



Stratford City Council Regular Council Open Session

MINUTES

Meeting #: 4790th
Date: Monday, January 26, 2026
Time: 7:00 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Council Present: Mayor Ritsma - Chair Presiding, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor McCabe, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, Councillor Wordofa

Staff Present: André Morin - Chief Administrative Officer, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services and Interim Director of Human Resources, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure Services, Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Adam Betteridge - Director of Building and Planning Services, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Victoria Trotter - Council Committee Coordinator, Marc Bancroft - Manager of Planning, Alex Burgess - Manager of Ontario Works, Alexander Burnett - Intermediate Planner, Will Mason - Rent Receivables Clerk

Also Present: Media and Members of the Public

1. Call to Order:

Mayor Ritsma, Chair presiding, called the Council meeting to order.

Councillor Hunter provided regrets for the meeting.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Singing of O Canada

Respectful Conduct Statement

2. Declarations 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 to otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest made by a Member at the January 26, 2026 Regular Council meeting.

3. Adoption of the Minutes:

R2026-28

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated January 12, 2026, be adopted as printed.

Carried

4. Adoption of the Addendum to the Agenda:

R2026-29

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT the Addendum to the Regular Agenda of Council and Standing Committees dated January 26, 2026, be added to the Agenda as printed.

Carried

5. Report of the Committee of the Whole In-Camera Session:

5.1 At the January 26, 2026 Session, under the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, a matter concerning the following item was considered:

4.1 Confidential Report of the Chief Administrative Officer - Collective Bargaining Update – CUPE 1385, CUPE 197 and IBEW 636 (Parallel Transit

Division) (CM-26-02) - Labour relations or employee negotiations (section 239.(2)(d)).

At the In-camera session, direction was provided to the City's Bargaining Committee with respect to Item 4.1.

6. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations:

6.1 Added - Request for Delegation - Jane Marie Mitchell

R2026-30

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT Jane Marie Mitchell be heard.

A member requested a recorded vote.

In Support (8): Mayor Ritsma, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, and Councillor Wordofa

Opposed (1): Councillor McCabe

Carried

Jane Marie Mitchell spoke to Council regarding Items 7.4 and 7.7 and the continued availability of water as the number of homes increase in the City.

The Director of Infrastructure stated the City is currently using half of the water available per second and staff continue to properly monitor and manage resources.

Councillor McCabe noted he voted against the delegation and stated that the presentation did not provide information which specifically addressed Items 7.4 and 7.7 but was providing a political position.

7. Orders of the Day:

7.1 Resolution - Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area 2026 Draft Budget (COU26-006)

R2026-31

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT Jamie Pritchard, General Manager and Jennifer Birmingham, Treasurer, of the Downtown Stratford BIA, be heard.

Carried

Jamie Pritchard, General Manager and Jennifer Birmingham, Treasurer of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) presented the 2026 Draft Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- there being 25 new businesses that opened in 2025;
- two (2) bike racks being installed in partnership with the Active Transportation Advisory Committee at the Stratford Police Station;
- wayfinding strategies being implemented via pole wraps and maps;
- an overview of initiatives including the ten bucks back promotion, the Winter Wander-Land event, as well various additional marketing and events; and
- there being a conscious consideration in keeping the levy as low as possible in the preparation of the budget.

A member thanked the Downtown Stratford BIA for their hard work.

R2026-32

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT the draft 2026 budget of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area be approved as submitted in the amount of \$354,042.28;

THAT the sum of \$319,442.28 shall be levied on properties located within the boundaries of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area for the year 2026;

AND THAT the City Clerk be directed to prepare the requisite by-law pursuant to section 208 of the Municipal Act, 2001, to levy the special charge upon the rateable property in the business improvement area for the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area for 2026.

Carried

7.2 Resolution - Heritage Alteration Permit Appeal for 23 Downie Street (COU26-009)

R2026-33

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Craig Foster be heard.

Carried

The Intermediate Planner provided an overview of the report. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the Heritage Conservation District Standards;
- an overview of the Heritage Stratford review of the application;
- an overview of the Heritage Alteration Permit process; and
- there being options for the applicant to appeal the decision made by Council.

In response to the questions from Members of Council, the Intermediate Planner noted the following:

- the applicant having the ability to submit a new application at any time with a professional opinion on the state of the bricks; and
- there being no fee required for heritage alteration applications.

The applicant, Craig Foster, addressed Council regarding the appeal. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the brick condition being a dangerous situation;
- the original plan being to repair and paint the brick prior to discovering the paint was causing the original problem;

- the stucco adding 1.5 inches of insulation to the building; and
- there being other buildings in the Heritage Conservation District with stucco on the rear facade.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion regarding the following:

- the importance of maintaining the Heritage Conservation District Standards; and
- the paint being required to be removed to repair the brick on the building.

