
A D I N K R A F A R M C O N S U L T I N G

A PLACE TO RECLAIM, BUILD AND GROW A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY



April 28, 2022

Re: Deputation In Support of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism – Year Three Annual Report

Dear Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Rudi Quammie Williams, lead consultant at Adinkrafarm Consulting, a small consulting company that was birthed in Toronto's African-Canadian community. We are focused on assisting organizations currently serving our diverse Black Communities, to reclaim ancestral wisdom, build sustainable infrastructure and grow to meet our collective needs in the future. Presently, supported by the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit, we are involved with the Black Resiliency Cluster, a group of approximately sixty-five Black serving, black focused and black led (B3) organizations with interests in collectively formulating a Pandemic Recovery Framework that will help to mitigate the disproportionate risks that are faced by Toronto's Black Communities as a result of long existing disparities now exacerbated by the COVID 19 Pandemic.

We strongly support the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit and its implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. We ask that Committee Members support the unanimous adoption of the Toronto Action Plan Year Three Annual Report and continue to fund and support the Unit's invaluable efforts in our African and Caribbean communities.

Together the agencies that make up the Black Resiliency Cluster serve over 60,000 Black identifying Toronto residents. They provide services to all ages, genders and intersections of our communities. In examining the organizations of the cluster and reviewing the elements that they can contribute to ongoing efforts to reduce the damage caused by COVID 19, it is clear that these organizations are operating in a resource-starved environment. This elevates the significance of the CABR Unit and the financial and human resources that they can bring to solution making and sustainable change.

Black communities were impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic at disproportionate levels when compared to most other communities. Many Black children experience food insecurity at significantly higher rates than their counterparts in other communities. Other impacts include mental and physical health challenges and deterioration in vital social, economic and wellbeing indicators for Black children, youth, seniors and families. Evidence of the double edged sword of poverty and pandemic can be seen across indicators such as housing and employment, where the unemployment rate among Black Canadians was at 12 percent, about 70 percent higher than the rest of the population (8 percent) and 36 percent Black renter households had twice the eviction filing rates compared to census tracts with 2 percent Black households, even after controlling for poverty and other important factors.

Black Toronto residents, through the organizations that serve them are in need of increased supports such as sustainable funding and access to administrative resources. The current strategy of reallocating staff from the CABR Unit as a City of Toronto response to the Pandemic, reduces the level of support that the CABR staff can provide to the Black community that it was meant to serve. This is the strategy that is being implemented at our time of greatest need. This should be reconsidered.

Anti-Black Racism is pervasive and is a major obstacle for our communities and the organizations that serve them. As consultants serving these organizations, we see the need for a capacity building strategy aimed at supporting Black community members and organizations with sustainable funding, secure housing, increased community health supports, educational supports and communications tools. The Partnership and Accountability Circle provides valuable community oversight and feedback to the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR). This model provides for community engagement as an inherent aspect of the CABR Unit's service delivery. It works.

All signs are indicating that the effects of the Pandemic are going to be felt by the Toronto African and Caribbean communities for some time to come. Historic anti-Black Racism further complicates efforts to address the challenges faced by the Black communities. It is of paramount importance that the City of Toronto continue to provide the culturally sensitive supports that can have successful intergenerational outcomes and are offered through the CABR Unit.

Please accept a humble Adinkrafarm thanks to the Economic and Community Development Committee for the opportunity to share our thoughts today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rudi Quammie Williams', written in a cursive style.

Rudi Quammie Williams

Lead Consultant, Adinkrafarm Consulting