

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: February 4, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Janine Oosterveld, Manager, Customer Experience & Project Management, 519-783-8942

PREPARED BY: Oluseyi Ojurongbe, Project Manager (Planning), 519-783-8941
Deeksha Choudhry, Heritage Planner, 519-783-8906

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All

DATE OF REPORT: January 24, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-037

SUBJECT: Kitchener's Great Places Awards program update with respect to the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage awards

RECOMMENDATION:

That Heritage Kitchener endorse program amendments to the Kitchener's Great Places Awards with respect to the award recipient selection for the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards as recommended in DSD-2025-037.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to inform and seek Heritage Kitchener's input on the proposed amendments to the Kitchener's Great Places Awards (KGPA) program with respect to the selection process for the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards.
- The key finding of this report is that staff are recommending a change in the process for selecting the successful recipients of Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards which integrates a jury panel. The intention of this change is to streamline and align this award category with the other KGPA selection processes.
- This recommendation will be accommodated in the KGPA capital budget.
- Community engagement included posting this report with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

In 1997, the City of Kitchener established the Mike Wagner Heritage Awards to pay tribute to property owners, businesses and individuals who have contributed to the conservation of the City's cultural heritage resources. The program was named after former City Councillor Mike Wagner who served on City Council from 1989 to 1997, and who was a strong advocate for heritage, culture, and the arts. In 2017, the heritage awards were renamed the

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Mike & Pat Wagner Heritage Awards in recognition of the many contributions of Pat Wagner, who was a long-time member of Heritage Kitchener and a recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement.

In 2015, Council endorsed the establishment of a new comprehensive planning awards program celebrating a broad range of categories. Known as the Kitchener's Great Places Awards (KGPA), the program honours outstanding development projects that show a commitment to design excellence and innovation in urban design, sustainability and heritage conservation and contribute to a built environment to enhance quality of life. Since inception, the program has brought people together, fostered community pride and the recognized projects have contributed to the quality-of-life in Kitchener. Over the years, the award ceremony has recognized projects across 9 categories as listed below:

1. Future Design Leaders
2. Master Planning
3. Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards
4. Neighborhood Design
5. People's Choice
6. Placemaking
7. Schmalz Award for Design Leadership
8. Sustainable Kitchener
9. Urban Design Excellence

The last KGPA event was held in 2023. Staff received six (6) nominations for the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards. At its June 6, 2023 meeting, Heritage Kitchener was given a summary of the award nominations, and then voted to select the winners which were subsequently endorsed by Council. The 2023 Mike and Pat Wagner Award winners were:

- 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

REPORT:

Building on the success of previous editions and as part of the KGPA program going forward, staff are requesting the Committee's and Council's endorsement to update the program for the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards to establish a heritage jury panel to select award winners.

Staff are seeking to refine the selection process of the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards to align with how winning projects are chosen similar to other categories. Attachment A provides an overview of the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Award including existing eligibility requirements, award categories, nomination criteria, and the proposed jury panel composition. Staff propose that the jury panel for this category will include a representative from the Heritage Kitchener Committee, the Director of Development & Housing Approvals and up to four other professionals with expertise in heritage conservation, urban planning, urban design, architecture and landscape architecture. The

jury plan will review nominated projects and may select up to four winning projects in a program year outlining reasons why projects were selected.

This change in process will allow a more comprehensive review of the nominations for the award among experts in heritage and other related fields. The representative from the Heritage Kitchener Committee will be selected by the Committee.

The Committee will be informed of the progress through regular updates including:

- The call for nominations and jury panelists and the request for a committee representative on the jury panel;
- The announcement of the People's Choice Award community voting;
- The invitation to the award event; and,
- A post event summary of winning projects.

Bringing these information reports forward at different points throughout the process will ensure that the Committee stays informed and involved.

At the time of writing, timelines for the KGPA are still being finalized but staff anticipate a nomination period to be open this spring with the award event to be held in the fall. Pending Council's endorsement of the change in process for the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards along with other program updates, the timelines will be finalized. Once the timelines are finalized, as mentioned above, staff will inform the Committee regarding next steps in the process.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The recommendation of this report supports the achievement of the City's strategic vision through the delivery of core service.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM - This report has also been posted to the City's website in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

CSD-18-046: Re-naming the Mike Wagner Heritage Award to the Mike & Pat Wagner Heritage Award

CSD-15-083: Urban Design Awards Program Update

REVIEWED BY: Garrett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Overview of the Mike and Pat Wagner Heritage Awards