

**REPORT FOR ACTION****The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism**

**Date:** November 15, 2017

**To:** Executive Committee

**From:** City Manager

**Wards:** All

**SUMMARY**

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Toronto is the most diverse city in the world. However, studies continue to show that anti-Black racism still exists in this city, affecting the life chances of more than 200,000 people of African descent who call Toronto home.

Anti-Black racism is policies and practices embedded in Canadian institutions that reflect and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization here in Canada.

The legacy of anti-Black racism lies in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of Torontonians of African descent. It is experienced as a lack of opportunity, poor health and mental health outcomes, poor education outcomes, higher rates of precarious employment and unemployment, significant poverty, and overrepresentation in the criminal justice, mental health, and child welfare systems.

To begin confronting anti-Black racism in Toronto, the City of Toronto partnered with Black leaders and organizations to create and implement a four-phase process. Phase one was the development and launch of the Toronto For All campaign in November 2016, naming and challenging anti-Black racism for public education. Phase two was the review of 41 years' worth of research and recommendations about addressing anti-Black racism in Toronto. This review created the foundation for 41 Community Conversations in phase three to determine how best to take meaningful action going forward. Conversations ran from January to March 2017. Black Torontonians reviewed a draft action plan at a citywide workshop in May 2017 and provided feedback. In Phase four, City staff and subject matter experts from across Toronto's Black communities worked together to create work plans and to identify resource requirements to begin implementation.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism is the result of this collaborative effort between the City of Toronto and Torontonians of African descent to take corrective action.

This five-year plan leverages the talents, knowledge, and experiences of Black residents and Black organizations as partners in making municipal services, spaces and policies fully inclusive and accessible to Torontonians of African descent in both intent and in practice. The Action Plan includes 22 recommendations and 80 actions to address five issue areas: children and youth development; health and community services; job and income supports; policing and the justice system; and community engagement and Black leadership. This report recommends adoption and implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council adopt the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism as outlined in Attachment A.
2. City Council adopt the 2018 Annual Work Priorities for year one implementation as outlined in Appendix B.
3. City Council refer the new and enhanced request of \$0.460 million gross and net for 5.0 positions and \$0.535 million gross and net for community partnership initiatives, for a total of \$0.995 million gross and net, and included in the 2018 Operating Budget Submissions for Social Development, Finance and Administration for consideration with other City priorities through the 2018 and future-year budget process.
4. City Council request the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance & Administration, the Acting Director, Equity, Diversity, and Human Rights; and the Executive Director, Human Resources to form the City Steering Committee to lead the internal City systems change work of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism and to align this work with other equity-based initiatives to ensure combined impact.
5. City Council approve the establishment of the Anti-Black Racism Partnership and Accountability Circle comprised of diverse Torontonians of African descent to support the implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism in effective, collaborative and accountable ways.
6. Subject to the adoption of Recommendation 5, City Council request the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance & Administration, the Acting Director, Equity, Diversity, and Human Rights; and the Executive Director, Human Resources, in collaboration with the Anti-Black Racism Partnership and Accountability Circle to report annually on the progress of implementation and the next year's work priorities.
7. City Council forward the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism as outlined in Appendix A to the Board of Health, Toronto Library Board, Toronto Police Board, and Toronto Community Housing Corporation Board for their consideration.
8. City Council forward Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism as outlined in Appendix A to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Children and Youth Services for consideration on program and funding alignments.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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This report recommends adopting the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism for implementation over a five-year term, beginning in 2018. Implementation will be based on five annual work plans, starting in Year One (2018), and a corresponding progress report. Annual work priorities will be implemented through a mix of initiatives that can be completed within existing resources and initiatives that may require additional funding.

