

PROGRAM

THE SUMMIT ON THE CITY: RECOVERING CANADA'S DOWNTOWNS

Join us for two days of public conversations to identify key challenges and solutions to recovering Canada's downtowns. Sessions will be offered in English and French and recorded for subsequent broadcast. Your questions and comments throughout the summit will be important to ensure the right issues are raised and to develop solutions to chart a path forward. We all have a role to play in recovering Canada's downtowns.



Canadian
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Canada

JANUARY 25-26 2022

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

TUESDAY JANUARY 25

(EASTERN TIME)

12:00 - 12:15PM	OPENING: SETTING THE STAGE
12:15 - 12:45PM	WHY DOWNTOWNS MATTER TO THE CANADIAN ECONOMY
12:45 - 1:15PM	HOW CANADA'S DOWNTOWNS COMPARE WITH CITIES IN NORTH AMERICA
1:15 - 1:45PM	DIGGING INTO THE DATA: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS AREAS AND TOURISM
2:00 - 2:45PM	BRINGING PEOPLE BACK: HOUSING
3:00 - 3:45PM	BRINGING PEOPLE BACK: TRANSIT
4:00 - 4:30PM	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS TO REBUILD DOWNTOWNS: CHURCHES
5:00 - 5:30PM	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS TO REBUILD DOWNTOWNS: LIBRARIES
5:45 - 6:30PM	POLICY AND INVESTMENT LEADERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 26

(EASTERN TIME)

12:00 - 12:30PM	DAY 1 RECAP AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP FOR DOWNTOWN RECOVERY
12:30 - 1:15PM	LOCAL APPROACHES TO DOWNTOWN RECOVERY
1:30 - 2:15PM	FUELLING THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF CANADA: THE ROLE OF BUSINESS TO LEAD
2:30 - 3:15PM	EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: CANADA'S CHALLENGE WITH STREET ISSUES
3:30 - 4:15PM	DOWNTOWN DYNAMISM: REBUILDING HOSPITALITY AND CULTURE
4:30 - 5:00PM	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS TO REBUILD DOWNTOWNS: POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS
5:00 - 6:00PM	WHAT CAN BE DONE ON THE GROUND TO RECOVER OUR DOWNTOWNS?
6:00 - 6:30PM	POLICY AND INVESTMENT LEADERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

**"YOU CAN'T RELY ON BRINGING
PEOPLE DOWNTOWN, YOU HAVE TO
PUT THEM THERE."**

Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*,
Random House, 1961

ABOUT THE SESSIONS

TUESDAY JANUARY 25

(SESSIONS DISPLAYED IN EASTERN TIME)

12:00PM - 12:15PM | OPENING: SETTING THE STAGE

Downtowns are the heart of a city—and having a healthy downtown is essential to having a strong city and region. Canada's downtowns generate a huge percentage of our country's economic wealth and cultural vitality. Canada's eight largest metropolitan areas generate 55% of Canada's GDP and are hubs of activity for commercial, cultural, educational and civic institutions. What are the key challenges facing downtowns as we recover? And what actions need to be taken to address them? *The Summit on the City: Recovering Canada's Downtowns* will host a series of public conversations to discuss the challenges and changes needed to inform a new Urban Agenda for Canada after COVID-19.

PARTICIPANT:

Mary W. Rowe, President and CEO, Canadian Urban Institute

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12:15PM - 12:45PM | WHY DOWNTOWNS MATTER TO THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

Downtowns in Canada have been hit hardest by the pandemic. Many elements that contribute to the economy, like tourism, business travel, events, restaurants, hotels and retail, have been significantly affected. How important are downtowns in Canada's economic recovery? What interventions are needed to bring back and retain workers, and attract visitors and new residents?

PARTICIPANTS:

Amarjeet Sohi, Mayor, City of Edmonton and former Minister, Infrastructure and Communities, Government of Canada

Goldy Hyder, CEO, Business Council on National Issues, Ottawa

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12:45PM - 1:15PM | HOW CANADA'S DOWNTOWNS COMPARE WITH CITIES IN NORTH AMERICA

What's the data telling us from across North American cities? Which downtowns are recovering more quickly and why? Hear about the Avison Young Vitality Index, the Story It, and learn what other data sources are telling us.

