

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



<p>Date: November 19, 2024</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>Meeting date: December 4, 2024</p>

Subject

Healthy City Strategy

Recommendation

That the “Healthy City Strategy” and associated recommendations attached as Appendix 4 to the corporate report titled “Healthy City Strategy” and dated November 19, 2024, from the City Manager and CAO, be approved.

Executive Summary

- In 2021, City Council supported the City’s membership in the Cities for Better Health program (CBH – formerly “Cities Changing Diabetes”, a program launched by Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen, University College London, and Novo Nordisk) and unanimously signed the Urban Diabetes Declaration, joining a network of over 50 international cities to better understand and curb the rise type 2 diabetes. The Declaration outlines five principles to help prevent type 2 diabetes and create a healthier city.
- In 2022, the City entered into a five-year Relationship Agreement with Novo Nordisk Canada Inc. (a Mississauga based life sciences company) to outline roles and responsibilities for the CBH collaboration. Since then, the City has benefited from shared resources and learnings from around the world.
- A Healthy City Strategy (formerly a “Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Strategy”) was developed in response to the Urban Diabetes Declaration, to embed a “healthy city” perspective in City decision-making to help reduce the rising prevalence of type 2 diabetes in Mississauga and create a healthier community.
- To inform the strategy, the City established external collaborations with research and data experts, reviewed health research findings, learned from the experiences of other municipalities, and completed a variety of community engagement activities to understand community needs and priorities.

- The proposed strategy builds on existing City policies, strategies, programs, and initiatives to advance a clear vision for health equity: Mississauga will be a city where all people thrive and are healthy, active, connected and supported within their community.
- In light of diverse social and environmental characteristics relative to the higher prevalence areas of type 2 diabetes across the city, the concept of using a geographic planning tool (“Equity Action Area”) grew out of the comments from the community engagement. It is intended that this planning tool will assist in tailoring programs and services, and inform policy and infrastructure decision-making to the specific needs of diverse communities
- To support the implementation of the strategy, there are 25 recommended actions organized under 10 themes that emerged from the research, external collaboration, and community engagement initiatives.
- Progress on the actions will be reported through key performance indicators and as part of the next Strategic Plan reporting process.

Background

With rising numbers of type 2 diabetes cases in Mississauga, in 2021 City Council unanimously signed the Urban Diabetes Declaration and joined the Cities for Better Health (CBH – formerly Cities Changing Diabetes) program. The declaration outlines five principles for a healthier city:

- Invest in the promotion of health and well-being;
- Address the social and cultural determinants and strive for health equity;
- Integrate health into all policies;
- Engage communities to ensure sustainable health solutions; and
- Create solutions in partnership across sectors.

CBH is a global public-private partnership focused on improving urban health by advancing prevention and promoting health equity through health promotion initiatives in urban communities. Through CBH, Mississauga joined with 50 cities around the world who are working to help prevent and control urban diabetes and other chronic diseases including obesity and heart disease. After signing the Declaration, the City entered into a five-year Relationship Agreement with Novo Nordisk in 2022 that outlined roles and responsibilities for the CBH collaboration. Since then, the City has benefited from shared resources and learnings from around the world.

To pursue an evidence-informed approach to developing a Healthy City Strategy, external collaborations were established with various research and data experts. The organizations include the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) Novo Nordisk Network for Healthy Populations (NHP), Institute for Better Health Trillium Health Partners Family and Child Health Initiative, and Peel Public Health.

Research is critical in understanding how best to work with health risk factors and inform how to enhance the built environment to effect change. In August 2024, Mayor Parrish wrote a letter of support for a UTM researcher's grant application (in collaboration with the City) to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's Healthy Cities Research Initiatives. The proposal is to mobilize healthy cities knowledge for equitable mobility and transportation actions for healthy living in Malton.

Rates of Diabetes in Mississauga

In June 2023, the University of Toronto Mississauga Novo Nordisk Network for Healthy Populations (NHP) provided data to the City showing that the prevalence rates of type 2 diabetes in most neighbourhoods in Mississauga ranged from 13 to 16.9% (see Figure 1). These rates exceed the Ontario average of 9.8%. To help identify community-based insights and solutions in response to this finding, the City launched community engagement activities to inform the development of the strategy.

