

## City Council

### Notice of Motion

MM42.18	ACTION			Ward: All
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### **Achieving Community Benefit Agreements on Major Transit Projects - by Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão**

*\* Notice of this Motion has been given.*

*\* This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

#### **Recommendations**

Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailao, recommends that:

1. City Council reconfirm its ongoing commitment for Community Benefit Agreements for the construction of major infrastructure.
2. City Council recognize the importance of the initial ground-breaking Community Benefit Agreement for the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit and the further opportunities to advance Community Benefit Agreement's on current major transit projects.
3. City Council request Metrolinx to continue the ground-breaking Community Benefit Agreement work on all future Metrolinx projects including the Scarborough Subway Extension, the Eglinton West Extension, the Ontario Line, and the Yonge-North extension, and City Council request that the following elements be included;
  - a. each project have the requirement for 10 percent of all trade or craft working hours to be performed by apprentices or journey persons who identify as women, Black, Indigenous and/or people of colour;
  - b. establish a project level Community Benefits Working Group that includes the project contractor, Metrolinx, Infrastructure Ontario, Provincial ministries, labour and community representatives including Toronto Community Benefits Network to monitor and oversee the implementation and reporting of outcomes;
  - c. creation of an implementation and tracking plan for each project; and
  - d. requirements for contractors to develop and implement an anti-racism strategy that includes training for all workers.
4. City Council request the City Manager to formally advise Metrolinx, the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada of City Council's commitment to and request for formal construction Community Benefits Agreement's on all major Transit projects and to report on this matter to the Executive Committee meeting of July 12, 2022.

## Summary

Achieving formal Community Benefits Agreements as part of upcoming transit infrastructure projects is critical in creating a more inclusive, prosperous and just Toronto for local residents and equity deserving groups.

Community Benefits Agreements are increasingly being supported by governments across North America to maximize the social and economic impacts when they buy, build, or provide financial incentives for construction or remediation. In Ontario, the community benefits movement is built on the premise of community and labour working together to ensure the people building public infrastructure projects represent the demographics of the local communities. Community Benefits Agreements as part of new large-scale infrastructure projects are critical for an equitable and inclusive recovery to support good jobs and opportunities for underrepresented groups including Indigenous, Black, people of colour, youth, women and newcomers.

The Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit was the first large scale infrastructure project to include a Community Benefits Program. In 2014, Metrolinx signed a Community Benefits Framework with the Toronto Community Benefits Network, the first of its kind in Ontario.

This remains a ground breaking agreement which put equity hiring into practice and created a pathway for equity hiring to be replicated on all new transit projects.

Metrolinx, with funding assistance from the Federal Government and the City of Toronto, is set to embark on the construction and delivery of major new transit projects across the City of Toronto including the Scarborough Subway Extension, the Eglinton West Extension Light Rail Transit, the Ontario Line and the Yonge-North Extension.

Many of these new projects will have a direct impact on the City of Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement Areas such as Scarborough, Thorncliffe Park, York South Weston, Mount Dennis and Etobicoke.

The Federal Government and the City of Toronto, both funders of the current major transit initiatives by Metrolinx, have clear language about equity targets for construction.

Accompanying the 2021 announcement of the historic \$10.4 Billion contribution to the 4 priority transit projects was a commitment that the projects were to include:

“Measures to maximize high quality jobs and benefits for communities including through mechanisms such as Community Benefit Agreements with hiring targets of at least 10 percent for historically disadvantaged communities, equity-seeking groups, Black, Indigenous and people of colour, with possible higher targets based on an assessment of local representation.”

In 2019 the City of Toronto adopted its Community Benefits Framework which focused on ways to maximize the use of City of Toronto levers (such as procurement, real estate transactions, or financial incentives for specific sectors and uses) to create inclusive and equitable economic opportunities through community benefits initiatives and in 2021 Toronto City Council committed the City to striving to achieve a 10 percent equity target in construction projects over \$50 million.

In 2015, the Province of Ontario's Bill 6, Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act was introduced by the Provincial Government to ensure infrastructure planning and investment include community benefits. This Bill was a direct result of the first successful Community

## Benefits Agreement for the Eglinton East Light Rail Transit between Metrolinx and Toronto Community Benefits Network.

Through its work, the Toronto Community Benefits Network has grown to a 121 member coalition of community organizations, grassroots groups and social enterprises, unions, construction trades training centres and workforce development agencies is currently implementing Community Benefits Agreements on five major infrastructure projects. They include Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit, Finch West Light Rail Transit, West Park Healthcare Centre and substantial involvement in the Casino Woodbine Expansion project. Toronto Community Benefits Network continues to advocate for an equitable and inclusive recovery by ensuring Community Benefits Agreements are part of new large-scale infrastructure projects. It is imperative that these agreements be embedded in projects funded by the City of Toronto.

### **Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM42.18