**RECOMMENDATION**

That, on the recommendation of the General Manager of Planning and Development, the following report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER**

A series of reports pertinent to the establishment of Community Improvement Project Area for the Old East Village have previously been brought forward to this, and other Standing Committees of Council including:

- **Re-establishing Value – A Plan for the Old East Village** – April, 2003, Report from the Old East Village BIA to the Board of Control;
- **Convert-to Rent Pilot Program Old East Village BIA** – June, 2003, Report from the General Manager of Planning and Development to the Community and Protective Services Committee;
- **Old East Village Convert-to-Rent Program** – September 2003, Information Report from the Director of Business Liaison to the Board of Control;
- **Potential Tax Rebate Grants for Units Created Under the Old East Village Convert-to-Rent Pilot Program** – October, 2003, Report from the Acting General Manager of Planning and Development to the Board of Control;
- **Old East Village Business Improvement Area Initiatives and Timelines** – October, 2003, Report from the Director of Business Liaison to the Board of Control;
- **Convert-to-Rent Pilot Program Old East Village BIA** – March, 2004, Report from the Acting General Manager of Planning and Development to the Community and Protective Services Committee; and,
- **Old East Village Community Improvement Plan and Associated Official Plan Amendments** – August, 2004 AND October, 2004 Reports from the General Manager of Planning and Development to the Planning Committee.
Below are DIRECT EXCERPTS from the Planners Action Team report:

**Context – The Planners Action Team**

- Established in 1986, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) is the recognized voice of the Province’s planning profession and provides vision and leadership on key planning issues. The Institute’s 2,600 practicing planners are employed by government, private industry, agencies, and academic institutions. Members work in a wide variety of fields including urban and rural community development, urban design, environment, transportation, health and social services, housing, and economic development.

- PACT is the acronym used for the Planners’ Action Team. The Planners Action Team (PACT) is a group of professional planners who have banded together to volunteer their knowledge, training and expertise to prepare a plan for revitalization of the Old East Village commercial corridor. The team was spawned from the Southwest District of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute in 2001, but has grown through this project to also include members from outside of the District and other professionals outside of the field of land use planning.

- The PACT was established with the intent of helping a community in need that would otherwise not have the resources to hire planning services. It was seen as a way of using the wide diversity of talents offered by planning professionals in Ontario to help a community in a real and tangible way.

- After two years of study, the Planners Action Team released a report entitled “Re-establishing Value: A Plan for the Old East Village” in April of 2003. The report included over 30 recommendations designed to:
  - Establish a vision for the long term revitalization of the corridor;
  - Recognize that various segments of the corridor differ and should be treated differently to allow for successful revitalization;
  - Develop policy, incentives and programs for each segment of the corridor;
  - Encourage the revitalization of the residential community adjacent to the corridor;
  - Functionally re-link the residential community to the commercial corridor.

An underlying thrust of these recommendations was to re-establish value in the Old East Village from many different perspectives.
The One Year Audit Process

- Consistent with the commitment that was provided by the Planners Action Team following the delivery of the PACT revitalization plan, the PACT returned to the community to perform a two day audit in October of 2004. The audit included the following:

  - One-on-one meetings with a variety of stakeholders and interest groups to understand their work over the past year, the progress that they felt had been made, their assessment of what is working well and what needs improvement, and their suggestions for moving forward. These meetings lasted between 20-30 minutes each and spanned the entire morning and into the afternoon of the first day of the audit. These sessions included the following groups (listed alphabetically):
    - City of London By-law Enforcement
    - City of London Director of Business Liaison
    - City of London Heritage Planner
    - City of London Planning Division Staff
    - City of London Ward Councilors
    - Convert to Rent Affordable Housing Project Steering Committee
    - Eastern Bloc Collective – Culture, Arts & Creativity
    - London Police – Community Oriented Response Unit
    - Old East Village Community Association
    - Old East Village BIA
    - Old East Village Heritage Conservation District Steering Committee
    - Old East Village Garden Club
    - Western Fair Association

  - A walking assessment of the commercial corridor, the Queens Park space which fronts Dundas Street and the residential area to the north of the commercial corridor.

  - A Public meeting, facilitated by the Old East Village BIA, inviting members of the public to express their opinions on progress, needs, and recommendations for moving forward.

  - A Day 2 charrette session to synthesize the results of Day 1, assess the progress of the revitalization program and develop a series of recommendations for further advancement.

  - Follow-up discussions between members of the PACT.

  - Follow-up one-on-one meetings with property owners on the corridor. It is noteworthy that 10 separate owners or ownership groups were invited to meet with the PACT and only 1 agreed to do so.
Summary of Accomplishments

The Planners Action Team was absolutely astounded by the multitude of accomplishments that had taken place in the neighbourhood and on the corridor in such a short period of time. Key stakeholders in the community "stepped up to the plate" in a big way. Investments of time, money and many other resources have been devoted to the area and it's becoming clear to everyone that the Old East Village has tremendous value. The community has become galvanized around these initiatives and has taken firm hold of their own community. They desire revitalization and they are working very hard to achieve it from a grass roots level. Meanwhile, an arts, culture and heritage theme is emerging as a focal point for revitalization. These are being revealed as key strengths of the Village and forces are culminating to celebrate these strengths and clearly illustrate them to the wider community.

A significant amount of ground work has been executed that have put in place the foundation for revitalization. This is important and difficult work that typically takes much longer than it has taken in the Old East Village—a testament to the community and good evidence that the prospects for revitalization are very good.

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*Definitions of terms used within this column are provided within the body of this report.*
The PACT acknowledged the significant commitment by the City of London in advancing the revitalization plan. This commitment can be summarized as follows:

**One-time**
- Queens Park - $30k
- Carson Library - $50k
- Heritage Conservation District - $40k(study) +$35k(plan)+ signage ($10k)
- Queens Ave. Consultant - $25k
- Convert-to-rent Program - $165k (now working on second round of applications)

**Ongoing**
- Business Police Academy & increased presence on Corridor
- New OP Policies for Core, Annex, Transition
- New Community Improvement Plan
- New Zoning - live-work-display, retain core, allow for transition and residential intensification
- New Incentives – Façade (extended), Building Code, Tax Rebates; working on DC exemptions
- World Town Planning Day at Lorne Ave School
- Property Standards Enforcement
- Maintenance – Christmas Lights, etc.
- City Hall Team
- Designated Aeolian Hall - Hearing

### THREE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Planners Action Team developed a series of additional recommendations for the Old East Village. However, they strongly emphasized the following three recommendations:

1. Property owners on the commercial corridor must now participate in the revitalization effort. All key stakeholders must work to engage these property owners to take action. Even where deteriorating buildings are serving as "positive" tax losses within a property owner's portfolio, they owe it to the community to participate in the revitalization process or sell their property to those that will. The infrastructure, incentive, and momentum are all in place for revitalization, and the time is now for property owners to take advantage.

2. Moving into Phase II of the revitalization initiative, the BIA should place an emphasis on business recruitment, business retention, strategic marketing programs, and other more traditional BIA functions to spark further commercial investment in the corridor.

3. A new organizational structure should be developed to oversee the more comprehensive revitalization initiative. This "Old East Village Revitalization Steering Committee" could consist of representation from the BIA, Community Association, Western Fair Association, City of London, corridor property owners, arts community, heritage sector, and social services community. This new committee would instill a sense of accountability over each of the key stakeholders TO all other stakeholders. Recognizing that the BIA should be focusing more of its efforts on more traditional BIA-type functions, this Steering Committee would ensure that the thrust and recommendations of the larger revitalization plan are not lost. The Steering Committee will also ensure that important initiatives which do not squarely fit within the mandate of any one stakeholder do not "fall through the cracks".


The PACT audit was presented to approximately 100 people at the Aeolian Hall on February 23rd, 2005. City of London Planning Staff made a presentation at that meeting to discuss the new Community Improvement Plan and the incentive programs that would become available to the Old East Village within two weeks.

The result has been a significant influx of applications and expressions of interest for Façade and Building Code Loan Program funds. In many ways, this is a demonstrated response by the Private Sector to the PACT's challenge to property owners. Of significance, one proponent is proposing the renovation of 10-14 buildings on the corridor—all with the intent of making interior and façade improvements that are sympathetic to the heritage character of these buildings. In addition, owners of other key buildings on the Corridor have had meetings with Staff and indicate that they will be submitting applications for improvements (façade and interior) with the intent of beginning work this Spring.

The following is a direct quote from the Planners Action Team's audit report:

In its simplest terms, the word renaissance can be defined as:

"A rebirth or revival"

"The Planners Action Team is united in their opinion that a renaissance is occurring in the Old East Village of London, Ontario. We believe that this is clearly illustrated in the following report which documents the progress that we have witnessed in the Old East Village since we delivered our revitalization plan in April of 2003, entitled "Re-establishing Value: A Plan for the Old East Village".

During our assessment, we witnessed the revival of a heritage building stock and a community's recognition of its value through the completion of a Heritage Conservation District Study. We saw the rebirth of a neighbourhood, through the establishment of a new community association and the creation of several new community-based groups that are aimed at improving the area of the City that they call home. We have seen a renewal of collaboration, activism, partnership, involvement and community spirit all revolving around a new sense of hope for the revival of the Old East Village. We have seen key stakeholders contributing to the revitalization initiative with a renewed sense of dedication to help "make it work". We have seen the revived celebration of arts and culture in Old East Village and the multiple talents of the people within it—no better exemplified than by the Block Party which showcased and reveled in the community's artistic talents. We have also seen a "sprinkle" of new exciting businesses investing in the corridor.

And, above all, we have seen a rebirth of perceived and real value connected to the Old East Village. Of course, this "value" was always present, but the realization of that value is now firmly taking hold.
There is much work to be done and much progress to be made. The Dundas commercial corridor is anything but revitalized. However, within approximately one and a half years, a huge amount of foundational work has been completed which we know will pay dividends in the future. And, the foundation for the future is now emerging with great strength.

Let it be clear, "The Planners Action Team is of the opinion that there is a renaissance occurring in the Old East Village and we see a bright future for the Village ahead."

Acknowledgements

Two members of City Staff were members of the Planners Action Team and volunteered significant amounts of their time from 2000 to present:

- Jeff Leunissen – Senior Planner, Planning Division
- John Fleming – Manager, Land Use Planning – Policy

Leona Cunningham is a former City of London staff member who also sat on the Planners Action Team and contributed significantly.

