

Region of Waterloo

Planning, Development, and Legislative Services

Legal Services

To: Regional Council

Meeting Date: April 23, 2025

Report Title: 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo pass a by-law in the form attached as Appendix 'A' to this Report PDL-LEG-25-017, being a Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub (KCTH) and other transit-related development.

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo direct staff to implement a plan for alternative accommodation for current residents of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, and add \$814,333 to the 2025 regional Housing budget as outlined in this Report PDL-LEG-25-017.

2. Purpose / Issue:

The Kitchener Central Transit Hub ("KCTH") is a transformational project that has been in the planning stages since 2013. To advance construction, Metrolinx has advised that it requires the use of the Region's property at 100 Victoria Street North by March 2026. The process to prepare the site for use by Metrolinx will take several months, requiring the site to be vacant by December 1, 2025.

There currently is an encampment of residents located at 100 Victoria Street North (the "Encampment"). A bylaw is therefore being introduced to Regional Council to allow the Region to obtain vacant possession of 100 Victoria Street North.

The purpose of this report is to seek Regional Council approval of a Site Specific By-law for 100 Victoria Street North, to facilitate remediation of the property commencing December 1, 2025 and Metrolinx's use of the property by March 2026.

3. Strategic Plan:

The Region of Waterloo is on a journey of growth to an intentional, sustainable future of one million residents. KCTH supports the Homes for All, Equitable Services and Opportunities and Climate Aligned Growth focus areas within the Region's 2023 – 2027

Strategic Plan.

Upon completion, KCTH will enhance and integrate transit infrastructure, provide residential and commercial development opportunities and be a gateway for economic development for Waterloo Region.

4. Report Highlights:

- KCTH has been in the planning stages since 2013 and builds on the success of ION light rail. Designed to serve current and future residents, as well as visitors, the transit hub will redefine how people connect, commute, and experience Waterloo Region.
- Work on KCTH has advanced to the stage where construction is anticipated to begin in the next year. To further advance the project, the Region's property at 100 Victoria Street North is required by Metrolinx in March 2026.
- The Region is required to complete due diligence and site preparation at 100 Victoria Street North prior to handover of the property to Metrolinx. This work will take approximately three months to complete and cannot be undertaken with an encampment present on the property.
- To meet this timeline, a bylaw is now being introduced that requires the site to be vacant by December 1, 2025.
- In preparation for this transition, Regional staff will provide enhanced support by focusing efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options.
- In the context of the decision of Justice Valente in *The Regional Municipality of Waterloo v. Persons Unknown and to be Ascertained*, 2023 ONSC 670 ("Valente Decision") the Region intends to seek further direction from the Superior Court of Justice, to the extent this is feasible and compatible with the anticipated construction schedule.

5. Background:

KCTH Development

As the Region quickly grows to one million residents, the community is on the cusp of significant change. To help shape future growth, the Region, along with many partners, is leading transformational projects that will positively impact residents and visitors for generations to come.

Designed to serve current and future residents, as well as visitors from around the world, KCTH will redefine how people connect, commute, and experience our community. Building on the community investment in ION light rail, KCTH will connect ION light rail, GRT, GO Transit (rail and bus service), VIA, rail service, intercity bus,

active transportation, passenger vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians in one central location.

The transit hub is expected to generate ION ridership as an anchor development along the Central Transit Corridor with transit station functions integrated with a future mixed-use destination. It will be a gateway to the Region of Waterloo and will connect residents and visitors to the Toronto-Waterloo Region innovation corridor.

KCTH is a landmark development and has the potential to stimulate growth, development and sustainability well into the future.

As part of this project, the Region has procured land on Victoria Street, from King Street to Weber Street. Upon completion of the transit hub, the remaining land will be used for commercial and residential development, including affordable housing.

In 2016, the Province recognized the value of investing in the Region of Waterloo's transit infrastructure, providing \$43 million to support the transit hub. In February 2023, the Region applied for funding through the Public Transit stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). A decision on the application is pending.

The timing of the Region's work for the KCTH is driven by Metrolinx's construction schedule for its railway track and platform improvements adjacent to the KCTH site. Since Region staff provided the Kitchener Central Update in December, 2024 (see Appendix B) Metrolinx has notified the Region that it requires the Region owned property at 100 Victoria Street North for its use by March, 2026.

As a part of the KCTH development, Metrolinx will raise the section of rail tracks between King Street and Weber Street and relocate the rail platform from between Weber Street and Ahrens Street to the rail corridor between King Street to Duke Street. Metrolinx will also construct a diversion track that will be incorporated in the rail system immediately behind 100 Victoria Street North. Construction of the diversion track will include the build-up of ground level and rail modifications in this area.

