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Mississauga: The Evolution of a City

Planning and Building

February 2004

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Mississauga was incorporated in 1974 by the amalgamation of the towns of Mississauga, Streetsville and Port Credit. From the aboriginal tribes that once lived on the northern shores of the great lakes, to the dynamic 21st century city on the brink of maturity, Mississauga has a rich and diverse heritage.



Conover Farm (1904) illustrates the mature agrarian society that had developed in Toronto Township
Mississauga Heritage Foundation

This brochure reports on historic population, growth and development trends in the City of Mississauga. The agrarian settlement of the last century has given way to a rapid expansion in this one, and contributed to Mississauga's evolution into a distinct urban centre and the sixth largest city in Canada.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Archaeological exploration tells of a human presence in the Credit River Valley of present day Mississauga for thousands of years. In the 1600s, European explorers found Iroquoian and Algonquian speaking peoples settled in the Lower Great Lakes¹ region. By the end of the 17th century, a powerful Ojibwa tribe had established exclusive possession of the lands on the north shore of Lake Ontario that today encompasses most of Southern Ontario. Their territory included lands from Belleville to London and Niagara to Lake Huron. In the 1600s Europeans named the Ojibwa tribe the Mississaugas, after the Mississagi River on the northwestern shore of Lake Huron where they first encountered them. Mississauga is believed to mean "river of the north of many mouths".

¹ The Lower Great Lakes includes the eastern part of the Lake Huron basin, the St. Lawrence River to Quebec City, the western portion of the Eastern Townships of Quebec, north New York and Vermont. (www.civilization.ca A History of the Native Peoples of Canada Volume II)

By the late 1700s, the British dominance established on the north shores of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, would give way to large scale settlement of southern Ontario. The British acknowledged the Mississauga claim to the land and from 1783 to 1787, negotiated a series of treaties to acquire all the land along the north shore of Lake Ontario. British controlled lands as far east as Cataraqi (now known as Kingston) and the Niagara River, through York (now known as Toronto) and as far west as Newark (now known as Niagara-on-the-Lake).

A 26-mile (42 km) stretch of land on the north shore of Lake Ontario between Burlington Bay and the Etobicoke Creek was retained by the Mississauga Indians. This land became known as the "Mississauga Tract."

The First Purchase

Development in Upper Canada proceeded on both sides of the Mississauga Tract. In the late 1700s, the continuing demand for land, the founding of the new capital at Toronto, from the old capital at Niagara-on-the-Lake, and the opening of the Dundas Road² facilitated the need for improvement of transportation and communication across the province and made the Mississauga Tract "...indispensably necessary to connect the population of the Colony with the seat of the King's Government".³

In 1805, through the First Purchase Treaty, some 70,000 acres (28 329 hectares)⁴ of the Mississauga Tract was acquired by the Crown. The lands fronted Lake Ontario in the south, extended inland to what is now Eglinton Avenue and stretched from the Etobicoke Creek in the east, to Burlington Bay in the west. (Figure 1) The exception to this purchase was lands where the Mississauga had established their camps along the Etobicoke Creek, Twelve Mile Creek and Sixteen Mile Creek

and a one mile strip of land on each side of the Credit River. The banks of the Credit River was where much of the trading between the French and Mississauga Indians had taken place. The Credit River's name, *Riviere du Credit*, originated from the custom of trading with the French on credit.

The First Purchase lands were divided into three townships: Nelson in the west, Trafalgar in the middle and Toronto in the east. The portion of the First Purchase lands that was Toronto Township would become Mississauga south of Eglinton Avenue. These lands were divided into 200 acre (81 hectare) lots for settlement with two concessions north of Dundas Road to present day Eglinton Avenue and three concessions south of Dundas Road to the lakefront.

The Second Purchase

As demand for land grew, the Provincial authorities in Upper Canada looked to the remaining lands of the Mississauga Tract. In 1818, with the signing of the Second Purchase Treaty, the Crown acquired another 648,000 acres (262 246 hectares). These consisted of the remaining portion of the Credit Valley Watershed and extended approximately 26 miles (42 km) on the east and 50 miles (80 km) on the west comprising the future Regions of Peel and Halton. (Figure 1)



Mississaugas at a First Nations Festival, 1994
Mississauga Heritage Foundation

In this treaty, the Mississaugas relinquished their claims along the inland waterways and kept three small reserves at the mouth of the Credit River, Twelve Mile Creek, and Sixteen Mile Creek. With the Second Purchase, Toronto Township was extended north to

