



The Corporation of the City of Stratford
Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee
Open Session
AGENDA

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025
Time: 4:00 P.M.
Location: City Hall Auditorium
Ad-Hoc GTR Committee Present: Dan Mathieson - Chair Presiding, Mayor Martin Ritsma, Barb Cottle, Franklin Famme, Mark Vandenbosch, Melanie Hare, Nic Flanagan, Paul Parlee, Ron Dodson, Stephen Mitchell, Trudy Jonkman
Staff Present: Adam Betteridge - Director of Building and Planning Services, Emily Robson - Corporate Initiatives Lead, Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Joani Gerber - CEO of investStratford, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Victoria Trotter - Recording Secretary

Pages

1. Call to Order

The Chair to call the Meeting to Order.

Land Acknowledgement.

Moment of Silent Reflection.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

3. Adoption of Previous Minutes:

Motion by

THAT the Minutes of the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated January 20, 2025 be adopted as printed.

3.1 Adoption of Previous Minutes:

4 - 10

Motion by

THAT the Minutes of the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated December 16, 2024 be adopted as printed.

4. Delegation Requests

Robert Ritz (10- mins)

5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

5.1 Shared Community Facilities & the GTR Opportunity (30 mins)

11 - 50

Peggy Vacalopolous, Vacal Services

5.2 Updated Key Recommendations & Rationale for Council Consideration (30 mins)

51 - 77

Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead

Joani Gerber, CEO investStratford

6. New Business

7. Working Group and Staff Updates

7.1 Partnership

Herb Klassen & Karen Haslam, Co-Chairs

No report

7.2 Vision, Planning & Architecture

Melanie Hare, Chair

No report

7.3 Real Estate, Legal & Finance

Franklin Famme, Chair

No report

7.4 Communications, Advocacy, Civic Engagement

Andrew Hilton & John Kastner, Co-Chairs

No report

7.5 Infrastructure & Environment

Stephen Cooper, Chair

No report

7.6 Working Group Coordinators

Alan Kasperski & Ray Harsant, Coordinators

No report

7.7 Staff Update

78 - 88

Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead, City of Stratford

Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee Meeting is Monday, March 17, 2025 in the Auditorium at City Hall.

9. Adjournment

Meeting Start Time:

Meeting End Time:

Motion by

THAT the February 11, 2025 Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee meeting adjourn.



The Corporation of the City of Stratford
Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee
MINUTES

Date: December 16, 2024
 Time: 4:00 P.M.
 Location: Tim Taylor Lounge
 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford

Ad-Hoc Committee Present: Dan Mathieson - Chair Presiding, Mayor Martin Ritsma, Barb Cottle, Franklin Famme, Mark Vandenbosch, Nic Flanagan, Paul Parlee, Ron Dodson, Stephen Mitchell, Trudy Jonkman, Ryen Ropp-Robinson, Zachary Schultz

Regrets: Melanie Hare

Staff Present: Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Adam Betteridge - Director of Building and Planning Services, Emily Robson - Corporate Initiatives Lead, Joani Gerber - CEO of investStratford, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Victoria Trotter – Recording Secretary

Also Present: Herb Klassen, Karen Haslam, Stephen Cooper, Ray Harsant, Working Group Members, Members of the Public

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Meeting to Order.

Greetings were provided from Christin Dennis, (Gzhiiquot), Aamjiwnaang Frist Nation, Sixties Scoop Survivor, organizer and facilitator of the Tipi of Huron

Perth. Mr. Dennis discussed how Indigenous engagement could enhance the Grand Trunk project.

Dan Mathieson welcomed the two new members of the Committee, Ryen Ropp-Robinson and Zachary Schultz.

2. **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof**

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

None declared at the December 16, 2024 Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee meeting.

3. **Adoption of Previous Minutes:**

Motion by: Mayor Ritsma

Seconded by: Mark Vandenbosch

THAT the Minutes of the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated November 18, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried.

4. **Delegation Requests**

None were scheduled.

5. **Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

5.1 Master Plan to Business Plan

Discussion: Dan Mathieson introduced Mark Conway noting he is the President of NBLC, a Toronto-based firm that provides planning, market, and financial guidance to the real estate industry. As an Urban Planner and Economist, Mr. Conway collaborates with developers and governments to assess feasibility and develop business cases for various projects.

Mr. Conway presented Cooper Block Master Plan to Business Plan.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- forecasting demand for Master Planned uses;

- Forecasting an annual population increase of 6,641;
- population growth from older demographic groups;
- migration largely from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), London and Waterloo;
- estimated overall demand of housing averaging 208 new units per year;
- Cooper Block is aligned several aspects of market demand including walkability, proximity to downtown and potential co-location with community amenities;
- immediate demand for all forms of rental housing;
- consider City Led infrastructure planning versus Developer Led;
- forecasting costs and revenue and develop a cashflow analysis.

A discussion took place following the presentation. Highlights of the discussion included:

- provided funding is available the environmental concerns and infrastructure should be completed;
- community benefits can be negotiated with the sale and disposition of parcels;
- parking considerations for both housing and general use.

*Mayor Ritsma now absent at 4:50 p.m.

5.2 Environmental Remediation Options Q & A

Discussion: Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure Services presented on environmental and infrastructure. Highlights of the presentation included:

- focus to date has been on the revitalization of the historical building for use as a community hub;
- Record of Site Condition (RSC) has been granted for a portion of the historical building;
- municipal services and site access are needed ;
- existing structure is to remain in Parcel 1B;

- Parcels 2A, 2B, 2C and 2D would require similar environmental action;
- Limited or no remediation is required for roads and parking areas.

A discussion took place regarding the potential environmental work required for more sensitive uses and the potential for changes to the roadways.

*Joan Thomson, Taylor Crinklaw and Adam Betteridge now absent at 5:30 p.m.

5.3 Key Recommendations for Consideration

Discussion: Joani Gerber reviewed the proposed recommendations related to housing and mobility noting the following:

- previous work has been completed on 2D, therefore it is the easiest parcel to bring to market;
- parking and mobility could include bike and car shares in the future;
- expressions of interest (EOI) will be completed to gauge interest;
- once expressions of interests (EOI) are reviewed they will be reviewing and scoring provided;
- environmental does not need to be completed prior to an EOI;
- 437 parking spaces are currently on the site;
- development will require alternate parking solutions.

*Joani Gerber now absent at 5:46 p.m.

Emily Robson reviewed the proposed recommendations related to interim uses and the community hub. Highlights included:

- staff will bring finding from engineering and architectural investigations regarding interim uses to a future meeting;
- a motion to Council would request direction on whether or not they are willing to consider a significant investment in a shared community facility.

*Tim Wolfe now absent at 6:13 p.m.

Motion by: Ron Dodson

Seconded by: Franklin Famme

THAT Stratford City Council directs staff, with support as needed from the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee, to develop an Expression of Interest to receive proposals addressing housing on the GTR site focusing on the Parcel known as 2D. Carried

Motion by: Paul Parlee

Seconded by: Mark Vandenbosch

THAT Stratford City Council directs staff, with support as needed from the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee, to develop an Expression of Interest in accordance with the policy to receive proposals to build and operate a parking/mobility solution on the GTR site. Carried

Motion by: Mark Vandenbosch

Seconded by: Stephen Mitchell

THAT Stratford City Council direct staff to pursue background research on temporary and interim uses for the GTR site and associated next steps including cost estimates and bring the finding back to Council for consideration.

Motion by: Ron Dodson

Seconded by: Trudy Jonkman

THAT staff provide Stratford City Council with an update on discussions between the YMCA, Stratford Public Library and the City of Stratford on a shared facility at the Grand Trunk site, including an estimated range of municipal investment required to develop a shared community facility for their consideration. Carried

The Committee requested staff bring back the research regarding municipal investments in shared community facilities in January for review and discussion.

5.4 Partnership Working Group Findings and Recommendations

Discussion: Herb Klassen and Karen Haslam, Partnership Working Group Co-Chairs completed an activity with members of the Committee and Working Groups demonstrating the multitude of potential partnerships in the community and how they can work together.

*Mark Vandenbosch now absent at 6:55 p.m.

5.5 Committee Survey Findings and Next Steps

Discussion: Barb Cottle reviewed the report on the Committee Survey Findings noting each of the four members reviewed the data and provided a statement of their findings, then combined the statements into one report.

Committee members discussed the potential of moving meetings out of the Council Chambers as the layout is not conducive to facilitating group discussion and the alternative options to live streaming the meeting. Members determined that the January meeting should take place in the Auditorium at City Hall, if available. The committee will then assess their preference between the Tim Taylor Lounge and the Auditorium.

Motion by: Franklin Famme

Seconded by: Trudy Jonkman

THAT the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee meetings be moved to an alternate suitable room based on availability.

Carried

Motion by: Franklin Famme

Seconded by: Barb Cottle

THAT the Working Group Co-ordinator's Report dated December 8, 2024 be received for information. Carried

Motion by: Barb Cottle

Seconded by: Ron Dodson

THAT Working Groups, Chairs, Co-Chairs and Working Group Coordinators review their roles, responsibilities and over all Committee process and structures;

AND THAT suggestions related to the process and structures be provided to the Corporate Initiatives Lead for proposing amendments to more effectively undertake the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee's mandate. Carried

6. New Business

6.1 Discussion on Next Steps in Developing the Grand Trunk Building

Discussion: Dan Mathieson facilitated a discussion regarding segmenting the project and narrowing the focus to specific topics such as roadways. Members of the committee expressed their appreciation for the open

discussion at today's meeting and the recommendations brought forward by staff for the committee's consideration.

7. Reports of the Working Groups

7.1 Partnership

7.2 Vision, Planning & Architecture

7.3 Real Estate, Legal & Finance

7.4 Communications, Advocacy & Civic Engagement

7.5 Infrastructure & Environment

7.6 Working Group Coordinators

7.7 Staff Update

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee Meeting is January 20, 2025. The location of the meeting will be confirmed.

9. Adjournment

Motion by: Nic Flanagan

Seconded by: Ron Dodson

THAT the December 16, 2024 Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:02 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 7:18 P.M.



February, 2025

Exploring the Feasibility of a Community Complex as Part of the Grand Trunk Master Plan

Understanding funding and operating models, as well as the rationale for progressing.

Prepared by: Peggy Vacalopoulos
VACAL SERVICES LTD.



Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Introduction	4
The Case Studies	6
Third-Party Facilities.....	8
YMCA Community Life Centre, Belleville (2027)	9
YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, Barrie (2027).....	10
Shared Facilities	12
The David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community (2022).....	13
StarTech.com Community Centre, YMCA, and Library, London (2018)	15
Quinte West YMCA (2009)	16
Municipally Owned and Operated Facilities	18
Kitchener Schlegel Park (2026)	19
Muskoka Lumber Community Centre, Bracebridge (2024)	21
Summary of Cases	22
SWOT Analysis.....	25
Strengths	25
Weaknesses.....	26
Opportunities.....	26
Threats	27
CONCLUSION	29
Best Practices Operating & Funding Models.....	29
The Rationale for Moving Forward	29
Future Considerations	30
Appendix A: Calculations for the projected cost of the proposed community complex, Stratford.....	33
References	35

Executive Summary

The feasibility study examines the potential for developing a new community space at the Grand Trunk site in Stratford. The report begins to address key action two from the Grand Trunk Renewal Project to determine the scope, funding, and design for a shared community recreation facility while considering the community's need for accessible and versatile spaces. Through comprehensive research, stakeholder engagement, and financial analysis, the study seeks to determine the viability of this facility and assist the Council in making an informed decision about its level of involvement in the project.

Key findings indicate that Stratford's current community facilities are insufficient to meet the evolving needs of its diverse population, and robust partnerships are essential for creating inclusive spaces. The proposed community complex will include facilities for sports, cultural activities, education, and social gatherings, along with dedicated areas for youth, seniors, and community service initiatives. These components align with Stratford's vision of empowering the community through services and opportunities that foster care, well-being, resilience, and environmental sustainability.

To complete a conceptual costing exercise, this study primarily focuses on the funding and operating models related to ten leisure spaces in Central and Southern Ontario, Canada. The research found that operating and funding models exist on a spectrum, leading to three categories: Third-Party Facility, Shared Facility, and Municipally Owned and Operated Facility. The municipal investment varies depending on the extent of the City's involvement in design, development, and operations, with greater investment offering increased control over programming and facility management. Funding sources include municipal investment, government grants, and partnerships with local organizations. Cost estimates have been adjusted for inflation using accurate Consumer Price Index calculations, ensuring realistic projections.

The proposed community facility at the Grand Trunk site will cover an area of 70,000 to 110,000 square feet. It will feature a pool, gym, walking track, childcare services, a library, meeting rooms, a café, community and communal spaces, an auditorium, a communal kitchen, a lounge, change rooms, and washrooms. With estimated construction costs at \$695 per square foot, the projected cost for this project is expected to range from \$48.5 million to \$76.5 million. Research estimates suggest that building a new community centre with limited municipal involvement (Third-Party Facility) could cost the municipality between \$1.83 million and \$47.59 million. Operating partnerships that include municipal oversight of community spaces and shared governance (Shared Facility) would raise the estimated costs from \$31.88 million to \$60.15 million. Lastly, a community complex owned and operated by the municipality would require investments ranging from \$35.08 million to \$72.29 million based on the cases analyzed. It is recommended that the City of Stratford

adopt a shared model to ensure fairness in governance and equitable access for all citizens.

In addition to addressing community needs, the new facility is anticipated to provide economic and social benefits, such as retaining and attracting talent, enhancing residents' quality of life, creating opportunities for local businesses, fostering reconciliation, and supporting sustainable development goals. The historical significance of the Grand Trunk site further enriches the project's potential to become a landmark that symbolizes Stratford's dedication to community development and sustainability.

This study concludes that the proposed community complex is viable and crucial for achieving Stratford's long-term objectives. The proposed next steps include:

1. **Refining the Project Scope:** Develop detailed options for design, programming, costing, and operational models.
2. **Exploring Funding Opportunities:** Pursue grants, private donations, and external partnerships to reduce municipal contributions.
3. **Engaging Stakeholders:** Maintain discussions with the YMCA, SPL, and other potential collaborators to clarify roles and responsibilities.
4. **Reporting Back to Council:** For final consideration, provide a comprehensive report with refined plans, funding strategies, and anticipated community impacts.

Stakeholders, including the YMCA, Stratford Public Library, Community Services, and various engaged citizen groups, firmly back the project, highlighting the urgent need for this initiative to move forward.

