buy social CANADA

Community Wealth Building Toolkit

Build Community Wealth in Place with Social Procurement, Social Enterprise, and Community Benefits in Construction

October 2026







About Buy Social Canada

Buy Social Canada is a national, women-led social enterprise that exists to build healthy communities that are rich in social, cultural, human, environmental, and economic capital.

We shift how goods and services are bought and sold in the marketplace through social procurement consulting, education, and advocacy, and social enterprise certification. We bring together purpose-driven purchasers and social value suppliers to build business relationships to buy and sell with impact in Canada. Our services support organizations to achieve strategic goals and build vibrant and resilient local economies and communities.

Contact us at info@buysocialcanada.com to learn more or explore how we can work together.

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Cover photos from top to bottom: Certified Social Enterprises EMBERS Staffing, Le Chic Resto Pop, and Fireweed Food Co-op.

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We respectfully acknowledge that we live, work, and learn on unceded, traditional, and ancestral lands of Indigenous and First Nations peoples. We invite you to consider what efforts we can all take to repair and improve our relations with Indigenous people locally and globally.

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Executive Summary

Community wealth building engages a broad ecosystem of place-based stakeholders – including local governments and public entities, Indigenous governments and organizations, local businesses, social enterprises, labour organizations, and residents – to collectively shape local economies. This model challenges extractive economic approaches by shifting policy, funding, procurement, and business development to retain wealth within communities and ensure that economic activity delivers social, cultural, and environmental value.

While the concepts behind community wealth building have deep historical roots, the term was popularized by The Democracy Collaborative in 2005. Today, it is a globally recognized framework applied through five interconnected pillars: inclusive and democratic enterprise, locally rooted finance, fair work, just use of land and property, and progressive procurement.

This resource highlights three practical tactics that Buy Social Canada and communities across Canada have successfully implemented to build community wealth: social procurement, social enterprise development, and community benefits in construction. Rather than serving as a step-by-step implementation guide, this document provides an overview of how these tactics connect to, and advance, the community wealth building model.

These connections are illustrated through real-world case studies from Ottawa, Peel Region, and Saskatoon to demonstrate how communities can leverage social procurement, social enterprise and community benefits in construction as tactics to build resilience. In each case, communities conducted market capacity assessments to better understand the assets and gaps in local infrastructure and identified recommendations to advance these tactics to achieve local socio-economic goals.

By exploring the stories, lessons, and successes of organizations across the country, readers can identify pathways to advance their own local economic strategies. For those ready to act, the document concludes with concrete steps to engage with social enterprises, develop community benefit frameworks, and join the growing movement for equitable economic development.

What is Community Wealth Building?

> "Community Wealth Building (CWB) is an economic development model that transforms local economies based on communities having direct ownership and control of their assets. It challenges the failing approaches that have been widely accepted in economic development for too long, and addresses wealth inequality at its core."
> – The Democracy Collaborative

Community wealth building is a globally recognized and practical economic development model designed to tackle the complex social, environmental, and economic challenges our communities face. The community wealth building model works to build regenerative, resilient economies by redefining how local wealth is generated, circulated, and distributed.

Although the concepts and intentions that drive community wealth building go back decades (and likely millennia, in the pre-contact Indigenous context), the term was first coined by The Democracy Collaborative in 2005. Since then, the model has been adopted across the globe, with many regions and organizations adapting it to suit their community's needs and grow local wealth and resilience. Because community wealth building is driven by community, how exactly it is defined and applied varies widely. For this resource we draw primarily on The Democracy Collaborative's definition.

The community wealth building model contains five interconnected pillars. They have many different names depending on the organization and location where they are being referenced, but the core intention and meaning of each remains the same. In this resource we draw on The Democracy Collaborative's language for the five pillars but adapt them to be more inclusive of a wide variety of stakeholders.

The five community wealth building pillars are:

1. Inclusive and democratic enterprise

Communities should have multiple forms of social enterprises, worker and consumer cooperatives, public ownership, municipal enterprise, and more, based on the recognition that the ownership and control of productive capital is at the heart of where power lies in any political-economic system.

