



Stratford City Council  
Regular Council Open Session  
AGENDA

**Meeting #:** 4765th  
**Date:** Monday, February 24, 2025  
**Time:** 7:00 P.M.  
**Location:** Council Chamber, City Hall  
**Council Present:** Mayor Ritsma - Chair Presiding, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Briscoe, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Hunter, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, Councillor Wordofa  
**Staff Present:** Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, 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, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary

To watch the Council meeting live, please click the following link:

<https://video.isilive.ca/stratford/live.html>

A video recording of the meeting will also be available through a link on the City's website

<https://calendar.stratford.ca/meetings> following the meeting.

Pages

**1. Call to Order:**

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

Councillor McCabe provided regrets for this meeting.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Singing of O Canada

## Respectful Workplace Policy 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**3. Adoption of the Minutes:**

12 - 40

Motion by

**THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated February 10, 2025, be adopted as printed.**

**4. Adoption of the Addendum/Addenda to the Agenda:**

Motion by

**THAT the Addendum/Addenda to the Regular Agenda of Council and Standing Committees dated February 24, 2025, be added to the Agenda as printed.**

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

**5.1 At the February 24, 2025, Committee of the Whole In-camera Session, under the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, a matter concerning the following item was considered:**

4.1 Appointment of a Director to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation – Personal matters about an identifiable individual(s) including municipal employees or local board employees (section 239.(2)(b)).

**6. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations:**

None scheduled.

**7. Orders of the Day:**

**7.1 Resolution - Plan of Condominium Application and Exemption from Draft Approval Process 31CDM24-001 - 4117 Perth Line 36 (COU25-015)**

41 - 49

Motion by

**Staff Recommendation: THAT the City of Stratford approve the application for exemption from the Draft Plan of Condominium approval process submitted by Quinlan Road Developments GP Inc., prepared by Deanna Rowe, certified by James M. Laws, OLS, Project No. 31090-22, dated November 13, 2024. The plan contains a total of 133 residential units and 6 parking spaces, located at 4117 Perth Line 36;**

**AND THAT the above is recommended for the following reasons:**

- **the request is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement; and**
- **the request conforms with the goals, objectives and policies of the Official Plan.**

## **7.2 Resolution - Grand Trunk Renewal Project Key Recommendations (COU25-019)**

50 - 106

The report will be presented by:

- Joani Gerber, CEO, InvestStratford, and Emily Robson, City of Stratford Corporate Initiatives Lead
- Dan Mathieson, Chair of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee
- John Kastner, Co-Chair of the Communications, Advocacy and Civic Engagement Working Group of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee
- Melanie Hare, Chair of the Vision, Planning & Architecture Working Group and Member of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

Motion by

**Staff Recommendation: 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;**

**THAT Council direct staff to pursue the shared community facility option as outlined in this report, which includes investment from the City in addition to funding from external sources and operational partners;**

**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;

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;

AND 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.

**7.3 Resolution - Group Benefits Program Renewal 2025 (COU25-017) 107 - 109**

Motion by

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Council authorize retaining Manulife Financial as the Group Benefits provider for the City of Stratford.**

**AND THAT any surpluses relating to the savings be placed in the Human Resources Contingency Reserve.**

**7.4 Resolution - Community Transportation – Partnership Agreements between the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, and Municipality of North Perth (COU25-018) 110 - 112**

Motion by

**Staff Recommendation: THAT the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford approve the entering into of a further Local Partnership Agreement with the Town of St. Marys and the Municipality of North Perth for the Intercommunity Transportation Project (PC Connect) to December 31, 2025;**

**THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the further Local Partnership Agreement;**

**AND THAT City staff be authorized to prepare a plan for Council's consideration regarding the future of PC Connect.**

**7.5 Resolution - Community Transportation Pilot Project – Service Agreement Extension (COU25-016) 113 - 115**

Motion by

**Staff Recommendation: THAT The Corporation of the City of Stratford enter into a Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago until December 31, 2025;**

**THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago for the Community Transportation**

**Project;**

**AND THAT the City and partners commence investigation of service delivery for 2026 and beyond with options to be presented to Council later in 2025.**

- 7.6 Resolution - Drinking Water Source Protection - Proposed Updates to the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report** 116 - 118

Motion by

**THAT pursuant to Section 34(3) of the Clean Water Act, 2006, the Council of the City of Stratford endorse the proposed updates to the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Plan;**

**AND THAT Provision of this resolution meets requirements of Section 34(3) of the Clean Water Act, 2006.**

- 7.7 Resolution - Appointment to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors (COU25-020)** 119 - 120

Motion by

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Sarah Hamza, representing the Digital Media/Creative Economy sector, be appointed to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors for the remainder of the three-year term to June 2027 or until a successor is appointed by Council.**

- 7.8 Resolution - Stratford Live Music and Food**

Organizers of the Stratford Live Music & Food (formally Stratford Blues and Ribfest) have requested designation of the 2025 event to be held June 20, 21 and 22, around the Veterans Drive Band Shell and in the York Street parking lot, as municipally significant for the purpose of obtaining a liquor license.

Comments received from departments and agencies include:

- no concerns from Stratford Police;
- no concerns from Corporate Services;
- no comments or concerns from Building Services;
- no concerns from the Parks division of Community Services;
- no concerns from Huron Perth Public Health(HPPH) and the event organizers and vendors are to contact HPPH if food is to be served at the event;

- Fire Prevention provided the following comments:
  - a 6 meter emergency lane is to be maintained at all time.
  - food vendors to provide fire suppression certificates to fireprevention@stratford.ca prior to start of the event.
  - temporary electrical wiring to be completed by a qualified electrician.
  - fire extinguisher to be located on-site to protect beer tent/ greenroom tent/ kids area tent.
  - an on-site inspection to be conducted prior to the start of this event.

Motion by

**THAT City Council hereby designates the 2025 Stratford Live Music & Food event to be held June 20, 21 and 22, 2025, around the Veterans Drive Band Shell and in the York Street parking lot as municipally significant for the purpose of obtaining liquor licenses from the AGCO, subject to compliance with the City's Municipal Alcohol Risk Policy and required certificates of insurance being provided.**

**7.9 Correspondence - CN Rail Safety Ambassador Certificate**

121 - 122

Motion by

**THAT the correspondence and Rail Safety Ambassador Certificate received from the Canadian National Police North America dated January 22, 2025, be received.**

**8. Business for Which Previous Notice Has Been Given:**

None scheduled.

**9. Reports of the Standing Committees:**

**9.1 Report of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee:**

Motion by

**THAT the Report of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee dated February 24, 2025, be adopted as printed.**

**9.1.1 Update on Recycling Services and Options for Non-Eligible Sources (NES) Starting January 2026 (ITS25-002)**

123 - 126

**THAT Council approve the Change in Scope to Contract T2019-18 Waste Collections Contract with Canada Waste Management**

to provide Recycling Services to Non-eligible Sources (NES) for the period from January 1, 2026, to October 31, 2026, for a cost of up to \$355,000, including HST.

**9.1.2 Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) Pilot Project (ITS25-003) 127 - 131**

THAT the Report titled, "Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) Pilot Project" (ITS25-003) , be received;

THAT Council authorize Staff to negotiate and finalize the terms and enter into an agreement with Global Traffic Group as the ASE service provider and the corresponding partnering processing centre municipality for a 24-month pilot program;

THAT Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the finalized agreement with Global Traffic Group as the ASE service provider and the corresponding partnering processing centre municipality for a 24-month pilot program;

THAT outcomes from the pilot will be reported to Council;

AND THAT any subsequent agreement will be subject to Council approval and executed by the Mayor and Clerk.

**9.1.3 Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2 – Open House and Recommendations (ITS25-001) 132 - 135**

THAT Council receive the report titled, "Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2 – Open House and Recommendations" (ITS25-001);

THAT Council approve the design as presented at the Public Open House on Engage Stratford;

AND THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with construction tendering.

**9.2 Report of the Planning and Heritage Committee:**

Motion by

**THAT the Report of the Planning and Heritage Committee dated February 24, 2025, be adopted as printed.**

**9.2.1 Proposed Exemption from Sign By-law #159-2004 for the Canadian Dairy Expo (PLA25-001) 136 - 141**

THAT the Canadian Dairy Expo Sign Variance Application to Sign By-law #159-2004 be approved as follows:

- The nine (9) temporary sidewalk signs and one (1) cow statue be permitted for the temporary period of March 28, 2025 to April 7, 2025, on City property at the following locations:
    - Mornington Street at the City's northerly limits;
    - McCarthy Road West at Mornington Street (2 signs);
    - McCarthy Road East at Romeo Street;
    - Ontario Street at the City's easterly limits (2 signs);
    - Huron Street at the City's westerly limits;
    - Downie Street (Road 112) at the City's southerly limits;
    - Erie Street at Line 32; and
    - Northeast corner of McCarthy Road West and Mornington Avenue (Cow Statue).
  - The two (2) banner signs, one (1) cow statue and five (5) directional signs be permitted for the temporary period of April 1, 2025 to April 4, 2025 on the City's Rotary Complex property (353 McCarthy Road West);
- AND THAT the sponsorship signs be limited to the two (2) banner signs.

**10. Notice of Intent:**

None scheduled.

**11. Reading of the By-laws:**

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

Motion by

**THAT By-laws 11.1 to 11.4 be taken collectively.**

Motion by

**THAT By-laws 11.1 to 11.4 be read a First and Second Time.**

Motion by

**THAT By-laws 11.1 to 11.4 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.**



- 11.1 Agreement - Optimism Place Outreach Worker Services** 142 - 143
- To authorize the entering into and execution of an Outreach Worker Service Agreement / Purchase of Service Agreement with Optimism Place Women’s Shelter and Support Services for the provision of services defined in the Agreement.
- 11.2 Appointments - investStratford Board** 144
- To amend By-law 4-2023, as amended, to make an appointment to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors.
- 11.3 Extension Agreement - Intercommunity Transportation Project with St. Mary's and North Perth** 145 - 146
- To authorize the entering into and execution of an Extension Agreement to the Local Partnership Agreement with The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys and The Corporation of the Municipality of North Perth for the Intercommunity Transportation Project (PC Connect) to December 31, 2025.
- 11.4 Voyago Agreement** 147 - 148
- To authorize the entering into and execution of a Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago for the provision of an inter-regional community bus transportation service until the end of December 31, 2025.
- 12. Consent Agenda: CA-2025-010 to CA-2025-024** 149 - 151
- Council to advise if they wish to consider any items listed on the Consent Agenda.
- 13. New Business:**
- 14. Adjournment to Standing Committees:**
- The next Regular Council meeting is March 24, 2025 in the Council Chamber, City Hall.
- Motion by  
**THAT the Council meeting adjourn to convene into Standing Committees as follows:**
- **Social Services Committee [7:05 or thereafter following the Regular Council meeting]; and**

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

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

## 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 February 24, 2025, 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

### 15.2 Committee Reports

#### 15.2.1 Community Services Committee

Motion by

**THAT Item 5.1 of the Community Services Committee meeting dated February 24, 2025, be adopted as follows:**

**5.1 Stratford and District Agricultural Society Use of City Facilities (COM25-001)**

**THAT City Council approve the five-year [2025 to 2029] Memorandum of Understanding with the Stratford and District Agricultural Society to support the use and rental of city facilities;**

**AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the municipal corporation.**

**15.3 Reading of the By-laws (reconvene):**

152 - 154

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

**By-law 11.5 Memorandum of Understanding - Stratford and District Agricultural Society**

To authorize the entering into and execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Stratford & District Agricultural Society to support the use and rental of City facilities.

**By-law 11.6 Confirmatory By-law**

To confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on February 24, 2025.

Motion by

**THAT By-laws 11.5 to 11.6 be taken collectively.**

Motion by

**THAT By-laws 11.5 to 11.6 be read a First and Second Time.**

Motion by

**THAT By-laws 11.5 to 11.6 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.**

**15.4 Adjournment of Council Meeting**

Meeting Start Time:

Meeting End Time:

Motion by

**THAT the February 24, 2025, Regular Council meeting adjourn.**



**Stratford City Council  
Regular Council Open Session  
MINUTES**

Meeting #: 4764th  
 Date: Monday, February 10, 2025  
 Time: 7:00 P.M.  
 Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

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

Staff Present: Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, 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, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Dave Bush - Director of Human Resources, Shannon Archer - Business Integration Manager, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary, Krista Robinson - Chief Executive Officer, Stratford Public Library, Zac Gribble - Executive Director, Destination Stratford

Also Present: Members of the Public and Media

**1. Call to Order:**

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

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

Councillor Wordofa noted that they do not believe they have a pecuniary interest in relation to Item 9.1.4 - Review of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Program, however they will not vote or participate in the discussion of the item.

**3. Adoption of the Minutes:**

R2025-33

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor McCabe

**THAT the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council of The Corporation of Stratford dated January 16, 2025, and the Regular Meeting of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated January 27, 2025, be adopted as printed.**

**Carried**

**4. Adoption of the Addenda to the Agenda:**

R2025-34

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT the Addenda to the Regular Agenda of Council and Standing Committees dated February 10, 2025, be added to the Agenda as printed.**

**Carried**

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

### **5.1 February 10, 2025, Committee of the Whole In-camera Session**

It was noted that the February 10, 2025, Committee of the Whole In-camera Session was cancelled.

## **6. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations:**

### **6.1 Requests for Delegation - 2025 Budget**

R2025-35

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Henderson

**THAT Amanda Hatton, Pamela Mountain, Rory Auster, Leif Wahlquist, Zach Kritzer, Ewan Mann, Jane Marie Mitchell and Barb Shaughnessy be heard.**

**Carried**

Amanda Hatton, Owner/Operator of Avery House B&B, presented to Council regarding the 2025 Draft Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- there being concerns that licenced accommodations continue to remit Municipal Accommodation Taxes while a large number of non-compliant accommodations operate without penalties due to lack of enforcement;
- a request for Council to support the additional staffing for a Supervisor of By-law and By-law Enforcement Officer positions;
- the positions being important in addressing the unlicensed accommodations in the City;
- there being a petition circulated and signed by owners of Bed and Breakfast accommodations, Short-Term Rental Accommodations, inns, and hotels outlining concerns about the lack of the enforcement; and,
- an overview of potential issues resulting from the lack of enforcement and the benefits of the proper enforcement of the by-law.

Pamela Mountain, owner of a Stratford B&B, presented to Council regarding the 2025 Draft Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- a request for Council to consider the hiring of by-law enforcement staff;
- there being concerns with the lack of enforcement of the Accommodation Licensing By-law and the need for staffing to address the significant number of unlicensed accommodations operating in the City; and,
- there being a need to give staff the tools to enforce the by-law and collect the necessary licensing fees.

Rory Auster, Leif Wahlquist, Zach Kritzer and Ewan Mann, representing the Stratford District Secondary School Eco-Club, presented to Council regarding the 2025 Draft Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- there being a lack of climate initiatives in the budget to assist in reaching the 2023 goal of 30% reduction;
- there being additional staffing needed to help implement current initiatives;
- an overview of climate initiatives from the Township of King and the Town of Caledon; and,
- a request for Council to support the Community Energy Liaison staffing expansion.

Members of Council and the members of the SDSS Eco-Club held a discussion regarding the following:

- educational resources for students to help them take part in similar club initiatives;
- Stratford aiming to be a climate-friendly city so that young residents stay and continue to live in the community;
- members thanked the group for their advocacy work and for bringing their concerns forward.

Barb Shaughnessy presented to Council regarding the 2025 Draft Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the number of hours required to investigate and licence the almost 600 unlicensed accommodation properties;
- how licensing can help solve the housing shortage;
- a suggestion to cap the number of licenced short term rental accommodations in the City to encourage compliance; and,
- the proposed staffing expansions being able to help resolve the issue of unlicensed properties.

R2025-36

**Motion by** Councillor Henderson

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT correspondence received February 7, 2025 from Jane Marie Mitchell, Reverand R.L. Stephenson-Read and Anna Stratton, and correspondence received February 9, 2025, from Felicity Sutcliffe and Marlene Pomeroy be received.**

**Carried**

**6.2 Added - Request for Delegation - Item 7.3 Updated  
Recommendation for Tender T-2024-36: Supply and Delivery of  
Meraki Hardware and Licensing (COU25-013)**

R2025-37

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT Jane Marie Mitchell be heard.**

**Carried**

Jane Marie Mitchell presented to Council regarding the tender and the City's procurement policy. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the importance of buying local due to the trade instability between Canada and the US;
- the need to incorporate long term sustainability elements in the procurement policy;
- a suggestion to change the policy to add sustainability, climate lens, and aligning it with the federal government's move to



diversify supply chains, while following applicable trade legislations;  
and,

- a request to have the policy revised by end of spring, June 30th for the inclusion of the elements suggested.

**6.3 Added - Request for Delegation - Item 7.4 Consideration of Lease Extensions – 270 Water Street and Queen Street Parking Lot (COU25-009)**

R2025-38

**Motion by** Councillor Briscoe

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT Loreena McKennitt, Owner/Director Falstaff Family Centre, be heard.**

**Carried**

Loreena Mckennitt, Owner/Director Falstaff Family Centre, spoke to Council regarding the lease extension. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the importance of ensuring that the next owner will have the ability to maintain the building and preserve its heritage features;
- the need for a more inclusive consultation process with respect to the disposition of the property given its significant community value; and,
- there being support for the lease extension but staff being urged to review the sale of the property more closely.

A member noted that Stratford Festival is exempt from paying property taxes as a result of provincial legislation passed in the 1960s.

**6.4 Added - Request for Delegation - Item 7.5 Accommodation Licensing Fee Implementation (COU25-010)**

R2025-39

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Henderson

**THAT Barb Shaughnessy be heard.**

**Carried**

Barb Shaughnessy, representing Inn Keepers Collective, spoke in support of the recommendation. Highlights of the presentation included:

- there being support for the implementation of the licensing fees;
- a clarification being requested with respect to the appeal fee and how it applies to short-term rental accommodations and bed & breakfast accommodations; and,
- a proposal that bed & breakfast accommodations be reimbursed their 2024 licensing fees and that this be funded from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Reserve, which bed & breakfast operators have been contributing to.

**6.5 Added - Request for Delegation - Item 9.1.6 Sale and Disposition of Land Policy Review**

R2025-40

**Motion by** Councillor Briscoe

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT Mike Sullivan be heard.**

**Carried**

Mike Sullivan spoke to Council regarding the review of the Sale and Disposition of Land Policy. Highlights of the presentation included:

- there being a lack of a clear definition regarding what attainable housing entails, including the lack of definition from the Province;
- there being a definition in the City's Official Plan on what is affordable housing; and,
- a proposal to use affordable housing instead of attainable housing for the review to better guide staff on what recommendations to bring to Council.

**6.6 Added - Request for Delegation - Item 9.1.7 Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) Ad-Hoc Committee**

R2025-41

**Motion by** Councillor McCabe

**Seconded by** Councillor Wordofa

**THAT Barb Shaughnessy be heard.**

**Carried**

Barb Shaughnessy, representing Inn Keepers Collective, spoke to Council in support of the recommendation to create a Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) Ad-Hoc Committee. Ms. Shaughnessy also suggested that staff work in collaboration with Destination Stratford and the Inn Keepers Collective to develop the Terms of Reference for the proposed Ad-Hoc Committee.

A member noted that community stakeholders were previously consulted during the development of Destination Stratford which was an important element of the process, something that can also be considered for the Committee.

## **7. Orders of the Day:**

### **7.1 Resolution - Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area 2025 Draft Budget (COU25-014)**

R2025-42

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

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

**Carried**

Jamie Prichard, General Manager, and Jennifer Birmingham, Treasurer, of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA), referring to a PowerPoint presentation, spoke about the 2025 Draft Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the Downtown Stratford BIA's activities and programs in 2024;
- an overview of the statistics relating to the 2024 projects and activities including number of attendees and volunteers for the various events, revenue from the sale of downtown dollars, and marketing campaigns on social media platforms;
- an overview of the upcoming 2025 projects; and,
- an overview of the 2025 draft budget.

