



Downtown Advisory Committee Agenda

Thursday, April 24, 2025, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Schmalz Room - Second Floor City Hall

City of Kitchener

200 King Street W, Kitchener, ON N2G 4G7

People interested in participating in this meeting can email Committee Administrator, Amber Nguyen at amber.nguyen@kitchener.ca. Please refer to the delegation section on the agenda below for the registration deadline. Written comments received will be circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting and will form part of the public record.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. If you require assistance to take part in a city meeting or event, please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994.

Chair: Joel Leslie

Vice-Chair: Brandon Court

Pages

1. Commencement

The meeting will begin with a Land Acknowledgement given by the Chair:

The City of Kitchener is situated on the traditional territory of the Chonnonton, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee Peoples.

We recognize our responsibility to serve as stewards for the land and honour the original caretakers who came before us. Our community is enriched by the enduring knowledge and deep-rooted traditions of the diverse First Nations, Metis and Inuit in Kitchener today.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

Members of Council and members of the City's local boards/committees are required to file a written statement when they have a conflict of interest. If a conflict is declared, please visit www.kitchener.ca/conflict to submit your written form.

3. Delegations

Pursuant to Council's Procedural By-law, delegations are permitted to address the Committee for a maximum of five (5) minutes. All delegations must register in order to participate in the meeting. Delegation registration is permitted up to the start of the meeting.

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4. Discussion Items

4.1 Retail Attraction Strategy 15 m 3

A. Hertzog will present early thinking on a Retail Attraction Strategy focused on filling gaps, supporting local entrepreneurs, and creating a sustainable mix of retail in the core. This includes ongoing work around retail incubation models and the development of a longer-term plan for Square Peg. DAC members will be asked to reflect on innovative examples and opportunities relevant to downtown Kitchener.

4.1.a Group Discussion 45 m

1. What's one retail incubation initiative you've seen elsewhere (big or small) that we should explore for downtown Kitchener?
2. As we plan the 2026 vision for Square Peg, what types of retail incubation would make the space truly valuable for both new entrepreneurs and the community?

5. Information Items

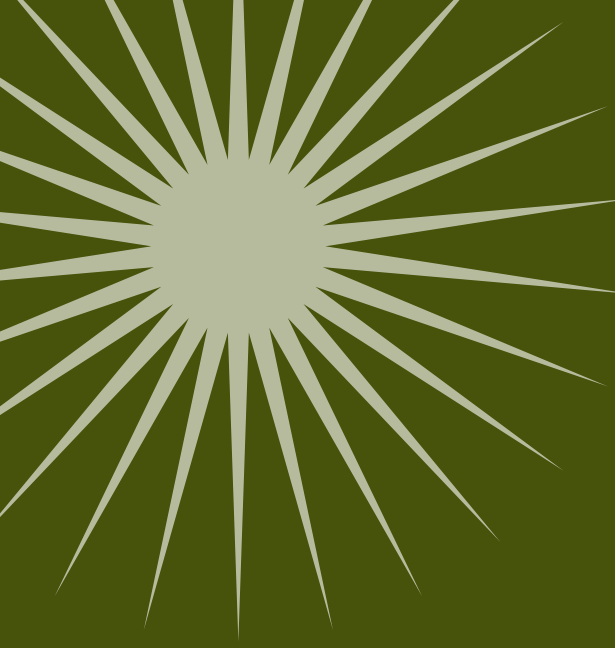
5.1 DTK Updates 15 m

5.1.a Q&A 15 m

5.2 BIA Updates 15 m

5.2.a Q&A 15 m

6. Adjournment



BUILDING A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN RETAIL LANDSCAPE 2025 & BEYOND



RETAIL STRATEGY 2025

CURRENT CONSTRAINTS

Based on research both externally and internally:



OFFICE OCCUPANCY DEPENDENCY

- Property owners have relied heavily on office tenants.
- Businesses have relied on office traffic.
- Hybrid work has reduced office occupancy needs.
- Multi use is new direction for sustainability



ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

- High Interest rates (loans and equipment leasing)
- Cost of Goods and Exchange Rate
- Minimum Wage
- Tarrifs
- Unemployment and Cost of Living



SAFETY CONCERNS

- Real and Perceived.
- Less Foot Traffic amplifies safety concerns.
- Fentanyl and Mental Health
- Decrease in Provincial funding for support/social services.

ECONOMIC CASH FLOW FOR RETAIL SPACES



DTK CUSTOMER

\$\$\$\$\$\$



BUSINESS OWNER

\$\$\$\$



BUILDING OWNER

\$\$



FINANCIAL LENDER

\$

Available Disposable Income



DTK CUSTOMER

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

Leases Operating Costs



Profit

Mortgage Operating Costs



Profit

ROI



Profit

CUSTOMER PROFILES

CIRCUMSTANCE

Office Workers
Students

CHOICE

Residents
Shoppers

Shoppers
Experience Seekers
Community Spaces

BUSINESS TYPES

Single Source
Brick and
Mortar

Integrated
Retail Multiple
Sources

Destination
Retail

Mixed Use

NEW DTK RETAIL MODEL

Supporting the current retail shift from office dependency-based businesses to new integrated and destination businesses served by a new population who choose to come downtown.

RETAIL SUPPORT & INCUBATION

Explore New Retail Incubation Program

- *SQ PEG*
- *WRSBC*
- *Short Term Lease Program*

DEVELOPER COLLABORATION

Property Outreach Program

- *CRM database*
- *Retail support and Connections*
- *Begin CIP review for 2028*





BUILD OUT THE DTK EXPERIENCE



Focusing and aligning with our guiding principles



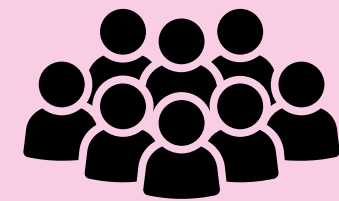
Radiating Vibrancy

- Maintenance and Beautification
- Engaging Online Presence
- Festivals and Programming



Cultivating Connections

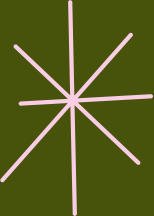
- Condo Boards outreach
- BIA collaboration



Belonging

- Placemaking infrastructure
- Safe Spaces
- DTK branding

TELLING OUR DTK STORY



SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

Strategic Retail Priorities for 2025

- Support New Retail initiatives
- Explore Retail Incubation Program
- Continue Connections with Building Owners

Next Steps

- Retail Gap Analysis
- Storefront inventory
- Outreach to Building Owners
- Launch new Square Peg Program for 2026
- Tell the DTK story

