

REPORT FROM CITY HALL

By Ed Corrigan, Councillor Ward 7

CITY KEEPS GREENHOUSES

The proposal to close the Civic Gardens Greenhouses has been rejected by the City Administration. A strong response from volunteers like Gail Dimson, Volunteer Co-ordinator for Friends of the London Civic Gardens, volunteers like Ruth Webber and scores of others clearly demonstrated to City Administration that the greenhouses meant a great deal to residents of the City. This corporate asset has more value than just dollars. The projected cost savings from closing the facility also were found to be greatly overstated. I invited City Manager George Duncan to attend the open house held on April 27, 2003 where we met with volunteers, Steve McCall the Greenhouse Grower and toured the facility. The 80,000 flowers were blooming and the enthusiasm of the volunteers and the many citizens of London who toured the facility that day was impressive. Congratulations to the volunteers for saving this unique and valuable asset. The flowers will soon be beautifying our parks. If you are interested in touring the Civic Gardens Complex, you can get information at 661-5784.

COLONEL TALBOT /401 INTERCHANGE

The Ministry of Transportation Ontario and the City of London have come to an agreement on a realignment of the 401 Interchange and Colonel Talbot Road. The three traffic fatalities that occurred in November 2002 clearly demonstrated that the interchange alignment problem had to be addressed. Several meetings with stake holders and area residents were held to discuss the traffic problem at the interchange. Councillor Susan Eagle and I attended numerous meetings including one held on April 24, 2003 with City Engineer Peter Steblin, other City Staff and Engineer Kevin Bently representing MTO. Representatives from the Ford Motor Plant, Gentek, Canada Transit and local residents were also in attendance. Several proposals were considered and a consensus reached among all of the parties. The Ministry and the City, with support of area businesses and residents agreed to realign the exit from the 401 to Colonel Talbot to come out at Littlewood Drive. The old exit will be closed. The proposal also maintained the Glanworth Drive bridge over the 401 which is important to area farmers. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$480,000. The province has agreed to fund \$385,000 of the cost with the City picking up the remainder. The City will be responsible for installing traffic lights at Littlewood Drive, reducing speed and taking other measures to improve safety at the busy 401 Interchange. The construction is expected to be completed by Fall 2003.

An approach to the Federal Government is planned to try to get money earmarked for improving Canada/U.S. border access to assist with the long term reconstruction of the 401/Colonel Talbot interchange. The Canadian Transit Company has established an Advance Border Crossing Processing Centre on Littlewood Drive. The Centre currently processes 40 to 50 trucks per day but could handle as many as 1000 trucks per day. This aspect of the project may allow the City and the province to access Federal Funds designated to improve cross border traffic. A major overhaul of the interchange is a long term project of the Ministry of Transportation but it will

require Federal funding to build it sooner than its current 20 year timetable.

WARD MEETING

Councillor Susan Eagle and I will be having a Ward 7 Community Meeting at the Lambeth Community Centre on Tuesday, June 10, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend and refreshments will be served. I would like to hear your views on these and other City issues and I can be reached at (o) 661-1558, (r) 652-0973 or at ecorriga@city.london.on.ca.