

Date: February 15, 2022	Originator's files:
To: Chair and Members of General Committee	
From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building	Meeting date: February 23, 2022

## Subject

**New Identity and Marketing Campaign for Mississauga's Innovation District**

## Recommendation

That the corporate report dated February 15, 2022 entitled "New Identity and Marketing Campaign for Mississauga's Innovation District" from the Commissioner of Planning & Building Department be received for information.

## Executive Summary

- The *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Study* (2019) and the *Economic Development Strategy* (2020) established the priority to strengthen Mississauga's innovation performance.
- Establishing an innovation identity for Mississauga within the Toronto Waterloo Tech Corridor is an important first step.
- EDO worked with partners to develop an entrepreneurship and innovation marketing campaign.
- The new campaign, "IDEA" will create an innovation identity for Mississauga that will position the city as a global leader of innovation; create a sense of place for entrepreneurs, start-ups and scale ups; and it will celebrate Mississauga innovation stories.
- The Mississauga Business Enterprise Centre (MBEC) will be positioned as a central coordinating hub for innovation activity and a primary feature in the new campaign.

## Background

The Economic Development Office (EDO) continues to develop and enhance the innovation and growth potential of local start-ups, scale-ups and established businesses in Mississauga. The *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Study* (2019) and *Economic Development Strategy* (2020) identified several critical gaps in Mississauga's innovation performance, and recommended priority actions be implemented to enhance the services in the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem. In addition to new programming and the creation of space to support innovation activity, the development of a new "innovation identity" for Mississauga within the Toronto Waterloo Tech Corridor was recommended.

EDO has worked with partners to develop an entrepreneurship and innovation marketing campaign. The marketing campaign is intended to highlight Mississauga as a global leader of innovation; and a central centre for entrepreneurship and innovation in the region.

## Comments

### Innovation Identity

Mississauga's innovation identity needs to resolve an "asset coordination problem" and present a clear offer of business supports available for entrepreneurs, start-ups and scale ups under one identity. Further, it is important that the role of Mississauga Business Enterprise Centre (MBEC) be well defined and repositioned as a central coordinating hub for innovation activity.

A set of principles established to guide the development of Mississauga's innovation identity included:

- position the city as a global leader of innovation;
- create a sense of place for entrepreneurs, start-ups and scale ups; and
- celebrate our innovation stories

Additionally, extensive marketing research, which included examination of comparable local/national/international municipal marketing campaigns and assessment of Mississauga's existing value proposition (e.g. talent, access to markets, business community) was undertaken to assist in developing the campaign identifier. Staff assessed Mississauga's relative competitiveness to the broader region, province, and country in order to help refine and narrow the key elements of the campaign.

Many key stakeholders were also engaged through the process of developing the new identifier including: local entrepreneurs; business leaders; education representatives; select members of the City's Extended Leadership Team and; members of the Entrepreneur and Innovation Advisory Board.

### A new identity for Mississauga's Innovation District:

Following extensive consultation, research and with direction and support from Council and input from our entrepreneurship and innovation advisory board and partners, Mississauga's entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem became "IDEA."

*It all starts with "IDEA – The Mississauga Innovation District. Located within one of the world's fastest growing major city economies, IDEA Mississauga has the mentorship, partners, talent and connections to test, scale and commercialize solutions to global challenges. Get it done in IDEA – The Mississauga Innovation District.*

"ID" – represents "Innovation District", and as a word, idea ties well with innovation, because every great innovation and business starts with an idea.

The geographic distribution of Mississauga's Innovation assets is illustrated in the map **Appendix 1: Mississauga's Innovation Identity Presentation**. Both this map and anecdotal evidence disclosed via stakeholder engagement, made it clear that there is no prominent space or asset that stands above all others in Mississauga. The value lies within the city's ecosystem of space and programs, which is currently orientated around the growth of start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs. IDEA encompasses all innovation assets across the city, and therefore, IDEA encompasses all of Mississauga. IDEA can also anchor a specific location of the city to highlight its cluster of programs and services, for example, IDEA Square One.

### **Campaign and Approach**

The campaign begins with a soft launch on February 21<sup>st</sup> to build excitement and generate interest for the virtual official launch event on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The virtual launch event will include greetings by Mayor Bonnie Crombie and EDO will present the IDEA marketing campaign and video reveal. The event will also include three scale-up companies presenting their business ideas and encourage attendee engagement.

To launch IDEA branding the following current and future marketing tactics will be implemented:

- **Promotional Video** – Produced a series of videos featuring inspiring Mississauga innovation business stories, from start up, to scale up, to big business and how they achieved success using Mississauga resources and location assets.
- **Website** – Created a new IDEA Virtual Innovation Hub that includes a concierge tool showcasing programs and resources, training, and events, and will become a central place to go for innovation activity in our city.
- **Social Media Campaign** - Created IDEA Twitter, Facebook and Instagram with plans of running social campaigns to drive traffic to the IDEA website and build awareness of IDEA services and programs.
- **Media** – Invited media to the launch of IDEA on February 28<sup>th</sup>, and will issue a press release following the event with amplification on the Canadian Newswire. EDO will seek out earned and paid media to build awareness of IDEA locally, nationally and globally.
- **Advertising** – Leverage industry based digital and print opportunities to reach entrepreneurs, scale-up and high growth companies.
- **Events** – Seek opportunities for IDEA representation at partner and affiliate events to build awareness of IDEA, promote services and programs, generate membership and attract scale-up/high growth businesses to Mississauga.

### **Strategic Plan**

The Mississauga Innovation Campaign supports the City's Corporate Strategic Plan to be driven by an active innovation agenda. As articulated in the City of Mississauga Strategic Plan (2009), the City aspires to be a 'global city for creativity and innovation'. Under the Plan's 'Prosper' pillar, it is intended that the City will cultivate creative and innovative businesses.

## Financial Impact

The development and implementation of the entrepreneurship and innovation marketing campaign was primarily staff resourced through cost centers: 21212 and 21229.

## Conclusion

In response to recommendations outlined in the *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Study* (2019) and the *Economic Development Strategy* (2020) endorsed by Council, The Economic Development Office (EDO), along with its partners and key stakeholders, developed a new marketing campaign that creates an identity for Mississauga's Innovation District, called "IDEA".

The IDEA campaign will help build a presence within Toronto Waterloo Tech Corridor and will strengthen Mississauga's reputation as a global leader of innovation; create a sense of place for entrepreneurs, start-ups and scale ups; and that it will celebrate Mississauga innovation stories.

IDEA encompasses all innovation assets across the city, and therefore, IDEA encompasses all of Mississauga. IDEA, however, can anchor a specific location of the city to highlight its cluster of programs and services, for example, IDEA Square One.

Following the formal launch of the IDEA campaign on February 28<sup>th</sup>, Mississauga's Innovation District will be known as IDEA. Through EDO marketing efforts and the broader adoption of IDEA across the corporation, and by affiliated partners and stakeholders, IDEA will be locally, national and globally recognized as Mississauga's Innovation District.

## Attachments

Appendix 1: Mississauga's Innovation Identity Presentation



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Andrew Whitemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building

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