Davos Baukultur Alliance

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WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

Pioneering Places: From Quality Principles to Local Action

COHORT 1, 2025–2026



Introduction

Pioneering Places is the Davos Baukultur Alliance's programme for putting high-quality Baukultur (building culture) into practice through local initiatives.

Between October 2025 and October 2026, the Pioneering Places Programme of the Davos Baukultur Alliance brought together Kuala Lumpur, Medellín, Montréal, Nairobi, San Francisco and Utrecht. Each is pioneering a new approach to its living environment, from healthy neighbourhoods and affordable housing to rural water systems, waterfront resilience and the reuse of buildings and materials. Their shared aim is to make these places more liveable for the people who live and work there.

Over the course of the year, each place examined how its initiative could better serve people, respond to its surroundings, remain affordable and resilient, and create lasting value for communities and the organisations involved. Through exchanges with peers and executive experts from business, government and civil society, they identified changes to policy, investment, procurement and governance that could improve the quality of the living environment, and translated them into commitments for implementation.

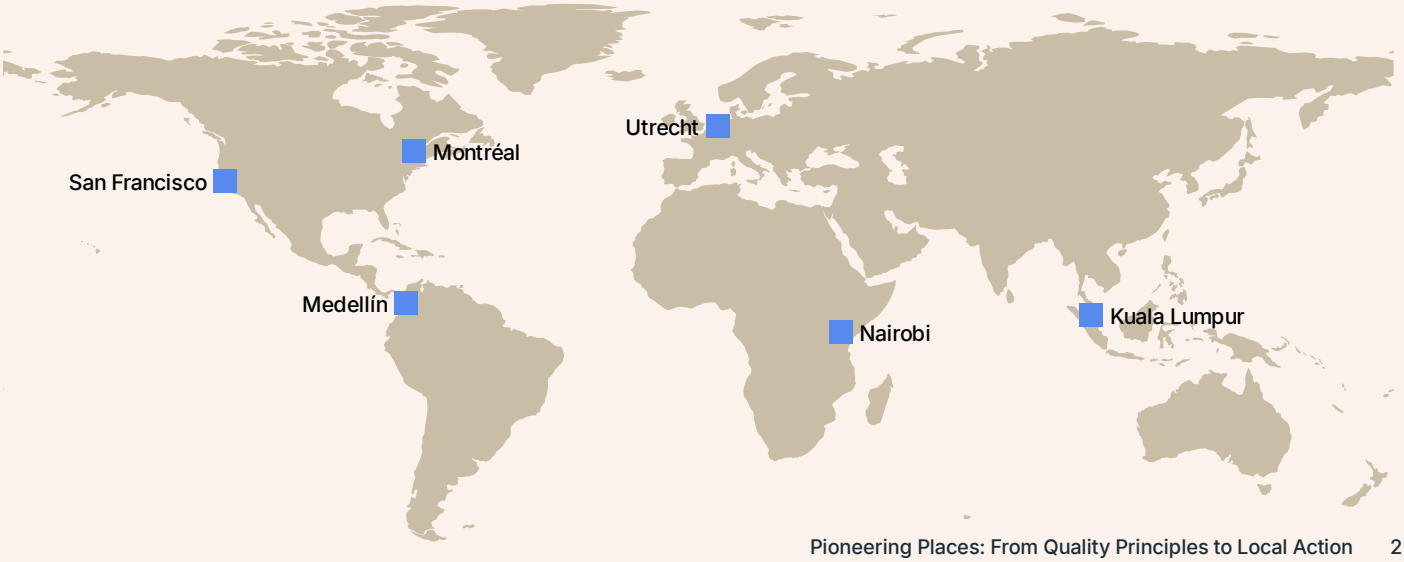
This overview presents the six initiatives, the questions they raised and the commitments that followed. It also outlines how collaboration and learning from implementation can support the next phase of work.

"The Davos Baukultur Alliance builds on a rigorous framework for assessing the quality of a place: from its governance and functionality to its beauty and sense of place. For the Alliance, the central question was: how do we ensure this quality begins to impact the complex realities of local implementation?"