Introduction

The City of Stratford is located within the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral (Attawandaron) Peoples. Stratford lies in Perth County along the Avon River in Southwestern Ontario. According to the 2021 census, Stratford has a population of 33,232 residents, with an average age of 44.8 years. Males represent 48.3% of the population, while females account for 51.7%. The largest age group in Stratford consists of residents over 65 years old. Additionally, 1.7% of Stratford's residents identify as Indigenous. The largest racialized group is South Asian, comprising approximately 675 individuals, or 2.1% of the population. The second group is Black, with around 585 individuals representing 1.8% of the population. The third group is Latin American, with approximately 315 individuals, accounting for 1.0% of the total population.

The primary economic drivers for the community are tourism and manufacturing. According to an estimate by the Conference Board of Canada, tourism generates \$140 million in economic activity, contributes \$65 million in tax revenue, and supports 3,000 direct and indirect jobs. Manufacturing and healthcare are the two largest employers at the industry level, accounting for 15% of the region's jobs in 2021. It is also important to note that Stratford has a robust agricultural sector and auto parts manufacturing. More recently, Stratford has emerged as a digital hub, highlighted by the Royal Bank of Canada opening a data centre and establishing the University of Waterloo's Stratford School of Interaction, Design, and Business.

The historic Grand Trunk Railway and Canadian National Railway (CNR) Shops were located on Downie Street in Stratford, Ontario. Spanning 18 acres and housing a 185,000-square-foot facility, the building was established in the mid-1850s and prospered for many years. By the 1940s, Stratford's locomotive repair shop employed nearly 40% of the city's workforce, earning the distinction of being the largest repair operation in the CNR network. However, as Canadian National transitioned to diesel-powered machinery, the Stratford CNR facility experienced a significant downturn in business, ultimately leading to its closure. The site remained vacant for several years and serves as municipal parking. It is also the largest undeveloped site within downtown Stratford. Recently, the site has been revitalized with the opening of the University of Waterloo's Stratford School, the first building of a planned University of Waterloo Stratford School Campus. The Grand Trunk site aims to renew its place in, and as the heart of, Stratford and become a gathering place for residents and visitors alike through the Grand Trunk Master Plan.

The YMCA and Stratford Public Library (SPL) have outgrown their facilities. In the spring of 2022, Lemay was engaged by the SPL to conduct a space needs assessment of their current library and to determine their future space requirements and needs for a venue

designed to continue and enhance the excellent work and public service that the library provides to both the Stratford community and the larger Perth County region. The general findings were shared as part of a 2023 presentation to the Council regarding the library's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan - [click here to view the full report](#).

To address the needs of the YMCA, SPL, other interested citizens, and the City of Stratford, the proposed community complex should include various amenities such as a pool, gym, walking track, childcare facilities, library, meeting rooms, café, community areas, shared spaces, auditorium, communal kitchen, lounge, changerooms, and washrooms. The anticipated size is between 70,000 and 110,000 square feet. Although the YMCA currently has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the municipality, it remains uncertain whether the library will be part of this project at this time.

The proposed square footage is designed to incorporate community spaces that meet the diverse needs of Stratford's population. This includes a community theatre space, areas for older adults and youth to gather and engage in shared programming, and spaces for community service initiatives. Thanks to their close collaboration with various community groups, the YMCA, SPL, and Community Services thoroughly understand these space requirements. The analysis section of this report provides a detailed examination of these specific needs.

The purpose of this research is to provide the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and the Stratford City Council with a comprehensive understanding of the varying levels of municipal investment needed to develop a new community complex at the Grand Trunk site. The study identifies three operating models, each corresponding to different investment levels based on the extent of influence the municipality wishes to exert over space programming and design. These models include third-party, shared, and municipally owned and operated facilities. To assist the Council in making an informed decision, data was collected from ten cases of both old and new community centres built in Ontario, representing a range of partnership options and population demographics.

The remainder of this report presents the findings and analyzes the research study results. It begins by explaining the methodology and methods used to collect the data. Next, seven of the ten cases are detailed, along with financial reporting for all ten cases. We discuss third-party facilities, followed by shared facilities, and conclude with municipally owned and operated facilities. The report also includes a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis prepared by potential key partners of the proposed community complex (YMCA of Three Rivers, the City of Stratford, and the Stratford Public Library). I then assess these results to pinpoint best practices for operations and funding, articulate the rationale behind the project's essential significance for the future, and wrap up with considerations for the Council moving forward.

The Case Studies

A case study methodology was developed to determine the various funding and operating models associated with ten community leisure spaces in Ontario, Canada. Information was gathered through municipal records and federal and provincial announcements, alongside a thorough search of online third-party resources. It is worth noting that, where applicable and when information was available, municipal investment is broken down further in the case descriptions since not all municipal investment is cash in hand; it often includes in-kind support, such as the contribution of land. Inflation rates were calculated by adjusting the total facility cost based on the year it was constructed. This adjustment was made by multiplying the original building cost by Statistics Canada's September 2024 CPI (161.1) divided by the CPI for the year the facility was built.

At the same time, two working sessions were held with key stakeholders from the YMCA of Three Rivers, the Stratford Public Library, and municipal representatives from the City of Stratford. Additionally, executives from the YMCA and the municipalities were interviewed to better understand each centre's funding and operating models. During the second working session, the participants completed a SWOT exercise to assess the feasibility of a shared community complex.

The research revealed that both operating and funding models exist on a spectrum. No one-size-fits-all solution or magic formula can determine what works best for each community. As a result, three categories emerged: third-party facilities, shared facilities, and municipally owned and operated facilities. Several cases were examined to validate the research while illustrating the types of partnerships, funding, and operating models. Variables related to financing and operational models depended on several factors, including population size, demographics, the level of municipal involvement, addressing the needs of the community, the municipality, and partners, as well as other market factors such as the political climate, the availability of grants, and pre-and post-COVID developments, to name a few.

This study begins to address one of four critical actions in the Grand Trunk Renewal Project: identifying the scope, funding, and design for a shared community recreation facility. In the future, additional interviews and possibly focus groups may be conducted with the Ad Hoc Committee members and other stakeholders to evaluate space programming, and design needs as the municipality determines its level of involvement in this project. Best practices for community spaces across Canada and globally should also be considered. It is the researcher's recommendation that further research be carried out in these areas.

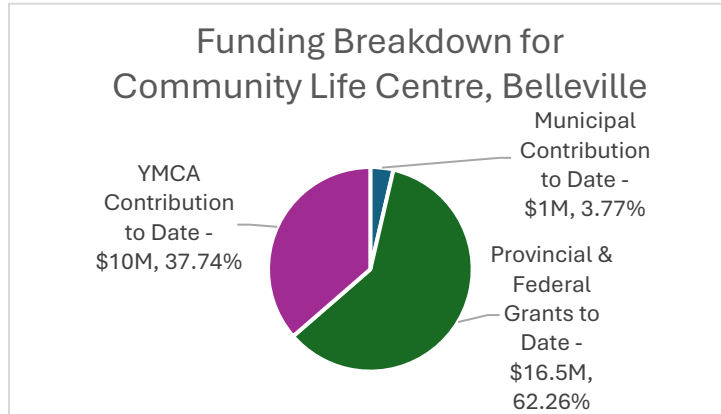
The case study section provides a comprehensive analysis of ten cases, highlighting financial data, community demographics, funding and operating models, notable amenities, accessibility, and greening initiatives for each facility. The third-party facilities discussed include the YMCA Community Life Centre in Belleville (2027), the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka in Barrie (2027), the John M. Harper Library & Stork Family YMCA in Waterloo (2011), and the Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA & Library in London (2010). In these instances, the YMCA and Library (where applicable) oversee all operations with minimal municipal influence. The second category consists of shared facilities where the YMCA, Library, and municipal spaces work together on operations. This group includes the David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community (2022), the StarTech.com Community Centre, YMCA & Library in London (2018), and the Quinte West YMCA (2009). The final category comprises municipally owned and operated facilities, which are the Kitchener Schlegel Park (2026), the Guelph Southend Community Centre (2026), and the Muskoka Lumber Community Centre and Library in Bracebridge (2024). Each explored case offers valuable insights into funding and operating opportunities, presenting a realistic depiction of costs and municipal expectations essential for making these projects viable and achievable.

Third-Party Facilities

Limited municipal influence in operation, space programming, and design.

	YMCA Community Life Centre, Belleville (2027)	Barrie YMCA, Simcoe/Muskoka (2027)	Harper Library & Stork Family YMCA, Waterloo (2011)	Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA & Library, London (2010)
Funding Variables				
Total Cost	\$ 26,494,000	\$ 67,000,000	\$ 22,300,000	\$ 29,783,000
Accounting for Inflation			\$ 29,882,000	\$ 41,100,540
Total Municipal Contribution	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 9,500,000	\$ 18,533,000
Municipal Contribution as a %	3.77%	7.46%	42.60%	62.23%
Grants Contribution as a %	62.26%	44.63%	18.39%	0.00%
YMCA Contribution as a %	37.74%	6.72%	36.77%	28.54%
Library Contribution as a %	0.00%	0.00%	2.38%	9.23%
Other Contribution as a %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Square Footage	60,000	77,000	66,000	82,250
Cost per square foot (inclusive)	\$ 441.57	\$ 870.13	\$ 452.76	\$ 499.70
Provincial Grants	\$ 7,497,000	\$ 29,900,900		
Federal Grants	\$ 8,997,000		\$ 4,100,000	
Library			\$ 530,000	\$ 2,750,000
YMCA	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 4,500,000	\$ 8,200,000	\$ 8,500,000
Other				
Total Cost	\$ 26,494,000	\$ 67,000,000	\$ 22,330,000	\$ 29,783,000

YMCA Community Life Centre, Belleville (2027)



The **City of Belleville** is situated on the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, the Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee Peoples. Belleville is a city in Central Ontario, Canada, on the eastern end of Lake Ontario, located at the mouth of the Moira River and on the Bay of Quinte. According to the 2021 Canadian census, its population was 55,071

(Census Metropolitan Area population 111,184), with an average age of 44.5. Males comprise 48.4% of the population, while females comprise 51.6%. Locals over 65 represent the largest age group in Belleville (13,030 people), followed by those aged 55 to 64 (8,385 people). Belleville's population is mostly of European descent. The racial makeup of Belleville as of 2021 was 85.1% European descent, 5.6% Indigenous, and 9.3% visible minorities. The largest visible minority groups, as identified in the 2021 census, are South Asian at 3.9%, Black at 1.3%, Filipino at 0.9%, and Chinese at 0.8%.

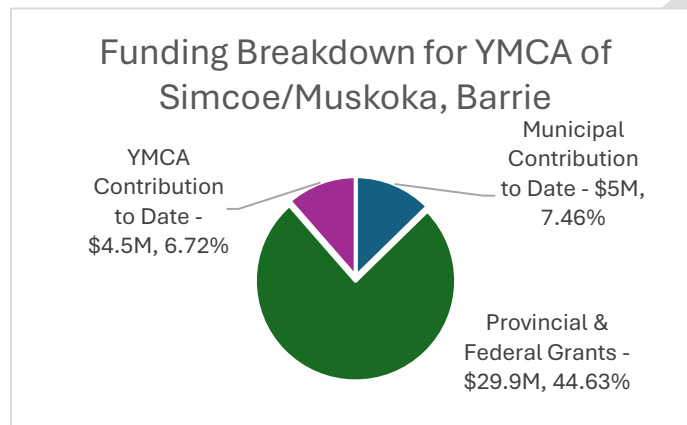
The YMCA Community Life Centre in Belleville was proposed in 2021 and aims for completion by 2027. The planned facility will span **60,000 square feet** and is expected to cost approximately **\$26.5 million**, equating to **\$441.57 per square foot**. Notable features include two pools, a gymnasium, an exercise studio, a conditioning centre focused on youth and senior programming, and locker rooms with universal and family-changing areas. Additionally, the facility will host social and educational community programs and meeting spaces, including areas designed for individuals with physical and mental disabilities. There will be no municipal influence over space programming and design.

The Government of Canada is investing more than \$8.9 million in this project through the Community, Culture, and Recreation Infrastructure Stream of the Investing in Canada plan. The Government of Ontario is providing more than \$7.4 million, while the YMCA of Central East Ontario is contributing over \$5.9 million. Allowing the YMCA to sell the existing building they own, along with property valued at \$1.1 million, and waiving development fees for the new facility will generate more revenue for the municipality if and when new homes are built on the property. The \$1 million municipal contribution is not cash in hand; rather, it is the estimated value of the land the municipality will donate for the new facility and the savings on development fees. It is estimated that the construction of the YMCA

Community Life Centre will directly and indirectly create \$30 million in economic activity and produce the equivalent of 200 full-time jobs over the project's duration.

It is worth noting that this project took 20 years to develop and was supported by both the MP and MPP at its inception. Additionally, much of the funding for this project comes from a series of successful federal and provincial grant applications, largely attributed to hiring a third party who was experienced in writing grants and knowledgeable about the YMCA's ethos.

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, Barrie (2027)



The **City of Barrie** is situated on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe Peoples, which include the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Pottawatomi Nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. Before the mid-17th century, the Wendat Nation (Huron) occupied these lands. Barrie is a city in Central Ontario, Canada, about 90 kilometres north of Toronto. It is located within Simcoe County and

along the shores of Kempenfelt Bay. Although Barrie is part of Simcoe County, it is an upper-tier municipality. Barrie is part of the extended urban area in Southern Ontario known as the Greater Golden Horseshoe. As of the 2021 census, Barrie's population was 147,829, while the census metropolitan area had a population of 212,667 residents. The average age in Barrie is 37.2, which falls below the national average. Over 87% of Barrie residents are of European descent, 7.6% are minorities, and 3.7% of the population identifies as Indigenous. The largest visible minority groups identified in the 2021 census are South Asian at 4.4%, Black at 3.9%, and Latin American at 2.0%.

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka Regional Hub was proposed in 2019 and is set to be completed by 2027. The facility will span **77,000 square feet** and cost approximately **\$67 million**, equating to **\$870 per square foot**. It will replace the now-demolished Grove Street facility, which was sold in 2020 and is being developed into residential units. Proceeds from the Grove Street building sale will be allocated to the new centre. The new YMCA will also feature licensed childcare, youth, and newcomer services, an accessible indoor playground, community meeting spaces, an intergenerational hub, a community kitchen, and a health/fitness and aquatics centre. It has been designed to meet the needs of Barrie for the next 100 years and will host cardiac and cancer rehabilitation programs while also providing 12 units for unhoused youth.

