

**City of Brampton
Stakeholder Engagement Consulting Services
for a Brampton University:
Engaging Developers and Financiers
RFP2019-079**

Final Report | August 19, 2021



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1.0 Introduction

The City of Brampton contracted Stakeholder Research Associates (SRA) to engage City Councillors, City Council staff, residents, business owners and relevant community stakeholders in support of its goal to bring a Brampton University to the community. SRA was charged with delivering on three strategic objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Engage Provincial and Federal governments to securing support and all necessary approvals, primarily, and funding commitments, secondarily, from both the Provincial and Federal governments in bringing additional post-secondary education to Brampton (SRA work plan activity 1)
- **Objective 2:** Identify funding sources, both public and private (within development and financial communities) that could be leveraged to invest in bringing a University to Brampton (SRA work plan activities 1 and 4)
- **Objective 3:** Engage community stakeholders through various public engagement opportunities and a public attitude survey (SRA work plan activities 2 and 3)

In this final report, we outline work undertaken related to Objective 2/SRA work plan activity 4 to engage developers and financiers.

2.0 Methodology and Outcomes

In SRA's proposal to Brampton City Council, as reflected in the contract, Activity 4 envisaged the following:

"Working closely with staff of the City Council, the consultant will conduct preliminary outreach to the property development and investment communities to ascertain levels of interest in partnering with the City on campus and student housing developments. The consultant will also liaise frequently with consultant(s) appointed by the City Council throughout to ensure alignment with the hopes and wishes of the people of Brampton and the broader region."

Our work plan focused on two main activities:

1. Creation of a public meeting for developers
2. One-on-one meetings with qualified and interested developers and financiers

Activity 1: Creation of a public meeting for developers

In the 5th March, 2020 submission to the City entitled: *The Case for Brampton University* (Section 8.4, page 94) the following briefing meetings were listed:

“8.4 Briefing Meetings

In addition to the public meetings described above, briefing meetings were provided to various citizens and business advocacy groups, including:

- *New Brampton, 22nd November, 2019*
- *Brampton Action Committee on Innovation and Post Secondary Education, 29th November, 2019*
- *Downtown Brampton Business Improvement Area, 14th January, 2020*
- *Property Development community, 24th February, 2020*
- *Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board, 4th March, 2020.”*

The meeting with the property development community, held on 24th February 2020, was convened by Paul Aldunate and hosted by Gurdeep Kaur based on the logic of Section 6 (pages 81-88) of *The Planning and Real Estate Strategy for Brampton University*. The meeting was designed to attract the 20-plus developers who had had previous contact with the City and potential PPP participants identified by SRA consultant Michael Rudderham. The slide deck used by Ms Kaur and the invitation list and attendee list for the February 24th event will both be available from council officers, together with any feedback received. The meeting was attended by SRA consultant Dr. David Wheeler, who made remarks, and various council staff members and stakeholders.

Outcomes: Attendees seemed genuinely engaged and supportive of their potential involvement in BramptonU and further follow up was deemed welcome.

Activity 2: One-on-one meetings with qualified and interested financiers

SRA, in close consultation with City staff, developed a strategy of short-, medium- and long-term options for the cost-effective and efficient accommodation of classroom and administrative space for a BramptonU. The analysis, presented in the aforementioned Section 6 *The Planning and Real Estate Strategy for Brampton University* (Section 6.4, page 86) noted that:

“Brampton City Council has unique experience in securing P3 arrangements for public buildings and this will remain a core strength that will allow Brampton University to benefit from this expertise whilst leasing state of the art facilities for its academic mission.”

The research and analysis in this area paved the way for serious engagement with investors. Specifically, SRA consultant Michael Rudderham held in-person meetings with a major institutional property investor at the investor’s offices in early Feb 2020. Another follow-up meeting with same investor was held at Brampton city hall later in February 2020. March 2020 Ontario entered its first COVID lockdown and in person meetings ceased.

Outcomes: The advice from the institutional entity was that there appeared to be merit in a collaborative public/private model. The degree to which the model would viable would depend on the exact capital needs of the University, which were not quantifiable at the time.

3.0 Next Steps

While there were unavoidable delays in convening the property development event and, by end-February 2020, the focus of consultants and staff activities was centred on preparing the Brampton U proposal document to the Province (factors that were compounded by the Ontario COVID-19 lockdown in mid-March 2020, which precluded hosting further open houses and in-person meetings), follow up to the property developer and financier communities was necessarily taken up by council officers, to such time when there might be more tangible opportunities to pursue related to PPP projects in any one of the proposed campus developments for Brampton University.

It was also envisaged that the continuation of the project, formally supported by the Province of Ontario, through some form of ‘special purpose vehicle’ would permit more tangible PPP-related conversations to occur with interested developers, including those identified by SRA consultants in both Canada and the UK.