



REPORT

Report Date: September 15, 2022
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Meeting Date: September 27, 2022
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Arts Culture and Community Services
SUBJECT: Addressing Anti-Black Racism and Historic Discrimination: Interim Report

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council receive this interim report as an update of work to date on addressing anti-Black racism and historic discrimination.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to conduct further community conversations with a broader cross section of Vancouver's Black and African diaspora communities to inform the finalization of the City's anti-Black racism and cultural redress strategy, to be presented to Council in late 2023. Funding needed to continue this work will be addressed in the development of the 2023 operating budget.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to create partnerships with academics and historians to carry out research and analysis of the history of Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver to be used to create awareness and support cultural redress of historical wrongs and legacy of anti-Black racism in Vancouver.
- D. THAT Council direct staff to allocate annual funding through the City's Arts, Culture and Community Services and other departmental granting programs to community initiatives that further the City's anti-Black racism response.
- E. THAT Council request the Mayor, as Chair of the Vancouver Police Board, to share this interim report and provisional priority actions for information with the Vancouver Police Board.
- F. THAT Council direct staff to share this interim report and provisional priority actions for information with other governmental and public organizations including, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Provincial Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives, Attorney General and Minister responsible

for Housing, Minister of Children and Family Development, Minister of Education BC Human Rights Commissioner, Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner, Independent Investigations Office, BC Housing, TransLink, Transit Police Board, Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver Park Board, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), and the Metro Vancouver Social Issues Committee.

REPORT SUMMARY

This interim update report outlines four draft priorities and 23 associated draft recommended actions to address the historic, ongoing and present day racism targeting Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver as part of the City's cultural redress work identified through engagement with an external Community Advisory Committee comprised of knowledge holders from the Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver, along with a City staff advisory. These draft recommendations will be confirmed through a next phase of broader community engagement before being finalized. Also included is a summary of the work to date, including the further planning and scoping of the work needed to carefully address anti-Black racism in Vancouver. By working alongside Black and African diaspora community members, staff will work to identify measurable ways to address anti-Black racism in order to lead to racial equity so that we are collectively contributing to the recognition, justice, and development for Black and African diaspora communities, and furthering the goal of racial equity for all. The authors of this document wish to alert the reader that some of the information below may be difficult to read due to the impacts of racism on the personal and professional lives of residents in the community.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

For motions previously approved by Council, please see Appendix C.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

Staff acknowledge the contributions, resilience and strength of Black and African diaspora communities in the face of historic and ongoing injustices and oppression. Staff extend gratitude to all who have contributed to address racism in Vancouver, including members of the Community Advisory Committee, the research assistant, Internal Advisory Committee, and Black, Indigenous and staff of colour who share their personal and professional commitment to the work of anti-racism and cultural redress. The recommendations in this report aim to begin the work of repairing and building relationships of trust with Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver. Sharing the draft priorities and draft recommended actions outlined in the report is a first step for the City, and is intended to begin to articulate a path to reducing systemic barriers for Black and African diasporic peoples in Vancouver and supporting opportunities for this community to thrive.

REPORT

Background/Context

Local Context

The City of Vancouver is located on unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations who are the Rights holders and stewards of these lands and waters. The City acknowledges that these lands were taken by the Crown without consent, displacing Indigenous communities from their lands and cultural practices. Attempts to assimilate Indigenous cultures, languages, family and economic systems into Euro-centric culture, language, family and economic systems were imposed. Vancouver is built on the history of this colonialism and white supremacy, a history that has and continues to negatively impact everyone – but particularly Indigenous, Black and African diaspora¹, and other racialized communities, who, by design, have not benefitted from relative status, privilege, and power. As local government, the City of Vancouver plays a critical role and has influence over many aspects of community life.

While Vancouver celebrates its diversity with a population in which over half the residents are “visible minorities,”² Indigenous communities, Black and African diaspora and other racialized communities, and in particular those who are new immigrants, currently face significant barriers to thriving in Vancouver, as do those who are marginalized because of their sex, gender identity or expression, sexuality, ability, age, socioeconomic status and other factors (Equity Framework, 2021). In particular, anti-Black racism has persisted throughout the history of Vancouver and Canada as a whole, detrimentally impacting the creation and transmittal of intergenerational wealth, income potential, educational achievement, health outcomes, and the general wellbeing of members of Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver.

This report recognizes that there is no single term shared among all people, and the terms “Black and African diaspora” are used in this report to refer to individuals and communities that include, but are not limited to Black Canadians, African-Canadians, African Caribbean, Black Africans, and Black Vancouverites.

Anti-Black Racism

Globally, the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and the Canadian Government define anti-Black racism as, “prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement” and the legacy of that enslavement suffered by Africans and people of African descent³. The Canadian government recognizes that anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, such that it is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger white society⁴.

Anti-Black racism has its roots in the colonial systems that created this country. Historically, myths and stereotypes, including the ideas that Black people were biologically different or subhuman, less intelligent, and had a greater tolerance for pain were created and used to justify slavery and the torture of enslaved African people⁵. Today, many of these ideas still permeate society and are pervasive across Canada. Anti-Black racism is “manifest in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of African Canadians, which includes unequal opportunities, lower socio-economic status, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates and

overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.”⁶ As outlined in the City’s Equity Framework, racial equity recognizes that “systemic racism, anti-Black racism, and anti-Indigenous racism have a larger impact than individual acts of racism based on consciously held beliefs of racial superiority and the way whiteness is positioned as the cultural norm”⁷ and that a “systems orientation⁸” is required.

Experiences of Black and African Diaspora Peoples in Canada⁹

Canada prohibits racial discrimination and other forms of discrimination and intolerance in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Criminal Code, and federal, and provincial and territorial human rights statutes. Further, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1985) recognizes diversity as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society that requires institutions to respect and be inclusive of the country’s multicultural character and commits to promoting the full and equitable participation of individuals of all origins and eliminating barriers to that participation.

Black people comprise 3.5% of Canada’s total population and about 43% of Black people in Canada are Canadian born. Locally, Black people make up 1.2% of Metro Vancouver and 1.09% of the City of Vancouver, with 44% of Metro Vancouver and 45% in the City of Vancouver born in Canada¹⁰. The Black population in Canada is diverse and from a range of backgrounds. Many Black people in Canada can trace their roots back to generations of Black communities that helped build Canada from its earliest days, while a number of other Black people arrived through various waves of migration in Canada¹¹. The contributions of Black people to advancing the economic, political, social, and cultural welfare of Canada spans every province and territory, yet many of these contributions remain unacknowledged and inequities and disparities continue to exist, negatively impacting Black and African diaspora communities across the country.

