

# Staff Report



Development Services Department

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**REPORT TO:** Heritage Kitchener

**DATE OF MEETING:** March 5, 2024

**SUBMITTED BY:** Garrett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals,  
519-741-2200 ext. 7070

**PREPARED BY:** Jessica Vieira, Heritage Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7291

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** Ward 10

**DATE OF REPORT:** February 15, 2024

**REPORT NO.:** DSD-2024-089

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Intention to Designate 60 Victoria Street North under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

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## RECOMMENDATION:

That pursuant to Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Clerk be directed to publish a Notice of Intention to Designate the property municipally addressed as 60 Victoria Street North as being of cultural heritage value or interest.

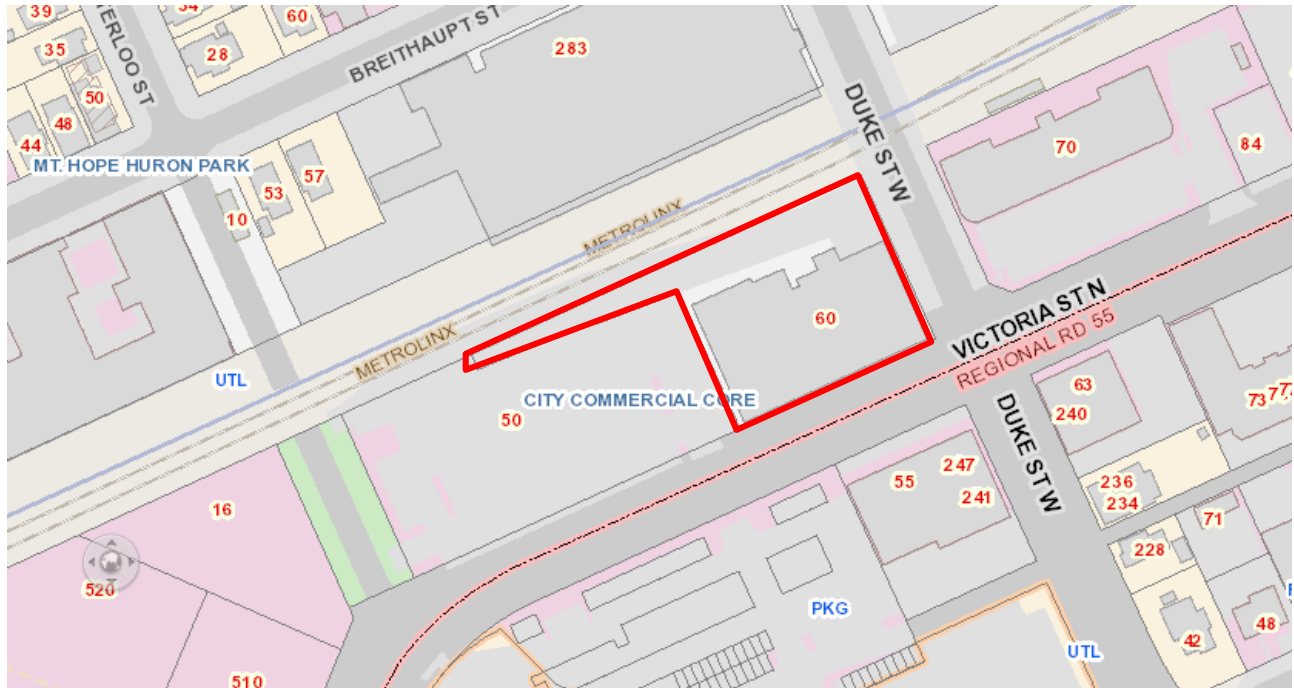
## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to request that Council direct the Clerk to publish a Notice of Intention to Designate the property municipally addressed as 60 Victoria Street North under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- The subject property is currently listed as a non-designated property of cultural heritage value or interest on the Municipal Heritage Register, and as such is part of the Municipal Heritage Register Review Program. In response to the May 23, 2023 letter that was sent to all owners of listed properties, the Region of Waterloo had contacted Heritage Planning Staff to indicate their support of the designation and provide a Heritage Impact Assessment related to 60 Victoria Street South.
- The key finding of this report is that the property municipally addressed as 60 Victoria Street North meets the criteria for designation under Ontario Regulation 9/06 (amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22) and has been confirmed to be a significant cultural heritage resource. The property is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.
- There are no financial implications.
- Community engagement included informing residents by posting this report with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting, providing written correspondence to the property owner, and consulting with Heritage Kitchener. In addition, should Council choose to give notice of its intention to designate, such notice will be served to the Owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

\*\*\* This information is available in accessible formats upon request. \*\*\*  
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

## BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located on the northwestern corner of the Victoria Street South and Duke Street West intersection. It is a complex of buildings, including an original 1913 three-storey brick factory constructed in the Vernacular Industrial architectural style with three contemporary additions. The structures are situated on a lot 0.85 acres in size within City Commercial Core of the City of Kitchener, Region of Waterloo. The principal resource that contributes to the heritage value of the property is the original 1913 portion of the building.