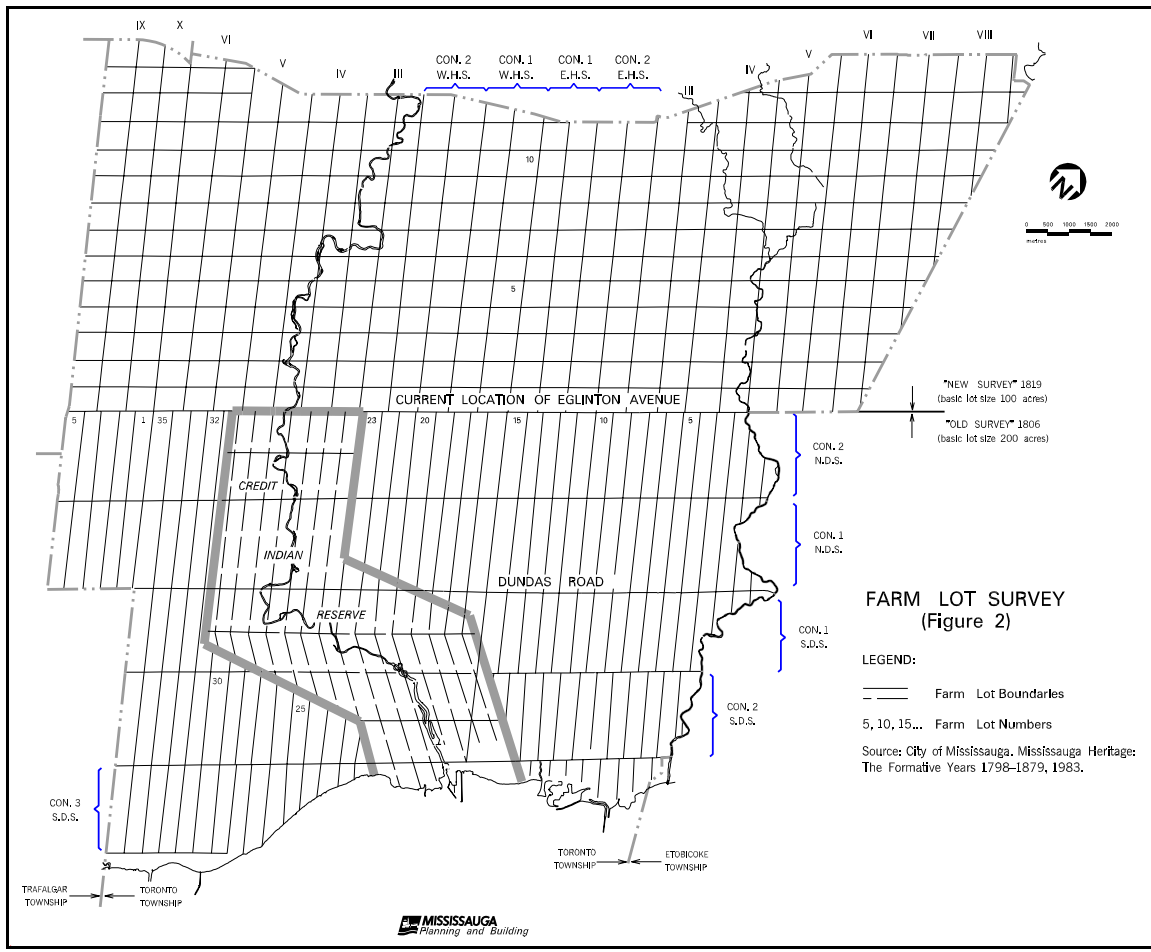
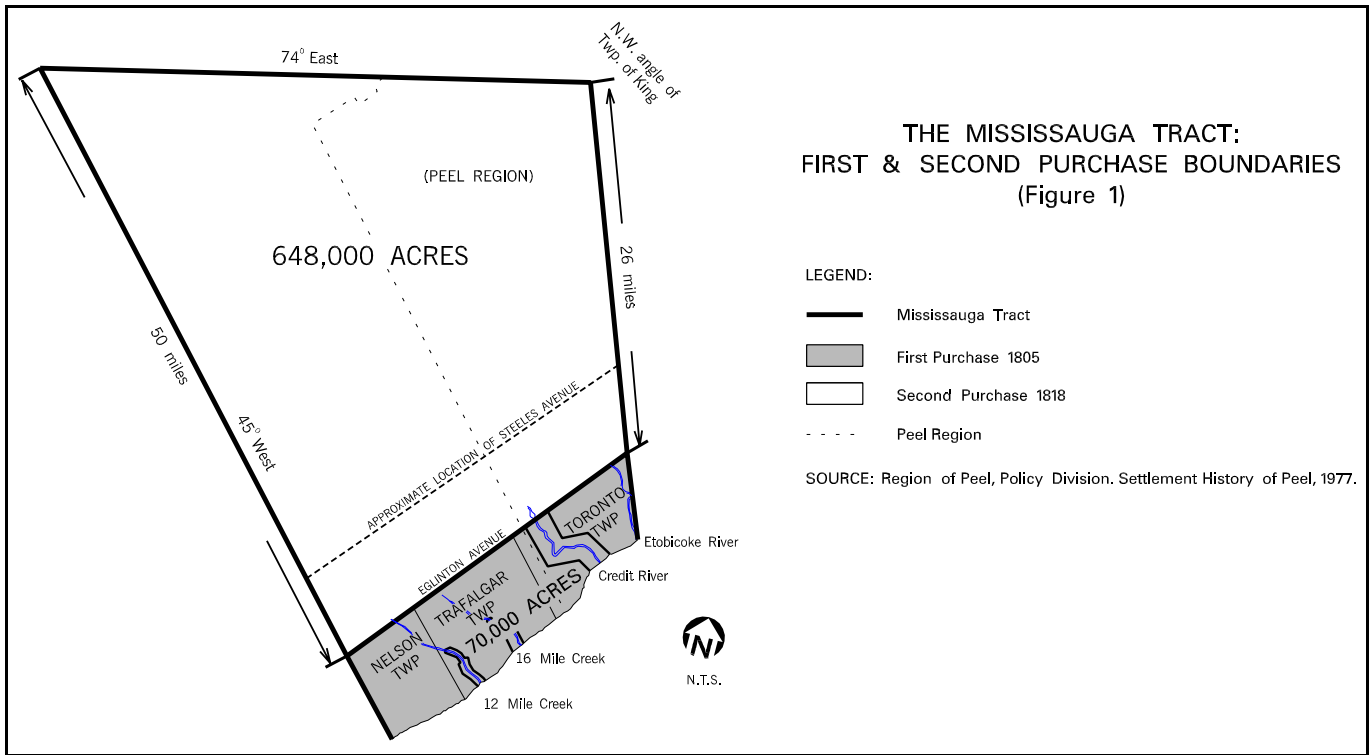
present-day Steeles Avenue and increased in area to 64,777 acres (26 215 hectares). Present-day Mississauga, from Eglinton Avenue to the northern boundary⁵ was included in the Second Purchase. The basic lot size of the survey on these lands was reduced to 100 acres (40 hectares) to allow frontage and encourage clearing on both sides of the concession roads. Figure 2 illustrates the lotting pattern on the First and Second Purchase lands.

² Dundas Street was originally referred to as the Dundas Road. The roads were sold to counties in 1865. Dundas Road became known as Dundas Street before it was widened in 1924.

³ Receiver General Peter Russell as found in R. Riendeau, Mississauga: An Illustrated History.

⁴ Some sources quote 84,000 acres (33 995 hectares).

⁵ The northern boundary of the City generally runs south of the Highway 407 right-of-way and generally follows the hydro transmission line.



19TH CENTURY: SETTLERS AND SETTLEMENT

Early settlers of the young Toronto Township were a mix of people of British origin (Irish, Welsh, English and Scots) emigrating from overseas and south of the border. They were lured by the fertile land close to the commercial centre of Toronto. United Empire Loyalists were among the first settlers. One of the earliest recorded populations of Toronto Township was in 1809, the population was 175 according to a census taken in March of that year.⁶

Settlement proceeded gradually for the first two decades of the 19th century and the population reached 803 by 1821.⁷ It was at this time that the lot survey of the Second Purchase lands was completed and the Township witnessed its first period of significant growth. Waves of British immigrants in the next three decades would bring the population to 4,000 in 1835 and 7,539 in 1851. Toronto Township became a predominantly agrarian society.

The second half of the 19th century was not nearly as kind to Toronto Township. Population growth had stalled as the rural economy could assimilate no more families with the existing land subdivision. Declining prices of the principle crop also lead to a difficult transition from a wheat monoculture to mixed farming. Power from the steam engine rendered the old mills obsolete, industry concentrated closer to markets, and often relocated to neighbouring communities.

The railroads by-passed the centre of Toronto Township which deprived the smaller communities in the heart of the Township of the road traffic they depended on. Also, the industrialization that came about as a result of the railway facilitated migration to the surrounding communities of Toronto, Hamilton and Brampton. From the total of 7,539 residents in 1851 the population fell to 5,208 in 1901. This is the first and only time to-date that the population has declined.

⁶ Toronto Township at this time would have consisted of the lands south of Eglinton Avenue.

⁷ The Second Purchase lands extended the boundary of Toronto Township to Steeles Avenue beyond the boundary of present day Mississauga. Therefore the population recorded for Toronto Township may have included persons living on lands not within the current boundaries of the City.

**Table 1:
Population, Toronto Township, Port Credit, Streetsville
and City of Mississauga, 1809-2001**

Year	Population			
	Toronto Township	Port Credit	Streetsville	Total
1809	175	—	—	—
1821	803	226 ¹	—	—
1835	4,000	—	500 ²	—
1851	7,539	400 ³	1,000	—
1901	5,208	650 ⁴	522	—
1921	6,981	1,123	615	8,719
1931	9,935	1,635	661	12,231
1941	12,481	2,160	709	15,350
1951	28,528	3,643	1,139	33,310
1956	47,053	6,350	2,648	56,051
1961	62,616	7,203	5,056	74,875
1966	93,492	8,475	5,884	107,851
1971 ⁵	156,070	9,442	6,840	172,352
1976 ⁶				250,017
1981				315,055
1986				374,005
1991				463,388
1996				544,382
2001				612,925

Sources: Dieterman, F. Mississauga: The First 10,000 Years (2002); Riendeau, R.E. Mississauga: An Illustrated History (1985); Statistics Canada.

Notes:

- ¹ Population in 1826
- ² Population of Streetsville in 1837
- ³ Population of Port Credit in the mid-1850s
- ⁴ Population at the end of the 19th Century.
- ⁵ By 1971 Toronto Township had become the Town of Mississauga
- ⁶ Towns of Mississauga, Port Credit and Streetsville had become the City of Mississauga in 1974.