On their 2016 Mission to Canada, the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent expressed concern about the ongoing nature of anti-Black racism in Canada, noting that “structural racism lies at the core of many Canadian institutions [and that] across the country, many people of African descent continue to live in poverty and poor health, have low educational attainment and are overrepresented in the criminal justice system.”¹² Further, the Working Group notes that there remain critical policy gaps in addressing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, Afrophobia¹³ and related intolerance that is faced by people of African descent in Canada¹⁴. These gaps can be attributed to the historical and ongoing impacts of “Canada’s history of enslavement, racial segregation and marginalization has had a deleterious impact on people of African descent, which must be addressed in partnership with communities.”

Anti-Black racism in Canada is acutely experienced in four areas: children and youth¹⁵ development; job opportunities and income supports; health and community services; and policing and the justice system. The impacts of ongoing anti-Black racism in Canada are significant and include: compounding and intergenerational marginalization, exclusion, inequity, and dehumanization of Black people in Canada¹⁶. At the same time, nearly half of Canadians believe that anti-Black racism is “no longer a problem”¹⁷ which has impeded recognition and action by all sectors of society, including government.

To further illustrate, Black communities are disadvantaged related to jobs and economic wellbeing, the justice system, education and displacement as described below:

Labour Market & Economic Disparities

A 2020 report showed that on average Black Canadians are at a disadvantage in the labour market. The data revealed that the annual wages of Black populations were generally lower than those of the rest of the population. Moreover, the employment rate of the Black population aged 25 to 59 was lower than that of the rest of the population. Among this age group's Black population in 2016, 78% of men and 71% of women were employed, compared with 83% and 76%, respectively, among their counterparts in the rest of the population¹⁸.

In general, Black people in Canada live in more difficult economic conditions than the rest of the Canadian population. In the context of Vancouver, the Black population is 1.0% of the general population, however the 2020 [City of Vancouver's Social Indicators Profile](#) indicate that a disproportionate number of Black residents live below the poverty line. 29% of Black people experience income poverty, compared to 20% of the overall population. Black people are 45% more likely to have incomes below the poverty line.

These economic disparities have severe implications on the wellbeing of Black children. The data indicated that the low-income rate for Black children is two and a half to three times higher than that observed for other children. In 2015, low-income status affected 27% of Black children and 14% of other children.¹⁹ 32% of Black children (under 18 years) in the City of Vancouver lived in families below the poverty line compared to 20% for children overall²⁰. "Overall, being born into and growing up in a poor household negatively affects children in the short term and across the life-cycle. These effects have major implications for society."²¹

Inequalities in the Justice System

Within the justice system, Black and African diaspora communities are disproportionately represented in carding, street checks, racial profiling, and discrimination in policing decisions including use of force²². Black and African diaspora communities are disproportionately policed and over incarcerated²³. In BC, Black people continue to be overrepresented in police-involved death with BC having the highest rate of police-involved deaths of all people in Canada²⁴. Further in Vancouver, as detailed in the BC Human Rights Report *Equity is safer: Human rights considerations for policing reform in British Columbia*, Black people are grossly overrepresented in mental health incidents, strip searches, and arrests²⁵. Anti-Black racism in the justice system is indiscriminately impacting Black people in Canada, British Columbia, and Vancouver. A recent example of the overrepresentation of Black people in arrests in Vancouver was the wrongful detainment and handcuffing of retired BC Supreme Court Justice Selwyn Romilly.

Education Opportunities

Similarly, while Vancouver's residents were more likely to have higher education credentials compared to residents of the overall region (Metro-Vancouver), Black residents in the City were less likely than their European counterparts to have postsecondary and university degrees. These statistics suggest that Black communities, including Black people in Vancouver, continue to face systemic challenges to educational achievement and advancement, which in turn impacts employment and prosperity.

Black Erasure and Displacement

In Vancouver, similar to other Canadian and US cities, Black and African diaspora communities have historically and continue to experience displacement due to targeted revitalization and/or urban renewal. Emanating from a city that is implicated in institutional and systemic racism as recently acknowledged in the Equity Framework, displacement from and within Vancouver, including Hogan's Alley, has led to a wide dispersal of people of African descent across the lower mainland. The resulting geographic distance made community and connection difficult to establish and maintain and negatively impacted the establishment of cultural organizations, visible presence in Vancouver, and cultural community development. Further, displacement and anti-Black racism in housing has also contributed to significantly less intergenerational wealth being created and transferred in Vancouver's Black communities in comparison to other communities, impacting home ownership and hence housing tenure, prosperity and security.

Similar to the history of displacement, the limited commemoration of Black community members and the lack of recognition of Black history in Vancouver has led to a pervasive perception that there are no or few Black people, both currently and historically. The absence of education about historical Black communities, integrated within school curricula, and the limited commemoration of this community continues to perpetuate the invisibilization and displacement of Black and African diaspora community members. Learning and displaying Black history in Vancouver, strengthens the sense of community and transforms the city into a place of belonging.

Acknowledging and Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Vancouver

In early 2018, Council approved Northeast False Creek Plan, policy directions were made to redress the impacts of the displacement of the Black and African diaspora communities from Hogan's Alley, which resulted from the construction of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts.²⁶ Recently, Council approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Hogan's Alley Society (HAS) that confirms the intention to work together in a collaborative manner to enable the redevelopment of the 898 Main St. Block, including the City granting a long-term lease of the land to HAS.

In December 2018, the City of Vancouver publicly acknowledged that anti-Black racism exists in Vancouver. In communication to staff following an incident of hate speech and threats of racialized violence against Black youth in Vancouver, the then City Manager expressed the City's support for Black staff and communities. The City Manager indicated that the City had "an opportunity to address anti-Black racism and the disproportionate traumatic impact these incidents have on Black youth and members of the Black community" and that through the City's commitment to equity, the City, would "initiate efforts to address anti-Black racism as a societal issue."

In the 2020 budget, Council approved a one-time fund of \$200,000 to begin work with Black and African diaspora communities to tackle anti-Black racism. A research analysis on anti-Black racism in Vancouver was carried out and resulted in the report, "[*Towards a Healthy City: Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Vancouver*](#)." In addition, community priorities were compiled from previous engagement with the Black and African diaspora communities and presented at

the 2020 town hall with this community. This existing work has been instrumental in helping to direct some of the ongoing work.

