



Corporate Report

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DATE: February 28, 2013

TO: Mayor and members of Council
Meeting Date: March 6, 2013

FROM: Edward R. Sajecki
Commissioner of Planning and Building

SUBJECT: **Community Improvement Plan for the Main Street District of the
Downtown Core Character Area**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That a by-law be enacted to designate the Main Street District of the Downtown Core Character Area as a Community Improvement Project Area.
2. That a Community Improvement Plan for the Main Street District of the Downtown Core Character Area be prepared.
3. That a public meeting be held to consider the Community Improvement Plan for the Main Street District of the Downtown Core Character Area.

**REPORT
HIGHLIGHTS:**

- A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is proposed to facilitate and accelerate the development of the Main Street District.
- To implement a CIP the next steps would be to designate the area as a Community Improvement Project Area, identify appropriate programs and financial tools and hold a public meeting to consider the proposed CIP.

BACKGROUND:

Main Street District of the Downtown Core

The Downtown 21 Master Plan was received by City Council on April 28, 2010 and the Downtown Core Local Area Plan was approved by Council on February 20, 2013. These documents identify the Main Street District as the heart of the Downtown Core. The District is envisioned to be a lively pedestrian oriented urban place that will act as a model, catalyst and attractor for ongoing investment in the Downtown Core.

The Downtown Core Local Area Plan identifies the following key objectives for the Main Street District:

- to create a “main street” that connects the Square One Shopping Centre to the residential communities south of Burnhamthorpe Road West;
- to incorporate a broad mix of uses that would make this area a vibrant part of the city fabric;
- to create a critical mass of at least 5,000 residents, 5,000 employees, with neighbourhood oriented retail/restaurant uses; and
- to realize this vision in a relatively short period of time.

Policy 5.1.3 of the Downtown Core Local Area Plan indicates that Community Improvement Plans may be prepared to encourage, incent and support employment uses.

Community Improvement Plan

On September 29, 2010 City Council considered the report “*Assessing Planning Tools for Mississauga – Recommendations Report.*” That report outlined various planning tools the City could utilize as it transitions from a greenfield community to a more urban place where development is largely through intensification and redevelopment. One of the tools identified in the report was the use of Community Improvement Plans (CIP).

A CIP is a tool, enabled under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, which allows a municipality to develop a comprehensive plan for community improvement either at a city-wide or area-specific scale. A CIP is a strategic framework for dealing with the development of land and buildings in a way that can address local physical, social, economic or environmental issues and priorities.

CIPs are supported by a range of powers which enhance the municipality's ability to promote and direct community improvement. Once a CIP is in effect, municipalities have the ability to:

- provide financial incentives and programs to owners of property within the community improvement project area in compliance with Section 106 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* which otherwise prohibits a municipality from directly or indirectly bonusing a business enterprise through economic assistance; and
- prepare lands for community improvement through the purchase or expropriation and assembly of land as well as its disposal through sale or lease for any use in conformity with the CIP.

The programs contained within a CIP are typically time-limited and generally consist of either municipally-driven or incentive-based activities. Municipally-driven CIPs are those which focus on capital works improvements (e.g. public realm improvements or the creation of new public amenities and facilities). Incentive-based programs represent financial inducements for property owners within the CIP project area. They include a range of financial incentives such as grants, loans, fee exemptions and property tax relief. In most cases the resulting community improvement, which benefits both the community and the property owner, is expected to stimulate ongoing investment interest in the area after the incentive program has ended.

Mississauga Official Plan

Section 19.22 of Mississauga Official Plan sets out the City's policies regarding CIPs. It states that a CIP may be established to consider, among other matters, the following:

- deficiencies in the physical infrastructure of an area, including sanitary sewers, water or storm sewer systems, roads, sidewalks, curbs, street lighting, and electrical facilities;
- deficiencies in the provision of off-street parking areas;
- inadequate park space, open space, recreation, and other community facilities;
- identification of the need to provide affordable housing;
- identification of the need to provide cultural infrastructure;
- opportunities for the infilling and development of underutilized sites;
- identification of the need to encourage office and other employment opportunities;
- identification of the need to encourage energy improvements; and
- opportunities to support the growth management objectives of the Plan and encourage transit supportive communities.

Mississauga Official Plan also identifies a number of implementation methods. These include, among others, the following:

- participation in funding programs with senior levels of government that provide assistance in undertaking Community Improvement projects;
- the preparation of design guidelines which outline necessary streetscape improvements and beautification plans for the area;
- the acquisition and assembly of lands for public facilities and infrastructure, and possible development; and

- allocation of public funds in the form of grants, loans or other financial instruments for the physical rehabilitation or improvement of land and/or buildings including the remediation of contaminated properties.

COMMENTS:

The Main Street District has been identified as being of strategic significance to the City in the creation of a vibrant, urban downtown. To facilitate and accelerate the development of this area, it is proposed that a CIP be prepared for the Main Street District, as shown on Appendix 1.

A CIP would allow Mississauga to develop programs and utilize financial tools that would enable the City to encourage appropriate development and to acquire lands necessary for public infrastructure.

To implement a CIP the next steps would be to designate the area as a Community Improvement Project Area, identify appropriate programs and financial tools and hold a public meeting to consider the proposed CIP.

The CIP that is being proposed at this time is intended to apply only to the Main Street District and to be relatively narrow in scope. Future CIPs for this and other areas of the Downtown Core and the City may be considered at a later date.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Under the Connect pillar of the Strategic Plan, is the strategic goal of creating a vibrant Downtown. This goal speaks to developing a vibrant Downtown that will be the civic and cultural soul of the city, as well as a strong economic centre.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The CIP could result in funding commitments, however, the CIP is intended to stimulate development that advances the vision for Downtown that may not have occurred or may not have occurred at this time. In the long term, the program should result in a tax uplift as lands are developed. The extent of the financial impact will be determined by the financial tools utilized and the participation in the CIP by the private sector.

CONCLUSION:

A CIP is proposed to facilitate and accelerate the development of the Main Street District. To implement a CIP the next steps would be to designate the area as a Community Improvement Project Area, identify appropriate programs and financial tools and hold a public meeting to consider the proposed CIP.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix 1: Main Street District of the Downtown Core Character Area – Proposed Community Improvement Project Area

Edward R. Sajecki

Commissioner of Planning and Building

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MAIN STREET DISTRICT OF THE DOWNTOWN CORE CHARACTER AREA-
PROPOSED COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA

APPENDIX 1

