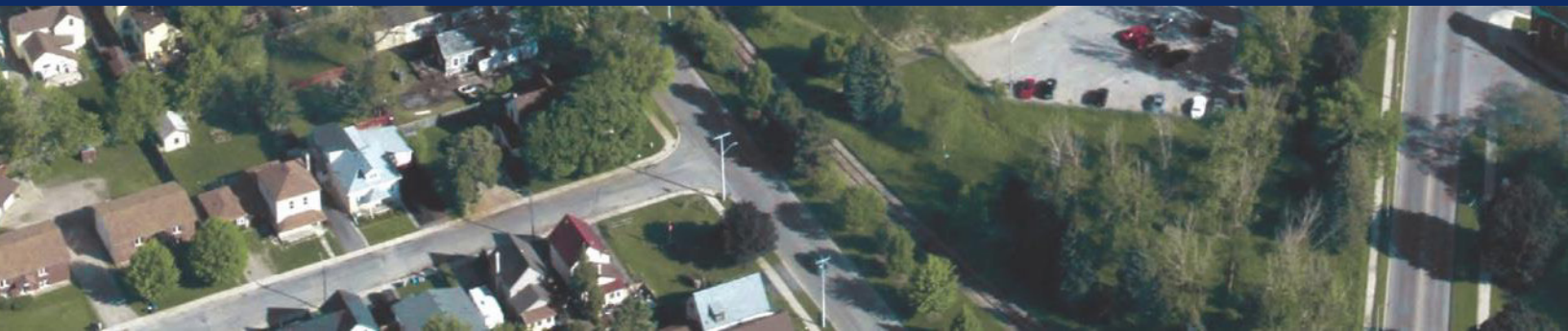




**Grand Trunk  
Master Plan**  
February 2018

**URBAN  
STRATEGIES  
INC .**



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# 01

## INTRODUCTION

The Grand Trunk site, an 18 acre site on the south edge of Stratford's Downtown, has long been an important site in the city. Once home to over a third of Stratford's workforce, the site lay vacant for a number of years save for municipal parking and the Stratford-Perth YMCA, which has grown into an anchor for the Stratford community, serving over 2800 members annually. Recently, the site has been given life again with the opening of the University of Waterloo's School of Digital Media, the first building of a planned University of Waterloo Stratford Campus. The Grand Trunk site stands to renew its place in, and as the heart of, the city and become a place for residents and visitors alike through the Grand Trunk Master Plan.

Urban Strategies Inc has prepared a Master Plan for the Grand Trunk site on behalf of the City Stratford. The Master Plan provides a framework for how the site could develop over time and it addresses a range of urban planning and urban design matters such as parking, built form, open space provision, the public realm, and the street network. The Master Plan may also serve as a basis for future amendments to the City of Stratford Official Plan and any other regulatory documents, such as zoning, informing growth on the site.

This Master Plan builds from a wealth of work already completed to understand the site and the Grand Trunk Railway Shop (Grand Trunk Building) itself. Prior work includes a series of engineering reports and analyses, a heritage assessment, and a technical review of site opportunities and constraints. The Master Plan has been informed and influenced by a multifaceted and phased public engagement process which included community roundtables, open houses, online feedback, and "talking walls" set up around the site. The vision for the future of the site articulated in this document is a direct result of community feedback and input.

This report introduces the site's physical and regulatory context, provides an overview of the work completed to date including the public engagement process, establishes a vision and appropriately flexible framework for the Grand Trunk site's evolution, and provides recommendations on phasing and next steps to implement that vision and framework. The Master Plan envisions a range of uses in association with, and complementary to, existing uses on the site. Importantly, these new uses will form the core of a Community Hub on the site, anticipated to be housed in the existing Grand Trunk building. If it is determined that the Grand Trunk Building is unable to be retained given its age, stability of other limiting factors, a new building may be explored to house the Community Hub. The intention is to retain and reuse this building, however, due diligence must be adopted in the regeneration of the site.



Figure 1 ► The Grand Trunk Site Today



The Grand Trunk Community Hub will be a convergence of education, community, entrepreneurship, and innovation to strengthen and diversify the Stratford economy, providing services and amenities for both residents and visitors.

The Hub will facilitate a cluster of uses that create a strong identity, sense of place, and centre of gravity for the Grand Trunk site and Building, expanding and connecting to the existing Downtown. It will generate a critical mass of activity that appeals to a diverse cross-section of Stratford's population.

### ► Downtown Stratford

Downtown Stratford, or Stratford City Centre, measures approximately three and a half square kilometres and is defined by its remarkably intact heritage character. This character expresses itself as consistent and proud streetwalls comprised of three to four storey brick Victorian buildings which create an extensive “main-street” network typified by Ontario Street and Wellington Street and housing over 300 stores and businesses. Because of the triangular shape created by the main streets in Downtown Stratford, the “centre” of the City Centre naturally falls at the intersection of Downie and Wellington Streets. The intersection is anchored by Stratford City Hall, and Market Square behind it, which together create a coherent focus for the City Centre district.

Given the picturesque setting of Downtown Stratford, enhanced by the complementary natural setting of the Avon River to its north and the presence of the Stratford Festival, it is unsurprising that tourism is Stratford’s most significant economic driver next to manufacturing.

Much of that tourism is the result of the Stratford Festival which attracts over 500,000 visitors a year to the city and employs approximately 1,200 people, more than any other single entity in the city. The influence of the creative sector extends beyond the Festival to the dozens of smaller performing arts, musical, and artistic groups that practice and perform in the city.

Downtown Stratford is also the home for Stratford’s growing population, which increased from 30,903 in 2011 to 31,465 in 2016, growth of 1.8%. Many new residents are coming in response to the city’s effort to further diversify Stratford’s economy and tap into the emergent technology sector centred in Kitchener-Waterloo. The opening of the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus and the provision of free wifi throughout the Downtown by Rhyzome Networks (the city-owned data infrastructure company) are reflective of this 21st century economic development strategy. As the city, and the Downtown, continues to grow and evolve, there is a need to ensure that the amenities, services, and community spaces that serve the community grow and evolve in turn.

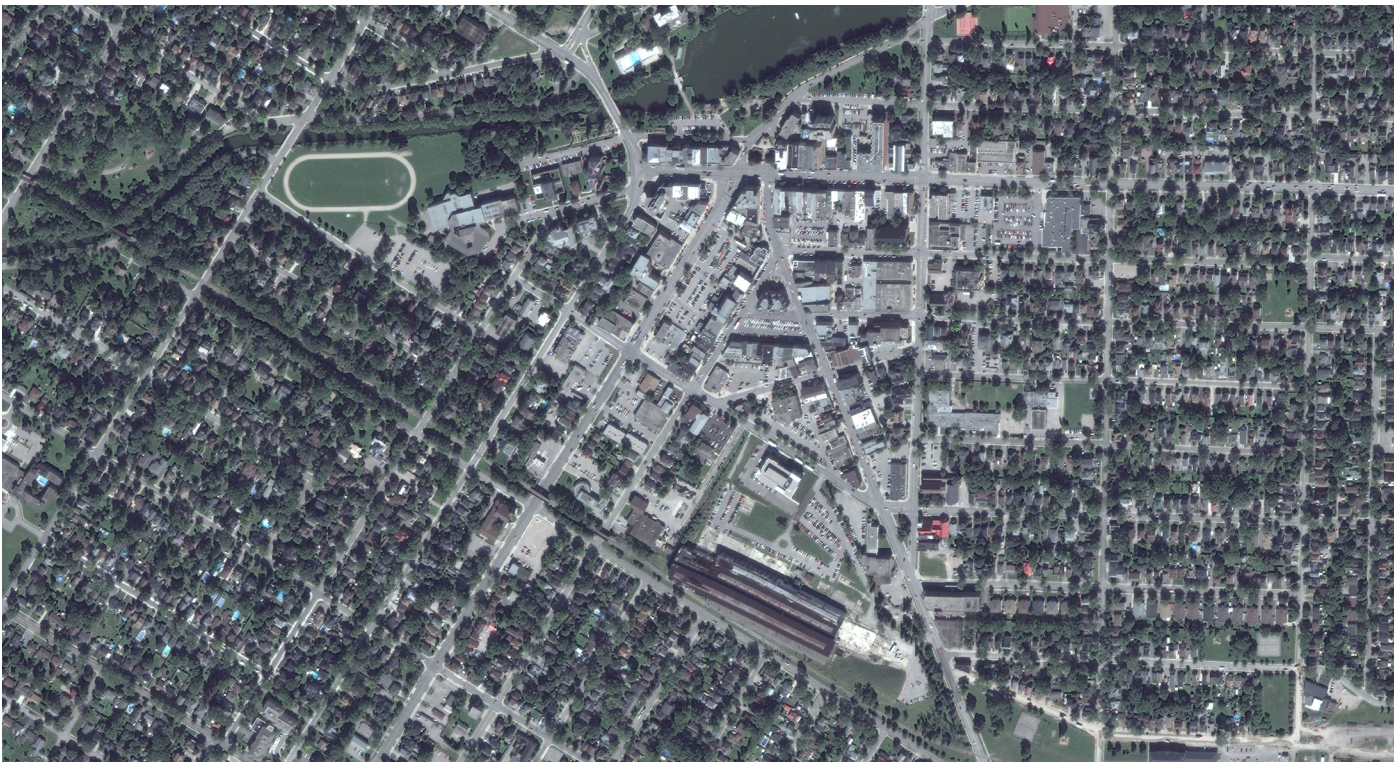


Figure 2 ► Downtown Stratford

## ► Recent Downtown Initiatives

There have been several recent initiatives and construction projects in, and proximate to, Downtown Stratford that help to inform the future context and design of the Grand Trunk site:

### **Market Square**

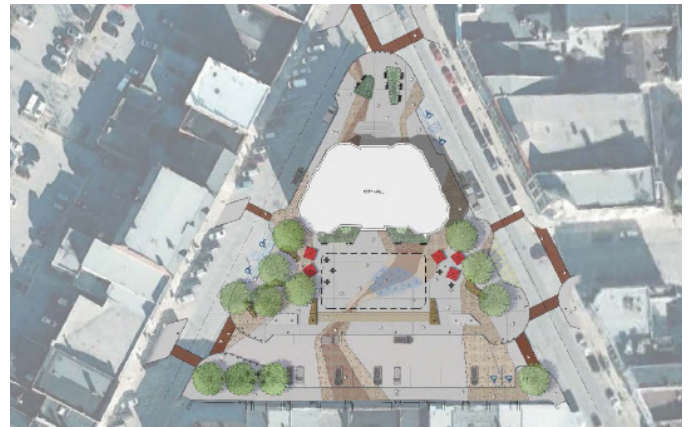
The redevelopment of Market Square has transformed the space behind City Hall from a surface parking lot and bus drop-off to a public plaza. The pedestrianized area is supported by seating, high quality paving material, and street trees, which will provide amenity for residents and support the hosting of special events in the Downtown.

### **Transit Terminal**

The revitalization of Market Square created an opportunity to improve how bus transportation and parking is provided in Downtown Stratford. A new transit terminal with weather protected seating areas and washrooms will be constructed on the Grand Trunk site in proximity to Downie Street. The location was determined via public input and supported by City Council.

### **Tom Patterson Theatre Rebuild**

Currently housed in a former curling arena, the Tom Patterson Theatre can no longer support the infrastructure and technological needs of a modern theatre facility. The Stratford Festival is proposing to rebuild a contemporary theatre facility on the same site. An opportunity exists on the Grand Trunk site to potentially accommodate some of the past users of the Tom Patterson Theatre facility and site.



**Figure 3** ► Market Square Redesign

## ► The Grand Trunk Site in the City

The Grand Trunk site is the largest undeveloped site within Downtown Stratford. It is located an approximately two-minute walk from the heart of Stratford, Market Square and City Hall, and is adjacent to Shakespeare Park. Because of its location on the southern edge of Downtown Stratford, the Site acts as an interface between the city's core and the surrounding neighbourhoods, in particular the St. David Street neighbourhood to the south. Moreover, the Stratford Via Rail Station is located an approximately five-minute walk from the site.