In 2021, staff took steps to begin the process of meaningfully engaging with a wider cross section of community stakeholders, partners and organizations, community knowledge holders, and people with lived experience to “better understand the Vancouver context and to find Vancouver responses²⁷” to *anti-Black racism*. This interim report is a result of the engagements to date and a step towards the development and implementation of a City-wide action plan to address anti-Black racism.

Process to date: Project Structure and Engagements

Staff have strived to develop a cultural redress process for Black and African diaspora communities and to address anti-Black racism in Vancouver as a collaborative process with community members and City staff. Internal coordination across City departments has also been instrumental in informing the process.

Black and African Diaspora Community Advisory Committee

Engagement with community advisors was a core part of this process. The Community Advisory Committee convened between January and August 2022 and consists of key stakeholders, individuals with lived experience of anti-Black racism, and respected members of the community, including knowledge holders, historians, researchers, legal experts, and individuals with multiple intersecting identities, such as race, gender, class, age, sexual orientation, ability, citizenship status, among others.

The Advisory Committee met monthly and informed this work by providing feedback and guidance to ensure that the draft priorities and recommended actions take into consideration the diverse needs of Black and African diasporic communities in Vancouver. Further, the Advisory Committee informed the planning, evaluation, and ongoing process of this work through individual interviews with a research assistant.

It must be noted that advisors’ contributions have been generously offered based on the possibility of real change. Contributions have been carefully considered and handled in an effort to re-build trust with communities that have been and continue to be marginalized and impacted by the City and other institutions’ historical and ongoing actions and inactions including processes, policies, procedures, and outcomes

Internal Working Group

The Internal Working Group was formed in December 2021 and consists of eight department directors and key staff working on City policies and strategies that impact and have the potential to impact Black and African diaspora staff, individuals and communities, how anti-Black racism is being addressed and how Black priorities are being identified and met. This group brings their professional expertise and insights on how their departments function and make suggestions on how they and their teams could work towards addressing anti-Black racism internally and externally.

Strategic Analysis

Current Approach to Cultural Redress

Redress itself is an expansive concept that has been implemented in international contexts but is new to the City of Vancouver. As the City embarks on this journey toward anti-racism and specifically cultural redress, staff do so with the understanding that the City principles and practices for cultural redress are emerging through our work with impacted communities.

Within the City's context, cultural redress is taking place on unceded Indigenous land, and must be approached in consideration of the perspectives of xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Peoples and specific communities seeking cultural redress. To this end, staff have worked with the lens that any overall discussions of cultural redress for the impacts of anti-Black racism need to be in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice (National Inquiry), and the City's forthcoming implementation of UNDRIP. Further, many of the issues identified in this report demonstrate alignment with work underway including Historical Discrimination Against People of South Asian Canadian Descent, Chinatown Transformation, and the work on Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples noted above. With respect to addressing the wellbeing and prosperity of Black and people of African descent, the City must also consider the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024, which outlines three areas of action: Recognition, Justice, and Development for Black and African diaspora People²⁸. (See specific details in Appendix D). These areas of action are considered in the analysis below.

Black and African Diaspora Community Advisory Committee: General Findings

Research and engagement with Black and African diasporic community members over the past six months highlight the continued negative impact of anti-Black racism and discrimination on the lives of Black people and people of African descent in Vancouver and point to an urgent need for strategic policies, laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines aimed at eliminating anti-Black racism.

Engagement findings also point to the community's hope that the City as local government will play a role in either creating or facilitating opportunities across social determinants of health, ranging from housing, health care, arts, and culture to jobs and economy. While the main levers of financial support across these areas rest with senior governments, the City can play a role in various social development areas including convening, as a funding partner, as regulator and policy maker, and as an advocate. Further, engagement findings suggest that any City-supported economic development opportunities need to be more accessible to members of the Black and African diaspora community to foster intergenerational capacity for those most marginalized, enabling Black communities to thrive and reach their full potentials.

From the Advisory Committee: Key Themes/Areas of Concern

The following thematic areas of concern have been outlined by the Black and African diaspora Community Advisory Committee based on initial engagement and community-identified priorities. Direct comments from the Community Advisory Committee are included in Appendix F. It is expected that continued engagement with Black and African diaspora communities will

support refinement of these ideas and may also highlight other thematic areas and key areas of focus for City action to eliminate anti-Black racism.

Themes from engagement with the Advisory Committee span all areas of life because the impacts of historic and ongoing anti-Black racism impact all areas of life, including labour market and economic access, housing, employment, education, policing and the justice system, language access, advocacy for temporary and seasonal workers, access to health care, social benefits, and workplace advancement. While some of these areas of focus are outside the City's jurisdiction, the City has role to play in advocacy, potentially as a funding partner, and in service and program delivery. A few initial examples are included in the preliminary analysis below, and a detailed analysis of the issues raised will be brought forward in the final report.

Access to Jobs and Economic Wellbeing

The systemic barriers that hinder Black and African diaspora people from holding leadership positions within the City and in other public institutions has been identified by many Advisory Committee members. Further, the small number of Black and African diaspora councilors and politicians across all levels of government within Vancouver suggest barriers to political participation and create conditions for exclusion of Black and African diaspora perspectives in elected governance. Advisory committee members expressed the need for more equitable pathways to pursue and succeed in getting into political leadership positions to enable influence and representation across all levels of government and public appointments.

Staff further heard from the Advisory Committee regarding the City's workplace and Black and African diaspora employee experiences, specifically noting that in addition to hiring Black and African diaspora people into City positions, the City should also ensure that the workspace is not only a safe space but an environment which is actively working to break down systemic barriers, is de-colonial, and supports Black professionals. This concern arises from experiences when Black and African diaspora people overcome systemic barriers in hiring processes and frequently enter unwelcoming workspaces with the added and unreasonable expectation to tackle anti-Black racism that they must navigate silently. This struggle leads to exhaustion, stress, mental duress, earning gaps, reduced earnings over time, unemployment, and underemployment, which impedes career progression.

Affordable Housing and Spaces

Stable, safe, and welcoming housing is widely understood to be the solid foundation upon which every resident builds their life and their families, and is accordingly one of the first and most important systems to address. The Advisory Committee has noted that anti-Black racism and its effects on Black life presents itself on many levels within the housing system, including intergenerational housing discrimination, inadequate housing, racist housing laws, environmental racism, racist lending and real estate agency practices in upholding racist and discriminatory covenants. The compounding effects of anti-Black racism within housing sector and the unaffordable housing market continues to limit opportunities for Black and African diaspora community members to situate themselves within Vancouver. In turn, housing insecurity further exacerbates educational attainment and employment achievement.

