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Subject: **Recommendation Report
Urban Community Hub Design Concepts and Initiation of Pilots
at Uptown Brampton and Queen Street East Precinct**

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Report Number: Planning, Bld & Ec Dev-2021-961

Recommendations:

1. **THAT** the report titled “Recommendation Report – Urban Community Hub Design Concepts and Initiation of Pilots at Uptown Brampton and Queen Street East Precinct” to the Planning and Development Committee meeting of October 18, 2021 be received;
2. **THAT** the Urban Community Hub Design Concepts be endorsed by Council;
3. **THAT** Urban Community Hub Pilot Projects, under working title ‘Uptown Hub’ and ‘Queens Hub’ be initiated at Uptown Brampton and Queen Street East;
4. **THAT** the City initiate the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Peel District School Board, Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board and other potential partners for ‘Uptown Hub’ and ‘Queens Hub’ pilots;
5. **THAT** staff continue furthering the capital, operational and delivery arrangement of the “Brampton Hub Pilots” and report back to Council in 2022; and,
6. **THAT** the City Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this staff report and Council resolution to the Region of Peel, Sheridan College, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority and the Credit Valley Conservation, and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing PERL Secretariat for their information.

Overview:

- In January 2020, Brampton initiated an *Urban Community Hub Study* to consider opportunities to improve effective delivery of services, particularly in intensification areas along rapid-transit routes.
- Building upon the Mount Pleasant Hub design, the City has expanded the concept design to address needs and services that are not addressed through the typical development process.
- The initial phase of the *Study* completed design concepts that with pragmatic solutions to address urban challenges including health, education, economics, equity, inclusion and post-COVID recovery:
 - Diamond Schmitt Architects developed the hub design concepts;
 - HR&A Advisors developed an economic and fiscal impact analysis;
 - University of Toronto School of Cities developed a policy levers and partnership analysis;
 - Canadian Urban Institute conducted a business and community needs assessment.
- Two initial Urban Community Hub design concepts, ‘Uptown Hub’ and ‘Queens Hub’, were developed in collaboration with stakeholders including Brampton Library, School Boards, Peel Public Health and Social Services, Sheridan College, Toronto Region Conservation Authority and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority.
- Key components of the hub design concepts include:
 - Education Hub with elementary school, library, daycare;
 - Recreation + Food Hub with community kitchen, gymnasium;
 - Health + Social Hub with clinics, agency space, meeting space;
 - Arts, Culture + Design Hub with exhibition venue, pop-up space;
 - Technology + Innovation Hub with co-work space, lecture hall;
 - Green + Ecology Hub with eco-gardens, green energy.
- Further to the presentation at *Council Workshop* on June 29, 2020, the Urban Community Hub initiative was presented to ministries at the Association of Municipalities AMO Conference in August 2020, and a large-scale workshop and Public Townhall in October 2020.
- The opportunity to implement a pilot Urban Community Hub has been advanced through the Shoppers World Redevelopment Development Application Review process.

- Provisions for the Uptown Hub Pilot were incorporated in the *Zoning By-law* for the proposed development approved by Council November 25, 2020. The next steps in the application process will advance delivery of ‘Uptown Hub,’ including the creation of the parcel to be combined with Kaneff Park in which the hub will be located.
- The second concept design will continue to be advanced through the planning work currently underway to carry forward the *Preliminary Queen Street East Precinct Plan*.
- This recommendation report summarizes the work based on the concepts developed through the Urban Community Hub Study and seeks Council’s approval to proceed with next steps of implementation including the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Peel District School Board, Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board and other potential partners for ‘Uptown Hub’ and ‘Queens Hub’ pilots.

Background:

Align with Vision 2040 and Terms of Council Priority

The Council endorsed *Brampton Vision 2040* and *Terms of Council Priority* provides direction for the City to take a forward-thinking, proactive role in addressing urban issues.

