

## 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

Programs and services will address the needs of west Windsor residents through activities for children and families, and senior-focused workshops and presentations.

### Ignite Academy (ProsperUS Program)

**Organization:** United Way/Centraide Windsor-Essex County

**Funding:** \$22,000

**Initiative Type:** Programming

Daily programming will provide 30 students, grades 2-7, at General Brock Public School with nutrition, recreation, mentorship, mental wellness and cultural activities. Students will engage with local historians and community leaders, visit historical sites and learn 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

The Helping Hands Friendship Centre programming will provide refreshments, 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 Sandwich/west Windsor schools to enrich the learning experience for mentors and mentees by using art supplies, functional games and puzzles.

### Food and Mood

**Organization:** Windsor Essex Community Health Centre

**Funding:** \$32,000

**Initiative Type:** Programming

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

### Community Meals, Lunch Club, After School Soup Konnection

**Organization:** Feeding Windsor Essex by New Song Church

**Funding:** \$10,000

**Initiative Type:** Programming

Food security programming will include a free semi-monthly community meal open to Sandwich/west Windsor residents, a lunch club that delivers 16 monthly meals to participants, and a weekly after-school soup program for elementary students.

### Feeding Sandwich

**Organization:** St. John's Church

**Funding:** \$10,000

**Initiative Type:** Programming/Infrastructure

Funds will support purchase of a new refrigerator and two food carts to store and transport perishable foods such as eggs, fresh fruit and vegetables to Sandwich/west Windsor residents.

### Father Joe Quinn Education Series

**Organization:** Assumption University

**Funding:** \$5,000

**Initiative Type:** Event/Programming

Local students will learn about social issues in their community from area experts to deepen their understanding of the importance to make society a better place.

### **Windsor Police Service Diversity Barbecue**

**Organization:** Windsor Police Service – Community Service Branch

**Funding:** \$5,000

**Initiative Type:** Event

This event will foster relationships and promote understanding between community members and the Windsor Police through fun activities and refreshments.

## **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 will address concerns impacting student success such as food security, wellness and economic stability. Resources provided for families include nutritious food, transportation assistance, and connections to health and mental health services. In addition, the hub provides referrals to 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

This program will address safety concerns in school-adjacent areas through the installation of up to 3020 square feet of mural curb extensions and crosswalks. The new infrastructure will be located near Clark Park.

### **Let's Get Moving**

**Organization:** Unity in Our Community Timebank

**Funding:** \$11,000 (CDN)

**Initiative Type:** Programming

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

### **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 will create 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 provide at least 500 lunches to unhoused individuals per month and boxed food to local families in need.

## **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](http://GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com), along with quarterly reports on initiative progress and results.

**For more information about the Gordie Howe International Bridge project visit**

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