



## NEWS RELEASE

### First Funding Releases from Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan

March 5, 2020

**Windsor, Ontario** • The Gordie Howe International Bridge project team is excited to announce the first release of funding to four Community Benefits Plan initiatives totaling more than \$475,000 CDN. The funding will support two initiatives in Canada and two in the United States in the areas of aesthetics and landscaping, economic benefits and community partnerships.

In Canada, the funding supports a community art project in Windsor, targeting youth involvement and reflecting history and culture of the community. Life After Fifty has received \$20,000 to coordinate the project.

The City of Windsor received \$250,000 to undertake an Environmental Assessment for the Ojibway Park – Black Oak Heritage Park Wildlife Eco-Passage. The \$250,000 is part of a larger investment of \$1.5 million in seed funding to be released to the City should the project proceed.

In the US, the first of three years of funding has been provided to Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA) in the amount of \$83,333 to launch Bridge to Prosperity, a new business development program that will provide support to Southwest Detroit small businesses and start-ups. SDBA will receive \$250,000 in total over the three-year period to support the program.

The Fort-Rouge Gateway (FRoG) Partnership also received \$125,000 for the creation of a sculpture within the new Fort Street Bridge Park.

Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan initiatives will continue to be implemented with allocated funding between 2020-2025.

## QUOTES

"Today marks another milestone in the delivery of the Gordie Howe International Bridge project with the advancement of key community benefits initiatives. WDBA remains committed to enhancing the Delray and Sandwich communities by working with our stakeholders to deliver a shared vision that will improve the areas for residents and businesses."

- *Bryce Phillips, CEO, Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority*

"This Community Benefits Plan funding release is the first of many, demonstrating the team's transition from planning to implementation. Bridging North America is proud to celebrate the unique communities we are working in by investing in long-term, meaningful benefits that can be leveraged by the region."

- *Aaron Epstein, CEO, Bridging North America*

Funding from the Community Benefits Plan will enable the Southwest Detroit Business Association and our partners to provide technical assistance and business planning services to existing and start-up businesses to help grow their operations in anticipation of meeting the increased demand for products and services associated with the construction and eventual operation of the new Gordie Howe International Bridge. The

Bridge to Prosperity initiative will ensure that our local business owners and entrepreneurs are able to take advantage of this major economic driver in our community for years to come.”

- *Rob Dewaelsche, President, Southwest Detroit Business Association*

“We’re grateful to the Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan for allowing us to embark on a creative journey, giving voice to the community through local artists by developing new works of public art.”

- *Veronica Samek, Project Coordinator, Life After Fifty*

## QUICK FACTS

- Between 2015 and 2019, a two-phase consultation approach was undertaken with Ontario and Michigan residents, Indigenous Peoples, business owners and community and municipal leaders to inform the initiatives identified.
- The Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan was publicly announced on June 14, 2019, and is being delivered by Bridging North America with collaboration and oversight from WDBA and the State of Michigan.
- The Community Benefits Plan is comprised of two components: the Workforce Development and Participation Strategy and the Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy. In partnership with WDBA and Bridging North America, more than 30 agencies and organizations will support the implementation.
- In November 2019, Bridging North America hosted Vendor Summits in Windsor and Detroit consistent with the Workforce Development and Participation Strategy. Collectively over 800 local contractors, suppliers and business sector representatives attended.
- A Local Community Group representing the communities of Delray, Sandwich, Windsor-Essex County and the Greater Detroit Area has been formed to act as informal partners during the implementation of the plan.

## RELATED PRODUCTS

- [Backgrounder: Community Benefits Overview](#)
- [Backgrounder: Winter 2020 Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy Funding Investments](#)
- [Backgrounder: Supportive Statements](#)
- [9 Things to Know about the Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy](#)

## ASSOCIATED LINKS

- [Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan](#)

## ABOUT WINDSOR-DETROIT BRIDGE AUTHORITY

Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority (WDBA) is a not-for-profit Canadian Crown corporation created to deliver the Gordie Howe International Bridge project between Windsor, ON and Detroit, MI through a public- private partnership (P3). WDBA is responsible for overseeing and managing the construction and operation of the new crossing. For more information visit [www.GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com](http://www.GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com) and follow the project on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/GordieHoweBrg](https://www.twitter.com/GordieHoweBrg).

## ABOUT BRIDGING NORTH AMERICA

Bridging North America is comprised of some of the most recognized leaders in the construction and infrastructure industry which includes North American and international companies. BNA partners have significant experience carrying out major infrastructure projects such as the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway in Windsor, Ontario; New Champlain Bridge Corridor in Montreal, Quebec; Autoroute 30 in Montreal, Quebec; Eglinton Crosstown LRT in Toronto, Ontario; Réseau Express Métropolitain (REM) in Montreal, Quebec; Automated People Mover at LAX Airport, California; Harbor Bridge, Corpus Christi, Texas; Tappan Zee Bridge in New York and San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, California.

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