

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



<p>Date: November 11, 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

Corporate Strategic Plan Update

Recommendation

1. That Council approve the recommended approach to refreshing the City's Strategic Plan as outlined in the report dated November 11, 2024 from the City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer entitled "Corporate Strategic Plan Update" to initiate public engagement starting in January 2025; and
2. That the City of Mississauga renew its partnership with the World Council on City Data (WCCD), including adopting ISO standards to monitor city services, quality of life, smart city initiatives, and urban resilience.

Executive Summary

- In March 2023, Council approved a staff recommendation to update the City of Mississauga's Strategic Plan, as it had not been updated since 2009.
- Following a priority-setting session in September 2023, Council identified key priorities for the remainder of the 2022-2026 term: reducing car dependency, addressing climate change, improving affordability (including housing), promoting well-being and public health, enhancing financial stability, promoting social inclusion and diversity, and attracting investment. These priorities were adopted by Council in January 2024.
- In February 2024, a mayoral by-election was called, leading staff to pause public engagement on the Strategic Plan. In June 2024, the City underwent leadership changes with the election of a new Mayor, Ward 5 Councillor, and the appointment of a new City Manager. This resulted in a temporary pause of the Strategic Plan refresh.
- Optimus SBR, an independent consulting firm, was hired to support the Strategic plan refresh. They were tasked with undertaking best practices research, internal engagement, sociodemographic analysis, and a review of the City's master plans. This work is near completion. Emerging themes from this process align closely with Council's

priorities.

- Public engagement is scheduled from January 2025 to May 2025, to be led by staff using internal resources and community volunteers, to gather input from residents and stakeholders. Planned activities include surveys, booths at city facilities, public education and information dissemination through City channels. Members of Council are invited and encouraged to participate in and promote these activities.
- Following the external engagement, staff will prepare a report for Council by September 2025 that will form the foundation of a refreshed Strategic Plan, as well as the 2026-2030 term of Council priorities. Staff will also report back on how the City can engage in an ongoing conversation about its strategic priorities to make the refreshed Strategic Plan a “living document” that continues to guide the work of the organization.
- To effectively monitor the plan's impact, staff recommend that Mississauga rejoin the World Council on City Data (WCCD), which provides globally recognized metrics. These include the ISO 37120, ISO 37122, and ISO 37123 indicators for city services and quality of life, smart cities, and resilience, respectively. This will enable the City to track urban performance and benchmark its goals against international best practices.

Background

In 2009, the City of Mississauga adopted a Council-endorsed Strategic Plan built on five pillars: Move, Connect, Belong, Prosper, and Green. These pillars included 28 goals and 119 action items, all based on the City's core values of trust, excellence, and quality.

Although a review of the plan was scheduled for 2019, it was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past decade, the City's priorities have shifted, and the current plan no longer fully addresses emerging challenges.

In March 2023, Council approved staff recommendation to update the City of Mississauga's Strategic Plan. Following a priority-setting session in September 2023, Council approved the following priorities for the remainder of the 2022–2026 term:

- Reducing Overdependence on Cars
- Focusing on Climate Change
- Improving Affordability, Including Housing
- Promoting Well-being, Personal and Public Health
- Improving Financial Stability and Sustainability
- Promoting Social Inclusion and Diversity
- Attracting Investment

In November 2023, the City engaged Optimus SBR, an independent consulting firm with municipal expertise, to develop and execute the research and engagement strategy for the

Strategic Plan refresh. In February 2024, public engagement was paused due to the upcoming June mayoral by-election, while internal engagement and research continued.

After the election of a new Mayor, Ward 5 Councillor, and the appointment of a new City Manager in June 2024, staff resumed planning to realign the remaining phases of the project with the priorities of the new leadership.

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on the Strategic Plan refresh and outline the remaining timeline and next steps in the public engagement phase.

Present Status

Between November 2023 and September 2024, Optimus SBR worked closely with the Strategic Plan refresh project team, City departments, and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to advance five key tasks. The internal engagement phase has been successfully completed pending validation, while the external engagement phase was paused in February 2024.

Significant progress has been made, with Optimus SBR accomplishing the following actions:

- Leadership Team engagement (April-May 2024)
- Best practices review of five North American cities.
- Sociodemographic analysis of Mississauga.
- Internal workshops and surveys across departments, producing a report of emerging themes.
- Initial review of the City's Master Plans to assess alignment with the 2009 Strategic Pillars.

Emerging themes from the completed internal engagement, pending validation, include:

- Affordable and accessible housing
- Inclusivity and equity
- Environmental sustainability
- Health and well-being
- Economic growth
- Governance and Efficiency

These themes closely align with the priorities set by Council. However, additional work remains to finalize the plan, refine priorities, and ensure the Strategic Plan fully addresses the City's evolving needs.

Comments

Staff are prepared to resume work on the Strategic Plan refresh, beginning with public engagement from January 2025 to conclude in May 2025. This process is vital to ensuring the updated plan effectively guides the City's five departments and 26 divisions, many of which have evolved their work beyond the 2009 plan. The refresh will be completed through a series

of critical steps, including comparative research, public consultation, and a final update to the City's vision, strategic pillars and goals, all aimed at addressing both current and future challenges.

Finalizing the Strategic Plan will align City operations with its budget and business planning processes, support informed decision-making, and provide clear direction for staff reports and advocacy efforts. It will also establish a long-term vision, align with existing Master Plans, and shape the 2026-2030 term of Council priorities.

