

**City of London
Special Called Meeting
City Hall
August 15, 2017
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

MEETING PURPOSE: To conduct a workshop with members of the London City Council, the London Tourist Commission and London Downtown, Inc. to facilitate the creation of a strategic plan for the City of London.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Troy Rudder called the City Council to order.

Tourist Commission president called the Tourist Commission to order.

Downtown London president called the Downtown London Board of Directors to order.

2. Roll Call

- ✓ Indicates attendance

London City Council

- ✓ Noah White
- ✓ Bobby Joe Parman
Judson Weaver
- ✓ Steve Berry
- ✓ Danny Phelps
- ✓ Kelly Greene

London Tourist Commission

- ✓ Steve Berry
- ✓ Bill Dezarn
- ✓ Troy House
- ✓ Sharon Cornelius
- ✓ Lois McWhorter
Holly Little
Starr Handy

Downtown London, Inc.

- ✓ Julie Rea, president
- ✓ Daniel Carmack, vice president
- ✓ Derrick Dean, treasurer
- ✓ Ryan Henderson, secretary
- ✓ Katherine Hardman
- ✓ Judith O'Bryan

- ✓ Garry Conley
- ✓ Kimberley Brewer
- ✓ Chris Minton
- ✓ Jason Burton
- ✓ Todd Strauss
- ✓ Tracey Maxey
- Kimberly Brewer
- Daniel Carmack
- Katherine Hardman

Others in attendance included:

Mackey Williams, London Parks and Recreation director
 Brittany Cradic, Downtown London interim executive director
 Steve Edge, London Public Works director
 Carolyn Adams, London city clerk
 Chris Robinson, London Tourist Commission director
 Topher Payton, *The Sentinel Echo*

Kentucky League of Cities Community Consulting Advisors, Bobbie Bryant and Tad Long, facilitated the workshop. Mr. Long opened the meeting and set forth the agenda for the day: to share ideas, hopes, visions and dreams for the improvement of London. Attendees were asked to respond to a variety of questions and the results of their discussion is shown herein. The first question was held during full-group discussion.

- 1. Think about the reason you ran for office or volunteered to serve on a board. What is it you wish to accomplish by the time your term is finished?**
 - Want to make London a better community for young people; make it a more desirable place for business to locate here.
 - Move the city in a positive direction.
 - One hundred percent occupancy.
 - In love with London; want to get more involved and encourage others to be involved.
 - To move London in a positive direction – I've got grandkids, want it to be alive and beautiful for our kids. Keep the downtown vibrant.
 - With a small child, I want them to have the opportunity to work here and live their life here.
 - I grew up in a small town in WV; this is the first time I've had a chance to be involved, it's good to be able to help, want to see positive growth.
 - Want to help with positive change while I'm here, want to do something.
 - Want to see more business coming in.
 - Want to make a better place for my child to stay here.
 - Want to see people occupy the downtown.
 - I was ecstatic to serve because I want to see the town be strong and be a good community
 - I've served since 1978 in some capacity and most of the things I've seen done have been good.
 - I live downtown, wouldn't move unless I get replaced. It's hard to get people to settle downtown. I want to see the boundaries increase – need to grow.

- We've got one of the prettiest downtowns but it's empty from the inside out. We need it for the next generation.
- Ran for council because I wanted to see the direction we were taking continue. We need more events, better streets.
- I was asked to join the council in 1986 when my property was annexed into the city. I started going to city council meetings because I was annexed. Lot of times I was the only one in the audience so when there was an opening, I was asked to serve. The biggest reason I ran was because I had two little boys. My generation had to leave the community to find work.
- A lot of folks are negative and criticize things. I think people need to get involved rather than sit on the sidelines and complain about things. Once they're involved, they see how to participate and learn that it's not quite as easy as it looked from the outside.
- I enjoy serving, being part of change, part of the decision-making process. Like to have an impact on what is going on and if you want to do that, need to join the Chamber of Commerce.

Every person attending made note that they are serving because they want to accomplish something positive for the community. Getting there is sometimes the source of discord. To encourage discussion among individuals representing each of the three entities, attendees were divided among three table groups so that each organization was represented at all tables.

2. Over the next five years what would you like to see the City of London accomplish?

- Projects, culture
- Enlarge the baseball and soccer fields
- More parks within the city limits
- More downtown restaurants
- Expand landscaping projects – more to the north side of town
- Antique store in downtown to draw more people in, particularly if we had more restaurants
- Issue is parking – Corbin has one-way streets, maybe we should consider that
- Be cycling friendly – make London the cycling capital of Kentucky
- Fix empty building issue
- South 25 is a problem
- Streets and sidewalks repaired
- Magee Building filled
- Keep buildings filled with something
- Extend downtown street sidewalks
- Repair/redo Highway 192
- Indoor aquatic center
- 2,000 seat arena
- Music hall
- Condos
- More sit-down dining
- Tax incentives

- Codes – how/who does it?