The *Vision 2040* envisioned the “community hub” to provide a one stop offering of facilities for recreation, education, health and social cohesion that promote sharing and changeable as circumstances shift. The *Vision 2040* also envisioned Brampton as a “City by Design” that declares design excellence for public projects to contribute to a well-designed city that draws talent, wealth and competitive edge at the global stage.

In January 2020, the *Urban Community Hub Study* was initiated. Building upon the Mount Pleasant Hub design which includes a public recreation centre, public library, public park, public elementary school and daycare, the City has further its proactive role through focusing on meeting needs that are not typically addressed through development application, including the design for:

- Technology and innovation uses to meet the needs of youth, entrepreneurs and small businesses;
- Arts, culture and design uses to meet the needs of local artists, creative industries and intergenerational-learning of diverse culture;
- Food, pop-ups and urban agriculture uses to meet the needs of community-led programming and culinary events;

- Community health and social services uses to meet the needs of vulnerable populations, new immigrants and seniors;
- Urban ecology and renewable energy uses to meet the needs of climate change, greenhouse gas reduction, and low carbon lifestyle; and
- Area-specific needs such as housing, firehall and other non-traditional uses.

Align with improving Health, Environmental, Economic and Education outcomes

In Peel Region, 75% of children do not walk to school. Over 60% of the population is obese or overweight. Pandemic has also revealed the limitation of auto-oriented, single-use facilities' ability to deliver services to residents and businesses effectively, and the psychological impact of social isolation. The Council endorsed *2020 Community Energy and Emission Reduction Plan* also calls for commitment to fight against climate emergencies through delivering net-zero buildings and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As a response, the City has retained Diamond Schmitt Architects to develop hub design concepts that centralized on providing a 'walk-to one-stop-shop' to meeting holistic needs, removing barriers to access services, and strengthening the community through thoughtful curation of shared space and programs. This is an adaptable and expandable 'future-proof' campus model designed to achieve four key objectives:

- Prioritizing safe and easy arrival to the facility by walking and cycling for children, their caregivers and seniors;
- Prioritizing all seasons, all day, all-age friendly multi-use function and community connections with built-in indoor, outdoor and roof-top public spaces;
- Prioritizing program synergies among innovation technology, arts and design, social and health to sustain a well-educated population and competitive workforce;
- Prioritizing access to daylight and airflow, green technology, healthy food to reach sustainable and resilient goals.

Using the 20-min walkable urban neighbourhoods in Uptown and Queen East as the setting, the City has designed two hub prototypes in collaboration with school boards, public health and social services, library and recreation, parks and open space, environmental and age-friendly planning, economic development, culture and tourism, transportation and transit planning and Sheridan college. Key components of the hubs include:

- *Health and Social Hub* with clinics, agency spaces, exhibition and meeting venues;
- *Library and Education Hub* with elementary school, daycare, library & study space;
- *Recreation and Food Hub* with community kitchen, culinary and pop-ups space, gymnasium and dance studios, community lounge and event space;
- *Arts, Culture and Design Hub* with performance and multipurpose exhibition venue, city-building design centre, creative industries agency space, pop-up program

space, cultural workshops, non-profit showrooms and opportunity for an African Canadian Economic and Cultural Village;

- *Technology and Innovation Hub* with lecture hall and multipurpose event venue, co-work space and meeting rooms, start-ups and accelerators mentoring space;
- *Green and Ecology Hub* with urban agriculture eco-gardens, green infrastructure and district energy connections, outdoor fitness and multi-use sports court, ice skating and fountain square, outdoor play and event space, dog leash-free area and multipurpose community park.

Align with Redevelopment Activities along Rapid-Transit Served areas

Since 2020, the City has experienced a high volume of high-density mixed-use development proposals along rapid-transit served areas. This presents an opportunity for the City to take a proactive role to deliver complete, walkable, healthy, family and transit-oriented communities that can increase Brampton's competitiveness through retaining and drawing talents to these areas.

