Old Bones: A recent history of urban placemaking in Kitchener,

Ontario through media analysis

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Kitchener, Ontario has experienced significant social and physical changes in its downtown in recent decades. Once an industrial hub, the City's urban core declined as suburban migration and deindustrialization gutted its economic and cultural activity. Now, the downtown sees a new light rail transit (LRT) system pass by the old brick industrial buildings where tech companies and new developments thrive. This thesis will offer a historical review as to how this transition occurred through media analysis. Newspaper archives show that this revitalization was the process of negotiating place, identity, and value amongst the City's leaders, its residents, and investors. This process revolved around the successful conservation of cultural heritage sites. Participants considered how to leverage these assets to reclaim the City's identity while also building a liveable space for its future. By exploring the important role played by heritage conservation in the City's downtown revival, readers will see how cultural assets can offer an economic, social, and cultural return on investment.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Markus Moos, for his guidance and patience throughout this project. It took several attempts for me to finally find a research topic that was not only informative for my professional development, but also fun and engaging. Markus offered encouragement and support through the many ups and downs that went along with this.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

"If engineers were in charge, every building would be a rectangular box," Joe Salvia (Gawande, 2010, 57)

"There is a real element of place-making to it, the space has to feel good" Kitchener based developer Craig Beattie on the future central transit station in downtown Kitchener (Pender, 2017, September).

Kitchener, Ontario has experienced significant social and physical changes in its downtown in recent decades. Once an industrial hub, the City's urban core declined as suburban migration and deindustrialization gutted its economic and cultural activity by the end of the twentieth century. In 1961, for example, 59.7 percent of department stores and retail were located in downtown Kitchener; that number fell to 11.6 percent by 1991 (Filion & Hammond, 2008). One report showed in the early 1990s that 66 percent of Kitchener residents avoided going downtown altogether (Bunting & Filion, 1999). Remarkably, however, the downtown has seemingly revived itself. Now, the downtown sees a new light rail transit (LRT) system pass by the old brick industrial buildings where tech companies and new developments thrive.

The remarkable nature of this transition can be summarized by an article in the Waterloo Regional Record (The Record). In 2014, a reporter wrote,

> Locals with long memories… will recall that this heart was in dire need of a defibrillator just a decade and a half ago. Big old factories - the Tannery, Breithaupt Block and Kaufman Footwear, most notably - sat dormant or doomed, shops were shuttered and street fights after last call were among the few signs of life downtown. The region's tech sector was active and growing even then, but less conspicuously, almost exclusively in low-slung, suburban-style buildings outside the core. Much activity remains there today, but there's been a big

> change: The startup explosion, demographics and evolving preferences have brought an increasing amount of tech activity downtown, adding fresh tissue and new blood to that old heart. (TKWR, 2014, January)

The passage is no doubt romantic and biased, but captures the nature of change that occurred in downtown Kitchener, which is the return of activity to a dilapidated core. This thesis will explore this story.

Figure 1: Map of Innovation District (City of Kitchener, n.d.)

At the heart of this research is a curiosity with the growing dominance of the so called Innovation Economy in Kitchener. Its presence is so noticeable in the City that there is an entire sector of the downtown that has been branded as the Innovation District (Figure 1). The Innovation District is fascinating because it is largely shaped by two key features. The first is the number of industrial heritage buildings including the

Breithaupt Block (Figure 2), where Google moved its office to in 2014, and The Tannery

(Figure 3), which was once the largest leather tannery in the British Empire and now

supports a secondary Google office, a microbrewery, a café, a large tech incubator

called Communitech, and others. The other physical feature that defines the Innovation

District, is a newly installed Light Rail Transit System. It is important to recognize that

these two features have greatly shaped the physical environment within the downtown,

and they have both been instrumental in bringing activity back to the core.

Figure 2: Image of the Breithaupt Block

To begin with, the LRT was a key infrastructure project that has redirected

development from greenfield and agricultural lands towards intensifying existing urban

cores in Waterloo Region[1] (Revington et al., 2020). In 2016, the Region was actually

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[1] There are seven municipalities in Waterloo Region. The City of Kitchener is the largest.

given a national award which recognized the impact that the LRT has had in rebuilding the underutilized urban space, particularly Kitchener's downtown. As Regional Councillor, Tom Galloway explained in,

> The [LRT] is not a transportation project, it's a planning project. It just happens to move people, and so what I think this award really represents is a recognition of that, because these awards are given out to projects across the country that are dealing with infill, intensification and remediation of brownfield sites. And the Ion project in its total is very much that (Desmond, 2016, December).

The success of this project has been rewarded by the market: by 2018, an estimated $1.2 billion of development projects were planned in downtown Kitchener (Pender, 2018, January). It is then fascinating that despite the emphasis on high-density growth, that cultural heritage sites, such as the ones already mentioned, have not only survived, but have come to become such a key feature in the downtown.

Figure 3: Image of the Tannery

Cultural heritage sites generally come under threat in the face of urbanization (Kalay et al., 2007). As development increases, heritage properties generally become a nuisance for developers who are interested in maximizing their profit (Shipley et al., 2006). But in Kitchener, this has not been the case. Even with LRT reshaping the City itself– a massive project meant to redirect development so it intensifies the downtown – sites like the Tannery, Kaufman Lofts, and Breithaupt have only avoided demolition and have come to define the urban form of downtown Kitchener. They have been key drivers in creating a valuable location that others now want to participate in. These participants include developers, tech companies, young adults, and others. This thesis will explore the ways in which cultural heritage has created locational advantage and value in downtown Kitchener. It will demonstrate that while there are many factors that have contributed to the successful revitalization of downtown Kitchener, the role that cultural heritage has had is important. The aesthetic qualities of these buildings have helped stakeholder see value in their downtown, contextualize how growth will affect them, and attracted investment. Despite urbanization, cultural heritage has been become an integral piece of activity in the downtown.

My research will rely on archival sources from The Record. This source is rich in data and captures key events and voices that have helped shape and understand the change that has occurred in downtown Kitchener. To guide this thesis, I have formulated the following research questions:

- How has Kitchener's downtown revitalization been promoted and understood in the public discourse?

- How have heritage aesthetic and location advantages factored into this discourse?
- What are the implications of the nature of this discourse for planning in the public interest in Kitchener, and mid-sized cities more broadly?

Figure 4: Image of the Kaufman Lofts

This thesis will begin a literature review that addresses the discussions found in this thesis. This literature review will include an overview of placemaking, adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, a brief overview of deindustrialization and its relationship with Kitchener, a review of literature focussing on demographic change and its relationship with planning.

This will be followed by an explanation of methodology. I will explore the how I decided on using a media analysis of this project, followed by a roadmap as to how I searched this data and later analysed it.

Next, I will conduct an analysis of my findings. This will be divided into four chapters. The first chapter will explore the history of Kitchener's downtown revival by exploring the intersection between heritage and LRT and the sense of placemaking that shaped these concerns and objectives. The next chapter will explore the role that community identity has had in Kitchener's revival. This will provide insight into how heritage has been an integral component of Kitchener's transformation. This will then lead into a chapter on how heritage has been instrumental in creating locational advantage in the downtown. This analysis will demonstrate the economic outcomes of conserving Kitchener's downtown by considering how proximity to such sites drove investment and interest. The final chapter of my findings will explore how young adults have migrated to Kitchener and how this is connected to the built environment in the downtown. This chapter will consider who the downtown was built for and what implication demography has for planners. After analysing my findings, I will then provide a conclusion that considers what the implications are for the planning profession.

Finally, it is worth explaining the epigraphs included in this thesis. The first is meant to illustrate the value of design and aesthetics in downtown planning. Kitchener's downtown revitalization has relied on the value created by aesthetically pleasing buildings, not just big rectangular boxes. I am not the first to argue for the value of design in economic development, but Salvia's remark offers a nice introduction into the topic that I am uncovering. The second quote comes from a local developer. Craig

Beattie is the head of Perimeter Developments – a company that has been very active in Kitchener's recovery.[2] His comment on placemaking offers insight into how value has been created and measured in the downtown. Ultimately, placemaking has many different definitions. It can be used to create more liveable and sustainable communities (Palermo & Ponzini, 2014) or it may refer to the process of leveraging local assets to build 'place' (Welch & Anderson, 2017). For this thesis, it is not important to establish one clear definition of placemaking: it has many meanings for many different people. The many voices found in this thesis often emphasise the need to value the landscape of their community. In doing so, they use many meanings of placemaking to achieve their goals. That being said, I include Beattie's remark because it encapsulates the feelings associated with the term placemaking. That is, the importance of a place "feeling good." Further, Beattie is referring to transit hub. This transit hub will actually be built on the site of the Rumpel Felt Company, another industrial heritage site in Kitchener. The heritage aesthetics of this property will actually guide the design of the hub itself. So, Beattie's remark demonstrates two things: heritage aesthetics are intertwined with the framework of placemaking, and there is actual value in ensuring the downtown landscape must "feel good". I mention this because the stakeholders involved in Kitchener's revival are essentially concerned with making sure that as the City grows, it invokes such feelings. That is, what is the point of growth if all we get are more rectangular boxes in our downtown? It is important to recognize this process and its outcomes because it is through placemaking and notions of "feeling good" that the downtown landscape in Kitchener gains its locational advantage. The important sense

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[2] Perimeter has invested in Breithaupt, the Walper Hotel, the central transit hub, as well as other office space in the downtown. This will be discussed throughout this thesis.

of place in the downtown has in turn created value which has attracted talent,

businesses, and developers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Deindustrialization and the Innovation Economy

If we are to examine the importance of the Innovation District and the innovation economy in Kitchener, and its sphere of activity, it is important to first consider how the City of Kitchener has been shaped by external factors such as deindustrialization and globalization. Vinodrai demonstrates how deindustrialization has had an impact on the growth of the innovation economy in general (Vinodrai, 2015). She begins by tracing the history of Fordism, a form of economic organization that "included a detailed division of labour resulting in simplified, deskilled tasks requiring minimal job training; a high degree of labour control; highly standardized and routinized manufacturing" (Vinodrai, 2015, 68). As cities continued to deindustrialize, there emerged qualitative and quantitative changes in how the labour market and economy organized itself in North American cities. These shifts include global outsourcing of production activities, automation, changing consumer behaviour, and increasing reliance on service-based employment for local economic development (Vinodrai, 2015). As this trend continues, firms are increasingly aware that by locating to urban environments, they can leverage knowledge and innovation among urban dwellers. Vinodrai elaborates, stating,

> …scholars increasingly recognize that learning and innovation—critical for firms' competitiveness—are inherently social processes that rely on interaction between different economic actors, such as firms, industry and professional associations, universities, government, public and private research and development laboratories… (Vinodrai, 2015, 69).

Thus, there is a cyclical effect where, as cities have deindustrialized, the knowledge economy has gained priority. While not every city in Canada has experienced deindustrialization in the same way (e.g. more resource based cities like Calgary never

really deindustrialized), Vinodrai shows that from 1970-2011, the number of professionals has doubled in Canada (Vinodrai, 2015, 79). This, she suggests, has had a significant impact on how communities and cities function and may lead to troubling future outcomes.

One of the reasons this all matters is that employment can affect how a city changes and grows (Hutton & Vinodrai, 2015; Florida, 2002). For example, in 1961, 43 percent of Kitchener residents were working in manufacturing. By 1991, that figure dropped to 26 percent (Bunting & Filion, 1999). This represents a major shift in how urban spaces function in a city like Kitchener: critical industrial sites have lost their importance. We must understand this trend within our growing reliance on service-based industries and the emergence of cities as an engine for innovation and creativity in the global market (Hutton & Vinodrai, 2015).

Hall looks at the process of deindustiralizing as it is affected by global networks. (Hall, 2015). As globalisation expends and changes, he argues, so does the flow of goods, knowledge, and information. These variables have increased in volume (i.e. more goods move through cities), and have often had a severe impact on shaping urban communities. With these changing trends, vacant industrial sites that have been closed due to globalization, for example, now serve alternative uses depending on market demands (Hall, 2015). A process that we see in Kitchener.

Literature examining deindustrialization and the growing dominance of the innovation economy provides insight into how a city like Kitchener transitioned over recent decades. What this literature also points to is the application of new uses to old industrial sites. This too can be see in Kitchener. But these sources overlook the

important aesthetic quality of any of these sites (i.e. their heritage status) and how they are essential to the urban environment in Kitchener. For this, we must begin to explore the role that heritage has in creating place and value within a community.

Heritage Conservation and Urban Change

It is important to understand the variety of practices in heritage planning. Harold Kalman indicates that the three areas – restoration, preservation, and conservation – which all imply different things. Restoration refers to returning a building to its original state either by removing additions or through reassembling its components. Preservation simply means maintaining the existing state and preventing further deterioration. Conservation refers to the process of retaining a place's cultural significance, meaning, a site may change so long as its cultural significance is intact (Kalman, 2014). This is important, because this thesis will look at Kitchener's downtown conservation. As will be shown, there are moments when stakeholders speak of the need to preserve heritage, they are actually speaking of conservation. The City's heritage has been conserved so that its cultural value has been maintained while now serving a different purpose (i.e. condos, office space, etc.).

There is a body of literature that does make some connection between the innovation economy and heritage conservation through the lens of gentrification. Chang, for example, examines how the aesthetics of heritage properties contribute to Singapore's gentrification. Chang uses the Jane Jacobs adage, "Old buildings need new uses" to suggest that it is also the case that "New uses need old buildings," this illustrating the draw that these sites have for niche consumer behavior. (Chang, 2016, 524) Aesthetics can be engineered or marketed to brand geographies in a certain way,

he argues. They are not neutral but can attract people to specific locations and spend. As Chang states: "For consumers, partaking in aesthetically charged experiences may serve as a way to distinguish themselves as refined and knowledgeable, as members of an elite group" (Chang, 2016, 526). Chang sees heritage conservation as a potential driver of inequality as it supports more "creative" types of consumption patterns within the City.

Other scholars are interested in how heritage is leveraged to encourage neighbourhood change. The potential issue here is that it might contribute to the rise of inequality in said neighbourhoods (Pendlebury & Porfyriou, 2017). More focussed examples of this can be found in the literature examining the conversion of historic churches. Many historic churches have been converted into lofts in the City of Toronto, which rebrands the institutions as modern upscale living (Lynch, 2014). A balance must be found in referencing the heritage status of the building without endorsing any religious messaging. "Through various marketing tactics," Lynch writes, "developers create an aesthetic distance in the loft product by reframing religious heritage, for example, as a unique commodity endowed with a sense of quality and distinction that partly erases deeper religious content" (Lynch, 2014, 194). Lynch offers an analysis that sees heritage aesthetics as the main draw for investment and interest. He also identifies how this may contribute to forms of inequality in that it is marketing an "experience" of sorts. It is "making over" or "re-inventing" urban space in the same form as deindustrialized downtowns (Lynch, 2014). As Lynch states, "church lofts are characterized as variants or a niche of the post-industrial aesthetic" (Lynch, 2014, 201). Thus, we see how heritage aesthetics can attract economic activity in a given City.

Lynch's analysis is not entirely applicable to this study. As he notes, there is a need to rebrand such uses: associations with religious institutions could be a potential pitfall for buyers. In Kitchener, the key heritage sites are industrial in nature, so are not necessarily associated with a social institution, and therefore do not require rebranding in that sense. Still, his work considers how such buildings are catered to an economic class, such as the creative class, which is relevant to this study.

Sugden takes a different position and examines the role that adaptive reuse of heritage sites can have in supporting larger community aims (Sugden, 2017). By looking at the Kaufman Lofts and the Tannery in Kitchener, Ontario, he explains that heritage conservation can significantly contribute to community revitalization. Not only this, heritage conservation is a means to guide multi-faceted goals towards community building (Sugden, 2017). He writes:

> This was demonstrated by the adaptation of Kitchener's Kaufman building and Tannery District, where the adaptation of these two former industrial buildings have become a catalyst for new, innovative, and technology-focused downtown development. Contributing to the transformation an industrial blighted downtown into an innovation district and what has become Canada's technology hub. (Sugden, 2017, 110).

Heritage does more than recycle old buildings for new uses; it can drive change as has been Kitchener's case. His work argues that by finding "anchor" tenants, such Communitech at the Tannery, or buyers for lofts, is a crucial component of successful reuse projects (2017). Sugden's work offers insight into neighbourhood change because it focusses on the importance of leveraging assets: not all downtowns experience revitalization, but successful downtowns have unique qualities to them that are instrumental in attracting investment (Lauder, 2010). In Kitchener's case, the aesthetic

quality of the downtown seems to have been a significant asset in its downtown planning, which has turned it around, so to speak.

Miller also looks to heritage conservation in Kitchener. He analyses eight case studies across the City and argues that location is the most important variable determining "a site's candidacy for reuse" (Miller, 2019, 117). Developers working on these properties are mostly interested in retaining industrial aesthetics. But this primarily applies to sites that are located close to amenities and transit networks (Miller, 2019). One study examining the relationship between cultural heritage and transit suggests that they offer similar tools to planners: both features are often relied on for improving urban attractiveness. As such, the improvement of urban qualities is seen as a key driver for economic growth (Tønnesen et al., 2014). This study illuminates the role that amenities and aesthetics have in community development.

Skaburskis and Moos (2015) explain that the value of a location depends on proximity and accessibility. This illuminates heritage conservation practices because it recognizes the unique aesthetics of such sites, but concludes that these properties are still reliant on the factors that support larger land development trends. That is, heritage aesthetics still rely on external factors that will allow their assets to be leveraged into the urban fabric. Developers emphasize this, stating that location is still critical in adaptive reuse practices (Shipley et al., 2006).

