UpSurgence.

FIRST STEPS:

A Community-Driven Report on Making Mississauga More Equitable for Black Communities

Inform! Collaborate! Mobilize!

March 2022

PRESENTED TO:

City of Mississauga Council

PRESENTED BY:

Claudia McKoy

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And to the members of the Black Caucus, it has been an amazing year! Thank you for sharing your brilliance!

Thank you all for Your Support!

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Mississauga, I truly believe we are now in the position to make meaningful and lasting change when it comes to addressing anti-Black racism and ensuring equity and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do.

In June of 2020, in the wake of the George Floyd murder and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, Mississauga City Council unanimously passed an Anti-Black Racism resolution that called for several actions to be led out of the offices of the Mayor and the City Manager. This resolution represents the City's commitment to make concerted efforts to uproot systemic discrimination and strive for greater equity and inclusion.

We passed this resolution because we knew that we needed to do better.

The first—and most critical—step we took was to better understand the experiences of Black community members through a series of six public consultations and four co-design sessions involving roughly 900 members of the public, City staff, and subject matter experts. This process saw Black community members directly identify the barriers they face in accessing City programs and supports. Community members also provided tangible recommendations on how the City could become more responsive to their needs.

These consultations were the first time the City had dedicated time and resources to have a meaningful dialogue on the steps we needed to take to ensure Black community members have more of a say in the decision making-process here at City Hall.

And I admit, it was long overdue.

The result of these conversations has led to this comprehensive report written by Claudia McKoy, Principal Consultant at UpSurgence, who was recruited to lead this process and represent the voices of the community. We now have over 60 recommendations that will serve as a starting point to empower and create more space for Black community members at the City of Mississauga. These recommendations will serve as a guide for the City and external partners to continue to make progress on their equity, diversity, and inclusion commitments to build a more inclusive city. In order to address anti-Black racism, we will need to think outside the box and be creative and innovative in the solutions we implement.

I want to thank every member of the community who took the time to lend their voice to this report. I am incredibly proud that this process has been led and shaped by Black community members.

To members of the Black Caucus Advisory Group—be proud of what you have achieved. Your dedication and feedback will help shape Mississauga's work on equity and inclusion for years to come. And to Claudia McKoy, our consultant, thank you for your hard work, leadership, passion, and commitment to documenting the voices and recommendations of community members, and directing them into workable solutions.

I also want to assure community members that this will not be a report that is tabled and then put on the back burner. We are committed to taking action on these recommendations because we are fully committed as a City to doing better.

And as the title suggests, these are just the "First Steps." We have so much important work ahead of us. I look forward to taking these first steps, as partners, as we work to build a more equitable City, where members of Mississauga's diverse Black communities feel included, supported, and empowered.

Change starts here.

Bonnie Crombie

Mayor Bonnie Crombie

BLACK CAUCUS CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Over the years we have seen many tragic events and loss of lives that have taken place all across the world due to racial injustice and discrimination. The year 2020 was extremely challenging and heartbreaking. Not only because of the pandemic, but because of all the racial injustices and inequalities that were exposed across North America, globally and right here in our own backyard. The frustrations of racialized people, in particular Black community members, understandably boiled over and sparked protests around the world.

Decades of systemic racial discrimination and practices in our policing, justice, health care, and child care systems are now at the forefront. Moreover, the struggle for equality within institutions remains a constant challenge.

Mississauga is home to a significant number of Black residents. In 2020 it became clear that something needed to be done to bring about the right change for Black communities. I commend Mayor Bonnie Crombie and the Members of Council for their unprecedented decision on June 24, 2020. They unanimously passed an anti-Black racism motion that included the recommendation to create a Black Caucus to advise the Mayor on issues affecting Black communities.
As Chair of the Black Caucus, I have proudly worked alongside community leaders with lived experiences and a variety of expertise. Their skill sets comprise community services, finance, policing, arts and culture, advocacy, and information technology. Together, we provided direction on the process for change, identified key themes for City-wide action, and shared our personal stories of facing barriers. Our advice was also sought out by other City departments and initiatives requiring review through an Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lens.

This year-long process with the community has generated hope, trust, and excitement for what's to come. Moreover, we must maintain this momentum to ensure that systemic changes at the City and the Region of Peel continue to happen. The consultations that formed the basis of this report were a historic first for Mississauga, since they provided space and opportunities to address historical barriers and inequities. Furthermore, they intentionally allowed the voice of communities to be reflected in the overall report structure and key recommendations.
As we begin our First Steps forward in implementation, we will continue to reinforce the mantra "Nothing About Us Without Us."

We need to focus our efforts to eliminate inequities and recognize that it is a shared responsibility to improve better outcomes against racism, intolerance, and oppression.

I would like to thank Mayor Bonnie Crombie and Members of Council for supporting Black communities in addressing racism, discrimination, and systemic changes across Mississauga.

Also, I greatly appreciate all the participants who generously dedicated their time to share their experiences and perspectives. This report would not have been possible without their commitment and impartiality. In addition, I look forward to continuing our work together to empower the Black communities and create a more inclusive Mississauga.

I sincerely thank everyone for their significant contributions.

Linden King

Linden King

CONSULTANT'S MESSAGE

People of African descent and Indigenous peoples were the only two groups upon the land we now call Canada to have been legally slaves. And when slavery legally ended, political, social, and economic discrimination rose and persisted. Viola Desmond, the Black woman shown on the Canadian $10 dollar note, is celebrated not because she was a former prime minister or the head of a monarchy, but because she resisted and fought against racial segregation by sitting in a "Whites Only" section of a movie theatre right here in Canada. Such legal racial segregation practices did not formally end in our Canadian schools, housing practices, and hospitals until 1983, when Nova Scotia closed the country's last segregated school—six years after the passing of the 1977 Canadian Human Rights Act. Sadly, we all know that informal discrimination continues.

Resolution 207 was in fact the City of Mississauga's acknowledgement of historical wrongs that helped to form today's system barriers. Resolution 207 was also the City's hope to begin to dissolve those barriers. Eleven months of community consultations that began in May of 2021 and ended in March of 2022 is in relative terms an extremely limited amount of time to address the vast and prolonged damage that Black communities have endured. Furthermore, given the current connectivity gap that exists between the City and its Black communities, the outreach of the engagement sessions could only begin to scratch the surface. Therefore, First Steps is (and can only be) an advisory document meant to lay the initial foundations required to begin to move the City towards greater cultural cohesion and equity—and cannot address all the needs of the Black communities residing in Mississauga.

While a start, I am still very proud of the work that we have been able to accomplish: six consultation sessions and four community driven co-design sessions that sharped nearly 60 recommendations that in turn lead to over 40 one-on-one post-recommendation follow-up sessions that yielded a vast and overwhelming support from subject matter experts, corporate stakeholders, community leaders, faith-based leaders, and (most importantly) Mississauga's Black communities, who were given the opportunity to co-refine the recommendations with me.

With that, some heartfelt thank-yous are in order:

To Linden King, I simply can't capture the truly exhaustive list of unseen and thankless work you do to advance Black communities. Thank you for your service, Sir. Thank you for your support.

To Her Worship Mayor Bonnie Crombie and the City Councillors, thank you so much for initiating the Black Community Engagement process and committing to equity. I am truly honoured to have served such a worthy cause.

And to those seeking justice and equity, thank you for haunting my thoughts. I hope that I have served you well.

Sincerely,

Claudia McKoy
Principal at UpSurgence
Mississauga's Black Community Engagement Consultant

5. SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with resolution 207 and the community feedback garnered from the six consultation sessions held from April to June 2021, a set of recommendations to foster greater equity within the City of Mississauga were formed. Below is a summary of those recommendations, which allow for a quick overview; however, section 10 of this report offers readers greater context and insights into the recommendations and their intended impact.

1. The Role of the New Black Caucus Alliance

Currently the Mayor's Black Caucus serves to inform and advise the Mayor on a path forward to address systemic barriers that impact the lives of the members of the various Black communities in Mississauga. The recommendations below call for the current Black Caucus to become a new independent organization empowered to oversee the delivery of activities recommended in this report, as well as serving as a unified force among Black communities within Mississauga to connect those communities to the City. The new version of The Black Caucus and the City are asked to become partners supporting each other to create policies, structures, and initiatives to diminish the systemic barriers to the communal success of Black communities. Therefore, for the purpose of this report, the new Black Caucus with its new structure will be referred to as **The Black Caucus Alliance**. The new organization however, will be free to select a name of its liking.

1.1. The current Black Caucus should become an arm's-length nonprofit with a new name that can perform the necessary activities that this report calls for, including those that fall outside the City's scope.

1.2. The Black Caucus Alliance should link Black communities to the City's activities and policies on an ongoing basis —offering the communities more access and involvement with the City. In short, the Black Caucus Alliance should bridge the gap between the City and its Black communities. To ensure that the Black Caucus Alliance plays such a role, the Black Caucus Alliance and the City of Mississauga ought to adhere to the following guiding principles that in turn govern this report:

- That together both The Black Caucus Alliance and City work to ensure that the new entity becomes a centralizing force within the Black communities by promoting and fostering a "Black ecosystems approach" where the various complementary and necessary talents, businesses, and/or organizations from within Black communities collaborate to collectively address the needs of the Black communities, as well as empower those communities with new opportunities and support systems. In this way, The Black Caucus Alliance will facilitate a process where Black communities are empowered to address key issues within them.
- That together both the Black Caucus Alliance and City continuously advocate for and pay competitive rates for work done to carry out the recommendation within this report by individuals, businesses, and organizations from within the Black communities.
- That together both the Black Caucus Alliance and City advocate and support Black representation rather than mere Black participation by carrying out the necessary community engagement strategies that will ensure that Black individuals who in decision-making roles on city boards, committees, and Committees of Councils are connected to the Black communities.

1.3. The structure of the new organization will need to correspond with the activities called for in this report. Therefore, it is recommended that the current Black Caucus establish a new board for the new Black Caucus Alliance, along with subcommittees such as Governance, City Relations, Economic Inclusion, Civic Inclusion, Community Engagement, Operations Team, Black Community Innovation Hub Development Team, and Diasporic Relations. Each subcommittee corresponds with the key activity areas that are laid out in this report.

1.4. Once the members of the governing board have been established, the City and the new Black Caucus Alliance must develop a memorandum of understanding.

1.5. To launch the Black Caucus Alliance as an organization, the City of Mississauga should cover the start-up cost as well as fund the new entity's operational costs annually for no less than four years at an amount to be negotiated by the City's representatives and the current Black Caucus.

1.6. The Black Caucus Alliance in partnership with the City should lead and oversee the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report. It is also recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance meet and present to Council semi-annually. Therefore, Council should have a standing agenda item to receive the Black Caucus Alliance every March and October of every calendar year. Thus, semi-annually, the Black Caucus Alliance will report back to the City to present its own progress report and community feedback. Similarly, the City should report back semi-annually to the Black Caucus Alliance on its progress on carrying out the activities and the inclusion strategies outlined in this report.

1.7. In addition, it is recommended that the newly formed Black Caucus Alliance work with the City's Equity Office to develop the key performance indicators for the new organization, as well as the activities laid out in this report. Those key performance indicators should be reflected in the reports the City and the Black Caucus Alliance present to each other.

2. Inclusion and Engagement Strategies

The recommendations below include data acquisition and engagement strategies which aim to heighten the City's connectivity to it Black communities while offering those communities more social and political access within the City of Mississauga.

2.1. To fill the connectivity gap the City has with its Black communities, a community data acquisition campaign, **Operation Black Box** is recommended. Operation Black Box would assist the City in identifying and connecting with its Black residents and Black businesses in Mississauga. The database would also be a knowledge hub that residents could be directly connected to in order to receive targeted information on City resources, events, and updates. The knowledge hub would offer the users information regarding external resources offered by Black community organizations as well. Connecting Black residents with Black organizations and City resources will attract users and encourage partnerships among community groups. To develop Operation Black Box, the City's Smart City initiative, the City's IT department, and its Economic Development Office should work alongside the Black Caucus Alliance.

To promote the Operation Black Box in accordance with the main missions of this report, it recommended that the City and the Black Caucus Alliance should utilize social media and community and ethnic media, as well as legacy media partnerships to deliver PSA (Public Service Announcement) campaigns based on the following themes (**City Resources, Black Business Identification**, and **Political Awareness and Inclusion)** that correspond with the inclusion strategies outlined in Section 2 of this summary of recommendations:

2.1.1. City Resources PSAs: Create and launch "resources" awareness campaigns along with inclusion strategies designed to promote and connect Black communities to the City and the Regional services, programs, and grants they offer. These measures will help to make the City's resources and activities more accessible to Black communities.

2.1.2. Black Business Identification PSAs: Create a local Black business identification campaign that would attract Black entrepreneurs to register their businesses with the Operation Black Box database.

2.1.3. Political Awareness and Inclusion PSAs:
Create targeted political awareness and inclusion PSAs that would invite Mississauga's Black residents to participate in the City of Mississauga's Committee of Council, groups, and boards. In addition, political awareness and inclusion PSAs would also inform the communities on the nonprofits, as well as on ongoing opportunities to participate in the local political structures on all levels of political and civic life within the City of Mississauga.

Political Inclusion Strategy

In accordance with the communities' call for a path towards greater political inclusion and empowerment, the following are recommended.

Committees of Council Inclusion:

2.2. To ensure the Black Caucus Alliance has the required access to the City, the City's Council should appoint no less than one member of the Black Caucus Alliance to the following key Committee of Councils: Accessibility Advisory Committee, Committee of Adjustment, Committee of Revision, Election Campaign Finance Committee, Environmental Action Committee, Governance Committee, Heritage Advisory Committee, Incidents in City Facilities Committee, Library Board, Mississauga Appeal Tribunal, Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee, Property Standards Committee, Public Vehicle Advisory Committee, Road Safety Committee, and Traffic Safety Council. Akin to the Committee of Councils, any City advisory bodies that includes local non-elected individuals, such as the City's Economic Committee of Council , also should include one Black Caucus Alliance representative.

2.3. However, in the case of the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DIAC) and/or the new creation of a Council of Committee that addresses anti-racism, anti-Black racism, or cultural and/or ethnic inclusion in its terms of reference, the City's Council *should* appoint no less than two members of the Black Caucus Alliance.

