



Ensuring the EDGE Program Continues to Create Economic and Social Value in Toronto

A Letter to the City of Toronto's Planning and Housing Committee

Dear Planning and Housing Committee,

Buy Social Canada is writing in support of the proposed new city-wide Community Improvement Plan to enable the Economic Development and Growth in Employment (EDGE) Program that will replace the Imagination, Manufacturing, Innovation, Technology (IMIT) Program and strongly encourage the City to continue to prioritize the use of the alternative non-hiring activities, including social procurement.

As a part of the EDGE Program, the new Community Workforce Development Requirement and alternative non-hiring activities will help to create social and equitable impact in Toronto and align with other City-wide initiatives like the Community Benefit and Social Procurement programs.

Buy Social Canada strongly encourages the City to continue to prioritize the use of the alternative non-hiring activities, like social procurement, to drive additional social and equitable impact in addition to the hiring requirements.

Under the proposed Enhanced Grant stream there is an opportunity to require recipients that opt-in for Community Benefits Hiring during the construction period to also have to commit to purchasing from Indigenous businesses, diverse businesses and social enterprises. This requirement aligns with the [City's Social Procurement program](#) and leverages existing spending to create additional positive impacts in addition to the hiring requirement.

Requiring recipients to purchase from social enterprises directly supports the Community Workforce Development Requirement goal of creating employment opportunities for Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving groups. Many social enterprises provide employment, and necessary wraparound support to individuals who face barriers to entering the workforce. Adding this

requirement will amplify the positive social and equitable impacts of the program.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Chick-Blount', with a stylized, cursive script.

Elizabeth Chick-Blount
Chief Executive Officer, Buy Social Canada

About Buy Social Canada

www.buysocialcanada.com

Buy Social Canada's (BSC) social enterprise purpose is to educate, advocate and engage social suppliers and purchasers from across governments, institutions, and corporations, to advance social procurement and community benefit agreement policies and practices, to help build healthy communities.

Buy Social Canada's team has been actively engaged in and focused on social purchasing and Community Benefit Agreements (CBA) research, policy development, implementation, and measurement for over 15 years. BSC has been collecting, analyzing, and applying best practices in multiple jurisdictions, various socio-economic environments, and rural and urban market municipalities.

We support purchasers and suppliers across Canada to Buy and Sell with Impact. We work with public and private sector purchasers across Canada to develop and implement social procurement and CBA policies and offer a [national certification for social enterprises](#). We bring together purchasers and suppliers through social procurement roundtables, trade shows and 1:1 introductions, and provide capacity building support to social enterprises across the country.