

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: February 3, 2026

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

PREPARED BY: Deeksha Choudhry, Heritage Planner, 519-783-8906
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WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 10

DATE OF REPORT: January 12, 2026

REPORT NO.: DSD-2026-046

SUBJECT: Notice of Intention to Designate 1254 Union 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 1254 Union 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 1254 Union Street under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- The key finding of this report is that property municipally addressed as 1254 Union Street, in particular the portions of the original warehouse building and former machine shop 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:

1254 Union Street includes a two-storey warehouse building, two single storey buildings to the east, a temporary structure to the southeast and various landscape components situated on a 5.65 acres of land located on the south side of Union Street just before Union Street turns into Sereda Road (Fig. 1). The subject property is located in the Northward Planning Community in the City of Kitchener within the Region of Waterloo.



Figure 1. Location Map – 1254 Union Street

A Site Plan application for the subject property was submitted for the property in 2023, and a Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was required as part of that site plan application. The HIA was presented to Heritage Kitchener at its August 1, 2023, meeting. The site plan application proposed the construction of a storage facility on the subject property. The heritage evaluation of the subject property included within the HIA concluded that the property only met one (1) out of nine (9) criteria under Ontario Regulation 9/06. However, staff had a differing opinion, concluding that the property met five (5) out of nine (9) criteria, and warranted designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The designation of the property was made a condition of final site plan approval for the subject property. Upon further communication with the applicant, it was decided that designation will be pursued once the construction on the maintenance facility had been completed.

Per standard procedure, should Council support the Notice of Intention to Designate, Owners will be contacted through a Notice of Intention to Designate (NOID) Letter. An ad for the NOID will also be published in a newspaper. Once the letter is served and the ad posted, there will be a 30-day appeal period in which Owners could 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 and Side Elevation of original former Warehouse Building.

1254 Union Street is recognized for its design/physical, significant historical/associative, and contextual values (Fig. 2). It satisfies five (5) 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 provided in the table below. Even though the property as a whole was evaluated against O. Reg 9/06 and there have been many alterations

since these building were first constructed, specific portions of the buildings were identified by staff as having cultural heritage interest of value:

- The main original 1902 former warehouse building, along with the wings on the warehouse building (1904-1923) portion; and
- Former machine shop (1902).

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, 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.	Yes
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.	No
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

Original Former Warehouse Building

The subject property has design value because it is a representative and unique example of the Industrial Vernacular architectural style with Spanish Eclectic influences (Fig. 3). It is two storeys in height, and still contains many of its original elements including but not limited to; main hip roof, yellow and red brick including decorative details; brick pilasters between bays; segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs, and exterior archways. The Spanish Eclectic influences can be seen in the project portico of the building, with the arched parapet, brick voussoirs, and brick pilasters at each end of the portico.

The main building was constructed in 1902 and has had many alterations done to it over the years. The protruding portico to the building is not original, and was most likely constructed between 2003 and 2006, along with the addition immediately behind it that was built with tan brick construction, with brick pilasters on each side and a parapet at the

top. The addition covered most of the front façade of the original building, leaving only a bay of windows on each side of the original façade visible from the street. There is a single-storey addition on each side of the building that was constructed between 1904 and 1925.



Figure 3. Front Façade of the Former Warehouse Building with Spanish Eclectic Influences.

Former Machine Shop

The original portion of the Former Machine Shop was built in 1902, with an addition that was constructed between 2017 and 2018 (Fig. 4). The building is one-storey in height, of tan brick construction with a hipped roof and arched windows.



Figure 4. Former Machine Shop

The history of the subject property is quite complex, with many additions and removals throughout the years. The main warehouse building, and the former machine shop are the only two remaining buildings from the original complex that was first built in the early 1900s.

The 1894, revised 1904 Fire Insurance Plan showed that the processing factory was one-third of a mile long when it was occupied by the Ontario Sugar Company and included eleven (11) buildings in its entire complex. Out of these buildings, building No. 2 (former warehouse) and building no. 5 (former machine shop) are the only two buildings still standing today.

