

## Achievements and Benefits from the City's Academic Partnership with UTM

As part of the MOU, the City works with UTM on opportunities to promote Truth and Reconciliation, combat racism, build sustainable communities, foster healthy populations and advance a prosperous future. Below is a list of achievements over the past two years.

- **Advance a Prosperous Future achievements:**

As part of the MOU, UTM and the City committed to advancing a prosperous future through talent to support a creative, innovation-based and globally connected economy.



*Figure 1. Image provided by Sheridan College. The 2024 Sauga Pitch Showcase - Mississauga's flagship startup pitch competition.*

- Since 2023, together along Sheridan's EDGE and the City, UTM hosts an annual joint pitch competition called "Sauga Pitch and Showcase." Sauga Pitch has become Mississauga's flagship startup pitch competition that showcases the range of innovation happening in Mississauga. Each incubator takes turns physically hosting the event, and eligible startups who participate need to be affiliated with one of the participating programs, be an alumni, and be a resident of Mississauga.
  - For 2025, together, they will be hosting the Startup Canada Tour stop in Mississauga, which will feature the Startup Global Pitch Competition Grand Finale.
- As part of this work, to develop and support a vibrant innovation ecosystem in Mississauga, regular meetings occur between IDEA Mississauga, ICUBE and SpinUp staff to continue to identify and pursue opportunities to best support the ecosystem.
  - There is a flow of communication between all institutions to cross-promote events, ensure programming topics don't overlap, and that key workshops are offered throughout the year.
- The City's Economic Development Division works in close collaboration with UTM to leverage strategic opportunities to attract investment to Mississauga, particularly in the City's sectors of focus (Advanced Manufacturing, Financial Services, Technology, Life Sciences, and Smart Logistics).

- In 2023, the former Mayor joined UTM Vice-President and Principal, Alexandra Gillespie, at the BIO International Convention to announce the creation of SpinUp.



Figure 2. Poster for upcoming October Lecture Me! talk with Professor Hema Ganapathy-Coleman

- The Library's Lecture Me! series in partnership with the UTM Experiential Education Unit has been an ongoing fixture in City programming since 2016. Over the last two years topics have included psychological and social factors of health, poetry, earthquakes and more.

- The City has worked in collaboration with the UTM

Centre for Urban Environments (CUE) to adapt its Research Awards Program to focus on City challenges and promote a deeper understanding of civic issues. Since 2024, five student researchers have been assigned to tackle research questions in collaboration with City staff. For example:

- Best practices in effective public education with diverse communities of Mississauga;
- Leveraging City-owned assets to support and grow urban agriculture;
- Mapping the City's groundwater and potential vulnerabilities with stormwater infrastructure from expected developments.



Figure 3. Image provided by the University of Toronto. Master of Urban Innovation 2024-2026 cohort standing in front of City Hall before presenting their findings to staff for feedback.

- The Fall 2024 Master of Urban Innovation (MUI) Local and Regional Government course allowed the City to identify best practices surrounding the governance and use of Artificial Intelligence based on four comprehensive environmental scans.

- In 2024 and 2025, the Capstone course from the MUI program allowed the City to explore:

- building a marketing and promotion plan for Mississauga's Waterfront; and
- new ways to understand and celebrate heritage.

- City staff organized a booth on campus in March 2025 to thoughtfully engage students on Imagine Mississauga, to inform the City’s next Strategic Plan.
- **Foster Healthy Populations achievements:**  
As part of the MOU, UTM and the City committed to foster the health and well-being of all populations in Mississauga.
  - The City has continued its relationship with UTM’s Novo Nordisk Network for Healthy Populations (NHP) to leverage expertise and data for an evidence-informed approach to support the implementation of the City’s Healthy City Strategy.
    - In 2024, the City joined as a member of their NHP Partnership Table and Advisory Group.
  - The City is involved in the 2025 Catalyst Grant projects funded by the NHP that aim to reduce social inequities in the risk and burden of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases through improved care, reduced risk factors, and healthier living environments. Each Catalyst Grant provides \$100,000 of annual funding. Successful projects include:

- The “Integrating Community Perspectives into Greenspace Policies and Planning in the City of Mississauga” project, led by Dr. Gillian Booth, Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto. The City was a co-applicant for the grant, which provides the City with access to resources to further its Healthy City Strategy and other initiatives, such as recommendation 13 from the City’s Future Directions: Parks, Forestry, and Environment Plan:



Figure 4. Image provided by the University of Toronto. Dr. Booth presents research project at Novo Nordisk Discovery Day at the City’s C-banquet.



