

REPORT TO: Climate Change and Environment Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 17, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager, Policy & Research, 519-783-8933

PREPARED BY: Oluseyi Ojurongbe, Project Manager (Planning), 519-783-8941

WARD(S) INVOLVED: ALL

DATE OF REPORT: April 2, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-175

SUBJECT: Request for jury panelist for Kitchener's Great Places Awards

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Climate Change and Environment Committee identify a representative and back-up representative to participate in the jury panel for the Sustainable Kitchener award category as part of Kitchener's Great Places Awards 2025 program.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to seek direction that the Climate Change and Environment Committee identify a committee member (including a back-up) to participate in the jury panel to select the winning project(s) for the Sustainable Kitchener award as part of the Kitchener's Great Places Awards program.
- The Climate Change and Environment Committee is also encouraged to support program awareness by sharing with their community that nominations are open for projects for the Sustainable Kitchener Award along with other categories.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, Council endorsed the establishment of a new comprehensive planning awards program celebrating a broad range of categories related to excellence in urban design and cultural heritage conservation. 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, affordable housing, sustainability and heritage conservation and contribute to a built environment that enhances quality of life. Since inception, the program has brought people together, fostered community pride and contributed to the quality-of-life Kitchener residents expect. The 2025 award program will recognize awardees across 10 categories as listed below:

1. Affordable Housing Solutions Award (new this year)
2. Future Design Leaders

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

REPORT:

The Sustainable Kitchener Award is a component of Kitchener's Great Places Awards and is given to civic or private development projects that demonstrate innovation and exceptional design with respect to:

- sustainable development,
- water conservation,
- energy conservation and generation,
- air quality,
- waste reduction and management,
- supporting active transportation, and,
- transit-oriented development.

The Sustainable Kitchener Award category is open to projects that have one or more prominent sustainability components, per the themes which are further described in the Official Plan. Projects can range from "micro" projects (with a big impact) to new or renovated buildings and new neighbourhoods. Qualifying projects must have been completed in the last 4 years and may include:

- new developments,
- adaptive reuse of existing buildings,
- building additions, renovations, or site improvements
- parks and open spaces,
- public utilities, and,
- street improvements and other civic structures.

The Sustainable Kitchener Award jury panel will be composed of:

- Manager, Policy & Research (or designate);
- Director, Transportation Planning (or designate);
- Manager, Stormwater Utility (or designate);
- Climate Change and Environment Committee representative;

- up to three professionals which would cover such expertise as active transportation, environmental planning, energy management, and engineering related to the Official Plan policy themes noted.

Nominations for awards and expressions of interest for jury panels are open until April 30th through www.kitchener.ca/GreatPlaces.

Expected commitment:

The time commitment for this appointment is expected to involve reviewing submission materials for each nominated and short-listed project provided in advance and attendance at a single day, on-site review of the projects. The timeframe will be relative to the number of nominated and short-listed projects. For this category, we also try to coordinate a project representative to be on-site at a scheduled time to answer questions of the jury panel. The on-site commitment will be scheduled for a day in mid- to late June 2025 and we will target scheduling the date in May. Primary and back-up CCEC representatives are requested in the event that the primary representative is unable to participate for any reason.

Awards ceremony:

We are working to confirm the event date for this year's Kitchener's Great Places Awards ceremony which is expected to take place in October. Winning projects are announced at this event. This is a public event, and we invite all Climate Change and Environment Committee members to attend (more information to follow).

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 Committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

CSD-15-083: Urban Design Awards Program Update

DSD-2025-037: Request for jury panelist for Kitchener's Great Places Awards

REVIEWED BY: Janine Oosterveld, Manager, Customer Experience and Project Management

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A