Industrial Employment Areas
KITCHENER’S INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Industrial Employment Areas are a significant part of the urban environment, making consequential contributions to built form, streetscapes, natural areas, and active transportation. Industrial Employment Areas include various business activities such as manufacturing, warehousing, and industrial business parks.

These areas will fall under the new EMP zones. This section of the manual also provides guidance on urban design in areas that are currently designed as business park, general industrial and heavy industrial in the current Official Plan.

These guidelines apply to:

(1) New development.

(2) Additions and modifications to existing sites and buildings.

(3) Redesign of selected public rights of way, to be undertaken by the City or Region in future.

The guidelines effectively operate as three different layers, or overlays:

(1) At the base, General Guidelines that apply to all Industrial Employment Areas.

(2) Special Considerations affecting only certain types of sites.

(3) Area-Specific Guidelines, related to Special Character Areas.
PART A  INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS

COMMUNITY DESIGN  All projects are expected to meet the objectives of the City-Wide Design section of this manual.

07.2.0  All projects are expected to meet the objectives of the City-Wide Design section of this manual.

07.2.1  Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to design all spaces to a high standard for safety. Avoid creating any potential entrapment areas, dead-ends or hidden/obscured spaces. Be particularly thoughtful of how to provide appropriate safety in areas where opportunities for natural surveillance are limited or non-existent.

Prioritize pedestrian and user safety when designing lighting, landscaping and site function elements such as parking, access and servicing areas.

Universal Design

Design sites with a clear, continuous and visible pedestrian pathways that connect the public realm and parking areas with building entrances. Ensure that these pathways are barrier-free and minimize points of conflict with vehicular traffic.

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

07.2.2  Design new buildings to withstand climate change by being resistant to extreme weather conditions, anticipating increased cooling demands through sustainable natural ventilation and efficient mechanical systems, and by being adaptable to changes in the needs of occupants over time as new technologies are realized and lifestyle choices evolve.

Production, manufacturing and warehousing facilities can be large consumers of energy. Incorporate renewable energy systems where feasible, including solar, geothermal, wind and district energy options. Where possible, target a Net-Zero performance standard.

Look for opportunities on-site to offset environmental impacts including LID (Low Impact Design) infrastructure, rain water collection and re-use, renewable energy generation, living walls and roofs, permeable pavers and more.

Provide white, high-albedo and/or green roofs for all roof surfaces.

DESIGN FOR OUTDOOR COMFORT

07.2.3  Protect for user comfort within transit waiting areas, outdoor amenity spaces and pedestrian pathways. These areas should offer a seasonally appropriate mix of direct sunlight and shaded areas as well as protection from the elements.

Design transit waiting areas, outdoor amenity spaces and pedestrian pathways for winter activity such that they are useable, comfortable, safe and attractive year-round.

DYK? The large, flat roofs often found on industrial buildings are excellent opportunities to incorporate green roof/solar panels.

Photo: Rooftop solar panels that are part of a net-zero industrial building. Source: kssarchitects.com

DYK? Many industrial buildings use Smart building systems such as sub-metering to help optimize building performance. Other energy saving techniques include HVLS (high-volume, low-speed) fans, which can be networked to save on heating and cooling costs while providing a more comfortable environment for worker
## STREET DESIGN

### Pedestrians & Cyclists
Provide dedicated pedestrian circulation for employment sites. These networks should allow pedestrians to traverse from the public sidewalk to the parking lot to the main entrances of the building. Minimize the need for pedestrians to traverse driveways and parking areas.

Where applicable, connect pedestrian pathways directly to trails and parks.

Provide seating and weather protection for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.

Coordinate streetscape and landscape design with utilities and infrastructure to minimize visual clutter and points of conflict.

Consider transportation demand management measures (such as indoor secure bicycle storage and showers) to encourage employees to cycle.

### Focal Points & Gateways
Gateway and Terminus sites are identified in the Special Considerations section of this document. These sites should be designed as focal points, creating a sense of identity established through expressive, high quality architecture and landscaping.

### Arts & Culture
Industrial employment areas do not often feature arts and culture initiatives. Consider ways to incorporate public art, and to empower other arts and culture programs.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACES

### Access & Location
Associate parks, trails, natural areas and open spaces with Industrial Employment Areas. Provide direct access and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage active transportation and recreational opportunities for workers and visitors.

