SUMMARY OF PROCESS AND CONSULTATIONS INFORMING DATA FOR EQUITY

The Data for Equity Strategy and Guidelines were developed by an interdivisional working group consisting of staff with equity and data expertise including representatives from Social Development, Finance and Administration, People and Equity, Indigenous Affairs Office and Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit. The Strategy and Guidelines were informed by a jurisdictional scan, a review of existing tools, and extensive consultation with City staff, experts and community members. This process included:

- Reviewing existing guidelines, best practices and data collection tools including the Ontario Anti-Racism Data Standards for the collection and use of race-based data, Statistics Canada survey and census tools, and data collection tools used by the Toronto District School Board, hospitals and community health centres in the Toronto Central LHIN, Ontario child welfare and youth justice programs, Ontario Works income assistance, City of Toronto divisions and several research projects
- Consulting with experts to learn about key local and provincial experiences collecting and using socio-demographic data in education, health care, public health, child welfare and youth justice
- Building on the lessons learned and tools provided by other initiatives
- Engaging with City staff on the Strategy and Guidelines through many individual conversations and the well-attended Data for Equity Community of Practice
- Expert and community consultations on the Guidelines, including the core and optional socio-demographic data elements, with researchers, data and anti-racism experts, community organizations, Black organizations and leaders, Indigenous organizations and leaders, advisory groups and residents including people from Indigenous communities, Black communities and many equity-seeking groups. These consultations are described below.

Community Demand and Support

Community demand and support for the collection and use of socio-demographic and disaggregated data has become strong in recent years and has been highlighted by many advocates and experts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members, researchers, community service providers and advocates have pointed out the current lack of disaggregated data at the municipal, provincial and national level. They have expressed the value of using this data, highlighted examples from other countries, and called on governments at all levels to be more accountable to Indigenous, Black and equity-seeking groups by collecting this data and acting on it. Strong support has been expressed by community groups for collecting and using additional socio-demographic

data including race, Indigenous identity, gender and sexual orientation in government and research data sets. Communities have also identified the need to better coordinate and standardize this data, report it publicly and make it available for use by communities to promote positive change.

This support for data collection, sharing and use was expressed in the extensive community engagement with Black Toronto residents that informed the development of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, the 2017 and 2020 Black Experiences in Health Care Symposium of health and community leaders, and by many community groups and organizations including the Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change Campaign, Rainbow Health Ontario and the Assembly of First Nations. During COVID-19, many prominent health and anti-racism leaders, researchers and advocates such as the Black Health Alliance again voiced their support for the collection of race-based data.

Despite strong support for the collection and use of socio-demographic data to demonstrate inequities and advance equity, Indigenous and Black communities have also highlighted how this data has been used to harm their communities and the need for community governance models.

Misuse and harm caused by data, data not being shared, and research not being used to benefit Indigenous communities has led to substantial mistrust and fear among Indigenous communities about research and government data collection. Black community leaders and researchers have highlighted how data about Black people has been misused, has not benefited and has not been accessible to Black communities. Experts and leaders have also identified how technology, artificial intelligence and algorithms have used race, income and other socio-demographic data to target and harm racialized communities, citing examples such as higher levels of surveillance, "predictive policing" technologies that profile racialized and low income people and neighbourhoods, and algorithms that identify and flag individuals considered to be at risk of committing fraud in accessing social services.

It is now widely recognized that data and research must incorporate Indigenous data governance approaches to ensure Indigenous collaboration and leadership in data collection, protection, use and sharing. A growing community movement has identified the need for Black community oversight and governance over the collection and use of data about Black people. Advocates have also called on all levels of government in Canada to introduce stronger regulations and penalties to ensure the protection of residents.

Summary of Consultations

Substantial insights were gathered from the engagement, community advocacy and existing literature described above about community perspectives on socio-demographic data collection and use. For this reason, consultations informing the Data for Equity Strategy focused on learning from experiences and promising practices, and getting advice and feedback on the collection of socio-demographic data.

Generally, City staff, community organizations, leaders, experts, researchers and community members were supportive of the City of Toronto collecting socio-demographic data and using disaggregated data to address inequities. Community members from Indigenous, Black and equity-seeking groups provided input on the core socio-demographic questions in the Data for Equity Guidelines. Community members generally reported being comfortable with answering the questions and provided feedback on how to improve specific questions. Extensive consultation was also done with experts, researchers and community leaders to inform the core socio-demographic questions, particularly on race, Indigenous and Two-Spirit identity, disability, gender and sexual orientation. Indigenous researchers, experts, community organizations and leaders were also consulted on Indigenous data governance approaches and models.

A list of the tables, organizations and individuals consulted is provided below.

City Staff Tables and Units

These tables and teams include City staff:

- Accessibility Unit
- Black Staff Network
- Children's Services Black Staff Network
- City Surveys Working Group
- Community of Practice for Evaluation
- Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit
- Data for Equity Community of Practice
- Indigenous Affairs Office
- Interdivisional Staff Team on Access and Equity
- Toronto Newcomer Office

City Community Tables

These tables include residents, experts and community organization representatives:

- Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee
- Children's Services 2SLGBTQ Advisory Committee

- City of Toronto Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit Expert Working Group on Race-Based Data
- People and Equity Division Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division Community Disability Steering Committee

Community Members

- Black trans youth in the community
- Indigenous trans and Two-Spirit community members
- Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Lived Experience Advisory Group
- Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy Resident Advisory Committee
- Toronto Youth Equity Strategy's Indigenous and Black trans and Two-Spirit working group

Community Organizations, Tables and Networks

Community organization representatives and tables:

- 2–Spirited People of the 1st Nations
- Legal Aid Ontario
- LGBT Service Providers Executive Directors Group
- Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- Na-Me-Res (Native Men's Residence)
- Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
- Social Planning Toronto
- Toronto Inuit Association
- United Way of Greater Toronto

Government and Public Services

- Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate, Ministry of the Solicitor General
- Ontario Indigenous Education Office, Ministry of Education
- Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network
- Toronto District School Board

Individual Researchers, Experts and Community Leaders

- Aaron Franks, First Nations Information Governance Centre
- Alex Abramovich, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- Ayden Scheim, Drexel University Dornsife School of Public Health
- Cameron Crawford, Ryerson University School of Disability Studies

- Carl James, York University Faculty of Education
- Caroline Bennett-Abuayyash, University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Esther Ignani, Ryerson University School of Disability Studies
- Fiona Cheuk, University of Toronto and Ryerson University
- Gillian Parekh, York University Critical Disability Studies
- Janet Smylie, Well Living House
- Jarret Leaman, Troon Technologies (formerly Aboriginal Professional Association of Canada and Ministry of Colleges and Education)
- Kathryn Underwood, Ryerson University School of Early Childhood Studies
- Lindsay Kretschmer, Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council
- Lori Ross, University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Lynn Lavallée, Ryerson University School of Social Work
- Sara Wolfe, Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto
- Tammy Bernasky, York University Critical Disability Studies
- Wendy Porch, Centre for Independent Living in Toronto