Oliver Martin
Vice-Director, Swiss Federal Office of Culture;
Chair, Davos Baukultur Alliance

Figure 1 **The six places of Cohort 1**



Advancing high-quality Baukultur through collective action

The Davos Baukultur Alliance's work is directed at making high-quality Baukultur, or building culture, the basis for more liveable places.

Launched by Switzerland in cooperation with the World Economic Forum, the Davos Baukultur Alliance brings together leading public, private and civil society organisations to strengthen the places where people live and work, by advancing approaches to planning, financing, building and managing the living environment that create greater mutual value.

It concentrates on three core focus areas: resilience and climate adaptation, affordability and social value creation, and sustainability and circularity.

The Alliance pursues this work in three ways:

- **Connecting leaders across sectors**
  Convening global leaders across built environment sectors to share knowledge and strengthen collaboration.
- **Building the business case for quality**
  Making the value of quality visible and supporting leaders to deliver it in practice.
- **Showing how quality delivers in different places**
  Working with places to show how the eight criteria of the Davos Baukultur Quality System[1] improve outcomes for people, places, the economy and the environment, and create more liveable places.

Figure 2 **From the Davos Declaration to practice**

2018

Davos Declaration

At Switzerland's initiative, European Ministers of Culture adopt the Davos Declaration "Towards a high-quality Baukultur for Europe".

2021

Davos Baukultur Quality System

The Swiss Federal Office of Culture, in cooperation with international partners, publishes the Davos Baukultur Quality System for assessing the quality of a place.

2023

Davos Baukultur Alliance

The Davos Baukultur Alliance is launched by Switzerland in cooperation with the World Economic Forum.

2025

Pioneering Places Programme

Cohort 1 connects the eight criteria of the Davos Baukultur Quality System to initiatives already underway in six places, in order to achieve high-quality Baukultur.

Eight criteria for a high-quality Baukultur

Baukultur means building culture, recognising the entire designed living environment as a coherent whole. Developed by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture in cooperation with international partners, the Davos Baukultur Quality System defines and frames high-quality Baukultur through eight criteria. Its criteria give social, emotional and cultural values equal weight with technical and functional aspects.

These qualities translate into four strategic returns for those approving, financing and delivering initiatives: delivery certainty, asset performance, competitive identity and social credibility. These connect the quality of a place with the practical priorities of decision-makers.

Figure 3 **The Davos Baukultur Quality System: eight criteria and four strategic returns**

8
criteria for a high-quality Baukultur

Governance
High-quality Baukultur follows good governance

Functionality
High-quality Baukultur fits the purpose

Context
High-quality Baukultur results in spatial coherence

Diversity
High-quality Baukultur connects people

Economy
High-quality Baukultur adds economic value

Environment
High-quality Baukultur protects the environment

Beauty
A place of high-quality Baukultur is beautiful

Sense of Place
High-quality Baukultur improves the sense of place

4
strategic returns of a high-quality Baukultur



Delivery certainty
High-quality Baukultur makes an initiative easier to approve, fund and deliver.



Asset performance
High-quality Baukultur improves how an asset works and performs over its lifetime.



Competitive identity
High-quality Baukultur strengthens what makes a place distinctive and attractive.



Social credibility
High-quality Baukultur builds public trust and strengthens community benefit.

Six places advancing high-quality Baukultur

The first cohort brings together six places working to improve liveability through local initiatives.



San Francisco is adapting its waterfront to climate and seismic risks, and Medellín is strengthening rural water services. Nairobi is renewing public housing, and Utrecht is making health central to neighbourhood development. Kuala Lumpur is advancing heritage-led adaptive reuse, and Montréal is supporting circular construction.

These initiatives operate within different planning systems, funding arrangements and political contexts. In each place, the programme helps stakeholders apply the eight quality criteria to decisions on policy, governance, financing, procurement or delivery that they can still influence.

Why these places and initiatives were selected

- **A clear point of influence**
  Each place brought forward a defined programme or policy where decisions on governance, financing, procurement or delivery could still be shaped.
- **Public responsibility**
  Each initiative had a named public institution responsible for carrying the work forward beyond the programme.
- **Different operating contexts**
  The cohort brought together places with different planning powers, funding structures and political conditions across five continents.
- **Common questions**
  The initiatives focused on the Alliance's three core focus areas (resilience and climate adaptation, affordability and social value creation, and sustainability and circularity), creating a basis for peer exchange and collaboration.

