

PRESS RELEASE

Belize strengthening relations with the City of Merida (Mexico) through technical cooperation in the Building Sector and in Urban Development and Planning



Belmopan. March 16, 2020. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, through the Building Sector Reform Project, and in partnership with the Economic Development Council (EDC) continues to strengthen its bilateral relations with Mexico on the subject of construction sector development. Through a technical exchange visit to the capital city of the state of Yucatán, a delegation from the Government of Belize held meetings with the Merida City Council, specifically with the Municipal Institute of Planning (Instituto Municipal de Planeación de Mérida - IMPLAN) and the Department of Urban Development (Dirección de Desarrollo Urbano - DDU) responsible for urban planning and development and, building permit processing respectively. The Belizean delegation included representatives from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Council, Ministry of Local Government, the Physical Planning Unit at the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Central Information Technology Office (CITO) and, the Mayor's Association.

The objective of the technical exchange was to strengthen institutional capacity of key public agencies in the areas of building process administration including one-stop service booths, building sector regulatory frameworks and urban development and planning. This initiative represents the Government of Belize's commitment, under the Building Sector Reform Project, to drive improvements in the doing business climate and sustainable planning and development at all levels of Government.

The City of Mérida has become a recognized leader in Mexico and the hemisphere for its best practices in building sector administration, land-use planning, urban planning and development that are environmentally and socially responsible. In particular, they have achieved significant strides in the establishment of a municipal single window service for the effective administration of building permits which facilitates the development of a safe, sustainable and harmonious built

environment. Therefore, the technical exchange provided an opportunity for Belize's delegation to strengthen its knowledge in the application of land-use planning and management, construction sector regulations and legal framework, digital service and urban planning as key elements to achieve modern, resilient and safe cities. At the core of Mérida's success reflects the acknowledgement of the importance to facilitate doing business through digitized permitting processes while ensuring the safety of its citizens with the implementation of proper planning and legal and regulatory frameworks.

It is expected that the mission will result in:

- I. Greater collaboration and action among the respective Government agencies in the areas of land use planning and zoning, building sector regulatory and legal frameworks, urban development, municipal planning and building permitting;
- II. Strengthen bilateral relationships with the City of Merida while fostering new opportunities for collaboration in the area of urban development; and
- III. Further guide and improve the implementation of the Building Sector Reform Project.

The Government of Belize through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Economic Development Council is committed to the modernization and improvement of the Building Industry for a safer, flexible, resilient and efficient Belize.

For more information, contact the Building Sector Reform Project under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development at (501) 828 4562.

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