



## Toronto Community Benefits Network

October 20, 2015

To: City of Toronto Executive Committee

From: The Toronto Community Benefits Network

Re: Item 9.5 TO Prosperity - The Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of the Executive Committee,

The Toronto Community Benefits Network is a city-wide alliance of community and labour organizations with strong support from workforce development institution and foundation sectors. The Community Benefits model is an approach to breaking through barriers to opportunity, barriers that keep people in poverty which have built up through business-as-usual approach of the development industry in relation to large scale public and private projects. The approach has worked elsewhere – across the US, in the UK, in the Vancouver Olympics and in First Nations Impact Agreements.

We support establishing a Poverty Reduction Strategy for the City of Toronto, and particularly endorse the actions to create systemic change by including a Community Benefits framework with City capital investment and purchasing. The TCBN is looking forward to the City commitment to ensuring departments and agencies are able to leverage public and private opportunities to implement Community Benefit Agreements, and how these opportunities can be properly resourced to carry out planning and implementation of community benefits in their delivery of capital investments and procurement.

As we work towards implementing this important strategy, we hope that you will pay particular attention to its stakeholder engagement and ultimately, its action.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The Accountability Table as outlined includes a “Private Sector” Roundtable for providing management with strategic advice and identifying opportunities to meet economic and employment goals (TO Prosperity page 44; Staff report page 10). In addition to Business leaders, its representation includes United Way and the Board of Trade. We respectfully suggest that this be renamed the “Economic Partnership” Roundtable and that it also include the labour to complete a holistic perspective of the issues and solutions required to acquire success.

### Action

The 2015-2018 Term Action Plan Recommendation 13.4 “Develop models to enhance economic development in low income areas” (TO Prosperity page 58). We strongly suggest that a Community Benefits model be included, and that attention be given by the City to how the Eglinton Crosstown and Finch West LRT Maintenance and Storage Facility developments can become catalysts for economic

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development in the Mount Dennis-Weston-Keele and Jane-Finch communities, as well as a model for future Community Benefit Agreements in the city's numerous infrastructure models.

We urge the City to strengthen the Poverty Reduction Strategy on these matters as outlined and to find as many opportunities to begin implementation and resourcing as soon as possible in order to support our city's transition out of poverty.

Thank you for this opportunity to give our input on behalf of the Toronto Community Benefits Network.

Effie Vlachoyannacos  
Co-Chair,  
Toronto Community Benefits Network

Tam Goossen  
Co-Chair  
Good Jobs For All Coalition  
and TCBN Board member