

# Urban Design *in the* City of Kitchener

*MUDR Presentation  
May 2010*



# Highlights



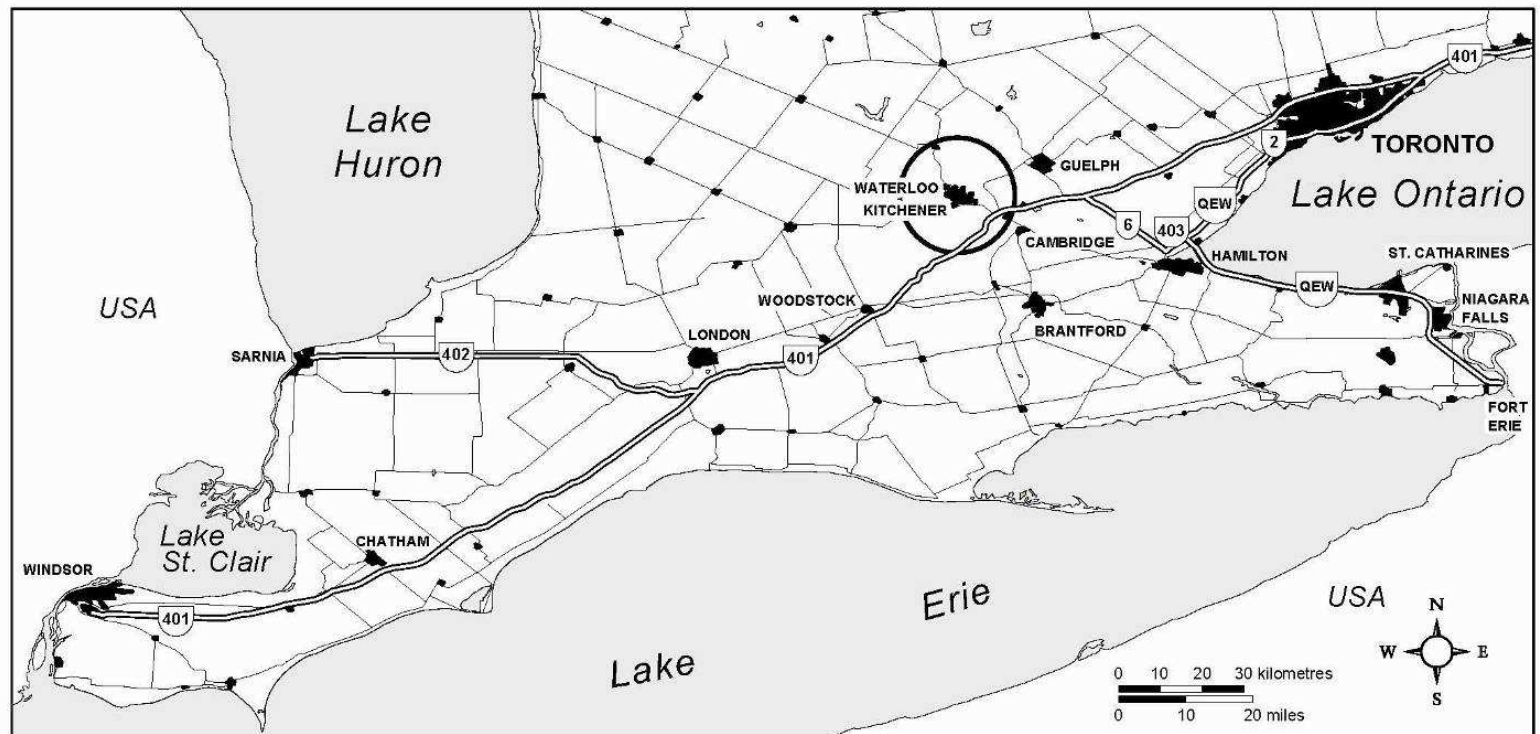
Direction: *long term commitment to urban design in Kitchener*