The following Staff have had considerable involvement in one or more element of the revitalization effort within their capacity as City of London employees:

- Mark Henderson – serves as City Hall liaison with Old East Village representatives
- Brian Turcotte – wrote Community Improvement Plan and handles incentive program applications
- Terry Grawey – prepared Official Plan and Zoning amendments
- Chuck Parker – contributed to Official Plan and Zoning amendments
- Andrew MacPherson – Queens Park restoration
- Julie Michaud – Queens Park restoration
- Don Menard and Chris Nelson – Old East Village Heritage Conservation District and Aeolian Hall designation
- Jay Zendrowski – assists with incentive programs by providing pre-construction site visits to discuss Building Code issues
- Louise Stevens - Convert to Rent Housing partnership
- Neil Watson - Convert to Rent Housing partnership
- Doug Green – transportation issues (eg, Queens Ave – proposal for conversion to 2-way)
- John Lucas – transportation issues (eg, Queens Ave – proposal for conversion to 2-way)
- Jamie Skimming – Cool Shops energy conservation initiative
- Bill Coxhead – maintenance of public infrastructure
- Anne Boyd – compost materials for community garden project
- Rob Panzer and Vic Cote – BIA budget request
- Anna Seranno-Mendoza – significant clerical support
- Nancy Pasato, Lou Pomplili, Bruce Page - Word Town Planning
- Philippa Crawley – City of London Web Page links and banners
- Mark Boulger, Dave Turvey and Chris Howell – graphics and GIS support
- London Police Department

PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY:

J.M. Fleming
MANAGER – LAND USE PLANNING, POLICY

RECOMMENDED BY:

G.W. PANZER
GENERAL MANAGER OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

March 14, 2005  JMF/...oldeastvillage/submission of audit to Council.doc
Planners Action Team
One Year Audit of Revitalization Activities

Renaissance
Auburn's Old East Village

February, 2005
Acknowledgements

The Planners Action Team would like to thank the entire community of the Old East Village for allowing us to work with them in their revitalization efforts. Having worked throughout the province of Ontario, the PACT can honestly say that this community is a special one. It is the community’s determination, energy and drive to revitalize the Old East Village Corridor that will ultimately “win the day”. We thank you for the friendships we have made, the experiences that we have been part of and the privilege of working in your outstanding community.

Not wanting to leave out any groups from our list, we will refrain from identifying specific organizations and individuals from the community that have assisted the PACT in its processes. Pre-meeting communications, meeting hall accommodations, organizational logistics, food and beverage preparation and provision (for both the PACT and the Public) were all contributed to the PACT by members of the community. Thank you so very much for all that you have done to make this process a fantastic experience. Special thanks go out to the Community Association for their support and many contributions throughout this process. We would be remiss if we did not specifically thank Clarke Bryan for the use of Aeolian Hall to host Public Meetings and the membership of Centennial United Church, Galleria Mall and the Palace Theatre for the use of their meeting rooms. We would also like to specifically thank the City of London and their Planning and Development Staff who provided meeting space, printing services and significant amounts of their time to support this initiative. The PACT is very appreciative for the focus group work done by Virginia Sause of Portal’s Educational Consulting Services.

The PACT was inspired by, and derived from, the Southwest District (SWOD) Executive of OPPI. Through this process which began 4+ years ago, SWOD has always been very supportive — including funding support which enabled us to carry out our Charette and audit activities. Similarly, we extend our appreciation to OPPI who have been supportive in a variety of ways. Without these two groups, PACT would not exist and this work would not have been completed.

Special thanks go out to the Old East Village BIA. Their leadership (Phil Singeris and Sarah Merritt) and all staff and members of the BIA are tremendously devoted to their community and the revitalization initiative. Their relentless energy and commitment are infectious. It is what drew us to the Old East Village in the first instance, and what allowed this project to become as successful as it has to date.

Thanks go to PACT members John Fleming, Maureen Zunti and Leona Cunningham who wrote and assembled this report. Thanks also go to PACT members Michael Hannay, Jeff Leunissen and Ian Seddon for their editorial contributions. Many thanks to the Eastern Bloc Collective and the Old East Village BIA for supplying many photographs for this report — these photos are an outstanding reflection of the renaissance that is occurring in Old East.

As a group, the PACT has fluctuated in membership throughout the past 4+ years. Collectively, we estimate that approximately 1,500 hours of time have been put into this project, free of charge, within this 4 year period. Our April, 2003 document lists all of those that were involved in preparing the initial revitalization plan. Their efforts were key and have not been forgotten! Below is a list of PACT members who participated in the One Year Audit:

Chair, Michael Hannay MCIP, RPP — Principal, Urban Design Coordinator, John Fleming MCIP, RPP — Manager, Land Use Planning Policy, City of London Jeff Leunissen, MCIP, RPP — Senior Planner, City of London Richard Zelinka — MCIP, RPP — Principal, Zelinka Primo Cathy Saunders — MCIP, RPP — Manager of Planning, Township of Middlesex Centre Maureen Jones — MCIP, RPP — Senior Planner, Stanlec Consulting Leona Cunningham — Policy Advisor, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food Ian Seddon — MCIP, RPP — Principal, Ian Seddon Planning Services Paul Hicks — MCIP, OPPI (provincial) — Planner, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing David Hall — Principal — David Hall Associates


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1. Property owners on the commercial corridor must now participate in the revitalization effort. All key stakeholders must work to engage these property owners to take action. Even where deteriorating buildings are serving as "positive" tax losses within a property owner's portfolio, they owe it to the community to participate in the revitalization process or sell their property to those that will. The infrastructure, incentive, and momentum are all in place for revitalization, and the time is now for property owners to take advantage.

2. Moving into Phase II of the revitalization initiative, the BIA should place an emphasis on business recruitment, business retention, strategic marketing programs, and other more traditional BIA functions to spark further commercial investment in the corridor.

3. A new organizational structure should be developed to oversee the more comprehensive revitalization initiative. This "Old East Village Revitalization Steering Committee" could consist of representation from the BIA, Community Association, Western Fair Association, City of London, corridor property owners, arts community, heritage sector, and social services community. This new committee would instill a sense of accountability over each of the key stakeholders TO all other stakeholders. Recognizing that the BIA should be focusing more of its efforts on more traditional BIA-type functions, this Steering Committee would ensure that the thrust and recommendations of the larger revitalization plan are not lost. The Steering Committee will also ensure that important initiatives which do not squarely fit within the mandate of any one stakeholder do not "fall through the cracks".

Summary of Recommendations Stemming from Audit

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<th>Recommendation</th>
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<td>Install major 4'x8' signage in Queens Park fronting Dundas Street as a &quot;teaser&quot; indicating that redevelopment will be coming in the Spring of 2005. This is intended to maintain and build momentum.</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many recommendations have been made with respect to the design for Queens Park improvements. The Audit report should be consulted for these detailed recommendations.</td>
<td>City/Western Fair/CA/BIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Fair should continue to be involved in the revitalization initiative, building upon the excellent contributions that they have made to date. They are a key stakeholder and hold the potential to play a large role in revitalizing the corridor.</td>
<td>Western Fair</td>
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<td>Fundraising by the community should be taken up by a lead group to augment the funds that the City of London have devoted to this park redevelopment. The goal should be to create a special urban space that the community can adopt with pride.</td>
<td>CA/BIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of London Administration — including the London Police Department and other relevant staff — consider the costs and benefits of video surveillance cameras along Dundas Street in the Old East Corridor and, if deemed appropriate, consider installation in 2006.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider creative ways to support the retention of Aeolian Hall. A first step may be support for a potential Firefighters museum within an unused portion of the Hall.</td>
<td>Landmarks London/Jim Fitzgerald/Clark/Bryan/City</td>
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The Garden Club seek out opportunities for establishing a community garden within the neighbourhood.

- The BIA should continue to focus more energies on business recruitment.
- Gain a better understanding of the residential neighbourhood’s needs.
- Prepare a detailed inventory of vacant spaces – including deficiencies and amenities.
- Prepare an information kit for potential investors (recruitment package).
- Consider unique, entrepreneurial uses. Observe Queen Street West in Toronto.
- Use vacant spaces to incubate new businesses.
- Assist fledgling businesses with BIA support services.
- Work with the Small Business Centre to explore opportunities for focused support on the Corridor.

Pursue a second round of funding for another Convert to Rent Program opportunity on the Corridor.

City of London should review taxes owing on properties along the commercial corridor and identify where insurmountable barriers may exist to the viable sale or rental of properties.

Develop a focused business retention program to strengthen existing businesses on the corridor.

Begin a theme-based marketing program, which ties together the buy-at-home program, recruitment efforts, and retention efforts.

Approach Fanshawe College’s Urban Design Program to explore the possibilities for an assigned project to prepare illustrations of how the Area of Transition could be redeveloped. As an alternative, summon artists in the community to prepare representative illustrations.

Continue to explore the more widespread display of art in storefront windows.

All stakeholders should work to foster the creative renaissance in the Old East Village to create a clear identity for the area as an arts and culture focal point. Recognize and take advantage of the key ingredients for arts and culture districts that are present in the Village.

Explore the concepts of an arts and culture district; an artists colony; further arts festivals and further arts co-ops.

The BIA should work with the creative industry to connect individuals with low cost spaces within which they can establish studios, galleries, and other creative spaces.

The City of London should recognize the importance of the Old East Village as an existing attraction for arts and culture.

Adopt a performance measurement framework.

The City of London provide a sustainable funding base to the CEV BIA for basic operational needs. As a condition of this funding, the BIA could be required to explore the opportunity for expanding the BIA boundaries with a longer term intent of generating more sustainable funding through its levy.

Establish a new “Old East Village Revitalization Steering Committee”

Property owners must do "their part" in the revitalization program. They need to become engaged with the BIA, consider improvements to their properties which will allow tenants to occupy vacant spaces, and generally seize on the opportunity that exists. Without their willingness to become involved, revitalization cannot succeed!
In its simplest terms, the word renaissance can be defined as: "A rebirth or revival"

The Planners Action Team is united in their opinion that a renaissance is occurring in the Old East Village of London, Ontario. We believe that this is clearly illustrated in the following report which documents the progress that we have witnessed in the Old East Village since we delivered our revitalization plan in April of 2003, entitled "Re-establishing Value: A Plan for the Old East Village".

During our assessment, we witnessed the revival of a heritage building stock and a community's recognition of its value through the completion of a Heritage Conservation District Study. We saw the rebirth of a neighbourhood, through the establishment of a new community association and the creation of several new community-based groups that are aimed at improving the area of the City that they call home. We have seen a renewal of collaboration, activism, partnership, involvement and community spirit all revolving around a new sense of hope for the revival of the Old East Village. We have seen key stakeholders contributing to the revitalization initiative with a renewed sense of dedication to help "make it work". We have seen the revived celebration of arts and culture in Old East Village and the multiple talents of the people within it - no better exemplified than by the Block Party which showcased and reveled in the community's artistic talents. We have also seen a "sprinkle" of new exciting businesses investing in the corridor.

And, above all, we have seen a rebirth of perceived and real value connected to the Old East Village. Of course, this "value" was always present, but the realization of that value is now firmly taking hold.

There is much work to be done and much progress to be made. The Dundas commercial corridor is anything but revitalized. However, within approximately one and a half years, a huge amount of foundational work has been completed which we know will pay dividends in the future. And, the foundation for the future is now emerging with great strength.

Let it be clear. The Planners Action Team is of the opinion that there is a renaissance occurring in the Old East Village and we see a bright future for the Village ahead.
2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Purpose of The Planners Action Team Audit

The Planners Action Team report of April, 2003 began with the following words:

"This revitalization plan for the Old East Village is different from those that have gone before it. Some may be skeptical of this statement—they might say that this plan, like previous others, will not yield results."

Upon the delivery of the plan to the community, the Planners Action Team committed to return to the Old East Village within one year to assess the progress the community had made during that period. It was made clear by the members of the PACT that one year is but a "moment" within the context of a revitalization process for a deteriorated commercial area. However, an assessment within a year's time would allow for an understanding of how well the plan had been mobilized in the community and would allow for an assessment of the degree to which key stakeholders had taken action.

