

# **Building on Success**

**An evaluation of the Community Benefits Agreement  
for the Vancouver Olympic Village Site**

**Prepared for:  
Building Opportunities with Business Inner City Society**

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## Preface and Acknowledgements

In Vancouver, community groups, developers and government have been experimenting with community benefits agreements that deliver neighbourhood benefits alongside major development projects. These experiences have yet to be well documented, widely discussed, or routinely integrated into the development process. The research conducted for the purpose of this evaluation represents an important contribution to understanding how these negotiated agreements work in principle and practice and how the development process can become an opportunity for responsive community development.

Evaluations rely on quantitative and qualitative data – all of which is gathered or shared by real people. Sincere thanks to the following individuals for generously supporting the data collection process and sharing their observations, experiences, insights, and tough questions.

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## **Executive Summary**

On September 24, 2007, a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) was signed for the development of a 7-hectare site in Southeast False Creek. Signed by Millennium Southeast False Creek Properties Ltd. (Millennium), the City of Vancouver, and Building Opportunities with Business Inner-City Society (BOB), this agreement spelled out several commitments and targets that would see that the build out of the site would deliver direct benefits to Vancouver's inner-city residents and businesses.

The key targets identified in the agreement were 100 entry-level construction jobs for inner-city residents and \$15million in procurement from inner-city businesses. The developer, Millennium, committed \$750,000 to support employment training and procurement initiatives. BOB was designated as the community organization responsible for managing the implementation of the agreement with the City and Millennium.

Almost 2 years later, over 120 individuals have been placed in construction jobs and almost \$42million in goods, services and equipment procured from inner-city businesses. Working with training partners, BOB delivered 10 construction training courses and 6 pre-employment training courses. A Construction Directory of over 200 inner-city construction businesses was developed, published and distributed. BOB prudently managed the funds provided by the developer with 89% of funds supporting training and procurement initiatives and 11% dedicated to administering the program.

Parties to the agreement as well as the community more broadly, are eager to see this CBA become a model upon which other development agreements are based. The opportunity exists for champions in all levels of government, the development community, and community organizations to reference, learn from, and adapt this agreement to other development projects and sites.

With respect to the implementation of this agreement, some areas for improvement have been identified by stakeholders. Key areas for learning include: improving community engagement and progress reporting; maximizing employment suitability and longer-term stability; refining procurement targets and business support initiatives; and transforming this particular opportunity into a new development paradigm for Vancouver and British Columbia.

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