Key area: Resilience and climate adaptation





San Francisco, United States
Downtown Waterfront Resilience

San Francisco's downtown waterfront is exposed to rising seas and earthquake risk,[2] while the adjacent downtown faces weakening economic activity. The Embarcadero is both critical infrastructure and one of the city's most prominent public spaces, making waterfront resilience and downtown renewal closely connected.

San Francisco is responding by reimagining the downtown and adjacent waterfront as a connected, resilient public realm for the next century. This broader effort brings together the renovation of a landmark public space, a sea-level-rise resilience programme with the US Army Corps of Engineers, significant transit and infrastructure upgrades, and several public-private initiatives to improve the downtown economy and public spaces. The Waterfront Resilience Program alone is expected to cost US$17.8 billion and unfold over several decades.[3]

Medellín, Colombia
Smart Rural Water Systems

Seventy per cent of Medellín's territory is rural,[4] and many rural communities rely on small aqueducts with limited monitoring capacity. Ageing infrastructure, irregular connections and increasingly variable environmental conditions are placing additional demands on these systems.

Medellín is using real-time data to strengthen rural water services. The city is adapting technology proven in large urban water systems to rural settings, tailoring it to community governance and transferring knowledge to local operators. At San José, the city's first automated rural aqueduct, sensors and telemetry monitor water quality, flow and chemical dosing in real time. Operators can manage parts of the treatment process remotely, while alerts identify changes that previously depended on manual observation. The plant serves around 640 people[5] and provided the first proof of concept for a wider programme. Medellín is now extending automation, instrumentation and telemetry across additional rural aqueducts, with three systems expected to benefit more than 31,800 people.[6]

Key area: Affordability and social value creation





Nairobi, Kenya
Urban Renewal Programme

Nairobi faces a growing shortage of affordable housing, while much of its ageing, low-density public housing occupies county-owned land. In 2006, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) found that informal settlements housed at least half of the city's population on roughly five per cent of its residential land.[7]

Through its Urban Renewal Programme, Nairobi is using county-owned land as its contribution to joint ventures with private developers, who bring finance and equity.[8,9] This allows redevelopment without the county borrowing or selling the land outright. The ambition extends beyond housing: new neighbourhoods will combine mixed-income homes with transport connections, green space, schools, health facilities and markets. Two sites are nearing completion, within a pipeline of around 1,000 hectares across six priority locations.[10]

Utrecht, the Netherlands
Cartesius, Heart of Health

The Netherlands needs around 981,000 additional homes by 2030,[11] **but the quality of a neighbourhood depends on more than the number or performance of its homes.** It is also shaped by whether people can walk, meet one another, access nature and healthy food, and remain socially connected.

Utrecht is demonstrating how new housing can support healthier everyday lives. Cartesius is a new mixed-use neighbourhood near Utrecht city centre designed around Blue Zone principles[12] – the everyday conditions associated with unusually long, healthy lives – with an ambition to support five additional years of healthy life expectancy for residents. An initial acquisition in Cartesius forms part of a €1 billion investment strategy for Dutch residential development.[13] Utrecht made health a central criterion in the development tender, leading the project team to address not only buildings, mobility and circularity, but also healthy food, walking, community-building and social connection. The municipality, University Medical Center Utrecht and Utrecht's regional public health service (GGD regio Utrecht) are studying residents' health as the development is built.[14]

Key area: Sustainability and circularity





Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Heritage-led adaptive reuse through the RE_NEW Policy

Downtown Kuala Lumpur contains a high concentration of nationally significant heritage landmarks, many of which are vacant or underused. Fragmented ownership, overlapping mandates and financing and regulatory systems designed for new construction make their reuse slower, riskier and harder to fund.