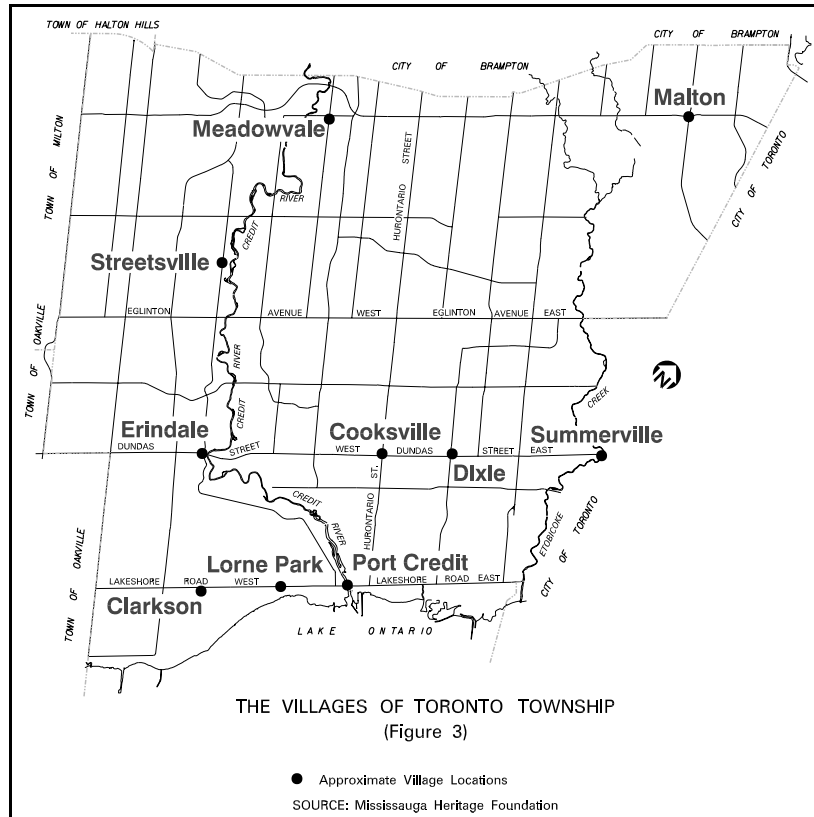
The Villages

When Toronto Township was incorporated in 1850 it was an established rural society as compared to the hinterland at the beginning of the century. Villages and hamlets had sprung up in various parts of the township and dotted the landscape as illustrated in Figure 3. Inhabitants grew to identify

more strongly with these villages than the Township as a whole.

Many of the early villages of the Township that developed in the first half of the 19th century served the farming community or local industries that were based in the processing of the natural resources of the area including lumber, grain, and local farm products.

In the mid-19th century, the population in the villages could be as small as 100 or as large as 600. Fortunes generally declined in the second half of the 19th century and many of the villages such as Summerville (Dundas Road and the Etobicoke Creek) disappeared⁸. Others such as Erindale and Malton would experience a resurgence later in the 20th century. Whether they have perished or persevered these communities made an impression on the landscape and society of Mississauga that remains to the present day.



Two of these villages, Port Credit and Streetsville, established their autonomy early in the history of the Township and thrived independently until they amalgamated with the City in 1974.

The Dundas Road was strategically planned well back from Lake Ontario to provide safe movement between the capital and other centres in the province in the event of military action by water. It acted as a major transportation route through the province and linked several farming hamlets that had sprung up along its length: Erindale, Cooksville, Dixie and Summerville.

In addition, the influence of the railways cannot be overlooked in the early history of Toronto Township. They fuelled the development of communities along the lakeshore such as Clarkson (Lakeshore Road and Clarkson Road) and Lorne Park (between Clarkson and Port Credit), and in the

northern part of the Township in the community of Malton.

Two paths that drew the early map of Toronto Township were the Credit River and Dundas Road. The Credit River was a means of transport and trade. It also provided power for saw and water mills in burgeoning commerce. The early development of Port Credit, Streetsville and the village of Meadowvale were a result of their location on the Credit River.

Port Credit is located at the mouth of the Credit River. The harbour acted as the catalyst for the community's early development. The first permanent structure in Port Credit, The Government Inn (1798-1861), was constructed at the instruction of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe after he and his family were forced to take shelter in the harbour during a storm. The village plan was established in 1835 and the community prospered as grain and timber were shipped through the harbour. Shipbuilding was also established as an important industry and the village became a transportation hub with stagecoaches, steamers and railway links.

A unique trade developed in Port Credit - stonehooking. The "stonehooker" was a schooner which collected large stones, gravel or sand in the shallow waters of Lake Ontario. The stones

⁸In addition to the villages mentioned here, there are a number of lost villages in the Township of which little or no trace remains: *Burnhamthorpe* (Burnhamthorpe and Dixie), *Elmbank* (east of the Etobicoke Creek on the site of Pearson International Airport); *Mount Charles/Kings Corner's* (Dixie and Derry Roads); *Sheridan* (QEW and the western boundary of Toronto Township); *Britannia/Gardner's Corners* (Highway 10 and Britannia Road); *Derry West* (two miles north of Britannia/Gardner's Corners on Hurontario); *Palestine* (Derry and Tomken Roads), *Lisgar* (Shelter Bay and Derry Roads) and *Frogmore* (Dundas Road and Winston Churchill Boulevard).

were used in local building trades. Many buildings and streets in the City of Toronto were made with Port Credit stone.

In Streetsville grist mills, saw mills, carding and planing mills not only provided for the needs of the community but produced goods for export. Barber Woollen Mills (1840s -1880s), illustrated on page 15, was one of the early industries in Streetsville and grew to be one of the largest industries of its kind in Ontario.

Streetsville is also home to the first brick house in Ontario, that of Timothy Street, built in 1825 and after whom the town is named. The town suffered when it was by-passed by the railroad in the 1850s and was not chosen for the county seat, which went to Brampton in 1867. Streetsville was incorporated as a village in 1858. It became part of the City of Mississauga in 1974 and its mayor at the time, Hazel McCallion, later became mayor of Mississauga. She remains one of Canada's longest serving and best-known mayors.



Summerville circa 1900s
Peel Archives

The village of Meadowvale's history resembles that of many of the communities in Toronto Township. It developed in the first half of the 19th century to serve the farming community. Milling operations emerged along the Credit River but its fortunes turned when the railway by-passed the village. In 1980, Meadowvale became the first conservation district in Ontario.

Erindale was the westernmost village along the Dundas Road in Toronto Township. For many years the village was a popular stop on the road from Toronto to Hamilton. Its fortunes declined in the mid 18th century with the reduction in travel along the Dundas Road and the opening of the Great Western Railway but would re-emerge in the mid 19th century.

Further east along Dundas Road at present day Hurontario Street, Cooksville, originally known as Harrisville, found advantage in its central location. Mail and stagecoach service were among the early enterprises in the community. By the mid 1850s, Cooksville had become a busy commercial centre when a major fire swept through the centre destroying much of the village. The first municipal offices for Toronto Township were located in Cooksville and it remained an important administrative centre for over a century with municipal offices, public and separate school boards and various Federal and Provincial ministries located in the community.

The village of Dixie was located along Dundas Road at Cawthra Road. Curiously Dixie, which is named after Dr. Beaumont Dixie, a well-known local doctor, is said to have developed around a government-owned toll booth. Many of the early settlers of Toronto Township are buried at The Dixie Union Cemetery which was established in 1812.

Summerville was the easternmost village in Toronto Township located at Dundas Road and the Etobicoke Creek. The village was initially centred around milling and blacksmith operations but the declining supply of water from the Etobicoke Creek caused the village prospects to decline as well. Parton's Blacksmith Shop was the last trace of the village. It was dismantled in 1979.

