

May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Re: Deputation In Support of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism – Year Four Update**

Dear Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

Margaret's Housing and Community Support Services (Margaret's) emphatically supports the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit in the ongoing implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. We ask that Committee Member support the unanimous adoption of the Toronto Action Plan Year Four Update.

Margaret's is a multi-services agency providing housing and Support Services in the downtown area. Our services include:

- Includes a variety of housing options specifically for women
- 24/7 High Support Housing
- Crisis beds
- Partial opportunity employment
- Mental health and justice (provides diversion and pre-diversion, and release planning)
- Client care – provides clinical care at three probation offices
- System navigator – release planning for inmates – Toronto East Detention centre
- Drop In Services – anchored in food security, provides Healthcare (Psychiatric care and GP services) dental care
- Housing Hub

At our community agency, we aim to address long-standing systemic disparities faced by Black communities. Our own experiences supporting Black residents and as a Black-led organizations our lived experience tells us we need more long term systemic interventions to address the root causes of anti-Black racism.



Increased support through sustainable funding for Black and Black-led organizations is critical toward facilitating sustainable solution and impactful change.

Throughout COVID-19, Black communities were disproportionately affected with the effects of the pandemic extending far beyond health outcomes impacting vital social, economic and wellbeing indicators for Black children, youth, seniors and families. Impacts 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 of 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

The ongoing leadership of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, the Partnership and Accountability Circle, and its partners will provide a comprehensive, community-informed approach to realize meaningful change to address the immediate and long term challenges experienced by Black communities.

Anti-Black Racism and its ongoing manifestations is one of the top challenges facing our communities, so we encourage the City to continue to take these critical steps to respond to the long standing demands for sustainable funding, capacity building supports, and addressing challenges such as food insecurity, housing and gentrification, and community health and well-being. These challenges preceded the pandemic and will continue well after without the City of Toronto's targeted action, intervention and support of local Black community leadership and increased action to address anti-Black racism in the City of Toronto.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism emphasizes that systems change is what we need immediately, as the City of Toronto moves to recover and rebuild through and beyond the pandemic. Short-term solutions are not enough to address the intergenerational impacts of anti-Black racism.





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We are in full support of the continued investment in the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism and look forward to seeing the necessary positive impacts it will continue to bring.

Thank you to the members of the Economic and Community Development Committee for considering our comments today.

Sincerely,

Diane Walter  
Executive Director  
Margaret's Housing & Community Support Services