The RE_NEW for Federal Territories Policy 2025[15] aims to turn these underused buildings into active spaces that combine heritage preservation, carbon reduction and local identity. It is intended to catalyse the revitalisation of surrounding areas and encourage the adaptive reuse of more than 100 underused office buildings, while preserving their historical, architectural and cultural significance. Three flagship restoration projects led by Khazanah Nasional Berhad have been completed: Seri Negara in December 2025, followed by Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad and Pejabat Pos Besar Lama in February and May 2026.[16] A master plan and new Urban Design Guidelines are also in place for the historic core, the Dataran Merdeka Heritage Area, a flagship project under WarisanKL.[17]

Montréal, Canada
Circular Construction Programme

Material reuse is not yet standard practice in Montréal's construction sector, where current practices still favour new materials and demolition. Montréal aims to double its circularity index by 2030,[18] but procurement requirements, limited recertification options, additional design time and inadequate infrastructure for storing and transporting recovered materials remain significant barriers.

Montréal is treating the existing built environment as a source of future building materials. Supported by climate, design and waste policies, the city has launched initiatives including[19] deconstruction practices, support for circular businesses and practices, trials with low-carbon materials, and partnerships to recover and resell materials. More than 40 stakeholders have collaborated to map the circular construction value chain,[20,21] identifying where material flows break down and where shared infrastructure or new business models could help.

Structure of the programme

The programme takes each place from assessing its initiative, through collaboration with Alliance members, to defining a commitment and exploring how to deliver it.

Five steps connect local priorities with experience from peers and Alliance members, with each step informing the next.

Figure 4 **Five steps from assessment to locally owned action**

1 **Assess**
Output: a shared view of quality in the initiative

2 **Exchange**
Output: context-specific insight

3 **Shape**
Output: strategic actions

4 **Commit**
Output: locally owned commitments

5 **Delivery dialogues**
Output: options for local institutions to consider

1 Assess

Each place began with a defined initiative and assessed it against the eight Davos Baukultur Quality System criteria to identify strengths, gaps and opportunities.

Comparing the assessments revealed shared questions about governance, financing, procurement and long-term stewardship. These questions shaped the exchanges that followed.

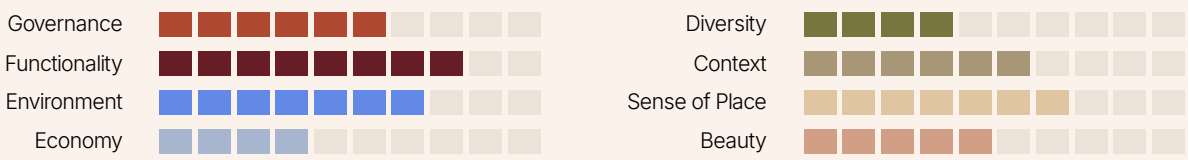
Output: a shared view of quality in the initiative

"Cities are inherently place-based, but the decisions shaping them often are not. A place-based approach can help connect policy, investment and delivery around the longer-term outcomes that communities and local economies need."



Lisa Kelvey
Global Head of Infrastructure & Transport, KPMG

Figure 5 **Assessment profile (illustrative)**



2 Exchange

The assessment provided a basis for structured dialogue. Places were paired around shared themes and brought together with Alliance members from the public and private sectors and civil society.

The discussions started with the specific challenge facing each initiative and considered the wider conditions shaping it. Stakeholders examined which approaches could be adapted to the local context, and where further collaboration could help move the work forward.

Output: context-specific insight

Table 1 **Places paired around shared themes**

Focus area	Focus of the dialogue	Places
Resilience and climate adaptation	How financing and governance can sustain resilience investments over time.	San Francisco, Medellín
Affordability and social value creation	How land, investment and procurement can be used to secure value for residents.	Nairobi, Utrecht
Sustainability and circularity	How regulatory, logistical and market conditions can make reuse viable.	Kuala Lumpur, Montréal

3 Shape

The dialogues helped clarify the changes needed to advance each initiative. These were developed into strategic actions: changes to policy, procurement, financing, governance or delivery that address barriers to high-quality Baukultur.

Each action was linked to the value it could create. The four strategic returns connect these actions to the priorities of different stakeholders, helping make the case for quality in terms that support approval, investment and implementation.

