

Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

To: Chair and Members
Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

From: Scott Mathers, MPA, P.Eng
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development

Subject: Actions Implementing London's UNESCO designation as
Canada's 'City of Music'

Date: September 20, 2022

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development the following actions be taken with respect to London's UNESCO designation as Canada's 'City of Music':

- a) The area previously identified in the Music, Entertainment and Culture District Strategy as the Downtown/Old East Village District **BE REDESIGNATED** as the Core Area Entertainment District;
- b) Staff **BE DIRECTED** to proceed with the actions required to include UNESCO City of Music messaging on new City of London gateway roadside signage; and
- c) Staff **BE DIRECTED** to report back at a future date with a proposed governance structure and detailed four-year action plan to implement *London's UNESCO 'City of Music'* designation over time and within existing budgets or in association with the next 4-year multi-year budget.

Executive Summary

On November 8, 2021, UNESCO formally designated London as Canada's *first* and *only* UNESCO City of Music. In receiving this internationally regarded distinction the City of London has committed to numerous ways of cultivating the role music will serve, in the context of a wider array of entertainment and culture actions, in developing the local community and economy.

In the Mayor's 2022 State of the City address, it was observed that this designation provides opportunities for music to serve as an important contributor to London's community recovery and renewal, while offering a sustained economic boost to the city. The Core Area is uniquely positioned to lead the revival of these sectors as a contributor to wider economic benefits for the city as a whole. This purpose of this report is to reply to a May 3, 2022 resolution of Municipal Council to begin the process of building upon London's UNESCO designation as Canada's City of Music.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The summary of existing and proposed actions subject of this report were developed through applying a lens through all of London's Strategic Areas of Focus, including Strengthening Our Community, Building a Sustainable City, Growing our Economy, Creating a Safe London for Women and Girls, and Leading in Public Service.

As Canada's first and only UNESCO City of Music, these recommendations align with London's vision to be a world leader in commerce, culture, and innovation; they represent our region's connection to the international stage and our dedication to fulfill our mission as a responsive and modern public service partner that fosters change to build a better London for all.

1.0 Background Information

1.1 London's UNESCO City of Music Designation

First created in 2004, The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) strives to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

On April 13, 2021, City Council formally endorsed an application to the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Creative Cities Network for London to become a member of said network. A formal application led by Civic Administration (Cultural Services and London Music Office) was prepared and submitted on June 30, 2021. On November 8, 2021, UNESCO formally designated London as Canada's *first and only* UNESCO City of Music. Across Canada, three additional cities are recognized as UNESCO Creative Cities including Montreal (City of Design, 2006), Toronto (City of Media Arts, 2017) and Quebec City (City of Literature, 2017).

WHAT THE DESIGNATION MEANS FOR LONDON

A UNESCO City of Music designation is an ongoing commitment to continue developing and strengthening our music sector. As a UNESCO City of Music, London will be able to connect and collaborate at an international level with the 59 other Cities of Music. London's UNESCO City of Music Action Plan envisions developing London into a more robust, culturally diverse, and enriched music community by:

- Creating greater inclusivity for IBPOC businesses, individuals, and communities in the boom of arts and culture
- Nurturing homegrown talent
- Attracting and developing international talent
- Assisting and supporting more Cities of Music and strengthening the UCCN

The cities within the Music Network, including London, commit to developing both local and international opportunities. The six areas of focus areas for London include:

- Music Incubation
- Inclusive Community
- Music & Film
- City of Music Exchanges
- Music Conferences
- Media Arts

1.2 Council Resolution

At its meeting held on May 3, 2022 Municipal Council resolved:

That the following actions be taken with respect to London's UNESCO designation as Canada's 'City of Music':

a) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back, in a timely manner, on specific geographical borders for the establishment of a Core Area Entertainment District, while also defining what such a District may constitute; and,

b) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back on tangible actions that can be undertaken year-round to demonstrate how music, entertainment, and culture can aid in fueling our community's ongoing economic and social recovery; it being noted that actions may include, but should not be limited to, pursuing additional supportive investments from federal and provincial government partners. (AS AMENDED) (4.2/8/PEC)

1.3 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

The following reports are directly related to the May 3, 2022 Council Resolution:

- London Community Recovery Network – Recovery Funding Business Cases (London Public Library Reading Garden Access from Dundas Place Flex Street) (SPPC, July 27, 2022)
- London Community Recovery Network – Recovery Funding Business Cases (London City of Music Expo; City of Music Conference and Events) (SPPC, June 22, 2022)
- Zoning By-law Patio Review (CPSC June 21, 2022)
- London Community Recovery Network – Recovery Funding Business Cases (Centre Stage Patio Grant) (SPPC, June 7, 2022)
- London Community Recovery Network – Update on Municipally Funded and Community Initiatives (SPPC, June 7, 2022)
- Application to UNESCO for London to be designated a ‘UNESCO City of Music’ (CPSC, March 30, 2021)
- Sound By-Law – Public Participation Meeting Outdoor Patio Time Exemption And Housekeeping Amendments (CPSC February 20, 2019)
- Music, Entertainment and Culture District Strategy Amendments and Implementation Status Update (PEC, November 12, 2018)
- Music, Entertainment And Culture District Feasibility Study And Strategy (SPPC, March 20, 2017)
- London’s Music Strategy, (SPPC, September 2, 2014)
- London’s Cultural Profile Report and London’s Cultural Prosperity Plan (CPSC, March 5, 2013)

Please note that the March 20, 2017 report contained an extensive list of other reports related this matter in its Appendix A that are not repeated here.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Defining a Core Area Entertainment District and its borders

2.1.1 Music, Entertainment and Culture District Strategy [MECDS] Borders

London’s 2021 UNESCO Music City designation is attributable to the groundwork laid in London’s 2014 Music Strategy, itself implemented in part through London’s Music, Entertainment and Culture District Strategy. Drawing from the feedback received through a robust consultation process and the review of other municipalities’ approaches, the MECDS implementation approach takes into account and balances the perspectives of residents and business owners, event organizers and industry professionals, and staff from various organizations and agencies. City Council on November 20, 2018 adopted amendments to the MECDS boundary definitions proposed in the Strategy’s initial 2017 approval.

The MECDS identifies 3 categories of districts where the intensity, frequency, and duration of Music, Entertainment and Cultural Events are generally similar and accordingly supported to varying degrees. The district categories include:

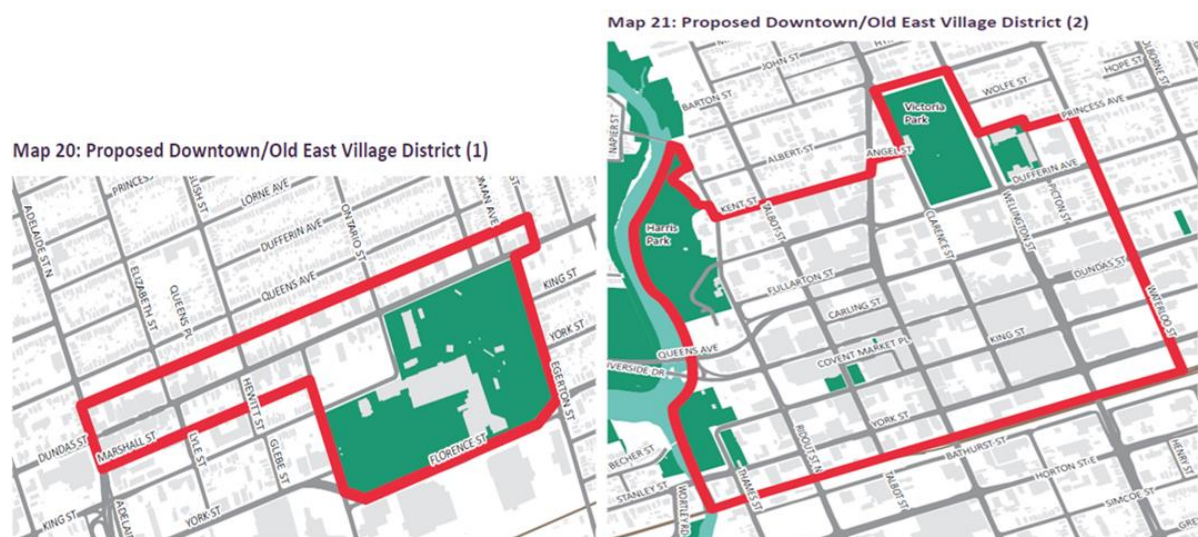
- City-Wide District,
- Main Street District, and
- Downtown/Old East Village District.

The districts were derived from an examination of where major venues and supporting businesses and infrastructure are already clustered in London, and how they function in the London Plan’s Place-Type city-building framework. This approach was meant to underpin community expectations of where intensity and diversity of uses are to be more or less pronounced. Where expectations of intensity, frequency, and duration of uses is higher, regulatory and promotional responses are proportionately greater.

City-Wide is the baseline district, where music, entertainment, and culture events happen relatively less frequently and are not clustered in time or space in any significant or sustained way. Canada Day events are a good example of the type and size of City-wide intensity. Regulations and processes City-wide anticipate the least intensity, frequency, and duration of events similar to the current status quo.

London's Main Streets are designated to be equipped to act as "local downtowns" for their surrounding Neighbourhoods, to accommodate comparatively more music, entertainment, and culture events, more frequently than the baseline situation, including some instances/locations which draw significant participation from outside the local community, such as Richmond Row.

The Downtown/Old East Village District boundary includes all nine major music, entertainment, and cultural hubs located within the downtown and the four major hubs located within Old East Village identified in the MECDS. The boundary also includes the majority of the complementary venues and patios identified. Downtown, being the heart of the city, belongs to the whole city, and acts as London's calling card to the world. The Downtown music, entertainment and culture district would normally be the location with the biggest cluster of the most frequent events, and therefore be expected to sustain the greatest intensity of such activity in the city. In the MECDS, Downtown's expected intensity, frequency, and duration of events, though greatest in the city, is expected to have somewhat broader, but not unlimited, regulatory permissions than elsewhere. It would also have a proportionately greater allocation of attention in the spectrum of proposed public space stewardship and district promotion methods necessary to cope with the consequences of hosting the highest order of intensity. Very similarly, the four major hubs located within Old East Village, especially the Western Fair Entertainment District, were a significant factor in the decision to define the merged Downtown/Old East Village District, on the understanding that the [formerly] two Districts would not necessarily fall within one single boundary. Map 20 and Map 21 in the MECDS, pictured below, define the 2-part boundary.



The territory and characteristics derived in the evolution of the MECDS, provide a policy-based rationale on which to base specific geographical borders for the establishment of a "Core Area Entertainment District", while also defining what such a District may constitute. By geographically defining the "Core Area Entertainment District" from this source, implementing that District can be framed by the expectations already cited in London's Music, Entertainment and Culture District Strategy.

2.1.2 Borders in Other Core Area Plans

In adopting the Downtown/Old East Village District borders from the 2018 MECDS as the Core Area Entertainment District, it is also noted that there are points of potentially significant intersection with certain aspects focusing on music, entertainment, and culture found in two other Core Area plans. These are discussed in section 2.2 below. The Core Area Action Plan (CAAP), approved by Council on November 12, 2019, encompasses the area shown below. It is larger than, but incorporates the 2-part MECDS "Downtown/Old East Village District".



To implement certain actions that originated in the CAAP which are applicable to private property, the Core Area Community Improvement Project [CIP] Area and Plan was adopted in 2021. The CIP Area boundary is consistent with the CAAP boundary. Actions executed under the purview of these two plans are much broader in their scope and intent than MECDS actions specifically focused on operationalizing a Core Area Entertainment District. However, the intersection of actions in the Core Area Plans do provide additional support that can strengthen the context in which the specific MECDS actions are applied.

2.2 Tangible Actions

There are tangible actions already underway, and more that can be undertaken, year-round to demonstrate how music, entertainment, and culture can aid in fueling our community's ongoing economic and social recovery. These initial actions are summarized below.

2.2.1 Actions from the Music Entertainment and Culture District Strategy

The MECDS recognizes the benefits of establishing a framework that is supportive of music, entertainment, and cultural events and activities, and meanwhile acknowledges that these uses can create impacts that exceed established community and/or regulatory expectations. Events and activities can strengthen London as a city, help to drive economic opportunities, assist in urban regeneration, strengthen the image of our city, enhance the quality of life, promote diversity, and provide a competitive edge for talent attraction and retention. However, noise, traffic congestion, and littering are a few examples of potential impacts created by these uses that can negatively affect the quality of life of nearby residents and local business operations.

To balance these impacts, the MECDS is guided by the following directions:

- Celebrate and promote music, entertainment, and cultural events and activities.
- Streamline processes to facilitate events and activities of all scales.
- Mitigate impacts that sometimes come with these events and activities.