Themes: *density, mixed use, community focal points, transit, accessibility*

Tools: *urban design manual, design briefs, financial*



# Context



- Largest city in Waterloo Region (~230,000)
- Forecast to grow to 313,000 by 2029
- Historically = industrial city    now = diverse city

# Long Term Commitment



- 1964 Planning Study density targets:
  - City Centre = up to 120 persons/ha by 2000
  - Near shopping centres = up to 100 p/ha
  - Suburban = up to 60 p/ha
- 1966-73 Planning Studies:
  - Plan for a range of dwelling types, including high density and mixed use
  - “places to live, work, play”



# Long Term Commitment



## Official Plan Policy:

- “Every portion of the neighbourhood should be within walking distance of a neighbourhood park”
- Promotes apartments above commercial
- Encourages central areas to be 245-370 p/ha and greenfield at 75 p/ha
- Projects future development - 70% multiples, 30% singles
- Promotes increased public transit vs. car usage
- Environmental design section
- Arterial intersection = no more than 2 drive-thrus



# Long Term Commitment



Official Plan Policy:

**1967**

- Includes “Urban Design”

*The policies referenced preparing design concepts for major development projects and that good design is a prerequisite for all projects, maintaining the existing topography, protection of trees, neighbourhood and community centres as a focal point, sign controls, heritage preservation, and “the City shall be a place for people”.*

# Long Term Commitment



- 1979 Official Plan
  - includes Urban Design section
  - create community focal points (centrums) with mixed use
- 1982 Kitchener Transit
  - *Guidelines for the Design of New Residential Developments with Respect to the Provision of Transit Service*
- 1994 Official Plan
  - compact, urban form that is transit supportive
  - nodes and corridors
  - brownfields to mixed use
  - pedestrian and cycling priority



# Long Term Commitment



- 1998 Nodal Living Report
- 2001 New Commercial Policies
  - comprehensive mixed use, urban form and design policies
- 2004 Urban Design Report
  - Council resolution for urban design based approach to city building: Kitchener by Design





# Current Considerations



- Diversity
- Rapid transit, TDM and parking
- Parks
- Water management
- Design details
- “Green” buildings



***City of Kitchener buildings to be LEED Gold***



# City-led Projects



- Growth Management Strategy and Plan

[www.kitchener.ca/kgms](http://www.kitchener.ca/kgms)

- New Official Plan:
  - Comprehensive Review of Intensification Areas
  - SW Kitchener Community Master Plan

[www.kitchener.ca/officialplan](http://www.kitchener.ca/officialplan)



*Urban Design Guidelines  
and  
Current Initiatives*





- Detailed Urban Design Policies in 1994 Official Plan
- Two separate areas being City Wide and Downtown
- 2007 deleted Downtown section and made it a whole chapter recognizing the 4 separate Design Districts