In Year One (2018), a range of City divisions will lead initiatives, monitor progress and publicly report on key deliverables driven by four priorities: (1) Creating Culture Change at the City; (2) Investing in Black Children & Youth; (3) Connecting Black Torontonians to Civic Decision-Making; and (4) Improving Customer Service. Implementation across these priorities requires the establishment of a Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit within Social Development, Finance and Administration, supported by Equity Diversity and Human Rights, and Human Resources. Five positions are proposed to focus on the key community development, staff learning, policy change and youth development work of the Action Plan. These new staffing resources require strong Anti-Black Racism Analysis and specific expertise to effectively implement the Action Plan. The Confronting ABR Unit will deploy expertise and resources to a range of City divisions and the Toronto Police Service to implement initiatives of the Action Plan.

Funding to support Year One implementation is \$0.460 million gross and net for 5.0 positions to implement the Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, and \$0.535 million gross and net for community partnership initiatives, for a total of \$0.995 million gross and net, included as a New Service Priority in the 2018 Operating Budget Submission for Social Development, Finance and Administration. This new and enhanced priority will be referred to the 2018 budget process for consideration.

The Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **EQUITY IMPACT**

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Anti-Black racism is normalized and deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, often making anti-Black policies and practices appear invisible to non-Black people. Yet, the realities of anti-Black racism are demonstrated in the many social, economic and political disparities of Black people's lives today.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism centres on Black Torontonians as an equity-seeking group taking an intersectional approach. It also specifically examines the experiences and recommendations of Black residents who are also members of other equity-seeking groups, including women, youth, newcomers, queer and transgender people, Francophones, people affected by the justice system, people with dis/abilities, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The recommended Action Plan addresses key areas where diverse Black people face disparity and where City action can make demonstrable impact. The Action Plan mandates shared leadership and ownership with people with lived experiences of anti-Black racism at every stage of implementation.

The Action Plan utilizes an equity approach of targeted universalism in order to address anti-Black racism. Targeting equity measures for Black Torontonians will ensure they have access to the full benefits of living in this city like other Torontonians, and simultaneously, benefit other Toronto communities experiencing racism and marginalization, and all Toronto residents.

## DECISION HISTORY

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On June 19, 2017, Executive Committee considered The Interim Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism and requested the City staff to work collaboratively with subject matter experts from Toronto's Black communities to develop multi-year work plans for implementation, identify resource requirements and recommend a model for partnership and accountability to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX26.5>

## COMMENTS

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### Anti-Black Racism is Deeply Rooted

“Despite Canada’s reputation for promoting multiculturalism and diversity... Canada’s history of enslavement, racial segregation, and marginalization has had a deleterious impact on people of African descent which must be addressed in partnership with communities.”<sup>1</sup> These were the findings of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent in their final report released September 25, 2017. The report followed the Working Group’s first official visit to Canada in October 2016 to study the human rights situation of Canadians of African descent. The Working Group expressed their deep concern for the human rights situation of Black Canadians after meeting with representatives from governments, community organizations, and Black leaders working on issues of racism and racial discrimination in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax.

During their fact-finding mission, the Working Group was confronted with clear evidence of disparities faced by Black Canadians due to racism. Anti-Black racism is policies and practices embedded in Canadian institutions that reflect and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination that is directed at people of African descent. It is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and

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<sup>1</sup> Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. *Statement to the media by the United Nations’ Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, on the conclusion of its official visit to Canada, 17-21 October 2016*. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2016. Retrieved May 25, 2017:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20732&LangID=E>

colonization in Canada. Anti-Black racism is micro (as seen in day-to-day interactions) and it is structural (as seen in governing laws and policies).

