

A RENEWED TORONTO ACTION PLAN TO CONFRONT ANTI-BLACK RACISM



COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION GUIDE



CONVERSATIONS
FOR 10-YEARS
OF ACTION



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit, as part of the City of Toronto, acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, lands that are now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The City also acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties, signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

AFRICAN ANCESTRAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

African Ancestral Acknowledgement

The Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit also acknowledges the generations of African peoples throughout the diaspora who have endured the systemic, pervasive, and damaging impacts of white supremacy over the past 400 years. We are guided by the principle of Sankofa, while being grounded by the legacy and commitment to the realization of justice, development, and recognition under the United Nations Decade for People of African. As a tree is connected to its roots, we honour our African heritage, the resilience, creativity, and relentless striving for equality and justice. We acknowledge that African history is rich with wisdom and is much deeper than the tragedy that began through colonialism and enslavement. May our future generations be empowered to continue the work of ensuring the human rights of all Black peoples are upheld, respected, and advanced, and that the collective resilience and strength of our ancestors guides a better future for people of African descent everywhere.



THANK YOU

TORONTO'S BLACK COMMUNITIES

The City of Toronto's Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit would also like to express our deepest thanks and gratitude to Toronto's African, Caribbean, and Black communities who have inspired and informed the foundation of the Action Plan and the vision of a better future for Black people in our city. We thank the hundreds of residents who will participate in engagements over the next 10 months. Included are all of those who cannot participate but continue to confront and live through the burden of systemic oppression, anti-Black racism and inequality. We would also like to extend gratitude to the 40 plus Black-led agencies and partners who stepped forward to host Community Conversations, including the spirited facilitators and thoughtful notetakers who will be capturing our collective stories, experiences, and recommendations as part of the engagement.



What's Inside

01

INTRODUCTION

03

WHERE WE BEGAN

09

A SNAPSHOT OF BLACK
EXPERIENCE

10

2024 ACTION PLAN
ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

13

COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION

14

COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION THEMES

60

FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS

64

FACILITATOR & NOTETAKER
GUIDES & TEMPLATES

76

ACTION PLAN REPORTS

77

REFERENCES



INTRODUCTION

On December 5, 2017, Toronto City Council made a historic decision to unanimously approve Canada's first action plan to combat systemic anti-Black racism. Titled the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, this five-year, multi-million-dollar investment would establish a permanent unit at the City of Toronto. The Unit would be dedicated to driving systemic and cultural change to disrupt discrimination and barriers disproportionately faced by Black residents, while also increasing access to opportunities.

Officially launched in 2018, this work was advanced by more than 21 City divisions, agencies, and commissions, and was successful thanks to the incredible partnership, leadership and trust of Black-led and Black serving community agencies, grassroots groups, and Black leaders across the city.

Now at the end of its five years, the Action Plan has advanced 100 percent of all 22 recommendations and 80 activities, contributed to more than 100 distinct City initiatives, strategies and community plans, and has engaged more than 15,000 Black residents. But we cannot stop there.

On June 14, 2023, City Council received the Year Four Report and Update on the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black racism. This was the second last year of the five-year Action Plan. The Update outlined the significant investments, collaboration, and increased growth and capacity of Black community agencies to respond to the emerging issues facing Black populations across Toronto.

The Update also highlighted the ways that the [KB1] COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with historic underinvestment, inconsistent access to service navigation and targeted supports, and systemic discrimination, have impacted and deepened equity gaps experienced by African, Caribbean, and Black residents. This is especially true for those identifying as members of underrepresented groups. This encompasses seniors, continental Africans, newcomers; 2SLGBTQ+ folks, youth, Afro-Indigenous community members; people living with disabilities and Black women.

It is clear the City has made significant progress, but that anti-Black racism, a generations-long issue, is not something that can be undone in 5 years.

A generational problem needs a generational solution. More tangible systems change is needed to build on the successes of the Action Plan -to address new and emerging gaps, while strengthening community collaboration and institutional capacity.

To advance the City's long-term commitment to this issue and to continue to improve outcomes for Black residents, City Council approved the development of a new 10-year Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism on June 14th, 2023.

Now we need YOUR help to guide where we go, and how we get there.

Will you join us?



WHERE WE BEGAN

In 2016, significant protests led by Black Lives Matter Toronto, and advocacy from Black communities in response to an increase in police brutality, racial profiling and discrimination, and poor outcomes for Black residents came to a head.

The former mayor convened a Roundtable on Anti-Black Racism to hear and better understand community concerns. This was followed by a review of 41 years of reports, research and recommendations detailing the experience of Black populations in Toronto, outlining clear areas of disadvantage faced by African, Caribbean, and Black communities. Informed by this research, an open dialogue on anti-Black racism was convened with senior City staff to inform meaningful actions and interventions to address the issues highlighted in reports and from Black residents.

These discussions led to the first intervention and significant investment to combat systemic anti-Black racism: the launch of a public engagement campaign on anti-Black racism in the fall of 2016 to increase awareness and understanding of the systemic and entrenched nature of anti-Black racism. Highlighting the ways anti-Black racism impacts daily decisions, interactions, and access to opportunities for Black people.





Developed and delivered in collaboration with the Ontario Council for Agencies Serving Immigrants, this campaign also embedded a way of working whereby anti-Black racism work, action, and leadership would always be advanced in partnership with communities.

Built on the momentum of the education campaign, in January 2017, the City launched 41 Community Conversations working with 11 community [KB1] agencies serving diverse Black Torontonians across the city to better understand its role in driving change. This included what actions and interventions could be taken to inform the development of a draft Action Plan.

In May of that year, the City hosted a city-wide workshop to share the draft Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. The Action Plan was compiled using ideas from 41 Community Conversations. Approximately 120 members of Toronto's Black communities attended the feedback workshop, building on the initial ideas of over 800 Black Torontonians during the Community Conversations. Feedback from the workshop was used to refine the five-year Action Plan, which was officially presented to City Council including 22 recommendations and 80 actions. The Action Plan features five priority areas for bettering the lives of Black Torontonians: Children & Youth Development; Health & Community Services; Job Opportunities & Income Supports; Policing & the Justice System, and; Community Engagement and Black Leadership.

Unanimously adopted by Toronto City Council on December 5th, 2017, the Action Plan was the first Anti-Black Racism Strategy in Canada and remains a model for systems change, not only for Black communities, but for other groups who are facing discrimination and injustice.

Following the approval of the 2018 City Budget, the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit was established. Launched with 4 staff, the Unit stewards



and supports the implementation and reporting of the Action Plan through annual reports to Black communities and City Council.

To ensure ongoing accountability, transparency and engagement with Black residents, the Unit also leads the recruitment of the Partnership and Accountability Circle: a foundational governance mechanism of the Action Plan. The Circle is composed of 12 members of African descent, including youth, elders and people representing key stakeholder groups from Black communities. The stakeholder areas are representative of Toronto and include, but are not limited to health services, social services, arts and culture, business and corporate sectors, and government.

Some outcomes of the first Action Plan include:

- **Investing in youth training, employment, and leadership development:** Securing 2,329 new youth recreation jobs through Parks Forestry and Recreation in 2022; creating stable employment opportunities across 13 City divisions for Black queer and trans youth through People and Equity's relaunch of the Black Youth Career Development program; establishing and delivering the Black Youth Fellowship for 3 consecutive years.
- **Delivering incubation support for Black businesses:** Economic Development and Culture developed a 10-week pre-incubator program designed to support early-stage Black entrepreneurs and non-business individuals to increase viability and scalability of their business, with strategic investments in Black food business and public market initiatives through the Toronto Black Food Sovereignty Plan.
- **Removing barriers to grow Black arts and culture infrastructure and initiatives:** Economic Development and Culture established the Youth Cultural Incubators Stabilizing Initiative, providing three years of core funding, mentorship and financial literacy training to six Black arts agencies, including NIA Centre for the Arts and RISE Edutainment and Community Services; Toronto History Museums delivering learning opportunities for 300 Black and Indigenous youth entrepreneurs, local business owners, professionals, and artists; The City's Cultural Hotspots prioritizing Black neighbourhoods awarding \$245k to artists, local businesses, and agencies in Little Jamaica and in the Jane-Finch community, as well as the development of the forthcoming Blackhurst Cultural Centre, a three-story, purpose-built, permanent and affordable Black cultural space.