Leveraging redevelopment activities triggered by the arrival of light rail transit on Hurontario-Main and bus rapid transit on Queen Street, the City has developed two design concepts, namely 'Uptown Hub,' and 'Queens Hub.'

Further to the presentation of hub concepts at the *June 2020 Council Workshop*, the City has further the exploration of 'Uptown Hub' with the goal to enable the City to:

- Accelerate facility delivery to improve quality of life and economic outcome;
- Integrate programs to promote lifelong learning, global competencies, and utilize the community as a knowledge resource;
- Cultivate partnerships to align with regional, provincial and non-profit programs to increase efficiencies in providing services;
- Provide youth, seniors, residents and businesses with walkable access to a holistic offering of services; and
- Prioritize arrival by walking and cycling for children through integrating facility in neighbourhood and public realm design.

Alignment with Peel Region and Provincial Goals

The Urban Community Hub design concepts included the consideration to align with Peel Region's *Community for Life 20-year Vision* and Public Health, Social Services and School Boards' goals. It also aligns with multiple provincial goals and is an effective way to implement the Provincial *Growth Plan*, deliver complete communities and amplify the value of provincial investments in *Transit-Oriented Communities*. Key alignment includes:

- *2020 Provincial Policy Statement* that directs co-locating public facilities in community hubs to facilitate service integration, enhance health and social well-

being, deliver strong and livable communities, improve access to transit and active transportation, and demonstrate resilient to climate change;

- *2020 Growth Plan* that indicates community hub as a ‘major trip generator’ that expand convenient access to public service, and directs investments in public facilities such as libraries and schools to be planned and located to keep pace with changing needs; and
- *2020 Transit-Oriented Communities* that mandates catalyzing complete communities, providing positive value capture, and increasing access to transit. Currently, the *Transit-Oriented Communities* program covers the area surrounding light rail transit stations and GO stations.

In August 2020, the Urban Community Hub initiative was presented to ministries at the *Association of Municipalities AMO Conference*, and to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing’s *Planning, Environment, Research and Land Secretariat, Assistant Deputy Minister PERL ADM table* in April 2021 for their awareness and information. Discussions with provincial ministries will continue as the project moves forward.

Align with Global Trends and Local Needs

In October 2020, the City conducted a “virtual walkshop” in collaboration with the City of Helsinki, the Urban Land Institute, the University of Toronto School of Cities and Greenberg Consultants. Using the Helsinki’s “25-hour City” model and ULI’s global knowledge base, over 200 participants discussed pragmatic ways to provide “extra hours” to residents and businesses through delivering urban community hubs in tandem with the development of transit-oriented communities. Recommendations were presented at a virtual public townhall. Brampton’s “Urban Community Hub and Transit-Oriented Communities” effort is recognized as an emerging global best-practice to achieve United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

To further the exploration of ‘Uptown Hub’, in November 2020, the City engaged the Canadian Urban Institute to undertake a research and engagement project to understand the local “on-the-ground” needs in Uptown. Using CUI’s national research and action campaign on post-COVID recovery, the study focused on:

- Understanding the needs of youth, small businesses, and racialized population;
- Addressing the needs of entrepreneurs and those in the informal economy;
- Recommending actions to restore social and economic resilience while drawing new attention to reconciliation and equity; and
- Recommending ways to leverage ‘Uptown Hub’ to accelerate post-COVID recovery.

Stakeholders engaged include representatives from Indus Community Services, Roots Community Services, Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario, Achev, United Way, Boys and Girls Club, Brampton Entrepreneur Centre, Youth Task Force, IT and Smart Cities and Multicultural Centre.

Align with Integrated Programming

In April 2021, the City has further engaged the Toronto Region Conservation Authority and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority to join school board, public health and social services, library and recreation, environmental and age-friendly planning, economic development, culture and tourism, transportation and transit planning and Sheridan college to develop a sample of integrated programs with to goal to:

- Promote lifelong learning and utilize the community as a knowledge resource;
- Build global competency and empower modern learners;
- Foster collaboration, celebrate diversity and sustain a well-educated population;
- Create family and business-friendly environment to attract office developments;
- Cultivate partnerships through aligning with regional and provincial programs.

