

Community at [work](#)





Sketch by the community. Colour by Goodwill.

Some time ago, we at Goodwill asked ourselves a question:

What is the work of a community? Why does it exist?

At Goodwill, we think that the work of a community is exactly that: to be a community. To include. To welcome. And to do it for everyone. When everyone is invited to come into the picture, to add their piece, to bring their gift and have it opened, that's when a community starts to come to life and show its colours. That's when a community starts to work.

But communities aren't working for everyone. Some people never see themselves in the picture. The aged. The young. The new Canadian. The disabled. Over and over, their contributions go unfelt, their gifts, unopened. And our communities are the lesser for it. Shuttered. Muted.

Why? Why are our communities content to be mere sketches of all they could be? When they could be exploding with colour and shimmering with hope. When they could be vibrating with life. Busting with pride.

When they could be working better. For everyone.

Everyone can work.

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Few things change a person or a place like work.

To work means to become—a contributor, a consumer, a citizen. A person that needs to be somewhere, doing something.

Work has unique power. Goodwill harnesses this power, enabling people and communities to work better.

We do this by developing workforces in our communities. Through our non-profit enterprises—Retailing, Food Services, Janitorial Services and Creative Services—we offer paid, transitional employment that provides training and work experience.

The work we create builds value—economically, socially, and environmentally. Working brings people into the economy, buying things, paying taxes, hiring others—giving instead of needing to receive. When people start to work, people start to belong, to matter, to connect.

A Goodwill store also welcomes one and all, acting as a great open house, a vital community within a community. Environmentally, communities work better when, instead of a landfill or an alley, there's a place like Goodwill, a place that turns things people don't need into things the community wants. Like inexpensive goods. And jobs.

The power of work. Changing lives, communities, and even Goodwill itself.



Painters splashing colour onto a faded wall. A courier racing to a deadline. A lawn getting a sprucing. And, of course, all the other work you can't see. This is work at work in an Ontario community. Imagine the picture without it. We can't.



A new Goodwill.

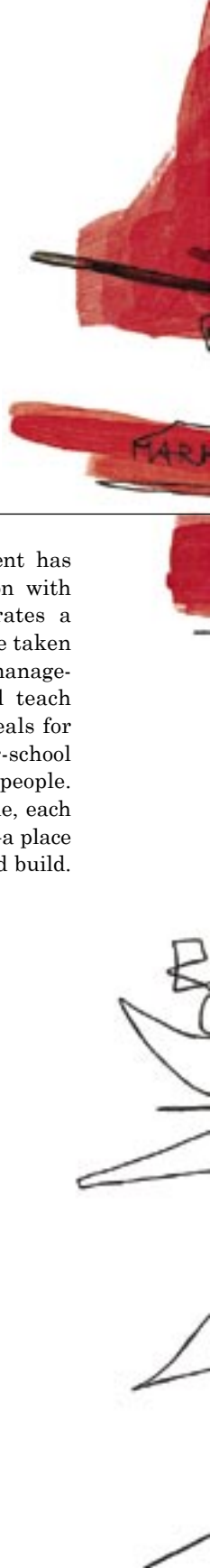
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The Goodwill that once stood in the community now stands with the community—and both are working smarter, better, and closer together because of it. We have embraced our potential as a social enterprise. And this has changed our role, and how we perform it.

It begins with work itself. Today, Goodwill is operating with a new vision for workforce development, driven by a deeper understanding of how to make work truly work better for more people. Through the paid transitional employment we offer, local people who face employment barriers are able to discover, finally, the power and the meaning of work. And gain the skills, experience, and sense of personal worth that will help them launch, and sustain, a working life.