- **Improving representation of Black leadership in City governance and at decision making tables:** Establishing Toronto's first Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Body, directly advising City Council on strategic city-wide and intergovernmental action to dismantle anti-Black racism; the delivery of the Blacks on Boards training program, recruiting and training Black residents to sit on health community boards; establishing a Black Staff Network to support the advancement of hundreds of Black City of Toronto staff.
- **Developing and delivering targeted funding and increased coordination for Black-led and Black-serving organizations and groups:** Investing \$1.29M in emergency funds to Black agencies and grassroots groups; convening 20 Black organizations to create a Black Resilience Cluster, expanding to 40 members as a permanent City planning table; deployed more than \$1.6M through Children's Services to develop, pilot, and expand culturally-appropriate programming for Black children and families through EarlyON sites; developing a Black Scientists Taskforce on Vaccine Equity to convene experts during Covid-19 to address disparities in COVID-19 rates and develop an equitable vaccine response.
- **Responsive and anti-Black racism informed policing:** Increasing accountability, transparency, and access to all open data collected by Toronto Police Service Race-Based Data Collection Policy, supporting alternatives to policing including the creation and expansion of the Toronto Community Crisis Service in the delivery of mental health support across the City.
- **Training more than 7,500 staff in anti-Black racism:** Improving City staff and partner understanding and capacity to embed an anti-Black racism lens in their work to remove barriers and increase opportunities for Black communities.

The work of the Action Plan has also led to historic investments in Black communities, leading to additional City commitments, including The Toronto Black Food Sovereignty Plan, The Black-Mandated Funding Framework, The Little Jamaica Initiative, Emancipation Month activities and Black Mental Health Week.

Significant work is underway and ongoing, but to ensure its success, it is necessary that this work continues to be directed by Black community experience. We invite you to continue to journey with us.



The Legacy of Anti-Black Racism – A Deeply Entrenched Issue

Anti-Black racism is prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and/or discrimination against

People of African Descent, and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization. This type of discrimination continues to be entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, which can make anti-Black racism appear normal or invisible to the larger society and groups in positions of power.

What We Need From You

To make sure that the decisions and actions in the 10-Year Action Plan are relevant, and effective, the Plan needs to be built on the leadership and recommendations of Toronto's Black communities. The 10-Year Action Plan will be informed by the historical and current climate, while ensuring to centre community voices and grassroots ideas.

To deliver both of these goals, the City will continue to partner with Black leaders, Black-led organizations and businesses and groups from diverse Black communities to convene and host structured discussions informed by community research and engagement with Black residents. A final 10-Year Action Plan will be brought forward to City Council in January 2025, along with a final report on the outcomes of Year Five in the current Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism.

YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The City of Toronto is your local government and is responsible for: water treatment, parks, libraries, garbage collection, public transit, land use planning, traffic signals and road safety, police, paramedics, fire services, sewers, homeless shelters, childcare, recreation centres, and more. Powers are defined by the [City of Toronto Act, 2006](#).

What Can the City of Toronto do?

The City of Toronto has made steps toward concretely addressing anti-Black racism over the last five years. As the government closest to residents, the City of Toronto has a duty to make decisions and take actions that help Toronto become an inclusive and prosperous place for everyone.

The City, governed by an elected City Council, can make policies and regulations to govern behaviour. It can create, fund, and administer services. It can influence hiring practices. It can invest in community leadership and support community capacity. There are also limits to the City's authority. Some changes must be done by the Province or Federal Government. In these instances, the City can advocate to the Province and the Federal Government to achieve change.

Below are some the ways the City through Council decisions, budget, policies and programs the City affects change:

Arts & Culture

Hydro Services

Long-Term Care

Parks & Forestry

Public Health

Court Services

Policing

Taxation

City Planning

Waste & Sewage

Economic
Development

Employment Programs

Transportation
Infrastructure

Shelters & Transitional
Housing

Toronto Community
Housing

Settlement &
Newcomer Services

Early Childhood
Development/Childcare

Library and Recreation
Services



A SNAPSHOT OF BLACK EXPERIENCES

2016 AND TODAY*

2016

Population

8.5%

(216, 160) of Toronto's population identify as Black

Child Welfare

42%

of children in the care of Toronto Children's Aid Society were born to Black parents

Education

64.5%

Black students had lower graduation rates compared to the overall student population

Employment

13%

unemployment rate for Black people in Ontario higher than for non-racialized people

Youth Employment

28%

Black youth **unemployment rate** in Toronto & Ontario, which is two times higher than the national average of 14.3%.

Incarceration

27%

Black Torontonians **overrepresented in carding incidents**, despite making up 8% of Toronto residents.

TODAY

Population

9.5%

(265, 005) of Toronto's population identify as Black

Child Welfare

13.9%

of children in care in Ontario are Black children & youth

Education

33%

Black students continue to be overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions by the TDSB

Employment

54%

unemployment rate for Black Canadians in 2023

Youth Employment

30.6%

unemployment rate for Black youth in Canada, which is double the 15.6% for non-racialized youth.

Incarceration

2.2x

Black Torontonians overrepresented in enforcement actions by police, despite making up 9.5% of Toronto residents.

*Statistics noted above reflect most up-to-date relevant statistics on the comparative areas for 2016. Where possible the exact same data point(s) were used.



2024 ACTION PLAN ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

AT A GLANCE

There are three phases of community engagement running between April 2024 and October 2024. They include the following phases:

Phase 1: April to June 2024

Community Conversations

In collaboration with Black-led and Black-serving community agencies and grassroots groups, the CABR Unit to convene over 100 touch points, listening sessions, and conversations with Black residents to understand the challenges and strategic opportunities that can meaningfully improve Black lives. Sessions will be convened in barbershops, hair salons, Black bookstores and theatres, drop-in spaces, roti-shops, conferences, and community hubs. In-person and virtual opportunities will be provided, with formal public sessions being delivered in all 5 quadrants of the City. Several closed sessions will also be delivered to directly engage Black Francophones, continental African populations, 2SLGBTQ+ communities, Afro-Indigenous populations, people living with disabilities, seniors, newcomers, and Refugee claimants.

Phase 2: July to August 2024

“What We Heard” Report to Community

The CABR Unit will release an online public summary of feedback and recommendations received as part of the Community Conversations. Residents will also be able to publicly comment on the report to increase opportunities for community feedback and civic engagement.

Phase 3: September to October 2024

Community Town Hall

In September 2024, the CABR Unit end the public engagement period with a Community Town Hall in the Toronto City Hall rotunda to present a first draft of recommendations for the next ten years. The event will invite additional feedback and comment from Black communities on the specific actions the City can take before the Action Plan is finalized and delivered to Committee in December.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

SHARING YOUR IDEAS

There are three ways to get involved in the renewed Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism public engagement process.

HOST YOUR OWN CONVERSATION

Grab a group of friends, colleagues or community members and host your own conversation. See the section on How to Host Your Own Community Conversation to learn how and visit the Appendix section for templates on how to structure your session, record your discussion and share resources about previous accomplishments of the current 5-Year Action Plan. You can download the community conversation guide from the [CABR Website](#).