R2025-43

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Henderson

**THAT the draft 2025 budget of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area be approved as submitted in the amount of \$344,623.10;**

**THAT the sum of \$311,023.10 shall be levied on properties located within the boundaries of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area for the year 2025;**

**AND THAT a by-law to levy this special charge upon the rateable property in the business improvement area for the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) for 2025 be adopted as presented.**

**Carried**

Council recessed at 8:22 P.M.

Council reconvened at 8:32 P.M.

**7.2 Resolution - Plan of Condominium Application and Exemption from Draft Approval Process 31CDM24-001 - 4117 Perth Line 36 (COU25-015)**

The Director of Building and Planning Services reviewed the application. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the application seeking an exemption from the draft approval process to facilitate condominium ownership of the residential units and parking spaces, located at 4117 Perth Line 36;
- the exemption process being intended to apply to applications that have previously undergone a complete evaluation, are subject to a site plan agreement, comply with the Zoning By-law, and no further conditions of approval are required by the municipality for the development; and,
- Council having previously reviewed a zoning by-law change application for the property.

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

- concerns about the increase of condominium development applications and the associated condo fees for residents in such developments;

- high condominium fees being more prevalent for older buildings that require significant capital upgrades;
- the possibility of drafting a policy to limit condominium developments;
- condominiums being preferred by some who want building and lawn maintenance to be taken care of on their behalf; and,
- the consideration of the application being deferred to the next Council meeting to allow for a review given the oversight.

R2025-44

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Sebben

**THAT the application for exemption from the Draft Plan of Condominium approval process submitted by Quinlan Road Developments GP Inc. dated November 13, 2024, for the property located at 4117 Perth Line 36, be deferred to the next Council meeting.**

**Carried**

**7.3 Resolution - Updated Recommendation for Tender T-2024-36: Supply and Delivery of Meraki Hardware and Licensing (COU25-013)**

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

- the supplier honouring the pricing provided by the original highest bidder and staff to bring back a report should this not proceed;
- the inability to give local preference to suppliers due to the free trade agreements in place;
- the possibility of adding mechanisms in the tendering process that would incentivize faster response times resulting from a local element; and,
- the importance of expertise with respect to some services being sought by the City.

R2025-45

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor Beatty

**THAT Council rescind Resolution R2025-05 and repeal By-law 1-2025 awarding Tender T-2024-36 to C.E. Technology Solutions Ltd.;**

**AND THAT Council authorize the award of Tender T-2024-36: Supply and Delivery of Meraki Solutions to Synnapex Inc. at a total cost of \$204,479.00, including HST and 3-year licensing.**

**Carried**

**7.4 Resolution - Consideration of Lease Extensions – 270 Water Street and Queen Street Parking Lot (COU25-009)**

Members of Council and the Chief Administrative Officer held a discussion regarding the following:

- the recommendation being to extend the lease until December 2025 as there are a number of requirements that still need to be met should the property be declared as surplus;
- the possibility of including conditions in the sale to accommodate the current tenant of the property; and,
- the sale of the property to be considered separately and the matter currently for consideration only being for the lease extension.

R2025-46

**Motion by** Councillor McCabe

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT the request to extend the current leases with The Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada for the use of the Discovery Centre at the Normal School at 270 Water Street and for the use of the municipal parking lot at Queen Street and Lakeside Drive to December 31, 2025, be approved;**

**AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to execute lease extensions on behalf of The Corporation of the City of Stratford.**

**Carried**

**7.5 Resolution - Accommodation Licensing Fee Implementation (COU25-010)**

Members of Council and the Director of Building and Planning Services held a discussion regarding the following:

- short-term rental accommodations not being subject to the Bed and Breakfast Licensing By-law;
- the licensing not being factored into the budget;
- the appeal fee applying to both short-term rental accommodations and bed & breakfast accommodations;
- the timeline of the implementation of the licensing fees; and,
- challenges related to the implementation of the licensing program.

R2025-47

**Motion by** Councillor Beatty

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT the report titled, "Accommodation Licensing By-law Fee Implementation" (COU25-010), be received;**

**AND THAT Schedule "B" of the City's Fees and Charges By-law 99-2024 be amended to establish license application fees for the City's Accommodation Licensing By-law 130-2022 as recommended in Report COU25-010.**

**Carried**

**7.6 Resolution - Ontario Regulation 284/09 – Excluded Expenses (FIN25-006)**

R2025-48

**Motion by** Councillor Hunter

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT the report dated January 21, 2025, from the Director of Corporate Services regarding legislative requirements of Ontario Regulation 284/09, and the impact of excluded expenses from the City's 2025 budget, be received for information.**

**Carried**

**7.7 Resolution - 2025 Draft Budget and By-Law Adoption (COU25-011)**

**Motion by** Councillor Henderson

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT the Community Energy Liaison position be added to the draft 2025 Budget.**

Members of Council and staff held a discussion with respect to the following:

- costs associated with the position;
- the position being a two-year pilot contract;
- how the position can help in identifying savings by highlighting programs offering grants for climate initiatives.

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Wordofa

THAT the motion be amended to fund the Community Energy Liaison position from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Reserve Fund.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion with respect to the amendment as follows:

- Council having the ability to direct the use of reserve funds;
- there being \$70,000 currently in the reserve;
- there being support for the position but not the use of the Municipal Accommodation Tax Reserve for funding; and,
- there being no climate related reserve currently in place that could be used for funding.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

**Defeated**

**Motion by** Councillor McCabe

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

THAT the motion be amended to fund the Community Energy Liaison position from the Parking Reserve Fund.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion with respect to the amendment as follows:



- there being concerns as the Parking Reserve Fund is intended to fix parking lots and meters;
- the impact to the tax levy if the position is not funded through the reserve;
- there being a grant application submitted for the position and the grant covering 70% of the costs related to the position; and,
- the costs associated being reflective of how the position will start halfway through the year if approved.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

**Defeated**

R2025-49

**Motion by** Councillor Henderson

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT the Community Energy Liaison position be added to the draft 2025 Budget.**

Members of Council and staff held a discussion with respect to motion as follows:

- there being concerns about the expenditure as the most compelling reason for the position being to assist residents in finding grant programs however contractors are very aware of these programs already and can provide information to residents;
- there being concerns about increasing the budget further given the significant capital investments needed for the year;
- the request for a similar position not being approved in the previous budget cycle and there being concerns about putting the work off;
- there being a need for additional staffing to support the implementation of current programs; and,
- it being important to act now in order to reach the City's targets.

A member requested a recorded vote.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

In Support (9): Mayor Ritsma, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Briscoe, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor McCabe, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, and Councillor Wordofa

Opposed (2): Councillor Biehn, and Councillor Hunter

**Carried**

**Motion by** Councillor Sebben

**Seconded by** Councillor Biehn

THAT the Destination Stratford - Lights On Expansion, to be funded from the MAT Reserve, be removed from the draft 2025 Budget.

Members of Council held a discussion with respect to the motion as follows:

- the item being funded from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Reserve Fund so there is zero impact to the levy; and,
- the Municipal Accommodation Tax Reserve Fund being potentially used for other projects.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

**Defeated**

R2025-50

**Motion by** Councillor Briscoe

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT staff be directed to investigate options for a tax deferral or cancellation program for fixed-income households and to report back to Council in advance of the 2026 Budget discussion;**

**AND THAT the resolution be forwarded to all Ontario Municipalities.**

Members of Council held a discussion with respect to the motion as follows:

- there being municipalities currently implementing a deferral or cancellation program for residents on fixed-income;
- there being work done by the Association of Municipalities in Ontario to advocate for tax relief from the Province; and,

- it being important for Council to have a conversation regarding such programs especially in advance of the 2026 budget discussions.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

**Carried**

**Motion by** Councillor Sebben

**Seconded by** Councillor Biehn

THAT the Facilities Plumber and Facilities Electrician positions and Facilities Plumber and Facilities Electrician Vehicles be removed from the draft 2025 Budget.

Members of Council held a discussion with respect to the motion as follows:

- there being a need for a fulsome report that can show how the expenses can be recovered through the addition of internal positions;
- the positions having no levy impact as they will be funded through savings realized from not having to retain contractors;
- how the internal positions will contribute to greater efficiencies;
- there being long term savings that can be realized by moving the positions internally; and,
- there being no guarantees that savings will be realized from the positions being moved internally.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

**Defeated**

Councillor Henderson left the meeting at 9:28 P.M.

Councillor Henderson returned to the meeting at 9:29 P.M.

**Motion by** Councillor Sebben

**Seconded by** Councillor Wordofa

THAT the Supervisor, Financial Services and the Supervisor, Policy and Placemaking be removed from the draft 2025 Budget.

Members of Council held a discussion with respect to the motion as follows:

- the position being important to assist in the work needed to be done with respect to the increase in developments in the City;
- the expansions related to staffing becoming self-funded through the work that they do in the implementation of by-laws;
- the position, including the ones related to By-law Enforcement, being critical in the implementation of programs already approved by Council;
- the work on the Official Plan being behind and how the position can help push the work forward; and,
- the impact of the position to the levy

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

**Defeated**

R2025-51

**Motion by** Councillor Beatty

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT the draft 2025 budget, as amended, be adopted with a levy increase of \$5,948,452 and a total tax levy of \$86,038,828;**

**AND THAT the 2025 Budget By-law be adopted as presented.**

Members of Council held a discussion with respect to the following:

- the City's service delivery being unparalleled; and,
- there being a need to continue to move forward despite of the current situation faced by the City and its residents.

A member requested a recorded vote.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

In Support (7): Councillor Beatty, Councillor Briscoe, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Hunter, Councillor McCabe, and Councillor Nijjar

Opposed (4): Mayor Ritsma, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Sebben, and Councillor Wordofa

**Carried**

Council recessed at 10:07 P.M.  
Council reconvened at 10:13 P.M.

### **7.8 Resolution - Canadian Dairy XPO**

R2025-52

**Motion by** Councillor Hunter

**Seconded by** Councillor Nijjar

**THAT City Council hereby designates the 2025 Canadian Dairy Expo (CDX) event to be held April 2 and 3, 2025 in the Cow Coliseum at the Stratford Rotary Complex as having municipal significance for the purpose of obtaining liquor licenses from the AGCO, subject to compliance with the City's Municipal Alcohol Risk Policy and required certificates of insurance being provided.**

**Carried**

### **7.9 Resolution - Spottydawg Productions Inc.**

R2025-53

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor Wordofa

**THAT City Council hereby designates the Spottydawg Productions Inc. event to be held April 17, 2025, at the Stratford Rotary Complex as having municipal significance for the purpose of obtaining liquor licenses from the AGCO, subject to compliance with the City's Municipal Alcohol Risk Policy and required certificates of insurance being provided.**

**Carried**

### **7.10 Proclamation - Kin Canada Day 2025**

R2025-54

**Motion by** Councillor Sebben

**Seconded by** Councillor Wordofa

**THAT Stratford City Council hereby proclaims February 20, 2025 as Kin Canada Day and the week of February 16 to 22, 2025 as Kin Canada Week in celebration of the Kinsmen Club of Stratford's 80th year serving the "Communities Greatest Need";**

**AND THAT Stratford City Council authorize the flying of the Kin Flag the week of February 16 to 22 in recognition of the men and women who volunteer their time for the purposes of bettering**

**their communities through 'hands on' service work and raising funds.**

**Carried**

#### **7.11 Proclamation - National Human Trafficking Awareness Day**

A member shared a message raising awareness of the statistics relating to this issue as well as available resources that detail how to recognize and stop human trafficking.

R2025-55

**Motion by** Councillor Henderson

**Seconded by** Councillor Biehn

**THAT Stratford City Council hereby proclaims February 22, 2025, as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day to raise awareness to the magnitude of modern-day slavery in Canada.**

**Carried**

#### **7.12 Proclamation - Epilepsy Awareness Month**

R2025-56

**Motion by** Councillor Briscoe

**Seconded by** Councillor Wordofa

**THAT Stratford City Council hereby proclaims March 26, 2025 as Purple Day for Epilepsy and March 2025 as Epilepsy Awareness Month to raise awareness of the prominence of Epilepsy in Ontario and to break down the stigma of Epilepsy.**

**Carried**

#### **7.13 Correspondence - Resignation of Michael Adams from the SEEDCo./investStratford Board of Directors**

The Mayor thanked Mr. Adams for their work as a member of the SEEDCo./investStratford Board of Director member.

R2025-57

**Motion by** Councillor Beatty

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT the resignation of Michael Adams from the SEEDCo./investStratford Board of Directors be accepted.**

**Carried**

**8. Business for Which Previous Notice Has Been Given:**

**8.1 Resolution - Designation of 15 Huron Street (The Shakespearean Gardens) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. (COU25-012)**

R2025-58

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor McCabe

**THAT City Council designate 15 Huron Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* through the passing of a By-law pertaining to the following attributes:**

- a. **Dufton Chimney Tower and features, including the top structure and weathervane**
- b. **Original stone walls throughout the garden design**
- c. **Huron Street lychgate**
- d. **Knot Garden**
- e. **Herb Garden**
- f. **Rose Garden**
- g. **Perennial Border Garden**
- h. **Walkway lamp lighting**
- i. **Sundial within the confines of the Garden**
- j. **Bust of William Shakespeare**

**AND THAT, a commemorative plaque be installed on the subject lands with all costs borne by Heritage Stratford.**

**Carried**

**9. Reports of the Standing Committees:**

**9.1 Report of the Finance and Labour Relations Committee:**

**9.1.1 Council Remuneration Review and Recommendations (FIN25-005)**

R2025-59

**Motion by** Councillor Biehn

**Seconded by** Councillor Briscoe

**THAT the per diem rates for meetings remain at the 2024 rates.**

**Carried**

R2025-60

**Motion by** Councillor McCabe

**Seconded by** Councillor Briscoe

**THAT Council authorize a 2025 base remuneration for the Mayor of \$86,800.16, Deputy Mayor of \$24,333.75 and Councillors of \$22,390.14;**

**THAT the per diem rate for meetings with a duration of three hours or less remain at \$60;**

**THAT the per diem rate for meetings with a duration of more than three hours in any one day be remain at \$90;**

**THAT Council amend the indexing from the Consumer Price Index to the internal method of following the Administrative Salary Group for any annual increases;**

**THAT the Council Remuneration By-law attached to Report FIN25-005 be adopted;**

**AND THAT By-law 20-98 be repealed.**

**Carried**

### **9.1.2 Council Remuneration Review and Recommendations (FIN25-005)**

R2025-61

**Motion by** Councillor Briscoe

**Seconded by** Councillor Nijjar

**THAT Council amend the recommended indexing to follow the most current available annualized Consumer Price Index, monthly, not seasonally adjusted or 3%, whichever is lower, for future annual increases.**

**Carried**



**9.1.6 Sale and Disposition of Land Policy Review**

R2025-62

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach**Seconded by** Councillor Briscoe**THAT the motion be amended to change "attainable housing initiatives" to "non-market housing initiatives".****Carried**

R2025-63

**Motion by** Councillor Biehn**Seconded by** Councillor Sebben**THAT the Sale and Disposition of Land Policy be referred to staff to review the ability to direct a portion of municipal land sales, excluding industrial land, towards non-market housing initiatives, including Community Improvement Plans.****Carried**

R2025-64

**Motion by** Councillor Hunter**Seconded by** Councillor Henderson**THAT Items 9.1.3, 9.1.5, and 9.1.7 listed on the February 10, 2025 Finance and Labour Relations Committee Report be adopted as printed.****Carried****9.1.3 United Way Request to Waive Facility Fees (FIN25-001)**

THAT the report titled, "United Way Request to Waive Facility Fees" (FIN25-001), be received;

AND THAT the facility rental fee waiver request in the amount of \$875 for use of the Agriplex fieldhouse on March 15, 2025 be approved and funded from the 2024 Community Grants Reserve fund.

**9.1.5 Downloading of Services Information Report**

THAT staff be directed to report back to Council regarding the impacts of the downloading of services from the provincial and federal governments.

### **9.1.7 Municipal Accommodation Tax Ad-Hoc Committee**

THAT the development of an Ad-Hoc Committee to review and develop a draft policy on the use of municipal accommodation tax funds be referred to staff.

### **9.1.4 Review of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Program**

R2025-65

**Motion by** Councillor McCabe

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Program be reviewed.**

**Carried**

It being noted that Councillor Wordofa did not participate in the discussion or the vote regarding the matter.

## **9.2 Report of the Social Services Committee**

R2025-66

**Motion by** Councillor Briscoe

**Seconded by** Councillor Henderson

**THAT the Report of the Social Services Committee dated February 10, 2025, be adopted as printed.**

**Carried**

### **9.2.1 Ontario Works 2024 Business Plan (SOC25-001)**

THAT the report titled, "Ontario Works 2024 Business Plan" (SOC25-001), be received for information.

### **9.2.2 CMHA Outreach Worker Service Agreement (SOC25-002)**

THAT the Corporation of the City of Stratford enter into a three-year agreement with the Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth Addictions and Mental Health Services for the provision of services defined in the Outreach Worker Service Agreement;

THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Outreach Worker Service Agreement with

the Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth Addictions and Mental Health Services;

AND THAT the Director of Social Services be authorized to approve any contract amendments, subject to no changes to the financial considerations or identified performance concerns, for the duration of the contract and subject to providing the City Clerk with any approved contract amendments.

### **9.2.3 Optimism Place Outreach Worker Service Agreement (SOC24-003)**

THAT Council authorize The Corporation of the City of Stratford to enter into an agreement with Optimism Place, Women's Shelter, and Support Services for the provision of services defined in the Outreach Worker Service Agreement;

THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Outreach Worker Service Agreement with Optimism Place, Women's Shelter, and Support Services;

AND THAT the Director of Social Services be authorized to approve any contract amendments, subject to no changes to the financial considerations or identified performance concerns, for the duration of the contract and subject to a copy of any approved amended contract being provided to the City Clerk.

### **10. Notice of Intent:**

None scheduled.

### **11. Reading of the By-laws:**

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

R2025-67

**Motion by** Councillor Henderson

**Seconded by** Councillor Nijjar

**THAT By-laws 11-2025 to 17-2025 be taken collectively.**

**Carried** unanimously

R2025-68

**Motion by** Councillor Hunter

**Seconded by** Councillor Beatty

**THAT By-laws 11-2025 to 17-2025 be read a First and Second Time.**

**Carried** two thirds support

R2025-69

**Motion by** Councillor Burbach

**Seconded by** Councillor McCabe

**THAT By-laws 11-2025 to 17-2025 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.**

**Carried**

R2025-70

**Motion by** Councillor Beatty

**Seconded by** Councillor Nijjar

**THAT By-law 18-2025 be read a First and Second Time.**

**Carried** two thirds support

R2025-71

**Motion by** Councillor Henderson

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT By-law 18-2025 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.**

**Carried**

R2025-72

**Motion by** Councillor Beatty

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT By-law 19-2025 be read a First and Second Time.**

**Carried** two thirds support

R2025-73

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT By-law 19-2025 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.**

**Carried**

**11.1 Agreement - Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth Addictions and Mental Health Services - By-law 11-2025**

To authorize the entering into and execution of an Outreach Worker Service Agreement / Purchase of Service Agreement with CMHA Huron

Perth Addiction and Mental Health Services for the provision of services defined in the Agreement.

**11.2 Lease Agreement - Discovery Centre - By-law 12-2025**

To authorize the execution of an extension to the Lease Agreement with The Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada for the lease of certain lands at 270 Water Street, more commonly known as the Discovery Centre (former Teacher's College), to December 31, 2025.