Output: strategic actions

Table 2 **Linking strategic actions to value through the four strategic returns**

Strategic return	Intended benefit	Criteria
Delivery certainty	Making an initiative easier to approve, fund and deliver.	Governance and Economy
Asset performance	Improving how an asset works and performs over its lifetime.	Functionality and Environment
Competitive identity	Strengthening what makes a place distinctive and attractive.	Context and Beauty
Social credibility	Building public trust and strengthening community benefit.	Diversity and Sense of Place

4 Commit

Each place translated its strategic actions into a commitment, focusing on changes with clear local ownership, a connection to existing priorities and a realistic path to implementation.

Table 3 summarises the elements that guide their development and follow-up.

Output: locally owned commitments

Table 3 **Elements guiding commitments and follow-up**

Element	Description
What the place will do	A specific change to a policy, process, investment or delivery model.
Who is responsible	A named public institution that carries the work beyond the programme.
How progress is measured	The evidence that will show the change has taken hold.
What it advances	The criteria it strengthens and the returns it is intended to produce.

5 Delivery dialogues

Following the commitments, delivery dialogues connect each place with Alliance members whose expertise and experience can help address a specific implementation barrier. The discussions test strategic approaches, draw on relevant examples and clarify practical options for the responsible local institutions to consider. Responsibility for decisions and implementation remains with the place.

Output: options for local institutions to consider

- **Bring together the place and members with relevant experience**
  Organisations are selected for their expertise and experience in relation to the implementation challenge.
- **Focus on the barrier identified in the commitment**
  A strategic exchange on the question at hand, whether a financing model, an appraisal method or a procurement clause.
- **Enable knowledge to move in both directions**
  Sharing relevant examples with the place and drawing on its implementation experience to help drive change across the priorities of both the place and Alliance members.

Community of practice: Alliance leaders work alongside each place

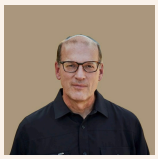
Supporting all five steps, the community of practice brings together cross-sector experts from the Alliance membership, spanning business, finance, government, research and international organisations. They bring experience from other places and sectors into the programme dialogues, and carry what they learn back to the Alliance and into their own institutions.

"None of us exist in a vacuum. Our quality of life, our state of mind and the relationships we build are subtly moulded by the spaces we inhabit. If we want to have a positive influence on our wellbeing, our mental health, our carbon footprint, it behooves us to pay attention to the places we choose to inhabit and to how we design our homes, neighbourhoods and cities. Quality matters. For all of us, the quality of places is existential."



Antonio Gómez-Palacio
Chair, DIALOG

Figure 6 Selection of executive leaders supporting the Pioneering Places community of practice



Jonathan Reckford
CEO, Habitat for Humanity International



Aziza Akhmouch
Head, Cities, Urban Policies and Sustainable Development Division, OECD



Anacláudia Rossbach
Executive Director, UN-Habitat



Ming Zhang
Global Director, Urban, Subnational Finance, Tourism, and Disaster Management, World Bank Group



Lisa Kelvey
Global Head of Infrastructure & Transport, KPMG



Iñaqui Carnicero
Secretary-General for Urban Agenda, Housing and Architecture, Spain



Rupesh Madlani
CEO, Bankers without Boundaries



Cha-Ly Koh
CEO, Urbanmetry



Juan Caballero
CEO, Build Change



Louis Downing
CEO, Global Infrastructure Basel



Laia Gasch
Director, World Cities Culture Forum



Yeongmin You
Senior Vice President, GS E&C

Turning quality into place-based action

The following profiles demonstrate how each place translated its assessment and exchanges into priorities for action and a commitment.[22]

San Francisco, United States

Initiative: Downtown Waterfront Resilience

1 2 3

Assess, Exchange, Shape

What will it take to deliver resilience across decades?

- Align the financing model with design, phasing and risk decisions
- Use early infrastructure and public-realm improvements to demonstrate value and build support
- Track shared resilience, economic, environmental and public-realm outcomes
- Use measurable health, safety and resilience benefits to diversify funding sources

"San Francisco has long been a pioneer in climate innovation, where people and nature thrive together. By blending nature-positive solutions with bold economic revitalisation, our city continues to demonstrate how ecological resilience and community wellbeing go hand in hand."