ONLINE SURVEY

Share your feedback via the [online survey](#). Complete an online survey on your computer, desktop or tablet. For optimal use and ease while responding to this survey, we encourage you to use the link below depending on the device you will use to complete the survey:

[A Renewed Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#)



JOIN A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Stay connected:

Visit the CABR website where you can view the full list of public community conversations hosted in partnership with Black-mandated, Black-led and Black-serving organizations across the City of Toronto or follow the CABR Unit on X (formerly Twitter) to remain up to date on ongoing conversations in your community.



www.toronto.ca/cabr



[@CABR_Toronto](#)
[#10YearsofAction](#) [#CABR](#)



USING THIS GUIDE

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

This guide is aimed at providing Black communities with tools to effectively participate and contribute in a proactive and informed way in the engagement process. The objectives of the engagement are to ensure that the decisions and actions of the 10-Year Action plan are relevant, responsive, and effective at delivering meaningful systems change and improved opportunities and outcomes for People of African Descent in the city.

It is recommended to review the Introduction, *How to Use this Guide* sections prior to hosting a conversation, however it is not necessary.

Community members can simply walk through the questions in the *Conversation Themes* section and complete the sections directly in the template or guidebook.

If you are looking for additional information on the Action Plan, additional resources and links can be accessed in the Appendix section.

HOW TO HOST YOUR OWN COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

It is recommended that each session over 10 people include a separate note take and facilitator. For large sessions, more than 30 people, we recommend contacting the CABR Unit at cabr@toronto.ca for additional support to host your event. For smaller sessions we recommend using the following steps:

- Determine whether you'd like to focus on convening people around all themes or one or two
- Identify Black friends, colleagues or community members who you would like to attend
- Select a date and time to bring people together based on everyone's availability
- Use the Agenda Templates in the Appendix section to develop an agenda for your event (consider the themes you want to explore, who is in the room and how you will create a safer space for discussion, while also capturing notes)
- Identify a meeting place (make sure to reserve space if needed)
- Confirm guests, and share within your network on social media (if relevant)
- Share the Community Conversation Guide and encourage participants to review the questions and relevant resources included where possible
- Set up your meeting space so everyone is able to see and hear each other
- Host your meeting
- Don't forget to capture notes. You can use the templates or online survey link to record group responses to the thematic questions

See sections on Facilitation and note taking for more information on how to facilitate, capture and submit feedback from the meeting.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION THEMES

EMERGING AREAS FOR ACTION

From a review of emerging community research, government reports and statistical data collected and reviewed between 2018 to 2024, along with the identification of existing areas of City and community work, the CABR Unit has identified 10 themes to guide the community conversations that reflect emerging areas of concern and opportunity.

CONVERSATION THEMES:

01

COMMUNITY HEALTH &
WELLBEING

06

CHILD & FAMILY WELFARE

02

COMMUNITY FUNDING &
ACCESS TO SERVICES

07

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

03

EMPLOYMENT, INCOME &
BUSINESS SUPPORTS

08

COMMUNITY SPACE &
NEIGHBOURHOOD
DEVELOPMENT

04

ARTS & CULTURE

09

BLACK LEADERSHIP, CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT & CULTURE
CHANGE

05

COMMUNITY SAFETY, POLICING
& THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

10

HOUSING



BUILDING A LEGACY - TOGETHER

Although disparity continues to exist, there have been several significant and notable advances for Black communities over the past five years. The next decade promises similar advances. To open discussion, we are asking communities to share their individual and collective hopes for the next 10 years of action. We want to know where they would like to be, and how they would like to see the world change for Black people 10 years from now.

As we end the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent, a period of focused action by cities and communities around the world to better the lives of Black people through increased recognition, justice, and development, we want to ask:

What legacy should the next 10-years of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism leave behind?

THEME 1: COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING

Black Torontonians continue to face disparate outcomes across the social determinants of health. In 2021, the COVID-19 mortality rates for Black people living in low-income households were almost 3x higher compared to Black people not living in low-income households, and 3.5x times higher compared to non-racialized and non-Indigenous populations living in low-income households. A 2022 study on the prevalence of household food insecurity showed that Black households had the highest rates during the COVID-19 pandemic, and attributed the rate to factors such as poverty, living on a low-income, disability and precarious employment. The ongoing lack of culturally responsive supports and services for broader health services for Black communities remains an ongoing challenge.

Your ideas are important in creating action on community health and well-being. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Ensure the visibility of 2SLGBTQ+ communities, people living with disabilities, seniors, newcomers, people living with long-term illness, and people living with mental health and addictions in planning processes.
- Replicate, expand, and invest in effective models of Black-led health and community services to underserved neighbourhoods and populations of Black Torontonians.
- Increase the availability of integrative, specialized and culturally responsive services that cater to Black Torontonians with disabilities.
- Ensure long-term planning coordinates interventions in housing, employment, community development, and transit.
- Respond to rising rates of opioid-related deaths in the city with sustained support for overdose and harm reduction.
- Invest in locally-driven solutions led by Black communities and designed by and for residents based on their needs.
- Collect, coordinate, and ensure the accessibility of race-based data to inform planning and holding the healthcare system accountable.

Spotlight: Black Food Sovereignty

In October 2021, City Council approved Canada's first **Black Food Sovereignty Plan** for Toronto to respond to the need for immediate and comprehensive action to address the problem of food insecurity experienced by many Black Torontonians. The Black Food Sovereignty Plan has 5 recommendations and 45 actions and is in its third year of implementation.

City Strategies for Alignment

- Toronto Thrive: A Mental Health Plan for Our City
- TO: Prosperity Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy
- SafeTO: A Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan

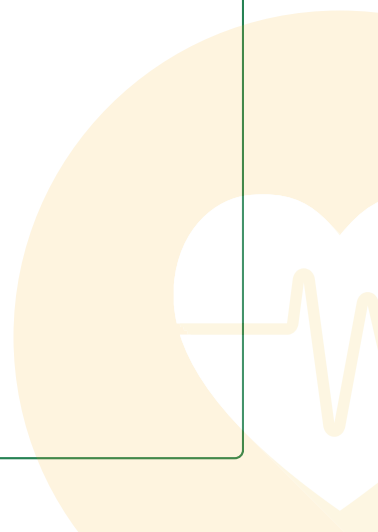
Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...



Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...



THEME 2: COMMUNITY FUNDING & ACCESS TO SERVICES

Black-mandated and serving organizations continue to respond to and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have disproportionately impacted their organizations and the services they deliver. Black-mandated organizations face challenges in accessing funding and retaining staff. This is coupled with outdated funding models and approaches that stretch organizational capacity which increases challenges in how to best serve Black communities.

Your ideas are important in creating action on community funding and access to services. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Invest to build better health and social service infrastructure for Black communities in Toronto, including facilitating access to resources and addressing the under-representation of Black-led or Black-serving organizations.
- Equip non-profits and charities with resources to create innovative approaches to their work, ensuring communities are not dependent on government resources on an ongoing basis.
- Hire Black 2SLGBTQ+ service providers with lived experience to work in settlement organizations.
- Sustain support for organizations that serve Black communities to increase access to health services and other community supports.
- Fund and invest in critical and culturally appropriate and safer services for Black older adults/seniors.
- Develop decentralized immigration services for Queer and Trans-serving service providers (develop services outside of the downtown core)

Spotlight:

Black Youth Leadership Grant

As part of this work, the City in partnership with the United Way of Greater Toronto, awarded the Black Youth Leadership Project Grant of \$520,000 to three Black-led organizations to provide Black youth leadership programs

City Strategies for Alignment

- Toronto Youth Equity Strategy
- Toronto Seniors Services Strategy
- Toronto Newcomer Strategy
- City of Toronto Gender Equity Strategy (forthcoming)

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 3: EMPLOYMENT, INCOME & BUSINESS SUPPORTS

As of 2020, 12.4% of Black Canadians continued to live in poverty. Black Torontonians continue to be the most educated and most underemployed, with the labour force participation rate of the core-aged Black population rate being 83.6% in 2021, however most of which remains in 'essential work', low-paying and precarious jobs that fail to meet their needs or leverage their talents. The unemployment gap widened for Black workers during the pandemic, with Black people having significantly higher unemployment rates. This is further compounded for Black people with disabilities, due to a lack supports and services which aims at disrupting the poverty disability cycle and the racialization of poverty.