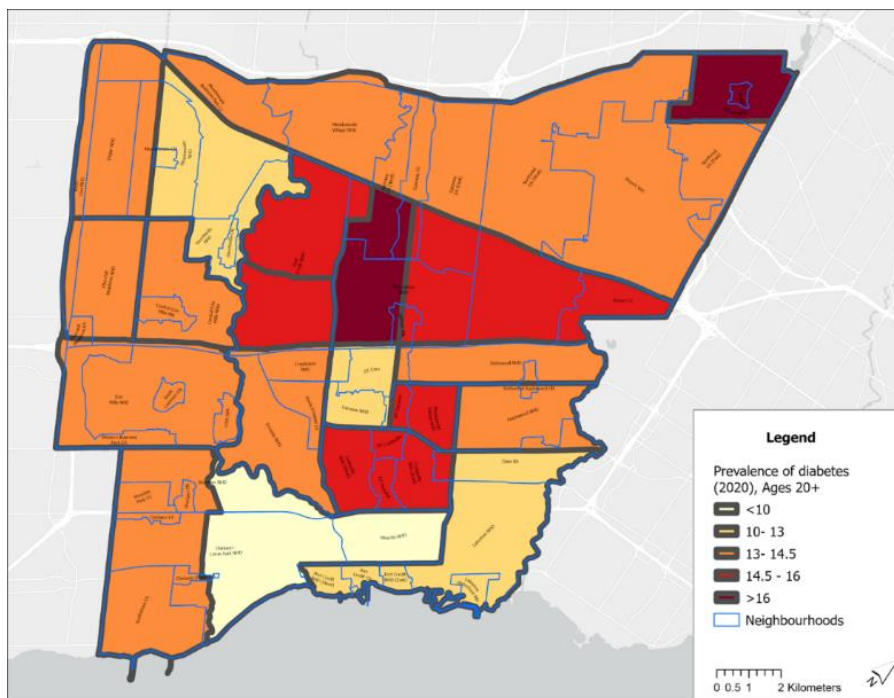


Figure 1: Prevalence of Type 2 Diabetes in Mississauga Neighbourhoods (Source: University of Toronto Mississauga Novo Nordisk Network for Healthy Populations and Ontario Community Health Profiles Partnership)

Community Engagement

City staff worked with an independent consultant (Mivian Consulting), funded as part of the CBH program through Novo Nordisk, to plan and implement an equitable engagement process that was guided by data and collaboratively co-designed with community organizations. More than 1,000 people participated in community engagement activities in Q3 and Q4, 2024 that included focus groups, multi-lingual digital and printed surveys, community meetings, and a Healthy City Expo in November 2023. The participants shared ideas about community needs and priorities to be healthy. Mivian Consulting's report and appendices, which outline the results of the

community engagement efforts, are posted on yoursay.mississauga.ca for community members to access.

The following are the eight key findings from the community engagement (listed below in no ranked order):

1. Address affordability of City programming to support participation.
2. Improve program accessibility through affordable, culturally appropriate, and close to home programming.
3. Support mobility through improvements to the transit system and built environment.
4. Maintain outdoor spaces to promote physical activity, especially walking as a free physical activity close to home.
5. Address food security and nutrition through accessible and affordable healthy food options.
6. Create more solutions to address affordability of housing.
7. Increase awareness of type 2 diabetes and of existing resources while enhancing relevant educational offerings.
8. Cultivate opportunities for connection and a sense of belonging.

City staff used these key findings to frame the draft strategy. To seek community input on the draft components of the strategy, City staff hosted a community meeting on October 24, 2024. Participants expressed support for the previous community engagement key findings and now shape the themes for the strategy's actions. The discussion emphasized the need for access to healthy food and food literacy, the importance of education and awareness, and identified additional external contributors to work with the City on the various actions. Participants acknowledged the importance of performance measurement of the strategy. Their comments helped to further refine the draft strategy.

