

**Case Impact Report: KTH Centre for the Future of Places Collaboration with UN-Habitat**

<b>Impact case study – KTH School of Architecture and the Built Environment, Centre for the Future of Places</b>
1. Title of case study: <b>“Public Space Research into Implementation for the New Urban Agenda”</b> Case study concerning impact of research/impact of education: <b>Impact of Research</b>
2. Summary of the impact (max 150 words):  <p><b>The Centre for the Future of Places has been working closely with UN-Habitat in a partnership outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2018, and currently being renewed through 2021. The Centre serves as a research hub for implementation of the New Urban Agenda, a framework international agreement adopted with acclamation by all 193 member states of the United Nations, portions of which were developed in part by Centre personnel.</b></p> <p><b>Among the projects:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1) publication of books, book chapters, research articles, and edited special issue research journals;</b></li><li><b>2) compilation of a database on public space research;</b></li><li><b>3) development of a white paper of conclusions available on the UN-Habitat website;</b></li><li><b>4) assistance with implementation of pilot projects, including meeting with public officials, civic leaders and the media;</b></li><li><b>5) participation in international conferences and public events, disseminating the Centre’s findings;</b></li><li><b>6) further dissemination through websites, videos, and professional articles.</b></li></ol>
3. Underpinning research (maximum 100 words):  <p><b>The underpinning research is a series of survey research projects and symposia conducted with leading researchers in public space, including: Setha Low of CUNY, Vikas Mehta of Univ. of Cincinnati, David Brain of New College Florida, Mathew Carmona of UCL, Ali Madanipour of Newcastle, and others. Centre participants included: Director Tigran Haas, Project Leader Michael Mehaffy, and students Kyle Farrell, Rosa Danenberg and Jing Jing. A database of public space literature was created, followed by a series of peer-reviewed journal articles, special issues, book chapters, and several books. (Full listing below.)</b></p>

**4. Sources to corroborate the impact (max 5):**

**Laura Petrella, Head of Urban Planning and Design Branch, UN-Habitat:**

**" Our collaboration with the Centre for the Future of Places at KTH has a long history... all the process of the Future of Places conference has built quite a lot of understanding and collaborative mechanisms. And I think that process was so fundamental to influence the global thinking on the issue of public space. So now it is moving into implementation, which is the topic of the moment in the collaboration with the Centre."**

**CONTACT: [laura.petrella@un.org](mailto:laura.petrella@un.org)**

**Eugenie Birch, Chair, World Urban Campaign, and Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research, University of Pennsylvania:**

**"The Centre for the Future of Places is really essential to thinking about and creating the public policy that's going to emanate from the New Urban Agenda...the findings, and the work that the Centre is doing, shows universal principles about public space."**

**CONTACT: [elbirch@design.upenn.edu](mailto:elbirch@design.upenn.edu)**

**Kristie Daniel, Program Director for Livable Cities, HealthBridge:**

**"Our work with the Centre for the Future of Places has led to an increased understanding among the governments we work with about the importance of public spaces, and the CFP will be instrumental in helping us evaluate and document policy actions that can be applied to other cities and nations. For us this is providing a very important link between research and practice."**

**CONTACT: [KDaniel@healthbridge.ca](mailto:KDaniel@healthbridge.ca)**

**Fred Kent, founder, Project for Public Spaces, and President, Placemaking Fund:**

**"Our collaboration with Tigran Haas, Peter Elmlund, Michael Mehaffy and the others in the Future of Places had a widely recognized impact on the language on public space and in both the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. I was delighted to see them take forward the partnership with UN-Habitat into the research hub at KTH, the Centre for the Future of Places. Their continuing work on public spaces and Placemaking with us and with other colleagues like Setha Low and Vikas Mehta is continuing to have an important impact on the implementation of these catalytic international agreements."**

**CONTACT: [fredikentiii@gmail.com](mailto:fredikentiii@gmail.com)**

**Richard Florida, Professor, School of Cities, University of Toronto and author of *The Creative Class* and *The New Urban Crisis*:**