Your ideas are important to creating action on employment, income and business supports. Below, are recommendations from reports and research between 2018-2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Leverage federal and provincial funding to develop a targeted workforce development strategy for Black youth and Black Torontonians living with disabilities.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to establish or ensure better access to business education programs for Black business owners and operators.
- Support education relevant to procurement contracts, including training initiatives that address potential capacity gaps, bandwidth or skills gaps for Black-led and Black-owned businesses.
- Ensure consistent outreach and networking with Black-led and Black-owned business associations to promote procurement opportunities in advance of posting of tenders; to increase awareness of procurement opportunities and promote readiness to successfully bid on opportunities.
- Provide start-up funds, capital, mentorship, and other needed supports to help boost entrepreneurship.
- Increase the income threshold for young Black mothers exiting Ontario Works assistance - to better account for income inequalities faced by Black women and to reflect current childrearing costs and challenges, including securing childcare.

Spotlight:

Mayor's Roundtable on Black Business

Action 15 of the inaugural CBR called for the development of the Mayor's Roundtable on Black Business to provide strategic advice to the Mayor on topics of entrepreneurship, business development, cultural industries, and economic development in Toronto's Black Communities.

City Strategies for Alignment

- Community Benefits Framework
- City of Toronto Social Procurement Program
- Action Plan for Toronto's Economy
- City of Toronto Gender Equity Strategy (forthcoming)

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 4: ARTS & CULTURE

The Black arts and culture sector play a critical role in Toronto's economic and cultural economy. Although the City has made steps to invest in the sector through the launch of the Toronto Arts Council's Black Arts Program, the City's support of the Blackhurst Cultural Centre (formerly known as A Different Booklist) and the expansion of the NIA Centre, more critical investments are needed. The pandemic left the Black arts and culture community continuing to face challenges related to the ownership of space, rents, sustainable funding for programming and infrastructure development. Moreover, the impacts of COVID-19 on the Black arts and cultural workers continue to reverberate due to closures.

Your ideas are important in creating action on arts and culture. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Actively engage Black advice to review routes, sites, security and increase sustainability in relation to Black cultural festivals.
- Leverage City spaces to create Black community hubs in partnership with Black service providers and arts cultural centres.
- Establish a Decade of Black Arts and Culture in the city of Toronto.
- Reallocate 30% of funding currently directed to a handful of well-established, well-funded arts institutions to support cultural programming and practices in Little Jamaica (and future cultural districts).

Spotlight:

Toronto Arts Council Black Arts Program

In July 2021, the Toronto Arts Council launched the inaugural Black Arts Program with an initial investment of \$500,000. The Black Arts Program supports non-profit Toronto Black Arts organizations seeking support with operating expenses, as well as Black artists, art workers and collectives.

City Strategies for Alignment

- Toronto History Museums Strategic Plan: Laying a New Foundation
- Toronto's Action Plan for the Cultural Sector
- Toronto Arts Council Black Arts Program

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 5: COMMUNITY SAFETY, POLICING & THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

In 2021-22, Black people represented 9.2% of the overall incarcerated population, despite representing about 3.5% of the Canadian population. For Black Torontonians, confidence in police continues to remain lower among Black residents of the City. Black people continue to be grossly overrepresented in arrests, charges, force, and strip search data and in the overall population. The pandemic highlighted the increased risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) and criminalization for low-income Black women, as well as the increased risk of homicide for Black communities due to structural inequities across the social determinants of health, such as education, employment, income and mass incarceration. Moreover the increase in racialized violence, discrimination and hate crimes targeted towards newcomers and refugees of African descent, Black 2SLGBT+ communities, and Black Muslim populations, has impact on the mental health and overall quality of life for Black Torontonians.

Your ideas are important in creating action on community safety, policing and the justice system. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Establish a renewal fund dedicated to developing or advancing community safety and well-being initiatives for Black communities.
- Work across sectors to address the social determinants of homicide and improve upon the integration of services that survivors of homicide victims engage and interact with as a result of experiencing the murder of a loved one.
- Provide access to space and programming for Black youth and neighbourhoods who are at risk of and/or experiencing violence.
- Implement strategies to transfer certain functions currently being performed by armed police officers to other public and community agencies with better expertise.
- Expand the use of youth and adult pre-charge diversion and restorative justice programs that allow unlawful behaviour to be addressed without formally laying a charge in appropriate circumstances.
- Make referrals to culturally appropriate diversion programs and monitor the number of referrals made to these programs.

Spotlight:
Toronto Community Crisis Service (TCCS)

The TCCS was developed in 2021. Through partnerships with Community Anchor Partners with the experience, skills, and expertise in using anti - racist, anti – oppressive and culturally safe approaches to address the needs of people experiencing mental health challenges and will work to address some of the service barriers Black and Indigenous communities face. Following the launch of pilots, TCCS has expanded to become city-wide by the end of 2024.

City Strategies for Alignment

- SafeTO: 10-Year Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan
- TO Prosperity: Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Toronto Public Health’s Strategic Plan

31

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 6: CHILD & FAMILY WELFARE

Black children continue to be overrepresented across all levels of the child welfare system. Black children and youth are 2.2 times more likely than white children to be involved in an investigation for child maltreatment concerns. Investigations among Black children and youth were more likely to involve police than those among white children and youth. The pandemic highlighted many challenges, particularly the affordability of internet access and impacts of digital exclusion on Black families, such as limiting the ability of Black children to complete their schoolwork due to lack of access to a computer at home. Black 2SLGBTQ+ youth have experienced adverse childhood experiences and involvement with the child welfare system.

According to the *GBVlearning Network report 2024*, 2SLGBTQ+ youth were more likely to report involvement with child protection services than straight youth (62.8% vs. 55.8%). For young Black women and girls, anti-Black racism and gender inequity compounds the difficulties they face in navigating the education system, children's aid societies, economic barriers. They face further stigmatization if they are young mothers. For young Black women and girls, anti-Black racism and gender inequity compound the difficulties they face in navigating the education system, children's aid societies, economic barriers, as well as stigmatization if they are young mothers.

A 2020 Report *Navigating Two Worlds: Understanding the Complexities and Health Implications of Black Fatherhood* in Toronto, states individual and systemic racist notions against Black fathers contribute to Black fathers' feelings of ineptitude, invisibility and dejection. A systemic racial trope that Black fatherhood mainly encompasses absenteeism, intimidating and abusive behavior. Black fathers are burdened with mental and physical health detriments as a result of navigating state sanctioned violence and systemically racist notions against both them, their families and their children.

Your ideas are important in creating action on child and family welfare. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

THEME 6: CHILD & FAMILY WELFARE (cont'd)

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Work with Black families and students to explore and enhance ways to address anti-Black racism in Toronto schools, including embedding the collection and use of disaggregated race-based data to inform decision-making related to Black student achievement, discipline, and experiences.
- Advocate for and promote programs that support and respond to challenges that Black fathers deal with from isolation, mental health and parenting to access to resources to support Black fathers through fatherhood.
- Develop an evaluation framework to monitor school boards and develop anti-Black racism and African-centred education and resources to advance educational outcomes for Black and equity-deserving students.
- Engage, invest and partner with Black-led and Black-serving agencies who deliver culturally relevant services for Black families navigating the child welfare system.
- Children's Services Toronto, Child welfare and Child Protection Services Ontario and other Agencies should work diligently to create safer spaces for Black 2SLGBTQ+ youth.
- Advocate for additional childcare spaces and more flexible hours of operation to accommodate more mothers' work and school schedules.