Comments

The state of diabetes in Mississauga may be considered an indicator of the health of the city. Diabetes affects a rapidly growing number of Mississauga residents. Having reviewed mapping from the *Climate Change Risk and Adaptation Assessment for Asset Management, 2023*, as prepared by Climate Risk Institute (CRI), Emmons & Olivier Resources Inc. (EOR), Nodelcorp, and Climalogik for the City, and *SNAP Neighbourhood Screening Process for the City of Mississauga: Summary Report, 2022*, as prepared by Toronto & Region Conservation Authority and Credit Valley Conservation for the City, it appears that areas of higher prevalence of diabetes in Mississauga generally align with areas that are considered more at risk to climate change impacts and social vulnerability.

The NHP documents in their *Current State of Type 2 Diabetes in the Peel Region (2024)* report, that areas of higher prevalence of diabetes in Mississauga align with areas of lower walkability, lower access to green space and transit, higher proportion of fast-food restaurants, higher core

housing needs and poorer air quality. NHP also notes that mental health, housing and food insecurity, racism, trauma, and oppression are also associated with diabetes prevalence. This means that specific areas of Mississauga carry a higher burden of diabetes along with other risk factors that contribute to the challenge of healthy living. This is not health equity.

The following appendices illustrate how areas of higher type 2 diabetes intersect with a few examples of the built environment characteristics:

- Appendix 1 – Proximity of Residents to Grocery Stores – a lower proximity indicates a “food desert” and intersects with areas of higher diabetes prevalence
- Appendix 2 – 2021 Census – Percent of Households in Core Housing Need – areas with a high number of residents intersects with areas of higher diabetes prevalence
- Appendix 3 – Proximity of Residents to Frequent Transit – areas where fewer residents have access to frequent transit intersect with areas of higher diabetes prevalence

However, the City can effect and influence change. It can shape how and where people live, play, shop, and work within the city. It can implement new infrastructure in the built environment and determine the type of municipal services and programs it offers. This Healthy City Strategy outlines how the City can influence positive change without taking on responsibilities that belong to other organizations or levels of government. The City cannot solve this issue alone.

Integrated solutions will require support from various business, organizations, and other levels of government who can each contribute toward a healthy city in diverse ways based on their mandates.

The strategy sets a way forward for the City’s decision-making and actions to reduce the risk factors associated with type 2 diabetes and create opportunities for improved health. The strategy’s focus is on compact, complete, and connected neighbourhoods; community services and programming in support of active living and education; and collaborations with the researchers, community, organizations, business, agency, and government.

To inform the strategy development process, health research findings, community insights and ideas, plus learnings from both external collaborations and other municipalities were considered. The strategy builds on what the City currently has in place in terms of policies, strategies, programs, and initiatives. It also provides guidance for future decision-making and initiatives to promote health equity. Figure 2 (below) illustrates the four drivers for the strategy and delineates the strategy components (see Appendix 4: Draft Healthy City Strategy).

Figure 2: Framing the Healthy City Strategy:



The Healthy City Strategy outlines 25 actions based on 10 themes that emerged from the research, external collaboration and community engagement activities that informed the development process.

For example, one of these actions – develop Equity Action Areas – will help guide the implementation of strategic actions in specific geographic areas of the city. In light of diverse social and environmental characteristics relative to the higher prevalence areas of type 2 diabetes across the city, the concept of using a geographic planning tool (“Equity Action Area”) grew out of the comments from the community engagement. It is intended that this planning tool will assist in tailoring programs and services and inform policy and infrastructure decision-making to the specific needs of diverse communities. The term Equity Action Area is recommended to recognize that there is health, environmental and social differences across Mississauga and that these factors are interrelated.

A review of other municipalities across Canada and their approach to decision-making showed the reliance on various data and mapping tools, including City of Toronto’s neighbourhood improvement areas, City of Calgary’s Equity Index and community service areas, and the Region of Peel’s well-being scores in their Neighbourhood Information Tool.

