

Inten - City

/2021

Witness the effects of rapid intensification on Kitchener's Downtown Core

Walking Tour of
Downtown Kitchener



1 22 WEBER STREET 22 Weber St. W 30 Duke St LTD Ventin Group LTD 15 126 R	2 THE SCOTT 63 Scott St. Weber Investments SRM Architects 10 133 R	3 20 QUEEN 20 Queen St. N Momentum ABA Architects 34 238 R	4 YOUNG CONDOS 55 Duke St. E Andrin Homes Quadrangle 26 296 R	5 ONE YOUNG ST 1 Young St. Bernie Nimer Walter Fedy 6 53K C	6 CHARLIE WEST 24 Gaukel St. Momentum / Zehr ABA Architects 31 300 R
7 GOWLINGS TOWER 345 King St. W Perimeter Diamond Schmitt 6 120K C	8 KING-VICTORIA TRANSIT HUB Intersection of King St. W and Victoria St. Region of Waterloo WZMH / Architecture49 2 4K P	9 BREITHAUPT BLOCK 20 Breithaupt St. Perimeter Martin Simmons 11 300K C	10 UNION TOWERS 607 King St. W VanMar KirKor Architects 28 583 R	11 STATION PARK 607 King St. W VanMar KirKor Architects 28 580 R	
12 30 FRANCIS 30 Francis St. S IN8 Developments SRM Architects 44 532 R	13 ONE HUNDRED 100 Victoria St. S Momentum ABA Architects 19 276 R	14 THE GLOVE BOX 120 Victoria St. S Momentum Edge Architects 8 140K C	15 GARMENT STREET 120 Victoria St. S Momentum ABA Architects 26 300 R	16 OTIS 51 David St. Vive Developments Neo Architects 6 30 R	17 242 QUEEN 242 Queen St. S Vive Developments Neo Architects 10 120 R
18 BARA ON QUEEN 399 Queen St. S Polo Corp Marsh Katsios 6 110 R	19 ARROW LOFTS II 112 Benton St. Auburn Homes Inc. Unknown 15 175 R	20 DTK 32 Duke St. E IN8 Developments SRM Architects 39 410 R	MAP LEGEND: New Buildings Walking Route ION Light Rail Green Space Urban Growth Centre Heritage Conservation District	MATRIX LEGEND: Building Address Developer Architect # Storeys # Residential Units Area of Office Space Private Residential Private Commercial Public Development Proposed Under Construction Completed	

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The creators of this guide respectfully acknowledge that the area with which we are concerned is deeply connected to Indigenous peoples who have historically lived, and who currently live here. It is entirely located on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples and situated in the Haldimand Tract, Land Promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

Inten-City : The Kitchener Core in 2021

Downtown Kitchener is experiencing an unprecedented surge in new construction. This guide maps and measures the new urban landscape emerging in the city core. The walking tour takes in 20 active construction sites, soon to be home to thousands of new office workers and residents. It also identifies the four distinct periods of development that lead to the present building boom.

What is the cause? The current pace of construction is the result of provincial and local planning policies that encourage urban intensification, large public and private investment, prosperity, population growth, incentivizing core area employment and the first thorough transformation of the public transportation system in the Region since the 1960's with the launch of the ION light rail transit system.

How great is the change? At the moment twenty-five new projects have been planned or started construction - as many as in the previous twenty-five years combined. Different from the developments of last quarter century, all but two of these new projects are privately funded.

The projects displayed along the route will transform the fabric and skyline of

Kitchener. This can now be seen well beyond the city limits. The highest building, DTK, is double the height of its predecessors at 39 storeys. Towers now loom over streets, intersections, parks and plazas, while multi-tower clusters and a new transit hub draw the city centre towards Victoria Street. Active construction sites are distributed across the core area. They do not obliterate the memory of the past or turn their backs on public space as was the case in past. When the current round of buildings is completed and occupied, the population of the Kitchener core will be roughly double what it was in 2018.

But this wave of residential intensification begs certain questions. Private investment followed public investment in the core. Will public initiatives respond to the new conditions, new residents, new workers? Will Kitchener re-focus on public, cultural, civic and accessible spaces to accommodate the large number of newcomers? Can we create sufficient affordable housing for current residents? This guide challenges all to witness the changes with their own eyes and measure them with their footsteps.

We must all ask ourselves what kind of city are we building, what does it feel like and for whom it is built?