3. What is preventing you from doing the things you talked about?

- Money – need incentives – why do people have a reason to improve things?
- The rent is unreal in downtown – the price to buy buildings is not realistic.
- Money is the issue
- Marymount Park
- Building owners
- Collaboration
- Lack of communication
- Red-tape reduction
- Procrastination
- No feet to our vision
- Follow through
- Transparency

4. Downtown – what does the downtown need to do in order to be successful?

- Take everything and every idea that our downtown has – make London a destination. Bring people to spend their money, go to restaurants, get the tax, stay in hotels.
- Things that stand in the way, miscommunication between downtown and people working with them – easily fixed.
- Positive – beautification on some of our streets. Negative – empty buildings and parking issues.
- Food trucks along with more events.
- To convince owners to lower rent is to look at food trucks – if we have more events, it will give people more incentive to bring food trucks downtown and they have lower operational costs.
- Beautification – extend façade improvements further on US 25.
- Add sculptures.
- Have planned development.
- Entertainment.
- Art.
- Motivation – incentives for building owners to part with their property.
- Anything that brings traffic downtown and generates tax dollars – get a consistent flow.
- Planned development – H. Hills.
- Promote the city.
- Be productive, attractive and collaborate.

5. Which of these ideas could have the most impact?

- Purchase the Magee Building and turn it into a new space

6. What could be done right away?

- More events downtown (Movies on Main)
- Consistent events

7. What can the Tourist Commission do to better fulfill its mission?

- More overnight stays
- Expansion of travel sports as tourism draw
- Invest in current facilities
- Work on parks
- Project on Main Street
- County Tourism on joint project
- Transparency on where money is being sent
- Do something besides parks
- Travel sports – bring in traveling teams
- Partner with the Levi Jackson State Park for more projects
- Kids museum downtown
- Dedicated bike paths – connect to Levi Jackson State Park and downtown

8. What could have the most impact – what can we do to get the ball rolling?

- Acquire property.
- Upgrade current facilities while a new facility is being built.
- Invest in ball parks.
- Maybe we should hire someone to bring in tournaments and work on bringing people to spend their money here.
- More annexation to generate more revenue.
- Look at a bike path.

9. What about the city as a whole – what can the city of London do to fulfil the mission of the city? What should they be focused on?

- Be up-front, honest, supportive.
- Propose ballot issues to support projects.
- Find money – through annexation or consolidation of parks.
- Fewer chiefs, more Indians. Rock the boat – things happen because it has always been done a certain way. What can we do differently?
- Long term plan to coordinate the work of the city and tourism.
- Be supportive of tourism and downtown events.
- Annex to increase tax dollars.
- Work on building codes.
- Enforcing codes to clean up properties on 4th Street – a positive move.

10. What could the city do immediately that could have a positive impact – an easy fix?

- Work on building codes.
- Formulate a master plan.
- Have more groups workshops with the three entities represented here today.

11. What prevents you from communicating? How can you communicate better?

- Group text messages.

- More group workshops.
- Every entity should give a summary to each other, include industrial board – all boards that have something to do with city development.
- Have a dedicated website to post reports from each – more transparency.
- Attend each other's meetings.
- Couple of reps from each organization and the directors to meet bimonthly or quarterly – review goals and see how to work better together.
- See if other group members will serve on the other groups committees.
- Liaison attending other meetings.
- Have everyone meet together.
- Eliminate territory pride so one doesn't feel encroached upon by the other
- Accountability – if everyone knows what the other is doing, it's a way to keep everyone on task.

In closing, Mr. Long explained that this type of workshop is how great communities grow and make progress. They meet together, share their goals and dreams, then work together to accomplish them. He reminded those in attendance that the KLC is assisting the City of London in developing a five-year strategic plan that will involve the public. A date will be set in the near future to ask the public to share their hopes and dreams for the future of the community. Each board and council member were asked to help generate interest in the forthcoming public meeting.

With no further business, the Special Called Meeting ended with the following motions to adjourn:

A motion to approve was made for the City Council by Councilmember Kelly Greene and seconded by Councilmember Steve Berry. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to approve was made for the Downtown London Board of Directors by Downtown London Board member Gary Conley and seconded by Ryan Henderson. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was to approve was made for the London Tourist Commission by Commissioner Troy House and was seconded by Commissioner Sharon Cornelius. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.