**11.3 Lease Agreement - Festival Parking Lot - By-law 12-2025**

To authorize the execution of an extension to the Lease Agreement with The Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada for the use of the Queen Street parking lot to December 31, 2025.

**11.4 Award Tender for Video Surveillance - Meraki Solutions - By-law 14-2025**

To authorize the acceptance of a tender, execution of the contract and the undertaking of the work by Synnapex Inc. for the supply and delivery of Meraki Solutions, including 3-year licensing (T-2024-36) and to Repeal By-law 1-2025.

**11.5 Heritage Designation 15 Huron Street - By-law 15-2025**

To designate 15 Huron Street under Part IV of Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

**11.6 Council Remuneration By-law - By-law 18-2025**

To establish the indemnity and remuneration of members of Council for the City of Stratford and to repeal By-law 20-98.

**11.7 Amend Fees and Charges By-law Short Term Accommodation Licensing - By-law 16-2025**

To amend the Fees and Charges By-law 99-2024, as amended, for The Corporation of the City of Stratford, to include fees for short term rental accommodation licensing.

**11.8 2025 Budget By-law - By-law 19-2025**

To adopt the budget (estimates of revenues and expenditures) for tax supported and user pay purposes for the year 2025.

**11.9 Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) Levy for 2025 - By-law 17-2025**

To levy a special charge upon the rateable property in the business improvement area for the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) (formerly City Centre BIA) for 2025.

**12. Consent Agenda: CA-2025-009**

Council did not advise of any items to be considered on the Consent Agenda.

**13. New Business:**

**13.1 Added - Good Roads Board of Directors Nomination**

R2025-74

**Motion by** Councillor McCabe

**Seconded by** Councillor Sebben

**THAT Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach be nominated for the Good Roads Board of Directors.**

**Carried**

**13.2 Added - Retirement of Joan Thomson, CAO**

Members of Council discussed the hiring process and timeline following the Chief Administrative Officer's retirement.

**14. Adjournment to Standing Committees:**

The next Regular Council meeting is February 24, 2025, in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

R2025-75

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor Briscoe

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

- **Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee [7:05 or thereafter following the Regular Council meeting]; and**
- **Planning and Heritage 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 February 10, 2025, 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 disclosures of pecuniary interest made by a member at the February 10, 2025 Council Reconvene meeting.

**15.2 Reading of the By-laws (reconvene):**

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

**By-law 11.10 Confirmatory By-law - By-law 20-2025**

To confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on February 10, 2025.

R2025-76

**Motion by** Councillor Sebben

**Seconded by** Councillor Burbach

**THAT By-law 20-2025 be read a First and Second Time.**

**Carried** two thirds support

R2025-77

**Motion by** Councillor Nijjar

**Seconded by** Councillor Henderson

**THAT By-law 20-2025 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.**

**Carried**

### **15.3 Adjournment of Council Meeting**

R2025-78

**Motion by** Councillor Beatty

**Seconded by** Councillor Hunter

**THAT the February 10, 2025, Regular Council meeting adjourn.**

**Carried**

Meeting Start Time: 7:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 10:39 P.M.

Council Reconvene Start Time: 10:54 P.M.

Council Reconvene End Time: 10:55 P.M.

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Mayor - Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual






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## PLANNING REPORT

**Date:** February 10, 2025  
**To:** Mayor & Council  
**From:** Alexander Burnett, Intermediate Planner  
**Report Number:** COU25-015  
**Attachments:** Location Map  
 Approved Site Plan SP09-22  
 Initial Phase Draft Plan

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**Title:** Plan of Condominium Application and exemption from the draft approval process  
 31CDM24-001 – 4117 Perth Line 36

**Objective:** The purpose of this report is to consider the approval of a proposed Plan of Condominium and exemption from the draft approval process to facilitate condominium ownership of the residential units and parking spaces, located at 4117 Perth Line 36. The exemption process is intended to apply to applications that have previously undergone a complete evaluation, are subject to a site plan agreement, comply with the Zoning By-law, and no further conditions of approval are required by the municipality for the development.

**Background:** An application for a Plan of Condominium and exemption from the draft approval process was received by the City for the lands known municipally as 4177 Perth Line 36, Reference Plan 44R-6110, Part of Lots 3 & 4, Concession 2 (formerly in the Geographic Township of Ellice) in the City of Stratford. The property is located on the south side of Perth Line 36 between Kastner Street and Mornington Street and is informally known as the 'Poets & Perth' development.

The proposed Plan of Condominium contains a total of 133 townhouse dwellings and 6 parking units. The initial phase of the proposed plan contains the first 54 of the townhouse dwellings and 3 parking units. The remainder of the plan is proposed to contain common elements, including private streets, visitor parking spaces, walkways, storage areas, and amenity areas. Site Plan approval (SP09-22) was granted on August 25, 2023, for the plan consisting of 133 townhouse dwellings, and an application for future phases is currently undergoing review. As such, the requested exemption for the first phase of the proposed development can be considered appropriate.

Site Characteristics:

Existing Use: Residential (under construction)

Frontage: Approximately 812.44 m

Depth: Approximately 224.34 m

Area: Approximately 49493 m

Shape: Irregular

Surrounding Land Uses:

North: Agricultural (Perth East)

East: Open space

West: Residential

South: Open space, future residential

Agency Comments

Circulation of the plan to agencies on November 21, 2024 resulted in the following comments:

City of Stratford Building & Planning Department – Building Division:

Prior to sign off on the Condo the Building Department will require the following for the Condo:

- All buildings are substantially complete, safe, functional and ready for occupancy,
- Fire Routes will need to be fully complete and to the satisfaction of the City of Stratford Fire Department,
- Certification from the design engineer, that has been accepted by the City, that all site works and servicing have been completed,
- Final Lot Grading Certification will need to be submitted and approved by the City Engineering Department.

City of Stratford Infrastructure Department – Engineering Division:

- No comments or concerns.

City of Stratford Corporate Services – Clerks Division:

- No concerns related to parking.

City of Stratford Infrastructure Department – Climate Division:

- It is recommended that a percentage of outdoor parking spaces be developed as “EV-ready”, to enable future installation of Level 2 EV chargers (at a minimum). EV-ready provisions can include adding adjacent energized power outlets (i.e. an electrical junction box or a receptacle) where EV supply equipment (EVSE – i.e. an EV charger) can be installed in the future.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority:

- Provided that the UTRCA is circulated on the site plan submission for the 'Future Phases' the UTRCA has no objections or requirements related to the proposed draft plan of condominium.
- The UTRCA has reviewed the grading for the site and building openings for Phase 1 through the site plan approval process (SP09-22) and has no further comments. A Section 28 permit (#159-22) has been issued for the works within Phase 1 (sub-phases 'Initial Phase' & 'Phase 1').

Bell Canada:

- Bell Canada reviewed the circulation regarding the above noted application. The following paragraphs are to be included as a condition of approval:
  - 1) The Owner acknowledges and agrees to convey any easement(s) as deemed necessary by Bell Canada to service this new development. The Owner further agrees and acknowledges to convey such easements at no cost to Bell Canada.
  - 2) The Owner agrees that should any conflict arise with existing Bell Canada facilities where a current and valid easement exists within the subject area, the Owner shall be responsible for the relocation of any such facilities or easements at their own cost.

The Planning Act does not require a public meeting to be held prior to a municipality considering draft plan approval exemption of the Plan of Condominium.

**History:**

The subject lands were rezoned on February 14, 2022, from the Agricultural (A) zone to a Residential Fourth Density R4(2)-28 zone, Park (P) zone, and Floodplain (FP) zone to permit cluster housing in the form of single detached, semi-detached, triplex, townhouse dwellings, back-to-back townhouse dwellings, stacked townhouse dwellings and apartment dwellings. Site specific regulations were requested related to lot coverage, density, landscaped open space and setbacks.

The owner was granted Site Plan approval (SP09-22) on August 25, 2023 for the first phase of the proposed development to facilitate the development of 133 townhouse dwellings. An application for Site Plan approval is currently being reviewed by the City for the proposed second phase of the development. Building permits haven been issued for the first phase, and the City continues to hold securities on this Site Plan Agreement.

## **Analysis:**

All planning decisions in the Province of Ontario shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) which came into effect on October 20th, 2024, and is intended to streamline the provincial planning framework and replaces the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, with an emphasis on more enabling housing policies. The 2024 PPS provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest relating to Building Homes, Sustaining Strong and Competitive Communities, Infrastructure and Facilities, Wise Use and Management of Resources, and Protecting Public Health and Safety. All decisions on planning matters are required to be consistent with the PPS.

Section 2.1.1 of the PPS states that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet the projected needs of current and future residents of the regional market area. Municipalities shall permit and facilitative all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic, and well-being of current and future residents, as well as all types of residential intensification. Municipalities shall promote densities for new housing that efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed.

The PPS states that new development should take place in designated growth areas that are adjacent to the built-up area and shall have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities. The subject lands are intended to be utilized for a residential development and will contribute to a mix of housing types that efficiently use land, resources, and infrastructure within the city. Additionally, the City's infrastructure has adequate capacity to accommodate cluster townhouse dwellings on the subject lands and the proposed Plan of Condominium provides a sufficient amount of off-street parking and amenity areas to support a residential use.

As a result, there are no Wise Use and Management of Resources or Protecting Public Health and Safety issues with this application. The request for Draft Plan of Condominium approval is appropriate for the subject lands and is consistent with the PPS.

### Official Plan

The property is designated 'Medium Density Residential Special Area' in the City of Stratford's Official Plan and is subject to the Residential Area and Stratford West Secondary Plan policies. The goals and objectives within the Residential Area policies and the Stratford West Secondary Plan include ensuring development and intensification is compatible in terms of scale, density and design with neighboring developments and adheres to sound planning principles relating to servicing, traffic, site design and amenities.

In accordance with Section 9.4, Plans of Condominium are to conform to the general policies and designations of the Official Plan and must create a minimum number of units appropriate to allow for the reasonable, independent operation of a condominium corporation. The proposed Plan of Condominium conforms to the general policies and designations of the Official Plan and will allow for the reasonable, independent operation of a Condominium Corporation.

### Zoning By-Law

The property is zoned Residential Fourth Density R4(2)-28 and townhouse dwelling units are permitted within this zone. The development meets all requirements of the Zoning By-law as approved through Site Plan agreement SP09-22.

This Plan of Condominium is consistent with the PPS, conforms with the Official Plan provisions and the Zoning By-law, is considered to be appropriate for the development of the lands and represents good planning. Agency comments included in this report have been addressed through the site plan agreement applicable to the subject lands. The City's Climate Division did recommend that EV-ready charging spaces be developed on site. Although there is no policy direction in the Official Plan or regulations under the CZBL to require EV chargers, this topic will be considered by planning staff as part of the Official Plan review process and the subsequent required update to the Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

There are no further conditions of approval required by the City or any agencies and as such, the request for condominium exemption is appropriate. No further public consultation is warranted considering the public consultation required previously to establish the zoning of the lands.

### **Financial Implications:**

Development charges have been collected as part of the building permit application. No municipal expenses are anticipated to support the condominium development.

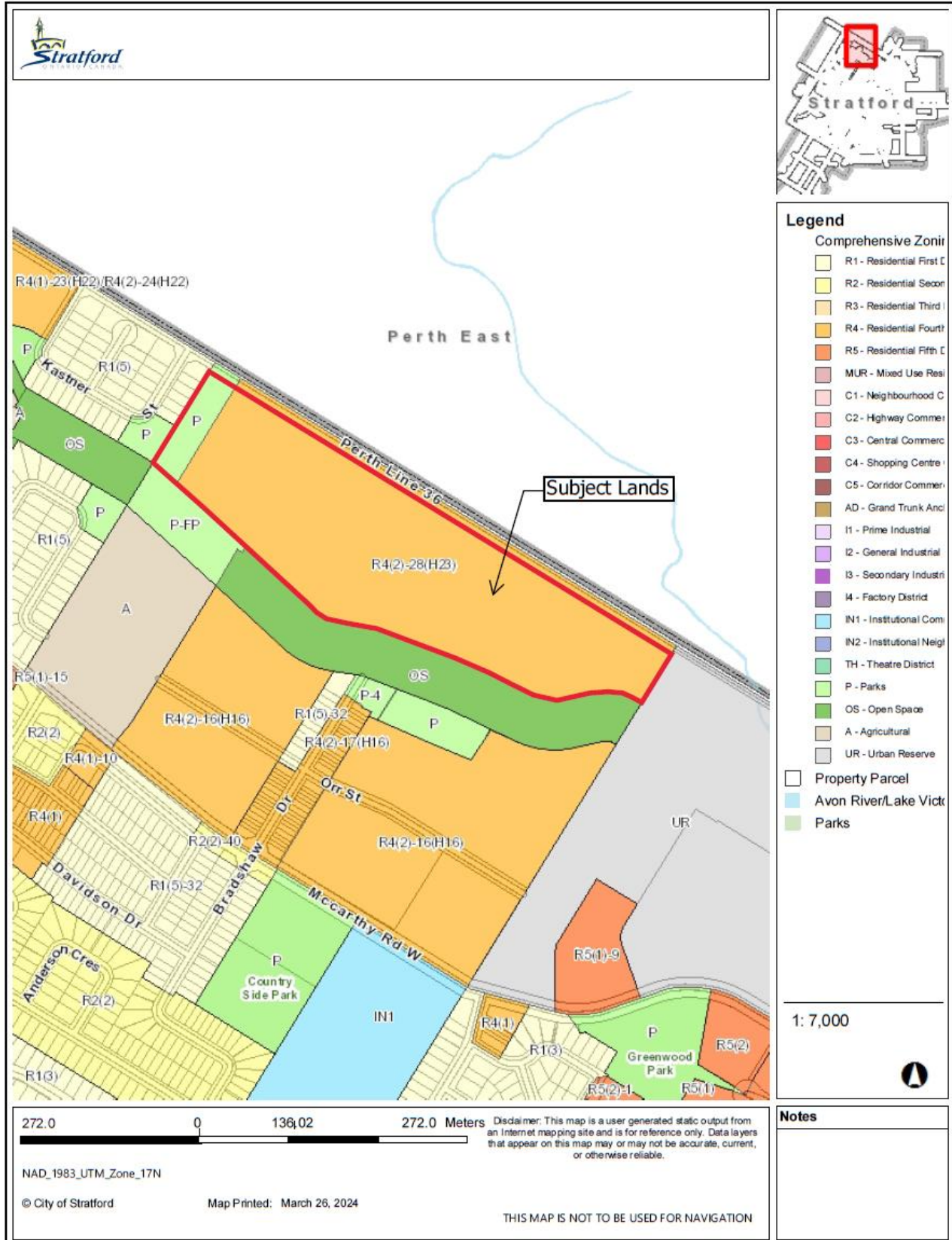
**Staff Recommendation: THAT the City of Stratford approve the application for exemption from the Draft Plan of Condominium approval process submitted by Quinlan Road Developments GP Inc., prepared by Deanna Rowe, certified by James M. Laws, OLS, Project No. 31090-22, dated November 13, 2024. The plan contains a total of 133 residential units and 6 parking spaces, located at 4117 Perth Line 36;**

**AND THAT the above is recommended for the following reasons:**

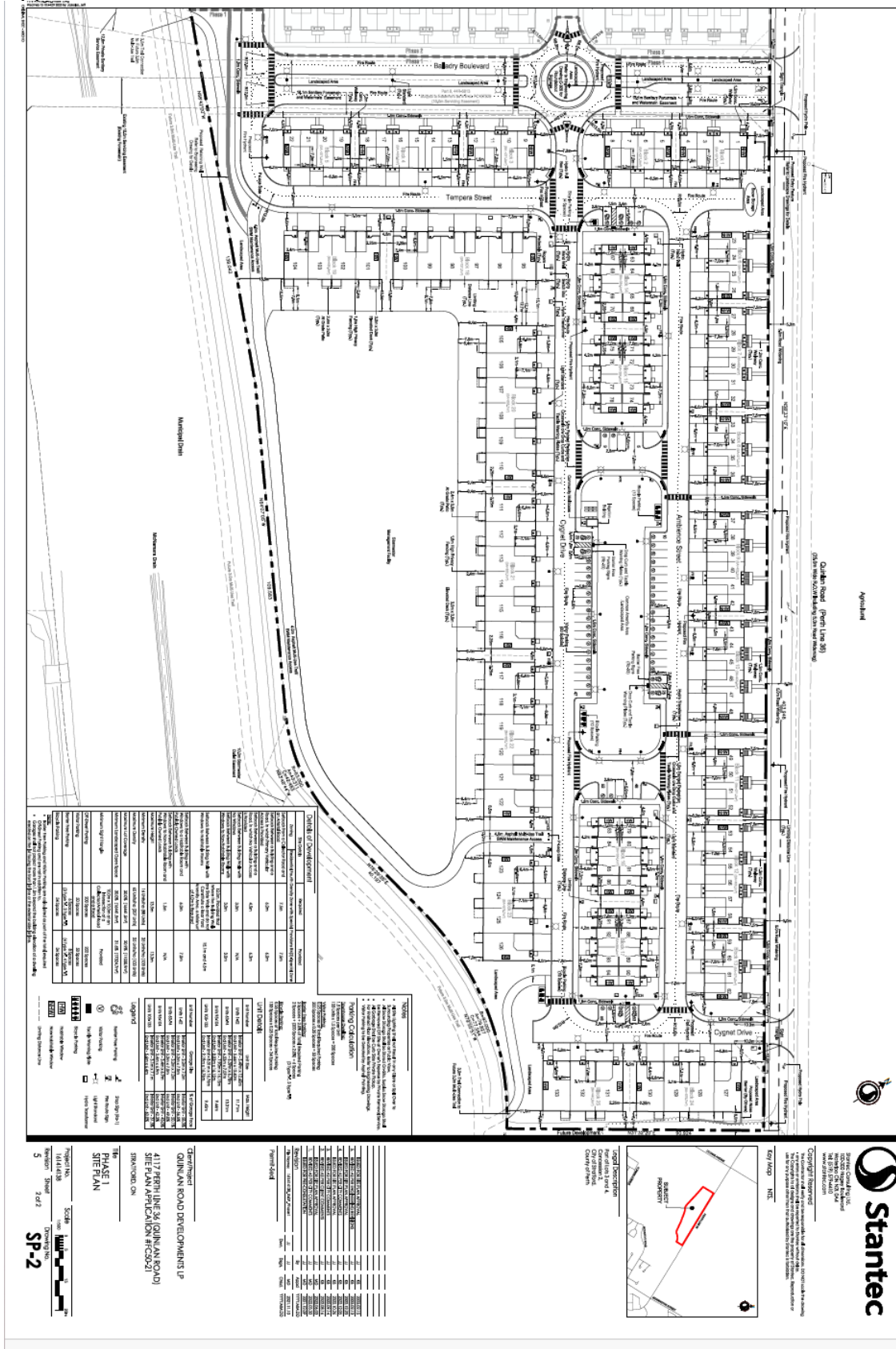
- **the request is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement; and**
- **the request conforms with the goals, objectives and policies of the Official Plan.**

**Prepared by:** Alexander Burnett, Intermediate Planner  
**Reviewed by:** Marc Bancroft, Manager of Planning, MPL, MCIP, RPP  
& Adam Betteridge, Director of Building and Planning,  
MPA, MCIP, RPP  
**Approved for Council by:** Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer

Location Map



Approved Site Plan SP09-22



SCHEDULE OF DEVELOPMENT	
Lot No.	Area (sq. ft.)
1	1,200
2	1,500
3	1,800
4	2,100
5	2,400
6	2,700
7	3,000
8	3,300
9	3,600
10	3,900
11	4,200
12	4,500
13	4,800
14	5,100
15	5,400
16	5,700
17	6,000
18	6,300
19	6,600
20	6,900
21	7,200
22	7,500
23	7,800
24	8,100
25	8,400
26	8,700
27	9,000
28	9,300
29	9,600
30	9,900
31	10,200
32	10,500
33	10,800
34	11,100
35	11,400
36	11,700
37	12,000
38	12,300
39	12,600
40	12,900
41	13,200
42	13,500
43	13,800
44	14,100
45	14,400
46	14,700
47	15,000
48	15,300
49	15,600
50	15,900
51	16,200
52	16,500
53	16,800
54	17,100
55	17,400
56	17,700
57	18,000
58	18,300
59	18,600
60	18,900
61	19,200
62	19,500
63	19,800
64	20,100
65	20,400
66	20,700
67	21,000
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73	22,800
74	23,100
75	23,400
76	23,700
77	24,000
78	24,300
79	24,600
80	24,900
81	25,200
82	25,500
83	25,800
84	26,100
85	26,400
86	26,700
87	27,000
88	27,300
89	27,600
90	27,900
91	28,200
92	28,500
93	28,800
94	29,100
95	29,400
96	29,700
97	30,000
98	30,300
99	30,600
100	30,900

**NOTES:**

- All dimensions are in feet and inches.
- Lot areas are based on the approved site plan.
- Setbacks are as shown on the site plan.
- Landscaping is as shown on the site plan.
- Utilities are as shown on the site plan.
- Access is as shown on the site plan.
- Drainage is as shown on the site plan.
- Other conditions are as shown on the site plan.