**"I was delighted to visit the Centre for the Future of Places as part of my honorary doctorate award at KTH in November 2019, facilitated by its director Tigran Haas. Their work with UN-Habitat on the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is having a significant impact on the implementation process and the state of research into practice for public space. This is a critical moment in history for the quality of cities around the world, and the work of the Centre, with Tigran Haas, Michael Mehaffy and their colleagues, is having a recognized global impact."**

**CONTACT: [richard.florida@rotman.utoronto.ca](mailto:richard.florida@rotman.utoronto.ca)**

### **Categories of Reach**

The project "Public Space Research into Implementation for the New Urban Agenda" has had wide impact across many sectors and partners:

- **International Agencies:** Partners and collaborators in events and publications include UN-Habitat, UN Environment Programme, and The World Bank.
- **NGOs:** Partners include HealthBridge (Canada), King Salman Center for Local Governance (Saudi Arabia), and Sustasis Foundation (USA).
- **Academic partners:** The Centre has current or former collaborations with personnel and/or departments at ETH Zurich, TU Vienna, MIT, Harvard, UCL, University of Chicago, University of Newcastle, City University of New York, University of Cincinnati, New College Florida, Ben Gurion University, University of British Columbia, and others.
- **Students:** The Centre's personnel have lectured and presented its work to students at other institutions including Harvard University, Yale University, the University of Chicago, Da Nang University of Technology, Prince Sultan University, Cape Town University, Khalifa University, and others.

### **Publications Completed under the project "Public Space Research Into Implementation for the New Urban Agenda":**

#### **Refereed Journal Papers:**

Mehaffy, M. W., & Haas, T. (2018). Engaging informality in the New Urban Agenda. *Berkeley Planning Journal*, 30(1).

Mehaffy, M. W., & Low, S. M. (2018). The resurgence of public space: from the Charter of Athens to the New Urban Agenda. *The Journal of Public Space*, 3(3), 1-24.

Mehaffy, M. W., Elmlund, P., & Farrell, K. (2019). Implementing the New Urban Agenda: the central role of public space. *Urban Design International* 24(2019)

Mehaffy, M. W. (2019). Public Space in the New Urban Agenda. *The Journal of Public Space*, 4(4), 115-124.

Mehaffy, M. W., Haas, T., & Elmlund, P. (2019). Public Space in the New Urban Agenda: Research into Implementation. *Urban Planning*, 4(2), 134-137.

### **Edited Special Journal Issues:**

"From the Charter of Athens to the New Urban Agenda," *Journal of Public Space*, Special Issue, December 2018 (S. Low and M. Mehaffy, Guest Editors).

"Public space in the New Urban Agenda: Research into implementation," *Urban Planning*, Special Issue, March 2019 (T. Haas and M. Mehaffy, Guest Editors).

"The future of public space," *Urban Design International*, Special Issue, March 2019 (P. Elmlund, T. Haas and M. Mehaffy, Guest Editors).

"Heritage urbanism: Urban heritage planning and design," *Sustainability Journal*, Special Issue, MDPI, March 2019 (T. Haas and R. Locke, Guest Editors).

### **Books:**

Mehaffy, M., Kryazheva, Y., Rudd, A., Salingaros, N. (2020). *A new pattern language for growing regions*. Stockholm: KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sustasis Press, and UN-Habitat.

Rudd, A. and Mutai, J. (Eds.) (2020). *City-wide public space strategies guide*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat with KTH Centre for the Future of Places.

Rudd, A. and Mutai, J. (Eds.) (2020). *City-wide public space strategies - Compendium of inspiring practices*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat with KTH Centre for the Future of Places.

### **Book Chapters:**

Mehaffy, M., Elmlund, P. and Haas, T. (2019). Public spaces and private conflicts in the New Urban Agenda. *WIT transactions on ecology and the environment*, 238, 87-96.

Elmund, P. & Mehaffy, M. (2020). "The private lives of public spaces." In *Handbook of public space*. London: Routledge.