2. Locally rooted finance

Communities should redirect money in service of the real economy through public and community banks, credit unions, and targeted public pension investments.

3. Fair work

Every worker should receive a living wage and real power in, and control of, their workplace to deliver decent work and conditions, and advance trade union rights.

4. Just use of land and property

Communities should mobilize land and property assets to build real wealth in communities, bring local land and real estate development back under community control, and combat speculation and displacement.

5. Progressive procurement

Purchasers should lead with procurement practices that prioritize social value suppliers, re-localize economic activity, build local multipliers, and end leakage and financial extraction.

See Appendix A for additional resources related to advancing community wealth building in Canada and internationally.



Certified Social Enterprise Circle of Eagles Trading Post

Practical Tactics to Build Community Wealth

From rural communities like Courtenay, BC, to large municipalities like Ottawa, ON, Buy Social Canada has supported communities across the country to build and distribute community wealth by implementing social procurement and community benefits in construction, and cultivating the local social enterprise ecosystem. These three tactics have profound on-the-ground impacts that contribute to all five community wealth building pillars and have the potential to add local value in communities of all sizes.

Social Procurement

Community Wealth Building Pillar: Progressive Procurement

Every purchase has an economic, environmental, and social impact, whether intended or not. Social procurement is about capturing those impacts and seeking to make intentional positive contributions to both the local economy and the overall vibrancy of the community.

For purchasing organizations in both the public and private sectors, this means using procurement dollars to achieve overarching community and/or strategic goals such as environmental and social sustainability, often with a focus on systemically supporting social enterprises.

Social procurement is no longer a niche practice and is increasingly policy-backed, with measurable action. Organizations are developing tools, training staff, and tracking spend with social enterprises and other social value suppliers.

Social procurement can be implemented in several ways, within existing budgets, including:

- Social value bid language and evaluation criteria for competitive procurements
- Small buys that target local, small businesses and social enterprises
- Direct awards with not-for-profit social enterprises
- Set asides for Indigenous businesses

When used in this way, procurement is a powerful community wealth building tool that redistributes dollars back into the community.

Social procurement in action

City of Edmonton

The City of Edmonton first adopted a purchasing policy with ethical and environmental considerations in 2010 and then added social value in their policy in 2019 with support from Buy Social Canada. In 2022, they added Indigenous procurement into their sustainable procurement program.

Now, the City's Sustainable Procurement Policy has four guiding principles: Ethical Standards, Environmental Sustainability, Indigenous Procurement, and Social Value Considerations.

In 2022, the City began an action-focussed implementation project supported by Buy Social Canada, with an ambitious and impressive suite of tools and resources. They have also been leading the way on tracking and sharing transparent progress of their implementation with a Measurement and Reporting Framework and a Diversity Spend Reporting Framework. In 2025 the City began a pilot of community benefits in construction on the Ambleside Integrated Site Phase 1 project (AIS-1) by weighting questions in the RFP and collaborating with the general contractor, Delnor Construction, and the project team to design and implement CBA targets. Through their many initiatives and frameworks, they are taking social procurement from policy to action and learning and improving each year.

City of Winnipeg

The City of Winnipeg officially adopted a Sustainable Procurement Action Plan (SPAP) in 2022, following extensive stakeholder engagement with community, industry, and internal staff.

The City's framework has a four-pillar model which promotes a comprehensive approach to sustainable procurement that addresses supply chain opportunities across four pillars: Environmental, Ethical, Social, and Indigenous.

The City of Winnipeg is committed to continuously showing up and taking steps to create opportunities for social value suppliers in their procurement practices.

Learn more about social procurement

- Guide to Social Procurement (version français)
- From Transaction to Transformation: How Canadian Organizations Buy and Sell with Impact
- Social Procurement Myths and Facts
- Social Procurement Professional Certificate training course

Social Enterprise

Community Wealth Building Pillars: Inclusive and Democratic Enterprise, Locally Rooted Finance

A social enterprise is a business that generates the majority of its revenue from the sale of goods and services, has a defined social, cultural or environmental purpose, and reinvests the majority (at least 51%) of profits or surplus back into its purpose.

