

City of Mississauga
Corporate Report



Date: 2019/06/14

To: Chair and Members of General Committee

From: Robert Trewartha, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

Originator's files:

Meeting date:
2019/06/26

Subject

Mississauga Matters: Summary of Priority Issues and Engagement Strategy for the 2019 Federal Election

Recommendation

1. That the report "Mississauga Matters: Summary of Priority Issues and Engagement Strategy for the 2019 Federal Election" be endorsed as the City of Mississauga's priority issues pertaining to the October 21, 2019 Canadian federal election.
2. That the engagement tactics recommended in the report entitled "Mississauga Matters: Summary of Priority Issues and Engagement Strategy for the 2019 federal election" be approved for implementation.

Report Highlights

The Canadian general election is scheduled to be held on October 21, 2019

The federal government is an important partner in ensuring the City of Mississauga meets its objectives, realizes its vision, and achieves its city-building priorities, specifically through proper funding mechanisms.

A federal election affords the City of Mississauga the opportunity to engage with political leaders and candidates on key issues of importance. While there are many issues of importance between the City of Mississauga and the federal government, it is recommended that the City focus on just four in our engagement strategy: public transit, sustainable and direct funding for infrastructure, affordable housing, and strengthening the relationship between the federal and our municipal government.

The proposed name of the City of Mississauga provincial election strategy is "Mississauga Matters."

A number of engagement tactics are outlined that range from simple fact sheets for the general public, online engagement, and candidate and stakeholder information sessions.

Background

The next federal election will take place on October 21, 2019. The official writ period will likely begin a month prior, although this date has not yet been determined.

The City of Mississauga is an important stakeholder to the federal government and our residents will be directly affected by the outcome of the federal election. It is important that the City of Mississauga not only makes its top priorities known to the local candidates and party leaders, but also engages residents, businesses and key stakeholders to demonstrate the importance of Mississauga's priorities and why Mississauga matters to them. Our City is home to 6 federal ridings, currently held by members of the governing party.

Over the past many provincial and federal election cycles, the City of Mississauga has developed and deployed advocacy and engagement strategies. These previous engagement strategies have informed residents, businesses, and stakeholders about important municipal priorities and engaged them as supporters of the City's message. They have also informed local candidates running in the 6 local ridings about the City's priorities and what our expectations are for the party that forms the next provincial government.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the priority issues for the City and outline an engagement strategy for stakeholders, candidates, and federal parties during the 2019 federal election.

Mississauga Matters 2018 Provincial Campaign

In 2018, the City of Mississauga undertook a provincial advocacy campaign to showcase our priorities to the provincial parties and local candidates. The campaign featured a number of tactics, including significant presence on social media, information and advocacy materials (printed and digital), videos and visual materials, as well as a debate in the Council Chamber featuring 4 local candidates.

The results of the social media campaign, using the #MississaugaMatters hashtag were as follows (Appendix A):

- 355,587 impressions (target: 100,000)
- 13,071 engagements (target: 1,500)
- 29, 248 media views (target: 5,000)

An impression means the number of people reached; engagement means likes, comments, post shares; and media views means videos and visual materials were viewed.

The 2018 provincial campaign was provided a budget of \$50,000. Multiple departments within the corporation provided input and information and helped execute the strategy. Preparation work on the campaign began in January 2018 and the campaign was fully implemented between May 9, 2018 and June 13, 2019.

Comments

APPROACH

The strategy will aim to keep the number of issues manageable focusing on key priorities as identified by Council. If the strategy has too many messages or too many priorities, it will be difficult to engage our target audiences and deliver our message effectively.

Using the 2019 federal pre-budget submission as a guide, the overall message to provincial parties and candidates will be:

“Mississauga needs a committed federal government partner to provide consistent, predictable, direct and long-term funding and the legislative authority to allow us to build Mississauga into a world-class city.”

This message will underpin the entire strategy and shape the messaging of each of the priority areas: public transit; sustainable funding for infrastructure, affordable housing; and a strengthening of the municipal-federal relationship, with a greater emphasis on direct funding transfers to Mississauga.