Figure 4 ► The Site in the City

## ► A Confluence of Key Routes

The Grand Trunk Site, and Downtown Stratford more generally, is located at the confluence of key routes into - and out of - the city. Travelling east along Highway 8 brings you to Kitchener within 45 minutes and further on to the Greater Toronto Area in approximately one hour. Taking Erie Street south out of Stratford, London is an approximately 45 minute drive away on Highway 7. And to the west, past Goderich, Sarnia and the United States border are approximately 1.5 hours away by car. Potential future transit investments in the GO Transit or existing Via Rail network would also better support Stratford's role as a regional crossroads and cultural destination, and as an emerging "living lab" community that supports the Toronto-Waterloo Technology Corridor.



Figure 5 ► A Confluence of Key Routes

## ► Downtown Stratford's Public Realm

Although Stratford's Downtown core is highly walkable and offers a variety of amenities to pedestrians including restaurants, entertainment venues, theatres and retail options, residents and visitors travel outside the core to access the city's riverside park system and other parks and open spaces. In addition to the revitalization of Market Square behind City Hall, the Grand Trunk site is a significant opportunity to contribute new green and open space in the heart of the city.



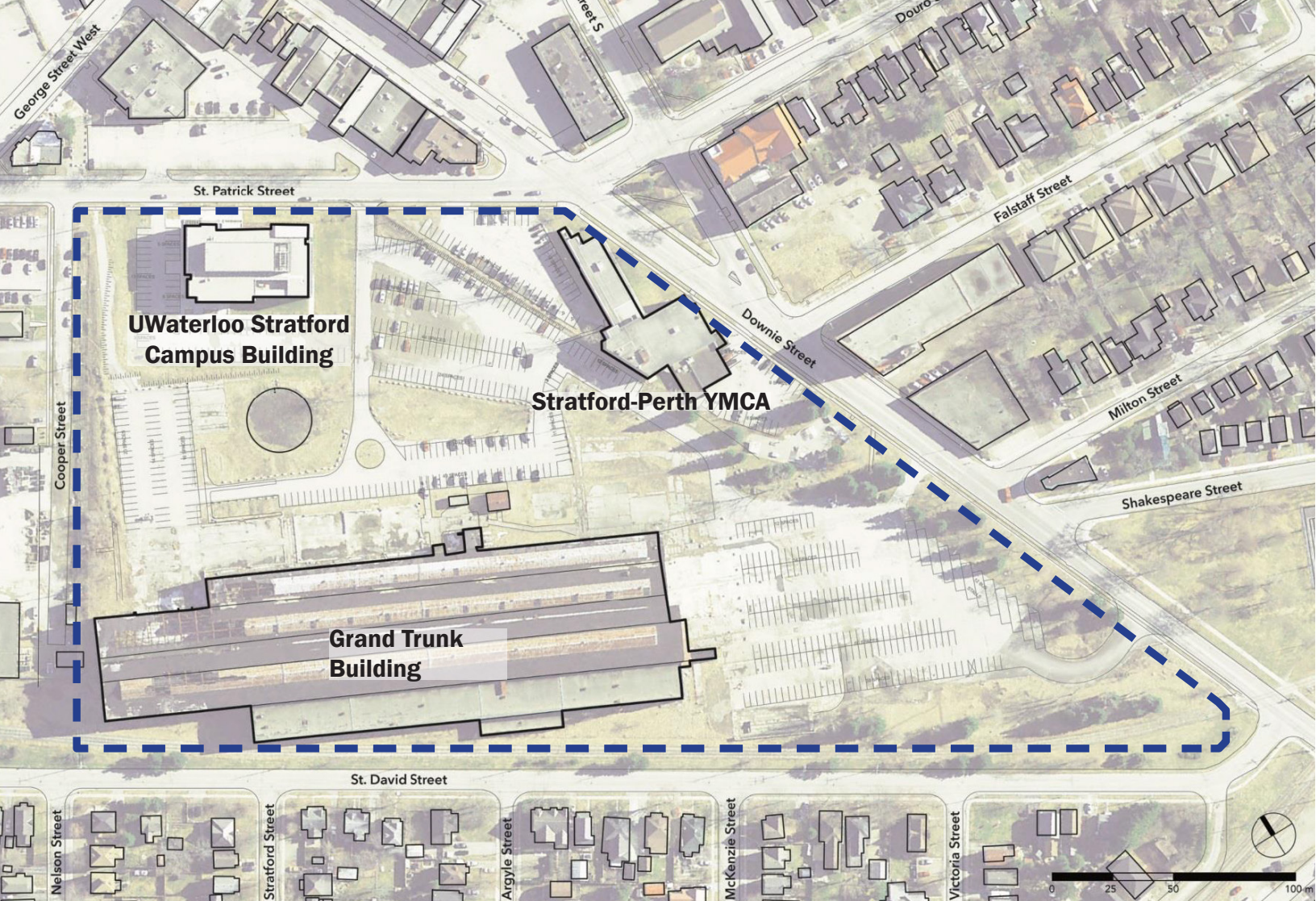
Figure 6 ► Downtown Stratford's Public Realm

## ► Parking in Downtown Stratford

The economic viability of Downtown Stratford depends, in part, on the availability of parking, both for residents traveling to jobs in the core and for visitors arriving from elsewhere. As a result, parking represents a significant portion of the land uses Downtown. Today, the Grand Trunk site provide approximately 40% of the municipal parking supply in Stratford, acting as a free parking lot for Downtown Stratford employees as well as playing a critical role as overflow parking during periods of high traffic volume in the city for visitors. As the Grand Trunk Site evolves, replacing and/or augmenting that parking supply, and considering new transportation demand initiatives, will be a core objective in order to support the overall success of Downtown Stratford.



Figure 7 ► Parking in Downtown Stratford



**Figure 8** ▶ The Grand Trunk site Today

### ▶ The Grand Trunk Site

The Grand Trunk site (the site) comprises approximately 18 acres within Downtown Stratford bounded by St. Patrick Street to the north, Downie Street to the east, St. David Street to the south, and Cooper Street and the west. The core of Downtown Stratford lies just north of the site, the site is surrounded by residential neighbourhoods to the east, south, and west.

The Grand Trunk site was originally developed as one large single parcel and, as a result, has poor internal connectivity and limited external connectivity. Currently, the site can only be accessed from St. Patrick and Downie Streets. A significant grade differential prevents access from the west side of the site from Cooper Street and an active rail line creates a connectivity challenge on the southern edge of the site between St. David Street and the site. Within the site, there is no rational street and block network. Instead, internal connections facilitate access between surface parking areas reserved for municipal parking.

Parking provided for the Stratford-Perth YMCA and for the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus building is separated from the municipal parking areas.

The Grand Trunk site is currently occupied by three buildings. The first phase of the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus is located at the northwest corner of the site and is approximately 42,000 square feet. The Stratford-Perth YMCA is located along the Downie Street frontage on the northern edge of the site and is approximately 45,000 square feet. The Grand Trunk Building, for which the site is named, is over 160,000 square feet and is located along the southern edge of the property. Other elements of historical industrial features are visible on the site, including the footprint of the original rail turntable and remnants of the original rail tracks, sides, and spurs.

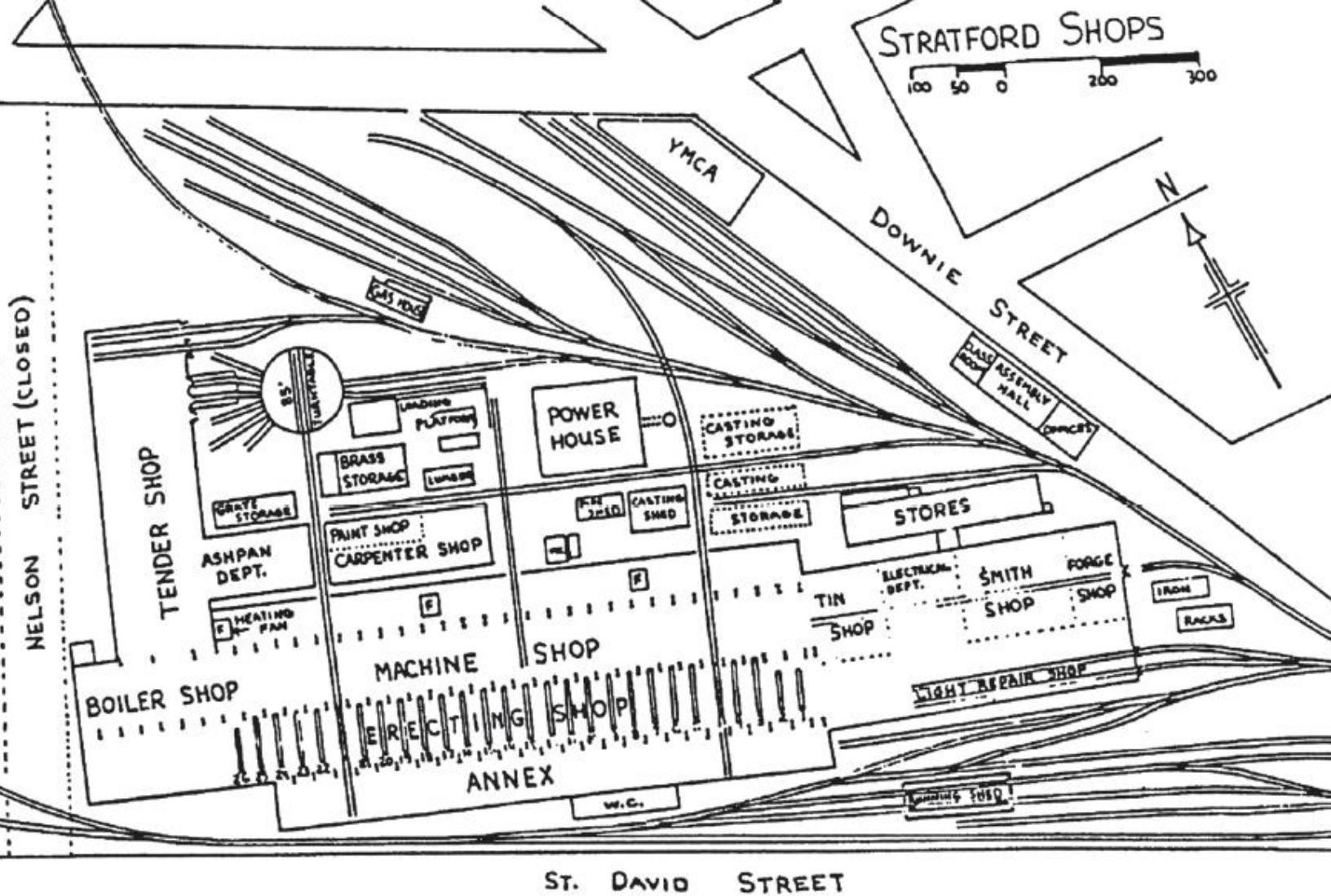


Figure 9 ► The Original Grand Trunk site and building

### ► A Brief Site History

The Grand Trunk Building was opened in 1871 as a locomotive repair facility and later, through the early twentieth century, expanded and grew to its maximum extent by the 1940's. At its height, the Grand Trunk building employed approximately 40% of Stratford's workforce. By the 1960's, the need for steam locomotives had declined significantly in favour of diesel-powered trains, resulting in the site being transferred to Cooper-Bessemer, a boiler manufacturer.

