

# DOWNTOWN KITCHENER DISCOVERY TEAM

## WHY

- Kitchener Downtown Discovery Team is based in an approach that is welcoming, engaging and inclusive. We want to spread the message that everyone is welcome in downtown Kitchener – businesses, shoppers, people who live in the downtown, our growing tech sector employers and employees.
- Downtown is a place where people who are homeless or at risk of homeless are always present. Many in this group struggle with mental health and addictions. It takes patience and knowledge to engage this group in positive ways. When people are counted in they participate more widely than when they are left out.
- Diversity is interesting, complex, and rich. The skills of hosting a diverse downtown can be shared. The Discovery Team can be part of the conversation.
- The Working Centre brings the added focus of engagement by inviting people who might otherwise be left out of a dynamic downtown to be part of the core infrastructure.

## WHAT

- The Discovery Team spends time on the downtown streets – forming relationships, acting as eyes on the street, supports businesses, and supporting people of the downtown to get to know each other and share space in mutually agreeable ways.
- This team creatively problem-solves the issues of downtown businesses, navigating the space between the WRPS Downtown Proactive Officers, and the Downtown Street Outreach Workers – bringing thoughtful presence, problem-solving and relationship building – responding thoughtfully, building shared relationships and awareness.
- Once the main Downtown Discovery Team is established, we hope to add Discover Downtown Kitchener tours (historical tours that also include information about local businesses who are part of the downtown), lunch-and-learns for downtown business people (building the connection to downtown Kitchener, exploring ways to become involved in/become aware of downtown social services), learning sessions on feeling safe in downtown Kitchener.

## WHERE

- The Downtown Discovery Team will spend their time on the main streets of downtown Kitchener, becoming familiar with people who spend their time in the downtown and with downtown business people. It is through these healthy relationships that we can invite a shared vision of an inclusive downtown.
- The “where” will also be decided by our downtown businesses – is there an issue, or a moment where problem solving help is needed? Businesses can call the Discovery Team cell phone and invite the presence of this downtown team to creatively problem solve situations. Our goal is to do this in ways that build relationships, which meet business needs, which also build inclusive and diverse spaces in downtown Kitchener.