

# Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit

SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER



## Greetings

Welcome back to our quarterly newsletter. We recognize that it has been a long time since we last distributed an edition of our newsletter. We greatly appreciate your patience as we work to restructure the content and frequency of our newsletter releases.

We begin this edition by celebrating the adoption of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism: Year Three Update by City Council. The Year Three Report provides an update on the progress to deliver Toronto's Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. This report outlines investments made by the City to advance growth and stability within Toronto's Black communities, as well as the collaborative work taking place between the CABR Unit and community partners to foster prosperity within Black communities.

Since the implementation of the Action Plan in 2018:

- 60% of recommendations and actions have been implemented;
- more than \$25.8 million has been invested by the City of Toronto to implement the Action Plan;
- more than 50% of all City staff have been trained on addressing anti-Black racism, including 9,294 senior leaders, managers, and frontline staff; and
- and we have established the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee, the first intergovernmental anti-Black racism advisory body to be embedded into the municipal governance process in Canada.

As we move through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, we're excited for everything we will continue to accomplish together. The CABR Unit works diligently to advance the lives of Black communities across Toronto, and our work will always be grounded in and led by community guidance and collaboration. In this edition of the newsletter, we are excited to highlight a few of our current initiatives, projects, and achievements.

CABR Unit

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## Looking Back...CABR Year Two in Review

Before we highlight some of our current projects and initiatives, we wish to reflect on the work done by the CABR Unit in Year Two of Toronto's Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. We are proud to announce the release of the CABR Year Two video, accompanied by the [CABR Year Two Annual Report](#).

The video provides context to the different projects and initiatives that we have partnered on with community agencies and organizations, and provides insight into how the CABR Unit operates within the City of Toronto as we work to confront anti-Black racism.

# YEAR 2

IN REVIEW

[Confronting Anti-Black Racism Year 2 - Full Video](#)

We also present a 3-minute highlight reel of the CABR Unit's work in Year Two of the *Action Plan*, which is now live on the [CABR website](#); and a video focused on the work that was done to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Toronto's Black communities.



[A Short Recap of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism's Unit's Year 2 Activities](#)

# CABR AND COVID-19

[Confronting Anti Black Racism's Covid-19 response video](#)



## Black Food Sovereignty

Adopted by the City Council in October 2021, the Toronto Black Food Sovereignty Plan (BFS Plan) works to address food insecurity faced by Black communities by dismantling socioeconomic barriers to increase food access, opportunity, and Black ownership over local food systems. So far, the Plan has funded Black-led urban agriculture initiatives; grassroots emergency food responses; increased operating dollars for Black-led food agencies; and has supported infrastructure and space access for Black farmers, Black food businesses, and food entrepreneurs to develop Black Food hubs and spaces.



We are also excited to launch the official Toronto Black Food Sovereignty Plan Advisory Circle later this month, featuring international and Toronto-based Black food leaders who will guide the implementation of the 5-year Plan.

### Community Spotlight: Community Advocacy Group Advancing Black Food Sovereignty in Toronto



“We have been on this journey for the past 25 years to ensure that Black communities have secure access to a sustainable food system that is culturally appropriate. On October 1, 2021, our collective efforts were recognized when Toronto City Council adopted the Black Food Sovereignty Plan. This is definitely a step forward, but also a critical time for our communities. We have to maintain dialogue among our communities as we move forward to ensure that Black communities reap the rewards of the Plan and our collective efforts.”

Anan Lololi, BFS Toronto





## Advancing Equitable Housing, Recognition and Placemaking

Working in partnership with City Divisions such as City Planning and Economic Development and Culture, the CABR Unit continues to ensure that the City consistently responds to the gentrification and displacement of Black communities in Toronto. This interdivisional collaboration proactively addresses neighborhood change and destabilization that contributes to Black displacement within Toronto. A focus is placed on responding to the challenges that impact access to community spaces and housing for Black businesses, residents, and local community agencies.



Neighborhoods with a high concentration of Black residents, including areas such as Jane and Finch, Eglinton West (Little Jamaica), Weston Mount Dennis, and Lawrence Heights, are being prioritized.



