



For Immediate Release

The Working Centre welcomes the community to their 97 Victoria St. Campus A Celebration of this hub for people experiencing homelessness

September 25, 2025 Kitchener ON – The Working Centre welcomes the community to celebrate with us as we recognize the many contributions to Making Home at 97 Victoria St. N. Kitchener. This purpose-built hub supports people experiencing homelessness or who are precariously housed.

This hub at 97 Victoria offers expanded supports within a campus model of housing, community gathering space, healthcare and mental health supports, including:

- 44 new housing units that offer purpose built spaces for people who are living precariously to build stability and opportunity for their next steps;
- A new home for St John's Kitchen, where people gather to enjoy a daily nutritious meal, laundry, showers, washrooms and problem-solving supports;
- A medical clinic which will be a barrier free space that combines on site clinical support and outreach support for people to access primary care and mental health supports;
- A base for our outreach teams and their work supporting encampments and system navigation.

Making Home at 97 Victoria is not just the opening of a building, it is a celebration of belonging and the strength that comes from creating meaningful connections with people who have been left out. It is about Making Home where we are at and with the people in our community.

This project was made possible by \$12M in government grants. Grants included a Rapid Housing Initiative contribution of \$9.8M, a Green and Inclusive Community Buildings contribution of \$2.4M, along with a CHMC Seed Grant, a Service Canada Accessibility Grant and an Ontario Trillium Foundation contribution.

This project was also made possible by an incredible \$10M in community contributions, including generous donations from Perimeter Development, Lyle S. Hallman Foundation, The Diocese of Hamilton, Auburn Developments, The Savvas Chamberlain Family Foundation, Cowan, Fairmont Foundation, and many other community donors.

"We're proud to be part of this innovative partnership that has created a place of belonging for people who are experiencing homelessness in our region", notes **Joe Mancini, Director of The Working Centre**. "We have watched this timely idea grow from a notion into a reality, working alongside of many community partners. We are grateful to Perimeter Development for spearheading this project with us, to BNKC for their design work, to Govan Brown for bringing the designs to life, and for the many generous financial contributions that made this work possible."

"We at the Hallman Foundation recognize the importance of supplying suitable housing to those without housing", says **Jim Hallman, Chair of the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation and President of Hallman Construction**. "The Working Centre has proven over many years that this organization can make a huge difference to the people they serve. We are happy to do what we can, to help this very important project."

“The federal government is proud to support The Working Centre’s 97 Victoria Street Campus through investments that reflect our commitment to inclusivity and environmental sustainability. By funding new housing units, accessible infrastructure, and a revitalized St. John’s Kitchen, we are helping to create a space where people experiencing homelessness can find stability, dignity, and connection.”

- The Honourable Bardish Chagger, Member of Parliament for Waterloo.

“The development of 97 Victoria is an example of what is possible when the community, local partners, the private sector and different levels of government work together with a single vision. The Region of Waterloo is grateful to our federal partners for recognizing the urgency of developing affordable and supportive housing in Waterloo Region. The Rapid Housing Initiative is helping us to deliver on the Region’s affordable housing goals and to build a better future for our community.”

- Karen Redman, Chair of Region of Waterloo

“Today’s celebration of Making Home and the new St. John’s Kitchen builds on more than 43 years of caring resident-focused support by The Working Centre staff and volunteers in Downtown Kitchener. I am grateful to the many community partners and donors who are helping our community build a caring community where we strive to ensure everyone is looked after and nobody is left behind.”

- Berry Urbanovic, Mayor of Kitchener

“At a time when collaboration between the public, private and non-profit sectors is more crucial than ever, we’re proud to be taking a leadership role in a project supporting The Working Centre and their entrepreneurial approach to addressing the challenges of those most at risk in our community.”

- Craig Beattie, Perimeter Development Corporation

Event Photos available upon request.

Note: Public Tours will be held on Friday, September 26 from 3:00pm to 6:00pm and on Saturday September 27 from 10:00am to 2:00 pm.

About The Working Centre:

The Working Centre is a dynamic community based organization with a web of projects that range from: employment supports and financial problem solving; an integrated response to homelessness including a community kitchen hub, medical, mental health and addiction supports, street and encampment outreach; a growing network of affordable and supportive housing and shelters; community enterprise projects including cafes, catering and event spaces, and creative reuse shops for bicycles, clothing, computers, and furniture and housewares. We adapt to the increasing unemployment, isolation and dislocation by bringing people together in common spaces that offer practical supports while working together to build common ground.

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