Spotlight:

Innovative Case Management Pilot
Leveraging \$114,183.32 in funding, the City's Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) Division also launched the Innovative Case Management pilot: Mental Health Supports for Black and Indigenous Youth.

City Strategies for Alignment

- EarlyON Action Plan
- TO Prosperity: Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Toronto Public Health's Strategic Plan

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 7: YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Black youth in Toronto continue to express frustration at the lack of supports, resources and space to support their well-being whether through the education system or through recreation programs and services. Black youth are often underemployed - wherein the unemployment rate for Black youth in Toronto and Ontario is 28%, which is two times higher than the national average of 14.3%. The *Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee Report* (2022) states that underemployment and unemployment rate for Black youth in Toronto and Ontario is 28%, which is two times higher than the national average of 14.3%. This is further magnified by spatial disparities and inequities across the City of Toronto. Black 2SLGBTQ+ youth continue to experience a lack of service access by the City, as well as within the Black communities and with the 2SLGBTQ+ communities, due to systemic issues such as discrimination, underemployment/unemployment and financial barriers.

Your ideas are important in creating action on youth development. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Encourage relationships and partnerships between the private and public sector to create opportunities for Black youth.
- Invite Black Queer and Trans youth to curriculum and policy planning tables, respecting their opinions and taking concrete action on their recommendations.
- Advance ongoing research and educational reform to reduce truancy rates among Black youth, eliminate discriminatory school practices, and develop targeted interventions to help keep Black students in schools and engaged.
- Develop targeted programming for Black women, lesbians, and Black Trans people.
- Service providers and schools providing culturally relevant educational resources for newcomer Black Queer and Trans youth.
- Create targeted workforce development programs for Black youth, working collaboratively with City divisions, agencies and Black-led community partners.

Spotlight:

The Black Youth Fellowship Program

In partnership with the Urban Alliance on Racism, the Youth Development Unit (YDU), Clerks, and the CABR Unit provide support for the Black Youth Fellowship Program. The program provide youth with paid employment and career development at the city of Toronto. The Black Youth Fellowship was consolidated existing youth fellowship programs under the Diversity Youth Fellowship, of which includes the Black, Muslim, Tamil, Filipino and Protégée Fellowships.

City Strategies for Alignment

- Toronto Youth Equity Strategy
- City of Toronto Workforce Equity Plan
- Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan
- City of Toronto Gender Equity Strategy (forthcoming)

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 9: COMMUNITY SPACE & NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Black communities continue to be deeply impacted by ongoing neighbourhood development changes. Urban planning practices continue to adversely impact Black people and Black communities overall. Gentrification through rapid transit and housing development continues to displace residents, businesses, and culture industries, limiting local and inclusive economic development, community asset growth, and prosperity for Toronto's Black communities. This is also reflected in the ways Black communities have limited access to space and broader community-led social infrastructure, such as Black-led cultural and arts centres, as well as the ways in which Black residents' access existing City infrastructure, such as libraries, community hubs and recreation services without facing anti-Black racism.

Your ideas are important in creating action on community space & neighbourhood development. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Strengthen provincial-municipal partnerships and joint action on social determinants of health, with a focus on local neighbourhoods, including strategies that encompass housing, food security, early childhood development, income security, and educational pathways and outcomes.
- Strengthen actions of community and sector-based anti-Black racism advisory structures that are already playing active roles alongside municipal and provincial planners. This is coupled with public reporting at multiple levels of government.
- Policy makers providing a framework for social infrastructure spending to address the needs of marginalized populations and communities while placing them at the forefront of this process.
- Undertake an audit of City Planning programs, processes, and services with an anti-Black/anti-racism lens.
- Explore community land trusts to support the economic and social wellbeing of Black communities, including commercial, housing, and food land trusts, to support Black businesses and community organizations in Toronto neighbourhoods with a population made up of at least 10 to 15 percent Black residents.
- Develop community economic development plans for Black communities while continuing to support established initiatives such as those in Weston Mount Dennis, Golden Mile, Little Jamaica, and East Downtown.

Spotlight:

Black Food Sovereignty Plan

In October 2021, City council approved Canada's first **Black Food Sovereignty Plan** for Toronto to respond to the need for immediate and comprehensive action to address the problem of food insecurity experienced by many Black Torontonians. The Black Food Sovereignty Plan has 5 recommendations and 45 actions and is in its third year of implementation.

City Strategies for Alignment

- City of Toronto Official Plan
- Toronto's Strategy for the Economy
- Parks and Recreation Facilities Masterplan

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 9: BLACK LEADERSHIP, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & CULTURE CHANGE

Often Black and other racialized professionals who face discrimination have desires to quit, given the emotional impacts they experience. This also extends to how Black City staff are supported in their leadership development within the City, particularly as it pertains to career progression, mentorship and support. Establishment of Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee, Partnership and Accountability Circles and other community working groups or committees that seeks to foster civic engagement and advocating for legislative issues and reforms to advance the well-being and progress of the Black community. This action aims to enhance meaningful interaction with officials at every level of decision-making and to serve as a resource in effecting positive change through providing accessible information to community members for informed decision-making, empowering Black communities to voice their concerns and to dialogue on their issues and aspirations.

Your ideas are important in creating action on Black Leadership, civic Engagement & culture change. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Conduct an audit of City of Toronto Employment Equity Representation in recruitment.
- Track progress of any self-identified Black employees through the employee engagement survey retention rates.
- Track racial discrimination and anti-Black racism-based complaints through the City's employee engagement survey.
- Develop clear measures, targets and progress on equity and inclusion outcomes for Black employees.
- Assess community engagement sessions and track delivery of community interactions to Council.
- Audit and assess existing complaints and dispute resolution processes to ensure that they specifically address instances of anti-Black racism in the workplace and that the complaints are received and managed by professionals trained and experienced in anti-Black racism.
- Invest in coordinated workforce development strategies in partnership with City agencies.

Spotlight: Black Staff Network

Action 11.5 of the Action plan called for Black City Staff to be engaged in the creation of a Black Staff Network. The Black Staff Network supports the professional development and engagement for City staff who identify as Black, African descent or origin, African Black Caribbean, African-Canadian, or Canadians of African descent and advocate for better working environment.

City Strategies for Alignment

- City of Toronto Workforce Equity Plan
- Youth Equity Strategy
- TO Prosperity: Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy
- City of Toronto Gender Equity Strategy (forthcoming)

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

THEME 10: HOUSING

Black Torontonians are disproportionately impacted by poor outcomes across the housing spectrum: from the shelter system to supportive and social housing, to rental and home ownership. A 2020 Wellesley Institute report on Evictions, Race and Poverty, states that areas in Toronto with 36% or higher Black resident populations have two times the eviction rates of other areas. Black people continue to experience homelessness in Toronto more than other population categories. A *Homes First 2021 Street Assessment Report* states that up to 31% of people experiencing homelessness identify as Black even though Black residents only form 9.5% of the overall population in Toronto.

Your ideas are important in creating action on housing. Below are recommendations from reports and research from 2018 to 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD ON

- Form partnerships outside of the private sector to develop housing; for example, building the capacities of local non-profit developers, housing co-ops, community land trusts.
- Address barriers as they relate to zoning, land use planning, and Black-led affordable housing development.
- Develop holistic housing support services that address Black 2SLGBTQ+ youth's unique housing challenges and advocate on their behalf.
- Increase government investments in resources and support for Black renters searching for housing.
- Ensure better data collection on the discrimination and racism experienced by Black housing seekers compared to other races in Toronto.
- Review the development of strategies to increase affordable housing and end homelessness and ensure that those strategies are gendered to include an intersectional analysis that addresses anti-Black racism.

