

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



<p>Date: June 4, 2025</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 files: FILE # CD.21.RET PROJ</p>
	<p>Meeting date: June 23, 2025</p>

Subject

Mississauga Retail Strategy – Status Update

Recommendation

That the report dated June 4, 2025 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building titled “Mississauga Retail Strategy – Status Update”, be received for information.

Background

On February 14, 2024, Council adopted Resolution 0027-2024 where Council directed:

“The City’s Economic Development Office to assess Mississauga’s local retail sector in order to provide Council practical strategies for retaining and attracting retail and commercial business that are necessary to build walkable communities, with a focus on neighbourhoods along the Hazel McCallion LRT, and in the city’s major and community nodes.”

Comments

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of the Retail Strategy. In September 2024, a collaborative project with Economic Development and Planning staff was launched to develop a Retail Strategy to assess the current and future potential of Mississauga’s retail sector and develop a plan for enabling a retail offering as part of a healthy, vibrant, inclusive, and walkable community.

Parcel Economics Inc. with support from Gladki Planning Associates were retained to undertake a multi-faceted study approach with the objective of developing a strategy and action plan for enabling a thriving retail offer in alignment with the City’s strategic vision.

Phase 1 of the retail study included a critical assessment of the retail/service commercial uses in Mississauga and comprised the following components:

- a) Land Use Analysis;
- b) Market and Community Analysis;
- c) Assessment of Current Context, Benchmarking and Market Feasibility; and
- d) Stakeholder Consultation.

The Phase 1 assessment provides an analysis of key geographies in alignment with the new City Structure within the recently adopted Mississauga Official Plan (MOP 2051), including Growth Nodes, Growth Centres and Employment Areas.

Findings from Phase 1 have been combined into an Interim Summary Report (see Appendix 1). A brief summary of the preliminary findings within these reports is provided below.

A – Land Use Analysis

The Land Use Analysis report focused on identifying key geographies of study within the city and provided an overview of the state and performance of existing retail/service commercial uses across the city. The findings suggested that:

- Mississauga has an existing inventory of 30 million sq.ft. (2.79 million sq.m.) of retail/service commercial space.
- There is approximately 40 sq.ft. (3.72 sq.m.) of retail/service commercial space per capita which is in-line with typical required levels of service to meet the needs of residents (40-45 sq.ft./3.72-4.18 sq.m. per capita).
- The redevelopment of existing commercial buildings for intensified housing development could reduce the supply of retail/service commercial space.
- Low vacancy and stable rental rates across retail space in the city demonstrates demand for new commercial space expansion.

B – Market and Community Analysis

The Market and Community Analysis report focused on establishing a market profile for the city and includes a discussion on the implications of business trends on commercial development patterns in Mississauga such as:

- The city's diverse population influences the type of retail/service commercial space that often serve culturally specific needs;
- E-commerce and online shopping activity continues to grow;
- Shifts in the retail/service hierarchy to more distinct formats (i.e. regional shopping centres, commercial plazas, and main streets);
- Blurring of retail/service categories (i.e. offering groceries within drugstores);

- Renewed emphasis on unit sizes and typologies such as fine-grained commercial corridors (or main streets) and “micro-retail” units due to challenges of affordability of commercial space and heightened operating costs; and,
- Challenges with financial feasibility of mixed-use projects.

These trends must be considered when developing the retail strategy in terms of protecting and integrating opportunities for local businesses and retail/service commercial uses.

C – Assessment of Current Context, Benchmarking and Market Feasibility

The Assessment of Current Context, Benchmarking and Market Feasibility report focused on a comprehensive assessment of local shopping behaviours and the impacts of new developments in Mississauga. Through resident and business surveys, an understanding of shopping patterns, why people shop in certain areas, and what operational challenges and opportunities businesses are facing was identified.

The following market-based trends were identified and will influence the strategy. They are summarized as follows:

- **Amount** (Floor Area) – 5.4 million+ sq.ft. (0.5 million+ sq.m.) of retail space will be needed to support population growth to 2051.
- **Type** (Store Category) – A diversity of retail spaces (i.e. food stores, non-food stores and services) is required to meet anticipated demands and to satisfy basic day-to-day shopping needs.
- **Location** (Geography) – A majority of new retail growth is anticipated to occur in intensifying areas (specifically in Growth Nodes).
- **Format** (Building Typology) – A balanced approach that maintains a mix of unit sizes and formats (mixed-use buildings) is needed to promote vibrant, walkable communities.

D – Stakeholder Consultation

The Stakeholder Consultation report focused on engaging with local stakeholder to understand the potential constraints, opportunities and challenges facing retail and service commercial delivery. Engagement involved discussions with City Councillors and the Mayor, representatives from local Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), and local real estate developers active in Mississauga and/or the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Through these discussions, the following key themes were identified in relation to the existing conditions of retail in Mississauga:

- Retail serves a broader community function as a “third place” where people gather to socialize, relax and connect.

- New development impacts businesses and residents (existing businesses are displaced and are not able to afford the rents in newer commercial spaces).
- While retailers value parking availability for their customers, providing parking was noted as a challenge (i.e. parking requirements, payment-in-lieu of parking can be a costly upfront expense).
- Retail in Mississauga is variable with established or well-known tenants performing strongly; however, challenges such as a potential oversupply of service commercial uses (i.e. dentists, nail salons, etc.), the rise of e-commerce, and the lack of certain stores and services—such as grocery stores and locally-run establishments—contribute to an uneven landscape in some areas of the city.
- Providing access to retail/service commercial uses within walking distance is critical to support growth.

As Mississauga continues to grow and urbanize, the development of a comprehensive Retail Strategy is essential to ensure the city's retail landscape remains vibrant, inclusive, and economically resilient. The strategy will aim to provide direction to guide future land use decisions, support small businesses, identify actions to and align retail planning with broader city-building goals.

The strategy will address directional themes identified in Phase 1, including:

- Flexibility in Land Use Permissions and other related policies such as parking requirements;
- Retaining Retail Supply and Improving Retail Mix;
- Quality versus Quantity to ensure an appropriate balance and diversity of retail spaces;
- Placemaking, Infrastructure and Public Realm Investments;
- Diversifying Retail Opportunities; and,
- Tools to Address Financial Feasibility of New Retail.

Engagement and Consultation

The Mississauga Retail Strategy is being prepared in consultation with City Council, the public (including residents and business owners), internal city departments/stakeholders, representatives from the development community, and other municipalities for benchmarking purposes.

Strategic Plan

The Mississauga Retail Strategy aligns with two of the pillars of the Strategic Plan: *Connect* to support the building of complete communities to accommodate growth and *Prosper* to foster a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact resulting from the recommendation of this report.

Next Steps

Timelines to bring forward Mississauga's Retail Strategy for Council approval have been adjusted slightly. Throughout the upcoming summer, the consultants will work on completing Phase 2 to prepare the Retail Strategy and Implementation Plan Recommendations.

The findings of the Retail Strategy will inform the ongoing Economic Development Strategy that is currently underway. The final Retail Strategy will be presented to Council in the fall of 2025.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Mississauga Retail Strategy - Interim Summary Report



Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building

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