While the federal government is limited in its direct interaction with municipal governments, in recent years there has been a shift towards a strengthened relationship. This has resulted in increased funding (i.e. doubling of the Federal Gas Tax in 2019), as well as unprecedented investments in housing, infrastructure, transit, and green infrastructure. Mississauga has and will continue to benefit from this new relationship with the federal government and the associated funding. It is our intention that the federal government continues this approach to municipalities following the 2019 federal election.

It is proposed that the strategy be titled “Mississauga Matters” to demonstrate not only the importance of our City to the next federal government, but also to local residents, businesses and stakeholder groups. The title has an additional meaning as through the engagement strategy we will also discuss priority matters pertaining to the City of Mississauga. This title has been used for previous federal and provincial election campaigns, most recently in the 2018 provincial election, and has been found quite effective.

During the 2015 federal election, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) conducted a campaign called “Hometown Proud,” where they sought to make local priorities into national priorities. It was highly effective with many of the campaign planks adopted into the platforms of the main parties. In 2019, FCM is again undertaking an advocacy campaign to encourage each party to maintain and enhance the federal government’s relationship with municipalities. They are again seeking to make local issues into national issues.

Recent public opinion research by FCM supports this approach. Here are some highlights from the May 2019 research conducted by Abacus Data on behalf of FCM (Appendix B):

- **61 per cent** of Canadians believe municipal governments are best understanding challenges facing our communities (13 percent provincial; 5 per cent federal)
- **46 per cent** believe municipalities are best able to plan for what infrastructure upgrades and maintenance is needed in our communities (24 per cent provincial; 9 per cent federal)
- **82 per cent** of Canadian say federal and municipal governments do not talk enough
- **48 per cent** of Canadians do not believe municipalities have enough resources to manage, maintain and build infrastructure
- **86 per cent** of Canadians believe it is a “good” or “very good” idea to give municipalities more control to manage infrastructure projects and 83 per cent want to give greater control to municipalities to decide where money is spent
- **84 per cent** of Canadians believe it is a “good” or “very good” idea for a federal party to promise to give municipalities permanent, dedicated funding and allow them to decide what the money is spent on
- **85 per cent** of Conservative Party supporters, 86 per cent of Liberal Party supporters, and 83 per cent of NDP supporters are in support of permanent funding tools for municipalities.

The research shows there is public support for a stronger federal-municipal relationship and a willingness to support parties that provide more direct funding to municipalities to improve local communities. The 2019 federal Mississauga Matters campaign will advocate to maintain the funding we have already received and make the case for increases in the years to come.

PRIORITY ISSUES

The four proposed priority areas of focus for our engagement strategy include:

- **Investments in Public Transit and Transportation Infrastructure**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Consistent, predictable, and long-term funding for infrastructure**
- **Strengthening the relationship between the federal and our municipal government**

i. **Public Transit and Transportation Infrastructure**

The City of Mississauga has a strategic vision that is only achievable if reliable, sustainable public transit systems are built. The City continues to make significant investments in public transit locally, but we require additional investment from the federal (and provincial) government to realize our long-term transit objectives. It is critically important to Mississauga that the next federal government is committed to continuing to work with the City to build transit, as well as to long-term, sustainable, and predictable funding.

In 2016, the federal government committed to Phase One of the Invest in Canada Infrastructure Plan (ICIP), which provided the City of Mississauga with \$58 million (50/50 cost share). This allowed us to make significant investments in our transit and mobility infrastructure across the city, most notably purchasing 77 new diesel-hybrid transit buses. Phase 2 of ICIP has allocated \$843 million to the City of Mississauga over 11 years (40% federal; 33% provincial; and 27% municipal). It is important that these investments continue with the next federal government as they provide much-needed funding for our city to address outstanding projects on our capital infrastructure list.

The federal government has a role to play in investing Mississauga's priority transit projects, which include:

- The Downtown Mississauga Terminal and Transitway Connection;
- The Dundas Bus Rapid Transit Corridor;
- Higher order transit on the Lakeshore Corridor as per the Lakeshore Connecting Communities strategy;
- All-day, two-way GO on the Milton Line through infrastructure improvements, including the "Missing Link,"; and
- Regional Express Rail service on the Lakeshore West and Kitchener GO Corridors

The questions that political parties and candidates should answer are:

- Will you and your party commit to maintain and enhance the investments in transit in Mississauga?
- Will you provide direct funding on an allocation basis to Mississauga to build local and rapid transit in our City?

