



Update on the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy

Item 5

July 22, 2021

Board of Directors

Report: TCHC:2021-50

To: Board of Directors (the “Board”)

From: Acting President and Chief Executive Officer

Date: July 13, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a more detailed action plan to respond to the recommendations in the Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) Confronting Anti-Black Racism (“CABR”) Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Receive the updates for information on the TCHC CABR Strategy action plan;
2. Receive the updates for information on the alignment of the TCHC CABR Strategy with:
 - a. Human Resources refresh at TCHC;
 - b. Revitalization work at TCHC, including community benefits;
3. Receive an overview of how other large housing providers are addressing anti-Black racism and racial equity; and
4. Receive the updates for information on TCHC’s youth hiring practices and pathways for hiring Black youth.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Decision History

At the Board's meeting of November 20, 2020, TCHC management provided an update on TCHC's Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy and work undertaken to that date.

[https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2020%20Board%20Meetings/November%2020%202020%20%20Board%20Meeting%20\(Rescheduled%20from%20Oct%2030%202020\)/Item%206%20-%20Confronting%20Anti%20Black%20Racism%20at%20TCHC%20Oct%20030%202020%20Board%20update.pdf](https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2020%20Board%20Meetings/November%2020%202020%20%20Board%20Meeting%20(Rescheduled%20from%20Oct%2030%202020)/Item%206%20-%20Confronting%20Anti%20Black%20Racism%20at%20TCHC%20Oct%20030%202020%20Board%20update.pdf)

At the Board's meeting of February 26, 2021, the Board approved the TCHC Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy and the 8-Point Plan for its implementation; authorized the establishment of a new TCHC Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People (the "Centre") and the hiring of staff to develop and implement the Centre; required semi-annual reporting to the Board of Directors, by TCHC on steps taken to implement the Strategy in order to ensure alignment between staff implementing the Strategy with Board oversight; and directed staff to consider the manner in which the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy informs the ongoing Human Resources refresh.

<https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2021%20Board%20Meetings/February%2026%202021/Item%205%20-%20Confronting%20Anti%20Black%20Racism%20at%20TCHC%20Strategy%20Board%20Report%2018%20Feb%202021%20KPM.pdf>

At its meeting of April 27, 2021, TCHC staff reported to the Board on the steps that were being taken to implement TCHC's CABR Strategy. The Board directed staff to report back to the Board in Q2 2021 with a work plan that included a budget and staffing plan for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People.

<https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2021%20Board%20Meetings/April%2027%202021/Item%204%20-%20CABR%20Strategy%20Implementation%20-%20Centre%20for%20Advancing%20the%20Interests%20of%20Black%20People.pdf>

At its meeting of June 15, 2021, the Board approved the 2022 budget for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People; approved the staffing plan for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People; and directed TCHC staff to develop a funding strategy for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People that funds any staff positions, aside from the 5.5 FTE that will be permanently assigned to the Centre, through the existing TCHC divisional operating budget allocations.

<https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2021%20Board%20Meetings/June%2015%202021/Item%205%20-%20CABR%20Strategy%20Implementation%20-%20CAIBP%20FINAL%202.pdf>

Action Plan

The Toronto Community Housing Corporation – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Action Plan (the “Action Plan”), as set out in Attachment 1 to this report, is comprised of 43 actions which, when performed over the next three years, will position TCHC to have stronger relationships with Black tenants and staff. The Action Plan contains a combination of actions and accountability measures that focus on training, policy review, IT projects, communications, quality improvement projects, and new programs. The Action Plan was developed by staff representatives from TCHC’s various Divisions, who created Divisional work plans that aim to respond to the 8-Point Plan outlined in the CABR Strategy. The work plans were developed with support, guidance and input from the CABR Strategy team. The CABR Strategy team consolidated the work plans and gained feedback from tenants and staff.

In Year 1, The Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People (the “Centre”) will be established to lead, monitor and report on the implementation of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy.

After the full implementation of the Action Plan and the advocacy and culture change activities performed by the Centre, the goal will result in increased equitable satisfaction rates and service delivery for Black tenants and staff, as measured through success and impact indicators identified in the Action Plan.

Evaluation of Action Plan

Through consultation with staff, tenants, and stakeholders, we heard about the importance of applying appropriate indicators to measure success and impact, provide insight regarding progress, and ensure accountability. Challenges continue to exist when identifying readily available metrics to benchmark TCHC's confronting anti-Black racism efforts. At present, limited access to disaggregated data exists. Given this, the action plan attached has identified clear success indicators that we will be working towards, and anticipate additional Key Performance Indicators ("KPI") will be added once baseline data is established.

Achieving the outlined targets by themselves will not fulfill the expectations of tenants, staff, and stakeholders. To effectively measure the impact of the Action Plan, the Centre will coordinate cross-sectional studies, focused on qualitative impacts, at different points in program implementation to evaluate how Black tenants have been impacted by the CABR Strategy. Together, these evaluation methods and metrics seek to answer how much did we do? (quantity, number of clients and/or activities), how well did we do it? (quality, percentage of activity that was of high quality, percentage of common measures of appropriate/high quality), and is anyone better off because of what we did? (impact, number or percentage change in skills/knowledge, attitude/opinion, behavior, or circumstance).

