

City of Mississauga
Corporate Report



<p>Date: September 5, 2023</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Jodi Robillos, Commissioner of Community Services</p>	<p>Meeting date: November 1, 2023</p>

Subject

2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan

Recommendation

1. That staff be directed to consult with the public and groups with interest to obtain feedback on the draft recommendations outlined in the “2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan” and appended to this Corporate Report dated September 5, 2023 from the Commissioner of Community Services.
2. That the final plan be presented to Council for endorsement in the first quarter of 2024.

Executive Summary

- The 2024 Future Directions Library Plan serves as the guiding document for the provision of facilities, services and programs in the City’s Library division for both the short and long term.
- The draft plan assesses current and future capital and service delivery needs with a focus on facility development, digital services, community engagement, service evolution, staff development and lifelong learning.
- The draft plan contains 21 recommendations shaped and developed with input from staff, the public and groups with interest. Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability were key lenses used throughout the plan’s development.
- This draft plan now requires further input and feedback from the public and groups with interest before being finalized.
- The implementation of the plan will be phased over the five to ten year planning horizon following ongoing validation and capacity to fund.
- The final plan is slated for presentation to Council in first quarter of 2024.

Background

The Future Directions Library Plan serves as the guiding document for the provision of facilities, services and programs in the City's Library Division. The plan provides a structured and forward-thinking approach to funding and resource allocation for capital and service delivery needs in the short and long term. To ensure the actions and recommendations remain relevant, the plan is updated every five years with the previous iteration completed in 2019.

Nordicity was the consulting firm awarded to undertake the 2024 Future Directions Library Plan. Below is an outline of the project's key phases and aimed timeline:

Project Phase	Timeline
Develop Background Reports	October 2022 – March 2023
Public Engagement	October 2022 – March 2023
Develop Draft Plan	April – October 2023
Present Draft Plan to Council	November 2023
Public Feedback on Draft Plan	November – December 2023
Present Final Plan to Council	February/March 2024

The updated Draft Plan (see Appendix 1) contains 21 recommendations developed in consultation with user and community groups, staff and the public. In addition to engagement, several background reports on population, benchmarking, and service provision levels helped to inform the plan. Some of the common themes throughout the plan include:

- Capital and Service Delivery Needs
- Areas of Intensification
- COVID-19 Impact
- Reconciliation
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability
- Technology and Digital Enablement

City Structure and Population Growth

Since 2004, Future Directions Plans have organized the City into six functional service areas as a basis for sub-geographic analysis. In 2022, the six original service area boundaries were revised to better reflect the evolution of the City's urban structure, transportation network and growth patterns. The 2024 Future Directions Plan now includes eight service areas that align with the City structure outlined in the new Mississauga Official Plan.

As part of the planning process, an analysis of projected population growth was conducted. Growth forecasts show that Mississauga's overall population will grow from the 2021 estimate of 795,040 to 852,060 by 2031. Beyond the current Future Directions planning period, Mississauga's population is projected to reach 995,040 by the year 2051.

There are a number of Intensification Areas (as defined through the Mississauga Official Plan) in which development will primarily take place. By 2031, 47 per cent of forecasted residential population growth in Mississauga, amounting to 26,500 people, is being directed to the Urban Growth Centre (referred to as the Downtown in the previous Official Plan) and its associated character areas. The majority of the remaining forecasted share of growth is directed at Mississauga's Major Nodes (25 per cent) and Neighbourhoods (21 per cent).

Support for Mississauga's Housing Strategy

Recommendations in the Future Directions Plans help to support Mississauga's housing strategy through the construction of new community infrastructure and redevelopment of existing facilities. This includes but is not limited to community centers, libraries, fire stations, parks, and spaces for culture activities and creative sector use.

Comments

Strategic Priorities

The 2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan identifies five strategic priorities representing the most pressing areas where coordinated effort and resources are needed. These include:

- **Expand and Extend Library Spaces:** Increase the physical area of library locations and extend the library's presence into non-traditional spaces to address population growth, densification, and changing customer needs.
- **Be Future-ready and Resilient:** Develop the processes, technology, and infrastructure needed to prepare for and respond to anticipated and unanticipated pressures over the next 10 years.
- **Enhance Customer-centred Service:** Apply a user-first and evidence-based approach to service and program planning and delivery.
- **Advance Community Cohesion:** Build on the library's role as an accessible social institution to encourage community connections, mutual understanding and democratic values.
- **Champion the Value of Library Services:** Promote greater understanding of how public libraries serve and strengthen their communities and celebrate Mississauga Library's impact.

The recommendations within the 2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan are centered on key areas of focus identified by the division. Each recommendation connects with one or more areas of focus. The following further details these areas and includes some of their associated recommendations. The full list can be viewed within the appended 2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan (see Appendix 1).

