

It comes as neither a shock nor a surprise that when the responses from the ReThink input sessions were analyzed, 45% of you listed public parks, recreation facilities and green spaces as being highly valued. In London, we have come to appreciate the rich surroundings we find ourselves in. Through both the engagement process and the recommendations from other city studies, several “green” themes emerged:

The Forest City has an urban forest that is important to everyone - neighbourhoods, businesses, industry, and wildlife. The urban forest requires strong protection and wise management given the recognized aesthetic, environmental, social, psychological, recreational, and economic values of forests, estimated to be worth \$5 billion.

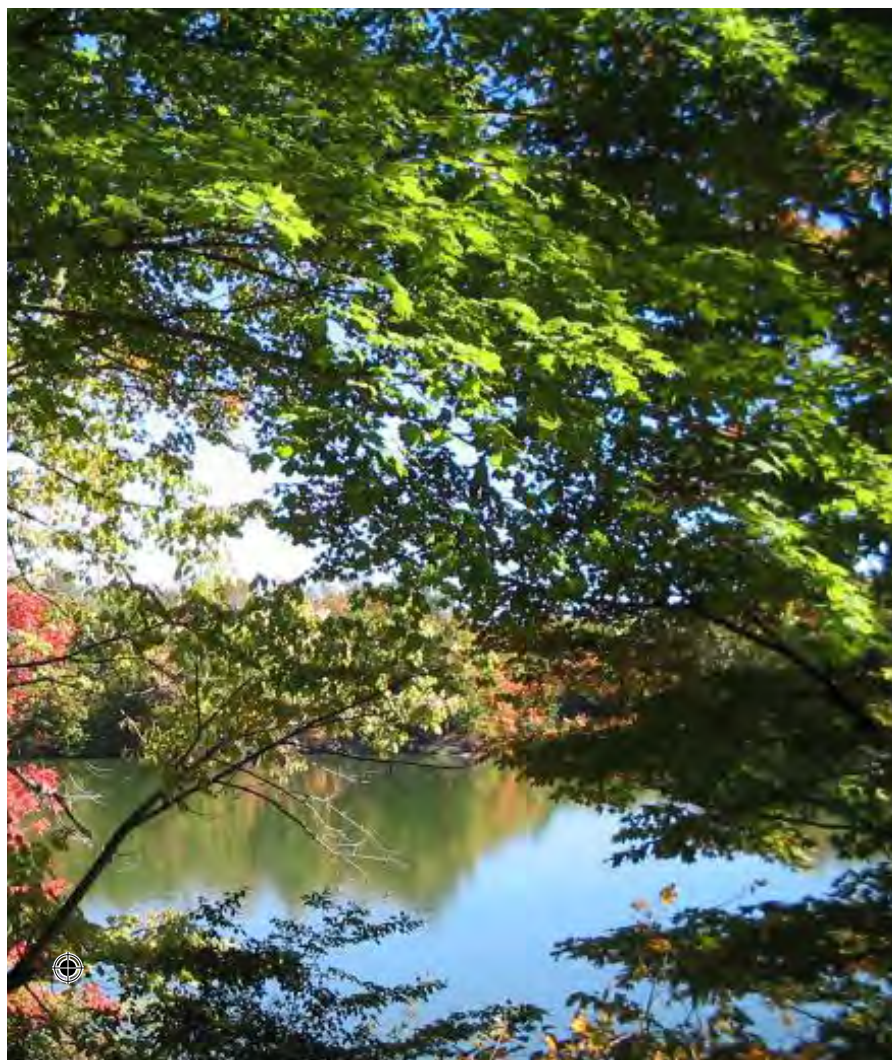
New buildings need to be “Future Ready” now by embracing principles that enable our built environment to capitalize on new digital communications, on renewable energy, electric vehicles and improved energy efficient building design. When looked at through full-cost accounting principles, “Future Ready” new buildings also provide a net economic benefit.



Green development practices should consider the ecological footprint that development creates and take action to reduce it. Mixed use and mixed density development can also reduce water and sewer infrastructure, transportation energy use and reduced emissions, by providing services within walking distances and supporting higher-order public transit. Green development practices should also allow space for trees and tree cover.

Consider the integration of “green” systems and technologies such as district energy systems, green buildings, stormwater management facilities, planted street trees, and permeable pavement.





Are naturally-occurring plant or animals in danger of extinction or of disappearing from the province. This biodiversity - the variety of different habitats, and types of plants, animals, fish, insects - is in trouble. Species can become at risk due to a number of reasons, including habitat loss, pollution, changing land use activities, and the spread of invasive species. The Province has identified over 160 species in Southwestern Ontario as species at risk.

Our river is rich in biological diversity, with more than 90 species of fish, 30 species of mussels and 30 species of reptiles and amphibians. These are more species than any other river in Ontario.

London is fortunate to have an inter-connected and accessible park system that borders many of our creeks and the Thames River. Parks and recreational trails achieve the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the rivers and creeks, and provides several interrelated benefits, such as riverbank protection, flood plain management, active transportation, human wellness and natural heritage corridor protection.

A sustainable or resilient London – one where environment, economy and community are considered equal. This is referred to as the “triple bottom line”. This will require the integration of results from several studies and recommendations that have already been completed by the City, and several other studies that are underway. Combined, these efforts will result in a more resilient City, able to respond to changing environmental pressures, to changing economic pressures and to the strengthening of neighbourhoods in London.

Green infrastructure is an interconnected network of natural and engineered green features in an urban context to maintain the ecological function at a variety of scales. These green elements are designed by humans to mimic nature in function, or to strive to reduce our impact on ecological systems. Natural green elements include all components of the natural heritage system.



Source water protection policies will be necessary to address existing and potential threats to our well-head protection areas surrounding the Hyde Park and Fanshawe well fields that are used as back-up water supplies.

Retrofitting existing commercial and residential buildings is the most cost-effective way for London to reduce energy use and the associated greenhouse gas and smog-forming emissions from using energy. Additionally, retrofitting buildings provides the economic benefit of job creation and reduced energy bills, in addition to every tonne of carbon dioxide that is avoided. With the exception of maintaining a healthy and sustainable urban forest, retrofitting existing buildings is also one of the most important in terms of the magnitude of emission reductions that can be achieved when compared to other strategies.

London's geographic location, surrounded by productive farmland, is a natural attribute from which we have always benefited. We are now strengthening those rural ties which will spur the marketing of locally produced farm-fresh food. Providing more opportunities to grow more food in London and providing more outlets for distribution of these products through farmer's markets and farm-gate operations has many interrelated benefits.

We use energy for everything we do. Home heating, cooling, vehicle transportation, pumping and treating water are just a few examples. We therefore need to consider how best to reduce our energy use and conserve what we have, given rising energy prices, fluctuating and/or reduced supplies and concern over greenhouse gas emissions.

Our river and its tributaries (like Dingman Creek, Medway Creek, Stoney Creek, Pottersburg Creek, Crumlin Creek Drain, Mud Creek, Kelly Creek, Stanton Creek Drain, Kettle Creek, Sharon Creek) all need attention, given their function to move both water and sediment and the inherent values of river systems. Our river is rich in biological diversity, with more than 90 species of fish, 30 species of mussels and 30 species of reptiles and amphibians. These are more species than any other river in Ontario.

Climate change adaptation strategies will recognize how all these things are interrelated, and bring all of the initiatives together.

### Where We are Now...

A review of current city policies regarding the environment shows both areas of strength and vision, and areas that need improvement and strengthening.

City Council's strategic policy states that we "value and protect our environment" and goes on to describe that "the decisions we make are environmentally responsible for today and sustainable for tomorrow. We are a community that is growing but understands it must take a careful and balanced approach to preserving and protecting our natural environment, knowing it is essential to our prosperity, sustainability and quality of life."

Green infrastructure, green development and green building design are elements of a built environment and are relatively new terms. Below is how we will define them so that we can create clear policies.

Green development means including design elements that are more compatible with the original or existing landscape and the natural functions that presently exist, or have been lost but are now desirable to restore.





The decisions we make are environmentally responsible for today and sustainable for tomorrow. We are a community that is growing but understands it must take a careful and balanced approach to preserving and protecting our natural environment, knowing it is essential to our prosperity, sustainability and quality of life.

- City Council's Strategic Policy

Green infrastructure means those elements of a "built environment" that by virtue of their design and function use processes found in nature (e.g. plants and plant roots, and the capture and filtering of water in soil) that contribute to the protection of the natural environment from potentially harmful inputs. Green infrastructure also means providing additional buffer and/or naturalization areas to protect and enhance the natural heritage system (such as street trees contributing to the overall urban forest).

Green Building Design is a collection of elements that can be incorporated into building materials and design to reduce demand on natural resources, implement energy and water conservation and create "future ready" capabilities.

London is also a "River City", and how we develop along the Thames and its tributaries is important. Flood plain management policies include a variety of approaches, including the use of two-zones in places where low water flows and shallow water







depths at times of flood can provide opportunities for limited development. New climate change water resource modeling could have implications on how we might be able to use this two-zone concept in the future. Special policy areas where flood threats exist in already built-up areas have been developed (e.g. the Coves and West London); however, some changes may occur elsewhere in the city in response to climate change implications.

Our “natural heritage” systems include corridors that are being affected by things like infrastructure, residential encroachment, and lack of stewardship. Many of these impacts appear to be the result of previous decisions that were different from our present day considerations of how the natural heritage corridors provide ecological goods and services such as a unique habitat for many species, including many rare species, and serve a major route for the migration of wildlife. Going forward, we will need to implement the recommendations of the Thames River Corridor Study that includes a 100 m width corridor on either side of the river, a different means of protecting, restoring or rebuilding our natural heritage along the river, and education about stewardship activities that homeowners, businesses and schools can undertake to enhance the Thames River Corridor.

## A look at what Other Cities are Doing – “Best Practices” ...

York Region’s Sustainability Strategy – Towards a Sustainable Region (2007) provides a “...long term framework for making smarter decisions about growth management and all municipal responsibilities that better integrate the economy, environment and community.” It recognized that the local drivers of sustainability in York Region were numerous and include:

Pace of growth, Water and air quality, Quality of life, Agriculture, Intensification, Natural heritage, Financial resources, Public health, Infrastructure, Human services, and Energy;

The strategy also recognizes global trends such as: Aging society, ethnically diverse society, mental illness, energy use, obesity, cardiovascular disease, pandemics, increasing urbanization, resource consumption, lifestyle choices, poverty and social isolation.