Spotlight: TCHC Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People Established in 2021, the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People was formed to lead TCHC in the implementation of company-wide confronting anti-Black racism strategy, with the goal of identifying systemic barriers, provide recommendations to address anti-Black racism embedded within TCHC's policies, programs and service delivery, and help create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment for tenant and staff.

City Strategies for Alignment

- Housing TO 2020-2030 Action Plan
- TO Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Community Benefits Framework
- City of Toronto Social Procurement Policy

Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges Black communities are facing in this area?

A1. The biggest challenges I (or my family/community/ Black people) face in this area are...

Q2. What things could the City of Toronto do to address the challenges in this area?

A2. The City of Toronto can take action to address challenges in this area by...

Q3. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) listed should be implemented or strengthened?

A3. My ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented or strengthened are...

Q4a. How would you like to see the Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions? What leadership (organizations, groups, individuals, or initiatives) is important to improve outcomes?

A4a. I would like to see the Black communities involved in...

A4b. Other leaders and participants who can help ensure improved outcomes include...

Q5. How would we know the recommendations are a success? What changes would Black communities experience?

A5. I would know the recommendation is a success because it impacted (me/my community/Black businesses/Black organizations) in these ways...

ADDITIONAL NOTES

ADDITIONAL NOTES

VISUAL NOTETAKING (OPTIONAL)

Note takers also have the option to provide a visual story or mapping of key elements that came in the conversations.

VISUAL NOTETAKING (OPTIONAL)

Note takers also have the option to provide a visual story or mapping of key elements that came in the conversations.

FAQS

QUESTION

Why are Community Conversations being held in this format?

ANSWER

The City of Toronto is committed to exploring new ways to better engage communities in decision-making at the municipal level. We have learned that community-led conversations are an effective way to ensure that as many people as possible have meaningful opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas. Conversations that happen locally at the neighbourhood level reduce the need to travel, lowering barriers to participate. When conversations are hosted by community leaders and within existing community programs, they may also engage a broader range of residents who may not be connected to the City and can create optimal conditions that allow people to share their thoughts in a familiar and safe space.

QUESTION

Why focus on Anti-Black Racism as opposed to other racialized and disadvantaged communities or groups?

ANSWER

Anti-Black Racism is a particular experience of racism that is historically rooted and entrenched in Canadian society. As a result, Anti-Black Racism is deeply embedded in the policies, practices, and assumptions inherent in our institutions leading to adverse outcomes for Black residents. Anti-Black Racism is experienced by members of Toronto's Black communities as a lack of opportunity, poor health outcomes, lower socio-economic status, precarious employment, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates and overrepresentation in the prison, mental health, and child welfare systems. Disproportionate impacts include reporting higher rates of under and unemployment, at 15 percent compared to the non-racialized populations; higher rates of poverty and food insecurity at 2-3 times their white counterparts; increased rates of evictions at 36 percent and homelessness at 30 percent, compared to other populations. To effectively combat these intersectional structural issues, targeted action is needed to confront bias and actively develop responses to remove barriers and increase access to opportunity.

Although no form of oppression is more important than any other, the intersecting and layered nature of systemic barriers requires intentional action. A focus on the specific needs of underserved groups, not only lowers barriers for other equity-deserving communities but improves outcomes for everyone.

FAQS

QUESTION

Anti-Black Racism has been extensively examined already, why are community conversations needed?

ANSWER

Anti-Black Racism persists in Toronto despite decades of examination and reporting by various stakeholders. To ensure the City is taking action on the most pressing and significant issues faced by Black communities, it is critical to hear directly from Black communities to ensure understand emerging trends and community priorities for action. Additionally, research may not always capture the experiences and concerns of groups who experience the greatest marginalization. For that reason, Community Conversations have partnered directly with community agencies and grassroots groups working with underserved populations to ensure their voices are represented.

QUESTION

When will Community Conversations end and begin?

ANSWER

The City will be undertaking three phases of public engagement running from April 2024 to October 2024. Community Conversations represent the first phase and will run from April 2024 to June 2024. This will begin on April 10, 2024 at a public launch event in Scarborough at CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals. This will be followed by a public report and online feedback period in the summer of 2024, and then a final Community Town Hall in the fall 2024.

QUESTION

What specific information are you seeking regarding critical concerns within Black communities? Are there any additional supports that agencies will have access to?

ANSWER

Community Conversations are seeking to understand the issues that Black communities are facing across the 10 themes identified for engagement. This includes information on the types of challenges they're facing, what types of supports and solutions they envision, who they feel should be involved in addressing critical issues they are facing, and that are taking place in their communities. To support these discussions, Community Conversation hosts will be able to access a Facilitator and Note Taker Guide (enclosed in this document), and will also have access to an online survey option to share discussion responses and/or to share with participants to capture additional information after a Community Conversation. This guidebook also includes an orientation and overview of all conversation questions, updates on the current Action Plan and links to the status of work, and templates to inform a Community Conversation event agenda. For additional support, event hosts can contact cabr@toronto.ca for more information.

FAQS

QUESTION

What are the ages that the youth consultations focus on?

ANSWER

Community Conversations focused on direct engagement with youth can focus on ages from 12-29 years old. To inform recommendations for children under 12 years old, it is encouraged to engage parents, guardians, and families.

QUESTION

Are the Conversations only open to Black Torontonians?

ANSWER

Community Conversations are aimed at better understanding the current experiences of people of African descent in Toronto, and elevating their experiences to inform actions in the new 10-Year Action Plan. To ensure this outcome, invitations are prioritized for residents who identify as part of Toronto's Black communities. Allies and non-Black residents and groups who are interested in informing the next Action Plan, are able to contribute comments online through the public What We Heard Report and by delivering a deputation to the Executive Committee when the Action Plan is presented in December 2024.

QUESTION

What happens if I am not able to attend a Community Conversation?

ANSWER

The City of Toronto is working to ensure that residents interested in contributing to the Action Plan will have various opportunities to be engaged. If you are unable to attend any of the public Community Conversations, you can share your views via the [online survey](#), or one of two ways: i) during phase two of the public engagement process, as an online comment on the What We Heard Report summary of the Community Conversations; or ii) during phase three at the in-person Community Town Hall. Information about upcoming consultation opportunities across all phases of engagement will be posted and updated on the City's website at www.toronto.ca/abr

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A: FACILITATOR & NOTETAKER GUIDE



THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

GUARDIAN AND STEWARD

The facilitator acts as a guardian, helping to guide and steward the conversation and ensure that the important and often unseen Black experience in Toronto is better understood, documented, and elevated to advance action. The facilitator creates space for Black lives, ideas, and voices of Toronto's Black diverse Black communities more visible.

FACILITATOR RESPONSABILITIES:



- Become comfortable with the Community Conversation Engagement Guide.
- Please remind notetakers to include the total number of participants at each table at the top of the page.
- Begin with an icebreaker. Allow time for participants to introduce themselves to each other, if the group is small enough, or some other type of icebreaker.
- Remind participants that input is recorded anonymously, and their responses will only be recorded with their consent. No personal information will be shared or attributed to any individual.
- Promote discussion. Ensure that each participant has an opportunity to contribute and keep the process on track and moving forward. Ensuring residents feel empowered, build trust and are comfortable sharing their ideas.
- Help participants review the information (you may have to read it out loud or give an overview and then allow participants to review in silence).
- Ensure that conversations remain on time, while managing the discussion to create space and flexibility for all participants to speak.
- Look for anyone having difficulty and support them by asking questions and assisting them to write responses, if required.
- Synthesize and summarize people's comments (back to the group) to move the group along and support the capturing of ideas.
- Designate a notetaker to ensure that the key agreements from the discussion are recorded. Notes are best captured in a way that participants can see and confirm what is written. Participants can alter or retract their statements at any time.
- You do not need to get everyone at the table to agree unless they want to.
- Following the template and guide that provides an example to model and prompt the conversation (See Appendix).