Engagement findings point to the necessity of affordable housing, work and creative spaces for individuals of the Black and African diasporic community. Access to safe and affordable housing would provide security and would support and encourage Black and African diaspora community members to flourish.

Justice System: Policing Black Lives

The Advisory Committee has noted that the hyper-surveillance and policing of Black lives that is common across US and Canadian cities is also experienced by the local Black community in Vancouver. The Advisory Committee identified concerns related to the Vancouver Police Department and Transit Authority. Members indicated that this continuous surveillance translates to feeling unsafe and unwelcome within the city. Many felt they were perceived as dangerous and delinquent when discussing being pulled over or undergoing random checks.

Education System

Themes of perceived delinquency among children and youth were also identified by the Advisory Committee within the context of the education system. They noted that Black children and youth are frequently labelled as disruptive, difficult, and/or low-achieving, subsequently capping their potential through biased educational assessments and treatment, disproportionately low educational attainment, high drop out rates, suspensions and expulsions, and streaming into general and basic-level academic programmes rather than advanced programs. They see this as a failure of the education system to empower and support Black students, leading to further systemic barriers to accessing higher education and other educational and career opportunities.

Presence and Visibility

The Advisory Committee also noted the lack of visibility of the Black community in terms of people's understanding of Vancouver history as well as on the present day landscape arising from historic displacement. They noted the importance of a City acknowledgment of its role in the displacement of Black and African diaspora communities while also emphasizing the importance of recognizing the historical and contemporary Black and African diaspora communities' members for their achievements, work in, and contributions to the city.

Draft Priorities and Actions

Due to the wide-spread and pervasive nature of anti-Black racism, the role of the City of Vancouver as a municipal government in addressing anti-Black racism can be understood on four levels:

- (a) direct anti-racist actions that specifically target anti-Black racism within City of Vancouver as an employer and service provider²⁹,
- (b) advocacy to other levels of government³⁰,
- (c) advocacy and leadership with other public organizations and institutions³¹, and
- (d) advocacy and leadership with non-governmental/public organizations.

These four areas are expanded upon throughout this report.

Based on what the City has previously heard from Black and African diaspora communities, the Advisory Committee met to review, discuss and prioritize a list of potential draft actions for further discussion with the community.

The Advisory Committee emphasized that the success of this work lies in a strong accountability process. Similar to the City's recent MMIWG2S Response Report and Accessibility Strategy implementation, they recommended that once the City has an action plan that the City develop an annual public accountability report³² on identified priorities and actions including specific resourcing and key performance indicators to measure impacts of all activities towards addressing anti-Black racism. The actions need to be responsive, ongoing, and adaptive to emerging issues as identified by community and ongoing assessment will assist to ensure that actions are achieving their intended outcomes.

Below is a summary of four draft priorities with 23 preliminary actions identified by the Advisory Committee for further exploration with the community and for consideration in the development of a final action plan.

ECONOMIC WELLBEING AND PROSPERITY

PRIORITY #1: Partner with Black and African diaspora community members, businesses and social enterprises to address poverty, advance community economic development and prosperity in Black and African diaspora communities.

The goal is to work with and support Black and African diasporic communities in developing sustainable and prosperous communities.

Actions:

1.1: Review and adjust grant objectives, criteria, application and disbursement processes and create inclusive policies that value and recognize Black experience and leadership to reduce barriers to equitable funding for social, cultural and recreational programs.

1.2: Provide financial support to Black and African diaspora-led organizations, local business and/or social enterprise economic development programs focused on youth, including, but not limited to, Black queer youth.

1.3: Use City tools including granting and advocacy with other levels of government to support agencies that advance community economic development in Black and African diaspora communities, starting with the City's 2023 grant cycle.

1.4: Develop City-led actions and advocacy with other levels of government for home ownership as an economic development opportunity for the Black and African diaspora community.

ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC ANTI-BLACK RACISM

PRIORITY #2: Work to eliminate systemic racism within City of Vancouver as an employer and service provider to take action against anti-Black racism and advocate to other levels of government, other governmental organizations, non-governmental/public organizations to take action against anti-Black racism.

The City has a responsibility to take steps to eliminate systemic racism in programs, services, policies and practices. In addition, the City should advocate for other public institutions to take strategic actions to eradicate negative interactions within the City at large.

Actions:

2.1: Advocate for the elimination of anti-Black racism including transparency and accountability for interactions with Black and African diaspora community members across policing organizations such as the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), Transit Police, Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner, and Independent Investigations Office.

2.2: Through the Public Partners Working Group on Anti-racism identify and recommend actions and strategies to address anti-Black racism in the justice system.

2.2.a: Support organizations and community groups to provide culturally appropriate legal and human rights support and programs for Black and African Diaspora communities in Vancouver.

2.2.b: Work with Black communities and other equity denied communities to develop racist-incident reporting mechanisms/channels and identify culturally appropriate supports to victims of racist incidents.

2.2.c: Advocate to senior government, including the BC Human Rights Commission and Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism, for: transparency and accountability across policing organizations such as the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and Transit Police; including, but not limited to, strengthened repercussions for perpetrators of racist actions and hate crimes; and increased representation of and access to Black legal professionals in the justice system.

2.2.d: Work with Public Partners Working Group to develop clear and transparent processes for community to report and receive response to racist and hate incidents; and responses and repercussions for patrons or clients who engage in racist or hate behaviours in City and other public facilities and/or properties.

2.2.e: Work with Black communities and other equity denied communities to develop recommendations for non-incarceration measures for poverty-related minor offenses including community based rehabilitation, diversion and

restorative justice methods aimed towards Black and African diaspora communities and youth in particular.

2.3: Work with the City's Equity Office and Human Resources departments to ensure City policies and procedures provide clear pathways for Black and African diaspora community members, including Black City staff, to raise concerns about any discriminatory staff and community conduct they may have experienced.

IMPROVING CITY'S IMPACT ON BLACK COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY #3: The City to provide appropriate resources and direct staff to create ethically sound ways to better understand the experiences of Black community members in Vancouver that include collecting race-based data, to reveal:

- a. **How Black people are impacted by City-led programs and initiatives and;**
- b. **How human resources practices impact Black staff and leadership diversity in the City.**

Recognizing the importance of disaggregated race-based data in helping to identify and address racial inequities, the Advisory Committee recommends that the City commits resources, including staffing into taking the below actions. In addition, the City should advocate for other public institutions to take strategic actions to collect, analyze, and apply disaggregated race-based data in order to address systemic anti-Black racism within the city at large.