An implementation plan is included as part of the Strategy. Reports are periodically provided in a table which summarizes progress made in the 18 implementation plan items. City Council on November 20, 2018 received the first Implementation Status Update since the Strategy's initial approval in 2017. Although impacts attributable to pandemic restrictions have slowed implementation progress on some of the original 18

items since that report, other actions have been undertaken. For example this year, amendments were proposed to Section 4.18(6) Seasonal Outdoor Patios of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law for temporary and seasonal patios to have the capacity to support small-scale, outdoor music performances, thereby supporting London's new UNESCO City of Music designation. Also, a Temporary Sound Permit is now required for all amplified outdoor music. To date, the City of London Municipal Compliance office has issued 16 sound permits for the 2022 season, allowing a variety outdoor music, live bands and DJ's. Volume allowances for patios include a maximum of 70 decibels and 80-90 decibels for outdoor concerts, at the point of reception. Time allowances are anywhere between 9:00am and 12:00 midnight. Civic Administration are of the opinion that the Sound By-law warrants a further review to ensure that all regulations are in keeping with the UNESCO City of Music designation.

Another Implementation Strategy Update should be undertaken to capture these efforts and to summarize progress generally made since 2018 on the original 18 implementation plan items. It should also consider any significant additional actions that align with the strategy which have emerged since 2018, especially music, entertainment, and culture learnings informed by pandemic recovery initiatives and by UNESCO City of Music commitments.

2.2.2 Actions from the Core Area Action Plan

Over 70 action items are being pursued to address four key areas of need cited in the CAAP. Several actions in the Core Area Action Plan (CAAP) have direct and indirect intersections with London's progress in demonstrating how music, entertainment, and culture can aid in fueling our community's ongoing economic and social recovery. Actions related to support of Core Area activations and events, security, and outreach services are especially relevant in this regard. Annual reports summarize the progress being made on implementing all CAAP actions using existing budgets.

Following the most recent annual report, staff were directed on March 22, 2022 to prepare an updated Core Area Action Plan, expanding the current plan to the years 2024 to 2027 inclusive, for the consideration of Council in 2023 in coordination with the next Multi-Year Budget and Strategic Plan development processes. This work will be folded in with the development of the Core Area Strategy and Council's next strategic plan.

2.2.3 Actions from the London Community Recovery Network Initiative [LCRN]

Supporting the hardest hit sectors of arts, culture, tourism and hospitality has been highlighted as a priority by the London Community Recovery Network. The LCRN has pointed to the rebound of these important sectors as key for London's overall recovery and renewal over the next three years and are taking steps to measuring this within the LCRN Framework.

On February 23, 2021 Council approved implementation plans for 2021 and 2022 for the following LCRN Ideas for Action related to how music, entertainment, and culture can aid in fueling our community's ongoing economic and social recovery:

- Initiating a Christmas (Holiday) Market in the community to serve as a local and regional destination and involve local and regional artisans. Strategically located outdoor vendor markets in all seasons contribute to the animation of public spaces and can attract visitors and facilitate community connections which can lead to local economic development.
- Expanding the frequency, intensity, and duration of artist performance opportunities throughout the Core Area to cover both outdoor concerts and outdoor performances in all public spaces.
- Creating both formally guided and self-guided tours of murals, visual art exhibits, public art installations and monuments in the downtown core, leveraging the Culture City X initiative started (2018) by the London Arts Council (LAC) and

funded partially by the City of London, that provides opportunities through cultural industry specific jobs for professional artists and arts venues and organizations to host and present immersive experiences during tours.

- Implementing a Downtown Wayfinding Plan to focus on actions that get people moving around the core.

On June 14, 2022 Council approved the Centre Stage Patio Grant program, which continued the 2021 Patio Grant program in Business Improvement Areas by offering more opportunities for hospitality businesses to provide patio materials to support dining outdoors at local cafes, restaurants, bars, with the enhanced option to also provide patio operators options for the purchase of equipment to stage performances that support greater access for local musicians to present live music performances and cultural activities.

On July 5, 2022, Council, to promote and leverage London's UNESCO City of Music designation, approved a proposal for the London Chamber of Commerce to host a full-day Expo to highlight the designation. At the same meeting, a separate initiative was also approved, for the London Music Office to host a City of Music Conference and Events.