R2026-34

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the Heritage Alteration Permit application for 23 Downie Street, proposing the replacement of the existing rear brick façade with EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System) stucco, be denied, as the proposed alteration is contrary to the recommendation of the Heritage Stratford Permit Review Committee and does not conform to the City of Stratford's Heritage Conservation District Standards.

Carried

R2026-35

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the development of a levy-neutral, property-secured heritage façade and masonry loan program under the Community Improvement Plan, targeted to the Heritage Conservation District funding up to 50 percent of eligible costs, capitalized from unallocated funds from the proceeds of the Vivian Line land sale, and structured with a Bank of Canada linked interest rate, be referred to staff;

AND THAT staff be directed to prepare a report for consideration at a future Council meeting.

Carried

7.3 Resolution - Recommendation Report for a property located at 145 Ontario Street with respect to an Application for Draft Plan of Condominium (31CDM25-002) (COU26-013)

R2026-36

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT Caroline Baker of Baker Planning Group be heard.

Carried

The Manager of Planning provided an overview of the planning report. Highlights of the presentation included:

- there being no physical development proposed;
- there being eight (8) units including a restaurant, inn and commercial spaces;
- there being driveway access for parking and a walking access to Ontario Street;
- the request allowing the free-hold ownership of individual units;
- condition number 16 being satisfied as per the Acting Chief Building Official; and
- the application being recommended by staff for approval.

In response to the questions from Members of Council, the Manager of Planning noted the following:

- should the Plan of Condominium be approved, it would allow for free-hold ownership of the individual units;
- the Plan of Condominium providing the property owner the ability to sell individual units; and
- there being no long-term tenants at the property as it is currently operating as an inn.

Caroline Baker of Baker Planning Group spoke to the application noting the following:

- the applicant having no concerns with the conditions of draft plan approval;
- the Plan of Condominium allowing each unit to have an individual PIN to facilitate their sale;
- the property owner having the ability to retain parts of the building to continue leases with the current commercial tenants; and
- the proposal allowing businesses to own a space rather than continuing to rent.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion regarding the potential effects of condominium fees for residential and commercial properties to owners and tenants.

Motion by Councillor Henderson
THAT the application be filed.

There was no seconder for the motion.

R2026-37

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Council for the City of Stratford pursuant to Section 51(31) of the Planning Act grant draft approval to Application for Draft Plan of Condominium (31CDM25-002) submitted by Baker Planning Group on behalf of Lot 44 Developments Inc. for a property located at 145 Ontario Street and subject to the conditions of draft plan approval attached to the Planning Report, excluding condition 16, dated January 26, 2026 and recommended by the Manager of Planning;

THAT the above is recommended for the following reasons:

I. The request is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement;

II. The request conforms with the City's Official Plan and complies with the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-law; and

III. Comments received have been received, reviewed comprehensively and appropriately addressed through the recommended conditions of draft plan approval.

Carried

7.4 Resolution - Recommendation Report for Draft Plan of Subdivision Application 31T21-002 and Zone Change Application Z07-21 for 525 O'Loane Avenue in the City of Stratford (COU26-010)

R2026-38

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Dave Nuttall of DLN Group Inc. be heard.

Carried

Robyn McIntyre, Consulting Planner for the City from MHBC, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the planning report. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the location of the subject lands;
- an overview of the draft plan including the number and types of housing;
- an overview of the requested zone changes;
- there being environmental studies completed and a Certificate of Property Use issued by the Province;
- an overview of the planning analysis;
- an overview of agency comments;
- there being a Noise Study completed and various mitigation measures recommended; and
- an overview of the staff recommendation.

Members of Council and the Consulting Planner held a discussion regarding the following:

- there being concerns with traffic increases since 2021;

- there being concerns with one entrance and emergency vehicle access;
- parking being restricted to one side of the street only;
- Festival Hydro conditions to be satisfied prior to proceeding; and
- there being no playground or park included in the plan.

Dave Nuttal of DLN Group Inc, spoke to Council regarding the application. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the variances requested;
- the work completed with the UTRCA regarding the flood plain; and
- an overview of the parking plan.

Members of Council and Mr. Nuttal held a discussion regarding the following:

- contaminated soil having been removed from the majority of the site;
- a portion of the site requiring homes without basements due to soil contaminants; and
- 25% of the housing having the requirement to be affordable.