Actions:

3.1: Review best practices and partnership opportunities to develop ethical tools to collect, analyze, and apply disaggregated race-based data to inform all City services and programs and report back on the feasibility and scope, for creating a system to enact good data stewardship in seeking to understand the Black community's experiences in Vancouver.

3.2: Work with the City's Equity Office and Human Resources department to analyse existing employee benchmarking survey to understand the experiences of Black staff and the actions that can be taken to address the issues raised, identify and address existing gaps in this data, and offer ongoing all-staff training on addressing anti-Black racism.

3.3: Track and publicly report data on an annual/ongoing basis to be shared with community members on the impact of recommendations and actions identified to address anti-Black racism in Vancouver.

3.4: Establish a standing Black and African diaspora steering committee to inform City's ongoing work to address anti-Black racism in all City-wide activities including planning processes and engagements.

CREATING CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND SAFE PLANNING PROCESSES

PRIORITY #4: The City integrate culturally relevant and safe planning processes for urban development, urban design, public space design, housing development, and preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Black and African diasporic people.

This priority identifies the need for consistent and dedicated anti-racism work to be undertaken when planning and designing projects and programs in order to centre Black life and address anti-Black racism. It underpins the need for the City to purposefully design for, and in collaboration with, Black communities, so that they access affordable housing and feel welcomed and included in public spaces.

Actions:

4.1: Work with community organizations to collect baseline data to understand housing needs for the Black and African diaspora community, and identify short-term and long-term targets, and ongoing measures to monitor impact on identified needs.

4.2: Prioritize below and non-market housing for all Black and African diaspora communities, particularly those who are seniors, newcomers, LGBTQIA2S+ and people with disabilities.

4.3: Work with Black and African diaspora communities and other levels of government to develop policies for eliminating systemic barriers that prevent first time home buyers from getting into the housing market and Black and African diaspora communities from attaining for market and non-market rental and co-op housing across the city.

4.4: Direct staff to clearly assess the potential risks of displacement on Black populations during community planning, including development plans, and work to mitigate these risks.

4.5: Work in partnership with the broader community, including the Hogan's Alley Society to identify spaces where Black and African diaspora communities can convene.

4.7: Following the completion of the Commemoration Policy, direct staff to explore opportunities to preserve cultural heritage that's important to Black and African diaspora communities.

Next Steps

The next step will be to conduct broader consultation and engagement with the Black and African diaspora community to seek refinement of the draft priorities and actions presented in this interim report and to seek advice on implementation.

Staff will engage concurrently with internal City departments to discuss recommendations and priority actions that impact areas of work and where specific City departments play a key role in addressing anti-Black racism across the City. Staff will conduct this engagement with guidance from the Advisory Committee and internal staff working group.

A final report with confirmed recommended actions, timelines, budget requests and a plan for ongoing reporting to Council will be presented following this broader engagement.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

It is imperative that this work be carried out in a way that creates space for Black and African diaspora communities to be part of the process – to participate in decisions and processes that directly impact them. Communities have asked for greater transparency and accountability in their relationship with the City, to be updated regularly on “progress of engagement initiatives,³³” to be given assurances that the City of Vancouver is committed to eliminating anti-Black racism. These accountability measures are important to building trust with Black and African diaspora communities – communities that as this report shows, have been severely impacted by centuries of systemic injustices.

Financial

Current work is funded from a one-time allocation in the 2020 operating budget of \$200,000. Additional resources are required to undertake further engagement with the broader community, complete the required research, and finalize actions in each priority area.

One-time \$80,000 project funding and extension of the Planner are supported through reallocation within the 2022 ACCS operating budget. The one-time project funds will be allocated to support further research, community engagement, or other process work identified by the staff in consultation with the Advisory Committee.

Staff will identify resources necessary and prepare a funding strategy as part of the 2023 annual budget process. In addition, staff will also explore advocacy and collaboration with the provincial and federal governments including applying for anti-racism and redress funds to continue this work.

As noted above, implementing recommendations arising from the final recommendations (i.e., in the final report) will require sustained effort to both implement programs and actions, maintain liaison and engagement with the community, and ensure accountability of follow-through for the community. When staff present the final report, staff will also bring forward recommended resource requirements to maintain relationships and liaison with community and ensure work proceeds and any Council-approved commitments are met.

CONCLUSION

This work is an initial step by the City of Vancouver towards cultural redress for Black and African diaspora communities and addressing anti-Black racism. Staff and communities acknowledge that there is a lot of ground to cover to repair harms, build trust, uphold the rights and dignity of Black and African diaspora peoples and to work alongside them in creating prosperous communities.

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¹ Equity Framework: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210720/documents/p1.pdf>