The projected budget for this new facility in 2019 was \$36.5 million; however, due to rising construction costs and unforeseen expenses, the total has now surpassed \$60 million. The \$5 million municipal contribution will be paid in installments that align with ongoing construction progress: \$500,000 in 2024, \$1.5 million in 2025, and \$3 million in 2027. An additional \$5 million in funding will be provided by Simcoe County to address the urgent needs of the community's unhoused youth population, which significantly drives support for the project. Furthermore, the YMCA has secured nearly \$30 million in funding from the province under stream two of the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund, a grant that expires in 2027.

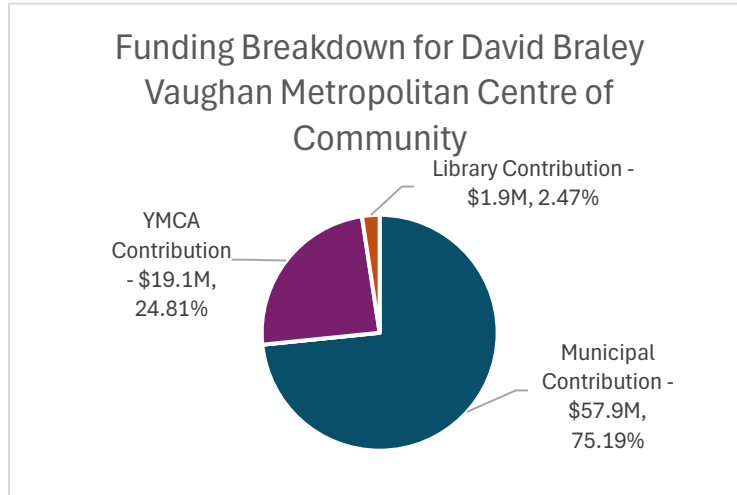
It is worth noting that the YMCA has signed a 50-year land lease with the City of Barrie for \$2 per year, with the opportunity for renewal; the land was not gifted in this instance. Regarding operations, the YMCA will be responsible for all activities, including the community kitchen and playground. In contrast, the Cardiovascular and Cancer rehabilitation centres will partner with the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre and the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Centre. At the same time, the YMCA will manage all other spaces.

Shared Facilities

Mixed operational accountability

	The David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community		StarTech.com YMCA & Library, London (2018)		Quinte West YMCA (2009)	
Funding Variables						
Total Cost	\$	77,000,000	\$	54,439,000	\$	12,800,000
Accounting for Inflation	\$	83,930,000	\$	65,871,190	\$	18,048,000
Total Municipal Contribution	\$	57,900,000	\$	42,859,000	\$	8,400,000
Municipal Contribution as a %		75.19%		78.73%		65.63%
Grants Contribution as a %		0.00%		0.00%		31.25%
YMCA Contribution as a %		24.81%		16.90%		3.13%
Library Contribution as a %		2.47%		8.37%		0.00%
Other Contribution as a %		0.00%		4.37%		0.00%
Square Footage		109,000		170,000		50,000
Cost per square foot (inclusive)	\$	770.00	\$	387.48	\$	360.96
Provincial Grants					\$	4,000,000
Federal Grants						
Library	\$	1,900,000	\$	4,556,000		
YMCA	\$	19,100,000	\$	9,200,000	\$	400,000
Other			\$	2,380,000		
Total Cost	\$	77,000,000	\$	54,439,000	\$	12,800,000

The David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community (2022)



The **City of Vaughan** is situated on the traditional territory and Treaty 13 lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The City of Vaughan also recognizes the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and the Haudenosaunee Peoples. The City of Vaughan is the fifth-largest city in the Greater Toronto Area and the 17th-largest city in Canada. Caledon and Brampton bound Vaughan to the west, King/Richmond Hill to the

north, Markham/Richmond Hill to the east, and Toronto to the south. Vaughan was the fastest-growing municipality in Canada between 1996 and 2006, with its population increasing by 80.2% during this period and nearly doubling since 1991. Vaughan has 323,105 residents, with an average age of 40.9 years. Males comprise 48.8% of the population, while females represent 51.2%. Locals under 14 constitute the largest age group in Vaughan (53,290 people), followed by those over 65 (52,690 people). Indigenous people account for 0.2% of Vaughan's total population. The largest visible minority groups identified in the 2021 census are South Asian at 11.2%, Chinese at 8.3%, and West Asian at 4.0%. The most commonly reported ethnic or cultural origin was Italian, Chinese, and Jewish.

In 2016, the municipality approved the YMCA Centre of Community and Library mixed-use project. This approval specified that the City of Vaughan would contribute up to two-thirds of the YMCA's construction and project-related costs and 100% of the municipal library and leisure spaces. The project is financed through Infrastructure Ontario, with the YMCA of Greater Toronto as the borrower and the City of Vaughan as the guarantor. In June 2022, a generous donation of \$5 million from The David Braley Charitable Foundation enabled the completion of the project.

The **109,000-square-foot** project cost **\$77 million**, or approximately **\$84 million** when accounting for inflation, equating to **\$770 per square foot**, and was completed in 2022. The YMCA occupies 75% of the space, while the library and municipal areas account for the remaining 25%. Smart Centres donated the land as part of a deal with the municipality for the building project. The YMCA, library, and municipality each operate distinct spaces within the facility. The only exception is the communal lobby, which serves as a heating and cooling relief station for the unhoused population. The YMCA is a landlord for the library

and municipal areas, meaning they maintain and manage the building and its operations. Although the library and municipality do not contribute to the rent, they share expenses.

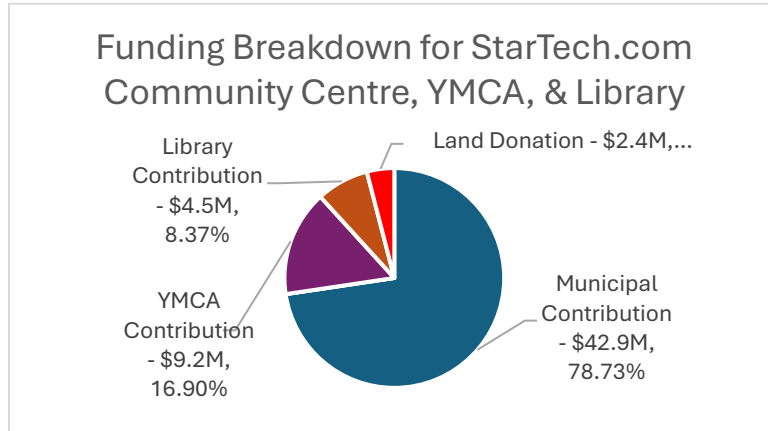
The municipally operated Vaughan Studios and Event Space is a 19,000-square-foot venue featuring a rooftop terrace. Its design embodies the contemporary urban lifestyle of the area and integrates cutting-edge, state-of-the-art amenities for the community, including:

- A 3,350 square-foot studio with a sky fold partition and gallery that exit to the rooftop terrace
- Two multi-purpose dance studios (825 square feet and 1,190 square feet)
- A 592-square-foot professional music-recording studio
- A 1,450-square-foot gourmet teaching kitchen

The municipally operated space provides programming for the community, including youth summer camps that use the dance studio and gourmet kitchen areas. Additionally, community members can rent the space for private events, and the rooftop terrace is a significant attraction, with many upscale events hosted there.

It is worth noting that the centre is situated in a densely populated urban area of Vaughan, providing direct access to the Jane and Finch subway line. Pro forma reports indicated that substantial development in the region would lead to increased traffic for the YMCA. However, the limited parking availability, partnerships with new condominium developments, and the area's heightened vulnerability (implying a greater need for security) have resulted in the YMCA underperforming compared to forecasts. This situation is closely related to new condominium developments that offer gym facilities for their residents, the transient nature of individuals occupying these residences—many of which are owned by overseas investors—and the absence of onsite parking. Moreover, tensions can arise over the use of common spaces when high-end banquet rentals intersect with the unhoused population accessing the same facility.

StarTech.com Community Centre, YMCA, and Library, London (2018)



The **City of London** is situated on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Attawandaron Peoples. London is located in Southwestern Ontario along the Quebec City-Windsor Corridor at the confluence of the Thames River and the North Thames

River. According to the 2021 Canadian census, London had a population of 422,324, with a median age of 38.8. Residents aged 20 to 34 represent the largest age group in London, numbering 94,420, followed by those over 65, who total 75,070. Nearly 27% of London's total population identifies as belonging to a minority group, with South Asian, Arab, and Black individuals comprising the majority of this demographic. Indigenous people account for 2.6% of London's population. London is one of the fastest-growing cities in Ontario and is recognized as a regional centre for healthcare and education.

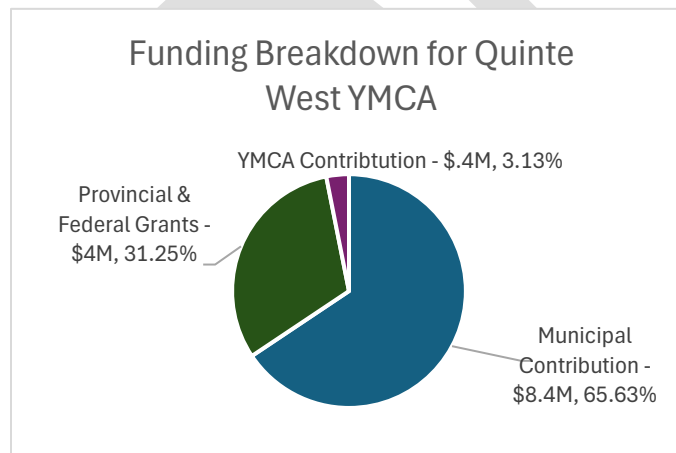
The **170,000-square-foot** project cost **\$54.5 million** or approximately **\$66 million** when accounting for inflation, equating to about **\$400 per square foot**, and was completed in 2018. The building's cost was shared among the municipality, the YMCA, and the library. Its construction represented the most significant municipal investment in the City of London. This project was made possible by a generous donation of land from Ali Soufan of York Developments, and the YMCA contributed an additional \$1.2 million in furniture and equipment. The municipal investment for this project is detailed as follows:

Funding Sources	Amount
Tax Support	\$26,597,000
Development Charges	\$11,706,000
Library Contribution	\$4,556,000
Subtotal Municipal	\$42,859,000
Donation of Land	\$2,380,000
YMCA Contribution	\$9,200,000
Total	\$54,439,000

The two-storey StarTech.com Community Centre, YMCA, and library is a shared community complex among the YMCA, the City of London, and London Public Library (LPL). The YMCA houses an athletic centre, aerobics rooms, a youth centre, a gymnasium, an aquatics centre with a teaching pool, childcare services, a 25-metre lap pool, change rooms, and a community space. The City of London facility features twin ice pads, multi-purpose rooms, change rooms, and an indoor running track. Additionally, a section of the building includes a library branch. The YMCA, library, and municipality each oversee the ongoing operations of their individual spaces. This innovative funding and partnership model allows the complex to meet diverse community needs while sharing the financial responsibility among the stakeholders.

It is worth noting that the building has undergone three name changes since its inception. The final name change occurred in 2020 to aid financial recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on community leisure spaces. A \$1.5-million sponsorship agreement with StarTech.com will secure the facility's name for the next 15 years. Regarding the ownership and operations of the building, the YMCA holds a 50-year lease with the City of London. Unlike Stoney Creek, the municipality owns the facility and will continue to do so under existing agreements, primarily due to the arena's infrastructure. The new community space was established based on the success of the Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA, and Library.

Quinte West YMCA (2009)



The **City of Quinte West** is situated on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), and the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation. The City of Quinte West is located in Southern Ontario on the western end shores of the Bay of Quinte on Lake Ontario. With tranquil waterways perfect for fishing, boating, or simply unwinding by the shore, Quinte West boasts a stunning natural

landscape. Paired with a dynamic and forward-thinking community, it is an ideal place to call home and build a career. According to 2021 census information, Quinte West, ON, has a population of 46,560 residents, with an average age of 44. Males comprise 49.8% of the population, while females account for 50.2%. Locals aged 65 and older represent the largest age group in Quinte West, ON, with 10,345 individuals, followed by those aged 55 to 64, numbering 7,875. Indigenous people make up 5% of the population. The largest visible

minority groups identified in the 2021 census are Black at 1.5%, South Asian at 0.9%, and Chinese at 0.6%.

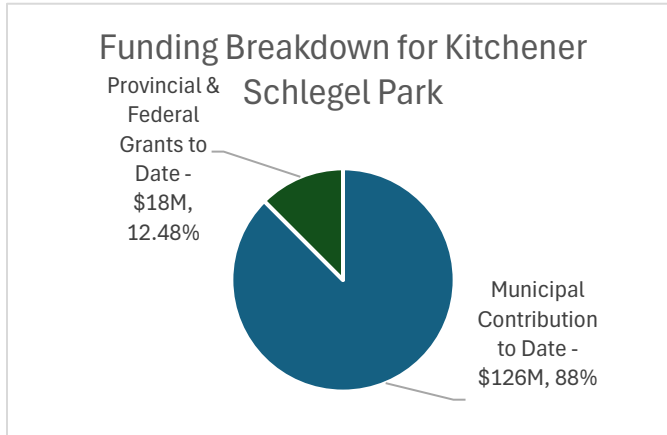
The **50,000-square-foot** project cost nearly **\$13 million** in 2009, or approximately **\$18 million** when adjusted for inflation, equating to roughly **\$360 per square foot**. To fund the project, the province invested over \$4 million in constructing the Quinte West YMCA, creating 32 construction jobs and resulting in 12 full-time and 86 part-time positions upon completion. Additionally, this project received backing through the Investing in Ontario Act. It was part of the Open Ontario Plan, reflecting the province's commitment to fostering active, healthy communities and sustaining economic stability. After raising \$5.8 million through internal and provincial contributions, the City of Quinte West secured \$6.6 million in affordable financing from Infrastructure Ontario to cover a portion of their contribution and to complete the project. Construction began in November 2007 and was finished by May 2009. Notable amenities include a 25-meter pool, two zero-entry pools, a therapeutic pool, a full-size gymnasium, walking tracks, a fitness room, community rooms, and childcare facilities. Also housed inside the centre is the Quinte West Sports Hall of Fame, which honours athletes, builders, and teams from the Quinte West community.

It is worth noting that, in this arrangement, the municipality covers all capital needs while the YMCA operates the facility and retains net profits. The municipality constructed the facility, and the YMCA covered all interior expenses. The YMCA pays the municipality \$30,000 in annual rent, although depending on the current financial climate, it may receive some relief on these payments.

Municipally Owned and Operated Facilities

	Kitchener Schlegel Park (2026)	Guelph Southend Community Centre (2026)	Muskoka Lumber Community Centre (2024)
Funding Variables			
Total Cost	\$ 143,820,000	\$ 115,500,000	\$ 78,000,000
Total Municipal Contribution	\$ 125,869,416	\$ 109,200,000	\$ 56,500,000
Municipal Contribution as a %	88%	94.55%	72.44%
Grants Contribution as a %	12.48%	0.00%	22.44%
YMCA Contribution as a %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Library Contribution as a %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other Contribution as a %	0.00%	5.45%	5.13%
Square Footage	211,500	160,000	113,640
Cost per square foot (inclusive)	\$ 680.00	\$ 721.88	\$ 686.38
Provincial Grants	\$ 8,100,000		\$ 17,000,000
Federal Grants	\$ 9,850,584		\$ 500,000
Library			
YMCA			
Other		\$ 6,300,000	\$ 4,000,000
Total Cost	\$ 143,820,000	\$ 115,500,000	\$ 78,000,000

Kitchener Schlegel Park (2026)



The City of Kitchener is situated on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral Peoples. Kitchener is located along the Grand River watershed and is one of the three cities that form the Region of Waterloo in Ontario. There are 256,890 residents in Kitchener, with an average age of 39.0. Males comprise 49.7% of the population, while females account for

50.3%. Locals under 14 comprise the largest age group in Kitchener (44,905 people), followed by those aged 25 to 34 (43,345 people). Indigenous people represent 1.9% of the total population, while visible minorities include South Asian at 9.9%, Black at 6.9%, and Latin American at 3.1%. According to the 2021 census, the total population of the Region of Waterloo (Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge) was 575,847, making it one of the fastest-growing regions in Ontario.

The proposed **211,500-square-foot** facility will cost nearly **\$144 million**, which equates to **\$680 per square foot**. It is scheduled for completion in 2026. The federal government has invested \$9.7 million into the project, while Ontario has contributed over \$8 million. The remaining \$126.2 million was financed through development charges collected by the municipality and by incurring debt. In a recent news release, the Schlegel Park project was identified as one of the main capital projects for the City of Kitchener. It will be partly responsible for the 3.9% increase in property taxes for Kitchener residents in 2025. A detailed breakdown of the funding for this centre is as follows:

Funding Sources	Amount
Federal Government Grant (ICIP)	\$17,950,584
2021-2023 Approved Budget (DC Funded)	\$3,550,717
Draw down the existing DC reserve fund balance	\$36,708,699
Debt issued in 2025	\$37,695,000
Debt issued in 2026	\$47,915,000
Total	\$143,820,000

The City of Kitchener will be exclusively accountable for the operations and management of the new facility.

The new community complex will be Kitchener's first net-zero carbon building and is designed as one of Canada's most sustainable community facilities. In addition to operating at a very high level of energy efficiency through a geothermal heating and cooling system, it will also house Kitchener's largest array of solar panels. These panels will reduce carbon emissions by 22 tonnes annually and save the municipality nearly \$100,000 in utility costs yearly.

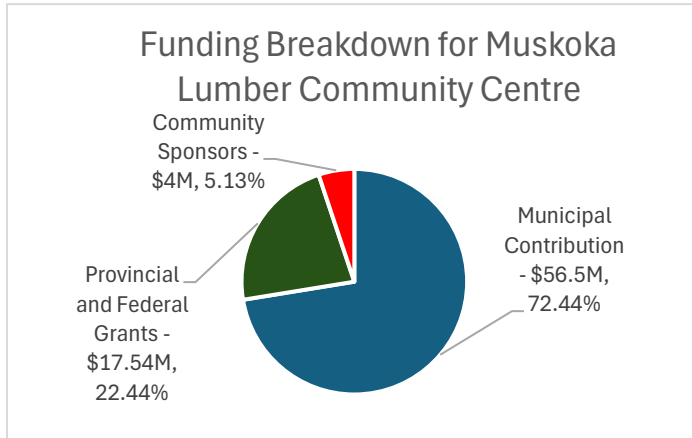
Intentionally created to promote a wider variety of sports and physical activities within the community, the new community space will feature:

- A FIFA-sized indoor turf fieldhouse that can be divided into four fields to allow more residents to use the turf simultaneously for sports such as soccer, cricket, and lacrosse
- The aquatics centre includes a community leisure pool and a separate lane pool with several viewing galleries
- A second-floor walking track around the perimeter of the turf field
- An indoor cricket batting cage to support year-round growth and development in this rapidly growing sport within the community
- A multi-purpose space with top-notch athlete amenities, including a sizeable dividable room for community events, family parties, or other rentals

The new facility has been designed with extensive landscaping and various outdoor amenities, which will help it blend seamlessly with the existing outdoor elements of RBJ Schlegel Park. The park features two outdoor soccer fields, a multi-purpose turf sports field, a cricket pitch, four outdoor courts, a splash pad, and additional play areas. The new complex is expected to accommodate 380,000 users in its first year of operations.

It is worth noting that the City of Kitchener adopted an Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) approach to designing and constructing the Kitchener indoor community complex. This approach enhances cost certainty and streamlines efficiencies during the design and construction phases by ensuring that key stakeholders responsible for the project's design, fabrication, and construction aspects are aligned under a single legal agreement. This model provides greater cost certainty and facilitates the quicker completion of projects compared to traditional project delivery methods.

Muskoka Lumber Community Centre, Bracebridge (2024)



The Town of Bracebridge is situated on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe – specifically the Ojibway, the Chippewa, and the Algonquin Peoples. Bracebridge is located in the Heart of Muskoka, the epitome of Canada’s Cottage Country. There are 17,305 residents in Bracebridge, with an average age of 47.5. Males comprise 48.2% of the population, while females account for 51.8%. Residents over 65 comprise

the largest age group (4,850 people), followed by those aged 55 to 64 (2,960 people). Indigenous peoples constitute 3.1% of the population. The largest visible minority groups identified in the 2021 census are South Asian at 0.8, Black at 0.5%, and Chinese at 0.3%. The population doubles during the summer months, and the community has a diversified economy highlighted by strong construction, hospitality, and professional sectors.

The **113,640-square-foot** community centre opened in 2024, costing **\$78 million**, or approximately **\$690 per square foot**. The Goble family donated the 22 acres required for the new centre. Sponsorship deals were secured within the local community to raise funds for the latest build in exchange for naming rights. Nearly \$4 million was raised in this manner; an additional \$17 million came from the province of Ontario, half a million from the federal government, and municipal investments exceeded \$61 million, all contributing to the total cost of \$78 million.

The Muskoka Lumber Community Centre is a modern, multi-generational hub in Bracebridge designed to centralize community activities and services. It features a 1,000-seat arena, a library, the Proline Rentals Fieldhouse, an outdoor courtyard, and play areas, with space for future expansion. The 1,850 square-metre fieldhouse provides year-round sports opportunities, hosting two NBA-sized basketball courts, volleyball courts, pickleball, tennis, badminton, indoor soccer, and lawn bowling. The centre also includes a large auditorium with a deck overlooking the playground and forest. It is ideal for weddings, conferences, and events, ensuring versatile use for sports, culture, and community gatherings. The library is nearly triple the size of its previous location. New library features include a recording studio, a maker space equipped with a 3D printer and laser printer (among other tools), a dedicated local history room, multiple spaces that the public can book, and expansive common areas.

In October 2014, the Town adopted a Preliminary Feasibility Plan to develop a new community centre to replace the existing Bracebridge Memorial Arena, constructed in 1949. At that time, the Bracebridge Public Library also sought to expand its services and needed additional space. The loans required to fund the centre have positioned Bracebridge as one of Ontario's most indebted communities. However, the Council determined that this level of debt was justifiable when weighed against the benefits the centre would bring to the community. The Town of Bracebridge supported incurring debt for the Muskoka Lumber Community Centre with a comprehensive financial strategy to minimize taxpayer impact. While the current 110-year-old library was beautiful, it no longer met the community's needs. Moreover, Bracebridge needed to replace aging assets, such as the decades-old arena, that no longer fulfilled their original purpose and provide new facilities to set the stage for leisure and learning for future generations.

Summary of Cases

The above cases illustrate the various operating and funding models for developing a new community complex. Specifically, the proposed and recent examples provide a realistic perspective on funding costs, as the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted the market, which has yet to recover. Additionally, these cases present an opportunity to explore best practices in greening, design, and accessibility initiatives to meet the diverse needs of community members now and in the future.

Municipalities chose to work with Infrastructure Ontario when financing information was available. These projects were funded through development charges, debt issuance, tax support, partner contributions, and provincial and federal grants (discussed in greater detail below). Municipalities also reduced costs by leveraging discounted services from local businesses (e.g., construction), securing community sponsorships, receiving donated land, and other in-kind support. In addition to financial contributions, municipalities often provided the land, retained facility ownership, and took responsibility for maintenance and long-term capital planning.

Several grants were obtained to help fund the community leisure spaces discussed in this report. Provincial funding sources include the Investing in Ontario Act, the Open Ontario Plan, and stream two of the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF), available until 2027. At the federal level, Belleville and Kitchener successfully accessed funding through the Investing in Canada Plan under the Community, Cultural, and Recreational Infrastructure stream. Moreover, the Gas Tax Fund and the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative have benefited previous projects.

Current grant opportunities include:

- Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF)
 - [Click here to learn more about this grant.](#)
- Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) (formerly the Gas Tax Fund)
 - [Click here to learn more about this grant.](#)
- Community Spaces Fund
 - [Click here to learn more about this grant.](#)
- Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) Capital Grants
 - [Click here to learn more about this grant.](#)
- Community Buildings Retrofit Initiative (through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund)
 - [Click here to learn more about this grant.](#)

Furthermore, Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) provides funding opportunities for smaller projects that align with a broader vision, and more research would identify additional grants that can be accessed.

Since grant application deadlines, eligibility criteria, and funding availability can change, it is essential to review each program directly when starting the application process.

As mentioned, the YMCA already has an MOU with the City of Stratford, and the library's involvement remains uncertain. However, it is important to acknowledge that the YMCA and Stratford Public Library have outgrown their facilities. The current YMCA building is over 60 years old and does not meet the community's needs, particularly in terms of aquatics, as it contains the only indoor community pool. If this pool requires maintenance, Stratford will become the largest community in Canada without an indoor pool. The same applies to the library. According to a 2022 study commissioned by SPL, the existing facility is significantly undersized for the community it serves. This limitation results in various operational issues, such as fire hazards, limitations in providing technology services, an inability to effectively address community needs, and serious accessibility concerns. New facilities are essential, and we are at a critical moment. We must now determine the level of involvement the City of Stratford will have with this project.

Based on the analyzed cases and square foot costs for projects built in 2020 and later, research estimates that a new facility will cost approximately **\$695 per square foot**. The City of Stratford aims to construct a community complex that includes a pool, gym, walking track, childcare, library, meeting rooms, café, community spaces, communal spaces,

auditorium, communal kitchen, lounge, changerooms, and washrooms with a planned size between 70,000 and 110,000 square feet. The total project cost may be between **\$48.5 million and \$76.5 million**, based on the findings of this study.

The research indicates that, depending on the size of the proposed facility—including a YMCA and potentially a library with limited municipal involvement—the required municipal investment could range from **\$1.83 million to approximately \$47.59 million**.

The research indicates that the necessary municipal investment could range from **\$31.88 million to approximately \$60.15 million** to construct a new community complex that accommodates the YMCA, the SPL, and other community groups (e.g., SACC), with shared operations and governance over space programming and design.

Lastly, research indicates that building a municipally owned and operated community space could require an investment ranging from approximately **\$35.08 million to \$72.29 million**.

Please refer to Appendix A for costing analysis calculations.

A SWOT analysis was conducted with potential key stakeholders involved in the project's inception and design to understand better how a shared partnership might work. The following section presents the SWOT analysis findings in exploring this potential partnership.

SWOT Analysis

During a workshop on December 18, 2024, representatives from the YMCA of Three Rivers, the Stratford Public Library, and the City of Stratford participated in a SWOT analysis to evaluate potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of collaborating on the proposed community space at the Grand Trunk site. Below is a summary of the results.

Strengths

- Operating strengths of the YMCA – save cities money through streamlined operations
- Shared operational costs among partners strengthen and mitigate financial risk for individual partners
- By expanding the partnership, there is greater access to a variety of potential funding sources
- Streamlining services for community members → Meet the demands of amenities needed in the community with greater access as partners are mainly serving the same constituents
- Positions the community for growth, economic development, and thoughtful planning for future generations
- Historically, capital investments are a win for the City of Stratford, boosting tax revenues for all levels of government and providing a 200% ROI for local government (CBoC, 2022)
- Increases the value of surrounding properties
- Impact more community members – serve similar populations – don't need to pick where to go or travel to more than one place
- The halo effect will benefit the downtown core
- Cost versus value – tangible versus intangible benefits – many intangible benefits associated with this partnership (attracting and retaining talent, social cohesion, etc.)
- Leverage partnerships for community fundraising

- Existing partnership culture is further ahead than other partnerships (positive reciprocal relationships and agreements – already demonstrated and proven) → will not operate in silos
- Unified leadership to help with diverse problem-solving
- Constructive collaboration among partners like the Municipality, SPL, and YMCA and potential collaborators like the Stratford Arts and Culture Collective (SACC).
- Opportunity for an incredibly unique building at a “complex site” steeped in rich historical meaning

Weaknesses

- Operational differences – each organization operates differently and offers a different experience and set of expectations for users
- Not everyone will win—access to facility spaces will require compromise (size, access, etc.)
- Diverse interests, accountabilities, and stakeholders
- Scheduling of programs across partners – avoid duplication of services
- Differing opinions of community members
- Heavily dependent on fundraising and grants

Opportunities

- Thinking ahead generationally
- Arrange agreements with future residential building developers to exclude community leisure spaces from the infrastructure plan → aiming to maximize users for the new community space (e.g., condominium members receiving 50% off YMCA memberships and community space rentals, ensuring a certain level of guaranteed revenue)
- There is an opportunity for shared governance to ensure alignment in planning and day-to-day operations
- Flexible use of space – when municipal spaces are not in demand, they can be accessed by the YMCA, SPL, or other groups to accommodate overflow or high-demand periods, and the opposite is also true

- Educate the community on how to access discounted YMCA memberships → show everyone what that looks like
- New space will offer more services to the community with greater accessibility, inclusivity, and green initiatives in mind
- Potential to involve Indigenous community with site design while addressing specific community needs
- Determine demand and type of pre-existing community facilities in Stratford to evaluate what community spaces are genuinely needed in this new complex, avoiding the duplication of spaces that are not in demand
- Determine the space required for all parties involved to serve the community effectively

Threats

- Environmental remediation will cost money and take time.
- Each organization has its own governance and management structures
- Political uncertainty at both the provincial and federal government levels
- Looming tariffs will impact the local economy
- Competing needs may cause tension
- Competing users may cause tension
- Staffing of these centres can be tricky → lifeguards and childcare
- SPL and YMCA are quickly aging out of their structures
- Challenge to meet demand or expectations in the beginning
- Trying to get things right
- Future change in leadership on all sides, with differing priorities
- There is a financial risk associated with a project of this scale and complexity
- Challenges arising from shared decision-making

Ultimately, to advance the realization of the Sports Tourism Strategy and Municipal Cultural Plan, the municipality of Stratford must have the capacity to deliver the necessary programming and facilities to make these plans a reality. Therefore, the City of Stratford

should favour a shared model. The following section presents best practices in funding and operating models based on the ten cases explored and concludes the report.

Draft

CONCLUSION

The concluding section of this report discusses best practices and funding models. I then outline the rationale for moving forward and finish with the next steps.

Best Practices Operating & Funding Models

The SWOT analysis and stakeholder interviews revealed that these operational and funding partnerships can be effective. However, the following details must be considered throughout the design and implementation process. Each organization cannot operate successfully in its own silos; operational collaboration is crucial. The spaces must complement one another and will challenge organizational cultures in doing so. Strong MOUs, non-compete clauses among partners, new developments, and involving those responsible for ground operations in the design and planning phases will ensure operational success in a shared operating model.

When it comes to securing funding through grant opportunities, starting early is key. Investing in a third party to write the grants—who is familiar with the cause and possesses experience as a technical writer—will aid in successful grant applications. Numerous opportunities exist to raise project funds through community sponsorships for naming rights associated with the proposed facility spaces. Furthermore, integrating an IPD design from the project's inception will facilitate cost-saving measures. As mentioned earlier, using an IPD in new builds is a project delivery method by which key parties responsible for the project's design, fabrication, and construction components are united through a single legal agreement. This model offers more cost certainty and helps projects be completed quicker than traditional project delivery methods.

The Rationale for Moving Forward

The most recent census data released by Statistics Canada indicates that Stratford's population reached 33,232 between 2016 and 2021—a 5.6% increase. While this might not appear as significant as the double-digit growth reported in nearby urban centres like London and Kitchener-Waterloo, it is approximately three times more than the 1.8% growth Stratford experienced during the previous five-year census period. With tourism and manufacturing serving as the main drivers of economic prosperity in this community, it is also essential to consider those who fuel these industries, including established and new community members, and the environment that sustains us. Considering population growth, the changing demographics of the area, the communal benefits tied to these spaces, the necessity of approaching economic development from the perspective of

talent attraction and retention, and the awareness that building this community complex will enhance property values, it is crucial for this project to advance without delay.

Moreover, this project supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acts as a global framework for peace and prosperity, highlighting the well-being of both people and the planet. Central to this agenda is the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which call for collective action to eliminate poverty, enhance health and education, reduce inequality, promote economic growth, combat climate change, and safeguard natural ecosystems. The proposed partnership project with the City of Stratford, SPL, YMCA, and other potential partners aligns with and can advance several of these goals, including:

- Goal 3 – Good Health and Well-being
- Goal 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 9 – Industry Innovation and Infrastructure
- Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities
- Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Goal 13 – Climate Action
- Goal 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
- Goal 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Finally, we cannot overlook the significance of this project and its potential contribution to reconciliation. This new community space can aid decolonization efforts and fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation (2015) Calls to Action by Indigenizing the centre. Several ways to achieve this are outlined below:

- Waive user fees for community members who identify as Indigenous (the University of Waterloo has waived all tuition fees for students from the Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the Credit)
- Dedicate a meeting space that can accommodate Indigenous ceremonies
- Commission an Indigenous artist to create a mural welcoming users to the space
- Work with local Indigenous communities to determine their needs and how to accommodate those needs in the new community space

Future Considerations

The YMCA and SPL have outgrown their current spaces, necessitating a new facility to accommodate their needs and those of the City of Stratford. The proposed 70,000–110,000 square foot community complex would feature amenities such as a pool, gym, walking

track, childcare, library, meeting rooms, café, community spaces, communal spaces, auditorium, communal kitchen, lounge, changerooms, and washrooms. The new facility is estimated to cost between \$48.5 million and \$76.5 million, based on current construction costs of \$695 per square foot.

This research aimed to provide the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and Stratford City Council with a conceptual cost analysis to determine potential municipal investments and operating models for the proposed community complex. Data was collected from ten Ontario community leisure spaces, reflecting a variety of partnerships and demographics. Consequently, it was determined that a shared facility would require an investment from the municipality ranging from \$31.88 million to \$60.15 million. To establish a foundation for regeneration, the City of Stratford must decide how much it will invest in the proposed Grand Trunk Community Hub; this is critically important.

Furthermore, significant work has been done concerning the land's environmental remediation needs. Staff involvement in the environmental remediation of the Grand Trunk Railway site began in 1993, with numerous investigations carried out over the years. According to the 2018 Grand Trunk Master Plan, this site comprises several conceptual parcels with unique characteristics and remediation needs. More details about the parcel remediation needs, costs, and phases of restoration can be found in Taylor Crinklaw's November 2024 report. Climate action initiatives and grant opportunities are available at both the Federal and Provincial levels; these grants will significantly assist in reducing municipal costs to remediate the land.

The Grand Trunk Community Hub will unite education, community engagement, entrepreneurship, and innovation to enhance and diversify Stratford's economy while elevating its citizens' well-being by providing valuable services and amenities for all. This Hub will support various uses, establishing a distinct identity, sense of place, and focal point for the Grand Trunk site and building while seamlessly integrating with the downtown core. It will foster a vibrant space for activity, catering to the diverse needs and interests of Stratford's population now and in the future. The project development will be guided by the six principles established by the Grand Trunk Renewal Ad Hoc Committee members. Any proposed changes to the site must be:

1. Sustainable and Fiscally Responsible
2. Celebrate the Past and Future Forward
3. Inspiring and Inclusive
4. Distinct, Diverse, and Multifunctional
5. Connected and Community Focused
6. Thriving and Vibrant

If the Council approves the project's advancement, we can refine its scope, explore funding opportunities, and engage stakeholders. These steps will enable us to report back to the Council with improved plans for final consideration.

Leisure is a fundamental human right, and this project promises significant benefits for the community. However, in a capitalist-driven society, these benefits are often undervalued. My research aims to serve as a driving force, encouraging all stakeholders to move forward with these vital partnerships and essential initiatives. When we act with purpose, we can create meaningful change within our community and beyond.

Draft

Appendix A: Calculations for the projected cost of the proposed community complex, Stratford

Costing Analysis:

For the third-party model:

- Minimum percentage: 3.77%
- Maximum percentage: 62.2%
- Total project cost range: \$48.5M to \$76.5M

Calculations:

- Minimum municipal investment = $48.5 \times 0.0377 = 1.83$ (approximately \$1.83M)
- Maximum municipal investment = $76.5 \times 0.622 = 47.59$ (approximately \$47.59M)

Range:

- Municipal investment range: \$1.83M to \$47.59M

For the shared model:

- Minimum percentage: 65.7%
- Maximum percentage: 78.7%
- Total project cost range: \$48.5M to \$76.5M

Calculations:

- Minimum municipal investment = $48.5 \times 0.657 = 31.88$ (approximately \$31.88M)
- Maximum municipal investment = $76.5 \times 0.787 = 60.15$ (approximately \$60.15M)

Range:

- Municipal investment range: \$31.88M to \$60.15M

For the municipally owned and operated model:

- Minimum percentage: 72.4%
- Maximum percentage: 94.5%
- Total project cost range: \$48.5M to \$76.5M

Calculations:

- Minimum municipal investment = $48.5 \times 0.724 = 35.08$ (approximately \$35.08M)
- Maximum municipal investment = $76.5 \times 0.945 = 72.29$ (approximately \$72.29M)

Range:

- Municipal investment range: \$35.08M to \$72.29M

Draft

References

Crinklaw, T. (2024, November). Background Information on the Grand Trunk Site. City of Stratford.

Lemay Consulting. (2022, September). Stratford Library Final Report.
<https://splibrary.ca/sites/default/files/libraryboard/splspaceneedsweb.pdf>

N. Barry Lyon (NBLC). (2024, December). Cooper Block Master Plan to Business Plan. PowerPoint.

The Conference Board of Canada. (2022, September). Economic Impact Analysis of investStratford's Business Investment Attraction Successes from 2018-2020: Final Report.

Urban Strategies Inc. (2018, February). Grand Trunk Master Plan.

[Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Stratford \[Census agglomeration\], Ontario](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Stratford \(Census subdivision\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Belleville - Quinte West \(Census metropolitan area\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Barrie \(Census metropolitan area\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - London \(Census subdivision\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Vaughan \(Census subdivision\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Quinte West \(Census subdivision\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo \(Census metropolitan area\)](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Bracebridge \(Census subdivision\)](#)

Flavelle, Dana (July 30, 2016). "[Is Stratford the next Waterloo?](#)". *Toronto Star*. Toronto. Retrieved March 6, 2017.

[Grand Trunk Railway and Canadian National Railway Shops - Stratford, ON - Simpson, Morgan - Local Landscape Report](#)

[Tuition waiver for eligible Indigenous students | Office of Indigenous Relations | University of Waterloo](#)

[THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development](#)

[Capital Campaign - YMCA of Central East Ontario](#)

[Canada and Ontario partner with the YMCA of Central East Ontario to invest over \\$22.4 Million in the YMCA Centre for Life in Belleville - Canada.ca](#)

[Major Mackay investment for YMCA | Quinte News](#)

[Centre for Life gets \\$125K from Mackay Insurance | Cornwall Standard-Freeholder](#)

[Amer Sports Canada donates \\$250K to YMCA Life Centre | The Napanee Guide](#)

[Rethink YMCA land swap to help build new centre: CEO Allen | Belleville Intelligencer](#)

[YMCA launches public fundraiser for \\$27M Centre for Life | Belleville Intelligencer](#)

[New YMCA will double the number of people it serves, will help revitalize the west end of Belleville | Quinte News](#)

[YMCA Centre for Life: Community Building in Belleville - Bay of Quinte Region](#)

[Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Belleville, City \(CY\) \[Census subdivision\], Ontario](#)

[Belleville, ON Household Income, Population & Demographics | Point2Homes](#)

[City of Belleville](#)

[Land Acknowledgement | City of Barrie](#)

[County chipping in another \\$2.5M toward Barrie YMCA facility - Barrie News](#)

[YMCA now shifting focus to south-end Barrie for new hub location - Barrie News](#)

[The City of Barrie and YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka sign lease for new facility near Sadlon Arena | CTV News](#)

[YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka announces new site selection for Barrie YMCA - YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka](#)

[Barrie YMCA Project Update - YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka](#)

[City of Barrie Awards \\$2.5 Million Per Door Grant to YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka for Youth Transitional Housing Project - YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka](#)

[City's \\$2.5M grant to help YMCA's Youth Transitional Housing project - Barrie News](#)

[Completion of new YMCA in Waterloo delayed | CTV News](#)

[‘WE’VE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE’: Mike Stork says ‘the privilege to give back’ is what drives his philanthropy, including a new fund established through WRCF — Waterloo Region Community Foundation](#)

[Stork Family YMCA now open in north Waterloo | CTV News](#)

[John M. Harper Branch Library & Stork Family YMCA / Teeple Architects | ArchDaily](#)

[Waterloo Celebrates the Completion of the John M. Harper Branch Library and Stork Family YMCA - Canada.ca](#)

[Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Library | City of London](#)

[Stoney Creek YMCA growing to match demand | CTV News](#)

[Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Library | Athletic Business](#)

[Stoney Creek Community Centre in London, Ontario | Magil Construction](#)

[Canada and Ontario Invest in Improved Sport, Recreation and Cultural Facilities in London | Ontario Newsroom](#)

[Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA & Library | YMCA of Southwestern Ontario](#)

[The David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community officially opens | City of Vaughan](#)

[YMCA of Greater Toronto celebrates the official opening of its first Centre of Community in Vaughan](#)

[Celebrating our YMCA City Builders: The David Braley Charitable Foundation – YMCA of Greater Toronto Blog](#)

[VMC YMCA CENTRE OF COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY FINANCING AGREEMENT AMENDMENT](#)

[Indigenous Land Acknowledgment | City of Vaughan](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Vaughan \(Census subdivision\)](#)

[StarTech.com Community Centre, YMCA, and Library | City of London](#)

[StarTech_CommunityCentreYMCAandLibrary_15331.pdf](#)

[Bostwick Community Centre renamed under 15-year, \\$1.5M sponsorship deal - London | Globalnews.ca](#)

[Inside London's new \\$55M hockey-pool-library-YMCA community centre | London Free Press](#)

[London's newest \\$55-million community centre will have it all - London | Globalnews.ca](#)

[\\$55M community centre on Southdale Road set to open ... and it's awesome! | CBC News](#)

[2018 Financial Report](#)

[eSCRIBE Agenda Package](#)

[Microsoft Word - 2015-06-16 Staff Report - SWCC Award of Construction Management Services](#)

[A cool \\$1.5 million names London's newest community centre | London Free Press](#)

[Groundbreaking held for new \\$55M Southwest Community Centre, YMCA and library | CTV News](#)

[Groundbreaking for new \\$55M Southwest Community Centre, YMCA and Library - southwesthealthline.ca](#)

[City of London Land Acknowledgement | City of London](#)

[London, ON - Demographics | Townfolio](#)

[Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - London, City \(CY\) \[Census subdivision\], Ontario](#)

[Top 10 Fastest Growing Cities In Ontario \(2024\) – Ontario Lists](#)

[Ontario Invests in Quinte West YMCA | Ontario Newsroom](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Quinte West \(Census subdivision\)](#)

[Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Quinte West, City \(CY\) \[Census subdivision\], Ontario](#)

[Quinte West, ON Household Income, Population & Demographics | Point2Homes](#)

[Kitchener breaks ground on \\$144 million rec complex](#)

[Kitchener property taxes could increase by 3.9 percent, 2025 draft budget to be discussed](#)

[Kitchener Indoor Recreation Complex – Target Cost and Design Update – Municipal detailed report including timelines, etc.](#)

[New recreation centre facility being proposed for RBJ Schlegel Park](#)

[New rec complex proposed for Kitchener's Schlegel Park to serve growing area of the city | CBC News](#)

[Kitchener building greenest rec facility in Canada](#)

[\\$1.8B Kitchener capital budget includes new park amenities](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo \(Census metropolitan area\)](#)

[Kitchener, ON Household Income, Population & Demographics | Point2Homes](#)

[Council moves forward with plan to build \\$115 million South End Community Centre - City of Guelph](#)

[Guelph council approves additional \\$35.5 million to build South End Community Centre | CTV News](#)

[City of Guelph breaks ground on long-awaited south end community centre | CTV News](#)

[Guelph City Council Agenda Package](#)

[Muskoka Lumber Community Centre | Engage Bracebridge](#)

[Celebrating the opening of the Muskoka Lumber Community Centre | Town of Bracebridge](#)

[“Best Seat in the House” Fundraising Campaign | Muskoka Lumber Community Centre | Engage Bracebridge](#)

[Muskoka Lumber Community Centre Naming Rights Sponsorship Opportunities | Muskoka Lumber Community Centre | Engage Bracebridge](#)

[Project Funding Summary | Muskoka Lumber Community Centre | Engage Bracebridge](#)

[Bracebridge’s Muskoka Lumber Community Centre to open in 2024](#)

[Opening day announced for Muskoka Lumber Community Centre - My Muskoka Now](#)

[Bracebridge Library begins new era inside Muskoka Lumber Community Centre - Bracebridge Library](#)

[The Muskoka Lumber Community Centre nears completion | CTV News](#)

[Unveiling nature inspired public art at the Muskoka Lumber Community Centre | Town of Bracebridge](#)

[FN-04 Respect & Land Acknowledgement 2024](#)

Key Recommendations for Consideration

January 20, 2025

Background

- The Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee considered 4 key recommendations offered by Staff in report on December 16, 2024. This report has been attached for reference.
- The key recommendations and analysis provided in the December staff report are the basis for a Management Report to Council scheduled for February 10, 2025
- The committee provided feedback at the December 16, 2024, meeting and this feedback, along with feedback from others, has been integrated into the revised recommendations that follow.

On activations & interim uses

THAT Council direct staff to conduct background research on temporary and interim uses for the GTR site, including associated next steps and cost estimates, and report these findings back to Council for consideration.

On the Community Hub & Partnerships

THAT staff be directed to pursue the shared community facility option as outlined in report COU25-XXX, which includes investment from the City in addition to funding from external sources and operational partners;

AND THAT Council direct staff to proceed with the exploration of the design, development, and operations of a shared community facility, and report back with a detailed plan outlining the project scope, a range of potential costs, and funding options for Council's consideration.

On building housing

THAT Council direct staff to develop an Expression of Interest to solicit proposals for housing development on the GTR site, with a focus on the parcel known as 2D.

On parking & mobility

THAT Council direct staff to develop an Expression of Interest to solicit proposals for the development and operation of a parking and mobility solution on the GTR site.

Next steps

- ✓ Refine recommendations and analysis
- ✓ Discussion at next Committee meeting
- Prepare report to Council
- Deliver report to Council on February 10, 2025



Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

Working Group:	Staff Report
Report Date:	Monday, February 4, 2025

Purpose:

To provide the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee with an update, findings, analysis and recommendations regarding the development of community facility at the Grand Trunk site. This includes an overview of discussions with the YMCA, Stratford Public Library (SPL), City of Stratford Community Services and various community organizations and groups.

The analysis below comprises a portion of the upcoming management report to City Council that presents four key recommendations as considered and discussed by the Ad Hoc Committee in December 2024. These recommendations aim to advance the project by addressing interim activation, partnership development for a shared community facility, and the exploration of both residential development, and mobility and parking solutions for the site. Each recommendation is grounded in insights derived from community engagement, research, and subject matter experts. The following report addresses second recommendation, partnership development for a shared community facility.

Key Action #2: Determine the Scope, Funding, and Design for a New Community Facility

The City of Stratford has a unique opportunity to address critical community needs by advancing the development of a new community facility at the Grand Trunk site. The YMCA and the City of Stratford have an MOU to explore the potential for a new community recreation facility at the Grand Trunk site. In March 2024, the Stratford Public Library (SPL) delegated to Stratford City Council, requesting to be considered as a potential partner at the Grand Trunk site. Council referred this request to the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee, which received a presentation from SPL in April 2024. Separately, SPL has completed a feasibility study articulating their need for a new, larger facility.

Over the past year, staff from the City of Stratford's Community Services Department the YMCA, and SPL, have discussed space requirements, potential operating arrangements, municipal investment, and funding opportunities. These conversations are part of an exploratory effort to determine the feasibility and community benefits of a new shared facility. This exploration aligns with the numerous successful partnerships between YMCAs, libraries and municipalities elsewhere, highlighting the potential benefits of a collaborative approach.

Each organization brought their unique perspective and shared the variety of community space and programming needs communicated to them by community members and groups. This includes insights from the Partnership working group of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee, and the Stratford Arts and Culture Collective. The community facility would provide multi-functional spaces that supports recreation, culture, and social well-being. While no detailed space design was undertaken, based on the needs of the YMCA, Stratford Public Library, City of Stratford Community Services, and the needs articulated by various community organizations, the following potential size and amenities were identified:

- 70,000-110,000 square feet
 - o Pool
 - o Gym
 - o Walking Track
 - o Childcare
 - o Library
 - o Meeting Rooms
 - o Café
 - o Community Spaces
 - o Auditorium
 - o Communal Spaces
 - o Communal Kitchen
 - o Lounge
 - o Changerooms
 - o Washrooms

The City retained Peggy Vacalopoulos, a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Scholar and recent Masters' graduate in the Department of Recreation & Leisure Studies to investigate the potential municipal investment required for developing a new community facility of this scale. The research examines various operating models and levels of municipal investment, providing critical insights to guide decision-making on the feasibility, design, and partnership opportunities for the facility.

The research employed a case study approach, analyzing ten comparable facilities across Ontario to assess funding and operational models. Data was gathered through municipal records, government announcements, and third-party resources. Stakeholder engagement included working sessions with representatives from the YMCA, Stratford Public Library, and the City of Stratford, as well as interviews with municipal and YMCA staff in the case study communities. A Strengths/ Weaknesses/ Opportunities/ Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted to evaluate the different models.

Key Insights from Research

Importance of Partnerships

While partnerships with community organizations to develop and operate community facilities can reduce operational burdens on municipalities and leverage external expertise and funding sources, municipal investment is essential to ensure community needs are addressed. Examples

of successful partnerships between YMCAs, public libraries and municipalities demonstrates the importance of combining municipal contributions with external funding sources (e.g., federal and provincial grants, private donations, and community sponsorships).

Three Facility Models & Ranges of Municipal Investment

From the case studies, the research identified three models for community facilities, each representing a different level of municipal involvement and financial commitment. The Third-Party Facility model involves operations managed entirely by a third-party organization, such as a YMCA or library, with the municipality playing a limited role and contributing between 3.7% and 62.2% of the total project cost. In contrast, the Shared Facility model features multiple partners, including the municipality, jointly designing, developing, and operating the facility. Here, the municipality assumes a leadership role and contributes between 65.6% and 78.7% of the total cost. The Municipally Owned and Operated Facility model places full responsibility for design, development, operations, and programming on the municipality, resulting in the highest financial contribution, ranging from 72.4% to 94.5%. The table below highlights how the level of municipal involvement increases across the models, directly correlating with a greater share of the project cost.

Model	Description	Role of Municipality	Municipal Investment as % of Total Project Cost
Third-Party Facility	Operated entirely by a third-party organization, typically a YMCA and/or a library.	Municipality plays a limited role in design, development, operations and programming.	3.7%-62.2%
Shared Facility	Multiple partners, including the municipality, jointly design, develop and deliver operations and programming.	Municipality plays a leadership role along with leaders from partner organizations in the design, development, operations and programming. Municipality may operate their own space within the facility and deliver	65.6%-78.7%

		direct programming.	
Municipally Owned and Operated Facility	Municipality owns and directly operates the facility.	Municipality is solely responsible for the design, development, operations and programming.	72.4%-94.5%

Case for a Shared Community Facility in Stratford

The shared facility model offers the best balance of financial feasibility, operational efficiency, and community impact for the YMCA, Stratford Public Library (SPL), and the City of Stratford. By co-locating services, this model reduces costs through shared investment and operations while ensuring that Stratford residents benefit from a diverse range of programs and amenities in one accessible location. This approach allows the City to retain influence over public spaces while leveraging the YMCA's expertise in recreation, the SPL's leadership in public programming, and the City's Community Services Department, which delivers a range of public programs. These partners already collaborate, and this facility would build on that relationship to create a more integrated and effective service model. Successful shared facilities in other municipalities demonstrate that this approach fosters sustainable community hubs, strengthens long-term partnerships, and enhances service delivery. As Stratford continues to grow, this model provides a scalable and strategic solution that meets evolving community needs while maximizing resources.

Conceptual Costing Exercise

The research estimates that developing a 70,000 to 110,000 square-foot community recreation facility at the Grand Trunk site—including an aquatic centre, fitness facilities, childcare, library, auditorium, and community spaces—would cost \$48.5 million to \$76.5 million, based on current construction costs of \$695 per square foot.

The level of municipal investment required for a new community recreation facility depends on the operational model selected. The table below outlines the estimated range of municipal contributions under three different models: Third-Party Facility, Shared Facility, and Municipally Owned and Operated Facility. The municipal investment varies based on the extent of the City's involvement in design, development, and operations, with greater investment providing increased control over programming and facility management. The municipal investment ranges were calculated by applying the percentage of municipal contributions observed in comparable facilities to Stratford's estimated project cost. This approach provides a realistic projection of the financial commitment required under each model.

Model	Municipal Investment Range
-------	----------------------------

Third-Party Facility	\$1.83M - \$47.59M
Shared Facility	\$31.88M - \$60.15M
Municipally Owned and Operated Facility	\$35.08M - \$72.29M

Financial Analysis

The table below provides a simplified summary of the financial impact on the City's tax levy under different borrowing scenarios for each facility model: Third-Party Facility, Shared Facility, and Municipally Owned and Operated Facility. The borrowing amounts reflect the range of municipal investment required for each model, based on total project cost estimates. Tax levy impacts are calculated for a 30-year repayment term at an interest rate of 6%.

The analysis highlights the third-party and shared facility models as preferred options, offering both financial feasibility and operational efficiency. Notably, the borrowing ranges for these two models overlap, providing flexibility in investment levels while maintaining fiscal sustainability. The municipally owned and operated model, while offering full control, represents the highest financial commitment and tax levy impact.

Model	Investment Range	Total Principal	Approx. Increase to Tax Levy @ 6% Interest Rate
Third-Party	Low	\$ 1,850,000	0.19%
	High	\$ 47,600,000	4.94%
Shared Facility	Low	\$ 32,000,000	3.32%
	High	\$ 60,000,000	6.22%
Municipally Owned and Operated	Low	\$ 35,000,000	3.63%
	High	\$ 72,000,000	7.47%

This information is presented as a conceptual exercise to help Council understand the potential range of financial impacts associated with each model. These scenarios aim to inform Council of the future fiscal implications of borrowing and ensure alignment between the City's financial capacity and the vision for the Grand Trunk site.

Conclusion

The development of a new community facility at the Grand Trunk site offers Stratford an opportunity to address critical community needs while fostering partnerships with organizations such as the YMCA and Stratford Public Library (SPL). The research and conceptual exercises

conducted to date have provided a comprehensive understanding of the potential scope, financial implications, and operational models for this facility. These findings underscore the necessity of municipal investment to realize the community benefits associated with the project.

To move forward, Council's direction is required to determine whether further exploration of the shared facility model is desired. The decision to proceed will allow staff to refine the project scope, identify funding opportunities, and engage stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan that aligns with Stratford's strategic goals.

Recognizing the overlapping financial ranges between the third-party and shared facility models highlights the potential to balance investment levels with operational efficiency and fiscal sustainability. Council's willingness to consider these models, along with their associated investment ranges and tax levy impacts, will set the stage for next steps.

Proposed Next Steps Include:

1. **Refining the Project Scope:** Develop detailed options for design, programming, costing and operational models.
2. **Exploring Funding Opportunities:** Pursue grants, private donations, and external partnerships to offset municipal contributions.
3. **Engaging Stakeholders:** Continue discussions with the YMCA, SPL, and other potential collaborators to clarify roles and responsibilities.
4. **Reporting Back to Council:** Provide a comprehensive report with refined plans, funding strategies, and projected community impacts for final consideration.

Draft Recommendation

THAT staff be directed to pursue the shared community facility option as outlined in report COU25-XXX, which includes investment from the City in addition to funding from external sources and operational partners;

AND THAT Council direct staff to proceed with the exploration of the design, development, and operations of a shared community facility, and report back with a detailed plan outlining the project scope, a range of potential costs, and funding options for Council's consideration.



Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

Working Group:	Staff Report
Report Date:	Monday, December 16, 2024

Purpose:

The Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee has been meeting for just over a year. In that time, the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee has developed a comprehensive list of frequently asked questions and provided a significant amount of information about the project to the community through the EngageStratford platform. The Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee delivered two large community events that explored the project itself and considered comparable project from neighbouring communities. The Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee collaboratively developed a vision and set of guiding principles to inform the project and delivered a series of ten community pop-ups to gather insights on this work. Members of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and Working Groups have met with stakeholders from across the community and presented to various community groups and organizations.

While this work has been important and foundational, there are key actions that will drive the Grand Trunk Renewal Project into the next phase of its development. These actions include:

1. Finding ways to activate the Grand Trunk Site on an interim basis to bring excitement, community and imagination to this long-vacant site.
2. Determining the scale, operating model, funding structure and design of a new community recreation facility, as well as the partnership and financial arrangement to support it.
3. Enhance organizational capacity to manage and coordinate the Grand Trunk Renewal Project.
4. Assessing the opportunity for residential development on the site to support our community's need for housing supply and to bring the energy of new residents to this site.
5. Assessing the opportunity for mobility and parking solutions on the site to anticipate the future needs of new residents and community users, and the disruption that development will cause to current surface parking options.

To support the successful execution of the Grand Trunk Renewal Project, the creation of a new 1.5 FTE position has been proposed. This role will provide essential staffing resources to manage and coordinate various aspects of the project, including communications, stakeholder engagement, and administrative support. The request for this position has been included in the 2025 budget and is currently under review by the City Council. Once the budget is approved in January or February of 2025, the role will be finalized and recruitment will begin.