This definition is internationally aligned with Social Enterprise World Forum, Social Enterprise UK, Buy Social Scotland, Government of South Korea, Social Traders in Australia, Buy Social USA, Buy Social Ireland, and many others.

There is no single incorporation for social enterprise in Canada. Buy Social Canada is the national supplier council for social enterprise and offers social enterprise certification to create a national verification standard for purchasers to have confidence that they are buying with impact, and to unify the Canadian social enterprise sector.

Social enterprises operate in communities across the country, rural and urban alike, selling everything from catering and construction to accessibility consulting, hotel accommodation, cybersecurity, and community internet. Each social enterprise exists to create a social benefit in its community and uses business as the way to achieve it.

Social enterprise in action

Aecon-Golden Mile

Aecon-Golden Mile (A-GM) is a joint venture social enterprise by the Inclusive Local Economic Opportunity Initiative (ILEO) and Aecon, a private construction company, created to respond to the demand of a massive redevelopment in Toronto's Golden Mile in 2022-2024 and create job opportunities for residents of the surrounding community. A-GM offers utility and construction services including hydrovac excavation, traffic control, and fibre optic installation.

National Capital FreeNet

National Capital FreeNet (NCF) is a social enterprise internet service provider based in Ottawa. NCF reinvests its revenues into bandwidth infrastructure and community services, offering high-speed internet to the general public while providing subsidized connectivity to Ottawa Community Housing tenants.

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre provides meaningful employment for members of the local Squamish and Lil'wat Nations which jointly own and operate the centre in Whistler, BC. Alongside sharing cultural knowledge, they create youth mentorship opportunities, rent the venue for events, and provide food and catering in their cafe.

SaskAbilities

SaskAbilities is a registered charity operating in Saskatchewan since 1950. To further their mission to support people experiencing disability with programs and services to enhance their lives, SaskAbilities operates 10 social enterprises. Social enterprise products and services include recycling depots, vet linens, ringette equipment, wood crating and shipping products, assembly and bulk mailing, metal fabrication, confidential document shredding, commercial sewing, and the Disability Travel Card™ Program.

Learn more about social enterprise

- Built for Impact, Ready for Market: Canadian Social Enterprise Sector Survey Report (version française)
- Guide to Social Enterprise
- Find social enterprises in Buy Social Canada's national Certified Social Enterprise Directory
- Partner with Social Enterprises to Achieve Strategy and Deliver Community Impact (blog)
- Put your money where your mouth is: Why Buy Social Canada certifies social enterprises (blog)

Community Benefits in Construction

Community Wealth Building Pillar: Just Use of Land and Property

Construction, infrastructure, and development projects present an opportunity to create community benefits such as inclusive hiring, skills training, local procurement, and social procurement. The practice of incorporating intentional community benefits in construction projects is increasing across Canada. Community benefits in construction come in a variety of forms, from legally binding agreements to informal commitments to deliver agreed-upon social value outcomes.

Regardless of the chosen model, the identified community outcomes or benefits generally fall into four social procurement opportunity areas:

1. Targeted employment
2. Training and apprenticeships
3. Inclusion of social value suppliers as subcontractors or businesses in the supply chain
4. Community development

Community benefit frameworks are blueprints to achieve positive impacts in these opportunity areas, capture project spend, and therefore build community wealth for the community in which the project is happening.

Community benefit frameworks can be mandated in a variety of ways, by project owners and/or construction developers, including:

- Through a framework or policy that provides the overarching key elements of the mandate, such as applicability to the project, targets to achieve, reporting requirements, and compliance mechanisms
- Adding the mandate in the project's bid requirements during the contract procurement process
- Negotiating the inclusion of community benefits on a project with key stakeholders such as community, the project owner, the developer, and/or the general contractor or design-builder

Community benefits in action

In 2018, City of Vancouver became the first municipality in Canada to pass a mandatory Community Benefits Agreement policy. The first project to trigger this policy was the New St. Paul's Hospital development which began construction in the spring 2021 and completed construction in summer 2026.

