

Date: March 28, 2022

To: Chair and Members of General Committee

From: Paul Mitcham, P.Eng, MBA, City Manager and Chief  
Administrative Officer

Originator's files:

Meeting date:  
April 13, 2022

## **Subject**

**Black Community Engagement Report – “First Steps: A Community-Driven Report on Making Mississauga More Equitable for Black Communities”**

## **Recommendation**

That the recommended approach outlined in the Corporate Report dated March 28, 2022 from the City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer entitled “Black Community Engagement Report – “First Steps: A Community-Driven Report on Making Mississauga More Equitable for Black Communities” be endorsed.

## **Executive Summary**

- Following Council resolution 207 on June 24, 2020, the Mayor’s Office established a Black Caucus to identify areas for systemic change within the City and support community-led consultations.
- The Black Caucus was established in October 2020 and a series of engagement sessions took place in Spring of 2021. The engagement sessions were led by Claudia McKoy, Principal of UpSurgence, a consultant who has also drafted a final report with 58 recommendations to address systemic anti-Black racism in Mississauga, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- City staff attended and presented at the engagement sessions and have met with the consultant and the Chair of the Black Caucus to review the City’s role in the recommendations and provide preliminary comments.
- While the City is supportive of the overall Report, a number of recommendations impacting City business units and services, City by-laws and policies, may not be feasible to implement exactly as recommended in the report. However, staff can work with the Black Caucus group to examine ways to achieve the goals or address the issues identified in each recommendation.

- Staff recommend that a key first step is for the group to establish itself as a formal organization, as the City has a number of programs and services, including funding resources, through the Community Group Registry Program. Formalizing the organization and registering it with the City's program will assist them in addressing a number of the recommendations.
- It is recommended that the Black Caucus continue to provide advice and guidance to the City while the group known as the "Black Caucus Alliance" is being established. Staff recognize there may be changes to group's membership and Terms of Reference during this time of transition.
- It is recommended that Council receive the consultant's report and direct staff to continue working with the group to develop implementation plans for the recommendations, where applicable.

## Background

### The Black Caucus

On June 24, 2020, Mississauga City Council passed resolution 0207-2020 to address anti-Black and Indigenous racism and hate. As part of the resolution, the Mayor's Office committed to establishing a Black Caucus and to hosting a series of community-led consultations on systemic racism, anti-Black racism and discrimination using an intersectional lens. The resolution also committed the Mayor's Office and the Black Caucus to identify areas for systemic change in the community. The Black Caucus was established in October 2020.

### Black Community Engagement Sessions

In the Spring of 2021, assisted by Claudia McKoy, Principal consultant from the firm UpSurgence, the Black Caucus engaged in a series of consultations on the following topics:

- Accessing political power in Canada;
- Accessing Mississauga's resources;
- Policing;
- Well-being: Designing healthy Black communities;
- Accessing an age friendly society; and
- Black economic empowerment.

Each session attracted hundreds of participants. City staff from many divisions attended to not only listen, but present information and take questions on a number of topics from economic development and City programs to human resources practices and policies.

Following these sessions, the Black Caucus engaged in a series of co-design sessions to help inform a final report and recommendations. This report is attached as Appendix 1: First Steps: A Community-Driven Report on Making Mississauga More Equitable for Black Communities. City staff provided information and attended these sessions as requested.

The Mayor's Office convened the Black Caucus and helped to organize the engagement sessions. Staff have engaged in discussions with the consultant, the Chair of the Black Caucus, and the Mayor's Office on the initial recommendations.

## Comments

### **First Steps: A Community-Driven Report on Making Mississauga Equitable for Black Communities**

The Black Caucus shared with staff a draft of the report to Council, as well as the 58 recommendations in early 2022. Staff from affected divisions have provided preliminary feedback where possible to the consultant and the Chair of the Black Caucus on the recommendations.

A number of recommendations impact City business units and services, and may not be feasible to implement exactly as recommended in the report. However, staff can work with the "Black Caucus Alliance" group to examine ways to achieve the goals or address the issues identified in each recommendation. Staff from across the corporation are fully committed to working with the Black Caucus or the Black Community Alliance (future organization), to address each of the recommendations in the Report, including assisting the Alliance to establish itself as an independent organization.

As such, staff recommend the following actions be taken:

1. Council receive the report from the Black Caucus and Consultant; and
2. Council direct staff to:
  - a. Work with the Black Caucus to establish the Black Community Alliance as an independent organization.
  - b. Review the recommendations as they pertain to each division and take action where possible to begin work to implement the recommendations. This will likely require divisions to work with the Black Community Alliance to refine the recommendations and may require more information and clarity.
  - c. Report back to Council on an as needed basis with updates on the implementation of recommendations.

### **Black Community Alliance**

One of the first tasks stemming from the finalization of this Report will see the Black Caucus transition to a new group, the Black Caucus Alliance (BCA). To do this, staff will work with members of the current Black Caucus on the organizational and operating structure of this group. Staff recommend that the Black Caucus Alliance form and become a registered group under the City's current Community Group Registry Program. This program allows groups to access community grants and funding; discounts on space at City facilities; and general liability insurance through the City affiliate insurance program. Staff are also able to provide support to groups within this program and support to developing groups like the Black Caucus Alliance.

Many of the recommendations contained within this Report require the Black Community Alliance to be formed as an organization, which is why staff recommend that the establishment of the BCA be the first priority of the current Black Caucus.

In some cases, staff have already begun the work referenced in the recommendations. For instance, Human Resources staff have just concluded a full review of the City's succession and recruiting processes through an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) lens, which is referenced in the Black Caucus report. The Economic Development Office has already begun work on expanding programming to and promoting Black Businesses. Council has already approved Resolution 0039-2022, seeing the City of Mississauga formally recognize the UN International Decade for People of African Descent. And, through the Sustainable Procurement Program, staff are already working to expand and promote procurements to a wider audience, including Black businesses.

Some of the recommendations address areas outside of the City's jurisdiction, including policing and education. Staff are unable to advance these recommendations. However, the Black Community Alliance, once formed, would be in a strong position to take action on these recommendations.

## Strategic Plan

This report supports the Belong Pillar of Mississauga's Strategic Plan as it seeks to create a more equitable City for Mississauga's Black Communities, and by extension, all residents.

## Financial Impact

There is no financial impact as a result of this report. Any request for funding will be brought forward to Council through future corporate reports.

## Conclusion

The Mayor's Office convened the Black Caucus and helped to organize the engagement sessions. Staff have engaged in discussions with the consultant, the Chair of the Black Caucus, and the Mayor's Office on the initial recommendations. It is recommended that Council receive the report and direct staff to work with the Black Caucus to review the recommendations and develop implementation plans, where applicable, with the first step being to support the group in establishing itself as an independent organization.

## Attachments

Appendix 1: First Steps - A Community-Driven Report on Making Mississauga Equitable for Black Communities



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Paul Mitcham, P.Eng, MBA, City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by: *Robert Trewartha, Director of Strategic Communications and Initiatives*