### Community Spotlight: Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market

The Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market, (started in the summer of 2017) runs weekly outdoor markets from July to September in Toronto's Little Jamaica and Little Keele Street neighborhoods. Founded and managed by Lori Beazer, these markets work to elevate local racialized farmers, food producers, and artisans, and re-root African and Caribbean food and culture in historically Black spaces within Toronto.

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"The Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market is more than just a market. It has become a weekly space to gather and reconnect with family, friends and neighbours, at the same time experiencing the different expressions of our rich culture. This market belongs to us and needs to be supported by all of us!"

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Lori Beazer - Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market Manager

## Black Mental Health Week 2022

As part of Action 22.2\* of the *Action Plan*, CABB partnered with TAIBU Community Health Centre, Tropicana Community Services, and Strides Toronto to hold the second annual Black Mental Health Week. Black Mental Health Week is a community-led initiative to spread awareness and improve understanding of the ongoing impacts of persistent systemic anti-Black racism on the mental health of Black communities.

*\*Action 22.2 outlines our commitment to provide public education on how anti-Black racism negatively impacts the health of people of African descent including being a trigger for mental illness.*



### Community Spotlight: Black Queer Youth Collective - PhotoVoice Project

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"The Black Queer Youth Collective (BQYC) designed a PhotoVoice project for Black Mental Health Week to encourage Black Queer and Trans youth to highlight self-care and prioritize their mental health. BQYC engaged Black youth and raised awareness about the important role self-care plays in promoting good health and wellbeing. Participants took and shared photos of themselves in the everyday activities they did to support their mental health such as taking care of their pets and plants, yoga, meditation to connect with their ancestors and spirituality, resting, and taking time to be outside in nature. The youth received their photos in a personalized mini-album and shared the gratitude they felt in being able to intentionally reflect and remind themselves to take care of themselves in a society that often does not support their queerness and blackness, and in turn takes a toll on their mental health. The feedback we received was invaluable in informing our programming moving forward. The structures in place are rooted in anti-Black racism and the BQYC is committed to finding ways for community to support one other navigating and fighting for systemic change especially when it comes to mental health."

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Tele Kapkirwok - Program Coordinator, BQYC





## Black-Mandated Funding Framework

This initiative responds to a history of underinvestment in Black-led and Black-serving agencies, organizations, and grassroots groups. The Black-Mandated Funding Framework (BMFF) was designed to achieve three key goals: increase funding to Black-mandated organizations and groups, improve granting practices to address historical funding inequities experienced by Black organizations and groups, and increase the stability of Black organizations through increased funding and self-determination.

### Community Spotlight: CEE Centre For Young Black Professionals



"In light of both the global movement for Black Lives and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the philanthropic community has increasingly turned its attention towards addressing systemic racism and the barriers that Indigenous and Black communities face with regards to accessing funding. The BMFF Pilot Micro-Grant project officially began implementation in February of this year, providing over \$180,000 in unrestricted capacity building funding to 9 Black-led, Black-serving and Black-focused grassroots and emerging organizations. We are excited with the progress made so far in being able to provide organizational mentorship and intermediary supports to these organizations, and look forward to even greater accomplishments in the near future. CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals would like to thank the City of Toronto-Community Funding Unit with the support of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit and the Black Resilience Cluster for the opportunity in this worthwhile endeavor."