Anti-Black racism challenges the popularly held narrative of Canada as a welcoming, safe haven for enslaved Africans escaping to freedom, and as a country where race relations with Black people lacked the viciousness of American slavery and segregation. Legalized slavery and segregation is also rooted in Canadian history. In 1628, Oliver Le Jeune, an eight year old African boy, became the first recorded enslaved African in Canada. The 47<sup>th</sup> Article of Capitulation of Montreal, the Peace Treaty of 1763 and The Quebec Act of 1774 were Canadian laws that legally recognized Blacks as property. In Upper Canada, slavery was reinforced by court interpretations of last wills and testaments, transferring the ownership of people of African descent from one white Canadian to another.<sup>2</sup>

Courageous white Canadians did support enslaved Black Americans to come to Canada through the Underground Railroad, but when people of African descent arrived, they were often met with stereotyping fear, and discriminatory laws and policies. Black Loyalists to Ontario were granted land that was isolated and unsustainable for living. The Commons Schools Act of 1850 segregated schools along racial and religious grounds. In the early 1900s, the media was used to reinforce negative stereotypes about Black people, suggesting sexual aggression in particular was in their nature, in an effort to limit Black Americans from settling in Canada en masse after changes to segregation laws in Oklahoma.<sup>3</sup> In 1911, federal policy was introduced to deny entry to Black immigrants because "the Negro race... is deemed unsuitable to the climate and requirements of Canada."<sup>4</sup> Order-in-Council P.C. 1324 was repealed and never took formal effect, but when compared to simultaneous efforts to encourage immigration from Eastern Europe, the discriminatory message at the time that Black people were unwelcomed in Canada was evident.<sup>5</sup>

First enslavement laws, then segregated institutions and customary practices denying Black people from restaurants, hotels, and other businesses, became the norm, embedding anti-Black beliefs, attitudes, stereotypes and practices in Canadian society and institutions.<sup>6</sup> This distinct history of African descendants in Canada has resulted in the perpetuation of anti-Black racism embedded in systems and practices.

The term "anti-Black racism" was spoken by Ryerson University social work professor Dr. Akua Benjamin to language the unique nature of systemic racism that people of African descent experience in Toronto. In his 1992 report on race relations in the province, Stephen Lewis, the Ontario Advisor on Race Relations, first captured the

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<sup>2</sup> Sadler, R. *Anti-Black Racism in Canada: A Historical Perspective*. Black History Society. 2003. Retrieved May 28, 2017: [http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/images/stories/Anti-Black\\_Racism\\_in\\_Canada.pdf](http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/images/stories/Anti-Black_Racism_in_Canada.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Sadler, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Yarhi, E. *Order-in-Council P.C. 1911-1324 — the Proposed Ban on Black Immigration to Canada*. *Historica Canada*. September 30, 2016. Retrieved May 28, 2017:

[http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/order-in-council-pc-1911-1324-the-proposed-ban-on-black-immigration-to-canada/#h3\\_jump\\_4](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/order-in-council-pc-1911-1324-the-proposed-ban-on-black-immigration-to-canada/#h3_jump_4)

<sup>5</sup> Yarhi, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Diversity and Human Rights. *Racism Against Blacks*. Retrieved on May 29, 2017: University of Guelph. <https://www.uoguelph.ca/diversity-human-rights/book-page/racismagainst-blacks>

term. Within the opening paragraphs of this seminal report commissioned by the Province of Ontario following the 1992 Yonge Street Riots, Stephen Lewis wrote: “First, what we are dealing with, at root, and fundamentally, is anti-Black racism. While it is obviously true that every visible minority community experiences the indignities and wounds of systemic discrimination throughout Southern Ontario, it is the Black community which is the focus. It is Blacks who are being shot, it is Black youth that is unemployed in excessive numbers, it is Black students who are being inappropriately streamed in schools, it is Black kids who are disproportionately dropping-out, it is housing communities with large concentrations of Black residents where the sense of vulnerability and disadvantage is most acute, it is Black employees, professional and non-professional, on whom the doors of upward equity slam shut. Just as the soothing balm of ‘multiculturalism’ cannot mask racism, so racism cannot mask its primary target.”<sup>7</sup>

Twenty-five years later, the situation of anti-Blackness described by Stephen Lewis has remained consistent. The legacy of anti-Black racism lies in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of Black Torontonians. It is evidenced by a lack of opportunity, poor health and mental health outcomes, poor education outcomes, higher rates of precarious employment and unemployment, significant poverty, and overrepresentation in the criminal justice, mental health, and child welfare systems.