PARTICIPANT:

Marie-France Benoit, Director of National Insight, Avison Young, Montréal

1:15PM - 1:45PM | DIGGING INTO THE DATA: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS AREAS AND TOURISM

Business Improvements Areas (BIA's) play a central role to any community's vitality. In this session, BIAs and their partners will have an opportunity to dive in and understand the impacts of the pandemic on their business areas and how visitation rates differ across the country, going back to 2019. BIA's will be able to leverage this information to support the development of strategies to increase foot traffic and spending in their areas.

PARTICIPANT:

Stephanie McIsaac, Senior Vice President and Practice Leader, Environics Analytics

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2:00PM - 2:45PM | BRINGING PEOPLE BACK: HOUSING

The lack of housing in Canada affects all aspects of urban life. Homelessness has become especially visible in our downtowns, as shelters and support services are unable to meet the needs of unhoused communities, and the number of encampments continue to increase throughout cities. How can our downtowns adapt to include appropriate housing options for all?

PARTICIPANTS:

Bob Dugan, Chief Economist, CMHC

Frances Bula, Urban Affairs, the Globe and Mail, Vancouver

Lisa Helps, Mayor, City of Victoria

Michael Brooks, CEO, RealPAC

Tim Richter, CEO, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, Calgary

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3:00PM - 3:45PM | BRINGING PEOPLE BACK: TRANSIT

Transit systems in Canada are among the most impacted services from the pandemic. As more and more people switched to remote work, ridership and services plummeted, which has led to significant revenue loss. Despite this, transit continues to play a critical role in our economies and was a lifeline for people—often frontline and essential-workers to reach their places of employment. How will Canada's public transit systems adapt after the pandemic?

PARTICIPANTS:

Bruce McCuaig, Senior Vice President, AECOM

David Cooper, Principal, Leading Mobility

Doug Morgan, General Manager, Transportation, City of Calgary

Jason Raynar, Chief Administrative Office, City of Windsor

4:00PM - 4:30PM | CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS TO REBUILD DOWNTOWNS: CHURCHES

The world's greatest downtowns include iconic buildings and cultural attractions that appeal to locals and visitors. Throughout the pandemic, we have come to appreciate the vital importance of places and spaces that are accessible to everyone. What roles and opportunities are there for these institutions—including places traditionally affiliated with religious traditions, to restore vibrancy to downtowns and attracting residents and visitors?

PARTICIPANTS:

The Rev Dr. Donna Schaper, Senior Minister, Judson Memorial Church, New York City

Rev. Graham Singh, Trinity Centres Foundation, Montréal

Stephen Jackson, CEO, Anishnabeg Outreach (AO)

5:00PM - 5:30PM | CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS TO REBUILD DOWNTOWNS: LIBRARIES

Libraries play a crucial role in communities, including in Canada's downtowns. In addition to being a hub for resources, they also act as a safe place for vulnerable populations and strengthen neighbourhoods by supplying free internet access and providing support for entrepreneurs and newcomers. Two Canadian cities have invested in their downtown libraries, creating iconic meeting places for civic life. What's their future?

PARTICIPANTS:

Asa Kachan, CEO and Chief Librarian, Halifax Public Libraries

Sarah Meilleur, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library

5:45PM - 6:30PM | POLICY AND INVESTMENT LEADERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

Summary of Day one: Key actions identified and policy leadership required to recover Canada's downtowns.

PARTICIPANTS:

Nigel Jacob, Senior Fellow, Burnes Centre for Global Impact, Northeastern University, and Emeritus Co-Chair and Co-Founder, Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics

Anneke Smit, Director and Associate Professor, Centre for Cities, Faculty of Law, University of Windsor

Shauna Sylvester, Executive Director, Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 26

(SESSIONS DISPLAYED IN EASTERN TIME)

12:00PM - 12:30PM | DAY 1 RECAP AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP FOR DOWNTOWN RECOVERY

Day two will launch with a summary of the previous day and an overview from the Chair of the Big City Mayor's Caucus on the priorities municipal leaders will focus on in 2022.

PARTICIPANTS:

Mary W. Rowe, President and CEO, Canadian Urban Institute

Mike Savage, Mayor, Regional Municipality of Halifax

With a special announcement from the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development

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12:30PM - 1:15 PM | LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO DOWNTOWN RECOVERY

What are local governments and downtown business associations doing to recover, and what support and policy changes are needed to support them? How can we rethink land-uses, building configurations, public space, ground floor retail, zoning rules and taxes to strengthen our downtowns?