The site was abandoned in the mid-1980's and in the 1990's the City of Stratford purchased the site pursuant to its program for the acquisition, sale and development of industrial/commercial lands. The City subsequently sold a portion of the site to a private interest. Several years later, following discussions between the City and the University of Waterloo about bringing a satellite campus to Stratford, the City expropriated that portion of the site that was still in private ownership. The University subsequently began construction of the first phase of the Stratford Campus, which hosted the inaugural class of its Global Business and Digital Arts Program in 2012. Since 2012, the Stratford Campus has enjoyed considerable growth in both its undergraduate and graduate programs.

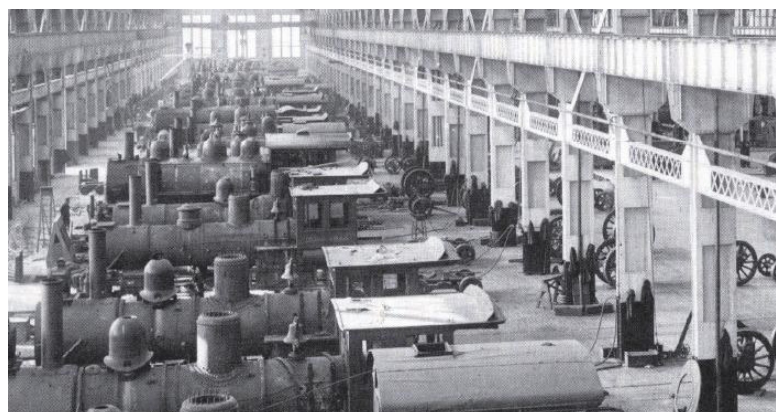


Figure 10 ► Train Repair

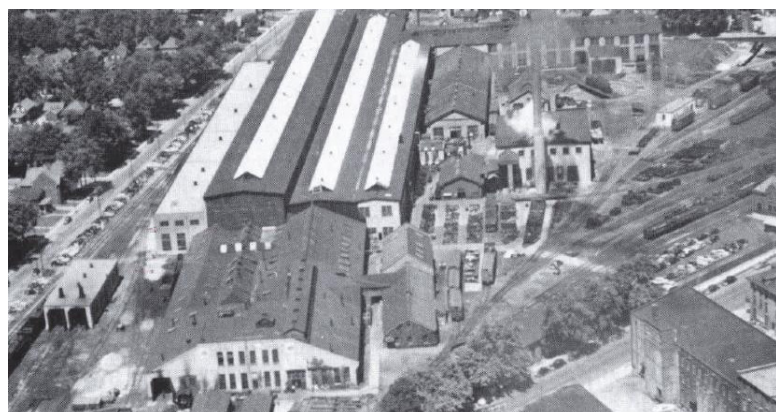


Figure 11 ► The Original Grand Trunk Building

A review of the provincial and local policy directions and initiatives supports the reinvestment and redevelopment of the Grand Trunk site.

► **PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2014)**

The anticipated redevelopment of the site as envisioned in the Grand Trunk Master Plan, including the Community Hub, is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014).

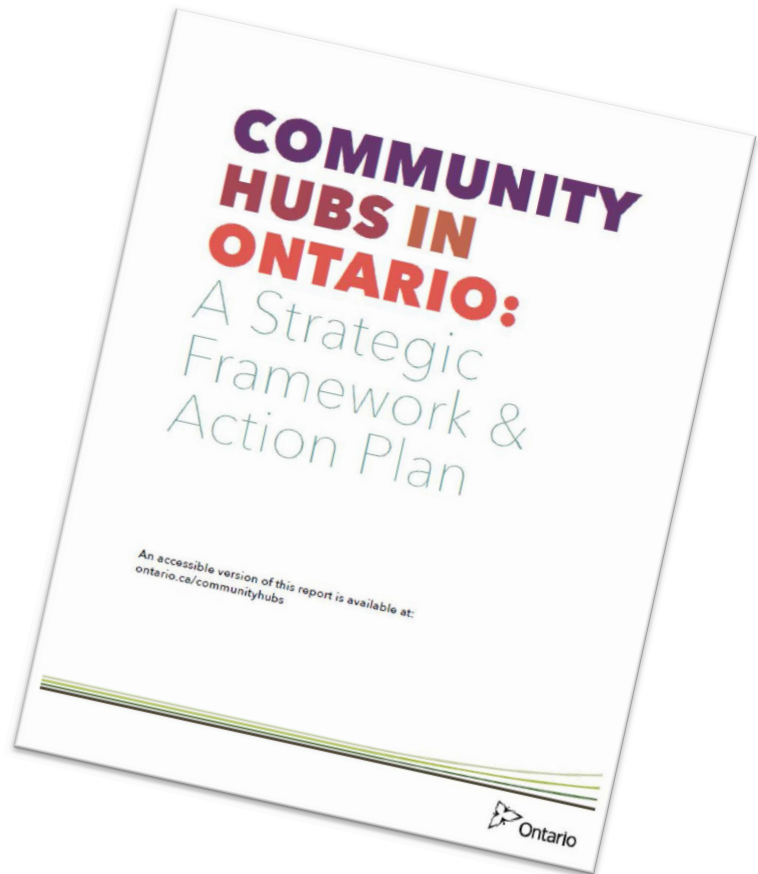
► **COMMUNITY HUB STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN**

In March, 2015 the Government of Ontario launched an initiative to improve and enhance community services across the Province by facilitating and supporting the creation of community hubs, which is outlined in a document titled Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework & Action Plan. Community hubs are described as central points within a community that provide a range of health, social service, recreational, environmental, and educational uses within an integrated facility. They can be located in existing schools, community centres, places of worship, libraries, or other public buildings.

The future redevelopment of the site envisions a Community Hub in an adaptive reuse of all or part of the Grand Trunk building, as well as an expansion of the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus. Given the range of uses envisioned for the entire site, both the redeveloped Grand Trunk building and University campus could be considered a community hub. The vision for a Community Hub on the site as a whole will be outlined throughout this Master Plan.

► **ONTARIO'S FIVE YEAR CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN**

Ontario's Five Year Climate Change Action Plan (2016-2020) is an important document relevant to the Master Plan as it establishes the key actions for managing climate change until 2020. This Action Plan aligns with the Community Hub Strategic Framework and Action Plan insofar as its aim is to, in part, support sustainable and resilient community services and facilities. Specifically, it identifies that the reuse of heritage properties is inherently sustainable and could be an excellent platform to showcase low-carbon technology and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The reuse of the Grand Trunk Building is an intention under this Master Plan which will be explored in further detailed investigations.



### ► STRATFORD OFFICIAL PLAN (2013) Downtown Core

The 1993 Stratford Official Plan, as consolidated designates the site “Downtown Core”. OPA No. 21, currently under appeal as related to the site, changes this designation from “Downtown Core” to “Cooper Site – Major Institutional Focus Area”.

In general, Stratford’s Official Plan describes the Downtown Core as a place that is “vibrant, compact, multi-functional, attractive and people friendly”. In support of the continued success of the Downtown, Official Plan policies encourage the rehabilitation of older buildings and recognizes the significance of Downtown heritage landmarks and their role in enhancing their surroundings. In addition, the Official Plan states that it is a policy of the City to maintain, make better use of, and increase, where feasible, the supply of parking Downtown. The vision for the Grand Trunk Master Plan meets the Official Plan policies with regard to the Downtown Core.

### ► OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT 21 - COOPER SITE - MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL FOCUS AREA

Starting in 2012, the City undertook the process of updating its Official Plan to ensure consistency with provincial policy and legislation. This process culminated in the adoption of the Stratford Official Plan Amendment 21 (OPA 21) by the City on December 14, 2014. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs approved OPA 21 on July 21, 2016.

OPA 21 is in force and effect City-wide, save and except as it relates to the Grand Trunk site. Currently, the policies of OPA 21 as they relate to the site remain under appeal as a result of an appeal by a former owner of the site and claimant under the Expropriations Act.

OPA 21, although under appeal in relation to the site, would amend the Stratford Official Plan with respect to the ‘Cooper Block’ (the Grand Trunk site) as a major institutional use focus area. The OPA would permit a broad range of uses and include goals and objectives as follows:

- To encourage public and institutional uses which will restore a sense of purpose and vibrancy to the Cooper Site making it a focus of activity in the southern part of the Downtown Core.

- To ensure that development in the Cooper Site complements and supports the role of the Downtown Core as the primary focus of the City with its own distinct character and identity.
- To ensure that the historic use of the Cooper Site is appropriately commemorated with an emphasis on the importance of rail to the development of the City.

The City’s Official Plan, both pre-OPA 21 and as amended by OPA 21, support the process the City has undertaken to prepare and adopt this Master Plan. This Master Plan is intended to be a flexible and visionary document that will inform future development and redevelopment of the site. Any future Official Plan amendment(s) that may be required (if any) to implement any aspect of this Master Plan will proceed through the ordinary planning application process.

### ► ZONING BY-LAW NO. 201-2000

The Grand Trunk site is zoned C3-2 which is a mixed-use zone permitting a wide range of uses including apartment dwellings, commercial uses, senior’s housing, institutional uses, and industrial uses. A maximum height of 15 metres is permitted on the Grand Trunk site and any new development must include a minimum of 10% landscaped open space in the proposal.

The vision for the Grand Trunk Master Plan is generally in conformity with the existing zoning regulations for the site. Depending on the ultimate form that development/ redevelopment of the site takes following further investigations, future Zoning By-law amendments may be required to implement any aspect of this Master Plan. These amendments would proceed through the ordinary planning application process.

The development of the Grand Trunk Master Plan has been supported by thorough research, background studies, and, crucially, an extensive community engagement process. For over a year, Urban Strategies, the City of Stratford, site partners, community members, and other consultants have worked together to understand the opportunities offered on the Grand Trunk site, coordinate efforts with regard to program needs, and develop and invite feedback on guiding principles and a vision for the Grand Trunk Community Hub. The first step in the development of this Master Plan was the undertaking of a technical review to understand the work performed to date with regard to the site and building's physical and environmental condition and to obtain clarity from the existing on-site partners of the University of Waterloo, the YMCA of Stratford-Perth, and the City of Stratford with regard to their priorities and plans for the future of their operations on the site.

As background, the technical review was itself informed by an intensive three-month process which involved a tour of the site and its surroundings, an extensive review of the previous body of work regarding the Grand Trunk site and Building, one-on-one interviews, and a two-day working session with key stakeholders and potential partners. The technical review also analyzed precedent community hubs elsewhere in Ontario.

### ► Document Review

The Grand Trunk site and Building have been studied extensively. In preparation for this technical review, Urban Strategies benefited from the following reports:

- *Potential Remedial Costs Related to the Redevelopment of the Cooper Site Property* (RJ Burnside & Associates Ltd., 2009)
- *Heritage Consultation and Report* (Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd., 2012)
- *Building Condition Assessment Report* (Read Jones Cristoffersen, 2012)
- *Community Workshop and Recommendations* (Malone Given Parsons Ltd., 2013)
- *Potential Salvage/Remediation Feasibility Study* (Read Jones Cristoffersen, 2013)
- *Roofing Components Visual Review* (Read Jones Cristoffersen, 2014)
- *Roofing Components Visual Review Including Hazardous Materials Abatement Costs* (Read Jones Cristoffersen, 2015)
- *Costing for Partial Demolitions Options* (Read Jones Cristoffersen, 2015)

### ► Technical Review Working Session

On December 20 and 21, 2016, Urban Strategies facilitated a two-day technical review working session at the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus. The purpose of this session was to discuss the technical considerations applying to the site, confirm the needs of the University of Waterloo and other potential partners, and to identify implementation options and an investment framework to support the achievement of the overall vision for the future of the site. Attendees at the session included representatives from:

- City of Stratford Staff
- Festival Hydro
- Stratford-Perth YMCA
- University of Waterloo Stratford Campus
- Urban Strategies
- N. Barry Lyons Consulting
- CBRE

## ► Key Partners

Along with the City of Stratford, the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus and the YMCA of Stratford-Perth are key partners in the development of the site and Grand Trunk Community Hub. Their program needs are summarized below and are integrated into the vision for the future of the Grand Trunk site.