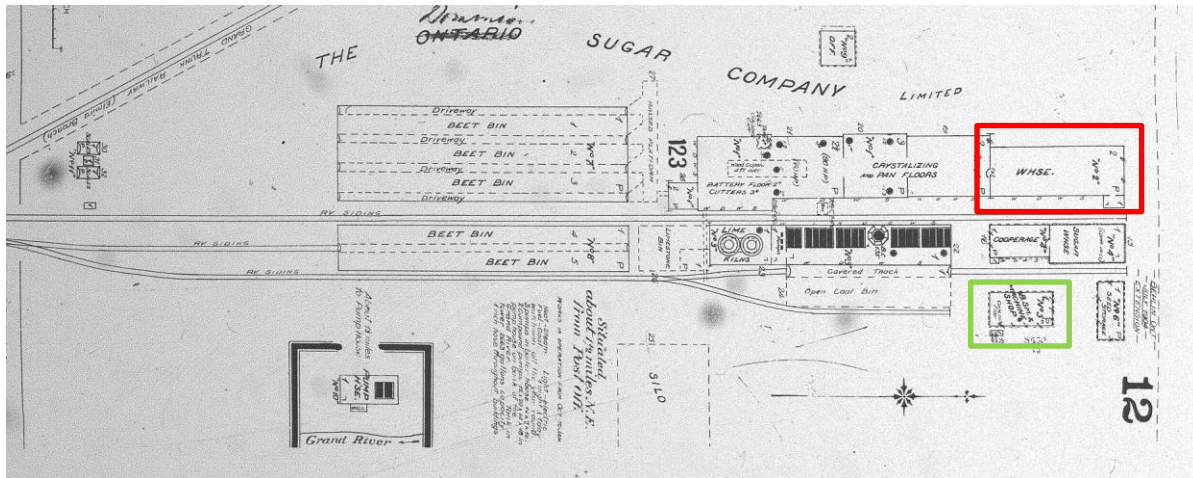


Figure 5. Excerpt from the 1904 Fire Insurance Map. Building No. 2 is highlighted in red, and Building No. 5 is highlighted in green.

‘Building no.1’ was the three-storey main plant on the property and was seen as a landmark in Kitchener at the time, locally referred to as the “white elephant”. However, in 1909 the Ontario Sugar Company was declared bankrupt and the operations on the subject property was taken over by the Dominion Sugar Company. They operated out of the subject property until 1923. The 1925 Fire Insurance Plans noted a number of changes on the factory site.

Since then, the subject property has changed ownership many times, with many different businesses operating out of the subject property. In 2005, the warehouse building was renovated by the owner at the time to serve as a private resident that was inspired by the “Road to Santiago de Compostela”, a century old-walk in Northern Spain, which is where the building for some of it’s Spanish eclectic influences.

Historical/Associative Value

The property has associative value because it has direct associations with the Ontario Sugar Company, the Breithaupt family in its operations, and Ebenezer Herrick Dyer (E.H. Dyer Co.) in the design of the original factory buildings.

In 1901, local businessmen were considering the idea of establishing a sugar-beet factory in Berlin (present-day Kitchener). To assess the cultivation of sugar-beets in Waterloo, several experiments were conducted in the same year, and many incentives were given to investors and farmers in the form of bonuses, tax exemptions, and grants to purchase farmland. On December 26th, 1901, Samuel Williams, who was the president of the Berlin Board of Trade, announced that the Ontario Sugar Company had elected Berlin to build its new half-million dollar sugar beet factory. In 1902, the Ontario Sugar Company finalized its purchase to buy 69 acres of farmland in the Township of Waterloo, with 49 acres being

from Daniel Fries and 20 acres being from the Breithaupt Family. Operations of the factory were strategically supported by its proximity to the Grand River, which was used to deliver 5 million gallons of water daily to the factory, and the Grand Trunk Railway which was accessible via the establishment of six brank lines on the property.