2.4. The Black Caucus Alliance shall be responsible for the merit-based recruitment of its Committee of Council representative. It shall also provide a list of potential candidates with full bios to the City councillors and relevant staff supporting these committees. The City would thus be responsible for presenting to the Black Caucus Alliance its requirements for each of the Committee of Councils named above in section 2.2 of this report's summary of recommendations.

2.5. The Black Caucus Alliance would also be responsible for conducting community meetings. These meetings will include its Committee of Council representatives to provide updates to the Black communities. Those communities could in turn offer feedback to the Committee of Council representatives. Thus, the representation of Black Caucus Alliance members on Committees of Council will not merely be an individualistic role, but rather a community role as well.

General Political Inclusion:

2.6 It is recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance and the City work together to introduce Black communities to local political structures and officials. Together, they should build relationships with members of City Council and representatives of the Region of Peel, as well as local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) and Members of Parliament (MPs). The Black Caucus and the City should also host meet and greets to ensure political figures engage Black cultural and business leaders. This activity will naturally be promoted with the support of the activities outlined in recommendation 2.1.3.

Civic Skills Development:

2.7. The City ought to support the Black Caucus Alliance as it seeks to inform the community on political rules of engagement by offering civics training workshops that include topics such as:

- Introduction to Robert's Rules and Carver Board Governance Model
- How to delegate at the City of Mississauga
- How to join local riding associations

2.8. In addition, it's recommended that the City of Mississauga develop and host an online video series explaining and clearly illustrating the various responsibilities and roles of the various levels of government.

Social and Cultural Inclusion Strategies

To celebrate and further integrate Black communities into the City of Mississauga's cultural landscape, the following is recommended:

2.9. **In accordance with the City's Resolution 0039-2022,** the City ought to work with the Black Caucus Alliance to create events and activities to mark the concluding year of the **United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent in 2024**. The events and activities should aim to celebrate the many cultures within Black communities and promote cultural cohesion within the City by working across a wide range of communities, ethnic groups, and organizations to foster greater understanding and partnerships among them. To do so, it is recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance work with local impresario, promoters, cultural leaders, artists, and stakeholders within the entertainment and tourism sectors. This cultural inclusion initiative would also have a great impact on helping our local Black cultural enterprises and independent artists of the City. For that reason, it is recommended that the City uses the activities of 2024 to launch an annual celebration of local Black talent, businesses, and achievements within the City.

2.10. **In accordance with the City's Resolution 0039-2022,** to promote the activities linked to the celebration of the **United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent in 2024**, it is recommended that an online virtual series exploring key people and issues that impact Black communities and lives be launched no less than six months prior to the celebration. The Black Caucus Alliance and the City should again work with community leaders as well as mainstream and ethnic media to promote the series. The online promotion will help to build the Black Caucus Alliance's profile and its reach into Black communities. Such online presence will also help to promote Operation Black Box on an ongoing basis.

2.11. To celebrate the closing year of the **United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent in 2024**, it is recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance work with the City and private and public funders to conduct cultural and trade missions within the international Black diaspora, specifically those located in the Caribbean and the

continent of Africa. Those missions would aim to strengthen cultural and economic ties with local businesses (regardless of ethnicity) to the international Black diaspora. Therefore, the Black Caucus Alliance and the City should explore foreign direct investment opportunities, strategic partnerships, and markets for the City of Mississauga. These activities should be integrated into the activities discussed in sections 4.12 and section 5 of this summary.

2.12. In addition to the United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent in 2024 programs and initiatives, The Black Caucus Alliance should work together with the relevant Community Services departments (Culture, Libraries, Parks, Forestry and Environment, Recreation, Tourism) to develop targeted programming that goes beyond Black History Month. Such programming should extend to the City's local museums, art galleries, and cultural centres.

3. Support For Black Communities

The development of economic empowerment and opportunities are essential to ensuring greater connectivity and growth of Mississauga's Black communities. To advance such ambitions, the following recommendations are offered:

Black Health and Well-Being

3.1 The Black Caucus Alliance, the City, the Region of Peel, and health and well-being organizations should work together to host a Black Health and Well-Being Summit. This will be a forum to identify challenges and opportunities and explore and develop a Black Health and Well-Being Strategy. The Health and Well-Being Strategy must be holistic and include issues such as access to affordable housing, City resources, and quality education, as well as improving health and mental health care resources for Black communities. Special attention ought to be paid to the intersectionality of Black identities, including those who are older adults, those from 2SLGBTSQ+ communities, and those who live with one or more disabilities. Such a summit ought to be held on City property at no cost.

3.2 The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and the Region of Peel to explore the feasibility of establishing a senior's home for the Black communities.

3.3 The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and the Region of Peel to offer Caribbean and Afro-centric representation in child welfare and long-term care facilities, especially relating to culturally specific food.

3.4 The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City, Peel Health, and community health groups to explore developing medical advocacy support programs for isolated and single adults within Black communities.

Supporting Black Talent

3.5 The Black Caucus Alliance should support and work with the City's Human Resources department to promote the City's job opportunities to individuals from Black communities. These activities should include the development of targeted recruitment strategies.

3.6 In addition, it is recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance work with the City to establish next generation mentorship programs for Black youth by establishing internship programs at the City. Such mentorship programs ought to include all departments at the City. Currently the City's HR Department has been working on a pilot to do just that with the Onyx Initiative. They now have four Black youth in intern positions and coop placements at the City.

3.7 Along with mentorship programs, the City's HR department and the Black Caucus Alliance should create sponsorship programs for young Black adults. This will refer to individuals who have leadership roles at the City, who will then sponsor young Black adults by both mentoring and advocating for them to advance into paid positions at the City.

3.8 The Black Caucus Alliance should work with HR as well as all other internal stakeholders to establish key performance indicators to measure the progress of its recruitment and talent management processes.

3.9 The City should support The Black Caucus Alliance as it seeks to work with universities, corporations, nonprofits, and high schools to help Black Students apply for and obtain loan-free funding to attend post-secondary education.

3.10 The City should support The Black Caucus Alliance as it seeks to work with Peel Regional Police, parents, Children's Aid, Peel District School Board, and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board to identify at-risk students and then offer those students coop placements, internships, and job opportunities in partnership with the private and public sectors.

4. Black Business Inclusion Strategies

Sections 4 and 5 of this summary of recommendations offer a path for the City to better support Black entrepreneurship. To ensure greater synergy, the majority of Black inclusion strategies outlined in this report follows the Economic Development Office's upcoming accelerator structure.

City's EDO Accelerator Inclusion Strategy

4.1.1. The City's Economic Development Office (EDO) is establishing an accelerator program that offers various support for businesses as they scale up. With the support of the Operation Black Box initiative, it is recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance work with EDO to invite Black businesses into the City's accelerator program by creating targeted initiatives for them. These initiatives must provide financial services and mentorship programs, as well as networking and administration support for Black entrepreneurs. These services should be offered on a vertical axis to follow the classic scaling path of successful companies. This vertical design structure reinforces the aim of the City's EDO accelerator, which is to identify and foster the growth and scalability of businesses. See the chart "Black Business Inclusion Program's Scale Ready: A Proposed Support System For Local Black Businesses" on page 39. As the program develops, those new tested channels of opportunities could be enjoyed by all entrepreneurs, regardless of their ethnicity.

4.1.2. It is recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance work with high commissioners, the private sector, provincial and federal governments, as well as the City's EDO to establish the International Integration & Expansion Initiative as a unique program for Black entrepreneurs within the EDO accelerator program. The International Integration & Expansion Initiative will link local Black businesses to the greater Black diaspora, allowing Black entrepreneurs the ability to leverage their ancestral homelands and histories to attract international partnerships. In turn, such activities will help the City promote itself abroad as a place to do business. Naturally, the launch of the International Integration & Expansion Initiative should coincide with the 2024 activities outlined in recommendations 2.3–2.5.

To further promote the inclusion of Black businesses into the City's economic ecosystem, it is recommended that:

4.2. The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and its Economic Development Office (EDO) and the Region of Peel to ensure that its COVID-19 strategic Economic Recovery Framework as part of the City's wider Recovery Plan includes targeted support for Black businesses.

4.3. The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and its Economic Development Office and community leaders to develop targeted messaging to ensure that Black female entrepreneurs are made aware of and are explicitly invited to access and participate in all the City's business programs. Again, data generated from Operation Black Box will be useful in this process.

4.4. The Black Caucus Alliance and the City's Strategic Communications and Initiatives Department should work to host an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Summit (EDIS). EDIS will bring together staff working in the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion departments from various corporations operating within the City of Mississauga to explore strategic corporate partnership opportunities with the Black Caucus Alliance, as well as making introductions to Black talent, innovators, and entrepreneurships.

4.5. The City's EDO should work with the Black Caucus Alliance to connect Black businesses to the greater financial ecosystems by hosting targeted events on an ongoing basis for Black entrepreneurs to meet and engage with decision-makers within organizations, such as the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), Export Development Canada (EDC), as well as other financial institutions.

4.6. The City's EDO ought to work with the Black Caucus Alliance and The Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC) to co-design and develop targeted strategies to include more local Black businesses in the competitive diverse supply chain.

4.7. The Black Caucus Alliance should support and work with the City in building its supplier diversity program and the City's own CAMSC corporate membership as part of the City's sustainable procurement practices.

4.8. The Black Caucus Alliance should explore the idea and feasibility of establishing a local Black Chamber of Commerce in Mississauga by collaborating and partnering with Mississauga Board of Trade.

5. Innovation Inclusion Strategies

To ensure greater participation of Black communities in the achievement of City's innovation goals**,** the following recommendations are offered:

5.1 The City should assist the Black Caucus Alliance as it seeks to work with tech-based and innovation-related companies to host a City-wide hackathon. This hackathon will invite local Black innovators from the global Black diaspora to find tech-based solutions, as well as services or products to address commercial or social challenges of the City and/or its Black communities. This hackathon should be an event included as a part of the 2024 celebration outlined in section 2 of this summary of recommendations.

5.2 To attract top quality talent from the greater Black diaspora to high-demand skilled positions within the technology and innovation sectors, the Black Caucus Alliance ought to first partner with a Black-owned incubator with a Start-up Visa designation and/or seek to obtain a Start-up Visa designation for itself. Again, recruited talent will have skill sets that help to deliver advanced manufacturing, smart logistics, life sciences, and high-value business services. Of course, the promotion of local Black talent and businesses should continue to be prioritized.

5.3 It is also recommended that the City's EDO work with the Black Caucus Alliance to connect Black local Business and talent to the wider innovation ecosystem on an ongoing basis.

5.4 In addition, to include local Black-owned businesses that are not tech-based in the City innovation narrative, it's recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance work with the City to establish a technology and innovation assessment program to help those companies identify the technologies and tech integration processes that will enhance their companies' operations.

6. The Establishment of a Black Community Innovation Hub (BCIH)

To further foster community collaboration and economic development, especially with the innovation sector, the following is recommended:

6.1 The City and the Black Caucus Alliance should work to establish a Black Community Innovation Hub (BCIH) to foster collaboration among Black communities and the wider communities at large. Thus, the BCIH would play an integral role in developing the ongoing political, social, and economic inclusion initiatives outlined above. The BCIH could also allow the Black Caucus Alliance to pursue unique activities that would support Black businesses.

6.2 Recommendation 6.1 will require the City to lease one of its properties like that of Bussell House, with a standing structure and enough land to build the hub onto the Black Caucus Alliance for the amount of one dollar annually for a hundred years.

6.3 The City and Black Caucus Alliance should work with all levels of government as well as the private sector to raise the funds needed to address any restoration and construction needs to establish the hub. The funding model would mirror that of the Tamil Community Centre, which garnered $26.3 million.

6.4 As the targeted activities and recommendations outlined in section 4 of this summary mature and become a fully functioning program, it is highly recommended that the Black Caucus Alliance integrate the program into the BCIH.

6.5 It is recommended that while the BCIH is being developed, the City should offer the Black Caucus Alliance office space free of charge.

7. Policing and Community Engagement

To offer more opportunities for collaboration between Black communities and Peel Regional Police, it is recommended:

7.1 That the Mayor and Council work with the Black Caucus Alliance to continue to encourage the province of Ontario to legally advance more of **Justice Tulloch's recommendations** on policing.

7.2 That the Mayor and Council work with the Black Caucus Alliance to continue to urge the Province of Ontario to appoint Black representation on the Peel Regional Police Service Board.

7.3 That the Mayor and Council work with the Black Caucus Alliance, the Peel Regional Police, and other community leaders across Mississauga's ethnic landscapes to encourage the province of Ontario to address the legal and financial barriers to enable community agencies to respond to mental health crisis calls where a police presence is not required, in keeping with the goals and objectives of its **Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) framework.**

7.4 That the Black Caucus Alliance work with the Peel Regional Police's EDI Service Board and community leaders to facilitate engagements with Black families as a whole.

7.5 That the Black Caucus Alliance collaborate with the City, including its Smart City project, along with Peel Regional Police to lead the residents of Mississauga in an inclusive exploration of AI and technologies within policing. The process will result in the establishment of a statement of principle on which an AI and policing policy could be built.

8. The City's Corporate Security

To ensure that the residents and visitors of the Black communities feel safe and welcomed on all of the City of Mississauga's properties, the following recommendations are offered:

8.1 The City and the Black Caucus Alliance review the City's corporate security policies and treatment of Black residents on City properties. To do so, it is recommended that the City and the Black Caucus Alliance review corporate security's incident reports starting from the previous five years and on an ongoing basis to uncover whether or not Black individuals have been overrepresented in those reports.

8.2 If Black individuals are found to be overrepresented in those reports, or the City's corporate security has not sufficiently documented the race or ethnicity of those it comes into contact with, then the City Corporate Security, the Black Caucus Alliance, and the City's Strategic Communications and Initiatives Department ought to work together to develop strategies and policies to address the concerns some Black residents have regarding entering City property.

8.3 It is recommended that the City's Equity Office work with all the stakeholders including the Black Caucus Alliance to develop key performance indicators to measure the progress of the City's Corporate Security in relation to the treatment of Black individuals on City properties.

