



Setting the record straight on Minister Anand's response

After signing the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the LeBreton Flats redevelopment, our supporters received a letter from the Parliamentary Assistant to Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Anita Anand, which ignores the legitimacy of our Coalition, our CBA goals and simply parrots the flawed NCC position that a CBA is not the best model for the LeBreton redevelopment.

The response was as followed:

"Hello,

Thank you for writing to Minister Anita Anand regarding LeBreton Flats. We appreciate you sharing your concerns with our office.

The LeBreton Flats is a critical site for the region and the surrounding community, and we are moving forward with its redevelopment through the Building LeBreton project in a way that contributes to community health and well-being and generates social, environmental and economic returns.

The NCC has examined different models of delivering community benefits. For a complex multi-phase/decade project like this one, it was determined that a combination of a Public Advisory Group and a social procurement approach would be the best model for Building LeBreton. This approach will allow the NCC to seek advice from a range of stakeholders and respond to emerging opportunities and concerns during implementation. Further, this builds the delivery of community benefits into the project throughout the procurement process, in line with the projects guiding principles. The process and timeline regarding the composition of the committee is being developed.

Again, thank you for your email. If you have additional questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to our office."

We're posting this note to set the record straight and to call on Minister Anand, the lead Minister for the NCC, to support a CBA for LeBreton.

Fact: Neither Minister Anand nor anyone in her department has made any effort to understand the case for and benefits of a CBA for LeBreton. They've only listened to the NCC's position. Minister Anand's staff has steadfastly blocked the Coalition from speaking to Minister Anand and her Parliamentary Secretary, Steven MacKinnon, has also ignored requests to speak with us.

Fact: Minister Anand's letter states that *"for a complex multi-phase/decade project like this one, it was determined that a combination of a Public Advisory Group and a social procurement approach would be the best model for Building LeBreton"*. This position is not based in substance, it's simply rhetoric and flies in the



face of the evidence. The facts are:

- CBAs represent best practice to ensure accountability in achieving community benefits that multiply the value of every dollar spent from building and infrastructure projects. That is why they are increasingly adopted in North America and the UK. That is why the federal government, through the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, which reports to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, instituted a CBA in collaboration with communities in Windsor-Essex and Detroit.
- By ignoring a CBA solution, the NCC is not living up to its own best practices mandate. It's "*goal is for Canada's Capital Region to be a model of urban planning: a place where decisions about the use and development of urban lands are based on considerations of environmental sensitivity, sustainability and best practices*". <https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/our-plans>

Fact: The NCC and by extension, Minister Anand, continue to ignore the Coalition's CBA Roadmap which will work for LeBreton as it involves use of the procurement process for each of the LeBreton land parcels. The Coalition's CBA Roadmap is similar to the approach taken by the Toronto Community Benefits Network with Metrolinx in first establishing a CBA framework agreement and then establishing project specific CBAs for the Eglinton and Finch West LRT projects.

Fact: The NCC's choice of a Public Advisory Group and a social procurement approach, in the absence of a CBA, emulates the old models that have since been refuted by communities in Canada and internationally. Why, because it lacks the accountability that only a CBA can bring. Over time, policies change, administrations change, personnel change...the continuity and protection is the CBA.

Fact: CBAs and social procurement are not mutually exclusive. CBAs in Toronto contain social procurement targets and act as the accountability mechanism to ensure the desired outcomes are met. We don't need to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Fact: The Anand letter implies that our Coalition is somehow exclusionary. Wrong. We comprise 27 organizations representing thousands of constituents and our tent is open to others who share our goal of a CBA for LeBreton. The brush-off from the NCC and Minister Anand's office is actually disrespectful to the countless volunteer efforts of Coalition members to advance ideas and solutions for a workable LeBreton CBA. CBAs in Canada and internationally generating various socio-economic outcomes is evidence that hard work and creativity pays off when the governing institutions put their minds to it.