Together, we will build an innovative, caring and vibrant Kitchener.

Kitchener’s strategic plan isn’t the city’s plan - it’s our community’s plan for action. It was created through extensive consultation with the people who live, work and play in our city.

The goals within the plan represent the shared vision of our community and council: Together, we will build an innovative, caring and vibrant Kitchener.

Our mission is: Proudly providing valued services for our community. Our promise to the community is that we’ll deliver on the priorities that matter to them: people-friendly transportation, environmental leadership, a vibrant economy, a caring community and great customer service.
Shaping our vision for Kitchener’s future...

Kitchener is a great place to live with strong, active neighbourhoods, welcoming leisure facilities, support for arts and culture, diverse events, beautiful parks, trails and natural areas. Kitchener is known for its innovation, embracing technology, its support for educational institutions and a thriving business community. People from all walks of life live here and call Kitchener home.

As our population becomes more diverse, we must become a more equitable and inclusive community.

Shaping our vision for Kitchener’s future over the next four years started with listening to citizens. We asked you how we can make Kitchener an even more innovative, caring and vibrant city, and what goals and actions within the strategic plan will bring your priorities to life.

...a city where everyone feels like they belong, are welcome, their needs are met and they can fully share in our city’s prosperity.

At your doors, at community events, through statistically and demographically relevant surveys, through email, phone, social media – in every format, in every interaction – we’ve listened to understand what’s most important to you.

And we’re prepared to act on those priorities. Through the five clear goals to give us focus and the 25 action statements acting as a blueprint to success, we will ensure that staff focus on the priorities that matter most to residents. Safer streets. A stronger, more resilient environment. A more caring, and prosperous city. Great customer service.

...we’ve listened to understand what’s most important to you.
A message from Mayor Berry Vrbanovic and council

On behalf of my fellow members of council, I would like to thank everyone who had a hand in creating our strategic plan. In particular, council would like to thank Compass Kitchener, our citizen advisory committees, staff from all levels of the city and every resident who provided us with their feedback. Your commitment and investment in our city is part of what makes our community the best place to live, work and play.

Kitchener is growing, welcoming new residents from across Canada and around the world. The actions in our strategic plan will help make Kitchener a city that feels like home for everyone. The voices and perspectives of these newcomers make us a stronger community.

It gives me great pride to see how our strategic plan aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals are the product of decades of research and accumulated experience, providing a blueprint for where we can focus our efforts in building a city where everyone can access services, get an education, pursue their career and participate fully in all aspects of our society. Studying cutting-edge research and policy alternatives helps cities around the world realize their goals.

One of the key lessons that we’ve learned both from our history and the SDGs is that a municipal government can only succeed when it works in true partnership with the entire community. From collaboration with private businesses to partnership initiatives with community organizations and other orders of government, we will continue to work with the partners that have enabled Kitchener’s growth and success.

As we move forward, our commitment to you is that we will continue the dialogue that resulted in this plan and report back regularly. Our plan is ambitious, achievable and we invite all of you to work with us hand-in-hand as we realize our community’s plan for action. Together, I know we will build an innovative, caring and vibrant Kitchener.
At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, world leaders from Canada and 192 other UN member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality, confront injustice and tackle climate change by 2030.

The UN SDGs outline the ways to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. Based on leading global research, input from politicians across the globe and hundreds of non-governmental organizations including United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the SDGs identify key factors that contribute to prosperity, inclusion and sustainability.

The City of Kitchener is committed to working with the Government of Canada in embracing the universality of the 2030 Agenda and to supporting the implementation of the SDGs in Canada and internationally.

The SDGs are global, but with a local lens, we can do our part to contribute to their success. All of the SDGs have targets directly related to the responsibilities of local and regional governments, particularly to our role in delivering direct services and programs.

Each of the 25 action statements within the 2019-2022 strategic plan can be connected to at least one of the SDGs.

Learn more about which SDGs align with each of our strategic goals by looking for the SDG icons on the following pages.
Our Goal

People-friendly Transportation

Transform how people move through the city by making the transportation network safe, convenient, comfortable and connected.