The following report is an audit of the progress that has been made by the community, Business Improvement Area and other key stakeholders in the revitalization plan to date. In addition, the report provides a series of further recommendations to help guide and bring focus to the next steps in the revitalization process.

2.2 Background Summary

- Established in 1986, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) is the recognized voice of the Province's planning profession and provides vision and leadership on key planning issues. The Institute's 2,800 practicing planners are employed by government, private industry, agencies, and academic institutions. Members work in a wide variety of fields including urban and rural community development, urban design, environment, transportation, health and social services, housing, and economic development.

Renaissance in the Old East Village - 7
PACT is the acronym used for the Planners' Action Team. The Planners Action Team (PACT) is a group of professional planners who have banded together to volunteer their knowledge, training and expertise to prepare a plan for revitalization of the Old East Village commercial corridor. The team was spawned from the Southwest District of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute in 2001, but has grown through this project to also include members from outside of the District and other professionals outside of the field of land use planning.

The PACT was established with the intent of helping a community in need that would otherwise not have the resources to hire planning services. It was seen as a way of using the wide diversity of talents offered by planning professionals in Ontario to help a community in a real and tangible way.

After two years of study, the Planners Action Team released a report entitled "Re-establishing Value: A Plan for the Old East Village" in April of 2003. The report included over 30 recommendations designed to:

- Establish a vision for the long term revitalization of the corridor;
- Recognize that various segments of the corridor differ and should be treated differently to allow for successful revitalization;
- Develop policy, incentives and programs for each segment of the corridor;
- Encourage the revitalization of the residential community adjacent to the corridor;
- Functionally re-link the residential community to the commercial corridor.

An underlying thrust of these recommendations was to re-establish value in the Old East Village from many different perspectives.

Renaissance in the Old East Village - 8
2.3 A Description of the PACT Audit Process

Consistent with the commitment that was provided by the Planners Action Team following the delivery of the PACT revitalization plan, the PACT returned to the community to perform a two day audit in October of 2004. The audit included the following:

- One-on-one meetings with a variety of stakeholders and interest groups to understand their work over the past year, the progress that they felt had been made, their assessment of what is working well and what needs improvement, and their suggestions for moving forward. These meetings lasted between 20-30 minutes each and spanned the entire morning and into the afternoon of the first day of the audit.

These sessions included the following groups (listed alphabetically):
- City of London By-law Enforcement
- City of London Director of Business Liaison
- City of London Heritage Planner
- City of London Planning Division Staff
- City of London Ward Councillors
- Convert to Rent Affordable Housing Project Steering Committee
- Eastern Bloc Collective – Culture, Arts & Creativity
- London Police – Community Oriented Response Unit
- Old East Village Community Association
- Old East Village BIA
- Old East Village Heritage Conservation District Steering Committee
- Old East Village Garden Club
- Western Fair Association

- A walking assessment of the commercial corridor, the Queens Park space
which fronts Dundas Street and the residential area to the north of the
commercial corridor.

- A Public meeting, facilitated by the Old East Village BIA, inviting members of
the public to express their opinions on progress, needs, and
recommendations for moving forward.

- A Day 2 charrette session to
synthesize the results of Day 1,
assess the progress of the
revitalization program and
develop a series of
recommendations for further
advancement.

- Follow-up discussions between
members of the PACT.

- Follow-up one-on-one meetings with property owners on the corridor. It is
noteworthy that 10 separate owners or ownership groups were invited to
meet with the PACT and only 1 agreed to do so.

3.0 WHAT WE SAID : WHAT THEY DID

The report prepared by the Planners Action Team included a series of
recommendations which tied together to form a strategic plan for revitalization.
The five prongs of this strategic plan can be described as:

1. Improve the desirability of the surrounding neighbourhood
2. Strengthen the connection between the community and corridor
3. Create a Village Core and concentrate revitalization efforts there
4. Support the transition of portions of the corridor
5. Develop entertainment, recreation and arts opportunities

The PACT report stated that:

"more than 35 recommendations have been outlined in this
report. It should be clear that the entire plan cannot be
implemented immediately. To attempt this would spread the
revitalization effort too thin and would undoubtedly lose
focus....It is important to take incremental and deliberate steps
towards revitalization. Recognizing this, the PACT has
formulated a priority list. All items are important, but focus is
critical."

Keeping this in mind, it was important to evaluate progress based on the
priorities that were stated in the PACT report.

The following section provides an overview of recommendations that were
delivered by the PACT with respect to each of these strategic prongs. It then
goes on to describe what we have learned has been completed by stakeholders.
relating to each recommendation. Finally, an assessment of the progress which has been made to date is provided and, in some cases, further recommendations are elicited.

Under each recommendation, a table is provided which shows the stage of progress that the PACT believes has been made vs. the progress that the PACT had targeted in the original plan at this stage of the process.

The following are definitions that generally describe what is meant by each level of progress:

**Dialogue:** Discussions by stakeholders have begun in earnest relating to the recommendation that was provided. No specific action has been taken.

**Initiate:** Activity has been initiated by stakeholders relating to this recommendation. This activity goes beyond discussion and represents the beginning of a determined course of action to address the recommendation.

**Progress:** Significant progress has been made with respect to the activity that was initiated in response to the recommendation.

**Complete:** The activity that was initiated to address the recommendation has been completed. In some cases, there will be no logical completion. For example, efforts to preserve Aeolian Hall will continue into the future for decades. However, an indication that an item has been completed indicates that the recommendation within the scope of the Revitalization Plan has been addressed with a specific action that is now complete.

These indicators are for quick reference and illustration. They should be seen as subjective evaluations of the PACT.

Where a new recommendation has been made by the Planners Action Team through this audit document, the following symbol has been placed in the margin so that all recommendations can be easily identified:

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3.1 Improve the desirability of the surrounding neighbourhood

**Re-development of Queens Park**

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*What We Said:* The Planners Action Team recommended that Queens Park be redeveloped to introduce child-related and active recreational facilities that are easily visible from the street (e.g. splash pad, tot lot, basketball court, etc.). This recommendation recognized that there was a need for more open

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*Renaissance in the Old East Village* - 11
recreational space in the neighbourhood and also was intended to provide a positive, visible activity on Dundas Street that sent messages of neighbourhood vitality and family orientation. The PACT estimated a cost of $20k to $30k.

What They Did: The City of London’s Parks Planning and Design Section set aside $30k in their 2004 budget to complete this project. City Council approved this budget amount. Since that time, several meetings have taken place to discuss how the park should be developed and what amenities should be included. Suggestion boxes have solicited public input at both the Block Party and the PACT Public Meeting – displays of the plan which has been prepared to date were provided. One organization has come forward as a potential community partner to contribute to a specific element of the park redevelopment.

PACT Assessment and Recommendation:

The PACT heard some comments expressing disappointment that the park was not re-developed in 2004. While it is desirable to see physical improvements on the corridor as quickly as possible, it is even more important to do the project “right” so that it is perceived as a positive improvement and not a wasteful endeavour.

The PACT recommends that the City install major (4’X8’) signage fronting Dundas Street which indicates that Queens Park redevelopment will be coming in the Summer of 2005. Graphics showing conceptual elements of the improvements should be used if a specific design is not yet ready. The intent of the signage is to maintain and build momentum.

The PACT visited Queens Park again and listened to Planning Staff’s assessment of the discussion that has occurred to date on this property – much of which has been very positive. To provide some guidance for future discussions, the following are recommendations relating to the functional elements of design for this park:

- The park needs to be designed such that it very clearly invites public use. Most of the people that we spoke to during our planning process and during the audit weren’t even aware that this was a publicly accessible park. This can be achieved through entrance features, pathways, signage, and identifiable park elements that are clearly meant for the general public. Fencing for the Western Fair should be removed as soon as possible after an event such that it does not send the message that access to the park is restricted.

- Active park elements should be visible from the road such that they send a message of streetscape vitality and positive activity.

- The PACT’s earlier recommendations called for park facilities that were specifically focused on children and families. Recognizing
the demographic composition of the area, the PACT would like to revise this recommendation to suggest that facilities are also put in place to attract a more inclusive usage. Specifically, consideration should be given to amenities for young seniors and the variety of ethnic groups in the area. For example, a bocce court, chess tables, and reading areas are worthy of consideration.

- The park should celebrate the history of the area -- the commercial streetscape, industry, the Town of East London and the Western Fair. This could be done with didactic interpretive panels or other more interactive amenities.

- According to London’s Heritage Planner, London’s first art gallery exists in Queens Park. It currently houses the Western Fair’s archives. Consistent with the above recommendation, it is recommended that this building be renovated and established as a focal point within the park. The building’s entrance currently faces away from Dundas Street and this should be rectified so that this important building welcomes those in the park to “come inside”.

- As will be discussed later in this report the Old East Village has begun to establish itself as an important arts and culture district. Consideration should be given to supporting the impromptu use of the park for creative activities such as: display and sale of art (this activity needs to be supported by By-law as well); small-scale theatre, music or other performances, busker-type activities, and the occasional outdoor screening of movies. The underlying goal is to consider park amenities that could support the creative initiatives of the community.

- The park should support a blend of active and passive pursuits. For example, an area to be used for meditation, Tai Chi or reading, is worth consideration. A reading garden component might be appropriate.

- As noted in the PACT’s previous report, the Western Fair is an important activity generator. The four-pad arena complex attracts thousands of people to its doors each day as do many specialized events on the main grounds. The park can act as a “connector” between the Fair and the corridor. Potential travel patterns between the four-pad arena and the corridor should be considered, and facilitated in cooperation with the Fair, and such consideration could
involve the park.

- The train that currently exists within the Park is situated such that it cuts off the visibility of the park from the corridor to the west. This visibility truncation means that the park is not as well connected to the corridor as it could be. While the PACT recognizes the logistical and cost implications of moving the train, consideration should be given to the possibility of shifting the train to another location within the park which would not act as a barrier to the streetscape. While this might seem like a minor issue, the PACT believes that it has significant bearing on the park's effective use.

- The possibility of introducing vendors to the park should be considered. For example, hot dog carts or ice cream vendors are a possibility during certain peak use hours. When some dissent to this concept was raised on the basis that no traffic exists in the park for such vendors to viably sell to, one PACT member pointed to the Forks of the Thames project that has occurred in London and the fact that vendors now exist there where none existed in the past.

- Programming should be considered and developed by various parties to support the ongoing use of the park. Programming will re-connect the community to the park and, the more that the park is used, the more likely it will be maintained, safe and "owned" by the community.

- Signage and other messaging is important to let the public understand the multiple uses of the park that are possible. An activity diagram of the park, displayed as permanent signage, might be appropriate in the early years of the park's new use.

- Security must be a key consideration when designing the park. CPTED principles should be utilized to ensure that the park is well lit, easily seen from the street, does not include concealed spaces, and possibly patrolled during certain hours. It may be appropriate to consider adding security cameras to the park to be tied into the City's current security camera system.

- The needs of the Western Fair must be considered when designing the redevelopment scheme. Where fencing is systematically required for specific events that take place on a portion of the park, consideration should be given to a permanent solution whereby permanent footings are put in place to support the easy and quick installation and de-installation of fencing for events.

