

Community Priorities Report Regent Park Community Benefits Coalition

October 15, 2019



Introduction

Community Benefits Coalition

The Regent Park Community Benefits Coalition was formed by the Regent Park Neighborhood Association in partnership with TCHC and Condo residents, with support from community organizations and the Toronto Community Benefits Network. The coalition's purpose is to improve the RFP process for better community benefits for phase 4 & 5. The Coalition has developed a list of community priorities in the context of community benefits that follow best practices and city policies such as the Community Benefits Framework¹ (June 11, 2019).

The Coalition is working with stakeholders to create long-term opportunities for residents to generate both social and financial wealth in Regent Park. **We want developers to set up key infrastructure that will continue to support the community for years to come and the means to hold them accountable through a community benefits agreement.**

The community benefits movement aims to ensure that the main purpose of economic development is to bring measurable, permanent improvements to the lives of affected residents, particularly those in low-income neighborhoods and communities of colour. We encourage all stakeholders in the public sector to play a more strategic role in land use planning and urban development, and to leverage economic development subsidies toward the creation of good jobs, affordable housing, and neighborhood services that improve the quality of life for all residents.

The Creation of this Community Priorities Report

The Revitalization Committee and the Community Benefits Coalition were concerned about lack of community influence over the contract negotiation process and asked TCHC for a greater role in the process of negotiating with the developer candidates. As a result, TCHC allowed the Community Benefits Coalition to develop the report and held a community meeting on Oct 10, 2019 for a review of the community's priorities.

The report is the result of filtering through many community consultations, SDP working groups actions and RPNA consultations, advise by subject matter experts and existing best practices. From these consultations five priorities emerged.

1. Community Space
2. Employment
3. Affordable Homeownership/rent
4. Sustainable Funding for Social Development
5. Programs

¹ <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/ec/bgrd/backgroundfile-134595.pdf>

Community Priorities

The following priorities are being presented to TCHC to negotiate with the developers during the contract negotiation phase.

1. Community Space

Community space is essential, and since much of the space from phases 1-3 is already allocated and controlled by specific service providers and the city, there is a need for community-controlled spaces in phases 4 and 5. **All spaces funded by CED money must be community controlled.**

Space for General Community Use with Community Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local Community Board with majority residents controls the use of space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The governance model for this space will need to be decided by the community ○ Could use Board of Management model as used for other centres in the Association of Community Centres • City, TCHC or developer pays building operating, maintenance and repair costs • Community Board sources funds for activities and programs • The governance model for this space will need to be decided by the community • The 10,000 sq. ft. ground floor mentioned in the RFP should likewise be community directed space
SDP Stakeholders Table and 4 Working Groups Space Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 sq. ft. - Business Hub space is required to support social enterprises identified by the SDP 4 Working Groups • A center for social development is needed to support the SDP Stakeholders Table and the 4 working groups

2. Employment

The RFP states that that the successful proponent is expected to leverage its relationship within its group of companies, consultants, trades, and others to access available jobs in a range of fields including but not limited to construction, administration, professional and creative positions. **The expectation in the community is that opportunities for employment will extend after construction.**

Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to a minimum of 25% entry-level apprenticeship positions for construction, renovation
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	<p>and retrofit jobs to be allocated to local residents from equity-seeking groups and with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partner with workforce development intermediaries and community organizations that can help ensure the success of the local and equitable hiring program • Work with the community to develop partnerships with and invest in high quality pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.
Local Equitable Hiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to 25% local and equitable hiring including youth, people with disabilities and people age 50+, at a living wage, for generalized workforce needs. These include but are not limited to the professional, administration and technical positions related to the construction of the project and post-construction operations. • Work in partnership with the community, local employment service agencies, labour organizations, and educational institutions to create and implement a comprehensive workforce development plan • Commercial space lease contracts to require businesses to hold regular job fairs, have a living wage level and equitable health benefits
Full Time Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to 50% full time positions for all workforce needs and include this requirement in commercial lease contracts
Social Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to 25% social procurement of goods and services from local and diverse suppliers, local social enterprises and worker cooperatives that employ equity-seeking community members • Support financially and through in-kind mentorship and administration, the development of resident led social enterprises and cooperative models
Low Rent Commercial Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% of commercial spaces at low rent to Regent Park residents for social enterprises
Commercial Spaces for Sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of commercial spaces to be available for sale

3. A) Affordable Home Ownership

Movement of people between social housing and private market adds to social cohesion and better understanding in a mixed income community.

Down Payment Assistant Program (like the foundation program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35% down payment provided by developer as second mortgage • Available to low to moderate income residents • 25 Units with down payment from developer and 25 Units with down payment from Federal/ Provincial/ City funding – these units are to be for TCHC residents living in Regent Park or who were relocated from Regent Park • In addition, City is to continue Foundation program as part of HousingTO
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3. B) Affordable Rental Housing

Affordable rentals in private market buildings is part of a mixed community and increases social cohesion.

Affordable rental units in private market properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to TCHC units • Mix of deep subsidies and 60-80% of average market rent, for 99 years or in perpetuity • Ownership and rental model to be negotiated with the community
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4. Sustainable Financial Infrastructure for Social Development

Revitalization equals physical development and social development. Social development should have sustainable resourcing after the construction phase of the physical development. Existing funds for social development will be used within a few years; therefore, an **ongoing funding infrastructure** is necessary. Physical development must support Social Development if revitalization should succeed.

Community Owned and Controlled Endowment Fund	\$5000 per residential unit (TCHC and Developer) be put in an endowment fund for social development (one-time)
Sustained Income for social development	2% of rent from commercial rental units (ongoing, in perpetuity) should go towards the endowment fund as well

5. Programs

Youth, seniors, and people with disabilities are under resourced and supports are not coordinated. The expectation for phases 4 and 5 is that programs will be holistic, comprehensive, effective and sustainable, and work with both existing programs. **The SDP**

stakeholders table in consultation with the affected demographic groups should decide on how CED money is spent on programs to achieve these goals.

Youth	Holistic youth supports – mentorship, middle school, high school, post secondary, pre-employment, employment
Seniors	Seniors programming will provide inclusion, a sense of involvement in the community and a sense of overall wellness.
Disability	All programming should be accessible.

6. Resident Engagement

Resident engagement is an ongoing process that leads to better implementation of all aspects of large, important projects such as the Regent Park revitalization. The community should not only be consulted but should be listened to.

Community Benefits Agreement Oversight Committee	Developer, TCHC, Community Benefits Coalition, RPNA, Tenants Council and Community Organizations, to ensure smooth implementation and coordination of the activities identified as part of the community benefits program.
Building Design and Site Plan	Community Working Group
Retail Uses	Stakeholders table employment working group
Support of SDP	Stakeholders table
Employment Plan	Stakeholders table employment working group
Supports needed for community engagement	Interpretation, childcare, honoraria, communication in advance of and after consultations.

Conclusion

These priorities have been formed through community consultations, subject matter experts and existing best practices. It is expected that TCH and the potential developer meet these community needs as they negotiate for an arrangement that makes sense for all the parties involved – the Regent Park community, TCH, the city and the potential developer.

