



July 12th, 2019

To Members of Council and the City Clerk

Re: EC 6.15 Community Benefits Framework

In the past two decades across municipalities in North America, Community Benefits Agreements have been proven to be an effective vehicle to create economic upliftment for historically marginalized communities. We applaud the City of Toronto for the efforts to embrace this concept, and urge councillors to codify Toronto's commitment to utilize this vehicle through the Community Benefits Framework.

Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) require good will from developers, community organizations and labour to ensure we get the best outcomes. Over the past six years, the Toronto & York Region Labour Council has been working as a partner to the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) to advocate for more agreements in both the public and private sector.

Fundamental to the success of CBAs is a need for vigilance and accountability to ensure agreements are met to their fullest, especially in a time when a culture of community benefits is still in development here in Toronto. We are proud of our work with the TCBN in partnering with unions to build deeper commitments to community benefits. Equally, we commend the TCBN for their work in ensuring there is accountability to the CBAs by developers and other stakeholders.

The Community Benefits Framework is an important step in developing a culture in Toronto, as it ensures City infrastructure projects will include requirements set forth in the framework. However, as we further our work in this field, based on past experience from different jurisdictions, we believe we will need to strengthen our mechanisms to ensure there is full accountability in implementation, and clear targets that start to set industry standards.

Community Benefits Agreements have the potential to transform communities, by giving tools to individuals to create stable meaningful careers and be the bedrock of families upon whom economic stability and upliftment can be built up. The Toronto & York Region Labour Council commits to ensuring the labour movement, through our affiliates, remains in motivated support of creating bigger and better community benefits agreements. We look forward to continuing our work with the Toronto Community Benefits Agreement and the City of Toronto on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Mohammed Hashim
Senior Organizer,
Toronto and York Region Labour Council
mhashim@labourcouncil.ca 416-543-0885