6. BLACK COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

"AND WHEREAS racism and discrimination, and in particular anti-Black racism and discrimination, are historic, pervasive, institutional and systemic issues in Mississauga that must be addressed"

- Resolution 02072020

Mayor Bonnie Crombie brought Resolution 0207-2020 **("Resolution 207")** to Council on June 24, 2020. The resolution came just one month after the brutal murder of a handcuffed Black man by a white police officer. In broad daylight and in the presence of horrified pedestrians, the police officer pressed his knee into the man's neck for over eight minutes. George Floyd was left begging for his dead mother as he was losing his own life, unable to breathe. The horrific attack on humanity rightfully sparked worldwide protests in Berlin, Bristol, Brussels, Cardiff, Cologne, Dublin, Edinburgh, Frankfurt, Lausanne, Liege, Luton, Maastricht, Madrid, Manchester, Melbourne, Paris, Porto, Pretoria, Pristina, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Seoul, Sofia, Stuttgart, Sydney, Tokyo, Tunis, and Westminster. No less than sixty cities in Canada also held protests. On June 7, right here in Mississauga, demonstrators marched from Celebration Square, calling for police officers in the Region of Peel to wear body cameras.

Whether one angrily took to the streets or remained quietly bewildered at home, we were collectively asked to reflect upon the failed promise of civil equality that the murder of Mr. George Perry Floyd Jr. symbolized. We were also left to answer the question: How can we do better? In the midst of such reflections, Resolution 207 was born. With Resolution 207, the Mayor asked Council to not only recognize the social injustice that Black communities face, but also to set a course of action to address systemic barriers and racial discrimination. Council voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

Resolution 207 called for the Mayor to establish the Black Caucus. In accordance with the Black Caucus' terms of reference (Appendix 2), its members were selected to advise the Mayor on how to begin to tackle anti-Black racism within the City. The Black Caucus had to identify how anti-Black racism uniquely manifests itself in Mississauga. The Black Caucus then decided to host a series of consultations. These consultations were required to gain unique insights to better understand the impact of anti-Black racism and systemic barriers within Mississauga. The consultations were also needed to help identify the best course of action to take to make the City a more equitable and inclusive place for its Black residents and communities.

In March of 2021, UpSurgence—an engagement firm—submitted the winning proposal in the City's RFP process for the creation of community engagement sessions to consult with Mississauga's Black communities. Those sessions were to be known collectively as the Black Community Engagement ("BCE"). UpSurgence's principal is a Black woman and an entrepreneur based in the Region of Peel. Claudia McKoy stressed with the Mayor's staff that the BCE activities needed to be impactful and not merely a shelved report. All agreed. On Thursday March 25, 2021, the consultant was introduced to the Mayor's Black Caucus. Please see Appendix 3 for full bios of the Black Caucus. Collectively, the team established the BCE sessions' objectives:

1. To better understand the lived experiences and challenges of the Black communities in Mississauga, as well as identifying opportunities to improve access to City and Regional resources, including:

- Social, library, and recreational services
- Employment and housing
- Local, provincial, and federal political institutions
- Positive promotion of Black history and culture

2. Identify pathways that will lead to better social outcomes through effective political engagements, as well as resolving systemic challenges relating to:

- Economic development
- Housing, health care, mental health, and well-being
- Child and youth welfare, and older adult services and care
- Policing, justice, and law enforcement

3. Improve the lived experiences and the well-being of members of Black communities within Mississauga and the Region of Peel.

7. THE BLACK COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Six 2.5-hour virtual engagement sessions were conducted and opened to the public. These sessions were used to generate greater mutual understanding, trust, and partnership between the City and its Black residents. They were also meant to support Mississauga's Black communities in gaining more insights and access to the City's resources, as well as its social and political institutions. The feedback provided allowed the City to learn more about the Black communities' concerns and insights. To ensure that the sessions supported passionate-yet-impactful constructive discussions, the BCE consultant initially created two-and-a-half sessions with five main segments:

Introduction: The use of poll questions and the rules of engagement, as well as the sessions' mantra: *Inform. Collaborate. Mobilize!* This mantra reinforced both the function of the sessions and the spirit in which they were made.

Subject Matter Expert Segment: A subject matter expert (SME) is an individual with extensive knowledge on a particular issue, topic, or subject matter. The SME segments were then designed to create a framework for each consultation's discussion. The SMEs' presentations then set the stage for the evening's community discussions on a particular topic. For the full bios of each of the subject matter experts, please see Appendix 4.

Breakout Sessions: The breakout sessions were designed to give feedback regarding the evening's topic. The virtual breakout sessions allowed participants to move from one breakout session to another with ease.

Open Mic: These segments were launched with a representative from each breakout session. They outlined what was discussed and what recommendations were presented. After revisiting the outcomes of the breakout sessions, the participants were free to discuss, explore, and offer recommendations regarding the intersections between racism and the evening's specific topic.
Poll questions were used throughout the sessions to gather additional feedback from the session's participants. The fix questions were used to identify the participants' ethnicity and if they were a Mississauga resident. The variable questions explored the values, desires, and views of the participants.

"We need to deliver strategies that will make positive impact for our youths"

Leo Bailey, Diversity & Inclusion Director, Interac
A Mississauga Resident

7.1 Session #1: "Accessing Political Power in Canada"

On May 6, the session for *"Accessing Political Power in Canada"* aimed to empower Black communities. Its goal was also to gain insights into their views about Canada's political structures to enrich Black communities in Mississauga. The Mayor acknowledged the historical challenges Black communities have had accessing political institutions and offices within Mississauga. The session hosted presentations given by SMEs who discussed each level of government, explained what they oversaw, and how best to access them. The "Accessing Political Power in Canada" SME presenters were:

Mayor Bonnie Crombie, who explored the responsibilities and limitations of a municipality.
Nando Iannicca, the Region of Peel's Chair, who discussed the political powers and the limitations of the Region of Peel.
Michael Coteau, MPP of Don Valley East, who talked through the responsibilities and limitations of the Government of Ontario.
Greg Fergus, MP of Hull–Aylmer, examined the responsibilities and limitations of the Government of Canada.
Participants were offered the opportunity to respond to and interact with the SMEs to express their thoughts on how to gain better access to Canada's political institutions throughout three breakout sessions:

Political Engagement as an Economic Tool
MPP Michael Coteau and amanuel melles led the community discussion on how Black communities can use political engagement as an economic tool.

The Role of Faith-Based Leaders in Black Political Empowerment
Bishop Walker and Bishop Ransford Jones led the community discourse on how faith-based leaders can elevate Black political power in Mississauga.

Black Youth Political Empowerment
Agapi Gessesse, the Executive Director of CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals, helped to guide the conversation on how can Black youths could find empowerment through political engagement.

As a result, the team received a lot of useful information. For example:

- 33 percent of respondents believed that the Government of Ontario was the government body that most impacted the lives of Black communities.
- 88 percent of the respondents believed that it is extremely important to encourage Black youths to become civically and/or politically engaged.

Regarding the question, "*In what areas do you think better government supports are necessary to improve access for Black communities?"*

- 28 percent of respondents believed that better government support was needed in ensuring financial and administrative support for Black businesses.
- 28 percent of respondents believed that better government support was needed in ensuring increased accessibility to higher education.
- 16.6 percent of respondents believed that better government support was needed in ensuring better access to quality housing.
- 11.6 percent of respondents believed that better government support was needed in ensuring better access to social services.
- 11.6 percent of respondents selected "other" as their answer.
- 3 percent of respondents believed that better government support was needed in accessing better childcare.

In addition:

- Nearly 93 percent of respondents said that they would like to see faith-based leaders work together to expand political reach for Black communities.
- 95 percent of respondents said yes to the question, "W*ould you like to be more socially and/or politically engaged?"*

The community feedback focused on several main themes*:*

- Participants called for more Black representation within the City's and Region of Peel's political infrastructures.
- Participants sought more Black elected officials.
- The community called for more Black representation and appointments to the City's Committee of Councils, as well as on its boards.
- Community members wanted to be more politically engaged, but encounter challenges when trying to access the City's political landscapes.
- Community members called for Black community groups—including faith-based organizations—to leverage their relevance and influence to help expand the communities' political reach.

"As a city-builder and recipient of the City's Phil Green Award, I would like to see the City of Mississauga support Black communities through land use planning, in policy and practice."

Nicole N. Hanson, MES(Pl.), RPP, MCIP
Co-Founder, Black Planner's and Urbanist Association
A Mississauga Resident

7.2 Session #2: "Accessing Mississauga's Resources"

On May 20, the session for "*Accessing Mississauga's Resources*" informed Black communities on how to better access the key resources and programs that the City currently offers. The session also sought to uncover how the City could deliver those services in a way that would better serve Black communities. It gave Black communities a chance to share their recommendations, as well. The SME session involved three presentations by City staff members who shared information about the City's resources:

Paul Damaso, the City's Director of Culture, discussed how the City currently identifies and creates partnerships. **Kristina Zietsma**, the City's Director of Recreation, explored the various services and programs at the City. **Rona O'Banion**, the City's Director of Library Services, and **Tamara Stojakovic**, the City's Library Manager, illustrated innovative ways to use the City's libraries and their resources.

Following the SME presentations were three breakout sessions. Each one was focused on different themes: resources for nonprofit organizations, celebrating Black cultures, and removing the systemic barriers when accessing resources in Mississauga:

Strategies for Inclusive Programming at the City of Mississauga
Paul Damaso led the community discussion on how the City could make programs and grants supportive of Mississauga's Black nonprofit organizations.

Strategies for Promoting and Celebrating Black Cultures at the City
Kristina Zietsma led the community discussion on how the City could better support and promote Black cultures.

Strategies for Increasing Access to City Resources
Rona O'Banion led the community discussion on how the City can decrease barriers to increase Black communities' access and engagement with the City's services.

When asked, "*How could the City make programs and grants supportive of Mississauga's Black nonprofit organizations?*"

- 31 percent of respondents said that designing more grants and programs with the needs of Black communities in mind would better support Black nonprofit organizations.
- 51 percent of respondents believed that Black nonprofit organizations should be involved in the design phase of Mississauga's grants and programs.
- 18 percent of respondents thought that hosting more information sessions for Black communities would better support Black nonprofit organizations.

When asked, "*How could the City decrease barriers to increase Black communities' access and engagement with City services?"*

- 32 percent of respondents said creating stronger ties with Black communities could decrease barriers to access and engagement with City services.
- 68 per cent of respondents felt that Black communities needed to be involved in the development of engagement strategies to help decrease barriers to accessing the City services.
- None of respondents felt the City was doing a good job of including Black communities in accessing City services and engagement.

When asked, "*What are the services or programs that you are most interested to access?"*

- Nearly 38 percent of respondents said they were most interested in accessing cultural events.
- 27 percent of respondents said they were most interested in accessing skills training.
- Nearly 22 percent of respondents said they were most interested in accessing library services.
- 13 percent of respondents said they were not sure of all the City's programs and services.
- No respondents said they were most interested in accessing sports programs.

When asked, *"Are you interested in partnering with the City to deliver new services or cultural programs that will benefit Black communities?"*

- 72 percent of respondents said that they would collaborate with the City to deliver new services or cultural programs that benefit Black communities.
- 25 percent of respondents said that they were not sure that they would collaborate with the City to deliver new services or cultural programs that benefit Black communities.
- 3 percent of respondents said they would not partner with the City to deliver new services or cultural programs that benefit Black communities.

The community feedback focused on three main themes:

- The need to review the City's corporate security policies and treatment of Black residents on City properties.
- The need for a Black advisory body to facilitate better inclusion of Black voices into the City's decision-making process in developing City programs and grants. This will better promote Black history and culture at the City and Mississauga.
- The need for an awareness campaign to promote the City's programs and resources for its Black residents.

7.3 Session #3: "Policing"

On May 27, the *"Policing"* session took place**.** The session's purpose was to consult with Black communities to identify ways to restore faith in the Peel Regional Police, given their history. (Discuss the key happenings that created tension between Black residents of Mississauga and the Police.) The Mayor acknowledged the ongoing challenges Black communities have faced building collaborative relationships with the Peel Regional Police. The session then offered a series of SME presentations that explored racism, new technologies, the justice system, and policing.

The SMEs who explored different ways to reimage policing included:

The Honourable Justice Michael H. Tulloch
Gerry McNeilly, the former Director of the Office of the Independent Police Review (OIPRD)
Dr. Akwasi Owusu-Bempah, an assistant professor at the University of Toronto who studies race, crime, and criminal justice, with a particular focus in the area of policing

The SMEs who discussed policing from the inside out, the current realities of modern policing, and recent lessons learned in engaging diverse communities were:

Deputy Chief Marc Andrews, Peel Regional Police
Chair Ahmad Attia, Peel Regional Police Service Board
Superintendent Hubert Hiltz, Community Safety and Well-Being Services, Peel Regional Police

The SMEs who discussed the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and new technologies on policing and Black communities were:

Deputy Chief Anthony Odoardi, a specialist in new technologies at Peel Regional Police
Brenda McPhail, Director of Privacy, Technology & Surveillance Program at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Three breakout sessions explored the main themes from the presentations. They included community advocates, civil liberties groups, and members from the Peel Police Services:

"Making Room for Black Voices in Peel Policing Strategies: A Pathway to Collaboration"
This session included the former OIPRD director Gerry McNeilly, Peel Regional Police Deputy Chief Marc Andrews, Peel Regional Police Chair Ahmad Attia, and Black Caucus' Chair Linden King. They led a discussion centred around the question, "What do you think would be needed to ensure effective policing that supports community trust and collaboration?"

"Policing, AI, and Black Communities"
This session included the Director of the Privacy, Technology & Surveillance Program at The Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Brenda McPhail, Peel Regional Police Deputy Chief Anthony Odoardi, and BCE consultant Claudia McKoy. They led a discussion that explored the question, "How should we balance privacy and policing within a world of new emerging technologies?"

"Strategies for Improving Black Youth and Police Engagement"
This session included Professor Akwasi Owusu-Bempah, Superintendent Hubert Hiltz, community advocate Dave D'Oyen, and Black Caucus Alliance member Audrey Campbell. They guided the discussion on how to develop strategies for improving Black youth and police engagement.

