

City of Mississauga
Corporate Report



<p>Date: March 20, 2024</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee</p> <p>From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building</p>	<p>Originator's file: EC.19.GRE</p>
	<p>Meeting date: April 8, 2024</p>

Subject

RECOMMENDATION REPORT (ALL WARDS)

Recommendation Report – Update to the Green Development Standards

Recommendation

That the mandatory and voluntary Green Development Standards metrics, as detailed in Appendices 4 and 5, respectively, that apply to all residential and non-residential site plan applications described in the body of the report dated March 20, 2024, from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be approved.

Executive Summary

- The City's Green Development Standards (GDS) were originally endorsed and established in 2012.
- The City's Climate Change Action Plan identifies the need to update the existing GDS to include energy and resilience considerations
- City staff, with the support of a consultant, Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG), have updated the Green Development Standards (GDS) to align with best practices
- A set of mandatory and voluntary metrics is recommended for the updated GDS to apply to four separate building categories that are subject to site plan control – Low-Rise Multi-Unit Residential, Mid-Rise and High-Rise Residential, Institutional and Commercial, and Industrial
- Residents, industry representatives and the development industry were engaged and provided feedback on the draft mandatory and voluntary metrics
- A feasibility study to explore potential incentives is recommended

Background

The City of Mississauga's Green Development Standards (GDS) were originally endorsed by Council on July 7, 2010 (PDC-0036-2010) and subsequent guidelines were established in 2012 (Appendix 1). The existing GDS is a voluntary guideline that encourages the implementation of green features as part of new developments through the site plan approval process. The City's Climate Change Action Plan identifies the need to update the existing GDS to include energy and resilience considerations to align with best practices.

City Councillors and environmental groups have stated that green building standards would be best established and regulated through the Ontario Building Code (OBC). This would ensure the standards are managed consistently throughout the Province. In a letter dated February 28, 2023, the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing indicated an interest in moving the implementation of certain green building standards from the site plan approval process to the building permit process through revisions to the OBC (Appendix 2). However, while the Province has undertaken discussions with various groups of interest (including City staff), to date, an amendment to the OBC has not been implemented.

Comments

In the absence of green building standards in the OBC, the City has initiated an update to the existing GDS. Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG) was retained by the City to provide professional advice on the updates to the GDS to align with other Greater Toronto Area (GTA) municipalities and industry standards. The project was initiated in May 2022 and the final GDS mandatory and voluntary metric recommendations, supporting documents and reports were provided to staff earlier this year.

The updated GDS aims to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through all new residential and non-residential developments subject to site plan control. The proposed update of the existing GDS includes requirements related to energy efficiency and building resiliency which is identified as Action 3-1 in the City's Climate Change Action Plan, approved by Council in 2019.

Section 41 of the *Planning Act* allows for municipalities to implement sustainable design features, including the GDS program, through site plan control. This direction was reinforced by the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in response to environmental concerns and comments raised during the review of the draft Bill 23 legislation (Appendix 2). Several municipalities across the GTA have established successful mandatory GDS programs to support their climate change objectives, including the City of Toronto, City of Pickering, and the Town of Whitby.

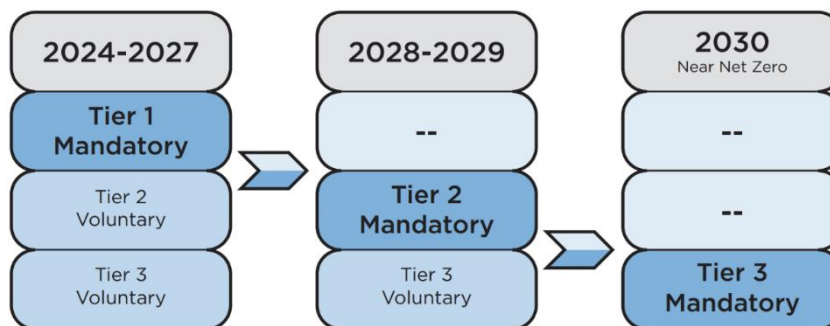
Mandatory and Voluntary Metrics

Staff are recommending the establishment of a tiered structure that would create both mandatory and voluntary GDS requirements. The tiered structure would be composed of three

tiers; Tier 1, which would contain mandatory requirements, and Tiers 2 and 3, which would contain voluntary higher performance standards.

Only Tier 1 requirements will be mandatory effective immediately (2024), while the voluntary tiers (2 & 3) would also be in effect, they would not become mandatory until 2028/29, and 2030, respectively, as depicted in the diagram below. This means that all new site plan applications will have to conform to the City's Tier 2 high performance requirements by 2028/29 and Tier 3 by 2030.

Mississauga's GDS Tiered Structure



There are many benefits related to the adoption of the aforementioned. Once the voluntary Tier 3 high performance standards are mandatory, the program would yield near net-zero developments and align with objectives outlined in the City's Climate Action Plan. Within each Tier there will be various metrics organized into the following five categories: Energy and Building Performance, Climate Impacts, Resilience, Ecology, and Natural systems which will contain specific metrics each applicant will have to conform to through the site plan approval process.

