

December 15, 2022

Her Worship Mayor Bonnie Crombie  
and Members of Mississauga City Council  
Mississauga Civic Centre  
300 City Centre Drive  
Mississauga, Ontario  
L5B 3C1

Dear Madam Mayor and Members of Council,

**Re: Blueprint for Business and Economic Success in Mississauga**

First, let me congratulate each of you on your election to Mississauga City Council for the term of 2022-2026. The Mississauga Board of Trade (MBOT) looks forward to continuing to work with you and the staff at the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel on our shared goals of a prosperous economy and competitive business climate.

As you know, MBOT is the voice of business in the City of Mississauga with a membership of close to 1,000 businesses in virtually every sector of the economy. We have a long-standing relationship with the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel and have been a strong stakeholder and advocate for the interests of the business community in Mississauga.

As you begin this term of office, we would like to share with you some of the issues we believe should be addressed at both the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel to support the conditions for business and economic growth in a post-pandemic period. I look forward to meeting with you to share ideas and perspectives on how we can work together to support our dynamic business community in Mississauga, continue to attract new investment and jobs, and fully realize the economic potential of this great city.

**City of Mississauga**

**Property Taxes**

As the City of Mississauga is predominantly funded through residential and commercial property taxes, tax rates need to remain stable as many businesses continue with their post-COVID recovery. A competitive tax rate also helps to attract new businesses to the City. Taxes should never rise higher than the standard rate of inflation. Council should strive to have the lowest property tax rates in the Greater Toronto & Hamilton area to continue to attract new investment and jobs to Mississauga.

## **Retail Cannabis Stores**

In 2023, Council must do a review of its current policy not to allow retail cannabis stores in the City. These are highly regulated businesses selling a legal product and would contribute to our economy and workforce. Council should pass a resolution to “opt in” to Ontario’s retail cannabis sales regime at the earliest opportunity. In doing so, the City of Mississauga will be recognizing this legal industry sector and associated employment opportunities, while doing its part to displace the unregulated, illicit market.

## **Economic Development**

MBOT maintains an excellent working relationship with the Mississauga Economic Development Office (EDO). The EDO plays a very important role in supporting businesses in Mississauga and providing important information about Mississauga’s economy to potential foreign investors. Further, EDO is launching IDEA Mississauga and establishing a hub in Square One to promote and support innovation. Council should continue its financial support of EDO and encourage more partnerships and collaborative activities with organizations like MBOT. Some of the most successful jurisdictions globally maintain strong, collaborative partnerships with the business community.

## **Building and Development**

MBOT believes the City can do a better job of expediting and processing development applications and building permits. Future development in the City is key to economic growth and job creation and should not be stifled by bureaucracy and red tape. We understand that many processes are currently being updated to adapt to recent provincial legislation. The City of Mississauga should do a comprehensive review of its application approval process in consultation with the business community to ensure for the most effective and efficient process going forward.

## **Downtown Mississauga**

City Council has done a commendable job of putting in place policies that encourage new commercial development in the City Centre. Mississauga should continue to evaluate measures that would incent commercial development in City Centre and work with developers on private-public partnerships and other models to support development.

## **Waterfront Developments**

Mississauga is very fortunate to be located on the shores of Lake Ontario. Moreover, both the Lakeview Partners and Brightwater developments are a once in a lifetime opportunity to build a dynamic future on the waterfront of our City. MBOT expects the City of Mississauga to fully work with the project developers to ensure the timely and appropriate development of these sites. While most of each development is zoned as residential, there is considerable space being allocated for commercial development including an innovation district at Lakeview. Council should fully support these developments that will contribute significantly to Mississauga’s renaissance and accelerate our global standing as a City that has all of the components necessary to compete with other global markets as the place to live, work and invest.

MBOT, along with our partners in the Clarkson and Port Credit BIA districts are concerned about the impact of these developments on traffic and transportation along the Lakeshore Road corridor. We ask Council to be mindful of this impact and support of the local current and future business community in this area.