Although City Council has since voted to make the policy non-mandatory and applicable on a voluntary basis only, the New St. Paul's Hospital has the mandatory application of three CBA targets:

- 10% local, inclusive hiring: the hiring of equity-seeking groups and local residents
- 10% local procurement: using suppliers that are based in the most local postal codes of Vancouver
- 10% social procurement: using suppliers that are focused on creating positive community impact

Buy Social Canada was contracted by the project's Design-Builder, PCL Construction as the Independent Third-Party Monitor to support the project with measurement and reporting, stakeholder engagement, and supply and demand matching.

Project outcomes

New St. Paul's Hospital completed the construction phase of the project in summer 2026, and achieved the following outcomes:

- 11. 6% local procurement
- 8.9% local, inclusive hiring
- 4.5% social procurement
- $5.1 million in spend with DTES Certified Social Enterprises

Providence Health Care, PCL Construction, and key subcontractors on the project shared that the CBA policy has increased their social procurement awareness and encouraged their relationship-building with social value suppliers. These long-term relationships and partnerships with local social enterprises, such as CleanStart Property Services and EMBERS Staffing, will pave the way for long-lasting benefit for communities beyond the New St. Paul's hospital project.

Learn more about community benefits in construction

- Community Benefits in Construction Guide
- Voices of Industry: A Paradigm Shift in CBAs
- Community benefits in construction services
- City of Vancouver CBA Policy boosts construction sector impact on local projects (blog)
- The New St. Paul's Hospital Journey Part I: Final Community Benefits Agreement Data (blog)

Community Wealth Building in Place: Case Studies

How can the tactics of social procurement, social enterprise, and community benefits in construction be activated in communities? Each can advance community wealth building in a community, they are all interconnected, and therefore strongest when they are advanced and aligned to work together to support a thriving ecosystem.

Find Your Starting Point

The following case studies share stories from early adopters and leaders who have conducted market capacity assessments which allowed their communities to assess:

- Existing assets that can be used and built on
- Needs and resource or capacity gaps
- What social procurement activities are happening, by whom, and to what degree
- Which organizations are supporting community benefits in construction, either directly on community benefits projects or through employment initiatives
- What social enterprises and other social value suppliers exist in an area, and identify their goods and services sold, contracting capacity, and social value creation
- Potential leverage points or catalysts, such as an institutional purchaser or a large development project

Market capacity assessments gather information and look for potential alignment, gaps, and opportunities across the ecosystem to build a concrete, grounded, place-based understanding of what is and then what could be. A set of recommendations and activations can be developed to guide the community to further leverage assets and tactics to build community wealth.

These case studies demonstrate how market capacity assessments, along with social procurement, social enterprise, and community benefits in construction, can guide local or regional community wealth building efforts in communities across the country.



Ottawa

Community wealth building was prioritized in Ottawa starting in 2023 through a collaborative process sparked by City of Ottawa and led by United Way Eastern Ontario (UWEO) as a convener and intermediary for several other stakeholder groups who have shared expertise, contributions, and commitment. The major redevelopment of the Lansdowne Park site (Lansdowne 2.0) served as one catalyst for this initiative, with stakeholders identifying a need to conduct a market capacity assessment to identify opportunities to integrate local social enterprises and other local businesses and promote inclusive workforce development. Following an assessment, stakeholder engagement, and the formal inclusion of CWB language in the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the City of Ottawa and purchasers on Lansdowne 2.0 are actively working to implement a social procurement framework, creating and retaining local wealth.

Ottawa's community wealth building timeline

2021: UWEO identified Community Wealth Building as a priority and began mobilizing stakeholders, including through a Champions Table, around opportunities for an inclusive post-pandemic economic recovery. Early catalysts for this work included the new Ottawa Hospital construction, the Ontario Winter Games 2022 in Renfrew County, and federal infrastructure projects in Ottawa led by Canada Lands Company (now under Canada Builds).

February 2021: City of Ottawa Council passed the Economic Recovery Efforts motion instructing staff to integrate social procurement and engage social enterprises.