One concern among planners and developers is whether or not heritage conservation pays off. It can be costly, and while many developers steer clear of heritage properties, some see the financial gain (Shipley et al., 2006). It is important to address this because there is a need to support heritage for historical purposes while

allowing property owners to ensure that their investment is profitable. Heritage

properties, however, have aesthetic features that naturally demonstrate financial value:

"While conventional real-estate development usually involves a use in search of a site,

heritage development almost always features a site in search of a use", the authors

suggest (Shipley et al., 2006, 508). Further, these properties tend to have versatile

space for a number of projects (e.g. industrial warehouses have lots of open space that

can adapt to various uses).

Developers point out that there are a number of factors to consider. Location is

one. But it also depends on the demand of the market. When both considerations are

favourable, developers claim that they can often look past the current condition of

properties and envision a future use (Shipley et al., 2006). The authors reveal that

developers are disgruntled at the assumption that they are antagonistic towards

heritage preservation. They wish to maintain the aesthetics that attracted them to the

property as it is in their best interest to leverage such assets in the market. As such, the

authors suggest the following: "The existence of dynamic, risk-taking and creative

investors, with a passion for beautiful older buildings, is probably the most important

single element in the heritage development industry" (Shipley et al., 2006). This thesis

supports this finding.

Certain case studies illustrate the role of facades in economic development.

Filion (2007) provides a series of case studies across Southern Ontario. In a chapter

examining the role of the built environment, he shows that facades can affect downtown

activity. In Kitchener, for example, the downtown streetscape is unattractive. This is

attributed to deindustrialization and the flight to suburbia (Filion, 2007). In comparison,

Oakville, Ontario, has a downtown that is designed to attract consumer activity. He

notes that is difficult to figure out whether this is replicable or not, but indicates that,

"From a planning perspective, the success of downtown Oakville translates into an

economically optimal use of a traditional built environment, which contributes to the

preservation of a heritage district while containing activities that could have opted for

greenfield sites" (Filion, 2007, 95). Therefore, we see heritage as a key driver to support

downtown economic activity. The literature and series of case studies observed

illustrate heritage aesthetics or facades a component of development.

Finally, we must also consider, what heritage means as an identifier for palce

and community value. Saruhan Mosler shows that historical structures affect community

identity. Mosler looks at heritage as a catalyst to form spaces and create identity and

meaning (Mosler, 2019). Mosler argues that,

> Whilst place-making is the process of spatial and socio-cultural formation of
> urban landscape through the dialogue between people and the place over the
> whole of its existence, it also represents the culmination of the historic and
> contemporary urban environment evolved through morphological and socio-
> spatial change and adaptation, creating new functions, meanings and narratives
> within the context of the heritage. (Mosler, 2019, 779).

Likewise, Suzana Vukic observes that when we make decisions not to tear down

heritage, we are making still making a statement. In choosing to preserve heritage, we

are maintaining the neighbourhoods' nature that surround heritage properties

(Slegtenhorst, 2014). Heritage is a key feature in neighbourhood identity and function.

The literature that looks at how heritage sites operate within a geography are

insightful, and there are aspects of this literature that make connections to the

environment and activity that we find in the innovation economy. But there is an

opportunity to explore this connection in full through an analysis of Kitchener's downtown revival.

Youthification

Lastly, we should also examine the demographic trends associated with the innovation economy. This thesis explores the downtown revival in Kitchener. In doing so, it examines the rise of its innovation economy, and thus, its class of young professionals. My findings demonstrate how cultural heritage has stimulated activity in the downtown, including that associated with young adults. Therefore, it is important to consider how young adults interact with the built environment.

Richard Florida's Creative Class thesis has been influential among planners in recent years (Vinodrai, 2015). The focus on innovation and creativity in the global economy has affected large firms, their actions and, in turn, the urban environment. This raises another component of analysis: demographic change. As Florida argues, young professionals are both assimilating to and driving the new direction of the economy (Florida, 2002). Essential to this is that young cohorts have changing economic behaviors and lifestyle preferences, which affect how they want their neighbourhood to look. Researchers have shown that there is a clear move of young adults towards inner-city locations where they can get better access to amenities (Skaburskis & Moos, 2015; Moos et al, 2017; Moos, 2016; Moos, 2014, Lee, 2020). As Vinodrai and Florida indicate, the growing importance of the knowledge economy means that young adults are becoming more educated. The increase in education corresponds to an interest in relocating to downtowns for better access to amenities and services (such as cafes, museums, etc.…). As such, store owners have begun to reconsider where they locate:

as consumption patterns change, so must businesses that wish to have exposure to the market (Skaburskis & Moos, 2015).

There is a growing interest in understanding the movement of young adults as it corresponds to urban change. Moos (2016) has dubbed this development as "youthification". Youthification is the process in which young adults (or Millennials) have migrated towards high-density neighbourhoods within the city while older adults have shifted towards lower-density areas. High-density neighbourhoods tend to have better access to amenities, better access to transit services, and better walkability. Data shows that Millennials are much more willing to embark on journeys through a multi-modal journey and are much more willing to ride public transit (Myers, 2017). Certain studies show that Millennials on average possess fewer driver's licenses than previous generations (Shelton & Fulton, 2017). Such shows that Millennials are migrating to urban cores and bringing with them a broad set of behaviors. Some see this as a simple correlation, stating that the preference to living in walkable high-density neighbourhoods is just the consequence of rising prices for car and home ownership (Myers, 2017). But this trend is more often understood as a change in ideals and preferences categorized by age-cohort (Lee, 2020). The process of youthification demonstrates that the 'residential ecology' of cities is changing (Moos, 2014).

Youthification differs from gentrification in that incoming residents are young adults across the income spectrum, not only young people with high social capital and/or income as is often the case in gentrified neighbourhoods. An Ipsos poll (2020) demonstrated that there is a conflict of interests among Millennials. Many wish to live in downtowns, but at the same time place a high value on affordability. But as the data

shows, those neighbourhoods in the downtown are often the most unaffordable. This is reiterated by scholars examining walkability, who demonstrate that walkable high-density neighbourhoods tend to be more unaffordable (Bereitschaft, 2018; Knight, 2018; Riggs, 2016; Bereitschaft, 2017). Knowing that young adults are migrating to such neighbourhoods, we can assume that while affordability is a concern, the lifestyle granted by high-density living is a key pull for this demographic.

Many theorists and planners have championed the flow of Millennials to urban centres as a catalyst for developing Smart Growth policy and implementing high-density growth (Moos & Revington, 2017). As one author has put it: "the emergence of the new generation, which has a massive population and reportedly distinctive urban tastes, may provide an opportunity to revive urban centers, promote sustainable development, and create transit-oriented communities" (Lee, 2020,568). This thesis will show that many people involved with Kitchener's downtown planning show excitement when discussing the arrival of young professionals in particular, and how they correspond with planning for more pedestrian-friendly environments.

The different literature reviewed in this section reflects the moving pieces involved in Kitchener's downtown planning. With such a dramatic change over recent decades, there has been much interest in understanding what has worked, what hasn't, and who the City is being built for. The literature above captures the factors we must consider when examining the change in downtown Kitchener and how cultural heritage sites became so defining in this landscape. This thesis will explore how cultural heritage conservation has interacted with the City's major economic, geographic, and demographic change.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Process

In the initial stages of my research, I came across a paper that examined how downtown Kitchener changed over time between the 1960s and the 1990s (when the paper was written). The key source of data used for this study was also The Record (Filion & Bunting, 1993).[3] The authors used this source in order to explore how urban changed generated over time. The change that occurred during this period was dramatic, but so is the change that occurred from the 1990s to present. This research demonstrated that through qualitative analysis, media is a valuable source in that it captures issues taking place within an localized environment. Further, media analysis allows for two key things: it allows us to uncover the motivations, justifications, and responses of key stakeholders such as councillors, planners, developers, community organizations, and residents through interviews, editorials, and op-eds; and it allows us to track these voices over time, and thus watch the community evolve and examine how the public responds. So, I became interested in exploring how The Record may provide us insight into the changes that downtown Kitchener sees today.

Based off of observations made of the Innovation District, it became clear to me that both heritage and the LRT are major factors in Kitchener's downtown change: buildings that were vacant and now supporting office space of the innovation economy, and a light rail system bringing new development to the downtown. So, using an online database called Factiva, I ran a search through The Record's archives using search

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[3] The findings of this research will be discussed in the following section.

terms "Heritage" and "Light Rail". Using the term "Heritage" was self justified. I chose to use the term "Light Rail" rather than "LRT" because it was not always referred to as "LRT" within the media. Further, every mention of the term "LRT" in media source also included the longer form name "Light Rail Transit". Therefore, using the term "Light Rail" was more inclusive for this search. I completed this search which turned up hundreds of articles that discussed both of these terms together.

This initial search proved to be very fruitful and confirmed my hypothesis that both the issue of heritage conservation and LRT planning were of central importance to the planning and concern for revitalization the downtown. The articles that emerged Results turned up articles dating back the year 2002, up until 2019. The bulk of the results were gathered between years 2012 – 2019 when plans for the LRT were approved and implemented, and sites like the Tannery and Breithaupt were up and running. But articles dating back to 2002 are valuable despite predating much of this development. These earlier articles illuminate the City's attempt to formulate a new vision and strategy for itself. Framing downtown revitalization by looking at the two key factors of heritage and LRT identified the key narrative of how downtown Kitchener came to be as it is today.

So, after gathering the data, I began reading year-by-year. This brought forward interviews with key voices in Kitchener's change, and provided an overarching narrative as to how the City came to be. Three specific sites were discussed consistently through these sources: three sites that would offer meaningful data on the questions I had formulated. Those sites were the Tannery, the Breithaupt Block, and the Rumpel Felt Company (Rumpel).

Figure 5: Image of the Rumpel Felt Factory

As the geography of the Innovation District suggests, both the Tannery and Breithaupt emerge as central sites in both Kitchener's revival. Through the search of "Heritage" and "Light Rail", they are identified as significant landmarks in the changing downtown. The third site, Rumpel, is slightly different. It is not mentioned nearly as much as the Tannery and Breithaupt largely because it does not house any major industry. It is also mentioned relatively infrequently in comparison to the other two sites. It has significance because it will serve as the future central transit hub for the Region. It is an industrial heritage site will meet head-on with the LRT. Analysing how this decision came to be, and how planners balanced heritage with transit provides insight into how the LRT has affected heritage conservation. After carefully reading the initial sources that were collected, I then went through Factiva again and conducted three searches:

"Light Rail" and "Breithaupt"; "Light Rail" and "Tannery"; and "Light Rail" and "Rumpel".

The search term "Light Rail" was included through this process to ensure consistency,

but also to limit the results; if I searched, "Tannery" for example, it provided results

dating back to the 1970s and 1960s, long before the questions of heritage and high-tech

came to be. So, after these searches, I compiled data chronologically. There was

certainly a degree of overlap since authors often mentioned two or three of the sites in

the same article. But the results proved to be substantial as it provided me with a

considerable amount of data that would support my qualitative analysis.

Justification and Approach

Often, media analysis that explores the changing urban environment relies on

discourse analysis. That is, those studies tend to examine the use of language as it

relates to the difference between objectivity and reality (Farthing, 2015). For example,

scholars tend to examine media accounts in order to illustrate how media

representations often fail to capture the reality of gentrification with in a certain location,

which, it is argued, influences how readers make sense of the phenomenon (Gutsche,

2015; Brown-Saracino & Rumpf, 2011). Tolfo and Doucet (2020) consider how the term

"gentrification" has been used in the Canadian newspaper, *The Globe and Mail.* They

show that since the term's first use in 1980, it has evolved in a manner that reflects

middle-class interpretations, as opposed to those who are being most affected my

gentrification. These findings, they argue, provide insight into the public discourse:

studying media can inform how the public views a place, and as such, how they see it

changing.

McCann's (2004) use of media analysis assesses the role that media has in portraying urban locations in terms of "best places". He is concerned with how media portrays certain cities as successful and prosperous in comparison to others, and how these portrayals in turn create narratives that influence policymakers in how they development policy in their own setting. McCann argues that "the relationships between media discourse and urban politics resonates with a more widespread attempt in urban studies to understand the power of discourse in the construction of urban economies" (McCann, 2004, 1910). Discourse analysis "is founded on a strong social constructivist epistemology. Social reality is not something that we uncover, but something that we actively create through meaningful interaction" (Hardy et al., 2004, 20).

However, my thesis uses content analysis to understand how downtown Kitchener has changed over a period of time as described in media, following the approach used by Filion and Bunting (1993). Content analysis is an effort to understand how an event or series of events have been portrayed within a source (Krippendorff, 2004). It is the "the study of the text itself not of its relation to its context, the intentions of the producer of the text, or the reaction of the intended audience" (Hardy et al., 2004, 20). I am concerned with how the neighbourhoods have changed over time as depicted in the media, not specifically how language of this change reflects different power dynamics. As readers will see, I look to The Record as a historical source that identifies how changes in downtown Kitchener are articulated in one specific media outlet.

Readers will find that media sources that I rely on are rich in content. So much so that as I wrote this thesis, I needed to make the conscious effort to have this remain as a media analysis, not a work of history. As such, there is little to no reliance on

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supplementary sources such as policy from the City, interviews, statistics, or other

sources that could enrichen the story here. This was a conscious decision taken to

avoid diluting the value of what a media analysis offers. The value of this approach is

that these sources provide a narrative of what "happened on the ground" as portrayed

by the main local newspaper. Where a review of policy might offer insight into the City's

objectives, media sources have provided rich commentary from various participants,

which in turn illustrates what change occurred and how the public made sense of it. It

deals with history, and it deals with narrative. It is a history of Kitchener's post-industrial

renaissance through media analysis.

Chapter 4: Mountains Beyond Mountains: A Brief History of Change in Downtown Kitchener

In 2010, Arcade Fire's third studio album *The Suburbs*, received international acclaim and earned the band the Grammy for Best Album of the year; unprecedented for an indie band (Breihan, 2011). The album tells the story of a dystopian future where the narrator is looking back in retrospect on suburban childhood. One of the album's singles, "Sprawl II (Mountains Beyond Mountains)" has Arcade Fire co-founder Régine Chassagne, sing the line, "Dead shopping malls rise like mountains beyond mountains" (The Suburbs, 2010). The song speaks to the qualities that surround contemporary suburban life, noting its lifestyle, but also its physical geography, that is, the seemingly endless horizon of shopping malls across suburbia.

Around the same time the album was released, the City of Kitchener, Ontario, a mid-sized city west of Toronto, had, it seemed, begun to rebound after years of decline. Like many North American cities whose manufacturing work force depleted in the late twentieth century, the City's downtown had decayed. But by 2010, investment began to return. Old factures were purchased and renovated either supporting new residences or small tech start ups. Also around this time, ambitious plans for the LRT were in the approval process. Much work had to be done, but still, the transformation from only a decade earlier was astounding. Even into the early 2000s, downtown Kitchener was plagued by the existence of not just one, but two dead shopping malls.

By the mid-1960s, downtown Kitchener's retail economy was struggling due to the growing dominance of suburban shopping malls (Filion & Bunting, 1993). As a

result, the Chamber of Commerce, along with planners and municipal leaders, began to devise a plan to develop shopping malls in the downtown to prevent further decline. In 1971, city council approved the sale of the City's historic city hall and market for $1 million. They were both demolished and replaced by Kitchener Centre, a new shopping mall (Filion & Bunting, 1993). This decision fell within the modernist tradition of planning which assumed that the car could be integrated into the downtown effectively (Filion & Hammond, 2008). Kitchener went a step further to bookend the main street by building another mall at the opposing end of the downtown (Filion & Hammond, 2008). However, decline continued.

Whereas in 1961, 59.7 percent of department stores and retail were located in downtown Kitchener, that number fell to 11.6 percent by 1991 (Filion & Hammond, 2008). Further, the vacancy rate for retail properties rose from 4.4 percent in 1953 to 22.9 percent in 1991, and the population of the downtown declined by 20.1 percent from 1971 – 1981 (Bunting et al., 2000). One report showed in the early 1990s that 66 percent of Kitchener residents avoided going downtown altogether (Bunting & Filion, 1999). The drastic change in Kitchener's downtown can be understood in part by external factors such as globalization and the flight of manufacturing jobs (Bunting & Filion, 1999). But there is a strong correlation between the physical landscape created by the downtown malls and the decline of the downtown itself. Understanding this story is important towards understanding how the past (i.e. heritage) became so important when forming the brand of downtown Kitchener we see today.

Part of what follows in this section is a review how the planning profession changed in Ontario over the decades. As one reporter wrote in 2005, "It was easy to be

an urban planner in Ontario 15 years ago. People were having enough babies to keep the population growth rate climbing. Everyone wanted to live in single family homes in subdivisions at the edge of town" (Swayze, 2005). By the early 2000s, that model of city building was coming to an end: demographics were changing, and infrastructure built for the car-dominated landscape was costing millions in repairs (Swayze, 2005).

The discussion above, and the one to follow, illustrates that this story is about the changing philosophy of planning. Examining the history of heritage, LRT, and placemaking in Kitchener involves unearthing how planners began to change the profession. Planners, residents, and developers began to consider how to leverage the community's assets (i.e. its industrial past) to create a sense of place that would drive and attract further investment in the downtown.