Facility Development

An assessment of facility needs was undertaken to identify gaps in areas related to future growth or existing developed areas. Some of the priority projects recommended include:

- Redevelop or expand Lakeview Library to service anticipated population growth
- Replace the Cooksville Library with a new location as part of the development of a new community centre and/or mixed-use development
- Redevelop or expand Mississauga Valley Library as part of a broader renovation of the Community Centre

Digital Services

Libraries are community leaders in digital services, supporting the adoption of new technologies by providing access and training for the community. In addition to providing access to essential technology, libraries also offer innovation spaces with specialized/emerging technologies. To continue to develop digital services, some of the recommendations include:

- Introduce express libraries that meet the community where they are
- Invest in essential technology services to help bridge the digital divide
- Invest in enhanced technology to support creativity and innovation, specifically through Maker Mississauga services and programs

Community Engagement

Libraries are key community hubs where people can engage in a number of ways. In addition, libraries establish connections between residents and various community services including cultural services, newcomer services and specific initiatives related to topics such as legal advice, art projects and mental health. Some of the recommendations to support community engagement include:

- Expand equitable library access for underserved and vulnerable residents
- Increase marketing and communications efforts to build greater brand recognition and acceptance throughout the community
- Contribute to sector-wide efforts to strengthen and sustain library services in line with City and library priorities

Service Evolution

Service evolution is essential as the role of libraries in the community is continuously evolving. To make library programs and services more responsive to current community need, some of the recommendations include:

- Explore offering increased hours of operation through an extended access or self-serve hours model
- Optimize the library website and expand virtual branch services
- Invest in furniture, equipment, and design features that enable flexible use of space

- Refresh the library's vision, mission, and value statements to better reflect how the library aims to serve the community

Staff Development

Fostering a diverse workforce, and staff training are essential for libraries to keep pace with equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives and changing technology, as well as to address the gap between library education and necessary job skills. In addition, health and well-being initiatives help to support work-life balance and contribute to happier, more productive workplaces. Some of the recommendations to support staff development include:

- Advance Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) commitments to retain and develop a talented workforce that reflects Mississauga's diverse community
- Develop a proactive strategy for service and program planning, delivery, and assessment using data-driven decision making

Lifelong Learning

Libraries' contribution to lifelong learning is primarily expressed through supporting multiple literacies. Beyond their traditional support for literacy through collections, reading programs, and language learning, libraries are increasingly focusing on fostering digital and financial literacy, recognizing their significance in advancing equity within communities. Some of the recommendations to support lifelong learning include:

- Develop collections to be inclusive and to reflect community demographics and interests
- Invest in enhanced technology to support creativity and innovation, specifically through Maker Mississauga services and programs

The full list of recommendations are contained within the appended 2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan (see Appendix 1).

Strategic Plan

The 2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan aligns with all five of the City's Strategic Pillars: Move, Belong, Connect, Prosper and Green. The strategic pillars reflect a common purpose: a collective desire for success in leadership, quality of life, and civic pride – all of which are relevant to the Future Directions Plan.

Steps have been taken to ensure the 2024 Future Directions Plan also aligns to the updated Strategic Plan scheduled to be launched in 2024.

Engagement and Consultation

Over 15,000 people were engaged in the shaping of the Future Directions Library Plan through a variety of methods including focus groups, face-to-face meetings, pop-up engagements, and

an online survey that garnered over 7,000 responses. The Future Directions 'Have Your Say' engagement webpage mississauga.ca/futuredirections and yourfuture@mississauga.ca email address provided additional forums for input.

The consultation phase initiated with staff meetings and focus groups in October 2022, followed by Library Board consultation, and the launch of the online public survey in November 2022. Some of the various staff groups that were consulted include Environment, Indigenous Relations, Diversity and Inclusion, Facilities and Property Management and Planning and Building.

The next step in the planning process is to obtain feedback on the draft plan from the public and those previously engaged. This phase is set to occur from November to December 2023, and any required revisions to the draft will be completed in early 2024. The final plan is slated for presentation to Council in the first quarter of 2024.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact resulting from the recommendations in this report. The implementation and funding of initiatives included in the 2024 Future Directions Library Plan will be subject to approval of the annual budget and business plan.

Conclusion

The 2024 Future Directions Library Draft Plan responds to themes of intensification, population growth, and capital and service delivery needs for both the short and long term. The draft plan was developed through extensive research, collaboration, public engagement, and serves as a comprehensive guide for the future of library services in the City. With Council's approval as recommended in this report, the draft plan will be presented to the public and groups with interest before being finalized. This process ensures that the City's library services evolve to meet the changing needs and preferences of its diverse population, while creating a sense of inclusivity that fosters community and social well-being for all.

Attachments

Appendix 1: 2024 Future Directions Library Plan



Jodi Robillos, Commissioner of Community Services

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