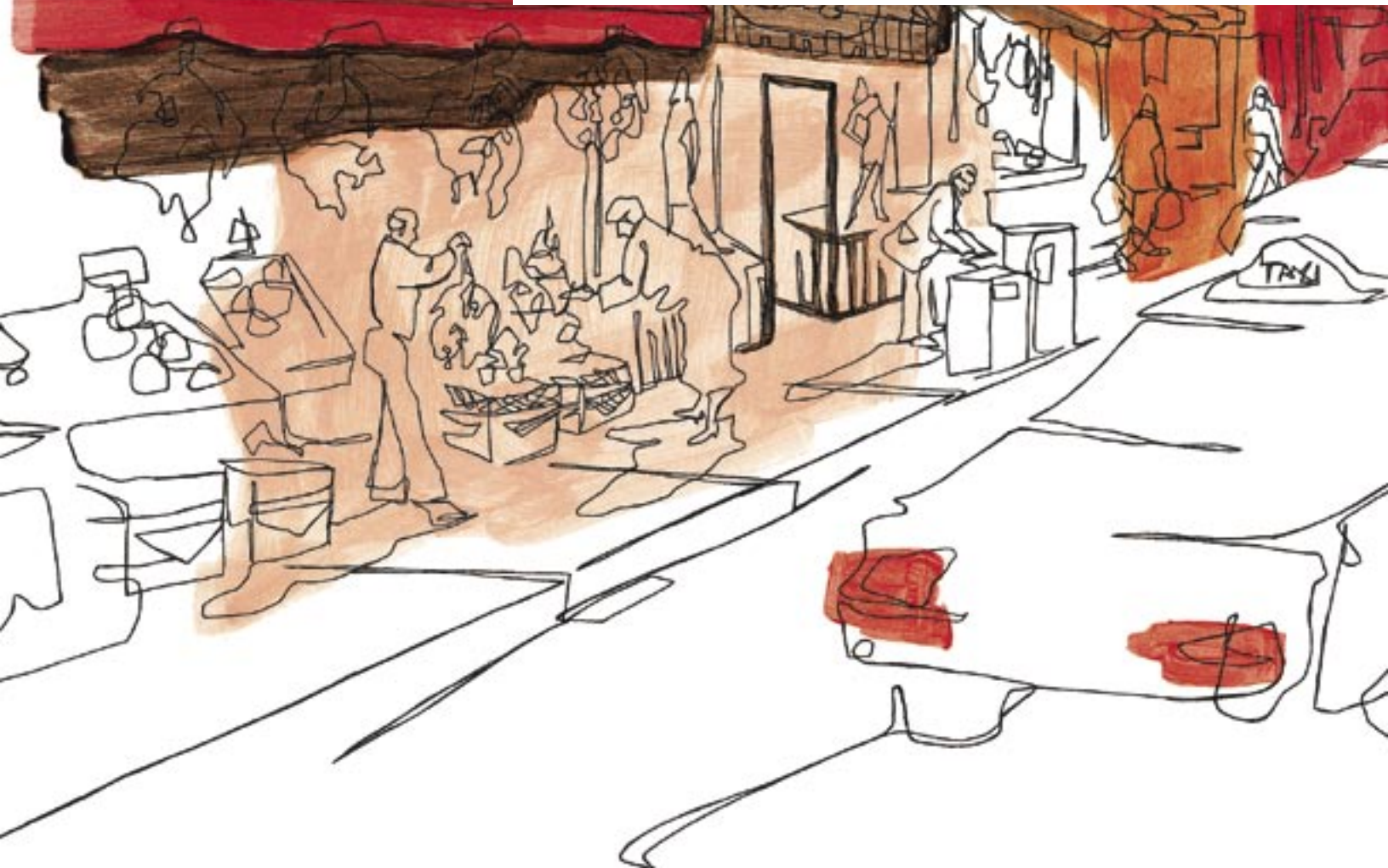
In our retail organization, this new vision sees our stores acting as transitional worksites, with each store encouraged to meet the needs of its community. Across our organization, our invigorated sense of purpose is reflected in a new commitment to continually improve how we do things, and to become an even stronger advocate for communities and how they can work better.

Finally, our new vision for workforce development has spawned a new spirit of innovative collaboration with like-minded organizations. Now, Goodwill operates a retail store in a community recycling centre. We've taken on the janitorial services for a region's waste management facilities. And we manage a kitchen and teach food services skills at a food bank, and make meals for homeless shelters, women's shelters, and after-school programs. In every case, we hire and train local people. Even our stores are living out our vision: over time, each will feature, front and center, a community room—a place where community groups can meet, and share, and build. And work.





A community at work, as seen through its businesses: colourful stores, fair prices, good things, and people, people, people—unloading boxes, serving customers, hustling and buzzing and moving to the music of work that matters. In a grocery store, a tailor's shop, a tea room, a Goodwill.



A future that works for everyone.

7 A community beams with colour. A worker buzzes with purpose. A Goodwill store pulses with potential. Snapshots from a future that works—for Goodwill, for clients, for communities.

For Goodwill, that future brings revitalized stores, new locations, brand new stores and new donation centres. It will bring more employment opportunities. More people using them. And more communities that work because of it all.