Mehaffy, M. (2020). "Curating main streets," in *Street life: The future of urban retail*. London: Springer

Mehaffy, M. (2020). "New Urbanism and the New Urban Agenda," in Talen, E. (Ed.), *Research agenda for New Urbanism*. London: Edward Elgar.

Karimnia, E. and Haas, T. (2020). "Appropriation of public space: a dialectical approach in designing publicness." In Mehta, V. and Palazzo, D. (eds.) *Companion to public space*. London: Routledge.



### **White Papers and Other Publications:**

Mehaffy, M. and Farrell, K. (2019). "Addressing rapid urbanization through a public space agenda: Developing a Vietnam pilot project for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda." White paper prepared for the national government of Vietnam. Retrieved from <http://www.sustasis.net/CFP-CPVNUP.pdf>

Mehaffy, M. (2019). "Portland: Regional green planning." Case study paper for the government of Chengdu, China, for UN-Habitat project, "Research on international experience and trends of Park City Indicator System."

Mehaffy, M. (2019). "Valuing the benefits of public space systems," White paper, Centre for the Future of Places and UN-Habitat. Retrieved from <http://www.sustasis.net/CFP-VBPSS.pdf>

Farrell, K. (2019). *Rapid urbanization: An inquiry into the nature and causes of the urban transition in developing countries.* (Doctoral dissertation.) Stockholm: KTH.

Mehaffy, M., Kryazheva, Y., Rudd, A. and Salingaros, N. (2020). *A new pattern language for growing regions.* (Compilation of best practice standards from the New Urban Agenda.) Stockholm: Centre for the Future of Places, UN-Habitat and Sustasis Press.

Meijling, J. and Haas, T. (eds) (2020). *Essays on Jane Jacobs.* Stockholm: Stolpe

Rudd, A. (ed) (2020). *City-wide public space strategies: A guidebook for city leaders.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat and Centre for the Future of Places.

Rudd, A. (ed) (2020). *City-wide public space strategies: A compendium of inspiring practices.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat and Centre for the Future of Places.

Haas, T. and Westlund, H. (2020). *In the post-urban world.* Tokyo: Routledge/Wedge Japan

Danenber., R., Doumpa, V. and Karssenber., H. (eds) (2020). *The City at Eye Level for Kids.* Amsterdam: US-AB, STIPO

Elmlund P. and Haas T. (eds) (2020). *Rural Urbanism.* Stockholm: Stolpe.

### **International conferences, symposia, workshops, and high-level meetings:**

February 2018, World Urban Forum, networking session on "Public Space in the New Urban Agenda: Research into Practice."

June 2018, UN High Level Political Forum in New York, co-organized session titled "Quantifying the Commons," on development of SDG 11.7 and its indicators.

September 2018, Expert Group Meeting, Stockholm, September 2018, co-hosted sessions on development of indicators for SDG 11.7.

November 2018, AfriCities conference, session on “Overcoming the Loss of Green and Public Spaces in Urban Africa.”

November 2018, AfriCities conference, workshop on “Creating Safe, Inclusive and Accessible Public Space in Urban Africa: From Inventory to Implementation.”

December 2018, Wuhan Placemaking Week, China, 2019, workshop on “Why Public Space Matters: Research on Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits.”

February 2019, training session on public space implementation tools, conducted by Setha Low and Michael Mehaffy, at UN-Habitat, Nairobi, Kenya.

May 2019, Side Event at the UN-Habitat Assembly, “Innovation Districts for Rapidly Urbanizing Cities: Opportunities and Challenges” with Ax: son Johnson Foundation, UN-Habitat and other partners, Nairobi, Kenya.

May 2019, address at UN-Habitat Assembly by Michael Mehaffy of the Centre for the Future of Places, Nairobi, Kenya.

February 2020, World Urban Forum, networking session on “Public Space in the New Urban Agenda: Partnerships for Research and Practice,” Abu Dhabi, UAE.