## COMPATIBILITY

### Scale & Transition
Provide adequate landscaped buffering which also screens loading, servicing or storage zones from view of the mixed use areas.

## CULTURAL & NATURAL HERITAGE

A number of Kitchener’s industrial employment lands are adjacent to Parks or Natural Areas, some of which include waterways, such as the Grand River or Strasburg Creek. These areas are to be sufficiently protected from potentially harmful runoff, as well as noise and light pollution.

Where sloping terrain is present, design the site such that it does not contribute to erosion. To achieve this, appropriate buffering is required, as determined by an environmental impact assessment. Siting outdoor employee amenity adjacent to Natural Areas is encouraged.

Where Employment lands meet Natural Areas, it is important not to create unused remnant spaces (resulting in poor landscape maintenance, garbage accumulation, etc.). Where possible, include a multi-use trail along property lines abutting Natural Areas or Parks.

Where a property abuts a Natural Area, but it is not feasible to provide a trail, provide appropriate fencing, at least 2.0 metres high and free of large openings (through which garbage might blow) along the property line. However, solid or blank walls are not appropriate.

Conserving cultural heritage resources within industrial employment areas is of critical importance, as doing so promotes diversity, gives variety to the urban fabric, reflects and enhances the cultural history of neighbourhoods and encourages urban exploration, sustainability, and the perpetuation of Kitchener’s living history.

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DYK? Employment Areas frequently interface with Mixed Use areas. Where these Mixed Use areas contain, or permit, residential uses, a building setback of at least 20 metres is required by the Province.

DYK? Lancaster Corporate Centre abuts the Grand River and provides a multi-use trail. Trails encourage active transportation and promote natural surveillance, while also providing access to natural areas for City staff to do inspection or clean-up work.
Use built form to screen loading areas, parking and mechanical equipment.

Screen rooftop mechanical elements where they are visible from the public realm.

Accessory buildings, such as sheds, are discouraged. If necessary, they are to be located behind the main building, or if located to the side, screened by landscape features.

Provide front building façades that are parallel to the street. In the case of a curving or irregular street, the building façade should curve or step with the street.

Orient the longest and tallest elevation of the building along the street where possible.

Buildings located on corner sites should orient their highest built element to the corner.

Locate functions such as lobbies, offices, salesrooms and meeting rooms at the front of the building, with warehousing, loading, manufacturing or assembly areas at the rear.

Front façades of buildings should be well articulated and clad with high quality materials.

Provide regularly spaced, generously sized windows along the entire front façade.

Use massing, materials and architectural features to articulate the front façade.

Locate the main pedestrian entrance(s) along the front façade. Secondary entrances may be located at the side or rear, adjacent to parking lots.

Where buildings contain a single unit, or multiple units sharing an entrance, the main entrance should be visually enhanced through its placement, massing, articulation, the design of the roofline, and the creative use of materials and colours.

In the case of buildings that include multiple units with separate entrances, each unit should have a main entrance within the front façade. These units should be distinguished from one another by changes in cladding material or colour, or through building articulation.

New building features are to be consistent with, or complementary to, the rest of the building and site design, including materials, colours, articulation, and fenestration.

Where an existing site does not meet the guidelines in the Urban Design Manual, retrofits and additions should work to better align the site in the overall with the objectives of the Manual.

Diagram demonstrating many of the design objectives for Industrial Employment Areas.

Note. This image is diagrammatic and conceptual in nature.
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- Massing on a Small Site
  - Parking located at rear
  - Customer/visitor parking located at side, with accessible parking toward the front
  - Single, two-way driveway
  - Small sites may necessitate greater flexibility on setbacks

- Massing on a Multi-Unit Site
  - All loading bays at rear
  - Break up facades visually with articulation
  - Principal entrances facing the street
  - Only barrier free parking should be located in front of the building

- Natural Area Interface
  - Public trail (where possible)
  - Fencing with gate or entry for employee access
  - 10m planted rear landscaped area

- Corner Site
  - Frontage along both streets
  - Greater height/bulk directed to the corner
  - Increased articulation at corner
### Shared Spaces

**Outdoor Amenity**

Where practical, provide outdoor amenity space for employees and customers. Spaces designed for frequent use should include hardscaped areas, seating, and weather protection. On very large sites, (over 2 hectares), consider providing additional programmable amenity areas at the side and/or rear of the property.