These same drivers and trends recognized in York Region, located in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), can be applied to London.





How London would respond to these drivers of sustainability should align with the five results of Council's Strategic Plan: strong economy, vibrant and diverse community, a green and growing city, a sustainable infrastructure and a caring community.

The City of Mississauga has implemented the strategy "Going Green in Mississauga (2010)" to require the third-party green LEED-ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Neighbourhood Development) certified Silver rating system as a guide for future development and introduced the 'Made in Mississauga' Stage One Green Development Standard. Mississauga strongly encourages applicants to incorporate green sustainable elements into proposed buildings, site works, construction methods and long-term maintenance programs. Further to the Stage One Standard requirements, the City also encourages applicants to pursue LEED-ND credits required to achieve Silver certification.

Guelph City Council unanimously endorsed the vision, goals and general directions of a 25-year Community Energy Initiative (2007) that will put Guelph on the cutting edge for North America for a community sustainability plan.

Under their initiative, Guelph could use less energy in 25 years than it does today – even with expected residential growth of 65,000 people – and cut its annual greenhouse emissions by nine tonnes per person (from 12 to 3 tonnes). This will put Guelph among the top energy performers in the world.

Guelph's Community Energy Initiative has earned international attention as it is among only a handful of North American cities to undertake an energy management project of this scope. After six years of implementation, the analysis of the data is starting to show positive results.

Vancouver's Greenest City Sustainability Plan (Vancouver, B.C. - 2012) proposed actions to shrink the ecological footprint with EcoDensity and EcoStructure. The EcoDensity initiative has started a public dialogue about how Vancouver residents can reduce their ecological footprint. That's the Eco part of EcoDensity. The Density part of EcoDensity is because the right kind of density can be one of our best tools to help lower our ecological footprint.

EcoDensity in Vancouver is intended to achieve the following:

- make walking, transit and cycling easier for more people;
- take advantage of existing infrastructure;
- allow for new green systems that reduce and better use energy, water and materials;
- introduce urban agriculture to reduce "food miles" (the distance it takes to get food to our homes); and,
- create more complete communities by having housing diversity within walking distance of shops and services, and accessible to transit.

## Where We Need to Go... Overview

There are a number of ways that London could become a Greener City:

Promote Green Development Principles recognizing the four pillars of energy, water, waste and natural features. In addition, we must promote the incorporation of the four objectives of Green Development which include transportation mobility choices, urban design, green infrastructure and building design.

Explore a strengthened connection to the natural heritage system with our regional partners (Middlesex County, Conservation Authorities, Thames Talbot Land Trust and Thames Canadian Heritage River) to more effectively manage London's natural heritage system to the benefit of the overall health of ecosystems, watersheds and citizens.

Strengthen London's Natural Heritage Strategy – by implementing the recommendations of the Thames Valley Corridor Study; implementing the recommendations of the City's Environmental Review Lands Study that identified significant woodlands outside the Urban Growth Boundary and incorporating the revised Middlesex Natural Heritage Study recommendations.





Ensure that climate change adaptation and mitigation considerations are enshrined in the general discussion section of the Official Plan, as well as in policies and procedures (where applicable) to ensure London moves forward as a resilient community that is adapting to future changes in climate and reduce future costs caused by the impacts of extreme weather.

Improve active transportation with better access to parks and open space systems, and recreational opportunities. These factors all contribute to “quality of life” and help to achieve healthy London citizens. They also help reduce our carbon footprint.

Continue “regional” approaches to enhancing natural heritage corridors such as the proposed increased corridor width surrounding Dingman Creek in the Council approved Southwest Area Plan. This increased corridor would provide rehabilitation opportunities and would ensure that the natural heritage system of corridors and cores would be strengthened.

## Where We Need to Go... Making it Happen

Even before we started the ReThink London public consultation process, the City had done lots of research, completed many Plans, and began to implement the recommendations of those Plans to make London a Greener City. The following are just some of those initiatives.

The completion and implementation of both an Urban Forestry Effects analysis and an Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) provides direction on how to value, protect and expand London’s trees and woodlands. The key points from the study is to plant more, protect more and maintain better. We can achieve these goals by:

Increasing our tree canopy target up to 32% from the present 25%;

Site by site evaluation of development to strive for the city-wide goal of no net loss of tree canopy cover;

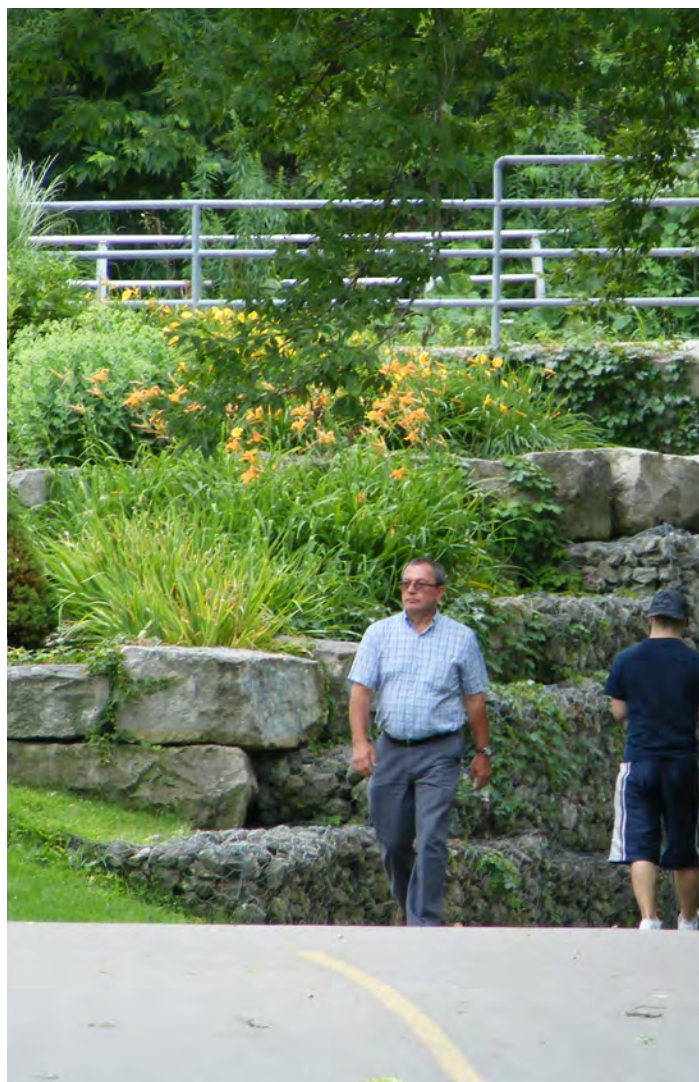
Urban design guidelines prioritize the inclusion of trees and soil volumes as part of green infrastructure and private tree protection;

Applying measures for tree planting to ensure trees are protected or replanted in a suitable removal to planting ratio; and,

Prioritize native tree species, but acknowledge that it is not always practical or possible for native species to be planted in every urban setting.

The Thames Valley Corridor Plan recommends that more emphasis is needed on protecting our natural heritage rather than allowing things like infrastructure, residential encroachment, lack of stewardship, and fragmentation to occur. We need





to incorporate design and development techniques and technologies within new developments to lessen the need for large storm-water management ponds and infrastructure. The Plan states that views and vistas to and from the river valley are important in key locations, but not more important than the overall need to protect or restore natural riverside vegetation and the habitat for dependent wildlife.

The mid-June 2013 release of the Community Energy Action Plan is intended to identify London's energy and greenhouse gas (GHG) emission goals, and to align with the goals set by the federal and provincial governments, a London's energy use and GHG emissions are significantly influenced by policy set by senior levels of government. London is currently on track to meet provincial GHG reduction goals. By incorporating policies of the Action Plan in the new Official Plan, it will be easier for the City to implement the principles and to achieve the goal of 80 percent reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2050.

Development needs to consider the principle of being "Future Ready". Contained in this concept is the idea that we can make it easier to introduce more flexible ways for Londoners to use green technologies like solar panels, district energy, and electric vehicles. If we make simple, low cost design decisions today, it may avoid the need of costly retrofits in the future.

Mixed land uses and mixed densities assist in reducing overall energy use in all sectors including vehicle use, and home and business energy costs relating to heating and cooling.

The Thames Valley Corridor is London's most important natural, cultural, recreational and aesthetic resource. The City and community partners will preserve and enhance the natural environment, Thames River health, vistas, beauty and cultural heritage while accommodating compatible infrastructure, accessibility and recreation.

- Thames Valley Corridor Plan

High-performance new buildings (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – LEED and passive building design) are the preferred approach for new, green development, and should be encouraged to be built as the new standard.





In addressing Municipal Drinking Water Protection, ground water recharge, stormwater management, water conservation and water efficiency polices need to be strengthened and expanded in scope to include individual building lots with the intent to minimize impacts surrounding the site and downstream. As well, policies for protecting Source Water Protection need to include specific policies to control land use and associated activities with the well-head protection areas surrounding Hyde Park and the Fanshawe Well Fields, which are used as back-up emergency water supplies for London.

Solid Waste Management strategies include strengthening waste diversion policies. The need to grow resource facilities and initiatives more quickly and need to consider the possibility of creating an “Eco” industrial development area surrounding the landfill site. New development should be “Future Ready” for recycling and organic waste collection.

Plants species native to London and the Carolinian Life Zone must be prioritized to achieve multiple benefits including Carolinian Life Zone compatibility, natural heritage system objectives, climate change adaptation goals, and stormwater management benefits.

London’s role in regional watershed efforts such as the Thames River Clear Water Revival and the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Cities Initiative should be encouraged and supported to ensure recognition of London’s place in the regional context and to ensure our voice is heard and input considered.

