



# The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

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## How to Meet the Needs of Soccer Stadium Neighbors? A Community Benefits Agreement

By Wes Rivers

Mayor Gray's proposal for a new soccer stadium at Buzzard Point raises a number of [concerns](#). But for neighbors in Southwest, the most important issue is the impact on their community, their homes, and job opportunities. That's why a coalition of Southwest residents, led by the [Community Benefits Coordinating Council](#), have approached District officials and DC United with a detailed proposal to protect the community and provide job, recreation, and other opportunities to nearby residents.

The residential neighborhood adjacent to Buzzard Point is economically diverse – with affordable and public housing units, as well as mixed income condominium and apartment buildings. However, the community has not benefited much from the development at Nationals Park and the Navy Yard, and has several pressing needs – including jobs, work-readiness and training, access to health care, and inadequate recreational facilities.



That's why the coalition has [begun negotiations](#) with the city and the team for a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) – a legally binding contract to address specified community needs.

CBAs across the country have helped low- and moderate-income neighborhoods benefit from big development projects. For example, a CBA tied to the development of [Staples Center](#) in Los Angeles led to new parks and recreational space, job readiness programs, and affordable housing.

Here are the highlights of the Southwest community's CBA request:

**Preserve Affordable Housing:** The coalition is asking that the city commit to preserving the existing affordable housing in the area, because the stadium and related development could create pressure to redevelop older public housing buildings. Affordable housing preservation will allow lower-income residents to stay in the neighborhood and take advantage of the jobs and amenities from the new development.

**Support Jobs:** The proposed CBA calls for the team to set aside some of the stadium's construction and operation (ticketing, concessions, guest services) jobs for residents living in the immediate

neighborhood. This, along with city funds for workforce development and training, will help residents gain long-term employment.

**Create a community fund:** The coalition is asking for a \$5 million community fund to support recreational and educational programming for the community's youth. The CBA will also call for funds for the Randall Recreation and Author Capper Community Centers.

The Southwest CBA will hold the team and the city responsible for making sure that a new soccer stadium benefits the entire neighborhood, rather than leaving existing residents behind.