A portion of the factory's land was previously owned by the Breithaupt family, and they were also involved in establishing the company in Berlin. They were well known in the community, and their contributions were highly significant to the development of Kitchener. J.C. Breithaupt and W.H. Breithaupt were the director and the president, respectively, of the Ontario Sugar Company at the time of the closure of the company.

The design and construction of the factory was contracted to E.H. Dyer Company of Cleveland. The company was founded by Ebenezer Herrick Dyer. He established the first successful sugar beet plant in the United States in the latter half of the 19th century. He was also responsible for the construction and design of over fifty (50) sugar refining factories globally thereafter. Dyer was known as the 'father of the sugar beet industry in America'. Even though the building has undergone many alterations over the years, this building is one of the last remaining from the original complex that was initially constructed, and some of the original architectural elements still remain intact and visible today.

The property also has associative value because it has potential to yield information regarding the rapid economic and industrial expansion of Berlin at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. Berlin (now Kitchener) was experiencing major economic development during time, with the establishment of many industrial companies. The establishment of the Ontario Sugar Company also significantly contributed towards Berlin's industrial development. At the time of the opening of the factory, Berlin began to refer to itself as the "Sugar Beet Capital of Canada". The opening and processing within this factory represented the first sugar that was produced using Canadian beets. Furthermore, operating the plant created hundreds of permanent and seasonal jobs.

In 2005, the property was operated by an award-winning, European inspired event venue. Ron Doyle, a local visionary, community builder, entrepreneur, and philanthropist was behind the transformation. The project was inspired by the 800 kilometre Camino de Santiago pilgrimage Doyle completed in Spain in 2001. Doyle was also behind Lot 42, a local event space for high profile gatherings, and A Better Tent City, a small community of vulnerable residents in individual cabins.

Most recently, the property was occupied by the Hacienda Sarria Market Garden, operated by the Working Centre. The Hacienda Sarria Market Garden was a volunteer-driven initiative to develop an inclusive, hands-on learning environment to demonstrate, promote, and share knowledge about sustainable local food production and environmental stewardship.

Contextual Value

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings. The buildings remain in their original location and are still located in close proximity to the Grand River. This strategic location of the factory so

close to the Grand River at the time of its establishment contributes to its contextual value even though the surrounding landscape has seen immense change in the years since. The factory was situated close to the Grand Trunk Railway. The railway was used to bring beets from farms to the refinery, and the river was used to power the refinery and discharge effluent. The factory was built on a slight rise of land providing it prominence in the landscape.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of 1254 Union Street reside in the following attributes:

- All elements related to the construction and Industrial vernacular architectural style with Spanish eclectic influences of the main original 1902 former warehouse building, along with the wings on the warehouse building (1904-1923) portion; and former machine shop (1902):
 - The location, massing and scale of the original 1902 former warehouse building with the wings (1904-1923) and the former machine shop (1902);
 - The style and appearance of the main hip roof;
 - Flat and shed rooflines on the wings of the original warehouse;
 - Yellow and red brick construction including decorative details on all facades;
 - Brick pilasters between bays;
 - Segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs;
 - Various arched window openings;
 - Two-storey front entrance portico with parapet;
 - Segmentally arched door openings with brick voussoirs;
 - Exterior archways; and
 - Flat headed door openings with timber lintels
- All elements related to the construction and architectural style of the original former machine shop (1902) (excluding the later addition):
 - The location, massing and scale of the former machine shop;
 - Yellow and red brick construction;
 - The style and appearance of the hip roof;
 - Arched window openings with brick voussoirs;
 - Arched door openings with brick voussoirs;
- All elements related to its contextual value of the buildings:
 - The original location of the original former warehouse and former machine shop on the subject property, and its contribution to the Union Street streetscape.

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 January 16, 2024.

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*
- *Draft Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment – 1254 Union Street, Construction of a Maintenance Facility – DSD-2023-316*

REVIEWED BY: Sandro Bassanese, Manager of Site Plan

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

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A – Updated Statement of Significance for 1254 Union Street
- Attachment B – Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment – 1254 Union Street