

## IDEA Square One – A Community supporting local & globally minded entrepreneurs & businesses

The epicentre for the collision of ideas that allows interesting concepts to emerge and grow

A new innovation hub – IDEA Square One – is the nexus of the City of Mississauga’s strategic plan to retain and attract ambitious entrepreneurs, start-ups and scale-ups.

It is expected to fully open in the Square One shopping centre in the fall.

“IDEA Square One will be based on an affordable membership model,” says Donna Heslin, Manager of Small Business, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation with the City of Mississauga’s Economic Development Office.

It will include co-working space, along with rentable or bookable offices, boardrooms and event spaces. Business experts and mentors, along with City economic development staff and representatives of other innovation programs, will offer a range of services at the hub.

“IDEA Square One is a physical manifestation of the City of Mississauga’s commitment to our innovation ecosystem. We are

approaching things differently. We will service small start-ups but also the step-ups and scale-ups,” says Heslin.

“Building on a strong innovation ecosystem that includes University of Toronto Mississauga, Sheridan College and a wealth of private companies of all sizes, IDEA Square One and the future Lakeview Innovation District will help ensure that made-in-Canada ideas don’t have to go elsewhere to flourish,” says Vigen Nazarian, who serves as an entrepreneur-in-residence at the Mississauga Business Entrepreneur Centre.

“I am so happy to see this come to fruition. Mayor Bonnie Crombie and her team deserve credit for being bold and going in this direction,” says Nazarian, who is a successful Mississauga-based serial entrepreneur and commercialization expert.

Square One is the perfect location because it is the “intersection of commerce and civic activities and offers visibility many such incubators don’t have,” says Nazarian. “It will be the epicentre for the collision of ideas



that allows interesting concepts to emerge and grow.”

As a transit hub, Square One delivers critical accessibility, says Heslin.

“A lot of thinking and planning went into choosing this location. We wanted to ensure it was easily accessible from anywhere in the city.”

The shopping centre also offers high visibility for IDEA Mississauga.

“We want the diverse communities of Mississauga to know about us and what we offer. We know Square One will deliver that to us. Oxford Properties has been a terrific partner on this initiative.”

Sherif Masood, head of asset management in Canada for Oxford Properties, which co-owns and operates Square One, says he’s not aware of another incubator space in the country that is located in a mall.

It fits in with the company’s strategy to diversify the uses of 25 per cent of its leasable space in its shopping centres into alternative uses, including employment and educational uses, destination retail and food options, health and wellness, entertainment and public realm spaces.



“We’ve had a decades-long relationship with the City of Mississauga and this partnership is mutually beneficial. IDEA will give many people a reason to come to Square One regularly,” says Masood.

“This is an investment in our community. IDEA will help start-ups grow into mid-sized companies. We are huge believers in Mississauga.”

Oxford Properties has invested \$500 million in the 2.2-million-square-foot Square One – Ontario’s largest retail destination – over the past seven years. A long-term vision for the 130 acres at Square One includes office and life sciences spaces, recreation, and 18,000 residential units.

