



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: August 12, 2024
To: Mayor and Council
From: Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford & Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead
Report Number: COU24-086
Attachments: Appendix 1: Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee Workplan Update Q1- Q2 2024
Appendix 2: Q3-Q4 2024 Work Plan: Grand Trunk Renewal Business Case

Title: Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee Workplan & Update 2

Objective: To provide an update on the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee Q1 & Q2 2024 workplan and to consider the Committee's work plan for Q3 & Q4 2024.

Background:

About the Grand Trunk Renewal Workplans

At the February 12, 2024 Regular Council meeting, Council considered report COU24-015, which presented a workplan prepared by staff and the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee for the first half of 2024. Council directed staff and the Ad Hoc Committee to implement the 6-month workplan as presented. As a result of this workplan, Council considered a set of draft guiding principles for the Grand Trunk Renewal Project prepared by the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee on April 22, 2024 (COU24-041) and directed staff and the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee to use the as the basis for community consultation.

In addition to implementing the Q1-Q2 workplan directed by Council in February, the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee has worked concurrently to develop the workplan for Q3-Q4 202, which is presented in this report.

About the Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

At the October 11, 2022, Regular Council meeting, Council directed staff to develop terms of reference and composition of a Citizen's Advisory Committee to support the

development of the Grand Trunk Site, its architectural design, development, and fundraising. Subsequently, staff returned to Council with management reports articulating the Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee (FIN23-009), the appointment of the committee Chair (COU23-075 & COU23-089), and the appointment of committee members and the establishment of working groups (COU23-120).

Policy C.3.1 Council Appointed Advisory Committees articulates that the role of Council-appointed committees is to provide recommendations, advice, and information to City Council on specialized matters which pertain to the purpose of the Committee. While it is the legislative mandate of City Council to make final decisions on all matters that affect the municipality, citizen Committees play an important role in providing expert and resident input on City initiatives.

Analysis: To support the development of the Grand Trunk site, the Committee and staff have identified a significant objective for 2024-2025: the preparation of a complete business case for the Grand Trunk site. This business case will build on the 2018 Master Plan and provide recommendations and insights on key project components, including: vision and development principles, partnership models, financial modeling, community impact, financial implications, operating and capital pro forma budgets, and phasing. This business case will be presented to Council for consideration and provide Council with the analysis needed to make decisions regarding the site that might include the disposition of property, the procurement of development partner(s), investment of municipal funds, and the allocation of municipal resources.

The focus of the Q1-Q2 2024 workplan was to build on the 2018 Master Plan by considering the vision and key principles for the Grand Trunk Renewal project. While significant work was accomplished in 2018, this work required consideration in the current context. To this end the Committee worked together to develop a draft vision statement and set of guiding development principles. The Committee considered the findings of the 2018 Master Plan, recent plans and strategies adopted by the City of Stratford, current and emerging community issues, the learned and lived experience of committee members, feedback from Council and most importantly, insights from the community. This work included two large community events, and a series of community pop-ups to engage a wide range of Stratford residents. The outcome of this work, which will be brought forward to Council in the early fall offers a clear statement on the vision for the Grand Trunk Renewal project and set of priorities to guide its development.

Status Update: Q1-Q2 Workplan

In January, the initial phase of the project was successfully completed with the committee endorsing an engagement strategy proposed by the Vision, Planning, and Architecture Working Group. Moving into February, the development of draft guiding principles progressed well, and the review of the Terms of Reference was postponed to

allow further definition of the working group's efforts. Website content, key messages, and an extensive FAQ section were prepared and posted online.

March marked significant progress as the committee finalized the draft guiding principles, and the first community event, attended by approximately 130 people, provided valuable feedback and updates on the project. In April, the second community event drew around 120 attendees who learned about urban renewal projects from various cities. Council reviewed the draft guiding principles and directed the launch of further community engagement to refine these principles.

Although the scope of work for May was delayed, it was eventually completed in June. During this period, community engagement activities were designed, locations secured, and materials prepared. In June, the engagement activities were delivered, and the findings were synthesized to inform the vision and guiding principles. The community engagement findings, vision, and revised guiding principles were considered by the Committee on July 15, 2024 and will be brought forward to Council in a report in early September.

