

# City of Mississauga Corporate Report



Date: February 14, 2020

To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee

From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building

Originator's files:

CD.02-MIS

Meeting date:  
March 9, 2020

## Subject

**INFORMATION REPORT (ALL WARDS)**

**Mississauga Official Plan Review – Status Update and Engagement Timeline**

## Recommendation

That the report titled “Mississauga Official Plan Review – Status Update and Engagement Timeline” dated February 14, 2020 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be received for information.

## Report Highlights

- Since the June 2019 endorsement of the Mississauga Official Plan (MOP) Work Program, significant background research and analysis and internal cross-divisional meetings have been undertaken, including a legal audit of MOP and the preparation of thematic policy discussion briefs
- Discussion briefs will guide community and stakeholder engagement through these six thematic policy areas: Reconfirm Vision and Guiding Principles; City Structure and Urban Design; Transportation; Environment & Climate Change; Housing; and, Complete Community and Culture
- Community meetings and active engagement is scheduled for June 2020 while outreach to the Indigenous Peoples and the Haudenosaunee will continue

## Background

Mississauga Official Plan (MOP) provides the goals, objectives and policies to manage and direct the physical growth and development of the City and the effects of physical change on the social, economic, cultural and natural environment of the City. It also forms the basis for detailed land use designations and urban design policies, and sets the context for the review and approval of development applications.

MOP is for the most part effective in terms of conformance with the 2019 Provincial Growth Plan and the proposed Provincial Policy Statement. However, it is important that MOP policy updates are made to address policy weaknesses resulting from changing conditions or new directions. For example, in 2009 when MOP was last comprehensively reviewed and updated, housing affordability and climate change were not focal issues as they are today. Furthermore, current directions from the City's numerous cross-divisional initiatives and plans<sup>1</sup>, need to be considered to modernize MOP policy.

The MOP Review work program endorsed at the June 10, 2019 Special Council meeting officially marked the start of the MOP Review (See Appendix 1).

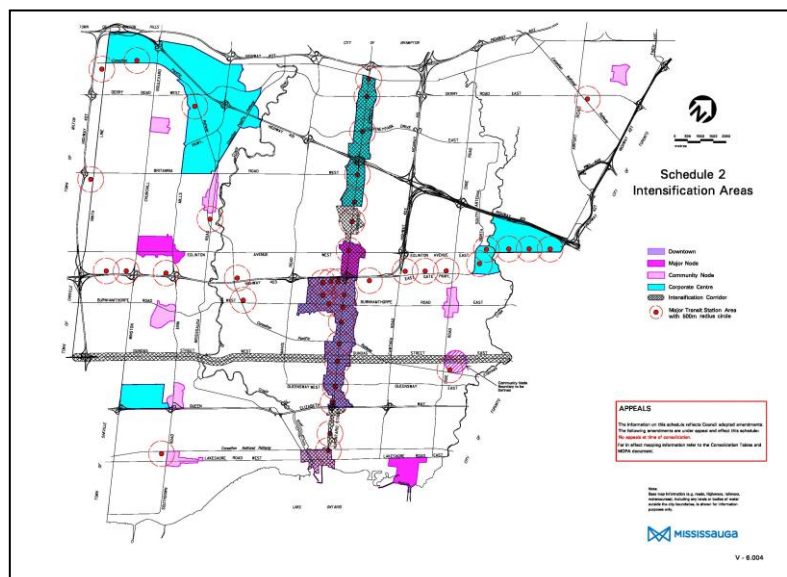
The MOP Review aims to make MOP a more streamlined and strategic document, with guiding objectives to: address conformity to and consistency with provincial and regional policy; simplify MOP policy and reduce duplication; be innovative and consider policy best practices and new trends; and, provide certainty in policy direction.

Several key work program items have been undertaken to date, including:

- Legal audit: Audit of existing MOP policy was conducted to clarify the required policy updates to align with recent Provincial legislative amendments and to conform with key regulatory areas in the 2019 Provincial Growth Plan (Growth Plan). The audit also identified what official plan policy can and cannot address.
- Growth management policy review: Data analysis was undertaken to understand how MOP policies were performing to direct growth to the designated Intensification Areas shown in the below Schedule 2 excerpt from MOP. There is strong alignment between recent and proposed residential unit developments and the City's Intensification Areas, with an average of 74% of issued building permits and 62% of proposed developments being located in Intensification Areas. A majority of the new residential units are apartments, with over 90% located in Intensification Areas. For new non-residential development, most new office gross floor area is located in Intensification Areas (See Appendix 2).

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix 1: Corporate Report presented at June 10, 2019 Special Council meeting (Appendix 2 – Cross-City Divisional Initiatives and Plans)



- Cross-divisional meetings: Met with divisions across the City to record preliminary comments on required MOP policy changes to update, simplify and/or strengthen policy, address alignment with cross-divisional master plans and strategies, as well as learn about current MOP policy areas that are working well.
- Launch of MOP Review public engagement site: A dedicated digital engagement platform for the MOP Review was launched on [yoursay.mississauga.ca](http://yoursay.mississauga.ca) to communicate and document the review status and invite public comments and ideas.
- Film Forum and Competition: The Our Future City – Urban Film Forum was held on November 2, 2019 to start the dialogue with the community about topics relevant to the MOP Review, including inclusive cities, affordable housing and diversity. The comments received from the public in response to the question “What is your vision for the future of our city?” will be included as part of the consultation record (See Appendix 3). A short film competition held as part of the film forum, resulted in three award-winning films that also provided community perspectives about the future of the city.