**LEGEND:**

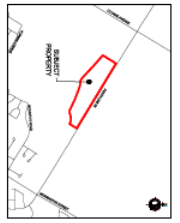
- Proposed Building Footprint
- Proposed Parking
- Proposed Landscaping
- Proposed Utilities
- Proposed Access
- Proposed Drainage
- Proposed Other

**QUINLAN ROAD DEVELOPMENTS LP**  
**1177 BURNHAM (QUINLAN ROAD)**  
**SHEPPARD AVENUE (QUINLAN ROAD)**  
 SHEPPARD AVE. (QUINLAN ROAD)  
 SHEPPARD AVE. (QUINLAN ROAD)

**THE PHASE I**  
**PRELIMINARY**  
**SITE PLAN**

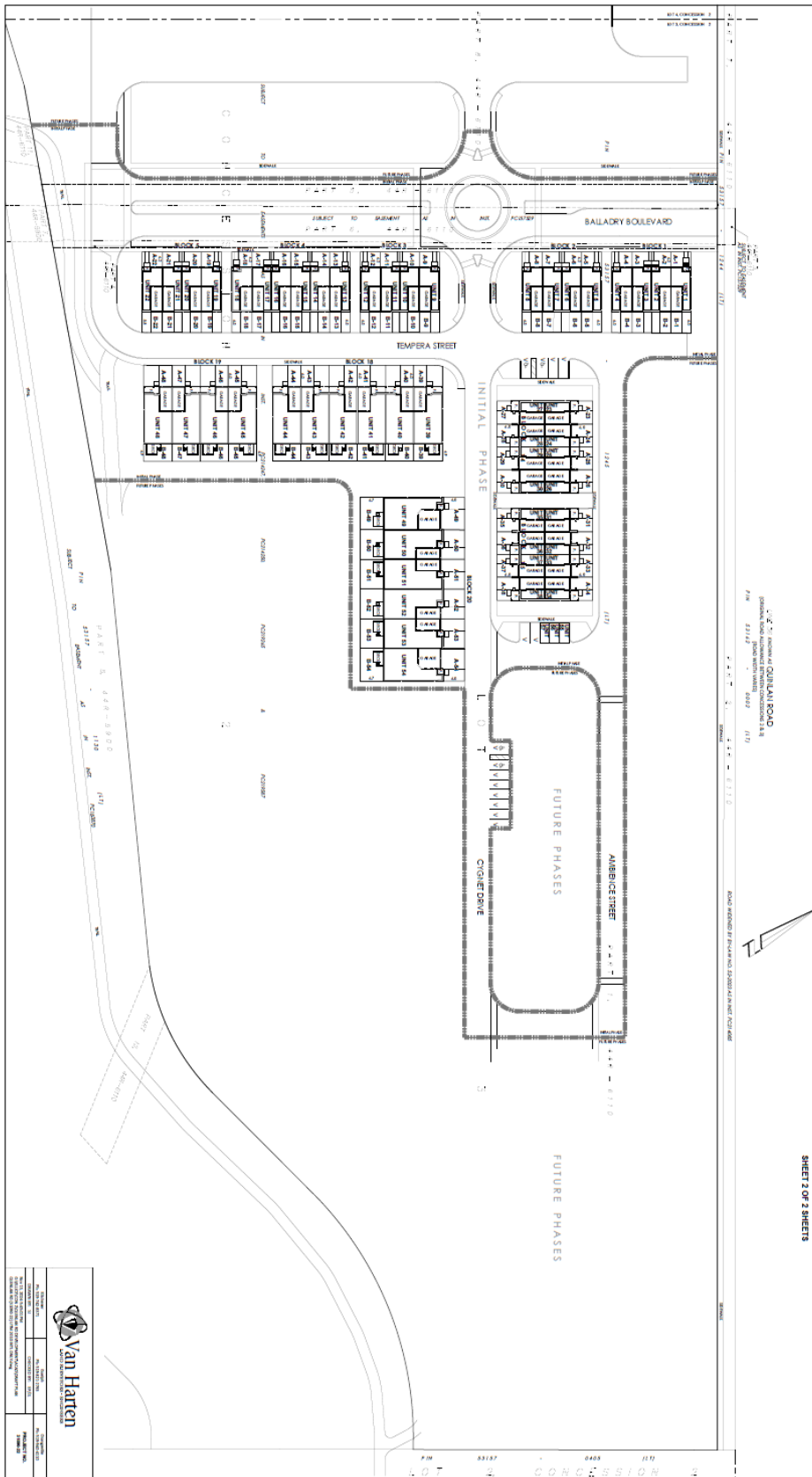
DATE: 05/20/2014  
 DRAWN BY: [Name]  
 CHECKED BY: [Name]  
 APPROVED BY: [Name]

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"  
 SHEET: 5 OF 5  
**SP-2**





# Initial Phase Draft Plan



**Van Harten**

ARCHITECTURAL FIRM

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PROJECT NO. 2014-001  
DATE: 08/14/14



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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** February 24, 2025  
**To:** Mayor & Council  
**From:** Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead  
Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford  
**Report Number:** COU25-019  
**Attachments:** Appendix 1: Exploring the Feasibility of a Community Complex as Part of the Grand Trunk Master Plan  
Appendix 2: Sample Loan Costs

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**Title:** Grand Trunk Renewal Project Key Recommendations

**Objective:** This report provides an update on the Grand Trunk Renewal Project and presents four key recommendations for Stratford City Council's consideration. 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.

**Background:** The Grand Trunk Renewal Project aims to revitalize the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) site into a vibrant, sustainable space for Stratford, addressing key community needs like housing, recreational and community spaces, and sustainable development.

The Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee has been instrumental in guiding the project, engaging with the community, and developing a comprehensive work plan to move the project forward. After a year of foundational work, several critical actions have been identified to propel the Grand Trunk Renewal into its next phase. These include activating the site, determining the scope and financial structure for a community recreation facility, exploring the market opportunity for residential development, and addressing mobility and parking challenges.

*Areas of Critical Action:*

1. *Activate the Grand Trunk Site on an Interim Basis*

The site, currently secured due to safety concerns, needs temporary activations to engage the community, raise awareness, and generate excitement for the long-term revitalization. Suggested activities include art installations, community events, performances, and small-scale tours, aligning with the vision of revitalizing the site. In order to use the Grand Trunk building for events and other gatherings, staff need to determine what interventions are needed to ensure the public's safety and the cost of these interventions for all or a portion of the building and/or site.

2. *Determine the Scope, Funding, and Design for a Shared Community Recreation Facility*

There is a strong need for a new community facility to serve the community, recreational and cultural needs of Stratford's residents. The YMCA, Stratford Public Library and the City of Stratford's Community Services Department have worked together to assess their individual and collective space needs and conduct research on financial and operational models. To determine the scope, scale, and partnership model for new community facility, the City of Stratford must determine its level of investment in this new amenity. With Council's direction, staff and partners can work together to develop a specific proposal for a new facility, including space design, programming, capital costs, maintenance estimates, and operational costs and model.

3. *Develop an Expression of Interest (EOI) for Housing Development on the Grand Trunk site, including Parcel 2D*

The Grand Trunk site is in a prime location for residential development, which is crucial to address some of Stratford's housing needs. The development of Parcel 2D will bring new residents and energy to the site and downtown, aligning with the community's demand for accessible, walkable housing options.

4. *Develop an Expression of Interest (EOI) for Parking and Mobility Solutions*

The loss of 437 parking spaces at the Grand Trunk site, due to anticipated construction and development, necessitates a parking and mobility solution to accommodate the needs of new residents, businesses, and visitors. A well-designed parking structure or alternative mobility options will be essential for managing the site's growth.

### *About the Approach*

The recommendations outlined in this report are based on a strategic approach to redevelopment that prioritizes municipal leadership in shaping the future of the Grand Trunk site. The Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee has consistently emphasized the importance of the City maintaining a central role in the site's development, rather than divesting the property outright. This approach aligns with long-term community-building objectives and ensures that development reflects the City's vision and priorities. Historically, private sector ownership of the site has not resulted in meaningful progress toward redevelopment. Over the past 15 years, the City has taken deliberate steps to regain control of the site, underscoring the importance of maintaining municipal oversight moving forward.

The preferred strategy is an approach that balances community benefits and long-term economic returns with strategic land disposition. This model envisions significant public assets on the site, including within the main building, funded through staged partnerships with private developers that align with clearly defined municipal outcomes. Maintaining municipal leadership in the development process will allow Stratford to maximize community impact, ensure long-term site viability, and position the Grand Trunk site as a transformative asset for future generations.

### *About the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee & Recent Project Work*

In October 2022, Council directed staff to establish a Citizen's Advisory Committee to advise on the development of the site, including architectural design and financing. This led to subsequent reports detailing the Terms of Reference (FIN23-009), the appointment of the committee Chair (COU23-075, COU23-089), and the appointment of members (COU23-120). The committee held its first meeting in November 2023.

At the February 12, 2024, Council meeting, Council directed staff to implement a 6-month workplan (COU24-015). The initial workplan focused on refining the 2018 Master Plan's vision and guiding principles. These principles guide decisions on development, partnerships, financial contributions, and procurement. The Ad Hoc Committee worked through a collaborative, iterative process to develop a draft set of guiding principles. The Ad Hoc Committee hosted two large public events to familiarize the community with the project, built out an enhanced web presence, and offered over thirty answers to frequently asked questions about the project on EngageStratford.

On April 22, 2024, Council considered the draft guiding principles created by the Ad Hoc Committee and directed staff to engage the community on the draft principles and return with a final version (COU24-041). This process reflects Council's goal of ensuring

the project aligns with current community needs, including sustainability and inclusivity. The committee and staff conducted ten community pop-up events and launched a campaign on EngageStratford to seek input on the guiding principles.

On August 12, 2024, Council reviewed the Committee's workplan for Q3-Q4 2024, which emphasizes the preparation of a business case (COU24-086). This case will inform decisions about land disposition, procurement, and municipal investments. The recommendations contained within the report below move key aspects of the workplan forward.

On September 23, 2024, Council considered a revised version of the project vision and guiding principles that incorporated insights from community engagement activities (COU24-113). The updated vision and principles reflect the community's preferences for a space that balances economic growth with inclusivity, sustainability, and community uses.

### **Analysis:**

#### ***Key Action #1: Activate the Grand Trunk Site on an Interim Basis***

The GTR site, a partially restored industrial structure, has been secured and is currently restricted from public access due to safety considerations. Following the removal of the roof decking and treatment of the steel trusses, the City is exploring temporary uses to activate the site. These activations aim to foster community engagement, align with long-term revitalization goals, and increase public awareness of the site's potential.

The Communications, Public Engagement, and Advocacy Working Group of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee recommended that the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee request City staff to review temporary use concepts and feasibility. This direction was provided at the August 29, 2024, meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Proposed activations include a range of activities such as art installations, historical tours, community events, live performances, and public markets. Additionally, small-scale tours led by Ad Hoc Committee members were suggested at the October 21, 2024, meeting to allow residents to safely explore the building and engage with the site's potential.

Placemaking during the interim period is crucial to build momentum for the site's future development. Temporary activations such as art installations, community events, performances, and historical tours have been proposed to draw residents, visitors, and prospective developers to the site.

#### *Progress and Current Work*

Public use of the building faces several challenges due to compliance requirements under the Ontario Building Code (OBC). Public assembly will require a change of use

from industrial to assembly occupancy, triggering specific structural and operational standards. Staff are currently working to determine the physical and operational interventions necessary to meet these requirements.

Key actions and consultations include:

- **Building Code Compliance:** An architect and engineer are assessing the interventions needed to apply for occupancy. The Chief Building Official (CBO) has provided guidance on compliance requirements and will review the findings.
- **Health and Safety:** A report by Sellery Health + Safety (October 2024) outlines safety measures, such as securing hazardous areas, improving egress, and enhancing emergency response capabilities.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Staff from DestinationStratford, Stratford Summer Music, City of Stratford Community Services Department, as well as subject matter experts have provided feedback and insight on the approach.

### *Guided Tours*

Guided tours are possible under current conditions without a change of use, provided appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety protocols are in place. These tours could offer opportunity to further engage the community and showcase the site's potential while more comprehensive activations are being developed.

### *Next Steps*

1. **Initiate Tours:**
  - Complete health and safety protocols
  - Procure personal protective equipment
  - Finalize content and format
2. **Building Assessment:**
  - Complete an assessment to identify compliance measures, alternative solutions, and associated costs for a change of use.
  - Use these findings to support CBO review and prepare a cost-benefit analysis.
3. **Chief Building Official Consultation:**
  - Submit the assessment to determine if temporary occupancy for public assembly can be granted.
4. **Costing and Reporting:**
  - Develop detailed cost estimates for compliance requirements, including structural and safety adjustments.
  - Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the financial implications and community impacts of enabling temporary public use.

- Prepare a follow-up report to Council with options, solutions, and recommendations for phased site activation.

### *Conclusion*

The activation of the GTR site during this interim period is an important step in fostering community engagement and demonstrating the site's potential value. While the complexities of achieving assembly occupancy require significant effort, staff and members of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee are actively working to identify practical solutions. A follow-up report will be presented to Council outlining detailed options and recommendations to advance this critical placemaking initiative.

### *Recommendation*

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.

### ***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
  - Pool
  - Gym
  - Walking Track
  - Childcare
  - Library
  - Meeting Rooms
  - Café
  - Community Spaces
  - Auditorium
  - Communal Spaces
  - Communal Kitchen
  - Lounge
  - Changerooms
  - 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 full report can be found in Appendix 1: Exploring the Feasibility of a Community Complex as Part of the Grand Trunk Master Plan.

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 direct programming.	65.6%-78.7%

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%
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### *Case for a Shared Community Facility in Stratford*

Based on this research, 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 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 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.

<b>Model</b>	<b>Municipal Investment Range</b>
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%. Additional details are available in Appendix 2: Sample Loan Costs.

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.

<b>Model</b>	<b>Investment Range</b>	<b>Total Principal</b>	<b>Approx. Increase to Levy @ 6% Interest Rate</b>
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.

Council's decision at this stage is about direction, not a final financial commitment. The recommendation is for Council to indicate whether they support further exploration of a shared community facility model rather than approving funding now.

*Next Steps:*

1. Refined project scope and cost estimates: Conducting further financial analysis, including external funding opportunities and potential operating models.
2. Partnership negotiations: Formalizing discussions with partners to clarify roles, commitments, and risks.
3. Community demand validation: Ensuring the project meets Stratford's long-term needs with data-driven insights.
4. Exploring Funding Opportunities: Pursue grants, private donations, and external partnerships to offset municipal contributions.
5. Decision timeline: Outlining the process and key milestones for future Council decisions.

*Recommendation*

THAT staff be directed to pursue the shared community facility option which includes investment from the City as outlined in this report, 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.

***Key Action #3: Advance Housing Opportunities on Parcel 2D of the Grand Trunk Site***

Parcel 2D, a 2.5-acre section of the Grand Trunk site, is positioned along Downie Street, historically home to industrial buildings and rail spurs. As Stratford continues to grow,

addressing housing needs remains a key priority. Future residential development on this site presents an opportunity to support walkability, public transit connections, affordability, accessibility, and intergenerational living, accommodating both students and seniors.

Preliminary environmental investigations indicate the presence of heavy metals and hydrocarbons, though early findings suggest these impacts are shallow. To facilitate a transition from industrial to residential use, a Record of Site Condition (RSC) will be required, and remediation will need to adhere to Site Condition Standards.

To assess the best approach for development, procurement strategies have been reviewed in alignment with Policy P.3.1 Sale and Other Disposition of Land and Policy P.5.1 Purchasing Policy. An Expression of Interest (EOI) is a strategic first step in exploring housing development for Parcel 2D, allowing the City to gauge market interest, assess potential partners, and refine the project scope before committing to a formal process. Unlike a Request For Proposals (RFP), an EOI offers flexibility by gathering insights on viable development models, funding opportunities, and industry challenges, helping the City shape a project that aligns with market realities. It also positions Stratford for provincial and federal funding, demonstrating readiness for investment in housing solutions. By identifying potential partners and procurement pathways early, an EOI reduces risk, informs future decisions, and ensures a competitive, well-aligned approach to development.

*Key Findings and Considerations:*

Developing Parcel 2D for housing presents several considerations, including environmental remediation, servicing, student housing needs, and potential government funding opportunities.

- Environmental Due Diligence
  - Consultant costs for further environmental assessment are estimated at \$250,000, though costs may rise if additional boreholes or monitoring are required.
  - Soil remediation to site-specific standards is projected to exceed \$2 million.
  - Anticipated timelines to secure a Record of Site Condition range from 1.5 to 3 years.
- Servicing Considerations
  - Alternative servicing options from Downie Street may be available, reducing reliance on the internal road network for connections.
- Student Housing Potential
  - Stratford is home to four permanent post-secondary institutions and private learning centres, creating an ongoing demand for student accommodations.
- Government Funding Opportunities
  - Housing and housing-enabling infrastructure remain priorities for both provincial and federal governments.

- With upcoming elections, shovel-ready projects will be more competitive for available funding programs.

### *Conclusion*

Parcel 2D represents a significant opportunity to address Stratford's housing needs while aligning with broader growth, accessibility, and sustainability objectives. While environmental remediation and servicing require further due diligence, advancing this project will position the site for future investment and government funding opportunities. Council's direction is needed to proceed with detailed analysis, procurement planning, and development exploration.

### *Next Steps*

1. Define the Scope of the Development: Assess the density, return on investment, and servicing requirements to determine the site's overall feasibility.
2. Evaluate Procurement and Partnership Options: Explore various models for developing and delivering housing solutions, including potential partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders.
3. Report Back to Council: Prepare and report back to Council on the Expression of Interest process, including market interest, feasibility assessments, financial implications, and recommended next steps.

### *Recommendation*

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.

### ***Key Action #3: Explore a Parking and Mobility Solution for the Grand Trunk Site***

The Grand Trunk site (GTR) consists of a partially restored industrial structure and surrounding lands totaling 18 acres. Currently, the site includes 437 unpaid parking spaces, commonly referred to as the Cooper Site, which are primarily used by downtown employees, business patrons, and seasonal visitors during the Stratford Festival. The City of Stratford is responsible for the maintenance and repair of this lot.