Chapter 5: Findings

My findings are broken down into four sections. First, I will provide a history of Kitchener's revival through analysing articles found in The Record. This chronology will put a spotlight on the role that placemaking has had in this story. This will contextualize the following chapters as it offers a sequence of events and an understanding of what placemaking has meant to the community. The second chapter is concerned with Kitchener's community identity, which is that it is inherently an innovative community. The third chapter looks to unearth how cultural heritage sites have created a ripple effect throughout the city in terms of investment and growth. And finally, I explore the migration of young adults to the downtown, what this means, and what problems it may create. Readers will find that many of these themes are interconnected and related. Kitchener's downtown revival was multi-faceted, and therefore the pieces in this thesis will often overlap and support one another.

The Rise of Placemaking

By the early 2000s, the re-visioning of Kitchener's future became a key point of conversation for The Record and, it would seem, locals, planners, architects, and councillors. This dialogue recognized the miscalculated land-use practices of the past. In 2002, George Bechtel, Kitchener resident, and contributor to The Record on planning and transportation-related matters discussed the closing of the electric trains in 1955, arguing that it was ultimately regressive: "It took us almost another 50 years to the present to realize our mistake, and we are enthusiastically promoting the new trolley, light rail transit" (Bechtel, 2002). The piece offers a grand narrative of the current geography across the Region, pointing fingers at the automobile-intensive landscape

that emerged in the twentieth century (Bechtel, 2002). This reiterates the history of

Kitchener's downtown evolution that Filion and Bunting (1993) analysed in their work.

Bechtel's argument, unfortunately, goes on to promote a somewhat outdated and

primitive image of indigenous peoples[4] stating that "Indian society was based on living

in harmony with nature" (Bechtel, 2002), thus arguing that light rail transit would be a

step towards more sustainable practices. Nevertheless, Bechtel, like many of the

observers who wrote for, or to, The Record, captures the community's desire to get the

future "right." While just a resident, and loaded with bias, Bechtel's article, and the title

at that – "A revolution in land use is here; let's get it right" – captures the process

unfolding in Kitchener at this time.

In the same year, The Record began a series of articles examining how growth

should look across the Region. The first of these pieces, written in September 2002,

provided a general history of the Region and its failure to live up to the growth projected

in the 1960s. Based on predictions at that time, the Region expected to balloon to 1.1

million residents by the 2000s. "This overestimation," the author wrote, "led to planning

assumptions that ultimately failed. Instead of urban renewal, we got failed downtown

shopping malls, and a Centre in the Square arts complex that was built too far from the

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[4] There is a vibrant historiography exploring the problems with broadly assuming indigenous populations "live in harmony with the land" (See: Krech, 1999; Deloria, 2004; Raibmon, 2005). The issue is best described by Cherokee writer, Tommy Orange, who writes: "Urban Indians feel at home walking in the shadow of a downtown building. We came to know the downtown Oakland skyline better than we did any sacred mountain range, the redwoods in the Oakland hills better than any other deep wild forest. We know the sound of the freeway better than we do the rivers, the howl of the distant trains better than wolf howls, we know the smell of gas and freshly wet concrete and burned rubber better than we do the smell of cedar or sage or even fry bread – which isn't traditional, like reservations aren't traditional, but nothing is original, everything comes from something that came before, which was nothing. Everything is new and doomed. We ride buses, trains, and cars across, over, and under concrete plains. Being Indian has never been about returning to the land. The land is everywhere or nowhere" (Orange, 2018, 11).

faltering core to aid in its renewal" (Outhit, 2002). This article, and the one previous to it, are noteworthy because they lean on the past in order to present the case that the future requires better planning. In doing so, these articles consider how the built environment affects community wellbeing, what went wrong in the past, and what can be done about it.

In 2002, the Region held eight different workshops bringing together planners, community members, and students from the University of Waterloo, among others, to begin brainstorming a vision for the future. One of the questions asked through this brainstorming session was: "How would Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge make their core areas vibrant and attractive to people? What should this region be like 25 years from now?" (Domagala, 2002). Hanna Domagala, a reporter for The Record at that time, wrote,

> The issue that immediately comes to the forefront when considering any vision of the future is the current state of the local downtowns. In each, there is a main street surrounded by urban blocks with scattered vacant buildings and empty public space. This area tends to deteriorate, both socially and physically (Domagala, 2002).

The Region was at a juncture. Domagala recognized the need to diversify the cityscape, intensify the cores, provide better urban amenities, and offer better transportation options for changing work behavior (Domagala, 2002). Her assessment connects the condition of the built environment to community well being. By emphasising the deteriorated state of the downtowns, she suggests that re-visioning, and reinvesting in, the core is a crucial component towards creating a desirable and vibrant location for new and old residents. Domagala wrote,

Identity is a key factor for defining what that vision should be. Identity cannot be invented, cannot be produced in a meeting of visionaries who fabricate a list of what they would like a city core to be. The starting point must be what is already there… To further depict their characters, cities can create a network of artifacts displaying their heritage, history and future. Artifacts can visually unify an area and enhance the spaces in which they are placed. It is also crucial to understand the significance of architecture and what one sees. It is not enough to have exemplary buildings scattered throughout. People more often remember the negative things they see than the positive ones (Domagala, 2002).

It is actually somewhat remarkable that Domagala was able to so effectively capture the process that would unfold in the coming years. It is important to unearth such articles because they help as see how the events to follow have unfolded. In the field of geography, we run the risk of identifying trends only to look backwards and find data that supports the assessment we make today. Examining the discussions found in these earlier articles shows us that even before major structural change occurred in the downtown, the public was concerned with the intangible qualities of their community. The issues raised in 2002 will continues to thread themselves through the actual events and milestones discussed in this thesis.

At the last of these workshops, a planner raised the question: "What is the identity of Waterloo Region?" (Lukachko, 2002). This question led participants to consider how design and architecture create value for a community. Alex Lukachko, the reporter writing of the event, explained that, "To examine our regional identity is one way of talking about the bond between culture and landscape" (Lukachko, 2002). Much like Domagala, Lukachko's comment raises the importance of identity in placemaking. From the early stages of the re-visioning of Waterloo Region, questions surrounding the past and present were deemed significant. The dilapidated urban cores, which once housed prized industrial buildings, had lost their spark. The Region's landscape had

changed, and with it, it seemed, so had its industrious culture. In the early 2000s, archival sources from The Record demonstrate that the physical quality of the Region is entwined with its identity.

The workshop came forward with two central conclusions regarding the Region's character: 1) "it depends on strong, local culture, which is mainly seen in the city centres of the larger communities;" and 2) the, "Region's character depends on the vital link between the cities and the surrounding farmland" (Lukachko, 2002). This assessment is relevant to this research because it situates a major infrastructure such as the LRT within the need to enhance community identity. Lukachko explained that to preserve the highly valued natural heritage, development across the Region should be directed inward towards the urban cores, as opposed to expanding further onto farmland, as was usually the case in southern Ontario (Lukachko, 2002). As Revington et al. (2020) show, LRT development in the Region was designed to prevent further encroachment on farmland. This objective was meant to create a more sustainable environment in the Region. However, as The Record illustrates, the process of using the LRT to guide development is inherently tied to questions around heritage, identity, and placemaking. Lukachko wrote,

> The proposed light-rail transit route through the downtown supports both the expected increase in density and the development of pedestrian-only areas. Light rail will also strengthen the connection of Kitchener's centre to other regional downtowns. The challenge will be to integrate this plan into the existing urban fabric. Anyone looking at King Street from Francis Street to Eby Street, can still see the industrial heritage of Kitchener, even years after most of the factories have closed or moved. Kitchener has a wealth of solid brick factory buildings and vacant lots that can be reused to accommodate growth. Many of these spaces could be used for public squares. Because these factories were built when people walked to work from their homes, most of the properties are near King Street and older residential neighbourhoods (Lukachko, 2002).

Thus, the LRT and industrial heritage are not seen as incompatible by those considering the Region's future. Industrial heritage and LRT are part of the same visioning exercise. To embrace new forms of city planning is not only compatible with, but dependant on the bricks laid through the City's built heritage. It suggests that this is the approach needed to make the Region and its urban spaces more livable: to make them feel good.

One of the benefits to analysing sources from The Record is that it also casts a light on the opposition that emerged within the Region. In 2002, a resident from Cambridge offered an unfavourable review of the Region's intention to grow:

> Just because the Kitchener mayor is not satisfied with Kitchener's performance, it doesn't mean he has to ruin it for the whole region and bring us down with it. It seems as if he and Ken Seiling are trying to turn us into Mississauga West and I don't like it. This so called smart-growth approach isn't smart at all -- community identities have not been considered in the process (Emerta, 2002).

Nicholas Emerta (who would later serve as a city councillor for the City of Cambridge) indicated that he feared that Waterloo Region would become a bedroom community for Toronto as Mississauga had become (Ermeta, 2002). If we look at the history of Kitchener's downtown decline, one can see how Emerta came to this concern. Past attempts to prepare for growth were failed and gutted the downtown for suburban expansion. It resulted in the decline of the once industrious and prosperous urban community. Its identity changed. Whether in support of, or in opposition to, growth and change, the question is ultimately one that considers place, identity, and livability.

Table 1: Articles discussing "Heritage" and "Light Rail", 2002

Author	Title	Date
Bechtel, G.	Region's rail transit proposal is indeed a 'great fit'	April 24, 2002
Outhit, J.	Vision is needed; Challenges, opportunities await region in years ahead	September 21, 2002
Ermeta, N.	Cambridge has no choice but to go its own way	October 10, 2002
Bechtel, G.	A revolution in land use is here; let's get it right	December 12, 2002
Lukachko, A.	Focus growth on city centres, students say; Any architectural plan must serve to protect culture in the community	December 21, 2002
Domagala, H.	All feel welcome in vigorous cores; Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge can thrive with the right balance between land, space	December 28, 2002

For the year 2002, there were six articles that came of out the search "Heritage" and "Light Rail" (Table 1). A quick read of the titles shows that in 2002, there were serious discussions about the future of the Region, and its land use planning practices. What is essential to recognize is that in 2002, voices show that the questions around LRT and the changing the built environment are often concerned with identity. Whether

it is considering how to leverage the built environment to represent the community's identity, or fears that the Region may merge into "Mississauga West," The Record illustrates that the discussions about LRT and heritage in the early 2000s are both ultimately concerned with the same question. As the preceding decades had shown residents of Waterloo Region, failure to respect the role that Kitchener's downtown had severe repercussions.

To be sure, many residents expressed concern over the impact of the LRT downtown. In 2003, May Ann Wasilka wrote in the Letter-of-the-day section of The Record, stating:

> I believe that The Record has also been unsympathetic to inner city residents who are concerned about road widening, the loss of heritage buildings and the intensive rezoning of adjacent properties to support the density of people needed to support light rail. It is time The Record and the region started to regard the people who live downtown as more than infill and address what makes living downtown an appealing alternative (Wasilka, 2003).

Wasilka's concern speaks precisely to the issue surrounding planning, growth, and history. To be concerned for heritage in light of such a major infrastructure was valid. Especially since there were so many unclear lines as to how the two would be balanced.

Despite the conclusions gathered at the workshops in 2002, the actual practice of protecting heritage in the wake of LRT was not as simple. Just over two months after the last workshop, the historic school Kitchener-Collegiate Institute (KCI), was going to close. KCI is well over 150 years old and was attended by Canada's longest-serving Prime Minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King (Fahel, 2003). When it was announced that the school would be closing, and possibly sold to its neighbour, Grand River

Hospital, a spokesperson for the Economic Development Advisory Committee to

Kitchener, Shawky Fahel, wrote an opinion piece in The Record. He wrote,

> At a time when both the city and regional councils are embarking on a mission of revitalization to our downtown, attracting new business, new residential developments, trying to get new light rail lines to two blocks away from KCI, we have some unimaginative committee members who lacked the basic understanding that a major part of a city's strength lies in its vibrant downtown (Fahel, 2003).

Fahel's comment reiterates the fear that growth may cost too much. That the history of

the City may be overlooked in planning its future. Further, his role as an Economic

Advisor adds the layers which surround the role that heritage has in community

placemaking. He is drawing a link between heritage aesthetics, community vibrancy,

and economic success. He illustrates that the City and its community were trying to

negotiate its past and future at this time. The role of which heritage has had in

Kitchener's re-visioning provides us with a history of placemaking in Kitchener, Ontario.

The potential closing of KCI brought many advocates forward. A reporter for The

Record wrote, "local historians and architectural heritage advocates reacted with

surprise and disappointment that KCI -- with its rich history, illustrious alumni,

architectural importance and distinctive personality – is one of two high schools in

Waterloo Region to be recommended for closure" (Aggerholm, 2003). The decision was

controversial not just because of its history but also due to its design features. In the

1980s, the building's façade had been deemed historically significant. This made the

decision all the more controversial. The issue encouraged many locals to participate in

the discussion, including regional councillor Jean Haalboom (who was then head of the

heritage committee), who said, "This is really a fine example of the beginning of modern

architecture in Kitchener" (Aggerholm, 2003). A history professor from the University of

Waterloo, and former Liberal Minister of Parliament, John English, believed that the school's closing would be detrimental to the City's plans to revitalize the downtown. In light of the desire to attract more people to the downtown, he argued, it seemed illogical to remove such an essential institution meant to support young families who might otherwise settle in suburbia – the exact opposite of what the Region had been planning for (Aggerholm, 2003).

The value of unearthing these articles is that it shows us what was happening at the ground level. The points raised by people like Haalboom and English demonstrate that placemaking is an essential component to this story and that it took conflict and debate to negotiate precisely how growth would enhance community life. This case also shows us that questions around heritage and architecture are not arbitrary. The arguments protecting heritage considered how the City should leverage its past to support its future. This is a key issue found in The Record's archives. As residents expressed, growth that overlooks this component is cause for concern. Questions of identity and placemaking thread together the City's past with its potential to grow and change.

As the community was developing a vision for itself, developers were busy in Kitchener's downtown. In 2002, development companies established plans to redevelopment "three empty industrial buildings" (Ash, 2003). This moment in history marks the beginning of Kitchener's brownfield program. "Private projects," a reporter wrote, "some with city support, are revamping another downtown block" (Ash, 2003). The article discusses Kitchener's overall changing landscape, highlighting the efforts revamp the entrance to Victoria Park, demolition projects making way for new

developments, and a new children's museum (Ash, 2003). One of the key developments

at this time, however, was the Kaufman lofts. Kimshaw Holdings Ltd. bought the old

Kaufman factory at the corner of King and Victoria. Initially, the firm hoped to build office

space; however, the market for office space was over-saturated, so the firm decided on

a mix of office and residential properties, providing "135 affordable rental apartments

and about 50,000 square feet of office space" (Ash, 2003). Between 2002 and 2003, the

vision for the future was not yet fully realized. Sites like KCI demonstrate that the

relationship between growth and heritage was not entirely clear. While the decision to

close KCI was not directly related to the LRT, it highlights, as John English noted, there

was a lack of coherence in directing the role that heritage would have in shaping

downtown Kitchener. Simultaneously, however, the development occurring at sites like

Kaufman were demonstrating exactly what English and Fahel were advocating:

conserving the City's industrial heritage created value and place that, as we will see,

provided a return on investment.

"One of the biggest goals has been to convince people they should look after

and maintain their buildings," explained Bob Rowell, one of the founding members of

the Architectural Conservancy Ontario (ACO) North Waterloo Branch. "You don't really

own a building, you're stewards of it. It's your job to keep that building intact" (Davis,

2005). The ACO's presence in the Region was noted by Mike Galloway, head of

Heritage Kitchener, and by regional councillor and heritage advocate, Jean Hallboom,

who stated: "When there has been a crisis with a property of historical or architectural

value, what is valuable is (the branch's) support" (Davis, 2005). But their role as

advocates became even more crucial, it seems, as plans for growth and intensification

began to mount in the 2000s. The ACO noted that the LRT could potentially impact many historic properties along its route and that this, along with the broader goal for intensification, were concerns. "There's always something at risk," Bob Rowell told The Record (David, 2005). But what Rowell does not comment on here is that perhaps the developers involved with Kitchener's intensification might value its heritage as an asset rather than a nuisance.

By 2005, the Ontario legislature began to "reign in suburban development sprawl and to encourage denser development and redevelopment. There is talk of cities getting powers they never had before to push public transit over cars" (Swayze, 2005). The director of community planning at that time, Kevin Eby, was quoted as stating, "We can't plan like we did before. Where that leads as we're looking forward . . . it's a guess. Hold on" (Swayze, 2005). Within this context, Rowell's concern is legitimized: cities may have the power to implement change that may severely affect heritage properties. Of course, there was no indication that this process would side-step the importance of heritage in a community. Rather, understanding the planning profession's changing priorities simply suggests that heritage is just one piece of a changing profession. The role of which had not yet been seen or understood.

In 2006, with a new set of municipal councillors in place (TKWR, 2006), the vision was still coming together. Kevin Eby explained that a new vision for the Region was still underway. "We are working our way through putting the puzzle together one piece at a time," Eby said (Burtt, 2006). In his interview with The Record, Eby provided an overview of some of the larger changes occurring, such as the need to preserve precious farmland and natural heritage across the Region by building up the cores. He

also discussed some of the problems across the Region, namely that Waterloo was nearly out of space for industrial land, Cambridge had ample space, and Kitchener had limited land available (Burtt, 2006). However, he concludes this thought by suggesting that the best way to arrange all of the moving pieces is to develop a vision that sees the Region growing as one. Eby's comment doesn't directly speak to the relationship between heritage and LRT. But, it does speak to the fact that both are features in a multi-faceted project that aimed to guide the Region into the future. As previous articles have shown, this is important because the discussions surrounding this transformation are concerned with the potential loss of identity if the moving pieces are not all considered. For example, English suggested the closing of KCI would inadvertently support further suburban growth. Whether or not that is true, it reflects the complex negotiating that residents and planners were undertaking in the wake of an uncertain future. Referring back to interviews, such as the one with Eby, reminds us that Kitchener's downtown revival was a piecemeal effort and not one linear trajectory. The final result that we see today, that sees buildings like the Tannery and Breithaupt act as benchmarks for the downtown, took time and effort. Analysing archival sources from The Record offers insight into how events came to be, how value was created, and how ideas of place came to define the return of Kitchener's downtown.