Another accomplishment is the development and installation of an interpretive banner at the Grand Trunk Site which was initiated by the Communications, Advocacy and Civic Engagement Working Group in partnership with the Stratford Perth Museum. The banner provides historical information on the Grand Trunk site and shares information about the renewal project.

Additional information on the status of the Q1-Q2 2024 Workplan can be found in Appendix 1.

Q3-Q4 Workplan

The Grand Trunk Renewal Business Case outlines a comprehensive plan to transform the Grand Trunk site through careful planning, community engagement, and strategic partnerships. The project will unfold in several key phases, each with specific objectives, tasks, and timelines to ensure the successful redevelopment of the site. The Q3-Q4 workplan was initially reviewed by the Committee on June 17th and again on July 15th. A summary of the workplan is provided below and details are available in Appendix 2.

1. Finalize Vision & Guiding Principles

Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives | Working Group: Vision, Planning & Architecture

The initial phase focuses on community outreach to gather insights, developing a vision statement, and revising guiding principles. These principles will be graphically represented and incorporated into procurement documents. A report will be prepared and delivered to the Committee and Council, followed by mechanisms to report back to the community.

2. Site Analysis & Environmental Assessment

Staff Lead: investStratford | Working Group: Environmental & Infrastructure

This phase involves analyzing existing site conditions and environmental status, identifying additional site assessment needs, and consulting with Indigenous communities. The team will develop strategies to achieve carbon neutrality and prepare for development.

3. Develop Key Partnership Model

Staff Leads: Corporate Initiatives & investStratford | Working Group: Partnership

A formal agreement for the construction and operation of a community recreation/amenity facility will be established. This includes conducting a needs assessment, collaborating with partners to define roles and space requirements, and developing a prioritized list of spaces and services. The team will outline financial requirements and establish legal agreements with partners.

4. Communications & Community Engagement

Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives | Working Group: Comms & Civic Engagement

Ongoing engagement activities will be conducted to activate the GTR site through placemaking interventions such as banners, events, art installations, and a pop-up garden. A communications plan will be implemented to keep the community informed.

5. Procurement/RFP Process and Legal Agreements Structure

Staff Lead: investStratford | Working Group: Finance and Real Estate

The team will develop a strategy for land disposition and partner selection, including recommendations for a competitive procurement process. They will create promotional materials, develop website content, and attract interest.

6. Financial & Real Estate Model

Staff Lead: investStratford | Working Group: Finance & Real Estate

This phase involves validating site capacity and program options, reviewing parking needs, developing a sales mix, and conducting market soundings. The team will articulate financial and real estate models for Council consideration.

7. Economic, Environmental, and Social Impact Analysis

Staff Leads: Corporate Initiatives & investStratford | Working Group: All

An impact analysis will be conducted to inform development scenarios and recommend preferred models. This will include economic, environmental, and social considerations.

8. Government Relations

Staff Lead: Corporate Initiatives & investStratford

The team will identify funding opportunities, key relationships, and engagements, and liaise with the Ministry of Environment on site conditions.

Anticipated Key Council Report Dates:

- August 2024: Council consideration of the work plan (this management report)
- September 2024: Council consideration of final vision & guiding principles
- October 2024: Council consideration of Key Partnership Model
- November 2024: Council consideration of committee recommendations for development models

This structured approach ensures that each phase of the project is planned and executed, with regular updates and community involvement to achieve a successful and sustainable redevelopment of the Grand Trunk site.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There are funds available in the 2024 City Budget to support the work of the Ad Hoc Committee of approximately \$11,000. Half of these funds were used to implement the Q1-Q2 workplan, with the remaining funds available to support the implementation of the Q3-Q4 workplan. It is anticipated that there will be expenses incurred related to space rental fees, advertising, community engagement and honorariums etc.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

Not identified at this time.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Work Together For Greater Impact

This report aligns with two objectives under this strategic priority:

- Initiative the Grand Trunk Renewal development through a formal partnership model.
- Building meaningful partnerships to address community needs.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

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

Equity and Local Economy

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

Culture and Community

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

Land and Nature

Protecting and restoring land for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Staff Recommendation: THAT staff be directed to work with members of the Ad Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee and Working Group Chairs to implement the Q3-Q4 2024 workplan as presented in Report (COU24-086).

Prepared by: Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead

Recommended by: Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer