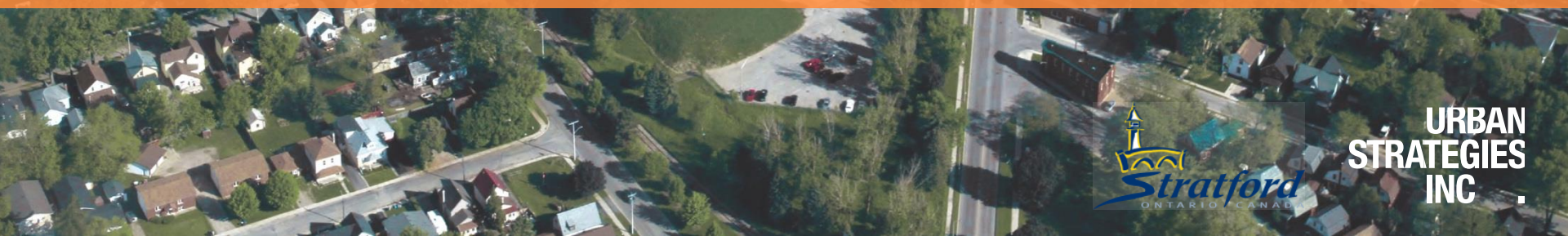




City of Stratford Cooper Block Master Plan

“What We Heard” Consultation Summary and Key Considerations for the Master Plan

September 11, 2017



**URBAN
STRATEGIES
INC.**



Stratford Official Plan Amendment No. 21

“Development of the lands in the Cooper Site – Major Institutional Focus Area designation shall be in accordance with a Master Plan prepared and adopted by the City which will establish the general land use and transportation structure, and provide direction for other related issues such as servicing and urban design”

*Note: OPA 21 is under appeal with a decision pending at the Ontario Municipal Board

Presentation Overview

- **Engagement Activities**
 - Talking Walls
 - Community Round Tables
 - Public Open House
 - Kitchen Table Kits
- **Summary of Key Findings**

A Range of Public Consultation Tools & Methods



By the Numbers...

20+ groups engaged in community roundtables

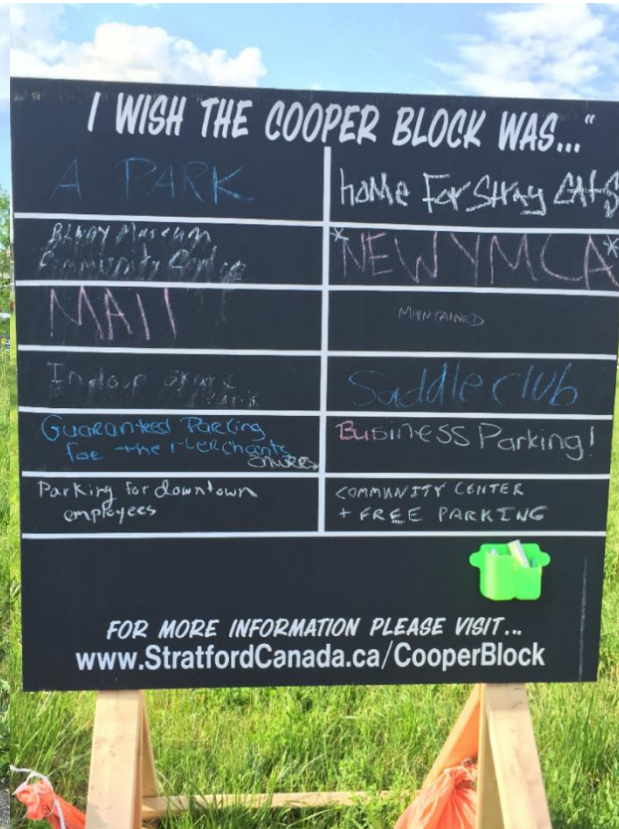
100+ attendees at first open house

50+ kitchen table kits received

30+ ideas submitted using the talking walls

15+ direct emails received

Talking Walls



Talking Walls – Common Ideas

Four Ideas, by far, were suggested by the walls:



1) Community Centre /
YMCA / Seniors + Youth
Recreation Centre



2) Parking



3) Entertainment uses (i.e.
laser tag, arcade, mini golf,
go karts, rock climbing)



4) Art space / creative
hub / performance
venue

Other common ideas included:

- 1) Outdoor recreation (park, ice rink, skate park)
- 2) Mall
- 3) Bus station / terminal / depot
- 4) Railway museum

Community Roundtables



Community Roundtables – Participants

In June of 2017, Urban Strategies met with over two dozen local organizations, clubs, advocacy groups, and foundations to invite their input into their vision for the future of the Cooper Block + Building:

Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association
Kiwanis Club
Rotary Club
Coin Club
Lawn Bowling Club
University of Waterloo – Stratford Campus
YMCA of Stratford-Perth
Stratford Library
SEED Co
Chamber of Commerce
Stratford Perth Community Foundation
Avon Club
Master Gardener Club
Stratford & Area Builders' Association

Arts and Culture Collective
Accessibility Committee
Active Transportation
Downtown Business Improvement Association
Architectural Conservancy
Heritage Stratford
Stratford Preservation Board
School Boards
Town and Gown Committee
Tourism Stratford
Scotiabank
Stratford Transit
Builders' Union
United Way

Community Roundtables – Key Messages



“Stratford is one of the five **Canadian Bee Cities**. It would be great to have a **pollinator Garden!**”

“If this is going to be a **hub**, what are the **spokes** that connect to it...St. David street, Market Square, Downtown, the train station...”

“It’s hard to find space to **start, grow and build businesses** in this area.”

“What is the attraction to **younger folks** and **young families?**”

“Be pragmatic, but we need to **accelerate the investment** to get it done.”

“Let’s create a positive **parking** story.”

“**Green space** as a focal point!”

“This needs to be a **net contributor** to the city and community”

“Make sure that the future site is **inclusive** and **collaborative!**”

“Who is the Cooper Block for? The residents? The theatre folks? The tourists?”

“We’ll never build a building like this again, we need to find a way to **celebrate** it.”

“This block transformation needs to be **authentically Stratford**”

“What are the **objectives** for the site?”

“This should be called **The Grand Trunk Railway Shop & Lands**, instead of Cooper Block.”

“This needs to be a **community** not a silo building process.”



Public Open House



Public Open House



Public Open House

Draft Guiding Principles

The principles below will help guide the development of the Cooper Block Master Plan. They help structure the approach and inform the questions for the future of the Cooper Block. Do you agree with these Principles? Are there any that you would change?

Put a **green dot** beside the principles you agree with, a **red dot** beside those you do not agree with, and add your own views in the bottom.

- Optimize partnership opportunities** with groups and civic institutions like the Active Seniors Club and the Stratford Library.
- Build on the vibrancy and access** of the growing University of Waterloo Stratford Campus and the redevelopment of the YMCA as key anchors.
- Investigate the potential** for the Cooper Block to be adaptively re-used.
- Celebrate the history** of the site.
- Protect for short and longer-term economic development opportunities.**
- Create a place that is uniquely "made-in-Stratford."**
- Ensure that the evolution** of the Cooper Block complements Downtown Stratford.
- Enhance open spaces** and improve the public realm.
- Create social opportunities** (as meeting points). Please welcoming to people of all ages.

What are we missing? Add a Post-it note below with your idea!

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

What is a Community Hub?

Community hubs are clusters of community-oriented uses such as recreation, health services, education, child care, meeting space, arts, and culture that anchor a community. By their proximity to each other, these combination of uses which are related to each other create opportunities for collaboration, social interaction, and economic development.

What could a community hub on the Cooper Block look like?

Picture of the Hub: *From the Hub, you can see the University of Waterloo, the Stratford Library, and the Stratford Public Market.*

What if the Hub: *What if the Hub was a mix of uses, like a library, a cafe, and a meeting space?*

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

The Vision

No DEBT!

What is your vision for the future of the Cooper Block? Use a Post-it note to share your thoughts!

Picture of the Vision: *Picture of the vision in 10-20 years for the Cooper Block. What does it look like? What are the key features? What are the challenges? What are the opportunities?*

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Enhance the Public Realm

Place a green dot on the images you think most closely reflect the vision for the public and open spaces that are part of the future of the Cooper Block. Place a red dot beside those you do not agree with. Let us know what you like about them with a Post-it note.

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Connectivity, Streets & Blocks

How do you get to and from the Cooper Block?

What are the most important connections into and through the Cooper Block?

Draw on the map below to show us how you think streets should be organized on the Block. Leave a comment below on a Post-it note with your thoughts.

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Buildings and Programming

Place a green dot on the images you think most closely reflect the vision for the buildings and activities that are part of the future of the Cooper Block. Place a red dot beside those you do not agree with. Let us know what you like about them with a Post-it note.

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Celebrating History

How can the future of the Cooper Block respect and celebrate its history?

Place a green dot on the images you think most closely reflect how the history of the site should be celebrated. Place a red dot beside those you do not agree with. Let us know what you like about them with a Post-it note.

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

PLACE EXTRA IMAGES HERE

COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Public Open House – Guiding Principle Feedback

Draft Guiding Principles

The principles below will help guide the development of the Cooper Block Master Plan. They help structure the approach and inform the objectives for the future of the Cooper Block. Do you agree with these Principles? Are there any that you would change?

Put a **green dot** beside the principles you agree with, a **red dot** beside those you do not agree with, and add your own ideas at the bottom.

- 1** Optimize **partnership** opportunities with groups and civic institutions like the Active Seniors Club and the Stratford Library.
- 2** Build on the vibrancy and success of the growing **University of Waterloo** Stratford Campus and the redevelopment of the **YMCA** as key anchors.
- 3** Investigate the potential for the Cooper Building to be adaptively re-used.
- 4** Celebrate the **history** of the site.
- 5** Protect for short and longer-term **economic development** opportunities.
- 6** Create a place that is uniquely "made-in-Stratford".
- 7** Ensure that the evolution of the Cooper Block complements **Downtown Stratford**.
- 8** Enhance open spaces and improve the public realm.
- 9** Create **social opportunities** (ie meeting spaces, places welcoming to people of all ages).

What are we missing? Add a Post-it note below with your idea!

Handwritten feedback on sticky notes includes: "No DEBT!", "Ensure community with groups is prioritized in partnership strategy - (P.S.) We need a decent community performance report", and "We need a decent community performance report".

8 COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Stratford URBAN STRATEGIES INC

- Broad support for the draft guiding principles
- Some resistance to the principle “Protect for short and longer-term economic development opportunities”
- Notecards and discussion suggest that resistance to this principle relates to the cost of the project and wariness that “longer-term” suggests that nothing will happen on the site

Public Open House – Public Realm Feedback

Enhance the Public Realm

Place a **green dot** on the images you think most closely reflect the vision for the public and open spaces that are part of the future of the Cooper Block. Place a **red dot** beside those you do not agree with. Let us know what you like about them with a Post-It note.



Community Allotment Gardens



Mixed Hard and Soft Landscape with Sculptural Seating



Tiered Suburban Gardens



Fresh and Well-used Activity Space



Naturalized Planting Areas



Hard Landscaped Area with Water Features



Open Green Space



Shared Street with Strong Building Presence



Boulevard Sidewalks with Street Trees



Walkable 'Main Street' with Strong Building Presence

- Green and active-oriented precedents received the most support
- Some resistance to the hardscaped plaza and water feature precedent
- Similar resistance to the “urban condition” precedent
- Broadly speaking, results indicate a desire for passive recreational spaces and the integration of greenery

Public Open House – Potential Uses Feedback



- Significant support for flexible and programmable spaces such as outdoor markets and seating areas
- Significant support as well for community centre, seniors' centre, and performing arts spaces
- Limited relative support for a playground or office space
- Resistance to residential uses depicted in the precedent cards

Note: These uses were not vetted through an economic analysis or business plan

Public Open House – Heritage Feedback

Celebrating History

How can the future of the Cooper Block respect and celebrate its history?
Place a **green dot** on the images you think most closely reflect how the history of the site should be celebrated. Place a **red dot** beside those you do not agree with. Let us know what you like about them with a Post-it note.

- Historical Rail Elements Integrated into the Landscape** (Green dots)
- Commemorative Plaque** (Green dots, Post-it: "Love the readability!")
- Adaptive Reuse** (Green dots)
- Integration of the site into the Landscape** (Green dots, Post-it: "Less impact than trees", "Landscape should be in an area with a winter")
- Historic Narrative Integrated into Rail Corridor** (Green dots)
- Historic Narrative Integrated into Paving & Public Art** (Green dots, Post-it: "Use the old building as a museum")
- Commemorative Sculpture** (Red dots, Post-it: "HERITAGE COMMEMORATIVE PLAN IS NEEDED")
- Historic Narrative** (Green dots)
- Historic Narrative Integrated into Paving & Public Art** (Green dots, Post-it: "Use the old building as a museum")

14 COOPER BLOCK MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 10, 2017

Stratford

- Significant support for heritage landscape interpretation
- Significant support for adaptive reuse including a railway museum
- Resistance to commemorative sculptures and interpretive signage

Kitchen Table Kits



~60 received in total

What do you think of the Cooper Block today?



Thinking about the Cooper Block today, what are some words you would use to describe it?

What is your vision for the Cooper Block in the future?



Thinking about how you described the Cooper Block on the previous page, what are some words you would use to describe what the Block should be in the future?

Anything else you want to tell us?

If there is anything more that you want to share about your vision for the future of the Cooper Block, feel free to use the space provided below to tell us!

Let us know who you are so we can keep in touch!

Name: _____

Postal Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

I want to stay in touch: Yes / No

Yes No

Please note: The above information is optional. Your feedback will still be collected if you wish to remain anonymous.

Notice of Collection

Personal information collected on this form is collected by The Corporation of the City of Stratford under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001 and will be used by City Staff to contact interested parties with updates on future Cooper Master Plan public engagement sessions.

Consenters about the collection and use of the personal information may be referred to the City Clerk, P.O. Box 816, Stratford, ON, N4A 4W1 or by telephoning 519-271-0200 ext. 230 during business hours.

If you require this form in an alternate format, contact the Clerk's office at 519-271-0200 ext. 237.

Thank you for providing your input about the planning for the future of the Cooper Block!

Kitchen Table Kits – Key Messages

Top 5 Comments / Responses



1) Rebuild / integrate / include the YMCA



2) Parking is a must



3) Find room for a community theatre / performing arts space



4) A large green space with seating and trees



5) Adaptively re-use a portion of the Cooper Building

Kitchen Table Kits – Key Messages Continued

Other common themes and feedback:



Celebrate the site's rail heritage



Include flexible meeting space inside the Community Hub



Make the site pedestrian friendly and accessible



UWaterloo buildings should work with the rest of the site



Find opportunities for affordable/student/rental/senior housing



Encourage sustainable design and development

Kitchen Table Kits – Key Quotes



The future of the block should be **open, porous, integrated, urban and future-focused!**

The site is **a piece of history** that needs to be honoured and maintained.

Let's make the Cooper Building **a centre that showcases all of the wonderful things** happening here!

Please don't call it the Cooper Block/Building. It is the **Grand Trunk Railway Shop/Building/ Block!**

The University of Waterloo buildings need to be designed to **complement the public usage** of the site – not take over the site.

We promote ourselves as a forward-thinking community where the **arts are part of our DNA...** Now is the time to prove this to our community and our visitors and become **leaders in making the arts central to our community** and economic development.

The building is **a part of our past** and we need to make it **live again as part of our future**. Don't fail the memories of those who made Stratford what it is today.



Toward a Framework for the Master Plan

Based on community consultation to date, the Master Plan Framework will serve as a guide for the evolution and development of the Cooper Block (Grand Trunk Lands) over the long-term. It will guide investment and address matters including:

- land use structure
- transportation structure
- urban design
- access and servicing

Feedback and ideas suggested by the Stratford community will inform the development of the Master Plan

Through the community consultation process, the following 15 elements have emerged as important considerations for the overall Master Plan:

- **Preservation of a portion of the Grand Trunk Building** 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
 - 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 UWaterloo student housing, range of mid-to-low density market-rate housing, and affordable and/or seniors housing
- **Seek opportunities for temporary / interim uses** which do not preclude 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”**

Through the community consultation process, the following 15 elements have emerged as important considerations for the Master Plan:

- **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 UW, 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**

Proposed Next Steps

- Summarize and report back on initial consultation activities and feedback (today's meeting)
- Based on Council direction, prepare Draft Grand Trunk Block Master Plan
- Bring Draft Master Plan to Public Open House in October/early November
- Refine Draft Master Plan
- Bring Updated and Flexible Master Plan to City Council for consideration and adoption in December/January

An aerial photograph of a city, likely a university town, with a large, long, dark-roofed industrial or warehouse building in the foreground. The city is densely packed with various buildings, streets, and green spaces. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter, and the text "Thank You!" is centered in the middle.

Thank You!