The Carolinian Canada’s “Big Picture” Cores and Corridors cross London from east to west and to a lesser degree from north to south. This system of corridors forms a green belt around the City’s urban form and defined Urban Growth Boundary. When combined with agriculture land, this series of natural heritage corridors and cores has very few spaces or gaps as it surrounds the city, but those gaps and spaces must be protected and naturalized whenever the opportunity arises.

London’s Environmentally Significant Area policies should be strengthened to ensure that these cores of intact functioning ecosystems are preserved for







future ensuring that connections with other corridors are maintained and enhanced as land use changes.

London is located in the middle of Southwestern Ontario, in the mid-point of a continental climate landmass, and is surrounded on almost all sides by water. A changing climate will most certainly have an impact on the interaction London has with the Great Lakes. More intense and more frequent extreme weather events is the expected “new normal”. This includes intense summer storms creating higher humidity and higher night-time temperatures, increased number of extreme heat days, more flash storm events, and warmer winters with more freeze-thaw cycles. London is addressing these anticipated changes in two ways:

Climate Change Mitigation – by calculating and tracking our progress towards reducing our greenhouse gas emissions as a city, and as a community.

Climate Change Adaption – by designing projects differently today, we are able to avoid additional costs and possible hardships by anticipating the expected outcomes of a changing climate. We expect that this will assist us in responding to extreme weather events that will happen both more frequently and more intensely.

The City adopted a Community Improvement Plan for brownfields incentives in 2006. This program applies to the portion of the City within the Urban Growth Boundary, and is intended to support the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites in the City. Brownfields are defined as vacant, under-used or abandoned sites that were previously developed for industrial, commercial or other urban uses and may be contaminated because of those former activities.

The City’s programs are intended to remove or reduce the obstacles that would hinder the remediation and redevelopment of these sites. These incentives include contamination assessment grants, a property tax assistance program, a development charge rebate program, and a tax increment equivalent grant program. With the exception of the assessment grants, the total value of the incentives under this program is limited to the total cost of rehabilitating the lands.

Brownfields are abandoned, vacant or underutilized lands and/or buildings within the Urban Growth Area of the City of London where expansion, retrofit or redevelopment may be complicated by environmental contamination from past uses and development activity.





The following summarizes the direction that we're headed, based on what we've heard from you, and the research we've completed to date.

## More of this...

**Promote Green Development Practices** by considering the ecological footprint that development creates and take action to reduce it; implementing mixed use and mixed density development to support transit; providing services within walking distances; and ensuring preservation of tree cover and natural heritage features.

**Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation** by calculating and tracking our progress towards reducing our greenhouse gas emissions; designing projects differently today to respond better to frequent and intense extreme weather events; make our urban environments more resilient to climate change.

## Less of this...

Do not consider the long-term social, economic and environmental considerations of our City-building activities.

Disregard the importance of climate change and its potential impacts on our urban environment.





## More of this...

## Less of this...

Implement Green Infrastructure Strategies by promoting innovation in the way we construct infrastructure – such as stormwater management facilities and how we plant street trees; and promoting “Natural Capital” (woodlands, Environmentally Significant Areas – ESAs) as components of the natural heritage system for London and area.

Disregard the importance of green infrastructure and allow the infrastructure gap to wide.

Conserve energy by planning for energy conservation at all levels of city-building – from a city level (eg. linking transit and land use plans) to a community level (eg. street network, mix of land use, walkable streets, district energy) to a site level (xeriscaping, geothermal and solar and sustainable construction technologies).

Consider energy conservation as “nice to have” rather than a key part of our plan to attract and retain people and investment to the city.

Strengthen our Forest City by planting more, protecting more, maintaining better and engaging all citizens in strengthening and promoting our urban forest.

Consider the forest city as a non-critical factor in building a healthy city and attractive to live in.



## More of this...

Build upon our successes by conserving our natural resources; protecting and enhancing our natural heritage; and environmental management (reduce waste, promote recycling, pesticides, education).

Strengthen our efforts to encourage Brownfield remediation by identifying creative opportunities for brownfield redevelopment; addressing necessary clean-up requirements; and providing incentives for properties to be viably cleaned and re-developed for productive purposes.

Linking the pieces of the “green puzzle” by planning and coordinating all our efforts such as Environmental Significant Area preservation, natural heritage corridor protection, flood plain management, waste management, energy conservation, active transportation, and human wellness.

## Less of this...

Do not consider the importance of conserving and protecting our resources, environment and heritage.

Disregard the fact that each innovative development is part of our City building legacy, and part of our offering to attract and retain people and investment to the city.

Do not consider the integration of Natural Heritage System in our City-building activities and as a healthy, alternative way of travelling throughout the City.



# Supporting a Culturally Rich and Diverse City

*This paper is the sixth in a series of eight discussion papers.*



Culture. It's one of those words that we use a lot, but it has many different meanings, depending on who you ask. Ask a scientist about culture and they may refer you to what's growing in a Petri dish. Ask an anthropologist and they may define it as society and organized social behavior and how they are shaped by human interactions and evolution.

Ask a Londoner, and they may define culture as the arts, sports, and the many experiences that we share as residents of London. Culture is as much an idea, concept, or experience as it is a "thing". Our culture is most often defined as our common behaviours and shared experiences, and that often means "things" like festivals, concerts, sporting events, places and built and natural heritage or "just the way we live."

Whatever culture is to you, it's clear that Londoners like it, London has it, and London wants more of it.

The idea that culture is linked to prosperity is something that we have heard from you. If we use the definition of culture as those things that are both tangible (things) and intangible (ideas, experiences, or behaviours) that are unique to us as Londoners, then the link to prosperity is clear - prosperity is tied to our quality of life, and our quality of life reflects our culture. But culture is also fundamentally intertwined with the success of many local businesses, and from a business point-of-view, its role in London's economy may surprise you.

In 2011, culture contributed over \$540 million to the City's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). That translates to a contribution of \$1,475 per Londoner.

London's cultural sector also employs 7,700 cultural workers, and another 6,000 people are enrolled in cultural programs at Fanshawe College and Western University.

In 2011, there were 1,300 cultural enterprises, many of them small businesses, and approximately 9,000 cultural resources in the City of London. Culture





cannot be understated when we look at it as a component of the City's economy. As we noted above, defining culture is no easy task. For the purpose of this report, we will use the definition from the City's Cultural Prosperity Plan: It includes city-wide built, natural, and cultural heritage, cultural assets, tourism, diversity, libraries, food and agriculture, arts, sports, educational institutions, talent, cultural corridors (Downtown, Richmond Row, and Old East Village) and neighbourhoods.

It includes city-wide built, natural, and cultural heritage, cultural assets, tourism, diversity, libraries, food and agriculture, arts, sports, educational institutions, talent, cultural corridors (Downtown, Richmond Row, and Old East Village) and neighbourhoods.

– Cultural Prosperity Plan

### Here's What We Heard...

Throughout the ReThink process, we heard a lot of positive comments about the significance of culture. Many Londoners also identified a number of areas that present opportunities for improvement. You place a high importance on festivals, libraries, and museums, particularly Museum London and the Children's Museum. Budweiser Gardens, Labatt Park, schools that are active in their neighbourhoods, heritage buildings and architecture were all sources of civic pride. Along those same lines, you identified the London Knights and the Western University



Mustangs football team as examples of important civic fixtures. Sports teams are an important element in culture, and are rarely mentioned, however, you acknowledged them. Lastly, the Downtown was specifically mentioned a number of times as the centre of culture in the City, and a large number of you thought that was something important to recognize.

Here are some of your ideas about how we could better promote culture in the City:

- create spaces for artists to display their work
- create affordable mixed-use housing or live-work units for artists
- support artist lofts
- build a Downtown performing arts centre
- support Downtown murals
- nurture further development of Downtown culture, and the Downtown as an entertainment hub
- update and expand museums, including longer hours
- allow for more projects along the Thames River
- host an Air show
- better connect educational institutions and the City
- better promote London's music scene
- design more public spaces for better interaction within community



- increase public awareness of cultural events
- create the “cool” factor
- enhance the City’s historic neighbourhoods
- encourage more spring, fall and winter festivals
- hold festivals at outlying parks
- have more live theatre
- encourage outdoor concerts at Western
- support artists, composers, performers
- provide greater recognition of people in sports, arts & culture
- establish an art market
- produce a video of multiculturalism in London
- encourage inclusiveness/equity

## Where We Are Now...

As in the other reports, it is important to understand the current state-of-affairs and some of the noteworthy initiatives related to culture that are happening in London. The following is a snapshot of some of the things that are underway that are about increasing the role and profile of culture in London.

London’s Cultural Prosperity Plan:

This Plan was approved by Municipal Council in March 2013. The Goal of the Plan is: To recognize the role of culture at the heart of our thriving and vibrant city, in building economic and community growth, attracting and retaining talent, informing municipal

decision-making processes and elevating the profile of London as a regional cultural centre.

The Plan sets out four Strategic Directions to support the Vision that was developed for the Cultural Prosperity Plan: “Culture is at the Heart of our Thriving and Vibrant City”. The four strategic directions include:

Strengthen culture to build economic prosperity

Support cultural programming

Leverage London’s cultural assets

Celebrate and promote culture

Under each of these directions are listed a series of objectives and actions that are intended to implement the Plan. This Plan builds upon previous work undertaken by the City related to culture to advance and improve the City’s economic competitiveness through culture, and to explicitly acknowledge the link between culture and prosperity.







### Downtown Master Plan:

The Downtown Master Plan is intended to bring many of the recent initiatives and strategies regarding moving Downtown forward together, and to set the stage for the next phase of Downtown’s evolution. A key element of this Plan is reiterating Downtown’s role as the “hub” for arts, culture and entertainment centre for the City.

The Master Plan will also describe the next set of ‘Game Changers’, or projects that will set Downtown on its course for the next number of years. Many of these projects are related to arts and culture: the creation of high quality public spaces, including the re-imagining of Dundas Street, the development of the River’s edge to link Soho to the Downtown, animating and activating the Forks and the River’s edge, and a new Performance Centre.

### Economic Prosperity Plan:

The Investment and Economic Prosperity Committee identified five areas of focus that are needed to grow the City’s economy. These five areas are:

- Business retention, growth and attraction
- Retain and attract talent
- Develop our labour force
- Community economic development
- Visitor attractions

It’s easy to see how rethinking Culture and Diversity lines up with these areas that Council has identified as key to the future economic prosperity of London. A strong and vibrant Downtown, a thriving cultural scene, quality facilities and built and natural heritage, a “City for Everyone”, and quality parks and open spaces and recreational facilities are all elements of a diverse and prosperous City.