## **Black in Toronto**

Toronto, the most diverse city in the world, is not exempted from the recent United Nations' findings. Studies continue to show that anti-Black racism still exists in Toronto today, affecting the life chances of more than 200,000 people of African descent who call Toronto home. Since anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in institutions, policies and practices, this particular form of racism often appears normal or invisible to non-Black people. Yet, evidence shows the great disparities Black Torontonians face in the areas of children and youth development; health and community services; job and income supports; and policing and the justice system.

## **Children & Youth Development**

Almost 88,000 Black children and youth, ages 0-24 live in Toronto.<sup>8</sup> While dedicated parents and strong communities are raising many thriving Black children, as a whole, Black children and youth experience differential outcomes to their non-Black peers.

Forty-two percent of Toronto children in the care of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto are Black children, five times their representation in the population overall.<sup>9</sup> Despite the formal ending of academic streaming in 1999, Black students in the Toronto District

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<sup>7</sup> Lewis, S. *The Report of the Advisor on Race Relations to the Premier of Ontario Bob Rae*. June 9, 1992. Retrieved on January 15, 2017: <http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/13000/134250.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada. *2011 National Household Survey: Data Tables*, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-012-X2011038.

<sup>9</sup> Contenta C, L Monsebraaten, and J. Rankin. *CAS study reveals stark racial disparities for blacks, aboriginals*. The Toronto Star, June 23, 2016. Retrieved May 25, 2017: <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/06/23/cas-study-reveals-stark-racial-disparities-for-blacks-aboriginals.html>

School Board are twice as likely to be enrolled in applied courses instead of academic courses compared to their non-Black counterparts, closing off their opportunity for a university education.<sup>10</sup> Black youth have higher drop out and expulsion rates than other Toronto children. Black students become "early leavers" of high school at twice the rate – 23% compared to 12% of white students.<sup>11</sup> At 23%, the unemployment rate of Black youth in Toronto is two times higher than the national average.<sup>12</sup> And Black youth report often feeling unwelcome or unsupported in many of the programs that are funded to assist them.

### **Health & Community Services**

Anti-Black racism impacts the health and wellbeing of Torontonians of African descent. Toronto Public Health's 2013 study examining racialization and health inequities found that experiencing racial discrimination contributes to poor health outcomes by "triggering harmful biological, psychological and behavioural responses."<sup>13</sup> Compared to non-racialized people, Toronto's Black residents report higher rates of pain and discomfort, high blood pressure, and overweight and obesity.<sup>14</sup>

Limited access to relevant, safe, affordable, and effective health and community services remain a challenge for Black residents and families living in Toronto. Black Torontonians often experience a 'service desert' in their neighbourhoods. And when services are available, many Black residents report that though these services are funded to support all Torontonians, they are often inadequate in meeting the needs of Black residents.

### **Job Opportunities & Income Supports**

Torontonians of African descent experience lower graduation rates, higher rates of unemployment, and are more likely to be living in poverty than the general population in the city. Black families are about three times more likely to be living on low incomes than white families.<sup>15</sup> Forty-eight percent of Black children live in families with incomes of less than \$30,000 a year compared to only 9% of non-racialized children.<sup>16</sup> The newly available Census data shows that low income rates are highest among third and later generations for Black residents within the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area than other population groups.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> James, C. & Turner, T. *Towards Race Equity in Education: The Schooling of Black Students in the Greater Toronto Area*, April 2107. Retrieved May 28, 29, 2017. <http://edu.yorku.ca/files/2017/04/Towards-Race-Equity-in-Education-April-2017.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). Newsroom: Ontario's Black Youth Action Plan. Queen's Printer for Ontario, March 7, 2017. Retrieved May25, 2017: <https://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2017/03/ontarios-black-youth-action-plan.html>

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Children and Youth Services. March 7, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Toronto Public Health. *Racialization and Health Inequities in Toronto*. October, 2013. Retrieved May 25, 2017: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-62904.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Toronto Public Health. 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Morgan, A. "The Blackening Margins of Multiculturalism": ACLC's Feb 2016 United Nations Report on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of African Canadians. African Canadian Legal Clinic, Toronto, Ontario, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada. 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016211.

