



MISSISSAUGA

.BUSINESS friendly





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Mississauga is a dynamic and beautiful city made up of a network of vibrant, safe and connected communities. Situated on the shores of Lake Ontario, the city is the sixth largest in Canada, and one of the country's most successful communities. Residents enjoy a wide selection of excellent housing, shopping, and great schools, as well as an active cultural life with galleries, theaters, art centres, museums, concert homes, and a year-long schedule of festival events.





The city is also exceedingly business friendly, with an optimal location in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), and an active Economic Development Office (EDO) dedicated to providing a wide range of information and services to help businesses grow and prosper. As a result, the city is home to many major corporate headquarters, as well as the Toronto Pearson International Airport, the largest airport in the country.

Moving forward, however, the City of Mississauga is not content to rest on its laurels – the city has a vision to become a worldwide hub of creative and innovative activity, where

business and talent thrive.

To realize their vision, the City of Mississauga adopted a 10-year Economic Development Strategy in 2010, which identified actions for fostering a prosperous and sustainable economy. The strategy was structured around three high level goals: become a global business magnet; embrace a culture of innovation; and build a knowledge economy.

With the 10-year strategy passed its midpoint, the City of Mississauga is optimistic as it focuses on existing strengths and seeks new opportunities that will help the local economy continue to grow and prosper.



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AN IDEAL LOCATION

When it comes to attracting and retaining business and investment, Mississauga has a long list of advantages. According to Mayor Bonnie Crombie, the city boasts three major strengths in particular.

Mississauga's first major strength, she says, is its location in the heart of the GTA, which has a market of six million people. Plus, the city is home to the Pearson International Airport – the busiest airport in Canada, served by 75 airlines – making it easy for people to there and go almost anywhere.

“When you land at Pearson International Airport, you're actually landing in Mississauga,” Mayor Crombie explains. “So you have about a 15 to 20 minute drive to the city of Toronto, and an hour in the other direction will get you to the US border. We also have excellent transportation links, including seven major highways, three major railway lines, busses, a harbour – you name it.”

Mississauga's second major strength is its talent pool. According to PwC's 15th Annual Global CEO Survey, 78 per cent of CEOs worldwide believe finding talent is their number one challenge, and the City of Mississauga

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is dedicated to helping meet that challenge.

“We have a highly skilled workforce,” Mayor Crombie says. “Two-thirds of our population has a post-secondary degree, and about another 20 per cent of those are highly skilled in areas like engineering, micro-biology, design, and more. We’re a cultural magnet for skilled and semi-skilled labour from around the world.”

The workforce in Mississauga collectively speaks over 200 languages from 90 different countries, and includes representatives from all over the world. The city also has ample post-secondary education in close proximity, with 10 universities and 11 colleges within a

one-hour drive. This educational infrastructure will allow Mississauga to sustain and grow their supply of great talent.

The city also boasts an extremely strong lifestyle offering, with strengths in education, healthcare, stability and safety – in fact, for the 14th year in a row, Mississauga was named one of the safest cities in Canada based on research conducted by Safe City Mississauga, which compares crime rates to other census metropolitan areas across the country. Because of this overall lifestyle offering, employees and their families tend to be drawn to the city, making it easy to retain talent once it ar-

rives.

“We really sell ourselves as a great place to live, work and raise your family,” says Mayor Crombie. “There’s a quality of life here that’s quite exceptional. Mississauga was made for families; not as a bedroom community, but as a focal point for amazing lives.”

Finally, Mayor Crombie cites the city’s “business friendly environment” as its third major strength. By that, she means that it’s cost-effective to operate and grow in Mississauga, and that the city’s industry-leading EDO will work closely with local companies to make sure that happens.

“We have a great service mentality with our Economic Development Office,” she says “We actually visit our local corporations and companies and ask them how we can improve our service. We find out what they need help with, whether it’s creating contacts, business problem-solving, or site location assistance.”

Whether a business is starting out, expanding, consolidating or relocating, Mayor Crombie says they can rely on a team of professionals at the EDO to help them make decisions easier, faster, and more effectively.

“We’re very hands-on with our companies,” she says.



The efficacy of the City of Mississauga and its EDO is reflected in the city's thriving and diverse business community. The city currently has over 63,000 businesses, including 73 Fortune 500s, and 14,000 multinationals – most of which are clustered around four key sectors that the city specialises in and draws foreign investment into.

These four sectors include life sciences, advanced manufacturing, information and communications technology (ICT), and finance, insurance, and real estate (also known as FIRE). This depth of existing business is important, because companies tend to want to be located

near potential suppliers, distributors, and other allied service providers in order to create synergies and efficiencies.

LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to focusing on its existing strengths, the City of Mississauga is also constantly searching for new opportunities to develop their economy and achieve their long-term vision. To this end, they have initiated a number of exciting infrastructure and economic development projects that will grow the city's appeal as a destination to live and work.

Some of these projects involve the city's

transportation network and have received funding from the Ontario provincial government. An example is the Mississauga Transitway, a bus rapid transit system (BRT) that is in the latter stages of construction. That project involves the creation of 12 stations along a dedicated transitway spanning east-to-west from Meadowvale to the Mississauga Airport Corporate Centre.

