

# COMMUNITY BENEFITS

QUARTERLY REPORT  
FALL 2023



The Community Benefits Plan is a key component of the Gordie Howe International Bridge project. With a commitment to transparent and accountable implementation, the project team is proud to report on Community Benefit Plan activities and accomplishments each quarter. For more information on Community Benefits Plan initiatives visit [GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com](https://www.gordiehoweinternationalbridge.com).

## NEIGHBOURHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2023 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION INVESTMENT UPDATES

Our delivery partners continued to serve residents in a variety of ways.

Between July-October 2023, more than 150 Southwest Detroit residents received produce vouchers and 100 youth took part in education cooking classes offered by Community Health and Social Services (CHASS).

Over 90 cats in Sandwich were spayed or neutered, vaccinated and microchipped through funding provided to the Windsor/Essex County Humane Society.

Eleven individuals and four teams in Southwest Detroit received grants to support youth participation in organized sports, administered by the Hispanic Police Officers' Association of Michigan - Detroit Chapter.

Over 30 members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul's Helping Hands Friendship Centre are enjoying a quieter environment resulting from improvements to the centre's ceiling and electrical system.

Through the Saint Elizabeth Foundation/Journey Home Hospice, 192 hours of complimentary art and music therapy were provided to people experiencing homelessness and vulnerability at end-of-life.

*Right: Art created during art therapy at Journey Home Hospice in Sandwich.*



*Over 100 Southwest Detroit youth learned about nutrition and healthy eating during CHASS cooking classes.*



*A new drop-down ceiling at the Helping Hands Friendship Centre provides a comfortable space for participants.*



## COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLAN UPDATES 2024

The Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy is a **\$23 million (CDN)** direct community investment in west Windsor and Southwest Detroit. As of 2023, approximately **\$14.9 million (CDN)** was allocated to 38 projects in Windsor and Detroit. In spring 2023, the project team consulted with key stakeholders, community members and the public to understand current Community Benefits investment priorities for each neighbourhood, which were then incorporated into a Call for Proposals facilitated over summer 2023.

As a result of the Call for Proposals and additional outreach to identify programming aligned with the current priorities, 13 new investment opportunities, valued at **\$2.6 million (CDN)**, have been identified to bring further benefits to the local communities, including six initiatives in Canada and seven initiatives in the US. Remaining Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy funds will be allocated in 2024 and 2025. See page 2 for more details on the selected projects.

We acknowledge that the land in Canada where the Gordie Howe International Bridge project is being constructed sits on Anishinaabe Territory. The Anishinaabeg in the Windsor area are known as the Three Fires Confederacy which consists of the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations. This land has also served as a place of refuge for the Huron/Wendat people.

## NEW INITIATIVES

### **Community Outreach Programming** **Partner: Assumption Cares**

Free services will be offered to Sandwich and west Windsor residents from an enhanced community hub, including community meals, fitness classes, food box distribution, open mic nights, events, workshops and training.

### **Historical Interpretation Enhancements at the Duff-Bâby Mansion**

#### **Partner: Les Amis Duff-Bâby**

The first floor of the Duff-Bâby Mansion will be transformed into a house museum reflecting more than 200 years of history. A new website and mobile app will support the transformation to stimulate interest and allow self-directed tours of the historically significant space.

### **Green Space Development at Maryvale**

#### **Partner: The Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism**

Green spaces on Maryvale's campus will be enhanced to include a naturally designed outdoor area and playground structure. The outdoor enhancements will provide a safe, controlled outdoor space for clients of the Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism and others on Maryvale's campus to develop skills and relax in nature.

### **Arts-based Youth Programming** **Partner: Art Windsor-Essex (AWE)**

Free arts-based programming will engage school-aged children in Sandwich and west Windsor. Workshops on various topics will be delivered where youth will learn about local history and culture through creative activities led by local artists connected to the neighbourhood. Results from the workshops will be showcased in Sandwich BIA businesses and in the AWE community display space.

### **School Lunch Program**

#### **Partner: United Way/Centraide Windsor-Essex County & COOK Up**

A free school lunch program will be delivered in two Sandwich schools at least one day a week throughout the school year. COOK Up will develop a framework encouraging local businesses to supply food for the program.

## NEW INITIATIVES

### **Unity House Improvements and Programming**

#### **Partner: Graft Living Studios**

Funding will support renovations at Unity House community center in Southwest Detroit. Once renovations are complete, green programming including community gardening, education classes, workshops and events will be delivered in the space. The community center will also include a resource library with access to various rental items and an information kiosk to connect residents with broader services.

### **Environmental Stewardship Programming**

#### **Partner: The Greening of Detroit**

Southwest Detroit youth and adults will be engaged in activities designed to promote environmental awareness and increase capacity to become environmental stewards in their community. Activities include school-based programming for elementary and middle school-aged children, Green Corps summer youth employment opportunities for high school-aged youth and community programming and reforestation activities to engage local adults.

### **AmeriCorps Urban Safety Programming**

#### **Partner: Wayne State University - Center for Urban Studies**

A series of community safety programming and interventions will be delivered throughout Delray and Southwest Detroit by local youth service corps members. Community safety will be promoted through events, patrols, business-focused safety initiatives, beautification of vacant spaces and providing automobile and home safety interventions to local residents.

### **International Heritage Camp**

#### **Partner: The Detroit River Project**

Camp Freedom at Midnight is an international heritage camp that encourages young people from Detroit and Windsor to discover the history, culture and heritage of the Detroit River region. Funding will allow the year-round camp to offer an immersive educational experience with outdoor activities and other engaging programming to local youth.

