

REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: June 3, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Garrett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals,
519-783-8922

PREPARED BY: Michelle Drake, Senior Heritage Planner, 519-783-8909

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 10

DATE OF REPORT: [Click or tap here to choose date](#)

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-241

SUBJECT: Notice of Intention to Designate 241-247 Duke Street West / 55
Victoria Street North Under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

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 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North as being of cultural heritage value or interest.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to request that Council publish a Notice of Intention to Designate 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- An updated Statement of Significance describing the cultural heritage value or interest of 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North has been drafted by Heritage Planning staff.
- The key finding of this report is that 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North meets five (5) of nine (9) criteria for designation under *Ontario Heritage Act Regulation 9/06* (amended by *Ontario Regulation 569/22*) and has been confirmed to be a significant cultural heritage resource recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.
- 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 at their June 3, 2025 committee meeting. Should Council choose to give Notice of Intention to Designate, such notice shall be served to the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North is an early 20th century commercial building situated on a 0.48 acre parcel of land. The property is located on the southwest corner of Duke Street West and Victoria Street North in the Warehouse District Cultural Heritage Landscape of the City of Kitchener within the Region of Waterloo. The principal resource that contributes to the heritage value is the commercial building.



Figure 1.0: Location Map of Subject Property (241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North)

A full assessment of 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North has been completed, including: field evaluation and archival research. The findings conclude that the subject property meets five (5) of nine (9) criteria for designation under *Ontario Heritage Act Regulation 9/06* (amended by *Ontario Regulation 569/22*). An updated Statement of Significance describing the property's cultural heritage value or interest was presented to the Heritage Kitchener Committee on March 4, 2025. The Committee recommended that pursuant to Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the cultural heritage value or interest of 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North should be confirmed by pursuing designation of the subject property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. This work was undertaken as part of the City's 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*. Bill 200, the *Homeowner Protect Act, 2024*, extended the time municipalities have, to designate properties listed on their municipal heritage registers until January 1, 2027. The City contacted owners of listed properties through an initial letter dated May 23, 2023, to inform them of this undertaking. Owners of properties recommended for designation were contacted via a second letter. The property owner for 241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North was contacted via second letter sent by mail dated March 5, 2025. This letter was accompanied by the updated Statement of Significance and a "Guide to Heritage Designation for Property Owners" prepared in June 2023. The letter

invited property owners to contact the City’s Senior Heritage Planner with any comments, questions, or concerns.

Per standard procedure, should Council support the Notice of Intention to Designate (NOID), the property owner will be contacted a third time through a letter advising of the City’s NOID. An ad for the NOID will be published in a newspaper. Once the letter is served on the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust, and the newspaper ad is posted, there will be a 30-day appeal period in which the property owner may object to the designation.



Figure 2.0: North & East Elevation – 241-247 Duke St. W. / 55 Victoria St. N.

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 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 conservation 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 or interest; 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 or interest.

241-247 Duke Street West / 55 Victoria Street North is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values. It satisfies five (5) of nine (9) criteria for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act Regulation 9/06* (amended by *Ontario Regulation 569/22*). A summary of the criteria that is or is not met is provided in Table 1.

| Criteria | Criteria Met (Yes/No) |
|--|-----------------------|
| 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. | Yes |

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|---|------------|
| 2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit. | No |
| 3. The property has design or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. | No |
| 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. | Yes |
| 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. | No |
| 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. | Yes |
| 7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area. | Yes |
| 8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings. | Yes |
| 9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark. | No |

Table 1: Criteria for Designation under *Ontario Regulation 9/06 (Amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22)*

Design/Physical Value

The design/physical value relates to the building as a representative example of early 20th century Vernacular Industrial architecture in Berlin (now Kitchener). The original 1913 portion of the building features elements characteristic of early Vernacular Industrial architecture including a flat roof, buff (yellow) brick (painted c. 2019), a regular arrangement of windows and minimal ornamentation. Decorative features include a horizontal brick band under the cornice and above the foundation, dentils under the cornice band and brick pilasters that separate the door and window openings. An addition constructed after 1925 on the east side of the building replicates the mass, setback, roofline, and pilasters of the original building.

Historical/Associative Value

The historical/associative value of the building reflects the work of an architect, Charles Knechtel (1869-1951), who was significant to Berlin. Charles was the son of Jonas Knechtel whom he acquired most of his building and design knowledge from between 1886 and 1894. He opened his own business in 1895 and operated until 1930. Over 100 buildings were designed by him, including churches, commercial blocks, factories, homes, schools, etc. In 1913, he built a large warehouse on Victoria Street for John Sloan and Co. Other notable buildings he designed include: First Church of Christ Scientist, Victoria Park Pavillion, Berlin Carnegie Library, Hymmen Hardware Co. Ltd., and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church rectory.

