



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

Introduction4

The Case Studies6

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.

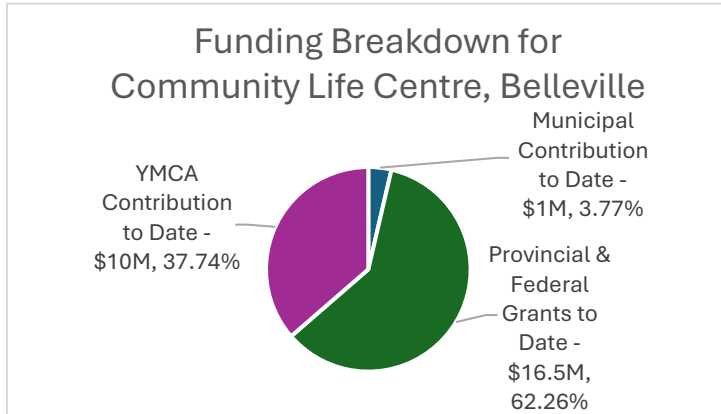
Third-Party Facilities

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

* 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

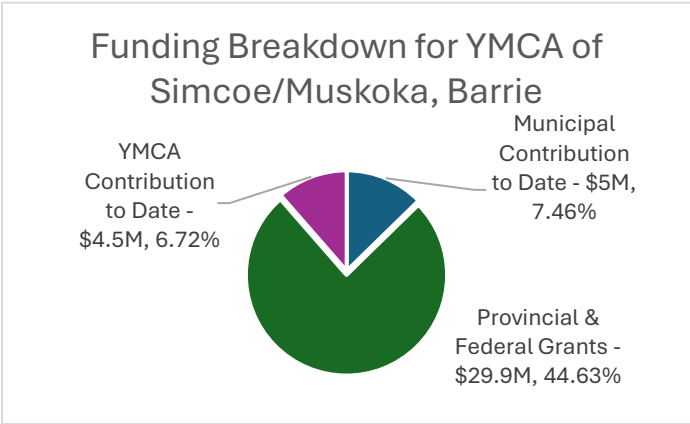
(Census Metropolitan Area population 111,184), with an average age of 44.5. Males comprise 48.4% of the population, while females comprise 51.6%. Locals over 65 represent the largest age group in Belleville (13,030 people), followed by those aged 55 to 64 (8,385 people). Belleville's population is mostly 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.

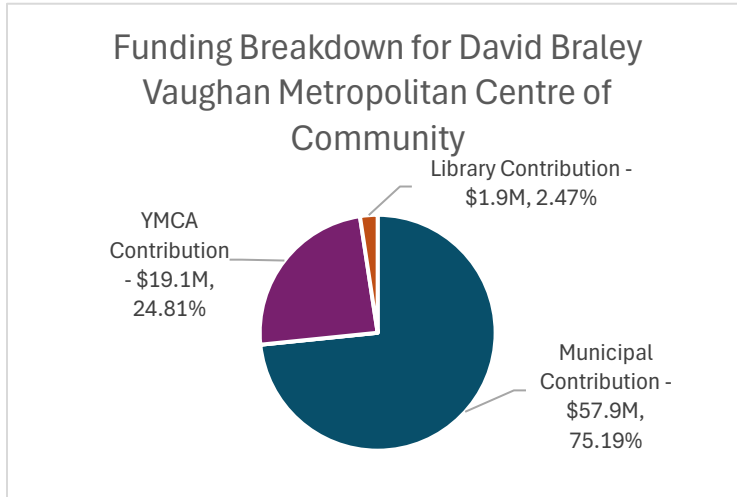
It is worth noting that the YMCA has signed a 50-year land lease with the City of Barrie for \$2 per year, with the opportunity for renewal; the land was not gifted in this instance. Regarding operations, the YMCA will be responsible for all activities, including the community kitchen and playground. 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)	
Funding Variables						
Total Cost	\$	77,000,000	\$	54,439,000	\$	12,800,000
Accounting for Inflation	\$	83,930,000	\$	65,871,190	\$	18,048,000
Total Municipal Contribution	\$	57,900,000	\$	42,859,000	\$	8,400,000
Municipal Contribution as a %		75.19%		78.73%		65.63%
Grants Contribution as a %		0.00%		0.00%		31.25%
YMCA Contribution as a %		24.81%		16.90%		3.13%
Library Contribution as a %		2.47%		8.37%		0.00%
Other Contribution as a %		0.00%		4.37%		0.00%
Square Footage		109,000		170,000		50,000
Cost per square foot (inclusive)	\$	770.00	\$	387.48	\$	360.96
Provincial Grants					\$	4,000,000
Federal Grants						
Library	\$	1,900,000	\$	4,556,000		
YMCA	\$	19,100,000	\$	9,200,000	\$	400,000
Other			\$	2,380,000		
Total Cost	\$	77,000,000	\$	54,439,000	\$	12,800,000