As construction and development advance on the site, the loss of these spaces will create a significant parking challenge in the downtown core, with no existing plan in place to replace them. The most recent Parking Study (2014) provides insights into usage trends and is included as a supplemental report.

Additionally, with the anticipated development of new residential and community facilities (e.g., YMCA, Stratford Public Library, and City-operated spaces), future parking demand is expected to increase. To proactively address these challenges, an Expression of Interest (EOI) is proposed to explore potential solutions for a parking and mobility structure at the Grand Trunk site.

Addressing parking capacity at the Grand Trunk site requires careful consideration of existing demand, anticipated growth, and potential locations for structured parking.

*Key Considerations:*

- Replacement of Existing 437 Spaces
  - There is currently no strategy or plan to accommodate the loss of parking once construction begins.
  - Existing usage is primarily by downtown employees, business patrons, and seasonal visitors.
  
- Accommodating New Development
  - An estimated 300 new residential units will require 375 additional parking spaces, based on an average ratio of 1.25 spaces per unit.
  - Proposed community facilities, including the YMCA, City spaces, and the Stratford Public Library, could require an additional 50–100 spaces.
  - Strategies for replacement parking may need to be considered in the broader context of the downtown.
  
- Cost and Location of a Structured Parking Solution
  - Modern above-ground parking structures are estimated to cost \$40,000–\$50,000 per space, resulting in a total cost of \$29M–\$36.25M to replace existing parking and accommodate new demand.
  - A site review has identified the west side of the Grand Trunk site as the most suitable location for a structured parking/mobility hub.
  - This space could accommodate approximately 150 vehicles per level, requiring a minimum of three levels to replace existing parking.
  - Future expansion potential should be incorporated into the design to support long-term growth and evolving transportation needs.

*Conclusion*

As development progresses at the Grand Trunk site, addressing parking and mobility needs is essential to supporting downtown businesses, residents, and community users. The introduction of a structured parking and mobility hub would help mitigate parking pressures, ensure continued accessibility, and accommodate future development on the site. An Expression of Interest (EOI) would allow the City to explore potential solutions, engage industry partners, and assess feasible procurement models before making further commitments.

*Next Steps*

1. Define the Scope of the Parking and Mobility Solution: Assess the scale of the parking/mobility structure required and its implications for downtown parking capacity.

2. Evaluate Procurement and Partnership Options: Explore available procurement models and potential partnerships for the development, funding, and operation of the parking facility.
3. Confirm Feasibility and Explore Delivery Models: Conduct further feasibility studies to determine site suitability, cost implications, and long-term expansion opportunities.
4. Report Back to Council: Prepare and report back to Council on the Expression of Interest process, including market interest, feasibility assessments, financial implications, and recommended next steps.

### *Recommendation*

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.

### ***Closing Statement***

The Grand Trunk site presents a unique opportunity to support Stratford's economic growth and deliver community benefits. These initial actions will advance the process of transformation through interim activation, community partnerships and a shared facility, housing development, and a parking/mobility solution. Advancing these initiatives requires strategic investment, partnerships, and alignment with Council's direction.

Council's direction on these key items is needed to proceed with the next phase of work, including due diligence, market engagement, and financial analysis. These steps will ensure that decisions align with Stratford's long-term priorities and position the City to maximize funding opportunities and community benefits.

### **Financial Implications:**

#### **Not applicable:**

There are no financial implications to be reported as a result of this report.

### **Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

#### **Build Housing Stability**

This report aligns with this priority by bringing City-owned lands to market for residential development.

#### **Work Together For Greater Impact**

This report aligns with this priority by developing a partnership model for the development and delivering of a new community facility.

#### **Intentionally Change to Support the Future**

This report aligns with this priority as it considers the current and future needs of residents.

### **Alignment with One Planet Principles:**



### **Health and Happiness**

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

### **Equity and Local Economy**

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

### **Culture and Community**

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

**Staff Recommendation: 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;**

**THAT staff be directed to pursue the shared community facility option as outlined in this report, 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;**

**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;**

**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.**

**Prepared by:** Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead &  
Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford

**Recommended by:** Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer



February, 2025

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

Understanding funding and operating models, along with the reasons for advancement.



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 .....	31
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 addresses 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 space design, programming, and facility management. Funding sources identified 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 (excluding environmental remediation expenditures), 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, supporting sustainable development goals, and fostering opportunities for reconciliation. 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 situated within the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral (Attawandaron) Peoples. Stratford is located in Perth County along the Avon River in Southwestern Ontario. In 2021, the enumerated population of Perth County was 81,565 residents, reflecting a change of 6.2% since 2016. Although the City of Stratford falls within the Perth census division, it operates independently from Perth County. 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, change rooms, 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 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, the YMCA's and the municipalities' executives 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 addresses one of four critical actions in the Grand Trunk Renewal Project: identifying a shared community recreation facility's scope, funding, and design. In the future, additional interviews and 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. More research is also required on how the environmental remediation of the land will impact the overall cost of a new facility and how costs may change if the original Grand Trunk building is incorporated into the new space design. Best practices for community spaces across Canada and globally should also be considered. The researcher recommends that further research be conducted in these areas.

The case study section comprehensively analyzes 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 and Stork Family YMCA in Waterloo (2011), and the Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and 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, and 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.

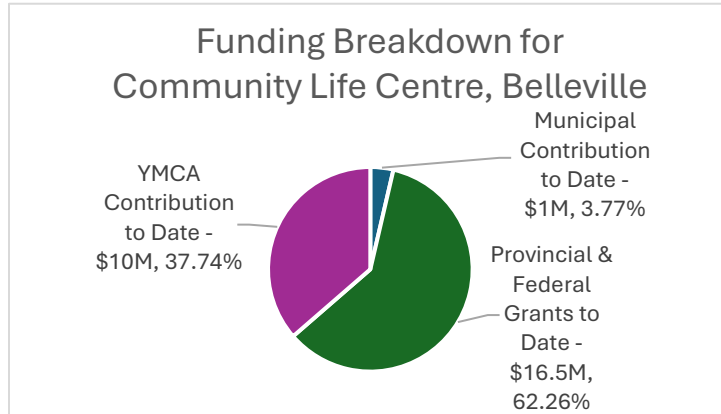
## Third-Party Facilities

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)
<b>Funding Variables</b>				
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$ 26,494,000	\$ 67,000,000	\$ 22,300,000	\$ 29,783,000
<b>Accounting for Inflation</b>			\$ 29,882,000	\$ 41,100,540
<b>Total Municipal Contribution</b>	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 9,500,000	\$ 18,533,000
<b>Municipal Contribution as a %</b>	3.77%	7.46%	42.60%	62.23%
<b>Grants Contribution as a %</b>	62.26%	44.63%	18.39%	0.00%
<b>YMCA Contribution as a %</b>	37.74%	6.72%	36.77%	28.54%
<b>Library Contribution as a %</b>	0.00%	0.00%	2.38%	9.23%
<b>Other Contribution as a %</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Square Footage</b>	60,000	77,000	66,000	82,250
<b>Cost per square foot (inclusive)</b>	\$ 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				
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$ 26,494,000	\$ 67,000,000	\$ 22,330,000	\$ 29,783,000

\* The Barrie YMCA has not yet secured all the necessary funds to complete the project.

## 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

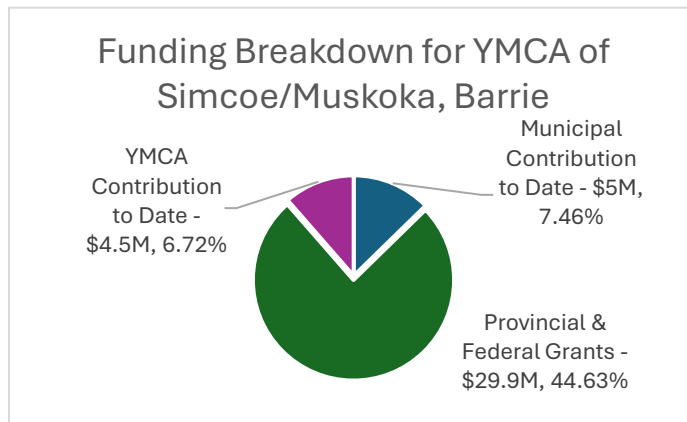
(Census Metropolitan Area population 111,184), with an average age of 44.5. Males comprise 48.4% of the population, while females comprise 51.6%. Locals over 65 represent the largest age group in Belleville (13,030 people), followed by those aged 55 to 64 (8,385 people). Belleville's population is mostly 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 over \$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. The YMCA's sale of its existing building and property for \$1.5 million will enhance the tax base revenue for the city when new homes are constructed on the land. The \$1 million municipal contribution is not cash in hand; it represents the estimated value of the land the municipality will donate for the new facility and the savings on development fees. It is estimated that constructing the YMCA Community Life Centre will directly and indirectly generate \$30 million in economic activity and create 200 full-time jobs during 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, primarily 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. The Grove Street building sale proceeds 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, that total has now exceeded \$60 million. The \$5 million municipal contribution will be paid in installments that align with the ongoing

construction progress: \$500,000 in 2024, \$1.5 million in 2025, and \$3 million in 2027. Simcoe County will provide an additional \$5 million in funding 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. The project has yet to secure all the funds necessary for its completion. However, due to the urgent need for youth housing, support for the project from all levels of government, and contributions yet to be received from operating partners, the project will ultimately be realized.

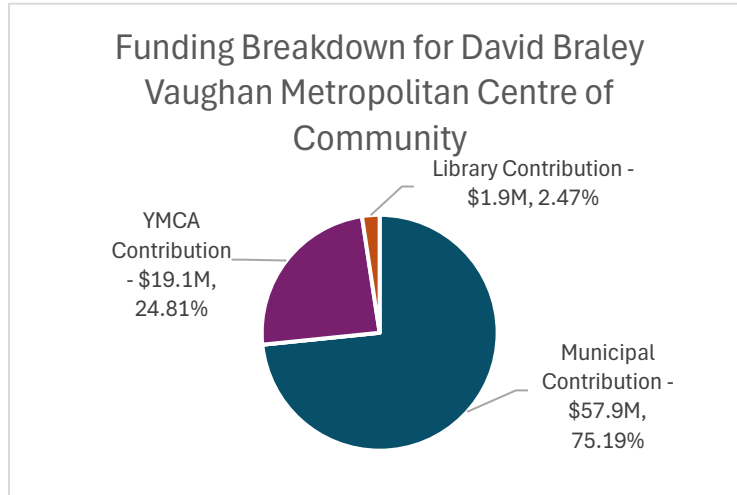
It is worth noting that the YMCA has signed a 50-year land lease with the City of Barrie for \$2 per year, with the opportunity for renewal; the land was not gifted in this instance. Regarding operations, the YMCA will be responsible for all activities, including the community kitchen and playground. 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)	
<b>Funding Variables</b>						
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$	<b>77,000,000</b>	\$	<b>54,439,000</b>	\$	<b>12,800,000</b>
<b>Accounting for Inflation</b>	\$	<b>83,930,000</b>	\$	<b>65,871,190</b>	\$	<b>18,048,000</b>
<b>Total Municipal Contribution</b>	\$	<b>57,900,000</b>	\$	<b>42,859,000</b>	\$	<b>8,400,000</b>
<b>Municipal Contribution as a %</b>		<b>75.19%</b>		<b>78.73%</b>		<b>65.63%</b>
<b>Grants Contribution as a %</b>		<b>0.00%</b>		<b>0.00%</b>		<b>31.25%</b>
<b>YMCA Contribution as a %</b>		<b>24.81%</b>		<b>16.90%</b>		<b>3.13%</b>
<b>Library Contribution as a %</b>		<b>2.47%</b>		<b>8.37%</b>		<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Other Contribution as a %</b>		<b>0.00%</b>		<b>4.37%</b>		<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Square Footage</b>		<b>109,000</b>		<b>170,000</b>		<b>50,000</b>
<b>Cost per square foot (inclusive)</b>	\$	<b>770.00</b>	\$	<b>387.48</b>	\$	<b>360.96</b>
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		
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$	<b>77,000,000</b>	\$	<b>54,439,000</b>	\$	<b>12,800,000</b>

## 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:

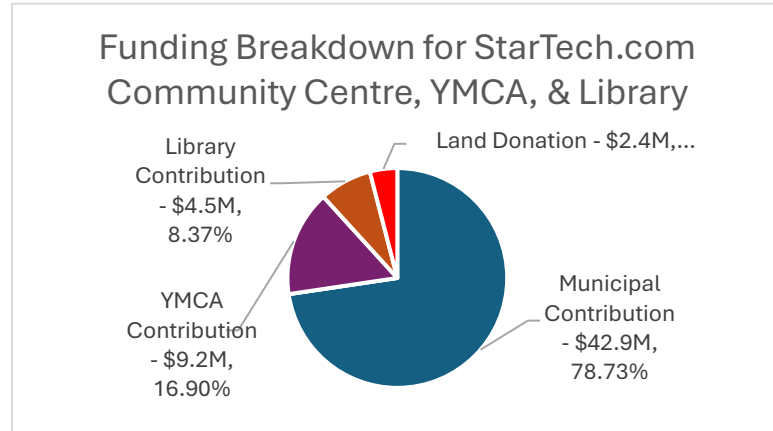
- A 3,350 square-foot studio with a sky fold partition and gallery that exit to the rooftop terrace
- Two multi-purpose dance studios (825 square feet and 1,190 square feet)
- A 592-square-foot professional music-recording studio
- A 1,450-square-foot gourmet teaching kitchen

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.

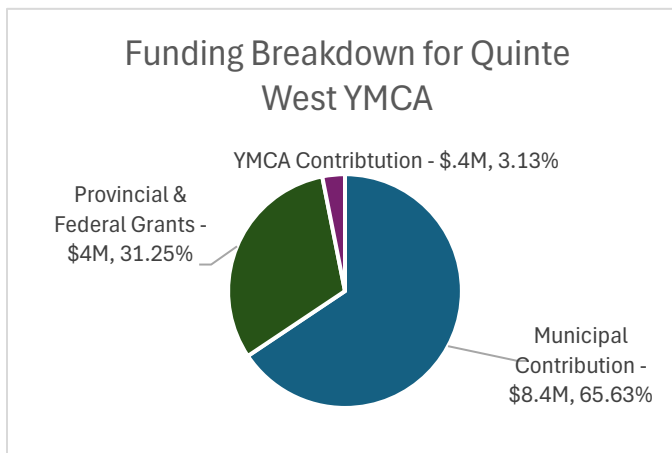
The **170,000-square-foot** project cost **\$54.5 million** or approximately **\$66 million** when accounting for inflation, equating to about **\$400 per square foot**, and was completed in 2018. The building's cost was shared among the municipality, the YMCA, and the library. Its construction represented 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
<b>Subtotal Municipal</b>	<b>\$42,859,000</b>
Donation of Land	\$2,380,000
YMCA Contribution	\$9,200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$54,439,000</b>

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, 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%.

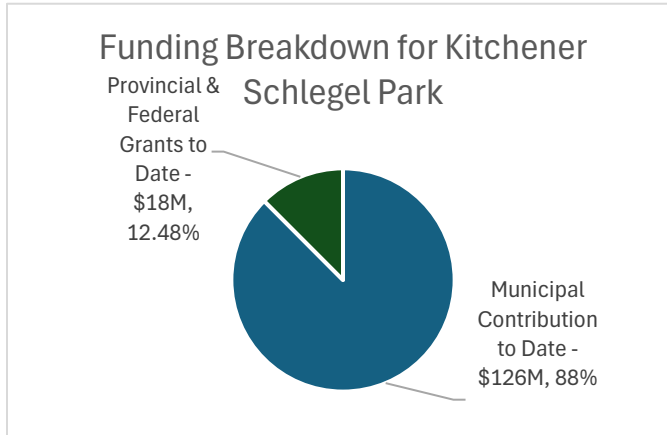
The **50,000-square-foot** project cost nearly **\$13 million** in 2009, or approximately **\$18 million** when adjusted for inflation, equating to roughly **\$360 per square foot**. To fund the project, the province invested over \$4 million in constructing the Quinte West YMCA, creating 32 construction 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 revenues. 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)
<b>Funding Variables</b>			
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$ 143,820,000	\$ 115,500,000	\$ 78,000,000
<b>Total Municipal Contribution</b>	\$ 125,869,416	\$ 109,200,000	\$ 56,500,000
<b>Municipal Contribution as a %</b>	88%	94.55%	72.44%
<b>Grants Contribution as a %</b>	12.48%	0.00%	22.44%
<b>YMCA Contribution as a %</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Library Contribution as a %</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Other Contribution as a %</b>	0.00%	5.45%	5.13%
<b>Square Footage</b>	211,500	160,000	113,640
<b>Cost per square foot (inclusive)</b>	\$ 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
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$ 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$143,820,000</b>

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, 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 most extensive 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.

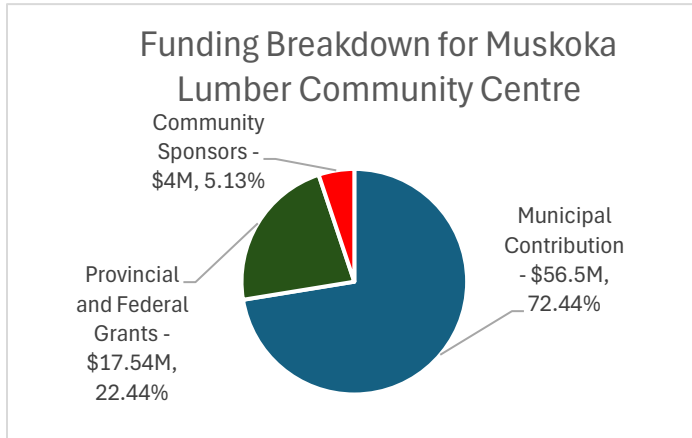
Intentionally created to promote a wider variety of sports and physical activities within the community, the new community space will feature:

- 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. These cases do not consider the costs of environmental remediation or the expenses related to renovating the existing building at the Grand Trunk site.

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 offering 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, reviewing each program directly when starting the application process is essential.

As mentioned, the YMCA already has an MOU with the City of Stratford, and the library's involvement remains uncertain. However, it is essential 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 address community needs effectively, 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, change rooms, 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**.

It is important to note that regardless of the extent of the municipality's influence on the project, they are still obligated to provide a degree of investment.

*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 – do not 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—if they are willing to be involved
- 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.

## 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 crucial. The YMCA can begin applying for grants with just a letter of support from the municipality. Engaging a third party who is familiar with the cause and has experience as a technical writer will enhance the chances of successful grant applications. Numerous opportunities exist to raise project funds through community sponsorships for naming rights related to the proposed facility spaces. Moreover, incorporating an Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) design from the project's inception will enable cost-saving measures. As mentioned, using an IPD in new builds refers to a project delivery method whereby key parties responsible for the project's design, fabrication, and construction are united through a single legal agreement. This model provides greater cost certainty and facilitates quicker project completion 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

At the forefront of these initiatives is the recognition that the Indigenous community must be willing to participate in and support the initiatives outlined above. This will ensure that the project promotes Indigenous sovereignty and resurgence while avoiding the imposition of colonial ways of knowing in project delivery and design.



## 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, change rooms, 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.

## 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

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City of Stratford  
Sample Loan Costs  
At January 30, 2025

Purpose: to establish ranges of costs for various levels of debt for discussion purposes (Grand Trunk).

Interest rates fluctuate regularly. At this time, Canada's Prime Rate is 5.45%. Borrowing rates are typically higher than the Prime rate.

Assumed a maximum 30 year repayment (Typically, longer terms will not be an option)

Total costs for monthly vs annual payment options will differ a bit.

Serial Debenture Structure (vs Amortizing) used, as this results in less interest over the term, but higher total payments in the early years.

Principal Amounts remain the same over the term, while the interest component drops.