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- ² Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016 Census: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CD&Code1=5915&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=Greater%20Vancouver&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=Visible%20minority&TABID=1>
- ³ United Nations, Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its mission to Canada. (2017). <https://ansa.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/files/report-of-the-working-group-of-experts-on-people-of-african-descent-on-its-mission-to-canada.pdf>
- ⁴ Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022. (2019). Accessed last on August 11, 2022: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>
- ⁵ Canadian Medical Association Journal, Time to dismantle systemic anti-Black Racism in medicine in Canada. https://www.cmaj.ca/content/193/2/E55?fbclid=IwAR3A-dMeJrt9-ziyPKtunHK12ciWg2FcbQ4G5-GU_ctjfggowaONSjMAGBQ
- ⁶ Toronto District School Board, Equity, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression, Glossary. <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Equity-Anti-Racism-and-Anti-Oppression/Glossary>
- ⁷ Equity Framework: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210720/documents/p1.pdf>
- ⁸ One of four lenses, systems orientation: focused on recognizing embedded discrimination within systems, and the redesign of the rules and incentives of a system, in order to lead to more equitable outcomes. Equity Framework: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210720/documents/p18.pdf>
- ⁹ Black is used in this report recognizing that there is no single term shared among all people and that this term is used to recognize Black Canadians, Black Vancouverites, and African diaspora.
- ¹⁰ OmiSoore Dryden and Onye Nnorom. (2021). Canadian Medical Association Journal. Time to dismantle system anti-Black racism in medicine in Canada. https://www.cmaj.ca/content/193/2/E55?fbclid=IwAR3A-dMeJrt9-ziyPKtunHK12ciWg2FcbQ4G5-GU_ctjfggowaONSjMAGBQ
- ¹¹ Government of Canada, Social determinants and inequities in health for Black Canadians: A Snapshot. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health/social-determinants-inequities-black-canadians-snapshot.html>
- ¹² United Nations, Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its mission to Canada. (2017). <https://ansa.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/files/report-of-the-working-group-of-experts-on-people-of-african-descent-on-its-mission-to-canada.pdf>
- ¹³ ENAR describes Afrophobia as “a term used to describe the specificities of racism that targets people of African descent. Afrophobia seeks to dehumanise and deny the dignity of a large group of people. Afrophobia manifests itself through acts of racial discrimination – direct, indirect and structural – and violence, including hate speech, targeting Black people. It can take many different forms: dislike, personal antipathy, bias, bigotry, prejudice, oppression, racism, structural and institutional discrimination, racial and ethnic profiling, enslavement, xenophobia, societal marginalisation and exclusion, systematic violence, hate speech and hate crime.” <https://www.enar-eu.org/about/afrophobia/#:~:text=What%20is%20Afrophobia%3F,a%20large%20group%20of%20people.>
- ¹⁴ United Nations, Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its mission to Canada. (2017). <https://ansa.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/files/report-of-the-working-group-of-experts-on-people-of-african-descent-on-its-mission-to-canada.pdf>
- ¹⁵ The federal government refers to youth as individuals ranging from 15 to 30 years of age. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/11-631-X2019003>
- ¹⁶ BCG. The Pervasive Reality of Anti-Black Racism in Canada. (2020). Accessed last on August 11, 2022: <https://www.bcg.com/en-ca/publications/2020/reality-of-anti-black-racism-in-canada>
- ¹⁷ BCG. The Pervasive Reality of Anti-Black Racism in Canada. (2020). Accessed last on August 11, 2022: <https://www.bcg.com/en-ca/publications/2020/reality-of-anti-black-racism-in-canada>
- ¹⁸ Statistics Canada, Changes in the socioeconomic situation of Canada's Black population, 2001 to 2016. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020001-eng.htm>
- ¹⁹ Statistics Canada, Changes in the socioeconomic situation of Canada's Black population, 2001 to 2016. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020001-eng.htm>
- ²⁰ Healthy City Dashboard: <https://opendata.vancouver.ca/pages/indicator-disaggregated-tags/?q.cardid=142>.

- ²¹ Kaila de Boer, David W. Rothwell and Christopher Lee. Child and family poverty in Canada: Implications for child welfare research. <https://cwrp.ca/sites/default/files/publications/Child%20And%20Family%20Poverty%20In%20Canada%20Implications%20For%20Child%20Welfare%20Research.pdf>
- ²² Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. (2021). <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/SECU/Reports/RP11434998/securp06/securp06-e.pdf>
- ²³ Maynard, R., Policing Black Lives. (2017).
- ²⁴ Equity is safer: Human rights considerations for policing reform in British Columbia. BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner. (2021). <https://bchumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/BCOHR Nov2021 SCORPA Equity-is-safer.pdf>
- ²⁵ Equity is safer: Human rights considerations for policing reform in British Columbia. BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner. (2021). <https://bchumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/BCOHR Nov2021 SCORPA Equity-is-safer.pdf>
- ²⁶ 2018 City of Vancouver: Northeast False Creek Plan: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/northeast-false-creek-plan.pdf>
- ²⁷ December 12, 2018 email address from Mr. Johnston to City staff.
- ²⁸ United Nations Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024. Accessed last on August 11, 2022: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent/recognition>
- ²⁹ City services and programs include Mayor and City Councillors; Office of the City Manager; Arts, Culture and Community Services; Civic Engagement and Communications; Development, Buildings and Licensing; Engineering Services; Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management; Fire and Rescue Services and Emergency Management; Human Resources; Legal Services; Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability; and Real Estate and Facilities Management.
- ³⁰ Other levels of government include Host Nations, Municipalities across Canada, Provincial Government, and Federal and Territorial Governments.
- ³¹ Other governmental organizations include Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver Park Board, Translink, BC Emergency Health Services, BC Housing, and others as required.
- ³² Report, MMIWG2S Response Report: Response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice and Red Women Rising Report Recommendations: Recommendation #2 Development of an evaluation plan that creates accountability for City's actions. 2022. <https://council.vancouver.ca/20220719/documents/r3.pdf>
- ³³ Addressing anti-Black racism: Black and African diaspora community recommendations. https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/anti-black-racism-community-recommendations-detailed-summary.pdf?_ga=2.130961286.868005005.1626805455-517730808.1626132783

Research Required

If the City of Vancouver is to work towards addressing anti-Black racism, there needs to be a general consciousness-raising of the history, experiences and contributions of Black people and People of African descent in Vancouver. The United Nations International Decade of People of African Descent calls for ***Recognition*** as one of its core goals. That is, recognizing and celebrating the important contributions of people of African descent, while also recognizing the long-standing prejudices and unfair treatment endured for generations³⁴.

As communities call for greater awareness of Black history in British Columbia and more locally, in the context of Vancouver, engaging in research that brings Black stories, experiences and contributions to the fore is instrumental. Staff have consistently heard from members of Black and African diaspora communities that they lack a sense of belonging in the city, stemming from the fact that they have not been written into the local landscape, even though their presence can be traced to as far back as the mid-1800s. The Community Advisory Committee expressed that, as a part of its cultural redress to the Black community, this research must be done with a view to working with communities in translating the findings into key areas of knowledge and information highlighting the history of Black communities in Vancouver.

This research should include a review of City policies, procedures and bylaws, gathering historical information through archival searches, speaking with historians, and hearing from elders, descendants of early pioneers of Black and African diaspora communities, as well as other knowledge keepers to fill in the gaps. Staff should explore collaborations with Black and African-led community organizations, educational institutions, community historians, researchers and academics to undertake this research. Collaborative efforts should also be sought with agency partners, such as the Vancouver Public Library, and other external organizations, such as the Vancouver Land Titles Office, the Vancouver Maritimes Museum, the Museum of Anthropology and the Province's Multiculturalism and Anti-racism Division.

³⁴ Nova Scotia's Action Plan in Response to the International decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024. <https://novascotia.ca/international-decade-for-people-of-african-descent/Action-Plan-international-decade-for-people-of-african-descent.pdf>

Community Engagement for Cultural Redress

Engaging Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver is critical to understanding the diversity, strengths and contributions of the communities, the impact arising from historic and ongoing anti-Black racism and discrimination, as well as the opportunities and priorities important to fostering growth, development and prosperity in Black communities.