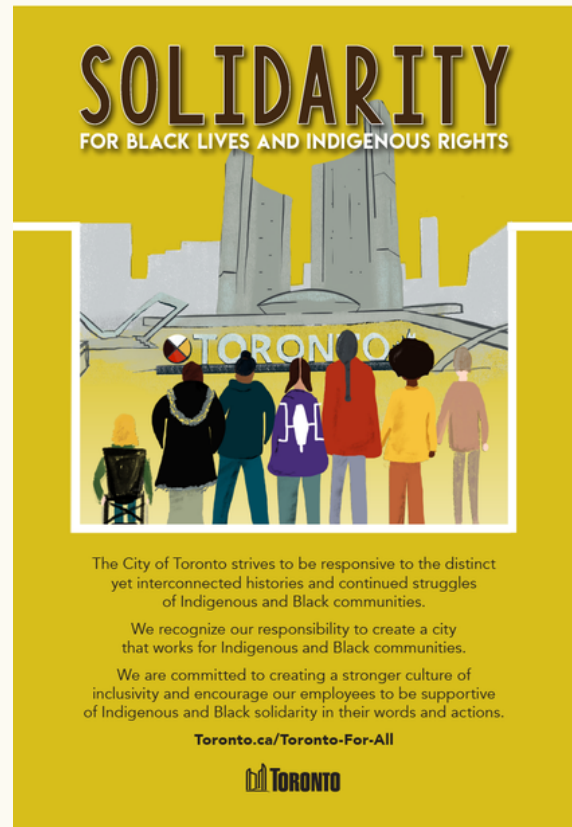


Khary Collins - Manager, Sector Leadership, CEE Centre

## Implementing Culture Change within the City of Toronto

Implementing lasting and meaningful culture change within the City of Toronto is the primary directive of Recommendation 11 of the *Action Plan*. Culture change is being advanced through confronting anti-Black racism work by leading City Council-mandated training as well as creating and facilitating important spaces. These include:

- Culturally-relevant learning opportunities where staff are able to learn about various parts of the African Diaspora;
- Monthly *Lunch and Learn* sessions that are grounded in explaining the five themes of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, highlighting some of the work particular divisions and agencies are advancing;
- Bi-weekly sharing circles that are focused on deeper discussions about the implementation of the *Action Plan*; and
- Collaboratively working with various employee reference groups targeting equity-deserving communities in an effort to embody the principle of Targeted Universalism and to establish it as a guiding principle for all Communities of Inclusion within the City Of Toronto.



The CABR Unit, collaborates with the City's Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO) through the City of Solidarity campaign in partnership with Indigenous and Black communities.

After taking part in the Council-mandated training, participants are asked to fill out a short survey. Here is some anonymous feedback from a participant that have completed the CABR training session:

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“The training is very enlightening and insightful. (The facilitator) has been a wonderful speaker. I learned that racism goes beyond the Black people's experience of being discriminated because of their skin color. Their history speaks for it and the society needs to learn more, understand and accept that Black people have equal rights, just like everyone else, and they deserve to be treated with dignity and justice.”

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## Things to Look Out For...

The 2022 iteration of Hungry for Comfort is spotlighting Afro-Caribbean contributions to Toronto's rich and diverse food culture.

### **Hungry for Comfort Saturday, August 20, 2022**

An annual celebration of culinary food

stories, Hungry for Comfort features free food tastings, walking tours, pop-ups and talks, celebrating Black food sovereignty and spotlighting Toronto's Black food culture, leaders and innovation this Emancipation month. Register for a free event this weekend:

- Talk and Tastings, Sat. August 20, 2022 1PM- 3PM at Fort York National Historic Site. A cooking demonstration and tastings by Chef Marc Kusitor of Chop Time Catering, and tastings provided by Black food entrepreneurs from the Foodpreneur Lab.
- Neighbourhood Tour, Sat. August 20 + Sun. August 21 10AM and 12:30PM. Explore the influence of Black communities on food culture in Toronto from the 1830s -1860s.

### **Black-Mandated Funding Framework Advisory Committee**

As part of the ongoing implementation of the City of Toronto's Action Plan to

Confront Anti-Black Racism, Black community leaders and volunteers are invited to join the Black-Mandated Funding Framework (BMFF) Advisory Committee. The purpose of the BMFF Advisory Committee is to offer advice, knowledge, and African-centered experiences that contribute to the development of targeted and purposeful funding supports for Black-mandated groups and organizations funded by the City of Toronto.

To commemorate the beginning of Emancipation Month 2022, the CABR Unit hosted an in-person Community Gathering and Flag Raising Event. Stay tuned to the Emancipation Month webpage on the CABR website for the release of this event's recording accompanied by a video of the Emancipation Proclamation 2022 from the Mayor of Toronto.

### **Video Release: Emancipation Month Proclamation and Flag Raising Event**

### **Black Food Sovereignty Video**

We are excited to announce the upcoming release of the BFS video.

This video will provide some insight into the history of Black Food Sovereignty in Toronto, and highlight some of the work that went into the creation of the BFS Plan. Stay tuned to the CABR website for the release of this video.

The 2022 Toronto Municipal Election is scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2022. On this day, eligible residents of Toronto will have the opportunity to vote for Toronto's Mayor and City Councillors. For more information on eligibility, voter registration, and voting processes, visit the City of Toronto's Elections webpage.

### **Toronto Municipal Elections October 24, 2022**