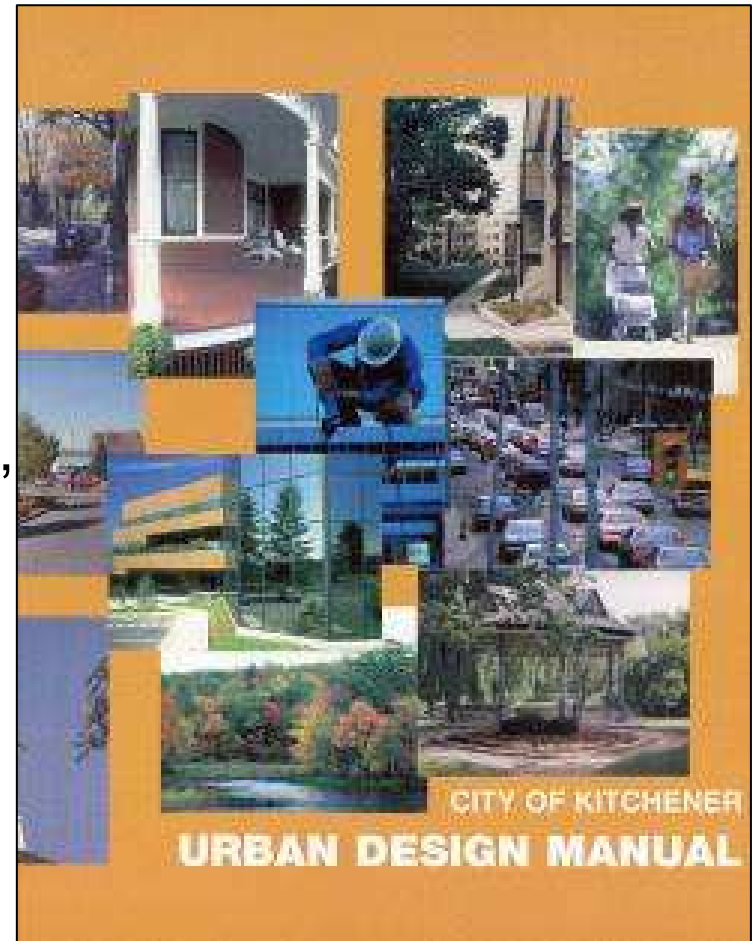


- 3D Visualization of Downtown Density



# Urban Design Manual (UDM)

- Draft in 1993, final version in 1999
- Includes guidelines for transit, landscaping, accessibility, parking, etc.
- Suburban Design, Site Plan, Mixed Use Corridors, Drive-thus
- Establishes development expectations





- 2010 Revisions to UDM
- 2011 Revised OP with new Urban Design Section



# UDM



- Excepted by Consultants
- Buy in by them
- Forces them to be more creative in their designs
- Results in a lot less negotiations



# Mixed Use Corridors



- Primarily entrance streets to downtown
- High Density mixed use zoning - 1994
- Designated in the Official Plan as focal points for transit-supportive intensification- 2001"
- Design Guidelines in place
- Updated zoning partially complete



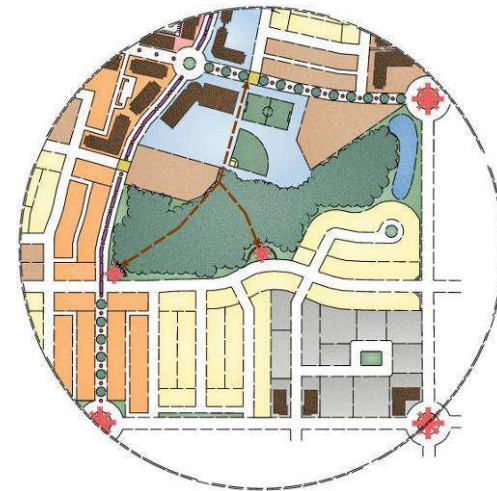
# Mixed Use Corridors



# Suburban Design



- UDM includes guidelines for:
  - Community Design
  - Neighbourhood Design
  - Design Brief for Suburban Development and Neighbourhood Mixed Use Centres



# Suburban Design



## Primary Design Objectives

Walkability  
Variety  
Placemaking  
Conservation  
Connectivity  
Transit Supportive  
Safety  
Balance  
Liveability

## Neighbourhood Design: Design Brief for Suburban Development & Neighbourhood Mixed Use Centres



## A Committed Approach to Healthy Communities

The City of Kitchener is committed to ensuring residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life through the development of complete communities – communities that are well-designed, offer transportation choices, have the right mix of housing, a good range of jobs, and easy access to stores and services to meet daily needs.