The requirements associated with all three tiers can be found in Appendices 4 and 5.

The City's GDS will be applied at site plan approval process, and to four building typologies:

- Low-Rise Residential: Low-Rise Multi-Unit Residential Developments (≤ 4 Storeys and ≥ 10 units)
- Mid-Rise and High-Rise Residential: Multi-Unit Residential Building (≥ 5 Storeys)
- Institutional and Commercial: Non-Residential Uses, Including Retail, Commercial, Office, Institutional, etc.
- Industrial: Non-Residential Uses, Including Warehousing, Manufacturing, etc.

Implementation

Upon endorsement from Planning & Development Committee all new residential and non-residential developments subject to site plan control submitted after March 1, 2025, will require

the completion of a Green Development Standards Checklist, which will form part of the complete application. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how the mandatory GDS metrics have been achieved through the submission of accompanying drawings, statistics, letters, documents and/or reports. In the interim, subsequent to Council endorsement, compliance to the GDS metrics will not be mandatory; however, proponents will be required to submit the Green Development Standards Checklist and the associated documentation in order for the City to monitor internal resources, determine staffing requirements, and implement internal process refinements as necessary.

The City's updated GDS program recognizes that specific development constraints may exist preventing applicants from achieving all of the mandatory requirements. In recognition of this, a variation request process is proposed as part of the updated GDS program. Authority is provided to the Director, Development and Design Division, that would enable them to waive or reduce the mandatory GDS requirements in instances where a comprehensive assessment has been conducted.

Incentives

The implementation of the updated GDS to include energy efficiency and resilience considerations is anticipated to result in increased construction costs. Industry estimates identify the increase in construction costs can range between 0% - 7%. The increased construction costs can vary for numerous reasons such as: building type and size, level of performance, geographical location, etc. The increased construction costs do not account for anticipated cost savings for future residents related to building maintenance, operation, infrastructure and utility costs.

In order to offset a portion of the increased construction costs, some GTA municipalities have considered providing financial incentives to applicants in order to encourage them to adopt the voluntary higher performance standards. Mississauga's proposed GDS framework may benefit from a focussed set of incentives that would support more voluntary higher performance metrics until they become requirements in later iterations of the GDS program. Studying the feasibility of providing incentives as part of the updated GDS program is recommended.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Groups of interest were engaged throughout the project and a number of stakeholders provided written comments for consideration. A comprehensive comment summary, including responses indicating how the comments were integrated into the GDS update project, can be found in Appendix 3. The following is an overview of the engagement program:

- Residents, developers (residential, industrial, commercial and institutional); Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), academia, youth groups, Indigenous Nations, Region of Peel, local conservation authorities, utility companies, environmental groups and Mississauga City Councillors were engaged through the process.

- A public consultation website was launched in April 2023 in order to collect feedback and provide information, <https://yoursay.mississauga.ca/green-standards-2023>.
- An extensive social media advertising campaign was undertaken to generate interest in the GDS update project. During this period, there were over 22,000 views on the project website. An online survey was utilized as part of the campaign and 310 survey responses were submitted (292 resident and 18 industry surveys). Another 87 comments were provided directly to the project website.
- City staff made three deputations before the Environmental Action Committee (EAC) on June 7, 2022, April 4, 2023 and October 3, 2023.
- Staff hosted several industry workshops, individual follow-up meetings and responded to numerous inquiries via email.
- The City hosted a joint virtual engagement session with the Town of Caledon, entitled 'The Land Sustains Us - Indigenous Perspectives on Development'. The session included five Indigenous panelists who provided their perspective and unique views on nature, society and the relationship between development and Indigenous culture. The virtual engagement session had over 400 attendees.
- The public comment period on the project website was available from September 7 to October 13, 2023.

Strategic Plan

The update to the GDS is consistent with the Green Pillar of the Strategic Plan by leading and encouraging environmentally responsible programs. The City's updated GDS will promote the utilization of technologies and tactics to conserve energy and water, reduce emissions and waste, improve our air quality, and protect our natural environment.

Financial Impact

Some additional staff application processing time is anticipated due to the implementation of the update to the GDS program; however, the additional application processing time is not anticipated to extend site plan application approval timelines.

Additional budget allocation will be required in order for City staff to complete the feasibility study for potential financial incentives.

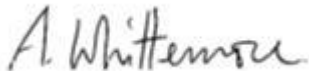
Conclusion

The City's Climate Change Action Plan identified the need to update the existing GDS to include energy and resilience considerations within the City's GDS to align with other municipal best

practices and the City's greenhouse gas reduction targets and long-term goal of becoming a net-zero city. The approval of the updated GDS metrics is critical to ensuring the City is progressing towards its environmental and climate-related objectives within the community. Overall, the updated GDS program will complement the City's existing site plan application review processes and will not extend the standard site plan review timeline.

Attachments

- Appendix 1: City of Mississauga Green Development Standards
- Appendix 2: Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Draft Bill 23 Response Letter
- Appendix 3: Comment Summary Matrix
- Appendix 4: Recommended Mandatory GDS Metrics
- Appendix 5: Recommended Voluntary GDS Metrics



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