The ***"Policing"*** session was the most intense of the six consultations. The aim of the consultations was to listen to the communities to find collaborative solutions to any of the barriers Black communities faced in accessing equity. Some of the insights included:

- 57 percent of respondents stated that if they had to make a hard choice, they would choose privacy over security.
- 97 percent of respondents said that they were willing to work with law enforcement to create new strategies for better Black communities' engagement.

The community recommendations centred on the following themes:

- Black representation on the Peel Regional Police Service Board
- The Honourable Michael H. Tulloch's recommendations being implemented
- More transparency regarding the use of AI and new technologies in policing
- Amendments made to the provincial legislation to allow for additional first responders to respond to a mental health crisis

7.4 Session #4: "Well-Being: Designing Healthy Black Communities"

On June 8, the session for "*Well-Being: Designing Healthy Black Communities"* asked Black communities to tell the City what they needed to achieve greater health and well-being. The Mayor acknowledged challenges that Black communities have faced accessing housing and healthcare in Mississauga. Several SMEs then shared information on the status of healthcare and housing, as well as its impact on Black communities.

On the topic of health, the following subject matter experts conducted presentations:

Dr. Lawrence Loh, Medical Officer for Peel Public Health, who offered insights on key issues impacting Peel Region's medical system and its connection to race.
David Smith, CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Dufferin, who explored the need for more support to deliver mental health care services, and how the lack of services has negatively impacted Black communities.
Dianne Fierheller, Co-lead for Co-Design an Equitable and Inclusive Health System in Peel, who reported on the ongoing process of developing a wellness strategy for Black communities.
Paul Bailey, Executive Director at Black Health Alliance, who examined how Black communities could transcend the current systems to deliver better care to our Black residents.
Hope Ramsay, Executive Director at Moyo Health & Community Services, who explained how a new funding model could allow for more collaborations among organizations that focus on the intersection of health and anti-Black racism.

On the topic of housing, the following subject matter experts presented:

Aileen Baird, Director of Housing Services at the Region of Peel, explored various housing services that the Region of Peel offers.
Victoria Nelson, President of Camille's Place, discussed the historical difficulties many Black communities have faced in accessing quality housing and resources.

The breakout sessions offered were:

"Strategies to Ensure Black Communities' Access to Affordable Housing"
Aileen Baird, Director of Housing Services at the Region of Peel, Victoria Nelson, the president of Camille's Place, and the BCE consultant, Claudia McKoy, launched the community discussion on, "**How could the City assist Black communities to access better affordable housing?"**

"Strategies for Equitable and Inclusive Health Systems in Peel"
David Smith, CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Dufferin, Dianne Fierheller, co-lead for Co-Design an Equitable and Inclusive Health System in Peel, Hope Ramsay, Executive Director at Moyo Health & Community Services, and the Chair of the Black Caucus, Linden King, joined the community in a discussion on, "**How to develop strategies to support a more equitable and inclusive mental and public health system in the Region of Peel."**

Through the polling responses, the team learned that:

- Nearly 79 percent of respondents were home owners, while 21 percent were renters.
- 19 percent of respondents were in need of affordable housing.
- Nearly 72 percent of respondents knew someone in need of affordable housing.

When asked, "*What do you think is the top health issue facing Black communities?":*

- 23.5 percent of respondents said hypertension.
- Nearly 59 percent of respondents said diabetes.
- Nearly 2 percent of respondents said sickle cell disease/anemia.
- Nearly 2 percent of respondents said cancer.
- 14 percent of respondents said COVID-19.

When asked, "*How important is it to address mental health in Black communities?":*

- 96 percent of respondents believed that it is very important to address mental health.
- 4 percent of respondents believed that it is somewhat important, but that there are other health challenges to be prioritized within Black communities.
- All respondents believed that mental health is an issue that needs to be addressed in Black communities.

When asked, *"Are you aware that the Region of Peel receives 50 percent less per capita health funding from the Government of Ontario compared to other jurisdictions?"* 42 percent of respondents said that they did not know that the Region of Peel receives 50 per cent less per capita compared to other jurisdictions in Ontario.

When asked, "*How can we support healthier Black communities?", participants suggested:*

- More consultations to identify the specific needs regarding access to affordable housing and better healthcare.
- Increasing provincial and federal funding for both health and housing, as they are greatly underfunded in Peel Region per capita.
- Consistent race-based data collection to understand the facts and learn the stories behind the facts. More mental health resources for Black communities and families experiencing mental health crises.
- A comprehensive Black Health Strategic Plan.
- More sustainable "2–3 year" funding for community partners within a collaborative and non-competitive funding model.

"The Black community in Malton needs safe and affordable spaces to foster family and community building"

Clovalyn Wilson, President of Malton Black Development Association
A Mississauga Resident

7.5 Session #5: "Accessing an Age-Friendly Society"

On June 17, the session for "*Accessing an Age-Friendly Society"* launched with the Mayor acknowledging the historical challenges that Black communities have faced accessing services in Peel Region for different life stages. The session was an opportunity to discover the current quality of access Black communities have to key services.

Childcare was explored by:
Lori Nicholls-Kerec, Manager, Early Years and Child Care Services at the Region of Peel
Dawn Fullington, Supervisor, Ontario Works at the Region of Peel
Chima Nsitem, Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Service at the Children Aid Society of the Region of Peel

Education and its impact on Black communities were explored by:
Laura Mae Lindo, MPP of Kitchener-Centre and NDP Black Caucus
Donna Ford, Superintendent of Indigenous Education, Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression and Community Partnerships, Peel District School Board

Older Adults services and their impact on Black communities were explored by:
Jennifer Cowie Bonne, Manager of Community and Neighbourhood Development at the City of Mississauga
Anne-Marie Case-Volkert, Interim Director of Long-Term Care and Health Services at the Region of Peel
Jennifer D'Amico, Adult Day and Community Services Supervisor at the Region of Peel
Kathleen Millar, Interim Manager, Practice, Innovation & Education (PIE) Team and Long-Term Care, Health Services at the Region of Peel
Accessibility, disability, and race were explored by **Irene Paul** of Abilities at Work.

The breakout sessions were:
"Strategies to Access Better Child and Youth Care Services"
Lori Nicholls-Kerec, Manager, Early Years and Child Care Services at the Region of Peel, Chima Nsitem, Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Service at the Children Aid Society of the Region of Peel, **Kemesha Alli**, CEO and founder, Patches 360 Inc., along with the Black Caucus' Chair, Linden King, led the community discussion on "*How could the City assist Black communities to access better child and youth care services as well as educational programs?"*

"Strategies to Access Better Services for Older Adults and Those Living with Disabilities"
Irene Paul of Abilities At Work, Jennifer Cowie Bonne, Manager of Community and Neighbourhood Development at the City of Mississauga, **Jerry Halliday** of 55+ Can-Afro Seniors Group, and the BCE consultant launched the community discussion. It focused on, "*How could the City assist Black communities as they attempt to access better services and programs for older adults and those living with disabilities?"*

During the session, the team discovered that:

- 14 percent of respondents stated that they use either the Region of Peel's Children's Services, subsidies through Early Child and Family Centres, or special needs supports.
- 22 percent of respondents stated that they were the primary caregiver for an aging parent or relative.
- Nearly 21 percent of respondents stated that they care for someone living with a disability.
- 40 percent of respondents stated that they would like more help caring for young children, a disabled person, or an aging adult.
- 34 percent of respondents have a retirement plan for their caretaking.

Respondents also expressed that they wanted additional information about City and Region of Peel services:

- 27.5 percent of respondents wanted more information on services and programs for older adults.
- 25 percent of respondents wanted more information on children's services and programs.
- 15 percent of respondents wanted more information on Ontario Works.
- 12.5 percent of respondents wanted more information on services and programs for long-term care.
- 10 percent of respondents wanted more information on services for individuals living with disabilities.
- 22.5 percent of respondents wanted more information on all of the above.

The recommendations from the community included:

- The creation of a Caribbean and Afro-centric representation in child welfare & long-term care facilities, especially relating to culturally specific food.
- The use of an intersectionality lens to serve those within the Black community living with disabilities better.
- The launch of an awareness campaign targeted to Black communities to better promote the City and regional resources.
- The need for a comprehensive strategic plan to promote more equity in both the City's own educational programs as well as those designed by Peel District School Board.

"...I want to see Mississauga championing Black innovations in Science, Technology, Arts and Culture."

Ben Idowu, CEO of LightCone Technology
A Mississauga Resident

7.6 Session #6: "Black Economic Empowerment"

On June 29, the session for "*Black Economic Empowerment"* invited Black communities to share their insights on accessing the resources required in building successful Black businesses, entrepreneurs, employment opportunities, and wealth. The Mayor acknowledged the historical challenges that Black communities have had in building and accessing economic development resources within the City and across the Peel Region. The SMEs explored strategies on how to nurture Black economic empowerment in Mississauga:

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Member of Parliament for York South–Weston and the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, discussed the recent Government of Canada initiatives to support Black businesses.
Mawutor Alifo, Minister and Acting High Commissioner for the Republic of Ghana, discussed the opportunities and benefits for local Black businesses to collaborate with African businesses to both strengthen their businesses and ancestral ties.
Derick Pearson, President, Centre for Black Innovation (Miami, USA), offered insights on how Mississauga can support, attract, and develop Black innovation.
Chelsea Prescod, Regional Manager for Client Diversity at Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), discussed BDC programs to support Black entrepreneurship.
Earl R. Davis, CFA, MBA, Managing Director–Head of Fixed Income and Money Markets, Bank of Montreal and Former Director, Head of Fixed Income and Currencies at the Ontario Teachers' Pension Fund, explored the necessary elements for establishing successful businesses and how Mississauga could support Black entrepreneurs.
amanuel melles, Executive Director, the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities asked, "*Is funding enough*?" He then advocated for a systemic change approach to tackling economic inequalities.

Two leaders of community-based organizations also discussed the work they do to promote Black wealth and offered recommendations:
Colin Lynch, Co-Founder of Black Opportunity Fund & VP Global Assets Management at TD
Melloney Campbell, Board Member & Peel Lead, StartUp Canada

The City's Economic Development Office (EDO) highlighted the division's initiatives on supporting local Black businesses. The EDO Staff that presented were:
Harold Dremin, Business Investment and Sector Development Manager
Donna Heslin, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Manager
Stephanie Dunbar, Global Business Consultant
Aleksandra Allen, Business Initiatives and Planning Manager
Tamara Bangura-Pagan, Business Analyst
Michelle Browne, Business Analyst

The segment also included a discussion on how to access partnership and procurement opportunities the City offers. The segment was led by **Andrea Westfall**, Sustainable & Materiel Management Procurement Coordinator. In addition, community members shared their ideas, concerns, and solutions about strengthening Black wealth through breakout sessions:

"***Strategies for Build Black Wealth—How could Mississauga be a better ally to the building of Black wealth?"***
Earl R. Davis, Managing Director–Head of Fixed Income and Money Markets, Bank of Montreal
Colin Lynch, Co-Founder of Black Opportunity Fund & VP Global Assets Management at TD
amanuel melles, Executive Director, the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities
Craig Wellington, Executive Director of the Black Opportunity Fund
Linden King, Black Caucus Chair

"Strategies for Supporting Black Innovation—How could Mississauga better support and attract Black businesses and innovation?"
The City's Economic Development Office joined **Melloney Campbell,** Board Member and Peel Lead, StartUp Canada, **Derick Pearson,** President, Centre for Black Innovation, and **Claudia McKoy**, BCE Consultant and UpSurgence's Principal

The "*Black Economic Empowerment"* session highlighted the need for greater community building between the City and its Black communities. Out of more than the 130 people who attended, only eight identified themselves as Black business owners living in Mississauga. **The session offered the following insights:**

- 42 percent of respondents said that they owned a business in Ontario.
- 75 percent of respondents believed that they needed more support growing their current business or starting a new one.
- 50 percent of respondents would like to help the City better support and develop Black innovation, businesses, and wealth in Mississauga.

The following are the communities' recommendations:

- Develop and support the growth of Black innovation
- Include Black businesses in the wider financial ecosystem
- Establish a market/entertainment district that includes Black businesses
- Develop a program to assist Black businesses in owning their commercial spaces
- Establish funding for mentorship programs
- Help Black businesses access local and international markets
- Establish support for older Black entrepreneurs
- Create targeted financial literacy programs for Black communities
- Launch an awareness campaign to inform the communities of City resources, networks, and programs
- Facilitate a deeper "ally culture" within Mississauga's business ecosystem for Black businesses

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS' SUMMARY

Throughout May and June 2021, the Black Community Engagement sessions saw hundreds of Black community members and more than fifty SMEs come together to discuss pressing issues facing Black communities.

Throughout the BCE sessions, several key themes emerged:

- The need to address the connectivity gap that poses barriers for Black communities to access the City and its resources
- The need for integration and inclusion into the City's political and social infrastructure
- The need to develop a framework from which Black communities and Peel Regional Police can work collaboratively from
- The need for the City to provide culturally specific programs, services, and events for Black communities
- The need for targeted messaging to ensure that Black women are invited to participate in City programs targeted to women
- The need for targeted support of local Black businesses

These overarching themes need to be distilled down into actionable items. After consultations, some Black residents, Black entrepreneurs, SMEs, and City staff who participated in the sessions were asked to provide additional insights, feedback, and clarifications to their statements and views. In addition to the consultation sessions, four co-design sessions with key external and internal stakeholders, SMEs, and community stakeholders were conducted to determine how best to convert the communities' recommendations into actionable items.

Co-Design Sessions

Four co-design sessions invited representatives from all the key stakeholders to come together to defend their interests, express their insights, and collaborate to find solutions to complex issues. "***Nothing About Us Without Us"*** is the mantra that rules the sensibilities of co-design. To be clear, the use of co-design sessions was to obtain the necessary feedback from the key stakeholders and to set the stage for greater collaborations among them. Accordingly, the consultant then designed the co-design sessions for each of the four main areas that the communities' recommendations fell into: ***"Accessing Services & Better Care," "Inclusion," "Black Economic Empowerment,"*** and ***"Policing."***

Prior to each session, the consultant prepared a co-design kit and held one-on-one meetings with each participant as well as with City staff to prepare them for the meeting. For each community recommendation, the co-designers were asked to answer the following questions:

"Given current realities, is a recommendation possible?"