The historical/associative value of the property relates to its connection to commercial development in the City during the early part of the 20th century. The building was first

occupied in 1913 by John Sloan and Co., a wholesale grocer, and one of only two such wholesale companies in Berlin at that time. The location was important given its proximity to the railway spur line that ran along Victoria Street North and enabled easy transport of produce to the warehouse. John Sloan and Co. was a Toronto company that operated several wholesale grocery outlets throughout Ontario in the early 1900s. Victor Sloan, a son of John Sloan, was a resident of the City of Kitchener and served as office manager and later accountant of the wholesale business. In 1920, John Sloan and Co. purchased its sole local wholesale competitor, the Randall and Roos Wholesale Grocer and Liquor Warehouse (est. 1884). Later that same year John Sloan and Co. was purchased by National Grocers Ltd. By 1950, National Grocers had moved to a new property and was later consolidated with Loblaws Companies Ltd, the largest food retailer in Canada.

The historical/associative value of the property also relates to the connection of building to well-known local electrical and lighting company called Bergen Electric Ltd and its owner Robert William Bergen (b. 4 December 1900; d. 22 May 1993). Robert Bergen was an electrician who owned and operated several electrical contracting companies from 1921, including the RW Bierwagon Electric Company, the Mattell & Bierwagen Electric Company and the Bergen Electric Company. Robert Bergen purchased 241-247 Duke Street West/55 Victoria Street North from the Sloan estate in 1950. He helped form the Ontario Electrical Contractors Association and encouraged local farmers to use hydro instead of coal oil at their farms.

Contextual Value

The contextual value relates to the building's role in maintaining and supporting the character of the Warehouse District Cultural Heritage Landscape (WDCHL) identified in Kitchener's Cultural Heritage Landscape Study (2015). The WDCHL, which roughly encompasses the complex of industrial buildings concentrated along the Canadian National Railway (formerly Grand Trunk Railway) and the railway line itself, was the site of the majority of the City's economic development during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Heritage attributes include a quantity of multi-storey, brick buildings in a Vernacular Industrial style with small setbacks from the street and the rail line. The building at 241-247 Duke Street West/55 Victoria Street North supports these heritage values and attributes through its height, mass, setback, Vernacular Industrial architectural style, and original use as a warehouse. The building is historically linked to the Canadian National Railway, which delivered produce and goods via a spur line which permitted freight cars to pull up directly alongside the Victoria Street North elevation of the building.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage value of 241-247 Duke Street West/55 Victoria Street North resides in the following heritage attributes:

- All elements related to the construction and Industrial Vernacular architectural style of the building, including:
 - roof and roofline, including the flat roof;
 - door openings;
 - window openings, including concrete headers and sills;
 - yellow brick construction (painted c. 2019);
 - concrete foundation;

- parapets between windows;
 - shallow horizontal brick banding under cornice and above foundation; and,
 - dental brick work under brick banding.
- All elements related to the contextual value of the building, including:
 - height, mass and set back.

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– Heritage Planning staff have consulted with the Heritage Kitchener committee regarding designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Property owners were invited to consult via two separate letters dated May 23, 2023 and March 5, 2025.

Section 29(2) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires Council to consult with the Municipal Heritage Committee (Heritage Kitchener) before giving *Notice of Intention to Designate* (NOID) 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. Should Council choose to proceed with a NOID, such notice will be served on the property owner, the Ontario Heritage Trust, and published in the local newspaper (The Record). Once notice has been served, the property owner has the right to object the NOID and appeal the Designating By-law. Should Council decide not to proceed with a NOID then the building will remain on the City’s Municipal Heritage Register (MHR) until January 1, 2027, after which it will be removed in accordance with the legislative changes enacted by Bill 200. Once removed from the MHR, it cannot be re-listed on the MHR for five (5) years (i.e., January 1, 2032).

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2022*
- *Ontario Regulation 9/06 (Amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22)*
- Bill 23 – Municipal Heritage Register Review (DSD-2023-225)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – August 2023 Update (DSD-2023-309)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – January 2024 Update (DSD-2024-022)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – February 2024 Update (DSD-2024-056)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – March 2024 Update (DSD-2024-093)

- Municipal Heritage Register Review – April 2024 Update (DSD-2024-131)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – May 2024 Update (DSD-2024-194)
- *Bill 200, Homeowners Protection Act, 2024*
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – June 2024 Update (DSD-2024-250)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – August 2024 Update (DSD-2024-333)
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – September 2024 Update (DSD-2024-413)
- Municipal Heritage Register – October 2024 Update (DSD-2024-413)
- Municipal Heritage Register – November 2024 Update (DSD-2024-444)
- Municipal Heritage Register – March 2025 Update (DSD-2025-031)
- Municipal Heritage Register – April 2025 Update (DSD-2025-108)

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Statement of Significance for 241-247 Duke St. W. / 55 Victoria St. N.