City staff have heard from the Community Advisory Committee that while these initial conversations with the City are useful, there are still gaps in knowledge and lived experiences, and as such, effort must be extended to have broader, more meaningful, and ongoing conversations with Black and African diaspora residents. Crucial to these conversations are the voices of youth, seniors, LGBTQIA2S+ folks and persons with disabilities. As with any community, the Black community is not a monolith, therefore hearing only from a select few or from individuals who are normally the ones being engaged runs the risk of exclusion or ineffective responses, and potentially causing further harm.

The Community Advisory Committee reminds the City that for cultural redress processes to be done in an appropriate and ethical way, it must be driven by community members who have been marginalized, excluded, displaced, and affected and it cannot be rushed. Communities will need time throughout the conversations to grieve and to heal. This is a process that will take time and demands deep, active listening and genuine conversations facilitated through trauma informed lens, especially because conversations have to take into consideration the history of trauma and the impact of the harms of systemic exclusion and discrimination on Vancouver's Black and African diasporic communities.

This work aligns with, and builds on related strategies and motions previously approved by Council, including:

- [Phase 1 of Transforming Attitudes, Embedding Change: The City of Vancouver's Accessibility Strategy 2022](#)
- [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice and Red Women Rising Report Recommendations, 2022](#)
- [Equity Framework, 2021](#)
- [Women's Equity Strategy, Phase II, 2021](#)
- [The City of Vancouver's Accessibility Interim Report, 2021](#)
- [Safety for Residents with Precarious Status: Delivering Access without Fear, 2020](#)
- [Standing Up to the Rise in Anti-Asian Racism, All Racism & Hate Crimes, 2020](#)
- [Calling on the Federal and Provincial Governments to Make Emancipation Day an Official Holiday, 2020](#)
- [Culture|Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture, Vancouver Culture Plan 2020-2029, 2019](#)
- [City of Reconciliation Framework, 2019](#)
- [Addressing anti-Black racism: Black and African diaspora community recommendations Detailed Summary, 2019](#)
- [Northeast False Creek Plan \(NEFC\) - Hogan's Alley Working Group " 2018\)](#)
- [Healthy City Strategy](#)
- [Framework for City of Reconciliation, 2014](#)

The United Nations Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024 outlines three areas of action: Recognition, Justice and Development for Black and African diaspora People, including:

- a. Development: recognizing the poor and insecure housing conditions in which many people of African descent live, States should develop and implement policies and projects as appropriate aimed at, inter alia, ensuring that they gain and sustain safe and secure home and community in to live in peace and dignity
- b. Recognition: regarding participation and inclusion, enable and measure full, equal, effective participation in public and political affairs without discrimination and within human rights law
- c. Recognition: regarding information-gathering, collect, compile, analyse, disseminate and public statistical data at local levels
- d. Recognition: people of African descent have the right to education on equality and awareness-raising: positive role of leaders in fighting racism, education to restore dignity
- e. Justice: review legislation to abolish direct/indirect discrimination; comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, bylaws, policies;

The initiatives identified below serve as guiding examples of efforts to address anti-Black racism and set the precedence for this work at the City of Vancouver.

International

- On December 23, 2013, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2014-2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent.
- The proclamation identified people of African descent representing a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected.
- The International Decade represents a call to governments across the globe to celebrate the contributions of people of African descent worldwide, advance social justice and inclusion policies, eradicate racism and intolerance, promote human rights, and assist in creating better, more prosperous communities, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals spearheaded by the United Nations .

Federal

- On January 30, 2018, the Government of Canada announced it would officially recognize the International Decade for People of African Descent with a five year budgetary commitments to support initiatives relating to this decade.

Provincial

- The province of Nova Scotia adopted the Count Us In: Nova Scotia's Action Plan in response to the International Decade for People of African Descent.
- A 2019 report and the 2020 Nova Scotia Economic Action Plan, Road to Economic Prosperity for African Nova Scotian Communities, was, co-developed with and owned by the African Nova Scotian community to advance economic development and community priorities.
- Ontario's Anti-Black Racism Strategy outlines a roadmap for addressing anti-Black racism and improving outcomes for Black communities.
- British Columbia recently passed the Anti-Racism Data Act to help the Province identify and combat systemic racism in government programs and services and pave the way to a more just and equitable province.

Municipal

- On December 2017 the Toronto City Council adopted the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism,
- On June 2021, the Halifax Regional Council adopted the City of Halifax's Framework for Anti-Black Racism Strategy.
- On May 2021, the City of Victoria embarked on a three-year action plan to implement the International Decade for People of African descent,

Below are some of issues that members of the Community Advisory Committee spoke passionately about, indicating the need for the City of Vancouver to work towards addressing as matters of priority. These comments are included as direct quotes of what staff heard.

Black Erasure:

The absence of education of the historical Black community, integrated within school curricula, and the lack of commemoration of Black Vancouverites, continues to perpetuate the invisibilization and displacement of the Black community.

The fact that there's a vibrant community here, it's interesting, growing up in Vancouver and hearing that there aren't Black people here. Even in history class, it was not mentioned any kind of Black community existed. And then discovering our community, later as an adult, and only in law school, learning about the Black communities that existed that were thriving. And it was always weird to me that the proximity of Vancouver to Seattle, why there weren't a lot of Black people here. And then you realize, no, there was a Black community, it was just systematically removed through laws and things like that. And so my view has been, if you want to do anything, first honour and celebrate that history. Make people feel like we're part of the history of this place. Once you do that, one, you attract more people here, because the narrative exists, that this is a place for all of us, and then secondly are you able to elevate and highlight the current Black community. - *R.T.*

I would also like this, to see the city actually admit the impacts of anti-Black racism to our history here. Rather than pretending that, you know, Black people haven't been discriminated against, and by not acknowledging that the system continues to create oppressive structures. I think if they can look at the history and actually admit to it, then they can actually move forward from it. I think if we keep pretending that it doesn't exist and that it doesn't have an impact, then we actually go nowhere. - *M.C.*

Supporting Community:

It is imperative that there is a focus on supporting the various organizations and endeavours within the Black community. Organizations and individuals working to support the Black community are to be acknowledged and recognized for their work in order to make Black presence visible.

