



Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee

Working Group:	Working Group Co-Ordinator Ray Harsant's June 9, 2025 Report
Report Date:	June 9, 2025

Information Item and Follow-up Actions

to Improve the roles and purpose of the Ad Hoc Cttee:

This is *a reminder* regarding some outstanding follow-up to motions passed at the February AD Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee meeting. These motions came out of the input from those who completed the Ad-Hoc "survey questionnaire" back in November:

That Working Groups, Chairs, Co-Chairs and Working Group Coordinators review their roles, responsibilities and overall Committee processes and structures;

And that suggestions related to the process and structures be provided to the Corporate Initiatives Lead for proposing amendments to more effectively undertake the Ad-Hoc Grand Trunk Renewal Committee's mandate.

No due date was established for us to do this.

I therefore recommend that we – individually as well as Working Groups – consolidate thoughts and ideas on the above and forward these to Emily Robson, the Corporate Lead, by September 1st. This way she will have everyone's input before the current Committee's official two-year mandate is concluded. In the absence of any meaningful communication regarding this, I understand that some Committee members currently expect this to occur between now and the end of the year.

Discussion Points:

I provide the following thoughts with respect to where we currently are in our planning process.

The work that Joe Svec and Rock Wang are doing is *critically important* to the Ad Hoc Committee's overall mandate to establish sound recommendations for Council's considerations regarding these 18 acres and to update the approved 2018 Grand Trunk Master Plan.

To paraphrase some of Joe's opening comments last month, what we are doing here has the potential "to unlock magic that is here with sound decision making."

The exciting preservation of one of Stratford's most critical heritage building landmarks is such a decision. Indeed, it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to cohesively integrate "past and future heritage".

As such, I think it is of utmost importance that we see this phase of imaginatively preserving and repurposing the Grand Trunk "Shops building and space" as only the first of many steps to be taken to fully realize the greater vision of these 18 acres – and in doing so, *transform* Stratford's inner core and beyond.

To do so, the planning of the site's overall Vision must be part of – integrated with – an Overarching Strategic Developmental Vision to the city's planning exercises.

- Such an overall Vision for these lands can have an amazing impact on our quality of life as Stratford residents by attracting investments in surrounding lands and buildings.
- It can have a huge impact on attracting new businesses and industries.
- So, in addition to the revitalized Shops building, what and how can our *overall* vision for this property, impact surrounding lands beyond these 18 acres?
- What are the incentives and attractions such a vision offers?
- Indeed, *what is our overall vision?*

Questions in search of answers!... And for me, others immediately come to mind!

- What questions come to *your* mind...what do *you* think of....as you read the consolidated inputs to the most recent questionnaire.
- Jot your questions and thoughts down.
- And ask them when we meet.

My point here is, let's ensure everyone fully discusses where we are, where we are going with our mandate, and how are we to continue to go about this. Discussion. The May Committee meeting has been labeled a "workshop". I do not see it as ever having really being this. It was a presentation with some discussion. Not much. But some discussion.

In our June 16th meeting, I encourage *everyone* to fully participate in discussing and exploring where we are and how we are going forward.

"There is indeed magic here to be unlocked"

As a possible stimulus for thoughts and discussion, I provide an example of a possible Vision as I put forward in 2016 following many discussions and conversations with fellow citizens, staff and others.

I hope it might stimulate creative thoughts and ideas as we collaborate and collectively continue our discussions and planning around the Shops building and space – as it impacts and integrates with an overall transformative Vision of Stratford's inner core and beyond.

Attachment: "Example of A Visionary Strategic Statement & Plan Document for Enhancing the Vibrancy of Stratford's Downtown Core"; 2016