With feedback and insights from the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee, a series of recommendations will be presented to Council in February 2025. The recommendations are aligned with the project's Vision and Guiding Principles and Q3-Q4 2024 Workplan. These recommendations are intended to drive the Grand Trunk Renewal forward on key project components.

Requested Committee Direction:

- **THAT** Stratford City Council direct staff to pursue background research on temporary and interim uses for the GTR site and associated next steps including cost estimates and bring these findings back to Council for consideration.
- **THAT** staff provide Stratford City Council with an update on discussions between the YMCA, Stratford Public Library and the City of Stratford on a shared facility at the Grand Trunk site. This update will include an estimated range of municipal investment required to develop a shared recreation facility.
- **THAT** Stratford City Council directs staff (with support as needed from the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee) to develop an Expression of Interest to receive proposals addressing housing on the GTR site focusing on the Parcel known as 2D.
- **THAT** Stratford City Council directs staff (with support as needed from the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee) to develop an Expression of Interest in accordance with the to receive proposals to build and operate a parking/mobility solution on the GTR site.

Background Information, Analysis and Next Steps:

Interim use of the Grand Trunk Building

- Work Plan Item: Communications & Community Engagement
- Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives

Background

The GTR site, a partially restored industrial structure, has been secured and restricted for public access due to safety considerations. Following major structural reinforcements and removal of the roof decking, temporary uses for the building are being explored to foster community engagement with the site, align with long-term revitalization goals, and generate public awareness.

The City is exploring options for temporary activations, including art installations, community events, and performances, which would bring people onto the site. The Communications, Public Engagement, and Advocacy Working Group suggested that the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee request City Staff to review temporary use concepts and develop a report for Council. The direction was provided at the August 29, 2024, meeting of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee.

Potential activations include diverse activities such as art installations, historical tours, community events, live performances, and public markets. Ideas also include small-scale tours led by Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee members to enable residents to explore the building safely (as proposed by the Communications, Public Engagement, and Advocacy Working Group at the October 21, 2024, Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee meeting. These activations are intended to make the building more accessible, build community interest, and showcase the site's potential value for residents, visitors, and prospective developers.

To support these initiatives safely, adherence to Ontario Building Code standards or suitable alternatives is required. Discussions on this topic with Building and Planning started in June 2024. Over the course of many conversations with internal stakeholder and external experts, it has become clear that a change of use is required to have the public in the Grand Trunk building.

The team from Community Services has been engaged to provide operational support for the site once activations are possible. Staff from LightsON Stratford and Stratford Summer Music have been engaged to articulate site requirements for anticipated activations. External experts, including Clyde Wagner of TOLive and formerly of Luminato, David Stonehouse, Director of the Waterfront Secretariat and formerly of Evergreen Brickworks, Janet Sellery of Sellery Health & Safety, Azra Ross of Epiphany Engineering, have been consulted.

Analysis:

Occupancy and Use Considerations

- Public events in the building are not currently permitted. The CBO advised that the intended uses may require reclassification from industrial to assembly occupancy depending on public access and temporary use needs. All of this will affect compliance requirements under the Ontario Building Code.
- This will require recommendations on the on-site interventions needed to meet the building code requirements for assembly use.
- An engineer and architect have been engaged to determine the interventions needed to apply for a change of use. The building department has provided and will continue to provide feedback on this scope of work.

Health and Safety Recommendations

- An October 2024 health and safety report from Sellery Health + Safety outlines specific measures for safe site activation, including recommendations for securing hazardous areas, improving egress and emergency response capabilities, and managing crowd control for different levels of site activation. This builds on the Temporary Use Guidelines by articulating the specific requirements such as power and seating for events.

Guided Tours:

- Guided tours are possible without a change of use. PPE will be required as well as safety protocols.

Next Steps:

Building Assessment:

- Commission an assessment to determine necessary compliance measures, alternative solutions, and estimated costs for change of use. The results will support both CBO review and a cost-benefit analysis for public engagement opportunities.

Chief Building Official (CBO) Consultation:

- Submit the assessment to the CBO to determine if temporary occupancy can be granted.

Costing, Cost-Benefit Analysis and Report to Council:

- Develop a detailed cost estimate for all compliance requirements necessary for use of the building. This costing will include structural adjustments, safety installations, and any additional requirements identified in the architectural assessment and health and safety assessment.
- Complete a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the financial implications and community impact of making the building compliant for temporary public use.
- Present a final report to Council summarizing the required investment, anticipated benefits, and potential funding options to secure the necessary funds to support phased activation of the site.

Implementation Plan for Broader Activations:

- Develop a phased plan, incorporating the health and safety recommendations and architectural assessment, to enable scalable, temporary public uses aligned with the CACE Working Group's proposed activation ideas (e.g., art installations, public performances, and outdoor markets).

Shared Community Recreation Facility

- Work Plan Item: Develop Key Partnership Model and Finance & Real Estate Model
- Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives and investStratford

Background

The project aims to develop a new community recreation facility at the Grand Trunk site in Stratford. The YMCA has an MOU with the City to explore the potential of a new facility at the Grand Trunk Site. In March, the Stratford Public Library delegated to Stratford City Council, requesting that the library be considered as a core partner at the Grand Trunk. Council referred this decision to the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee, who received a presentation and request from the Stratford Public Library at its April 18, 2024, meeting.

Over the past year, the YMCA, the Library, and the City of Stratford, have been meeting regularly to discuss the vision, goals, and collaborative opportunities for the project. The primary objective is to assess space needs, potential operating arrangements, the required municipal investment and identify potential funding sources, including contributions from partners and government grants.

Establishing and maintaining strong relationships is crucial for the success of this collaborative project. By fostering open communication and understanding, these parties can ensure that the contributions from each partner align with the Grand Trunk Renewal project's overall goals and make the project financially feasible. This collaborative approach is key in leveraging resources, sharing expertise, and ensuring that the final design meets the diverse needs of the community.

The scope of work includes researching various funding models based on similar community recreation projects and understanding the roles that each partner can play in contributing to the project's success. The findings will help outline the investment required from the municipality and the potential support from other partners.

Analysis

Current research has been undertaken with the assistance of recent graduate of the University of Waterloo's Recreation and Leisure Studies Masters' program. The goal of this research is to provide the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and Stratford City Council with a clear understanding of the municipal investment required for the new community recreation facility at the Grand Trunk site. Progress to date includes:

- **Amenities and Facility Considerations:** To meet the needs of the YMCA, Stratford Public Library and the City of Stratford, the facility would need to include a variety of amenities such as a pool, gym, walking track, daycare, library, meeting rooms, a café, community spaces, a shared kitchen, and a lounge. The planned size is between 70,000 and 110,000 square feet, excluding ice pads.
- **Funding Models:** Research on potential funding models for recreation complexes has been completed. This included a detailed analysis of funding contributions from municipalities, the YMCA, libraries, and government grants. The findings indicate that municipal investment ranges from 4% to full funding, depending on the project, with other partners like the YMCA contributing up to 43% in some cases.
- **Practical Implications:** Cost-saving measures, such as leveraging provincial and federal grants, including the Federal Gas Tax Fund, are being explored. Additionally, the City of Kitchener's Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) model, which streamlines design and construction, is referenced. This could potentially reduce costs and accelerate the project timeline.
- **Partnerships and Funding:** The research emphasizes the importance of partnerships to make this project feasible.

Next Steps:

- Further research on grants and funding opportunities.
- Finalize report on cost range of comparable facilities
- Prepare final report for consideration in January by the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and City Council in February.

Grand Trunk Site Blocks and Housing Opportunities

- Work Plan Item: Finance & Real Estate Model and Procurement/RFP Process and Site Analysis & Environmental

- Staff Lead: investStratford

Background

The land parcel known as 2D on the Grand Trunk Site is approximately 2.5 acres in size with access and frontage on Downie Street. It is identified as a former area of industrial buildings and rail spurs.

Preliminary investigations have been carried out.

- Environmental impacts related to heavy metals and hydrocarbons.
 - Initial investigation indicates that impacts are shallow.

A Record of Site Condition will be required to develop a more sensitive land use (from industrial to residential), and site remediation would proceed under 'Site Condition Standards'.

Housing of all types is needed in the City of Stratford. As our City continues to grow characteristics like walkability, connections to public transit, affordability, accessibility and inter-generational living (student and seniors) will be top of mind.

For an analysis of procurement options, please refer to the memo at the end of this package entitled "Procurement Options for the Disposition of City Land and Securing Development Partners", Policy P.3.1 Sale and Other Disposition of Land, and Policy P.5.1 Purchasing Policy.

Analysis

- Environmental & Due Diligence
 - Estimated range for consultant costs \$250,000.
 - Costs may increase if unknowns encountered.
 - Ministry may require more boreholes and monitoring.
 - Contaminant levels encountered could be higher than anticipated.
 - Soil remediation to site specific standards expected to reach and exceed \$2,000,000.
 - Anticipated timelines for record of site condition ~1.5 to 3 years
- Servicing
 - Alternative municipal servicing options could be available for this parcel (from Downie Street) and may not require the internal road network for connections.
- Student Housing
 - Stratford is home to four permanent post-secondary schools and private learning centres.
- Government Funding and Programs
 - Housing and Housing-Enabling infrastructure continue to be top of mind for Provincial and Federal Governments. With upcoming elections, shovel-ready properties will be the most desirable for any available funding.

Next Steps

- Seek direction from the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and Council to begin due diligence, expressions of interest and development of housing solutions and parcel 2D.

- Work to define the overall proposed scope of the site to calculate the magnitude and density of housing, the return on investment and servicing and environmental consultations.
- Review the various procurement and partnership options available to the City for a housing development on the site.

Parking and Mobility Solution Expression of Interest

- Work Plan Item: Work Plan Item: Finance & Real Estate Model and Procurement/RFP Process and Site Analysis & Environmental
- Staff Lead: investStratford

Background

The Grand Trunk site (GTR), a partially restored industrial structure and surrounding lands – approximately 18 acres in total – currently has 437 parking spaces. The spaces located at what is referred to as the Cooper Site are currently unpaid or free parking spaces. The City of Stratford is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of the lot. There is currently no alternative in the downtown core to replace the 437 spaces when construction and development begins on the site. The most recent parking study was completed in 2015/16 and is included as a supplemental report entitled “Parking Study 2014”.

For an analysis of procurement options, please refer to the memo at the end of this package entitled “Procurement Options for the Disposition of City Land and Securing Development Partners”, Policy P.3.1 Sale and Other Disposition of Land, and Policy P.5.1 Purchasing Policy.

Analysis

- Replacing the existing 437 parking spaces
 - There is no current plan or strategy to accommodate the loss of spaces to development and construction on the Grand Trunk site.
 - It is our understanding that most parking is used by employees of downtown businesses, some patrons of downtown businesses and by visitors (mostly in the spring/summer Theatre season).
- Accommodating new development on the site:
 - Based on an assumption of 300 new dwelling units built on the site and the existing parking ratios of 1.25 spaces/unit, the site would need to absorb an additional 375 spaces.
 - Further accommodation of future community spaces – YMCA, City of Stratford, Stratford Public Library would add approximately 50-100 spaces.
- Cost to build and location:
 - Internal estimates to build modern parking structures range from \$40,000-\$50,000/space for above ground structures. Based on the spaces required, in the short term (5-10 years) this order of magnitude is \$29,000,000-36,250,000.
 - Further to an internal review of the site, the burnt-out portion on the west side of the site is the most ideal for a parking/mobility structure.
 - The approximate size of that space would allow for about 150 vehicles per level – replacing just the existing spaces would require 3 levels (~400 space).

- It is recommended that a structure consider future expansion opportunity to accommodate the new and proposed development.

Next Steps

- Seek direction from the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and Council to begin due diligence, expressions of interest and development of a parking solution.
 - Work to define the overall proposed scope of the site to calculate the magnitude of the parking/mobility structure and the implications on parking in the downtown core.
 - Review the various procurement and partnership options available to the City.
 - Confirm the feasibility of a parking structure on the GTR and explore procurement/partnerships to deliver.



CITY of STRATFORD

BRIEFING MEMO

TO: Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

FROM: Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead
Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford

DATE: December 16, 2024

RE: Procurement Options for the Disposition of City Land and Securing Development Partners

Purpose:

To provide background to the committee on procurement options and to inform next steps for attracting development partners on the Grand Trunk site.

Background:

Many procurement options are available on the GTR site. This analysis references The City of Stratford Policy P.5.1 Purchasing Policy (purchasing policy) and The City of Stratford Policy P.3.1 Sale and Other Disposition of Land (disposition policy).

Sole Sourcing (Non-competitive)

- Description: Directly select a buyer or developer without a competitive process.
- Alignment with Policies: The purchasing policy permits single sourcing only under specific conditions, such as lack of competition, exclusive capabilities, or proprietary rights (P.5.1 section 37.0). Sole sourcing is an identified disposition method in the disposition policy (P.3.1 section 8.1.4).
- Considerations:
 - Justification: Clearly document the rationale for single sourcing, such as the lack of competition or unique contributions to community benefits.
 - Transparency: Address potential scrutiny by documenting the decision-making process and obtaining necessary approvals.

- Risk Mitigation: Include performance guarantees and ensure alignment with accessibility and environmental standards.

Broker or Third-Party Agent

- Description: Engaging a broker or agent to market the property with conditions for its use or development.
- Alignment with Policies: Not specifically indicated in the purchasing policy, but an identified disposition method in disposition policy (P.3.1 section 8.1.6).
- Considerations:
 - Market Reach: Leverage the broker's network to attract diverse and qualified developers.
 - Costs: Negotiate clear terms to control brokerage fees and ensure value for money.
 - Oversight: Monitor activities to ensure compliance with the purchasing policy's ethical standards (P.5.1 section 4.0).

Tendering

- Description: Inviting bids for purchase or lease of the land with clear specifications.
- Alignment with Policies: For projects exceeding \$100,000, competitive tendering aligns with the purchasing policy requirements (P.5.1 section 35.0). It is also identified method in the disposition policy (P.3.1 section 8.1.2).
- Considerations:
 - Specifications: Clearly define all requirement in the tender documents—residential type, number of units, amount of greenspace etc.
 - Evaluation: Focus on both price and qualitative factors, such as alignment with public interests and project sustainability.

Expressions of Interest (EOI)

- Description: Soliciting non-binding interest to gauge market capacity and innovation.
- Alignment with Policies: While EOIs are not identified in the purchasing policy, they align to Requests for Information (P.5.1 section 31.0) indicated in the purchasing policy. This approach aligns with the disposition method "call for proposals or offers" (disposition policy P.3.1 section 8.1.1).
- Considerations:
 - Creativity & Flexibility: Use EOIs to identify innovative approaches to achieve objectives.