Equity Action Areas can be defined based on specific geographies in Mississauga where a higher prevalence of type 2 diabetes (and other chronic disease) aligns with significant environmental risk factors and population characteristics that impact individual and population health; that is, the social determinants of health such as income, employment, education, gender, culture, and race. Data and mapping from NHP, Peel Public Health and City’s EDI dashboard will inform the definition of these areas.

Other actions include the City’s collaboration with the NHP on research projects to investigate ways to reduce the inequities of the risk and burden of diabetes through lower risk factors and healthier living environments. For example, City staff have worked with NHP and CBH to launch the Mississauga Healthy Communities Grant – Collaborative Action Projects to act on

community ideas generated during the strategy’s community engagement process. NHP will fund projects focused on the development, expansion or adaptation of evidence-informed programs, interventions, or evaluations in Mississauga.

Healthy City Strategy Draft Recommendations

The complete list of proposed actions is in Section 3.3 of the Healthy City Strategy (see Appendix 1). Below is an overview of the actions, organized by theme:

Action Theme	Action Overview
A. Research & External Collaboration	1. Continue Research Collaboration
	2. Promote Healthy City Project Proposals
	3. Explore Grant Program Opportunities
B. Strategic Decision-making - Equity Action Areas	4. Establish Equity Action Areas to Guide Decision-making
	5. Develop a Healthy City Dashboard
C. Affordability of City Programs	6. Explore Ways to make City Programs More Affordable in Equity Action Areas
D. Accessibility of City Programming	7. Make City programs More Accessible
	8. Align Library and Recreation & Culture programs to support Equity Action Areas
E. Ease of Getting Around	9. Improve Transit Service in Equity Action Areas
	10. Improve Pedestrian Infrastructure in Equity Action Areas
	11. Explore Micromobility and Active Transportation Options in Equity Action Areas
F. Improve Neighbourhoods & Outdoor Spaces	12. Enhance the Built Environment
	13. Improve the Safety and Amenities in Outdoor Public Spaces
G. Access to and Affordability of Housing and Healthy Food	14. Attract Healthy Food Retailers to Equity Action Areas
	15. Promote Urban Agriculture in Equity Action Areas
	16. Improve Access to Healthy Food Options through Partnerships
	17. Increase Access to Affordable and Adequate Housing in Equity Action Areas
H. Community Awareness & Education	18. Encourage Employer Programs that Promote Healthy Living
	19. Promote Outdoor Attractions
I. Connection & Belonging	20. Support Community Connection Opportunities
	21. Enhance Access to Wireless Mississauga
	22. Support Program Delivery through Partner Collaboration
J. Implementation & Measurement	23. Work with other levels of government, community, and business collaborators to explore sustainable funding options for “healthy living” programs and initiatives.
	24. Annual Council Updates
	25. Refresh Strategy Every 5 years

It is important to note that three of the 25 proposed actions in the strategy address accessibility and affordability of healthy food. This issue was a key priority raised by the community, and these actions support Council's declaration on Nov. 13, 2024, of a food insecurity emergency in Mississauga.

Progress on the actions will be reported annually through key performance indicators and as part of the next Strategic Plan reporting process.

The Healthy City Strategy can help empower City staff and decision-makers to incorporate a health equity perspective ("healthy city lens") and an evidence-informed approach in their decision-making. This would ensure alignment between City initiatives and the Council endorsed Urban Diabetes Declaration.

Strategic Plan

The Healthy City Strategy supports each of the five pillars of the Strategic Plan (Move, Belong, Connect, Prosper, Green), as well as the City's commitment to developing and promoting healthy, compact, and connected communities.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact associated with the recommendations of this report.

Conclusion

The Healthy City Strategy was developed through insights gained from external collaborations with research and data experts, health research findings, the experiences of other municipalities, and community engagement efforts to understand community needs and priorities. It will empower staff and decision makers with a health equity perspective to take an evidence-informed approach to the planning and development of City programs, policies, initiatives, and infrastructure.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Proximity of Residents to Grocery Stores

Appendix 2: 2021 Census – Percent of Households in Core Housing Need

Appendix 3: Proximity of Residents to Frequent Transit

Appendix 4: Draft Healthy City Strategy



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