



2025 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION INVESTMENT INITIATIVE: FUNDED PROJECTS

The Gordie Howe International Bridge project is a once-in-a-generation undertaking. Not only will the project deliver much-needed transportation improvements for international travellers, it is providing jobs and opportunities for growth to the Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, Michigan region. A key project element is the inclusion of a Community Benefits Plan.

The \$23 million Neighbourhood Infrastructure Strategy of the Community Benefits Plan includes the Community Organization Investment initiative, an annual commitment to provide \$200,000 (CDN) in funding to community organizations located in or serving Sandwich/west Windsor or Delray/Southwest Detroit (the host communities). Originally scheduled to run for five years, in 2025 the initiative was extended to include a sixth year with \$300,000 available to organizations on both sides of the border. The initiative supports events, programming and/or infrastructure improvements that benefit the host communities and align with one of the community investment priorities: community partnerships, community safety and connections, regional tourism and economic development, food security and wellness, local history and culture and/or aesthetics, landscaping and green initiatives.

From November 2024 to January 2025, registered non-profit and charitable organizations were invited to apply for the program's final year of funding. Thirty-nine eligible applications were reviewed and prioritized by members of the Local Community Group, which includes stakeholders representing various perspectives from Windsor and Detroit. The prioritized applications were reviewed by senior project representatives from Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority (WDBA), Bridging North America (BNA) and the State of Michigan to determine funding recipients.

In July 2025, the Community Organization Investment will divide \$300,000 (CDN) between nine organizations in Canada and five in the US.

CANADIAN INITIATIVES

Ongoing Programming Support

Organization: Assumption Cares

Funding: \$50,000

Initiative Type: Programming

Funding will support ongoing programs and services as well as new programs focused on addressing the wants and needs of west Windsor residents. This includes increased activities for children and families, as well as senior-focused workshops and presentations on topics such as foot care, healthy eating and advanced planning.

Food and Mood

Organization: Windsor Essex Community Health Centre

Funding: \$32,000

Initiative Type: Programming

Health programming will provide Sandwich residents with resources to enhance physical health and psychological wellbeing including budgeting and mental wellness workshops, access to primary care and an emergency food security kit.

Ignite Academy (ProsperUS Program)

Organization: United Way/Centraide Windsor-Essex County

Funding: \$22,000

Initiative Type: Programming

The Ignite Academy program at General Brock Public School will provide daily programming focused on nutrition, recreation, mentorship, mental wellness and cultural activities to 30 students in grades 2-7. Students will engage with local historians and community leaders, visit historical sites and experience hands on learning about Sandwich/west Windsor's cultural significance.

Helping Hands Friendship Centre Programming

Organization: Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Funding: \$10,000

Initiative Type: Programming

Funding will support the Helping Hands Friendship Centre programs to provide refreshments, program materials and transportation to various group outings.

BBBSWE In-School Mentoring

Organization: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Windsor Essex (BBBSWE)

Funding: \$6,000

Initiative Type: Programming

BBBSWE will purchase new materials for activity bins for five schools in Sandwich/west Windsor which will be used to enrich the learning experience for mentors and mentees. These materials include new crayons, markers and colouring books, as well as functional games and puzzles for the children and youth in the program.

Community Meals, Lunch Club, After School Soup Konnection

Organization: Feeding Windsor Essex by New Song Church

Funding: \$10,000

Initiative Type: Programming

Funding will support free semi-monthly community meals open to all Sandwich/west Windsor residents, a lunch club that delivers 16 monthly meals to participants and an after-school soup program providing weekly soup meals to elementary students.

Feeding Sandwich

Organization: St. John's Church

Funding: \$10,000

Initiative Type: Programming

A new refrigerator and two food carts will be purchased to store and transport perishable foods such as eggs, fresh fruit and vegetables that are distributed to address food insecurity in Sandwich/west Windsor. Volunteers will create a recipe book for clients based on food stored in the cart.

Father Joe Quinn Education Series

Organization: Assumption University

Funding: \$5,000

Initiative Type: Event/Programming

Through a free one-day educational event, local students of all ages will learn about social issues in their community from area experts while deepening their understanding of their role in making society a better place.

Windsor Police Service Diversity Barbecue

Organization: Windsor Police Service – Community Service Branch
Funding: \$5,000
Initiative Type: Event

This free event is designed to foster relationships and promote understanding between community members and the Windsor Police. Over 30 community organizations will be invited. Attendees will be offered a free meal, and a local food bank will distribute fresh produce at no cost.

US INITIATIVES

Detroit Public Schools Community District Health Hub
Organization: Detroit Public Schools Community District Foundation
Funding: \$50,000 (CDN)
Initiative Type: Programming

The Health Hub is designed to address issues that impact student success such as food insecurity, wellness and economic instability. Families can access essential resources such as nutritious food, transportation assistance and connections to health and mental health services. In addition, the hubs provide referrals for job training and certification programs.

La PAZ (Pedestrian Access Zone) Engagement and Design Workshops
Organization: Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision
Funding: \$27,000 (CDN)
Initiative Type: Programming

La PAZ (Pedestrian Access Zone) is a network of mural curb extensions and crosswalks, including school-adjacent intersections. This corridor is used by families and children walking to nearby schools and Clark Park. The project aims to address safety concerns through the installation of up to 3,000 square feet of mural curb extensions and crosswalks.

Bikes and Bebidas
Organization: Urban Neighborhood Initiatives
Funding: \$42,000 (CDN)
Initiative Type: Infrastructure

Funding will support the expansion of Bikes and Bebidas, a bicycle repair and coffee shop in Southwest Detroit. This expansion will provide employment and training opportunities for youth as bike apprentices and baristas, offering hands-on experience in engineering, mechanics, hospitality and business management.

Feed the Homeless
Organization: Trinity-St. Mark's Pantry and Gardens
Funding: \$20,000 (CDN)
Initiative Type: Programming

Funding will help to provide at least 500 lunches for unhomed individuals per month and boxed food for local families in need.

Organization: Unity in Our Community Timebank

Funding: \$11,000 (CDN)

Initiative Type: Programming

A series of physical and cultural activities including a bike repair training course, cardio drumming classes, historical walking tours in Southwest Detroit and a Fiesta event will encourage residents to explore local parks and recreational spaces, promote physical activity and create community connections.

PUBLIC REPORTING

The Community Benefits Plan includes a robust documenting, tracking and reporting structure that demonstrates accountability to the region. The Community Benefits Plan is posted on GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com, along with quarterly reports on initiative progress and results.

For more information about the Gordie Howe International Bridge project visit

GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com or call 1-844-322-1773. Follow us on X at x.com/GordieHoweBrg, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/GordieHoweBridge and connect with us on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/wdba-apwd.