

11.4.7 - Does your university as a body work with local authorities to address planning issues/development, including ensuring that local residents are able to access affordable housing?

Our university maintains a long-term commitment to sustainable urban development and social inclusion. Recognizing the critical role higher education institutions play in shaping equitable and resilient communities, the university works closely with local authorities to address planning and development issues. These collaborations ensure that urban growth around the campus is inclusive, environmentally responsible, and supports affordable housing for local residents. Through formal partnerships, research engagement, and community-driven planning, the university contributes to balanced urban development that benefits both students and surrounding communities.

Section 1 – Institutional Collaboration Framework

The university has established a Community and Urban Development Partnership Framework in cooperation with the local municipality.

- A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) governs joint work on sustainable urban planning, affordable housing, and community infrastructure projects.
- A Joint Advisory Committee—comprising representatives from the university, the municipality’s urban planning department, and local NGOs—meets quarterly to coordinate urban initiatives.
- The university’s Urban Policy Research Group provides data analysis and technical expertise to local planning agencies, supporting evidence-based decision-making.

Section 2 – Joint Urban and Housing Development Projects

The collaboration has produced several concrete projects:

- Neighbourhood Redevelopment Planning: University architects and urban design experts contribute to the municipality’s master plan, emphasizing walkability, public green spaces, and mixed-income housing near the university zone.
- Student and Local Housing Integration Program: The university allocates part of its non-academic land for affordable housing construction led by municipal housing cooperatives, ensuring at least 30% of new units are reserved for local low-income families.
- Applied Learning Projects: Students from civil engineering and architecture faculties develop design and feasibility proposals for community housing under municipal supervision, integrating academic learning with public benefit.

Section 3 – Ensuring Local Access to Affordable Housing

- The university actively supports the municipality’s Affordable Housing Strategy, offering technical consultation, land-use studies, and socio-economic impact analysis.

- Together with a local housing cooperative, X new affordable rental units have been established within walking distance of the campus, with a fixed portion allocated to non-university residents.
- Community outreach events hosted on campus provide residents with information on application procedures, eligibility criteria, and housing support programs.

Section 4 – Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Assessment

- The university publishes an annual Urban Engagement and Housing Report, reviewing progress on collaboration outcomes, affordability ratios, and community satisfaction.
- A joint monitoring committee—including university researchers, municipal staff, and local civil-society representatives—evaluates policy impacts and recommends improvements.
- Research findings are integrated into university courses and theses, reinforcing the link between academic knowledge and real urban challenges.

Section 5 – Outcomes and Future Commitments

- The partnership has led to a measurable increase in affordable housing stock and greater public participation in urban planning processes.
- Over the last three years, the initiative has improved access to housing for local families, strengthened municipal–academic cooperation, and promoted inclusive planning principles.
- Future goals include expanding the mixed-income housing model to two additional districts and launching a resident advisory platform to ensure community voices guide future development.

Conclusion

Through sustained cooperation with local authorities, our university acts as a catalyst for socially responsible urban development. By integrating research expertise, policy participation, and practical support for affordable housing, the institution ensures that community well-being remains central to urban growth. This comprehensive collaboration directly contributes to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and demonstrates strong evidence for Indicator 11.4.7 of the THE Impact Rankings.