- Develop a set of Complete Streets (safe and centered) guidelines and an associated evaluation scorecard by 2020 to apply to roadway construction projects.
- Encourage and incentivize alternative modes of transportation by developing and subsidizing a bikeshare program by 2021.
- Install a continuous and protected cycling network that connects adjacent neighbourhoods to the downtown by 2022.
- Improve connectivity and year-round maintenance to multi-use trails and pathways as prioritized through the Cycling and Trails Master Plan with an initial target of providing year-round access to a minimum of an additional 3km of existing trails by 2022.
- Develop a plan to create pedestrian-first streets between Victoria Park and City Hall and between the ION and Kitchener Market by 2022.
Kitchener’s commitment to people-friendly transportation means everyone having a safe, convenient, comfortable and connected way to move through our city.

“The more my city shows it cares about the environment, the more I feel like my city cares about my future. I want to live in a city that’s a real leader in environmental sustainability.”

**OUR GOAL**

**Environmental Leadership**

Achieve a healthy and livable community by proactively mitigating and adapting to climate change and by conserving natural resources.

- Launch and implement a Corporate Climate Action Plan by 2019 to achieve an absolute greenhouse gas emission reduction of at least 8% by 2026.
- Starting in 2019, leverage the Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund and other resources to reduce consumption and emissions at our facilities and in our operations.
- Develop a Community Climate Action Plan with partner organizations by 2020.
- Implement the Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy with a focus on establishing a tree canopy target by 2020 and eliminating the current (2018) tree planting backlog by 2022.
- Reduce waste diverted to landfills by implementing new diversion programs at our facilities and events by 2021.

**Nicola - Founder of Grand River Food Forestry**

**Environmental Leadership**

Achieve a healthy and livable community by proactively mitigating and adapting to climate change and by conserving natural resources.
Kitchener’s commitment to environmental leadership means facing the challenges of a changing climate head-on, and protecting our natural resources and areas for future generations.

“I live downtown, and the transformation that’s taken place over just a few years was amazing. I’m happy to see that the city is taking a strategic approach to our evolution to build our economy and city.”

**OUR GOAL**

**Vibrant Economy**

Build a vibrant city by making strategic investments to support job creation, economic prosperity, thriving arts and culture, and great places to live.

- Complete a new Urban Design Manual by 2019 that advances city building and design expectations to ensure planned new developments look like Kitchener.
- Foster a tradition of dynamic re-energizes of students, accelerate new co-working spaces by converting 150Cainted at 2017, continuing work on a Creative Hub and redevelop a business case in 2019-2020 for the food, manufacturing and health tech industries.
- Develop the Make it Kitchener 2.0 Strategy by 2020 with a focused thematic action to leverage the attraction, success and potential of diverse businesses, talent, and artistic communities.
- Complete a comprehensive review of city-owned properties by 2020 to determine how they could be effectively and efficiently advance city strategic objectives.
- Develop a vision for downtown Kitchener and continue to position downtown Kitchener as a leading destination for investment opportunities, with at least one new city-owned property brought to market by 2020. Finalize the Innovation District (Bramm Yards) Master Plan by 2021 and the Civic District Master Plan by 2022.
Kitchener’s commitment to a vibrant economy means fostering the conditions that will make Kitchener an ideal destination to start, move or grow businesses in a variety of industries.

Our Goal

Caring Community

Enhance people’s sense of belonging and connection by providing welcoming community spaces and programs; better engaging, serving and supporting our diverse populations and helping to make housing affordable.

- Create a comprehensive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy by 2020 to combat systemic barriers to full economic and social participation in the city.
- Create an Affordable Housing Strategy for Kitchener by 2020 in collaboration with the Region of Waterloo, community groups and the development industry.
- Reduce social stigmas experienced by those living with mental illness and addiction in our community through staff training and supporting the creation of safe consumption and treatment facilities in Kitchener.
- Better utilize existing facilities, provide relevant programming at community centres, support the city’s distribution of leisure programs and resources across neighbourhoods. Start work on the Mill Courtland Community Centre expansion by 2020 and the Rosenberg Community Centre by 2021.
- Complete the Huron Brigadoon Community Centre and Open Space Strategy by 2021.
- Engage a broad cross-section of the community, including the arts and creative industry sector and multi-cultural communities to develop a new and inclusive Arts and Culture Plan by 2021.

