

Staff Report



Development Services Department

www.kitchener.ca

REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: March 3, 2026

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

PREPARED BY: Victoria Grohn, Heritage Planner, 519-783-8912

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 9

DATE OF REPORT: February 9, 2026

REPORT NO.: DSD-2026-087

SUBJECT: Notice of Intention to Designate 85 Strange Street 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 85 Strange Street 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 85 Strange Street under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- The key finding of this report is that property municipally addressed as 85 Strange Street 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. This property is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.
- There are no financial implications with this recommendation.
- 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.

BACKGROUND:

85 Strange Street consists of two structures, which were once individual buildings, but are now connected: the 1937 main church building and the 1948 rectory building. Both buildings were constructed in the 20th century in the Neo-Gothic architectural style. The

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

buildings are situated on a 0.88 acre parcel of land located on the west side of Strange Street between Dominion Street and Waverly Road in the Cherry Hill Planning Community within the City of Kitchener.



Figure 1: Location Map

A full assessment of 85 Strange Street has been completed and included a field evaluation and detailed archival research. The findings concluded that the subject property meets the criteria for designation. An updated Statement of Significance on the property's cultural heritage value was taken to the Heritage Kitchener Committee on October 7, 2025. On this meeting date, the Committee recommended that pursuant to Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the cultural heritage value or interest of the Church be recognized and designation pursued. 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 of the Ontario Heritage Act introduced in January of 2023 through Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act. The City contacted owners of the listed properties through an initial letter dated May 23, 2023 to inform them of this undertaking. The property owners were contacted via a second letter dated November 21, 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 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 through a third letter advising of the City's NOID. 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.

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 Façade

85 Strange Street is recognized for its design/physical, historic/associative, and contextual values. It satisfies four (4) of the nine (9) 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 summarized in the table below.

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
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,	Yes

activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	
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.	No
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

Design/Physical Value

The property municipally addressed as 85 Strange Street demonstrates design/physical value through its Neo-Gothic architectural style. The 1937 main church building and the 1948 rectory building are in good condition with many intact original elements. The church building features: a rectangular plan; red brick construction; one large gothic arch window per bay; buttressing between bays; wood front entrance door with concrete gothic arch door surround; large gothic arch stained glass window above front entrance door; two small octagonal steeples with bells flank the front façade; and, decorative concrete details. The rectory building features: a square plan; hip roof with dormers; red brick construction; front entrance concrete pediment with cross and inscription reading “St. John’s Rectory”; wood paneled door with sidelights; and, hung windows with concrete surrounds. These features are representative of the Neo-Gothic architectural style.

Historic/Associative Value

The historic and associative values relate to the original and continued use of the building as a church. The building was constructed as a result of growth in the City in 1937. The church is associated with the adjacent property at 99 Strange Street (St. John’s Catholic School) and the church used the school’s basement for Sunday mass until February 1938 while the new church was being constructed. Though the superstructure of the church was unfinished, the cornerstone was laid on August 15, 1937 by Reverend W. Beninger, C.R., and dedicated by Reverend Joseph Ryan on February 20, 1938.

Contextual Value

The building at 85 Strange Street is in its original location and has continued to serve as a church since its construction. The property is physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings, particularly as it relates to the adjacent St. John’s Catholic School. Both buildings were constructed around the same time and have served the community since their construction.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage value of 85 Strange Street resides in the following heritage attributes:

- All elements related to the construction and Neo-Gothic architectural style of the Church building, including:
 - It's location, orientation, and massing;
 - a rectangular plan;
 - red brick construction;
 - roof and roofline;
 - windows and window openings, including:
 - one large gothic arch window per bay;
 - large gothic arch stained glass window above front entrance door;
 - Appearance of the 3-over-3 square hung windows.
 - buttressing between bays;
 - door openings, including:
 - wood front entrance door with concrete gothic arch door surround;
 - two small octagonal steeples with bells flank the front façade;
 - Horizontal concrete banding; and
 - Decorative concrete quatrefoil motifs; and
 - Any other decorative concrete details.

- All elements related to the construction and Neo-Gothic architectural style of the Rectory building, including:
 - a square plan;
 - roof and roofline, including:
 - hip roof with dormers;
 - red brick construction;
 - front entrance concrete pediment with cross and inscription reading “St. John’s Rectory”;
 - doors and door openings, including:
 - wood paneled door with sidelights; and,
 - window openings, including:
 - hung windows with concrete surrounds.

- All elements related to the contextual value of the buildings, including:
 - It's location on the Strange Street streetscape, and
 - It's relationship to the adjacent St. John’s Catholic School.

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 November 21, 2025.

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, 2027, 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, 2032.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2022*
- Municipal Heritage Register Review – October 2025 Update – DSD-2025-357

REVIEWED BY: Sandro Bassanese, Manager of Site Plan

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Updated Statement of Significance