### **Impact Areas:**

The Centre’s work on implementing public space research delivers on the New Urban Agenda’s commitment to the positive impacts of public space in urban areas. **Among the impact areas cited in the New Urban Agenda – and documented in research – are:**

- “Social interaction and inclusion”
- “Human health and well-being”
- “Economic exchange”
- “Cultural expression”
- “Improving the resilience of cities to disasters and climate change”
- “Physical and mental health”
- “Household and ambient environmental air, and auditory quality”
- “Promoting attractive and livable cities [and] human settlements”
- “Prioritizing the conservation of endemic species”

**Photos and other documentations of impact:**



*The Future of Places conference series, the first UN “Urban Thinkers Campus,” developed inputs to the Habitat III conference and its outcome document, the New Urban Agenda. The idea for the KTH Centre for the Future of Places was first developed here, with (L-R) Saskia Sassen, Richard Sennett, Centre Director Tigran Haas, and others.*



*The Future of Places, the UN “Urban Thinkers Campus,” brought together many high-level participants, who went on to collaborate with the Centre in its work on implementing the New Urban Agenda. This is Maimunah Sharif, then mayor of Penang, Malaysia, and now Director of UN-Habitat.*



*Signing ceremony for the MOU with UN-Habitat and CFP at the World Urban Forum in 2018. L-R: Michael Mehaffy for the CFP; Shipra Narang Suri, Coordinator of the Urban Design Branch of UN-Habitat; and Saidou N'Dow, Head of Legal Office, UN-Habitat.*



*Centre director Tigran Haas chairs an "Expert Group Meeting" convened by UN-Habitat with partners including officials of the City of Stockholm, City of Barcelona, City of Johannesburg, City of Prague, City of Seberang Perai, City of Sao Paulo, HealthBridge Canada, City University of New York, and Centre staff.*



*A training session on public space implementation tools conducted by Setha Low and Michael Mehaffy of the Centre for the Future of Places, in partnership with UN-Habitat and the Public Space Research Group of City University of New York, in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2019.*



*A Da Nang, Vietnam newspaper headline states “NEWS/POLITICS: Da Nang needs to focus on developing public space in its residential areas.” The article states, “On the afternoon of the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, Vice Chair of the Da Nang City People’s Committee Nguyen Ngoc Tuan received the organization of Dr. Michael Mehaffy and HealthBridge Canada. The delegation came to visit and learn about construction work on public space projects...” UN-Habitat Vietnam was a partner in this work.*



