

For Immediate Release

***Rhythms of Change, Reflections on the Regent Park Revitalization* by Mitchell Cohen jointly Launched Internationally with the World Urban Pavilion and UN-Habitat at Urban Library | WUF12 | Cairo, Egypt**

Toronto, Canada's Regent Park Revitalization Showcased in New Book on Urban Transformation

Cairo, Egypt (November 11, 2024) - The much-anticipated international launch of *Rhythms of Change, Reflections on the Regent Park Revitalization*, authored by Mitchell Cohen, took place on November 5th at the World Urban Forum (WUF12), the world's premier conference on sustainable urbanization.

This captivating book chronicles the dramatic transformation of Toronto's Regent Park, Canada's oldest and largest public housing project, into a dynamic, vibrant, mixed-income community. Since 2005, this ambitious redevelopment has served as a model for sustainable urban regeneration, highlighting the importance of inclusive, community-led development, supported by strong public and private partnerships.

Author Mitchell Cohen is a social activist, a musician, and the president and CEO of The Daniels Corporation, one of Canada's most respected real estate development firms, and Toronto Community Housing's development partner for 53 of the 69-acre Regent Park revitalization. Through *Rhythms of Change*, Cohen shared insights from this transformative journey, blending emotion, knowledge, and artistic and poetic expression.

His insights highlighted how adversity—stemming from the economic downturn of 2008 and various social and political challenges—can catalyze innovative solutions when communities come together.

Cohen's emphasis on a "shared vision" underscores the importance of unity in overcoming challenges. By combining resources, knowledge, and creativity, the stakeholders transformed Regent Park into a model for neighbourhood revitalization, demonstrating that with social commitment and a focus on creative capital, meaningful change is not just possible, but achievable.

"This book is about the transformative potential that can be achieved when all sectors unite with a shared, powerful vision and work together in common cause," said Cohen.

During the launch, **Douglas Ragan**, Programme Manager and expert from UN-Habitat specializing in youth and social integration, emphasized the critical importance of incorporating community voices in the revitalization process. Doug Ragan stated, "The resilience of the local population is powerfully highlighted through the World Urban Pavilions Sister Neighborhood initiative. This initiative demonstrates, through on-the-ground partnerships between neighborhoods in the global North and South, that active participation is essential to ensuring that the transformation of neighborhoods such as Regent Park remain firmly grounded in the needs and aspirations of its residents."

Raf Tuts, Director of the Global Solutions Division at UN Habitat, expressed his admiration for the book's impact, calling it a "moving testimony of transformation." He said, "This poetic

account of Regent Park's 40-year journey of transformation captures the intricacies of urban regeneration in a way that few other accounts do. The complexity, the policy nuances, and the involvement of municipal and private entities like The Daniels Corporation are all skilfully woven together."

UN Habitat views Regent Park as a global model for urban regeneration, with lessons that apply well beyond Canada. "The World Urban Pavilion at the heart of Regent Park allows visitors to experience the fruits of this holistic urban revitalization. Regent Park exemplifies a model of sustainable urban development, engaging a strong civil society alongside robust public-private partnerships," Tuts emphasized.

"For urban development practitioners worldwide, Regent Park serves as an example of revitalization that not only meets local SDG goals but addresses urban challenges in an integrated way. It's an inspiring case study that demonstrates how transformative urban regeneration can enhance the quality of life for residents."

Laura Petrella, Chief of Urban Planning at UN-Habitat, emphasized the role of the World Urban Pavilion as a transformative space that bridges the lessons of Regent Park's redevelopment with broader urban regeneration strategies.

"The Pavilion has become a vital place where the experiences and knowledge from Regent Park's journey can be shared and applied," Petrella remarked. "It's a physical and symbolic space that demonstrates the power of community-centred transformation, especially when rooted in inclusive planning and partnerships." The

UN-Habitat is eager to share the book's insights with global urban planners. "Urban regeneration is a long journey," said **Eduardo Moreno**, session moderator. "The Regent Park experience offers valuable lessons on collaboration, social justice, and the transformative potential of informed community involvement." It also highlights the importance of urban economy and financial innovations that The Daniels integrated in this rehabilitation and are so critical for the work of the Urban Economy Forum.

Wendy Purcell, Professor and Vice Chair of Education, Rutgers University and visiting research scientist at Harvard, stressed the 'Power of With' during her remarks.

Professor Purcell articulated how combining diverse viewpoints and interests can lead to a deeper understanding of "Home"- one that goes beyond its physical attributes. She also highlighted the importance of social and emotional dimensions as crucial elements in driving meaningful change.

Professor Purcell also stressed that transformation often comes with a sense of loss and the need to confront it, underscoring the importance of heritage, memories, and sense of identity and belonging. In turn, developers The Daniels Corporation and Toronto Community Housing fostered a profound sense of community, making them genuine leaders of the revitalization, driven by hope, courage and belief in the future.

Rhythms of Change, Reflections on the Regent Park Revitalization offers readers a powerful narrative of resilience, community transformation, and the promise of sustainable, inclusive cities.

Rhythms of Chane is now available for purchase at the following retailers: [Canadian Retailer](#); [U.S. Retailer](#) or [International Retailer](#).

About The Daniels Corporation:

[The Daniels Corporation](#) is one of Canada's pre-eminent builders/developers, building nearly 40,000 new homes across the Greater Toronto Area for over 40 years. Daniels is the developer of TIFF Lightbox in Toronto's Entertainment District and the City of the Arts community on Toronto's East Bayfront. Among its many initiatives, Daniels partnered with Toronto Community Housing to revitalize 53 of the 69-acre Regent Park community in Toronto. Regent Park is home to the World Urban Pavilion, a collaboration between the Urban Economy Forum, UN Habitat, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Daniels. Understanding that quality of life is created by much more than physical buildings, Daniels goes above and beyond to integrate building excellence with opportunities for social, cultural, and economic well-being.

About UN-Habitat:

[The United Nations Human Settlements Programme \(UN-Habitat\)](#) is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. UN-Habitat is the focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system. UN-Habitat works with partners to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities. UN-Habitat promotes urbanization as a positive transformative force for people and communities, reducing inequality, discrimination and poverty.

About the World Urban Pavilion:

The [World Urban Pavilion](#) is located in the Toronto's Regent Park community and is a knowledge exchange hub to share best practices, innovation and research in urban development and revitalization from countries around the world. The Pavilion envisions people centred, sustainable cities that are planned through data analysis, driven by innovation, and informed by the SDGs.

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