Figure 5. Image provided by the University of Toronto. Picture celebrates the opening of the community garden next to Victory Hall in Malton. The garden space was provided by the City for one of the 2024 Catalyst Grants

“Develop approaches to remove barriers and enable marginalized and equity-deserving groups access to more spaces within parks.”

- The “Food and Culture as Healing: an Intergenerational Community Garden to Address the Burden and Impacts of Type-2 Diabetes in Black Low-Income Communities.” The project was led by Dr. Ibukun Abejirinde, Assistant

Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto. This project will support the City's Healthy City Strategy and the Urban Agriculture Strategy. As part of the proposal the City committed to finding a viable garden location to support the project, and on July 11, 2025, Councillor Hart attended the opening at Victory Hall in Malton.

- Supported the planning of a community Diabetes Testing event on June 21, 2025 led by Dr. Ghazal Fazli, Assistant Professor at UTM's Faculty of Geography, Geomatics and Environment. This event received a grant from the City's Small Projects Matching Grant program, which subsidized hosting costs for the Living Arts Center.
- Promoted the City's Small Project Matching Grant program to the NHP network to find ways to support the sustainability and growth of "healthy city" community projects.
- As part of the work with the UTM CUE, a Research Awards Program has helped identify solutions and new ideas to address local issues related to healthy cities, including:
  - Identifying barriers to engaging with City programming at community centers for residents located within the Downtown core; and
  - Best practices in incorporating the social determinants of health to shift how the City makes decisions using available data.
- The City is collaborating with researchers at the University of Manitoba, with collaborators from the University of Toronto and other institutions, in multi-city research as part of the Urban Trails Research Team. This research includes the following project:
  - **CATCH - Causal Analysis of urban Trails and Cardiovascular Health**, which seeks to expand an analysis conducted in Winnipeg, Manitoba that investigated the health effect of a large investment in urban active transportation infrastructure. The research will review trails built within the same time period across five Canadian cities (Edmonton AB, Winnipeg MB, Mississauga ON, Quebec City QC, and Sherbrooke QC).
  - **ESCALATE - ESsential conditions for CACanadian Leisure and Active Transportation Effectiveness**  
  
This is an implementation science project to examine the contexts and attributes of cycling trails with higher versus lower cycling traffic volumes. This project has sites in eight Canadian cities.

Build Sustainable Communities achievements:

As part of the MOU, UTM and the City committed to building sustainable communities connected through social mobility, and a culture of diversity, learning and arts.



Figure 6. City poster promoting 2023 exhibit "What's for Dinner?"

○ In 2023, the City presented the “What’s for Dinner? Exploring Locally Sourced Meals in Southern Ontario” exhibit as part of the City’s partnership with the Master of Museums Studies program in the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Information. The exhibit explored how local foods invoke nostalgia, represent the past and present, and bring people together.



Figure 7. City poster promoting the 2024 "Meet me at the Park" exhibit.

- In 2024, the City presented the “Meet me at the Park” exhibit as part of the City’s partnership with the Master of Museums Studies program. The exhibit explored the mutually beneficial and cyclical relationship between community and parks and greenspaces of Mississauga, emphasizing the nurturing role parks play for people and the stewardship role people play for parks.
- MiWay has engaged closely with UTM students to better understand their needs and concerns. They have regular communication with the UTM Urbanism Club and the Student Union, including the review of research conducted on student travel patterns.



Figure 8. Image provided by UTMSU celebrating successful advocacy efforts.