The opening of a railway station by the Great Western Railway in the 1850s contributed to the residential development of Clarkson and Lorne Park. Clarkson had a population of approximately 100 residents in 1875. Four years later, a 75 acre (30 hectare) amusement complex called Lorne Park (located along the lakeshore area southeast of Clarkson) attracted approximately 8,000 visitors. At this time, residential lots were being sold in the vicinity and used mostly for summer cottages. Although the amusement park closed, the residential community would remain as the foundation for Lorne Park and the concept of a recreational home would spread to other communities in Toronto Township.

In the northern section of the Township, the village of Malton (Derry Road and Airport Road) originally began as an agricultural community in the 19th century. It acted as a distribution hub for grain and was one of the few villages to benefit from the development of the Grand Trunk Railway in 1854 which improved access to Toronto markets. It also had short success as the county seat in 1859. The most significant role for Malton, however, would unfold in the 20th century.

EARLY 20TH CENTURY: GROWTH AND CHANGE

Prosperity returned to Toronto Township, Streetsville and Port Credit in the first half of the 20th century. Reversing the population decline in the last half of the 19th century, the population in Toronto Township, Streetsville and Port Credit nearly doubled in the first three decades of the 20th century from approximately 6,380 in 1901 to 12,231 in 1931. Growth slowed during the depression and picked up at the end of the second world war (WWII). By 1951, the population had reached 33,310.

Road improvement was key in promoting urban development. In contrast to the railroads which centralized growth in established centres, the newly paved highways facilitated the decentralization of residents and industry to the outskirts of established centres like Toronto. Improvements to Lakeshore Road in 1914, which was the first highway paving project in Ontario, and construction of the new King's Highway in 1937 (later called the Queen Elizabeth Way) which was the first paved four lane thoroughfare with night lighting, opened the way for large scale development in Toronto Township.

Residential growth and development in the early part of the century can be linked to three trends: the interest in selected communities of Toronto Township as vacation destinations for the affluent; interest from middle income households working in neighbouring commercial centres; and, housing for workers in local industry.

At the turn of the century, communities in the southern part of Toronto Township such as Port Credit, Clarkson, and Lorne Park became popular vacation destinations. Clarkson and Lorne Park also became prime locations for summer homes and cottages for affluent Torontonians. One of the more famous summer residents of Clarkson, Mazo de la Roche, spend summers writing her Jalna novels at Trail Cottage in the 1920s. Lorne Park remained primarily a summer cottage area in the first part of the century and did not see permanent settlement until after WWII.

Middle income families were attracted to smaller housing along or near Lakeshore Road in Port Credit, Clarkson, Mississauga Road, and Hurontario Street south of Middle Road (later the location of the Queen Elizabeth Way). Accessibility was an issue as some residents would need to reach their place of work in neighbouring commercial centres. The developing rail, inter-commuter and road network improved accessibility.

Demand from this group helped prompt larger scale housing development.

By the 1920s, subdivision development began in Lakeview. Rifle ranges, a Cadet wing camp and an arms plant built around the time of the first and second world wars led to the development of a residential community around Lakeshore Road. A community of about 300 in the 1920s, expanded with army built wartime housing and barracks to a population of 9,000 in the 1950s when returning veterans were encouraged to settle in Lakeview. Lakeview was one of a handful of subdivisions⁹ that emerged in the first half of the century but it wasn't until the post WWII era that subdivision development began in earnest.

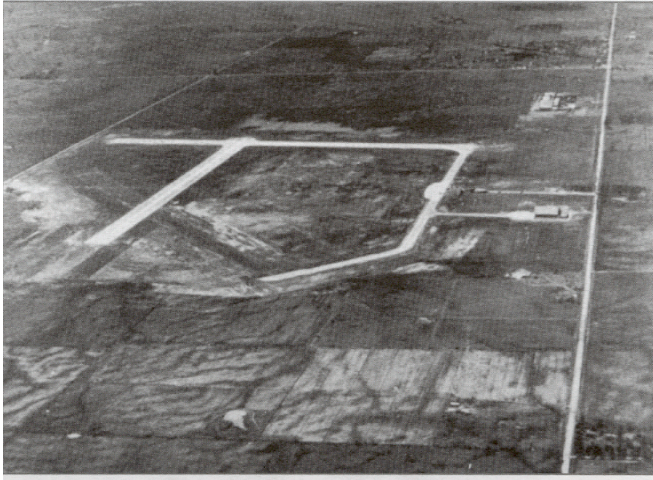
Industrial development both stimulated the establishment of communities and acted as a stimulus to the further development of existing communities. Industries like St. Lawrence Starch (1889-1989) and the Cooksville Brick and Tile Yard (1912-1970) provided employment to many local residents. Thus, communities like Port Credit and Cooksville thrived and became places where people could live and work. Industry also helped diversify the Township's cultural composition. Many ethnic groups took up residence in Toronto Township as a result of the employment opportunities offered by local industry in the early 20th century. Much of the industrial development in Mississauga had its roots in the early part of the 20th century.

The change in the Township was evident by 1950 as newer homes interspersed with the older farmhouses and lined Hurontario almost continuously between Port Credit and Cooksville. The northern part of the Township held onto its rural heritage through the first half of the 20th century with the exception of Streetsville and Malton.

Streetsville's prosperity had been based on serving the surrounding agricultural community as well as providing a home for local industry. In the early 20th century, Streetsville's picturesque setting appealed to many as the June 16, 1910 headline in the *Streetsville Review* stated "*Streetsville Getting Popular as Residential Town*". Improvements in accessibility such as the paving of Mississauga Road greatly contributed to a revival in Streetsville around the mid 20th century.

⁹In the southern part of the Township development was stimulated by the QEW and resulted in subdivisions such as the Birchview and Tecumseh Park subdivisions northeast of Clarkson, the Indian Valley Trail subdivision southwest of Cooksville and Cloverleaf subdivision near Hurontario Street. (R.E. Riendeau. *Mississauga: An illustrated History*, 1985)

Malton's fortunes were also reversed by a dramatic change in the local economy. In 1937, farmland adjacent to the village of Malton was chosen as the site for an international airport, which is now Lester B. Pearson International Airport.¹⁰



Malton Airport, 1937
Mississauga Heritage Foundation

Malton's economy shifted from one which was based on the service of the agricultural economy to an industrial one. The airport brought prosperity during the 1940s when Malton acquired an international reputation as a leader in aeronautical design and manufacturing. Malton is known as the home of the "Avro Arrow" a fighter plane that was a benchmark in Canadian aerospace engineering until 1959, when the development of the Arrow was cancelled in a controversial decision by the Federal government.

By 1950, Toronto Township was in transition, the rustic rural northern part of the Township stood in contrast to the suburban frontier south of Dundas Street. Toronto Township had not completely shed its agricultural roots as dairy goods, wheat, barley, fruit and vegetables continued to be produced. The next fifty years would see one of the largest periods of growth in its history.

MID 20TH CENTURY: HINTERLAND TO HEARTLAND

The second half of the 20th century would see Toronto Township, Streetsville and Port Credit transformed from rural to urban, and from distinct

¹⁰ Lester B. Pearson International Airport is often incorrectly referred to as the "Toronto Airport".

communities to one city. The population of Toronto Township, together with Port Credit and Streetsville, had reached 33,310 in 1951. In 10 years, the population of these three communities would more than double to 74,875 in 1961 and more than double again in the next decade to reach 172,352 in 1971.

Transportation improvements, residential expansion and industrial and commercial development intensified from the mid 20th century onward. As well, building began to take on a form that would come to characterize growth in Mississauga. Lands were no longer developed in small, piecemeal increments but in the form of planned residential and industrial subdivisions.

