



## REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2011

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	Historic Sites Committee Strategic Plan, 2011-2014
Prepared By:	Historic Sites Committee
Presented By:	Margaret Mitchell, Hilary Bates Neary
Purpose of Report:	For Decision: Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Recommendation:

**It is recommended that the Strategic Plan, 2011-2014 of the Historic Sites Committee be approved.**

### Background

The Historic Sites Committee (HSC) Strategic Plan is contained in Appendix A. Its strategic plan has several key focus areas:

- continue its recognized work in the researching and plaquing of historic sites, to identify and mark sites of historic interest in London;
- refine the Mill Project, researching the history of mills along the Thames River in London, and marking mill sites;
- work in collaboration with the Library and community partners to enhance the public's knowledge about London's historic sites and local history;
- work with the Library to sustain the work of the Historic Sites committee through resource management development.

The HSC does not receive funding through the Library budget to undertake its activities but relies on donations to support specific projects, or grants to fund more extensive ventures. In part because of the recognized expertise of these dedicated volunteers, the HSC has been successful in the past few years in generating project specific funding.

Members have also earned honoraria for the Committee through writing projects. These funds have been applied to the plaquing program.

Some achievements in its strategic plan, 2007-2010 are:

- installation of four plaques: First Anglican Episcopal Election (St. Paul's Cathedral), Margaret Fullerton (City Hall), Dawn of Tomorrow ( 95/97 Glenwood Avenue), Industrial Banner (420 Richmond Street);
- organization of archived research materials on plaques for access by the public;
- *upgrades to the Historic Sites Committee web page, including Walking Guide to Historic Sites of London* available on the Library's website, hosted by Knowledge Ontario;
- brief to the Thames Valley Corridor Study regarding project to recognize and interpret former mill sites in the river lands;
- partnered with the Rotary Club of London on a walking/bus tour of historic sites along the Thames, 2008.

**LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD  
HISTORIC SITES COMMITTEE**

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2014**

**Mission Statement**

The Historic Sites Committee researches and promotes London's heritage to its people and to visitors.

**Committee Mandate**

The Committee provides value-added services in support of the London Public Library's Service Excellence Model and Core Service Outcomes: Literacy, Learning, Culture, Leisure and Recreation, Information and Community Meeting Place.

The Committee's work supports the Library's Vision:

*London Public Library is the Community Hub that strengthens individuals, families, and neighbourhoods by connecting them to people and to relevant information, collections, programs and resources.*

The Committee:

- \* identifies and commemorates sites that have played a significant role in the city's history that would otherwise not be recognized;
- \* compiles documentation on historic sites, and makes this research, speeches made at unveilings, and collateral materials available to other researchers through the London Room;
- \* liaises with other heritage organizations in London;
- \* promotes an appreciation of London's past to individuals and groups by sharing knowledge and expertise;
- \* advocates for the preservation and interpretation of London's historic sites;
- \* advises federal and provincial historic sites agencies on local sites of mutual concern;
- \* makes the collective expertise of the committee available to London's heritage tourism sector;
- \* enhances public use of the London Room through its community outreach.

**Background**

The London Public Library Board established the Historic Sites Committee in 1970 at the request of municipal council. The Committee consists of eight members appointed by the Board to represent citizens at large, as well as a representative from the Board and the Library Administration. The Secretary for the committee is a member of Library staff (London Room Librarian).

## **Responding to Community Needs**

London has a strong heritage community. There is a growing interest among people of all ages in learning more about local history. The great response to Doors' Open London is one example of public participation in heritage events, and the annual ACO Geranium Walk is another. *Since 2007, London Heritage Council is providing a new level of leadership in London's heritage community.* The Historic Sites Committee contributes to the recognition and interpretation of London's history, and collaborates with many community organizations in fulfilling this role..

### ***Heritage Tourism in London***

The HSC designates sites of local historical interest in London and broadens public knowledge by providing extensive research about their historic significance. Such recognition of places of historic importance both stimulates broader public involvement in heritage preservation locally, and attracts visitors to our city who wish to learn about our distinctive past. The committee's *Walking Guide* (published in 2005, and updated on the Library website) enables tourists and residents to know their city better.

London's history is of interest to citizens in other parts of Canada. Local information regarding historic sites can be publicized to a national audience, thus strengthening London's heritage tourism initiatives.

Provincial and federal government agencies, such as the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, have welcomed the advice of the Historic Sites Committee on the recognition of local sites.

### ***Local History in the School Curriculum***

- . Educators include the study of local history in the elementary and secondary school curricula. The London Room is a well-used resource for students at all levels of historic inquiry. The research done by the Committee is available to students and the general public through the London Public Library's Ivey Family London Room.

### ***Partnerships for the Preservation of Heritage***

- . London is home to many organizations and municipal agencies dedicated to the study of local history and the preservation of heritage buildings, landscapes and sites. The HSC works in partnership with these organizations and agencies to share knowledge, enhance public understanding of our common goals, collaborate on joint projects, and strengthen advocacy efforts. The Committee has successfully partnered with many local groups in the public and private sector to erect plaques, and this raises community awareness of our history.

## **Goals and Tasks (2011-2014)**

### **1: Identify and mark sites of historic interest in London**

1.1: Work with Marienbad Inc. to erect a plaque commemorating The Farmers' Advocate at 122 Carling Street.

1.2 Set priorities for new plaques for 2011-2014, and establish tasks for their development. Begin research for plaques planned for 2011. The Committee will undertake to develop two plaques per year.

1.3: Work with local community and neighbourhood associations to identify sites for historic plaques. Explore joint funding opportunities

1.4: Work with the City of London to identify sites for plaques, produce interpretive materials, and walking guides, as per the HSC brief to the Thames Valley Corridor Plan: Phase 2.

1.5: Monitor progress of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque to recognize Edward Richmond and the Noble and Wolf v. Alley court case in London.

1.6: Explore opportunities with cultural heritage associations to identify and recognize sites relating to the diverse cultural groups who have populated London.

### **2: Redefine the Mill Project and plan its completion**

2.1: Upon completion of the goals described by the Committee in its brief to the TVCP2, redefine the Mill project and establish new goals.

### **3: Work in collaboration with the Library and community partners to enhance public knowledge about London's historic sites and local history.**

3.1: Monitor the Library website regarding HSC sites and publications. Establish tasks to maintain this page and keep its information current by updating the map and adding data about new sites. Assess the use of this page.

3.2: Finalize the organization the HSC archives to ensure that research materials about historic sites and the history of the Committee's involvement in heritage recognition are accessible to researchers.

3.3: Make the expertise of the Historic Sites Committee available to the Library to enhance the development of programming in and displays on local history.

3.4: Cooperate with other organizations in London to promote local historic sites through projects such as walking tours, site interpretation, and publications.

3.5: Support efforts of other heritage bodies to recognize historic sites in London.

**4: Work with the Library to sustain the work of the Historic Sites Committee through resource management and development.**

4.1: Work with Library staff to secure grants from foundations and other funding bodies to support projects relating to plaque development, publications, site interpretation, and research activities of the Committee.

4.2: Maintain an annual inventory of all sites plaqued by the Committee.

4.3: Develop with Library staff a protocol for ensuring the security of plaques, dealing with missing plaques, and responding to threatened sites.