Black Torontonians have an unemployment rate of 13%, nearly two times the provincial rate.<sup>18</sup> Reviewing national trends, the United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent concluded its official visit to Canada in fall 2016 noting concerns over anti-Black racism in the country's labour market. For example, they found a much higher unemployment rate for Black women at 11% compared to 7% for the general Canadian population, and when employed, Black women make 37% less than white men and 15% less than their white female counterparts.<sup>19</sup> Black residents are often concentrated in part-time and precarious work that is inadequate to meet their basic needs and fails to leverage their talents.

### **Policing & the Justice System**

For over a decade now, Torontonians of African Descent have been the second most targeted community for hate crimes in the city. In 2016, Black residents were victims of 85% of hate crimes in Toronto where racism was the motivating factor.<sup>20</sup> Yet, lack of community trust in police means many incidents of anti-Black harassment and violence go unreported.<sup>21</sup>

Black Torontonians face many disparities related to law enforcement. They are disproportionately impacted by racial profiling and over-policing, and over-represented in federal and provincial prisons. Twenty-seven percent of all carding incidents are focused on Black Torontonians, three times their representation in the overall Toronto population.<sup>22</sup> Over the last 10 years, the number of federally incarcerated Black people has increased by 75%, now accounting for 9.3% of the total federal population despite representing just 2.9% of the Canadian population. Black women and girls are one of the fastest growing incarcerated groups.<sup>23</sup>

This ongoing reality of anti-Black racism in Toronto stands as an obstacle to a truly fair and just city. The City of Toronto, as a government, has a duty to make decisions and take actions that help Toronto become an inclusive and prosperous place for everyone.

### **Development of a City Response**

In April 2016, Mayor Tory requested the Director, Social Policy, Analysis and Research in the Social Development, Finance & Administration Division (SDFA) to initiate a process to acknowledge anti-Black racism in Toronto and develop a comprehensive plan to address it. To begin the process, SDFA partnered with Black leaders and

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, 2016.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20732&LangID=E>

<sup>20</sup> Toronto Police Services (TPS). *2016 Annual Hate/Bias Crime Statistical Report*. Intelligence Services, Hate Crime Unit, Toronto Police Services, December 2016. Retrieved May 25, 2017:

<https://www.torontopolice.on.ca/publications/files/reports/2016hatecrimereport.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Xing, L. *Hate crime reports up, arrests down in 2016, Toronto police say*. CBC, March 17, 2017.

Retrieved May 25, 2017: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/hate-crime-reports-up-arrests-down-in-2016-toronto-police-say-1.4029286>

<sup>22</sup> McIntyre, C. *Canada has a Black Incarceration Problem*. Torontoist.com, April 21, 2016. Retrieved May 25, 2017: <http://torontoist.com/2016/04/african-canadian-prison-population/>

<sup>23</sup> Office of the Correctional Investigator. *A Case Study of Diversity in Corrections: The Black Inmate Experience in Federal Penitentiaries Final Report*. Government of Canada, 2014. Retrieved May 25, 2017: <http://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/cnt/rpt/oth-aut/oth-aut20131126-eng.aspx>



organizations to create and implement a four-phase process, guided by three principles that emerged from a meeting Mayor Tory held with Black leaders in April 2016 following protests by Black Lives Matter Toronto: (1) build on existing research and recommendations; (2) partner with the community; and (3), engage young leadership in the process.