The real turning point for the City of Kitchener seems to be between the years 2010 and 2012. This story is not just how the LRT interacted with heritage conservation but also how the LRT changed how residents interact with heritage sites. For example, residents were also interested in the community's intangible heritage features (i.e. not just the built form). Gord Nicholls, a resident of Kitchener, approached city council in
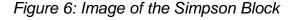
2011 suggesting that the City re-evaluate how heritage trails are a part of the City's geography. He made the point that with the LRT stopping at Fairview Mall, pedestrians will now only have a short walk to access some of the City's heritage trails, those used by many of the early pioneers (Pender, 2011, April). As Nicholls indicates, the LRT may provide the means for pedestrians to connect to their heritage. This relationship between heritage and community is very similar to the role that the built heritage in the downtown has had community experience. The sources show that the changing built form in downtown Kitchener allowed residents to interact with the City's heritage as residents became more attracted to their downtown.

The LRT remained a contentious issue for communities across the Region during this time. The conflict even met at the political level: while Mayor Carl Zehr of Kitchener was a key player in advocating for the LRT, The Record notes in 2011, that Mayor Brenda Halloran of nearby Waterloo saw the LRT as a divisive issue among the community, calling for a referendum. Indeed, according to an Ipsos Reid poll taken at that time, "A full 83 percent of respondents want a referendum to chart the region's rapid transit density" (Roe, 2011). The author of the article, John Roe, who served as editor for The Record, showed disdain toward Halloran's views as he did for the public who wished to hinder the decision-making power of the Region's leaders. "Let them remember that true leaders stand before their community and march forward," he wrote (Roe, 2011). But the opposition that we see here exists mostly under the umbrella of placemaking issues; to be concerned about density and transit corridor planning is to be concerned about losing the qualities of one's community and the features that make it a

unique place. It is important to examine this conflict in real time because it adds texture to the change occurring across the Region and in Kitchener's downtown.

However, around this time, a "downtown landmark" (The Simpson Block) in Kitchener had been purchased by a development group, Perimeter Development. Perimeter Development decided to buy the 115-year-old building. As indicated in The Record, Perimeter "specializes in finding new uses for old buildings" (Pender, 2011, August). An interview with Perimeter's head of development, Craig Beattie, offers insight into how heritage properties were seen as an asset. Further, in contrast to Mayor Brenda Halloran and her constituents, Beattie's comments show us that the growing threat of increased density actually supports the reclamation of the community's identity, not the removal of it. Efforts to densify the transit corridor attracted investment, which leveraged community landmarks to create a place of value within the Region. Beattie told Pender: "It's a fabulous old building, and frankly has not had a lot of attention for many years" (Pender, 2011, August). It is not seen as an eyesore, nor a limitation to the City's downtown. Rather, it is seen as a fabulous feature that has been underutilized. As to "why here" and "why now": Beattie explained that both the LRT and the strategies to diversity the downtown economy had been key "reasons for the company's recent investments in the city centre" (Pender, 2011, August). Beattie explained that future plans involved upgrading the building's façade and converting some of the space for office use. "We are big supporters of what the city has done with the streetscape and that sets the tone for further investment" (Pender, 2011, August). So, while polls and politicians expressed concern for what density may bring, archival sources from The Record show that those participating in the changing geography of the downtown see

the plans to increase density as a tool to better leverage the community's identity, not

oppose it. The difference of opinion shown here illustrates that the questions around

LRT and heritage are ultimately concerned with placemaking. Either there is concern

that growth will take priority over place, or recognition that growth is a tool to leverage a

sense of place. Readers will see that it is the latter that turns out to be true. As one

reporter wrote in response to Perimeter's investment in the Simpson Block, "Businesses

want to go where people are going" (TKWR, 2011, August). In Kitchener, growth and

place are one and the same.

Figure 6: Image of the Simpson Block

As Perimeter invested in the downtown, the remnants of the City's manufacturing economy continued to decline. In 2011, Schneider's meat processing plant decided to close its doors in Kitchener.[5] This left the 10-acre site, deemed to be in "prime real estate" territory, with an uncertain future (TKWR, 2011, October). But the closure marked a jumping point for those who saw a bright future for Kitchener. An article in The Record stated,

> So much of the region's old industry has died only to be reborn in positive ways. Sure, hundreds of jobs were lost when the Epton plant, Kaufman Footware and the old Lang Tannery ended their days. But look what's on those respective sites today: a pharmacy and medical school, the residential marvel that is the Kaufman lofts and a Lang Tannery complex that is, in part, a hub for the region's high-tech sector (TKWR, 2011, October).

Thus, the fall of a critical employer in Kitchener is seen as an opportunity. It is a marker used to illustrate the change that is to come. As the article suggests, sites like Kaufman and the Tannery are seen as instrumental in redirecting the City's economic base. This is the landscape in which this story takes place.

A major project set to define the Region's future is the planned transit hub at King and Victoria, downtown Kitchener.[6] In 2011, Provincial and municipal politicians saw the future transit hub as the home of "Grand River Transit, intercity buses, GO trains, Via Rail and light-rail transit" (Outhit, 2011). At the time the article was written, all of these services were scattered throughout the City. The possibility of relocating these services to one location to support pedestrian mobility was popular. However, the site that the Region bought was home to the Rumpel Felt factory, an industrial site that the Region bought in 2007 for $7 million (Outhit, 2011). The site had heritage value to the City and

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[5] It would not officially close until 2015, but the decision was made in 2011.
[6] This has yet to be built as of 2020.

Region, so there were concerns about how the project should proceed. While the site was marked as culturally significant, Ken Seiling, Regional Chair at the time, showed that the future of this building was by no means incompatible with the vision and development taking place across downtown Kitchener. In fact, Seiling mentioned the importance of finding private partnerships to develop this project (Outhit, 2011). This was a goal that would shape the future of the transit hub and the surrounding environment.

The following year, planners decided that Rumpel's architectural features would guide the design of the future transit hub. The debates surrounding this decision offer considerable insight into how the City and Region attempted to bridge the community's past and future. In this case, part of the problem was that there were three additional structures added to the original building between 1942 and 1968, none of which were assigned heritage status (Desmond, 2012). But still, the decision created tension. Kitchener Councillor Dan Glenn-Graham wanted the building to be protected by heritage designation (as opposed to simply being listed at this time) to ensure that the LRT's development would not interfere with the building. A report which came out that year recommended that the original structure be saved, but the Region claimed that it would be too early to make any decisions. Glenn- Graham told staff reporter Paige Desmond, "We need that to preserve our history… I don't have a problem with them tearing down the new additions as long as it preserves the heritage of the (original) building" (Desmond, 2012). Desmond noted that Rumpel was added to the Municipal Heritage Register, but was intentionally not designated as a heritage property. This process was intended to protect "the property from demolition" but would ensure that

developers were not "getting tied up in heritage red tape" (Desmond, 2012). This decision became a topic of concern for members of the public and planners alike.

The following month (October 2012), Kitchener's heritage advisory group decided that the Rumpel building would be protected, but would not be designated until after the transit hub was constructed (Pender, 2012, October). Leon Bensason, Kitchener's head of cultural heritage planning, reiterated the points discussed by Desmond, noting that "if the building is protected under the legislation now, then the region will be forced to complete a lot of studies, known as heritage impact assessments, before doing any work at or near the Rumpel Felt building" (Pender, 2012, October). This, he argued, was impractical and a burden to developers. Much like Glenn-Graham, city councillor Yvonne Fernandes was not pleased with the decision, stating, "I would rather see stronger language used right away" (Pender, 2012, October). Her concern was that developers would resist and would demolish heritage sites, much like what had been done at the Tannery when several original buildings had been torn down (Pender, 2012, October).

The different views expressed by municipal councillors and planning staff are illuminating because they ask how growth and place should be balanced. A crucial document shaping the decisions around heritage matters was a study published by the form, Land Collaborative. The study noted that Rumpel, much like the Tannery, Breithaupt, Kaufman, the School of Pharmacy, and others, were located in Kitchener's rail corridor. "The importance of this landscape to the history and heritage of Berlin/Kitchener cannot be overstated," the report stated, "It is one of the fundamental touchstones for the community that we care for and operate within today" (Pender,

2012, October). The debates around Rumpel are important because both camps share the same appreciation for heritage. They see the site and its history as an integral component to the community's identity. The debate illuminates the negotiation process between various parties as to how heritage, history, identity, and growth may intersect in Kitchener's revival.

Glenn-Graham noted at this time that there seemed to be a trend of tearing down old buildings in the surrounding area. "Demolition is underway in the area… I'm nervous," he told Desmond (2012). The fear that density would erase the City's heritage echoes the concerns expressed by citizens in 2002. He wanted tighter legislation that would prevent developers from destroying heritage properties. "The devil in this is the details," he explained. "It's definitely going to be about respecting our history and a nod to that history in a way that people understand" (Desmond, 2012). But Glenn-Graham completely missed the point. The loose legislation around heritage was not implemented so that developers could operate without any oversight: Bensason's approach was based upon the fact that developers had no interest in destroying the City's industrial heritage. They all had intentions to leverage the features of these sites for profit. Bensason knew this, and worked with these developers rather than against.

By the end of 2012, further issues arose over heritage matters. The City of Kitchener had decided to reduce the number of elected officials who sat on the heritage advisory group (Pender, 2012, November). Zug Janecki believed that the city was deliberately undermining the heritage advisory group, and Fernandes claimed the decision was a slap in the face to the group. Fernandes went on to say that "There are a lot of heritage buildings in this city that need to be protected and a lot of heritage issues,

especially where the light rail train is coming through" (Pender, 2012, November). As we

can see, the treatment of Rumpel highlights the negotiations and decisions made by

stakeholders as to how the LRT would interact with heritage. As Fernandes points out,

there is genuine concern that the LRT would affect the current standing of heritage sites

in Kitchener. But the clash between those who advocate for heritage, and those who

work in heritage planning highlight that process was not yet fully understood. As

Bensason shows, the issue is not how to prevent any change to Kitchener's heritage,

but how to ensure that cultural heritage supports the community that is changing and

growing. By allowing developers to have more freedom, there is no compromise by

heritage professionals. There is a mutual understanding that these properties have

measurable value. These properties are important assets in building Kitchener's bright

future. The comments that Beattie provided in regards to his investment in the Simpson

Block clearly show this. And as the Landplan Collaborative stated: "It [Rumpel] may

guide the design of new development for the proposed multimodal-hub facility" (Pender,

2012, October). The position taken by planners was not intended to favour developers'

interests. It was based on the findings that concluded that growth and cultural heritage

was mutually beneficial for the community and its identity.

In January 2013, The Record asked readers to prose names for the LRT. The

results highlight the range of feelings held by the community. Richard H. Douglas who

suggested the name be "LRT – Lots of Regional Tax". Clark Muir suggested it be

named "LRT – Lost Revenue Train" (TKWR, 2013, January). But there are also many

suggestions that connect the LRT to the Region's past. Those suggestions included

"The Berlin Express", "The Big Kielbasa," "WaGon", "Wagon Train", and others (TKWR,

2013, January). The name that was finally decided on was ION. But the article offers insight into how the LRT interacted with the community's history. One resident stated "I feel a great name for the LRT should include something from the past in the area as well as something that demonstrates what it can do" (TKWR, 2013, January). The debates and changes that occurred through 2010 – 2012 seem to have set a precedent for what would follow, both in terms of how the LRT was viewed, but also in how it would support the history of the Region, be it through identity, or built heritage.

Before the construction for the LRT began, planners conducted a complete inventory of the City's cultural assets. As Pender noted in 2014, "City and regional planners will begin detailed plans next year for the neighbourhoods around each light-rail station. And the city wants cultural heritage to be part of that discussion" (Pender, 2014, June). In his article, Pender refers to Leon Bensason again, Kitchener's "head of heritage preservation," as he puts it (Pender, 2014). Bensason, who supported leaving Rumpel off of the heritage register, explained that there was an urgency to ensure that looming construction would not significantly interfere with heritage sites. "We realize this is a critical time in the evolution and growth of our city" Bensason told The Record. "The only way to balance these interests is to first know where those properties actually are" (Pender, 2014, June). "There are a number of ways to try to achieve some level of conservation, but that's going to be for another day… This first part we are doing, this study, is just really to understand what is out there, to take an inventory" he said (Pender, 2014). Bensason was Kitchener's lead heritage planner. His position on policy and implementation shows us that heritage and growth collaborated in an attempt to create place and locational advantage in the downtown.

In 2015, Kitchener completed its Cultural Heritage Landscape Study identifying a total of 55 landscapes (TKWR, 2015, April). The report wrote, "Kitchener's cultural heritage is embodied not only in its buildings, but also in the open spaces, commercial and industrial districts, cemeteries, whole neighbourhoods and other landscapes that are part of the city's rich history, culture and identity" (TKWR, 2015, 2015). Chris Borgal, a consultant who worked on the story, told The Record, "All of these factors make Kitchener quite a unique community in Canada" (TKWR, 2015). Heritage is this critical in identifying Kitchener as a unique and advantageous location. As we will see in later chapters, this is an important part of the equation of revival. But it must be restated that conversations on identity, uniqueness and value hang on the advantage created by the City' heritage inventory.

The Cultural Heritage Landscape Study was applicable only to Kitchener. Still, around the same time, the City of Waterloo began to consider how downtown (often referred to as Uptown) could be improved. City Councillor Melissa Durrell told The Record "I'm really excited to see over the next 12 months how this is going to impact uptown, especially as we go through this renaissance as I like to call it through all the construction, not only with LRT but with our streetscape" (Desmond, 2015). The article discussed the initiatives to improve the streetscape, including grants for businesses to improve their facades and special grants for businesses to assess their heritage status (Desmond, 2015). What we see here is the changing landscape facilitating a need for better placemaking. In this case, Waterloo sees the arrival of the LRT as a catalyst to improve the core area. The issue emphasises the role that streetscape and facades have in economic development strategies. The incentive programs leverage aesthetics

to create place through growth. This is essential for understanding how heritage sites have been valued by those in Kitchener.

One avenue we can explore too is how the LRT has changed citizens' relationship with their heritage. In the same year, in Uptown Waterloo, LRT construction dug up Waterloo's original corduroy road (Desmond, 2016). The discovery of the road built by the original Mennonites who settled in the Region, prompted the City to invite citizens to take home pieces of the road "on a first-come, first-serve basis" (Desmond, 2016). "Just the fact that our ancestors from Pennsylvania built it originally is enough to intrigue a few of us" one man said, "Yeah, it's just a 200-year-old piece of rotten wood but it represents a lot more and it's nice that the region has kind of thought about making that accessible to people," said another (Desmond, 2016). The Corduroy road found in Waterloo offered citizens a chance to reconnect with the identity that they have promoted for years. But it also shows how the original placemaking of a city like Waterloo still supports the community's efforts for improvement: a new train is travelling down the same road established 200 years go. Thus, new and old remain intact.

By 2016, issues of heritage had a different dynamic. By this time, development had begun to expand and the LRT construction had begun. For the previous eight years, few properties had actually been designated, rather they had only been listed – a process offering fewer protections (Thompson, 2016). Leon Bensason explained that by 2016, however, more focus had been put towards designating properties that may be at risk along the LRT corridor (Thompson, 2016). While Bensason showed a willingness to leave key properties off the heritage register, such as with Breithaupt and Rumpel, his voice in 2016 shows that the relationship between growth and heritage needs constant
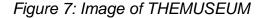
managing. At times heritage legislation may need to be side-stepped to boost broader community objectives, but at other moments, the need to protect such assets was deemed a priority.

All along the way, however, the Region monitored the change spurred by the LRT. Regional Chair Ken Seiling told The Record, "The LRT produces results over a period of time… this is a long longer-term development along the corridor" (Desmond, 2016). Paige Desmond, a reporter for The Record wrote that there was "plenty of visible development happening along the route" and that "of the 72 demolitions that took place in the corridor in 2015 17 percent, or 12 buildings, were formally recognized as heritage resources" (Desmond, 2016). The transformation that Desmond identifies speaks to the objectives that Bensason identified, namely the process of demolishing the old for the new. This process implies the value that heritage has for the City. It is seen as a key component of the City's ambitions to redevelop, and as that development ramped up, new threats emerged to heritage. The case here illustrates the need to leverage heritage into the City's growth and not overlook it. This balance can be seen in the changing approaches taken from City staff between 2012 and 2016, where heritage is identified as key to placemaking as the LRT and development inflicted physical change. The value of heritage is not arbitrary, but instead supports the big-picture vision of spurring development along the LRT corridor to drive growth and investment.

