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Downtown Plan Progress Update

Complementing the project's extensive public consultations over the summer, the Project Team has also been undertaking a background review and analysis of current conditions in the Downtown from multiple lenses including: demographic and market analyses; historical research; review of policy and regulatory frameworks; infrastructure and transportation systems; ecology and the natural environment; previous revitalization initiatives and public investments; and the governance and management frameworks within the Downtown. The aim of this exercise has been to immerse the Project Team in the Downtown's context and to establish the analytical foundations for the London Downtown Plan.

What We've Learned To Date

- **A vibrant commercial core:** Downtown London supports nearly 2 million square feet of retail and service space, with food, beverage, and entertainment uses giving the area a distinctive character compared to traditional shopping centres.
- **A thriving live music scene:** With more than 20 live music venues, Downtown is a cultural hotspot that supports local artists, attracts visitors, and strengthens London's reputation as a UNESCO City of Music.
- **Opportunities for new business growth:** While retail vacancies are above average at 17.6%, this represents a significant pool of available, well-sized spaces (1,000–4,999 sq. ft.) ideally suited for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and service providers looking to establish themselves Downtown.
- **Accessible & convenient parking:** The presence of over 600 municipally-owned parking spaces in addition to privately-owned lots and car parks found throughout the Downtown provides various parking options for visitors, employees, and residents to access Downtown amenities, businesses, and events.
- **Strong office market potential:** Although overall office vacancy sits at 31.4%, Class A spaces are performing much better at 15.4%, pointing to demand for high-quality office environments. Higher vacancies in Class B and C commercial spaces provide opportunities for reinvestment and adaptive reuse in older buildings.
- **A showcase of creativity and identity:** With more than 25 public art installations, ranging from murals, memorials, and sculptures spread through the core, not to mention Museum London, Downtown offers vibrant and visually engaging streetscape, plazas and parks that celebrates local culture, history, and contributes to the Downtown's unique sense of place.
- **A young and dynamic population:** With a total of 11,557 residents, Downtown's population is concentrated in the 20–34 age group, creating a youthful energy that fuels demand for housing, culture, and nightlife. The area also welcomes a large non-permanent resident population, likely tied to students and newcomers.
- **A district rich in heritage character:** Downtown London contains more than 500 heritage-listed buildings, making it an important centre of cultural heritage in Ontario with iconic landmarks such as Eldon House (1834) and the Middlesex County Courthouse (1827) having survived and thrived for almost 200 years.
- **A green and livable core:** With well over 4,500 trees enhancing its streets and public spaces, Downtown London is living up to its reputation as the Forest City, and benefits from a strong urban canopy that supports walkability, improves air quality, and creates a more welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike.
- **A regional destination for culture and events:** Festivals and downtown programming consistently draw visitors from across the city and beyond. At events like Sunfest, more than half of attendees come from outside the Downtown, showcasing the area's strength as London's cultural hub.

Continuing Engagement

The first city-wide survey for the Downtown Plan is now closed. However, results of the survey and other forms of engagement will be included in the Background Study for this project, which is expected to be publicly available October/November 2025. In addition, opportunities to learn about

Monthly Project Update #4



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the Plan and provide your feedback will continue into the fall including:

- Project updates will continue to be shared on the project webpage and the City's social media channels: [Downtown Plan](#)
- A public virtual summit is planned for October 2, 2025, with details coming soon

If you require any accommodation to fully participate in the engagement process, or have a comment or question regarding this project, please contact the Downtown Plan project team using the information below.

Email: dmp@london.ca

The information collected will be used in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. F.31*. Except for personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

This notice was issued September 4, 2025.