- Given the above, fundraising by the community will likely be required. As noted, the City of London has set aside $30k for this re-development. While this is adequate to re-develop Queens Park in a modest way, more of the above elements could be incorporated at a high quality if the community seeks out funding to match this $30k amount. Time is of the essence, so fundraising should begin immediately and target March of 2005 for final design with construction beginning in the Spring of 2005.
Improve Carson Library

**What we said:** The PACT recommended that the Carson Library should be improved to send a message of revitalization and investment in the community.

**What they did:** The London Public Library Board (LPLB) have initiated a $50,000 capital project to improve the Carson Library. This project is to include "interior finishes, wall removal, landscaping, furnishing, book drop and redesign of staff workroom to increase public space" (City of London Board of Control report – October 27, 2004). Meanwhile, the Board has been working with the community to establish a Heritage Bulletin Board and the new Garden Club to develop a plan for updating the library gardens.

**PACT Assessment:** The London Public Library Board has "stepped up to the plate" to fund and initiate an important initiative for the community.

More Vigilantly Enforce Property Standards and Parking By-laws

**What we said:** PACT’s review of the area revealed that both property standards and parking by-laws were not being enforced. We recommended that enforcement be stepped up.

**What they did:** The City of London and Old East Village BIA entered into an agreement to more proactively enforce these two by-laws. The BIA established networks in the community to identify parking and property standard by-law infractions on a proactive basis. The BIA then reports these issues to the City’s By-law Enforcement Office who then acts accordingly.

**PACT Assessment:** The PACT heard from both the BIA and City Staff that this has led to some major improvements in by-law enforcement and the PACT concurs that a cursory review of the area suggests these conditions have improved considerably.

Improve Ongoing Maintenance of Public Realm

**What we said:** The PACT suggested that the BIA and City needed to work together to improve the appearance and maintenance of the public realm – including public infrastructure.

**What they did:** A new sewer and water project has recently occurred in the neighbourhood. The project cost is approximately $1.5 million. This investment in the neighbourhood's infrastructure sends a positive message to the residents that the City is investing in maintenance and repair.

The BIA has been very active in this area, initiating and partnering with the London Police, area businesses, the Unity Project, St. Joseph’s Hospitality, Renaissance in the Old East Village - 15
Goodwill Industries, London Intercommunity Health Centre, Community Associations, area residents, the OEV Community Association, the City of London and others in projects such as:

- Graffiti removal
- Clean and green
- Sweep the streets program (prior to Block Party)
- Storefront clean-up

Meanwhile, the City has now established a program to regularly install Christmas lights on the corridor and has partnered with the BIA and business owners to maintain hanging flower baskets.

**PACT Assessment:** The PACT believes that major improvements are occurring in this area and are impressed by the changes that have occurred in one year. It is clear, however, that full-scale maintenance and beautification on the corridor will not take place until economic revitalization takes hold.

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**Dedicate a Person or Team at City Hall as Liaison/Trouble-Shooter**

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**What we said:** In light of the multitude of recommendations relating to subject matter which is controlled or affected by the Corporation of the City of London, the PACT recommended that Municipal Council dedicate a staff member or team as the key liaison for the BIA, community and others to work with as a single window into City Hall.

**What they did:** The Director of Business Liaison was given this responsibility.

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_Renaissance in the Old East Village - 16_
PACT Assessment: The Director of Business Liaison prepared a report to Board of Control shortly after the revitalization plan was brought to Council by the BIA. The report had the effect of itemizing each recommendation and ensuring that specific staff members were assigned ownership and accountability for addressing these recommendations. The PACT is very impressed by the amount of action taken by the City to date to support the revitalization plan. Much more work is required, but the progress made by this key stakeholder in the revitalization process is very encouraging.

Move up the Timing of the City's Plan to Heritage Designate the Old East Village Neighbourhood

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What we said: To recognize the heritage value of the neighbourhood, the Planners Action Team suggested that the residential neighbourhood north of Duncais Street be designated as a Heritage Conservation District. While the City had identified this area as a potential HCD, the City's list of priorities and timing for designation indicated that this area would not be designated for many, many years.

What they did: Since the PACT report was released, the municipality approved an amendment to the HCD priority list, placing the Old East Village at the top. This was followed up by the hiring of consultants to prepare an HCD study (at a cost of $40k). Another $30k has been set aside for the Old East Village HCD plan and further funds have been reserved for heritage signage for the area.

PACT Assessment: The Heritage Conservation District study process has been a major success factor in the revitalization of the neighbourhood to the north. It has sparked a kind of renaissance whereby the neighbourhood has awakened to the understanding of the tremendous heritage asset within its midst. With the creation of a community-based HCD steering committee, the community has rallied around the designation process. Positive attitudes towards the process can be illustrated by the fact that there was only one submission which objected to the HCD Study when it was submitted to Council in October of 2004. Attendance at all Public Meetings relating to the Study was unusually high and rather than concerns being expressed relating to the HCD, there were more requests for inclusion within the HCD from property owners who were outside of the original HCD boundaries.
The HCD Study recommended an HCD boundary which would take in approximately 1,000 properties. It is believed that this would make the Old East Village HCD the largest of its kind in Ontario. The Study prepared by the consultants for this project is outstanding in its detail, historical background, and analysis. An unusual component of the study includes an assessment of tourism potential for the Old East Village (and corridor) which takes the Study beyond regulation and begins the discussion of the economic benefits of the HCD.

The Heritage Conservation District Study has been a major contributor to the PACT's goal of re-establishing value. The neighbourhood, and the wider London community, have begun to understand the value of the Old East Village as one of London's few heritage villages with all of the positive elements that come with heritage neighbourhood design.

Benjamin Moore Paints is now preparing a specific Old East Village colour pallet that will be available in the Spring of 2005 throughout southwestern Ontario. The release of the pallet is scheduled to bring Toronto TV exposure the area.

Install Video Surveillance Cameras Along Dundas Street

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What we said: The PACT acknowledged that the concept of installing video surveillance cameras along Dundas Street required further research by the BIA and municipality. This was listed as a low priority by the PACT and something to be considered in the longer term.

What they did: The PACT learned that the BIA had consulted on this issue with the City Police Department. At the same time, they have done some research which has led them to a decision not to go forward with cameras at this time. They note that such cameras are not an effective crime deterrent and can only be expected to address the issue of public perception.

PACT Assessment: As indicated above, this is an item that the PACT believes should be addressed at some point in the future. The benefits of cameras to a perceived feeling of safety is significant. The PACT notes that such cameras are currently used in Downtown London. It was listed as a longer-term priority but it should not be "lost in the shuffle". It would be appropriate for Municipal Council to refer this item to the London Police Department, for discussion with the BIA and other relevant City staff to consider the costs and benefits of such a program.

Improve the New Western Fair Parking Facility at King and Ontario

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What we said: During the previous assessment and plan prepared by the PACT, it was identified that the Western Fair Association had recently purchased and demolished a number of buildings on the northwest corner of King and Ontario streets. The lot was surfaced with gravel. The PACT recommended that the lot be paved and landscaped.

What they did and PACT assessment: The Western Fair "stepped up to the plate" on this item, indicating that they already had plans to do so prior to the PACT report. The lot has been developed to a high quality standard, including paving, curbing, some landscaping and lighting. The lot serves its purpose of providing parking for the Fairgrounds, while also providing for safety and reasonable aesthetics.
Consider Improvements to the Schoolyard at Lorne Ave, P.S.

What we said: The PACT recommended that the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) improve the yard at Lorne Ave P.S. so that it incorporates more green space – noting that there appears to be an imbalance between hard surface and green space in the yard. The PACT also recommended that the Board commit to maintain the school for the long term.

What they did and PACT assessment: A recent City report to London’s Board of Control indicates that a letter was submitted to Municipal Council on this issue in September of 2003, expressing concern regarding improvements to the school yard and the process by which Council adopted the PACT’s recommendations to consider this issue. Since then, the TVDSB has identified a budget for a project to make improvements to the schoolyard. Furthermore, the Board has been working to expand the range of programs offered within the school to enhance the feasibility of maintaining it.

In addition, the school has been nominated by Senior Administration at the TDSB to receive additional resources from the Ministry of Education in response to the provincial government’s new Education Foundations Program to improve early literacy.

Finally, the TVDSB entered into a partnership with the City of London and the OPP to host a World Town Planning Day celebration at Lorne Avenue Public School. The Principal, Vice Principal and staff throughout the School were instrumental in carrying out the day, which included a variety of planning-related learning activities throughout the day. One of those activities involved the students re-designing the Lorne Avenue schoolyard. The students learned about their neighbourhood’s many assets and this was another positive step towards re-establishing value in the area.
Work to Retain Aeolian Hall

What we said: The PACT identified Aeolian Hall as a vital component of the Old East neighbourhood, given its role as the Town Hall of the former Town of East London, its prominent architecture, and function as a community focal point for arts and culture in the past. The PACT recommended that strong efforts be made to retain the building.

What they did: Following failed negotiations, Municipal Council heritage-designated Aeolian Hall without the owner's consent. The owner subsequently appealed the designation to the Heritage Conservation Review Board. Evidence was provided by municipal staff, Nancy Tausky (a local heritage expert and advocate), the Old East Village BIA and members of the community. The PACT report, and the significance that it attached to the building, was referenced in evidence provided at the hearing.

The Heritage Review Board decided in favour of the municipality's move to designate the building. Since then, the property was purchased by Clark Bryan who has begun a plan to restore the building over time and, most importantly, has given the building new life by establishing the Canadian National Conservatory of Music within the building. Mr. Bryan has also booked the Hall with a variety of community-oriented events which has had the effect of bringing the facility back to the community. Mr. Bryan has taken steps to establish the building as a Nationally Registered Heritage Site.

Meanwhile, the Aeolian Hall Musical Arts Association has played a large role in the preservation of the building through promotions, fund raising and stage extensions.

PACT Assessment: The PACT could not be more impressed by the incredible progress that has been made with respect to Aeolian Hall. The building is of key importance to the revitalization effort and its retention will pay significant dividends for revitalization in the future. The PACT acknowledges that the City has played a major role in the retention of the Hall, but recommends that the Municipality continue to explore creative ways to support the viable retention of this building. At the PACT Public meeting, there was discussion relating to the possibility of establishing a Firefighter’s Museum within an unused portion of the Hall. Perhaps this could be a starting point for Council’s consideration to assist the Hall.
Initiatives Undertaken Beyond PACT Recommendations

Western Fair Association: The Western Fair Association has begun to play a key role in the revitalization plan. As noted above, they have improved the parking facility at King and Ontario, but their activities have gone beyond that and the prospects for the Fair playing a key stakeholder role in the revitalization of Old East London are bright.

The Western Fair has spent a considerable amount on the Confederation Building located at Ontario and Dundas Street. This is a key investment for the Old East area in that it suggests that the building remains in the long term plans of the Fair, it's restored façade provides a positive physical influence on the corridor, and it illustrates investment to other property owners on the corridor. The Western Fair should be congratulated for this move.

Similarly, the Western Fair has re-invested in its Archives Museum in Queens Park. While the building, itself, needs improvements, the interior use is excellent for both Queens Park and the entire Old East Village community. The Archives Museum celebrates the history of the Fair which has been a key community asset within London and the surrounding region for many, many years. The celebration of this history at this location is an important positive activity.