The Plan goes on to identify some areas for strategic focus, including:

**Industrial Land** – A supply of shovel ready prime land is integral to being able to attract the type of investment that will address long-term regional employment goals.

**Vibrant Downtown** – Leveraging assets in the downtown.

**Community Economic Development** – All areas of a community must be given the opportunity to thrive. To maximize this potential, projects need to be targeted and niches selected. Such funding commitments should be viewed as a business investment not community economic development.

**Progressive Transportation Network** (both intra and inter-city) – the city needs to be visionary in its transportation outlook.





## What We Have Learned... Official Plan Best Practices

London is not alone in recognizing the many benefits of a healthy and active culture sector within our City. Other cities are not only investing in arts and culture, but they also recognize that this will attract and retain the very same people that we are targeting. Here is a sample of what other cities are doing related to Culture within their Official Plans.

### York Region – VISION 2051

Guiding Principal: Accessible and Inclusive – Programs and services that are available to all, regardless of location or personal abilities and the inclusion of all, regardless of age, gender, ability, income, culture or faith.

Goal – A Place Where People Can Thrive – In 2051, York Region’s diverse population can thrive in an environment that fosters healthy living, is safe, accessible, inclusive and supportive.

Goal – Livable Cities and Complete Communities – 2051, York Region’s diverse urban form provides a variety of interesting and exciting places to live, work and play. Communities are people first, and designed for healthy, active living and social inclusion, and are the heart of business, arts and culture, community and life services.

### Actions:

- A place where people achieve optimum health – social inclusion
- An integrated network of community support – diverse population
- Celebrating our culture, heritage and diversity
- An accessible region
- A vibrant City-Region
- Complete communities
- Integrated Urban System – place making
- A living city.

Edmonton – Municipal Development Plan – The Way We Grow (2006)

The key focus of Edmonton’s Plan is to “Strengthen the Downtown as the centre of art, culture, entertainment employment and transit for the City and region”.

### Ontario Immigration Strategy

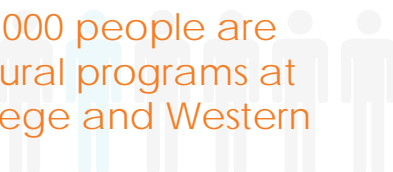
The City is a partner in the Province’s immigration strategy. Some of the objectives of this strategy are:

Attracting a skilled workforce and building stronger economy.

Helping newcomers and their families achieve success.

Leveraging the global connections of these diverse communities

London’s cultural sector also employs 7,700 cultural workers, and another 6,000 people are enrolled in cultural programs at Fanshawe College and Western University.



## Vancouver – City Plan

Vancouver's Vision: "Sense of Community" states that Vancouver residents want a City where people of all ages, incomes, cultures and abilities feel a sense of belonging, caring and safety, and have access to services that they need.

### Here's Where We are Headed...

Communities like London already include culture into their Official Plan. It is reflected in various sections including heritage building protection, downtown revitalization, flexible zoning to allow live-work spaces and studios, public art and urban design requirements.

London's Official Plan presently includes many of these same types of policies, and also includes policies related to the Creative City. These policies serve as a foundation to build on those things that you told us we should include as part of ReThink London.

### Here's what you've told us:

London needs to elevate its profile as a Regional Cultural Centre

Economic growth can be achieved through cultural sustainability

Culture is a life experience for everyone

Culture is valued as a component of economic growth and employment

Culture benefits all residents of London as it is in our neighbourhoods, schools, community centres, libraries, etc.



Creativity fostered through cultural programming, promotion and communication

Cultural capital assets need to be maintained

London needs to have greater awareness of existing cultural assets

London needs to have continued investment in culture to yield long term reward - Invest in the cultural product, marketing and employment in the cultural sector

There is value for the City to invest in our community so that leveraging can occur and culture can grow



Based on all of this, here are some of the things that we might see in the new Plan for London.

## 1 Economic Prosperity/Capturing Tourism Potential

- Become a cultural leader, creating bold new partnerships including new collaborations between the public and private sector.
- Provide greater support to cultural production – get people involved locally.
- Support economic spinoff for a small investment.
- Continue to offer grants and incentives to leverage culture-related outcomes.
- Promote retention of heritage structures.

## 2 Support Cultural Programming

- Activate streets and parks through Festivals and Events.
- Develop linkages with local food culture, both locally and regionally.
- Connect children & youth to cultural education.
- Differentiate London from other centres by celebrating London's identity.
- Work with cultural organizations to identify ongoing opportunities for tourism and marketing.
- Work with cultural organizations to enhance cultural programming along and at the Forks of the Thames.
- Leverage London's Public Libraries and community centres as important cultural hubs.
- Promote participation in recreation and amateur sports.

## 3 Diversity and Inclusion

- Better engage and communicate with all Londoners.
- Create livable and sustainable communities.

- Provide different ways of living, housing, working and education.
- Support, celebrate and strengthen London's diversity - our different and shared beliefs, values, morals.
- Attract and retain talent, including youth, new immigrants and creative professionals.

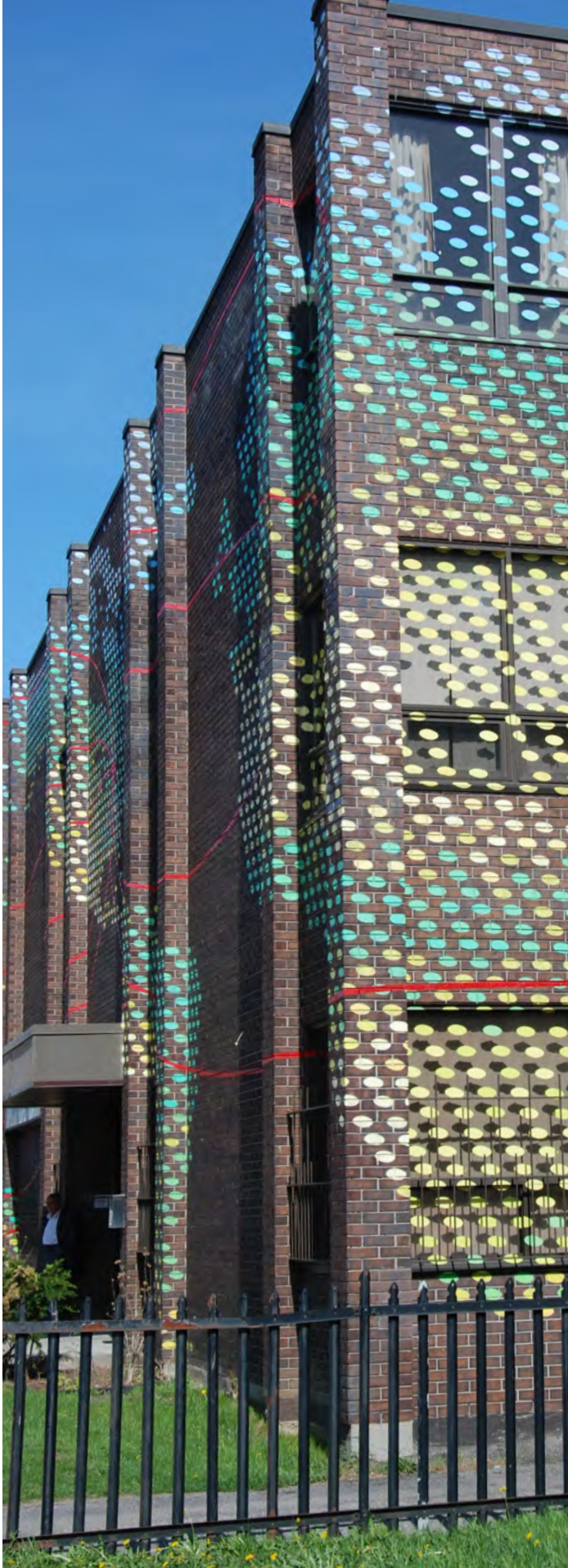
## 4 Cultural Asset Feasibility Planning

- Encourage the development of creative cultural industries.
- Develop a Cultural Feasibility Plan, which would meet the needs of the culture sector, such as developing more affordable artist spaces.
- Cultural Heritage – explore a consolidated cultural centre, including a museum and archives.
- Promote London's Natural Heritage assets such as its parks and trails.
- Encourage more bonusing for public art.
- Continue to develop and maintain cultural asset mapping databases.

## 5 Maintenance / Preservation of Cultural Assets

- Develop strategies to promote the adaptive re-use of existing built heritage assets.
- Ensure maintenance, revitalization and funding of municipal heritage structures and facilities are a municipal priority.
- Develop a strategy for emergency management/risk standards to be carried out for City owned historic buildings and properties.
- Engage the community in the advancement of community heritage conservation.
- Promote and encourage conservation of heritage neighbourhoods by developing a heritage conservation strategy.





## 6 Creative Spaces - Cultural Corridor Enhancement

- Create a vibrant Downtown as the cultural centre for the region.
- Recognize Downtown, Richmond Row and Old East Village as important Culture Districts in the Official Plan.
- Promote adaptive repurposing of historic buildings.

## 7 Celebrate and Promote Culture

- Encourage tourism by building community awareness of our cultural assets.
- Leverage our location as the centre of southwestern Ontario.
- Develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan to promote the City's cultural sector to both visitors and residents.
- Promote marketing and communications of the cultural sector using technology.
- Enable local food producers to get food from the field, to the truck, to our tables.

The following summarizes the direction that we're headed, based on what we've heard from you, and the research we've completed to date.



## More of this...

Promote culture as a prosperity tool to attract and retain talent.

Leverage London's cultural assets and promote them to the world.

Protect our built and cultural heritage to promote our unique identity and develop links to arts and eco-tourism in the London region.

Do more to establish public art to strengthen London's strong and unique identity; revitalize Downtown, our urban neighbourhoods and the community; and promote London's image at important locations along corridors and at gateways to the city.

## Less of this...

Consider culture a non-critical factor in economic development and prosperity.

