

# Creating a buzz

**T**he Creative City. It doesn't sound like a topic the business community would be interested in. It doesn't seem an issue that would gain traction with disparate groups during a municipal election campaign.

But the fact is it has — and it should.

If you don't know about creative cities, get your favourite campaigning politician to tell you about it. If they don't know, tell them to read the Creative Cities Task Force report issued earlier this year — and then get them to tell you what they think about it.

Controller Gord Hume, a member of city council who's made his reputation on being "business friendly," is leading the charge to make London a "creative city." That should be a comfort — and is — to both arts groups and business groups.

As chair of the task force, Hume is committed to seeing many of the group's 87 recommendations put into place.

What is a creative city?

It's all about making London livable for everyone. It's about keeping young

people from moving away, it's about creating buzz, it's about diversity and heritage and trees and the arts. But most important, it's about a new way of thinking about economic development.

The made-in-London task force report is held up across the country as a model for other communities and local groups are taking ownership of a few recommendations each and seeing what they can do to effect change.

There have been several dozen small neighbourhood projects started or completed under the auspices of Creative Cities and they'll get together Nov. 2 to share what they've done. A good example is the the London Ontario Live Arts free outdoor festival, which will take over downtown London Oct. 28, or an upcoming London Economic Development Corp. conference on diversity.

Meanwhile, the creative cities concept is part of the official plan process in London and runs like a thread through it. It could be the beginning of something big.

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One in a series of editorials leading up to the Nov. 13 civic elections.