- If not, what realities would need to change for it to be possible?
- If yes, how should this recommendation be accomplished?
- What needs to be the key feature(s) of the recommendation?

"Who is the lead to carry out the recommendation?"

"What is a reasonable timeline to achieve the recommendation?"

9.1 "*Co-Design Session #1: Accessing Services & Better Care*"

On August 11, the co-design session for "Services and Better Care" reviewed recommendations from the "Accessing An Age-Friendly Society," "Designing Healthy Black Communities," and "Accessing Mississauga's Resources" sessions. This process helped create potential action plans related to those recommendations. The "Services and Better Care" co-design team was comprised of the following people:

Black Caucus Members:
Lori Brotherton
Shelly Scott-England
Heather Relf
Lisa Smalls
Len Carby

Health Subject Matter Experts:
Paul Bailey, Executive Director at Black Health Alliance
Hope Ramsay, Executive Director at Moyo Health and Community Services

Other Services and Community Representatives:
Veroy Clarke, Community Development Coordinator (Library Services) at the City of Mississauga and Mississauga resident
Ben Idowu, Mississauga entrepreneur in the technology industry
Father Vernal Savage, a faith leader at Mississauga's St. Francis of Assisi Anglican Church
In addition, the **Housing** subject matter expert was Victoria Nelson, President of Camille's Place.

9.2 "Co-Design Session #2: Black Economic Empowerment"

On August 18, the co-design session for "*Black Economic Empowerment"* reviewed the recommendations from the BCE Black Economic Empowerment session held on June 29, 2021. Also included in the session:

Business Development Bank of Canada representatives:
Mary Ann Wenzler-Wiebe, Vice President of GTA at Business Development Bank of Canada
Ogie Ifoga, Senior Account Manager at Business Development Bank of Canada

Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC):
Cassandra Dorrington, President, Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council
Christina Rodrigues, Director of Business Development, Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council

Royal Bank of Canada:
Alecia Aquino, Director of Business Owner Planning and Women in Business, Royal Bank of Canada
Tyson Jones, Director of Financial Advisory Services, Royal Bank of Canada

Black Caucus Members:
Linden King, Chair
Craig Wellington
Mel Botembe
Shelly Scott-England

Community Business Owners:
Ben Idowu, CEO at LigthCone Technology Inc.
Lawrence Olsei-Antoh, Importer and
Akin Oladeji, Founder of FB Services Canada Exporter Inc and Orchard Sloane Trading LTD
Jeannie Buckley, Founder of Jeanie's Bakery
Sharon Bailey, Founder of SAB Fruit Cake & Food Market
Dorothy Vernon-Brown, Business Coach
Rose Streete, Community Leader
Nicole Hansen, Environmental Planner
Dwania Peele, Founder of Canada Small
Gladys Osei-Antoh, Founder of Business Women geleesspices.ca
Josh Dung, Logistic Specialist

Other International and Canadian Leaders:
Mawutor Alifo, Minister and Acting High Commissioner for the Republic of Ghana
Earl R. Davis, CFA, MBA, Managing Director—Head of Fixed Income and Money Markets, Bank of Montreal, and
Former Director, Head of Fixed Income and Currencies at the Ontario Teachers' Pension Fund
Leo Bailey, Diversity & Inclusion Director, Interac
Penny Cromwell, Revenue and Operations Team Member at Rogers

City's Economic Development Office:
Bonnie Brown, Economic Development Office Director
Harold Dremin, Business Investment and Sector Development Manager
Stephanie Dunbar, Global Business Consultant
Aleksandra Allen, Business Initiatives and Planning Manager
John Lam, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Specialist
Michelle Browne, Business Analyst

City Elected Officials and City Staff:
Ward 9 Councillor Pat Saito, City of Mississauga
Sara Alimardani, Interim Senior Advisor, Stakeholder Relations, Mayor's Office
Uzma Shakir, Strategic Leader, Diversity and Inclusion, City of Mississauga
Andrea Westfall, Sustainable Procurement Coordinator, City of Mississauga

9.3 "Co-Design Session #3: Black Inclusion Strategies"

On August 19, the co-design session for "*Black Inclusion Strategies"* reviewed recommendations from all six BCE consultant sessions. The co-design team included:

Black Caucus Members:
Linden King, Chair
Len Carby

Mississauga's Community Representatives
Bishop Ransford Jones, Chair of Canadian Black Clergies & Allies
Joycelyn Callender, member of The Congress of Black Women of Canada -- Mississauga and Area Chapter
Antoinette Clarke, Executive Director at Peel Family Mediation Services
Loris Thomas, Administrative Management Professional
Hans Poppe, Graphic Designer
Kemesha Alli, Founder of Patches 360 Inc.
Clovalyn Wilson, President of Malton Black Development Association
Faye Schepmyer, member of The Congress of Black Women of Canada -- Mississauga and Area Chapter

City Elected Officials and City Staff:
Ward 9 Councillor Pat Saito
Sara Alimardani, Interim Senior Advisor, Stakeholder Relations, Mayor's Office
Uzma Shakir, Strategic Leader, Diversity and Inclusion, City of Mississauga

9.4 "Co-Design Session #4: Policing"

On August 23, the co-design session for "*Policing"* focused on the recommendations that were derived from the BCE *"Policing"* session. In addition, throughout several BCE sessions, members from Black communities expressed feeling unwelcome and targeted by City security staff. The following participants included:

Black Caucus Members:
Linden King, Chair
Audrey Campbell
Lori Brotherton

Subject Matter Experts:
Brenda McPhail, Director of the Privacy, Technology & Surveillance Program at The Canadian Civil Liberties Association
Gerry McNeilly, the former Director of the Office of the Independent Police Review (OIPRD)

Peel Regional Police:
Deputy Marc Andrews
Former Superintendent Hubert Hiltz
Deputy Anthony Odoardi

City Representative:
Daniel Ulrich, Manager Security Services, City of Mississauga
After the session, further meetings were conducted with Deputy Anthony Odoardi and Brenda McPhail to explore initiatives about new technologies, AI, and their impact on Black communities.

10. THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Once the feedback, comments, concerns, hopes, and recommendations from members of the Black communities were collected from the BCE sessions, the team sought to conduct co-design sessions to convert the communities' recommendations into actionable items in addition to obtaining the necessary buy-in from the key stakeholders. The entire process was a collaborative negotiation. In turn, the initial negotiations with stakeholders proved fruitful. The following has been a result of the stakeholder's engagement:

- The Peel Regional Police now seeks to include Black Caucus member to sit on its Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
- Internal City support for the establishment of a Black Hub has been developed
- The City's Economic Development Team has committed to be more intentional in how it engages with Black businesses
- The foundation for greater collaboration between Black businesses and key financial corporations such as BDC, EDC, and Interac have been laid
- The foundation for greater inclusion of Mississauga's Black businesses in the diverse supply chain industries have been made
- The City's Economic Committee of Council will in next session include a Black representative

All Wins. While the post-consultation engagements indeed helped us to map a way to convert the communities' recommendations into a set of actionable missions, two pressing questions remained:

Now that we were eighteen months removed from the George Floyd murder and six months removed from the trial's guilty verdict—*"What role would the City want play?"*

"Did the City's internal stakeholders still have the will to carry out the required tasks or stand as steadfast allies for those activities that were outside of its legal sphere?"

No longer being "important" was a persistent worry of the City's Black communities. History has taught them that initial outcries of injustice invite big promises of reform, but then the spotlight inevitably changes to another storyline, and then those promises were forgotten. In the world of justice, Black communities have unfortunately become used to their concerns being reduced to sensationalized news items.

Fortunately, Mayor Crombie has remained committed. In addition, members of the Peel Regional Police have also remained open to building paths to better collaborations with the City's Black communities. Yet, the plain truth is, to gain the political power needed to better enforce what they want, the Black communities will need to unify and collectively rally. Additional social-political negotiations will indeed need to continue between the City and the Black communities on an ongoing basis to ensure greater future success of Black communities accessing the City and its resources. The activities and the recommendations outlined in this document aim to begin to position the Black communities in Mississauga in such a way that they can become better self-advocates. To assist this proactive repositioning of the City's Black communities, the following initiatives are recommended.

The New Black Caucus Alliance

Currently, the Mayor's Black Caucus serves to inform her on a path forward to address systemic barriers that impact the lives of Mississauga's Black communities. The recommendations below call for the current Black Caucus to become a new independent organization empowered to oversee the delivery of activities recommended in this report. Being a legal entity would also allow The Black Caucus Alliance to carry out the recommended activities that fall outside of the City's scope, as well as increase the fundraising capacity for those activities. This legal status would also enable The Black Caucus Alliance to better serve as a unified force among Black communities, creating collective partnerships and procurement opportunities for organizations and businesses within Black communities to carry out many of the recommendations cited in this report. Therefore, a key role of The Black Caucus Alliance will be to empower and collaborate with organizations and businesses from within Mississauga's Black communities to then connect them—as well as the local Black communities as a whole—to the City.

The Guiding Principles

Three principles have governed the formation of the recommendations of this report. Those principles must also govern the City and the Black Caucus Alliance activities as they carry out the recommendations outlined in this report to ensure that the activities in fact benefit the Black communities.

The first principle asks the question, 'What would be the most effective model to address systemic barriers that would allow for the greatest level of empowerment of the Black communities?' Repeatedly community leaders, such as amanuel melles of The Network for the Advancement of Black Communities, call for the "Black Ecosystems Approach" to be utilized. "Black ecosystems approach" occurs when the various complementary and necessary talents, businesses, and/or organizations from within Black communities collaborate to collectively address the needs of the Black communities, as well as empower those communities with new opportunities and support systems. In this way, The Black Caucus Alliance will facilitate a process where Black communities are empowered to address key issues within them. Therefore, the Black Caucus Alliance and City must work to ensure their activities, including the formation of the new entity, all become centralizing forces within the Black communities to promote and foster a "Black Ecosystems Approach."

The second principle is straightforward. In our society, inequality inevitability is expressed through unequal compensation. To ensure that through the process of delivering the recommendations in this report breaks the cycle of inequality, the City and The Black Caucus Alliance will need to continuously advocate for and pay competitive rates to individuals, businesses, and organizations from within the Black communities.

The third principle aims to strengthen the communication channels within Black communities by carrying out the necessary community engagement strategies to support Black individuals in decision-making roles on city boards, committees, and Committees of Councils to connect back to the Black communities. By doing so, Black individuals in decision-making roles will not merely be participants. Instead they will have the means to engage and gather feedback from the communities to ensure that the community voice impacts the individual's decision-making process to become a representative.

The Black Caucus Alliance Governance and Structure

The new version of the Black Caucus and the City are thus asked to become partners supporting each other to create policies, structures, and initiatives to diminish the systemic barriers to the communal success of Black communities. Therefore, for the purpose of this report, the new Black Caucus with its new structure will be referred to as The Black Caucus Alliance. Yet, the new organization, however, will be free to select a name of its liking if it so chooses.

As alluded to earlier, there will be an ongoing need to call upon and rally a diverse body of allies and partners to carry out the recommendations laid out in this document. To address this need to unify and rally the communities, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance in partnership with the City lead many of the recommended initiatives in this report. The City will offer both the legitimacy to mobilize its internal stakeholders and the resources to attract the confidence of external stakeholders. The Black Caucus Alliance will work to be a centralizing force within Mississauga's Black communities and connect those communities to the City and its activities. In addition, The Black Caucus Alliance will carry activities set out in this report that fall outside of the City's scope.

To foster the transformation of The Black Caucus Alliance and its role at the City, it is recommended that the current Black Caucus should become an arms-length nonprofit with a new name that can perform the necessary activities that this report calls for. For continuity, the new entity should be formed under the leadership of the current Black Caucus Chair. The new Black Caucus Alliance will need a working board to launch the organization. The young organization will also need to attract individuals with the skills and time to serve. Therefore, in early 2022, it is recommended that the current Black Caucus spend no more than three month developing the new governance and operational structure for the new organization, as well as creating the timelines for its activities. During this three-month period, the City and the Black Caucus must develop a memorandum of understanding between itself and the new Black Caucus Alliance. By the end of this process, the original Black Caucus ought to conclude.

Regarding the new governing structure of The Black Caucus Alliance, it is recommended that the current Black Caucus establish a new board for the new Black Caucus Alliance along with subcommittees such as Governance, City Relations, Economic Inclusion, Civic Inclusion, Community Engagement, Operations Team, Black Community and Innovation Development, and Diasporic Relations. Each subcommittee will correspond with a key activity area that is laid out in this report. These committees can then serve a working groups to steer the various activities this report calls for.

It is also strongly recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance work with the City's Strategic Communications and Initiatives Department to develop all the necessary key performance indicators to track the advancement of Black communities within the City, and also measure the impact the recommendations outlined in this report are having on an ongoing basis. For The Black Caucus Alliance to be impactful and successful at carrying out the duties asked of it in this report, it will need to have a high level of access to the City, as well as City support. In exchange, The Black Caucus Alliance would serve as the City's gateway to the Black communities by conducting community engagement initiatives that would also serve to galvanize the communities to link them to the City activities and policies on an ongoing basis.

To achieve this aim, The Black Caucus Alliance in partnership with the City should lead and oversee the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report. Both The Black Caucus Alliance's and the City's progress reports on carrying out the activities and the inclusion strategies outlined in this report should be presented semi-annually at Council. To ensure succinct and synchronized reporting, it is recommended that the newly formed Black Caucus Alliance work with the City's Strategic Communications and Initiatives Department to develop the key performance indicators for the new organization as well as the activities called for in this report. Those key performance indicators will then be reflected in the reports the City and the Black Caucus Alliance present to each other.

To launch The Black Caucus Alliance as an organization, the City of Mississauga should cover the start-up cost as well as fund the new entity's operational costs annually for no less than four years at an amount to be negotiated between the City's representatives and the current Black Caucus.