### University of Waterloo Stratford Campus

In 2009 the City of Stratford entered into an agreement with the University of Waterloo to establish a Stratford Campus. The agreement indicated that the Campus would be on a single site of at least 8 acres located in the Downtown Core; the Grand Trunk site was chosen as the location and development of the Campus was contemplated to occur in phases. The initial building occupies approximately 1.4 acres of the site. The University of Waterloo is interested in integrating a Student Campus Life component into the Grand Trunk Community Hub, in addition to new academic buildings and student housing which is planned to be constructed on the Grand Trunk site as the Campus grows.

### YMCA of Stratford-Perth

The YMCA of Stratford-Perth has served the Stratford community on the Grand Trunk site since 1869 and is an integral part of the city. The existing building is in need of drastic renovation and repair to address accessibility, space, and operating inefficiencies. In addition, the YMCA operates the only indoor publicly-accessible aquatic facility in Stratford. A new YMCA of Stratford-Perth is envisioned to be integrated into the site and Grand Trunk Community Hub, accommodating a new pool and additional child-care spaces. The new YMCA is anticipated to require approximately 45,000 square feet of the Hub. The existing YMCA building is expected to be demolished.

## ► Other Potential Partners

### City of Stratford Library

The Stratford Library also has an interest in participating in the Grand Trunk Community Hub. It intends to potentially expand its services to include a Maker Space, a place where users can access new technology and related services such as 3D printing machines and simple programmable robotics.



Figure 12 ► University of Waterloo Stratford Campus



Figure 13 ► YMCA of Stratford-Perth



Figure 14 ► Potential MakerSpace Activity

## ► Precedent Hubs

The technical review also entailed a review of precedent spaces across Ontario to better understand the roles and functions these hubs serve in their communities. Precedents reviewed include the following:

- Evergreen Brickworks, Toronto
- Wychwood Barns, Toronto
- The Tannery, Kitchener-Waterloo
- Lansdowne Park, Ottawa
- Market Square, Guelph

All of the above examples share the following similar characteristics that inform the vision for the Grand Trunk Community Hub:

- Incorporate flexible and programmable open space for people to gather and for events to be held.
- Accommodate and anticipate activity in all seasons.
- Provide a range of uses and opportunities for both the private and public sector.
- Build from the unique characteristics of their site and context.
- Adaptively reuse landmark buildings, whole or part, to give them new purpose and new life.



Figure 15 ► Evergreen Brickworks, Toronto



Figure 16 ► Wychwood Barns, Toronto



Figure 17 ► Lansdowne Park, Ottawa



Figure 18 ► The Tannery, Kitchener-Waterloo

## ► Technical Opportunities and Constraints

The technical review process identified several opportunities and constraints for the evolution of the Grand Trunk site into the Grand Trunk Master Plan. These opportunities and constraints have been based on the input and advice of the technical review participants, and include:

- Given the site's industrial history, there are chemical impacts to soil and/or groundwater quality across the property; however, the nature and distribution of these impacts varies across the site. Based on the results of environmental investigations carried out at the site over the past 25 years, it is expected that where present, impacts to soil and/or groundwater quality could be managed through a combination of targeted remediation and/or implementation of risk management measures.
- the existing rail line, operated by the Goderich-Exeter Railway, which separates the Grand Trunk site from the St. David Street Neighbourhood to the south is expected to operate into at least the near future, complicating the ability to connect the Grand Trunk site to the communities to the south;
- key partners, including the Stratford-Perth YMCA and the University of Waterloo, are committed to participating in the creation and evolution of the Community Hub;
- other partners have indicated an interest in the Grand Trunk Community Hub;
- future investment in rail infrastructure could see the GO Rail network extended to Stratford, terminating at the existing VIA Rail station immediately adjacent to the Block;
- the “annex” and fire-damaged portions of the Grand Trunk Building should be considered for demolition to also facilitate the development of the Community Hub and rehabilitate the building;
- there is a desire to retain and/or augment the current supply of municipal parking currently available on the Grand Trunk site;
- both public and private sector uses will be required to realize the vision for the Grand Trunk Community Hub; and
- celebrate the long-standing history of the Grand Trunk site and Building through adaptive reuse of portions of the Grand Trunk Building and in other ways as possible.



Figure 19 ► Grand Trunk Building interior

## ► Community Engagement Process

The community engagement process formally began in June, 2017, after the results of the technical review were presented to Stratford City Council in May, 2017. Community organizations, members of the general public, and other stakeholders such as Festival Hydro were invited to contribute their feedback in a number of ways in order to ensure that as many people could participate in this process as possible. The following public consultation tools and methods were utilized to invite feedback and input:

- Community Roundtables
- “Talking Walls”
- Kitchen Table Kits
- Online Feedback / Website / Email
- Two Public Open Houses

After the initial round of consultation activities conducted in mid-2017, the following statistics were identified, providing an indication of the robustness of the community engagement program and speaking to the excitement Stratford residents have for a shared vision for the future of the Grand Trunk site. In total, this first phase of the community engagement program resulted in:

- 20+ different community groups and organizations consulted at community roundtables;
- 100+ attendees at the public open house;
- 50+ kitchen table kits received;
- 30+ unique ideas submitted via the “talking walls”; and
- 15+ direct emails received.

The feedback obtained through the initial community engagement process helped inform both the guiding principles of the Grand Trunk Master Plan concept as well as the particular potential uses and physical structuring elements of the Grand Trunk Community Hub. The Draft Grand Trunk Master Plan was then presented to the community at a second Open House on November 7, 2017. Feedback from the community on the draft Master Plan was provided over the next month, and has been addressed throughout this document.

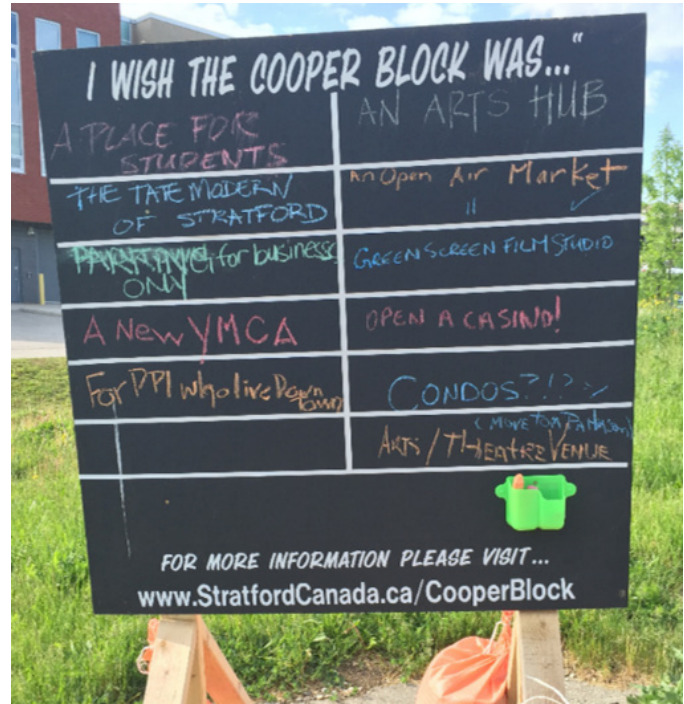


Figure 20 ► “Talking Wall” Example

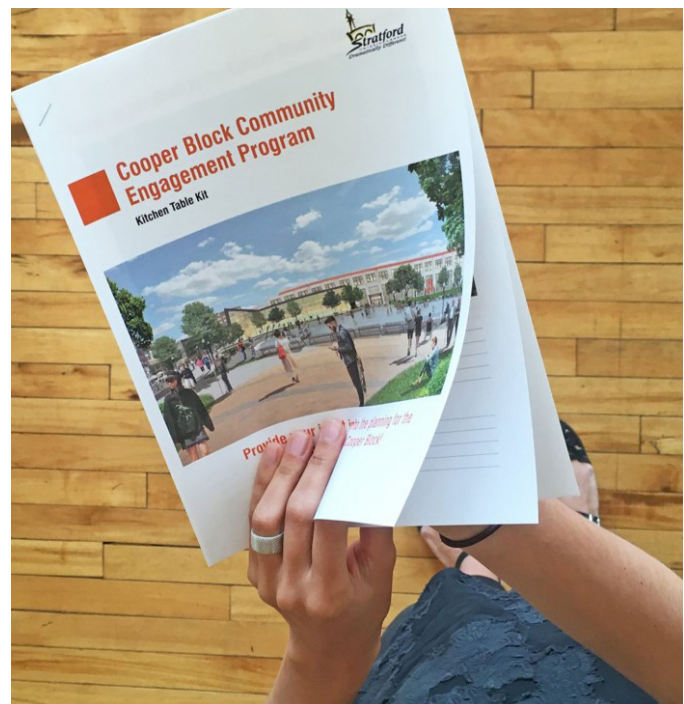


Figure 21 ► Kitchen Table Kit

A summary of all feedback received from the community is provided in the following pages.

## ► What We Heard - Initial Consultation

Residents, community members, city staff, and other stakeholders provided a wide range of suggestions and ideas for the future of the Grand Trunk site. The top four ideas for program uses shared via the “talking walls” were:

1. A community centre / YMCA.
2. Public parking.
3. Entertainment uses (i.e. laser tag, mini golf, theatre).
4. Arts and culture space / performance venue.

At the community roundtables, representatives of local organizations such as the Kiwanis Club, the Chamber of Commerce, Heritage Stratford, and the Arts and Culture Collective shared their priorities, which included:

- Ensuring the site is inclusive and welcoming for young and old residents alike;
- Incorporating green and open space;
- Balancing the Grand Trunk Community Hub with the vibrancy of Downtown; and
- Celebrating the history of the Grand Trunk Building.

Ideas submitted through the kitchen table kits echoed these sentiments. The most common responses provided through the kitchen table kits were:

- rebuild / integrate the new YMCA building;
- parking is a priority;
- find room for a community theatre / performing arts space;
- accommodate a large green space with seating and trees; and
- adaptively reuse a portion of the Grand Trunk Building.

At the first public open house, held at the University of Waterloo’s Stratford Campus in June 2017, attendees expressed enthusiasm and excitement for the idea of a Grand Trunk Community Hub and shared the following feedback:

- urgent need to capitalize on the momentum generated for the Grand Trunk Community Hub and ensure implementation;
- preference for a passive green space over a more urban-in-character plaza or square;
- significant support for flexible and multi-purpose programmable space for community groups and residents including a community centre, arts venue, and/or seniors’ centre; and
- desire for some form of adaptive reuse of the Grand Trunk site and Building to celebrate its important industrial history.

The results of the initial community engagement process clearly revealed a number of shared and critical priorities and issues that informed the Grand Trunk Master Plan.



Figure 22 ► Attendees at the Open House

Overall, the following key directions were developed to inform the draft Master Plan and were presented to City Council in September 2017:

- Preserve of a portion of the Grand Trunk Building as possible to celebrate the important industrial heritage of this critical site and as an opportunity for adaptive reuse of the structure as a community hub.
- Explore the development a Community Hub potentially to include the following uses: The YMCA, Cultural / community space (including flexible meeting rooms), student life / recreational space and small-scale retail and commercial uses supportive of above uses.
- Develop a central passive and green recreational space as a focus for the Community Hub and university/ community-related uses.
- Develop a fine-grained street and block network that promotes ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles.
- Introduce residential uses including University of Waterloo student housing, a range of mid-to-low density market-rate housing, and affordable and/or seniors housing.
- Seek opportunities for temporary / interim uses which will facilitate/accommodate longer-term economic development opportunities for the City.
- Integrate the proposed bus terminal logically as a key mobility hub and early site animator
- Call the community hub the “Grand Trunk Community Hub”
- Maintain the site’s important parking function for the Downtown. This function should be consolidated on the western portion of the site where cap-and-cover is the most realistic solution for environmental conditions
- Continue to strengthen existing partnerships between the University of Waterloo, the Stratford-Perth YMCA, the City of Stratford, and the constellation of community groups and organizations through ongoing communication and participation in the process of refining the Master Plan.
- Create a place that reflects Stratford’s community, values, and aspirations.
- Plan for both the short and the long-term, with flexibility to respond to change securing early “wins” such as the location of the transit terminal and short-term leasing opportunities while protecting opportunities for longer term investments.
- Pursue design excellence in open space and architectural execution to create a unique and cherished destination in Downtown Stratford.
- Signal the importance of the site/community hub by retaining a significant view corridor from the intersection of Downie Street and St. Patrick Street to the entrance of the Grand Trunk Community Hub and the repurposed Grand Trunk Building.
- Development will occur and be planned through a phased process.