**Landscaping**

Create a front landscaped area by providing sufficient building setbacks from the street. Avoid placing loading areas or parking between the building facade and the right-of-way. However, barrier free parking is permitted.

Landscaped areas are to contain trees, mid-height plants such as shrubs or tall grasses and groundcovers. Design these areas to be visually appealing and easily maintainable.

Include pedestrian walkways to access the front entrance and traverse the landscaped area.

Landscaped areas are not to be used to display or sell goods.

Provide side and/or rear landscape buffers of at least 5m where abutting a natural area or a mixed use area. Greater buffers may be required, as determined through an environmental impact assessment.

Plantings are to be predominantly perennial, and selected for their attractive qualities year-round.

Avoid invasive species. Where possible, native plant and tree species are to be used.

Consider features such as rainwater gardens or drainage swales to promote stormwater infiltration.

Larger species of trees should be mainly deciduous, in order to maintain views from the street to the building façade.

Coniferous species should only be used when necessary for screening of winds or specific views, such as parking areas.

**Signs**

Major signage should be permanent in nature and affixed to the front façade of the building.

Any secondary signage used should also be permanent. Secondary signage may be free-standing (ground-supported) within the front Landscaped Area, but should not be more than 2.0 metres in height.

Avoid temporary signage of all types.

Billboards signs are discouraged or subject to regulations in the City's Sign By-law.
SITE FUNCTION

Vehicular Access & Parking

**DYK?** Industrial employment areas may require a number of types of parking, whether for employees or customers, company vehicles, or longer-term storage. There may be a need to accommodate large trucks and trailers, as well as automobiles.

Locate parking areas away from the street to allow the building and landscaped area to define the site. Parking areas are to be well-designed, safe, visually appealing and functional. Design to accommodate separation of functions (parking from loading areas, etc.).

Locate primary parking areas at the rear of the property. If necessary, some parking, especially if needed for customers or visitors, may be located at the side of the property. Only barrier-free parking should be permitted in the front yard.

Parking lots should be well lit while in use to ensure adequate safety.

Include bicycle parking, located near the main pedestrian entrance(s). Covered and enclosed bicycle parking is recommended for employees.

All parking lots should be paved.

Servicing & Utilities

Locate service, loading and storage areas at the side or rear of the site such that they are not visible from the street, whenever possible.

Fully screen servicing and loading areas wherever visible from the street.

Avoid storing dumpsters or industrial products outdoors. If necessary, fully screen from view from the street by landscaping or fencing, or by locating these elements behind the building.

Outdoor storage (aside from retail goods on display) shall not be permitted in front yards or exterior side yards.

Stormwater Management

New development shall comply with the City of Kitchener’s Integrated Stormwater Management Master Plan criteria for stormwater design.

Consider providing rain gardens and bio swales wherever possible.

Consider providing permeable pavements wherever possible.

New buildings should incorporate green roofs, and they should be considered where possible during the retrofit process.

**DYK?** Employment areas have traditionally had low levels of vegetative cover, along with large, flat non-permeable surfaces (parking lots and building roofs). This results in substantial volumes of stormwater runoff draining into catch-basins or streams and rivers. In either case, this can transfer hazardous pollution into the water system.
**Gateway Sites**

**Gateway Condition**
Where Built Form Acts as the Gateway Feature.

- Architectural articulation at corner
- Greater building height/massing at corner

**Gateway Condition**
Where Landscape Acts as the Gateway Feature.

- Larger setback and/or private landscaped area transitioning to Natural Heritage areas
- Natural Heritage area

