

For immediate release

Civic District Design Charrette will envision a renewed cultural hub in downtown Kitchener

6 June 2019, Kitchener ON – The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery is partnering with the University of Waterloo’s School of Architecture on a two-day Design Charrette that will creatively envision a culturally active presence in the Civic District. Four design teams of architects, engineers, developers, urban planners, artists and civic leaders will gather at KWAG under the guidance of **Rick Haldenby**, former Director of the Waterloo School of Architecture, to engage in a visionary exercise on Friday 7 June, and will present their ideas to the public at a free presentation on **Saturday 8 June from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm**.

“There is dramatic change happening in the Kitchener core,” explains Haldenby, who provides extensive experience of design for mid-size cities to this charrette. “The pace of development is unprecedented. We need to take action to protect the quality, liveability, sustainability and diversity of the core area. By focusing on the Civic District, our charrette will produce challenging ideas for inspiring public spaces, healthy green spaces, an attractive pedestrian environment, and cultural facilities worthy of this growing and creative city.”

This charrette is a continuation of a master plan for the Civic District conceived in 2009 through a community planning process entitled *Imagine the Possibilities!* This plan informed the expansion of the Kitchener Public Library, the creation of a central green space, placemaking enhancements and new public art at Queen and Weber. “Ten years later,” says **Cory Bluhm** of the City of Kitchener, “it is only fitting that we come together again to Imagine the Possibilities. Over the next three years, the City of Kitchener will be engaging with the community in the Civic District to revisit and reimagine a Master Plan for this key asset within our city. This is an exciting opportunity to imagine the potential of the Civic District as a marquee destination to experience arts, culture, community, entertainment and so much more.”

“As a strong believer in active civic engagement, the Gallery takes its role in the revitalization of the City of Kitchener seriously,” adds **Shirley Madill**, KWAG’s Executive Director. “We have been exploring how the integration of culture and urban renewal leads to culturally active spaces over the past through months through our series of Culture Talks. Engaging the community in the visionary creation of a renewed Civic District is not only important to us but also all the cultural organizations that inhabit this area and our neighbourhood residents. We are pleased to work with the School of Architecture, University of Waterloo and the City of Kitchener on this impactful event.”

The Civic District Design Charrette is sponsored by MTE Consulting Inc. with the support of the City of Kitchener, the Ontario Association of Architects and Grand Valley Society of Architects. For more information about this event and the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, please visit kwag.ca and follow the conversation on social media at #KWAGCharrette.

ABOUT THE KITCHENER-WATERLOO ART GALLERY

Established in 1956, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) is Waterloo Region's leading public art gallery with an emphasis on contemporary art, offering creative and accessible experiences for all ages and segments of society. KWAG connects people and ideas through art, drawing the community into a shared experience of art that moves from sight to insight. The Gallery and its Permanent Collection of more than 4200 works is located within Centre In The Square.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. We are on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral Confederacy), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples.

MEDIA CONTACT

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HOURS AND ADMISSION

Tuesday-Friday 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm

Admission to KWAG's exhibitions is free, courtesy of