- Ahead of the fall 2024 school year, MiWay launched a new express route and increased the service frequency on Route 44 and Route 110 to support student demand.
- MiWay is currently working with the University of Toronto’s Transit Analytics Lab (TAL) on an On-Demand Feasibility Study. The case study involves developing multiple On-Demand Transit scenarios in consultation with MiWay to determine the impact and suitability of each within the context of Mississauga.
- The City of Mississauga has signed an MOU to join the Mobility Network Research Consortium (MNRC) within the School of Cities, along with a number of peer cities within Ontario as well as MTO and Metrolinx. MNRC is a collaborative initiative to address pressing transportation challenges in the GGH and to align transportation and housing strategies with sustainability, equity and climate resilience goals. It is expected the City will get access to evidence-based

tools, methods, and recommendations as research is undertaken and completed. MNRC is applying for an NSERC grant to assist in funding.

- As part of the work with the UTM CUE, a Research Awards Program has helped identify solutions and new ideas to local issues related to sustainability. These projects included research that supported the work of MiWay, Forestry, Environment and Stormwater Assets & Programming. More specifically:



*Figure 9. Image provided by the University of Toronto of the 2024 CUE Research Award recipients.*

- Leveraging best practices in ecological buffers to protect the City's natural assets;
- Determining Mississauga's current environmentally sensitive or significant areas to protect and ensure a thriving ecosystem today and in the future;
- Supporting the ridership experience of women using transit, particularly from a safety perspective;
- Leveraging City assets to promote urban agriculture, and developed a fruit-picking pilot;
- Best practices in environmental education with diverse communities;
- Mapping the City's groundwater and identifying areas of expected development that could impact the City's groundwater and lead to challenges with the City's groundwater infrastructure.

- Since 2023, the Capstone course in the Masters of Urban Innovation (MUI) program has allowed the City to tackle several challenges related to sustainability, including:
  - Inclusive education campaigns for Vision Zero; and
  - Enhancing Active Transportation in Mississauga.
- The City welcomed MUI students for the 2023, 2024, and 2025 summers as co-op students. In 2023 and 2024, the City was able to leverage the UTM Mobility Network Summer Internship Award that provided salary support for students (\$5,000 per award).

- Truth and Reconciliation achievements:

As part of the MOU, UTM and the City committed to promoting truth and reconciliation in a city with, and in support of indigenous peoples.



Figure 10. Image provided by the University of Toronto of the 2024 All-Nations Powwow welcoming community to actively participate in the Indigenous celebration to promote Truth and Reconciliation.

- Supported the UTM Office of Indigenous Initiatives (OII) in securing and expediting permits required to host the All-Nations Powwow on Sept. 28, 2024. The City waived all permit fees to the event and promoted this event as part of the City's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation campaign.
- The City is commissioning an Indigenous artist to create a monumental hanging sculptural installation in the Great Hall of Mississauga's Civic Centre. To select the artist, the public art team convened an all-Indigenous art selection jury in 2024, which included representation from the OII. The design artwork will

honour the Indigenous past, present and future on the lands of the present-day City of Mississauga.

- Combat Racism achievements:
- As part of the MOU, UTM and the City committed to combatting racism, and in particular anti-Black racism to address broad inequities and systemic racism and discrimination.
  - The City engages in university initiatives like the annual UTM EDI Breakfast, which seeks to foster meaningful connections with equity-deserving students and new graduates to showcase opportunities at the City of Mississauga.
  - In 2023, the Capstone course in the MUI program allowed the City to explore how it might build an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion lens tool.
  - The City promoted engagement opportunities to BIPOC student groups, including:
    - Call to Emerging Artists: Public Art Banner Program in February 2024
    - Open Data Hackathon on November 2024
    - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Engagement in February 2025



Figure 11. City poster promoting the 2025 "A City in Tune" exhibit.

- The City focused, when appropriate, UTM research efforts on neighborhood areas in Mississauga that have low Wellbeing Scores, based on the [Region of Peel's Neighbourhood Tool](#).
- In 2025, the City began promoting co-op opportunities through the new UTM Co-op Internship Program.
- In 2025, the City presented "A City in Tune" exhibit as part of the City's partnership with the Master of Museums Studies program. The exhibit explores the City's rich musical landscape, highlighting the diverse voices, cultures, and communities that have shaped its sound. From local legends to grassroots movements, the exhibition showcases the ways music connects people, builds identity, and reflects the evolving story of Mississauga.