

January 26, 2021

Re: EX20.7 Advancing the Community Benefits Framework

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Executive Committee,

Nearly 6 years ago, in April 2015, the Executive Committee directed staff to create a Community Benefits Agreements protocol to achieve social, economic and environmental benefits for local communities who will be impacted by proposed development and major infrastructure projects. In 2019, TEA showed our support at the Economic Development and Culture Committee when the Community Benefits Framework was finally introduced. The day it was passed by City Council was a moment of long-last celebration. We are disappointed that the recommendations in front of you today do not reflect the level of leadership and action we need in Toronto right now.

The framework is intended to align the City's poverty reduction and economic development efforts with the organizing that's been taking place in Toronto's neighbourhoods for over a decade. Many of Toronto's residents have been economically, politically and socially marginalized. This inequity and injustice persists today and has been further exacerbated by the greatest environmental and health emergencies of our time: the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City of Toronto has committed to an equitable and swift transition to a low-carbon economy and to "build back better" from this pandemic. The City cannot take on these challenges alone, but you must use the power and influence you do have. It is critical that you leverage *our* public resources (investments, land, tax incentives) to ensure economic opportunities are equitable and sustainable.

As an active member of the Toronto Community Benefits Network, the Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA) is calling on you to adopt and implement the following recommendations:

- Require signed Community Benefits Agreements for all large scale capital projects and ensure equitable community engagement processes for each.
- Set a 10% minimum hard target for equity hiring on all large scale capital projects.
- Collect, track and report disaggregated data (gender, race, age and geography) of all employees on projects that apply under the Community Benefits Framework.
- Designate TCBN as a strategic City partner to support the negotiations, implementation, monitoring and evaluation functions of the City's Community Benefits Framework.

It's time to start building a local regenerative economy that puts the health and wellbeing of people and planet before short-term - and short-sighted - financial gains.

Sincerely,
Heather Marshall
Campaigns Director