

ANNEXATION

Now, here it is . . . the new London

After years of intense negotiations, public hearings, and heated political debate, the Ontario government this week finally approved London's bid to annex thousands of hectares of land from its neighboring municipalities.

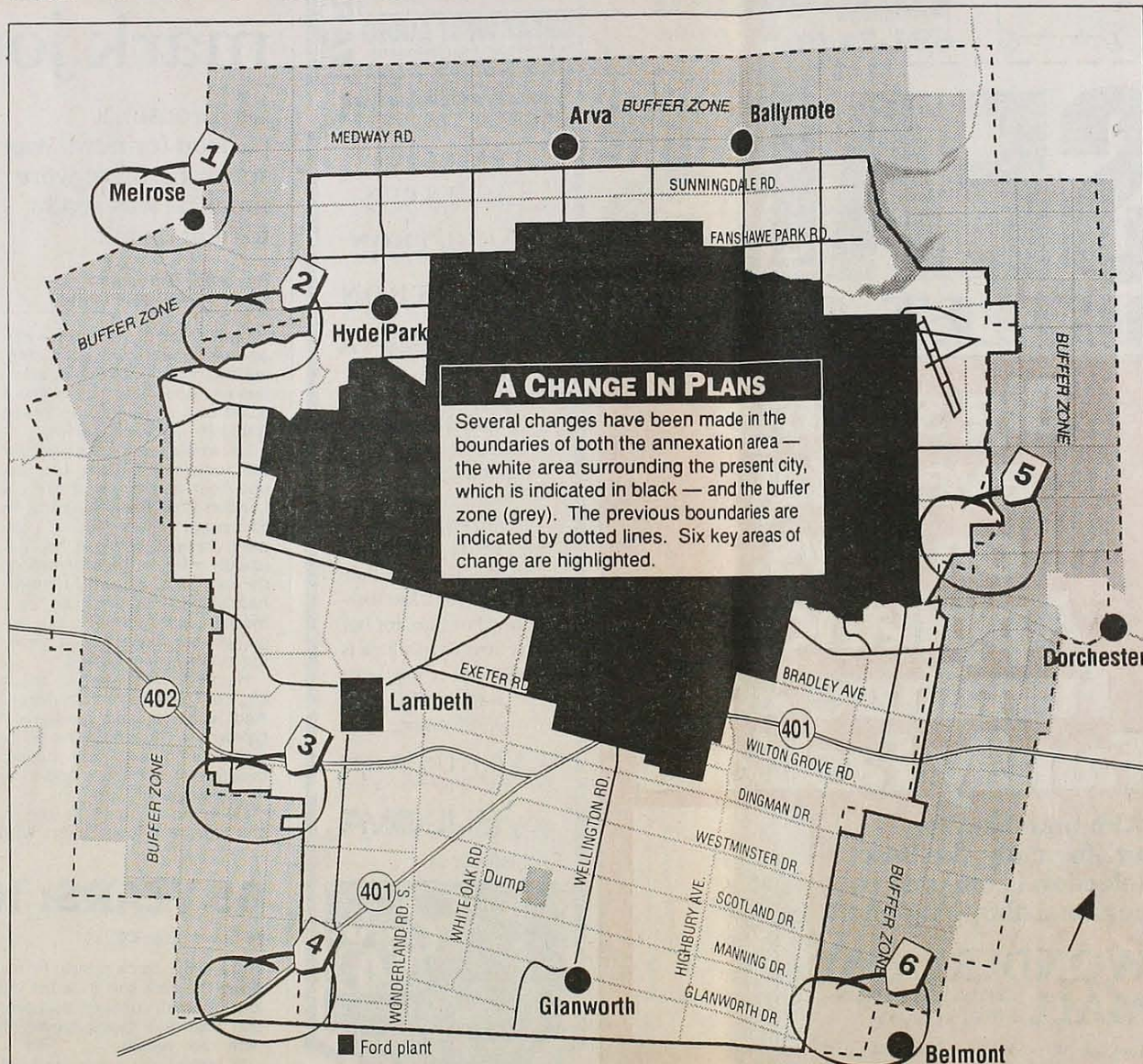
As of New Year's Day, London becomes one of the largest municipalities in the province — about 80 per cent the size of Metropolitan Toronto — with room to grow well into the 21st century.

Here are the final boundaries of the new London.

HIGHLIGHTS

Following are highlights of the plan to nearly triple the size of London by annexing 26,000 hectares (64,220 acres) of surrounding land, making it 80 per cent the size of Metropolitan Toronto. The plan is to take effect Jan. 1, 1993.

- ▶ Westminster ceases to exist, with nearly the entire town of 7,000 absorbed into London.
- ▶ The annexed area includes London Airport and large sections of Highways 401 and 402.
- ▶ Middlesex County loses 35 per cent of its tax assessment, but the city will pay compensation of about \$20 million over 10 years. The county says that amount is inadequate.
- ▶ London Public Utilities Commission is abolished and its role in setting power rates is transferred to a newly appointed hydro-electric commission. Responsibility for parks and recreation programming is transferred to the city.
- ▶ School boundaries are to remain the same pending further talks to restructure city and county school boards.
- ▶ Employees of Westminster and London PUC — and municipal workers declared redundant in annexed areas — are to be offered similar jobs by the city.
- ▶ City police expand their jurisdiction to include the annexed area.
- ▶ A preliminary financial study by the Ontario municipal affairs ministry suggests it will take 11 years before the City of London obtains a net cost benefit of \$200,000 from annexation.
- ▶ The city is expected to benefit from new taxation and vast new tracts of land for industrial, commercial and residential development.



By Chip Martin
The London Free Press

When the province announced this year it planned to let London nearly triple in size, it released a map showing the city's new borders.

After months of refinement and minor changes to reflect property holdings that straddled the proposed boundary, several modifications were made.

Among the changes was a slight

shrinking of the proposed buffer zone in which non-agricultural development will be discouraged.

This map is based on the revised map released by Ontario's municipal affairs ministry.

Among the more significant changes:

1 Removal of the hamlet of Melrose from the buffer zone.

2 Adoption of the Thames River as one of the western boundaries, reducing

slightly the city's bite of London Township.

3 Zigzagging to reflect contiguous property ownership.

4 Addition of a triangular spur to London that Delaware Township would have had difficulty servicing.

5 More zigzagging because of ownership patterns.

6 Ceding of more land to Belmont because of potential servicing problems for North Dorchester Township.

Note: Boundary changes are based on unofficial sources and may not be exact.