Inclusion and Engagement Strategies

Throughout the consultations, it was revealed that strategies to bridge the connectivity gap between the City and its Black residents were needed. The recommendations below, therefore, outline key activities designed to foster better communications between the City and its Black communities, as well as the ways that the City could connect its Black communities to the greater social and political ecosystems.

Operation Black Box: Data Acquisition and Integration Strategy

Consistently, members from the Black communities noted that they were not aware of various City activities and programs. It became apparent that the City first needs a means to identify members of the Black communities to then build better relationships with them. Therefore, it is recommended that the City launch a community data acquisition campaign, Operation Black Box, to identify and connect with Black residents and Black businesses in Mississauga.

Named after the "black box" in airplanes, Operation Black Box would be a knowledge hub that gathered key community data. The knowledge hub would be where Black residents could sign up for and/or register their businesses to then receive targeted information about the City's resources and activities. The knowledge hub would also offer the users information regarding external resources offered by Black community organizations. Connecting Black residents with Black organizations and other external resources will be a feature that will both attract users as well as community partners. Black organizations and businesses would enjoy the promotion the knowledge hub could offer them, and would then have an incentive to promote Operation Black Box within the community.

In fact, partnering with community groups will be an important promotional tool for Operation Black Box to garner initial users. It would be the responsibility of The Black Caucus Alliance to rally the communities' support. The Black Caucus Alliance will therefore engage Black organizations, communities, and faith-based leaders to create an engagement strategy that would encourage the City's Black residents to use the knowledge hub. The City, on the other hand, will be responsible for the development of the technical structures of Operation Black Box. The Black Caucus Alliance should therefore work with the City's Smart City initiative, the City's IT department, and its Economic Development Office to develop the project.

The information flow of Operation Black Box will move in two directions. The users of the knowledge hub will have access to information on services, resources, businesses, events, jobs, and grants, as well as funding and procurement opportunities, while users will offer the knowledge hub key data on an ongoing basis by responding to the surveys that will be hosted on the platform. Therefore, the City and The Black Caucus Alliance will gain the contacts needed to have greater reach into the communities, and through thorough data analysis, they will continually gain insights into the views, needs, and wants of the Black communities. The Ownership of Operation Black Box will be shared equally between the City and The Black Caucus Alliance.

In year one, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance and the City promote Operation Black Box in accordance with the main missions of this report by utilizing social media as well as community and legacy media partnerships to present local public services announcements (PSAs) that:

- Create a targeted resource awareness campaign to promote the services, programs, and grants that the City and the Region of Peel offers.
- Launch a local Black Business identification campaign that attracts Black entrepreneurs to register their business in the Operation Black Box database.
- Launch a targeted political awareness campaign in partnership with local community leaders to further inform members of the Black communities and to invite them to participate in all levels of political life within the City. This campaign would in turn support the political inclusion strategies outlined in this report.

Thus, each campaign will highlight the importance of the communities' participation in Operation Black Box. In addition to the initial Operation Black Box data acquisition and engagement campaigns, the following activities and campaigns are recommended to further foster the inclusion of Black communities in Mississauga's political, social, cultural, and economic life.

Finally, as mentioned to earlier, the name Operation Black Box is a play on the nickname used for the flight data recorder founded in airplanes. However, the name of the initiative can be changed if The Black Caucus Alliance and the City see fit.

Political Inclusion Strategy

Political inclusion is measured by the extent members of a given community have access to that society's decision-making structures. Any audit of the political infrastructure of the City that includes Council, Committee of Council, and the City's regional governance will reveal the lack of Black inclusion. Identifying the root causes of the lack of Black participation in the City's political structures are complex and may or may not be intentional. Yet to address the matter, the City needs to become intentional. Intentionally, The Black Caucus Alliance and the City need to work together to introduce Black communities' members to local political structures and official ones as well.

Black Representation Committees of Council

Repeatedly, the participants of the BCE process called for more social and political inclusion at the City level. A review of the membership of the City's Committees of Council reveals that only a small fraction of the nearly 130 people appointed by Council to the 16 committees listed below are Black individuals. The low inclusion rate of Black representation on the City's Committees of Councils highlights that Black communities' members have little to no representation during the decision-making process across the top key issues that shape the activities of the City.

Being marginalized from the City's decision-making process keeps Black communities in a reactionary—or worst—a silent role in the City of Mississauga. To ensure that The Black Caucus Alliance links Black communities to the City's decision-making policies, the City Council should appoint no less than one member of The Black Caucus Alliance to the following key Committee of Councils:

Accessibility Advisory Committee
Mississauga Appeal Tribunal
Traffic Safety Council
Committee of Revision
Election Campaign Finance Committee
Environmental Action Committee
Governance Committee
Heritage Advisory Committee
Library Board
Committee of Adjustment
Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee
Property Standards Committee
Public Vehicle Advisory Committee
Road Safety Committee
Incidents in City Facilities Committee

Akin to the Committee of Councils, any City advisory bodies that includes local non-elected individuals, such as the City's Economic Committee of Council , also should include one Black Caucus Alliance representative. However, in the case of the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee ("DIAC") and/or on any new creation of a Council of Committee that addresses anti-racism, anti-Black racism, or cultural and/or ethnic inclusion in its term of reference, the City's Council should appoint no less than two members of The Black Caucus Alliance. Equity should be at the forefront of the composition of Mississauga's Council Committees in order to ensure cultural cohesion. Thus, the structure of such a Committee of Council ought to be constructed in a balanced way to ensure that no cultural group is given any numerical advantages. This means that all members from various ethnicities, abilities, cultures, and cultural intersectionalities would need to truly negotiate.

To reverse the low inclusion rate of Black representation on the City's Committees of Councils, it will be incumbent on The Black Caucus Alliance to recruit high-quality representatives from Mississauga's Black communities with the talent, skills, will, and time to be effective members of a given Committee of Council. The Black Caucus Alliance will also be responsible for conducting community meetings that include its Committee of Council representatives to present City updates back to the Black communities, and those communities will in turn offer their feedback to the Committee of Council representatives. Thus, The Black Caucus Alliance Committee of Council representatives will not merely be an individualistic role, but rather a collective role. Therefore, current Black individuals on any one of the Committee of Councils can choose to be remain as an individual or opt to join The Black Caucus Alliance to become a representative for Black communities by engaging with them on an ongoing basis. Therefore, to be clear, the City Council need not limit Black participation on the Committee of Council to those from The Black Caucus Alliance.

In addition to including Black representatives on the Committee of Council, the City of Mississauga should ensure that The Black Caucus Alliance build relationships with City Council members, representatives of the Region of Peel, as well as local MPPs, and MPs. The Black Caucus Alliance and the City should host meet and greets to ensure that political figures and Black communities' cultural and business leaders engage one another. Town halls could be used to appeal to a broader audience from within the Black communities. Such activities are naturally the practical extension of recommendation 2.1.3. Bridging the gap between Black communities and their local political officials and structures complements the appointment of members of The Black Caucus Alliance to the key Committee of Councils, as recommended in 1.8 of this report's summary of recommendations.

Finally, The Black Caucus Alliance and the City ought to develop programs that will support greater understanding of the political infrastructures, how to navigate them, and how to function within them by conducting civic classes and workshops on Robert's Rules—the procedural handbook that form the basics on conducting board meetings. In addition, workshops should be held on how to delegate at the city of Mississauga.

Social and Cultural Inclusion Strategies

Throughout the consultations, members of the Black communities expressed that they wanted more representation within the City of Mississauga's social and cultural infrastructures. Therefore, to help to increase the Black communities' social and cultural footprint in Mississauga, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance and the City work together to celebrate the initial concluding year of the **United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent** in 2024.

The event should aim to celebrate the many cultures within Black communities as well as promote cultural cohesion within the City by working across a wide range of cultures, ethnic groups, and organizations to foster greater understanding and partnerships among them. To do so, The Black Caucus Alliance should work with local cultural promoters, artists, and stakeholders within the entertainment and tourism sectors. This cultural inclusion initiative would also have a great impact on helping our local Black cultural enterprises and independent artists of the City, many of whom are currently financially suffering in the face of Covid-19. For that reason, it is recommended that activities targeting the celebration of the closing year of United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent becomes a legacy event that kicks off an annual celebration of local Black talent, businesses, and achievements within the City.

To promote the event, it is recommended that an online virtual series exploring the people and issues that impact Black communities and lives be launched no less than six months prior to the celebration. The Black Caucus Alliance and the City should again work with community leaders as well as mainstream and ethnic media (online and offline) to promote the series. Such activities could also be used to increase the public's awareness of Black Caucus Alliance and Operation Black Box.

In addition, to celebrate the closing year of the United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent, it is recommended that the City and The Black Caucus Alliance seek private and public financial support to conduct cultural and trade missions to and with African and Caribbean nations. Currently, there is an opportunity to collaborate with the federal government of Canada as it states that it is committed to "[Developing] a strategy for economic cooperation across Africa, including support for the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, facilitation of increased infrastructure investment, and expanding partnerships in research and innovation."

Aiming to carry out the activities and initiatives in 2024 not only allows for sufficient preparation time, but also the easing of the negative impact Covid-19 has had on in-person events. It is hoped by 2024, many of the activities and events could be done in person. If this is not possible due to a resurgence of the virus, then the events list above ought to be done virtually.

Outside of the activities surrounding the celebrations and of United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent, the City together with The Black Caucus Alliance ought to work with local City Boards and boards of nonprofits on an ongoing basis to encourage them to include Black representatives. This initiative should coincide with the awareness-and-inclusion campaign that would be designed to inform for Black communities of and invite them to participate in relevant social, nonprofits, and City Boards.

Economic Support For Black Communities

Mississauga has a vibrant economy. According to its Economic Strategic Plan 2020–2025, the City generates $55 billion per annum of economic output. That translates into $77,000 per person, versus the province's average of $56,000 of economic output per person. Clearly, Mississauga has been an economic success story. Yet the passing of resolution 207 points to the acknowledgement that not every community has had equal access to the City's economic success. Since the City's overall economic strategies appear to be working, a reasonable tactic would be to find ways to connect the city's economic strategy in a targeted and intentional way to allow it to better support the well-being of Mississauga's Black communities. Therefore, the recommendations below are meant to promote the greater economic inclusion of Black communities in the Mississauga success story.

To do so, the recommendations outlined below have two main parts. The first part addresses ways to enrich the lives of Black communities as a whole. The second part of the recommendations is aimed at assisting the survival and growth of Black local businesses who have faced historical challenges due to systemic discrimination. For many local Black entrepreneurs, systemic discrimination has now been coupled with the current economic obstacles posed by COVID-19. To begin to address this reality, the recommendations will attempt to connect local Black businesses to Mississauga's lucrative innovation strategic plan and ecosystems, as well as the City's economic programs for its local businesses. The following is therefore recommended:

Black Health and Well-Being Summit

The Black Caucus Alliance and the City ought to work with the Region of Peel, Peel Health, and health-related organizations such as Black Health Alliance, Moyo Health & Community Services, Trillium Health Partners, and Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network Research (TAHSNr) that are attempting to address anti-Black racism to host a Black Health and Well-Being Summit to then establish a Health and Well-Being Strategy for Black communities in the City. The Health and Well-Being Strategy must be holistic to include ways in which Black communities could access high-quality housing, health care, and education. Special attention ought to be paid to the intersectionality of those who are both Black and live with one or more disabilities, as well as those who are seniors. This initiative should also aim to identify and address underlying barriers that Black communities and families face when building wealth and/or aiming to access personal security.

The Black Caucus Alliance and the City should also engage with (and incorporate) current community initiatives such as Mississauga's Cities Changing Diabetes (CCD) Initiative to support the summit. The City ought to work with the Region to develop a Black Health and Well-Being Summit to address the prevalence of diabetes, as well as chronic and cardiovascular diseases among Black communities. It is recommended that this initiative is launched in the second year of The Black Caucus Alliance engagement activities to ensure that it benefits from at least one year of community data from Operation Black Box. As a result, the completed Health and Well-Being strategy for Black communities should be delivered during the third year of The Black Caucus Alliance' initiatives.

In addition to the Black Health and Wellbeing Summit, it is recommended that:

- The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and the Region of Peel to explore the feasibility of establishing a senior's home for the Black communities
- The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and the Region of Peel to offer Caribbean and Afro-centric representation in child welfare and long-term care facilities, especially relating to culturally specific food
- The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City, Peel Health, and community health groups to explore developing medical advocacy support for isolated and single adults within the Black communities

Finally, many participants of the BCE consultations felt that Black communities would benefit from greater financial insights. Therefore, to further support the Black communities' well-being, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance work with organizations such as the Canadian Association of Urban Financial Professionals (CAUFP) to offer financial literacy programs for the Black residents of Mississauga.

Supporting and Recruiting Black Talent

Currently, the City's HR department is working with the consultant firm KPMG to establish a strategy to diversify its hiring practices in hopes that its hiring outcomes will become more diverse. In light of the upcoming KPMG report: "Human Resources Recruitment and Leadership Succession Planning Process Review and Recommendations with an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Lens.", The Black Caucus Alliance ought to support and work with the City's Human Resources department to promote the City's job opportunities within Black communities and develop targeted recruitment strategies for Black communities. These activities will complement the City's current commitment to reverse the underrepresentation of Black employees at the City. In addition, it is recommended that the City apply an equity lens at every stage of employment—including, recruitment, hiring, promotions, demotions, as well as exits and terminations.

Furthermore, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance work with the City to establish next generation mentorship programs for Black Youths by establishing internship programs at the City. Such mentorship programs ought to span across all departments at the City. Recently, the City's HR Department has been working on a pilot to do just that with the Onyx Initiative. This Initiative aims to "expand the Black Talent pipeline by fostering cohesive, mutually beneficial partnerships to close the systemic gap in the recruiting and selection of Black university and college students and recent graduates for roles in corporate Canada." The collaboration has currently secured four intern positions for Black youths. Such activities out to expand to include all City departments. Furthermore, such activities should serve as a temple for the near-future inclusion of Indigenous youths.