Finally, the Western Fair Association has expressed very strong support for the Old East Village revitalization initiative – this support was expressed publicly at a recent Planning Committee meeting whereby the City's community improvement plan was presented. This support is key and the City, BIA and Western Fair must continue to explore partnerships to build on successes to date. The PACT hopes that the Western Fair will become even more involved in the revitalization program with continued involvement and investment.

Garden Club: The PACT considered including a recommendation relating to a community garden in its April, 2003 report, but chose not to given the abundance of recommendations already "on the table" at the time. Even in the absence of this recommendation, an outstanding initiative has grown in the neighbourhood, spearheaded by residents Bev Wagar and Donna Currie. The Old East Garden Club was formed to allow members to "learn about horticulture, share their expertise, make friends, share resources and work to build the Old East neighbourhood".

The significance of this initiative should not be understated. It is the type of grass-roots undertaking that illustrates a strong movement towards community revitalization, an appreciation for community, and a desire to be involved in the meaningful improvement of the area. The Club has organized plant exchanges, two "garden crawls" (tours of members' gardens), two seminars on...
garden design, a seed swap, a perennial exchange, and two garden rehabilitation projects— one at Carson Library and the other on the Dundas Corridor in front of a local retail building. The Old East Garden Club worked with the Library Board to act as caretakers of the landscaping at the Carson Library. The Garden Club is proposing several new initiatives for 2005. The PACT recommends that the Garden Club seek out opportunities to develop a community garden project. This could enhance the current activities and further develop the renewed spirit and feeling of proud community ownership.

New Community Association: Perhaps the most significant advancement relating to the improvement of the Old East neighbourhood is the creation of a Community Association in January of 2004. The PACT is very impressed by the fact that such an organization has been formally established and, furthermore, by the activities of the organization and the quality of the ideas and future plans of the association.

Most of the energies of this fledgling organization have been devoted to establishing the organization, formalizing processes, and establishing plans for their upcoming work. They have undertaken extensive research on community revitalization to inform themselves and determine how they can be most effective. They have published a high quality newsletter which has established a communications vehicle within the neighbourhood. Importantly, the Community Association is establishing a representative voice (with over 75 members and over 100 affiliates) which can be "at the table" when issues relating to the neighbourhood and commercial corridor are being considered. Already, the Association has collaborated to assist with the Geranium Walk (see below), Block Party (see below) and Heritage Conservation District Study.

The OEV Community Association intends to prepare a neighbourhood plan— "a vision document that will identify and prioritize the needs of the neighbourhood and, through public participation, develop an action plan to meet these needs."

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Geranium Walk: The London Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario decided to hold its 31st annual Geranium Walk in the Old East Village in 2004. This was significant in that it represents the very first Geranium walk held east of Adelaide in the event's history. By all accounts, the event was a major success with almost 500 paying participants making it one of the most profitable Geranium Walks of all time in London.
3.2 Strengthen the Connection Between the Community and the Corridor

Return Queens Ave. to a Collector Road and Allow Two-way Traffic

**What We Said:** The Planners Action Team identified the one-way Queens Avenue arterial road as a perceived barrier which cut off the neighbourhood from the corridor. The PACT argued that a one-way arterial designed to move traffic into the Downtown was inappropriate within a residential community and further recommended that the road be returned to its prior status as a two-way collector street.

**What They Did:** $25k was set aside by the City of London to study the possibilities, issues and implications of converting Queens Avenue. The study was also designed to include consideration of converting King Street to a two-way street and allowing for southbound left turns onto Dundas Street from Adelaide Street. The terms of reference for the study will include an analysis of likely traffic impacts on Dundas Street, as well as likely impacts on other streets in the area should the Queens Avenue conversion be implemented.

**PACT Assessment and Recommendation:** At the time of writing this report, no results had been produced from the consultants studying this issue. However, results were expected in November of 2004. It is noteworthy that Stantec Consulting Ltd. who acted as the Prime Consultant for the Old East Heritage Conservation District Study, also recommended that a conversion of Queens Avenue to two-way traffic be considered and that "If implemented, it may help reduce the traffic speed on Queens Avenue and enhance the pedestrian environment for those walking along and crossing the street. It would also be consistent with the historic design and function of the street."

**Allow for Southbound Left Turns Onto Dundas Street from Adelaide Street**

**What We Said:** The Planners Action Team suggested that southbound turns from Adelaide Street onto Dundas Street should be considered, with limitations during peak periods. The PACT noted that this is would not be dissimilar to the regulations relating to other north/south streets that cross Dundas Street in the Core.

**What They Did:** As noted above, the City of London has funded the study of this concept, the results of which are expected to be released in November of 2004.
Focus Business Recruitment on Businesses That Can Service the Community

What We Said: The PACT suggested that the BIA study and better understand the shopping patterns of residents in the neighbourhood and identify regular needs and niches that could possibly be serviced by the commercial corridor. With this understanding, the PACT recommended that the BIA then recruit businesses to fill these needs.

What They Did: The Old East Village BIA indicated that this work has begun, but had no specific progress to report at this time: An online business directly has been created on the BIA web site, complete with photos where available.

PACT Assessment and Recommendation:
The PACT identified this initiative as a 2nd tier priority in the revitalization plan. Resources have been focused on higher priority items as recommended. However, it will soon be time to take on this initiative in earnest.

With so much effort devoted to improving the neighbourhood in Year 1, it is now time to yield some benefits of this improvement on the corridor. This can be supported by better understanding what opportunities exist to encourage neighbourhood-oriented commercial uses on the corridor that will service the community to the north. The PACT reminds key stakeholders of the illustrative vision offered by Wortley Village whereby the commercial corridor offers a substantial number of services to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Develop a Buy At Home Program

What We Said: The PACT suggested that the community needs to be engaged to feel a commitment to shop on the corridor. "This will be difficult at first, given that there are very few uses currently existing on the corridor that actually offer services that the community can use." For this reason, this recommendation was identified as a tier 3 priority.

What They Did and PACT assessment: No specific work has been completed to date relating to this recommendation. However, as indicated above, the community has formed a Community Association which is now producing a regular newsletter. This is an excellent foundation for communicating with the community which will be a requirement for any Buy At Home Program to be initiated by the BIA.
Establish Goals and Policies for the Village Core

What We Said: The Planners Action Team identified a Village Core area that was to serve as a focal point for revitalization. Policies were to be established, and entrenched in the Official Plan for the corridor.

What They Did: The City of London prepared a Community Improvement Plan which established boundaries for the Village Core: Village Annex; Area of Transition and Entertainment Area. The Community Improvement Area Plan was adopted by Municipal Council in November of 2004 under Section 28 of the Planning Act. The Plan is now being considered for adoption by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Community Improvement Plan provided a vision and policies for each identified area and also identified a series of implementation actions to be undertaken by the municipality, including: Official Plan and zoning by-law amendments and a series of incentive programs.

Official Plan policies and zoning applied to the Village Core are designed to:

- Promote retention of the existing heritage stock
- Promote a continuous building streetscape
- Promote the retention of public parking opportunities
- Discourage development of a scale, massing, and character that is inconsistent with the existing built form
- Support uses that link to the surrounding residential neighbourhood
- Promote ground floor commercial continuity; while allowing for living environments in the rear of ground floor spaces (live/work opportunities).

PACT Assessment: The Community Improvement Plan provides an excellent foundation for policies, zoning and programs along the commercial corridor. The Plan embodies many suggestions made by the PACT and clearly sets a focus for revitalization in the Village Core. The policies set out for the Core are clear and allow for an identifiable linkage to specific zoning actions. The CIP represents a major advancement for the commercial corridor and the fact that it has been completed and adopted by Council since the PACT report was presented in 2003 is an impressive accomplishment.
Change Zoning Applied to the Village Core

What We Said: The PACT suggested that the zoning previously applied to the Village Core was inappropriate. Specifically, it supported very large scale development without the goal of preserving a pedestrian-oriented streetscape – thus undermining the strongest asset that the Village Core has to offer.

What They Did: Based on the Community Improvement Plan, zoning amendments were prepared and approved by Council which supported the goals of the Official Plan policies (as noted above). The zoning now:

- Permits a full range of commercial retail, office and residential uses that are consistent with a business district.
- Dwelling units may be permitted in the rear of ground floor spaces, or anywhere above the ground floor – beyond the simple provision of more housing within the Core area, this will provide the benefit of live/work/display/sell opportunities for those involved in artistic endeavours.
- Uses with drive through facilities and parking lot structures are not permitted to front Dundas.
- Maximum front and exterior side yard depths are 0 m, supporting a contiguous building line which is constructed to the sidewalk.

PACT Assessment: Zoning has been applied effectively in the Village Core to support and implement the new policies included in the Community Improvement Plan and Official Plan.
Enhance the Incentive Package Currently Offered in the Old East Village

What We Said: The PACT suggested that new incentives be considered for the Old East corridor. Such incentives should provide impetus for investment on the corridor.

What They Did: As noted above, a Community Improvement Plan was established under Section 28 of the Planning Act. This Plan has been adopted by City Council, and is now awaiting provincial approval. Once approved, the Plan will provide a legal basis for the municipality to provide grants, loans and other financial benefits to property owners within the specified Community Improvement Planning Area.

The Plan provided similar, but slightly different, incentives for each district within the corridor. They are as follows:

### Financial Incentives Established by District

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<th>Village Annex</th>
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<td>Façade Loan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Waive Parking Requirements</td>
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<td>Tax Grant Incentive Rebate</td>
<td>Yes. If a structure exists which is important to the streetscape, it must be incorporated into the proposed development to the satisfaction of the City.</td>
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PACT Assessment: The incentives that have been adopted by City Council are significant. While they should not be considered a panacea for attracting investment to the corridor, they will blend with other activities to provide a good basis for investment decision making to support the corridor. These incentives stand the chance to "tip the scale" in favour of investing in Old East London.

Develop a Convert to Rent Program

What We Said: The PACT acknowledged that the Old East Village BIA had been successful in securing a grant through the City of London Affordable Housing Initiative for $165,000 to begin a convert to rent housing initiative. It was acknowledged that housing of all types was vital to the long term success of the corridor.

What They Did and PACT Assessment: As the PACT has come to expect, the BIA exceeded expectations to implement the Convert to
Rent Program. Unique within Canada, the BIA, CMHC and the City partnered to develop a program that would offer two programs jointly – the CMHC RRAP program and the City of London's Affordable Housing funding program. A Convert to Rent Steering Committee was formed which resulted in approval for the funding of 19 residential units. $165k of funding from the City leveraged a further $180k of funding from property owners and CMHC.

As noted above, this is a first of its kind in Canada – with CMHC not typically entering into partnerships such as this through the RRAP Program. CMHC has taken a hands-on approach to the RFP process, by assisting applicants to prepare applications for funding. This overcame typical "fears" of government processes. Members from the Steering Committee made it clear that the BIA was the cohesive force that brought the partnership together.

The team has now assisted another 19 property owners to apply for a second round of CMHC funding, using the first round as a template for success.

The PACT congratulates the City, CMHC and the BIA for this outstanding program. Plans should be put in place to pursue a second round of funding for this unique partnership program.