Toronto Township became more accessible with the construction of Highway 401 in the late 1950s, the widening of Lakeshore Road to four lanes in 1967, and the widening of the QEW to six lanes by 1979. North-south connections were also improved with the widening of Hurontario Street in 1963, the widening of Highway 427 in 1971 and the construction of Erin Mills Parkway. Commuting into the city was also improved by a high speed commuter service, the GO Train, along the lakeshore in 1967.

Residential growth was associated with the development of reasonably priced housing. Families were attracted to homes on generous lots in the vicinity of schools, shopping and entertainment. Applewood Acres, with 850 homes was among the earliest of the modern subdivisions in Toronto Township, was established in 1952 at the Queen Elizabeth Way and Dixie Road. Applewood Village Shopping Plaza was also developed as part of this community. In Malton, Ridgewood and Marvin Heights, northeast of the old village, represented over 1,000 homes. Erindale Woodlands, on the east side of the Credit River south of Burnhamthorpe Road West, opened in 1957 and proposed nearly 800 homes, over 600 apartments and multiple dwelling units, 150 acres (61 hectares) of industrial buildings, a shopping plaza and its own water purification and sewage treatment plant.

Industrial development went hand-in-hand with residential development as businesses were attracted to accessible, reasonably priced land for expansion. Large scale industrial parks were established first in the southern part of the Township, then in the north. Dixie was the first industrial subdivision opened in the 1950s. Located south of Dundas Street between Cawthra Road and Dixie Road there were 900 acres originally planned and was expanded in 1957 with an additional 750 acres north of Dundas Street. Sheridan Park Research Centre opened in 1964 between the Park Royal and Sheridan Homelands subdivisions and was one of the largest industrial research complexes in the world. By the early 1970s, firms were also moving into the industrial subdivisions in the

northern half of the City and the hinterland status with Toronto was quickly changing.

Commercial services also expanded. The first shopping complex in the Township was the Lorne Park Shopping Centre. Built in 1953 it boasted a supermarket, department store, theatre, bowling alley, post office, drugstore and a few smaller shops. Commercial development mushroomed to include a mall which set a new benchmark for shopping - Square One. Completed in 1973, Square One was, at the time of its development, the largest shopping centre in Canada. It remains the largest mall in Ontario.

Commercial development continues to evolve, among the newer retail trends to emerge is the power centre. The Heartland Power Centre at Britannia Road and Mavis Road has approximately 160 000 m² (1,720,000 sq ft) of retail space. Through all of this change the main streets of Streetsville and Port Credit have endured. Their characteristic charm is a testament to the communities which have so influenced the character of the City. All this retail development has transformed Mississauga into a hub of commercial activity whose catchment area extends well beyond its boundaries.

New industry, office complexes and commercial opportunities were attracting a greater resident base and expanding the live-work resident population. Whereas previously industries provided limited employment for local residents in smaller communities, now employment areas were drawing new residents to the Township. Subdivisions that may have initially developed as bedroom communities, were offering housing alternatives to employees of local industry and commerce.

The social and cultural composition of the Township was also changing. In the 1950s, the ethnic origin of over 80% of residents was British, but waves of immigration after WWII brought a myriad of cultures including people from Asia, the Carribean, Latin America and Africa. The population of Mississauga has grown to reflect the multi-cultural nature of Canadian society.

For Port Credit and Streetsville there was little room to expand after the end of the 1950s which necessitated annexation of land from Toronto Township. Port Credit was incorporated as a town in 1961 with a population of 7,203. The following year, in 1962, Streetsville was also incorporated as a town. It had reached a population of 5,056 in 1961. Sustaining growth for these two towns would necessitate further annexation of lands from Toronto Township.

In 1968, Toronto Township became the Town of Mississauga. Amalgamation between Mississauga, Port Credit and

Streetsville had been on the political agenda from the early 1960s and in 1974, the towns of Mississauga, Port Credit and Streetsville were incorporated as the City of Mississauga. In 1976, the City of Mississauga had a population of 250,017 and became the largest of the three municipalities in the newly incorporated Region of Peel.



Square One, Ontario's largest shopping mall
Planning and Building Department

LATE 20TH CENTURY: CANADA'S SIXTH LARGEST CITY

Mayor McCallion has stated that Mississauga is "...a city of small communities...trying to grow from the outside in."¹¹ This statement illustrated two of the City's principal characteristics and challenges at the time of its incorporation in 1974: its origins as a city of communities and, the type and pace of growth.

The communities within the boundaries of present-day Mississauga along with the area's rural heritage were so well established that they initially overshadowed the distinct identity of the new City. In the late 1970s, two developments would bring a change to this situation.

November 10, 1979 is now infamous in Mississauga's history as the date of the Mississauga railway disaster. Twenty-four cars of Canadian Pacific Railway carrying propane gas and chlorine derailed north of Dundas Street at Mavis Road. The derailment caused three propane tankers to explode. Chlorine fumes lead to the evacuation of a quarter of a million people in an area

¹¹ R.E. Riendeau. Mississauga: An illustrated History p.8.

bounded by the Credit River to the Etobicoke Creek south of Burnhamthorpe Road and the residents of Clarkson. Mississauga headlined national and international news. The response to the crisis and the fact that there was no loss of life generated a great deal of praise for the City and instilled residents with a greater sense of civic pride.

The second development was a plan to create a city core for Mississauga at Hurontario Street and Burnhamthorpe Road. Establishing a new civic would provide the young city with a focal point for new residents and existing communities. The plan for City Centre had been conceived as far back as 1953 and was adopted in 1979. The City Centre Plan included shopping, office, a new civic centre and housing. The City Centre now consists of the YMCA, Mississauga Central Library, Mississauga Civic Centre, the Living Arts Centre, Square One Shopping Centre, entertainment facilities, as well as numerous office buildings and expanding housing opportunities including several highrise condominium complexes currently under construction.

Growth: Population and Dwellings

Growth has been a consistent theme in Mississauga's history. In recent years, the pace and rate of growth has often been referred to as explosive. In 1976, Mississauga's population was 250,017. By 2001, the City's population has grown nearly two and a half times and reached 612,925, making it the sixth largest city in Canada. On average, Mississauga's population grew by 14,500 people per year between 1976 and 2001. This represented an average annual growth rate of approximately 3.7%. Table 2 illustrates the population by Planning District for each census year from 1976 to 2001. A map of the Planning Districts is included on page 16.

The City's growth is also evident in its built form. Table 3 summarizes the total dwellings in the City by Planning District from 1976 to 2001. The number of dwellings in the City has increased from 74,155 in 1976 to 198,235 in 2001. The City has added an average of approximately 5,000 dwellings per year between 1976 and 2001. This represents an annual growth rate of approximately 4% per year.

Since 1976, growth has generally proceeded from the southern part of the City to the north. Just after the City's incorporation, in 1976 the highest proportion of the population was in the established communities located in the southern part of the City.

By the mid-1980s, population growth was highest in the central communities of Creditview and Rathwood. Development had

also begun in Hurontario and continued in Mississauga Valleys. Erin Mills and Meadowvale were acclaimed as *master planned communities* which included businesses, recreation and a variety of housing forms that were initiated in this period of time.

From 1986 and 1996, the communities of Fairview, Hurontario, Lisgar, Central Erin Mills and East Credit were beginning to expand. The development of apartments in City Centre was responsible for the growth in this district. Erin Mills continued to grow as well - specifically the western portion of this district which was not part of the original master planned community of Erin Mills.

By 2001, population growth had occurred in East Credit, Hurontario and Lisgar as development in these communities was nearing completion. The last greenfields in the City are Churchill Meadows and Meadowvale Village.