With the LRT, new development, and the changing nature of the downtown's urban design, Catherine Thompson of The Record wrote: "When Brian Santos was a kid growing up in the suburbs of Kitchener, his parents wouldn't let him go downtown. Today, the Realtor, who lives on the edge of downtown, enjoys the lively scene

provided by the market, the boom in great eateries and entertainment" (Thompson, 2017). She wrote how Santos' experience is similar to many Kitchener residents who now see their downtown in a new light. Cory Bluhm, then interim director of economic development, explained, ""Once the LRT is running, downtown will never be the same." "This is a great time for us to stepback and ask the community, 'What does downtown look like to you in the next four years and beyond?'" (Thompson, 2017). At this time, the City hosted an event at TheMuseum (a local cultural hub) that allowed residents to give feedback and direction for the City's downtown. One of the conclusions that emerged from this event was that there needed to be "incentives to preserve heritage and encourage innovative urban design" (Thompson, 2017). This suggestion was seen as a tactic to create a liveable and desirable downtown. Now, the group of residents who participated in this event may not have represented the consensus across the City. It did, however, show that residents had come to share the same vision of the downtown as planners and developers working to revive the core. In contrast to some of the opinions expressed in the early 2000s, The Record demonstrates that residents no longer viewed growth and heritage as separate. Instead, residents saw the two as a form of collaboration that would create a sense of place.

Figure 7: Image of THEMUSEUM

Around this time, the City adopted a strategy to integrate heritage into its urban design. Catherine Thompson wrote, "Kitchener has a plan to spend almost $2 million to redesign a two-block stretch of Queen Street to give the street a "distinct identity" that capitalizes on its heritage and to encourage people to linger, to spill out of surrounding buildings" (Thompson, 2017). The City's head of long-range planning explained that with a rise in pedestrian activity, the City was designing the downtown to attract more foot traffic. "Bringing people down and having a better streetscape can provide numerous benefits" he explained (Thompson, 2017). Revitalization was directed at Queen and King's intersection, an area with a long and dynamic history. Thompson explained that this intersection has often been viewed as the heart of the City and is within close proximity to LRT stops, The Museum, and the Walper Hotel (Thompson, 2017). Here we see heritage as an asset and instrument to create a sense of place.

Figure 8: Image of the Walper Hotel

Figure 9: Image of Queen and King Intersection

The transit hub located in Kitchener also demonstrates how heritage has guided growth and design in the downtown. Craig Beattie explained that the central transit hub, located at Rumpel, would develop into a mixed-use space. "There is a real element of place-making to it," Beattie told The Record, "the space has to feel good" (Pender, 2017, September). He explained that the heritage status of such a site is integral for such a project. Leveraging he heritage design "is such an important piece of city building, it is something we had to really think seriously about and take a crack at it," Beattie explained (Pender, 2017). As with the intersection at Queen and King, the transit hub demonstrates that sites like Rumpel offer a deliberate aesthetic in the City's landscape. As Beattie notes, the central transit hub won't just be a location where traffic passes through, it will become a "critical intersection of the Region overall" (Pender, 2017, September). These events then mark a critical juncture in Kitchener's revitalization because they show how heritage is instrumental in defining the landscape of the downtown. For developers like Beattie, the successful conservation of heritage creates locational advantage that supports the financial investment made in buying property in the downtown.

It is important to remember that the change occurring at this time in the downtown is taking place during a broader economic shift. For example, through this time, the City was adjusting to the loss of the Schneider's processing plant. Peter Whatmore, vice-president of CBRE (Commercial Real Estate Services) explained that the sale of the old meat packing plant marks critical shift. "In lots of cities you would see buildings like this sit dormant for years and years and years," he explained, "For it to be sold in two years, I think it is pretty remarkable, and speaks volumes about the depth of

this market" (Pender, 2017, October). It is essential to look at this event as we compare how the market has evolved since 2002. While the Schneider's plant may not be understood as a heritage site itself, its transition of uses highlights the changing nature of Kitchener's locational advantage created by its more liveable and vibrant downtown.

In the final days of 2017, Terry Pender of The Record wrote a piece looking at the explosive growth in Kitchener's downtown, titled, "Boom time: $1.2 billion in building expected for downtown Kitchener" (Pender, 2017, December). The first line said: "Astonishing. Extraordinary. A model for the continent and the world" (Pender, 2017, December). Pender is probably right. Just fifteen years before this article was published, Kitchener's downtown was dead. Rick Haldenby, professor of architecture at the University of Waterloo, explained that the revival of the downtown has been carried out at a high standard. He went on to say that "If they apply the same principles that they have been, and the same quality of review, I think we should be looking forward to a really vibrant, successful core area that is really going to be a model for the continent" (Pender, 2017, December). Pender's piece illustrates to readers that the geography of the downtown has experienced something remarkable. He noted that for a long time, most residents in Kitchener only new the downtown as a place filled with crack cocaine, dead shopping malls, and prostitution. Haldenby added that "It was a pretty depressing landscape, not just here but everywhere," said Haldenby. "The big impact on mid-sized cities was the triumph of the automobile, the migration of retail to suburban shopping malls, and the migration of industry to suburban sites through the postwar period" (Pender, 2017, December). Within this context, the rebound of a liveable downtown is a triumph. A key milestone in this transition, according to Haldenby, was Google's

decision to move its office to the downtown. "When I heard that I thought: 'This is a kind of watershed moment'… It would be hard to pick a more significant turn of events," Haldenby told Pender (Pender, 2017, December).

The end of 2017 offers a wonderful reflection on how the City developed and where it is now. The path forward from the debates in the early 2000s was not clear or certain. But as Cory Bluhm, director of Kitchener's economic development, noted, "It was no small feat for our council to stick to its guns and keep going" (Pender, 2017, December). To have attracted so much development and investment in an area where residents in Kitchener did not feel safe is noteworthy. But at the heart of this is the paradigm shift in planning procedures. It is the transition for suburban living towards high-density, dynamic streetscapes that prioritize liveability. As I have shown in this section, heritage conservation played a key role in this story: it captures how cities change and what planners can do to spur change in the right direction. Haldenby's claim that Google is a watershed moment is not far fetched. Even if it was not a catalyst, it highlights this story. As Pender wrote, "Google's move downtown underscores the city core's transformation. Its first home downtown was once the biggest tannery in the British Empire. Its current home on Breithaupt Street is a former rubber factory and auto-parts maker. No other corporation better symbolizes the full flowering of the digital revolution and the Information Age" (Pender, 2017, December). Heritage is no mere footnote in the story of Kitchener's post-industrial renaissance.

This section began by discussing the role of shopping malls in Kitchener's downtown. At one time, best practices suggested that if you could book-end a mainstreet with shopping malls, this would attract more activity. This failed in Kitchener,

but to conclude this section, I will mimic this practice, and bookend the history of Kitchener with the story of a shopping mall. In 2018, the LRT was not yet running. But its most southern stop was planned for Fairview Park Mall. The mall had been in decline for many years, but the installation of an LRT stop offered a new opportunity. The mall began to market a new development called Grand Market District. Colliers International, the firm behind the development, advertised it as such: "Shop, eat, play - Grand Market District is a true one-stop destination for the Kitchener-Waterloo area… Grand Market District's traditional brick and cobblestone streets and lanes are a historic reference to southern Ontario's rich examples of Victorian-era industrial architecture" (Davis, 2018). The Grand Market District offers a straightforward example of the market adapting to the aesthetic features that guided Kitchener's revival. Clearly, there is an attempt to emulate the physical identity that has taken form in the downtown. All this despite there never having been any industrial activity at this location. But there is also an ironic twist.

While there was no industrial heritage at this location, one building on this site was listed on the City's heritage register: The Sears store. The building actually arrived before the mall and is cited as "a unique example of the International Modern architectural style" (Davis, 2018). The irony is that this site did not make it into the plans for the Grand Market District. Plans were made to destroy the building to make way for the new mixed-use development. So, what we see at this site is that heritage can be seen as an asset, and it can also be seen as an interference. In this case, heritage is being destroyed to make way for a design that resembles heritage features. As we have seen, heritage aesthetics have offered direction for growth and change across Waterloo Region and in downtown Kitchener. But only a certain kind of heritage.

Ultimately, the City recommended that the City not designate the building. Leon Bensason told The Record that while protecting the building is justified, the mall had no interest in designating the building. "Rather than risk a confrontational situation and potentially jeopardize achieving heritage interests, the opportunity exists to work with the property owner ... in achieving a compromise acceptable to both the property owner and the city," Bensason wrote in a report (Thompson, 2018). Again, Bensason offers us important insight into how heritage supports certain objectives. In this case, it would seem he felt that protecting the building would be done on more arbitrary grounds as opposed to those used to leverage heritage in the downtown. This case emphasises that the aesthetic and architectural qualities of the industrial heritage in Kitchener's downtown were seen as valuable by developers.

What I have shown in this section is a snapshot of how growth, heritage, and place have been understood from 2002 to 2018. Archival sources from The Record put a spotlight on the opinions of the community as well as its leaders. Over time, it became increasingly clear that growth could actually enhance the City's heritage and its identity. That is, those directing change understood that placemaking would actually add value and create locational advantage in the urban core.

Full Circle: Kitchener is an Innovative Community

In 2016, the Region hosted an open house to unveil plans for the new central transit hub. David Rumpel was there, the former owner of the Rumpel Felt factory. The Record interviewed him and explained that, "For David Rumpel of Waterloo, it means the transition from an old manufacturing economy to a new order based on technology" (Damato, 2016). David Rumpel added: "I'm very happy they're finding a positive use for

the property," suggesting the City's past and its future had something in common. "His wife, Renie," The Record wrote, "said the economy of this area is strong because the people are innovative and practical. As the high-tech sector takes over the downtown area where shoes, boots leather and felt were once made, 'we're using different technical skills,' she said" (Damato, 2016). "We're still technical people," Renie added.

This conversation gives us a glimpse into how the community sees itself through its heritage. In Waterloo Region, and even more so in the City of Kitchener, there is the idea that this an innovative community. This idea has been used to support new developments and contextualize change across the Region. This idea is important, but at the same time, hard to measure. After all, can we safely say that the City of Kitchener is generally more innovative than the next city? That question requires its own exhaustive study, but what sources show, whether this idea is real or not, is that it has had narrative power and has been used as a tool to support city building. In this section, I will explore this concept. I will trace how this narrative has grown and how it created a thread that connected notions of "new" and "old," past and future, here and now. Put more simply, the successful conversion of Kitchener's industrial hub to a high-tech ecosystem has been seen by many to be a result of the community's "natural" propensity towards innovation. I do not wish to support or defraud this claim. Rather, I will illustrate how these conversations helped shape the future ambitions of the City. It provided a more precise understanding as to how planners could justify moving forward by relying on the past (i.e. heritage). The mere fact that the branding of the Innovation District depends so heavily on its history is essential.

We must first remember that by the 1990s, the downtown core had declined substantially. Kitchener's revitalization must be understood within this context. By examining archival sources from The Record, we see a narrative emerge that maintains that the way forward is to reinvent the past. The decline over the decades, as presented through media, suggests that the community "lost" its innovative spirit. The Record indicates that the development between 2002 and 2018 is essential towards reclaiming that spirit. Take one editorial written in 2011. Anthony Reinhart, a former reporter in Toronto for the Globe and Mail and staff writer for Communitech[7], offered a thoughtful piece of his time growing up in Kitchener and where it is now. He wrote,

> We are at this point because we are a dynamic and forward-looking community, with options that stagnant or declining cities only dream about. I was born in Kitchener in 1967 and have lived in Waterloo Region for most of my life. When I moved back recently after seven years in Toronto, I sensed a renewed energy and a self-confident urbanism that wasn't here before (Reinhart, 2011).

His piece captures the urban decay of the downtown and the consequence of deindustrialization: "The University of Waterloo's pharmacy school sits where a smokestack came crashing down just over a decade ago. The Lang Tannery, silenced before I was born, now wears the multi-coloured logo of the internet's biggest brand on its old yellow bricks" (Reinhart, 2011). Reinhart was hardly the first to comment on the unique transition of the Tannery, but he placed this within an important history: Kitchener is an innovative community.

> Yet here they are… pointing the way forward from a proud industrial past, the newest examples of our 200-year history of reinvention and renewal, of our capacity to adapt and innovate. None of these projects would have happened if we hadn't allowed ourselves to imagine a new use for old sites, if we had let fear of change stop us from moving ahead (Reinhart, 2011).

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[7] Communitech is located in the Tannery.

Reinvention and renewal were key concepts that drove Kitchener's revival. It provided a narrative that allowed one to feel rooted in one's community yet prepared for change. Whether or not there is a "grit" that exists in Kitchener is unimportant: this idea offered a guiding narrative that allowed people to accept geographic change.

The flight of traditional manufacturing jobs from Kitchener continued even as the City was beginning to rebound. In 2012, Maureen O'Neal wrote an opinion piece that contextualized both the creation of the Innovation District and the decision to close the Schneider's plant by considering how the past reflects the City's future. She wrote,

> These plant closures are a sign of an economy in transition, where the creation of traditional jobs in the old manufacturing-based economy is not keeping pace with the creation of jobs in the new knowledge-based economy. The skills set of workers currently losing their jobs in the manufacturing sector do not match the skills required by the creative, knowledge-based jobs being created in information and communications technology and other advanced technology industries. (O'Neal, 2012)

While sympathetic to the workers who were to lose their jobs due to the plant closure, O'Neal offered optimism, arguing that the Innovation District is an "innovative" solution to support the growing knowledge-based economy (O'Neal, 2012). On the Innovation District, she wrote, "Finding innovative ways to stimulate growth can be done, and the innovation district is a great first start. Such initiatives have the power to focus resources, attract new investment and jobs, and build attractive places to live, work and play" (O'Neal, 2012). Here, we see the connection made between "innovation" as a broad concept, and the urban form. She connects the innovation economy to the revitalization of the urban core.

O'Neal's piece is valuable because it even refers to the community's pre-industrial era. When speaking of the opportunities that the Innovation District might

create, she romanticizes the City's Mennonite origins, stating: "While this may sound like a tall order, innovative thinking and a barn-raising attitude is, after all, what this region is known for" (O'Neal, 2012). In this article, we see a narrative that contextualizes the changing landscape through applying a communal identity, as if to say, "this is who we are." While it may be a stretch to argue that planners developed the Innovation District as an attempt to invoke the community's past, or that the history of barn-raising represents a collective mindset; it is clear that these narrative tropes have been used to brand the future of Kitchener and its community. So while much of the City's past may have been lost when its downtown was demolished to make way for shopping malls, this history resurfaced by considering what "innovation" means and how "we" can embrace it.

Figure 10: Image of barn-raising mural

A component to this narrative is the idea of "reclamation": the feeling that Kitchener lost its way, forgot its innovative spirit, but now has found it. When the Walper Hotel in the downtown was purchased by Perimeter Development to be restored in 2013, The Record wrote, "One of the oldest residents of Kitchener's downtown has just received a new lease on life, and for this the whole city can cheer" (TKWR, 2013, September). A new lease on life suggests that the site is reclaiming its former identity. It indicates that the reclamation of this identity will have meaning for residents. The Walper Hotel takes on narrative power. "The core is still on a spiral," the author wrote, but with projects like the Walper, "now it is moving up" (TKWR, 2013, September). Heritage conservation offered a bridge that connected the past and future for residents.

The author also refers to the Tannery, Breithaupt, and the Kaufman Lofts, highlighting a changing city. "These are just some of the latest projects that are part of a true downtown renaissance" the author wrote (TKWR, 2013, September). But the significance of the Walper purchase is, as the author suggests, a "vote of confidence" (TKWR, 2013, September). That is, the years of steady change and investment seemed to have taken hold. The article reinforces this through telling the reader that the Walper once supported "a host for the famous and powerful, including the likes of jazz greats Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, comedian Bob Hope and prime ministers William Lyon Mackenzie King and Pierre Trudeau" (TKWR, 2013, September). To invoke that history is to romanticize where the hotel once stood in history: in a City important enough to attract such people. The importance of reviewing such articles is to look at how heritage conservation has been understood in a time of renewal. As this thesis has shown, economic growth and heritage conservation are not incompatible. In fact, in the

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story of Kitchener, economic growth and heritage conservation seem to be inextricable. The article here makes it abundantly clear that built heritage is closely tied with community identity, which in this case, relies on a narrative of it being innovative by nature. As the author wrote in 2013, "The reclamation of downtown Kitchener is no longer just a work in progress, it is progress at work" (TKWR, 2013, September).

One author from The Record suggested that to understand the changing geography of the City, the community should look to the tech community for guidance. "Tech entrepreneurs know this inherently," the author wrote, "Change, after all, is the universal currency of the innovation economy; something to be chased, not evaded" (TKWR, 2014, January). By adopting the mantra (or perceived mantra) of Kitchener's growing knowledge-based economy, the author promotes the idea that if Kitchener is to move forward, it must adopt the same approach of those companies migrating to the core. The author then paints an image of how the City's industrial declined, but is now supporting a changing economy:

> All this activity is, in turn, changing the face of the broader community, most visibly in the region's urban heart, where innovative entrepreneurs have been flocking. Locals with long memories… will recall that this heart was in dire need of a defibrillator just a decade and a half ago. Big old factories - the Tannery, Breithaupt Block and Kaufman Footwear, most notably - sat dormant or doomed, shops were shuttered and street fights after last call were among the few signs of life downtown. The region's tech sector was active and growing even then, but less conspicuously, almost exclusively in low-slung, suburban-style buildings outside the core. Much activity remains there today, but there's been a big change: The startup explosion, demographics and evolving preferences have brought an increasing amount of tech activity downtown, adding fresh tissue and new blood to that old heart. (TKWR, 2014, January)

The metaphor applied here suggests that the arrival of change either reflects or will reinvigorate Kitchener's former self, i.e., it will circulate blood through its core once again. It is to say the City is reclaiming itself, that this change is indicative of its barn-

raising spirit, or whatever message. The author sees the rapid change of the decade as a testament to what the City should be.