Daniel Lurie
Mayor of San Francisco

4

Commit

San Francisco will align long-term investment with a safer, more liveable waterfront

San Francisco Planning, the Port of San Francisco and the Office of Resilience and Capital Planning commit to embedding a downtown waterfront performance framework for public investments by developing inter-agency indicators of success, measures of climate risk and investment capture strategies that can address multiple policy goals while attracting adaptation capital.

Together they will invite municipal and private finance experts to develop opportunities for attracting downtown waterfront investment that support resilience, health and safety performance.

Quality criteria and strategic returns advanced by this commitment



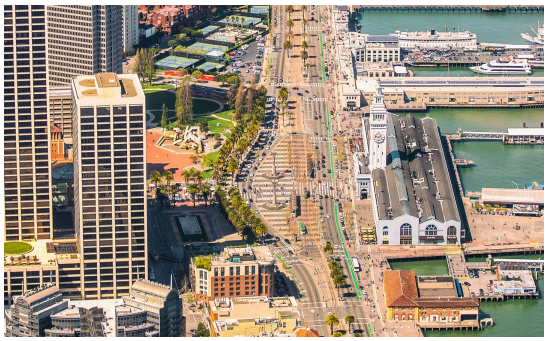
Eight criteria

- Governance
- Functionality
- Environment
- Economy
- Diversity
- Context
- Sense of Place
- Beauty



Four strategic returns

- Delivery certainty
- Asset performance
- Competitive identity
- Social credibility



San Francisco: rebuilding the waterfront for sea-level rise and seismic risk.

Medellín, Colombia
Initiative: Smart Rural Water Systems

1 2 3
Assess, Exchange, Shape

What will it take to turn a successful pilot into a model for rural water services across the district?

- Strengthen the programme's legal and funding foundations
- Build lasting research, technical and training capacity
- Strengthen community water boards with the capabilities to manage evolving systems

"Being part of the Pioneering Places Programme confirms a path Medellín was already walking: urban transformation that is sustainable and built around people. Working closely with these cities taught us that, thousands of miles apart, we ask the same questions and want the same things for our people. That discovery is what carries us into what comes next."



Federico Gutiérrez Zuluaga
Mayor of Medellín

4
Commit

Medellín will build a permanent system for monitoring and strengthening rural water services

Medellín commits to advancing its community-based rural water management model by establishing the Intelligent Water Monitoring Centre, integrating real-time monitoring across automated rural water systems and strengthening the capacities of community water boards. Success will be measured by the operation of a district-wide monitoring platform, increased use of data for operational decision-making and strengthened community governance, contributing to a more resilient, climate-adaptive and people-centred rural water system.

Quality criteria and strategic returns advanced by this commitment



Eight criteria

- Governance
- Functionality
- Environment
- Economy
- Diversity
- Context
- Sense of Place
- Beauty



Four strategic returns

- Delivery certainty
- Asset performance
- Competitive identity
- Social credibility



Medellín: extending monitored water services across rural areas.

Nairobi, Kenya
Initiative: Urban Renewal Programme

1 2 3
Assess, Exchange, Shape

What will it take to make urban renewal deliver community value?

- Assess bids against measurable social and environmental outcomes, alongside cost
- Capture and reinvest value created by public land, infrastructure and amenities
- Publicly track whether renewal improves residents' lives, health and economic opportunity
- Set shared social outcomes and report progress across projects and partners

"Nairobi's urban renewal and river regeneration must create caring, complete neighbourhoods where affordable homes, healthy rivers, opportunity, community voice and dignity reinforce one another. By applying our Environmental and Social Risk Management Policy and publicly measuring community value, we will make investment accountable to residents and advance a liveable City of Order, Dignity, Hope and Opportunity for All."



