



# Corporate Report

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**PDC** SEP 20 2010

**DATE:** August 31, 2010

**TO:** Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee  
Meeting Date: September 20, 2010

**FROM:** Edward R. Sajecki  
Commissioner of Planning and Building

**SUBJECT:** **Response to Peel Poverty Action Group "Asks"**

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**RECOMMENDATION:** That the report titled *Response to Peel Poverty Action Group "Asks"*, dated August 31, 2010, from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be received for information.

**BACKGROUND:** The July 7, 2010 Mississauga City Council meeting included a deputation from the Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG). PPAG presented a video on homelessness in Peel Region and had a number of requests or "Asks" of Mississauga City Council. The list of "Asks" were received and referred to the Planning and Building Department for a report.

The issues in the PPAG's "Asks" fundamentally relate to the issue of affordable housing. The City of Mississauga's work on Housing Choices: Mississauga's Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan is well underway and will continue to address the City's housing needs.

**COMMENTS:** This report has been prepared in response to the PPAG list of "Asks" as directed by Mississauga City Council. The "Asks" and responses follow:

1. *The City of Mississauga to find ways of increasing the housing supply including requiring more flexibility in zoning requiring all new housing, public and private, and including single family homes, to provide wide doorways that would give access to people with disabilities, plus a possibility of ramps being added. This would enable families as they age, to remain in their homes, in neighbourhoods with which they are familiar; in new houses, all basements to be half-above ground, thus addressing some safety issues around basement apartments; such a move would enable homeowners encountering hard times to rent out part of their homes.*

The City of Mississauga acknowledges the importance of universal design and accessibility to address different accessibility needs. Universal design principles are identified in Mississauga's new draft Official Plan in the *Building a Desirable Urban Form* Section.

Building standards, such as those for doorways, are included in the Ontario Building Code (OBC). The requirements for wide doorways for residential units and half above-ground basements are not required by the Ontario Building Code (OBC). Municipalities cannot enforce requirements that exceed those in the OBC; however, the City of Mississauga encourages new development to adhere to the guidelines in its *Accessibility Design Handbook (ADH)*. Many municipalities have created accessibility guidelines that exceed the OBC to allow persons with various disabilities (i.e. vision, hearing and physical disabilities) to better access their environment.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) administers the OBC and modifications are made to the OBC every five years. The PPAG should provide a written submission of their concerns to the MMAH to be considered when a new OBC is developed. Accessibility standards for the built environment are being developed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The goal of the proposed *Accessible Built Environment Standard* is to break down barriers in buildings and other structures for people with disabilities.

The proposed *Accessible Built Environment Standard* will be posted on the Ministry of Community and Social Services website. Most changes to the *Accessible Built Environment Standard* will be reflected in changes to the OBC.

2. *That Mississauga Council endorse MPP Cherie DiNovo's **Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Planning Act with respect to Inclusionary Zoning**. This Act, when passed, gives municipal councillors added clout to negotiate with developers to include a percentage of social housing in their plans; we ask that you inform Rev. DiNovo, Premier Dalton McGuinty, and all MPPs serving Peel Region, that you endorse Bill 58.*

**Bill 58: An Act to Amend the Planning Act with respect to Inclusionary Zoning (Bill 58)** proposes to amend the *Planning Act* to:

- allow municipalities to pass zoning by-laws requiring inclusionary housing and regulating the required percentage of affordable housing;
- include new powers requiring a specified percentage of affordable housing in all new developments; and,
- impose as a condition of approval of a plan of subdivision the requirement for a specified percentage of housing be affordable to low and moderate income households.

Inclusionary zoning puts affordable housing at the forefront when residential development occurs and would be a valuable tool to facilitate the creation of affordable housing. In order to use this tool, municipalities will need to pass zoning by-laws requiring inclusionary zoning. As proposed in *Bill 58*, this would not be mandatory.

Experiences in Canadian cities such as Vancouver and in the United States suggest that inclusionary zoning can be an effective way of increasing the amount of affordable housing. Research done by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation concluded that it is most successful when made mandatory.

The key to the success of inclusionary zoning provisions is their

implementation. Mississauga City staff have a number of questions regarding implementation and the tools that would be available for enforcement. Generally *Bill 58* which provides for amendments to the Planning Act to allow for inclusionary zoning is supported provided implementation issues can be satisfactorily addressed.

In addition, the Ontario Government is developing a new, Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (Strategy) which included consultation sessions that were attended by City of Mississauga staff. Inclusionary zoning was identified in the consultation sessions as one of the initiatives that can be used to promote and develop affordable housing. The Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy is anticipated to be released in late 2010. The City will provide comments on the Strategy when it is released.

3. ***That Mississauga Council support MP Libby Davies Bill C-304, An Act to Ensure Secure, Adequate, Accessible and Affordable Housing for Canadians, in accordance with the United Nations definition of basic human rights. The Bill would also require the government to set up a national housing strategy in consultation with all levels of government; we ask that you inform Ms. Davies, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and MPs serving Peel Region, that you endorse Bill C-304***

The purpose of *Bill C-304, An Act to Ensure Secure Adequate, Accessible and Affordable Housing (Bill C-104)* is to establish a National Housing Strategy that will include all levels of government as well as non-profit and private sector housing providers. *Bill C-104* passed second reading on June 3, 2010 and was ordered referred to Standing Committee.

Canada is the only major developed country that is without a national housing strategy. *Bill C-104* would provide coordinated approach to address housing issues from all levels of government and can be supported.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** Affordable housing is identified in the *Belong Pillar* in Mississauga's Strategic Plan. *Belong: Ensuring Youth, Older Adults and Immigrants*

*Thrive* has goals that include *ensuring affordability and accessibility by providing a range of affordable and accessible housing, transit and service options*. One of the action items for *Belong* is to develop an affordable housing strategy to address housing issues.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** Not applicable

**CONCLUSION:** The PPAG delegation has highlighted some very critical housing issues in the Region of Peel. This report provides a response to the “*Asks*” as presented to Mississauga City Council. In addition, it is the intent of City of Mississauga’s to continue to address some these issues through its work with stakeholders such as the Region of Peel and its work on *Housing Choices: Mississauga’s Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan*.

*Original signed by:*

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Edward R. Sajecki  
Commissioner of Planning and Building

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