

## **Appendix B: 20-year Vision Statement and Story for Kitchener**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

*Building a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us – and each other.*

### **VISION STORY**

#### **TOGETHER IN 2043**

Whether you've lived here your whole life, or you just arrived last week, Kitchener feels like home. We're a city that has come together behind a common purpose. A city committed to progressing our connection to one another, well-being, happiness, potential and quality of life – for everyone. A city where everyone belongs.

Our neighbourhoods are more connected and diverse today than ever before. Our streets and sidewalks know all kinds of people. Our kitchen tables, meeting rooms and council chambers do, too. Creating more opportunities for people to meet, connect, participate in and enjoy civic life has brought more diverse voices and lived experiences to those tables. This has shown us new possibilities. Helped us to make better decisions. And pointed us toward considerate solutions to some of our most challenging problems.

We step up to help and care for one another. In an equitable city that's a reflection of our caring community, we work together – and with community partners – to offer accessible services and to address disparities among communities of greatest need. Our programs are open to everyone with equal access for all, without financial or other barriers. Because of our work, more people than ever feel a deep sense of belonging in Kitchener.

Kitchener is where we feel at home. And where we can each have a safe, comfortable and affordable home. Our "housing for all" approach has led to smarter solutions, more creative designs and a home for everyone. Today, the city is more compact – filled with well-designed, adaptive reuses and new mixed-use and mixed-income housing options as diverse as our neighbourhoods and the people who live in them.

Our neighbourhoods are connected and pedestrian-friendly and full of businesses and services that meet the daily needs of their residents. Our community centres, arenas and pools – and our soccer fields and cricket pitches – are where we get together and where we get active. We've designed our busy public parks, open spaces and squares with residents. They welcome and work for people of all ages and abilities – and they're an extension of our kitchen tables, our homes, our unique world views and the inclusive way we live. Our libraries are, too. Full of ideas and wonder and people – they bring us together and offer equal access to the knowledge and tools we need to learn about and navigate in the world around us.

The places and spaces that bring us together are connected by reliable ways to get people moving around the city in active, clean and accessible ways. Our sidewalks see community connection every day – people who walk, roll, glide and wander – easily and safely getting where they want to go. We use cars and parking lots less and trails, protected cycling lanes and transit more. Fewer homes and businesses

use fossil fuels to heat and cool. We've reduced our impact on our environment, transitioning to a low-carbon future and using more renewable energy. Consistent awareness and incentives – to do more that causes the climate to change less – have made climate responsibility second nature for residents and businesses.

We serve as stewards of our natural environment, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to reconciliation — and to the Indigenous caretakers of these lands who came before us. We preserve and protect our natural environment for future generations to enjoy and explore. Our urban forests and our tree canopy soften the boundaries between the built and natural worlds. They are the natural backdrop – along our streets, sidewalks, squares, paths and parks – to the unique arts and cultural experiences, events and exhibitions that nourish our souls, make us think – and give us hope. Every time we leave home, we enjoy the cool shade of these investments.

Our investments in creating an agile and innovative local economy have strengthened our key industries and kept our job market healthy and diverse. We've supported local businesses of all sizes to continue to adapt and lead, addressing the unique challenges they face and helping them to connect and work together. Our city's difference-makers – the talented and resourceful local entrepreneurs, makers and artists, whose innovative new approaches reflect their daily pursuit of building a better world – continue to diversify and grow our economy and help create jobs for everyone.

The public servants who work alongside our businesses and residents are difference-makers, too. We don't just make decisions. We listen. We are the stewards of our city's present – and its future. We champion our collective goals and work alongside residents to build our city – one neighbourhood at a time. We invite civic action on the issues that matter most to residents. We are accountable, and we measure the right things and report on our progress. We're honest about what's not working. And diligent about working together to change course when it's needed. Our legacy reflects a diverse and caring workforce that mirrors the diverse and caring city we've helped to build.

We've built trust with residents. And because of this, people from diverse backgrounds vote and take part in public processes in unmatched numbers. We all tell stories of the challenges we came together to face over the years. And of how doing so led to a greater understanding of what we share and what makes us unique. By working together and making the most of our differences, residents have helped staff remove existing barriers and disadvantages, giving more people the opportunity to thrive in Kitchener.

We're building a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us – and each other. This is a legacy – a piece of the fabric – left behind by those who came before us. Threads woven into the future by the Indigenous peoples who first built communities and lived sustainably on these lands. A legacy of wisdom, community connection and caretaking that's sewn into both the tapestry of our past and the canvas of our future.

These lessons of our past – and the promise of tomorrow – remind us that people who love their city can always change it for the better. The future always was, and is, ours to create. Together.