- Open Process: Advertise widely to ensure a fair and transparent competition.
- Next Steps: Plan to transition successful EOIs into structured RFP or RFQ processes.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

- Description: Soliciting detailed proposals for developing the site, with criteria emphasizing priorities.
- Alignment with Policies: RFPs are ideal for projects requiring innovative or flexible solutions where price is not the sole determinant (purchasing policy P.3.1 section 36.0, and disposition policy P.3.1 section 8.1.1).
- Considerations:
 - Evaluation Criteria: Include community benefit contributions as a weighted factor in the RFP evaluation matrix.
 - Community Engagement: Engage the community and relevant stakeholders to align RFP criteria with public needs.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

- Description: Screening potential developer or organizations based on pre-defined criteria.
- Alignment with Policies: RFQs are useful for pre-qualifying vendors for complex projects (purchasing policy P.5.1 section 33.0, disposition policy P.3.1 section 8.1.1).
- Considerations:
 - Shortlisting: Prequalify vendors based on their experience with public benefit projects, financial stability, and compliance history.
 - Time Savings: Streamline subsequent procurement steps by focusing only on qualified vendors.
 - Transparency: Document the criteria and process for shortlisting to ensure fairness.

Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)

- Alignment with Policies: Though not explicitly outlined, P3s could be structured using the RFP process to attract long-term partners.
- Considerations:
 - Risk Sharing: Clearly define roles, risks, and responsibilities between the City and private partners.
 - Long-Term Benefits: Prioritize sustainable outcomes, such as affordable housing and green spaces.

- Council Approval: Seek Council endorsement for complex agreements exceeding five years (purchasing policy P.5.1 section 24.1.).

Disposal by Donation

- Description: Selling or donating surplus land for specific public uses (e.g., affordable housing or green spaces).
- Alignment with Policies: Disposing surplus goods through sale or donation aligns with the purchasing policy (P.5.1 section 40.1.). While the disposition policy does not address donation explicitly, it does allow for land exchange (P.3.1 section 8.1.7) and suggests that Council can determine alternative methods of disposal (P.3.1 section 8.1.8).
- Considerations:
 - Strategic Partners: Identify non-profits or organizations committed to achieving public benefits.
 - Conditions: Attach covenants or agreements ensuring land use aligns with community objectives.
 - Compliance: Ensure adherence to ethical and competitive standards (purchasing policy P.5.1 sections 3.2 and 4.0).

Considerations

Several consideration and factors are relevant to each of the described approaches.

1. Council Direction:

- Council provides direction at several points in the process of the sale and other disposition of land:
 - Declaring Land Surplus: Council must declare the land to be surplus to the needs of the City by resolution adopted at a meeting open to the public (P.3.1 section 3.3.1).
 - Determining Method of Disposal: Council determines the method of disposal at a meeting open to the public (P.3.1 section 3.3.2).
 - Granting Exemptions: Council may grant an exemption from any provision(s) of the policy by resolution (P.3.1 section 2.2).
 - Valuation: Council may authorize the disposition of land for other than the valuation if it is in the best interest of the City (P.3.1 section 7.4).
 - Methods of Disposal: Council determines the method of disposal of surplus land (P.3.1 section 8.1).

- Adjusting Sale Price: Council reserves the right to adjust the sale price and/or accept a proposal or offer for other than the sale price (P.3.1 section 9.1).
 - Ratifying Disposition: Any disposition of land must be ratified by by-law of Council (P.3.1 section 9.3).
 - In-Camera Sessions: Council may consider reports and give directions during in-camera sessions, including whether to declare land surplus, direct additional analysis, or proceed with disposal (P.3.1 Procedures for the Sale and Other Disposition of Land 6 and 7).
 - Reviewing Submissions: Council reviews submissions received for selling surplus land and gives direction on which submissions to consider, further consultation or negotiations, or terminating the process (P.3.1 Procedures for the Sale and Other Disposition of Land 10).
- For purchasing, Council provides direction at several points:
 - Approval of Purchases: Council must approve the purchase of deliverables.
 - Exemption Requests: A department may request an exemption from any or all purchasing methods outlined in the policy by submitting a report supporting the exemption and outlining the reasons to Council. Such exemption may be granted by resolution.
 - Consultant Engagement: Approval to engage consultants must be received either in budget approval or by resolution of Council for projects where the consultant's fees are expected to exceed \$60,000.
 - Bid Protests: If a bidder disputes the staff award recommendation, an appeal shall be conducted by a Dispute Committee, and the decision of the Dispute Committee shall be in writing. The City will establish an impartial authority to review a complaint that cannot be resolved between parties.
 - Notification of Tenders and Quotations: Prior notification to Council through the Consent Agenda is required when calling tenders and seeking sealed quotes.
 - Sole Source Purchases: The CAO will determine if a purchase shall proceed by a sole source if there is a disagreement between the MFS and Department Head.
 - Disposal of Surplus Goods: Surplus goods may be disposed of by offering to any other department, sale by auction or consignment, sealed bid, or donation to a charitable organization, with Council's direction.

2. Community Engagement:

- Involve public consultations and the Ad-Hoc Committee to align project goals with community expectations.

3. Transparency and Fairness:

- Maintain detailed records and ensure decisions align with public trust (purchasing policy P.5.1 section 43.0).

Q3-Q4 2024 Work Plan: Grand Trunk Renewal

Staff Update January 14, 2025

Objective: Develop a comprehensive business plan, secure initial approvals, and prepare for detailed planning.

1. Finalize Vision & Guiding Principles

Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives

Working Group: Vision, Planning & Architecture

Key Result: Final Vision & Guiding Principles endorsed by Committee & Council and incorporated into procurement documents.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Complete community outreach & prepare findings	Q2 2024	Complete	- Reviewed by AHC in July - Revised by WG in August - Endorsed by Council September 23, 2024
Develop vision statement	Q3 2024	Complete	
Revise guiding principles	Q3 2024	Complete	
Prepare graphic representation for vision & guiding principles	Q3 2024	Complete	- Shared with the AHC at the November meeting
Prepare report for Committee & Council	Q3 2024	Complete	
Deliver report to Committee & Council	Q3 2024	Complete	- Endorsed by Council on September 23, 2024
Prepare reporting back mechanism for the community to share vision & guiding principles	Q4 2024	In progress	- Website to be updated. - Graphic design for vision and guiding principles underway
Incorporate vision & guiding principles into communication materials and other processes (procurement etc.)	Q4 2024 and beyond	In progress	

2. Site Analysis & Environmental Assessment

Staff Lead: investStratford

Working Group: Environmental & Infrastructure

Key Result: Recommendations on additional site assessment needed to prepare for development, recommendations for approaches to carbon neutrality, complete

internal formal consultation on the site.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Analyze and synthesize existing findings on site condition and environmental status, including the heritage industrial building	Q3-Q4 2024	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with Infrastructure & Environment working group on this. Meeting on August 28 to discuss existing information and next steps. - Detailed information on the status of property to be presented by Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure at the Ad Hoc Meeting on October 21, 2024. - Information provided with November agenda package. - Follow-up environmental remediation question on December agenda.
Identify additional site assessment needs and Indigenous engagements/consultations	Q3-Q4 2024	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager of Inclusion, Equity and Indigenous Initiatives & Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator developing an Indigenous Engagement and Consultation strategy for the Committee's consideration in October - Committee endorsed draft strategy in October. - The strategy will go to Council in January for feedback and approval. - Staff continue to

			participate in Kaswentha/Two Row Now monthly meetings
Identify a range of potential strategies to achieve carbon neutrality	Q3-Q4 2024	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure and Environment WG turning their attention to this in November/December. - Anticipate sharing with committee in Q1 2025

3. Develop Key Partnership Model

Staff Leads: Corporate Initiatives & investStratford

Working Group: Partnership

Key Result: Establish a formal agreement for the construction and operation of a community recreation/amenity facility, including program of space and high-level design.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Conduct a needs assessment to determine complementary space needs across the community	Q3 2024	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WG is meeting with community groups to assess needs. - WG presenting report in December Ad Hoc Committee meeting.
Collaborate with key partners to define roles, governance, project interest, and program of spaces and services	Q3 2024	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular meetings with key partners including the YMCA and Stratford Public Library
Discussion on Community Needs and Potential Spaces/Services	Q3 2024	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key partners and WG met to discuss community needs
Collaborative Session to Identify and Prioritize Types of Spaces and Services	Q3 2024	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners have developed a draft high-level space program
Agreement on the Program of spaces and services	Q4 2024	Deferred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be completed after direction from Council on Feb 10
Draft the program outline and refine	Q4 2024	Deferred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be completed

it based on stakeholder feedback			after direction from Council on Feb 10
Bring outline of MOU and options for consideration to both Committee and Council	Q4 2024-Q1 2025	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently developing these options and MOU outline - Conducting benchmarking research to determine the investment needed from the municipality to support the development of a community hub. These findings will be delivered in mid-December. - Council report schedule for February to share anticipated investment range for shared community amenity facility. Staff will seek direction to proceed with design and cost-estimates.
Formalize the program agreement & preliminary design	Q1 2025	Not yet started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This needs direction from Council. Anticipated in February.
Outline financial requirements, potential funding sources, and investment opportunities.	Q4 2024-Q1 2025	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Included in benchmarking research
Identify potential risks and develop mitigation strategies	Q4 2024-Q1 2025	Not yet started	
Secure direction to negotiate legal agreements and design	Q4 2024-Q1 2025	Not yet started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This needs direction from Council. Anticipated in February.
Establish legal agreements with partners	Q1-Q2 2025	Not yet started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This needs direction from Council. Anticipated in

			February.
--	--	--	-----------

4. Communications & Community Engagement

Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives

Working Group: Comms & Civic Engagement

Key Result: Activate the GTR site through placemaking interventions

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Continue engagement activities	Ongoing	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLAAA engagement activity on September 7th to gather insight from members - SLAAA Board meeting discussion in November
Plan and implement 'early wins' placemaking site activations	Q3-Q4	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing event/activation parameters (site safety, protocols, infrastructure, insurance requirements) in collaboration with LightsON and Stratford Summer Music - Community Services exploring City-led events that could be implemented in Q3/Q4—this is not possible until the building can obtain occupancy. - Preparing report to Council seeking funds to support the infrastructure, equipment and operational support to open the site for activations. To determine the cost,

			<p>recommendations on the interventions needed to achieve temporary occupancy is needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeking expert advice on the scope of work required to obtain a change of use (from industrial to assembly). Recommendations are being prepared. - Planning for small group tours is underway. - Communications WG to lead upcoming site tours.
Prepare and implement communications plans, including key messages and collateral materials	Ongoing	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WG will undertake a scope of work that includes: - Revision of key messages - Additional website content - Presentation deck and speaking points developed for shared use

5. Procurement/RFP Process and Legal Agreements Structure

Staff Lead: investStratford

Working Group: Finance and Real Estate

Key Result: Council-endorsed strategy for land disposition and development partner selection.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Develop recommendations for the process and approach to the disposition of lands (competitive procurement process)	Q4 2024	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting with legal advisors to develop options for disposition. - Key recommendations on residential and mobility structure are based on an Expression of Interest process, which is a procurement option recommended for this particular situation. - Key recommendations re: residential and mobility structure development to be considered by Council on February 10.
Determine available space (roads, priority)	Q4 2024	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under discussion with Engineering
Develop a plan for implementation of recommendations	Q4 2024	In progress	
Develop a promotional plan	Q4 2024	Not yet started	
Develop website materials (3D models, real estate pieces, history to current, camera/time-lapse, website hosting location, community buzz)	Q4 2024-Q 1 2025	Not yet started	
International attraction	Q4 2024-Q 1 2025	Not yet started	
Create a database & CRM	Q1 2025	In progress	

4. Financial & Real Estate Model

Staff Lead: investStratford

Working Group: Finance & Real Estate

Key Result: Articulate development scenarios and seek endorsement from Council to pursue the preferred model.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Validate site capacity and program, identifying tradeoffs and optionality	Q3-Q4 2024	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban planning and land economics expertise retained to conduct market analysis & sounding. - Findings to be presented to the Ad Hoc Committee in December. - Final report forthcoming in Q1 2025.
Review existing parking study	Q3 2024	In progress	
Determine the number of parking spaces needed, ownership options, and phasing	Q3-Q4 2024	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of parking spaces depended on site usage. - Researching parking deliver models - Referenced in Key Recommendations presented in December meeting. - Key recommendations going to Council on February 10, 2025.
Develop sales mix	Q3-Q4 2024	Not yet started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessed based on findings from site capacity and market analysis. Anticipated for late Q4. - Referenced in Key Recommendations presented in December meeting.
Conduct market sounding for	Q4 2024	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban planning and

medium and high-density housing, cultural space, and other employment/entrepreneurial spaces/ Informal market sounding			land economics expertise retained to conduct market analysis & sounding. - To be presented to the Ad Hoc Committee in December. -
Articulate financial and real estate models for consideration / Assessment of forecasted market demand and pro forma to evaluate financial feasibility, including market project review	Q4 2024	In progress	- Working session to develop construction pro forma scheduled for October. This meeting was delayed due to extenuating circumstances on the consulting team side. - To be informed by the market sounding and site capacity work, which is to be delivered in December.

7. Economic, Environmental, and Social Impact Analysis

Staff Leads: Corporate Initiatives & investStratford

Working Group: All

Key Result: Provide impact analysis to inform development scenarios and recommendations on preferred models.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Analyze financial and real estate models to articulate the economic, environmental, and social impact of each option	Q4 2024- Q1 2025	Not yet started	

8. Government Relations

Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives & investStratford

Key Result: Determine best opportunities for collaboration and set government relations priorities.

Task	Target Date	Status	Notes
Identify potential funding opportunities & grants	Q3-Q4 2024	In progress	- List of funding opportunities regularly updated
Identify key relationships and engagements.	Q4 2024	In progress	
Consult with MOE on site conditions.	Ongoing	In progress	

Anticipated Key Council Report Dates

Date	Date Type	Deliverable/Milestone
August 2024	Council Meeting	Council consideration of work plan
September 2024	Council Meeting	Council consideration of final vision & guiding principles
October 2024 Deferred	Council Meeting	Council consideration of Key Partnership Model—Deferred to February 2025 report
November 2024 Deferred	Council Meeting	Council consideration of committee recommendations for development model(s)—Deferred to February 2025 report
February 10, 2025	Council Meeting	Recommendations on Key Actions to support project momentum