The population is currently relatively well distributed throughout the City. It has remained stable in the older communities as the newer communities in the central and northern part of the City have witnessed much of the growth that has occurred in the last quarter century. Redevelopment of larger sites like the Cooksville Brick and Tile Yard has sustained population levels in some older communities such as Cooksville. The distribution of the population throughout the City illustrates the growing maturity of the City.

Immigration and Cultural Origin

Historically, Mississauga has been populated by waves of immigrants and the City continues to owe much of its growth to immigration. Table 4 illustrates immigration by time frame. In 2001, Mississauga's immigrant population was 47% of the City's total population; in 1986, immigrants had represented 34% of the total population. Many of Mississauga's residents that are immigrants are newly arrived to Canada. Twenty-one percent of the City's immigrant population emigrated to Canada between 1996 and 2001.

Mississauga remains an attractive place for immigrants to make their home and the immigrant population continues to contribute to the City's growth. Residents that are immigrants represented 74% of the City's population growth between 1996 and 2001.

(Continued on Page 15)

Table 2
Population, Planning Districts and City of Mississauga, 1976 to 2001

	1976		1981		1986		1991		1996		2001	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Airport	100	0.0%	100	0.0%	85	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Airport Corporate	10	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Applewood	34,860	13.9%	36,688	11.6%	37,450	10.0%	36,725	7.9%	38,295	7.0%	38,575	6.3%
Central Erin Mills	190	0.1%	142	0.0%	1,780	0.5%	9,615	2.1%	22,490	4.1%	29,325	4.8%
Churchill Meadows	95	0.0%	91	0.0%	85	0.0%	110	0.0%	0	0.0%	5,440	0.9%
City Centre	100	0.0%	259	0.1%	615	0.2%	5,020	1.1%	6,725	1.2%	6,940	1.1%
Clarkson - Lorne Park	34,525	13.8%	37,701	12.0%	38,990	10.4%	38,010	8.2%	38,375	7.0%	39,250	6.4%
Cooksville	30,395	12.2%	33,924	10.8%	35,745	9.6%	36,260	7.8%	40,880	7.5%	43,140	7.0%
Creditview	30	0.0%	1,254	0.4%	9,150	2.4%	11,440	2.5%	12,010	2.2%	11,785	1.9%
Dixie	640	0.3%	480	0.2%	440	0.1%	330	0.1%	350	0.1%	425	0.1%
East Credit	645	0.3%	705	0.2%	1,105	0.3%	15,875	3.4%	34,665	6.4%	52,080	8.5%
Erin Mills	8,350	3.3%	20,633	6.5%	28,445	7.6%	45,020	9.7%	47,860	8.8%	48,220	7.9%
Erindale	17,210	6.9%	20,553	6.5%	21,750	5.8%	22,410	4.8%	23,220	4.3%	23,275	3.8%
Fairview	1,755	0.7%	2,210	0.7%	2,385	0.6%	10,005	2.2%	11,785	2.2%	13,540	2.2%
Gateway	195	0.1%	142	0.0%	150	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hurontario	275	0.1%	185	0.1%	3,015	0.8%	27,715	6.0%	42,655	7.8%	51,230	8.4%
Lakeview	21,500	8.6%	21,492	6.8%	21,055	5.6%	21,050	4.5%	21,340	3.9%	22,045	3.6%
Lisgar	100	0.0%	88	0.0%	420	0.1%	5,595	1.2%	15,300	2.8%	24,500	4.0%
Malton	31,270	12.5%	33,180	10.5%	33,780	9.0%	35,805	7.7%	39,040	7.2%	41,050	6.7%
Mavis-Erindale	25	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Meadowvale	5,305	2.1%	21,545	6.8%	36,340	9.7%	37,280	8.0%	40,885	7.5%	41,815	6.8%
Meadowvale Business	175	0.1%	68	0.0%	90	0.0%	105	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Meadowvale Village	410	0.2%	424	0.1%	305	0.1%	440	0.1%	230	0.0%	12,595	2.1%
Mineola	10,510	4.2%	10,125	3.2%	9,880	2.6%	9,855	2.1%	9,725	1.8%	9,660	1.6%
Mississauga Valleys	15,445	6.2%	21,239	6.7%	24,565	6.6%	24,125	5.2%	26,545	4.9%	26,750	4.4%
Northeast	390	0.2%	363	0.1%	320	0.1%	0	0.0%	10	0.0%	0	0.0%
Port Credit	10,320	4.1%	10,737	3.4%	10,705	2.9%	10,670	2.3%	10,660	2.0%	10,260	1.7%
Rathwood	2,265	0.9%	15,963	5.1%	28,185	7.5%	30,460	6.6%	30,935	5.7%	30,880	5.0%
Sheridan	13,135	5.3%	14,708	4.7%	15,250	4.1%	15,820	3.4%	16,475	3.0%	17,020	2.8%
Sheridan Park	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Southdown	220	0.1%	139	0.0%	150	0.0%	120	0.0%	110	0.0%	0	0.0%
Streetsville	9,480	3.8%	9,860	3.1%	11,755	3.1%	11,325	2.4%	11,705	2.2%	11,795	1.9%
Western Business Park	80	0.0%	58	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Population Adjustment	12	0.0%	-	-	15	0.0%	2,203	0.5%	2,112	0.4%	1,330	0.2%
City of Mississauga	250,017	100.0%	315,055	100.0%	374,005	100.0%	463,388	100.0%	544,382	100.0%	612,925	100.0%
Absolute Change in Population			65,038		58,950		89,383		80,994		68,543	
% Change in Population			26.0%		18.7%		23.9%		17.5%		12.6%	

Source: Statistics Canada 2001, Custom Tabulation.

The data presented in this table is based on a custom tabulation by Statistics Canada of 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Census of Canada data. Statistics Canada data is not comparable to City of Mississauga data due to differences in data collection and calculation methods. Adjustments were made to the Statistics Canada population data based on adjustments to the dwelling unit allocations. See the note to Table 3 for these adjustments. When dwelling units reallocations were made, the associated population was also reallocated. In the case of adjustments made to City Centre in 2001 and Mississauga Valleys in 1991, the population was calculated based on the household size numbers calculated from the unadjusted data applied to the adjusted dwelling unit data.

The total population shown for the City of Mississauga is based on published Statistics Canada data. The sum of the planning districts may not add to the City of Mississauga total due to rounding, minor differences in the custom tabulation results and adjustments made to City Centre and Mississauga Valleys. Further, the census undercount is included and the institutional population is not included in some years. These issues may also have resulted in some increases and decreases to the data for planning districts. The *Population Adjustment* row reflects the difference between the reported City of Mississauga total and the sum of the planning district figures.