The importance of this narrative is that it is fluid. The theme of innovation can easily be applied to the Tannery, where an actual tech incubator resides. But this narrative offers a tangible theme that links the past and the future together while being applied to the multitude of downtown projects. In 2011, the historic Mayfair hotel was being redeveloped. "In addition to the economic benefits that come from the redevelopment of core properties," a reporter from The Record wrote, "they also provide an intangible but important educational value. They remind us of our past, and that society constantly changes" (TKWR, 2011, June). Yet this constant change can, at least in theory, be rooted in a narrative: while the world changes, the innovative spirit of this community will continue to adapt to it. The article continues: "Old buildings remind us of our history and the debt we owe to generations that have departed. Let us hope that 100 years from now the residents of Kitchener can still see the buildings constructed in the early 1900s along with the structures we are building today" (TKWR, 2011, June). If Kitchener remains true to its innovative spirit, the industrial buildings constructed years before will support the value of those innovative buildings constructed today. Implicit or not, the relationship that The Record creates sees the landscape in Kitchener due to a set of values ingrained in the community. This narrative suggests that the value we find in the past today will create value for the community in the future.

There are other examples too. In 2011, Terry Pender wrote that "Some old industrial buildings have come full circle" (Pender, 2011, December). The Breithaupt

Block and much of the downtown's industrial past were being affected by a unique

demographic phenomenon. Pender wrote,

> The University of Waterloo was founded in the 1950s by a group of Kitchener
> industrialists who wanted better engineers for their factories. During the past 10
> years, nearly all of those factories in central Kitchener shut down. Several are
> now being reused as workplaces or condos for UW graduates working in the
> high-tech sector. The result is a marvel of bricks-and-beams bathed in a warm,
> natural light. (Pender, 2011, December)

Pender's article offers a tangible narrative that sees a direct connection between the

"hardworking" "innovative" spirit of the City's industrial past with its developing tech

sector and young demographic. His assessment offers a straightforward yet accurate

picture of the change in the downtown.

In 2014, the investment made by Perimeter at the Breithaupt Block paid off:

Google became its tenant. As mentioned earlier, Google's move to downtown Kitchener

(first in the Tannery in 2011), and then to Breithaupt, were both seen as significant

milestones in Kitchener's story. Haldenby, professor of architecture at the University of

Waterloo, looked to Breithaupt as a metaphor towards understanding the City. "The

whole project speaks of continuity and change," Haldenby said, "I am excited by it"

(Pender, 2014, October). Continuity and change capture the landscape of Kitchener

rather perfectly: allowing history to guide the future. While Haldenby never explicitly said

anything along the lines of "Kitchener is an innovative community, " his commentary

nonetheless echoes similar sentiments. He told Pender, "The sense of century-old

industrial buildings is being maintained... I think the addition of the faceted-glass box is

an appropriate statement about the new presence and the new economy in the

Kitchener core" (Pender, 2014, October). This was echoed by Peter Benninger, an

experienced realtor in the City, who stated: "New architecture and glass with the old

building. I think it is going to be really spectacular when it's done" (Pender, 2014,

January). Such an evaluation speaks to the very theme that others have presented:

conservation is a statement to the legacy of Kitchener's identity. One with a deep

history, but a history defined by growth and change. So, Breithaupt offers not a

contradiction to its past, but rather a monument to Kitchener's industrious nature. Such

narratives ground the future's ambiguity and the uncertainty of the new economy into

something comforting and palatable. Whether this is something that the general public

accepted over time is hard to tell. But enough voices echo the sentiment that

Kitchener's way forward is not through change, but rather, to rely on its instincts as a

means to adapt to and instigate change. In other words, there is nothing new here:

there is just the reclamation of spirit.

The strength of this narrative continues to emerge through the examination of

sources. In a piece titled "A Community Being Reborn," the editorial team at The

Record wrote: "All cities shift and change with time… We are fortunate that Kitchener's

downtown, though it has experienced monumental transformation from a manufacturer

of rubber, leather and buttons more than a century ago to a creator of ideas, technology

and software today, has held onto its soul" (TKWR, 2015, December). Of course, there

was ample evidence at this time that the redevelopment of the core was to be a

success, so the romanticism found in this piece is not without warrant. After all, the LRT

had long since been approved and underway. But the narrative presented by The

Record sees the City's industrial past as a key characteristic. The Record wrote,

> The Tannery building is still recognizable from its 19th-century beginnings. The
> Kaufman Rubber factory has been transformed into the Kaufman Lofts living
> space, but its sleek and graceful architecture has not been disturbed. Across the

train tracks, Breithaupt Block was a former rubber manufacturing facility also, but the high ceilings, exposed brick, original beams, and large operable windows keep the best of both worlds. Kitchener's new identity is dramatic, but all three cities in our region have experienced rebirth. (TKWR, 2015, December)

The emphasis on these three sites listed above cannot be overlooked. The revival of the core, has been dependent on the sense of place created through the conservation of its heritage. These sites offered a visual for the community and created infrastructure for the innovation economy to take root in the downtown. As The Record Observed,

Much of this has to do with tens of thousands of university students, who can breathe life into the sickliest of neighbourhoods. Many observers say that the foundations of downtown Kitchener's technology sector were laid by the decision to locate the University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy and the Wilfrid Laurier University School of Social Work there. (TKWR, 2015, December)

The idea that Kitchener is an innovative community is implicit with the use of terms like rebirth and soul. It speaks to a sense of confidence moving forwards, that despite the change and the cycles of boom and bust, there is something intangible within the community that paves the way forwards. While the LRT may have played a role here, the conservation of the City's industrial history has offered a sense of placemaking for the existing community and the arriving professional class.

It is important to examine the narrative driven by heritage because it has created a way to understand broader changes across the Region, including the installation of the LRT. In 2013, Jim Wideman, then city councillor for Kitchener, wrote a piece in The Record regarding the importance of the LRT. But in doing so, offered, much like other commentators, insight into how Kitchener stands out from other cities. He wrote: "Every day, it becomes more evident that the vibrant, global community that we call home is experiencing unprecedented investment, growth and change" (Wideman, 2013). While the article is meant to support the enthusiasm for light rail coming to the Region,

Wideman subscribes to the narrative which distinguishes Kitchener through its unique and innovative quality. The vibrancy and global nature he identifies are inextricable from the conservation of properties in Kitchener's downtown. Further, he goes on in his article to state that "Investors are attracted to Waterloo Region's quality of life, innovation and commitment to shaping our communities" (Wideman, 2013). There is then a quality to Kitchener (or in this case, the Region), which piques investors' interest. In Wideman's estimation, this quality is best understood by assessing the innovative nature of the community.

This innovation spirit also reveals itself in 2010, when there were public gatherings in Kitchener to denounce the future LRT. Martin De Groot, then executive director of the Waterloo Regional Arts Council (and frequent contributor to The Record), authored a piece expressing his concern. De Groot spoke at the event, hoping to promote the LRT as a tool to leverage culture in the City, but met opposition. "The negative, sometimes hostile response to the idea of a Light Rail Transit system in our region is part of a broader phenomenon," De Groot wrote, "a sign of the times all over North America, Europe and other parts of the world. It is especially disturbing to see such negativity manifesting itself here" (De Groot, 2010). De Groot wrote of the opposition that emerged in response to the LRT and argued that opponents didn't seem to consider what an asset it would be for community building. The LRT opposition actually showed a lack of confidence and vision that the residents in Kitchener were once capable of (De Groot, 2010). Perhaps slightly condescending, the piece suggests that those opposing the LRT have failed to live up to their historic nature. As members

of Kitchener, De Groot would have it, residents should see the LRT as an opportunity to live up to its heritage.

Lastly, we must consider what this all means moving forward. Above I have shown how the community's history was used to contextualize change for readers: The Record captured a narrative that portrayed growth and change not as a disruption but as something inherent to the community's nature. An innovative community that has always been a leading disruptor. All the City had to do was reclaim this spirit. Part of this narrative takes form in projecting for the future. But the question of the City's future can also be found in a more concrete example.

Communitech, the tech incubator that first moved into the Tannery, hosts an annual festival where it brings leading voices from the tech world to Waterloo Region. In 2018, Communitech made two significant changes towards how it organized this festival: first, it rebranded its name from Tech Leadership Conference to True North Waterloo; second, it relocated from the outskirts of Kitchener at a large amusement park called Bingemans, to downtown Kitchener (Pender, 2018, April). These changes were made so that the festival would resemble the well-known festival in Austin, Texas, South By Southwest. In doing so, True North Waterloo attempted to leverage the downtown to support arts and create a festival-like experience. Then Kitchener Mayor, Berry Vrbanovic, indicated that True North Waterloo would serve as a "great opportunity to showcase the City and that can only help tech companies attract new talent... This region is becoming a real powerhouse in tech, innovation and digital media… We have lots to show" (Pender, 2018, April). The festival provided an opportunity to curate a community brand for the rest of the world. Just as Communitech rebranded its name, it

also rebranded through its geography. Whereas the festival used to run out of an amusement park, it now centres around the urban core. Pender sees this an inextricable from the conservation of the City's past, stating,

> Since Communitech moved into the Tannery building in downtown Kitchener in 2010, scores of startups that were incubated there have moved into offices in renovated buildings in and around the city core… The burgeoning startup scene, the arrival of light rail transit and the move of Google's Canadian engineering headquarters into a former rubber factory on Breithaupt Street have helped give the region's tech sector an urban look and feel. (Pender, 2018, April)

Craig Beattie had a similar take, stating: "The tech scene growth over the past few years has been very urban driven, so for a big event like this to dovetail an urban festival is super important" (Pender, 2018, April). The landscape created by heritage conservation supports the vision that people like Beattie or Vrbanovic wish to instill in the community and its visitors. The urban core has come to represent the innovative spirit and quality of talent that exists in Kitchener. The festival markets this to the world.

Pender also points out that many of the demonstrations featured during True North Waterloo were held at two key heritage sites: "They will be centred around the Walper Hotel, the Tannery building and city hall, and include a wrap-up party at Themuseum" (Pender, 2018, 2018). Here we see physical evidence of heritage sites being served up to demonstrate the quality of the City. They are not mere aesthetic reminders of the past but present to the world where Kitchener is going. Such indicates that the conservation of heritage in Kitchener has been crucial in guiding the City's growth and has, in turn, served as a critical narrative device, implicit or otherwise, to project where the City sees itself going.

This chapter has shown that urban change has narrative power. Kitchener's heritage has had meaning in how stakeholders have embraced change. The theme that Kitchener is an innovative community is a long serving trope that goes back to its Mennonite origins. Putting aside whether or not that is true, we can see that the belief in that narrative has helped contextualized urban change. The core's revitalization offered the reclamation of identity and spirit. This has been instrumental in localizing the community's integration into the global tech economy. Through cultural heritage conservation, we can see a return on investment for social and cultural stakeholders who can bridge the past and future together as they brace for uncertainty.

Location, Location, Location: Or, the Force of Proximity

This chapter explores how heritage sites have created value in the downtown. Through the success conservation of sites like the Tannery or Breithaupt, the downtown has been seen as a valuable place to invest in and live. This chapter will show the different ways in which proximity and locational advantage have factored into the revival of the downtown core.

In 2012, one of Kitchener's downtown hotels received a makeover. "The Vista Hospitality Group announced this week that it has bought the Delta Hotel in the Kitchener core, a facility that the company operated in the 1990s. The new owners," The Record wrote, "have said they intend to invest millions of dollars in updating and renovating the 201-room hotel, a landmark on King Street east since the 1970s" (TKWR, 2012, November). The article argues that despite some of the qualms against the LRT, "the Region's strategy is working." The Record's account of this project highlights the major geographic changes in downtown Kitchener. But data show that

such reinvestment is directly tied to sites such as the Tannery and Breithaupt (TKWR, 2012, November; Simone, 2012).

Amin Visram, the chief executive of the Vista Hospitality Group, explained what attracted him to invest in the property. The Record wrote the following: "He said the renewed interest in the hotel was sparked by the fact that there is 'a lot of development' in Kitchener, including the new courthouse under construction, the proposed "innovation district" around King and Victoria, high-tech companies now occupying the Tannery building, as well as the opening of the University of Waterloo pharmacy school and McMaster University medical school satellite" (Simone, 2012). The changing landscape was in part inspired by LRT, which he notes, but adds, "There is a lot of activity going on and we felt that this is the appropriate time" (Simone, 2012). The Record illustrates that the investment made in heritage properties (named above) have helped stimulate further investment. Investors actively wanted to participate in the landscape that had been cultivated by the conservation of heritage properties.

In 2018, it was reported that nearly $1.2 billion of development projects were underway in Kitchener, all since 2011 (Pender, 2018, January). But the example above illustrates that much of this development is connected to the heritage sites in the downtown. Visram sees the Tannery and the School of Pharmacy as part of a landscape that requires a high-end hotel. Thus raises the importance of location and proximity. Many of the downtown development projects are not just motivated by the LRT; they are motivated by investing in space that has increased in value due to their location. Developers like Visram forecast the turn on their investment based on their

ability to integrate into the emerging landscape that is has been defined by the City's industrial past.

A key branding instrument in Kitchener is the Innovation District. This area contains a large portion of the City's startups and thriving tech economy – hence the name. But within the Innovation District lies several notable heritage sites: Breithaupt, Kaufman Lofts, the Tannery, and Rumpel. These sites, however, do not just lie within the Innovation District. They are a fundamental component of the District's brand. Innovation is being guided by the old. The Innovation District, and more specifically, these heritage sites have played a large role in supporting downtown Kitchener's growth. As always, location is everything.

In 2011, as city council was preparing its new economic strategy, it was estimated that the Innovation District could potentially "create 15,000 jobs and attract 4,000 residents within a five-minute walk of King and Victoria streets" (Pender, 2011, November). Besides bringing in new residents, it was also expected to attract investment in office space and residential development.

The Innovation District was seen to have many assets; one being access to the provincial rail line. But the key asset within the area was the cluster of tech companies forming around the Tannery (Pender, 2011, November). Rod Regier, Kitchener's head of economic development in 2011, told Pender, "This creates a very significant opportunity for us in economic development," one that could create "one of the most significant concentrations of creative talent anywhere in Canada think it's a game changer in terms of the economic development potential" (Pender, 2011, November). Pender celebrated this trend and wrote: "Kitchener should brand itself as Startup City -

the best place to launch a new business. There are more than 300 startups in the region now. Many that are working with Communitech in the Tannery will soon be looking for office space" (Pender, 2011, November). Given the name, it may seem evident that attracting talent was a key driver behind the Innovation District. But the fact that the City's economic strategy depended on the activity surrounding the Tannery speaks to the role that cultural heritage has had in creating investment opportunities in this location. Further, Pender's suggestion of "branding" speaks to the value created around this area's activity. As Regier noted at this time, "The market is shifting right now" (Pender, 2011). The market increasingly valued the aesthetic composition of certain heritage sites, and the City of Kitchener managed to leverage this asset in its economic planning.

The challenge at this time, Regier claimed, was to keep the startups in the City. The fact that the Tannery was a success story was not then indicative of a vibrant future. The rise of the Tannery "means providing attractive office space in old buildings downtown, a vibrant cultural scene and perhaps a festival for the startups" as Regier told Pender (Pender, 2011, November). These sources indicate that heritage properties have played an important role within the downtown revitalization project. In many ways, it seems, they added value within the downtown core, which, in turn, attracted more interest and investment over time.

Michael Emory, the head of Allied Properties REIT, the company who spent $61.75 million to purchase the Tannery, stated:

> I think [the Tannery] is a big driver in what is emerging as a very, very powerful hub in southern Ontario… We really believe in the long-term future of that part of the city… We really like it and certainly if there are opportunities for us to expand

our presence, and if that involves active redevelopment, we are very much
interested in that as well" (Pender, 2012, May).

Pender goes on to explain that Allied's interest in Kitchener extends beyond just

Tannery. In 2012, the company also owned 72 Victoria St. S, "another old factory turned

into offices," as well as fifty percent of Breithaupt, which was at the time seen as "a

collection of old factories at Breithaupt and King streets that is being restored by the

Perimeter Development Corporation" (Pender, 2012, May). Thus, as Regier stated in

2011, the market changed in Kitchener. While the investment is clearly stimulated by

the tech-culture, as Emory said, it is also centred around old industrial sites. However,

this goes further: these heritage sites were viewed by city officials (i.e. Regier) and

investors as part of a larger urban transition. "I believe this is an area of the city that is

going to benefit from what we call the secular trend that favours living-working-and-

playing in the centre of major urban centres," Emory explained (Pender, 2012, May).

And Emory was right. A component of the Innovation District was not just economics,

but also geography. The City developed a plan that would try to ensure that the

Innovation District included everything within a fifteen minutes' walk, thus promoting a

more liveable urban environment (Pender, 2012, May). But Emory explains the

conditions best. In discussing the Tannery, Breithaupt, and his property of Victoria St.,

he told Pender, "The way I look at it is our three buildings essentially form a triangle

around [the central transit hub]", that is, Rumpel (Pender 2012, May). So, the Innovation

District's geography and the investment that poured into it do not exist without heritage

conservation. While the LRT is clearly a major force here (hence the promotion of

pedestrian-oriented streets), it allowed the City and investors to leverage heritage sites

as prime movers of the City's economic vision. Peter Benninger, a real estate agent with

experience working in downtown Kitchener, told The Record that the Tannery deserves

a lot of credit for creating the downtown activity. "Is there a profit? Yup," he told Pender,

"They did really well on that. But whatever they made, believe me, they took a big risk"

(Pender, 2012, January). They justified the risk because they saw the potential. As

Emory told Pender, these sites are valued by tenants because they are lower in cost,

they are close to the city centre, and they have distinct aesthetics, inside and out

(Pender, 2012, May). By leveraging these features, properties like the Tannery have

created a highly valued market of activity. There is an advantage to investing in this

location.