**Figure 1: Location Map of Subject Property**

An assessment of 60 Victoria Street North has been completed and concludes that the property meets the criteria for designation. This work was undertaken as part of the City of Kitchener Municipal Heritage Register (MHR) Review, initiated in February of 2023. The MHR Review is the City's response to amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act introduced in January of 2023 through Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act*. The City contacted owners of listed properties through an initial letter dated May 23, 2023, to inform them of this undertaking. The Region of Waterloo responded to this letter in January of 2024, and during correspondence with City Staff it was confirmed that the Region would be in support of designation of the subject property (Attachment A). A Heritage Impact Assessment, completed in 2012 by the Landplan Collaborative Ltd., was also provided to City Staff at this time. The HIA had been undertaken as part of the Region's concept development for a Multimodal Hub which included 60 Victoria Street North and included the evaluation of the property against the criteria of Ontario Regulation 9/06, which has now been updated by Ontario Regulation 569/22.

Per standard procedure, should Council support the Notice of Intention to Designate, the property owners will be contacted a second time through a Notice of Intention to Designate (NOID) Letter. An ad for the NOID will also be published in a newspaper. Once the letter is served and the ad posted, there will be a 30-day appeal period in which owners may object to the designation.

**REPORT:**

Identifying and protecting cultural heritage resources within the City of Kitchener is an important part of planning for the future, and helping to guide change while conserving the buildings, structures, and landscapes that give the City of Kitchener its unique identity. The City plays a critical role in the conservation of cultural heritage resources. The designation of property under the *Ontario Heritage Act* is the main tool to provide long-term protection of cultural heritage resources for future generations. Designation recognizes the importance of a property to the local community; protects the property’s cultural heritage value; encourages good stewardship and conservation; and promotes knowledge and understanding about the property. Designation not only publicly recognizes and promotes awareness, but it also provides a process for ensuring that changes to a property are appropriately managed and that these changes respect the property’s cultural heritage value and interest.



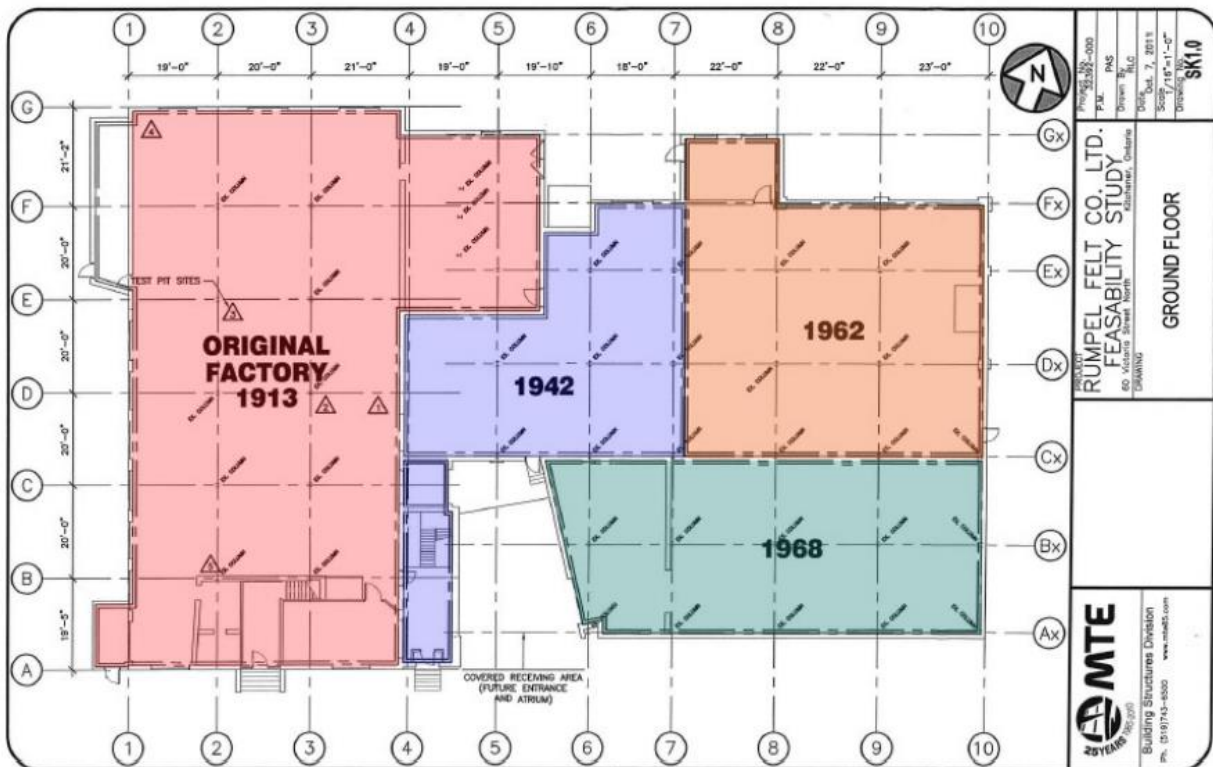
**Figure 2: Front Facade of 60 Victoria Street North (Original 1913 Portion)**