The David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community (2022)



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

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

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

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

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

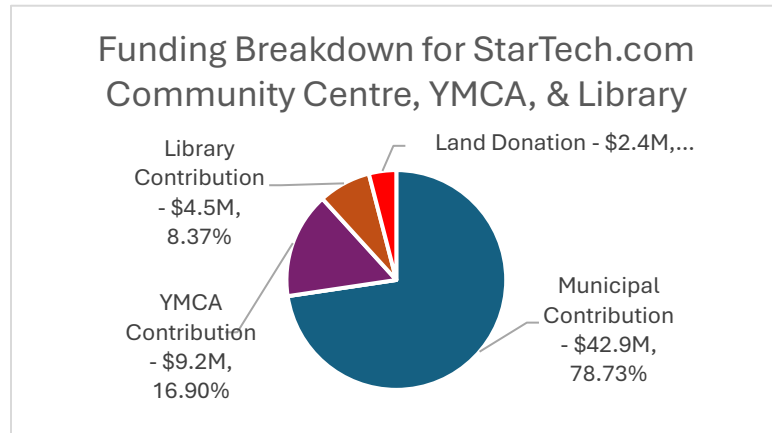
The municipally operated Vaughan Studios and Event Space is a 19,000-square-foot venue featuring a rooftop terrace. Its design embodies the contemporary urban lifestyle of the area and integrates cutting-edge, state-of-the-art amenities for the community, including:

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

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

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

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



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

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

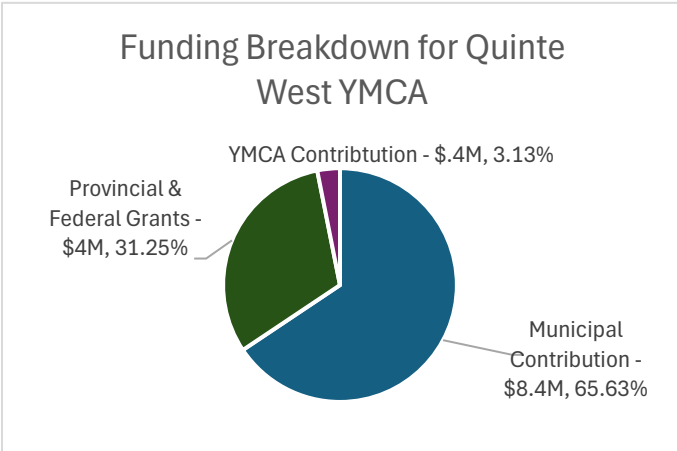
The **170,000-square-foot** project cost **\$54.5 million** or approximately **\$66 million** when accounting for inflation, equating to about **\$400 per square foot**, and was completed in 2018. The building's cost was shared among the municipality, the YMCA, and the library. Its construction represented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

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

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

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

Quinte West YMCA (2009)



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

landscape. Paired with a dynamic and forward-thinking community, it is an ideal place to call home and build a career. According to 2021 census information, Quinte West, ON, has a population of 46,560 residents, with an average age of 44. Males comprise 49.8% of the population, while females account for 50.2%. Locals aged 65 and older represent the largest age group in Quinte West, 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%.

