

A pedestrian-first street in the Market District: Final Report

January 9, 2025

Why a pedestrian-first street?



The City of Kitchener identified the need for a pedestrian-first approach between the Kitchener Market ION Station and the Kitchener Market. A pedestrian-first space makes it easier and more enjoyable to walk and roll to the Market and host events and activities out on the street.

What did we hear?



Staff engaged residents and businesses in 2021, with 805 people engaged. Feedback fell into three themes:

1. Create a definable “feel” to the Market District
2. Improve safety and comfort for getting around as a pedestrian
3. Make it easy to host events

Our vision

The streets around the Kitchener Market and LRT station are full of people, vibrancy and economic activity.

We undertook a variety of actions to move towards this vision in the short-term. In the long-term, we expect this vision to influence future city-building opportunities, such as nearby development or future street work.

Seeing the vision come to life

Through a combination of programming, strategic investments and community partnerships, we’ve seen the streets come alive in the past two years. Here’s a taste of the fun!



Saturday Markets spill onto the street, providing more space for vendors, music and things to do.

Easier street closures



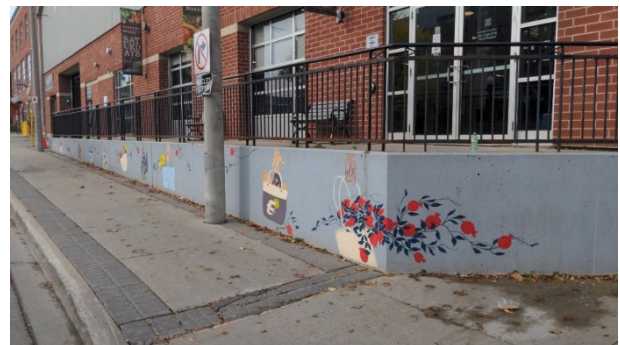
Newly installed swing gates make it easy to quickly open and close the street for planned events.

Store façade program



Local businesses are taking advantage of grant incentives to upgrade their façade, following an update to the City's program supporting upgraded street facing business facades and signage.

Street-oriented art



Through partnerships with artists and the Downtown BIA, several new murals bring more energy to the streetscape.

Urban agriculture



More greenery – that's edible! – is growing outside the Market thanks to a Community Powered Urban Agriculture partnership.

Flexible seating



Various seating and dining options encourage people to linger and hang out during their Market experience.

Shortened pedestrian crossings



Shortened pedestrian crossing distances and the addition of accessible tactile walking surface indicators were included in the scope of construction for the downtown cycling grid. A study to add a new crossing at King and Eby Streets found that current sightlines will not be adequate to ensure proper visibility of crossing pedestrians. A new pedestrian crossing is recommended when a street reconstruction opportunity arises in the future.

Upgraded bike parking



Aging bike racks on King Street were removed in favour of more practical and visually appealing racks, along with a new bike parking station added at the corner of Cedar and King streets.

Pedestrian wayfinding



Pedestrian wayfinding signs provide guidance to visitors using the Kitchener Market LRT Station.

Kid-friendly spaces



A variety of kid-focused amenities provide more play opportunities.

Thank you!

We wish to thank the many residents and employees and owners of nearby businesses for their enthusiastic participation in this project. We look forward to continued partnerships in the years to come.

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