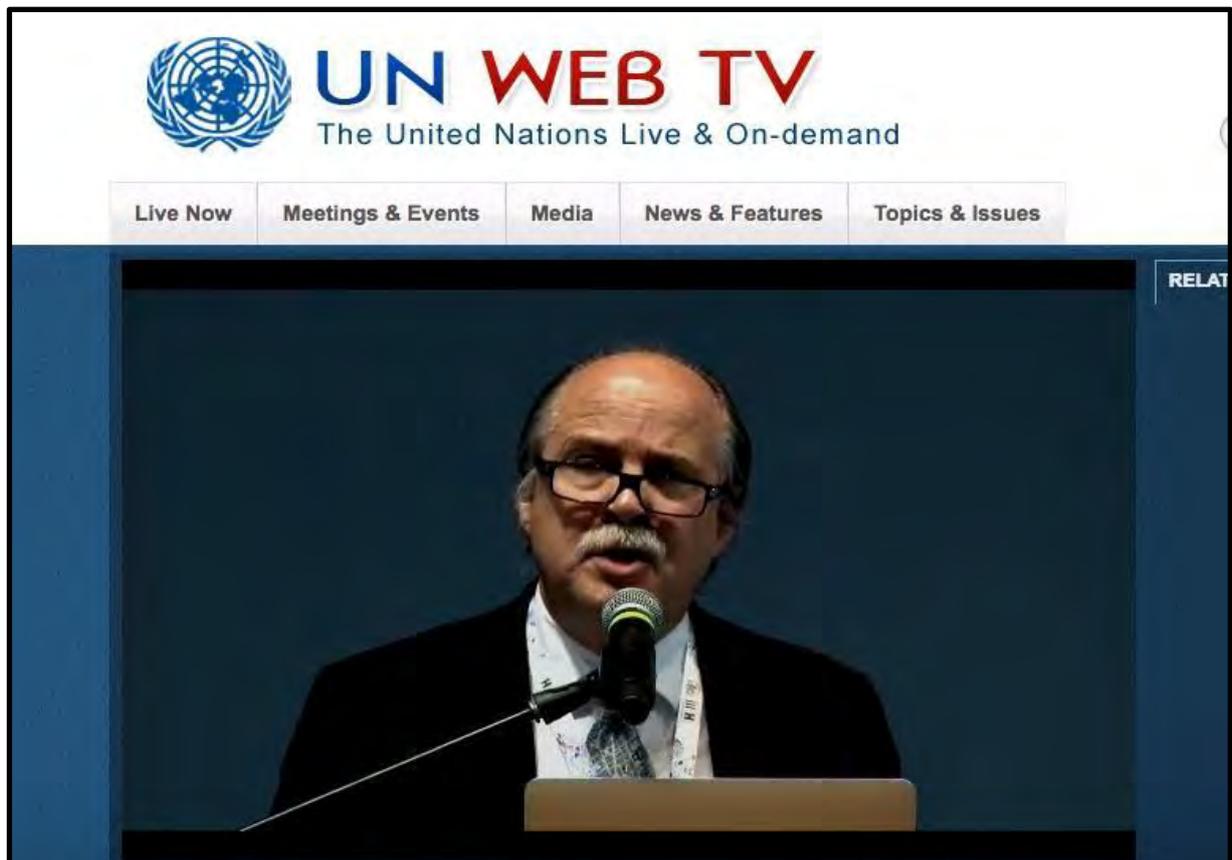
*Michael Mehaffy was invited to lecture at Prince Sultan University, Ryadh, Saudi Arabia, on the Centre’s research findings, in a talk titled “Public Space in the New Urban Agenda: A Changing Paradigm for Modern Development.”*



*Some of the participants in a training session co-organized by the Centre for the Future of Places in partnership with UN-Habitat, “Transforming Urban Africa through Safe, Inclusive and Accessible Public Spaces,” at the AfriCities 2018 Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco.*



*Among attendees at the 2019 Iceland Public Space Seminar, organized by the Centre for the Future of Places and the Ax:son Johnson Foundation, are Julian Agyeman (Tufts), Luc Anselin (U. Chicago), Christine Boyer (Princeton U.), David Brain (New College Florida), David Canter (Huddersfield U.), Matthew Carmona (UCL), Nan Ellin (UC Denver), Setha Low (CUNY), Ali Madanipour (U. Newcastle), Vikas Mehta (U. Cincinnati), Don Mitchell (Uppsala U.), Massimo Santaniccia (Iceland Univ. Arts), and Emily Talen (U. Chicago). Also attending are co-organizers Peer Elmlund, Tigran Haas, and Michael Mehaffy as well as students Rosa Danenberg, Anna-Paula Jonsson and Jing Jing of the Centre.*