Purpose of this report

This recommendation report summarizes the work undertaken to implement pilot Urban Community Hub projects, based on the concepts developed through the Urban Community Hub and seeks Council's approval for Staff to proceed with the development of an MOU with the Peel Region Public and Separate School Boards and next steps in the Uptown Community Hub Pilot project.

Current Situation:

The need of an Accelerated Hub Delivery Model to Improve Economic Outcome and Quality of Life in Uptown

Since 2020, the City has experienced a high volume of high-density mixed-use development proposals along the light rail transit LRT corridor in Uptown. Currently, there are no co-located facilities within Uptown to provide residents, businesses, and the growing young-family population with walkable access to holistic services.

Staff worked collaboratively with RioCan Ltd on the planning for the 'Uptown Hub' site through its development application for the redevelopment of the Shoppers World mall. Further to Council enacted the *Zoning By-law* for the proposed development on November 25, 2020, Staff has continued to work with RioCan on the refinement of the 'Uptown Hub' site through the *Draft Plan of Subdivision* application process. It is noted that the 'Uptown Hub' would not just serve the Shoppers World development but also existing residents and future residents from the significant number of applications being processed in the area.

The City retained HR&A Advisors and the University of Toronto School of Cities to inform the feasibility, benefits, policy levers and partnership structure with the goal to accelerate the delivery of 'Uptown Hub', and explore the opportunities to create a facility

which could open as early as 2027 (accelerated from 2031). The economic and fiscal impact analysis indicates that an accelerated delivery model could:

- Lower the cost of each of the two community hubs considered by \$30-90 million through avoiding at least four years of land and construction cost escalation;
- Enhance property values by 4.5%, contributing up to \$1.8 million tax revenue per hub annually by 2035;
- Support the demand for larger residential units, increase the share of two or more bedrooms units, and accelerate commercial office buildout in the neighbourhood;
- Enhance inclusive growth and sustain local economy through higher diversity of use in one place.

The policy levers and partnership analysis confirmed the hub concept is at the “cutting edge” of innovating co-location and program synergies which:

- Aligns with federal, provincial, regional and municipal policies, providing an opportunity for all levels of government to deliver a complete, walkable, and healthy community that exemplifies their government goals and programs;
- Provide opportunities for long-term tenancy that protect service tenants from future rent increases and allow the space to be more flexible to fit local needs;
- Enable various organizations to meet service objectives and measures of success while delivering additional value in terms of community development.

The need of Hub as an Anchor to Main Streets – An Equitable Model to Fast-forward Recovery and Sustain Small Businesses as Neighbourhoods Undergo Transformation

Brampton has been one of the cities hit hardest by the pandemic. Small businesses have faced steep challenges and need support as the urban fabric are transforming from plazas and enclosed malls into walkable neighbourhoods comprised of main streets.

The Canadian Urban Institute conducted a business and community needs assessment to inform how the Urban Community Hub concepts could serve as anchors to sustain the health of main street areas, restore economic resilience through providing social and cultural services to local businesses, while attracting diverse visitors to these new urban cores. The hub concepts address key needs identified including:

- business promotion and assistance for small businesses;
- co-work and pop-up spaces to retain youth and new businesses;
- commercial kitchen, food hall, diverse food-scene and events as attractions;
- beautification, public realm investments and meanwhile use activations;
- safe walking and cycling environment to enhance connectivity;
- unprogrammed space with extended hours to accommodate peak times;
- digital accessibility and shared network for business acceleration; and
- support businesses owned by South Asian, Black and other racialized groups through language training programs, daycare in programs, cultural program, start-

up and STEM programs, and “Angel Investor Pitch Nights” to provide access to capital.