Build a City that is functional and operational, but not enticing to live in.

Consider arts and culture investment a frill, rather than an important part of retaining and attracting people to London.

Build bland, faceless new public spaces and disregard the potential and need to continually invest in our identity.



## More of this...

## Less of this...

Promote Downtown prosperity by reinforcing Downtown's role as the cultural hub of the city, together with its surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

Allow Downtown to deteriorate, undermining our "calling card to the world".

Develop affordable housing providing a support network that attracts diversity to the city; quality affordable housing regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, or socio-economic status; and a variety of housing choice, including live/work opportunities.

Do not consider and plan for the unique needs of some people.

Promote, protect and provide for cultural facilities that increases access to arts, recreation and other cultural facilities and foster a culture of innovation.

Focus on short-term needs without thinking of our long-term prosperity.

Foster eco-tourism opportunities through community groups and neighbourhoods, and by collaborating with our regional partners to benefit from inter-connected regional trail systems.

Do not consider the long-term social, economic and environmental considerations of our City-building activities.





# Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods

*This paper is the seventh in a series of eight discussion papers.*

It's a typical morning. You get up, shower, get dressed and head off to the corner to catch the bus Downtown. On the way, you stop at the café and get a coffee, and then into the corner store to get your paper, getting to the corner just before the Downtown bus arrives.

Sound great? Right now, this story could play out in some London neighbourhoods, but for most Londoners, this is an image that they may see on TV or associate with larger cities. The concept of having the conveniences of a corner store, a café or a barber or hair salon within a convenient walk of your home is a reality in many metro areas.

This is the idea behind Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods. For new neighbourhoods, how do we plan now to make sure that they develop this way; where there are convenient places to shop and work, where there is easy access to transit, and where there is a full range of housing options available to us, and where the ways that we move about in the neighbourhood are safe, clean, and well connected. For existing established neighbourhoods where these options might not exist, how do we plan to help them happen? How do we make sure that those activities and functions like shopping, work, school and housing choice are incorporated into neighbourhoods that are already developed?

While you told us that London's neighbourhoods are among the City's greatest strengths, you also told us that we could do better. Access to transit, different housing options, and close-by services were all

things that you told us that you would like to see in all our neighbourhoods.

## Let's Talk the Same Language...

Before we go any further let's get on the same page when we refer to "Neighbourhoods" and "Communities."

A neighbourhood is a geographic area that people share, while a community is a group of people who identify with and support one another.

– Jim Diers

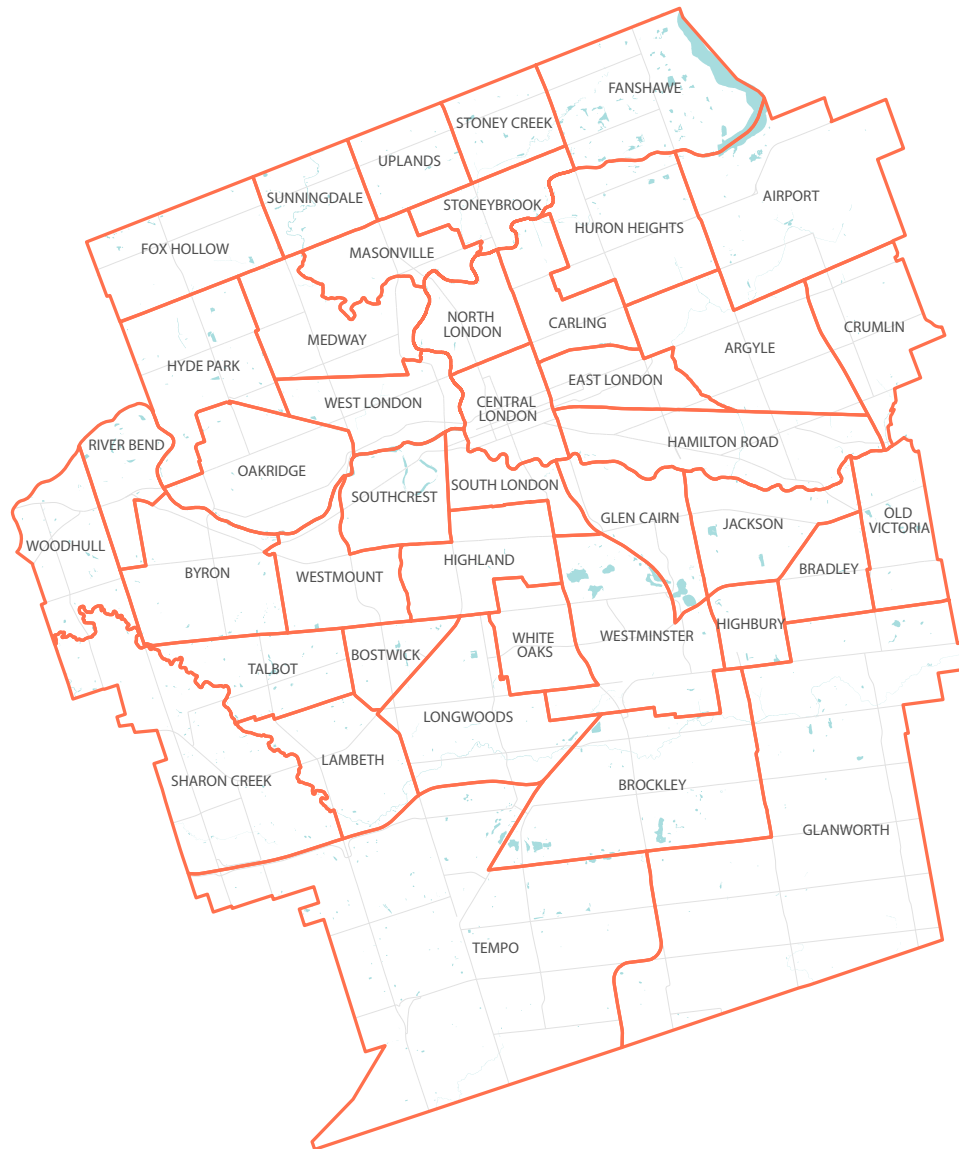
In simple terms, neighbourhoods can be thought of as places, or where you live. Communities are most often defined by people. In other words, neighbourhoods are about places and geography; communities are about people. This idea was the basis for the definition that was used as part of London's Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy, and we will use it here. According to Jim Diers, a Seattle-based community developer, "A neighbourhood is a geographic area that people share, while a community is a group of people who identify with and support one another."

Even with these simple definitions, what these mean to individuals often varies. For example, we might say that we live in Oakridge, but the boundaries of Oakridge might be something different to your

neighbour. In the same way, people might think of themselves of being members of many different communities. For example your church, your ethnic background, or your social activities might be how you would define what community that you were a part of. This means that lines on a map will not really define a community, which is often based on common interests and relationships.

In London, we also have divided the City into 42 Planning Districts. These are what the Planners have used to loosely describe neighbourhoods, and they are used mainly as a basis to collect consistent demographic data about the District over a number of years. These Planning Districts may contain many smaller neighbourhoods, and some neighbourhoods may cross Planning District lines. We would view

### London's Planning Districts





these Planning Districts as a simple way for us to divide the entire City geographically in an inclusive way.

For the purposes of this Discussion Paper, we are going to use the geographic definition of neighbourhood, that is, a geographic area that people share. In using this definition, we also acknowledge that this may often mean a slightly different geographic area to different people, but we are talking about “place” rather than “people” when we talk about neighbourhoods. Another thing that is important in this discussion is that because this will mean different things to different people, not all neighbourhoods would be the same, and this would mean that not all neighbourhoods would have all of the same uses, facilities, activities or functions. This doesn’t mean that one neighbourhood would be “better” than another neighbourhood, but that each neighbourhood is unique because of what it both has, and doesn’t have, when compared to another neighbourhood.

Londoners have already said it best when we talk about neighbourhoods. The Vision Statement developed by the Resident Task Force in 2009 when they developed London’s Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy captures the essence of how Londoners feel about their neighbourhoods.

So, with those defined, let’s get to it.

Our London is a City of Neighbourhoods. Our London Neighbourhoods will be empowered, sustainable, safe and active communities. We will care for and celebrate each other while encouraging diversity and inclusiveness. Our Neighbourhoods will be environmentally sustainable and will have available green space, vibrant local economies and accessible amenities of daily life. //

- Resident Task Force





## What We Have Heard...

Think back to the paper on “Fostering a Prosperous City”, where part of the discussion was about how important it is to our economic future that we build a city that people want to live in. It’s about making sure that London offers itself to the world as an outstanding place to live in. It shouldn’t be just that we need to live in London, but that we couldn’t imagine ourselves living anywhere but London.

“Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods” relies on many of the things that we’ve talked about in the previous Discussion Papers, and all of these other areas have a role in creating strong neighbourhoods. To show this link, we’ve taken some of your comments and responses from the other papers and listed them under the five ReThink London themes.

Here are some of the things that you told us about what London’s neighbourhoods should be in 2035:

### How We Grow:

- Developing using existing opportunities through intensification.
- Encourage small business and limit big box development.
- City plan needs protection against amendments.
- Improving arts, entertainment, culture.
- Gateways to City to attract people to London.
- Increasing connections between communities through urban planning and transportation to create more diverse neighbourhoods.
- Welcoming cultural differences.
- Providing a variety of housing options, including affordable housing throughout the city.
- Engaging and retaining youth.
- Removing socio-economic barriers in communities and integration of all social and economic cultural backgrounds.
- Encourage owners of vacant lands to lease/maintain, develop rather than leave to deteriorate.



### How We Prosper:

- Encouraging innovation.
- Buying local
- Considering social, environment and fiscal impacts in our decision-making
- Create a proactive culture of wellness that focuses on quality of life and celebrates creativity which is accessible to all.
- Developing arts and culture.
- Building the overall quality of life.
- Create opportunities to retain young people.

### How We Green:

- Create more community gardens.
- Increased recycling.
- Protect and preserve existing natural heritage
- Less car-focused transportation.
- Multi-use buildings within existing neighbourhoods.
- Create aesthetically beautiful streetscapes.



This is what we heard from you. These are some of the things that you told us are important in making sure that London is a place where people want to live.