## Comments

The MOP Review anticipates evolutionary changes to existing MOP policy that is based on the need to implement approved provincial, regional and City policy and strategic directions.

Overall, Mississauga Official Plan (MOP) policies are working to direct growth, create complete communities, protect the environment, develop transit and active transportation-oriented systems, and promote high quality urban design. However, there is need to fine-tune and in some cases substantially update MOP policy, in response to changing conditions on issues such as climate change, affordable housing and transit-oriented development.

Council directives on housing matters such as provision of seniors housing and gentle intensification through detached home replacement, as well as any emerging directives, will also be considered through the MOP Review.

Ongoing local area projects with MOP policy implications, for example the Meadowvale Neighbourhood Character Study, Reimagining the Mall and implementation of Dundas Connects, will continue independently and may coincide with MOP Review policy amendments or proceed as separate MOP amendments.

### Engagement and Outreach

The proposed public and stakeholder engagement process is sensitive to the considerable recent public engagement and approval processes undertaken by the City to develop or update many master and strategic plans that now have implications for MOP policy (e.g. Transportation Master Plan, Climate Change Action Plan, Housing Strategy, *Future Directions* Master Plans<sup>2</sup>). The engagement program will collaborate with other ongoing City projects' engagement where possible to maximize participants' time.

The proposed engagement and outreach program is multi-phased to align with the MOP Review process (See Appendix 5). At the core of the engagement program are community meetings to be held at key junctures over the course of the MOP Review. To start, a total of three community meetings are proposed in June 2020, within the north, central and south areas of Mississauga. The engagement program also includes youth, Indigenous Peoples and the Haudenosaunee outreach and engagement. There will be opportunities for topic specific discussions with various participants as required.

### **Refreshing the Vision & Confirming Priorities**

In June 2020, the MOP Review team plans to launch community engagement meetings. Outreach with the community, stakeholders, Indigenous Peoples and the Haudenosaunee will continue, with the intent to refresh the MOP vision and confirm policy priorities.

Discussion briefs are being prepared for use during the engagement process to communicate and generate dialogue on policy considerations under the following six thematic policy areas. These discussion briefs will be made available on the MOP Review webpage and at engagement and outreach events. Comments, questions and issues generated throughout the engagement process, including through the engagement platform, will help to further develop the policy direction in each of these thematic areas, and may lead to policy theme adjustments or to additional focal policy areas.

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<sup>2</sup> *Future Directions* Master Plans include five plans for: Parks & Forestry; Library; Culture; Recreation; Fire & Emergency Services

- *Reconfirm Vision and Guiding Principles*

The current MOP Vision and Guiding Principles align with the City's Strategic Plan; however, in the almost 10 years since MOP approval, there have been changes in policy direction and priorities at the provincial, regional and city level (e.g. greater emphasis placed on affordable housing and environmental sustainability). A refresh of the MOP Vision and Guiding Principles is needed to ensure current priorities are captured.

- *City Structure and Urban Design*

The 2019 Provincial Growth Plan (Growth Plan) mandates the identification of strategic growth areas<sup>3</sup> in support of achieving minimum intensification targets for residential development. Major changes to the city's strategic growth area boundaries under the current City Structure are not anticipated, with exception of major transit station area (MTSA)<sup>4</sup> boundaries that will be delineated (See Appendix 4). The addition of MTSA's will be significant, with up to 64 potential station areas in Mississauga. There may be opportunity to simplify the node layers (i.e. Major and Community Nodes) and improve height and density certainty through policy. The Corporate Centre Character Areas boundaries will be reviewed for alignment with new provincially significant employment zone (PSEZ) boundaries. Policies for lands within strategic growth areas will be reviewed, including those for the Downtown, as will urban design policies to ensure they continue to support urban form goals in strategic growth areas. This includes policy consideration of ways to improve transitions between strategic growth areas and neighbourhood areas.

- *Transportation*

The Growth Plan seeks to align transit with growth by directing growth to major transit station areas and other strategic growth areas. Communities are to be supported by an integrated transportation network with effective transit and active transportation systems that reduce reliance on automobile travel. The City's new Transportation Master Plan (TMP) has goals for safe and accessible streets, increased use of sustainable transportation modes supported by complete streets, improved connectivity, a healthy environment, and transportation evolution. MOP transportation policy needs to be reviewed and updated to ensure alignment with these and other current transportation priorities outlined in recently approved master plans (e.g. Cycling Master Plan 2018, Parking Matters: Parking Master Plan and Implementation Strategy 2019, MiWay Five

<sup>3</sup> Strategic growth areas as defined in the Provincial Growth Plan: *Within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified...to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form...include urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas.*

<sup>4</sup> Major transit station area as defined in the Provincial Growth Plan: *The area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop...or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core...generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.*

Transit Service Plan 2021-2025). A concern raised by Council regarding neighbourhood traffic impacts from infill development located on the edge of existing neighbourhoods, will be considered.