# Site Plans/Design Briefs



- 100+ Site Plan Projects a year
- Large Scale prominent projects require Design Briefs upfront

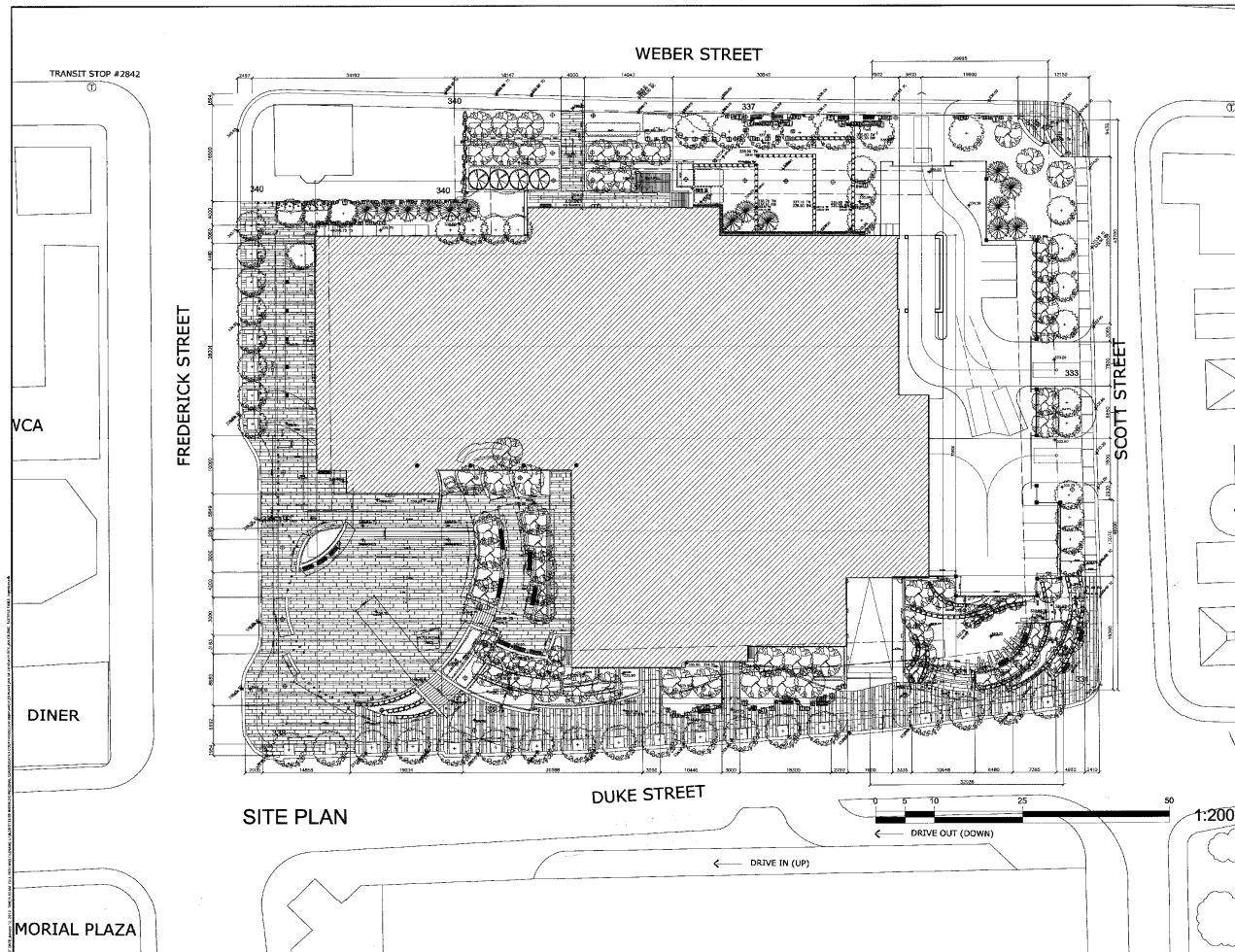


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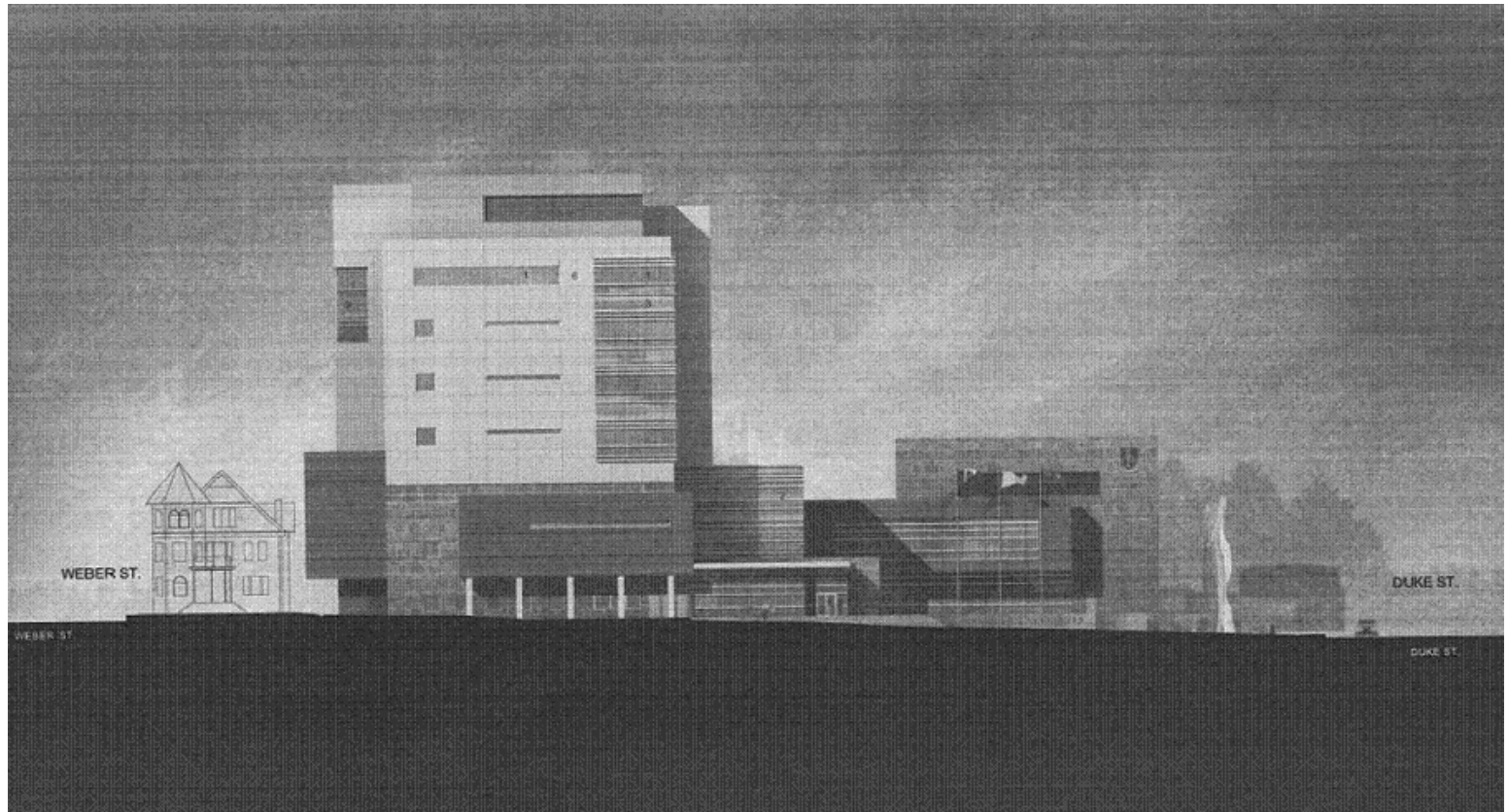




