Challenging Precarity through Community Benefits Agreements:

Leveraging infrastructure projects to increase training and labour market access for equity-seeking and historically disadvantaged groups in Ontario

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Ontario will invest $130 billion in public infrastructure over the next ten years.

**How do we leverage infrastructure dollars to get the most “social value added”?**
“Community Benefits” clauses:

✓ bridge the skills gap;
✓ increase employment equity;
✓ reduce socio-spatialization of poverty;
✓ environmental sustainability goals.
Under-representation

- Only 2% of skilled tradespersons are women.
- Only 9% of apprentices in the skilled trades are people of colour (23% of labour force).
Skills Gaps (?)

- Shortage of engineers with 5-10 years experience while internationally-trained professionals struggle to get hired
- Looming skills shortages in certain construction trades
Socio-spatial Polarization

**MAP 1: CHANGE IN AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL INCOME, CITY OF TORONTO, RELATIVE TO THE TORONTO CMA, 1970-2005**

Average individual income from all sources, 15 years and over, census tracts

*Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1971, 2006*

*Note: Census Tract 2001 boundaries shown. Census Tracts with no income data for 1970 or 2005 are excluded from the analysis. There were 527 total census tracts in 2001.*
Toronto Community Benefits Network
TCBN Eglinton Crosstown LRT Community Benefits Goals

- Targeted hiring
- Range of jobs
- Scaling-up pre-apprenticeship programs
- Bridging programs for internationally-trained professionals
- Contracts for social enterprises
- Community amenities
- Environmental design
- Monitoring & legally-binding enforcement
Eglinton Crosstown LRT Community Benefits “Framework”

✓ Coordination
✓ Unconventional resident engagement
X Clear targets
X Legal equity mechanisms
X Funding wrap-around supports
X Monitoring
Scaling-up CBAs

- Toronto City Council
  - April 22, 2015: CBA protocol referred to staff

- Bill 6 (Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act)
  - May 13, 2015 passed second reading
CBAs & Precarity

- NOT net job creation tool
- BUT reduce precarity through:
  - Living wage provisions
  - Affordable housing
  - More equitable income distribution across families & communities
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