June 2023: City Council directed staff to explore incorporating a "community wealth building approach" regarding economic development within the context of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan's proposed Poverty Reduction Strategy

January-August 2024: Building on existing stakeholder engagement and with emerging projects like Tunney's Pasture, Confederation Heights and Lansdowne 2.0 as trigger points, United Way Eastern Ontario brought Buy Social Canada in as a consultant on the "Developing a Made in Ottawa Plan for Community Wealth Building" project to convene key ecosystem players to identify opportunities, barriers, and recommendations for community wealth building work in Ottawa.

Stakeholders engaged for this project included City of Ottawa, local social enterprises, and other community organizations like OCBN and CSED. Together, they agreed upon a local definition for community wealth building:

"Community wealth building (CWB) is a people-first approach that transforms our local economy based on five pillars to create a more equitable and inclusive Ottawa community."

One of the key recommendations that emerged from stakeholder engagement was to conduct a market capacity assessment to identify social procurement and social enterprise opportunities for the Lansdowne 2.0 redevelopment, which the City was intrigued by.

October 2024: Ottawa's Poverty Reduction Strategy 2025–2029 officially included community wealth building language, and defined community wealth building as an extension of community economic development (CED) that aims to produce equity and economic prosperity through enhanced community participation

August 2024-July 2025: City of Ottawa contracted Buy Social Canada to conduct a market capacity assessment and identify opportunities for Ottawa-based workforce development programs and social enterprises to support outcomes for the Social Procurement Framework which is included during the construction and development phase of the Lansdowne 2.0 development.

The market capacity assessment identified local social enterprises and other social value suppliers that would support the project's social procurement and community benefits efforts and enabled the City and project team to leverage increased knowledge of place-based assets.

The project also included training and engagement for internal and external stakeholders across the City, construction sector, and social economy sector.

March 2026: City Council passed a motion to pilot "innovative approaches that would maximize the use of local and equity denied labour, and ensure robust training and apprenticeship programs are built into the procurement processes" on two upcoming City projects, and directed staff to review and assess feasibility of other procurement practices and approaches in Canada, "which include but are not limited to, a Fair Wage Policy, a Living Wage Policy, and a Community Benefits Agreement."

April 2026: The Lansdowne 2.0 Project team hosted a Social Procurement Conference and Trade Show specifically designed to connect Lansdowne 2.0's construction team with social impact suppliers from across the Ottawa region.

> "While political and institutional leadership play an important role in setting direction and policy frameworks, building community wealth requires broad stakeholder participation and lasting changes in how organizations invest, procure, hire, develop talent, support local enterprises, and steward assets for shared, long-term community benefit."
>
> – Henry Akanko, Director, Community Initiatives, United Way East Ontario



Peel

In Peel, all 4 local governments – Peel Region, City of Mississauga, City of Brampton, and Town of Caledon – prioritize best value in procurement rather than just lowest price, and all have adopted a formal social or sustainable procurement policy, program, or strategy. The establishment of the Peel Community Benefits Network (PCBN) in 2019 provided a space for stakeholders to build awareness, exchange ideas, and learn together about community benefits approaches. The network helped strengthen understanding of local opportunities, capacities, and considerations related to inclusive workforce development. In 2026, PCBN and United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) funded Buy Social Canada to conduct a comprehensive research project that mapped the region's inclusive employment landscape and identified a set of recommendations for continued community wealth building efforts in the region.

Peel region's community wealth building timeline

2018-2022: City of Mississauga adopted a Sustainable Procurement Policy, Town of Caledon adopted an Environmental and Social Procurement Protocol, City of Brampton adopted a Sustainable Procurement Strategy, and Peel Region began to pilot social procurement.

2019: To capitalize on social procurement and community benefits momentum in the region, the Peel Community Benefits Network (PCBN) was co-founded by Peel Region and United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) in 2019 as an initiative of the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee.

PCBN's mandate when first created was to:

- Ensure that local residents, particularly youth, newcomers, women, and racialized communities, benefit from the economic opportunities that large infrastructure projects, like the Hazel McCallion Line Light Rail Transit (LRT), will bring to the community.
- Actively engage stakeholders from businesses, non-profit organizations, the community, school boards, labour unions, and others to create inclusive Community Benefit frameworks.