# Court House



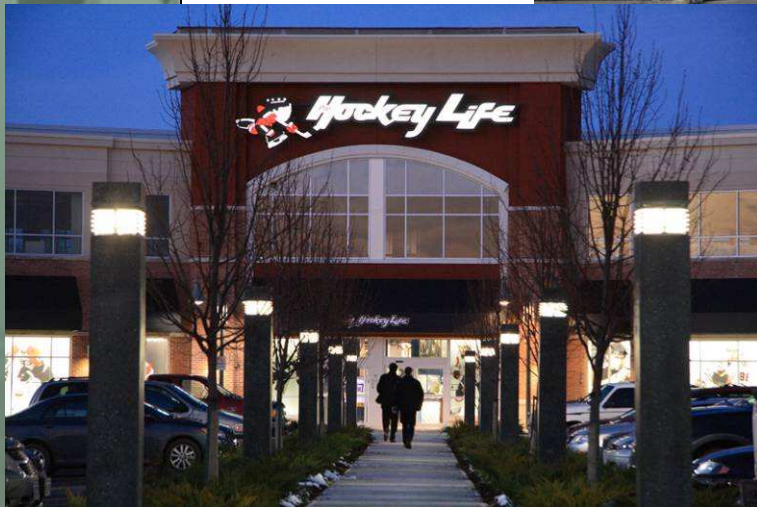
# Court House



# Sports World Crossing



# Lenore's Lane



# School of Pharmacy



# Design Briefs



- These Design Briefs let us establish a high base line for the detailing of the site.
- Establishes massing, pedestrian and vehicular routes, landscape areas, connectivity, transit, parking, signage, architecture style
- Time well spent upfront
- A lot less latitude at later stages