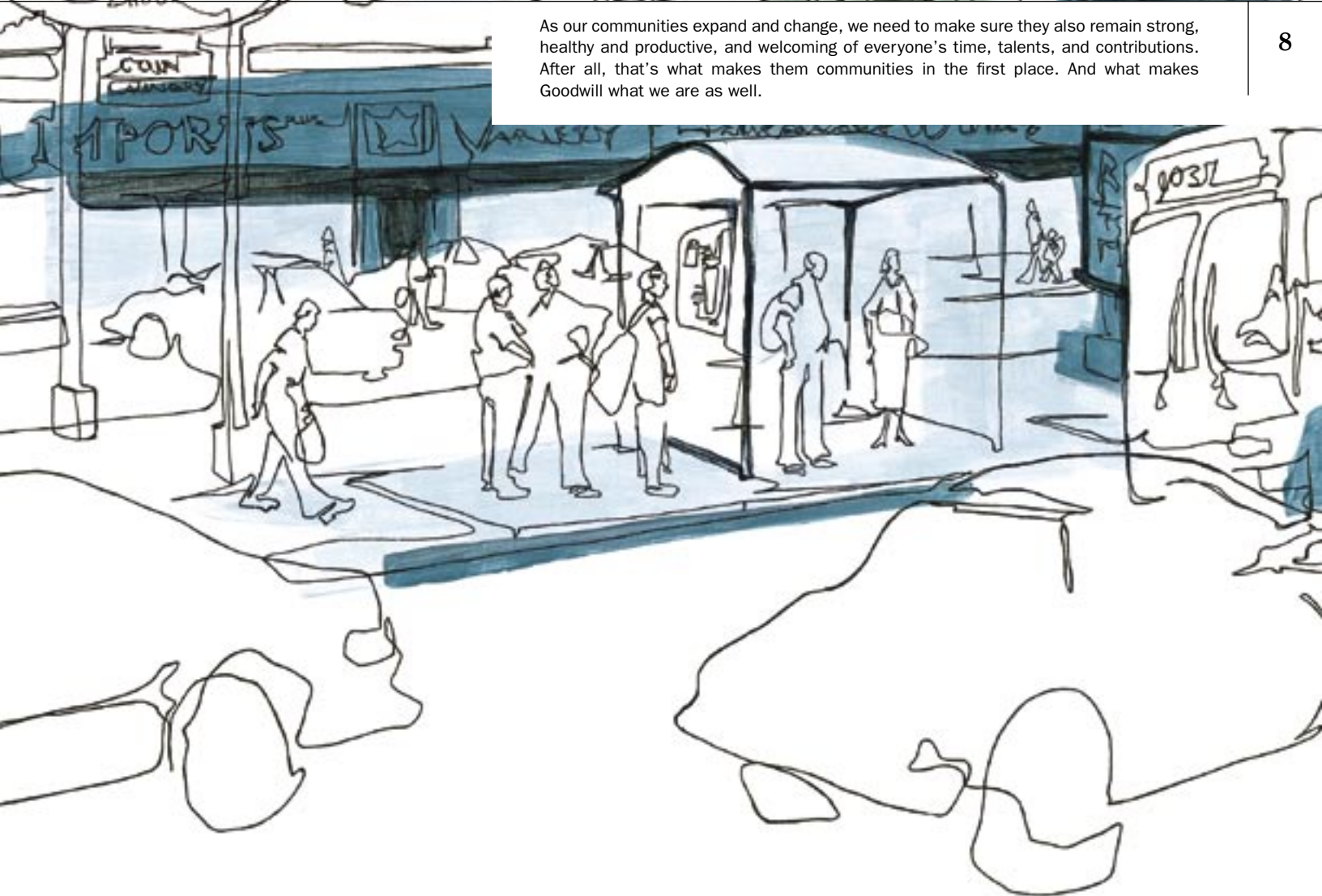
But that's not all we see happening. In the years to come, through our work, our influence, and our new role in communities—community partner, agent of change—we see a new dynamic taking hold in society, a new spirit of inclusion, where everyone can fit into the picture. We see the transformational power of work being used to integrate more people into the community than ever before, and not just by us. We see the marginalized and the forgotten embraced in the plans and hearts of community leaders, their gifts finally opened, their contributions finally valued. Their lives, finally, changed.

We see people—all people—engaging, connecting, hiring, buying, giving, learning, and working. Making communities work better. This is community at work. This is Goodwill.





As our communities expand and change, we need to make sure they also remain strong, healthy and productive, and welcoming of everyone's time, talents, and contributions. After all, that's what makes them communities in the first place. And what makes Goodwill what we are as well.



Changing lives since 1935.

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The mission of Goodwill has always been to provide work opportunities and skill development to people who face employment barriers. Even before we were Goodwill.

In 1935, a group of Toronto professionals got together and started The Society for Crippled Civilians, to provide meaningful work to people who were injured or disabled. In 1938, things really got going. We opened our first store and a training centre, and started a donated goods program. In 1975, we changed our name to Goodwill. Today, we have retail stores and donation centres across Greater Toronto, Durham, Peel, Eastern Ontario, Barrie and Simcoe County. Goodwill is devoted to self-sufficiency, so our revenues come almost entirely from our retail store operations. We raise the rest through government funding and donations from businesses, foundations and people.



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