

Case Study: Community Builders

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Community Builders is a Buy Social Canada certified, non-profit construction social enterprise based in Barrie, Ontario that provides construction services and trades-based training opportunities. Prior to participating in the coaching and mentorship offered through the Community Benefit Purchasing Project, they were working as a vendor with Simcoe County Housing Corporation, but looking to formalize a social procurement agreement or extended contract so that they can further their reach and impact in their community, and increase the supply of affordable housing in Central Ontario.

Goal

Based on Community Builders' current model, they require steady ongoing work to sustain the organization's programs including a trainee program for people facing barriers to employment. With a new formal or extended agreement in place, they can achieve this goal of ongoing sustainable work opportunities to support their training program and increase revenue for their social enterprise.

One of the barriers they have encountered in accomplishing this goal is that they have only been in contact with regional housing managers and are unable to reach the higher-ups needed to develop this type of agreement. They also need support creating this agreement and knowledge of other social procurement contract agreements that have been used in similar scenarios in other parts of the province and/or country.

Requested Support

To accomplish Community Builders' goals, they would need support to get in touch with stakeholders in purchasing who manage the vendor relationships for Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC).

They would also need guidance and backing to approach SCHC to explore and secure a formal/extended social procurement contract. Community Builders would also require examples or templates to support them in drafting these types of agreements and engaging stakeholders to advance this type of agreement.

Team & Responsibilities

Community Builders

Complete takeaway tasks, review/draft any key documents, negotiate, fulfill contract responsibilities.

Project Consultants

Set up meetings, share resources, correspondence, manage work plan, liaise between client and mentors.

Project Mentors / Coaches

Provide resources, share templates, create/review draft contracts/agreements, work with the client to build capacity.

Brandon Day (BD), Co-Founder and CEO

Elly Green (EG), Lead

Ashleigh Addison (AA), Support

Shaun Loney (SL), Encompass Co-op

Lucas Stewart (LS), Encompass Co-op

Implementation Plan

Date	Activity	Contributor(s)
<i>By 9-Jun-21</i>	Create a list of people to contact re: brokering an official social procurement contract for Community Builders	BD
<i>9-Jun-21</i>	Coaching call with Project Mentors	BD, SL, LS, EG, AA
<i>9-Jun-21 to 17-Jun-21</i>	Draft a letter to send to Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC)	BD, SL, LS
<i>9-Jun-21 to 17-Jun-21</i>	Mentors and consultants review draft letter to SCHC with Community Builders	BD, SL, LS, EG, AA
<i>10-Jun-21 to 16-Jun-21</i>	Engage expertise from Manitoba Housing to support future conversations and meetings.	BD, LS
<i>By 5-Jul-21</i>	Send finalized letter to SCHC; Attn: Carol Runnings, Manager, Housing Programs	BD
<i>5-Jul-21</i>	Second coaching call with mentors and update on letter	BD, SL, LS, EG, AA
<i>8-Jul-21</i>	Send a letter to the City of Barrie; Attn: Economic & Creative Development	EG
<i>5-Jul-21 to 7-Jul-21</i>	Consultant to reach out to appropriate contacts at SCHC to set up an initial meeting	EG
<i>15-Jul-21</i>	Meeting with SCHC re: Community Benefit Purchasing	BD, SL, LS
<i>20-Jul-21</i>	Consultant to follow up with SCHC	EG
<i>22-Jul-21</i>	Follow-up with a second email to SCHC	BD
<i>10-Aug-21</i>	Mentorship follow-up	BD, SL, LS, EG, AA
<i>Summer to Fall 2021</i>	Continue to follow up with SCHC	BD, EG
<i>27-Oct-21</i>	Check-in with consultant re: Sudbury Housing and SCHC	BD, AA
<i>Fall 2021</i>	Explore opportunities for support from Mayor and MPP	BD

Outcomes

By the end of summer 2021, Community Builders aimed to have a formal social procurement agreement in place with Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC).

After the initial meeting with SCHC on July 15th, the proposed next steps did not unfold as anticipated by Community Builders. Throughout the coaching and mentorship provided from May to August 2021, no additional meetings occurred with SCHC. However, as a result of the July 15th meeting, working relationships with SCHC's Housing Managers have strengthened with Community Builders. The next course of action in this region will be to continue to strengthen the relationship with SCHC and then re-approach senior positions in procurement at SCHC, with the support of the Mayor of Barrie and the local MPP, to broker an official social procurement agreement.

Initially, Community Builders wanted to use SCHC as a demonstration project to support other initiatives by providing a tested process with template agreements. However, in the interim, Brandon Day has found success in the City of Sudbury working with their Housing Operations department through Raising the Roof's Reside program. For this program, Community Builders was able to secure long-term work to renovate 5 vacant homes into 10 affordable housing units and draft a formal agreement with the City of Sudbury's Housing Operations. As of Winter 2022, Sudbury Housing has committed to working directly with Community Builders to build additional units on an ongoing basis. Going forward this will be the template for future projects and a possible resource to get SCHC on board.