# UD Budget



- \$100,000.00/year
- Purpose is to enhance the public realm



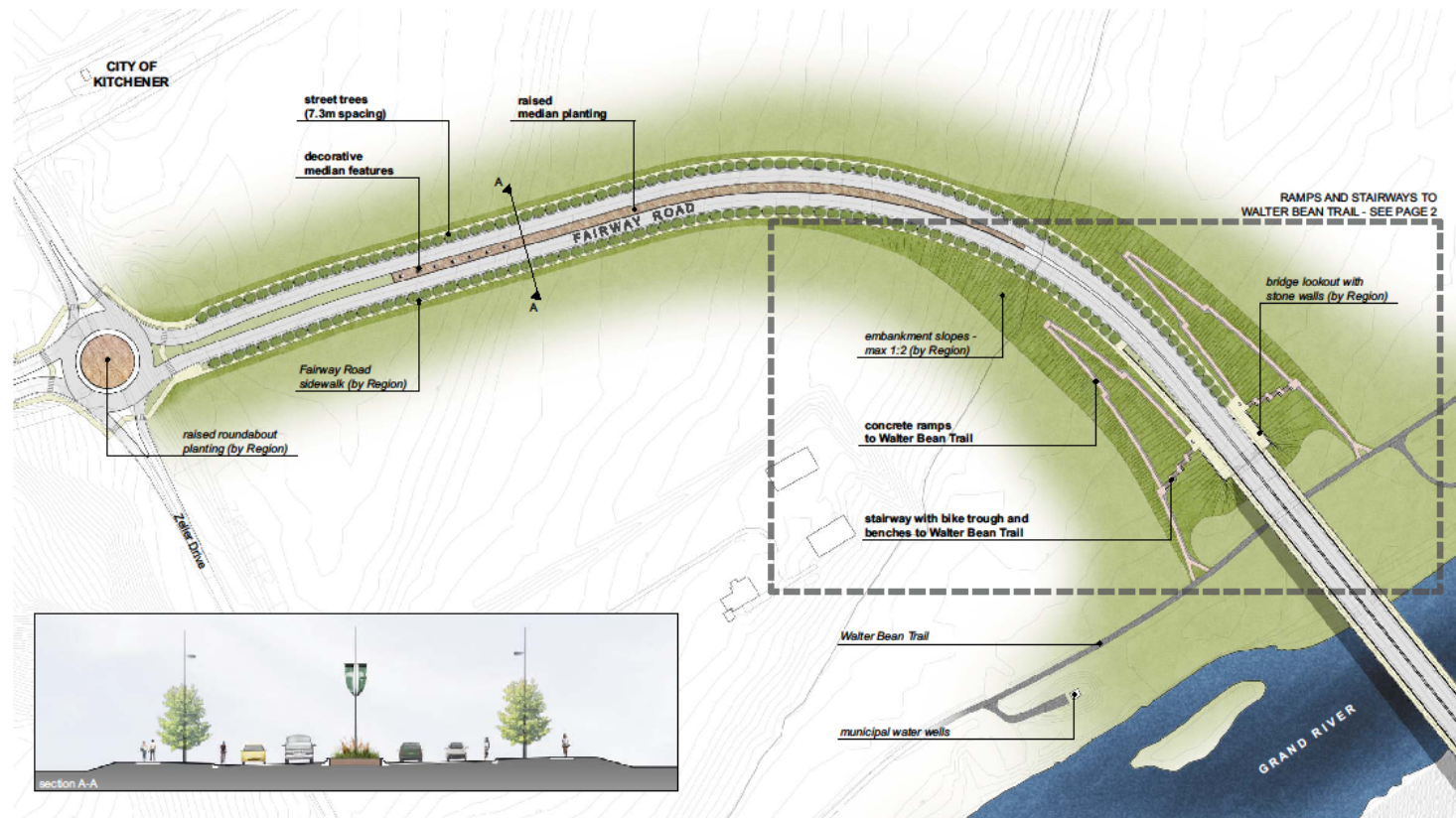
# King St Reconstruction



First phase of reconstruction complete,  
Pedestrian oriented flexible right of way design,  
Green elements key design focus including bio-swales and tree pits,  
Upgraded pedestrian scale lighting incorporated successfully to delineate Downtown District,



# Fairway Road



# EDIF



- Economic Development Investment Fund
- Purpose – invest in infrastructure that will help create jobs in emerging non manufacturing facilities
- Health Science and Digital Media



# School of Pharmacy



# Lang Tannery



Adaptive reuse project,  
HIA related to partial  
demolition  
Enhanced streetscape  
Mixed use development  
Currently site is developing in  
phased manner with  
integrated approach



# Results – Catalyst effect



- 30 million dollar investment in the School of Pharmacy help leverage Kaufman Lofts, Lang Tannery, Shoppers Drug Mart, Collins & Aikmans



# Façade Grant Program



- Face lift storefronts in the Downtown
- Strict Design Guidelines



# Revised UDM



- **CPTED**
- **“the proper design and effective use of the built environment can reduce crime and the fear associated with crime and improve the quality of life”** as coined by the late Timothy Crowe
- CPTED, Trained staff, specialist, consulting industry
- Requested to be guest speakers and lecturer at local universities and police force
- Accepted by industry
- Just good urban design



- **Access Control**



Clearly defined walkways guide people through spaces to the intended destination.



Define public space (sidewalk) from Semi-private space (front yard) and private space (front porch) with soft and hard Landscape elements (plants, ornamental fencing, alternative surface treatments).



# Surveillance:



Perimeter trees should be limbed up to 1.8 metres above grade to provide clear visibility into a property, especially parking lots. Buildings should be oriented so windows overlook parking lot



## Territorial Reinforcement:



There is no mistaking the entrance to this building. The design of the entrance clearly indicates you are leaving public space and entering private space.

# Maintenance:



A well maintained property tells people that someone cares about the property.

# Drive-through



- *“That the City of Kitchener requires new drive-through facilities to be designed so as to allow pedestrian movement from the street to the building and from the parking lot to the building without crossing the drive-through aisle; alternative designs to be subject to the approval of the Director of Planning.”*
- *Stacking space now 6.5 m vs. 5.5m*
- *Separation distance from other uses*



# Lighting



- Night sky compliant
- Re-defined light levels



# Bike Parking



- Standards for required number and to provide covered parking and long term parking.



# HVAC Screening



# Summary



- Kitchener incorporates urban design into the planning framework through:
  - Official Plan Policies
  - Urban Design Manual
  - Design Briefs
  - Downtown Strategic Plan
  - Culture Plan
  - Heritage Conservation Districts
  - Financial Considerations
  - Streetscape Improvements