Human Resources and CABR

TCHC's Human Resources ("HR") Division is undertaking a review in order to implement actions that will re-build trust and confidence – in the function, the Division, and the policies, programs and initiatives it is responsible for – in order to foster a culture of trust, fairness and safety in the organization. Through a comprehensive review of HR policies and programs, including a review of how those services are delivered, the goal is to create a modern,

progressive, high-performing HR function that promotes fairness, equity and diversity in the organization. HR is also leading the development and implementation of a comprehensive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (“EDI”) Strategy for the organization.

These HR undertakings align with the Confronting Anti-Black Racism strategy, and while they are each distinct bodies of work, they share the same objectives and desired outcomes. The HR review is broadly focused, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will reflect actions and initiatives that incorporate all dimensions of diversity. It is focused internally on staff, while the CABR Strategy will guide us in making changes to systematically address the realities of anti-Black racism experienced by Black tenants and staff. Though different in scope, both initiatives share the goal of creating a more equitable and inclusive environment for staff. The respective teams will work closely together to advance the aims of both strategies, and see the work as complimentary, not duplicative.

Revitalization and CABR

The revitalization of TCHC’s communities is taking place in eight communities across the City. Many of the communities have significant Black tenancies (Firgrove, Lawrence Heights, Leslie Nymark, Alexandra Park, and Regent Park). The Development Division will lead three actions towards the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Action Plan:

1. Host annual conversations with Developer partner leadership teams, their labour partners, and associated networks to facilitate Black tenant access in the development and construction industry;
2. Review tenant facing revitalization standard operating procedures; and
3. Leverage private sector partnerships to support TCHC’s CABR hiring target.

Through Tenant Benefit Programs negotiated with Developer partners, TCHC can deliver a significant number of economic opportunities for tenants. The Tenants Benefits Program will be relied upon to fulfill CABR employment targets.

Overview of Other Large Housing Providers

The CABR strategy team conducted an environmental scan during the development of the TCHC CABR Strategy, which informed our approach. This environmental scan indicated that social housing providers and governments in North America were in the early stages of developing strategies to confront anti-Black racism. There was a recognition across the board that Black tenants and staff face discrimination that was deep-seeded and systemic.

Some of the most notable examples are San Francisco's Racial Equity Action Plans and Portland Housing Bureau. The San Francisco Racial Equity Action Plans address issues in the areas of Human Resources, Organizational Culture of Inclusion and Belonging, and Boards and Commissions. This approach bears many similar elements to the CABR Strategy pertaining to Black staff. Portland Housing Bureau's Racial Equity Plan is the most aligned plan to the TCHC CABR Strategy in that it seeks to simultaneously address both staff and tenants within the scope of the initiative, including in the areas of community engagement and community outcomes, contracting, culture, equitable services and workforce with specific strategies and bureau actions, performance measures, evaluation tools and oversight. While there was evidence that other housing providers are thinking of how to effectively support tenants, many are in early stages of this work.

Black Youth Hiring

TCHC youth employment programs have a high representation of Black youth, and as we work towards disaggregated race-based data collection, we will be able to provide more specific numbers to inform how this work unfolds. Our programs have impacted Black youth through a variety of means. The regional staff teams consistently conduct targeted outreach to communities that have high percentages of Black youth for all Program Coordinators, Cleaning, Internship and Youthworx positions that are posted by TCHC. The teams also support young people by providing resume support and facilitating information sessions when feasible. An extension to the Youthworx program that TCHC is exploring is a pilot program to hire some of the Youthworx participants as part-time cleaners once the program wraps up. TCHC also offers youth career exploration opportunities through

our internship program that is exclusively for tenants. The program has a 30% post-internship hire rate since its inception.

While these initiatives historically have targeted all youth, as the CABR strategy is implemented, we will be creating pathways to be more intentional about hiring Black youth and tenants in underrepresented areas into meaningful sustainable careers and employment opportunities. Young people currently make up 35% of TCHC's tenant population and historically our organization has placed emphasis on the creation of youth economic development opportunities. TCHC is committed to continuing to support Black youth to access TCHC specific employment opportunities by building on the lessons learned from current pathways and finding ways to support their access to new and emerging opportunities.

NEXT STEPS:

In the future, Centre staff will take the following actions in support of the implementation of the CABR Strategy:

- Implementation updates will be brought back to Board in Q4 2021, and semi-annually thereafter.
- The CABR Strategy Team will disband in August and will be replaced by the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People Team.
- TCHC will complete the process of hiring all Centre staff by the end of Q4 2021

SIGNATURE:

"Sheila Penny"

Sheila Penny
Acting President and Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT:

1. Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy Action Plan
2. CABR Action Plan Presentation

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