Message to residents, businesses and stakeholders:

- To reduce congestion and traffic, and to continue to grow our local economy, Mississauga needs predictable, long-term, and sustainable federal funding to build local and regional rapid transit.

ii. **Sustainable Infrastructure**

The quality of life of Mississauga residents depends on basic infrastructure like roads, bridges and water and waste water systems, but also on parks, trails, community centres and other amenities being in a state of good repair. In 2019, Mississauga has an estimated \$9.2 billion in infrastructure assets.

Mississauga's infrastructure is funded through a combination of property taxes, debt financing, gas tax, development charges, as well as reserve funds the City has set aside. The City of Mississauga needs more than \$356 million every year to put funds away for replacement of future infrastructure needs. In 2019, the City will only raise \$35 million through property taxes and \$63 million through gas tax for existing infrastructure, leaving a funding shortfall of \$258 million. Still it is not enough. The City needs to continue to apply the two percent infrastructure and debt repayment levy in order to manage our infrastructure and keep our foundations strong.

To maintain Mississauga's infrastructure in a state of good repair, long-term, predictable and sustainable infrastructure funding is required. Municipalities own 60% of all infrastructure in Canada, yet only receive 9 cents of every tax dollar collected, compared to 44 cents for the province and 47 cents for the federal government. Municipalities like Mississauga need the federal (and provincial) government to provide more long-term, predictable funding for infrastructure.

In the 2019 federal budget, the government announced a one-time doubling of the Federal Gas Tax. In Mississauga, this resulted in \$20 million more to the city of Mississauga to invest in our transit and infrastructure priorities. While this one-time funding was appreciated and will be put to good use, it is our objective, and that of the entire municipal sector, that this direct funding from the federal government to municipalities be enhanced and made permanent. The traditional funding delivery model requires bilateral agreements with the provinces, which is cumbersome and does not allow municipalities as much say with respect to the projects that will be funded. A direct, allocation-based funding model from the federal government is the most efficient way for cities like Mississauga to build infrastructure in a timely fashion.

The City has already developed materials to show residents what our infrastructure consists of, including a brochure that has already been used in our provincial and federal advocacy efforts. We will use this work as a base to showcase to federal parties and candidates, as well as residents the need for federal funding. The approach will be to demonstrate the types of infrastructure that residents enjoy (trails, community centres, roads and bridges, etc.) is at risk if we do not secure sustainable funding from the federal government.

The questions political parties and local candidates must answer are:

- Do you and your party commit to developing long-term, predictable, and sustainable funding programs from the federal government to specifically fund the building and maintenance of municipal infrastructure?
- Will you commit to providing permanent, direct funding to municipalities, similar to the one-time doubling of the Federal Gas Tax.

Message to residents, business and stakeholders:

- Mississauga owns \$9.2 billion infrastructure ranging from roads and bridges, to trails, parks, community centres, and much more that impacts the lives of residents every day. We need a committed provincial partner to provide sustainable, long-term and predictable infrastructure funding to build Mississauga into a world-class city.

iii. Affordable, Housing

In 2017, Mississauga took the lead by developing a made-in-Mississauga plan to address issues of housing affordability in our City. The goal of “Making Room for the Middle” is to make 35% of Mississauga’s housing stock affordable (\$250,000 - \$400,000 ownership/\$1,200 per month rental) for middle income earners (\$55,000 - \$100,000 household income). Housing is considered “affordable” when a household pays less than 30% of their income on housing. In Mississauga, more than 33% of households are spending more than 30% of their income on housing, demonstrating a significant housing affordability issue exists in Mississauga.