The CUI report identified five key ingredients covering *People, Businesses, Places, Anchors and Leadership*, and the corresponding recommended action items, timeframe, and intended outcome to accelerate the transformation of car-oriented urban neighborhoods into livable, urban mixed-use communities and destinations for all.

Next Steps – Initiate Hub Pilots at Uptown and Queen Street East Precinct:

Uptown Urban Community Hub Concept initial Pilot

At the outset of the RioCAN’s Shoppers World redevelopment process, the Peel District School Board identified the need for an elementary school within the development. City staff identified that the Urban Community Hub concept provided an opportunity to provide the school as well as other needed services than the conventional approach. Staff worked extensively with RioCan, the school board and other stakeholders to incorporate to a community hub within the centre of the development. The *Shoppers World Redevelopment Master Plan, Urban Design Guidelines and Planning Rationale* document, prepared by RioCan in support of its rezoning application as the key document to guide the future development of the site, prominently featured the Urban Community Hub as a focus of the development.

Staff is currently processing the *Draft Plan of Subdivision* for the Shoppers World application. This application will include addressing some of the details of the arrangements for the delivery of the Hub, including the creation of the parcel to be combined with Kaneff Park in which the hub will be located.

‘Queens Urban Community Hub Concept’ Pilot

Based on January 2020 *Preliminary Queen Street East Precinct Plan* endorsed by Council, the City is undertaking technical studies to support the development of a policy framework to streamline the development approval process and realize the increased growth demand. This work includes study of the Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) along the corridor and combines transportation planning, market analysis, an integrated energy plan, master servicing plan, and a community facilities, parks and open space plan to facilitate an integrated high-quality transit-oriented community and mixed-use corridor. The ‘Queens Hub’ Design Concept as envisioned based on the *Preliminary Precinct Plan*, will be incorporated into this work.

School Boards Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Other Partnerships Approach

In November 2019, Peel District School Board identified the need for new school facilities in Uptown through the *Shoppers World Redevelopment* development applications review

process. In December 2019, Peel District School Board and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board identified the need for new school facilities in Queen Street East through the *Preliminary Queen Street East Precinct Plan* process. Since 2020, both school boards have been working with the City to integrate school facilities in the form of mixed-use Urban Community Hubs.

The locations for one initial Urban Community Hub has been identified through the *Shoppers World Master Planning* and will be determined redevelopment process in Uptown. The location and details for a second Urban Community Hub will be further developed through planning underway for Queen Street East area. The design concepts and siting of both hubs will continue to be developed in collaboration with school boards.

In an effort to advance the partnership with School Boards and other potential partners identified in this report, Staff is seeking Council authorization to initiate the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the ‘Uptown Hub’ and ‘Queen Hub’ pilots.

It is intended that the MOU will outline the capital, operational and delivery arrangement for the pilots. Staff will continue collaborate with potential partners to further the MOU and report back to Council in 2022.

Anticipated Timeline Outlining Key Milestones of the proposed ‘Uptown Hub’ Pilot

2021	Recommendation Report to seek endorsement of Urban Community Hub Design Concepts and to authorize the Initiation of Partnership Arrangements for ‘Uptown Hub’ and ‘Queen Hub’ pilots
2022	Recommendation Report to seek authorization to execute a Memorandum of Understanding which covers capital, operational and delivery Arrangements for the Uptown Hub Pilot
2024	Commence Architectural, Landscape Architectural, and Engineering design
2025	Urban Community Hub Breaks Ground
2027	Urban Community Hub Facility Open

Corporate Implications:

No corporate implications have been identified at this time.

Financial Implications:

Sufficient Funding is available in capital project #207841 – Urban Design Integrated Complete Community Master Plan to fund the remaining work on the initial pilot. Any future financial implications will be identified in a forthcoming recommendation report to Council, pending Council approval.

Economic Development Implications:

The City's Urban Community Hub concept is a great opportunity for the City to provide technology and innovation spaces in urban neighbourhoods. Maximizing the space available for Technology and Innovation initiatives in the City of Brampton will help grow the city's position as a competitive city in the Canadian Innovation Corridor between Toronto and Waterloo.