THE ROLE OF THE NOTETAKER

SCRIBE

The notetaker functions as the scribe, ensuring that this process documents and shares the narratives, words, reflections, and aspirations of Toronto's Black diverse Black communities. You will be responsible for ensuring that themes are identified, voices are reflected through documentation of statements, as well as capturing the aspirations of those around the table.

NOTETAKER RESPONSABILITIES:

- Become comfortable with the Community Conversation Engagement Guide.
- Please remember to include the total number of participants at each table at the top of the page.
- Capture ideas verbatim
- Following the template and guide that provides an example to model and prompt the conversation (See Appendix).



GROUNDING CONVERSATIONS

TIPS & GUIDANCE

Here are a few tips to support your organization, facilitators and notetakers to support community conversations.

GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION

- The group will be respectful of each other and other’s opinions.
- Everyone will wait their turn to talk, and not talk over anyone else. We will implement a “talking stick” for each group to enforce turn-taking and respect for each other’s turn to speak.
- When challenging someone else’s statement, be mindful to address your retort to their statement, not them personally.
- No hate, bigotry, terror, bullying, harassment, violence, or any kind will be tolerated.

CONVERSATIONS WILL

- Create a constructive space for a healthy dialogue.
- Use an anti-oppressive framework.
- Use an anti-Black racism lens.
- Highlight the voices of Black people and honour their experiences.
- Respond to the diverse needs and experiences of Black people in Toronto.
- Promote clear communication so that everyone can understand and participate.
- Provide opportunities for those who experience extreme marginalization to actively participate.
- Encourage sensitive behaviours from those who carry power (institutional and community).
- Be self-renewing, allowing new voices and new leadership to emerge, including youth leadership.

DEBRIEF & REVIEW

We encourage facilitators and notetakers connect within 48 hours after the session to debrief. This will ensure that information is captured accurately and to confirm a shared understanding. Notes should be submitted **a maximum of two weeks** after the session.

Location:

Date: Facilitator:

of Participants

Community Organization:

Demographics (leave blank if not shared): ● LGBTQ2+ ● Women
 ● Senior/Elder ● Youth (13-29) ● Newcomer/Refugee Claimant ● Persons
 with Disabilities ● Afro-Indigenous ● Francophone ● Continental African ●
 People who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing ● Persons Living with Mental Illness
 ● People Living with Chronic Illness ● Please specify (if indicated):

Notes

Theme(s)	Relevant Key Quotes/Key Points

Notes (cont'd):

Theme(s)	Relevant Key Quotes/Key Points

Overall Reflections (e.g. What reoccurring themes came up in the discussion? What solutions were shared? What challenges were identified?)

GROUNDING CONVERSATIONS

SUBMITTING NOTES

There are three ways to submit notes to the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit:

ONLINE SURVEY

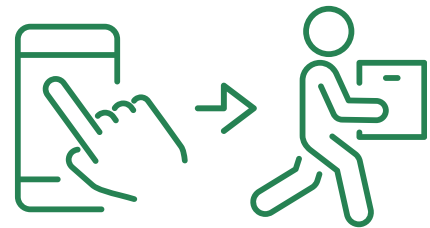
Individual hosts can submit responses directly in the survey via the survey platform, which will be available on the CABR website:

[A Renewed Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#)



REQUEST PICK UP*

Community partners can request that CABR Unit staff pick up notes and community conversation guides. Please email the CABR Unit or communicate directly with a CABR Unit Community Development Officer to schedule a time for pick up.



BY MAIL

It is recommended that if sending by mail, make sure host or community partners collect all guides after their engagement and debrief sessions. The guides can be mailed to the following address:

ATTN: Kemba Byam, Manager
Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit
Social Development, Finance & Administration
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
14th Floor, East Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2



*NB: The pick-up request is only available to Community Partners that are leading public engagements. We encourage individual hosts to submit via survey.

STRUCTURING A CONVERSATION

SMALL & LARGE SESSIONS

The following provides suggested structure when convening smaller and larger Community Conversations. There are four options based on duration ranging from 1 hour to a half-day session.

OPTION 1:

SUGGESTED FACILITATION STRUCTURE FOR 1 HR (60 MINUTE) ENGAGEMENT		
TIME	CONTENT	HOW & WHY
5-10 MINUTES	OPENING THE CIRCLE/ CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome/Introductions (make sure to identify notetakers and facilitators)• Icebreaker (Name, Pronouns)• Community Agreements/ Ground Rules
45-50 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide overview of engagement guide• Have folks go through 10 issue areas in the guide• Ask participants to rank the top issue areas
5-10 MINUTES	CLOSING THE CIRCLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank participants for sharing reflections• Remind participants all notes taken will not be attributed• Provide next steps
Notes:		

OPTION 2:

SUGGESTED FACILITATION STRUCTURE FOR 1.5 HR (90 MINUTE) ENGAGEMENT		
TIME	CONTENT	HOW & WHY
10-15 MINUTES	OPENING THE CIRCLE/ CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome/Introductions (make sure to identify notetakers and facilitators) • Icebreaker (Name, Pronouns) • Community Agreements/Ground Rules
20-30 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide overview of engagement guide • Have folks go through 10 issue areas in the guide • Ask participant to rank the top issue areas
5-10 MINUTES	BREAK	
20-30 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide overview of conversation purpose • Have participants articulate aspirational vision • Have participants go through the first 5 themes areas in the guide • Ask participant to rank the top issue areas
5-10 MINUTES	CLOSING THE CIRCLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank participants for sharing reflections • Remind participants all notes taken will not be attributed • Provide next steps
Notes:		

OPTION 3:

SUGGESTED FACILITATION STRUCTURE FOR 3 HOUR SESSION (180 MINUTE) ENGAGEMENT		
TIME	CONTENT	HOW & WHAY
20-30 MINUTES	OPENING THE CIRCLE/ CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome/Introductions (make sure to identify notetakers and facilitators) • Icebreaker(Name, Pronouns) • Community Agreements/Ground Rules • Group Activity
30-40 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide overview of conversation purpose • Go over the guide • Have participants articulate aspirational vision • Have participants go through first 5 themes in the guide • Ask participant to rank the top issue areas
10-15 MINUTES	BREAK	
30-40 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants go through final 5 themes in the guide • Ask participant to rank the top issue areas
15-20 MINUTES	CLOSING THE CIRCLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank participants for sharing reflections • Remind participants all notes taken will not be attributed • Provide next steps
Notes:		

OPTION 4:

SUGGESTED AGENDA STRUCTURE FOR HALF DAY ENGAGEMENT (APPROX. 20-30 PEOPLE 6-8 PEOPLE PER TABLE MAX)		
TIME	CONTENT	HOW & WHAY
5-10 MINUTES	WELCOME GROUP & INTRODUCTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer acknowledgments (Land and African Ancestral) • Provide purpose of the session to group • Identify who host, facilitators and notetakers will be • Provide overview of the session flow and how breaks will be signaled • Host to break folks out into tables/breakout groups
20 MINUTES	OPEN THE CIRCLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In break out groups provide an icebreaker (name, pronouns) • Define community agreements/ground rules • Open the guide and have participants articulate aspirational vision in the first section of the guide
1 HOUR 30 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator provide overview of guide themes • Have participants go through the first 5 themes of the guide
20 MINUTES	BREAK	
5 MINUTES	ENERGIZER ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short and fun activity to bring the group back together
1 HOUR 15 MINUTES	COMMUNITY CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconvene and have participants complete the 5 outstanding themes (e.g. Drumming, call or response activity)
5-10 MINUTES	CLOSING THE CIRCLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanking participants for sharing reflections • Reminding participants all notes taken will not be attributed • Provide next steps
Notes:		

