

Staff Report



Development Services Department

www.kitchener.ca

REPORT TO: Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee

DATE OF MEETING: February 26, 2024

SUBMITTED BY: Rosa Bustamante, Director, Planning and Housing Policy, 519-741-2200 ext. 7319

PREPARED BY: Tanya Roberts, Project Manager (Planning), 519-741-2200 ext. 7704

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All Wards

DATE OF REPORT: January 26, 2024

REPORT NO.: DSD-2024-080

SUBJECT: Kitchener's Great Places Awards 2023 Program Recap

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to provide a recap of the 2023 Kitchener Great Places Awards program to recognize winning projects and volunteer jury panelists.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

Kitchener's Great Places Awards program recognizes outstanding development projects that demonstrate a commitment to design excellence and innovation in the areas of urban design, sustainability, and heritage conservation and contribute to a built environment that enhances our quality of life.

The awards program began in 1988 when Council endorsed the idea of presenting Urban Design Awards to development projects that demonstrate outstanding design. In 1997, the Mike Wagner Heritage Awards were established to pay tribute to property owners and businesses who had contributed to the conservation of cultural heritage resources. Since 2011, the Urban Design Awards and Mike Wagner Awards have been celebrated in a joint ceremony.

In 2015 with the adoption of the City's Official Plan, the program was expanded to recognize a broader range of categories to become the current Great Places Awards.

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

REPORT:

This report provides an overview of the 2023 Great Places Awards program, including program updates and key outcomes.

Since the last awards program in 2019, Kitchener experienced unprecedented growth. This was reflected in the quality and quantity of nominated projects. We are setting the bar high for urban design in Kitchener, creating a city we love, while celebrating creative, innovative approaches to great design.

Jury Panels

Selected from an open call for jury panelists in March of 2023, we would like to thank the professionals who volunteered their time to critically evaluate nominated projects to select winners as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: 2023 Jury Panelists (External & Internal)

| Name | Background/Expertise |
|---|---|
| Urban Design Excellence Awards – Mid-rise and High-rise categories | |
| Dave Galbraith | Professional urban planner |
| Troy Glover | Representative from a post-secondary institution |
| Vivian Gomes | Professional urban designer |
| William Krohn | Professional architect |
| H.T. Lam | Professional landscape architect |
| Rosa Bustamante | Director, Planning and Housing Policy |
| Dave Schnider | Elected Official |
| Urban Design Excellence Awards – Placemaking, Low-rise, Civic categories | |
| Andre Arseneault | Professional architect |
| Shane Morgan | Professional architect |
| Sky Ounarom | Representative from post-secondary institution |
| Brian Page | Professional landscape architect |
| Rukma Ramdenee | Professional planner |
| Sustainable Kitchener Award | |
| Tamanna Kabir | Professional civil engineer – active transportation |
| Abdul Qader | Professional engineer |
| Derek Satnik | Professional engineer |
| Veronica Nhio-son | Environmental committee representative |
| Barry Cronkite | Director, Transportation Services |
| Natalie Goss | Manager, Policy & Research |
| Travis Pawlick | Manager, Stormwater Utility |
| Future Design Leaders Award | |
| Abby Goodrum | Representative from a post-secondary institution |
| Vikram Hardatt | Professional planner |
| Adam Clark | Senior Urban Designer (Architecture & Urban Form) |

| | |
|--|--|
| Katie Anderl | Project Manager (Planning) |
| Schmalz Award for Design Leadership | |
| Evren Altinkas | Compass Kitchener |
| Katherine Perrott | Representative from a post-secondary institution |
| Justin Readman | General Manager, Development Services |
| Dave Schnider (on behalf of Mayor) | Elected Official |

The Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards are determined by a vote by Heritage Kitchener and endorsed by City Council in June 2023.

2023 Great Places Awards Ceremony

The 2023 Great Places Awards process included a few new additions that proved to be a huge success. This included the creation of a sponsorship for the Future Design Leaders award, courtesy of Melloul-Blamey Construction Inc. valued at \$2000. This award is given to a student project in secondary school or post-secondary program with the intent of recognizing student design innovation and promoting city-building career options.

The awards ceremony took place on Wednesday November 8, 2023, with approximately 120 attendees including residents, nominated project representatives, development industry, members of Council, and staff. Joined by several members of Kitchener City Council, Mayor Berry Vrbanovic kicked off the event, which named 14 winners across a variety of categories. The event was held on World Town Planning Day, a day to recognize and promote the role of planning in creating livable communities and celebrate successes in city-building in creating healthy, sustainable communities.

To further enhance the event, the award ceremony featured a keynote speaker for the first time. Michael A. Ormston-Holloway's keynote, titled Looking at Spaces Differently - Unlocking Potential through Placemaking, discussed the power of placemaking in repurposing underutilized spaces in cities to support growth, build resiliency and create dynamic, engaging, welcoming public spaces.

2023 Winning Projects

The following is the list of award-winning projects by category:

Urban Design Excellence Awards

- Low-Rise: The Wedge House, 605 York Street
- Mid-Rise: GloveBox, 114 Victoria Street South
- High Rise (residential): Charlie West, 60 Charles Street West
- High Rise (commercial): Breithaupt Block (Phase 3), 20 Breithaupt Street
- Civic: Queen Street Placemaking, Queen Street between Charles and Duke Streets

Placemaking Award

- Gaukel Block, Gaukel Street between Charles and Joseph Streets

Sustainable Kitchener Award

- YWKW Supportive Housing, 1470 Block Line Road

Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards

- Preservation / Restoration: The Legion Building, 48 Ontario Street North
- Preservation / Restoration: 87 Scott Street
- Rehabilitation / Adaptive Re-Use: American Hotel Building, 1 Queen Street North
- Rehabilitation / Adaptive Re-Use: Hog and Hen Barn Restoration, 883 Doon Village Road

Future Design Leaders Award

- All Roads Lead to Roam, Ethan Zhang and Magdalena Kaczmarczyk, School of Architecture, University of Waterloo

People's Choice Award

- One Young Street, 1 Young Street

Schmalz Award for Design Leadership

- GloveBox, 114 Victoria Street South

For more information about the awards program and to view a video of the award-winning projects, visit www.kitchener.ca/greatplaces

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the achievement of the City's strategic vision through the delivery of core service.

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 council / committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- CSD – 15-083 Urban Design Awards Program Update

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS: N/A