- *Environment and Climate Change*

Current MOP environmental policies are comprehensive and progressive, already addressing provincial policy direction on matters such as environmental systems (e.g. natural heritage, parks, urban forest), water conservation, storm water management, air quality, green infrastructure, and climate change. However, updates are still required, for example to parks and open spaces policy to address a change to the parkland provision ratio per *Planning Act* amendments, and to align with the City's Parks & Forestry Master Plan and Waterfront Parks Strategy Refresh. Overall, the MOP Review provides an opportunity to simplify and consolidate environmental policies while ensuring alignment with provincial, regional and city policy direction.

Policy supporting efficient land use patterns and sustainable travel modes are found throughout MOP; however, more emphasis is needed in MOP on the climate change driver for environmentally sustainable communities. The City's new Climate Change Action Plan goals and provincial direction to reduce greenhouse gas emissions also need to be addressed.

- *Housing*

An important issue the city is grappling with is the provision of affordable housing. One of the key actions in the City's housing strategy<sup>5</sup> is to strengthen existing MOP policy and add new policies supporting affordable home ownership and rental and the development of family-sized units. This includes adding new policy to enable inclusionary zoning in protected major transit station areas. In order to conform to provincial policy direction, MOP policy must also address the need to provide an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities as well as minimum affordable housing targets. The provision of affordable housing is a citywide matter that requires a comprehensive review of the city's neighbourhoods. This includes consideration of opportunities for gentle intensification/infill in what are characterized in MOP as the city's "stable" neighbourhood areas<sup>6</sup>, where current zoning permits only detached dwelling units<sup>7</sup>. This may also include more as-of-right permissions for low density dwellings. A February 5, 2020 Council directive requests a review of ways to intensify to allow replacement of the same type of homes without requiring development applications.

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<sup>5</sup> Making Room for the Middle – A Housing Strategy for Mississauga  
<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/pb/housingstrategy>

<sup>6</sup> In reality, almost 70% of the city's neighbourhoods are experiencing population decline, resulting in "destabilization" and underutilization of city infrastructure that supports these neighbourhoods (e.g. schools, transit, community facilities)

<sup>7</sup> These areas represent 22% of the city's total land area

- *Complete Community and Culture*

Key components of a complete community include community and cultural infrastructure (e.g. schools, libraries, public art), cultural heritage and employment. The items below outline potential MOP amendments that pertain to complete community policy matters:

- With the Growth Plan's prioritization of intensification and higher densities in strategic growth areas, MOP policy will need to address the need for adequate community and cultural infrastructure to support growing communities in these areas.
- MOP cultural heritage policies will need to align with the outcome of the City's project to update the cultural heritage landscapes inventory<sup>8</sup>.
- MOP policy will need to reflect provincially significant employment zones (PSEZs), update employment policies and align with direction in the City's Economic Development Strategy<sup>9</sup>, to align with employment policy in the Growth Plan that:
  - further protects employment lands with the identification of PSEZs and calls for more efficient use of existing employment areas and vacant and underutilized employment lands and increasing employment densities. There is also policy emphasis on connecting employment areas with transit and active transportation networks.
  - promotes *"integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment."*<sup>10</sup>

### Testing Directions

Following review and consideration of comments received for the proposed policy priority areas, preliminary policy directions will be presented in late-Fall 2020 to the communities. A Report on Comments will then be presented to the Planning and Development Committee (PDC) with a summary of comments heard and how they were addressed, and an update on the proposed policy directions. The report will seek PDC approval to move forward with drafting MOP policy amendments.

### Finalizing the Plan

2021 will be devoted to refining the policies and circling back to the communities to confirm how comments were addressed. Focus will also be placed on conformity to the Regional Official Plan. Update reports will be presented to the Planning and Development Committee and a public meeting will be held when a final draft of MOP policies are available.

<sup>8</sup> Conserving Heritage Landscapes: <https://yoursay.mississauga.ca/cultural-heritage-landscape-project>

<sup>9</sup> Mississauga Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025: <https://yoursay.mississauga.ca/edstrategy>

<sup>10</sup> Growth Plan policy 2.2.5.1.d.

## Financial Impact

There is no financial impact resulting from the recommendation in this report.

## Conclusion

The MOP Review is on target to commence the engagement meetings in June 2020. Feedback received on the six thematic policy areas will inform the MOP vision refresh and confirm policy priorities. A comment summary report and proposed policy directions will be presented to the Planning & Development Committee in late-Fall 2020.

## Attachments

Appendix 1: Report to Special Council June 6, 2019: MOP Review Work Program

Appendix 2: Residential and Non-Residential Growth Statistics

Appendix 3: Film Forum Consultation Comments

Appendix 4: MOP Schedule 1b: Urban System – City Structure

Appendix 5: MOP Review and Engagement Timelines



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