## **Housing**

Many businesses are reporting that it is no longer possible to both live and work in Mississauga. This is leading to long commute times for employees and an impact on quality of life. Council must pursue all opportunities to build new ownership and rental housing including ending exclusionary zoning and accelerating approvals for new housing projects.

## **Traffic Gridlock**

It is becoming more and more difficult to get around Mississauga due to traffic and transportation pressures. Council needs to commit to working with other levels of government to improving our transportation networks, including public transit that supports businesses and workers. This should include making stronger transit connections to Toronto Pearson Airport with the further extension of the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension beyond Renforth Gateway.

## **Air Transportation**

Mississauga's growth has benefited from its proximity to Canada's largest airport, enabling global access and competitiveness for trade in goods and services, as well as generating 13,000 jobs for Mississauga's citizens. Half of airport jobs pre-pandemic came from Peel Region. The impacts of the pandemic on airports, which took on debt to cover loss of user fees, and on passengers, who are affected by delays at air borders and security screening points, has been substantial.

While the federal government is the lead authority when it comes to the policy and regulatory environment under which Toronto Pearson operates, there remains an important advocacy role that the City of Mississauga can play in supporting this critical economic asset.

We urge Mississauga Council to support requests from the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) to the Federal government for:

- National Trade Corridor Funding of its projects to support movement of critical cargo;
- The opportunity to reinvest airport ground rent into sustainable and transformational infrastructure; and
- To ensure Canada's key agencies have the talent and workforce to deliver globally competitive service levels to travellers.

## **Environment & Climate Change**

Businesses recognize they have a role to play in combatting climate change and reducing GHG emissions. MBOT has been working with both the Economic Development Office and the Environment Division to advance the creation of a program to support small business on their own climate change initiatives. Council should consider creating a program to provide financial assistance and other resources to businesses looking to reduce their own carbon footprint and other environmental objectives.

## **Procurement**

Procurement policies of the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel should be open, fair and transparent and encourage Mississauga-based businesses to tender or obtain business from the municipalities. A policy that better supports BIPOC and Aboriginal-owned businesses to participate in the procurement process would ensure the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion are achieved.

## Region of Peel

### **Property Taxes**

As the Region is predominantly funded through residential and commercial property taxes, tax rates need to remain stable as many businesses continue the post-COVID recovery and a competitive tax rate also attracts new businesses to the Region. Taxes should never rise higher than the standard rate of inflation and in fact Council should strive to have the lowest property tax rates for Peel Region in the Greater Toronto Area.

### **Small Business Tax Rate**

In 2022, the Region took a cursory look at implementing the new provincial regulation that permits the establishment of a small business tax rate. In 2023, the Region should launch a more robust consultation with stakeholders to ensure a full review of whether to adopt this policy. MBOT would expect to participate in such a review.

### **Supervised Consumption Sites**

Regional Council will be asked to establish supervised consumption sites. The business community must be fully consulted on this program particularly those businesses near the proposed sites. MBOT is not philosophically opposed to these sites, but they must be in the right places and have minimal impact on surrounding businesses.

### **Peel Public Health**

We all recognize the value of our Public Health Units given the experience of the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Peel Public Health (PPH) interacts with businesses on a regular basis through inspections and orders. PPH must continue to have a business-friendly approach to its interactions with the business community and make public education, and not solely compliance, as the top priority. Regional Council should make sure that PPH is adequately funded to perform its function and is prepared should another public health situation occur in the future.

### **Peel Goods Movement**

MBOT has been a member of the Peel Goods Movement Task Force and we encourage the Region to continue this group. Goods movement both within and through the Region is a significant contributor to the economy and supports thousands of jobs.

### **Future of the Region of Peel**

MBOT knows that it has been Mississauga Council's position that the Region of Peel be dissolved, and that Mississauga become a single-tier stand-alone municipality. While MBOT has not advocated for the dissolution of the Region of Peel, if such a development should occur, MBOT would strongly advocate to the Province that the City of Mississauga should be a stand-alone municipality.

Thank you for your consideration of the above priorities. On behalf of the Board of Directors and membership of the Mississauga Board of Trade, we look forward to a continued positive and constructive relationship with the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor McPherson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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