To further remove systemic barriers that Black youths face in obtaining higher education and employment, it is recommended that:

- The Black Caucus Alliance and the City works with community leaders, universities, corporations, nonprofits, and high schools to help Black Students apply for and obtain loan-free funding to attend post-secondary education.
- The Black Caucus Alliance and the City work with the Regional of Peel, Children's Aid, Peel District School Board and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board to identify at-risk students who are Black to offer those students internships and job opportunities in partnership with the private and public sectors.

Black Business Inclusion Strategies

To support local Black businesses, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance work with the City and its EDO to design programs and initiatives that specifically support Black entrepreneurs, as well as connecting them to the greater financial and innovation ecosystems.

EDO Accelerator Inclusion

It is recommended that within the EDO's upcoming accelerator program that targeted support for Black communities and entrepreneurs be established. These services will be offered on a vertical axis to follow the classic scaling path of successful companies. This vertical design structure reinforces the aim of the City's upcoming accelerator.

The upcoming EDO-led IDEA Mississauga: The Mississauga Innovation District accelerator will reside in Mississauga's Square One. The accelerator will offer programs for businesses that fall within one of two categories. Either a business will be considered to be in its start-up phase or in its commercialized scale-up phase, earning revenues from 100 thousand to 2 million dollars. Traditionally, EDO has been committed to helping local businesses as well as attracting foreign businesses to establish themselves and invest in the City. Throughout the Black Economic Empowerment consultations, however, there were calls for more targeted support systems that include financial literacy programs as well as initiatives that will give Black entrepreneurs greater access to national and international markets—especially those within the greater global Black diaspora.

To provide the wide a range of unique programs and initiatives needed to better serve Black businesses, The Black Caucus Alliance will need create those programs and the initiatives to bridge the gaps between the communities' needs and activities the City currently can and traditionally offer. Therefore, the financial literacy programs along with the national and international expansion support systems and initiatives will be led by The Black Caucus Alliance in partnership with the community, corporate, and public support. The City too shall play a supportive role in those The Black Caucus Alliance led programs by offering networking support, advocating, and promoting them to the appropriate provincial and federal ministers and ministries. In addition, the City shall also play a supportive role in The Black Caucus Alliance led economic development initiatives by participating in virtual trade, cultural, and FDI missions that The Black Caucus Alliance will host to support the International Integration & Expansion program and its related initiatives. The chart "Scale Ready: A Targeted Support System for Local Black Businesses" seen on page 48 offers an initial outline of the various programs being called for. Such initial outlines will need to be further developed and defined through the use codesign sessions with the City as well as with private, corporate, and public stakeholders. For example, exploratory virtual trade missions could be conducted in partnership with a community partner such as the Mississauga Board of Trade. Such missions would in turn offer the insights necessary to create the business case for the City to explore and conduct FDI within African and Caribbean nations.

In addition, with the assistance of further engagement work with local Black businesses as outlined under Operation Black Box Initiative, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance and EDO identify Black enterprises to be invited to participate in the EDO's accelerator program, that will include The Black Caucus Alliance complementary and targeted initiatives mentioned earlier.

Under such initiatives, it is also recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance and the City's EDO support and foster the growth of Black businesses by:

- Working with industry leaders such as Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), Export Development Canada (EDC), and Canadian Aboriginal Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC) to co-design and develop strategies to include more local Black Businesses in the competitive diverse supply chain
- Providing mentorship programs for Black entrepreneurs
- Providing targeted grants for Black entrepreneurs
- Hosting events with successful and inspiring Black entrepreneurs
- Working with the Mississauga Board of Trade, high commissioners, the private sector, provincial and federal governments, as well as the City's EDO to establish the International Integration & Expansion Initiative as a unique program for Black entrepreneurs within the EDO accelerator program.

The International Integration & Expansion Initiative will link local Black businesses to the greater Black diaspora, allowing Black entrepreneurs the ability to leverage their ancestral homelands and histories to attract international partnerships. Such activities are shown within the *Scale Ready: A Proposed Support System For Local Black Businesses chart* as a part of the International Integration & Expansion section. This promotion of linking the talents, innovations, and businesses of the Black diaspora within the accelerator could and should partner with the diaspora activities previously mentioned under the recommended social and cultural inclusion strategies section. Therefore, such a program ought to be launched as a feature of the City celebration of the United Nations' International Decade for Peoples of African Descent in 2024.

To further promote the inclusion of Black businesses in the City economic ecosystem, it is also recommended that:

- The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and its Economic Development Office to ensure that its strategic Economic Recovery Framework as part of the City's wider Recovery Plan includes targeted support for Black businesses.

- The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City and its Economic Development Office to develop targeted messaging to ensure that Black female entrepreneurs are made aware of and are explicitly invited to access and participate in all the City's business programs—especially those that are designed to help women in general overcome systemic barriers. Again, the data generated from Operation Black Box will be useful in this process by helping to attract and identify Mississauga's Black women who are entrepreneurs.

- The Black Caucus Alliance should work with the City's Strategic Communications and Initiatives Department to host meet and greets with directors and managers of organizations across commercial sectors to explore strategic partnership opportunities to promote or support Black talent, innovators, and businesses.

- The EDO ought to work with The Black Caucus Alliance to connect Black businesses to the greater financial and innovation ecosystems. The Black Caucus Alliance and Equity Office should work to host an Equity Diversity and Inclusion Summit ("EDIS"). EDIS will host D&I staff from various corporations to participate in the summit. This will help The Black Caucus Alliance and the City expand their reach into corporate Canada to then develop partnerships with them and connect those corporations to Mississauga's Black entrepreneurs.

- The Black Caucus Alliance and the City should invite organizations such as BDC, EDC, and CAMSC to co-design inclusion strategies to ensure more local Black Businesses are included in the competitive local and global diverse supply chain.

- The Black Caucus Alliance should explore the idea and feasibility of establishing a local Black Chamber of Commerce through collaboration and partnership with Mississauga Board of Trade.

Scale Ready: A Targeted Support System for Local Black Businesses

International Integration & Expansion

This accelerator program will be led by the Black Caucus Alliance in collaboration with community leaders, various levels of government assists, high commissioners, international officials, corporate partners, and businesses to create robust pathways for local Black businesses to access the greater Black diaspora's markets and communities locally and internationally to establish strategic partnerships within it.

National Expansion

The accelerator programs will be designed to guide entrepreneurs as they explore expansion models to access more of the local and national markets. The design of any national expansion support programs will be led by The Black Caucus Alliance along with community and corporate partnerships as the City play a support role.

Mature

At maturity, enterprises are characterized as having the capacity to attract revenues, investors, and capital at competitive rates from quality financial institutions to expand operations. Thus, at this stage, the main programs will be led by the City while The Black Caucus Alliance offers targeted expansion readiness initiatives.

Intermediate

At this stage, the accelerator will begin to wean the enterprises off the collective administrative support services program. Instead, City-led support programs will be geared towards advancing the businesses to full maturity, where profits are achieved and earnings meet or exceed 2 million.

Early Commercialization

At this stage enterprises are earning revenue but not profits. The accelerator should provide collective administrative support services in collaboration with community partnerships. This stage will also include programs designed to advance businesses to the intermediate stage. Again, programs will be led by the City, Black Caucus Alliance support.

Start up

This stage of the accelerator program will be devoted to developing blossoming entrepreneurs and their business concepts so that they can eventually become market ready and commercialized. Programs will be led by the City with Black Caucus Alliance support.

Concept

The accelerator's conception level activities will be geared for those desiring to become entrepreneurs. These early-stage programs will stress-test business ideas to identify those concepts that are viable. Candidates with viable ideas will then advance into the Start-Up program of the accelerator. Programs will be led by the City, with Black Caucus Alliance support to ensure activities are effective and targeted.

Community Level

Financial literacy and basic skill training programs will be led by the Black Caucus Alliance with corporate and community partners.

Innovation Inclusion Strategies

One of the contributing factors to Mississauga's economic success is its commitment to innovation. To ensure greater participation of Black communities in the achievement of City's innovation goals, it is recommended that the City assist The Black Caucus Alliance as it seeks to work with tech-based companies, innovation organizations, and institutes, as well as colleges and universities to promote and support the innovation sector within the City's Black businesses. To do so, the City and The Black Caucus Alliance should work together to attract top-quality talents from the Black diaspora with high-demand skills within the technology and innovation sectors. The Black Caucus Alliance therefore ought to first partner with an incubator with a Startup Visa designation and/or seek to obtain a Startup Visa designation for itself. Again, recruited talent will have skill sets that help to deliver advanced manufacturing, smart logistics, life sciences, and high-value business services. Of course, the promotion of local Black talent and business will be prioritized. The City's EDO and The Black Caucus Alliance will also need to work together to connect Black local Black Business and talent to the wider Innovation ecosystems. Encouraging talented and financially secure individuals in the City of Mississauga not only supports the City's goal to achieve its innovation aims, but such newcomers will help expand the City's tax base as well.

To assist in the identification and attraction of Black innovation, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance and the City host a City-wide *hackathon* that invite local Black innovators as well as those from the greater Black diaspora to find tech-based solutions for commercial and social challenges, especially those that Black businesses and communities face. This activity should be incorporated into the overall 2024 celebratory activities mentioned in the Social and Cultural Inclusion Strategies section of this report.

In addition, to include local Black-owned businesses that are not tech-based into the City innovation narrative, it's recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance work with the City to establish a technology and innovation assessment program to help those companies identify the technologies and tech integration processes that will enhance their companies' operations. Such an initiative could be an excellent feature of the City's Economic Recovery Framework as part of the City's wider Recovery Plan to assist businesses facing the negative economic impacts of COVID-19.

The Establishment of a Black Community Innovation Hub (BCIH)

The work of the new Black Caucus Alliance needs a home to truly flourish. The BCIH would therefore aim to be a place to centralize many of the activities presented in this report. The BCIH will also celebrate the diversity of culture and excellence within Black communities, as well as attract both local and international Black innovators to nurture and encourage the growth of Black innovation within the City of Mississauga.

It is thus recommended that the City and The Black Caucus Alliance work together to establish a Black Community Innovation Hub (BCIH) to foster collaboration among Black communities and the wider communities at large. Thus, the BCIH would play an integral role in developing the ongoing political, social, and economic inclusion initiatives outlined above. The BCIH would allow The Black Caucus Alliance to pursue unique activities that would support Black businesses. One such activity requested by small Black food producers during the consultations included working with the City and its Economic Development Office to establish partnerships with institutions like Seneca or Sheridan, and retailers to develop a shared production facility. Such a facility would need to be Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) compliant, and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) certified to enable small to medium-size food producers within Black businesses to scale up their production capacity within the facility to then hopefully advance their businesses into channel marketing within our local grocery stores and thus allowing local food producers to expand.

To establish the Black Community Innovation Hub (BCIH):

- The City should lease one of its properties, like that of Bussell House, with a standing structure and enough land to develop the hub, for the amount of one dollar annually for a hundred years. BCIH should be maintained by the City as it would any other City property.
- The City and The Black Caucus Alliance should work with all levels of government as well as the private sector to raise the funds needed to address any restoration and construction needs to establish the hub. Such a funding method would mirror the collective impact model used to develop the Tamil Community Centre that has garnered over $35.8 million from all three levels of government and private supporters.
- Once the BCIH is launched and the City's targeted accelerator initiatives for Black entrepreneurs outlined above mature and become fully tested and functioning programs, it is highly recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance integrate those initiatives into the BCIH. While the initiatives will move over to the BCIH, the partnership between The Black Caucus Alliance and EDO ought to continue on an ongoing basis.

While the Black Community and Innovation Hub is being developed, the City should offer an office space free of charge.

Policing and Community Engagement

Within the Region of Peel, three levels of government impact policing: provincial, regional, and municipal. Most direct authority rests at the provincial government level. In addition, there are several advocacy and community groups currently working with the Peel Regional Police (PRP) to address the ongoing shortcomings that governs policing and Black communities in Peel. Representatives from the PRP acknowledge this fact. While the current advocacy work is encouraged to ensure that ongoing systemic discrimination in policing is put to an end, this report seeks to assist that process by creating platforms upon which the City could support Black communities and PRP engaging each other in a progressive and collaborative way. Therefore, all the recommendations regarding policing focus on transforming the current adversarial relationship between PRP and the Black communities into one of allyship and partnership. To lay the foundation to materialize this ambition, five foundational activities have been identified. Those five activities and initiatives fall under two main categories.

Policing Police Advocacy

Since much of the authority of the PRP is held at the provincial level, the first category is advocacy—where The Black Caucus Alliance and the City work together to lobby the Province of Ontario to carry out several key activities. Therefore, it is recommended:

- That the Mayor and Council work with The Black Caucus Alliance to continue to encourage the Province of Ontario to legally advance more of Justice Tulloch's recommendations on policing.
- That the Mayor and Council work with The Black Caucus Alliance to continue to encourage the Province of Ontario to appoint a Black representative on the Peel Regional Police Service Board. To support such a representative, The Black Caucus and the City out to work together to connect that representative to Mississauga's Black communities by carry out ongoing community consultation to inform those communities of relevant updates and to gather their feedback. It thus ought to be mandatory that the future Black representative on the Peel Regional Police Service Board engage Black communities within the City on monthly basis through his/her/their tenure.
- That the Mayor and Council work with The Black Caucus Alliance, Peel Regional Police, and other community leaders across Mississauga's ethnic landscapes to encourage the Province of Ontario to address legal and financial barriers to enable community agencies to respond to mental health crisis calls where a police presence is not required, in keeping with the goals and objectives of its **Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) framework.**

Peel Regional Police and Black Communities Engagement Strategies

The second category is community engagement—where Peel Regional Police and Black communities are encouraged to work together to affect change by fostering greater collaboration and building greater understanding. Therefore, the first engagement recommendation hopes to right past mistakes. Wounded from the SRO experience, where Black children were over-policed within our schools, Black community leaders within the consultation process made it clear that the PRP ought not work with Black children without their parents'/guardians' presence. However, positive engagement between Peel Regional Police and Mississauga's Black communities is necessary to encourage healing and greater understanding. Therefore, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance work with Peel Regional Police's EDI Service Board and community leaders to jointly facilitate engagements with Black families.