RESOURCES FOR FACILITATION

TOOLS TO GUIDE CONVERSATIONS

FACILITATION TOOLS

- [Anti-Oppressive Facilitation for Democratic Process](#) (Source: AORTA)
- [Liberating Structures: Conversation Café](#)
- [Liberating Structures: Falling Off the Horse – How to Deal with Unproductive Behaviour](#)
- [Graphic Recording](#) (Source: Better Evaluation)

INDIGENOUS & AFRICAN-CENTRED APPROACHES TO CONVERSATION

- [Land Acknowledgement](#)
- [First Nation Talking Stick Symbolism](#)
- [African Ancestral Acknowledgements](#)
- [Anti-Black Racism Analysis Tool](#)
- [Guide to Libation Ceremony: Honouring Those That Came Before Us](#)
- [Attention Signals: Call & Response](#)

APPENDIX B: ACTION PLAN REPORTS

CABR ACTION PLAN REPORTS

Year 4

- [Year Four Update Report on the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#)
- [Appendix A - Year Four Action Plan Summary of Progress](#)
- [Appendix B - Year Five Work Plan Priorities and Deliverables](#)
- [Appendix C - Partnership and Accountability Circle Report](#)
- [Appendix D - Toronto Black Food Sovereignty Plan - Year One Highlights](#)
- [Appendix E - Divisional Anti-Black Racism Action Plans \(Part 1 of 2\)](#)
- [Appendix E - Divisional Anti-Black Racism Action Plans \(Part 2 of 2\)](#)
- [Presentation on Year Four Update Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#)

Year 3

- [Year Three Update Report on the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#)
- [Report from the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration on Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism - Year Three Update](#)
- [Appendix A - Year Three Action Plan Deliverables Progress Update](#)
- [Appendix B - Year 4 Work Plan Priorities and Actions](#)
- [Appendix C - Partnership and Accountability Circle Report](#)
- [Appendix D - Black-mandated Funding Framework Overview](#)

Year 2

- [Report from the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration on Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism - Year Two Update](#)
- [Appendix A - Year Two Action Plan Summary](#)
- [Appendix B - Year Two Partnership and Accountability Circle \(PAC\) Report](#)
- [Appendix C - Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Unit COVID-19 Response Summary](#)
- [Appendix D - Year Three Work Plan Priorities](#)
- [Presentation from the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration on Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism Year 2 Update](#)

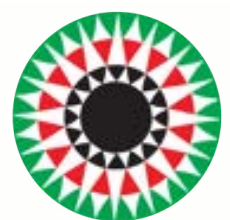
Year 1

- [Report from the Executive Director, of Social Development, Finance and Administration on Update on Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#)
- [Appendix A - Year One Work Plan Summary](#)
- [Appendix B - Partnership And Accountability Circle Report on Year One](#)
- [Appendix C - Year Two Work Plan Priorities](#)
- [Appendix D: Black Population Percentage, City of Toronto 2016](#)
- [Appendix E - Resources List of Major Reports](#)

APPENDIX C: REFERENCED RESEARCH AND REPORTS

- ASE Community Foundation. (2020). The Intersection of Blackness & Disability in Canada.
- Auditor General of Canada. (2023). Inclusion in the Workplace for Racialized Employees – Report 5
- Toronto Arts Council. (2020). Black Arts Funding for a Black Arts Future: Recommendations for Toronto Arts Council
- Black Health Alliance. (2020). Perspectives on Health and Wellbeing in Black Communities in Toronto: Our Health, Our Way
- Black Health Alliance. (2021). Perspectives on Health & Well-Being in Black Communities in Toronto: Experiences through COVID-19
- Black Queer Youth Collective (2020). Domino Project: Black LGBTQ+ Youth Needs Assessment.
- Black Urbanism TO. (2020). A Black Business Conversation: Planning for the Future of Black Businesses and Residents on Eglinton Avenue West
- Black Women in Canada. Monitor Magazine (accessed March 2024)
- Centre for Research & Innovation for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims. (2022). Social Determinants of Homicide
- City of Toronto. (2019). Equity and Inclusion Workplan
- City of Toronto. (2022). Contribution of Funds to Support Improvements at 756 Bathurst Street
- City of Toronto. (2021). Street Needs Assessment 2021
- City of Toronto. (2023). Little Jamaica Cultural Districts Plan - Final Report
- Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee. (2022). Commercial Property Ownership Mechanisms in Little Jamaica
- Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee. (2022). Employment Supports and Programs for Black Torontonians
- Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee. (2022). The Impacts of COVID-19 on Black Communities
- Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee. (2022). Request to Explore the PARTNA Program and Alternative Affordable Housing Options
- Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario. (2020). Anti-Black Racism in the Arts Discussion Document
- Duhaney, P. (2022). Criminalized Black Women's Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada
- Foundation for Black Communities. (2020). Unfunded: Black Communities Overlooked by Philanthropy
- Future Skills Centre & Diversity Institute. (2022). Bridging the Gap Between Identity and Social and Emotional Skills: Black Canadians' Perspectives of Social and Emotional Skills in the Workplace

- Gallagher-Mackay, et al. (2023). “I have all my credits – now what?”: Disparities in postsecondary transitions, invisible gatekeeping and inequitable access to rigorous upper year curriculum in Toronto, Ontario. Toronto: Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community and the Diaspora at York University.
- Grant, J. D. (2020). Navigating Two Worlds: Understanding the Complexities and Health Implications of Black Fatherhood in Toronto. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 31(3), 245–259.
- James, C.E. & Parekh, G. (2021). *Fixed Trajectories: Race, Schooling, and Graduation from Southern Ontario University*
- Office of the Correctional Investigator. (2023). *Annual Report 2022-2023*
- One Vision One Voice. (2023). *Understanding the Over-representation of Black Children in Ontario Child Welfare Services*
- Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2023). *Anti-Black Racism in Education: Compendium of Recommendations*
- Ontario Human Rights Commissions. (2023). *From Impact to Action: Final report into anti-Black racism by the Toronto Police Service*
- Ontario Nonprofit Network. (2022). *State of the Sector in Uncertain Times. Survey 2022 - Policy Report*
- Ontario Real Estate Association.(2022). *Fighting for Fair Housing*
- Parents of Black Children. (2022). *A Call to Action: Systems abuse of Black Students within Ontario’s Education System*
- Parents of Black Children. (2021). *Parents of Black Children Needs Assessment*
- SETSI & Buy Social Canada. (2021). *Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Procurement*
- Somali Centre for Culture & Recreation. (2022). *Inhibited Growth: Examining Public Investments Gaps in Black Infrastructure Needs*
- TAIBU Community Health Centre. (2023). *Experiences and Needs of Young Black Canadian Mothers in Toronto*
- The Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Focus in Racialized Communities in the GTA
- Toronto District School Board (2021). *Caring and Safe Schools Report*
- Toronto Foundation.(2022). *Toronto Social Capital Study*
- Toronto Foundation. (2023).*Toronto Vital Signs*
- Wellesley Institute (2023). *Understanding Evictions through Service Provider and Community Leader Perspectives in North York Communities*
- Wellesley Institute. (2020). *Forced Out: Evictions, Race and Poverty in Toronto*



**CONFRONTING
ANTI-BLACK
RACISM**



**CONFRONTING
ANTI-BLACK
RACISM**



www.toronto.ca/cabr



[@CABR_Toronto](#)
[#DecadeofAction](#)
[#10YearsofAction](#)
[#CABR](#)

