

## Community Benefits Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Virtual Meeting, Held on Microsoft Teams

Item	Discussion/ Comments / Actions
<b>Welcome, Land &amp; African Ancestral Acknowledgement</b>	Land Acknowledgment delivered by Reinaldo James African Ancestral Acknowledgement delivered by Naama Ofrath
<b>Advisory Group Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction of new CBAG chair Akwatu Khenti</li><li>• Introductions completed with attendees, including name(s) and organization(s).</li></ul>
<b>Chair Updates</b>	<b>Updates on Community Benefits Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The new CBAG Chair, and Executive Director of Social Policy and Research section in SDF&amp;A, Akwatu Khenti had some opening remarks about the importance of collaboratively problem-solving issues related to the Community Benefits Framework, especially given the rising construction costs and the need for social and economic inclusion.</li></ul>
<b>City of Toronto Community Benefits Unit Updates</b>	<b>Reminder of Community Benefits Advisory Group Terms of Reference</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purpose: To bring together knowledge and experiences of strategic partners to collaboratively problem solve key issues and challenges related of City's Community Benefits Framework.</li><li>• Guiding Principles:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Social and economic inclusion</li><li>○ Engagement with strategic partners is vital</li><li>○ Systems approach to collaboration and joint problem solving</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Terms of Reference available on City of Toronto Community Benefits Framework <a href="#">web page</a></b></li></ul> <b>Rexdale CBA 2024 Progress Update Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2024, One Toronto Gaming was recognized at the Building Diversity Awards as the recipient of the Community Benefits Project Award (Rexdale CBA).</li></ul>

- The Community Access to Space Policy & Procedures now includes four new spaces for community use at reduced or no cost.
- A location was selected for the Childcare Centre.
- Toronto Public Health, and Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation developed a workplan with four workstreams that will guide Responsible Gambling work from 2025 to 2029. For the CBA Five-Year Review (2018-2023), as of December 31st, 2024, 11 (out of 16) recommendations and 65 (out of 80) action items were completed.
- The Rexdale CBA 2024 Progress Update Report will be submitted to City Council on March 19th.

Rosemarie Powell inquired about collaboration with local organizations and stakeholders to address employment outcomes in operational and construction jobs.

- Reinaldo James commented on the oversight committees built into the Rexdale CBA (Employment and Labour Market Advisory Group (ELMA), Community Steering Committee, and Responsible Gambling Committee). Strategies related to employment will be discussed at the ELMA Committee and Employment Labour Market Partners Working Group.

#### **FIFA World Cup 2026 Community Benefits Plan**

- The FIFA World Cup 2026 Community Benefits Plan includes procurement opportunities for diverse suppliers and workforce development programs for youth from equity-deserving communities.
- A key component of the FWC26 Community Benefits Plan is the Community Workforce Development Program which focuses on connecting Indigenous, Black and Equity-Deserving youth to employment and training opportunities in the lead up to, during and after FWC26 concludes.
- An update report on the FWC26 Community Benefits Plan was brought forth to the FIFA Subcommittee on March 18<sup>th</sup> and at Executive Committee on March 19<sup>th</sup>. The report will be considered at Council on March 26, 27 and 28, 2025.

