

Letter from Floydeen Charles-Fridal, Caribbean African Canadian CA CA Social Services

November 12, 2020

To the Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee

TOWARDS A WELL SUPPORTED AND ACCOUNTABLE BLACK MANDATED-B3 FUNDING FRAMEWORK

We are here today to voice our support and to convey the backing of the communities we serve for the historical initiative – the Black Mandated/B3 Funding Framework – a framework for targeted funding for organizations that are Black led, Black serving and Black mandated (B3 Organizations).

We are a coalition of B3 organizations who are committed to strengthening the service delivery framework in our organizations in order that we may increase chances of sustainable success and improve the overall financial, economic, social, mental health and wellbeing of Black children, youth, families and adults in Toronto.

Cumulatively, we have well over 100 years of experience serving Black communities in Toronto. Together, we deliver a range of programs and services that are culturally relevant and informed by proven best practices.

Last year, our programs and services reached over 5000 Torontonians with a multiplicity of needs, who were facing complex challenges. These issues have been documented in various reports including some that were commissioned by the City and issued from its printers. The contents of these reports have justifiably informed the development of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. The many needs and challenges regularly faced by our community members are contributing in no small measure to the heightened vulnerability that we are experiencing today with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The combination of Anti-Black Racism and ongoing vulnerability to crises have created a funding need that the Black Mandated/B3 Funding Framework, if approved, would go a long way in addressing. The proposed funding framework is capable of enhancing the capacity of B3 organizations to respond more effectively in addressing the disparate vulnerability of Black communities to COVID-19 and its present intensification. We equally believe that the proposed funding scheme would place B3 organizations in positions of strength to tackle future crises in our communities and to continue our support for all efforts to eradicate systemic racism in our City.

The Black Mandated-B3 Funding Framework is the first time, as far as we can tell, that any level of government in Canada has created such a funding framework with a long-term outlook; that is, a funding framework that looks beyond a project, a program or a crisis. Importantly, the proposed funding scheme will create more sustainable structures within Black led organizations that are already committed to address community needs and challenges and to showcase the strength and dynamism of the communities that we serve.

While there is still scant historical data on the level of funding that Black led organizations have received from the City, recent reports by OCASI Continental African Leadership Project and Black to the Future Emergency AID Response reports indicate that Black led organizations continue to be underfunded by all levels of government in Canada including by the City of Toronto; especially in comparison to the documented needs of the communities they serve.

As members of the B3 organization City cluster we continue to show our readiness and preparedness to work with the City to improve the health outcomes of all Torontonians especially those who are most vulnerable. We continue to show in our work with the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) unit that our programs are adaptive and responsive and informed by direct lived experience and many decades of reflective programming in and with the Black communities.

To conclude, we the members of this coalition of agencies serving Black communities strongly recommend that the members of the Economic and Community Development Committee approve the Black Mandated/B3 Funding Framework.

Because we believe that:

1. It supports the vision, values and mandates of all of our organizations.
2. It will create a unique opportunity to engage Black youth in meaningful leadership positions. This would positively influence the life outcomes for youth in our communities.
3. It will facilitate a more sustainable partnership and collaboration among B3 organizations. This in turn will enhance our collective efficacy and therefore impact in our communities.
4. It is an historical opportunity for the City to showcase its responsiveness to the needs it has identified and articulated in its various reports and communiques.
5. It will further entrench the practice of “nothing about us without us;” “nothing about the Black communities without the leadership of Black organizations” in the City’s funding schema.
6. It will positively impact the capacity of B3 organizations to address both the systemic and situational issues that are necessary to improve the social, economic, and health outcomes of the members of the Black communities.
7. It will begin to concretely address and counter the historical under-resourcing of B3 organizations.
8. It will be another inflection point in addressing Anti-Black Racism in the City and show a clear pathway for the other levels of government in Canada to emulate.
9. The City with the implementation of this framework would create an infrastructure capable of achieving accountability and answerability from and to Black communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to add our collective voice to the support for the implementation of the Black Mandated/B3 Funding Framework. We believe it is a worthy initiative that warrants the full support of this committee.

African Food Basket (AFB)

Contact: Anan Lololi
E: anan@africanfoodbasket.ca

Africans In Partnership Against AIDS (APAA)

Contact: Fanta Ongoiba
E: fanta@apaa.ca

Black Action Defense Committee

Contact: Valarie Steeles
Email: ashbourne.steele@gmail.com

Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough (BGCES) & MAAT Youth Innovation Centre (MYIC)

Contact: Utcha Sawyers
E: Utcha@esbgc.ca

Canadian Gambian Youth Development Association (CGYDA)

Contact: Tijan Jallow
E: gambiacanada@gmail.com

Caribbean African Canadian (CAFCAN) Social Services

Contact: Floydeen Charles-Fridal
E: fcharles-fridal@cafcan.org

Harriet Tubman Community Organization (HTCO)

Contact: Akilah Hamilton
E: akilah@tubmancommunity.org

Jamaican Canadian Association

Contact: Adaoma Patterson
E: President@JCAOntario.org

National African Integration and Families Association (NAIFA)

Contact: Nathan Okonta
E: okontana@naifatoronto.ca

Young and Potential Fathers Initiative (YPF)

Contact: Quammie Williams
E: williamsquammie@gmail.com