Anthony Reinhart, a staff writer at Communitech, summarized the Innovation

District's landscape as it appeared in 2011. He wrote,

> One need only stand in the region's centre, at King and Victoria Streets, to see
> how far we've come. The Kaufman Lofts sparkle where labourers once made
> boots. The University of Waterloo's pharmacy school sits where a smokestack
> came crashing down just over a decade ago. The Lang Tannery, silenced before
> I was born, now wears the multi-coloured logo of the internet's biggest brand on
> its old yellow bricks. And on the last dead corner of the intersection, the promise
> of a new regional transit hub beckons" (Reinhart, 2011).

Reinhart's account is noteworthy because it suggests that the Innovation District has

become a valuable location within a once dilapidated core. Reinhart's piece suggests

that heritage conservation has attracted investment which is abundantly clear after

examining the construction of Victoria One.

Victoria One is located on the corner of King and Victoria. It is a 19-story condo

that has been designed to enhance pedestrian activity in the core (Pender, 2012,

January). In 2013, Terry Pender accompanied then-Mayor Carl Zehr to visit the site.

Zehr commented that the soon to be 19-story condo would fit "right in with the

intensification of the core" (Pender, 2013, January). Councillor Frank Etherington made a similar statement: "From where I sit, it is a fabulous addition to Ward 9 and the west end of the downtown… I am sure it will provide housing for people working at the Tannery, which is nearby and for other people who want to walk or bike to work in the core" (Pender, 2013, January). However, the environment that Zehr and Etherington identified is very much the result of activity formed through heritage conservation.

Figure 11: Image of Victoria One Condominium

Like Reinhart, Pender sees the development as a major milestone: "Less than 10 years ago, this intersection needed a lot of help. The old Kaufman factory was empty. The site of the One Victoria building was a parking lot and a single-storey commercial building" (Pender, 2013, January). The landscape created by Kaufman, Breithaupt, and

the Tannery offered a sense of vibrancy that attracted investment and development such as Victoria One.

By 2013, before the condominium opened, Victoria One had already sold eighty-five percent of its units. "It has been incredible," one executive said, "The demand for this location has far exceeded our expectations." (Pender, 2013, June). Pender noted in his article that the intersection of King and Victoria was being referred to by other developers as a "bulls-eye" and "gateway for downtown." His assessment of the existing conditions illustrates why the area became so successful:

> Across the tracks from the central transit station site is a collection of old factories that are now stunning examples of industrial chic office space - all brick-beam-and-skylights - along Breithaupt Street. It is a short walk to the former Lang Tannery at Charles and Victoria streets, where Google, Desire2Learn and hundreds of high-tech companies are associated with the location. (Pender, 2013, June)

Of course, Pender correctly identifies the tech-economy here; young professionals were, after all, the majority of buyers at Victoria One (Pender, 2013, June). However, we must acknowledge the aesthetic value here. This site is a "bulls-eye" precisely because of the activity created by tech clustering around the City's industrial past. It was such a prime location that, "The company [Momentum] is buying several properties within a stone's throw of the Tannery, and would like to build hundreds of more units in that area" (Pender 2013). Heritage properties such as the Tannery helped create locational advantage. The clustering activity that the building supported created interest and reason to invest in the downtown core, as clearly demonstrated by One Victoria.

Figure 12: View of the Tannery from Victoria One

Perimeter Development also saw the opportunity to expand its territory. In 2013, the firm purchased office space on King Street for $6.5 million. The office is located just a few minutes' walk from the Tannery. It houses tech startups growing too big for Communitech (Pender, 2013, November). Craig Beattie of Perimeter explained that the office would be converted to support the "new economy". The firm had "looked at it for some time as a strategic, well-located urban office building," as Beattie explained (Pender, 2013, November). Beattie went on to describe the nature of the Innovation District, stating: "This is just where there is a lot of action in the market," Beattie said. "It is a part of the market where tenants want to be, it has a real urban feel to it, people are living close by" (Pender, 2013, January). While there are many moving pieces to consider, it is clear that this environment has been shaped by the Tannery. And while

one may argue that this is simply due to economic activity from the tech sector, cannot dismiss the "urban feel" that has been create by heritage conservation.

This assessment was confirmed by Regier, who explained that the "old buildings in the Innovation District" are vital to the City's landscape. They offer "a soft landing for startups coming out of the Tannery" (Pender, 2013, January). Thus, Perimeter's move into the office market illustrates an economic return on buying into the ecosystem shaped by old building. There are indeed new uses for old buildings, and as Regier made clear, this is a conscious effort made by the City.

In 2014, The Record published an article titled "Light rail sparking redevelopment of King Street site". But the content of this article is very quickly drawn towards the redevelopment of the key sites within the Innovation District. Offices for the Zehr Group, a development firm in the City, are, as the article pointed out, just across the street from the Breithaupt Block, "a collection of redeveloped factory buildings where Google recently signed a lease for 185,000 square feet of space" (TKWR, 2014, February). Zehr's building, it becomes clear through the article, was in need of a tune-up. Don Zehr, the CEO, explained that from his property, he has witnessed over the years the downtown change as industrial activity disappeared. "And now the full circle again - and all of a sudden it becomes not only an incredible site for a strip plaza, it is going to be an incredible site for a dynamic, mixed-use property," he told The Record (TKWR, 2014, January). Alice Butt, Zehr's COO told The Record, "This location is a poster child for location, location, location… The Innovation District - we are right in the middle of it" (TKWR, 2014, February).

Breithaupt and the Tannery offered real and noticeable reasons to invest in this location. The revitalization of those properties spiralled outwards and gave developers the confidence to invest. Those who invested in these properties read the market appropriately and in turn shaped the market in downtown Kitchener. Developers like Zehr understood this trend and saw the opportunity to invest in the downtown. The reporter who intervened Zehr wrote, "Don Zehr stands on top of the building at 607 King St. W. that houses his firm's offices. In the background to the left is the Breithaupt Block; to the right are the Kaufman Lofts, University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy and the construction crane for the One Victoria condominium project" (TKWR, 2014, February). Here, we see a landscape of industrial brick creating an aesthetic for the reinvented downtown Kitchener.

The Zehr Groups' interest in the Innovation District continued, and in 2016, they purchased the Ratz-Bechel funeral home. The site, then 118 years old, closed in 2015. It is located on the LRT corridor, "near the Breithaupt Block development, which is home to Google and other tech companies, and the planned transit hub at King and Victoria streets" (TKWR, 2016, January). The building was not yet designated, but in 2016 it was listed on the heritage register. In response to this, Don Zehr commented, "We're very respectful of the history of property we develop and expect this will be a key focus of plans as we move ahead with the project" (TKWR, 2016, January). The project does two things; it highlights the value of heritage aesthetics for profit gains (i.e. for the investor) and also emphasises the opportunity to invest in the Innovation District, which is composed of sites like Breithaupt, as The Record often points out. The opportunity was so good that Zehr estimated that they would be investing at least $100 million into

the property (Pender, 2016, January). There is clear advantage to investing in this landscape.

The change that occurred inside the Innovation District has been contagious. In 2013, after maintaining a strong presence downtown for several years, Perimeter purchased the iconic Walper Hotel, a site historically known accommodating famous figures like Duke Ellington and Eleanor Roosevelt in its heyday (TKWR, 2013, September 5; TKWR, 2013, September 4). The Record wrote, "The sale of the historic Walper Hotel and the plans to spend $3.5 million renovating it is the latest in a series of good news stories for a part of the city that, not so many years ago, was feared to be caught on an irreversibly downward spiral" (TKWR, 2013, September 5). Reinvestment in the hotel demonstrates that the historical landscape attracted investment outside the tech sector too. As the author wrote,

> The successful redevelopment of the old Lang Tannery, and its rebirth as a hub for new technology, won national accolades. The redevelopment of the Breithaupt Block, the renovations of the Simpson building, the transformation of the old Arrow Shirt factory into condominiums, the construction of more condos near the intersection of King and Victoria streets and $8 million in renovations to the Delta Hotel - these are just some of the latest projects that are part of a true downtown renaissance. And in a few years, light rail trains will tie it all together" (TKWR, 2013, September 5).

This project does not necessarily speak to the notion of "proximity" in the same manner as the development of One Victoria; it is, after all, a heritage site itself. But the "faith" and "spiral" of regeneration showcased by this project highlights the role of heritage conservation in the vision of downtown.

Ian McLean, who was president of the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, commented on the project stating that it was "a positive thing for the future

of downtown Kitchener" (Howitt, 2013). He speculated that Perimeter must have a clear strategy at play with their purchase: "My guess is they will have a broader plan" (Howitt, 2013). This was supported by David Gibson (president of Perimeter), who told the Record that the investment in the Walper Hotel was motivated by the success seen across the core, including those initiated by Perimeter (TKWR, 2013, September 4). The Walper Hotel is a case worth studying because it is an example of heritage conservation in city rebuilding. While this property falls outside of the Innovation District, it is an example of the landscape created by the properties within it. The value of location created by the cluster of activity spiraled so that there could value found in a property like the Walper Hotel, which, like many of the other properties we have studied, were dilapidated and underused.

Further, in 2017, planners began to improve the Queen and King intersection facades and streetscape, where the Walper Hotel is located. The decision to enhance the streetscape was meant to encourage pedestrian activity and thus the local economy the local economy (Thompson, 2017). Through improving the facades of the City's historic centre, planners participated in the landscape shaped by sites like the Tannery and Breithaupt.

By 2018, the City of Kitchener, a mid-sized city in Southern Ontario, had accumulated over a billion dollars' worth of investment from development companies over just 20 projects. Professor Rick Haldenby of the University of Waterloo commented on the matter: "If somebody told me this was going to happen, even five years ago, I would have said they were on drugs like a lot of people in downtown Kitchener." "This is just extraordinary, 20 projects is just extraordinary," said Haldenby. "It is going to

transform the landscape (Pender, 2018, January). While infrastructure projects like the LRT are certainly a part of the equation, it is clear through interviews and geographic change that the billion dollars of investment in Kitchener is dependant on the activity created by the landscape of cultural heritage.

Earlier in this thesis, I discussed the development of the Grand Market District at Fairview Mall, the last stop on the LRT line. I showed that the owners of the mall decided to install a mixed-use develop that resembled Victorian style industrial architecture. This example demonstrates that investors see value in emulating a historic aesthetics to attract tenants and investment. This is the story of downtown Kitchener. This chapter demonstrates the economic return on investment of successful heritage conservation. It has shown that the old bones of the city served as a unique asset for those re-visioning the urban core. Through careful planning and consideration for what aesthetics were valued by the community, sites like the Tannery, Kaufman Lofts, and Breithaupt demonstrate that successful adaptive reuse can be instrumental in creating locational advantage. The participants in the downtown revival were set on situating themselves within the realm of this activity.

The activity that took place at these sites (i.e. the tech community) certainly had an affect on those wanting to build or purchase property near by. But it is important to recognize that this activity was supported by old buildings whose aesthetics offered value. The LRT is connected to this story too. But the arrival of activity in the downtown created by these sites created a location for light rail infrastructure. This story is multi-faceted, but through newspaper archives, we can see that a prime mover for change in the downtown is value. Aesthetics and design are not arbitrary factors in urban

planning. In Kitchener, the planning in the urban core illustrates that value found in geography is instrumental in building a community.

Cool and Trendy: Urban Change and Youthification

The sections above have shown that heritage conservation has been vital in attracting investment and businesses to Kitchener's downtown. This section will show that the revival of the downtown has brought an influx of young adults. There have been traces of this shown in this thesis already. For example, when Pender explained that the old buildings had come full circle, he indicated that students from the University of Waterloo are beginning to occupy the converted industrial buildings (Pender, 2011, December). Likewise, when Michael Emory, head of Allied Properties REIT, was asked why he was interested in investing in the Tannery, he explained rather plainly: "The University of Waterloo" (Pender, 2011). The discussion of the University is, of course, related to the talent that emerged from the institution. But it also illustrates how demography is connected with the revival of Kitchener's downtown.

In this section, I will not rely on statistics to show that there has been a major demographic shift in downtown Kitchener. The reason for this has been laid out in this thesis, which is that the value of this study is that is unearths real time community voices. While inferring other primary sources might offer insight into some of the trends identified in this paper, this thesis's findings rely solely on the data pulled from searching The Record's archives on topics of heritage in Kitchener. So, searching terms like "young adults" or "young professionals" may have offered a large pool of data, but it would stray too far from the nature of this research. This section may lack the texture

found earlier sections but will highlight the broad shift that sees the arrival of young adults in downtown Kitchener as it has been affected by heritage conservation.

In 2011, when Perimeter purchased the Simpson Block, a heritage building downtown, Beattie explained that the firm wanted to use the building to support the tech scene emerging to the downtown. "We would like to see those upper floors turned into a kind of cool urban office space - the top three floors," Beattie said (Pender, 2013, October). This statement makes no direct connection to young professionals. However, it illustrates that the aesthetics offer a sense of "cool" directed for a specific market that, by all accounts, supports a cohort of young adults.

This is reiterated by John Baker, CEO of Desire2Learn in 2011, a company located in the Tannery. He discussed the importance of supporting the LRT in Kitchener, suggesting that it is vital for supporting the arrival of young adults in the tech sector. He felt that the LRT would allow for his employees to be more mobile, but went on to say: "I can see the value, especially if you're trying to attract young talent into the downtown cores" (Baker, 2011). Baker illustrates that leaders in the business community were aware of the role that the urban environment has in supporting their companies' wellbeing. It is important to bring on talented people in order to be successful, and talented people are interested in certain amenities (Moos, 2016; Lee, 2020). If those amenities improve, activity may continue to rise as talent sees the value in locating to downtown Kitchener. His statement corresponds with Googles move to the downtown from its suburban location in 2011.

D'Amato also pointed to the impact role that downtown revitalization has had in attracting young professionals. In 2014, she wrote a piece praising the efforts of Mayor Carl Zehr as he approached retirement:

> Under Zehr's watch, the city created an economic development investment fund to assist them. The city, together with the Region of Waterloo, gave nearly $900,000 to help with the cost of environmental cleanup at the Tannery site. But what an investment it was. Young, well-educated employees need places to live, coffee shops to hang out in, and interesting places to go at night. What a great place Kitchener has become to start a new business. (D'Amato, 2014, February)

D'Amato's painting of the downtown illustrates the arrival of young professionals and ties it to the Tannery and shows how this new demographic shapes the downtown. Through qualitative observation, D'Amato suggests that downtown Kitchener had undergone the process of Youthification.

The special pattern that Moos (2016) identified seems to have taken form in Kitchener, that is, the migration of young adults towards the high-density core within close proximity to amenities and transit. Interestingly, the data found in The Record tends to capture some of the low-resolution transformation of the City in conjunction with this demographic trend. So while they may not rely on empirical data, the observations made by authors such as D'Amato (and many others from the Record) are valuable because they narrate the process of this unfolding in real-time.

In 2019, the Record sat down with Dawn Parker, a professor in the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo. She commented on the LRT project, stating: "People are buying near the LRT, not necessarily because they plan on taking the train, but because they believe it's going to be a nice place to live, where they can walk out their door and meet their friends and have a beer or a coffee, where they can take their

kids out for an ice cream" (Thompson, 2019). Parker's comment offers an insight into the changing nature of cities, a theme that has been measured throughout this thesis. But her efforts to capture the work-live-play paradigm emerging in the urban cores across Waterloo Region adds to the narrative that places young adults as the prime mover of this change. In the same article, Justin McFadden, the City of Waterloo's economic development chief in 2014, commented on the changing nature of Waterloo's urban core. He explained that there were forces at work changing the Region's urban cores and developers understand this perfectly well. "It's all market-driven," he explained, "They understand who they're trying to lease or sell to" (Thompson, 2019). As The Record indicated, demand for condos near the LRT was high. Some buildings even had all of their units sold out the day they became available for purchase. And it seemed that many of these units were designed for young people who, according to McFadden, are more environmentally conscious and committed to sustainable living.

In Waterloo, there is another case that broadly highlights this trend. In 2016, investors renovated Marbles, a restaurant in Uptown Waterloo. The building that the owners renovated dated back to the 1870s and still had original exposed brick and exposed beams, as noted by the staff reporter. "Honouring the history of this building was important to us," one of the owners said, who then explained that "There's a trend toward urban living, and this is an urban location on the LRT line... We want to make it more exciting and inviting to a younger demographic" (Davis, 2016). While this discusses a case in Waterloo and not downtown Kitchener, it highlights the change emerging and how it affects economic activity.

McFadden explained that this demographic shift has been instrumental in attracting companies to the Region. "We see very established, global companies, they want to be in the core area where there's lots of things to do for their employees. They also want as many transportation options as possible" (Thompson, 2019). Thus, the changing geography of the Region and its relationship with demographic change seems to be playing out. While McFadden did not provide a key example here, we might look back to Google's transition from a suburban office park in 2005, to the Tannery in 2011, and finally to Breithaupt in 2014: a clear marker for how the built environment is involved with the movement of talent and young professionals. This process was seen to be unfolding in 2017, as well, in Midtown Kitchener. As The Record suggested, Midtown was then an up and coming neighbourhood becoming occupied by young professionals. In tandem with this development was the investment of "tens of millions of dollars" (D'Amato, 2017).

