



Toronto Community  
Benefits Network



## TCBN Submission on EC12.2 - Downsview Community Development Plan

Members of the Economic and Development Committee and City Council  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen St W  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee and Toronto City Council,

The Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) is submitting this letter today in **full support of the Downsview Community Development Plan and eight priority areas.**

The TCBN, a 120-member city wide community-labour coalition situated within the Downsview surrounding area in North York has led an extensive engagement process through consultations with over 1,500 local community members, stakeholders and member organizations over the past two years. Engagement activities included community outreach, petitions, participating and hosting events in the community and a neighbourhood tour in collaboration with Northcrest Development.

We would like to recognize the ongoing support and active leadership from local Councillor James Pasternak who has attended numerous TCBN events and community engagement activities expressing strong support for our **vision in Downsview as a thriving, inclusive, diverse, affordable and environmentally sustainable neighbourhood for decades to come.**

As a Black-led local organization, we would also like to recognize the deep community engagement with local residents and stakeholders, Indigenous and Black communities led by the intervisional City of Toronto staff teams from Community Development, Social Development, Finance and



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Administration, Economic Development and City Planning during the Secondary Plan process and by Canada Lands Company and Northcrest through the Id8 Downsview engagement process.

Specifically, we would like to highlight the commitment and leadership by Northcrest Developments to be the **first private sector developer to participate in the City of Toronto's voluntary approach to establishing Community Benefits Plans under the Community Benefits Framework**, a commitment which was announced by Northcrest Development at the GTHA Summit on October 28th, 2023. The summit was an event hosted by the Toronto CBN, Peel CBN and Hamilton CBN that brought together over 200 residents, community and labour members, organizations, government and political representatives and employers from across the GTHA at Toronto City Hall.

TCBN has long advocated for equitable approaches and planning tools to support inclusive economies and sustainable development as part of large infrastructure and land use developments in communities across Toronto and proudly supported the motion to start this work in 2022. ([MM47.1](#) by City Councillor Joe Mihevc)

**As a Black-led organization and local community stakeholder, we look forward to the continued engagement, participation and collaboration in the next phase of the Community Development Plan specifically as it relates to implementation of the action plan priorities, governance and establishing baseline targets and measures for monitoring, tracking and reporting of outcomes.**

In closing, the TCBN is in **full support of the proposed Community Development Plan and eight action areas**. We would like to recognize the support from local Councillor James Pasternak, the Chair of the Economic and Community Development Committee Alejandra Bravo and City staff in helping to develop this innovative and interdivisional approach to equitable city building. We hope such an **approach sets the standard for future Secondary Plans, Official Plans and economic development plans for Toronto**.

Sincerely,

Rosemarie Powell  
Executive Director  
Toronto Community Benefits Network



### Community Priorities for Inclusive Economies and Community Benefits at Downsview

Through our [CBAforDownsview](#) campaign, steered by the Downsview Community Benefits Committee which included local residents and member organizations from community and labour, the TCBN has identified a number of key themes and priorities for inclusive local economies, equitable and sustainable development actions that are reflected in each phase of the land use planning process and as part of formalized agreements to deliver on community benefits targets:

Priority Areas	Targets and Expectations
<b>Good jobs and inclusive economies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet the TCBN minimum standard of 10% apprenticeships trades and/or craft working hours on a trade-by-trade basis to be performed by apprentices from equity deserving groups with a focus on Black and Indigenous communities</li><li>• Ensure minimum 50% target for equity hiring and minimum 25% for local hiring in new professional, administrative, technical, operations and maintenance roles</li><li>• Ensure employment opportunities that pay a living wage across all phases of construction and development</li></ul>
<b>Social procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum 20% social procurement target through purchasing goods and/or services from local businesses, social enterprises and businesses that are owned by persons who identify as Indigenous, Black or Persons of Colour.</li></ul>
<b>Neighbourhood Improvements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum 30% affordable housing on public land and 20% affordable housing on private land including affordable ownership in each phase of with 50% being deeply affordable or Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) for a minimum of 99 years</li><li>• A plan for affordable below market rate commercial and micro retail space opportunities are available to nonprofits, social enterprises, Black-led and Indigenous-led businesses</li></ul>
<b>Environmental sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure equitable and sustainable development that commits to the highest level of Toronto's Green Standard, a program that supports a 'just transition' for green jobs and careers, the adoption of innovative green building design and materials, sustainable micro mobility initiatives and preservation parks and open spaces for culturally appropriate community-led initiatives</li></ul>
<b>Accountability and Transparency through community oversight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A public commitment by each landowner through a Community Benefits Framework that leads to an agreement for community benefits for each phase of development at Downsview. Such agreements would include measurable targets in development contracts and a commitment to ongoing community oversight, monitoring, tracking, public reporting in each phase of development. Community oversight</li></ul>



	should also include representation from Indigenous-led and Black-led organizations and residents
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**About the Toronto Community Benefits Network**

Since 2014, TCBNs advocacy and engagement in local communities across Toronto has led to formalized frameworks and agreements to ensure responsible development with commitments to community benefits, social procurement, neighbourhood improvements and targets for inclusive local economic pathways for Black, Indigenous and equity deserving groups into good jobs and opportunities including apprenticeships, professional, administrative and technical and long-term stable careers.

TCBNs programs with member organizations from community and labour, working with employers and contractors to facilitate pathways into construction, for Indigenous, Black and equity deserving groups especially amongst Black youth, women, newcomers and contractors who historically have been underrepresented and have faced significant barriers to opportunities in the sector. Our work has also focused on hosting events like the Green Build Career Fair, working with employers, unions and contractors to promote green careers, skills development and training opportunities in neighbourhoods across Toronto.

The TCBN also hosts the [Canadian Building Diversity Awards](#), the premier event celebrating diversity, equity, and inclusion across Canada. The upcoming 4th annual celebration, on June 14th, 2024 "Building A Sustainable Future" will honor the visionaries and trailblazers fostering a more inclusive future in the construction industry.