R2026-39

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT Draft Plan of Subdivision application 31T21-002, as submitted by DLN Group Inc. (c/o Dave Nuttall) for the lands municipally known as 525 O'Loane Avenue, subject to the conditions of draft plan approval appended to this Staff Report as recommended by Robyn McIntyre, Consulting Planner on January 26, 2026, BE APPROVED for the following reasons:

- 1. The request satisfies the criteria outlined in Section 51(24) of the Planning Act;**

- 2. The request is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024;**
- 3. The request conforms to the City of Stratford's Official Plan;**
- 4. The request constitutes sound land use planning and is appropriate for the development of the subject lands; and**
- 5. A Public Meeting has been held and no comments were received.**

AND THAT Zone Change Application Z07-21, as submitted by DLN Group Inc. (c/o Dave Nuttall) for the lands municipally known as 525 O'Loane Avenue, which proposes to rezone the subject lands from Urban Reserve ("UR") to five zones and a holding symbol being:

- A new Residential Second Density zone ("R2(2)-47") with the following site-specific provisions:**
 - To permit a reduced minimum Lot Area of 284 square metres, whereas 300 square metres is required.**
- A new Residential Second Density zone ("R2(2)-48") with the following site-specific provisions:**
 - To permit a reduced minimum Lot Frontage for "Single Detached -Corner Lots" of 10 metres, whereas 15 metres is required.**
 - To permit a reduced minimum Lot Frontage for "Duplex-Corner Lots" of 10 metres, whereas 18 metres is required.**
- A new Residential Fifth Density zone ("R5(3)-28") with the following site-specific provision:**
 - To permit a reduced minimum Front Yard Setback of 7.5 metres, whereas 10 metres is required.**
- A Residential Fourth Density zone ("R4(4)")**
- An Open Space zone ("OS")**

- **And a new Holding Symbol (H28) with the following regulations:**
 - **Permitted Uses: "Until such time as the (H28) is removed, no building structure or use shall be erected or altered save and except for existing buildings or structures permitted in the applicable zone, until such time as the (H) symbol has been removed in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act."**
 - **Conditions for Removal: "The (H28) shall not be removed until the corridor works for the Roadhouse Drain and Finnegan Drain, and grading within the existing floodplain, have been completed to the satisfaction of the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority and the City."**

BE APPROVED for the following reasons:

- **The request provides for the development of the subject lands in a manner which is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024;**
- **The request conforms to the City of Stratford's Official Plan;**
- **The request constitutes sound land use planning and is appropriate for the development of the subject lands; and**
- **A Public Meeting has been held and no comments were received.**

Carried

7.5 Resolution - Accessibility Advisory Committee Barrier Buster Grant Opportunity 2026 (COU26-007)

R2026-40

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT staff be directed to apply for the maximum funding under the Rick Hansen Barrier Buster Grant for the construction and installation of an accessible viewing area on Veteran's Drive;

THAT the project be funded using \$10,000 from Item D.1.2 in the 2026 Mayor's Budget Capital Program, if the grant application is successful;

AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective designates, be authorized to execute all necessary agreements and documents required should the grant application be successful.

Carried

7.6 Resolution - Request for an Indigenous Representative on the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee (COU26-008)

R2026-41

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT the request to designate a seat on the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee for an Indigenous Representative be referred to staff to review as part of the broader Advisory Committee Governance Review.

Carried

7.7 Resolution - Recommendation Report with respect to Applications for Official Plan Amendment OPA2-25 and for Zoning By-law Amendment Z06-25, for lands situated at 16 Kastner Street (COU26-011)

R2026-42

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Dave Hannam be heard.

Carried

The Manager of Planning, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the planning report. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the location of the subject lands;
- an overview of the proposed Official Plan amendment;
- an overview of the proposed Zoning By-law amendment;

- an overview of the draft plan including the number and types of housing;
- an overview of the agency comments received;
- an overview of the public comments received;
- an overview of the planning analysis; and
- an overview of the staff recommendation.

Dave Hannam of Zelinka Priamo Ltd., referring to a PowerPoint presentation, spoke to Council regarding the application. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the location and concept plan;
- an overview of accessibility including four (4) fully accessible units; and
- an overview of proposed units and the current rental housing needs in the city.

Members of Council and Mr. Hannam held a discussion regarding the following:

- common amenity areas being provided to residents;
- green space and lighting being included in the parking area; and
- management of the building being undertaken by a specialist in the industry.

In response to questions from Council, staff noted that connection to the multi-use trail on O'Loane Avenue and updates to the Transit routes are being reviewed for this area.