60 Victoria Street South is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values. It satisfies six of the nine criteria for designation under Ontario Regulation 9/06 (amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22). A summary of the criteria that is met or not met is provided in the table below.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Criteria Met (Yes/No)</b>
1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, material, or construction method.	<b>Yes</b>
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	<b>No</b>
3. The property has design or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	<b>No</b>
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	<b>Yes</b>
5. The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	<b>Yes</b>
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	<b>No</b>
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	<b>Yes</b>
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings.	<b>Yes</b>
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.	<b>Yes</b>

### ***Design / Physical Value***

The original 1913 portion of the building municipally addressed as 60 Victoria Street North is a representative example of the vernacular industrial architectural style and is characteristic of early twentieth-century industrial complexes in Berlin/Kitchener. Its construct consists of load bearing brick exterior walls with steel frame interior bearing columns and beams infilled with board-formed concrete slabs. Sloping steel beam and purlin framing with joist infill forms the roof. Typical of the vernacular industrial style is the buildings load bearing brick and riveted shear plate column construction, three-storey height, rhythmic large-arched window openings providing ample natural light into the factory production spaces, and modest design with a decorated main entrance. Three additions construction in 1942, 1962, and 1968 are present on the eastern side of the factory (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Layout of original building and additions**

### *Front Façade*

The front façade of the 1913 factory is three storeys in height and symmetrical in appearance. The first floor contains two window openings to either side of the main entrance decorated with a column and architrave porch. Multi-paned sidelights and a transom surrounded the main door. The first floor is divided from the subsequent two storeys by a large painted sign that spans the expanse of the front façade and reads “The Rumpel Felt Co. Limited”. The second and third storey each contain three window openings and windows as well. Well and the window and window openings present today are not original, the initial large and arched forms can still be identified by the split-face architectural concrete blocks that were used as infill. The brick voussoirs of the original openings are also still present.

### *Interior Attributes*

The following information has been obtained from the 2012 HIA that was submitted in support of the designation of this property. Interior attributes including remaining industrial equipment have been identified as contributing to the design value of the property. These elements include:

- Riveted shear plate column construction;
- Goods lift (circa 1913);
- Remaining door hardware; and
- Original boiler.

The evaluation undertaken by City Staff did not include an interior review. Should an evaluation of the present-day condition of these elements be completed, they may be added to the heritage attributes list.

### ***Historical / Associative Value***

The historical and associative value of the subject property lies in its connection to the felt manufacturing industry and several important members of the community, as well as the ties it displays to regionally significant themes such as transportation, the manufacturing industry, and urban development.

Rumple Felt Co. Limited, then known as the Berlin Felt & Boot Company, was originally established by George Rumple on the adjacent property municipally addressed as 50 Victoria Street North in 1875. By 1909, the Rumple Felt Company employed over 300 workers, greatly contributing to the economic development and value of the downtown area. The industrial growth experienced by what was then Berlin at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century resulted in rapid population growth, with the number of residents increasing from 15,000 people in 1911 to over 19,000 in 1913. In addition to his establishment of a successful company that created jobs within the area and aided in local economic growth, George Rumple served his community as an active participant in the political scene. He was a prominent member of the Parks Board, Water Commission, and town council for five years. In 1897 he acted as Town Reeve and in 1898 Town Mayor.