**Table 3:
Dwellings, Planning Districts and City of Mississauga, 1976 to 2001**

	1976		1981		1986		1991		1996		2001	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Airport	30	0.0%	30	0.0%	30	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Airport Corporate	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Applewood	10,850	14.6%	12,190	12.3%	12,860	10.7%	12,935	8.7%	13,035	7.5%	13,495	6.8%
Central Erin Mills	50	0.1%	50	0.1%	475	0.4%	2,570	1.7%	6,380	3.7%	8,470	4.3%
Churchill Meadows	30	0.0%	30	0.0%	30	0.0%	30	0.0%	0	0.0%	1,675	0.8%
City Centre	30	0.0%	80	0.1%	220	0.2%	2,215	1.5%	2,815	1.6%	3,070	1.5%
Clarkson - Lorne Park	9,255	12.5%	10,950	11.1%	11,800	9.8%	12,280	8.3%	12,645	7.3%	13,280	6.7%
Cooksville	10,355	14.0%	11,930	12.1%	12,940	10.8%	13,620	9.2%	15,245	8.8%	15,965	8.1%
Creditview	0	0.0%	390	0.4%	2,560	2.1%	2,950	2.0%	3,140	1.8%	3,125	1.6%
Dixie	165	0.2%	145	0.1%	105	0.1%	105	0.1%	105	0.1%	150	0.1%
East Credit	155	0.2%	190	0.2%	300	0.2%	4,065	2.7%	9,030	5.2%	13,855	7.0%
Erin Mills	2,370	3.2%	5,975	6.0%	8,320	6.9%	13,325	9.0%	14,305	8.3%	14,690	7.4%
Erindale	4,615	6.2%	5,700	5.8%	6,290	5.2%	6,715	4.5%	7,040	4.1%	7,345	3.7%
Fairview	490	0.7%	660	0.7%	715	0.6%	3,105	2.1%	3,695	2.1%	4,260	2.1%
Gateway	55	0.1%	45	0.0%	45	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hurontario	75	0.1%	65	0.1%	885	0.7%	8,235	5.6%	12,670	7.3%	15,305	7.7%
Lakeview	6,515	8.8%	7,090	7.2%	7,300	6.1%	7,510	5.1%	7,875	4.6%	8,420	4.2%
Lisgar	25	0.0%	25	0.0%	125	0.1%	1,565	1.1%	4,390	2.5%	6,935	3.5%
Malton	8,070	10.9%	8,745	8.8%	9,080	7.6%	9,845	6.6%	10,410	6.0%	10,995	5.5%
Mavis- Erindale	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Meadowvale	1,685	2.3%	6,880	7.0%	11,855	9.9%	12,200	8.2%	13,360	7.7%	13,755	6.9%
Meadowvale Business	50	0.1%	25	0.0%	25	0.0%	25	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Meadowvale Village	130	0.2%	140	0.1%	110	0.1%	130	0.1%	75	0.0%	3,795	1.9%
Mineola	2,975	4.0%	3,130	3.2%	3,155	2.6%	3,215	2.2%	3,260	1.9%	3,275	1.7%
Mississauga Valleys	4,370	5.9%	7,185	7.3%	9,065	7.6%	9,130	6.2%	9,195	5.3%	9,445	4.8%
Northeast	115	0.2%	70	0.1%	40	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Port Credit	4,415	6.0%	4,885	4.9%	4,985	4.2%	5,040	3.4%	5,000	2.9%	5,000	2.5%
Rathwood	605	0.8%	4,825	4.9%	8,295	6.9%	8,915	6.0%	9,250	5.4%	9,550	4.8%
Sheridan	3,710	5.0%	4,335	4.4%	4,600	3.8%	5,000	3.4%	5,215	3.0%	5,450	2.7%
Sheridan Park		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Southdown	65	0.1%	50	0.1%	45	0.0%	40	0.0%	30	0.0%		0.0%
Streetsville	2,840	3.8%	3,145	3.2%	3,770	3.1%	3,835	2.6%	4,070	2.4%	4,260	2.1%
Western Business Park	25	0.0%	15	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%
Dwellings Adjustment	35	0.0%	-15	0.0%	0	0.0%	-365	-0.2%	489	0.3%	2,670	1.3%
City of Mississauga	74,155	100.0%	98,960	100.0%	120,025	100.0%	148,235	100.0%	172,724	100.0%	198,235	100.0%
Absolute Change in Dwellings			24,805		21,065		28,210		24,489		25,511	
% Change in Dwellings			33.5%		21.3%		23.5%		16.5%		14.8%	

Source: Statistics Canada 2001, Custom Tabulation.

The data presented in this table is based on a custom tabulation by Statistics Canada of 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Census of Canada data. Statistics Canada data is not comparable to City of Mississauga data due to differences in data collection methods, however, City data were consulted to confirm overall trends and numbers.

Statistics Canada assigns data for a block face or enumeration area to a single representation point. The custom tabulation assigned these data representation points to Mississauga Planning Districts. Where these data representation points occurred in close proximity to the boundary of a planning district, data may have been inappropriately assigned to the planning districts. Some reassignments of data to planning districts were made to correct this situation. This occurred most often for residential areas adjacent to an industrial area.

Dwelling information for City Centre in 2001 and Mississauga Valleys in 1991 has been adjusted because of large unexplainable declines in the original data. The adjusted City Centre figure reflects City development monitoring data for 2001. The adjusted Mississauga Valleys figure for 1991 reflects the mid-point between Statistics Canada data for 1986 and 1996. Assessment data was used to verify the historic trend for Mississauga Valleys. (Continued on page 13)

**Table 4:
Immigration by Period of Immigration, 2001**

Period of Immigration	Immigrants and Population	% of Immigrants
Before 1961	21,695	7.6%
1961-1970	33,680	11.8%
1971-1980	50,650	17.7%
1981-1990	65,470	22.9%
1991-1995	54,020	18.9%
1996-2001	60,125	21.0%
Total immigrant population	285,640	100.0%
Total Population/Immigrants as a percentage of total population	612,925	46.6%

Source: Statistics Canada 2001, Custom Tabulation. Totals may not add due to rounding.

**Table 5:
Non-Official Languages in the City of Mississauga, 2001**

	Total Single Responses	Percent of Single Responses
Non-official languages Single Responses	228,830	100%
Polish	27,710	12.1%
Italian	22,740	9.9%
Portuguese	20,365	8.9%
Punjabi	17,270	7.5%
Tagalog (Pilipino)	16,820	7.4%
Arabic	13,970	6.1%
Spanish	13,005	5.7%
Chinese, n.o.s.	12,315	5.4%
Urdu	12,045	5.3%
Cantonese	10,820	4.7%
Tamil	7,865	3.4%
Vietnamese	7,745	3.4%
Croatian	6,730	2.9%
German	6,000	2.6%
Hindi	4,680	2.0%
Korean	4,515	2.0%
Ukrainian	3,745	1.6%
Greek	3,735	1.6%
Mandarin	3,250	1.4%
Persian (Farsi)	3,175	1.4%
Gujarati	2,690	1.2%
Serbian	2,570	1.1%
Hungarian	2,060	0.9%
Maltese	1,525	0.7%
Romanian	1,485	0.6%

Source: Statistics Canada 2001, Custom Tabulation based on response to Form 2B (Question 15A). Totals may not add due to rounding.

Table 3 notes continued: Dwelling unit information for high growth areas such as Central Erin Mills, Churchill Meadows, Cooksville and East Credit are somewhat lower than anticipated when compared to City data. These differences may be due to the timing of the census in relation to the issuance of building permits and/or the occupancy of dwelling units. Dwelling unit information for stable areas such as Clarkson-Lorne Park, Creditview, Erindale and Malton are somewhat higher than anticipated. This may be due to the census capturing accessory units that are not included in City monitoring data.

The total number of dwelling units shown for the City of Mississauga is based on published Statistics Canada data. The sum of the planning districts may not add to the City of Mississauga total due to rounding, minor differences in the custom tabulation results and the above noted adjustments made to City Centre and Mississauga Valleys. Further, in selected years the dwelling totals exclude dwellings occupied solely by foreign or temporary residents and unoccupied dwellings. These issues may also have resulted in some increases and decreases to the data for planning districts. The *Dwelling Adjustment* row reflects the difference between the reported City of Mississauga total and the sum of the planning district figures.

**Table 6:
Labour Force in the City of Mississauga, 1976 to 2001**

	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001
Total Labour Force	122,280	175,715	220,015	273,745	302,495	348,110
Employed	113,255	169,590	209,780	252,080	277,355	329,650
Unemployed	9,025	6,130	10,235	21,665	25,140	18,455
Not in the Labour Force	54,960	57,860	65,795	85,205	118,460	131,595
Absolute Change - Total Labour Force	-	53,435	44,300	53,730	28,750	45,615
Percentage Change - Total Labour Force	-	43.7%	25.2%	24.4%	10.5%	15.1%
Population 15 years and over	177,240	233,575	285,810	358,945	420,955	479,700

Source: Statistics Canada 2001, Custom Tabulation. Totals may not add due to rounding.

