



HAMILTON COMMUNITY
BENEFITS NETWORK

building capacity through building communities

NEW FOUNDATION DOCUMENT

(Draft)

A Strong Community - Working Collectively to Build Opportunities,
Prosperity and Inclusiveness:

Vision, Commitment and Objectives for Community Benefit
Agreements around Community Identified Project(s)

OUR VISION AND COMMITMENT

The Hamilton Community Benefits Network envisions Hamilton as an inclusive, thriving city in which all residents have equitable opportunities to contribute to building healthy communities and a prospering economy. Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) are a proven approach to achieve this vision.

A CBA will help ensure that a skilled workforce is ready and available for the completion of infrastructure projects by tapping into the capacity of Hamilton's diverse communities. A CBA will contribute to the establishment of a shared framework for workforce development that ties together community-based organizations, governments, colleges, training agencies, local unions, professional societies and subcontractors involved in the trades, professions, and ancillary industries.

By contributing to the capacity of the training and workforce development system to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner today, CBA(s) will foster a long-term commitment to workforce development through existing training delivery agencies and union training programs.

Accessible transit is critical for the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of our City today and into the future. Transit and other infrastructure projects are engines for neighbourhood and environmental improvements.

The expansion of infrastructure that is envisioned for Hamilton will result in opportunities for good jobs in construction and operations. It is crucial that all Hamiltonians have access to economic opportunities stemming from infrastructure investments.

A Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) will develop, resource and implement an economic inclusion strategy to ensure that the diversity of the workers on future projects as they identified by residents across the City.

Working in tandem with community-based organizations, labour and other partners, a CBA will implement specific strategies, including targets that expand opportunities among historically disadvantaged communities and equity-seeking groups. Outreach strategies will be an essential part of reaching groups which include: residents in low income neighbourhoods, including Neighbourhood Improvement Areas; urban Indigenous populations; racialized and newcomer communities; people with disabilities as well as youth and women who are disadvantaged.

As a community network, we commit to working in partnership with any Community Identified Project(CIP) partners, the City of Hamilton, The Government of Canada, Province of Ontario, developers, contractors, sub-contractors, and all other partners on Community Benefits Agreements that can advance our vision for an inclusive, accountable and thriving City where everyone has a safe, clean, and affordable places to live, work, learn and play.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENTS

A CBA is founded on a shared, legally binding commitment between government, the contracting firm and community to build and complete infrastructure and development projects through an effective, efficient, transparent, fair and inclusive process that supports good jobs, social change, decent work, and provides community voices to help shape the change occurring in their City and neighbourhoods while prevailing industry standards.

The initial focus of applying the Community Benefit Agreement model was around transit expansion in Hamilton. The HCBN did enter into negotiations with Metrolinx for a CBA on the Hamilton LRT Project which was cancelled in 2019. The work of Community Benefits needs to extend beyond large scale government infrastructure projects.

The HCBN is committed to negotiating a Community Benefits Framework, under which there is a legally binding agreement for a Community Benefits plan between the governments, contractors, and sub-contractors, developers and any other group involved in the execution of CBAs for Community Identified Projects (CIPs).

The Framework provides a process to which the HCBN can hold all parties accountable (in the example of LRT: Infrastructure Ontario, Metrolinx, City of Hamilton & Project Co/Subs) to the Community Benefits plan. The HCBN remains committed to developing legally binding Community Benefits Agreements in Ontario.

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide equitable economic opportunities that promote economic inclusion through apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in the construction industry create both long term careers and short-term jobs for Hamilton communities. As entry level jobs they offer opportunities to people who are beginning their careers.

Specific measures should include, but not be limited to:

- » Specific targets and timetables in: pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs;
- » Initiatives that enhance career awareness in construction trades for local residents and communities in Hamilton;
- » An inclusive training to employment strategy within workplaces.

2. Contribute equitable economic opportunities that promote economic inclusion in into Professional, Administrative and Technical jobs generated by the CIP. Specifically, to those most affected by the project and groups traditionally excluded from or limited to employment opportunities.

Professional, Administrative and Technical (PAT) job categories are part of every major construction project and Transit System. Many newcomers to Canada, disabled and racialized folks have much needed and valued skills, but may lack professional networks to find jobs in their field. The HCBN will work with workforce development agencies to match skilled workers or uptrain workers into PAT jobs.

Specific measures should include, but not be limited to:

- » Job opportunities for those in or near the CIP area, from underrepresented groups such as women, people of colour, the disabled, skilled newcomers to the country and those suffering from poverty.
- » Resourcing the development of a shared framework of community organizations and workforce development agencies geared towards local employment opportunities in the Community Identified Project.
- » Initiatives that enhance PAT job awareness for local residents in the communities along the transit lines and across the City;
- » Recruitment, training and employment opportunities connected with the Community Identified Project. must start with engineering and design work and include ancillary roles, in addition to access to jobs in maintenance and operations.