The Region will be obligated to provide 100 Victoria Street North to Metrolinx in a condition fit for Metrolinx's use. To do so, remediation work must be completed before vacant possession of the land is delivered to Metrolinx. This includes site clean up, site investigations and geotechnical testing. It is anticipated this work will take three months, allowing for contingencies for unfavourable weather.

The Region will commence its construction activity for the KCTH project in 2025 with the demolition of the section of the Rumpel Felt building that does not have a heritage designation.

In 2026, the Victoria Street North Modifications, between Weber Street West to King

Street West, will begin. From 2027 to 2030, a bus loop, pedestrian bridge, pedestrian ramp and the hub facility will be built.

Site Specific By-law Respecting Use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener

This proposed Bylaw is a Site- Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener, which is owned by The Region.

The intent of the By-law is to facilitate the development of the KCTH and other transit development. To do so, it provides for vacant possession of 100 Victoria Street North by December 1, 2025.

This will allow the requisite time for the Region to complete site preparation activities prior to the handover to Metrolinx, and for Region staff to engage with encampment residents and assist in relocating these individuals.

The By-law specifically regulates 100 Victoria Street North. The By-law provides for persons currently residing at 100 Victoria Street North and their need to transition to alternate accommodation prior to December 1, 2025. To enable vacant possession by December 2025, the By-law provides that no persons who were not residents on the date public notice of the By-law was provided may erect shelters or other structures or reside at 100 Victoria Street North.

To support current residents of the Encampment (i.e. those who were present on the property when public notice of the By-law was provided), Region staff will provide enhanced site support by focussing efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options and transition to alternate accommodation.

Transition of Current Encampment Residents

Region staff have developed a proposed plan to transition encampment residents from 100 Victoria Street North. This transition will be supported through additional new resources, which may be summarized as follows:

- That Regional staff provide enhanced site support by focussing efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options and ongoing site management
- That this work be accomplished with an approach consistent with the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness
- This operational effort would be coordinated by a cross departmental structure and will wind down before November 30th.

Region staff have been supporting residents at the Encampment since December 2021. This includes regular supports provided by outreach staff, connections with Ontario

Works Caseworkers, providing regular cleaning and maintenance of the site, hiring pest control, portable washrooms, lighting, and other health and safety interventions.

Site security has been provided 24/7 since the spring of 2022. These efforts will continue through the transition process.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:

Over the last number of years, Region staff have worked with various municipal staff in area municipalities, particularly at the City of Kitchener and with community partners, to advance KCTH and manage the 100 Victoria site.

Should this By-law be approved, Region staff would continue to work with area municipalities and interest holders in its implementation.

Public:

Individuals currently residing at 100 Victoria Street North are being informed about the proposed By-law by the Region staff who visit the site daily to provide supports.

Partners and key stakeholders are being notified about the proposed By-law.

Updates to the community on KCTH have been ongoing and regular updates will continue throughout construction. More information can be found at:

<https://www.engagewr.ca/king-victoria-transit-hub>

7. Financial Implications:

Current costs to maintain the site at 100 Victoria are \$793,944 annually (\$66,162/month). These include costs for security, pest control, portable toilets, garbage removal, and ongoing servicing and maintenance. These do not include staffing costs for social supports, outreach, facilities, or by-law staff who attend the site regularly.

Site Support Budget April-November 2025

Item	2025 Amount
Supportive Housing Units (new)	\$271,250
Scattered Site Rent Supplements with social supports (existing)	\$183,750
Motels with social supports (new)	\$466,083
Site Remediation (new)	\$77,000
Total Investment	\$998,083
Less: Internal Reallocation	\$183,750

Total New net costs for 2025	\$814,333
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Annualized Site Support Net Financial Impact for 2026 & 2027

	2026	2027
Annualized Supportive Housing	\$ 465,000	\$ 465,000
Annualized Motels*	\$ 799,000	\$ 0
Site Remediation	\$ 35,000	\$ 0
Less: savings from closing 100V currently budgeted for security and maintenance	(\$ 793,944)	(\$ 793,944)
Total Net Impact	\$ 505,056	(\$ 328,944)

**Motels will only be used for temporary support and will not extend beyond 2026*

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Approval by Council of the proposed Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, and the plan for alternative accommodation for current residents of 100 Victoria Street, North, to facilitate the transition of current residents to alternative accommodation so that vacant possession of the site is achieved by December 1, 2025. Site preparation can then be completed so that the lands are ready for Metrolinx use in March, 2026.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub and other Transit Development.

Appendix B: Report EES-SAM-24-002

Appendix C: Moving forward on Kitchener Central Transit Hub: Site Specific By-law Presentation

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