



## Community Benefits Agreements Resource Guide

Communities around the United States are responding to economic revitalization efforts and the threat of gentrification by utilizing Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) as an anti-displacement tool.

CBAs are legally enforceable contracts between developers and community coalitions that help address a broad range of community needs. They establish clear commitments from developers and allow community members to play an active role in important decision-making processes. CBAs serve a mutually beneficial function by allowing for meaningful communication and negotiations between developers and community coalitions to generate public support for projects that meet community needs, problem-solve creatively, and avoid permitting delays. CBAs can steer large-scale, market-driven development to secure good jobs, affordable housing, small business assistance, and publicly accessible green space while ensuring that community stakeholders can influence the process.

Union United's work is inspired by the work of community groups using organizing, planning, and political education tools to weave together a narrative of development without displacement. Collectively, we have researched more than 25 community contracts either in effect or being negotiated.

Tonight's presentation offers examples from around the nation, including Los Angeles, New York City, and Seattle, and focuses on an active community benefits campaign taking place in Union Square, a vibrant and historically diverse neighborhood in a small city just north of Boston which will serve as the site of a major rapid transit expansion intended to mitigate negative environmental impacts of the Big Dig highway project.

### Case Studies

Los Angeles, CA / LAX CBA: One of the first CBAs put into effect, this agreement (along with many other won by LAANE) has served as a strong national model for publicly funded mixed-use projects (May 1999 by the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy).

New York City, NY / Kingsbridge Armory CBA: A comprehensive CBA for the redevelopment of an armory building in Northwest Bronx in which the developer agreed to more than \$8 million for community contributions including a community space, training local workers for green jobs, local procurement, and a small business incubator program (April 2013 by the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance).

Seattle, WA / Dearborn CBA: The first agreement between a community coalition and developer in the Pacific Northwest for a \$300 million project in one of Seattle's most economically and ethnically diverse communities. However, after more than two years of negotiations, the developer cancelled the project due to the economic downturn (September 2008 by the Puget Sound Sage and the Dearborn Street Coalition for Livable Neighborhoods).

Somerville, MA / Union Square CBA: An active CBA campaign focused on the redevelopment of a dense, diverse neighborhood in the Boston metro area along with a transit expansion. Priorities include affordable housing, local jobs, and small business protections. (Ongoing by the Union United coalition).

### Resources

- Partnership for Working Families: <http://www.forworkingfamilies.org/resources/policy-tools-community-benefits-agreements-and-policies>
- "Community Benefits Agreements: Making Development Projects Accountable": <http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/sites/default/files/docs/pdf/cba2005final.pdf>
- "Community Benefits Leveraging Partnerships for Successful Developments": [http://www.forworkingfamilies.org/sites/pwf/files/publications/2009.03\\_CBs\\_for\\_Developers.pdf](http://www.forworkingfamilies.org/sites/pwf/files/publications/2009.03_CBs_for_Developers.pdf)
- "Community Benefits Agreements: Ensuring that Urban Redevelopment Benefits Everyone": <http://www.communitybuilders.ro/library/studies/community-benefits-agreements-ensuring-that-urban-redevelopment-benefits-everyone-by-greg-leroy-and-anna-purinton/view>

To find out more about CBAs and Union United, please contact Mashael Majid at [mmajid@somervillecdc.org](mailto:mmajid@somervillecdc.org).