### **Healthy Habits Programming** **Partner: Community Health and Social Services (CHASS) Center**

The Healthy Habits programming includes strategic components to address food security and support wellness in the community. Funding will be directed to CHASS' Mercado, providing prescriptions for fresh produce, nutrition and healthy eating programming and wellness activities for local youth and families.

### **Mobile Wi-Fi and Charging Stations**

#### **Partner: Bridging Communities, Inc. (BCI)**

Five solar-powered cell phone charging and Wi-Fi stations will be strategically installed throughout Southwest Detroit offering residents the ability to charge cell phones and access the internet 24/7. The mobile stations will be monitored by residents, block clubs and community organizations.

### **Community Capacity Building Summits - Canada and US**

One-day events will be held in Sandwich and Southwest Detroit in 2024. Local non-profit and charitable organizations can attend sessions that will enhance local knowledge of grant writing, reporting and organizational capacity building.

### **Detroit Trail Expansion Investment**

#### **Partner: City of Detroit**

In 2019, the project team announced a \$1 million (CDN) investment into the construction of cycling infrastructure in Southwest Detroit. In 2024, cycling facilities will be constructed on Clark Street from Clark Park to West Jefferson Ave. and along West Jefferson Ave. to Campbell Street.

## MALDEN PARK OBSERVATION AREA

In November 2023, construction was completed and the Malden Park Observation Area opened to the public (pictured below). This area uses an existing high elevation to provide residents, students and tourists a safe vantage point to observe the construction and operations of the Gordie Howe International Bridge.



## TRIPLE TREE IMPACT PROGRAM

Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), with the help of local volunteers, planted an additional 40 large stock native trees in College Avenue Bikeway Park in Sandwich in October 2023 (pictured below). Stay tuned for other volunteer planting opportunities in 2024.



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Between January 2021  
and September 2023, over

# \$5.4 million

(CDN) was spent on small-scale purchases under \$25,000 from local\* businesses

## CUMULATIVE TOTALS FROM SEPTEMBER 2018 TO SEPTEMBER 2023

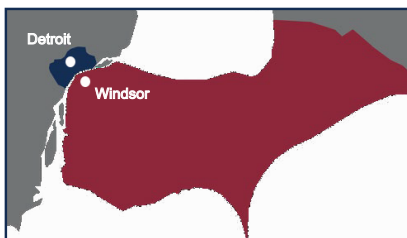
# 10,950+

individuals oriented  
to the project in  
Canada and the US



# 42%

are local\*



\*“Local” is defined as being within the City of Detroit or within 100 kilometres of the City of Windsor



# 275

local\* businesses  
engaged on the project



# 655+

pre-apprentices/apprentices  
assigned to the project



# 330+

co-operative learning  
experiences provided on  
the project

## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Between **September 2023** and **January 2024**, the project team:

- Launched the 2024 Community Organization Investment initiative and hosted three information sessions
- Participated in the University of Detroit Mercy hard hat ceremony
- Presented to the St. Clair College Construction Management class
- Hosted a booth at Build a Dream Expo informing students about careers in the construction industry
- Presented to University Prep Academy about the project and careers in the skilled trades
- Participated in a meeting of Wayne State University Chapter of American Society of Civil Engineers
- Participated in mock interviews at Randolph Career and Technical Center
- Hosted the Sandwich Business Development Information Session in partnership with the Small Business Entrepreneurship Centre – a Division of Invest WindsorEssex and the Downtown Windsor Business Accelerator

## UPCOMING

## INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES

- Selection of the 2024 Community Organization Investment initiatives
- Engagement and content development for the Windsor-Detroit Cross River Tour
- Continued work on Sandwich Street Enhancements and the trail expansion initiatives in Windsor
- Construction on remaining homes receiving improvements through the Delray Home Improvement Program
- Community tree giveaways and plantings in Sandwich and Southwest Detroit
- Planning and delivery of the Bike Rack Design initiatives
- Community Capacity Building Summits in Windsor and Detroit



University of Detroit Mercy hard hat ceremony in September 2023.

## ABOUT COMMUNITY BENEFITS

On the Gordie Howe International Bridge project, **community benefits are identified opportunities that can advance economic, social or environmental conditions for local communities.** In developing the Community Benefits Plan, it was key that the initiatives selected for implementation would provide positive outcomes for the Windsor-Detroit region and specifically focus on enhancing the Sandwich and Delray communities, the neighbourhoods closest to the project area.

Community benefits initiatives are delivered by the project team, a collaboration between Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, Bridging North America and the State of Michigan.

The Community Benefits Plan is comprised of two components:



### THE NEIGHBOURHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

focuses on collaborating with stakeholders and community members through consultation to develop a community betterments strategy based on priorities identified through public consultation, including: community partnerships, community safety and connections, economic benefits, and/or aesthetics and landscaping.



### THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

is geared toward engaging businesses and individuals and focuses on supporting workforce, training and pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship opportunities.

**THE GORDIE HOWE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PROJECT** is a once-in-a-generation undertaking. Not only will the project deliver much-needed transportation improvements for international travellers, it also provides jobs and opportunities for growth to the Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan region and includes features that make this project truly distinctive. A key project element is the inclusion of a Community Benefits Plan.

### The project consists of four components:



**THE BRIDGE**



**CANADIAN PORT OF ENTRY**



**US PORT OF ENTRY**



**MICHIGAN INTERCHANGE**

For more information about the progress of the Community Benefits Plan connect with us:

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