

Appendix B: 20-year Vision Statement and Story for Kitchener (Refined)

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 in Kitchener your whole life, or you have just arrived, you belong here. Kitchener is a city of people who, since 1854, have worked together to chart a progressive future, building a thriving city that offers well-being, potential and quality of life – for everyone.

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

Kitchener is one of Canada's largest cities, and the place we call home. Our city is committed to finding smart, sustainable, and innovative housing solutions to ensure that people have a place to call their own. Today, the city is filled with well-designed, adaptive reuses and new mixed-use, mixed-income housing options as diverse as our neighbourhoods and the people who live in them.

Our neighbourhoods are pedestrian-friendly and full of businesses and services that meet our daily needs. Our community centres, arenas, pools, libraries and sports fields are where we get together and get active. We've designed our busy public parks and spaces with residents, and they welcome and work for people of all ages and abilities. Full of people, activity and ideas, these spaces bring us together and offer access to knowledge and tools to learn about and thrive in the world around us.

The places and spaces that bring us together have reliable connections that enable us to move around the city in active, clean and accessible ways. Our sidewalks see community connection every day, as people walk, roll and wander – easily and safely getting where they want to go. We use cars and parking lots less and trails, cycling lanes and transit more. Fewer homes and businesses use fossil fuels to heat and cool, and we've reduced our impact on the environment, by using more renewable energy. Consistent awareness and incentives have made climate responsibility second nature for residents and businesses.

We serve as stewards of the natural environment, and remain steadfast in our commitment to reconciliation, honouring the Indigenous caretakers who came before us, and have built strong relations with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit who call Kitchener home. We preserve and protect parks and natural areas. 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 and paths, and to the arts and cultural experiences, events and exhibitions that we enjoy. 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 key industries and kept our job market healthy and diverse. We've supported local businesses to continue to adapt and lead, addressing their challenges and helping them connect and work together. Our city's difference-makers – the talented and resourceful entrepreneurs, workers and artists, whose innovative approaches reflect their pursuit of building a better world – continue to diversify and grow our economy and create jobs for everyone.

We step up to help and care for one another. We work together and with community partners to offer accessible services and 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.

The public servants who work alongside our residents and businesses are difference-makers. 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 with residents to build our city, one neighbourhood at a time. We invite civic action on the issues that matter to residents. We are accountable, we measure the right things, and report on our progress. 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 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 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. The lessons of our past – and the promise of tomorrow – remind us that people who love their city can always change it, and our world, for the better. Together.