Within the 40 recommendations in our housing strategy, 7 specifically require federal support or legislative changes to provide the City with more authority and ability to achieve our objective of incentivizing the building of affordable, middle-class housing. These include:

1. Petition senior levels of government (Peel, Provincial and Federal Governments) to create enduring and sustainable funding programs that realize developer timeframes and financial needs
2. Appeal to senior levels of government (Peel, Province and Federal Governments) to provide affordable home ownership assistance to individuals
3. Petition senior levels of government to consider taxation policies that incent affordable housing that include but are not limited to:
 - a. the creation of second units
 - b. rehab of existing purpose built rental housing
 - c. new purpose built rental housing
 - d. GST rebates or exemptions
4. Appeal to Federal and Provincial governments to explore tax credits and exemptions for affordable housing including but not limited to:
 - a. income tax credit (e.g. second unit homeowners)

- b. land transfer tax exemptions
 - c. create land value capture tools for municipalities
 - d. low income housing tax credits
5. Encourage senior levels of government to provide financial backing/insurance to affordable housing developers
 6. Petition senior levels of government to provide standardized local housing data and consistent methodologies to measure housing affordability
 7. Work with senior levels of government to make their surplus land available for affordable housing.

In 2017, the federal government announced the National Housing Strategy. In the 2018 federal budget, the Strategy was capitalized with a \$40 billion investment over 11 years. It is important that this money begin to flow in Mississauga and that each party commits to maintaining the strategy, the funding, and to working with municipal partners to enhance the program to bring more affordable housing online in our community.

Questions for provincial parties and local candidates:

- Do you and your party commit to a National Housing Strategy and to maintaining and enhancing the \$40 billion commitment to build affordable housing across Canada, including in Mississauga?

Message to residents, businesses and stakeholders:

- Mississauga residents should be able to live and work in their community without fear of being priced out of the market. Our City needs a committed federal government partner to help incentivize the building of affordable housing.

iv. Strengthening the Federal-Municipal relationship

Over the last 4 years, the relationship between the federal and municipal governments in Canada has been strengthened. For the first time ever, municipalities were invited to attend Federal-Provincial and Territorial (FPT) meetings on infrastructure. Mississauga was asked to attend these meetings twice as a representative of Canada's municipalities. At the same time, the federal government has made unprecedented investments in infrastructure, including \$180 billion over 11 years through the Invest in Canada Infrastructure Program.

Infrastructure funding has traditionally been delivered through a bilateral agreement between the federal and provincial governments. The federal government, through the work of FCM and municipalities across Canada, including Mississauga, has allocated funding specifically to municipalities for transit, infrastructure, and green

infrastructure. However, under the bilateral agreements, the provinces control the intake of projects and must approve and then submit projects from municipal governments to the federal government. While municipalities have been allocated funding, there is no guarantee the province will approve our projects.

As such, there is a need to continue to strengthen the bilateral relationship between the federal and municipal government in the years to come. In the 2019 Federal Budget, the federal government provided direct funding to municipalities through a one-time doubling of the Federal Gas Tax. This was done to speed up the flow of money to municipalities as the province has not yet opened the intake for Phase II of the ICIP.

This direct funding model works well for Mississauga and allows us to make investments in our priority areas without seeking approvals from the province. Moreover, it recognizes the strong, steady financial management practices of municipal governments and our ability to make smart investments in priority infrastructure. FCM will be making a similar case to the federal government during the 2019 campaign. As over 80 per cent of Canadians now live in cities, our voice and standing within the federation must be elevated. Cities like Mississauga are quite literally building Canada. As FCM says, city-building is nation building.

It is important that as the 6th largest City in Canada, Mississauga delivers this message to our local federal candidates, party leaders, residents and businesses. The research from Abacus Data prepared for FCM supports this approach.

The questions for political parties and local candidates:

- Do you and your party commit to working with the City of Mississauga and other municipalities on a new funding framework for municipalities that includes permanent and direct funding?

Message to residents, businesses and stakeholders:

- As the 6th largest city in Canada, Mississauga requires a strong relationship with the federal government and direct funding from the federal government to build strong, resilient communities.

TARGET AUDIENCES

The City of Mississauga's provincial election strategy will have three distinct target audiences:

- Political parties and party leaders

- Local party candidates registered with Elections Ontario in Mississauga's 6 provincial ridings
- Residents, businesses, and other important stakeholders in our City.

