



Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

Working Group:	Communications, Advocacy & Civic Engagement
Report Date:	August 2024

Requested Committee Direction:

The Communications, Advocacy & Civic Engagement Working Group proposes that the Ad Hoc Committee request City Staff to review the following temporary use ideas to develop the City's permitting, access, safety and other approaches and requirements in order to facilitate temporary uses and activation of the Grand Trunk site and building.

Context: With so few residents familiar with the GTR building or the site (seeing it as a sealed-off building behind a parking lot), it is in the interest of long-term revitalization that temporary or meanwhile uses for the building and site be proposed, reviewed and approved by City Council. This would allow both activation of the site before it is developed and attracting a wide range of users to the site and building to demonstrate the possibilities of the site/building and the potential value of the site to residents.

Discussion Points:

The following list of potential activation ideas is not exhaustive; it proposes ideas that require further research and engagement. These ideas share one thing in common: they would require the City to understand what is needed to safely bring people onto the site or in the building and develop a consistent approach to permitting such events.

1. Art installation: Siting an art installation for Lights on Stratford within the Grand Trunk Building. This would require the building to be open to the public at certain times—supervised with volunteers and security (as is the case with all the other Lights On installations) and would require lighting. Potential Partner: Lights On Stratford / Users: resident and visitors of all ages
2. Architecture and Heritage tour: Taking small groups of registered participants on a walking tour of the building, with the possibility of using archival images to illustrate the site's history. Potential Partner: Stratford Perth Museum, Architectural Conservancy Ontario – Stratford Perth County Branch / Users: All
3. Large-scale puppet show/static display of large-scale puppet that is created through a participatory build-out. Potential Partner: Springworks / Users: children and families

4. Silent Disco Party: Hosting a silent disco in the Grand Trunk building. This would include a DJ, lighting, bathrooms, controlled entry). Potential Partners: / Users: diverse young adults
5. Live performance: Hosting a live music performance in the Grand Trunk Building (or in the parking lot). This would require more physical infrastructure, like staging, chairs, washrooms etc. Potential Partners: Stratford Summer Music / Users: various
6. Mural: Installing a mural on the façade of the building – to tell the story of the building or site, to send a message about the possibility of the site or as a piece of art – to attract foot traffic to the site. Potential Partners: / Users:
7. Pop up park: Using the exterior space around Grand Trunk Building to create a temporary park. Potential Partners: / Users:
8. Car/Tractor Show: Use the GTR building as a static display for antique/heritage cars and trucks. The rough industrial backdrop would be ideal for displaying vintage and classic cars from past eras when the building was an active shop/factory. Potential Partner: Stratford Cruises / Users: car aficionados
9. Sports Tournament: The GTR building would be a fantastic backdrop for certain outdoor sports (beach volleyball, volleyball, soccer, basketball, tennis, ultimate) that would require only light infrastructure (lines, sand, nets). Potential Partners: Local sporting organizations / Users: local athletes of all ages
10. Scrap metal collection: In an effort to clean up inside the building and make it easier and safer to host events, engage with local contractors, recycling firms and scrap metal dealers to organize a day when scrap metal and other material can be safely removed from the building and the proceeds to be kept by those who participate. Potential Partners: / Users:
11. Food Trucks and/or Market: Use the building as a pop-up for local food trucks and/or Sunday slow market. Potential Partners: local restaurants and caterers / Users: visitors and residents