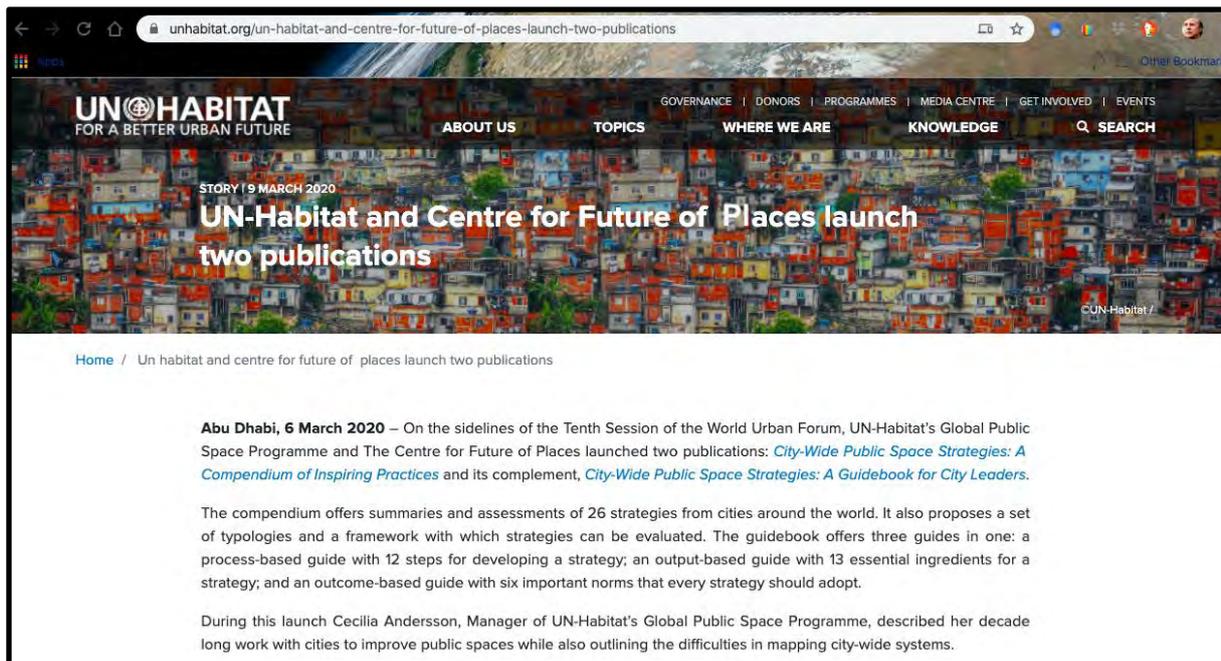
*Michael Mehaffy of the Centre for the Future of Places addresses the plenary session of the Habitat III conference and discusses the importance of public space, the challenges of implementation, and the formation and role of the Centre in developing research translated into practice for public benefit.*



*Graduate students at Da Nang University of Technology pose with Michael Mehaffy of the CFP after his lecture on “Public Space in the New Urban Agenda: Research into Policy.”*



*The Deputy Mayor of the City of Da Nang, Vietnam (center), at a high-level meeting of City officials, with Michael Mehaffy (left) and a delegation from the Centre and its partners.*



*UN-Habitat web press release for the launch of the “City-Wide Public Space Strategies” publications at the World Urban Forum in 2020.*



*Speakers and their associates at the UN-Habitat Assembly Side Event, “Innovation Districts for Rapidly Urbanising Cities: Opportunities and Challenges.” Speakers included Jie Song, Deputy director of Wuhan Land Use and Urban Spatial Planning Research Center (WLSP); Michael Mehaffy, Centre for the Future of Places, KTH; Maria Aranzazu Leturiondo, Deputy Minister of Territorial Planning, Basque Country; Laura Petrella, Head of Urban Planning Unit, UN-Habitat; Ismail Bin Ibrahim, Iskandar Regional Development Authority, Malaysia - Chief Executive; and Emmanuel Kombe Nzai, CEO of Jumuiya ya Kaunti za Pwani (The Coastal Economic Bloc, Kenya).*



***KTH Centre for the Future of Places and the Division of Urban and Regional Studies***

**Case Impact Report Authors: Dr. Tigran Haas, Director, Associate Professor at KTH and Dr. Michael Mehaffy, Senior Guest Researcher at the Centre for the Future of Places and the Urban City Research at the Ax: son Johnson Foundation, Stockholm Sweden.**



*Dr Tigran Haas and Dr Michael Mehaffy*

***The mission is that Centre for the Future of Places, aside from becoming an International Hub for Research on Public Space & Beyond, doing studies on the subject from a global perspective, also becomes a clearing house for ideas and new proposals on how the cities should be planned, designed, and retrofitted best to meet both today's and tomorrow's challenges with the focus on public places and urban spaces ([www.cfp.abe.kth.se](http://www.cfp.abe.kth.se))***

**In research cooperation with:**