Talent in Brampton requires access to resources to help its growth, and the closer these resources are to their places of residence the higher access they will have to help foster the spirit of innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship in the City. The dedicated Technology and Innovation areas in the Urban Community Hub Design Concepts can provide benefits including:

- promote access to underrepresented community members who typically lack the access and promotion of such spaces;
- give community members access to meet like minded individuals, help with the adoption of design thinking and innovation in our communities, and increase the exposure of residents to skill programs;
- prioritize innovation and entrepreneurship in the City and help foster jobs and technological breakthroughs.

Climate Emergency, Environmental and Sustainability Implications:

The City's Urban Community Hub concept presents an opportunity for the City to demonstrate its continuing commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency and achieving its community and corporate GHG reduction targets. Brampton's Community Energy and Emissions Reduction Plan (CEERP) is an evidence-based, comprehensive plan approved in 2020 to drive innovation, employment and economic development while achieving the City's environmental and climate change goals, along with its associated social benefits. The CEERP's GHG emission targets include a reduction in community-wide emissions by 30% by 2030 and 50% by 2040. In accordance with the CEERP energy and GHG emission goals, the City's corporate Energy and Emission Reduction Plan set a GHG emissions reduction target for all corporate facilities at 20% by 2024. To achieve this, the City is committed to implementing leading-edge energy efficiency technologies and renewable energy projects in new City facilities, including the Urban Community Hubs.

Term of Council Priorities:

The Urban Community Hub Initiative is a 2018-2022 Term of Council Priority and contributes to each of the Council *Strategic Directions*:

- *City of Opportunities*: synergize education, employment and neighbourhood services to develop a diverse workforce for jobs of the future;

- *Mosaic*: amplify diversity as a competitive advantage through inclusive space and program design;
- *Green City*: design-in climate action to shift to active transportation, energy efficiency and revitalize natural spaces;
- *Healthy and Safe City*: improve physical and mental well-being through design for an active and healthy lifestyle; and
- *Well-Run City*: design for co-location to improve service delivery effectiveness and provide a framework for partnerships and collaborations.

Conclusion:

Since 2020, the City has experienced a high volume of high-density mixed-use development proposals along light rail transit-served neighbourhoods including Uptown and the bus rapid transit neighbourhood including Queen Street East. Providing residents and businesses with walkable access to holistic services through an Urban Community Hub is critical to improving the health, education, economic outcome, quality of life, and accelerate post-COVID recovery in these urban neighbourhoods.

Implementing the Urban Community Hub concepts through an accelerated delivery model could lower cost, enhance property values, support demand for family-oriented development, create a diverse talent pool and help sustain a well-educated population to attract office and other employment...

Proceeding with the initial 'Uptown Hub pilot project and continuing to develop the 'Queens Hub' pilot, through the initiation of MOU with school boards and other potential partners will enable the City to integrate the timely delivery of Urban Community Hubs with other Terms of Council Priority underway.

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1A: Urban Community Hub Design Concept – Uptown Hub Prototype
- Appendix 1B: Urban Community Hub Design Concept – Queens Hub Prototype
- Appendix 2: Urban Community Hub Sample Programs
- Appendix 3: Hub Implementation Framework Technical Studies Summaries
- Appendix 4: Hub Model and Provincial Programs Alignment
- Appendix 5: Hub as Community Anchor and Actions Summary
- Appendix 6: “Brampton Hub Pilots” Sites
- Appendix 7A: Hub Design Concept Narrative, Diamond Schmitt Architects
- Appendix 7B: Hub Economic and Fiscal Analysis, HR&A Advisors
- Appendix 7C: Hub Policy Levers and Partnership Analysis, University of Toronto School of Cities
- Appendix 7D: Unbox Uptown Business and Community Needs Assessment, Canadian Urban Institute