The existing 1913 factory at 60 Victoria Street North was built by Walter Rumple, who succeeded his father George as manager of the company in 1916. Rumple Felt Co. Limited remained under the management of the Rumple family for over a century through a series of successors; George Rumple and Walter Rumple (1875-1916 and 1916 -1944 respectively) were followed by John W. Rumple (1944-1966), and David Rumple (1966-2007). The company ceased production in 2007.

60 Victoria Street North, like many of the industrial factories of the time, was intentionally constructed in proximity to the main rail corridor. The presence of the Grand Trunk (operational c. 1856) within the city allowed for transportation of raw materials into the industrial area and exportation of manufactured goods out to the rest of the country. The rise and evolution of large department stores, such as Eaton's or Sears, was a direct cause of the large-scale transport of goods manufactured in major centres such by train. As a significant built heritage resource, the Rumple Felt building contributes to the understanding of the twentieth-century industrial cultural and urban and economic development of what was then Berlin.

### ***Contextual Value***

60 Victoria Street North supports the character of the surrounding area, being located within the Warehouse District Cultural Heritage Landscape (CHL). The Warehouse District CHL is located in the west end of downtown Kitchener and encompasses a number of remaining factories along King Street and Victoria Street including: Kaufman Lofts (formerly the Kaufman Rubber Company Factory), Breithaupt Block (formerly the Merchants Rubber Co. Ltd. Building), 283 Duke Street (formerly the Hibner Furniture Co. Ltd. Building), the Glovebox (formerly the Huck Glove Factory), and the Lang Tannery, (formerly the Lang

Tanning Co. Building). These buildings were the sites for the manufacturing, storage, and exportation of raw materials and other products across Canada, and were one of the prominent reasons for Kitchener developing into an urban industrial centre.

The contextual value of the building also relates to its physical, historical, and functional link to its surroundings, specifically the railway tracks and train station. Consistent with the siting of the historic industrial buildings in the district, the Rumpel Felt Building was organized along the rail line and constructed immediately adjacent to the property line with a main entrance fronting directly onto the public right-of-way on Victoria Street North. The establishment and proximity of this building to the convergence of the rail line, along with the other aforementioned industrial buildings within the Warehouse District, were important to the City's development as a urban industrial centre. In addition the building can also be classified as a historic industrial landmark and a touchstone to the City's industrial heritage, made easily recognizable by the building's location on a corner property, main entrance fronting immediately onto a main street, and sheer massing.

### ***Heritage Attributes***

The heritage value of 60 Victoria Street North resides in the following heritage attributes:

- Exterior attributes related to the vernacular industrial architectural style of the building, including:
  - The massing of the original 1913 portion of the building;
  - North, south, and west façades of the original 1913 portion of the building;
  - Red brick walls;
  - Wooden pipes (presently used as top course of north retaining wall to north parking lot);
  - Entry columns and architrave to the roof of the entry porch;
  - Multi-paned windows with metal mullions and pivoting panels;
  - Painted sign above the first storey of the front façade that reads “The Rumpel Felt Co. Limited”;
  - Painted sign below the roof line of the rear façade that reads “The Rumpel Felt Co. Limited Felts for Every Purpose”
- Elements that relate to the building's contribution to the remaining industrial landscape known as the Warehouse District Cultural Heritage Landscape; including:
  - The north-south orientation of the building;
  - The massing of the building fronting onto Victoria Street North;
  - The proximity to the rail line.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

CONSULT– Property owners were invited to consult via a letter dated May 23, 2023. Heritage Planning Staff were contacted by the Region of Waterloo in response to this letter in January, 2024 and met with staff from the Region in February 2024 to discuss pursuing designation of the building. The Region’s support was indicated during this time, and is confirmed via the letter in **Attachment A**.

Section 29(2) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires Council to consult with the Municipal Heritage Committee (Heritage Kitchener) before giving notice of its intention to designate a property. Heritage Kitchener will be consulted via circulation and consideration of this report (see INFORM above). Members of the community will be informed via circulation of this report to Heritage Kitchener and via formal consideration by Council. In addition, should Council choose to give notice of its intention to designate, such notice will be served on the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust, and published in the local newspaper (The Record). Once notice has been served, the owner has the right of appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal. It should be noted that should Council decide not to proceed with a Notice of Intention to Designate, that the building will remain on the City’s Municipal Heritage Register until January 1, 2025, after which it will be removed according to the changes enacted by Bill 23. Once removed, it cannot re-listed on the Register again for five (5) years, i.e. January 1, 2030.

## **PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2022*

**APPROVED BY:** Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services Department

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – Letter of Support – Region of Waterloo

Attachment B – Heritage Impact Assessment, the Landplan Collaborative Ltd., 2012