In phase one, City staff took two actions. First, in fall 2016, the City Manager hosted an Open Dialogue session for City senior leaders to better understand anti-Black racism and its impact on the city. Second, City divisions, in partnership with OCASI (Ontario Coalition of Agencies Servicing Immigrants) launched the second instalment of the Toronto For All public education series to name and support public dialogue on anti-Black racism in Toronto.

In phase two, City staff reviewed 16 seminal reports already written by Black leaders, activists, educators, community groups, and public servants between 1975 and 2016 as the starting point. Staff analyzed these reports and grouped over 113 recommendations into five themes: (1) Children & Youth Development; (2) Health & Community Services; (3) Job Opportunities & Income Supports; (4) Policing & the Justice System, and (5) Community Engagement & Black Leadership.

In phase three, SDFA partnered with 11 community agencies serving Toronto's diverse Black communities to host Community Conversations structured around 41 years' worth of recommendations. Seven additional agencies stepped forward to host conversations, leading to a total of 41 Community Conversations from January 21 to March 22, 2017. Fifteen young leaders of African descent were trained and engaged to guide the Community Conversations about what actions needed to still be taken against past recommendations and current issues.

More than 800 Black Torontonians, from across the city – young and elder, Caribbean and Continental African, Black queer and Black trans youth and adults, Francophone women, parents and caregivers, community workers, artists, and business and faith leaders – shared with us how they would like to build on past recommendations to achieve meaningful action today.

City staff worked with the community facilitators to analyze and compile these community ideas into a draft action plan. Relevant City divisions reviewed the draft action plan for clarifications and additions from their service and policy perspectives. The resulting draft action plan was presented to Black community leaders, organizers and residents on May 13, 2017 in an open feedback workshop hosted by Mayor Tory at Toronto City Hall. This community feedback was used to refine and finalize the recommendations and actions.

In phase four, from September 5 to September 30, 2017, Black community workers, advocates, business leaders and experts joined City staff from across divisions and agencies in five Expert Working Groups supported by Black process facilitators. The Expert Working Groups convened to develop work plans and to identify resources required to implement actions. Additionally, five Black subject matter experts with strong Anti-Black Racism Analysis assisted eight City divisions and one agency to complete the same task. Collaborative meetings, informed by research into existing effective

models, also supported the development of the Anti-Black Racism Partnership and Accountability Circle.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism is the result of this collaborative effort between the City of Toronto and Torontonians of African descent.

### **The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism**

Eradicating anti-Black racism is not a task that a municipal governments alone can do. This is collective work. It requires mutually reinforcing efforts from all orders of government, institutions, businesses, schools, community agencies and individuals. That is how sustainable, long-term, societal impact will be achieved.

Through this Action Plan, the City is stepping forward as one key actor in this collective work to take leadership to enact municipal levers under our influence to increase positive outcomes for Torontonians of African descent.

The City of Toronto has direct administrative responsibility over a number of critical systems that affect Toronto residents on a daily basis:

- The City is one of the largest employers in Toronto, with a wide variety of professional positions and entry-level jobs with pathways to middle income earnings
- The City supports Canada's financial and business capital, as one of the most business-friendly cities in North America with more than 89,800 businesses operating from the Toronto
- The City owns a large portion of the housing stock, through the largest landlord in Canada, Toronto Community Housing, home to 110,000 Torontonians, and provides active support for other social housing providers and affordable housing in Toronto for low-income and vulnerable residents
- Through recreation infrastructure, the City supports the second largest system after the school system for social inclusion for children and youth
- Through local planning and community service investments, the City has intimate knowledge of 140 neighbourhoods and leads place-based planning with community partners
- Through the Toronto Police, the City operates the frontline service to the criminal justice system
- The City operates the crisis support systems for Toronto residents through Fire, Paramedics, Police, and shelters.

These are important systems that a municipal government provides to its residents. They need to be leveraged to create a fair, accessible and supportive city for all Toronto residents.