The City is governed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for Long-Term Debt Repayment Maximums

The City's maximum annual repayment limit is \$16 million.

The City's current annual repayments are approximately \$8 million, leaving annual room of a maximum of \$8 million

Total Principal	Annual Principal	Annual Interest	Annual Payment	Rate	Total Interest	Total to Repay	Approximate Increase to Tax Levy	Approximate Increase to Tax Levy @ 6% Interest Rate
\$ 1,850,000	\$ 61,667	\$ 92,500	\$ 154,167	5%	\$ 1,434,696	\$ 3,284,696	0.17%	0.19%
\$ 47,600,000	\$ 1,586,667	\$ 2,380,000	\$ 3,966,667	5%	\$ 36,914,343	\$ 84,514,343	4.41%	4.94%
						\$ -		
\$ 32,000,000	\$ 1,066,667	\$ 1,600,000	\$ 2,666,667	5%	\$ 24,816,365	\$ 56,816,365	2.96%	3.32%
\$ 60,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 5,000,000	5%	\$ 46,530,685	\$ 106,530,685.0	5.56%	6.22%
\$ 35,000,000	\$ 1,166,667	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 2,916,667	5%	\$ 27,142,899	\$ 62,142,899	3.24%	3.63%
\$ 72,000,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 3,600,000	\$ 6,000,000	5%	\$ 55,836,822	\$ 127,836,822	6.67%	7.47%




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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** February 24, 2025  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Kelly Nicholson-Yost, Manager of Human Resources  
**Report Number:** COU25-017  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Group Benefits Program Renewal 2025

**Objective:** To renew the Group Benefits Program for the City of Stratford.

**Background:** The Group Benefits Program for The Corporation of the City of Stratford is underwritten by Manulife Financial and is scheduled to renew on March 1, 2025. In conjunction with this renewal, a marketing of the Group Benefits Program was undertaken by Mosey & Mosey, our plan broker to ensure the City's costs remain competitive. In this regard, detailed specifications for the Program outlining coverage details, claims experience and premium costs were prepared and released to Manulife Financial (current insurer) and 11 other insurers with a request that they provide a proposal to underwrite the Program. Two insurers responded, Manulife Financial and Desjardins.

**Analysis:** Manulife Financial submitted a proposal in lieu of their normal renewal, and a proposal was received from Desjardins Insurance to underwrite the Group Benefits Program. The quote received from our current insurer, Manulife Financial, offers savings of approximately **\$271,000** per year, or **-8.8%** in comparison with the current costs. The quote from the other insurer, Desjardins Insurance, only offers ongoing costs very marginally more competitive than the quote received from Manulife Financial (approximately 1% additional savings compared to Manulife Financials' quoted costs).

In addition to the premium savings, Manulife Financial has offered a **\$60,000** expense credit for the first year; this would be applied as a \$5,000 credit each month commencing with the March 2025 billing statement.

In this regard, there is no financial advantage to be secured by a transfer of the Group Benefits Program to Desjardins Insurance, especially as the limited premium savings would be offset by the "soft costs" associated with a change in insurers.

In addition to offering competitive premium costs, Manulife Financial has provided the most competitive extended premium rate guarantees and renewal rate adjustment caps (March 1, 2025 – March 1, 2028 for Life/LTD and March 1, 2025 – March 1, 2027 for Health & Dental).

Insurer	Annual Premium	Variance to Current Cost	Variance to Manulife Quote
Current Cost	\$3,085,391		
Manulife Quote	\$2,814,398	(270,993) -8.8%	
Desjardins Quote	\$2,781,696	(303,695) -9.8%	(32,7020) -1.2%

Manulife Financial's quote results in annual savings of approximately **\$271,000 or 8.8%** in comparison with the Current Cost. Desjardins Insurance's quote, when compared with Manulife Financial's quoted cost, only offers additional savings of **\$32,700 or 1.2%**.

In addition to the premium savings, Manulife Financial has offered a **\$60,000** expense credit for the first year; this would be applied as a \$5,000 credit each month commencing with the March 2025 billing statement.

**Financial Implications:**

**Financial impact to current year operating budget:**

Group Benefits are built into the current budget approved by Council on February 10, 2025. Based on this information, there will be a projected corporate surplus of \$271,000.

**Financial impact on future year operating budget:**

Group Benefits costs are built into the budget approved by Council annually. Estimates of potential increase or decrease are entered as a draft effect on the multi-year budget.

**Link to asset management plan and strategy:** N/A

**Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

**Intentionally Change to Support the Future**

This report aligns with this priority by improving efficiency and service standards through the provision of group benefits for employee's wellness, health & safety.

**Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

**Health and Happiness**

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

**Equity and Local Economy**

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

**Culture and Community**

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Council authorize retaining Manulife Financial as the Group Benefits provider for the City of Stratford.**

**AND THAT any surpluses relating to the savings be placed in the Human Resources Contingency Reserve.**

**Prepared by:** Kelly Nicholson-Yost, Manager of Human Resources

**Recommended by:** Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer



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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** February 24, 2025  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Mike Mousley, Manager of Transit  
**Report Number:** COU25-018  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Community Transportation – Partnership Agreements between the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, and Municipality of North Perth

**Objective:** To seek Council approval to enter into a transit agreement and a local partnership agreement (LPA) with the Town of St. Marys and the Municipality of North Perth to continue to financially support the continuation of the Community Transportation Pilot Project known locally as PC Connect, until December 31, 2025.

**Background:** PC Connect is an equal partnership with the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys and the Municipality of North Perth and presently have an LPA to support servicing three routes that service centres such as Stratford, London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Listowel, and St. Marys. This LPA amongst the three partners expires March 31, 2025.

The City continues to advocate for increased community transportation program funding but does not anticipate any further funding commitments from MTO.

Municipal investment in 2024 and through 2025 will be approximately \$200,000 for each of the three partners, that in combination with the remaining funding from the Province, will extend the program until the end of 2025.

Beyond 2025, discussions with all three partnered Councils will need to take place. Over the next several months, a plan for the future of the service requires to be discussed which will create additional financial budgetary challenges for all Municipalities going forward, especially if there is no funding component from the Province.

**Analysis:** This report includes information on monthly ridership numbers in 2024.

**Ridership to Date:**

**Financial Implications:**

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>Route A: Perth County North</b>	<b>Route 1: KW to Listowel</b>	<b>Route 2: KW to St. Marys</b>	<b>Route 3: London to Stratford</b>	<b>2024 TOTALS</b>	<b>2023 TOTALS</b>	<b>+/-</b>
<b>January 2024</b>	542	458	379	281	<b>1660</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>+696</b>
<b>February 2024</b>	641	462	426	299	<b>1828</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>+876</b>
<b>March 2024</b>	637	370	494	328	<b>1829</b>	<b>1470</b>	<b>+359</b>
<b>April 2024</b>	678	501	484	351	<b>1914</b>	<b>1291</b>	<b>+982</b>
<b>May 2024</b>	767	468	525	374	<b>2134</b>	<b>1464</b>	<b>+670</b>
<b>June 2024</b>	636	394	542	384	<b>1956</b>	<b>1723</b>	<b>+233</b>
<b>July 2024</b>	747	551	534	426	<b>2258</b>	<b>1785</b>	<b>+473</b>
<b>August 2024</b>	739	516	581	516	<b>2352</b>	<b>1831</b>	<b>+521</b>
<b>September 2024</b>	652	406	552	447	<b>2057</b>	<b>1886</b>	<b>+171</b>
<b>October 2024</b>	723	479	576	559	<b>2337</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>+323</b>
<b>November 2024</b>	636	490	501	561	<b>2188</b>	<b>1918</b>	<b>+270</b>
<b>December 2024</b>	636	453	343	373	<b>1805</b>	<b>1649</b>	<b>+156</b>

**Financial impact to current year operating budget:**

There is no impact to the current year operating budget.

**Financial impact on future year operating budget:**

To be determined.

**Alignment with Strategic Priorities:****Enhance our Infrastructure**

Improving ways to get around, to and from Stratford by public transit, active transportation, and private vehicle.

**Work Together For Greater Impact**

Partnering with the community and strengthening Stratford's economy by developing, attracting, and retaining a diversity of businesses and talent. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

**Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

**Health and Happiness**

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

**Travel and Transport**

Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford approve the entering into of a further Local Partnership Agreement with the Town of St. Marys and the Municipality of North Perth for the Intercommunity Transportation Project (PC Connect) to December 31, 2025;**

**THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the further Local Partnership Agreement;**

**AND THAT city staff be authorized to prepare a plan for Council's consideration regarding the future of PC Connect.**

**Prepared by:** Michael Mousley, Manager of Transit  
**Recommended by:** Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services  
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer






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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** February 24, 2025  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Mike Mousley, Manager of Transit  
**Report Number:** COU25-016  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Community Transportation Pilot Project – Service Agreement Extension

**Objective:** To enter into a Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago for the delivery of the Intercity Community Transportation Pilot Project until December 31, 2025.

**Background:**

Community Transportation Program – PC Connect

In 2018, the City of Stratford received \$1.45 million in Community Transportation Grant funding to operate three intercity bus routes. The program was initially intended to be a five-year pilot program, that was substantially delayed by the 2018 provincial election and the 2020 outbreak of COVID-19, which reduced the initial program duration to two and a half years.

So, in summer 2021, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) announced a two-year pilot program extension with additional funding. Stratford received an additional \$611,936.91 to continue PC Connect until March 31, 2025.

Stratford operates three intercity routes of the PC Connect service, connecting North Perth with Kitchener-Waterloo on Route 1; and Stratford and St. Marys to Kitchener-Waterloo and London on Routes 2 and 3. The service is an equal partnership with North Perth and St. Marys that provides each partner with equal service levels and shared expenses.

Stratford, St. Marys and North Perth continue to provide in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions are related to key messaging, marketing, route design, and advocacy. The Service operates under one unified PC Connect brand, as the regional service areas, objectives, and interests overlap.

The partnership helps to share common project costs and ensure that the service remains a regional initiative, designed to benefit all communities in the region.

The City awarded and contracted Voyago to provide the service through an RFP process in 2020. Each of the three PC Connect routes operate eight hours per day, six days a week from Monday to Saturday, representing 140 total weekly service hours in the communities.

#### Service Extension 31 March 2025 to 31 December 2025

The current term of the grant-funded service will end on March 31, 2025 but based on discussions with the partners, the intent is to carry the service to December 31, 2025.

**Analysis:** Municipal contributions from the 3 partners have been put into reserves over 2024 and contributions will continue throughout 2025.

Once the Provincial funding is exhausted around mid-2025, municipal reserves will be used to fund the remaining service until the end of 2025. Based on approximate figures, each of the three partners will have contributed just over \$200,000.00 for 2025.

In reviewing the draft contract submitted by Voyago, their proposed rate has increased by 2% CPI, as follows:

#### **Voyago Hourly/Daily/Annual Rates**

<b>Rate</b>	<b>1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025</b>	<b>March 31, 2025 to December 31, 2025</b>
Hourly Rate	\$95.62	\$97.54
Daily Cost (3 Routes)	\$2294.88	\$2340.96
Total Annual cost (3 Routes)	\$693,053.00	\$505,647.36
Annual Cost Recovery	(2024) \$150,732.96	Projected \$120,000.00

Stratford, North Perth and St. Marys will be having further discussions in 2025 about the future of the Intercity Community Transportation Project and will bring recommendations forward for the respective Councils' consideration.

#### **Financial Implications:**

##### **Financial impact to current year operating budget:**

There is no impact to the current year operation budget, as the City's contribution has been included in the 2025 budget.

**Financial impact on future year operating budget:**

To be determined.

If one or more partners choose not to continue with the project due to budgetary restraints in 2026 and no additional funding announced by the Province, discussions with the 3 partnering Councils will need to take place to determine what the future of the service might look like (perhaps a reduced service or no service at all).

**Alignment with Strategic Priorities:****Enhance our Infrastructure**

Improving ways to get around, to and from Stratford by public transit, active transportation, and private vehicle.

**Work Together For Greater Impact**

Strengthening Stratford's economy by developing, attracting, and retaining a diversity of businesses and talent.

**Alignment with One Planet Principles:****Travel and Transport**

Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT The Corporation of the City of Stratford enter into a Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago until December 31, 2025;**

**THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago for the Community Transportation Project;**

**AND THAT the City and partners commence investigation of service delivery for 2026 and beyond with options to be presented to Council later in 2025.**

**Prepared by:** Michael Mousley, Transit Manager  
**Recommended by:** Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services  
 Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer

## Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Region

### Pre-Consultation Notice to Policy Implementers

**Subject: Source Protection Plan Pre-Consultation, Section 34 Updates**  
**Deadline for Comments: February 4, 2025**  
**Send comments to email: [welkerj@thamesriver.on.ca](mailto:welkerj@thamesriver.on.ca)**

You are being provided this notice and information because your ministry or municipality may be affected by the proposed updates of water quality Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs) and/or Intake Protection Zones (IPZs) and/or are responsible for the implementation of source protection plan (plan) policies.

On December 3, 2021 the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks released an update to the 2021 Director Technical Rules under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*. As a result the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Authority conducted a comprehensive review of the current policies in the Source Protection Plan Volume III. This review led to several proposed policies changes along with proposed new ones to align with the updated rules. These could affect your ministry or municipality.

These proposed updates are being provided as part of the pre-consultation process required by Regulation 287/07 of the Act, where the Source Protection Authority and Committee must consult with bodies responsible for the implementation of Source Protection Plan policies, before a public consultation period. The regulation requires pre-consultation when there are changes in the vulnerable area where policies apply, even if the policy text remains unchanged from the original plan approved by the Minister.

Ontario's Clean Water Act, 2006 provides for a community initiative where Municipalities, residents, business owners, provincial agencies, conservation authorities and others work together to protect existing and future municipal drinking water sources. Under the Act, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority together form the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Region that supports the multi-stakeholder Committee.

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Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority  
100 Thames Street, Chatham, Ontario,  
N7L 2Y8

phone 519-354-7310, fax 519-352-3435

St. Clair Region Conservation Authority  
205 Mill Pond Cres., Strathroy, Ontario,  
N7G 3P9

phone 519-245-3710, fax. 519-245-3348

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority  
1424 Clarke Road, London, ON  
N5V 5B9

phone 519-451-2800, fax 519-451-1188

See further below for a summary of the proposed updates. Comments received as part of the pre-consultation process will be reviewed by the Source Protection Region staff and the Committee, and possible changes made to the assessment reports and source protection plan policies prior to public consultation.

Tracked-changes versions of the proposed updated Source Protection Plan, Explanatory Document, Assessment Reports, maps and Change Log are available at: <https://www.sourcewaterprotection.on.ca/consultation/> These documents are for pre-consultation only and not for public sharing.

The key proposed updates include:

- Comply with mandatory amendments made to the Technical Rules 2021 and Tables of Drinking Water Threats
- Proposed new and amended policies that could affect municipalities as implementers of the policies

For further information on the Clean Water Act, 2006 please visit: [www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c22](http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c22)

For further information on the Thames-Sydenham Drinking Water Source Protection Region, please visit: [www.sourcewaterprotection.on.ca](http://www.sourcewaterprotection.on.ca)

Source Protection Region staff are available for virtual meetings during the pre-consultation process if necessary. Should questions arise, please contact Julie Welker, Source Protection Coordinator by email at [welkerj@thamesriver.on.ca](mailto:welkerj@thamesriver.on.ca).

## Municipal Endorsement and Public Consultation

As required by s.34 (3) of the Clean Water Act, 2006, the Thames River SPA must obtain municipal council resolutions endorsing the plan amendments, from affected municipalities, prior to formal public consultation.

The Thames River SPA are requesting resolutions from the councils of **LAWSS, Chatham-Kent, Thames Centre, St. Marys, Stratford, West Perth and Perth East..** These municipalities are requested to each provide resolutions to support amendments made to the plan.

All resolutions can be sent to Julie Welker at the address.

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Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority  
100 Thames Street, Chatham, Ontario,  
N7L 2Y8

phone 519-354-7310, fax 519-352-3435

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N5V 5B9

phone 519-451-2800, fax 519-451-1188

Public consultation on the draft updated plan will follow this pre-consultation period and council resolutions. Public consultation is scheduled to start late winter.

Following the public consultation period, any received public comments will be considered by Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Committee at their March, 2025 meeting Thames River SPA staff, respectively. The draft updated plans will be revised as necessary. The respective revised draft updated plans will then be released for submission to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for their review and approval.

Sincerely,



Julie Welker  
Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Coordinator




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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** February 24, 2025  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Audrey Pascual, Deputy Clerk  
**Report Number:** COU25-020  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Appointment to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors

**Objective:** To consider the appointment of one individual to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Board of Directors.

**Background:** The SEEDCo./investStratford is managed by a Board of twelve (12) Directors. Pursuant to By-law No. 1 of the Corporation, Directors are comprised of persons in the following classes:

- The Mayor of the City of Stratford (ex officio)
- Two (2) members of Stratford City Council, appointed among its members
- The Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Stratford (ex officio)
- Eight (8) nominee Directors appointed by City Council, from the following categories:
  - a. one member of the public
  - b. one member from the University of Waterloo or Festival Hydro Services Inc.
  - c. six (6) members with one to be appointed from local small businesses in the following sectors: digital/creative, economy, agriculture, manufacturing, technology and banking/financial.

**Analysis:** Following the resignation of Michael Adams, a vacancy for the Digital Media/Creative Economy sector representative is to be filled.

The application of Sarah Hamza is listed for consideration.

Training is provided by SEEDCo./investStratford to newly appointed members.

**Financial Implications:** There are no financial implications to be reported as a result of this report.

**Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

**Not applicable:** This report does not directly relate to one of Council’s Strategic Priorities.

**Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

**Not applicable:** This report does not directly relate to one of the One Planet Principles.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Sarah Hamza, representing the Digital Media/Creative Economy sector, be appointed to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors for the remainder of the three-year term to June 2027 or until a successor is appointed by Council.**

**Prepared by:** Audrey Pascual, Deputy Clerk  
**Recommended by:** Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer





CN Police North America  
 Service de Police des CN Nord-Ouest du Nord

**Corporate Headquarters**  
**Siège Social Corporatif**  
 935 de La Gauchetière St. W  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor/étage  
 Montreal, Quebec  
 H3B 2M9, Canada

**Regional Headquarters**  
**Siège Social Regional**  
 17641 South Ashland Ave  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor/étage  
 Homewood, Illinois  
 60430, United States

**DIVISIONS:**

**Pacific/Pacifique**  
 11717 – 138th Street  
 Surrey, British Columbia  
 V3R 6T5, Canada

**Mountain/Montagne**  
 10229 – 127th Avenue  
 Edmonton, Alberta  
 T5E 0B9, Canada

**Prairie**  
 821 Lagimodiere Blvd  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba  
 R2J 0T8, Canada

**Great Lakes/Grands Lacs**  
 1 Administration Road  
 Vaughan, Ontario  
 L4K 1B9, Canada

**Champlain**  
 4500 Hickmore Street  
 Montreal, Quebec  
 H4T 1K2, Canada

**North/Nord**  
 700 Pershing Avenue  
 Pontiac, Michigan  
 48340, United States

**Central/Centrale**  
 15840 West Avenue  
 Harvey, Illinois  
 60426, United States

**South/Sud**  
 2921 Old Horn Lake Road  
 Memphis, Tennessee  
 38109, United States

**CN Emergency Communication**  
**Centre / Centre de**  
**Communication D'urgence du CN**

1-800-465-9239 (option 3)



www.cn.ca

Chief of Police – North America  
 Chef de la police – Amérique du Nord  
**CN**  
 935 de La Gauchetière Street West/Ouest  
 Montréal, Québec, H3B 2M9  
 Canada  
 T 514-399-6220

January 22, 2025

Dear Mayor Martin Ritsma,

On behalf of CN and Operation Lifesaver Canada (OL Canada), we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to you and your community for officially proclaiming Rail Safety Week in 2024 and recognizing its significance.

