

Date: 2021-09-03

Subject: **RECOMMENDATION REPORT
Brampton: UN-Habitat Collaboration World Urban Pavilion and
Urban Economy Forum 2021 on Urban Sustainable Development
Goals Initiative**

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Recommendations:

1. **That** the recommendation report titled **RECOMMENDATION REPORT
Brampton: UN-Habitat Collaboration World Urban Pavilion and Urban Economy
Forum 2021 on Urban Sustainable Development Goals Initiative on Urban
Sustainable Development Goals Initiative** be received;
2. **That** City staff be directed to finalize a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) with the UN-Habitat Urban Economy Forum to facilitate collaboration on the initiatives outlined in this report and report back to Council with the final MOU. ; and
3. **That** the City Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this staff report and Council resolutions to the UN-Habitat Urban Economy Forum.

Overview:

- **City of Brampton is recognized as a global leader in committing to make shift to meet Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

- In 2020, City of Brampton was approached by United Nation's UN-Habitat and Urban Economy Forum (UEF) as a potential partner on Urban SDG Cities initiative, including the World Urban Pavilion (Pavilion).
- Urban Economy Forum is an international non-profit organization that provides a forum for professional dialogue between cities, financial institutions, private sector, professionals and non-governmental organizations to increase the efficiency of urban economy and promote innovation in markets for sustainable urban development.
- A Letter of Intent was signed on December 8, 2020 to facilitate further discussions and drafting of an MOU between Brampton and UN-Habitat to provide a framework for a five-year collaboration between Brampton and UN-Habitat through the UEF. The MOU is currently under-review.
- Opportunities identified include development of a *Brampton Virtual Street* initiative as part of a global pilot project with the Pavilion.
- Brampton will be co-hosting the *3rd Urban Economy Forum* conference from October 4th to 6th through virtual format. The event is on the occasion of the Canadian celebration of *World Habitat Day* and the *International Year of Creative Economy*.
- UEF has indicated a desire to work with the City to establish an *Annual Global Forum* on SDGs in Brampton, presenting Brampton to the United Nation's General Assembly, and positioning Brampton to attract sustainable development investments from national and international community.

This report provides information on the upcoming event and current status of discussions, including the development of a MOU for a 5-year collaboration with UEF.

Background:

In November 2020, United Nations' UN-Habitat, Urban Economy Forum, Government of Canada and CMHC announced a five year partnership to create the World Urban Pavilion (Pavilion) in Regent Park. The Pavilion is intended to be a knowledge exchange hub to share best practices, innovation and research in urban development and revitalization from countries around the world.

Under the Pavilion, the UEF has established the *Canada: Frontrunner of Urban SDGs* initiative to position Canada as the leading country to advance SDGs at the national level. The UEF is intending to use this initiative to:

- build capacity in Canada for innovation through collaborative partnership programs;
- inspire action through evidence-based decisions and people-oriented solutions;
- study the multidimensional of urban development through physical and virtual space;

- initiate and accelerate pilot projects to attract investments from local, national, and international sectors to advance SDGs.

About UN-Habitat and UEF:

Established in 1978, UN-Habitat is the United Nations program for human settlements and sustainable urban development. Its main mandate is to further the 'Urban SDG Cities Initiative' established in 2020 through working with over 90 countries globally.

Established in 2018, Urban Economy Forum (UEF) is a non-profit organization with office supported by board of directors, a senior advisory board and membership fee as financial resource. UEF charter indicates in the case of dissolution, all the assets of UEF will be donated to the public sector.

Current State:

In 2020, City of Brampton was invited by UN-Habitat, Urban Economy Forum (UEF) to begin discussions on a five-year collaboration to become a lead municipality under this initiative, under working title "Brampton: Frontrunner City of Urban SDGs" and to include a *Brampton Virtual Street* as part of the Pavilion. Collaboration with the UEF on these initiatives would provide opportunities to:

- showcase Brampton's innovation in sustainable urban development to international audiences;
- position Brampton as an international hub for implementing SDGs and pilot initiatives;
- attract investment to fund pilot sustainability initiatives in Brampton;

A *Letter of Intent* (LOI) signed on December 8, 2020 advanced this collaboration with UEF and discussions have included specific opportunities such as:

- establishing an *International City Leaders Network* in Brampton;
- supporting an *Annual Global Forum* and *Global Mayoral Roundtable* in Brampton;
- presenting Brampton at *United Nations General Assembly*;
- creation of a publication profiling Brampton projects for the UN;
- conducting an urban assessment for Brampton through the UN's *City Prosperity Initiative*; and
- furthering pilot projects and showcasing Brampton as a leading global city for sustainable urban development.

Work is already also underway with UEF to establish an *Annual Global Forum* and the *Global Mayoral Roundtable* in collaboration with the City of Brampton.