R2026-43

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT Application for Official Plan Amendment OPA2-25 submitted by Zelinka Priamo Ltd. (c/o Katelyn Crowley) on

**behalf of Countryside Developments (2014) Inc. (c/o Pete Hyde)
on the lands known municipally known as 16 Kastner Street:**

BE APPROVED for the following reasons:

- 1. The request is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 and conforms with the City of Stratford Official Plan;**
- 2. The request constitutes sound land use planning and is appropriate for the development of the lands;**
- 3. Public comments have been received, reviewed comprehensively and appropriately addressed.**

**THAT Application for Zoning By-law Amendment Z06-25
submitted by Zelinka Priamo Ltd. (c/o Katelyn Crowley) on
behalf of Countryside Developments (2014) Inc. (c/o Pete Hyde)
on the lands known municipally known as 16 Kastner Street:**

BE APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE for the following reasons:

- 1. The request is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 and conforms with the City of Stratford Official Plan;**
- 2. The request constitutes sound land use planning and is appropriate for the development of the lands;**
- 3. Public comments have been received, reviewed comprehensively and appropriately addressed.**

**AND THAT the implementing zoning by-law amendment be
forwarded to City Council for approval once the applicant has
obtained direct legal access to Perth Line 36 for the proposed
apartment building to the satisfaction of the Manager of
Planning.**

Carried

- 7.8 Resolution - T-2023-10 Annual Asphalt, Concrete and Turf
Repairs (Various Locations) – Consideration of Contract
Extension (COU26-2026)**

R2026-44

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT Council approve a one-year extension of Contract T-2023-10 – Annual Asphalt, Concrete and Turf Repairs contract with 465929 Ontario Ltd. o/a Nicholson Concrete at 'Year 3' unit prices.

Carried

8. Business for Which Previous Notice Has Been Given:

None noted.

9. Reports of the Standing Committees:

There were no Standing Committee reports considered at the January 26, 2026 meeting.

10. Notice of Intent:

None noted.

11. Reading of the By-laws:

The following By-laws required First and Second Readings and Third and Final Readings and were taken collectively upon unanimous vote of Council present:

R2026-45

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT By-laws 15-2026 to 18-2026 be taken collectively.

Carried unanimously

R2026-46

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT By-laws 15-2026 to 18-2026 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2026-47

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT By-laws 15-2026 to 18-2026 be read a Third Time and Finally

Passed.

Carried

11.1 Implementing By-law - Official Plan Amendment No. 35 - By-law 15-2026

To adopt Official Plan Amendment No. 35 to redesignate the subject lands from "Medium Density Residential" to "Residential Areas".

11.2 Zoning By-law Amendment Z07-21 - 525 O'Loane Avenue - By-law 16-2026

To amend By-law 10-2022 as amended, with respect to Application for Zoning By-law Amendment Z07-21 by DLN Group Inc. to amend the zoning of certain lands known as 525 O'Loane Avenue.

11.3 Amend the Fees and Charges By-law - Overnight Parking Permits - By-law 17-2026

To amend the Fees and Charges By-law 125-2025, as amended, for The Corporation of the City of Stratford, to amend fees for Parking Permits for Municipal Parking Lots.

11.4 Amend the Traffic and Parking By-law - Erie Street Lot Permits - By-law 18-2026

To amend Schedule 19, Parking Permits, of the Traffic and Parking By-law 159-2008, as amended, to provide for additional parking permits in the Erie Street Lot.

12. Consent Agenda: CA-2026-12 to CA-2026-16

Council did not consider any items on the Consent Agenda.

13. New Business:

13.1 Review of Condominium Fees

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT the review and development of policies to limit the application of condominium fees to recently converted residential and commercial properties be referred to staff.

The motion was withdrawn.

13.2 Winterfest 2026

Mayor Ritsma thanked the organizers of Winterfest for another great event enjoyed by the community.

14. Adjournment to Standing Committees:

The next Regular Council meeting is February 9, 2026 in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

R2026-48

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

THAT the Council meeting adjourn to convene into Standing Committees as follows:

- **Social Services Committee [7:10 or thereafter following the Regular Council meeting];**

and to Committee of the Whole if necessary, and to reconvene into Council.

Carried

15. Council Reconvene:

15.1 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest made at Standing Committees

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.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest made at Standing Committee meetings held on January 26, 2026, with respect to the following Items and re-stated at the reconvene portion of the Council meeting:

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest made by a Member at the January 26, 2026 Council Reconvene meeting.

15.2 Confirmatory By-law:

The following by-law required First and Second Readings and Third and Final Readings:

11.5 - Confirmatory By-law 19-2026

To confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on January 26, 2026.

R2026-49

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Beatty

THAT By-law 19-2026 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2026-50

Motion by Councillor Sebben

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT By-law 19-2026 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

15.3 Adjournment of Council Meeting

R2026-51

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the January 26, 2026, Regular Council meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 7:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 9:32 P.M.

Reconvene Meeting Start Time: 9:36 P.M.

Reconvene Meeting End Time: 9:37 P.M.

"Martin Ritsma"

Mayor - Martin Ritsma

"Audrey Pascual"

Deputy Clerk - Audrey Pascual