



COMPASS KITCHENER

Who are you, Kitchener?

Now ... and 20 years from now.

Compass Kitchener - A Citizen's Advisory Committee to the City of Kitchener

Tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.

In Kitchener, we believe that the future is something we can create.

So our community has come together to develop a picture of what we would like Kitchener to be...for ourselves, our neighbours, our children and our community – 20 years from now.

What does Kitchener look like to you in 20 years? What will be, and should be, important to us as a community? Who do we think we are? And who will we become?

We asked you for your ideas. And nearly 2,000 of you took the time to tell us what you think because you care so much about the place that you call home.

This brochure is the first in a series.

Through the Who-are-you-Kitchener process, we received volumes of information that will be compiled, analyzed and presented to you in additional brochures throughout this year.



Toward the future together.

In 2006, you generously shared your vision for the future of the City of Kitchener with us through the Who are you Kitchener? process. Through ward meetings, workshops, high school civics classes, workbooks, kitchen table talks and online input, you told us what you like – and don't like – about our city.

It was clear that you wanted to talk about community values. And so did we.

The things that you identified that set Kitchener apart and make us different – the things that you believe in your heart to be special and endearing about this community – are, indeed, the things that will shape who we become in the future.



Our Vision

So, the task is no longer about foreseeing the future. You've helped to determine our shared values and our shared vision. Now... it's about making it happen.

This is what we think, Kitchener. This is what we want.

A local government that regularly connects with citizens.

Our desire is for a community where all people have opportunity to be engaged in decision making about local issues that affect our city's future. We want to be informed about the issues. We want to speak for ourselves. And we want to be heard. Every step of the way.

We want a progressive, effective local government that is accessible and accountable to all.

We will strive to increase community involvement in decision making, and to create active partnerships between Council, residents and City staff. That is what will help us to ensure that we receive the open, honest, and transparent local government we expect and deserve.

A downtown we can enjoy and be proud of.

Our downtown is the heart of our city. And its vitality and success is critical to our economic health and quality of life.

Downtown Kitchener is undergoing an energizing revitalization. There is a realistic vision and practical plan for its rebirth as a place of pride and prosperity - and as a place for people. But it's going to take time.

We're patient. We believe in re-energizing the heart of our city. And we know that time will bring the lively downtown – that provides residents with a mix of exciting, big-city amenities and diverse services – that we want. We have a vested interest in the future of our downtown and a belief that it will succeed.

Careful growth and development.

We know that livable, attractive communities are created over time as the result of hundreds, even thousands, of development decisions. We want to continue to make the right decisions. For now and the years to come.

We want to live in a community that has thoughtfully planned its neighbourhoods and its housing alternatives. And its business and industrial parks. We want an effective balance between our economic needs as a city, the needs of business and industry, and the needs of residents. We won't sacrifice our environment for development.

To that end, we will seek out and bring positive residential and business development to Kitchener which reflects our shared vision for a healthy, well balanced community in which to live and raise our families.



A great place to live.

Living well matters to us.

Without strong schools, safe streets, intact roads, bridges and other infrastructure, adequate municipal services, and attractive parks and open space, the quality of our lives suffers.



We want a community that invests in maintaining basic services, in addition to amenities such as community centres, museums, theatres, art galleries, leisure facilities. Even if that means paying higher property taxes.

Where diversity is one of our many strengths.

Diverse communities and groups make up the population of Kitchener. We value the contribution of all of our people. And we believe that our cultural diversity provides a living fabric that binds our community together.

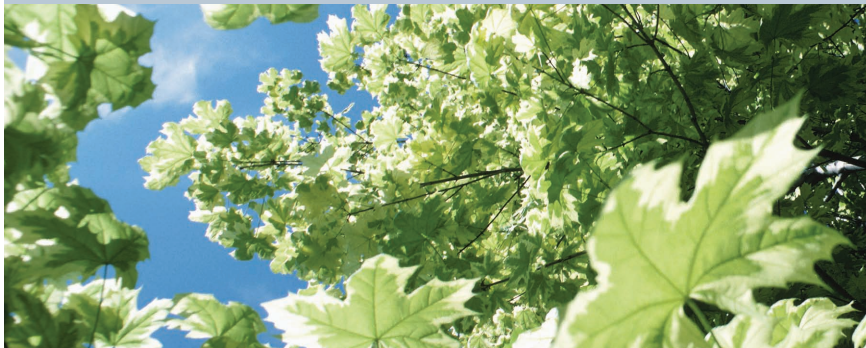
We weave the threads of this community fabric by living and working together. And how we relate to each other is key to the pattern, the colour and the strength of this fabric.

We want to continue to acknowledge and embrace the ethnic, cultural, and social diversity of our residents. And we want to encourage our culturally diverse friends and neighbours to retain their cultures and lifestyles, so that we can ensure a strong, rich, dynamic and inclusive social fabric for the Kitchener of the future.



And where environmental stewardship is a priority.

We care deeply about our environment. And we have much to celebrate. But there is much more to do. Responsible stewardship of Kitchener's environment is key to the quality of life that we all enjoy.



We want environmental considerations to be important factors in every decision the City makes in planning for our future. And we want to focus significant energy and resources on becoming more environmentally friendly through investments in bike trails, improved transit systems, tougher environmental bylaws and more strict growth management policies.

A commitment to sustainable development that balances the needs of a growing city with the need to protect our natural environment will continue to make us successful in attracting new people, new business and new opportunity.

But let's not forget where we came from.

Kitchener is a city of vibrancy and vision that only a great past can inspire. From our humble beginnings in the mid-1800s as an industrial town, we've emerged on the scene today as an innovative, creative and culturally diverse mid-sized Canadian city.



We've got all the big city stuff. But we haven't lost that appealing sense of friendliness and cohesiveness more often associated with smaller towns. We definitely want to hold on to that.

We want to be a place where there is a sense of community – and a city that maintains its small-town feel while providing residents with many of the amenities of large urban centres.

The future begins now.

We know where we're going. Our renewed vision for the future is very similar to the vision we agreed on in 2000. So we know we're getting there. Our shared vision is becoming reality. And we know what it's going to take to get the rest of the way there.

It's time to go to work. With a renewed spirit of civic pride for the city that we have become, and for the future that we are building together.

So what's next?

Who-are-you-Kitchener? was the second of a multi-phased citizen engagement process. And there will be more. Your input will be integral to two new citizen engagement opportunities that will be planned for the coming months:

- Growth management (Fall, 2006)
- Creating a three-year strategic financial plan (Winter, 2007).

Stay tuned for further updates on these engagement processes.



For Information:

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