### Where We Are Now...

As we've talked about in previous discussion papers, there are lots of good things happening relating to growth and development in London. While our pattern of growth has generally been at lower densities than were imagined in 1971, in the past 10 years development densities have jumped by 20% for single family homes, and almost 40% of all our residential units have been developed within the built up area of the City – that's what we would call "infill development". That means 40% of our residential development didn't occur on new Greenfield lands.

As well, more attention is being paid to urban design, placemaking, and sustainability. London's developers are integrating affordable housing and sustainable green technologies into their development projects. For example, Sifton Properties, in association with the London Home Builders Association, recently constructed a Green Home that demonstrates how new green technologies can be incorporated into new houses constructed in London. Sifton Properties is also developing a new model for mixing retail, office and residential uses in the Riverbend Heights area. This development also incorporates the potential for district energy and a new form of integrated "main street" mixed-uses.

For London to become the City that you told us that you want it to become, our development community will be an important partner as we explore things like new approaches to development and sustainable technologies. The City's role is to ensure that we create a Plan that encourages more of these good things to happen, and balances the needs of current and future London residents.

The face of London is also changing. The most recent census paints a picture of a different London than existed even 10 years ago. This means that there will be changes in what types of housing we will need in the years to come. It is estimated that we will add more than 42,000 new dwelling units over the next 20 years to accommodate our population

#### How We Live:

- More community spaces or places to gather.
- Providing greater inclusivity, welcoming and diversity.
- Integration between neighbourhoods and nature.
- Promoting healthy active lifestyles.
- Building public awareness of local events.
- Feeling safe in our community.

#### How We Move:

- Development needs to focus on people movement.
- Planning neighbourhoods to be full service, multi-use compact hubs.
- Build a higher priority and increased attractiveness of alternative forms of transportation.
- Expand bike and multi-use paths.
- More parking for bikes
- Create quieter, slower streets which encourage retail activity.



growth. Over the next 20 years, low density, single family housing will account for 53% of our total demand, down from approximately 60% in previous years. Medium density housing, traditionally row and townhouse dwellings, will account for 16% of the future demand, and high density housing will account for 31% of the new dwelling units.

## Some more numbers...

While our population is increasing, it is not the same across all age groups. Since 2001, the population of people less than 19 years old decreased by 3%, while the number of Londoners older than 65 increased by more than 22%. In 2001, the proportion of Londoners who were older than 55 was 20%, or 1 in 5 people. In 2011, the proportion of Londoners 55 or older was 27%, or more than 1 in 4 people. In the same period, our median age increased from 36.6 years old to 39.3.

In 2001, the proportion of Londoners who were older than 55 was 20%, or 1 in 5 people. In 2011, the proportion of Londoners 55 or older was 27%, or more than 1 in 4 people.

## ReThinking Neighbourhoods...

In the Compact City Discussion Paper, you told us you want more complete communities. Well, what does that mean? In this paper, we'll define complete communities as a collection of several neighbourhoods that together provide opportunities to live, work, shop and play, and that has the amenities that add to our quality of life. A complete community is about both people and places. Complete communities provide a mix of land uses, as well as a choice of housing, including affordable housing. Complete communities provide opportunities to age in place, meaning that there would be housing options available, including staying in your own home, so that people are able to remain in their neighbourhoods as their housing needs change over time during different phases of their life.







We know that there are limits to the mixing of uses and this will have to be handled with care to avoid real land use conflicts. We also know that every neighbourhood is unique, and so that a “complete community” will also be unique, because it will include many neighbourhoods, which means both different places and different people. There’s also a difference between existing neighbourhoods, and neighbourhoods that we are now planning for the future. A criticism that is often heard is that if we develop neighbourhood based exclusively on a single type of housing, then we won’t have the opportunity to create a complete community. In the same way, even existing neighbourhoods will change over time, so we will need a way to plan for that change so that we can create complete communities.

Many of the things that you’ve told us about Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods, and many of the things that we need to do to create these neighbourhoods are underway. Here are some of the things that the City and its partners are working on now to Build Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods.

### Placemaking Guidelines

Placemaking is a design process that to create livable communities by providing an identifiable character, a sense of place, and a high quality of life. Placemaking describes an integrated design process that recognizes that both public and private lands are important when we create places.

Placemaking guidelines draw on an understanding how each of the things listed below are inter-related, and guidelines are developed for each of these elements.

**Physical context:** design with the physical environment in mind, such as integrating natural features, retaining vegetation and slopes and incorporating natural features into the design.

**Natural environment:** preserve important natural features like wetland and woodlands.

**Land Uses:** provide opportunities for integrating different land uses, densities and building types into the neighbourhood.

**Transportation:** provide opportunities for pedestrians, cars and transit. Create linked open spaces, safe and accessible connections, and support a fine-grained grid street pattern.

**Architecture:** use consistent, high quality building materials and designs that are appropriate for the location. Incorporate principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) into development to make safe spaces.

**Engineering:** use alternative design standards for infrastructure such as roads, utility placement and stormwater.

**Landscape Design:** integrate natural areas with the development, encourage tree planting, and maximize opportunities for street trees.



The City has adopted draft Placemaking Guidelines, and is working with developers and landowners through the subdivision design process to incorporate these ideas. Through Placemaking initiatives, the City and developers are working to “raise the bar” in neighbourhood design so that London’s new neighbourhoods will provide a range of housing choices, amenities, access to transit and services, and integration of natural areas—all of the things that you told us are important in Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods.

A big part of Placemaking for both existing and new neighbourhoods is preserving and protecting what we cherish. Both the built environment and the natural environment are important features of Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods. The City recognizes important buildings in the Inventory of Heritage Resources. This list contains buildings that are both designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, as well as properties that have been identified as priority structures that should be preserved.

In addition to these individual structures, the City has created five Heritage Conservation Districts: Old East

Village, Woodfield, West Woodfield, Bishop Hellmuth, and Downtown. A sixth, Wortley Village-Old South is expected to be approved soon. These Districts include more than 3,000 homes and businesses, and the District Plans contain guidelines for new development to help make sure that the unique features of each District are maintained.

The natural environment is also an important part of London’s neighbourhoods. The City’s Official Plan recognizes this in a number of ways. The jewels of the City’s natural heritage system are identified as our Environmentally Significant Areas. These special places include natural environments and features that are unique, from a relic of the boreal (northern) region that we find at Sifton Bog to the Carolinian Forests of the Medway Valley and Meadowlily Woods. These features of the natural environment are associated with many of London’s neighbourhoods. You’ve told us that we need to protect and preserve these places. Other pieces of our natural environment, including wetlands, woodlands and unique landscape and physical features are all part of our neighbourhoods.







### Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan provides overall direction and guidance for making decisions about parks and recreation programming, public-use facilities and infrastructure (parks and recreation facilities), and investment in the community. It identifies what the City provides and sets out how we can make London the best place to live, work and play.

The City's community and recreation facilities play a large role in delivering the City's many programs and activities. These facilities provide accessible quality, welcoming spaces for community recreation programs, activities, sports competitions and gatherings that support strong neighbourhoods. This type of public investment in infrastructure provides opportunities for organized meetings, event space and community building. These are large facilities that create destinations and cores to neighbourhoods and communities.

### Age Friendly London

In 2010, London became the first city in Canada to join the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities. The means that London is committed to improving its age friendliness, and to engaging older adults in the process. In 2011, Council established the Age Friendly London Task Force, a group that included more than 100 older adults, baby boomers, service providers, caregivers, and other community members. The Task Force developed a vision, strategy and action steps that were focused on improving the quality of life of older adults in London, and this resulted in the Age Friendly London Action Plan, a road map for improving London's age friendliness over the next three years.

The WHO defines these eight areas as being key elements of an age-friendly City.

Outdoor spaces and buildings-the outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older adults, and affect their ability to age in place.

Transportation: transportation is a key factor influencing active aging. It is an area that impacts other focus areas such as civic participation and access to community and health services.

Housing: housing is essential to safety and well being. Where we live is more than just a roof-it's home. A place that is familiar and loved, and where older adults want to stay as long as possible. Housing and community supports are a key part of quality of life and independence.

In 2010, London became the first city in Canada to join the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities.







Social participation: participating in recreation, leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family, allows older adults to enjoy respect and esteem, and maintain and establish supportive relationships.

Respect & social inclusion: older people report experiencing conflicting types of behaviour and attitudes towards them. Sometimes they feel respected and included; other times they experience lack of consideration from others. The amount of respect and inclusion people experience is tied to their quality of life and social participation.

Civic participation & employment: older adults do not stop contributing to their communities when they retire. Many continue to provide paid, unpaid or voluntary work. An age friendly community offers opportunities for older adults to contribute to their communities through paid employment, volunteerism and civic participation.

Community Supports and Health Services- health and support services are essential to maintaining vitality and independence for older adults. This includes a wide network of services, including hospital, healthcare providers, caregivers, family supports, home care and community organizations.

Communication and information-staying connected to people, activities and events, and the ability to access information, is vital for active aging. The rapid evolution of information and communication technologies means that there are more and more ways to stay connected, but requires access for older adults to new technologies.