The overall messages will be tailored to suit each of these audiences in an effort to achieve maximum engagement from each group. For the vast majority of residents, basic messages and information will likely be sufficient. However, for those residents, stakeholders and candidates who wish to learn more, additional corporate reports, technical documents, and reports will be made available on each of our priority issues.

ENGAGEMENT TACTICS

In past federal and provincial election campaigns, the City of Mississauga has employed various engagement tactics with stakeholders and candidates, including:

- Website and online engagement, including social media
- News releases and other public communications activities
- Questionnaire to local candidates and party leaders
- A debate in the Council chambers
- Engaging businesses and residents to seek their input and support
- Partnership with the Region of Peel
- Video and visual content

The election is just under 4 months away, which provides us with adequate time to properly develop a strategy, a suite of tactics, and a roll out schedule in the months to come. As well, many of the materials used during the 2018 provincial campaign can be repurposed quickly and easily for this campaign.

The design of the campaign and the look and feel of the visual collateral will be based off existing materials.

The engagement tactics fall into three categories:

A. General Engagement:

- i. News releases and media alerts
- ii. Web information, including:
 - a. Information for candidates and residents on the City's priority issues
 - b. Downloadable and shareable fact sheets
 - c. Videos and shareable content including infographics
 - d. 'Keep me Posted' email alerts,

- e. Short videos on issues
- f. Get out the vote' message)
- iii. Information links to candidate's running in each riding
- iv. Social media outreach
- v. Outreach to both mainstream and ethnic media
- vi. Partnerships with the Region of Peel and other local municipalities where applicable
- vii. Partnerships with other local agencies (i.e. MBOT, Peel Region, United Way, residents' associations, etc.), as well as industry organizations like FCM and AMO

ii. Targeted Resident and Stakeholder Engagement:

- i. Video(s) specific to each of the issues, designed to be easily shareable across multiple media platforms
- ii. Printed information (not intended for every household but to be distributed at the City's facilities, public meetings, etc.)
- iii. Standardized messages for residents and businesses to send tailored and targeted messages to candidates and parties in support of Mississauga's priorities.
- iv. Printable post card for residents and businesses to mail to parties and candidates
- v. All stakeholder meeting to inform our key partners about the City's priorities

iii. Targeted Candidate Engagement:

- i. Open letter from Mayor to all local candidates*
- ii. Open letter with questionnaire to all party leaders
- iii. All candidates information forum
- iv. Candidate debate**

** The City will only engage with official political parties and local candidates registered with Elections Canada*

*** Note: the candidate debate will be limited to the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, the Ontario Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party of Ontario and the Green Party of Ontario. This is based on the criteria accepted by Council during previous election campaigns in 2007 and 2014 where any political party that had achieved one per cent, or greater, of the vote during the previous provincial election, would be included.*

Financial Impact

Total costs for this strategy will not exceed \$50,000 if all engagement tactics are all deployed. Costs will be funded through existing local budgets and any costs that cannot be absorbed will be from the contingency reserve.

Conclusion

The City should engage the political parties who wish to govern Ontario, on our key issues of importance. A robust engagement and advocacy strategy supports this goal.

Attachments

Appendix A: Results of 2018 Mississauga Matters provincial election campaign

Appendix B: Public opinion research conducted by Abacus Data on behalf of FCM

Attachments

Appendix 1: Results of 2018 Mississauga Matters provincial election campaign

Appendix 2: Public opinion research conducted by Abacus Data on behalf of FCM



Prepared by: Robert Trewartha, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

Mississauga Matters Campaign

Overall [From May 9, 2018 – June 13, 2018]

Total Posts	Total Impressions	Total Engagements	Media Views
51	355,587	13,071	29,248

Twitter [From May 9, 2018 – June 13, 2018]

Total Posts	Total Impressions	Total Engagements	Media Views
26	129,202	3,154	11,259

Facebook [From May 9, 2018 – June 13, 2018]

Total Posts	Total Impressions	Total Engagements	Media Views
21	226,385	9,443	17,989

LinkedIn [From May 9, 2018 – June 13, 2018]

Total Posts	Total Impressions	Total Engagements	Media Views
4	15,346	420	----