While downtown Kitchener's transformation should be celebrated, Dawn Parker indicated problems that may occur if the City continues to focus its attention on young adults. She noted that many developers prioritized smaller, one-bedroom apartments to support "well-off young professionals" and empty-nesters. Consequently, they tend to overlook the "missing middle"; the market that produces more diverse forms of housing for the whole population (Thompson, 2019). Through examining archival sources from The Record, we can get a glimpse into this unfolding. While the arrival of young adults was apparent by 2017 (as just shown), sources from 2014 show it taking form.

In 2013, Terry Pender met with Brian Prudham of Momentum Developments (the builder behind Victoria One) to discuss the upcoming development. Pender wrote: "As

Prudham is talking about the building, an older woman comes into the sales office for information about prices and units. A few minutes later, a young man in his 20s walks in and does the same. 'That is pretty much our demographic, young people 25 to 40 and older adults, empty nesters,' Prudham said." (Pender, 2013, June). Whether or not this was deliberate or simply a consequence of Kitchener's conditions, we see that those capable of investing their capital in the downtown core seem to fall within two groups, both of which either are, or likely will be, financially well-off. While this is just one case, Pender's telling of events with Prudham indicates that a process had begun, one in which housing infrastructure catered towards a particular group of consumers. Again, in 2014, at One Hundred Victoria, Prudham discussed his excitement for the Innovation District's energy and what that meant for his firm. The site at One Hundred, he explained, would also support a floor of office and retail space: "There are a lot of complimentary services to the tech sector" (Pender 2014, May). Pender explained that the site was receiving a lot of attention, writing, "The sales and presentation centre opens Saturday at 16 Victoria St. N., and the robust pre-sales include young techies at Desire2Learn, Google and faculty from the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University" (Pender, 2014, May). Here, again we see a specific emphasis on the young tech workers and their role in the market.

This transition is seen as a success overall, and it should be. Kitchener managed to turn the deteriorated state of its downtown towards supporting office space for one of the biggest tech companies in the world. But what we also want to consider is who the City is being built for. One article in The Record explored how the new LRT would affect "poor" residents. As the article indicated, almost no one in the City living in poverty

owns a car – they typically take the bus (D'Amato, 2014, April). But with the incoming LRT, the article explained, bus routes were subject to change. D'Amato interviewed one individual by the name of Suter, who fell into this category. She wrote: "It's almost as if he's becoming invisible because he's poor. Suter gets frustrated when officials tell him that, yes, the bus route he depends on has been cancelled, but then they go on to point out the new routes that go to shopping malls" (D'Amato, 2014, April).

The question raised here is: what good are the new routes for someone living in poverty? As Suter told D'Amato, "I have no use for the Conestoga Mall. I can't afford to shop there" (D'Amato, 2014, April). Suter had been running a petition to prevent further changes to the bussing system. D'Amato wrote that while flagging down individuals to sign the petition, Suter was surrounded by the booming downtown tech sector where "well dressed young men and women walk home from their jobs… Suter knows these are the people who everyone hopes will start riding the bus and the light rail transit when it comes" (D'Amato, 2014, April). Of course, this might be one man's opinion on the matter, but it raises concerns as to what the LRT, what the innovation economy, and what revitalization means. While there are many moving pieces to Kitchener's revival story, it should also include the question: For whom? As Suter suggested, young professionals seem to reign supreme: "If you're not part of that demographic, you don't really count. You're not the kind of people they want to attract" (D'Amato, 2014, April).

Scholarship on demographic change in urban environments points to changing habits and preferences (Lee, 2020; Moos, 2016). The improvement of facades and streetscapes seems to coincide with a generational choice to live in urban areas. We see this in the workplace and in housing development. However, as has been discussed

by news articles, there is a rising concern that Kitchener is being built for one group only. This is something that needs to be considered by planners as there are problems with accessibility and interaction. For example, the Innovation District, which has a mandate to provide better walkable infrastructure, has become dominated by young "talent". But data is very clear, showing that what is "walkable" for a young adult may mean something very different for seniors, a demographic whose health benefits from walking (Grant et al., 2010; Franco et al., 2015).

Further, there are other factors to consider. Housing is catered to a young demographic, which may mean smaller units. But data suggests that young adults may not want to migrate outwards to low-density neighbourhoods as they age and begin families (Lee, 2020; Foot, 1996). As the City continues to densify in order to curtail development on agricultural and greenfield sites, creative solutions as to how more age-friendly and inclusive housing need to develop.

We must consider that the rise of young adults is simply the result of which tenants have supported the downtown. As Sugden (2017) shows, the success of an adaptive reuse project often hangs on the ability to locate an "anchor" tenant. If we consider this in Kitchener, we may be able to understand why young adults increasingly shape the urban fabric. The anchor tenant at the Tannery is Communitech, a tech incubator; the anchor tenant(s) at the Kaufman Lofts are/is affordable one and two-bedroom condos; the anchor tenant at Breithaupt is Google. The arrival of young adults in part associated with the simple necessity to secure a successful anchor tenant. In Kitchener's case, these anchor tenants lean towards supporting young adults, either for employment or housing. While we need to consider the implications of a city building

itself around a young age-cohort, we need to recognize that the current downtown environment is simply the consequence of events and actors. We might look to Lynch (2014) or Chang (2018), both of whom consider the marketing component of city building around class, but relying on the narrative that the downtown has "sold" a brand to a particular group of consumers overlooks the process that has unfolded in the above chapters. People and groups took an enormous chance to invest in the downtown. There was a collection of affordable, underused space in a downtown whose infrastructure could sustain high-density clusters closely connected to the talent and success emerging from the nearby University and successful tech-culture. The downtown was not simply constructed for talented people alone: opportunity aligned with timing by all accounts. This is important, because it makes the problem of social inclusion in Kitchener more specific. The question of inclusion, or exclusion, is how to leverage community assets to support economic growth and urban vibrancy while also adjusting for the unintended consequences of events (such as the rise of unaffordability).

It is clear that in Kitchener's example, the aesthetic value of heritage is connected with young adults. Office space was converted to be "cool" and "trendy" with a specific demographic group in mind. In Waterloo, Marbles Restaurant saw an opportunity to restore its historic aesthetic to participate in the emerging downtown-local-economy ecosystem that rose in tandem with the tech scene. And while property owners and developers often made changes in order to adapt to this behavior, it is difficult to say that this economic activity has been orchestrated. Culture changes from generation to generation (Inglehart, 2005) which means so do consumption patterns

and behaviors. We should consider these factors when assessing how Kitchener has changed to be sure to diagnose the problem appropriately. Yes, planners and developers have shown excitement for the innovation economy and youth-migration to the core, and it does seem that this excitement has created conditions where others are being left out. But we do need to recognize that the changing urban form in Kitchener has done well to adapt to the changing behavior of young adults, who are essential for economic growth. As Grant and Perot claim, "While planning can influence development forms, alone it cannot transform cultural behaviour to create ideal cities" (Grant & Perot, 2011, 192). The downtown in Kitchener may fit the mold of what an "ideal" city should look like (cafes, pedestrian activity, beautiful design, and LRT), but the process that led to this was not simply due to a selling consumers a lifestyle as Change suggests (2018). The process that led here involved many stakeholders who actively participated in the shaping the value of the downtown. Large scale cultural change has been understood by key players in the market who then managed to leverage certain assets to best suite the consequences of that change.

The case in Kitchener does offer a solid high-resolution example of Florida's creative thesis. For one, the earliest debates in regard to changing downtown Kitchener correspond with his work (2002). But more importantly, it represents the relationship between urban environments, demography, and consumers. As Florida narrates, while teaching in Pittsburgh in the 1990s, he was fascinated to discover that many young adults he interacted with were set on locating to a "cool" city to pursue their career: a preference that seemed to outweigh the priority of high-earnings (Florida, 2002). In describing this realization, and its outcome, he sees this as a trend that must be

integrated into planning. Of course, this had consequences for those municipalities who took a shallow approach towards adapting to this trend, installing public art that failed to bring in "cafes" (MacGillis, 2009). However, one component to his work relevant to this study is the idea of first recognizing the changing behaviors of the market and how a city might reconsider what assets it has, and may even reconsider their definition of an asset. That is, perhaps the young adult with tattoos and piercings, who has a preference for urban life, is simply a representation of the changing market, not a catalyst for it.

 If we consider this, Kitchener's downtown illustrates how a city can respond to the change in the market. Kitchener had no control over its deindustrialization and the rise of the global economy. It did, however, experience the effects (Vinodrai, 2015). But by looking to the emerging conversations in 2002 and by considering the concerns that were raised, we can see that the origin of the change in Kitchener (economic, cultural, demographic, etc.) was done with recognizing that the City was not leveraging its assets to best prepare itself for the changing social and economic conditions thrust upon cities like it. While people like D'Amato and Dawn Parker are right in identifying the problems that have, and continue to grow in Kitchener's downtown, it is wrong to diagnose the problem as solely the problems of the creative thesis, or clever marketing, or of class. The downtown renaissance of Kitchener unfolded through a long negotiation process between those who found value in the City.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

By focussing on Kitchener's downtown, and the importance of the Innovation District, this thesis explored the ways in cultural heritage properties came to define and shape the innovation economy. What is so fascinating about the case in Kitchener, is that it appears that cultural heritage has had a tangible impact on facilitating the growth of activity in the downtown. As the downtown continued to intensify, and as the LRT project broke ground, sites like Breithaupt, the Tannery, and Kaufman lofts were not destroyed in order to make way for 19-story condos, such as Victoria One, but actually contributed to a unique downtown landscape. The Record provides us with interviews in real time of key players who explain to us what their motives were, what their intended outcomes were, and how the landscape of downtown Kitchener changed and grew into what it is now.

Limitations

A media analysis can only provide us with so much information. The strength of this thesis is that it allows for both an overarching narrative over time, and it provides a narrative, from one particular source, as to how physical change "on the ground" is portrayed in the media. But there are limitations to this project. First, it does look to any policy documents for clarification or context. Kitchener and the Region's change was influenced by decades of policy work and research by municipal planners and elected officials. While these voices have been included in this thesis, this research has not specifically dealt with goals and tools that policy documents identified. The thesis takes the content of the media 'as is', and further research could reflect more specifically on critically interpreting the media discourse.

Another limitation of this thesis can be found in the final section on demographic change. I chose to include a chapter on the migration of young adults based on the data found through search terms "Light Rail" and "Heritage." I argue that the relationship between those three factors is interrelated. However, a more detailed data set pertaining to Millennial involvement in Kitchener can be found through a more specific search. Because this project's scope is more oriented towards the "big picture" change in downtown Kitchener, it touches on many areas that could be explored in more detail if future researchers take a more granular look at said factors.

Finally, there is a potential bias to consider. As one member of the public suggested, The Record did seem to most often support a particular position that generally supports urban change in the downtown (Wasilka, 2003). The media analysis conducted here shows that the positions in The Record are more varied than this one reader suggests, and generally rely on diverse voices to build an argument. However, it is certainly reasonable to conclude that the overall narrative found in The Record does represent a particular position, as would be the case with any specific news source.

Implications

There are three important lesson for planners found in this thesis. The first is really about identity and its relationship to the built environment. This concept can be described as placemaking. On the one hand, this issue has been at the core of planning theory since Jane Jacobs' rise to fame in the 1960s. In her work, she clearly identifies the role of identity as it related to physical geography (Jacobs, 1961). Jacobs' offered an overarching critique of planning approaches of the time, but we see these concerns emerge in other areas of scholarship too. Jeff Chang's history of Hip Hop captures the

hardships faced by Black communities, particularly in the South Bronx, whose vibrant

neighbourhoods fell apart as expressways made their way through the heart of their

community (Chang, 2005). His work captures how art, graffiti, and hip hop, grew out of

these communities, harnessing unique cultural assets to create a global phenomenon:

Hip Hop. These issues are related to Kitchener because its revitalization, and the

enthusiasm for it, is largely shaped around how the built environment can invoke

feelings of identity. This is the intangible component of city building that planners

neglected when they built malls in Kitchener's downtown. Much like the neighbourhoods

in New York affected by the advancement of rational comprehensive planning,

Kitchener's core was gutted. Its vibrant community life followed suit. These sorts of

assumptions are well known among planners, but this thesis illustrates the relationship

between cultural identity and economic development. Kitchener's downtown

revitalization is not solely one of capital investment; it is the integration and growth of

community identity as it corresponds to the built environment. As seen through the

conservation of historical geography, the maintenance of continuity is essential for

feelings of identity and authenticity (Sandalack & Uribe, 2016).

This thesis also "quantifies" the return on investment of cultural assets. While this

is a qualitative analysis, it clearly shows that the conservation of the City's cultural

heritage helped support planners and developers in creating locational advantage in the

downtown. This, of course, is closely associated with identity, but it offers tangible data

that identifying and enhancing cultural heritage has real value in a city. It should not be

seen as an arbitrary process. It can be a great tool to drive change and growth. Through

leveraging cultural assets, planners have the opportunity to create said location. One needs to look at the Innovation District and the growth that has occurred there.

Lastly, media is a source that is often overlooked by planners. There is value in conducting interviews and focus groups, but sometimes we should consider how we can utilize existing data rather than creating more. This may be a personal preference due to my interest in historical processes, but this thesis shows that through media, there are key voices that point to feelings of community and illustrate how decisions have been carried out and perceived. This is invaluable for planners.

Cities Are Complex: Final Thoughts

In the early 1900s, Italian immigrants arrived in droves in New York City. They mostly settled in Greenwich Village, where they established frequented cafes. After two world wars, the Great Depression, and decades of change, cities like New York experienced significant economic and social change. By the 1950s, the cafes established by Italian immigrants now became home to a burgeoning art scene where jazz performers, poets, folk singers, and even comedians followed each other on stage (Petrus & Cohen, 2015). This would later become the cultural home of famous artists like Bob Dylan, Jack Kerouac, and Allen Ginsberg. No one could have predicted that the cafes established by Italian immigrants in the early 1900s would later come to support the heart of the American countercultural scene. The story illustrates that within the urban environment, we must prepare for the unintended consequences of change.

The story of Greenwich Village illustrates this best. We must consider what the implications of such trends are for planning. In Kitchener's case, once the largest

tannery in the British Empire, the Tannery now supports a local economy whose

interaction is global. We can see that planners managed to leverage their assets.

Alternatively, when we look to Kitchener's history in the twentieth century, we see the

opposite: when the downtown experience decline, rather than consider what assets the

downtown had, it attempted to emulate the environment that it was competing with

(suburban shopping malls). This, of course, led to the decline of a once vibrant core.

Atul Gawande explains that there are three different kinds of problems: simple,

complicated, and complex. Simple problems are problems like baking a cake; if you

follow the recipe, you will likely succeed. Complicated problems are more like building

an airplane; there are many moving pieces and many participants, but if all participants

follow their procedures accurately, they can build a plane. Complex problems are like

raising a child; no matter how many times you have done it, or how much you know,

there is no guarantee that that child will grow up to be a good person (Gawande, 2010).

The same can be said of cities. There are an endless number of participants and

variables that factor into a city that there can be no universal formula, and those who

think so are wrong. On complex problems, he writes,

> The real lesson is that under conditions of true complexity – where the
> knowledge required exceeds that of any individual and unpredictability reigns –
> efforts to dictate every step from the centre will fail. People need room to act and
> adapt. Yet they cannot succeed as isolated individuals, either – that is anarchy.
> Instead they require a seemingly contradictory mix of freedom and expectation –
> expectation to coordinate, for example, and also to measure progress toward
> common goals. (Gawande, 2010, 79).

I like this quote because Gawande is in many ways reiterating the problems expressed

by planning and economic theorists over the decades, who identified and challenged

the nature of rational-comprehensive planning (Jacobs, 1961; Hayek, 1944, Friedman,

1962; Chang, 2005). It also captures the process of neighbourhood change in downtown Kitchener and how it unfolded. While plans in the early 2000s provided broad direction as to how change might occur, there was the opportunity for stakeholders and participants to adapt and act in response to changing conditions and values. Alternatively, the story as to how Kitchener arrived to its downtrodden state in the 1990s demonstrates the failures of the rational-comprehensive model. The story of Greenwich Village and the story of modern Kitchener are case studies that highlight the role of participation and negotiation in the urban environment. The conservation of the City's heritage was not arbitrary, but rather a central factor in determining what the community valued and the importance of said value. Knowledge is dispersed throughout society, and the form that this knowledge chooses to form is impossible to know (Hayek, 1944). Planners must consider how they can provide the infrastructure for that knowledge to manifest itself through physical geography.

To be clear, this thesis does not argue that we should overlook the issue of exclusion in the core simply because the downtown is no longer abandoned and run down. It does, however, point to the fact that the change that has occurred is not by design exclusionary. Through a sequence of events, conflicts, and trends that go beyond the scope of control of municipal planners, Kitchener managed to provide the infrastructure for which a variety of actors were able to find value in its geography. It is a history of unintended consequences.

A key part of this story is the role of placemaking. Unique aesthetics have been leveraged to create an appealing landscape – a place that feels good. In some ways, Kitchener corrected itself in that it conducted an audit to recognize what assets it had

and how they should support its future. In this case, heritage was not simply preserved,

it was conserved so that its unique aesthetics and qualities were adapted to support the

contemporary value of the community. Such shows that heritage and development are

not incompatible, rather, when done right, heritage can be a key tool to create locational

advantage for investors and developers.

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