H.E. Njoroge Muchiri
Deputy Governor, Nairobi City County

4
Commit

Nairobi will make social and environmental value integral to urban renewal

Nairobi City County commits to strengthening governance and accountability across its Urban Renewal Programme and Nairobi Rivers regeneration by operationalising its Environmental and Social Risk Management Policy across future procurements and establishing a public community-value measurement framework, initially at the first two renewal sites nearing completion and adaptable to regenerated river corridors. The framework will embed and track social, environmental and economic outcomes – including resident satisfaction, health and wellbeing, local economic activity, access to essential amenities and green public spaces, environmental restoration and participation in community governance – alongside financial value. By using this evidence to guide procurement, delivery, long-term stewardship and future investment, Nairobi will advance affordable, inclusive, climate-resilient and complete neighbourhoods, restore its rivers as healthy and accessible public assets, and make care visible in how places are designed and managed.

Quality criteria and strategic returns advanced by this commitment



Eight criteria

- Governance
- Functionality
- Environment
- Economy
- Diversity
- Context
- Sense of Place
- Beauty



Four strategic returns

- Delivery certainty
- Asset performance
- Competitive identity
- Social credibility



Nairobi: using public land to deliver mixed-income neighbourhoods.

Utrecht, the Netherlands
Initiative: Cartesius, Heart of Health

1 2 3
Assess, Exchange, Shape

What will it take to make healthy urban living the national standard?

- Embed health and wellbeing in future national standards
- Track health alongside economic and asset performance
- Align government, developers, investors and researchers around shared health outcomes
- Secure long-term funding and governance for community programmes and social infrastructure

"A healthy living environment is the foundation of a strong society and a resilient economy. Pioneering Places has helped Utrecht turn that vision into concrete action, linking our local developments like Cartesius to international expertise to deliver healthier, better-connected and more vibrant communities for our residents."



André van Schie
Regional Minister of Economic Affairs, Province of Utrecht

4
Commit

Utrecht will make health central to how new neighbourhoods are built and sustained

The Metropolitan Region Utrecht, under the Heart of Health banner, commits to establishing the Cartesius district as a national and international blueprint for healthy urban living. Through the Pioneering Places Programme, Utrecht commits to (1) advancing health and wellbeing criteria within national housing standards, (2) publishing an annual evidence report linking health outcomes to economic and asset performance, (3) building coalitions with other places to adapt and scale the approach, and (4) designing a sustainable long-term stewardship model to secure the social and community fabric of healthy neighbourhoods.

Quality criteria and strategic returns advanced by this commitment



Eight criteria

- Governance
- Functionality
- Environment
- Economy
- Diversity
- Context
- Sense of Place
- Beauty



Four strategic returns

- Delivery certainty
- Asset performance
- Competitive identity
- Social credibility



Utrecht: a new neighbourhood designed around everyday health.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Initiative: Heritage-led adaptive reuse through the RE_NEW Policy

1 2 3

Assess, Exchange, Shape

What will it take for reuse to compete with redevelopment?

- Establish clear ownership of decisions across the historic centre
- Adapt delivery models to the realities of historic buildings
- Create the capabilities and market needed to scale adaptive reuse
- Retain local and cultural value after restoration

4

Commit

Kuala Lumpur will embed heritage in how the city grows and invests

Malaysia's Department of Federal Territories and Kuala Lumpur City Hall commit to advancing heritage-led adaptive reuse in Kuala Lumpur by embedding the Davos Baukultur Quality System within the city's planning, design and development delivery framework. This will strengthen design guidelines, development control, project appraisal and procurement practices to ensure that interventions in historic urban areas are high-quality, context-sensitive and sustainable. Success will be demonstrated through stronger stewardship of heritage precincts, enhanced conservation capacity within the local construction sector and tangible progress in adaptive reuse projects that revitalise Kuala Lumpur's historic urban core while safeguarding its cultural identity and sense of place.

Quality criteria and strategic returns advanced by this commitment



Eight criteria

- Governance
- Functionality
- Environment
- Economy
- Diversity
- Context
- Sense of Place
- Beauty



Four strategic returns

- Delivery certainty
- Asset performance
- Competitive identity
- Social credibility

"This initiative marks an important milestone in safeguarding Kuala Lumpur's architectural legacy while contributing to the socioeconomic vitality of our local communities. Building on Kuala Lumpur's existing planning, conservation, and development efforts, our collaboration with the Davos Baukultur Alliance further strengthens our capacity to translate high-level urban aspirations into concrete, actionable commitments. The exchange of knowledge and international perspectives through this collaboration will complement our local expertise and support Kuala Lumpur's continued progress towards becoming a more inclusive, livable, and competitive capital on the world stage."