**Note:** These images are diagrammatic and conceptual in nature.

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**Terminus Sites**

**Terminus Condition**
Where Built Form Acts as the Terminus Feature.

- Height and architectural articulation at view terminus

**Terminus Condition**
Where Landscape Acts as the Terminus Feature.

- Landscape feature at terminus
- Landscaped driveway

**Note:** These images are diagrammatic and conceptual in nature.

**Terminus Condition**
Where Built Form Acts as the Terminus Feature.

- ‘T’ intersection
- Landscaped driveway

**Terminus Condition**
Where Landscape Acts as the Terminus Feature.

- ‘T’ intersection

**Note:** These images are diagrammatic and conceptual in nature.
Unlike the other Employment Areas in Kitchener, Lancaster Corporate Centre functions primarily as an office park. It generally takes on a greener character than other Employment Areas, with substantial tree plantings and landscaping along the side of Riverbend Drive, and a relationship with the Grand River that includes a trail.

Lancaster Corporate Centre is effectively divided into two parts, separated by a narrow pinch point in the middle, where a public parking lot and trailhead are located. The area south of this point is more oriented to light industrial uses, rather than corporate office uses.

**Gateways:** Gateways are located at major entrances to the area: the north, the south (future Highway 7 access), where Guelph Street passes under Conestoga Parkway, and at the dividing point between the northern and southern portions of the Employment Area. Buildings located at these sites should be of a high architectural quality, and be at least three storeys in height. These sites should be the key ‘showcases’ of the area, introducing the public realm design.

**View Terminus:** View terminus points are located at the ends of Bridgeport Rd. E. and Guelph Street. Buildings located on these sites should make use of and emphasize their special condition, aligning entrances, taller elements or other special features to the view corridor.

**Special Interfaces:** Many of the sites back onto Natural Areas, especially the Grand River valley. Those sites should follow the recommendations laid out in this section. However, it should be noted the sites in this area, particularly north of the ‘pinch point,’ generally already do this effectively (albeit without buffering or fencing).
Riverbend Drive

Public Realm: The spine of this Employment Area, Riverbend Drive is relatively well landscaped north of the ‘pinchpoint.’ South of it, the area needs substantial improvement. There exists an area wide landscaping plan that is to be implemented through future development. Furthermore, in future, sidewalks should be included on both sides of the street. This is especially important here, because the street serves as an entry point to the Grand River hiking trails.

Built Form: Riverbend Drive is characterized by relatively substantial buildings, several storeys in height, north of the ‘pinchpoint.’ This quality of architecture should be applied during redevelopment of the southern portion of the area, with the understanding that permitted uses may differ slightly between the two.

The western half of the Shirley/Bingemans Centre area is mostly characterized by wide lots occupied by traditional heavy industries. In the eastern half, lots are smaller, but many remain unbuilt. Additionally, there are several car dealerships at the eastern end, which tend to have mid-sized lots.

The introduction of Highway 7 will have the effect of turning the area’s western end into a more significant gateway. Although a limited access highway, Highway 7 will create views over the river and to the rear of a number of Industrial Employment properties. It is therefore important that any future development of these properties consider highway views and make use of landscape and architectural treatments to screen loading and storage areas.

Gateways: Gateway sites are located at the eastern entrance to the area, at Lackner Boulevard and at the future Highway 7 connection. The eastern gateway should introduce the small and medium lot portion of the Area. The Lackner Boulevard gateway should introduce the large lots, which may in future take on a more corporate character similar to the northern end of Lancaster Corporate Centre. The Highway 7 connection, in an area of medium-sized lots, should serve as a general entrance to the area for vehicles arriving into Kitchener.
**Key Sites (con’t)**

View Terminus: The Lackner Boulevard terminus is especially important, because of the size of the street and because of its central position in the area. It aligns to the largest property in the area, occupied by Bingemans Grand Experiences (see Bingemans area specific guidelines).

Special Interfaces: Like the Lancaster Corporate Centre area, many of the sites back onto the Grand River valley. Also like the Lancaster Corporate Centre area, an existing public trail already runs through much of the adjacent Natural Area (or runs through easements on private property). Explore opportunities to connect the trail to Shirley Avenue/Shirley Drive/Bingemans Centre Drive.

**Priority Streets**

Shirley Drive

Public Realm: Shirley Drive currently has little landscaping within the right-of-way and no pedestrian infrastructure. It should eventually be redesigned to include sidewalks on both sides of the street and consistent street tree planting.