2021-2025: Cities of Brampton and Mississauga and Peel Region became Buy Social Canada Engage Members to formalize their commitments to social procurement and gain access to ongoing implementation support.

2023: In light of evolving policy commitments and strategic prioritization of social procurement by local governments, PCBN updated their mission statement and committed to "ensuring that a skilled workforce is ready and available for the completion of infrastructure projects by tapping into the capacity of Peel's diverse communities."

2024: United Way Greater Toronto assumed the leadership for the Peel Community Benefits Network and continued to work closely with Peel Region, local municipalities, and other stakeholders in the PCBN Working Group to increase opportunities for inclusive employment. United Way Greater Toronto provided funding to Buy Social Canada to lead the Peel Inclusive Workforce Research Project to map and assess the inclusive employment and workforce development system in Peel with the goal of advancing opportunities through partnership.

February 2025: United Way Greater Toronto funded Buy Social Canada to lead the Peel Inclusive Workforce Research Project to map and assess the inclusive employment and workforce development system in Peel, and to develop a roadmap to increase inclusive employment and community benefits in the Peel region.

As the communities in Peel already have social procurement in policy, active social enterprises, and community benefits in construction projects to learn from, the research focussed on understanding what is already happening, and engaging stakeholders to explore what is needed to further grow and support the inclusive workforce in Peel.

August 2026: Phase 1 of the research project is completed and Buy Social Canada shared recommendations to advance social procurement, social enterprise, and community benefits in construction in the region.

Key recommendations included:

1. Strengthen community benefit initiatives with clear targets and enforcement.
2. Establish a social procurement initiative focused on high inclusive employment opportunities.
3. Identify a private sector project to advocate for a Peel Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) on.
4. Provide subsidies and other financial incentives to improve inclusive workforce outcomes.
5. Pilot innovative models to address gaps in the foundational infrastructure.
6. Develop an intake hub to track workforce outcomes.

UWGT and PCBN also extended the contract with Buy Social Canada to explore emerging opportunities and potential pathways to advance community wealth building in Peel, including opportunities that could strengthen local ownership, participation, and long-term community benefit.

> "The Peel mapping exercise highlights that many of the building blocks for community wealth building already exist across the region. The opportunity ahead is not necessarily to create new systems, but to strengthen connections, increase awareness, and identify practical pathways to build on existing assets, relationships, and community-led efforts."
>
> – Fabio Crespin, Senior Manager, Inclusive Employment, United Way Greater Toronto



Saskatoon

Community wealth building in Saskatoon gained momentum following the City's 2018 shift to a best value purchasing policy and the adoption of an Indigenous Procurement Protocol in 2019. Progress accelerated in early 2024 when the Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership (SPRP) engaged Buy Social Canada to address barriers to social procurement, leading to targeted training for local organizations like Quint Development Corporation. Building on this foundation, Quint contracted Buy Social Canada to lead the "Community Wealth Building in Saskatoon" project, funded by the Federal Government's Building Safer Communities Fund, to conduct a current state assessment, train city staff, and support advocacy efforts with the goal of promoting community wealth building tactics in the city. Social procurement continues to evolve as a key tactic at the City and amongst other large purchasing organizations in the community.

Saskatoon's community wealth building timeline

2018: City of Saskatoon updated their Purchasing Policy and shifted from seeking lowest price to a best value approach that included social, economic, and environmental criteria.

2019: City of Saskatoon adopted an Indigenous Procurement Protocol, which was later supplemented by an Indigenous Procurement Strategy in 2023.

January 2024: Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership (SPRP) connected with Buy Social Canada to explore how to help social enterprise flourish in the region, and identified social procurement as an opportunity, and the lack of current social procurement implementation as a barrier.

October 2024: SPRP brought Buy Social Canada to Saskatoon to deliver an in-person custom cohort of the Social Procurement Professional Certificate and an Intro to Social Enterprise training.