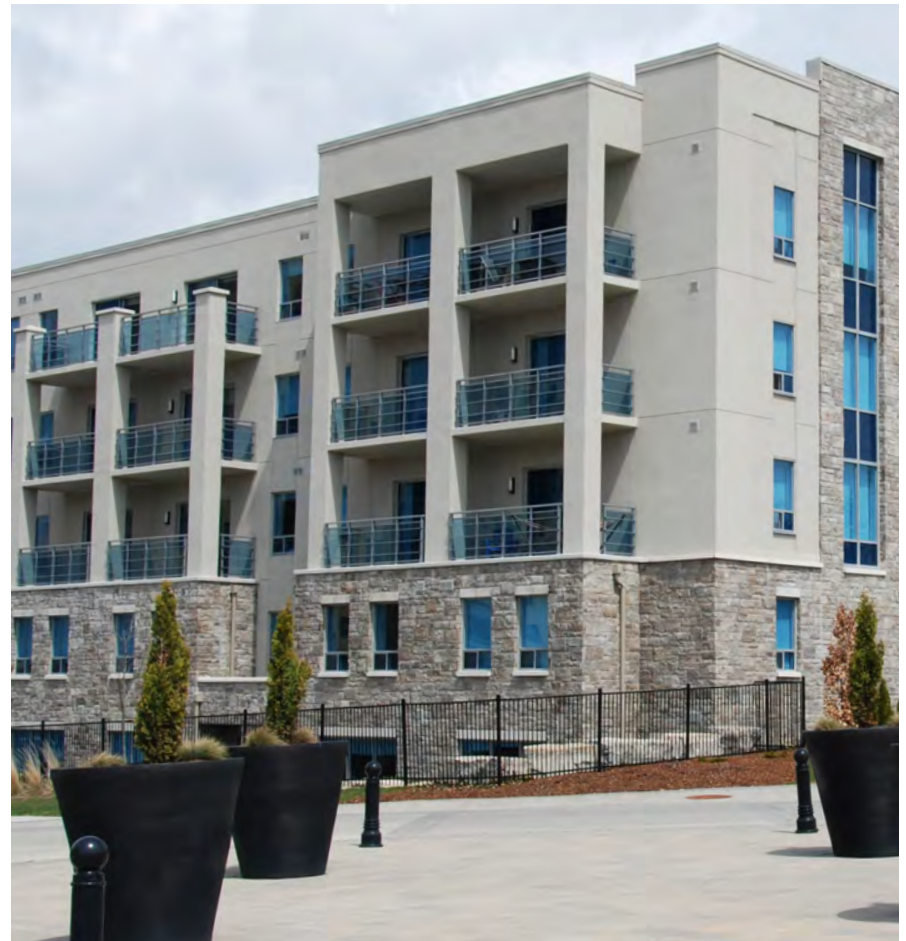
In addition to these initiatives, the City's Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services Division is working with partners in the community on a number of programs that are all intended to make London the best place to live, work and play. All of these programs are focused at the neighbourhood level.

### Child and Youth Network

This is a Plan that focuses on ending poverty, making literacy a way of life, increasing healthy eating and healthy physical activity, and creating a family-centred service system. More than 170 organizations and 500 people are working together to improve outcomes for children youth and families. The Vision for this initiatives is happy, healthy children and youth today; caring, creative and responsible adults tomorrow.

### Youth Community Economic Development Framework

Action at the local/neighbourhood level focused on creative, small-scale measures related to education, leadership, employment, skills development, and





business incentives to create conditions for economic opportunity for youth. Motivating students and giving them the help that they need to finish high school and attend post-secondary education and/or training is the most important goal of this program.

All of this will mean that in our neighbourhoods, our youth will be having fun, building skills, completing school, and seizing on the opportunities to carry them into the future.

### London Community Housing Strategy

This strategy addresses affordable housing needs at the neighbourhood level to provide access to housing “from the streets to home ownership”, to achieve the Vision of A City of London where all members of the community have access to housing that is safe, secure, and suitable to their needs and ability to pay.

### Healthy City/Active London

As input to the ReThink London process, the Middlesex London Health Unit (MLHU) prepared the Healthy City/Active London position paper to

identify the benefits of active transportation. Active transportation is defined as any form of human-powered transportation, such as walking, cycling or skateboarding. We talked about this in the Providing Transportation Choices discussion paper, but it’s important to talk about it again as part of Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods. Some of the recommendations from the report include:

Encourage and support active transportation through aesthetically pleasing and barrier-free, accessible, and safe trails, sidewalks and bike lanes that connect where people live to shopping, work, schools and open spaces.

Create complete streets that provide opportunities for all users of the street

Create compact, connected neighbourhoods that have street trees, sidewalks, pathways and access to transit.

## What We have Learned... Best Practices

### Provincial Growth Plan – Ministry of Infrastructure

While London is not included within any of the areas where the Province has established Growth Plans, Places to Grow, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe does provide us with an idea of what the Province views as a complete community.

The policies of the Growth Plan support the development of complete and livable communities with a better mix of housing, jobs, parks, shops and services in close proximity to one another. The Growth Plan contemplates complete communities as offering housing and service options to meet the needs of people in all stages of their life, and sets a framework to build complete communities through housing options and density. The Growth plan sets minimum densities for both housing and jobs, and includes policies regarding transportation,







environmental protection and infrastructure. These are the same things that we have talked about in building strong and attractive neighbourhoods.

Vancouver, British Columbia

The City of Vancouver has been an international model for success for city development. This success has relied on strong planning principals, consistent decision-making and community involvement. There are four elements that complete communities must provide for: they are Density, Mobility, Design, and Mix. Complete communities provide a land use mix to offer a variety of opportunities to work, live, shop, play and learn. In doing so, they must:

- consider the context and character of different neighbourhoods
- plan in three dimensions (horizontal and vertical, and how they change over time)
- maximize the synergy between different forms of development
- where mixed use is not possible, substitute other complete community tools (walking/biking/transit supportive facilities)
- prioritize retail and commercial uses at grade designed for those walking

- monitor and consider increasing residential and employment opportunities where appropriate
- support the engagement of all residents within the community in day to day life.

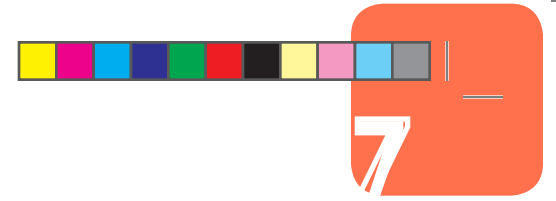
Adding density, while not easy, can be done in several different ways. Many of which are often unseen. The different types of easily integrated density that have been tried in Vancouver and could be used in London include:

- Mid-rise housing along arterial road-this can be thought of as standard density
- Ground-oriented housing, where higher density type housing has a “front door” on the street-this can be thought of as gentle density
- Backyard laneway infill housing, or hidden density
- Secondary suites within homes, or invisible density

London, Ontario – Woodfield

We often look elsewhere for examples of excellence outside our communities. It is important to know





what the rest of the world is doing, so that we can do it better. However, we should never lose sight of our homegrown success stories as models for excellence.

The Woodfield neighbourhood won the People's Choice of Great Neighbourhoods in Canada awarded by the Canadian Institute of Planners. The community snapshot looks like this:

- 1,400 households
- 2 Heritage Districts (East & West Woodfield) where most homes have been built between the late 1800s and early 1900s.
- One of the largest and finest examples of Victorian streetscapes in Canada.
- Gentrification of homes of all sizes.
- Variety of resident demographics.
- Access to major community parks.
- Community led event programming (Harvest festival, street parties, caroling)
- Tall trees
- Planned preservation of assets
- Heritage districts.



Woodfield is important to London and indeed to Canada. Woodfield shows what Canada once looked like, across many architectural styles and social classes. Importantly Woodfield also shows us what Canada can look like today, a community with close neighbourhood bonds, a "front yard" focus and an active, artistic, musical and cultural life. Woodfield is a wonderful place. //

- Canadian Institute of Planners

## Where we're headed...

Building Strong and Attractive Neighbourhoods is going to be a partnership of all Londoners, and can only happen if we are clear in our directions so that we can deliver on our goals and vision. City Council and municipal staff will set out the policy framework based on what we've heard from you for how to build the London of the 2035 in the Official Plan. It is up to all of us to buy into these ideas and embrace the policies about how London grows and what it will look like.

The list below are some of the things that we will need to do. They are about raising the bar to a new standard for London. These are examples of what we will need to do for this plan to have the impact that you have told us that you want.

**Design:** Beauty is a thing that we often don't talk about when we think of planning for our future, but beauty is what you have told us that we have and what we want. From our street trees to our parks, to the rivers and creeks in our natural areas, and our heritage areas and historic streetscapes, the beauty of our neighbourhoods says a lot about London and Londoners. By providing high design standards for residential buildings, commercial uses, streetscapes, public art and various other elements, we can help maintain the value of our neighbourhoods and create new and vibrant neighbourhoods.

**Environmental Design:** The costs of adapting to climate change and the advances in green technology mean new ways of looking at the long term affordability of growth. We will need to re-set the bar on what we will expect in terms of environmental sustainability through standards such as: LEED-ND neighbourhoods, Platinum and net-zero architecture, passive solar design, shore habitat restoration, and rain-water collection systems

**Defining Expectations and Roles:** Building strong neighbourhoods and complete communities will require partnerships between residents, developers and the City. The focus is on collaboration and expectations of each other's role in getting to the common vision of building an exciting, exceptional and connected London.

**Residents and the City:** The strength of our neighbourhoods is the primarily the responsibility of its residents. This means building a sense of place, creating events, building relationships and communication. The City's responsibility should be to support resident endeavours that provide a benefit to the neighbourhood, the community, and the City. Streamlining processes, and being open and accountable should be our common goal. In addition, the City should work with neighbours about their vision for their neighbourhood, and encourage neighbourhoods and their residents to be empowered and engaged in developing visions for their neighbourhoods. This would include creating opportunities for new development so that neighbours are part of the process of change.

**Residents and Developers:** The City should continue to build trust between these two groups by giving residents the confidence that all projects will be of high quality, and providing developers a clear message about the approval process. This is a balancing act however, and with each success momentum will build that will lead to the success of the plan.

**Developers and the City:** Developers are those who take financed risk in building our City. As such, they are critical to the success of our communities. Providing a clear path to completing great projects will not only help them succeed but will also help us to create strong and attractive neighbourhoods and complete communities that will support our high quality of life.





Investment and Ownership: As with any plan, the real changes happen by those in the community willing to make it happen. The community will only grow and improve through the engagement and involvement of neighbourhood residents.

We know London is up to the challenge as a community just as other cities have been successful creating strong and attractive neighbourhoods. In summary, we can do the following to make a real difference.

## More of this...

## Less of this...

Implement "Placemaking" by promoting exceptional neighbourhood design that creates diverse, walkable, healthy and connected communities; create a sense of place; and promote "beauty" as value in neighbourhoods.

Build communities that lack identity, character, quality, working environments, and are only focussed on functionality.

Create social gathering places where neighbours come together by the continued use of community gardens, urban parks and small parkettes, café's, restaurants and small service commercial uses fronting park spaces, active neighbourhood trails, recreational facilities and playing fields.