Enough of the lip service, we need action, we need support, we need trust, we need support with infrastructure. And I'm not just talking Hogan's Alley, I'm talking about Black organizations in general that are doing business or are creating business. So we need that support and capacity, we need to make sure that these organizations and these communities survive and thrive.- *M.E.*

I saw this GoFundMe for a Black library that 17 and 18-year-old kids are starting, most of their funding is coming out of people's pockets. I think the City really needs to get behind that, and my question is why is it that minors are having to come up with this as opposed to this kind of thing already existing or at least being supported by the City. There needs to be more funding for programs and organizations like Ethos Lab. There are these great

programs for racialized communities, and funding these groups is necessary so that people can continue to join these organizations without having to worry about how to pay. - *E.O.*

Community Spaces:

The erection of a physical community space would facilitate the opportunity for Black African Caribbean diasporic communities to connect, host cultural events, learn more about the history of their community and provide a safe space for Black folks.

When I think about growing up, why is it that the African and Caribbean societies had to rent space from other cultural societies? Why didn't we have our own? If we had at least one space, it would be a starting point, at least one place where Black people moving to Vancouver can learn about and connect with the existing Black community. A place that is both a resource and information centre. A space for all of us to host our cultural events, where seniors and youth can come together and have community. - *S.V.*

Within my own organization, we have tried booking spaces for meetings and so on, at libraries and other places, and often we encounter that we need a membership or that they are not taking requests, and you wonder when you get rejected so many times if it's systemic discrimination. When we are questioned why we want to have this function or there are issues with insurance and all kinds of different things. If we had a central space, it would really help in feeling connected and helping advance and change our community. - *N.T.*

When we talk about Hogan's Alley and Strathcona, that used to be a place that traditionally belonged or was allocated to Black people, but today it's not there and nothing else exists. So when we look at other places and other cultural communities, they do have places that they can call their cultural/ community hub. There is a space for them... When I think about the difficulty of forming community here. As an immigrant, I see how others are struggling to make ends meet and being together with other people from Africa or the Caribbean often feels like a luxury. So being together with other Black people that can share the challenges they're facing, all that becomes almost a luxury. - *K.K.*

We need a community centre. We need a space for black creators. A space for black students to study. Ultimately a place where you can read a book, exist in peace would be pretty nice. - *M.S.*

Affordable Housing:

Access to safe and affordable housing would provide security and in keeping, support and encourage the Black community to flourish.

An issue that is right at the top, for me and a lot of people, is housing. I think the same way that the City is looking at commercial spaces, having to have a certain degree of residential spaces built on top is equally important. There should be a percentage perhaps that is adhered to for Black and Indigenous folks, especially if it's housing that's meant to be equitably accessed. When it comes to housing in Vancouver, discrimination plays a huge factor. Housing as an issue has a lot of problems, period, full stop, but the impacts of anti-black racism, in addition to the disparity around pricing and availability, so when you add that in, it limits even further. - *S.B.*

I think the city needs to put more support into creating obvious commitments to Black spaces. Like I'm looking at the work that's being done in Chinatown, to memorialize and

create this honour of connection. And it stops at Keefer and Gore. Like, come on. This is obviously a time to add Black people in. I spoke to someone who's working on that project, and he said, they don't give us any more money if we put in Black people. So, you're dealing with something crazy on many levels, there is just a lot of institutional racism. I think access to space is a serious thing the city could help prioritize. The new buildings are being built on Main and First downtown near Emily Carr, I've gone to some of those city meetings, there's a priority to put artist space artists in those buildings as they get built, make a demand that some of those spaces be for Black centred artists, Black artists spaces. - *V.M.W.*

Lack of Black Leadership & Uninhabitable Workspaces:

The absence of Black councilors and politicians within the City of Vancouver alludes to a political exclusion the Black community faces. There need to be more leadership roles for Black professionals.

Is the city ensuring that they're doing everything in their power, to create safe spaces for employees to be part of the city and work within the city? So you know, it's one thing to say, we need to hire more Black people, but are you hiring them into a white supremacist organization where they're not safe, and then they're gonna leave right away? Because to constantly be in that battle, and be in fight mode, it's exhausting. And it's, it's killing us. So what is the city doing? Are they focusing on creating a decolonized work environment? Are the actions truly there? When there are incidents of anti-black racism? Who's being held accountable, are people being held accountable? What actions are being taken to rectify the situation and change? How are you supporting the Black employees when they face incidents of anti-black racism? How are they being supported? - *S.V.*

For me representation matters. Not just a speckle of Black people here and there. We need to make sure that we are visible at all levels within organizations, not just at entry-level positions or even middle management. When we look at leaders of the organizations, do we see them on boards? How do we make sure that we are there not just as tokens or lip service? And are we documenting and holding people accountable when there are incidents of anti-Black racism? - *S.V.*

If you're doing this work of addressing anti-Black racism then hire professionals with that expertise and that are also in the community. Hire us, compensate us accordingly and not just in a temporary consultancy position but permanent. If you want to actually create change, hire us in permanent positions. - *A.R.*

There needs to be senior leadership at the city from the Black community. A senior leader within the city, something like a city manager, CEO, or director of different departments, so that we see a Black person in a position of authority within the city, not just as an employee, but as a leader. - *M.S.*

Policing Black Lives:

The continuous surveillance of Black bodies by policing authorities translates to feeling unsafe and unwelcome within the city.

There was an incident, where a man came up to me in the street, when I was 13. Shocking racial and sexual epithets, and slurs were used. The police were called, however they didn't come. There was no follow up, and they needed to be contacted, instead of them contacting us. Changes could include:

- There could be a code for how to deal with racial issues/incidents, especially with a child (ie. people can be told what words to use with dispatcher)
- More dispatcher training
- Requirement to follow up within 24 hrs (policy change)
- Black counsellors used for support especially anti-Black racism offences. - *E.O.*

I used to commute a lot. And when you look at community, looking at transportation, the things that I noticed, especially coming into Vancouver from Toronto, is that there weren't many people that looked like me. There are things that were going on that security-wise or representation-wise, that made me feel a little uncomfortable. I often had instances, and others can echo this, where you feel a little bit of a fearful thing, especially when you're talking about like, authority like police and, how they react to you, as a black person. I've been stopped by the police and one time I was told that it was because there were two ethnic people in a high-valued car. This was the Vancouver Police racially profiling us. - *M.E.*

It's important that the city incorporates policies that are anti-racist, and that purposefully seek to create space for the Black community. And for Black communities to be safe and not over-policed. Not hiring police chiefs who don't believe in systemic racism. Having a formal redress with the Black community for displacement, over-policing and harassment, ensuring that street checks aren't being performed in a way that over-represents Black and Indigenous communities. - *M.S.*