Develop a BIA Recruitment Program

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What We Said: The PACT suggested that the BIA develop a business recruitment program. This was a second-tier priority in the PACT report. Recruitment efforts should be focused on filling space in the Village Core and efforts should be made to establish a visible beachhead of strong commercial uses to make an impact on perceptions relating to the viability of the corridor.

What They Did: The BIA has been involved in some initial recruitment work. They worked with a local realtor to identify vacant spaces to accommodate more than one prospective tenant. The BIA explained that they had difficulties contacting property owners – something that the PACT similarly had difficulties accomplishing. Furthermore, when contacted many of the property owners were not willing to improve their spaces to support new tenants. Some properties were so badly neglected that repairs and/or realty taxes owing were very high and there was little prospect for sale or rental.
The BIA has begun a detailed inventory of vacant space. This will be critical for developing a strategic recruitment plan. The BIA has become known as a resource for potential tenants to utilize to find such vacant space. In recent months, the BIA has received enquiries for assistance from 6 different parties. Three of these enquiries have resulted in new tenants on Dundas Street. Since the audit, many more enquiries have been received.

The BIA plans to tackle the task of recruitment in a more focused way in 2005. This is consistent with the sequence of work recommended by the PACT.

PACT Assessment and Recommendation: With major advancements being made in the residential community to the north, and financial incentives soon available in the corridor, the PACT believes that it is now time to focus more efforts on recruitment. A systematic process should be pursued to inventory vacant space and identify the characteristics of this space. In doing so, potential types of uses can be considered and then recruitment activities can begin. It will be important to prepare an information kit for potential investors so that they can understand the major improvements that are taking place in the Old East Village. This kit should include information on incentives, the community improvement plan, zoning and support services. The kit should also include demographic data relating to the population of the surrounding community. It is recommended that Main Street materials from the National Trust for Historic Preservation regarding recruitment be consulted.

The PACT believes that the type of commercial use that would consider locating on the corridor is likely the most desirable type of use to generate an interesting and eclectic commercial streetscape. The western extents of Queens Street West, in Toronto, is instructive in this regard. Very few "chain stores" are located here and individual entrepreneurs form the basis for the commercial corridor. Interior improvements are often minimal, which makes spaces flexible to turnover.

There is also a potential role for the corridor to play as a business incubator. With the significant amount of low rent space which is available, new businesses can take up spaces at a low cost to establish their business practices. Support networks through the BIA should be put in place to assist fledgling businesses, with regular communications, training, mentoring, community advertising, etc. The PACT suggests that the BIA work with the Small Business Centre which has recently moved to a location in the vicinity to explore opportunities for a focused Small Business Centre support program for the Old East Village.
Finally, the PACT recommends that the City of London review taxes owing on properties along the commercial corridor to identify where barriers may exist to the viable sale or rental of a property. Where such properties are identified, the City should creatively explore opportunities for "breaking the log jam". In some cases, this might involve a tax sale process.

A major problem has been revealed with respect to property owners on the corridor. Recruitment just isn't possible if building owners are not cooperative, nor receptive to reasonable leasing opportunities. Property owners have to change their perceptions and business practices such that they begin to more fully participate in the revitalization program. They stand to gain much from revitalization and, even where deteriorating buildings may be serving as tax losses, owners owe it to the community to either sell their buildings or engage in revitalization.

Establish a Business Retention Program

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What We Said: The PACT suggested that the BIA develop a business retention program to augment the business recruitment program.

What They Did: Recognizing the real and perceived issues relating to crime on the Dundas Corridor, the BIA entered into a very creative partnership with the City of London Police Services to establish a Business Police Academy. The Academy is an innovative Crime Prevention education and training program. It offers the business community a chance to learn more about business related crime prevention strategies.

Program topics were developed by London Police Services in consultation with the business community and address the most commonly identified concerns. Information was presented through guest speakers, facilitated discussion groups and community site visits. Participants also had the opportunity to observe the police working in the community. Topics included: shoplifting and robbery prevention; fraud and counterfeit prevention; personal safety; drug awareness; vandalism and graffiti; crime prevention through environmental design, police procedures, reporting procedures, and by-law awareness.

Beyond informal meetings with individual property and business owners, the BIA did not engage in further business retention activities. Once again, this activity is seen as a focal point for 2005.

PACT Assessment and Recommendation: The formation of the Business Police Academy is an outstanding accomplishment. It begins to address a key issue – safety and crime prevention – on the corridor and helps existing businesses to act effectively to do so. Further retention initiatives should be developed in 2005.
Improve Physical Linkages from Public Parking Facilities; Improve Timing of Traffic Signals and Consider Installing Gateway Features and Signage

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What We Said: Acknowledging the importance of parking facilities to support the commercial corridor, the PACT recommended that physical linkages from these parking spaces be improved. The PACT also noted that traffic signals needed to be better timed and suggested that gateway features and signage be considered for the corridor in the future. All of these programs were considered third tier priorities in the PACT plan.

What They Did: To date, there has been little reported activity on these three items. In a report to City Council, City Staff indicated that meetings between staff, the Police Department and the BIA are ongoing with respect to the connectivity between parking lots and the corridor. The same report indicates that the City is currently undergoing a major upgrade to its traffic control system. They have committed to include the Dundas corridor in their review. Finally, there has been no activity relating to the consideration of gateway treatments and signage. The PACT maintains that such a project would be more appropriate at a later date when revitalization begins to take hold.

Develop Strategic Marketing Programs

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What We Said: The PACT suggested that general marketing for the corridor will not be effective. Suggestions relating to theming (e.g., heritage theme), packages, cross promotions with Western Fair, etc. were elicited in the Plan. As noted above, a buy at home program was also recommended.

What They Did: This has not been a focus of the BIA to date. However, they have recently hired a marketing staff member and intend to focus more of their energies on marketing in 2005.

PACT Assessment and Recommendations: Marketing should be coupled with a recruitment and retention program in 2005 to begin to establish a presence for the corridor. Theme based marketing appears to hold promise. Perhaps arts, culture, and heritage – tied into an eclectic attitude - could provide a theme that ties some key strengths of this area together.
Establish Goals and Policies for the Village Annex and Area of Transition

What We Said: As noted above, the PACT recommended that areas along the corridor be differentiated and that policies, zoning and programs be implemented in these areas according to their varying roles on the corridor. Specifically, the plan noted that the corridor was too long to viably support with pedestrian-oriented commercial uses and that some areas should be planned to transition to other uses.

What They Did: As noted above, the City of London prepared a Community Improvement Plan which established boundaries for the Village Core; Village Annex; Area of Transition and Entertainment Area. The Community Improvement Plan provided a vision and policies for each identified area and also identified a series of implementation actions to be undertaken by the municipality, including Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments and a series of incentive programs.

Official Plan policies and zoning applied to the Village Annex are designed to:

- Promote retention of important heritage buildings – including Aeolian Hall and the Palace Theatre
- Promote a continuous building streetscape
- Allow for pedestrian-oriented infill projects
- Allow for medium and high density residential buildings where they are stepped back from the streetscape
- Support uses that link to the surrounding residential neighbourhood
- Promote ground floor commercial continuity; while allowing for living environments in the rear of ground floor spaces (live/work opportunities).
Official Plan policies and zoning applied to the Area of Transition are designed to:

- Promote retention of important heritage buildings
- Allow for the redevelopment of various sites for medium and high density housing to support the viability of the commercial corridor and create a more intense village form along the corridor.
- Allow for commercial uses of an automobile orientation

PACT Assessment: The Community Improvement Plan provides an excellent foundation for policies, zoning and programs along the commercial corridor. The Official Plan policies and zoning applied to the corridor are consistent with the recommendations of the PACT Plan and we believe that they lay the framework for effective revitalization.

Enhance Incentives Offered in the Village Annex and Area of Transition

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What We Said: The PACT recommended a variety of incentives for the Village Annex and the Area of Transition.

What was done and PACT Assessment: As noted above, an excellent range of incentives have been included in the Community Improvement Plan which will serve as a basis for attracting investment to the corridor. The above table shows the incentives that will be offered to each district within the corridor.

Provide an Illustrative Vision of How the Corridor May Transition

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What We Said: The PACT suggested that visual images should be prepared to represent a vision for how the Village Annex and Area of Transition will be developed over time. We suggested that such images be conceptual in nature.

What They Did: We are not aware of any work that has been done to date on this item.
PACT Assessment and Recommendation: The PACT recommends that the BIA approach Fanshawe College's Urban Design Program to explore the possibilities for an assigned project which engages students to prepare such illustrations. An alternative may be to summons artists in the community to prepare illustrations depicting how the area of transition could potentially develop. The vision for the area as expressed in the community improvement plan should be understood so that such illustrative visions are consistent. It should be remembered, however, that these illustrations are visionary and are not necessarily detailed architectural renderings.

3.5 Develop Entertainment, Recreation and Arts Opportunities

Retain Aeolian Hall

Additional Commentary: This item has been addressed in an earlier section of this report. The retention of the Hall as a performance venue is a major advancement for the corridor – particularly from the perspective of entertainment and arts. Together with the Palace Theatre, these two performance venues provide the seeds for a strong arts and culture district in the Old East Village.

Seek Out and Support Controversial Arts and Entertainment

What We Said: The PACT suggested that the London Community Players, the Forest City Gallery and other artist groups in the area should focus on theatre and arts that are outside of the mainstream.

What They Did: The BIA have discussed this issue with local arts groups and individual artists to identify what resources they need to foster arts and culture on the corridor. They are seeking out possibilities around affordable mortgages for artists.

PACT Assessment: The more general commentary in this report on arts and culture in the Old East Village should be referenced.

Display Art in Vacant Window Spaces

What We Said: The PACT suggested that a sense of art should be "in your face" within the corridor at all times. One way to build this sense is to display art in vacant window spaces.

What They Did: The PACT saw evidence that this was occurring on a fragmented basis. However, during the Block Party, very effective displays were created for...
storefront windows. The broad range of possibilities were explored very successfully.

**PACT Assessment:** This initiative will rely upon the creative community in the Old East Village to implement together with the BIA. The concept should continue to be explored.

### Organize and Promote Art-oriented Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What We Said:** The PACT suggested that an Arts Festival be organized to bring thousands of people to the Village Core and develop the reputation for arts in the Old East Village in minds of London residents.

**What They Did:** A very special series of activities occurred in relation to the notion of an arts-related event in the Old East Village. A group of community residents who have multiple artistic and creative talents banded together to create a new group referred to as the “Eastern Bloc Collective”. The mandate of the group was established to hold a high profile event on the Dundas Street corridor to celebrate the many artistic talents of the people who live and practice their skills in the area. The Eastern Bloc Collective partnered with the BIA, London Arts Council, OEV Community Association and the Western Fair to run a unique cultural event referred to as “The Block Party”.

The event was kicked off with a gala celebration at the Aeolian Hall – complete with musical performances, a celebration of successes in the neighbourhood and dancing. Dundas Street was closed for the weekend and a stage was set up to host performances throughout the day. Activities such as face painting blended with buskers and temporary flea market to create a festival atmosphere. An outdoor Canadian film festival was hosted in Queen's Park during the evening. Sidewalks and storefront windows were cleaned in preparation for the event and art installations were placed inside these storefronts. The Garden Club became involved by tying plant arrangements to parking meters and signs.

