

Toronto For All - Addressing Anti-Semitism

Date: March 16, 2021

To: Executive Committee

From: Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, Chief People Officer, and the Chief Communications Officer

Wards: All

SUMMARY

Since 2016, the City of Toronto has collaborated with community partners through the Toronto For All initiative to create public awareness campaigns challenging implicit biases, negative attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudices that contribute to systemic barriers to respect, inclusion, and equity. Each campaign has resulted in a transit shelter poster, social media engagement, web-based resources and community information for the general public as well as internal learning resources for City staff. There have been ten campaigns to date.

This report responds to Council decision, MM28.23. It provides a brief update on the Toronto For All initiative and indicates a commitment to address anti-Semitism as part of the Toronto For All initiative through a 2021 campaign. Across Canada, including Toronto, recorded increased incidents of anti-Semitism, including harassment, vandalism and violence against the Jewish Canadians.¹ In doing so, this report responds to Council decision, MM28.23.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, Chief People Officer, and the Chief Communications Officer recommend that:

1. The Executive Committee request the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, Chief People Officer, and the Chief Communications Officer to deliver a Toronto For All campaign focussed on Anti-Semitism in Q3 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

¹ 2019 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, B'Nai Brith Canada, 2019, 11, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gG6dXVevy0eEiHgTNXN hulwv54s79Cd9/view>

There are no immediate financial impacts to the City arising from the recommendations in this report. All actions related to the recommendation will be completed within existing resources.

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

EQUITY IMPACT

Equity is a fundamental issue of respect and fairness. The goal of Toronto For All is to generate dialogue amongst Toronto residents in order to create a city where all Torontonians say "no" to all forms of discrimination and racism, including systemic racism. Toronto For All encourages all Torontonians to challenge implicit biases, negative attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudices that contribute to systemic barriers to respect, inclusion, safety and equity. The program has positive equity implications by addressing underlying issues and biases, and promoting the diversity of Toronto. A campaign focused on addressing anti-Semitism recognizes the persistent issues of intolerance and hate activity aimed at members of the Jewish community across the country, including Toronto, and provides an opportunity to educate and positively shift attitudes and behaviours.

DECISION HISTORY

Inspired by a public service campaign in Barcelona, Spain that was designed to dispel misconceptions and prejudices about immigrants, on June 10, 2014, Toronto City Council approved the development of "an anti-rumours campaign" as part of the Toronto Newcomer Strategy, 2014-2016 Implementation. Council directed the campaign to address stigma and stereotypes as barriers to greater newcomer participation, better integration, social cohesion, and community building, but in the absence of resources, implementation was delayed.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.CD29.10>

On September 30, 2015, City Council approved the anti-rumours campaign as part of the proposed activities of the City of Toronto Syrian Refugee Resettlement Program. The campaign model was directed to address issues related to Islamophobia, xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments in the context of Syrian refugees arriving to Toronto.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX8.39>

On November 8 and 9, 2016, reviewing the Toronto Newcomer Strategy – Progress Report, City Council directed the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights to further develop the "Toronto For All" public education initiatives to address transphobia and issues experienced by Indigenous people in Toronto.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.CD15.5>

On October 2, 2017 City Council approved Regularizing Toronto For All - A Public Education Initiative to Support Civic Resiliency, regularizing a public education initiative with two campaigns a year across a range of media platforms supported by a learning program for City staff.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX27.9>

On February 2, 2021 City Council approved Addressing anti-Semitism through the Toronto For All anti-racism strategy

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.MM28.23>

COMMENTS

The Program Model

Toronto For All is a joint initiative between Social Development, Finance and Administration; People and Equity Division; Strategic Communications; and local community partners to support public education that makes real the City's motto: Diversity Our Strength.

There is growing understanding that implicit biases, negative attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudices contribute to systemic barriers of discrimination and racism. These barriers continue to negatively impact the safety, wellbeing and life chances of Toronto residents who belong to one or more equity-seeking groups. When Torontonians fail to recognize diversity as a resource and a source of strength, residents demonstrate low civic resiliency. Civic resiliency is the capacity of a group of residents or community to adapt to the evolving complexity and diversity of their social environment by building good relationships and viewing these changes as a strength. Civic resiliency can be measured in residents' awareness of – and engagement with – the systemic barriers that exist for people in their environment due to group membership. Implicit biases, negative attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices negatively impact Toronto's civic resiliency.