	<p><i>Discussion:</i></p> <p>Isaac Fonseca emphasized the need for more detailed job creation data, including job types, community employment numbers, and information for employment service providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April Lim discussed key hiring outcomes from the Rexdale CBA, including employee numbers, local hires, and the delayed 2024 report on the city's webpage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Benefits Framework Webpage Refresh</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Community Benefits Framework web page is being refreshed, including updating content and making it more useful and engaging for users.</li> <li>• CBU shared that 1529 people accessed the webpage in 2024</li> <li>• The following data was captured during a poll taken at the meeting about how CBAG members use the CBF webpage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 69% of respondents have accessed the webpage.</li> <li>○ 81% of respondents view the webpage for CBF updates and information.</li> <li>○ 46% of respondents share the webpage with partners in the community benefits space.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Key Discussion Items</b></p>	<p><b>Community Benefits Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2024, Taylor Newberry Consultants consulted 48 individuals from the community benefits ecosystem and led 7 focus groups and 13 interviews with community benefits key informants who participated.</li> <li>• The 2025 Community Benefits Report will clarify and explain the community benefits delivered through the City of Toronto's Community Benefits Framework, how partners work together to achieve Community Benefits, progressing towards goals, what success is, and why it matters.</li> </ul> <p><i>Discussion:</i></p> <p>Isaac Fonseca asked if this report is strictly for the city, or will it be going to the community as well.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naama Ofrath commented that the report would be written by City partners and will be made accessible to the public on the Community Benefits Framework webpage. The report will provide a clear understanding of the framework components and the roles of various stakeholders implementing community benefits. Timeline for publication is Q2-Q3.</li> </ul>
<b>CBAG Members Updates</b>	<p><b>TCBN Updates</b> (Rosemarie Powell)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 major upcoming events: Build Green Career Fair (February 26), the Building Diversity Awards (May 2025), and the Next Gen Builders Annual Retreat.</li> <li>These are tough economic times, and the construction industry is visibly slowing down – people seeking employment and those working are having a hard time (even ones in unions).</li> <li>Rosemarie emphasized the importance of these events for supporting and partnering with local and diverse communities in the construction industry. What can we do to double down and work with those that care to hire people from diverse communities.</li> <li>Congratulated the City of Toronto's Community Benefits Unit for its leadership on community benefits and for influencing the City of Brampton's new Community Benefits Policy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic Development and Culture Division – EDGE Program</b> (Candice Valente)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Economic Development and Growth Employment (EDGE) Program is the successor program (formerly IMIT Program), passed by Council in December 2024 and currently accepting applications.</li> <li>The program is on the website developed with partners from this table.</li> <li>Information on the EDGE Program can be found on the <a href="#">EDGE Program's</a> website.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Up</b> (Marc Soberano)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building Up is a trades training program that's been operating for 10 years. Marc shared that it's felt like the trades needed people at a rate greater than we could train but in the last 6-7 months we have felt the same shift that Rosemary is mentioning of less work, unions are bringing in less apprentices, and people are out of work for longer.</li> <li>Building Up also runs a social enterprise where graduates who are apprentices out of work can return to work on our sites. Usually, it is 3-4 people but right now it is 40-50 people.</li> <li>Building Up is also running the usual cohorts, there are 16 spots in the cohort and 940 people have applied.</li> <li>Marc emphasized that this may feel like a temporary blip but it is intense. He feels it's important for our group to be grounded in what's happening right now as we are trying to create opportunities – a lot of people are trying to get into the trades, and there's great programs that can support these people and</li> </ul>

community benefits. More than ever, we need community benefits to give us a head start in these challenging times.

**Metrolinx (Judy Brooks)**

- Metrolinx is an agency of the Ministry of Transportation, as the election is underway this is a writ period for the agency. All communications community engagement, Metrolinx staff, Province staff are not able to participate in outside activities.
- [2024 Annual Report](#) is posted on the website, includes information on the Metrolinx community benefits.

**United Way Greater Toronto (Paul Chamberlain)**

- United Way is currently working with Peel Community Benefits Network, preparing to begin mapping supply and demand assets and opportunities.
- United Way is working with the recently formed Social Procurement Stakeholders Group for York Region, building knowledge around social procurement, and identifying opportunities in the region.

**Social Procurement Program, Purchasing and Materials Management Division (Diana Levy)**

- In December 2024, an updated report (Social Procurement Program review) with the five-year review and recommendations was posted.
  - Social Enterprises are now officially recognized in the Social Procurement Program as of January 1st, 2025.
- The internal processes policy was updated to include one Indigenous, one Black, and one Diverse Social Enterprise supplier.
- Efforts are ongoing in Social Procurement, focusing on supplier diversity and external engagements with suppliers.

**Questions**

- Jessica Sherk asked if there have been engagements with Indigenous communities specifically to assess what their needs are, and what programs already exist regarding trades and potential ways to collaborate or work closer together.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Courtney Ayukawa commented on connections made with a couple of Indigenous leads and focused employment service providers building a relationship, learning about their programs, and adding them to our database.</li> </ul>
<b>Adjourn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next Community Benefits Advisory Group Meeting: <b>June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025</b></li> </ul>

## Attendees

<b>Name</b>	<b>City of Toronto</b>
Akwatu Khenti	Social Policy, Analysis & Research
April Lim	Community Benefits Unit (CBU)
Courtney Ayukawa	Community Benefits Unit (CBU)
Lina Pulido	Community Benefits Unit (CBU)
Naama Ofrath	Community Benefits Unit (CBU)
Reinaldo James	Community Benefits Unit (CBU)
Souleik Kheyre	Community Benefits Unit (CBU)
Candice Valente	Economic Development and Culture Division
Diana Levy	Purchasing Materials and Management Division
Jessica Sherk	Indigenous Affairs Office
Selina Young	Indigenous Affairs Office
Michael Brewer	FIFA Secretariat
<b>Name</b>	<b>Strategic Partner</b>
Stephen Callender	Afro Canadian Contractors Association
Marc Soberano	Building Up
Kemet Bahlibi	Context Development
Isaac Fonseca	COSTI
Nima Kia	CreateTO
Fatima Saya	Daniels Corporation

Genevieve D'Souza	Insulators 95
Cara Wallace	Humber College
Judy Brooks	Metrolinx
Robyn Gravelle	Metrolinx
Mike Mattos	Mount Dennis Community Association
Aytakin Mohammadi	Northcrest Developments
Rosemarie Powell	Toronto Community Benefits Network
Anshika Kushwaha	Toronto Workforce Funders Collaborative
Monica Zheng	TTC
Paul Chamberlain	United Way Greater Toronto