PARTICIPANTS:

Cheryl Blackman, Interim General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, City of Toronto

Christopher Glaisek, Chief Planning and Design Officer, Waterfront Toronto

Josh Neubauer, Principal, Urban Strategies

Puneeta McBryan, Executive Director, Edmonton Downtown Business Association

Thom Mahler, Director, Downtown Strategy, City of Calgary

Tom Girvan, Manager, Strategic Investment, City of Edmonton

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1:30PM - 2:15 PM | FUELLING THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF CANADA: THE ROLE OF BUSINESS TO LEAD

Businesses are the catalysts for regional economic growth. What are the key actions that different sectors (businesses, commercial real estate and different levels of government), can take to support local economies to recover in a strong, resilient and equitable way? How can they compete internationally and rebuild as places that residents, tourists and workers want to be in?

PARTICIPANTS:

Deborah Yedlin, Calgary Chamber of Commerce

Jan De Silva, Toronto Region Board of Trade

Marcy Burchfield, Economic Blueprint Institute, Toronto Region Board of Trade

Michel Leblanc, Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal

Patrick Sullivan, Halifax Chamber of Commerce

2:30PM - 3:15 PM | EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: CANADA'S CHALLENGE WITH STREET ISSUES

Canada's downtowns and main streets are being challenged and changed before our eyes because of COVID-19. This dire situation is being compounded by social issues like mental health and addictions, unemployment and lack of housing. This session—led by IDA Canada, will discuss the issues and the solutions from different cities across Canada.

PARTICIPANTS:

Judge Christine Lowe, Victoria Integrated Court

Mark Garner, CEO, Downtown Yonge BIA

Craig Cooper, Director of Housing Stability Services, City of London

Derek Pace, Brunswick Street Mission, Halifax

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3:30PM - 4:15PM | DOWNTOWN DYNAMISM: REBUILDING HOSPITALITY AND CULTURE

Canada's hospitality, culture and tourism sectors are completely connected to the dynamism of our downtowns. Locals and tourists come to 'the city' for experiences they can't find anywhere else. These activities create jobs and generate millions in tax revenue for all levels of government. Months of lock-downs have left these key sectors of our economic and civic life in a precarious position. What actions are needed to support this industry and bring people back downtown?

PARTICIPANTS:

Beth Potter, CEO, Tourism Industry Association of Canada

Michael Rubinoff, Theatre Producer and Founding Producer, Come from Away

Erin Benjamin, President, Canadian Live Music Association

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4:30PM - 5:00PM | CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS TO REBUILD DOWNTOWNS: POST-SECONDARIES

Universities and post-secondary institutions—particularly those with campuses downtown, are inherently connected to their communities. They attract thousands of people to the core and foster innovation, entrepreneurship and economic growth. Transitioning to virtual learning has had an extraordinary impact on downtowns. How will they recover and contribute to the recovery of their downtowns?

PARTICIPANTS:

Joy Johnson, President and Vice Chancellor, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby and Vancouver

Mohamed Lachemi, President and Vice Chancellor, Ryerson University, Toronto

Stephen Phillips, Vice President, Stantec

5:00PM - 6:00PM | WHAT CAN BE DONE ON THE GROUND TO RECOVER OUR DOWNTOWNS?

History has shown us that cities are remarkably resilient, even when faced with sudden or chronic challenges. What tangible ways can civic leaders, policymakers and entrepreneurs bring our downtowns not only back, but catapult them to a new dynamic future?

PARTICIPANTS:

Amahl Hazelton, Producer, Strategy and Development, Moment Factory

James Lima, President of James Lima Planning + Development

Nick Griffin, Executive Director, Downtown Center Business Improvement District, Los Angeles

Nolan Marshall III, President and CEO at Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association

Regina Myer, CEO, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, New York

6:00PM - 6:30PM | POLICY AND INVESTMENT LEADERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

Our last session of the summit will focus on actionable next steps our downtowns can take to build back better.

PARTICIPANTS:

Alexandra Flynn, Assistant Professor at Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia

Anneke Smit, Director and Associate Professor, Centre for Cities, Faculty of Law, University of Windsor

Dale McFee, Chief Of Police, Edmonton Police Service

Nigel Jacob, Senior Fellow, Burnes Centre for Global Impact, Northeastern University, and Emeritus Co-Chair and Co-Founder, Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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