**Table 7:
Labour Force by Industry in the City of Mississauga, 2001**

	Labour Force	Percent of Labour Force
Labour force by industry*	348,110	-
Industry - Not applicable	4,295	-
All industries	343,815	100.0%
Manufacturing	61,780	18.0%
Retail trade	38,555	11.2%
Professional, scientific and technical services	29,475	8.6%
Wholesale trade	27,240	7.9%
Transportation and warehousing	24,055	7.0%
Healthcare and social assistance	23,200	6.7%
Finance and insurance	22,450	6.5%
Accommodation and food services	18,275	5.3%
Educational services	16,470	4.8%
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	15,690	4.6%
Construction	15,320	4.5%
Other services (except public administration)	13,935	4.1%
Information and cultural industries	11,165	3.2%
Public administration	10,675	3.1%
Real estate and rental and leasing	7,820	2.3%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	4,390	1.3%
Utilities	1,810	0.5%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	630	0.2%
Management of companies and enterprises	540	0.2%
Mining and oil and gas extraction	340	0.1%

Source: Statistics Canada 2001, Custom Tabulation. Totals may not add due to rounding.

*Industrial classification based on 1997 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

Note: Historical comparisons not possible because of different classification systems in past surveys.

(Continued from page 10)

Mississauga's cultural composition is evident by a review of the non-official languages in the City. Table 5 presents the range of non-official languages in the City in 2001. Polish, Italian and Portugese were the most common non-official languages spoken. The wide range of languages spoken demonstrates clearly that Mississauga has indeed become a city of many cultures.



Barber Woollen Mills (1840s to 1880s) grew to be one of the largest industries of its kind in Ontario
Mississauga Heritage Foundation

Labour Force and Employment

Growth of the City's population was matched and often exceeded by the growth of its labour force. The City's labour force increased approximately 2.7 times since 1976 from 177,240 to 479,700 in 2001. Table 6 provides labour force information from 1976 to 2001. It presents the growth in the labour force which was between 11% and 44%. During the same time period the population growth was between 13% and 26% (see Table 2).

Not only does the City have a large labour force but it has a highly diverse labour force. As Table 7 demonstrates, the City's labour force participates in many different industrial categories, the highest concentrations are in Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Professional, Scientific and Technical services.¹²

21ST CENTURY: PRIDE IN OUR PAST

Mississauga's rich heritage is embedded in its landscape and society. Its name recalls the aboriginal people that once occupied the land and many of the community names remain as tributes to the City's heritage. In the past 200 years, Mississauga has seen the rise and fall of an agrarian society and the emergence of a diverse multi-cultural community. The challenges of taming the rugged frontier that once faced the pioneers have been replaced by the challenges of managing the rapid expansion that has taken place since the mid 20th century.

This brochure has reviewed population, growth and development trends in the 19th and 20th centuries. The City has grown so quickly many of the new citizens that have chosen Mississauga as their home may not be aware of the rich history of the City they live in. To this end, this brochure has also discussed some of the principal events and novel characteristics that have shaped the City's history that it may serve as a resource to them.

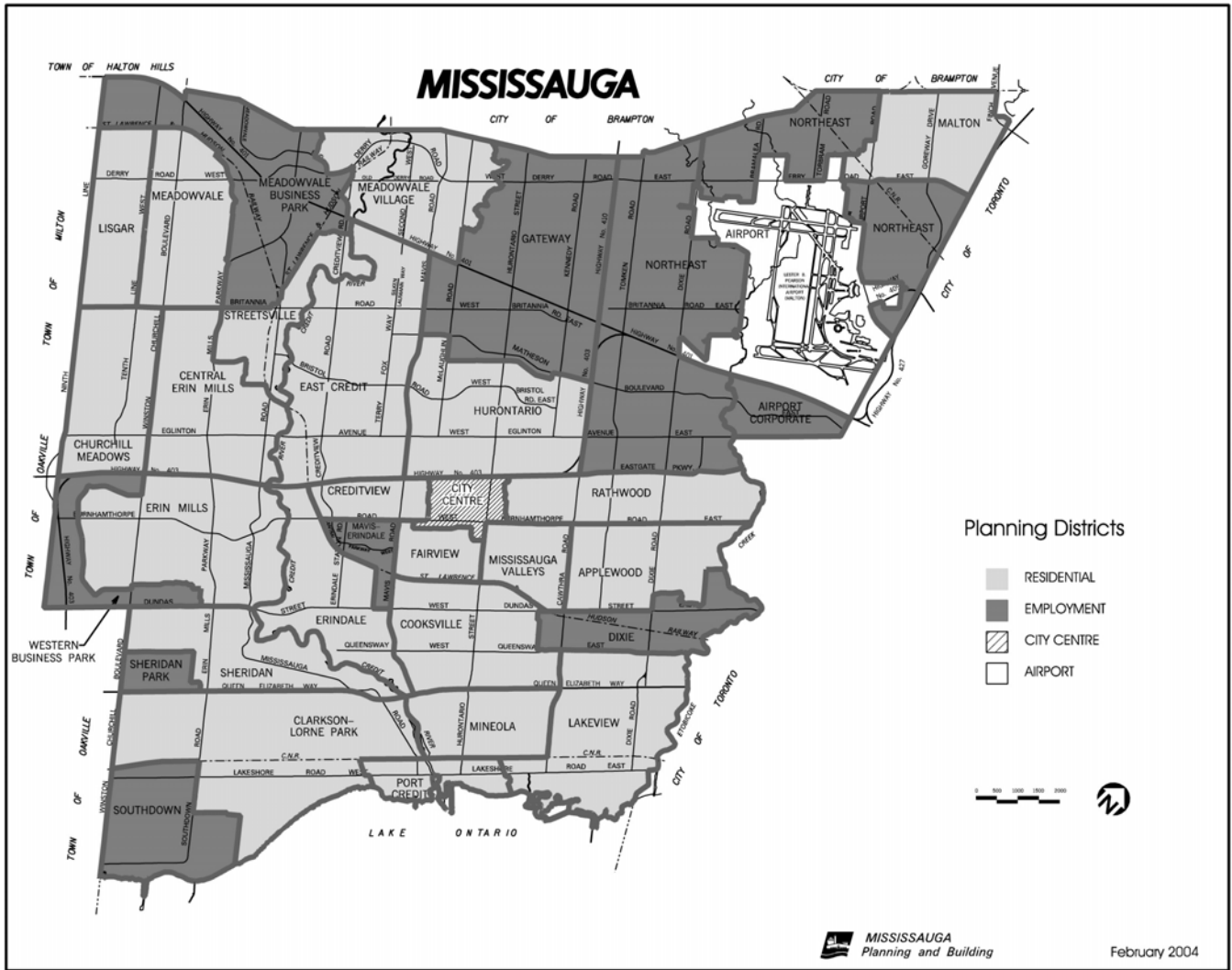
Mississauga's history has been shaped by a collection of stories rather than one single narrative. This history provides a context to understand the present and direction to guide the future. A sentiment that has been embedded as the motto of the City's coat of arms which reads "pride in our past, faith in our future."



Mississauga Central Library and residential apartments
City of Mississauga, Planning and Building Department

Sources: The information in this report was obtained from Statistics Canada, the City of Mississauga Planning and Building Department, from Mississauga Heritage Foundation's *Mississauga: The First 10,000 Years* edited by Frank A. Dieterman and *Mississauga: An Illustrated History* by Roger E. Riendeau.

¹² Historical comparisons of labour force by industry was not possible because of different classifications of industry over time.



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