Fauzia - Co-Chair of the Mayor’s Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

“My neighborhood is the best part of living in Kitchener. Everyone in the city deserves the same opportunity to experience a sense of community and belonging.

My neighborhood is the best part of living in Kitchener. Every one in the city deserves the same opportunity to experience a sense of community and belonging.”
Kitchener’s commitment to be a caring community means making sure that everyone feels included, and that no one is left behind.

“I love the idea of a customer service portal and services in multiple languages. There are a lot of recent immigrants in the city, and although they can communicate in English, many don’t feel comfortable enough to voice their opinion and participate in a lot of things.”

Great Customer Service
Increase people’s satisfaction, trust and engagement with the city by providing friendly, easy and convenient services.

- Provide on-demand customer service support in many languages through the Corporate Contact Centre by 2020.
- Introduce a comprehensive Customer Satisfaction Program that will allow for the collection of real-time feedback from customers accessing city facilities, programs and services by 2020.
- Enhance customer experience online by delivering customized information, providing easy access to services, and allowing financial transactions by 2021.
- Set clearly communicated and specific service levels for frequently asked about or accessed city services, including tree maintenance, parking, property standards complaints, snow clearing and grass cutting by 2022.
- Implement a comprehensive Customer Experience Review Program to help ensure services are easy and convenient to access from the customer’s perspective by 2022.
Kitchener’s commitment to great customer service includes continuously checking in with people who use our services to evolve with changing needs and ensure we are getting it right.

**Strategic Plan TIMELINE**

**2019**
- Corporate Climate Action Plan
- Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund
- Urban Design Manual
- Buildout 44 Guelph Street
- Creative Hub

**2020**
- Complete Streets Guidelines
- Tree Canopy Target
- Community Climate Action Plan
- Make It Kitchener 2.0 Strategy
- City-owned property review
- Cycling and Trails Master Plan
- City-owned property brought to market
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy
- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Customer service support in many languages
- Customer Satisfaction Program
- Reduce social stigmas through staff training
- Safe consumption and treatment facilities
- Expand Mill Courtland Community Centre

**2021**
- Bikeshare program
- New waste diversion programs
- Arts and Culture Plan
- Complete Huron Brigadoon Community Centre
- Open Space Strategy
- Start Rosenberg Community Centre
- Enhance customer experiences online
- Innovation District (Bramm Yards) Master Plan

**2022**
- Civic District Master Plan
- Protected cycling network
- Pedestrian first street plans
- Tree planting backlog eliminated
- Specific service levels
- Customer Experience Review Program
Our Commitment to Accountability

We are committed to being accountable to the community we serve. The 2019-2022 Strategic Plan contains measurable, specific actions and a timeline for completion. Our long-term financial plan, budgets and annual business plans will be aligned to implement the Strategic Plan.

We will measure and report on our progress to council and the public throughout the life of this plan.

We will report to council three times a year and share results (both our successes and challenges) with Kitchener residents.

The City’s Compass Kitchener Citizen Advisory Committee will review and assess our progress, and publicly report on an annual basis how well we are doing.

Through collaboration between staff, the public and council, this plan captures a shared vision for Kitchener. It was built by working together and by continuing to work together, we can make Kitchener a place to earn a good living, have a great life and love where you live.

Partnerships will be key to our success. The effective use of technology and innovation will be key enablers to achieve success with all five goals and in delivering each of the 25 action statements.

The City’s Corporate Leadership Team personally commits to be accountable for progress towards the strategic plan’s goals and to regularly report on our progress.

Kitchener’s Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Our current progress can be found at Kitchener.ca/ourplan