## ► What We Heard - Further Consultation

On November 7, 2017 a second Public Open House was held at the University of Waterloo's Stratford Campus. At this Open House, the draft Master Plan which had been informed by the initial consultation was presented. The Open House was well attended, with approximately 120 - 150 community members in attendance. The interest in the Master Plan was evident with the following feedback provided:

- 23+ Feedback Forms received;
- 83+ Post-It notes with comments provided;
- 42+ unique comments received online; and
- 5+ direct emails received.

The feedback received on the draft Master Plan can generally be categorized into five themes, including:

- Built Form
- Use and Program
- Open Space / Recreation
- Transportation and Parking
- Sustainability

The majority of comments related to land use and program. Generally, feedback was positive on the uses and programs envisaged in the draft Master Plan. Specific comments were provided on new uses/programs, however, with a focus on community orientated uses. General support was provided for the built form outcome envisioned on the site, with building heights and massing supported.



Figure 23 ► Attendees at the second Open House

Other feedback reinforced many of the comments which had been provided in the initial consultation, such as the need for parking, desire for green open spaces, support for retaining the Grand Trunk building and support for sustainability initiatives. Several key comments which have been reinforced in the final Master Plan include:

- Desire to protect or reuse the 1907 ' west wall' to showcase the history of the site.
- Need to understand and manage the traffic implications of the street network, in particular to the St David neighbourhood.
- Need to consider safety at intersections as part of the Master Plan development.
- Desire for an integrated walking and bicycle network, with the new street network promoting sustainable travel choices.
- Need to accommodate a variety of interest and user groups, such as seniors, cultural groups and creative industries.
- Desire for sustainability initiatives to be explored and provided given the opportunities posed by the site.

Overall, there was positive community support for the draft Master Plan with feedback highlighting that the Plan was “visually appealing”, “progressive”, “impressive” and containing “lots of great features”. A range of feedback received was complementary of the process to date and similar to the initial consultation, there was strong support for the project to proceed as soon as possible so the full benefits could be realized.



Figure 24 ► Attendees and Panels at the second Open House

# THE GRAND TRUNK MASTER PLAN

The Grand Trunk site including the future Community Hub is envisioned to be a convergence of education, community, health, culture, entrepreneurship, and innovation; will aim to strengthen and diversify the Stratford economy, and provide spaces, places, services and amenities for both residents, students, businesses and visitors.

The vision for the Community Hub creates a cluster of uses that allow for a strong identity, sense of place, and centre of gravity for the Grand Trunk site, generating a critical mass of activity that appeals to a diverse cross-section of Stratford's population and businesses.

The purpose of the Grand Trunk Master Plan is to provide a flexible framework for reinvestment on the Site as well as inform further policy, capital program and partnerships necessary to implement the vision and development concept presented herein.

To establish a platform for regeneration and success, the Master Plan needs to address matters including land use, transportation, servicing and urban design.

The transformation of the Grand Trunk site, described in this Master Plan, is a city-building opportunity in the literal sense. Reinvestment on the site will complement the Downtown and fill in a void in the heart of Stratford, revitalizing a key site that was for most of the city's history a landmark and destination. Recognizing the sites' original role as a critical employer of Stratford residents, the Grand Trunk Community Hub will translate that function for the twenty-first century, providing space for community groups who enhance the city's quality of life, facilitating opportunities for learning, recreating, living, economic development and employment.



Figure 25 ► The Grand Trunk Master Plan - Demonstration Plan

Finally, the Grand Trunk Community Hub will continue to grow the Stratford brand and further position Stratford as a community that celebrates its industrial past and supports its contemporary manufacturing industry. The Hub will build off of the city's existing strengths in the arts and culture while supporting Stratford's diverse community and embracing the growth in digital and technology industries. From children and youth to students and seniors, the Hub will provide a range of intergenerational services reflecting the community's day to day needs while supporting the emerging creative class economy.

## ► The Essential Ingredients

As outlined in Chapter 4, a key driver of the Master Plan and future Community Hub has been a desire to address a variety of community needs, as well as City of Stratford purposes and objectives, including to accommodate the expansion and renewal of existing users of the site, namely the University of Waterloo and YMCA. These users will play an important role in the overall redevelopment of the site, anchoring the initial phases of redevelopment and providing ongoing activity and vibrancy to the site. Consideration has been given to City-wide and community-based needs and opportunities for complementary and shared uses in the short and longer term and to accommodate flexibility. The program that has informed this Master Plan includes:

- Expanding the University of Waterloo, including a mix of academic uses, student housing, student living and incubator space.
- Relocating and upgrading the YMCA, replacing current facilities and including a day-care facility.
- Retaining a proportion of car parking and allowing for a more efficient approach to parking.
- Including potential new uses on the site, such as seniors recreation, community-based arts, culture and creative spaces, library-related facilities, private and affordable housing, learning and education space, businesses, offices, studios and short-term accommodation.
- Accommodating new investment to the Block in incubator, business and private development interest.

## ► The Guiding Principles

The following planning and development principles emerged as a synthesis of the background review of the site; its history; the policy framework; the opportunities and constraints identified during the technical review; and the feedback provided by Stratford residents, community groups, and other participants in the community engagement process:

- 1 Celebrate the history of the site by adaptively reusing portions of the original building and site as the Grand Trunk Community Hub.
- 2 Create a place that reflects Stratford's community, values, and aspirations.
- 3 Introduce a fine-grained street and block network that weaves the site into the City of Stratford, is pedestrian friendly and creates development blocks to accommodate future uses.
- 4 Establish a range of passive and green public spaces, anchored by a central, all season gathering commons.
- 5 Retain and enhance the significant view corridor at Downie and St. Patrick Streets as the entry portal to the Grand Trunk building and site.
- 6 Integrate a new transit terminal into the site to enhance mobility and transportation options for Stratford.
- 7 Explore the convergence and integration of program, activity and actors to establish a successful Community Hub.
- 8 Encourage complementary land uses, such as student and senior living, incubator space, residential, community-based recreation and cultural and hotel uses that can contribute to the long term prosperity of Stratford.
- 9 Demonstrate design excellence and sustainability in built form, public spaces, program and cultural landscapes.
- 10 Create a reinvestment framework that can accommodate phased development over time while providing certainty and accountability to the Stratford community and other partners.



Figure 26 ► Rendered view of the Grand Trunk Demonstration Plan

## ► Demonstrating the Potential Outcome

While the Master Plan establishes a flexible framework for reinvestment, it has been necessary to demonstrate how this framework may be implemented. In order to illustrate a potential implementation of the Master Plan, a demonstration plan has been developed, as illustrated in Figure 26 below.

This demonstration plan has been used throughout this report to illustrate a potential outcome using the framework layers and key directions of the Master Plan. It should be noted that the detailed development phases to be progressed under the Master Plan will be further refined in an ongoing manner and may differ from the demonstration plan shown.



## ► Key Elements

The Grand Trunk Master Plan is a flexible framework designed to guide the phased reinvestment of the site and allow for an efficient, sustainable and logical progression of development to achieve the highest quality outcome for the City of Stratford.

Within this reinvestment framework there are distinct opportunities and directions, brought together and framed as Key Elements. These Key Elements will be important to the success of the Community Hub. The Key Elements include:

- Celebrating Stratford's history through adaptively re-use portions of the Grand Trunk Building.
- Facilitating a community hub of: learning, education, health, culture, recreation, innovation, entrepreneurialism, community and living.
- Expanding and enriching the University of Waterloo Campus to increase the academic offering.
- Rebuilding and enhancing the YMCA facilities.
- Integrating the new Stratford bus terminal.
- Creating a fine grain of streets and blocks.
- Extending the street pattern to connect the site into Stratford and surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Creating The Common as a place of confluence and gathering of different users of the site.
- Introducing the Grant Trunk Spine as a visual and pedestrian connection.
- Attracting and unlocking private investment.
- Allowing for innovative parking solutions.

In addition to the Key Elements, the Master Plan identifies five site-wide structuring 'layers' that will contribute to transforming the site from its underutilized condition to a vibrant part of Stratford. The overall guiding principles, transformative vision and key elements will be important in achieving this vibrancy. The Master Plan is structured to address and provide directions for each of the following site-wide layers:

1. Streets and Blocks
2. Public Realm and Open Space
3. Use and Built Form
4. Mobility, Parking and Servicing
5. Sustainability



Figure 27 ► The Grand Trunk Demonstration Plan



### The Vision for Transformation

The Grand Trunk Community Hub is envisioned to be a convergence of education, community, entrepreneurship, and innovation to strengthen and diversify the Stratford economy, providing services and amenities for both residents and visitors. The Hub will create a cluster of uses, programs and activities that create a strong identity, sense of place, and centre of gravity for the Grand Trunk Site and Building, expanding and connecting to the existing Downtown. It will generate a critical mass of activity that appeals to a diverse cross-section of Stratford's population.

The Grand Trunk Community Hub will be active throughout the day, on weekends, and in all seasons. With clusters of academic, learning, community and living uses, there will never be a dull moment. The Hub will be at the heart of the site and will provide something for everyone: green space for relaxing picnics, a gym for the fitness-inclined, meeting space for engaged groups, work rooms for busy students, child care services for dotting parents, and parking for hardworking employees. The Hub will be a "third place", not work, not home, for all of Stratford.

## ► Streets and Blocks

The Grand Trunk Master Plan seeks to establish a framework for a logical and hierarchical street network and block layout. The future design of the street network should encourage the phased reinvestment of the Grand Trunk site and establish flexible development blocks for phased delivery. A key basis of the Master Plan is to reconnect the site into the surrounding Stratford centre, overcoming issues of isolation and scale which have restricted the potential of the Grand Trunk site. Also central to the anticipated street network and block layout is the integration of the new bus terminal, enhancing mobility and transportation options for Stratford.

### The Street Network

The anticipated street network is designed to create logical connections to surrounding streets and increase porosity and linkages through the site. A new north-south central road is anticipated, providing a spine through the heart of the Grand Trunk site and connecting St Patrick and St David Streets. From this, a finer grain street network will be achievable through connecting secondary roads /routes and pedestrian paths. The anticipated street network, illustrated in the potential Street Network at Figure 28, is flexible and would allow for phasing of redevelopment and delivery.

The final design and composition of streets will be developed further as the Master Plan is implemented in consultation with key stakeholders. In the development of the final design of the future street network, all potential traffic and safety considerations should be assessed and managed, including the range of traffic distribution from the site to surrounding streets. Overall, a high quality street design should be delivered for each new street, consistent with the technical standards of the City of Stratford.

### Block Layout

Logical and flexible development blocks are able to be created as a result of the street plan layout. These development blocks have been carved from the larger Grand Trunk site, creating a fine grain structure and enabling reinvestment to occur in a phased manner.

The development blocks devised under this Master Plan, as shown in the potential Block Layout in Figure 29, are overall positioned and sized to allow for a range of built forms, land uses, programs, activities and publicly accessible landscaped spaces.

