Deshkan Ziibiing
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

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Planning and Environment Committee
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON N6A 4L9
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June 19, 2025

Re: Urban Growth Boundary Review – Advancing Reconciliation through Responsible Planning

To the Planning and Environment Committee,

The Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN) submits this letter in the spirit of reconciliation and mutual respect, to express our concerns regarding the proposed expansion of London's urban growth boundary. These lands fall within our Treaty territory, including the McKee Treaty (1790) and the London Township Treaty (1796), and decisions affecting them must reflect the City's commitment to reconciliation and the rights of Indigenous peoples.

We are particularly concerned about the westward expansion toward Komoka/Kilworth, which threatens Deshkan Ziibi (Thames River), its tributaries, and surrounding ecological and cultural landscapes. The cumulative impacts of urban sprawl—including increased wastewater discharge—pose serious risks to our Nation's health, rights, and sustainability. Between 2020 and 2024, the City released over 1.4 billion litres of untreated or partially treated sewage into the river. This is unacceptable, especially as COTTFN remains under a water advisory, due to inadequate treatment and distribution infrastructure.

Urban expansion also affects our ability to acquire land under the Big Bear Creek Settlement Agreement, as land values rise sharply within the growth boundary. This undermines our efforts to restore and steward our traditional territory.

We are deeply concerned by the City Council's March 2025 endorsement of a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) for an industrial development south of Dingman Creek, led by developer Dancor, without any consultation with COTTFN. This decision bypassed the City's established planning process and disregarded the principles of free, prior, and informed consent as outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

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Despite assumptions that Dancor or the province engaged with affected First Nation communities, no outreach has been made to COTTFN, and the provincial MZO consultation process remains void and inadequate.

To align with the City's reconciliation commitments, we respectfully request:

1. A pause on urban boundary expansion until wastewater treatment issues are resolved.
2. Renewed collaboration with COTTFN on watershed monitoring and management.
3. A clear plan to prioritize infill and underutilized spaces before expanding outward.
4. A commitment to consult with COTTFN before endorsing any future MZOs.

We welcome the opportunity to work together in a way that honours our Treaty relationship and advances reconciliation through responsible, inclusive planning. We request a formal response to this letter and welcome the opportunity to meet with the City Council and City staff to discuss these matters further.

Respectfully,



Chief, R. K. Joe Miskokomon
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

cc: Planning Department