Built Form: In consideration of the smaller lot sizes, future built form along the eastern portion of Shirley Drive should be finer and smaller, and if necessary may include front Landscaped Areas of less than 5 metres.

**HURON/TRILLIUM**

One of the two main Employment Areas located centrally in Kitchener, Huron/Trillium is characterized by a mix of light manufacturing and warehousing. It is mostly made up of one to two storey buildings of varying sizes, large surface parking lots (often in the front yard) and moderate tree coverage and landscaping. It backs onto the Huron and Trillium Natural Areas.
**Gateways:** This area contains a number of significant gateway sites, including Beasley Drive, and both ends of Strasburg Road, Trillium Drive and Washburn Road. The most important of these is Beasley Drive, because of its formal quality as an entry point to the area. Its condition as a wide, but short, boulevard is striking. Any future redevelopment of the Beasley Drive sites should include elevated, architecturally articulated elements that wrap around the corners and roughly mirror one another in massing and orientation. Major pedestrian entrances should be at the corners. The other gateway sites demand less formality, but should nevertheless be emphasized by elevated elements at the corners.

**View Termini:** View termini include the end points of Beasley Drive and Battler Road, both ends of Shoemaker Street, both ends of McIntyre Drive and the bend in Washburn Road. In future, these points should either be aligned to a major building entrance, or emphasized as a landscaped driveway.

**Special Interfaces:** Many of the sites back onto Natural Areas, including the Trillium and Huron Areas and parts of Strasburg Creek. Those sites should follow the recommendations laid out in this section. Additional trails should be considered in future in the Trillium Natural Area and around portions of Strasburg Creek.

**Beasley Drive**

Public Realm: Although short in length, Beasley Drive is important as a formal entrance way to the Area. It currently has two roadways, separated by a planted median. Each roadway is comprised of one lane in the mid-block condition, but splits into two lanes at the intersections. In future, its roadways could be narrowed to provide room for sidewalks, bike lanes and tree plantings on both sides of the street. This would have to be done subject to accommodation of truck turning.

Built Form: Buildings along Beasley Drive should be of an especially high architectural quality.

**Trillium Drive**

Public Realm: Similar to Shirley Drive, Trillium Drive has inconsistent landscaping and no sidewalks. In future, sidewalks and regular street trees should be considered on both sides.

**Strasburg Road (Battler to Bleams)**

Public Realm: Strasburg Road is a major road currently containing four lanes of traffic, and a sidewalk on one side. However, with only moderate narrowing of the lanes, Strasburg can support sidewalks on each side of the street, bicycle lanes and quality street tree plantings.

Built Form: Due to the size of Strasburg Road, buildings should be set back at least 10 metres. They should also attempt to align their façades to the curvature of the street.
Like Huron/Trillium, Manitou/Wabanaki is located centrally in Kitchener and characterized by a mix of light manufacturing and warehousing uses. Its buildings tend to be smaller than those in Huron/Trillium, and usually one storey in height. It also includes part of the former Budd Automotive site, including the portion occupied by Budd Park (the portion at the intersection of Bleams Road and Homer Watson Boulevard is designated Mixed Use). The Area is split into two portions by the Schneider Creek Greenway.

**Gateways:** This area contains a number of significant gateway sites, including those at both ends of Bleams Rd., Manitou Dr., and Wabanaki Dr. and at the intersection of Wilson Ave. and Goderich Dr. Those at the exterior of the area (the western end of Bleams Rd., the southern end of Manitou Dr., the northern end of Wilson Ave., and the northern end of Wabanaki Dr.) should be highlighted with elevated architectural features and entrances at the corners. Those in the interior, located beside Natural Areas (the eastern end of Beams Rd., the western end and the mid point of Wabanaki Dr.) should be highlighted using special landscaping elements that can serve as a transition between the Employment and Natural Areas.

**View Termini:** View termini include the end points of Otonabee Drive, Wabanaki Drive, Sasaga Drive and Beasley Drive. The other view terminus points should be highlighted with special architectural features or building entrances.

