

BONNIE CROMBIE MAYOR

MAKING MISSISSAUGA MORE AFFORDABLE **Bonnie Crombie's Plan to Bring Taxes Under Control and Help People** **Make Ends Meet**

I hear it at doors across Mississauga: people are working hard, watching their spending and still finding it difficult to get ahead.

Homeowners are worried about their next property tax bill. Renters are wondering how much longer they can afford their apartment. Parents are making difficult choices about groceries, swimming lessons and summer camp.

Too many residents are struggling to afford the basics.

City Hall needs to understand those pressures and act on them. That starts with managing your money responsibly and extends to practical help with the costs of everyday life.

My plan will bring greater discipline to City spending, deliver meaningful relief and strengthen support for residents facing poverty.

1. Bring taxes and spending under control

I will make affordability a priority in every budget, with a goal of keeping City tax increases at or below inflation while protecting frontline services.

Every department will be required to justify its spending. A line-by-line review will examine purchasing, consulting, administration, technology contracts and the use of City facilities. Council will receive clear savings options and an explanation of any effects on services.

I will establish an independent Auditor General to scrutinize spending, major contracts and capital projects. Findings will be public, departments will be required to respond and residents will be able to track whether recommendations have been implemented.

Before major projects are approved, the City will disclose their full construction, financing, staffing and maintenance costs.

I will bring the same scrutiny to spending at Peel Region and require a clear funding source for new ongoing City commitments.

2. Give homeowners an option to save by paying early

I will bring forward an early-payment property tax discount, giving homeowners who can pay their annual bill in January an opportunity to save.

The City Treasurer will assess options for a discount between 2 and 5 per cent, with the final rate and the portion of the bill eligible for the discount determined by a public financial analysis.

Earlier payment can improve cash flow and generate interest income. The analysis will show those benefits alongside the cost of the discount, so Council can approve a financially responsible program.

The proposal will come forward through my first budget, with implementation in the following tax year. Monthly and instalment payment options will remain available.

This will sit alongside stronger targeted relief for seniors with low incomes and practical assistance for residents facing financial hardship.

3. Make recreation more affordable for families

Every child should have the chance to learn to swim, play a sport, discover the arts and enjoy summer camp.

I will increase the City's ActiveAssist recreation credit to \$500 a year for each eligible participant, helping residents with low incomes access more City recreation and culture programs.

We will simplify enrolment, provide registration assistance and reserve subsidized spaces in high-demand programs so families can actually use the support available to them.

I will also protect free MiWay travel for children under the existing fare rules and strengthen access to affordable neighbourhood activities.

Parents should not have to tell their children that taking part is beyond the family budget.

4. Make affordable transportation easier to access

Getting to work, school or an appointment should not put another strain on a household already struggling to make ends meet.

I will protect the existing discounted transit program for residents with low incomes and work with Peel Region to make registration easier.

Residents seeking recreation assistance will also be offered help applying for transit support. Wherever possible, and with their consent, we will reduce repeated requests for the same eligibility documents.

Libraries and community partners will offer help with applications and PRESTO registration.

I will also establish a targeted emergency transportation fund through community agencies to help residents facing an immediate barrier to reaching work, essential appointments or housing services.

5. Help people keep a roof over their heads

A temporary setback should not leave a family without a home.

I will work with Peel Region to strengthen eviction-prevention services, emergency rent assistance and connections to community legal help. I will bring forward a targeted City contribution to support Mississauga residents at risk of losing their housing and seek matching provincial and federal support.

The program will report on how quickly residents receive help and how many households remain housed.

At the same time, I will use City land, coordinated approvals and targeted incentives to advance non-profit, co-operative and purpose-built rental housing, including homes suitable for families.

Where the City provides land or financial support, there will be enforceable commitments to affordability and clear deadlines for delivery.

6. Turn concern about hunger into practical support

No parent should have to skip a meal so their child can eat. No senior should have to choose between groceries and another essential bill.

I will pursue multi-year funding agreements with Food Banks Mississauga and community food programs, helping them plan ahead and meet local needs.

City support will focus on practical gaps, including storage, distribution and access to food in underserved neighbourhoods.

I will also work with school boards and established student-nutrition organizations to expand breakfast and snack programs where needs are unmet, bringing together municipal, provincial, federal and community contributions.

As mayor, I will press senior governments for adequate income supports and housing benefits so fewer residents need emergency food assistance in the first place.

7. Help residents access benefits and opportunities

Support cannot help people who do not know it exists or cannot navigate the application.

I will expand benefits and tax-filing clinics through qualified community partners, with regular sessions at libraries and neighbourhood locations.

Residents will be able to get help identifying benefits, completing applications and connecting with housing, employment and financial supports.

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