The City, as the government closest to residents, has the ability, working with partners, to take steps to support the civic resiliency of Torontonians for the benefit all residents.

The Toronto For All initiatives includes annual public education campaigns directed to Toronto residents, and internal learning program directed to City of Toronto staff:

- Each campaign depends upon a lead community partner to convene conversations between a creative agency and community members that informs the visual campaign and the social media presence. The community partner contributes to the curation of web resources that are maintained on the Toronto For All page on the City's website.
- The program also informs the City's Toronto For All Learning platform which is an education initiative created by People and Equity, for all City staff that builds and maintains an equitable and inclusive workplace to better serve, and reflect, Toronto's diverse communities.

Campaign Themes: 2016-2020

The Toronto For All initiative has delivered ten campaigns since 2016. They have focussed on:

#	Date	Campaign
1	2016	Migrant and Muslim Torontonians - Challenging Islamophobia and Xenophobia
2	2016	Black Torontonians - Challenging anti-Black Racism
3	2017	Torontonians who are Experiencing Homelessness - Challenging NIMBYISM
4	2017	Racialized Transgender Youth - Challenging Transphobia
5	2018	Indigenous People - Challenging Anti-Indigenous Racism
6	2018	Torontonians with disabilities - Promoting accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities
7	2019	Torontonians who Experience Intimate Partner Violence
8	2019	Anti-Ageism in the Workplace - Challenging Age Discrimination
9	2020	Anti-Black Racism and Mental Health - Recognizing the Impact of Anti-Black Racism on Mental Health
10	2020	Anti-East Asian Racism - Challenging the Scapegoating of East Asian Torontonians During the Pandemic

Addressing Anti-Semitism

As the City continues to work with partners to challenge bias, stereotyping and discriminatory attitudes, the next Toronto For All campaign will focus on addressing anti-Semitism. For almost 40 years, B'nai Brith Canada has been documenting anti-Semitic incidents. They note a concerning trend in recent years, with an increase in anti-Semitic harassment, vandalism, and violence. "While online hatred accounts for most of the anti-Semitic harassment in Canada, face-to-face harassment almost doubled in 2019 – growing from 8.6% to 16.8%," notes the organization's audit, published in 2020.² Ontario saw the dramatic spikes of anti-Semitic occurrences with 62.8% more incidents in 2019 over 2018.³ Globally, Jewish communities have faced deadly attacks, including in places of worship. The Toronto Police 2019 Annual Hate Crime Statistical

² 2019 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, B'Nai Brith Canada, 2019, 5, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gG6dXVevy0eEiHgTNXNhulwv54s79Cd9/view>

³ 2019 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, B'Nai Brith Canada, 2019, 11, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gG6dXVevy0eEiHgTNXNhulwv54s79Cd9/view>

Report⁴ indicates that there were 44 occurrences of reported hate crime against Jewish community members in Toronto that year. The Jewish community makes up approximately 3.2 percent of the resident population in Toronto, and are represented in 32 percent of all reported hate crimes in 2019.⁵ The year over year identification of Jewish people as targets in the highest proportion of hate crimes reported to Toronto Police is evidence that anti-Semitism is a serious and ongoing manifestation of hate that must be addressed in order to achieve the City's goal of a Toronto for All.

Given the need for transit shelter space to be used for Public Health COVID-19 testing and immunization messaging, the program will be on-line, as was the Anti-East Asian Racism campaign. Staff will engage a community partner, convene community discussions and deliver the campaign in the third quarter of 2021. Concurrent with the public education campaign, the People and Equity Division will create resources to raise City staff's awareness about anti-Semitism.

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⁴ 2019 Annual Hate Crimes Statistical Report, Toronto Police Service, Intelligence Service, Hate Crime Unit, <http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/publications/files/reports/2019hatecrimereport.pdf>

⁵ 2019 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, B'Nai Brith Canada, 2019, 26, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gG6dXVevy0eEiHgTNXNhulwv54s79Cd9/view>