Steps to Finalize Strategic Plan Refresh

To complete the Strategic Plan refresh, the following steps are critical:

1. **Complete Research and Environmental Scan (Nov 2024 – March 2025)**
Finalize research from other municipalities to benchmark best practices. Conduct an environmental scan to assess local and global trends that impact the City, ensuring the Strategic Plan addresses both current and future challenges.
2. **Commence Public Engagement (January – May 2025)**
This includes conducting public surveys, aggregating feedback from recent initiatives, and engaging in targeted consultations with specific groups. This step will ensure that the updated plan reflects the needs and opinions of the community.
3. **Develop and Update the Strategic Plan (July – September 2025)**
Revise the City's vision and strategic pillars and define supporting goals and initiatives using insights from public engagement, comparative research, and environmental analysis. This process will culminate in the update of the 2009 plan and development of a foundation, from which Council will set the 2026–2030 term of Council priorities. Staff will also report on how the City can maintain an ongoing dialogue about its strategic priorities, ensuring the refreshed Strategic Plan remains a "living document" that continues to guide the organization's work.

Engagement and Collaboration

Staff recommend that public engagement for the Strategic Plan refresh commence in January 2025. To ensure greater ownership, the engagement phase will be managed by City staff using internal resources. This approach, modeled after the successful 2023 Asset Naming Review, will increase staff participation by leveraging internal expertise, including engagement specialists, Master Plan project managers, leaders of corporate and community initiatives, and community volunteers.

A key element of this strategy is the introduction of a Staff Strategic Plan Ambassador Program. Staff representatives from each City division will serve as ambassadors, engaging directly with the community to facilitate conversations and encourage survey participation.

While not resource intensive, this program is expected to increase cross-departmental collaboration, build a shared sense of ownership, and allow custom engagement strategies that

reflect the community's needs, resulting in a strategic policy document to which staff, leaders, and residents and businesses can relate.

Breakdown of Public Engagement:

During the public engagement phase, participation and visible support by the City's leadership and members of Council will be critical to facilitate public reception and ensure broader participation. The key components of this public consultation phase are outlined below:

- **All Residents:** A City-wide engagement will be conducted, including online surveys and pop-up booths at community centers, recreational facilities, and libraries. Both digital and in-person opportunities will be offered to gather diverse perspectives. Conversations will be facilitated by staff and volunteers to ensure broad resident input is captured.
- **Community Groups:** Community group leaders will be invited to provide insights into local issues. The City-wide survey will be tailored for these groups and delivered in collaboration with the Community Services department, leveraging existing relationships.
- **Business Community:** Input on economic priorities, business needs, and growth opportunities will be gathered through targeted surveys developed and executed in partnership with the Economic Development Office (EDO).
- **Youth Engagement:** Interactive workshops will be hosted at local schools and universities, while online polls and surveys promoted on youth-friendly social media platforms will engage younger residents.
- **Equity Deserving Groups:** In collaboration with the Equity Diversity & Inclusion and Indigenous Relations offices, input will be gathered from equity-deserving communities using conversation toolkits.
- **Engaging the Unengaged:** Partnerships with settlement agencies and immigrant organizations, along with multilingual surveys, will help reach newcomers. For residents who work outside Mississauga, pop-up booths and increased promotion at high-traffic locations like transit hubs, libraries, community centres, arenas, community events, and places of religious assembly will further encourage participation. The City will bring the engagement to people and meet them where they are.
- **Public Education:** Expert speakers on municipal issues will be hosted to discuss key topics, with participation from the public, staff, and leadership encouraged to raise awareness of the Strategic Plan and capture opportunities important to the City's future.

At the conclusion of the engagement phase, a corporate report will be prepared, that will consolidate findings from all research, consultations, and environmental scan. The report will identify priority areas and will be shared with Council by September 2025.

Monitoring and Reporting

To monitor and report effectively on the goals of Mississauga's updated Strategic Plan, staff recommend adopting selected standards from the World Council on City Data (WCCD). As a globally recognized organization, the WCCD certifies standardized city data using an international framework that enables cities to measure performance across sectors like economy, environment, infrastructure, and social well-being. This framework facilitates benchmarking against international best practices.

Established in 2014 at the University of Toronto, the WCCD supports cities of all sizes in Canada and worldwide in adopting standardized, independently verified, and globally comparable data. By using the applicable WCCD metrics, Mississauga can accurately track the performance of its Strategic Plan and benchmark against other cities globally.

The ISO 37120 series of standards (including ISO 37120, ISO 37122, and ISO 37123) provide standardized frameworks for cities to measure and enhance performance across various sectors. Collectively, these standards encompass 276 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across 19 themes, facilitating comprehensive urban analysis and benchmarking. Many of these indicators align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), enabling cities to track and advance their contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Although the City's previous WCCD subscription has lapsed, renewal and recertification efforts of the three ISO standards are underway, led by the Corporate Business Services (CBS) division. In 2025, staff will focus on defining goals and metrics to support the refreshed Strategic Plan and will align master plans and other departmental strategic plans/initiatives with these goals using consistent standards.

Rejoining WCCD will enable the City to track its progress using verified data, benchmark against global best practices, and remain forward-thinking in its long-term growth. Appendix 1 – The WCCD ISO City Indicator Framework – provides a summary of these themes and indicators and other potential benefits to the City of Mississauga.

Financial Impact

The WCCD subscription renewal costs USD \$69,000 annually and will be covered by the Strategic Plan refresh capital budget in its first year. Future subscription costs will be covered by the Corporate Business Services division starting in 2026. The operating impact is subject to Council approval in the 2026 Budget Cycle. All other resources will be sourced internally.

Conclusion

The Strategic Plan refresh is critical to align the City's long-term vision with current priorities, future trends and emerging challenges. Resuming the project with a focus on public engagement between January and May 2025 will enable the development of a forward-focused plan that supports Mississauga's evolving needs, guides corporate functions and informs the 2026-2030 Term of Council Priorities.

Attachments

Appendix 1: The WCCD ISO City Indicator Framework



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