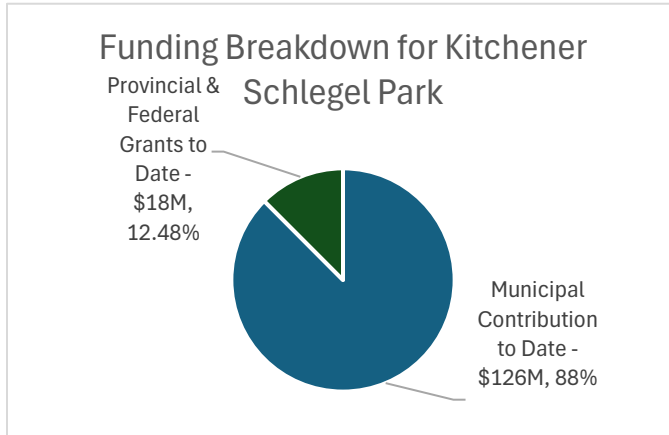
The **50,000-square-foot** project cost nearly **\$13 million** in 2009, or approximately **\$18 million** when adjusted for inflation, equating to roughly **\$360 per square foot**. To fund the project, the province invested over \$4 million in constructing the Quinte West YMCA, creating 32 construction 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)	
Funding Variables						
Total Cost	\$	143,820,000	\$	115,500,000	\$	78,000,000
Total Municipal Contribution	\$	125,869,416	\$	109,200,000	\$	56,500,000
Municipal Contribution as a %		88%		94.55%		72.44%
Grants Contribution as a %		12.48%		0.00%		22.44%
YMCA Contribution as a %		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%
Library Contribution as a %		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%
Other Contribution as a %		0.00%		5.45%		5.13%
Square Footage		211,500		160,000		113,640
Cost per square foot (inclusive)	\$	680.00	\$	721.88	\$	686.38
Provincial Grants	\$	8,100,000			\$	17,000,000
Federal Grants	\$	9,850,584			\$	500,000
Library						
YMCA						
Other			\$	6,300,000	\$	4,000,000
Total Cost	\$	143,820,000	\$	115,500,000	\$	78,000,000

Kitchener Schlegel Park (2026)



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

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

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

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

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

The new community complex will be Kitchener's first net-zero carbon building, 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.

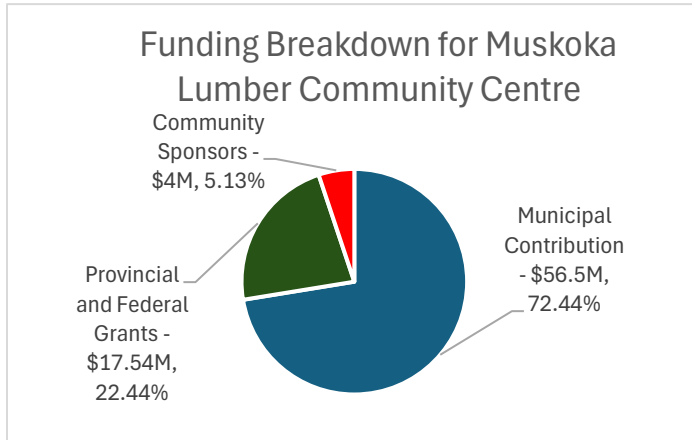
Intentionally created to promote a wider variety of sports and physical activities within the community, the new community space will feature:

- 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

References

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census - Perth \(Census division\)](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[City of Belleville](#)

[Land Acknowledgement | City of Barrie](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[StarTech_CommunityCentreYMCAandLibrary_15331.pdf](#)

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

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

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

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

[2018 Financial Report](#)

[eSCRIBE Agenda Package](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Guelph City Council Agenda Package](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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