The entrance of LaLa Land, an artists co-op, is a very important achievement for the corridor. In addition, a new art gallery has located on the corridor – another excellent sign that arts and culture are taking hold in Old East.

**PACT Assessment and Recommendation:** The PACT sees the seeds of an arts and culture district growing quickly in Old East London and we suggest that the community as a whole continue to build on this strength. Clearly, there is a sense of pride in the creative community within Old East London and the “renaissance” that appears to be underway should be fostered by all of the parties that are involved in this revitalization initiative. Commercial areas are more likely to successfully revitalize when they are associated with an identity. Arts, culture and heritage are authentic components of the Old East Village community that it should continue to nurture and grow at every opportunity.
This very creative endeavour is an excellent counter-weight to the loss of the Forest City Gallery from the Aeolian Hall. The BIA should work with those proposing creative initiatives to find them suitable spaces in vacant spaces on the corridor.

The PACT has learned that the City of London is currently engaged in a review of strategies which may employed to strengthen its role as a creative city. We believe that the City should recognize the importance of the Old East Village as an existing attraction for arts and culture. The ingredients for creative culture are in place and it is clear that the community is attracting many creative talents. The City should not lose sight of the fact that creative places must be authentic and the Old East Village delivers that authenticity "in spades".

The PACT recommends that the Old East Village explore the concepts of:
- Arts and Culture Districts
- Artists Colonies
- Art Festivals
- Arts Co-ops

On this last point, the Planners Action Team was encouraged to see the creation of La La Land, a collaborative project of several artists to create and exhibit art within loft space on the corridor.

4.0 COMMUNITY FEELINGS

The value of the PACT Report can be assessed not only by the actual changes that are visible but also by the feelings and perceptions that exist within the community about the report and its impact. From discussions with various community groups and the public on October 15, 2004, it appears that people are beginning to witness a positive transition within the neighbourhood and that many
of them credit the PACT report with stimulating some of that transition. Following is a summary of some of the key points raised and types of activities that are occurring in the community that can be attributed directly and indirectly to the PACT report and its recommendations.

Old East Village Community Association (OEVCA)
The OEVCA was formed in January 2004 with major energy and efforts focused on "getting it up and running". Members of the OEVCA have also been instrumental in participating in the Old East Heritage Conservation District Study and in lobbying the ACO to hold its annual Geranium Walk in Old East. These events and activities relate to PACT recommendations regarding moving up the focus on heritage in the area and are viewed by members of the OEVCA as being important components to help change the often negative stereotypes that many Londoners have of the area.

Heritage Conservation District Steering Committee
The Steering Committee's involvement in the Old East Heritage District Study has been an important component in garnering community awareness and support for the project. Members of the Steering Committee indicated that there has been a great deal of public interest and inquiry in the process and that many residents are interested and...
supportive of heritage designation as a means of changing the image of Old East.

The Heritage Committee is also expanding its focus to help integrate Old East heritage information and activities for students at Lorne Avenue School, and is working with a local business, Benjamin Moore, to develop heritage colour schemes for buildings in the area. These activities are also viewed as additional means of increasing community pride and awareness of Old East's heritage and improving both the mental and physical perceptions of the area.

**Convert to Rent Program**

The 'convert to rent program' has been a partnership between the Old East Village BIA, CMHC, London Intercommunity Health Centre, area realtors, are businesses and property owners and the City of London to convert non-residential buildings along the Dundas Street corridor to residential units, primarily on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The initiative is a direct result of PACT recommendations related to creating a village core and concentrating revitalization efforts in that area. Participants in the 'convert to rent' program indicated that the process of rehabilitation in the area is positive and that the 'hands-on' process was both useful and encouraging. They believe that there is more awareness in the community and more communication with neighbours than in the past, and see a greater sense that by working together, the neighbourhood can be improved.

**London Police Services**

London Police Services has undertaken some new initiatives in the Old East area, initiating the Business Police Academy to assist business owners in dealing with crime prevention, CPTED, etc. They also completed a 'crime prevention through environmental analysis' process to help identify problems in the neighbourhood. This has resulted in the formation of a number of committees and the
development of an action plan. As a result of these police initiatives, business owners have noticed a difference and there appears to be less crime and prostitution along the corridor. In addition, residents are calling police more frequently regarding problems and have set up committees to address specific problems. It would appear to indicate that people are taking a more proactive role towards such issues in the neighbourhood and that there has been a positive change in the relationship between business owners, neighbourhood residents and the police.

OEVCA Garden Club

The Old East Village Community Association Garden Club was established in spring 2004. While the group’s formation was based on common gardening interests rather than as a result of any recommendations in the PACT report, their activities have become more community focused. Due to their efforts along Dundas Street (Trads Furniture, Aeolian Hall, etc.) and at the library, the club is enhancing and helping to build upon PACT recommendations related to improving Carson Library, redeveloping Queens Park and improving landscaping in the area. Members of the garden club indicated that they and other community residents have been gratified (and somewhat surprised, in some cases) to find that their efforts have thrived without incident in various areas, particularly along Dundas Street, and made a noticeable and positive visual impact to the streetscape. The garden club has also organized a number of fun and ‘non-traditional’ garden events (garden crawls, “random acts of gardening kindness”, etc.) that help build community relationships as well as beautify the neighbourhood.

Eastern Bloc Collective

The Eastern Bloc Collective was formed to create an “on the street happening” using art to transform the landscape. It was composed of numerous creative people who had ties to Old East, either working and/or living in the area. This initiative is directly related to PACT recommendations regarding the development of entertainment, recreation and arts opportunities. The Block Party, held in August, was a very successful event and was viewed by many people as being an important and effective way of showcasing Old East’s unique attributes and creative energy to the neighbourhood itself as well as to the rest of London.

Residents In General

The former section highlights some of the comments and feelings expressed by residents who have been very directly involved in the various groups and activities that are playing a significant role in helping to
energize and revitalize the Old East area. A public meeting held in the evening of October 15, 2004 provided an opportunity for other residents to provide comments and input regarding what is occurring in Old East in general and as a result of the PACT report. For the most part, residents appeared to view the changes as being positive and that PACT had helped to provide credibility and focus to previous ideas and efforts. Some indicated that they were “thrilled with what is happening in the east end” and confirmed they were witnessing positive changes in the area.

However, despite their impressions that improvements are being made and the recognition that change will take both time and effort, concerns and issues still exist. Some of these related to what kind of incentives could be put in place to have buildings occupied rather than vacant, and how such incentives could be directed to tenants/businesses rather than to the building owners in some cases, to help stimulate additional business investment in the area. In addition, views were expressed about the need for business and retail uses on Dundas Street that would service the direct needs of the community (i.e. – grocery store, etc.) and help revitalize the core area.

A number of residents also expressed the view that despite some of the improvements and initiatives, issues remain with respect to the number of social services on Dundas Street along with concerns regarding crime, poor property maintenance (garbage and building repair), and insufficient police response in the area. However there seemed to also be substantial community recognition and support for these social services as being necessary to meet the needs of people who also reside in the community.

Substantial support appears to exist for developing and promoting the artistic wealth and resources in the community as a means of attracting business and investment to facilitate revitalization. The success of the Old East Bloc Party and the new businesses and initiatives that are being pursued by people in the area (i.e. – Aeolian Hall owner, LaLa Land Studios, etc.) are viewed as evidence that the potential for a vibrant artistic and cultural community exists.

There is also the recognition that although an ongoing partnership with PACT appears to be desired by many in the community, the path to the future lies within the city and community itself. As one resident phrased it, “PACT has mirrored the community vision. To carry the vision forth within the community and do the hard work that is necessary as a community together, we need to look to ourselves.” From the comments and sentiments expressed throughout the audit, it is evident that the community has the desire, capacity and commitment to move forward with and build upon many of the PACT recommendations. What is necessary is that the political, policy and financial framework and partnerships be in place to enable...
the community to continue pursuing their revitalization goals and programs so that their vision can be attained.

5.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PACT’s collaborative planning process resulted in a five “prong” strategy to address the most important issues facing the Old East Village community and corridor. This plan included specific prioritized recommendations but emphasized that the five elements of the strategy could be implemented in many ways. The BIA could utilize the plan as they saw fit. However, PACT committed to monitor the implementation of the plan by returning one year after its presentation to comment on changes that have taken place in the community.

The report, Re-establishing Value - A Plan for the Old East Village, outlined more than thirty-five recommendations intended to improve the corridor. It was suggested that incremental and deliberate steps would be required in order to maintain the focus and momentum of the revitalization effort. Just as it will take time to implement the plan, PACT recognizes that it will take time for the revitalization efforts to produce measurable results. In order to assess the PACT plan as a catalyst for community revitalization, a performance measurement framework should be adopted.

Performance measurement is descriptive and looks at where things are today in relation to the high level outcomes that were set for the program. It helps decision-makers make mid-course corrections to the implementation of a program. Measuring the effects of the PACT plan and its implementation by stakeholders can improve programs, raise external awareness, increase funding eligibility, and establish benchmarks for the Old East Village community revitalization. Looking at the performance results of programs over time can be a useful way for the BIA to track and publicize the progress of revitalization activities.

Through monitoring and tracking the progress of the PACT plan, the story of the Old East Village revitalization can be told. The story begins by identifying the ultimate objective of the program. While there are numerous benefits to the Old East Village revitalization, the ultimate goal is a prosperous commercial Dundas Street corridor. If the revitalization is successful, the beneficiaries will not only be the property owners, business owners, and residents of the Old East Village, but the greater London community. The PACT plan outlined a strategy for how this ultimate objective may be achieved. Therefore, performance measures should be based on the five elements of the revitalization strategy. The five “prongs” are the activities through which the community stakeholders contribute to community change. The final step is to track the progress of the revitalization initiative. Based on the activities in the PACT plan, indicators are used to measure the effect of programs or projects on the commercial corridor.

An emphasis on collecting data relating to performance indicators throughout the life of the program will increase the likelihood that the Old East Revitalization program will be successful in achieving its objective of a vital and thriving commercial corridor. The BIA should coordinate the performance measurement process because it is “spearheading” the community revitalization initiatives.
However, various groups may be responsible for identifying what they are doing and the specific results of their work. Information gained will help the BIA and community groups make the most of their resources by identifying projects to focus on or eliminate. Performance measures will also help garner community and financial support by demonstrating successes and highlighting the value of the revitalization efforts.