On August 2, 2022 Council approved a proposal from the London Public Library to provide direct access from Dundas Place to the 'Reading Garden'. This will add cultural vibrancy to Dundas Place and permit easier community access to the garden and the free programs for children and adults that the Library regularly holds during the warmer months. Another benefit is that the access will provide an additional venue for music performances and festivals, such as *Music Mondays*. Additionally, Council also approved a proposal from TechAlliance focused on an innovation challenge that is intended to bolster the creative industries with London-developed technical innovations, by addressing the unique needs of delivering prosperity for our local creative industries of music, film, media arts and digital gaming. Both proposals will contribute to the City's efforts to build on its UNESCO designation.

2.2.4 UNESCO Creative Cities Network Related Actions

The UNESCO City of Music designation is relatively recent. The application that led to this distinction, and the work done since it was received by London, is currently being supported through a City of London Enterprise Resource Team made up of representatives from: the London Music Office, Culture Services, Tourism London, Economic Partnerships, and the London Arts Council. This team has received substantial assistance from Information and Technology Services with developing a UNESCO Action Plan tracking tool through the use of Power BI. With this as a foundation, and so many other City service areas actually or potentially able to manifest the UNESCO City of Music designation in the course of their work, it is recommended that a clear governance structure be developed to ensure effective collaboration.

Consultation that occurred during the development of the MECDS did not directly address many of the issues of interest that emerged as a result of pursuing the UNESCO City of Music designation. Given the significance of the designation and the long-term commitments that come with it, it would be useful to explore reviewing the MECDS to determine how it might be amended to include how the issues could be consolidated into the MECDS. This review could place these UNESCO designation implementation proposals in the context of the policy perspectives and operational approaches forming the overall Strategy for Music, Culture & Entertainment.

2.2.5 Additional Actions

The actions summarized above include, but are not limited to, pursuing additional supportive investments from federal and provincial government partners.

Part of the City's "Welcome To The Heart Of London" Tourism Relief Fund approved project includes graphics to visually express or symbolize London's identity as Canada's

only UNESCO City of Music on temporary and permanent infrastructure in that geographical territory. This identity can also be made apparent upon arriving at the city limits at various entry points. A UNESCO City of Music tab can be added to the City-owned entrance signs.

A funding application, led by Canada's Music Incubator (CMI) and supported by the London Music Office, Tourism, and the Economic Partnerships Office, Planning and Economic Development, was submitted on March 3, 2022 to the CPAWRF (Canada Performing Arts Workers Resilience Fund Program). As a result, Canada's Music Incubator (CMI) was successful and will be receiving funding in the amount of \$300,000 to develop a project to offer professional development and career-related skills development, both on-line and in person, for live performing arts workers with the goal to increase career resiliency. The project will include skill-building industry panels/on demand webinars, workshops, a business development accelerator and one-on-one mentorship sessions. All music industry artists involved in the professional development initiatives will also be provided with free 24-7 access to short term counselling. The anticipated reach is 225 participants (London and Southwestern Ontario).

Conclusion

It is recommended that the Core Area Entertainment District be defined as the Downtown/Old East Village District described in the MECDS (Music, Entertainment and Culture District Strategy).

Dozens of tangible actions are being undertaken year-round which demonstrate how music, entertainment, and culture can aid in fueling our community's ongoing economic and social recovery. Some link back to implementing the direction adopted in the MECDS. Others have been established through recent efforts focused on Core Area support and/or pandemic recovery. These actions span across several City service areas and involve a high degree of collaboration with community partners.

It is recommended that staff continue work to implement London's UNESCO City of Music designation in policy development and implementation consistent with the MECDS, in practical measures such as branding on roadside gateway signs, and through a proposed governance structure and detailed implementation plan that can solidify how these and future actions can be prioritized and tracked over time and within existing budgets or in association with the next 4-year multi-year budget.

Prepared by: **Jim Yanchula Manager, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Core Area & Urban Regeneration, Economic
Supports and Services**

Reviewed by: **Stephen Thompson MAES, RPP, MCIP, Ec.D.(F), CEcD
Director, Economic Services and Supports**

Recommended by: **Scott Mathers, MPA, P.Eng
Deputy City Manager, Planning & Economic
Development**

cc: Lynne Livingstone, City Manager
Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services
Cheryl Finn, General Manager, Tourism London
Patti McKague, Director, Strategic Communications and Government Relations
Rosanna Wilcox, Director, Strategy and Innovation
Barbara Maly, Executive Director, Downtown London Business Improvement Area
Jen Pastorius, Executive Director, Old East Village Business Improvement Area