We are pleased to enclose a **Rail Safety Ambassador Certificate** to acknowledge your commitment. We hope that you will display it proudly!

At CN, safety is a core value and it is only by working together that we will be able to achieve our ambition of eliminating incidents and accidents in the communities across North America where we live, work, and play.

Working with OL Canada, which is also dedicated to getting to zero rail-related crossing and trespassing incidents, partners like you play a critical role in further enhancing rail safety in Canada.

We are truly grateful for your support and look forward to continuing our partnership into 2025 and beyond.

For additional information about rail safety in your community, please contact our Public Inquiry Line at 1-888-888-5909. For general rail safety information and resources, we welcome you to visit [cn.ca/railsafety](http://cn.ca/railsafety) or [operationlifesaver.ca](http://operationlifesaver.ca).

Wishing you a happy and safe New Year,

Janet Drysdale  
 CN Senior Vice-President and  
 Chief Stakeholder Relations Officer

Stephen Covey  
 CN Chief of Police and  
 Chief Security Officer

Chris Day  
 Operation Lifesaver  
 Interim National Director

Leading CN to be the safest and most secure railway in North America.

Faire du CN le chemin de fer le plus sûr et le plus sécuritaire en Amérique du Nord.

# RAIL SAFETY AMBASSADOR

THIS CERTIFICATE IS PRESENTED TO THE

# City of Stratford



*for outstanding leadership and support in promoting the importance of rail safety  
in your community. Congratulations for your commitment to rail safety!*

**Stephen Covey**  
Chief of Police and Chief Security Officer

January 22, 2025

Date



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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** January 29, 2025  
**To:** Infrastructure, Safety and Transportation Sub-committee  
**From:** Emily Skelding, Supervisor of Waste Management  
**Report Number:** ITS25-002  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Update on Recycling Services and Options for Non-Eligible Sources (NES) Starting January 2026

**Objective:** To seek Council direction on servicing blue box materials for non-eligible sources for the period of January 2026 to November 2026.

**Background:** In early 2019, Ontario's Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) announced a transition of the blue box program to full producer responsibility by 2026. Since May 1, 2024, the City has partnered with Circular Materials Ontario (CMO), a producer-led non-profit organization, to see the City through the transition phase ending December 31, 2025. During the transition phase, CMO has enabled the City to maintain its current contractor Canada Waste Management (CWM) and corresponding status quo services, while also covering the City's costs for providing legislated residential recycling services.

Starting January 1, 2026, the City of Stratford is no longer responsible for delivering the residential blue box program and the responsibility will entirely shift to producers in Ontario. This represents a significant financial benefit to the municipality and taxpayers, as it will no longer be responsible for the cost of residential recycling. Under the new regulations, the City can no longer determine its own level of recycling service. Without the initiation of new programs, this will result in reduced service in some areas.

The most significant impact will be on who does and does not qualify to receive service from CMO under the new regulations. Producers in Ontario through CMO will be providing recycling services to residents and other eligible sources such as elementary schools, public nursing homes, and multi-residential buildings. Non-eligible Sources (NES) are commercial, industrial or community properties that are not eligible for blue box services under the producer responsibility legislation. NES include small businesses, churches, private nursing homes, municipal buildings, and post-secondary institutions.

Council must determine whether the City will continue to provide blue box services for NES and, if so, establish the framework for these services moving forward. This report addresses these considerations with the additional intent of securing a contractor to bridge service delivery until November 2026.

**Analysis:** Providing recycling services for NES such as small businesses, would optimize recycling and diversion targets, which reduces landfill waste, conserves resources, and supports an overall healthier environment. Prior to this transition, the net costs for recycling services, including the NES, was over \$600,000 per year. If the City were to support recycling services for NES directly, it would be much lower than historical cost.

Currently, there are two main options for Council consideration: Continue supporting collection for NES or do not offer support for collection services to NES.

### **Option 1: Supporting Recycling Collection Services to NES**

To continue supporting recycling services for NES, Staff recommend maintaining the current approach until the waste collection contract expires in November 2026. Leading up to this report, Staff have had discussions with the current contractor to obtain proposed service costs for this extension.

The estimated cost is \$355,000 for servicing NES for the 10-month period in 2026. This includes contractual adjustments resulting from the reduction in scope of the contract, monthly collection fees and recovery of a small amount of revenue from sale of recycling commodities.

When the broader Waste Collection contract is issued for 2026–2033, the RFP can include an option to price collection from these NES. The actual activity and cost data can be analyzed to determine if providing Blue Box services for NES is the desired service level during the next contract period. Staff expect net cost for the program to be in the range of \$200,000 annually.

If Council would like to consider full or partial cost-recovery from these NES, or a move to a depot style system located at the landfill, these discussions should occur before the reissuance of the Waste Collection RFP that will be early-mid 2026.

### **Option 2: Stop Supporting Collection Services to NES**

In this case, the NES (small businesses, churches, private nursing homes, municipal buildings, and post-secondary institutions) would be responsible for the collection and processing of their own blue box materials.

A penalty would apply to break the 2019-2026 waste collection contract with the current collection contractor estimated at \$182,800. In this scenario, there is no other option than to break the contract due to the legislated changes.

## **Estimated Net Costs for Non-Eligible Blue Box Services For the Period of January-November 2026:**

Option 1 - Continued Service for 10-Months <sup>1</sup>	\$314,000
Option 2 - No Service	\$182,800

1. Revenue recoveries not included, would be in the range of \$6,000 to \$25,000.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommend that Council adopt Option 1: Continued Service, as it supports local small businesses with current service levels. The extension of the service/change in scope of the current contract allows the City to bridge services between the start of producer responsibility program to the start of the City's new waste collection contract beginning November 2026. Option 1 aligns with One Planet principals regarding zero waste, as it supports the diversion of materials from the landfill which extends the useful life of the landfill and defers post-closure requirements.

### **Financial impact to current year operating budget:**

Proceeding as recommended does not impact the 2025 budget. The 2025 budget includes \$780,000 in revenue from CMO to fully offset the costs of Blue Box-related collections, recycling operations at the City depot, and promotion and educational materials.

### **Financial impact on future year operating budget:**

There will be an increase in the 2026 operating budget for either option, as neither the termination penalty, nor the continued service costs for NES in 2026 and beyond are included in the multi-year budgets.

### **Alignment with Strategic Priorities**

#### **Enhance our Infrastructure**

This report aligns with this priority as it may contribute to increased diversion, that subsequently prolongs the useful life of the City's landfill.

### **Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

#### **Zero Waste**

Reducing consumption, reusing, and recycling to achieve zero waste and zero pollution.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Council approve the Change in Scope to Contract T2019-18 Waste Collections Contract with Canada Waste Management to provide Recycling Services to Non-eligible Sources (NES) for the period from January 1, 2026, to October 31, 2026, for a cost of up to \$355,000, including HST.**

**Prepared by:** Emily Skelding, Supervisor of Waste Management  
**Recommended by:** Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure Services  
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer



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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** January 29, 2025  
**To:** Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Sub-committee  
**From:** Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer  
**Report Number:** ITS25-003  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) Pilot Project

**Objective:** To present information on Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) and seek authorization to negotiate terms and enter into an agreement with Global Traffic Group as the ASE service provider and corresponding municipal processing centre partner for a 24-month pilot program.

**Background:** A key objective of the 2023 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is to improve safety for all road users, particularly for vulnerable road users. Speeding is a constant theme in discussions about road safety, especially in urban areas, near schools, parks, and pedestrian crossings. While the TMP outlines various strategies to reduce traffic speeds and improve road safety, these measures are most effective when accompanied by consistent and visible enforcement.

Automated speed enforcement has emerged as a valuable tool in managing traffic safety. With technology, automated systems help ensure consistent, objective, and efficient enforcement of speed limits, deterring speeding behaviors and reducing the burden on law enforcement.

### *What is Automated Speed Enforcement?*

Automated speed enforcement programs use automated cameras and other technologies to detect speeding vehicles and automatically issue tickets to the registered owners of those vehicles. ASE is designed to work in tandem with other speed control and safety strategies, including engineering measures (physical changes), education initiatives, municipal and police enforcement. The objective when adopting an ASE Program is to reduce the number of traffic accidents resulting from speeding, assist in creating a culture of safer driving by increasing compliance with speed limits, and encourage long-term behavioral changes in drivers.

In May 2017, the Province of Ontario passed Bill 65, the Safer School Zones Act. This bill included provisions to facilitate the municipal adoption of ASE technology on roads with a speed limit under 80 km/h in school and community safety zones.

Under the Highway Traffic Act in Ontario, school and community safety zones are defined as a designated area where additional traffic safety measures are applied to protect vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, and children. Community safety zones occur on sections of roadway where public safety is of special concern. These zones are typically located in areas with high foot traffic, such as near schools, parks, hospitals, or residential neighbourhoods. School zones occur within 150 meters of the entrance to or exit from a school. The City currently does not have any by-law designated school or community safety zones and the Traffic By-law would need to be updated to implement an ASE program.

### *How does ASE Work?*

The ASE system takes pictures of vehicles exceeding a set speed beyond the designated speed limit. The speed threshold that triggers a fine that would be established by the Municipality. After the ASE system captures an image of the vehicle exceeding the speed limit, the image is temporarily stored and sent to a processing centre. The image is reviewed by a Provincial Offense Officer before a ticket is mailed to the registered plate owners.

The processing centre manages the data collected by the ASE camera system, and processes violations captured. Joint processing centres exist that allow for the processing for more than one municipality. The municipality that hosts a joint processing centre requires agreements with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), Ministry of Attorney General (MAG), and confirmation from the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC) that a City's program complies with the province's requirements to protect personal information. Several Ontario municipalities have established processing centres and are equipped to support other municipalities through municipal agreements. Partnering with a municipality that already operates a processing centre is an efficient way to launch an ASE program while minimizing resource demands.

**Analysis:** Operating costs for such programs within smaller municipalities remain high despite revenue offset opportunities. Staff have been exploring several options and technologies and have received a proposal from one industry-leading service provider for a full turn-key solution with no up-front financial commitment from the City. Other providers' programs include options that range from 'buy-ins' to monthly rental fees and staff time for program creation. The pilot program being proposed in this report is turn-key in the context that there is no financial investment required, and nominal staff involvement.

In discussion with other municipalities, Global Traffic Group was recommended to jumpstart a program for the City of Stratford. This service provider is a Canadian-owned



and operated company that has operated for over two decades and has provided similar services to twenty-six municipalities across Canada.

The proposal provides a full turn-key solution for managing an ASE program, covering the supply of all necessary equipment, system maintenance, and administrative tasks for a 24-month pilot project (excluding setup time to get the program operational). The pilot program would run in 2025 and extend into 2027.

The process would include an initial evaluation in conjunction with Stratford Police Services (SPS) and City staff to determine which zones ASE can effect change. The service provider and City staff would decide on the number of zones, number of cameras, operating hours and commencement date. The service provider would follow staff directions and comply with provincial legislation, regulations and guidelines.

ASE location sites are data-driven and supported by proprietary software, which tracks traffic counts, vehicle speeds, and analytics. The system's data generates Risk Analysis Reports in easy-to-read formats that can be customized for internal and public display. The reports showcase the number of vehicles driving at speeds that have resulted in a traffic violation ticket.

The service provider is proposing deployment of an ultra-portable automated speed camera system that is remote, battery-operated, about one cubic foot in size weighing 15 lbs., and that can be operated from various types of roadside boxes or temporarily mounted on an existing post or pole. The system is capable of tracking multiple vehicles and multiple lanes. The collected data is stored securely on servers based in Canada.

During the two-year pilot project, all upfront costs associated with the implementation of the ASE program including the use of supplied Provincial Offences Officer, Screening Officer and Hearing Officer, would be fully covered by the service provider on negotiated revenue split. There is no initial capital or 'buy-in' costs with this service provider.

The following requirements/steps would need to be addressed/implemented for the ASE pilot project to commence in 2025:

1. Enter a contract with the service provider.
2. Establish School and Community Safety Zones by providing recommendations and updating the City Traffic and Parking By-law through Council approval.
3. Enter into an agreement with a municipal partner to operate an ASE pilot program through their joint processing centre that would use a City-based Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) by-law, and provide the services of their Provincial Offence Officers (PPOs), Screening and Hearing Officers.
4. Enter into an agreement with the Ministry of Transportation to access the licence plate registered ownership information.
5. Enter into an agreement with the Ministry of Attorney General to start an ASE program.

The service provider would support the enforcement program with maintenance and repair of hardware and upgrading software. It would also provide educational content in partnership with the City's communication team to support and promote the program, including FAQs and interactive map of ASE locations, and safety tips, and traffic data in all enforcement locations. The municipality which hosts the joint processing centre, would provide a call centre to field questions/inquiries, including directing inquiries to the province's ASE guidelines, penalty payments, etc.).

### *Future of Stratford Administrative Monetary Penalties*

In this turnkey solution, the foundational requirement for implementing Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) is the establishment of an Administrative Monetary Penalties (AMPs) by-law. This by-law is a critical component to enable enforcement. Staff acknowledge that several other services, such as parking enforcement, red light cameras, and short-term accommodation licensing compliance, are also working towards using AMPs for issuing fines.

To advance the ASE initiative, it is recommended that an external service provider be engaged during the pilot period. This approach would allow most operational tasks to be managed externally, enabling staff to familiarize themselves with the service prior to fully committing internal resources. Following the two-year pilot period, staff would conduct a comprehensive analysis to evaluate the program's efficacy and determine whether it is feasible for internal resources to manage the service going forward.

*Procurement:* The City's procurement policy is silent for agreements or contracts that have a net revenue impact. In consultation with the Director of Corporate Services/ Treasurer, the full analysis around costs versus revenues would form part of the post-pilot program period for Council consideration before moving forward.

*Recommendation:* An automated speed enforcement program offers numerous benefits in improving road safety and encouraging long-term behaviour changes in drivers. Staff recommend authorizing the Director of Infrastructure Services to negotiate terms and enter into an agreement with Global Traffic Group as the ASE service provider and corresponding partnering municipal process centre for a 2-year trial period.

### **Financial Implications:**

#### **Financial impact to current year operating budget:**

There are no costs associated with the implementation of a pilot ASE program. Any financial impact would be revenues that have not been included in the 2025 draft budget.

#### **Financial impact on future year operating budget:**

An ASE pilot program has net revenue potential based on the programs design and the terms of the revenue-sharing agreement with the service provider. This would be assessed after some experience with the pilot program and the current provider.

## **Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

### **Enhance our Infrastructure**

This report supports the priority of improving road user safety, a key objective outlined in the Transportation Master Plan.

## **Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

### **Health and Happiness**

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

### **Travel and Transport**

Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT the Report titled, "Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) Pilot Project" (ITS25-003) , be received;**

**THAT Council authorize Staff to negotiate and finalize the terms and enter into an agreement with Global Traffic Group as the ASE service provider and the corresponding partnering processing centre municipality for a 24-month pilot program;**

**THAT Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the finalized agreement with Global Traffic Group as the ASE service provider and the corresponding partnering processing centre municipality for a 24-month pilot program;**

**THAT outcomes from the pilot will be reported to Council;**

**AND THAT any subsequent agreement will be subject to Council approval and executed by the Mayor and Clerk.**

**Prepared by:** Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer

**Recommended by:** Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure Services

Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer




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## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** January 29, 2025  
**To:** Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Sub-committee  
**From:** Nick Sheldon, Project Manager  
**Report Number:** ITS25-001  
**Attachments:** None

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**Title:** Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2 – Open House and Recommendations

**Objective:** To present comments and concerns from the Open House, and to obtain Council approval to proceed with the Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2 Project.

**Background: Background:** Albert Street from Front Street to King Street (Phase 2) was approved for reconstruction during the 2024 capital budget process. This project will replace underground infrastructure, renew the roadway and sidewalks, and extend the eastbound bicycle boulevard route.

The specific improvements scheduled for this project are:

- Upgrade the existing storm sewer, sanitary sewer and watermains.
- Redirect storm flows to the Queen Street Trunk Storm Sewer as part of our ongoing work to create future capacity in the existing trunk storm system through the downtown core.
- Replace existing sanitary, storm and water services to the property line.
- Reconstruct the road with a total width of 6.7m, upgrading the asphalt roadway, curb and gutter, and sidewalks.
- Install traffic calming measures, including mid-block bump-outs and curb extensions at intersections, to extend the eastbound bicycle boulevard and promote active transportation. This is a recommended priority project in the update to the Master Transportation Plan.
- Remove trees in poor health or conflict with infrastructure renewal.
- Street tree planting.

The eighty-three properties abutting the project limits are a zoned Residential (R2 & R5) under the City Zoning By-law.

December 20, 2024, an invitation to attend the virtual open house was delivered to all properties within the project limits. The property owners and tenants were requested to visit the Engage Stratford page and review a presentation, project plans, anticipated construction schedule, and complete a Resident/Owner Questionnaire prior to January 3, 2025. An option to discuss the project and complete the questionnaire in-person was also provided.

**Analysis:** During the Open House period, the City of Stratford received feedback through various channels, including 18 completed resident questionnaires and direct communication with 4 residents via calls, virtual meetings, or in-person discussions. Additionally, the project page on the Engage Stratford webpage recorded 112 visits, reflecting a strong level of public interest.

The feedback received was a mix of positive and constructive. The primary concerns expressed by residents included:

- Objections to the proposed traffic calming measures and a preference for separated bicycle lanes;
- Requests for additional four-way stop-controlled intersections to deter cut-through traffic; and
- Questions regarding construction logistics and maintaining access to homes during the construction phase.

Conversely, positive feedback expressed by residents included:

- Support for the proposed traffic calming features;
- Support for the planned infrastructure renewal; and
- Appreciation for the quality of the project information provided.

Carried over funding consists of \$4,100,000 for road, storm, sanitary and water components. The estimated project funding and source is as follows:

Wastewater Reserve Fund	\$	700,000	R-R11-WWTR
Water Reserve Fund	\$	660,000	R-R11-WATR
Storm Reserve Fund	\$	1,000,000	R-R11-STRM
Provincial Grants	\$	1,740,000	R-R11-OCIF
Total Funding	\$	4,100,00	

If Council authorizes proceeding with the project, a tender will be issued and return to Council for approval and/or further direction. Any variances from the approved amounts and sources noted would also be identified.

### **Financial Implications:**

#### **Financial impact to current year operating budget:**

The funding for this project is currently in received grants and existing reserve funds. This project, as it was started in 2024, was not identified in the 2025 capital budget as a carried over item but funds for this project are still reserved.

#### **Financial impact on future year operating budget:**

Reconstruction of linear assets often has the effect of reduced maintenance costs in the earlier years following construction. Annual upkeep for winter and summer maintenance is expected to be consistent with previous years.

#### **Link to asset management plan and strategy:**

This project would result in a replacement of the current assets in the City's asset inventory. The new assets would be added to the asset management plan, and the old assets removed. New asset replacements are planned for based on estimated useful life. The adjustment to the asset management plan would impact future capital planning forecasts and funding strategies would be updated accordingly.

### **Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

#### **Enhance our Infrastructure**

This report aligns with this priority as the Albert Street Phase 2 Reconstruction project upgrades roadways, watermains, and sewers to a modern standard to address the present and future needs of the community.