Consider social gathering places as "nice to have" rather than a key part of our plan to build strong and attractive neighbourhoods.

Integrate outstanding parks and recreational facilities into all our neighbourhoods.

Place emphasis on the important of parks and recreation as drivers of qualities







## More of this...

Protect what we cherish by recognizing and protecting cultural identity, built heritage, neighbourhood character, and the environment; establishing ecological connections between woodlands, environmentally significant areas, and corridors; and incorporating views and vistas to and from the Thames River valley; and parks trail systems.

Promote healthy neighbourhoods by designing walkable, safe and connected areas; making non-auto transportation alternatives desirable and preferable; integrating recreational opportunities into neighbourhoods; addressing crime prevention through environmental design (CEPTED); giving neighbourhoods the ability to improve their neighbourhoods in creative and positive ways.

Design "complete" neighbourhoods by meeting the needs of people of all ages and abilities; promoting aging in place; having mixed uses that provides convenient access to goods and services for daily life; having affordable housing choice; and providing for a more equitable distribution of social infrastructure.

## Less of this...

Disregard the fact that our natural and built heritage is part of our City-building legacy, and part of what London has to offer to attract and retain people and investment to London.

Disregard the need to continually invest in our existing neighbourhoods to promote healthy choices.

Do not provide a range of housing choice-by type and by cost. Do not design neighbourhoods to include mixed-use opportunities or convenient access to transit.



# Making Wise Planning Decisions, Careful Management

# 8

*This paper is the final in a series of eight discussion papers.*

ReThink London is about talking to Londoners about our City, and asking questions about the City's future. What do we want London to be in 2035? What do we want it to look like? How are we going to live in London in 2035? What will London have to offer that will make this the place where I want to live?

A way to answer some of these questions will be in London's new Official Plan. This last Discussion Paper talks about Making Wise Planning Decisions and Careful Management. This is about how we will Plan to grow over time, and how we will make those decisions about how we grow.

Making the Plan work will rely on making good planning decisions, and carefully managing the outcomes of those decisions. In order to be consistent, and to make sure that we get to where we set out to go, we will need to meet the expectations that we have set out in the Plan. To do this, we will need to make our decisions based on a set of defined principles.

For Planners, this is pretty simple-in theory! We make decisions and recommendations about land use and planning based upon the policies of the City's Official Plan, and those decisions must be in the public interest and common good. This might sound easy, but planning is often a balance between many interests; the neighbours, the developer and City policies, but the "test" is the broader public interest. The question is "what is the public interest"? The public interest includes the interests of all of Londoners, and sometimes this might not fully align

with the people most involved, or even possibly affected by a planning decision.

To help us through this decision-making process so that we can make wise planning decisions, there are some over-arching planning principles that we use.



A community is only as good as its Plan, and a Plan is only as good as its ownership by the community!!

- ReThink London participant

### Planning Principles

A good place to start when talking about Planning Principles is the Provincial Policy Statement. This document sets out the provincial interest in land use planning matters, in other words, it lays out in policies what the Province expects municipalities to review when they consider planning applications. The Province also makes this consideration mandatory; Section 3 of the Planning Act requires that decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" policy statements that are issued under the Planning Act.

It's important to note that in the guide to how we use the Provincial Policy Statement, the policies are not set out in a hierarchical manner, meaning that one policy is not more or less important than another. The guide says that we are to apply those policies that are applicable to the matter that we are considering, and that we should recognize the inter-relationships and connections between many of these policies.

The protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions.

The protection of the agricultural resources.

The conservation and management of natural and mineral resources.

The conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.







The supply, efficient use, and conservation of energy and water.

The adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems.

The minimization of waste.

The orderly development of safe and healthy communities.

The accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities and services.

The adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities.

The adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing.

The adequate provision of employment opportunities.

The promotion of efficient development and land use patterns that sustain the financial and economic well-being of the City over the long term.

The co-ordination of planning activities of public bodies.

The resolution of planning conflicts involving public and private interests.

The protection of public health and safety.

The appropriate location of growth and development.

The promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians.

All of these principles could be summarized into four statements:

1 Avoid land use conflicts

2 Protect the environment

3 Preserve what you can't replace

4 Grow in fiscally prudent and sustainable ways

## The Decision-making Process

So far, we have talked about what we need to consider to make wise planning decisions, but what about the decision-making process? How can we make sure that the process will help us make wise decisions? The Planning Act lays out a process for public participation in the planning application process, but this tells us what we need to do and when we need to do it, not necessarily how we do it.

In 2012, Municipal Council adopted the City of London Community Engagement Policy. This policy, developed in consultation with a resident-



led community engagement task force, defines Community Engagement as the process of meaningful two-way dialogue and participation in forming decisions that affect the community. The community engagement process is transparent, responsive, inclusive and empowering, and is based on realistic expectations, mutual respect and trust.

The following definitions are from the Engagement Policy:

**Mutual Respect and Inclusion:** All participants will listen and respect different opinions, be flexible in how we interact and be open to considering alternatives.

**Accessibility:** Information and communications are easy to find, access and understand.

**Responsiveness:** All participants will listen and respond to concerns in a timely manner, ensuring that outcomes and next steps are communicated.

**Transparency:** All processes will be open, understandable, transparent and inclusive. All participants will make the best effort to reach, involve and hear from all those who are directly and indirectly affected.

**Realistic Expectations :** At each level of engagement, all participants will understand their roles, responsibilities and authority and will understand that the interest of the community may be greater than the interest of individuals.



Shared Responsibility: Both the City and the community have responsibilities to fulfill in honouring the implementation of the Community Engagement Policy and both will endeavour to meet these responsibilities.

This policy describes how we should be engaging the public through Plan practices. One really important thing to note is that the “decision-maker” when it comes to planning matters is Municipal Council. Planners, the applicant, residents and neighbours, outside agencies like Provincial Ministries or the Conservation Authority, and interest groups all have a role in the decision-making process, but we all must remember that it is Municipal Council who is the decision-maker.

## Engagement vs. NIMBY

What is NIMBY? Its an acronym standing for the words “Not In My Backyard”. It represents a concept whereby community members are very supportive of important city-building concepts, but they take a very opposing view of these same concepts when it relates to a property close to their own home. For example, we’ve spoken extensively about infill intensification in these discussion papers and we understand that we need to look inwards and upwards rather than just outwards for our future growth. This can’t happen if NIMBY kicks in every time a planning application comes forward that proposes an increase in a neighbourhood’s intensity or the infill of a vacant or underutilized site. This is not to say that infill and intensification is appropriate everywhere. However, we need to make wise decisions, that will be difficult decisions for some communities, when quality projects come forward in those locations where we’re aiming for intensification. We should not jump to the conclusion that a project isn’t a good one, just because the immediate neighbours don’t agree with it.

## Accountability to OUR Plan

We’ve heard it over and over in our conversations with the community. They tell us that they like the concepts that are coming forward through ReThink,

but they aren’t confident that Staff and Council will “walk the talk” as projects come forward. They point to past plans that they believe haven’t been well respected over the course of time.

They’re right. A plan is only as good as its implementation. A plan cannot sit on a shelf as a reflection of a community’s wants and needs, but not be implemented a piece at a time as development applications come forward, investment decisions are made, and municipal projects are initiated. The plan that is produced through ReThink London must lead the way in our decision-making. It needs to be clear so that all stakeholders can understand what the plan is asking for and act accordingly. And, if one or another stakeholder “slips” and does not honour the plan with the actions they take, it will be incumbent upon the others to “call them on it”.

## Evaluation Principles

The last piece of the Wise Planning Decisions and Careful Management discussion is “how do we know that we are making wise planning decisions?”

The best way to do this will be to evaluate our decisions based on the process that we have described above.

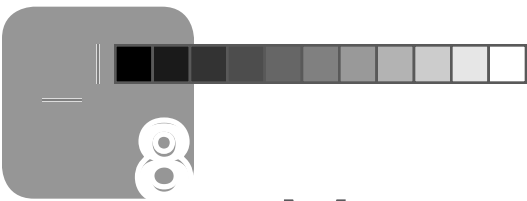
To do this, we would ask questions like:

- Is our decision consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement?
- Is our decision consistent with our Planning Principles?
- Was our decision-making process open, fair, transparent and inclusive?
- Is our decision sustainable over time? Have we considered the social, environmental and fiscal impacts of our decision?

## Where we’re going...

The following summarizes the direction that we’re headed, based on what we’ve heard from you, and the research we’ve completed to date.





## More of this...

Ensure the London Plan is current by on-going monitoring through 5-year updates; thinking long term by building on short-term opportunities; planning for a competitive city; and identifying and promoting opportunities for alternative implementation tools.

Our decisions should reflect planning principles by avoiding land use conflicts; preserving and conserving what we can't replace, such as Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage, agricultural lands, aggregate lands, tree canopy and coverage; protecting the environment, including air quality, ground water, and water resources; adapting to climate change and avoid contributing to climate change; supporting prosperity and growing in fiscally prudent ways; and plan for beauty.

Planning for changes by engaging citizens early in the process for their input on planning applications that may affect communities and neighbourhoods; and creating expectations through form, use and intensity.

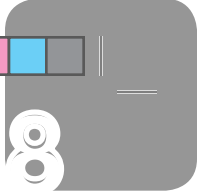
## Less of this...

Achieve only the minimum standards to implement on-going monitoring and regular updates to the Official Plan.

Less focus on applying planning principles equally to each situation.

Planning focused review that does not require public input in the early stages of the process.





## More of this...

## Less of this...

Ensure efficient and collaborative processing of applications by collaborating with regional partners and the Province; implementing the London Plan in an integrated way that involves all City departments; providing for flexibility, but in an integrated manner; and linking land use and transportation planning.

Continue to apply the required standards and specifications in all planning applications.

Promote opportunities to foster public-private relationships by collaborating with local partners to examine how education, business and community linkages can be leveraged for economic opportunity; making more efficient use of public resources by targeting and meeting the needs of specific populations; fostering an exchange of ideas, talent, and innovation; and using public funds more effectively.

Less collaboration with partners on public-private opportunities.

Making Wise Planning Decisions, Careful Management