TPr Haji Rosli bin Nordin
Executive Director (Planning), Kuala Lumpur City Hall

"Kuala Lumpur has significant opportunities to enhance urban quality through heritage conservation, adaptive reuse, greener neighbourhoods, improved public spaces, and the more effective use of existing urban assets. Over the next decade, our priority should be to ensure that quality becomes a shared responsibility across government, the private sector, the built environment professions, investors, and local communities. That is where I see the Davos Baukultur Alliance having real relevance for Kuala Lumpur."



Datuk Muhammad Azmi bin Mohd Zain
Director General, Department of Federal Territories

Montréal, Canada
Initiative: Circular Construction Programme

1 2 3
Assess, Exchange, Shape

What will it take to make material reuse standard practice?

- Use borough planning reviews to make reuse easier and create demand
- Connect deconstruction and new demand through storage, inventory and transport
- Adjust incentives to encourage preservation and material reuse
- Promote reused buildings and materials as desirable options, not compromises

"To bring about lasting change in the construction sector, Montréal is focusing on concrete actions: tools to facilitate the transition to a circular economy, support for businesses and funding measures to back innovative projects. The World Economic Forum's platform has provided us with an exceptional opportunity to share this vision and strengthen our capacity to take action, drawing inspiration from international best practice."



Chantal Gagnon
Member of the Executive Committee, responsible for economic and green economic development, City of Montréal

4
Commit

Montréal will make reuse easier to specify, approve and deliver

Montréal is committed to accelerating material reuse and circular construction across the construction, renovation and demolition sector. Building on its pilot projects, the City will move to wider-scale adoption by disseminating the resources developed with its partners, strengthening links across the value chain and sharing results.

Milestone 1: Structure and mobilise the ecosystem
Promote the reuse ecosystem map and the Directory of Re-use Stakeholders to raise the profile of existing resources and fill value-chain gaps.

Milestone 2: Increase the reach of the initiative
Run a targeted campaign on reuse resources, tools and businesses for construction stakeholders, within the City and beyond.

Milestone 3: Demonstrate the gradual adoption of practices
Share the outcomes and lessons of City-supported pilot projects to show the benefits of reuse and encourage wider adoption.

Key indicators will be the number of businesses and organisations registered in the directory, the reach of the campaign (people reached, impressions, views of resources and the directory) and the number of people reached through knowledge-sharing activities.

Quality criteria and strategic returns advanced by this commitment



Eight criteria

- Governance
- Functionality
- Environment
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- Context
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Four strategic returns

- Delivery certainty
- Asset performance
- Competitive identity
- Social credibility



Material inventory and storage, Résilience Montréal. Credit: Pivot Coopérative d'architecture

Commitments are the start of long-term change

The six commitments set a direction for changes to local policy and practice, from embedding health in housing standards and heritage criteria in planning to strengthening rural water monitoring and measuring the community value of renewal. Progress will depend on how these commitments are translated into local systems and sustained over time.

Implementation will be supported through targeted collaboration, with Alliance members bringing experience and expertise relevant to each place's particular challenges, while local institutions retain leadership of decisions and delivery. This approach creates shared value, making collaboration across places and sectors more likely to endure and contribute to common outcomes.

As the commitments are put into practice, evidence will reveal which approaches improve outcomes and where further change is needed. This learning will strengthen the Alliance's wider work, enabling its global community to adapt and advance approaches across regions and sectors.

"The experiences and sense of belonging that people develop in a place help shape its economic future. Investing in these qualities can strengthen communities, attract businesses and draw talent. Through the Davos Baukultur Alliance's first Pioneering Places cohort, six global cities are exploring how high-quality living environments can foster human connection while creating the conditions for economic opportunity to flourish."



Ramya Krishnaswamy
Senior Director, Urban Transformation, World Economic Forum

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Endnotes

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22. The commitments and quotations in this section were provided directly by the participating places.

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Davos Baukultur Alliance

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