A key opportunity offered by this street network and block layout is the ability for the University of Waterloo to grow in a contiguous manner, with the ultimate phasing of this expansion to be determined by the needs of the University. Another key opportunity has been the creation of a substantial block for the adaptively reused and rejuvenated Grand Trunk Building as intended under the Master Plan. The size of this block will ensure that the Community Hub can be an anchor for the site, not only in the form of the Grand Trunk Building, but also as a collection of new buildings and landscaped spaces around the rejuvenated building.

Street frontage opportunities for future buildings are able to be maximized in the blocks to promote activation. Ample opportunity for access, both pedestrian and vehicular, should be created through the block layout which would allow for flexibility in the future uses and built form outcomes on each block.

### Key Directions

- ***Establish a new internal street network as an extension of the existing surrounding streets, weaving the site into Downtown Stratford and ensuring seamless connectivity.***
- ***Focus on the development of a finer grain street network which allows for greater permeability through the large site and promotes pedestrian movements.***
- ***Ensure all traffic and safety considerations are addressed and managed in the design of the future street network.***
- ***Create logical, well-proportioned and flexible development blocks to facilitate reinvestment and accommodate a range of built forms and land uses.***
- ***Optimize the available frontage for each block to key streets, in turn allowing for an animated and active built form which addresses the street.***

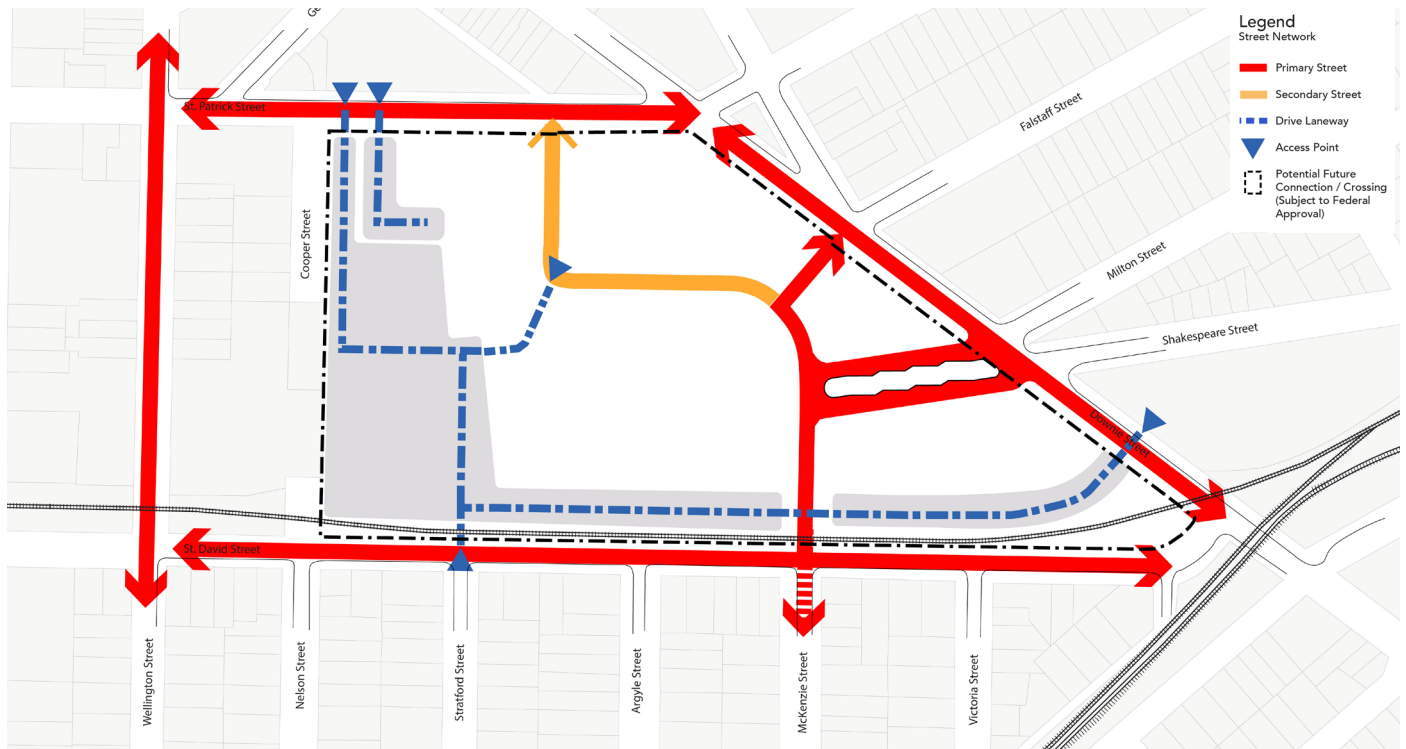


Figure 28 ► Potential Street Network



Figure 29 ► Potential Block Layout

## ► Public Realm and Open Space

A mix of green passive and recreational spaces are envisioned in the Master Plan to enhance the public realm, offering a complementary setting to the rejuvenated Grand Trunk Building and ensuring a dynamic atmosphere is created for the Grand Trunk Community Hub. These public spaces have been shown as part of the demonstration plan (refer to Figure 30).

A core public realm element envisioned in the Master Plan is the Grand Trunk Spine, a central public space which enhances the prominent vista connecting St Patrick / Downie Street to the Grand Trunk Building.

New open spaces should be attractive, inspirational, cultural and focus on place making; promoting meeting, gathering and physical recreational activities which contribute to the Community Hub and reflect the values of the Stratford community.

Overlapping and well-proportioned public spaces are anticipated to be delivered on the Grand Trunk site, integrating into a green and connected network and reflecting their purpose and immediate context. These spaces may include The Grand Trunk Spine, The Common, the YMCA forecourt, the Bus Terminal Plaza and the adjoining streetscapes as shown in the Public Realm and Open Space in Figure 30.

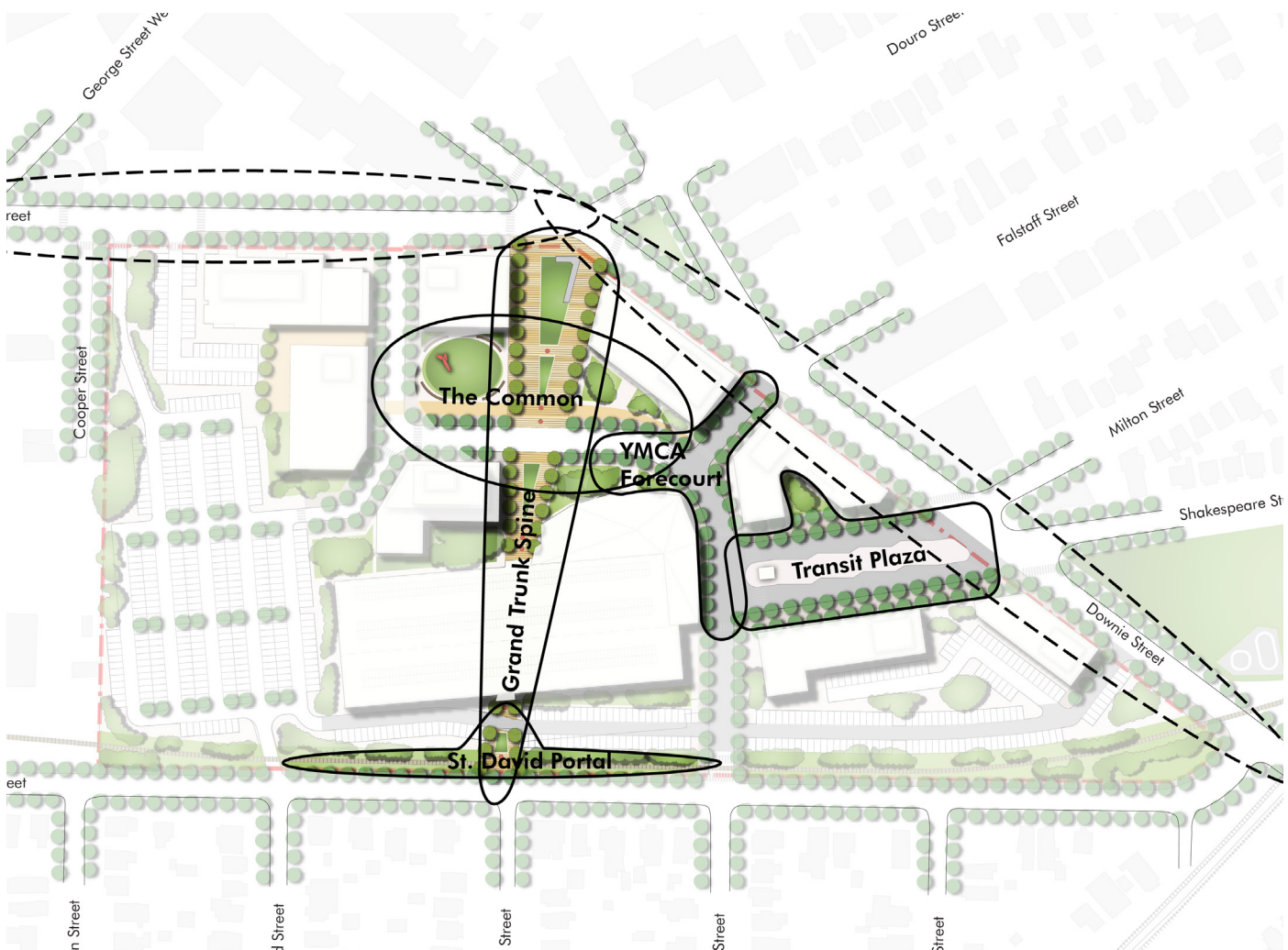


Figure 30 ► Public Realm and Open Space

Whilst likely associated with separate users and potentially under different ownerships, these spaces are envisaged to be publicly accessible, encouraging interaction amongst all users and visitors to the site.

Public realm design, including streetscape design, should be of a high quality, celebrating the site's history and contributing to greening of the block. The public realm and all open spaces should be designed to be inclusive and accessible to all users. The future design should also focus on sustainable initiatives, in particular when designing features associated with on-site water management, lighting, etc. Existing features of the site should also be incorporated where possible in the landscape design, such as the 1907 'west wall' and other historic railway features.

Enriching the public domain should be opportunities for public art, both permanently and temporarily. Public art should reflect the range of different site users and visitors, facilitating greater connections between all users of the open space to be delivered. The qualities of the separate spaces envisioned are described further below.

### **The Grand Trunk Spine**

The Grand Trunk Spine is envisioned as a public space and critical view corridor through the site from the corner of St Patrick / Downie Streets to St David Street. The Spine is both a journey and a destination connecting the Downtown and the St Davids neighbourhood with the Hub. This space would allow for a new vista, showcasing the rejuvenated Grand Trunk Building and welcoming visitors into the site.

### **The Common**

The Grand Trunk Common, an all season gathering place, should provide a green heart to the Block, creating a beautiful space that showcases the new Community Hub and anchors community interaction. The landscaping of the Common should include historical interpretations of the site's history, such as representations of the old railway tracks or key buildings which once operated on the site. A strongly defined quadrangle could be achieved in part of The Common, contributing to the institutional presence of the University and enhancing student life.

### **The YMCA Forecourt**

Providing an address and green threshold to the signature building, the YMCA Forecourt could be a space where building form and landscaping can be truly integrated. The YMCA Forecourt would assist in bringing visitors into the site and providing a strong setting for the signature YMCA building as a key component of the Grand Trunk Community Hub.

### **The Bus Terminal Plaza**

The Bus Terminal Plaza will be important in providing an attractive centrepiece to the new bus terminal located on the site. A landscaped setting should be provided to the northern and southern edges of the plaza, allowing for an attractive transition between the functional bus terminal and the future development blocks.

### **St Patrick and Downie Streetscapes**

The streetscape design of both St Patrick and Downie Streets should be of a high quality and create a green edge to the Grand Trunk site. A consistent language should be applied in the streetscape design internally to the Grand Trunk site, and into these prominent existing streets.