Brampton will be co-hosting the **3rd Urban Economy Forum** conference from October 4th to 6th through virtual format. The event is on the occasion of the Canadian celebration of *World Habitat Day* and the *International Year of Creative Economy*.

The **3rd Urban Economy Forum** will include a minister's roundtable, academia and industry expert panels on topics including creating resilient cities, low-carbon inclusion, leveraging national and local collaboration, and community empowerment for equitable economic growth. Speakers include:

- elected officials from Canada, Australia, Spain, United Kingdom, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Ireland, Iraq, Armenia, Costa Rica, Greece, Malaysia, and Fiji;
- leadership from UN-Habitat, David Suzuki Foundation, International Institute for Sustainable Development, IRIS Knowledge Foundation in India, Resilient Cities Network in Singapore, Ross Centre for Sustainable Cities in Italy, Cities Alliance in Belgium, World Bank, GLS Bank, and Arbejdernes Landsbank in Denmark; and
- professors from Harvard University, University of Cambridge, University of Melbourne, Lancaster University, University of Tehran, Polytechnique Montreal, University of Toronto, Ryerson University, and York University.

The intended outcomes of the forum include:

- providing recommendations for cities to implement sustainable policies, procedures and actions in their local communities;
- building a global network of cross-sectors leadership for knowledge exchange;
- encouraging participants to report back on progress from 2021.

Brampton's participation in the Pavilion will include a ***Brampton Virtual Street*** that will highlight Brampton urban innovations and include opportunities such as:

- Brampton being represented as the first global virtual street for international exchange of practices, case studies, and lessons learned with a focus on urban innovation on SDGs; and
- UEF, UN-Habitat and the Pavilion to position Brampton as a centre of urban innovation and highlight Brampton's innovation initiatives globally.

The UEF proposed virtual street is a platform that showcase cities around the world on sustainable design practices. UEF is collaborating with Harvard University to create this virtual platform and proposing to name the street after the City of Brampton.

It is intended that there will be opportunities to promote the ***Brampton Virtual Street*** and could also be included in Brampton's Urban Community Hub at Uptown Brampton or other City facilities.

The UEF has proposed that Brampton enter into an MOU and participate as a ***Frontrunner City of Urban SDGs*** initiative as part of the Pavilion. This would position Brampton as Canada's leading 'Frontrunner City' in the UEF and UN-Habitat's Urban SDGs Cities program, demonstrating innovation and lead international dialogue at the city scale.

Next Steps

UEF has established a strategic plan, steering committee, and priority programming areas for the Pavilion. The signed LOI outlines 'agree to collaborate' between the City of Brampton and UEF on the Pavilion initiative which includes the Virtual Street named after the City of Brampton.

City of Brampton is in the process of finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UEF to outline a 5-year collaboration. The MOU will provide a framework for cooperation, outlining roles, responsibilities, and an action plan.

It is intended that upon finalizing the MOU, the City will continue collaborating with UEF other potential partners to achieve the shared SDG objectives.

Financial Implications:

The costs associated with co-hosting the Urban Economy Forum 2021 event and joining UEF as a city member is estimated to be \$10,000. There is sufficient funding available within the 2021 Planning, Building & Economic Development operating budget to fund this initiative.

Should any additional funding related to the future work with UEF and the MOU be identified, this will be detailed in a future report to Council.

Term of Council Priorities:

UN-Habitat's *Sustainable Development Goal 11* is to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

This report and the UN-Habitat's SDG Cities Initiative directly align with the Strategic Direction – Brampton is a City of Opportunities, in particular the Council Priority to Create Complete Communities, Unlock Downtown and Uptown, Support Community Hub Concept, Prioritize Jobs within Centres and Attract Investment and Employment.

Living the Mosaic – Brampton 2040 Vision

This report and the UN-Habitat's SDG Cities Initiative aligns with Sustainability and Environment Vision, in particular Action #1-1 Institute for Sustainable Brampton and Action #1-2 Brampton Eco-Park.

Conclusion:

City of Brampton is recognized as a global leader in committing to make shift to meet Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Council endorsed *Brampton 2040 Vision* represents an inspirational transformation to shift from auto-oriented post-war suburbs to a sustainable future.

The *Brampton Frontrunner City of Urban SDGs* and *Brampton Virtual Street Initiatives* in the United Nation's UN-Habitat World Urban Pavilion represents a unique opportunity for Brampton to:

- deliver the 2018 Council endorsed *Brampton 2040 Vision*;
- address the 2019 Council declaration of *Climate Emergency*;
- amplify the impact of various programs and initiatives underway to address SDGs.

With less than nine years for countries and cities to achieve SDGs, Brampton has the unique opportunity to be the 'heart' of global actions, leading cities dialogue on the global stage, while attracting investments to advance SDGs by 2030.

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Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Relevance to SDGs and Climate Change
Appendix 2 – UN-Habitat SDG Cities Initiative
Appendix 3 – UEF 2021 3rd Urban Economy Forum