

Mount Dennis Economic Development Strategy – proposed Action Plan

Summary of Key Enhancements since December 2019 Draft

'Top 20' Action		Detailed Action	Revision Made for Final Action Plan
(A) LEVERAGING TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY			
1. Actively promote Mount Dennis for business investment and development	[3]	Investment opportunity package	Extend marketing/promotion of Mount Dennis to select international markets, in addition to local
	[4]	Investment opportunity forum	Actively seek opportunities to attract a major business or government office as an anchor use
2. Improve access to commercial space	[7]	Access to low-cost space	Investigate opportunity to create a business hub to support establishment, growth and incubation of local entrepreneurs, with the City or another partner potentially leasing the space shorter-term. Establish business mentorship program.
	[8]	Encourage temporary use of vacant/underutilized retail space	Investigate potential incentives to improve/lease/occupy space
4. Promote active transportation connecting existing and future community to Mount Dennis transit hub <i>[added 'existing and future community']</i>	[14]	Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity with Mount Dennis Station	In addition to pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, ensure bus routes in Mount Dennis continue to provide a high level of service to area residents and businesses after transit hub is opened
5. Identify and pursue opportunities for community benefits	[18]	Develop a plan that identifies a range of community benefits	Included more elements in anticipated community benefits outcomes, including local jobs/job placement opportunities, local procurement, green infrastructure
(B) CREATING A UNIQUE AND POSITIVE IDENTITY			
<i>[Not specifically listed in the Top 20 but related to and would support 7. Initiate streetscape improvement projects]</i>	[25]	Develop Mount Dennis brand	In addition to building on transit-accessible, connected and eco-neighbourhood themes, identify MD as being a strategically located, vibrant and diverse <i>destination</i> to be explored

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6. Support a local Indigenous place-making initiative in Mount Dennis <i>[new action added following discussion with City's Indigenous Affairs Office who would like to activate this with relevant partners in the very near term]</i>	[28]	Improve awareness of and access to the Humber River	Include identification of Mount Dennis as a location to participate in the Indigenous place-making initiative co-led by the City's Indigenous Affairs Office and the Indigenous community
<i>[Not specifically listed in the Top 20 but is part of broader theme of creating a unique and positive identity]</i>	[29]	Develop and promote community gardens	Generalized to include not only community gardens but also other small-scale environmental initiatives (e.g. community composting, Neighbourhood Climate Action Grants for NIAs, etc.)
(C) ENCOURAGING CLUSTER INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
11. Assess potential for an urban agriculture opportunity and create a farmers' market	[46]	Create Farmers' Market	Reinforced this concept and identified Farmers' Market as part of a local urban agriculture project including greenhouse and 'farm to table' opportunities that support business revitalization and social objectives
13. Establish and innovation hub	[49]	Investigate innovation hub	Include in this concept the additional elements of a business incubation function, and linkages with a post-secondary institution and public or private sector projects and initiatives in the area
<i>[new action suggested following the December 10 open house – related to the notion of developing and promoting specific niches in Mount Dennis]</i>	[]	Support a tourism collaborative	Investigate potential to support establishment of a Tourism Collaborative in Mount Dennis 'on the ground'
(D) PROMOTING BUSINESS, CREATIVE AND CULTURAL ENTERPRISE			
15. Establish new/extended festivals in Mount Dennis	[56]	Establish new/extended festivals (including Nuit Blanche)	Include conducting outreach and partnering with artists and organizations representing Indigenous and equity-seeking groups

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<i>[related to encouraging and promoting a variety of retail businesses in Mount Dennis]</i>	[58]	Identify retail and service gaps	Recognize a balance of retail businesses is needed, including those where lower-income residents can shop, and addressing 'food desert' issues (e.g. more grocery and fresh food outlets)
16. Promote existing supports for business in Mount Dennis <i>[The action 'Further promote BIA façade improvement program' has now been included here, as part of promoting existing business supports]</i>	[66]	Hold small business capacity-building session	Added consideration of identifying, developing or promoting incentive programs and funding for entrepreneurs, including those from targeted groups
17. Encourage and facilitate Mount Dennis business networking and collaboration	[70]	Mount Dennis local business collaboration	In addition to business networking to identify and address common issues, consider opportunities for both B2B and B2C awareness-building and marketing within the local area (e.g. via web)
(E) SUPPORTING LOCAL TALENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT			
<i>[related to and further focuses 19. Support sector-specific access to job opportunities and talent/skills development]</i>	[75]	Identify non-construction job opportunities	Added mention of working with trade associations and TDSB, among other agencies, and including a focus on youth and lower income/underemployed individuals in the area. Identified job fairs as a vehicle to connect local residents to job opportunities.
18. Identify local and/or social hiring and procurement opportunities <i>[has been generalized to have broader reach as further described in the detailed action]</i>	[78]	Identify local and/or social hiring and procurement opportunities	Continuing to recognize West Park Healthcare Centre's leadership role in this type of initiative, and have generalized so such opportunities are not specific only to West Park
20. Initiate effort to attract a post-secondary institution/satellite facility in Mount Dennis	[83]	Initiate efforts to attract post-secondary institution	Added further approaches to consider, including virtual/online opportunities combined with a smaller satellite facility or office in the area, and investigation of opportunities to also attract private post-secondary facilities