Kitchener Modern (1948-1968)

After the Second World War the cities of Waterloo County grew and reshaped themselves in a modern image. Civic buildings, banks, libraries, churches, and schools were demolished and replaced with modern versions of themselves. Office and apartment towers appeared for the first time on downtown streets. The new buildings were assertively modern in style, using new materials and construction techniques, simpler abstract forms absent of ornament or overt historical reference. Above all this new city accommodated

the automobile. New roads and highways carried traffic to, from and through the cities, connecting to vast regional shopping malls and burgeoning suburbs. Though the insertion of many new buildings changed the face of the Kitchener core, the traditional downtown declined as a result of the flight to the suburbs of the factories, shops and residents.

- NOTABLE PROJECTS 1948-1968 :
- 1 Water Street Apartments
 - 2 30 Duke Street West
 - 3 Duke Street Parking Garage
 - 4 Bank of Nova Scotia
 - 5 50 Queen Street North
 - 6 Kitchener Public Library
 - 7 Waterloo County Courthouse
 - 8 St. Peter's Lutheran Church
 - 9 TD Bank
 - 10 Valhalla Inn
 - 11 305 King St (Waterloo Trust)
 - 12 Post Office
 - 13 Victoria Place
 - 14 Queen Street Apartments



1965 : The Plan - Downtown Kitchener proposes to transform King St. into pedestrian covered mall

The (Failed) Dream of a Renewed Core (1968-1975)

In the late 60's, Kitchener followed in the path of cities across North America seeking to reverse the decline of their core areas by investing in massive "urban renewal" projects championed by developers and civic leaders. Market Square (16), King Centre (17) and the so-called MacKenzie King Square (15) adopted the typical pattern of government-supported land assembly and demolition of civic icons, main-street buildings and historic residential areas. Kitchener tore down its

beautiful neo-classical City Hall and elegant Queen Street mansions. These dignified and familiar examples of traditional Ontario urban architecture were replaced by large, amorphous, inward-focused complexes. Across the board these projects failed to deliver on the promise of renewal. The so-called 'urban' shopping malls sucked the life from the downtown streets before they themselves failed.

- NOTABLE PROJECTS 1968-1975 :
- 15 MacKenzie King Square
 - 16 Market Square & Oxlea Tower
 - 17 King Centre



1973 : Market Square opens on former City Hall/Market site

Post-Modern Kitchener (1975-1993)

Though the pace of change in the core area slowed, a series of isolated interventions took place over the decade and a half between the mid-70's and the early 90's. A new Regional Headquarters (18). A new Transit Terminal (21). Two large office buildings on downtown streets. At the same time, under some public pressure, builders largely abandoned the alienating, destructive and wasteful practices of demolition and erasure, and began to preserve, restore and reuse some historic buildings: the CIBC (23) at the corner of King and Queen and the

- NOTABLE PROJECTS 1975-1993 :
- 18 Region of Waterloo HQ
 - 19 The Galleria
 - 20 TD Bank
 - 21 Transit Terminal
 - 22 Canada Trust Centre
 - 23 CIBC Renovation
 - 24 Bread and Roses Coop



1992 : Canada Trust Tower becomes last office tower opened in the Downtown before 2020

From City Hall to Google (1993-2017)

The Kitchener City Hall (34) design competition attracted entries from Canada. The much praised winning project by KPMB marked a turning point in the history of the Kitchener core. Though the effect was not immediate, investment eventually accelerated. In 2004, the City established a \$110 Million Economic Development Investment Fund. The 2007 relocation of Google to The Tannery (32) paved way for the migration of the tech industry to Kitchener. More than two dozen public and private cultural, educational, institutional, residential

and commercial projects arrive in the core. In a new form of renewal, century-old factories were converted to condos and incubators for the digital economy. 'Modern' buildings from the 1950's and 60's were renovated (see red hatch) and their original character preserved.

- NOTABLE PROJECTS 1993-2017 :
- 25 Kitchener Public Library
 - 26 Waterloo County Courthouse
 - 27 Waterloo Regional Courthouse
 - 28 Breithaupt Block
 - 29 The School of Pharmacy
 - 30 Kauffman Lofts
 - 31 1 Victoria
 - 32 The Tannery
 - 33 305 King St
 - 34 Kitchener City Hall
 - 35 Laurier School of Social Work
 - 36 Centre Block (Phase 1)
 - 37 Conrad Centre
 - 38 THEMUSEUM
 - 39 Benton St Parking Garage
 - 40 Victoria School Housing
 - 41 Arrow Shirt Factory



2006 : Kitchener establishes \$110M City Economic Development fund

2014 : Kitchener Official Plan approved

2014 : Kitchener Public Library rennovated

2031 : DTK to reach Growth Targets of +340,000 people, +134,000 jobs

Calculating Change