3. Support **social enterprises** and other related vehicles to economic inclusion through commitments to **social procurement**

Social enterprises are businesses that are directly involved in the production and/or selling of goods, services and training for the blended purpose of generating income and achieving social, cultural, and/or environmental aims. A CBA will be integral in fostering the establishment and successful growth of social enterprises affiliated with the Community Identified Project (CIP).

Specific measures should include, but not be limited to:

- » Social procurement policies that enable social enterprises to deliver construction, catering, printing, security and post construction services and/or recruitment and training delivery, plus other services;
- » Social procurement practices that encourage staging contracts so that smaller businesses can have access to tendering opportunities;
- » Prioritizing access to businesses lead by newcomers, persons of colour and women to the service and supply opportunities arising from CIP.
- » Work with the Social Enterprise sector to ensure that social enterprise companies can opt in to Metrolinx related contract opportunities if they wish.

4. Contribute to **neighbourhood and environment improvements** through building new infrastructure

Most residents will experience long-term benefits, thanks to physical improvements and street beautification as a result of new infrastructure, affordable housing, access to more transit options and diversification of local economies. Projects undertaken for consideration of a CBA should include full resident engagement and conversation about the changes to that neighbourhood. Should result in increased affordable housing stock were possible.

Specific measures should include, but not be limited to:

- » Where a Community Identified Project (CIP) causes displacement or a reduction in access to affordable housing that the project creates a net gain in new true affordable housing.
- » Construction of the CIP use the best practices for environmental construction materials and standards., and include accessible indoor and outdoor spaces beyond Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and in consultation with disabled folks who will navigate those spaces.
- » The CBA will commit parties to work with appropriate levels of government to mitigate gentrification caused by the CIP in so far as is possible
- » That neighbourhoods around the CIP have a say in the built form, appearance, transit options, and other community-identified concerns were possible.

5. Distinguishing Justice from Charity

The HCBN will work with charitable organizations and foundations towards bringing together a collective of residents, stakeholders, government and community to build CBAs that will deliver net benefits to the communities in which they are implemented. However, “charity is about giving a hungry person some bread, while justice is about trying to change the system so that nobody has excess bread while some have none; charity is about treating your neighbours with respect, while justice is about trying to get at the deeper roots of societal inequality.” The HCBN is about bringing broad-reaching social change to the lived experience of residents.

Specific measures should include, but not be limited to:

- » Including resident voices in the changes affecting their communities.
- » Confirming CBAs provide the best results possible for those most affected in a community by the projects those communities are grappling with.
- » Jobs alone cannot transform a community. Any CBAs should look beyond simple employment to provide social good to a given community. CBAs must provide long-term gains for the communities undertaking the Community Identified Project.

6. Economic Justice at the core of all CBAs

Insuring CBAs at their core take into account “a set of moral principles for building economic institutions, the ultimate goal of which is to create an opportunity for each person to create a sufficient material foundation upon which to have a dignified, productive, and creative life beyond economics.”

7. Broader engagement across the whole City including access to faith organizations, disabled residents, racialized residents, and those outside traditional structured organizations

At its’ core any CBA undertaken by the HCBN should look across the whole City of Hamilton, for Community Identified Properties and opportunities for residents to voice concerns and demand a voice in changes being undertaken in their communities.

8. Ensure clear commitments and accountability from all parties to deliver to the CBA

Parties involved in the CIP and HCBN will work with key stakeholders to finalize a strategy for operationalizing CBAs. It will be built on the shared commitment by all parties to achieve the objectives of the CBA within the context of successfully delivering on the requirements of the CIP deliverables. The CBA will define the specific roles and responsibilities of CIP developers, contractors, government agencies, subcontractors, labour/trades, and other key stakeholders in the Agreement.

Specific measures should include, but not be limited to:

- » A monitoring process to be carried out by the Hamilton Community Benefits Network and contractors/vendors involved in the CIP, the City of Hamilton and/or neutral third party; Where possible to be facilitated with the City of Hamilton's Community Benefits Subcommittee.
- » Details of how and when signatory partners will be evaluated;
- » Assignment of a lead person who will be responsible for the implementation of the CBA with each of the main Community Identified Project stakeholders;
- » A resource strategy that enables the Agreement's objectives to be created.

The original Foundation Document was produced by Karen Lior and Patrick Rettig of the Toronto Workforce Innovation Group (TWIG). Subsequent revisions resulted from a 2-day workshop with community members, experts and key informants organized by the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) April 27-28 2013. Reviewed and Approved by further community consultation and the interim Board of Directors, and was adopted by the May 22 2013 General Meeting of the TCBN. The Toronto Foundation Document on approval from the TCBN was utilized and revised by the HCBN through two Stakeholder Outreach Meetings held on Jul 6 and Jul 19, 2017, to formally become the HCBN Foundation Document. Adopted by the Hamilton Community Benefits Network at their first Annual General Meeting Mon, Oct 30, 2017. With the cancellation of Hamilton's LRT project, the HCBN membership undertook an addition and modification to this document to include any Community Identified Projects and new foundations. This was done in the Summer of 2020.