**Proposed Draft Performance Measurement Framework:**

**Activity #1: Improve the desirability of the surrounding neighbourhood**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Benefits</th>
<th>Potential Indicators</th>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Improve image of neighbourhood | Home values | - real estate prices and sales  
- property tax revenues (assessed values) | Quantitative |
| | Marketability of residential properties | - annual survey of real estate agents | Qualitative |
| | Reputation of the Old East Village | - annual survey of broader London community | Qualitative |
| | Number of property-related crimes | - crime statistics (vandalism etc.) | Quantitative |
| | Criminal activity | - crime statistics (break and enters, prostitution, drugs) | Quantitative |
| | Number of residents (population density) | - census data  
- rental housing vacancy rates | Quantitative |
| Increase commitment of residents to revitalization efforts | Feelings of safety and well-being | - annual survey of residents | Qualitative |
| | Efforts to beautify | - annual survey of residents | Qualitative |
| | Volunteerism and/or resident involvement in revitalization efforts | - number of community groups created, membership of community groups, volunteers in neighbourhood programs or events | Quantitative |
| Increase commitment of property owners to revitalization efforts | Number of property owners living in area | - ownership patterns | Quantitative |
| | Property standards | - by-law enforcement statistics | Quantitative |
| | Condition of houses | - building permits  
- demolition permits | Quantitative |
### Activity #2: Strengthen the connection of the neighbourhood to the corridor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Benefits</th>
<th>Potential Indicators</th>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of residents who patronize businesses on corridor</td>
<td>Commercial diversity</td>
<td>- inventory of businesses</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial activity</td>
<td>- annual survey of businesses</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest in shopping on corridor</td>
<td>- annual survey of residents</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase positive activity on Dundas Street</td>
<td>Number of property-related crimes</td>
<td>- crime statistics (vandalism etc.)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criminal activity</td>
<td>- crime statistics (break and enters, prostitution, drugs)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vehicle traffic during &quot;open&quot; hours</td>
<td>- vehicle counts</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pedestrian traffic during &quot;open&quot; hours</td>
<td>- pedestrian counts</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase commitment of business owners to revitalization efforts</td>
<td>Participation in community</td>
<td>- number of Business Police Academy participants</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Activity #3: Create a Village Core and concentrate revitalization efforts there (focus and priority)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Benefits</th>
<th>Potential Indicators</th>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase profitability of businesses</td>
<td>Business income</td>
<td>- income tax</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- annual survey of business owners</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of businesses</td>
<td>Commercial rental space</td>
<td>- commercial square footage available</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- commercial vacancy rates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business recruitment efforts</td>
<td>- business recruitment stats</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase commitment of property owners to the revitalization effort</td>
<td>Condition of buildings</td>
<td>- value of city loans (building code, rehab &amp; redev, awning and sign)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- value of private investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- demolition permits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment of existing buildings</td>
<td>Building values</td>
<td>- real estate prices and sales</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and vacant land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Intended Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - property tax revenues (assessed values) | Redevelopment of existing buildings and vacant land
| - rental housing square footage | - value of city and CMHC housing loans |

Activity #4: Support the transition of the remainder of the corridor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Benefits</th>
<th>Potential Indicators</th>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment of existing buildings and vacant land</td>
<td>Building values</td>
<td>- real estate prices and sales</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- property tax revenues (assessed values)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- building permits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial rental space</td>
<td></td>
<td>- commercial square footage available</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- commercial vacancy rates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- commercial rental rates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental accommodation</td>
<td></td>
<td>- rental housing square footage</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- value of city loans (building code, rehab &amp; revdev, awning and sign)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase commitment of property owners to the revitalization effort</td>
<td>Condition of buildings</td>
<td>- value of city loans (building code, rehab &amp; revdev, awning and sign)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- value of private investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- demolition permits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity #5: Develop entertainment, recreation and arts opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Benefits</th>
<th>Potential Indicators</th>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase positive activity on Dundas Street</td>
<td>Criminal activity</td>
<td>- crime statistics (break and enters, prostitution, drugs)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle traffic &quot;after&quot; hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>- vehicle counts</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian traffic &quot;after&quot; hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>- pedestrian counts</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create greater awareness of entertainment, recreation, and arts</td>
<td>Arts, music, and cultural events</td>
<td>- number of events</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- paid rental events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve perception of community</td>
<td>Public art</td>
<td>- number of projects</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Increase commitment of Western Fair to the revitalization efforts                 | Business activity stimulated by Western Fair events | - survey of business owners                                                        | Qualitative
6.0 THE CRITICAL ROLE OF THE BIA

It is clear to the Planners Action Team that the successes that have been realized to date can be attributed in large part to the Old East Village BIA. They have played the most critical role in advancing the revitalization plan to date and the PACT believes that the revitalization plan would take a major step backwards, or potentially come unraveled, if the BIA were to discontinue their role.

Old East Village BIA Organizational Model For Revitalization Initiative

Multiple Roles of the BIA
The PACT report of April, 2003 noted that there have been many revitalization plans prepared in the past for the Old East Village. These plans have failed to
make a significant difference towards the goal of revitalization. So, one might ask why the PACT report would be any different than these previous plans. The April report explained that "the most significant among these differences is that this time a clear and identifiable "champion" is in place to implement this plan – an Executive Director and dedicated staff at the Old East Village BIA."

The BIA has played multiple roles in the revitalization program to date, such as (limited examples are provided below):

- Coordinator - revitalization plan as a whole, major events; multiple groups
- Partner - in many, many projects to provide funding, resources, organization
- Fundraiser - the BIA has directly raised $550,000 towards the initiative
- City Hall in General, Police, Planning, Housing, etc.
- Incubator - supported fledgling organizations; eg. community assn.
- Business developer - answering enquiries, beginning more work in this area
- Capacity developer - developing capacity of community, owners, tenants

The included illustration shows how the BIA has acted as the focal point for the revitalization initiative. All stakeholders should acknowledge that the BIA's role has been critical to the success of the revitalization program to date. A mutual support between the BIA and the important groups that are forming in the community is extremely important.

Funding Challenges Faced by the BIA to Date

While the BIA has been tremendously effective to date, it has faced a systemic problem. The BIA's formal boundaries include a one block area along Dundas Street from Adelaide to Elizabeth Street (both north and south sides of Dundas). Within this small area, the BIA levy only amounts to $14k per annum. This compares with a Main Street levy for the Downtown BIA of about $700k.

As a result, the BIA is not sustainably funded. Over the past 2 years staff at the BIA have been generously funded through Human Resource Development Services Canada (HRDSC) grant monies. These funds have given the BIA the opportunity to establish itself and become an integral part of the revitalization process. However, this funding commitment will end in January of 2005. A reality of this funding is that it leads to high staff turnover rates (as employees gain skills, it is intended that they move on to other non-funded jobs). So, the BIA expends a considerable amount of its time and energy seeking funding to support its basic operational budget and continually training new employees.

It was imperative that the BIA secure a sustainable funding base so that it can focus its energies on the implementation of the revitalization initiative. Municipal Council recently stepped up to the plate and funded the BIA to the tune of $100k per year. This is a critical step forward. With Council's significant investment in
Old East, their move to help the BIA as the critical driver of the revitalization was economically smart.

The BIA should explore the opportunity for extending the BIA boundaries. The Community Improvement Area provides a good basis for establishing a boundary for the extended BIA, given that incentives will be offered to this area and it represents the program area for the revitalization initiative. Recent Municipal Act amendments make it easier to modify BIA boundaries and the benefactors of the revitalization initiative should contribute to the program's costs.

Funding Challenges Faced by the BIA to Date
As the BIA moves into the next phase of the Plan, it will be focusing on time intensive recruitment, retention, and marketing initiatives in addition to continuing those programs that it has already begun. While the BIA has engaged in a tremendous amount of critical foundational work throughout the broader community, it needs to focus in this way to be effective.

So that the broader revitalization initiative is not lost with the BIA taking a more focused approach, the PACT recommends that a new Old East Village Revitalization Steering Committee should be struck. This committee would take on functions such as:

- Oversee the entire revitalization plan for the Old East Village (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.)
- Monitor success weaknesses that need to be addressed
- Coordinate efforts between key stakeholders working on elements of the revitalization initiative
- Take on tasks which are not clearly within the mandate of any single stakeholder – so that these tasks do not “slip between the cracks”
- Identify priorities and next steps in the revitalization process
- Provide a mechanism for celebration of successes and accountability

The composition of this Steering Committee should be established by the groups which form it, but the PACT believes that the representatives from following areas should be considered as a starting point:

- BIA (staff and Board representative)
- Community Association
- Western Fair Association
- Arts and culture community
- Heritage community
- Social service community
- Property owners
- City of London

It will be important that the BIA and Community Association have a proportionally high representation as the two key drivers of the revitalization initiative to date – they have done an outstanding job of moving the revitalization effort forward and this momentum needs to be sustained with their key direction.
7.0 PROPERTY OWNERS ON THE CORRIDOR

The PACT felt compelled to make some clear commentary on their view of the ownership structure on the corridor. From a positive perspective, most of the property owners on the corridor are NOT from outside of the City of London. This is a clear advantage for revitalization. Local residents are exposed to their properties on a regular basis and they are more likely to be anxious to improve their properties where it is financially viable to do so. Furthermore, there is more opportunity to develop collaborative efforts between property owners through strategy sessions, workshops, or joint marketing, promotion and recruitment efforts.

The PACT unhappily reports that many property owners (NOT all) on the corridor do not appear to be in a cooperative or collaborative frame of mind. While we have seen the residents, City Hall, Western Fair, BIA and others rise to the occasion to make a real difference in assisting with this revitalization initiative, we have not seen evidence that the majority of property owners on the corridor are doing their part. The BIA has indicated that many owners will not return their phone calls – even when such calls relate to prospective tenants for vacant space. The PACT experienced this phenomenon first hand. In the over 3 years of work that the Team has been engaged in within this area, the property owners that we attempted to meet with are the only group that have resisted meeting with us. The irony of the situation is that it is their properties that we are ultimately aiming to improve! After several days of attempting to contact ten owners on the corridor (who collectively own 22 properties on Dundas Street), only one owner agreed to meet with us to discuss the revitalization initiative.

The Planners Action Team urges owners on the corridor to work with the Old East Village BIA or, alternatively, the City of London Planning Division, to explore opportunities for making improvements to their properties. Such improvements do not need to be substantial and expensive to have an impact. A new awning, a coat of paint or new signage can make a world of difference in the look, feel and image of the corridor. The revitalization beachhead that needs to be formed to truly set revitalization on its way can be established with minimal costs for improvements such as these. And, it should be pointed out, all of the above improvements are eligible for loans under the City's new package of incentives. Our message to the owners is this:

Now is the time to take action to improve your buildings. Momentum has gathered in the community. Incentives are now in place. Dollars are available and there is a new sense of hope for the area. Work with the BIA to seek out potential tenants for your buildings. Get your space market-ready so that a tenant can reasonably move into your building. Put a fresh face on your building façade and make sure that you respect the greatest asset you have when you do so – the heritage character of your building.

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Become part of the renaissance and don’t let it pass you by. Opportunities like this come but once in a lifetime. You are the final lynchpin in making revitalization a reality. And, you will profit if commercial revitalization comes to fruition.

8.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There is undoubtedly a renaissance occurring in the Old East Village. After only one year, major transformations have occurred. Goals set out by the PACT that would typically take years to achieve have already been seized by the community. The rate of change and improvement is extremely rapid.

The recommendations from the Planners Action Team report should not be abandoned. They should continue to serve as a beacon for the revitalization initiative. However, it is appropriate for the community to take the plan and “tweak” it such that it clearly represents their own desires for moving forward. The PACT cautions both the BIA and the community that revitalization initiatives can “fall off the rails” when too much is taken on at once, or if focus is lost. It is important that priorities are clear and that the majority of energies are placed into initiatives that will make a meaningful difference towards revitalization.

In addition to the recommendations provided in the original PACT report, the following is a summary of recommendations that have been made in this Audit. Our opinion of the Old East Village community is extremely high. We are excited by the progress we have seen and we look forward to watching the renaissance of Old East continue.