The trainings were targeted to non-profits and social enterprises to give them language and a better understanding when speaking to purchasers. One of the organizations in attendance was Quint Development Corporation (Quint), a local community economic development non-profit which operates two social enterprises: Build Up Saskatoon, which provides construction and renovation services, and SWEEP, which provides junk removal, cleaning, and other related services.

Following these trainings, Quint identified the need for a more comprehensive review of the current state of social enterprise and social procurement in Saskatoon.

April 2025-present: Quint contracted with Buy Social Canada to deliver the "Community Wealth Building in Saskatoon" project. The project deliverables included conducting a current state assessment, hosting a custom Social Procurement Professional Certificate cohort for City staff and other purchasers in the Saskatoon region, engaging suppliers to help grow the social enterprise ecosystem, and supporting Quint's social procurement advocacy and social enterprise activities.

The project was funded by the Federal Government's Building Safer Communities Fund, through a transfer agreement between the City and Quint.

> "Quint's social enterprises have devoted the last few years to pursuing opportunities to demonstrate best value through social procurement, and we believe we have proof of concept. The next step is advocating for formalized targets and procurement policies that would provide the foundation for a robust social enterprise ecosystem."
>
> – Aaron Timoshyk, Social Enterprise Programs Manager, Quint



Certified Social Enterprise SmartICE. Photo by Michael Schmidt.

Conclusion

Adoption of the community wealth building model is growing. Through implementation of social procurement and community benefits in construction, and cultivation of the local social enterprise ecosystem, communities can build regenerative, resilient economies.

Communities are already leading the way in building local wealth in Canada and internationally, and there is an opportunity to join them by assessing your local landscape, learning from the diverse approaches and tactics highlighted in this resource, and crafting a community wealth-building plan or roadmap that fits your unique context. Even small actions can spark transformative change, and you're not alone on this path.

Take Action to Build Community Wealth

Public and private sector purchasers

- Conduct a market capacity assessment to understand local assets, capacity, gaps, and opportunities.
- Explore practical tactics, activities, and community engagement strategies to implement social procurement, social enterprise, and community benefits in construction.
- Become an Engage Member to access a database of social enterprises and receive custom support to achieve your community wealth building goals.

Social enterprises and community organizations

- Conduct a market capacity assessment to understand local assets, capacity, gaps, and opportunities
- Use this resource as a tool to advocate for social procurement, social enterprise, and community benefits in construction to advance community wealth building.
- Collaborate with local community wealth building organizations in your region to align your messaging and advocate for community wealth building with local anchor institutions.
- Become Certified and grow the movement of social enterprises across Canada.

Appendix A: Additional Resources

1. Community Benefits in Construction: Mandate, Design, and Implement Guide by Buy Social Canada
2. Guide to Social Procurement by Buy Social Canada
3. Guide to Social Enterprise: Plan, sustain, and grow your impact with a social enterprise business plan by Buy Social Canada
4. Marketplace Revolution: From Concentrated Wealth to Community Capital by David LePage
5. Six Steps to Social Acquisition by Buy Social Canada
1. Ownership Matters: Building Community Wealth in Canada policy paper by Heather Hachigian, Emily Mulroney, and Emma Woykin-Miller
2. Twenty Years of Community Wealth Building: Essay Collection by The Democracy Collaborative
3. The principles of community wealth building by The National Organisation for Local Economies (CLES)
4. Implementing Community Wealth Building: A Guide by Economic Development Association Scotland and CLES
5. Action Guide for Advancing Community Wealth Building in the US by The Democracy Collaborative
6. Community Benefit Agreements: Case study on St.Thomas-Elgin by Ontario Nonprofit Network
7. Three myths that hold nonprofit boards back from building community wealth by Ontario Nonprofit Network
8. Community Wealth Building Lab by 10C
9. Worker-Owned Cooperatives: The Cleveland Model by Urban Sustainability Director's Network
10. The Preston Model of Community Wealth Building in the UK by CLES
11. Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill by The Scottish Government
12. Community Wealth Building Toolkit for the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries by Community Enterprise in Scotland and Creative Scotland

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Social Procurement Leaders

Get in Touch

Connect with us to get involved and learn how our services can support your community wealth building efforts.

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