Like other Toronto residents, Torontonians of African descent want to live in a city where the services and spaces meant to serve residents are also accessible to them – this requires removing anti-Black bias, prejudice, and discrimination in policies and practices.

Black residents want to be afforded the same life chances and opportunities to participate as all other Torontonians. Currently, without acknowledgement of anti-Black racism and intentional effort to address it, measures to achieve universal equity often fail to effectively serve Black Torontonians, leading to disparities and disproportionate negative outcomes. Targeting equity measures for residents of African descent will ensure they have access to the full benefits of living in this city like other Torontonians.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism is presented as a five-year plan to leverage the talents, knowledge, and experiences of Black residents and Black organizations as partners in making municipal services, spaces and policies fully inclusive and accessible to Black Torontonians in both intent and in practice. The Action Plan includes 22 recommendations and 80 actions to address five issue areas: children and youth development; health and community services; job and income supports; policing and the justice system; and community engagement and Black leadership. The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism is attached in Appendix A.

Whenever governments and service providers work to target the removal of systemic barriers experienced by the most disadvantaged communities, all residents benefit. The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism follows this approach of targeted universalism. The actions, when taken as a whole and executed fully, will benefit all Torontonians, especially other Toronto communities experiencing racism and marginalization.

The Toronto Action Plan lays out actions to help ensure that municipal services, spaces and policies become fully inclusive and accessible to Black Torontonians:

- Some actions leverage Black cultural knowledge and practices to better support positive child and youth development
- Some actions require targeted communication and outreach to ensure Black communities are reached by universal service efforts and job opportunities
- Some actions assess current policies, practices and structures to identify anti-Black bias and take corrective and preventative actions
- In other cases, actions are about piloting new approaches and sustainably investing in programs and organizations that are already achieving successful outcomes.

For each year of implementation, an annual work plan will be created by City staff, in collaboration with community members and submitted to City Council for approval. Each annual work plan will contain key priorities and initiatives to advance the inclusion of Black Torontonians in the short-term. Work plans also include a mix of initiatives that can be completed within existing resources and others requiring new investments. An annual progress report for each implementation year will be reported publicly to help ensure continued improvement and community accountability.

## 2018 Work Plan

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism is a five-year plan with implementation scheduled from 2018-2022. In Year One (2018), the Anti-Black Racism Unit will deploy expertise and resources to a range of City divisions to lead initiatives, monitor progress and publicly report on key deliverables driven by four priorities:

1. *Creating Culture Change at the City*

This priority is about driving systemic change at the City of Toronto by working to shift the City's culture to better understand and actively address anti-Black racism in City practices, policies, hiring and retention strategies and service delivery. This internal focus helps embed an ABR analysis and competency into the institution to enable long-term transformative change. Efforts in this priority area are fundamental given their ability to achieve sustainable systemic impact.

2. *Investing in Black Children & Youth*

This priority is about ensuring that the City invests in the creation, continuation and expansion of high quality programs and opportunities to support equitable outcomes for children and youth of African descent. Efforts in this priority can meet some immediate needs and seed long-term on positive child and youth development.

3. *Connecting Black Torontonians to Civic Decision-Making*

This priority supports City actions that leverage the leadership capacity, talents and skills of diverse Black Torontonians into civic and business leadership and opportunities to contribute to the success of the city and its communities. Efforts under this priority emphasize partnership and community leadership as critical success factors in building civic resilience and community ownership in a prosperous Toronto.

4. *Improving Customer Service*

This priority reflects the intent to improve the quality and effectiveness of the customer service experienced by Torontonians of African descent at the City.

A range of initiatives will happen annually across the corporation, including the Toronto Police Service in order to meet these priorities. Key Year One initiatives can be found in Appendix B.