### **Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

#### **Health and Happiness**

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

#### **Equity and Local Economy**

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

#### **Travel and Transport**

Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT Council receive the report titled, "Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2 – Open House and Recommendations" (ITS25-001);**

**THAT Council approve the design as presented at the Public Open House on Engage Stratford;**

**AND THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with construction tendering.**

**Prepared by:** Nick Sheldon, Project Manager

**Recommended by:** Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure Services  
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer



## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Date:** January 30, 2025  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Kelton Frey, By-law Enforcement Officer, Connor Occleston –  
 Deputy Chief Building Official  
**Report Number:** PLA25-001  
**Attachments:** None

**Title:** Proposed Exemption from Sign By-law #159-2004 for the Canadian Dairy Expo

**Objective:** To consider an exemption to the City of Stratford's Sign By-law #159-2004 for various types of signs and sign locations throughout the City, and for various types of signs on City property at 353 McCarthy Rd W (Rotary Complex), for the Canadian Dairy Expo (CDX).

**Background:** The applicant is again hosting the annual Canadian Dairy Expo at the Stratford Rotary Complex in April 2025. The requested signs located throughout the City will be installed on or after March 27, 2025 with a removal date of April 7, 2025.

CDX promotes its event with signage posted across the City and requires relief from the City's Sign By-law. This year's request is similar to last years' approval where, at the February 26, 2024 Regular Council meeting, Council adopted the following resolution for Report Number COU24-019:

**THAT the Canadian Dairy Expo Sign Variance Application to Sign By-law #159-2004 be approved as follows:**

- **The nine (9) temporary sidewalk signs and one (1) cow statue be permitted for the temporary period of March 20, 2024 to April 10, 2024, on City property at the following locations:**
  - **Mornington Street at the City's northerly limits;**
  - **McCarthy Road West at Mornington Street (2 signs);**
  - **McCarthy Road East at Romeo Street;**
  - **Ontario Street at the City's easterly limits (2 signs);**
  - **Huron Street at the City's westerly limits;**
  - **Downie Street (Road 112) at the City's southerly limits;**



- **Erie Street at Line 32; and**
  - **Northeast corner of McCarthy Road West and Mornington Avenue (Cow Statue).**
- **The two (2) banner signs, one (1) cow statue and five (5) directional signs be permitted for the temporary period of April 1, 2024 to April 5, 2024 on the City's Rotary Complex property (353 McCarthy Road West).**

For 2025, the applicant is requesting the same request as per previous years', being that nine (9) sidewalk signs and one (1) cow statue be placed on City-owned property as illustrated in the CDX Sign Map below, which is described as follows:

- Mornington Street at the City's Northerly limits
- McCarthy Rd West at Mornington Street (2 Signs)
- McCarthy Rd East at Romeo Street
- Ontario Street at the City's Easterly limits (2 Signs)
- Huron Street at the City's Westerly limits
- Downie St (Road 112) at the City's Southerly limits
- Erie St at Line 29
- Northeast Corner of McCarthy Rd W and Mornington Ave (Cow Statue Location)



## Stratford Rotary Complex sign Map



- Pride seeds banners
- Cow
- Entrance 1/2 sandwich board
- Junior farmers parking sandwich board
- John Deere Welcome banner

The CDX event has been hosted annually within the City of Stratford and has previously had similar signage installed. In 2020, amendments to the City's Sign By-law provided clarity on the types of signage permitted for events, as well as provisions for sign variances. This will be the third event being held under these new provisions.

**Analysis:** The applicant is seeking the necessary variances from the Sign By-law that will allow for the temporary establishment of signage and promotional “cow” structures. Staff are of the understanding that similar signage has been used in previous years for this annual event with no prior issue.

Given that the proposal is for a limited time frame, Staff have no objection to the request. In general, the variances requested seek to permit the establishment of temporary signage as has been done similarly in previous years by the event applicant.

Lastly, Staff have reviewed the locations from a safety/hazard perspective and generally see no concerns. If any of the signage is deemed to potentially cause a safety/hazard, Section 23.0 b) provides that the Chief Building Official or designate may immediately pull down or remove any sign. Such removal is to be at the expense of the owner or the occupant, and the expense therefore may be collected in like manner as municipal taxes.

### **Financial Implications:**

#### **Not applicable:**

There will be no financial implications should the staff recommendation be approved. The required fees for Sign Permits and Sign Variances have been submitted in accordance with Schedule “A” to the Sign By-law.

### **Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

#### **Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships**

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

#### **Developing our Resources**

Optimizing Stratford’s physical assets and digital resources. Planning a sustainable future for Stratford’s resources and environment.

#### **Widening our Economic Opportunities**

Strengthening Stratford’s economy by developing, attracting and retaining a diversity of businesses and talent.

### **Alignment with One Planet Principles:**

#### **Equity and Local Economy**

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

**Staff Recommendation: THAT the Canadian Dairy Expo Sign Variance Application to Sign By-law #159-2004 be approved as follows:**

- **The nine (9) temporary sidewalk signs and one (1) cow statue be permitted for the temporary period of March 28, 2025 to April 7, 2025, on City property at the following locations:**
  - **Mornington Street at the City's northerly limits;**
  - **McCarthy Road West at Mornington Street (2 signs);**
  - **McCarthy Road East at Romeo Street;**
  - **Ontario Street at the City's easterly limits (2 signs);**
  - **Huron Street at the City's westerly limits;**
  - **Downie Street (Road 112) at the City's southerly limits;**
  - **Erie Street at Line 32; and**
  - **Northeast corner of McCarthy Road West and Mornington Avenue (Cow Statue).**
  
- **The two (2) banner signs, one (1) cow statue and five (5) directional signs be permitted for the temporary period of April 1, 2025 to April 4, 2025 on the City's Rotary Complex property (353 McCarthy Road West).**

**Prepared by:**

Kelton Frey, By-law Enforcement Officer  
Connor Occeston, Deputy Chief Building Official

**Recommended by:**

Adam Betteridge, Director of Building and Planning Services  
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer



**BY-LAW NUMBER XXX-2025  
OF  
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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BEING a By-law to authorize the entering into and execution of an Outreach Worker Service Agreement / Purchase of Service Agreement with Optimism Place Women's Shelter and Support Services for the provision of services defined in the Agreement.

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**WHEREAS** Section 8.(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25* as amended, ("the Municipal Act, 2001") provides that the powers of a municipality under this or any other Act, shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on the municipality to enable the municipality to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance the municipality's ability to respond to municipal issues;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 9 of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 10(1) of the Municipal Act 2001, provides that a single-tier municipality may provide any service or thing that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for the public;

**AND WHEREAS** The Corporation of the City of Stratford operating as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager ("the CMSM") for The Corporation of the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys and County of Perth established the Intensive Case Management program (the "Program") with funding provided by the Province of Ontario through the Homelessness Prevention Plan as well as the Ontario Works program;

**AND WHEREAS** the goal of the Program is to offer intensive support and wrap-around services for individuals experiencing homelessness in Stratford, St Marys and Perth County with the end goal of attaining permanent housing and long-term housing stability for participants in the program;

**AND WHEREAS** the Parties hereto deem it desirable to enter into an Outreach Worker Service Agreement / Purchase of Service Agreement for the provision of services defined in the Agreement;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** by the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford as follows:

1. That the Outreach Worker Service Agreement / Purchase of Service Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Stratford and Optimism Place Women's Shelter and Support Services for the provision of services defined in the Agreement be entered into and the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be and the same are hereby authorized to execute the said agreement on behalf of and for this Corporation and to affix the corporate seal thereto.

Read a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and  
FINALLY PASSED this 24th day of February, 2025.

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Mayor – Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual



**BY-LAW NUMBER XXX-2025  
OF  
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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BEING a By-law to amend By-law 4-2023, as amended, to make an appointment to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors.

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**WHEREAS** Section 8.(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25* as amended, provides that the powers of a municipality under this or any other Act, shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on the municipality to enable the municipality to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance the municipality's ability to respond to municipal issues;

**AND WHEREAS** Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford adopted By-law 4-2023 to appoint Council Members to Sub-committees of Council and Standing Committees of Council and to Advisory Committees, Boards and Agencies and to appoint Citizens to Advisory Committees and Boards during the 2022 term of municipal office;

**AND WHEREAS** Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford deems it necessary to make appointments to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Board of Directors;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** by the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford as follows:

1. That section 2.9 a) of By-law 4-2023, as amended, be further amended by deleting and replacing section 2.9 a) with the following:
  - a) Sarah Hamza, representing the Digital Media/Creative Economy sector, be appointed to the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation Board of Directors for a three-year term to June 2027 or until a successor is appointed by Council.
2. All other provisions of By-law 4-2023 remain in force and effect.

Read a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and

FINALLY PASSED this 24th day of February, 2025.

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Mayor – Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual





**BY-LAW NUMBER XXX-2025  
OF  
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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BEING a By-law to authorize the entering into and execution of an Extension Agreement to the Local Partnership Agreement with The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys and The Corporation of the Municipality of North Perth for the Intercommunity Transportation Project (PC Connect) to December 31, 2025.

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**WHEREAS** Section 8.(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25 as amended*, (“the Municipal Act, 2001”) provides that the powers of a municipality under this or any other Act, shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on the municipality to enable the municipality to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance the municipality’s ability to respond to municipal issues;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 9 of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of natural persons for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 10(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a single-tier municipality may provide any service or thing that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for the public;

**AND WHEREAS** the Province of Ontario has established the Community Transportation Grant Program (the “**Program**”) to fund municipalities to plan, implement and operate intercommunity and local transportation projects;

**AND WHEREAS** the City applied and was successful in obtaining funding from the Program and entered into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province to assist the Parties in carrying out the intermodal transportation project (the “**Funding**”);

**AND WHEREAS** the transportation project will provide inter-regional bus service from Stratford, St. Marys and the community of Listowel located in North Perth to the agreed upon intermodal transportation hubs located in the Cities of Kitchener and London (the “**Intermodal Transportation Project**”);

**AND WHEREAS** the Intermodal Transportation Project will enable passengers to access business activities, hospital and medical appointments, government agencies and services, shopping, industry and employment in the City, St. Marys and North Perth and enhance regional transportation links located across Southwestern Ontario;

**AND WHEREAS** the Intermodal Transportation Project established a regional intermodal service relying on scheduled bus runs to connect the Perth County transportation hubs of the City, the community of Listowel in North Perth, and St.

Marys to intermodal services in the Cities of London and Kitchener ("**Service Delivery Area**");

**AND WHEREAS** the City shall be responsible for overseeing and managing the Intermodal Transportation Project in accordance with the Transfer Payment Agreement and this Agreement;

**AND WHEREAS** the service launch date for the Intermodal Transportation Project was November 16, 2020, with the end date projected to be March 31, 2025, in accordance with the Provincial Payment with the specific dates to be determined and in accordance with the Funding;

**AND WHEREAS** the City, St. Marys and North Perth previously entered into a Transit Agreement, dated September 21, 2020, amended September 12, 2023, and the Parties wish to enter into an extension to the Transit Agreement amending the expiry date, and other administrative amendments;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** by Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford as follows:

1. That the Extension Agreement to the Local Partnership Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Stratford, The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys, and The Corporation of the Municipality of North Perth for the Intercommunity Transportation Project (PC Connect) to December 31, 2025; be entered into and the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be and are hereby authorized to execute the said Extension Agreement on behalf of and for this Corporation and to affix the corporate seal thereto.

Read a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and

FINALLY PASSED this 24th day of February, 2025.

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Mayor – Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual



**BY-LAW NUMBER XXX-2025  
OF  
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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BEING a By-law to authorize the entering into and execution of a Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago for the provision of an inter-regional community bus transportation service until the end of December 31, 2025.

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**WHEREAS** Section 8.(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25* as amended, ("the Municipal Act, 2001") provides that the powers of a municipality under this or any other Act, shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on the municipality to enable the municipality to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance the municipality's ability to respond to municipal issues;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 9 of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of natural persons for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 10(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a single-tier municipality may provide any service or thing that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for the public;

**AND WHEREAS** the City established an inter-regional community bus transportation service ("Service") between the City, Town of St. Marys, the Kitchener-Waterloo, the Municipality of North Perth, and the City of London (collectively referred to as "Area Communities");

**AND WHEREAS** the goal of the City's Service is to offer scheduled, fixed-route transportation at an affordable price to workers, students and members of the general public allowing area residents and visitors to easily travel to and from the Area Communities;

**AND WHEREAS** the City applied for and received funding from the Province of Ontario to establish the Service until December 31, 2025;

**AND WHEREAS** Voyago has been in the business of providing passenger transportation services including but not limited to bus services in and between numerous municipalities situated throughout Canada and in the area including but not limited to the provision of dedicated and custom shuttles to health care facilities, universities, colleges and other institutions and private sector clients;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford and with 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago entered into an Agreement in 2021 for the provision of an inter-regional community bus transportation service;

**AND WHEREAS** the City wishes to continue the Service until the end of December 31, 2025;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** by Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford as follows:

1. That the Community Transportation Service Agreement Extension between 947465 Ontario Ltd. o/a Voyago and The Corporation of the City of Stratford, for the provision of an inter-regional community bus transportation service until the end of December 31, 2025, be entered into and the Mayor and Clerk or their respective delegates are hereby authorized to execute the said Agreement on behalf of The Corporation of the City of Stratford and to affix the corporate seal thereto.

Read a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and

FINALLY PASSED this 24th day of February, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor – Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual



**STRATFORD CITY COUNCIL**  
**CONSENT AGENDA**

February 24, 2025

**REFERENCE NO.      CONSENT AGENDA ITEM**

CA-2025-010      Road Closure Notices

In accordance with By-law 135-2017 as amended, the Infrastructure Services Department is providing notification that:

- Princess Street from Glastonbury Drive to Arthur Street will be closed for one day only to through traffic, local traffic only, on Friday, February 7, 2025, for a water main break repair.
- William Street from Waterloo Street to Lakeside Drive North will be temporarily closed to through traffic on Saturday, February 22nd, 2025, from 4:45 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. for the Coldest Night of the Year Event.

CA-2025-011      Notification that the Infrastructure Services Department intends to call Tenders in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy for:

- Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2
- Avon Street and Avondale Avenue Reconstruction
- Neal Avenue, Morrison Street and Fern Street Watermain Lining

CA-2025-012      Notification from the Infrastructure Services Department, that they intend to call quotations in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy for:

- Concrete Crushing at City of Stratford Landfill
- Haul and Recycle of Shingles
- Metal Recycling at Landfill

CA-2025-013      Notification that the Community Services Department, Parks Division, intends to call the following Request for Proposal in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:

- Supply and installation of accessible play structure at Inverness Park
- CA-2025-014 Notification that the Community Services Department, Parks Division, intends to call the following Quote in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Removal and replacement of the Parks Buildings Roof for the Paint Shop and Lunchroom
- CA-2025-015 Notification that the Community Services Department, Cemetery Division, intends to call the following Quote in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Removal and replacement of the Cemetery Office and Chapel roof
- CA-2025-016 Notification that the Community Services Department, Cemetery Division, intends to call the following Tender in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Installation of three columbarium niche walls with base and walking surround
- CA-2025-017 Notification that the Community Services Department, Facilities Division (Other City Buildings), intends to call the following Tenders in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- City Hall Exterior Envelope Maintenance
  - Public Library Elevator Modernization
- CA-2025-018 Notification that the Community Services Department, Facilities Division (Recreation), intends to call the following Quotes in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Allman Arena – Exterior Insulating Finishing System
  - Rotary Complex – Parking Lot Entrance Sign
  - Agriplex – Fieldhouse Hardwood Flooring Refinishing
  - Upper Queens Park – Bandshell Refurbishment
  - Optimist Ball Diamond – Lighting Replacement
  - Veterans Drive Bandshell Refurbishment
  - Supply of Tables & Chairs for Various Facilities

- CA-2025-019 Notification that the Community Services Department, Facilities Division (Recreation), intends to call the following Tenders in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Allman Arena – HVAC Rooftop Units
  - Rotary Complex – HVAC Rooftop Units
  - Dufferin Arena – Metal Roofing
  - National Stadium Upgrades
  - SERC Washroom Upgrades
- CA-2025-020 Notification that the Community Services Department, Facilities Division (Recreation), issued the following Tender as a noted exception to the City's Purchasing Policy the week of February 18, 2025:
- Lions Pool Liner (Lap Pool)
- CA-2025-021 Notification that the Community Services Department, Transit Division, intends to call the following Tenders in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Regular Fuel Mobility Buses (2)
- CA-2025-022 Notification that the Community Services Department, Transit Division, intends to call the following Request for Proposal in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy:
- Design and Build of New Transit Office
- CA-2025-023 Notification from the Infrastructure Services Department, Water Division, that they intend to call Request for Proposal in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy for:
- Dufferin Water Tower Ladder and Safety Cable System
  - Forman Water Tower Safety Cable System
- CA-2025-024 Notification from the Infrastructure Services Department, Water Division, that they intend to call Tender in accordance with the City's Purchasing Policy for:
- Water Meters



**BY-LAW NUMBER XXX-2025  
OF  
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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BEING a By-law to authorize the entering into and execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Stratford & District Agricultural Society to support the use and rental of City facilities.

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**WHEREAS** Section 8.(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25* as amended, (“the Municipal Act, 2001”) provides that the powers of a municipality under this or any other Act, shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on the municipality to enable the municipality to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance the municipality’s ability to respond to municipal issues;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 9 of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 10(1) of the Municipal Act 2001, provides that a single-tier municipality may provide any service or thing that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for the public;

**AND WHEREAS** The Corporation of the City of Stratford (“the City”) owns and operates two recreational facilities at 353 and 357 McCarthy Road West, known as the Stratford Rotary Complex and the Agriplex and the surrounding municipal parking lot (“Municipal Facilities”);

**AND WHEREAS** the City and the Stratford & District Agricultural Society (“the Society”) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding authorized by City Council on June 24, 2019, to establish new terms and conditions for the use of part of the Municipal Facilities by the Society to continue to promote agricultural practices within the community;

**AND WHEREAS** the Memorandum of Understanding established in 2019 contained provisions related to the use of the Municipal Facilities, issuance of rental permits and rental fees applicable to the Society for a three-year term to December 31, 2022;

**AND WHEREAS** the Memorandum of Understanding established in 2019 and expired December 31, 2022 was renewed for a further two-year term to December 31, 2024;

**AND WHEREAS** the Memorandum of Understanding established in 2023 has expired and the Parties wish to enter into a new Memorandum of Understanding to establish similar terms and conditions related to the use of the Municipal Facilities, issuance of rental permits and rental fees applicable to the Society for a five-year term to December 31, 2029;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** by the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford as follows:



1. That the Memorandum of Understanding between The Corporation of the City of Stratford and the Stratford & District Agricultural Society to support the use and rental of City facilities be entered into and the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be and the same are hereby authorized to execute the said agreement on behalf of and for this Corporation and to affix the corporate seal thereto.

Read a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and

FINALLY PASSED this 24th day of February, 2025.

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Mayor – Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual



**BY-LAW NUMBER XXX-2025  
OF  
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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BEING a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on February 24, 2025.

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**WHEREAS** subsection 5(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001 c.25*, as amended, ("the Municipal Act, 2001") provides that the powers of a municipal corporation are to be exercised by its council;

**AND WHEREAS** subsection 5(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that the powers of council are to be exercised by by-law unless the municipality is specifically authorized to do otherwise;

**AND WHEREAS** it is deemed expedient that the proceedings of the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at this meeting be confirmed and adopted by By-law;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED** by the Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford as follows:

1. That the action of the Council at its meeting held on February 24, 2025, in respect of each report, motion, resolution, recommendation or other action passed and taken by the Council at its meeting, is hereby adopted, ratified and confirmed, as if each report, motion, resolution or other action was adopted, ratified and confirmed by its separate by-law.
2. The Mayor of the Council and the proper officers of the City are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the said action, to obtain approvals where required, and, except where otherwise provided, to execute all documents necessary in that behalf in accordance with the by-laws of the Council relating thereto.

Read a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and

FINALLY PASSED this 24th day of February, 2025.

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Mayor – Martin Ritsma

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Deputy Clerk – Audrey Pascual