



Why Unionized Construction Works

Labour Management Relationships: Five thousand unionized contractors partnering with building trades unions to build great structures in every corner of the province. Contractors and labour work together to deliver quality projects safely, on time and on budget. The unionized construction industry works collaboratively to create innovative tools to facilitate labour-management relations and to develop best practices that boost productivity, safety and skills training. These partnerships are built on a solid foundation of over one hundred and fifty years of history.

Workforce: Ontario's unionized Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) construction Industry's workforce is over 105,000 tradespeople strong. With locals in every region in the province and access to union members across Canada, Ontario's ICI construction trades unions have access to a large, mobile and highly skilled workforce.

Community Benefits

The community benefits concept has gained increased attention as government at all levels across Canada earmarked significant funding over the next decade to repair and expand public infrastructure. Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) and/or frameworks create an opportunity to enhance this investment to achieve additional social and economic benefits.

CBAs frequently focus on three distinct types of benefits:

- Workforce development – jobs and/or training opportunities including apprenticeships for members of traditionally disadvantaged communities, women and immigrants.
- Purchasing of goods and services from local businesses or social enterprises.
- Supplementary community benefits – community spaces, parkland, day-care and/or affordable housing.

The area of most relevance to the unionized construction industry revolves around benefits related to workforce development. Frequently, the terms of the Community Benefits Agreement are negotiated during the procurement process of the project in collaboration with owners and community groups. Hard targets and/or aspirational goals are identified. Accountability, tracking and monitoring are important components of the CBA to ensure targets are being met. Understanding the scope and context of community benefits will help stakeholders in the unionized construction industry assess what role they can play in the community benefit arena.

Community Benefit Agreements have been around for a number of years, and it's time for a review to ensure all parties are in synch and good working relationships are being fostered.

Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) Construction Sector Agreements

With the advent of single trade provincial collective bargaining in 1978 for the 25 ICI construction trades, there was a stipulated two-year agreement term with all agreements expiring on April 30th of the second year. In the mid 1990s this was revised to a three-year agreement term.

The identical labour unions negotiate five-year agreements with the electrical power sector (EPSCA) of the construction industry. Is it time to consider moving to four or five year agreements in the ICI sector, too?

What is the CBA?

Public or Private Institutions

Contractors, Unions & Community Representatives

Community Benefits Agreement.
The CBAs is an agreement between public or private institutions and the contractors, unions and community representatives working on large public works projects.



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