## The Anti-Black Racism Partnership & Accountability Circle

After 41 years of reports and recommendations, Black residents shared one central priority – the focus now must be on taking meaningful actions in partnership with Black community leaders. Residents were clear in their concern that the City not provide yet another report without clear commitment and investment to act. They felt hopeful about the leadership shown by the Mayor and the partnership process facilitated by City staff to develop the plan; however, they have witnessed decades of failure on the part of

governments to effectively address systemic anti-Black racism that have serious consequences for their own lives and those of their families and communities.

With serious commitment by the City, diverse Torontonians of African descent are ready to step forward again to be partners in working to challenge and change systemic practices and policies that can materially affect the life chances of Black Torontonians. Key to this partnership effort is the establishment of an ongoing, Anti-Black Racism Partnership & Accountability Circle.

In Phase four, City staff spoke to community members with interest in supporting the development of an ongoing structure of collaboration, partnership and accountability. Staff also researched several best practices models in Toronto and other jurisdictions.

This report recommends the establishment of the Anti-Black Racism Partnership & Accountability Circle comprised of diverse Torontonians of African descent to support the implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism in ways that are collaborative, transparent, effective and accountable to the community. City support to and partnership with the Anti-Black Racism Partnership & Accountability Circle is a key foundational step to ensuring that the City of Toronto better serve Torontonians of African descent.

The proposed model is informed by various indigenous African values, principles and practices and builds on key learnings of other community-government partnership best practices, such as the African Nova Scotian Affairs and the Toronto Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (TIHAC). Key features include:

- Circle membership of 12 comprised from the diversity of Toronto's Black communities
- Inclusion of both elders and youth among the membership
- Use of an independent community facilitator to help build trust and guide the process
- Secretariat support provided by the City's ABR Unit

A high level summary of the Anti-Black Racism Partnership & Accountability Circle is provided in Appendix C. The 2018 Work Plan Priorities includes work to develop the Circle through broad and open outreach and refinement of operating principles and practices with the founding Circle Members.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

In 2016, multiple consultations processes were launched in Toronto and across Ontario, including through the Provincial Anti-Racism Directorate and the Independent Police Oversight Review, and municipally, through the Toronto Police Transformation Taskforce Review. Earlier this year, the Province of Ontario launched A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-Year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan and the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan, both to support the Government of Ontario to take proactive steps to eliminate systemic, race-based disparities for Black children and youth and their families. On June 1, 2017, Bill 114, an Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures was

passed in the Ontario Legislature and received Royal Assent. The new legislation, the Anti-Racism Act, 2017 strengthens the Ontario's government's ability to identify and combat systemic racism in policies, programs and services and provides support for the efforts the City of Toronto is beginning to take.

Intergovernmental cooperation, coordination and investment are required to make sustained, widespread and effective systemic change on structural racism. The City alone cannot solve anti-Black racism. However, the City has an important role to play to take proactive steps in the areas of its jurisdiction, but requires co-investment and policy alignment with the Province most urgently and the federal government to achieve fundamental transformation. Some efforts have started. Staff from the City and the Anti-Racism Directorate at the Province are working together to align their race-based data collection strategies and impact assessment tools. Discussions are beginning about aligning other shared priorities.

From December 4 to 6, 2017, the Michaëlle Jean Foundation will be co-hosting the National Black Canadians Summit in Toronto, a gathering of an anticipated 400 people of African descent and stakeholders to support collaboration around an inclusive Black Canadian strategic action plan. The City is actively participating in the Summit and working with the Foundation to align the Toronto Action Plan with the priorities of the Summit.

Combined, these reviews and the new legislation, coupled with the Toronto Action Plan, create the opportunity for meaningful, comprehensive change. Two years into the United Nation's International Decade for People of African Descent (2015 to 2024), coordinated, aligned and integrated government action is required to fully address anti-Black racism in Toronto and in Ontario.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Peter Wallace  
City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment A: The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism

Attachment B: 2018 Work Plan

Attachment C: Anti-Black Racism Partnership & Accountability Circle