### **Key Directions**

- ***Provide a series of vibrant, connected and diverse green spaces, such as the Grand Trunk Spine, The Grand Trunk Common, the YMCA Forecourt and the Bus Terminal Plaza.***
- ***Retain and enhance the significant view corridor from Downie and St. Patrick Streets to the Grand Trunk Building, creating a central public open space.***
- ***Ensure new buildings address and animate the landscaped and public spaces.***
- ***Design new open spaces to be attractive, inspiring and publicly accessible.***
- ***Achieve a high quality and sustainable streetscape design that effectively connects the Grand Trunk site into the Downtown and surrounding neighbourhoods.***

## ► Land Use and Built Form

### Clustering Uses

Fundamental to the Grand Trunk Master Plan is the integration and convergence of a variety of uses, programs and activities, with a focus on expanding the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus. Further, the existing YMCA is anticipated to be relocated and enhanced to capitalize on its success in the local community and to build on the rich history of the site and Stratford. The University of Waterloo and the YMCA will play an important role in facilitating a true convergence of use, with a desire to achieve the comingling of spaces and programs, with all users working towards a shared outcome of a vibrant Community Hub.

A centrepiece of the site transformation is the adaptive reuse and expansion of portions of the Grand Trunk building as a Community Hub as possible – a representation of the historic, yet through adaptive reuse, new Stratford. This Hub will act as an anchor for the site and a touch point for the wider Stratford community, allowing for a celebration of Stratford’s history from the arrival of rail in 1856 to the present day values and character of Stratford’s people.

Complementary uses which contribute to the creation of a Community Hub on the Grand Trunk site will be provided in new well-designed buildings.

Such potential uses may include: facilities for community and indoor recreation activities; parks and open space; public uses and infrastructure; community gardens; retail; cultural, entertainment and performance, dining and hotel accommodation; residential such as student and senior living; incubator space, parking.

As the Master Plan progresses, these new uses will be spread across the site to capture the value proposition offered and allow for the creation of a vibrant new community where uses are not only integrated, but co-dependent on each other.

Whilst the intention is to encourage integration and convergence of uses across the site, the Master Plan envisions several ‘use clusters’ as illustrated in the Land Use and Program Map in Figure 31:

- Academic and Learning
- Community Hub
- Living
- Shared Parking

These use clusters are a starting point for structuring future buildings and uses across the site. The final layout and arrangement of buildings and uses will be the subject of further consideration as the Master Plan develops.

### Key Directions

- ***Encourage the integration of uses, program and activities, both horizontally and vertically across the site and within blocks.***
- ***Promote a range of land uses that foster the convergence of education, community, health, culture, entrepreneurship, innovation and economic prosperity.***
- ***Recognize and foster through complementary land uses four areas of focus: Grand Trunk Community Hub: Academic and Learning; Living; and Parking.***
- ***Design the built form to create intensification opportunities that are sensitive to the surrounding community while encouraging reinvestment of this important site.***
- ***Animate and activate the site and public realm through building design and placement of active at-grade uses.***
- ***Seek to achieve design excellence and sustainability in buildings, infrastructure and public realm design.***

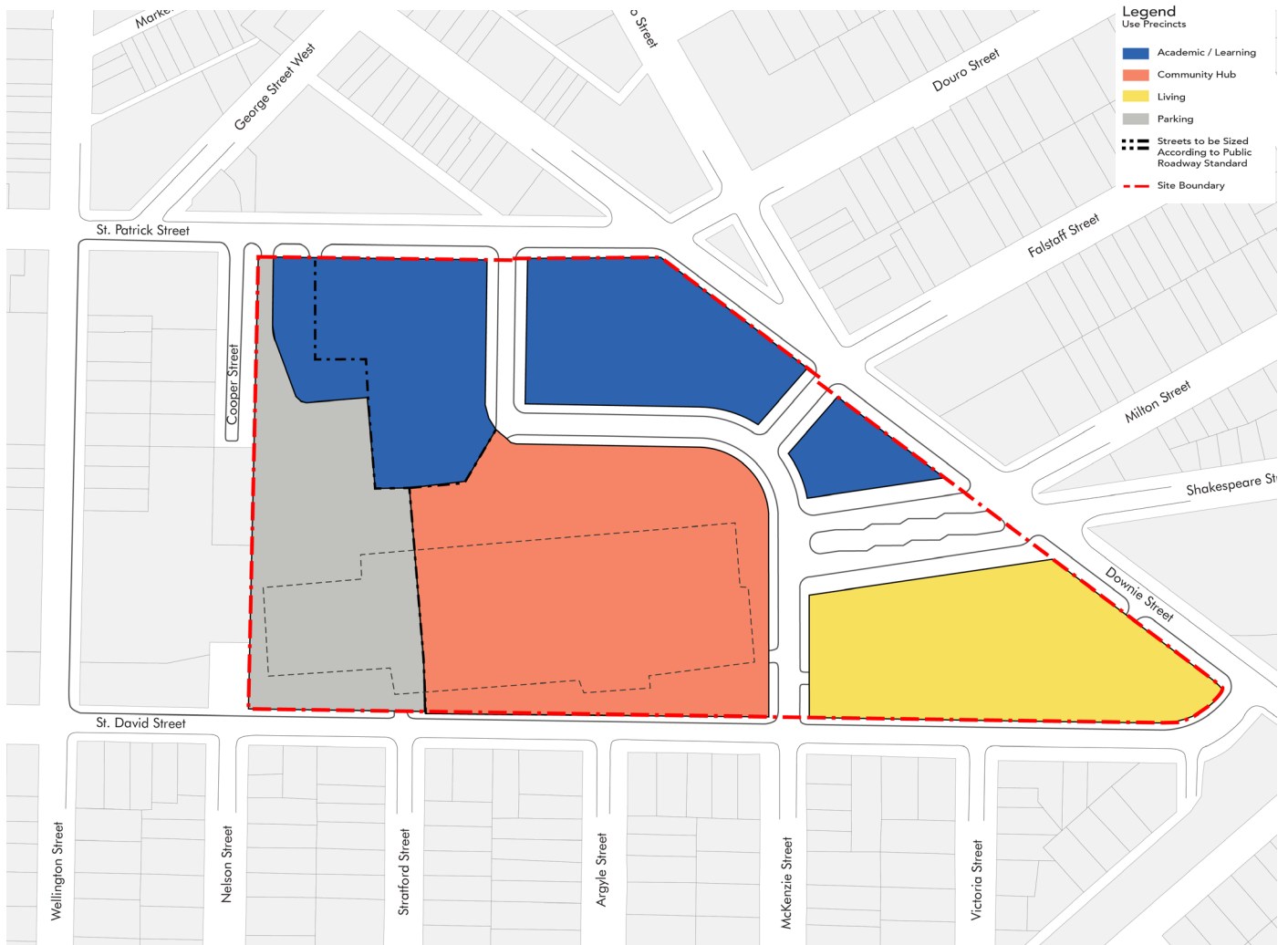


Figure 31 ► Land use and Program Map



Figure 32 ► A render of the potential signature building and rejuvenated Grand Trunk Building

## **Built Form**

The Master Plan anticipates design excellence and sustainability to be achieved in all new buildings, programs, activities and open spaces. New buildings should be positioned on blocks to engage with ground level landscaping and the building design must contribute to and animate the wider public realm. Three distinct use and program clusters have been created under the Master Plan as illustrated in Figure 31 on the previous page, including the Academic and Learning Cluster, Community Hub Cluster and Living Cluster. Anticipated heights of buildings are illustrated on the Building Height Map in Figure 33.

### **The Grand Trunk Community Hub Cluster**

The Grand Trunk Community Hub ‘block’ is anchored around a revitalized Grand Trunk building, intended to be adaptively reused where possible for community-driven and economic development purposes. The adaptive reuse of this building could be similar to Wychwood Barns, where a portion of the building was required to be demolished, but remaining portions were retained and upgraded. The staging and progress of the adaptive reuse will allow for opportunities for temporary and/or interim uses which do not preclude longer-term economic development initiatives and the overall prosperity of community activities. This building will be able to be better appreciated through the retention of the important vista from the corner of St Patrick / Downie Street to the rejuvenated building.

Other new buildings on this block may include a relocated YMCA and a new building that allows for complementary economic development uses. These complementary uses may potentially include learning, educational, hotel, or seniors/student living. The exact arrangement and location of these buildings on the block will be subject to further design investigation. Despite the final arrangement and location of these buildings, it is important that activation of building edges occurs to all key streets and public spaces.

The existing height of the Grand Trunk building should be retained, while any new signature addition to this building could reach a height of three storeys. It is anticipated that the third building on this block may be three storeys, but additional height could be explored as illustrated in the demonstration plan at Figure 33. Further urban design analysis would be required for any additional height sought and this would be subject to required planning approvals.

## **Academic and Learning Cluster**

Initially, the existing University of Waterloo building could be expanded on the same block, with an immediate addition to this building plus further built form, either in a connected structure or separate building. A contiguous expansion of the University could then occur across the St Patrick and Downie Street frontages, allowing for the University to increase their presence and achieve key requirements such as providing modern learning spaces, a new quadrangle, satisfying car parking demands and allowing for opportunities for living/complementary University uses, programs and activities. The ultimate design and placement of buildings for the University will be driven by their exact requirements and should be developed over time. A generally consistent height of three storeys would be anticipated for the University buildings, except in the block to the north of the Bus Terminal where four storeys could be achieved (refer to Figure 33). Activation should be focused at a minimum to St Patrick Street, Downie Street and new internal streets.

### **The Living Cluster**

Complementary to the expanded university campus and new Community Hub on the site is an opportunity for residential buildings, allowing for the injection of new site users and increasing the sense of ownership for the Grand Trunk site. Residential buildings could include such complimentary uses as student residences or student housing, seniors housing, private residential and affordable rental housing. Residential opportunities in the form of lower rise housing could be explored on the south-eastern block, achieving a built form relationship with the educational development anticipated on the northern side of the bus terminal. Height in this portion of the Block is expected to be a maximum of four storeys, as illustrated on Figure 33. Activation and interaction with the surrounding streets is expected in any future residential buildings.



**Figure 33** ▶ Building Height Map based on the Demonstration Plan



**Figure 34** ▶ Extracts of building scales from the Demonstration Plan

## ► Mobility, Parking and Servicing

### Mobility

Improved mobility has been at the forefront of the Master Plan, with an aim to connect users and visitors of the site to Downtown Stratford and the surrounding neighbourhoods. A goal of the Master Plan is to maximize the vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian permeability of the site, as illustrated in the Mobility Plan at Figure 35. This is expected to be achieved both internally, and to the immediately adjoining transit network, through the delivery of key access points at the site edges and through the extension of McKenzie Street (desired), Falstaff and Shakespeare/Milton Streets into the Grand Trunk site. The key access points will be logical and connect new streets and pathways to the existing streets in Stratford, as shown in Figure 35.

Both vehicle and cyclist movements should be accommodated within the new street network. Bus movements through the site are anticipated to be concentrated around the Bus Terminal, and whilst buses may use the wider street network, they should largely be contained within a small portion of the Master Plan.

The showcase movement of integrating the new bus terminal as a key component of the street network will be important to the success of the Master Plan.

This bus terminal will play a pivotal role in the transport connectivity of Stratford. Importantly, potential conflicts between buses, vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians should be avoided through the provision of a pedestrian pathway network internally within the site, allowing for a clear separation of these movements.

Pedestrian movements into, through and from the site will be important and it is recommended that further investigations are carried out to identify safe and attractive pedestrian routes to nearby attractions, such as Market Square to the north and the Via Rail Canada station to the east. Pedestrian paths from the bus terminal should be determined to ensure seamless and safe connectivity between the new terminal and the remainder of Stratford, in particular, at substantial intersections where vehicles and pedestrian conflicts may occur.