**Special Interfaces:** Many sites back onto Natural Areas such as the Schneider Creek Greenway, Homer Watson Park and smaller green areas adjacent to Hidden Valley, such as Petrifying Spring. Additional trails should be considered in future around Schneider Creek and the Grand River.
Homer Watson Boulevard, Regional Road

Public Realm: The very broad right-of-way contains substantial unused space, four lanes (separated by a median) and one sidewalk. Following future redesign, there should be more than enough room for sidewalks on both sides and a separated bike trail (traditional bicycle lanes are not appropriate here because of the extent of traffic). Street trees should be added to both the median and each side of the road.

Built Form: Due to the size of Homer Watson Boulevard, buildings should be set back at least 10 metres from the right-of-way. Built form should be at least three storeys in height to provide visual presence on the street. As much as possible, their façades should align to the street’s curvature. Curb cuts should be limited, but there should be adequate pedestrian and bicycle connections between the sidewalk and cycle track and the Employment buildings.
Bingemans is an events and recreational facility that is located in the Shirley Drive / Bingemans Centre Drive industrial area. It is anticipated that the facility will continue to evolve over time given the dynamics of the commercial entertainment and recreation industry. As the current and proposed use of the site is not for Industrial purposes the following set of guidelines have been crafted to guide future development.

Following collaborative urban design sessions, the following character areas were identified as important to framing the context for future development of the Bingemans property:

- **Entertainment Complex** - Comprised of more permanent entertainment uses, this includes the existing waterpark, arcade and restaurant development.
- **Festival Area / Outdoor Events / Concert Space** - Provides a more flexible space for temporary attractions which include indoor outdoor events, concerts etc.
- **Hospitality / Meeting Area** - Includes the existing convention space and is an area for other hospitality opportunities and related facilities oriented towards the existing woodlot.
- **Camping and Outdoor Recreation** - The northernmost camping area adjacent the Grand River is within the floodplain where there are limited redevelopment opportunities. The camping area at the southeast corner of the site represents a longer term opportunity for river activation beyond camping.
- **Corporate Office** - Includes long term office opportunities in a campus-like setting.

Ensure there is a positive relationship between new buildings, existing buildings and viewsheds (to the river and the street).

New buildings should respect and complement surrounding building forms through various design techniques such as building setbacks, terracing, articulation and rhythm and detailing.

Locate active uses at grade where appropriate. Provide a high-level of articulation for building facades that face a public street, are located at a gateway, or face primary pedestrian connections/trails. This includes a high percentage of glazing, high quality materials and an architectural expression that is engaging and visually appealing.

New buildings at the intersection of Bingemans Centre Drive and Shirley Drive should serve as gateway buildings with views to both the river and the Bingemans Centre Drive.
Employ themes of entertainment coupled with outdoor education, health and wellness to showcase innovation.

Use the Bingemans frontage along Bingemans Centre Drive to provide wayfinding elements such as changing signage, banners, visible technology, and strategic landscaping to activate the streetscape. Utilize existing grades, berming and high-quality landscaping along the street.

Place new open spaces at grade, incorporate four season design and be multi-functional and flexible to accommodate a range of users, programs and activities.

As part of any future development application, plant trees along associated public streets and along the full length of primary pedestrian walkways. Integrate and enhance existing natural systems, and introduce new green infrastructure where appropriate.

Improve supportive relationships, thematic integration and connectivity between character areas. Include hard and soft landscape elements, pedestrian-scaled light fixtures, interactive elements, public art and wayfinding and informal seating.

Provide bicycle parking facilities in visible locations near new building entrances and new pedestrian walkways. Ensure that these locations do not conflict with pedestrian circulation.

Implementation of these guidelines may be scoped based on the extent of the development application.

Plan for an interconnected street network with continuous pedestrian linkages to maximize pedestrian network connectivity both on-site and to off-site sidewalks, trails, parking areas and transit stops to building entrances. Implement through each development application individually to ensure that the plan is realized over time.

Design site circulation to minimize potential conflicts between pedestrian and vehicles.

Minimize the visual impact of parking on public views through building placement, landscape screening, grading and other design strategies.

Provide opportunities for future connectivity to Woolwich Township via river activation/usage.

Site Function & Connectivity

As part of the next major development application, prepare a conceptual streetscape design to help guide the implementation of these objectives.

Photo A bird’s-eye view across the Bingemans site.