Another example is the Hurontario Light Rail Transit (LRT), a planned light rail line that will span 20 kilometres and 22 stops. Last year, the provincial government announced they will fully fund the project at roughly \$1.4 billion. Construction on that project is expected to commence in 2018, and the line is projected to enter service in 2022.

"That's going to be a huge game changer, completely transformational for our city," Mayor Crombie says.

The provincial government also partially funded the completion of the GO Bus Terminal in downtown Mississauga, which is the second busiest in the GTA. More recently, the government announced \$20 million in grants to help create a network of public charging stations of electric vehicles, and a Mississauga-based company earned the contract.

The City of Mississauga is also working closely with other partners to create economic development opportunities. For example, at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)

campus is I-CUBE, a business accelerator. I-CUBE offers students and community youth early-stage business development and commercialization services – including an entrepreneurial curriculum, business advisory services, collaborative space, expert speaker sessions, and a mentorship program. The city is also home to another business incubator in the RIC Centre, which provides services to technology start-ups of all shapes and sizes in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon.

Mississauga is also part of a public-private alliance that brings together 29 municipalities and regions in the Greater Toronto Area, the



governments of Ontario and Canada, several not-for-profit organizations, and a broad cross section of private sector corporations.

That body shares the city's mission of providing businesses with professional assistance when it comes to evaluating, planning and implementing an expansion or move to the area. For example, they have a "soft landing program" that aids companies looking to move the business from another country, providing them with everything from immigration law advice to help locating appropriate real estate – "whatever you need, they'll pull together for no cost, which is very unique," Mayor Crombie says.

The city also works with local partners, such as the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB). EDAB is a dedicated group of volunteers from the business and education community who provide advice and input to the city and the EDO on matters related to the economic sustainability of the community.

In partnership with the EDAB, the city developed a program that Mayor Crombie envisioned during her mayoral campaign – the Mississauga International Partnership Program committee (MIPP). That committee will focus on creating new and existing connections with cultural groups in order to help attract foreign

direct investment and improve the city's international competitiveness.

"We've brought boards of trade and chambers of commerce from our diverse communities onto this committee, and we work with them to generate leads in their home countries," Mayor Crombie explains. "That way, we're able to leverage our residents and their business networks from abroad."

A LIVEABLE FUTURE

Mississauga is still a relatively young city at roughly 40-years-old, but it has already come a long way, and the future is even brighter.

Moving forward, Mayor Crombie says the city will continue down the path it's already on, as it focuses on creating more jobs, growing its profile globally, and becoming even more interconnected.

The city will also focus its attention on environmental sustainability. After the United Nations Climate Change conference in Paris, Mayor Crombie asked her staff to prepare a climate change report for council that will help them consider their own initiatives.

In the meantime, Mississauga is already a leader when it comes to stormwater management. In recent years, the city found that its in-



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infrastructure was eroding as a result of its inability to cope with the flash floods and storms that seem to be growing more and more common. In response, they implemented a new stormwater levee surcharge in order to invest more money in their stormwater system to keep it in good working order and to avoid costly repairs in the future. On the average home, the charge is minimal, but will help minimize potential risks to residents, property owners, and the environment.

That stormwater charge program recently received the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Environment Award.

“This national recognition from the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators is very encouraging,” said Mayor Bonnie Crombie in a press release at the time. “Stormwater management is an important priority for the City of Mississauga. There are increasing pressures on our aging infrastructure and more stormwater is entering our system than ever before.”

“Safe, reliable stormwater infrastructure is crucial to city-building. The stormwater charge remains an important, forward looking and responsible decision made by Council. It is helping us protect our environment and build a stronger and more reliable future for Mississauga.”

On the topic of sustainability, Mississauga

also has a Living Green Master Plan (LGMP), which is available for download at <http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/living-green-master-plan>. That plan provides a framework for the city, in collaboration with the community, businesses, and other levels of government, to meet a number of environmental goals and raise the minimum level of environmental performance in Mississauga.

The city is also planting a million trees – literally. They launched a program called One Million Trees Mississauga in order to help conserve and enhance the city’s open spaces and forested areas. Trees are planted by city staff, partners, and volunteers on public and private property. The count has already surpassed 200,000 and is growing all the time.

In recent years, the city also embarked on the LED Street Lighting Conversion Project, which involves the conversion of approximately 50,000 street lights to LED light bulbs. The new LED street lights will significantly reduce maintenance costs and are expected to result in a 55 per cent reduction in future energy consumption for the City. LED street lights will also increase safety, visibility and reduce light pollution in the sky.

Initiatives like that also go towards making the city a more appealing place to live and work, which Mayor Crombie says is her constant overriding mission.

“My goal is to create a more liveable, walk-

able city with transit that integrates seamlessly across our entire region,” she says.

Creating a more liveable city means continuing to add vitality to the city’s downtown. It also means creating a new state-of-the-art community at the site of the former Lakeview Generating Station, developing an “innovation corridor” within that community, and creating “inspiring, vibrant places” along the Mississauga waterfront – all of which are projects currently in development.

To learn more about the City of Mississauga and its many opportunities for business and development, visit <http://winthehumanrace.ca/>





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