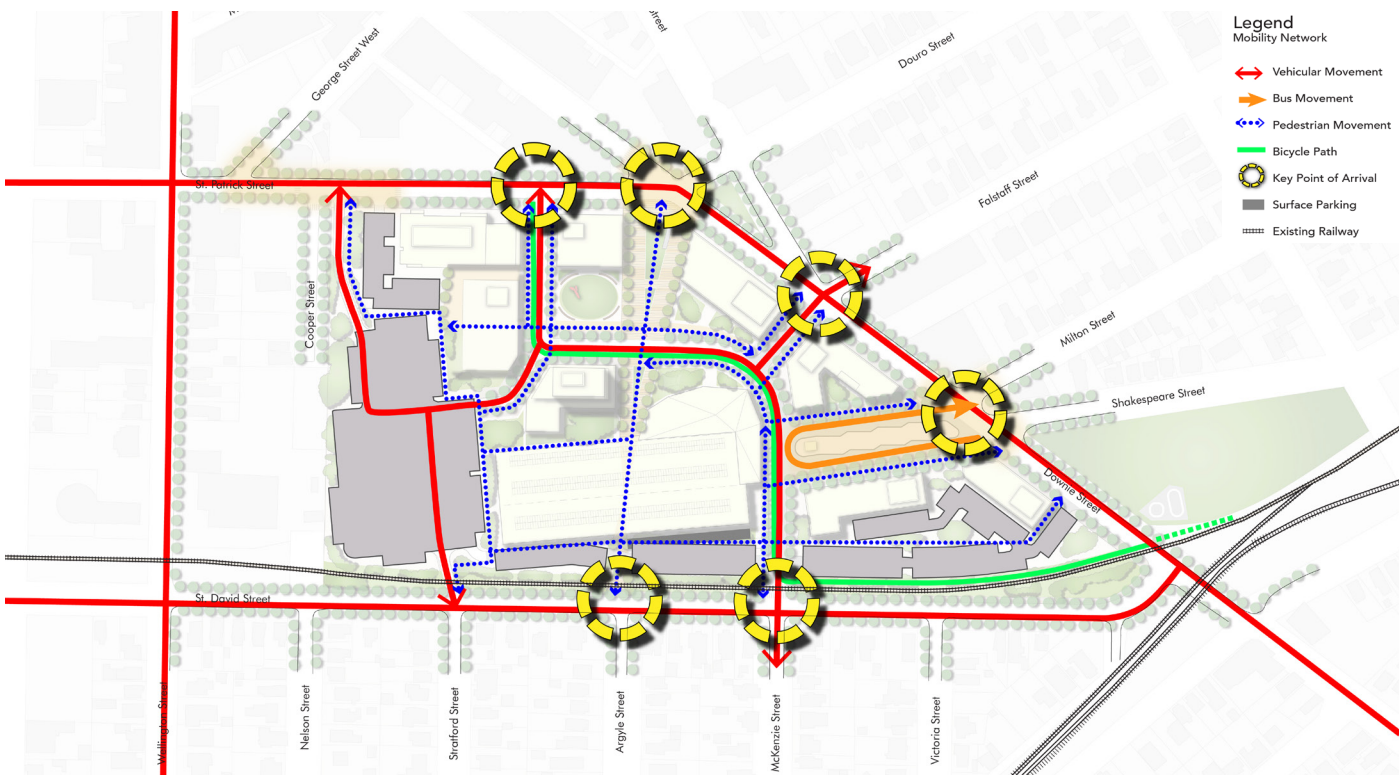


Figure 35 ► Mobility Plan based on the anticipated street network

## Parking

Car parking within the Grand Trunk site should continue to play a role in servicing Downtown Stratford, as well as accommodating the needs of new users of the site. Parking provision is anticipated to evolve with the ongoing redevelopment of the Master Plan to reflect advancements in technology, such as Autonomous Vehicles, and to directly accommodate shifting demands. Flexibility and an adaptive management strategy should be adopted. It is anticipated that parking spaces could be shared across uses as the Master Plan develops. The basis of this sharing arrangement would be that different times of demand could be accommodated for different uses, maximizing the value of spaces and rationalizing the total number of spaces.

Under the Master Plan, parking is anticipated in the western portion of the site, reflective of constraining environmental conditions where a ‘cap-and-cover’ remediation strategy is required. Parking should also be situated along the southern boundary, within the 30 metre setback required to the adjoining railway infrastructure. This parking will be visible from surrounding streets, ensuring easy access and use.

The anticipated car parking strategy, illustrated in Figure 36, allows for approximately 850 spaces in the ultimate built-out situation, providing a higher number of spaces than the current 605 available on site. Additional temporary parking opportunities will be available throughout the phased development of the Master Plan.



Figure 36 ► Potential car parking strategy

## Servicing

Preliminary investigations have identified that the site is currently connected to a number of services. Servicing of the future uses under the Master Plan should therefore be carried out through amplifying / extending existing available infrastructure, or implementing new infrastructure as required. Loading/unloading points for the future uses should not conflict with any traffic movements and should be as close as possible to building entries. Ideally, loading/unloading activities will be undertaken off the street network.

### Key Directions

- **Promote the safety and ease-of-movement to, within and from the site for buses, vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.**
- **Design key entry points to maximize safety, accessibility, promote pedestrian movements and to celebrate arrival.**
- **Introduce and integrate the Bus Terminal as an early animator, enhancing the mobility and transportation options for Stratford.**
- **Plan for the extension of McKenzie Street, Falstaff and Shakespeare/Milton Streets into the Grand Trunk site to strengthen connectivity to surrounding neighbourhoods. Potential traffic implications should be fully assessed during the planning phase of these extensions, including traffic infiltration impacts to surrounding neighbourhoods.**
- **Promote shared and phased parking solutions to address on-site needs and contribute to Downtown supply.**
- **Address environmental conditions of the site through strategic deployment of land use and localized mitigation strategies.**
- **Advocate for new crossings of the railway line to increase access to the site.**

## ► Sustainability

A benchmark development should be achieved on the site, not only providing exemplary design standards in built form and landscape features, but also in environmental sustainability, aligning with the Provincial Climate Change Strategy. Appropriate targets should be established for new development, such as aiming for a reduced carbon footprint. These targets could be achieved through a number of means, such as the adaptive reuse of the Grand Trunk building, the provision of solar panels, opportunities for electric charging stations and the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure that encourages more sustainable modes of travel.

Environmental stewardship is a core element of the Master Plan, both in terms of resolving past issues due to site uses and looking to the future to establish a new standard for sustainability in Stratford. The long history of the site and its past use for industrial rail purposes has an unfortunate consequence of environmental contamination over parts of the site. With this in mind, a comprehensive remediation strategy should be developed to overcome past contamination and ensure the site is suitable for the range of new uses. Where environmental conditions are most limiting, it could be decided to provide surface parking, allowing for a feasible solution of remediation in the form of 'cap-and-cover'. New developments under the Master Plan should focus on the development of green infrastructure to utilize low impact development (LID) solutions. LID solutions should be considered in the design of all landscaping and built form components of the site

The site, with its significant size and redevelopment opportunities, provides a once in a generation chance to implement new technologies and endeavour to achieve a highly sustainable outcome. Innovative design and sustainable excellence are priorities of the Master Plan and should be further explored in the development of the separate blocks.

### *Key Directions*

- *Foster sustainable development and environmental stewardship in all new buildings, public realm and infrastructure.*
- *Resolve the effects of past uses and the resulting current environmental conditions through a detailed environmental strategy.*
- *Promote design excellence and encourage demonstration and innovation in sustainable redevelopment.*
- *Establish and monitor targets to address climate change and environmental conditions on the site.*



**Figure 37** ▶ Examples of simple and effective sustainable measures (permeable paving: top left, electric recharge station: top right, green roof: bottom)

## ► Phasing

The transformation of the Grand Trunk site is expected to take place in phases and over time. Phasing of the Master Plan is important to ensure that reinvestment is able to occur at a pace consistent with market conditions, the City's objectives, and the needs of various users, including the YMCA and University of Waterloo. The initial phase of the Master Plan, following the development of the bus terminal, is anticipated to deliver the beginnings of the overarching street and block layout and the Community Hub, facilitating the future delivery of separate phases in a discrete and variable manner. Flexibility has been at the forefront of the Master Plan design and various phasing combinations for reinvestment are available despite the strategy outlined below. As such, the phasing diagrams illustrated in Figure 38 are indicative only.

Key principles of the phasing strategy include:

- Allowing for the continuous operation of the YMCA throughout the redevelopment, with operations transitioning from the existing building to the new building with no displacement issues or reduction of services/activities.
- Optimization of the ability for different uses, programs and activities to interact and converge on shared spaces, both within the public domain and future built form.
- Maximizing transitional opportunities such as utilizing future development blocks for temporary uses, including car parking to support the initial phases of development (both for operational and construction activities)

The phasing strategy will include the following elements:

### **The Community Hub Phase**

The Community Hub phase is envisaged to include the introduction of the bus terminal and the intended adaptive reuse of portions of the Grand Trunk building to house the new YMCA and complementary convergence and gathering spaces. Programatically, this may include the new YMCA facilities, recreation, student life space, incubator, meeting and performance space. Together these moves could create the nucleus of the Community Hub. Together this program approximates 100,000 square feet of adaptively reused and new gross floor area, new street connections and parking spaces.

### **Academic Expansion Phase(s)**

Other phases anticipate the expansion of the academic and learning focused blocks with the addition of new academic space, student housing and public spaces such as the Grand Trunk Spine and Grand Trunk Common. These phases will come forward along with funding and partnerships needed to implement these complementary uses.

### **Development Partner Phase(s)**

Several blocks offer an opportunity to partner with private sector developers to deliver a range of uses, programs and activities including student housing, seniors housing, residential, hotel, office, commercial and community amenities such as daycare. Potential sites for this partnership are identified on the Phasing Strategy map but are not limited to these solely. Full build out of the site may also be accompanied by the introduction of a parking structure at the west end of the Master Plan.

### The Community Hub



### Academic Expansion Phases



### Development Partner Phases



Figure 38 ► Indicative phasing options

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The creation of the Grand Trunk Master Plan and Community Hub is a once in a generation opportunity for the community of Stratford. This landmark and historic site will be reborn as the heart of the city, building on the success of the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus and the legacy of the YMCA. The new Community Hub will be a place where residents and visitors of all ages can access services, start businesses, and explore the history of the city.

The City of Stratford is eager to advance the development of the site. In order to realize the vision of the Grand Trunk Master Plan, the following actions are anticipated:

- Formalize the partnerships with the University of Waterloo, the Stratford-Perth YMCA, and other partners, for Phase 1 implementation.
- Explore opportunities for partnerships with other organizations and businesses.
- Advocate to senior levels of government with a view to secure partner funding.
- Implement the Bus Terminal as an early animator of the site.
- Understand the flow through traffic implications of the anticipated street network, in particular to the St David neighbourhood.
- Complete the environmental due diligence process as required.
- Undertake more detailed investigations on the potential for adaptively reusing all or portions of the grand trunk building. If deemed possible and appropriate from further investigations, prepare detailed engineering and building design for the adaptive reuse of the Grand Trunk Building and YMCA facility.
- Implement first phases of site preparation including environmental remediation and Grand Trunk building stabilization.
- Establish targets for sustainable development as relevant to the Climate Change Action Strategy.
- Engage the community in public realm design / conceptual design processes.

Overall, the Master Plan provides a vision and key principles to guide the transformation of the site. If ever enacted in respect of the site, the requirements of OPA 21 would also be satisfied by the Master Plan. A focus on community, learning, living, economic development and prosperity is born through this Master Plan and these values will be key to the ongoing redevelopment of the site.



Figure 39 ► The Grand Trunk Community Hub Concept Bird's Eye Rendering