In contrast, the second engagement recommendation takes a more futurist lens. While local and international physical altercations between Black individuals and the police currently captures headlines and sparks outrage, increasing the unseen use of data and new technologies are having profound impacts on our society—especially on those within our society that are from Black and marginalized communities. For example, Joy Buolamwini, an Edmonton woman born of Ghanaian descent and the co-founder of Algorithmic Justice League, successfully convinced Microsoft, IBM, and Amazon to pause their facial recognition tools intended for US police departments due to inherent programming biases that negatively impacted those who were not white.

In light of such realities, the question is: "*How are new technologies being used here in the Regional of Peel?" How* can all community stakeholders work together to ensure that new technologies in policing keep us all safe with accurate data while our privacy is also protected? To explore the impact AI and new technologies are having on policing locally, it is recommended that The Black Caucus Alliance collaborate with Peel Regional Police to lead the residents of Mississauga in an inclusive discussion regarding the exploration of AI and new innovations and technologies within policing. This process will result in the establishment of a framework on which an *"AI and Policing"* policy can be built.

Together, The Black Caucus Alliance along with Peel Regional Police should lead Canada into its first community-driven *Statement of Principle* regarding AI-led predictive policing. Such an initiative aims to transfer the current communities' distrust into partnership by first initiating a City and/or regional discussion that will include all (transcending ethnicity, class, and gender) to establish a progressive and timely document on how we can protect our civilian privacy and trust while empowering our police officers as they work in the era of AI and other disruptive innovations and technologies.

The *Statement of Principle* will then form the foundation of AI-led predictive policing policy that PRP can then use to guide its adoption of new technologies. Such an initiative could not only allow for a long-standing social impact in the Region of Peel, but it could also finally see to the existence of a culturally neutral initiative led by Black communities —putting them in progressive role instead of a reactionary one. Thus, the initiative will also allow Black leadership to embark on a cultural cohesion project while working with the PRP outside of a reactive adversarial context to offer a platform of mutual respect and collaboration for Black communities and PRP.

Hosting such a forward-oriented initiatives would place the City of Mississauga at the forefront of the North American discussion regarding AI and policing. To date, no City in North America has yet to establish such a guiding principle. This is mainly due to the fact that many cities including Montreal tried to tackle the impact of AI and policing legally, as opposed to collaboratively. In contrast, the City of Mississauga's *Statement of Principle* would not be adversarial in nature, but a co-design document that currently has the buy-in from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and Peel Regional Police.

City's Corporate Security

By working on strategies to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion among members of its Corporate Security Office, the City has begun to address the Black communities' concerns regarding not feeling welcomed on City properties. To resolve the matter, three recommendations are offered:

First, it is recommended that the City and The Black Caucus Alliance review the City's corporate security policies and treatment of Black residents on City properties. To do so, the City and The Black Caucus Alliance ought to review the corporate security's incident reports starting from the previous five years and then on an ongoing basis to uncover whether or not Black individuals have been (or are) overrepresented in those reports.

Second, it is recommended that if Black individuals are found to be overrepresented in those reports, or the City's corporate security has not documented the race or ethnicity of those it comes into contact with, then the City Corporate Security, The Black Caucus Alliance, and the Equity Office ought to work together to develop strategies and policies to address the concerns some Black residents have regarding entering City property.

Finally, it is recommended that the City's Strategic Communications and Initiatives Department work with a stakeholders including The Black Caucus Alliance to develop key performance indicators to measure the progress of the City's Corporate Security in relation to the treatment of Black individuals on City properties.

All the recommendations regarding the City's corporate security aim to ensure that at the very least, the City of Mississauga's properties are and feel safe for everyone that enters them.

11. OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the recommendations fall within one of four major overarching themes: Inclusion, Governance, Economic Empowerment & Wellness, and the development of the BCIH. Since the First steps in building any relationship begins with an introduction, the inclusion strategies are the most pronounced ones in this report and overlap with all the other clusters of recommendations. As a result, many of the activities in this report ask the City simply to connect with Black communities to then connect those communities to the greater political, social, financial, and innovation ecosystems.

However, to effectively carry out such inclusion strategies, a good governance framework will have to be established for the new Black Caucus Alliance, along with a memorandum of understanding that will govern its relationship and activities it will have with the City. In addition, in alignment with good governance, the development of KPIs is vital to measure the development of City's engagements with Black communities in both qualitative and quantitative terms to ensure accountability and transparency. The process of establishing an accountability framework aimed at tackling anti-Black racism and systemic barriers will inevitably lead to a very important yet complex question: Can such work be done without the use of race-base-data? The short answer is no.

In this report, the gathering of the communities' data via Operation Black Box, the tracking of incidents report via the City's Corporate Security, the measuring of the City's ability to recruit, retain, and promote Black talent in addition to the calls for equity KPIs in this report all speak to the need for race-based data. Yet, calling for the use of race-based data is not done lightly. Race-based data is a double-edged sword. While it can be a useful tool, it can also be rigged. In the wrong hands race-based data can be sanitized or weaponized to distort reality and reinforce traditional biases. How data is gathered, stored, and framed will need the greatest of transparency, community oversight, and care to ensure that the data used is clean, honest, and thus effective.

Clean and effective data is also needed to drive the Economic Empowerment & Wellness recommendations seen most predominantly in Section 3: Support For Black Community and Section 4: Black Business Inclusion Strategies. The call for a Black Health and Well-Being summit is based on the knowledge that more community engagement is needed to capture the insights needed to elevate the Black communities' overall well-being within the City of Mississauga.

Meanwhile, the recommendations seen in Section 4: Black Business Inclusion Strategies and Section 5: Innovation Inclusion Strategies support existing Black businesses while nurturing the development of a fresh pipeline of innovative local and international talent within the Black communities for the City. As a result, in partnership with the Black Caucus Alliance, the City of Mississauga will have the ability and the all perquisites needed to attract the brightest and the best within the Black diaspora who will in turn contribute to the building of a more prosperous Mississauga. Thus, all of Mississauga's local entrepreneurs will benefit, especially those from within its Black communities who will gain access to new opportunities and markets. These new opportunities and markets will not only strengthen the City as a whole, they will strengthen the Black ecosystems--thus, empowering Black communities to empower themselves through enterprise and innovation. And it will be such enterprise and innovation born out of collaboration that will be the heartbeat of the Black Community Innovation Hub.

Now that there is a body of recommendations and related activities, the next natural question is when should these the delivery of recommendations occur. The precise timeline of the delivery of the activities outlined in this report will need to be negotiated between the City and the Black Caucus Alliance as the two develop a work plan during the memorandum of understanding development phase. That being said, below outlines a temporal guideline:

Quick Wins: April 2022 – March 2023

- Recommendations being passed by Council
- The transformation of the Black Caucus into The Black Caucus Alliance
- The launch of Operation Black Box's community engagement strategies
- The launch of City-led targeted meet and greets for Black community leaders and businesses
- The launch of targeted inclusion strategies for Black women
- The Black Caucus Alliance identifying a Black incubator/accelerator program
- The launch of City-led civic training
- Hosting a celebratory event for the early wins

Mid-Range Wins: April 2023 – Sept 2024

- Implementation of Operation Black Box (Fully developed)
- The launch of a target acceleration program designed for Black businesses
- Hosting the Equity Diversity Inclusion Summit
- Hosting the 2024 celebratory activities, including virtual trade missions

Long Range Wins: 2025+

- The full launch of the Black Community Innovation Hub
- City conducts Foreign Direct Investment missions to African and Caribbean nations

The next step in the process of realizing the recommendations is to create a work plan that will put the recommendations into action. To do so, as mentioned earlier, additional, co-design, and working sessions will be required between The Black Caucus Alliance and City. Yet, bureaucratically speaking, from the City's point of view, not all of the recommendations may have been created equally—nor were they meant to be. The recommendations were meant to serve equity.

Therefore, as seen in this report, some recommendations sit outside the legal jurisdiction of the City. If that is the case, then the report has explored ways that the City could best advocate for a given recommendation to the correct governing body, which includes the Region of Peel, the Province of Ontario, and/or the Federal Government of Canada. For example, matters pertaining to the Peel Regional Police or the Peel District School Board are the domain of the province's Ontario government—not the municipalities that make up the Region of Peel: Mississauga, Brampton, and Caledon. In such a case, the City can only lobby the governing body to advocate for a particular recommendation, but cannot directly enforce it.

If, however, a recommendation does fall within the jurisdiction of the City, three main questions will need to be asked:

- **What department at the City would oversee or be directly impacted by a given recommendation? And what implementation insights could it offer?**
- **Did those City stakeholders have the will or capacity to make the necessary changes?** Before becoming a nonprofit, the Black Caucus' will need engage with the City staff to assess if there are barriers to achieving the City's full buy-in to support implementing a particular recommendation. If there are, additional out-of-the-box approaches will need to be designed and deployed to overcome those barriers.
- **How should a set of recommendations be implemented to ensure that Black communities were positioned in progressive and collaborative roles?**

Such recommendations that fit within the City's scope should naturally be led by the City with Black Caucus Alliance oversight. While playing an oversight role, The Black Caucus Alliance need not be a fully independent organization. Instead, to ensure those activities that fit within the City's scope can be launched as soon as possible, the Black Caucus Alliance could be a working and/or advisory group. The hosting of meet and greets for example, need no delay.

To carry out the initiatives that do not fall within another governing jurisdiction yet do not quite currently fit within the "normal" scope of the City's activities, The Black Caucus Alliance and the City will need to develop unique out-of-the-box community friendly approaches and solutions to implement them. Such recommendations should be led by the Black Caucus Alliance, who in turn will hire the appropriate community talents to carry out those required activities. Acquiring such talents will require City funding.

For example, to launch the development of the BCIH, The Black Caucus Alliance, while still in its early advisory phase, should identify the individuals that will make up the BCIH committee that would work with the City to co-design a path forward for the initiative. The early BCIH committee and City planning phase should take place if the Black Caucus transforms into The Black Caucus Alliance (a legal non-profit) or has appointed a trustee that both it and the City trust to oversee any financial activities. Subsequently, the City then ought to fund the appointment of BCIH committee's fundraiser, who then would identify private, corporate, and public funding, such as the Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure Stream (CCRIS) of the Investing in Canada plan to ensure that conversion of a City property into the communities' Black Community Innovation Hub.

As seen in the BCIH example, to quickly launch the initiatives in this report, an early-stage advisory committee could be formed under the leadership of the Black Caucus chair that can then be absorbed into the non-profit, Black Caucus Alliance, once it is fully established. By using such an evolutionary model to establish itself, The Black Caucus Alliance can move from initially being an advisory body into working committee committed to offering oversight over City activities and then in a non-profit that continues the work of former stages to also be a community aggregator facilitating the construction of local led Black ecosystems with the City's support. Such organizational adaptability will be a necessary feature of The Black Caucus Alliance to ensure that initiatives are created in alignment with the community needs in a manner that transcends the City's traditional procedural realities if need be.

Therefore, The Black Caucus Alliance will serve as a vehicle that allows the City to better connect with its Black communities while exploring new out-of-the-box means to do so. By using such an approach, the recommendations that do not neatly fit inside the City's traditional activities, bi-laws, or procedures, need not be discarded. Instead the Black Caucus Alliance must be utilized and supported to do precisely "such sort of work" to produce fresh solutions. For that is the "sort of work" the Black communities have clearly called for and endorsed.

12. Conclusion

In conclusion, these first set of consultations with Black communities did what we set out to do. Throughout the consultations, the BCE team gained greater understanding of the lived experiences and challenges of our Black communities in Mississauga. By employing a co-design sensibility, the BCE team, subject matter experts, City staff, as well as community and stakeholder representatives, used the heightened insights to identify opportunities to improve the lived experiences and the well-being of members of the Black communities that reside in Mississauga. The process also uncovered the way that the City could assist its Black residents to better access its resources. In addition, community and subject matter experts' recommendations were utilized to create new pathways to resolve systemic challenges that have undermined Black communities' access to economic and political inclusion, housing, health care, essential services, and justice within policing.

Over and over again, the reality of Black communities being stuck in a reactionary role became apparent throughout the BCE process. From the recommendation to include a unified Black presence on the City's Committee of Councils to the proposal to have the Peel Regional Police collaborate with the Black communities, the recommendations all aim to reposition the Black communities into progressive roles.

Being in proactive, progressive roles would allow Black communities to leap forward to be among those receiving and creating the knowledge that informs the City's—and its allies—activities and policies. Proactive roles, then, would demand Black communities' participation to ensure success. This new position of progressive leadership will redesign the current balance of power to challenge those who—from within and outside the communities—who have come to bank on the absence of Black communities' representation.

Of course, the development of progressive leadership within the City is only one of numerous tools required to address the social, political, and economic wrongs that anti-Black racism has created. By committing to placing Black communities in proactive roles, the recommendations in this report echo the calls being made by Canadian organizations advocating for improving the lives of those from Black communities, such as Network for the Advancement of Black Communities and Black Opportunity Fund: ***Nothing About Without Us!***

Yet, the recommendations outlined in First Steps—while extensive—are insufficient to address all the negative impacts that racism has had—and continues to have—on Black communities. There is so much more that needs to be done. Instead, the recommendations attempt to lay the foundation for further community empowerment. In the end, this report is best described by the words of Lao Tzu: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

THE BLACK CAUCUS

Linden King is The Chair of the Black Caucus and has a long and successful track record advocating for Black communities. Mr. King is the president for Safe City Mississauga, Chair of the United Way Greater Toronto Black Community Advisory Council, director for The Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Dufferin, former Co-chair for the Peel Region Police Black Community Advisory, Community and Stakeholder liaison for the Toronto Caribbean Carnival, and on the Board of Directors for the Mississauga Arts Council. In addition, Mr. King is also an advisor with the Region of Peel Community Safety and Well-being System Leadership Table, as well as the Systemic Discrimination Action Table. Mr. King also volunteered with the Ontario Trillium Foundation Halton-Peel Grant Review Team, was a director with Mississauga Youth Games, served on the Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee, and was an advisor to the Peel Multicultural Council.

Melanie Botembe is a Business Advisor with 17 years of industry and consulting experience building best-in-class, inclusive organizations. Melanie is a proven leader in running large-scale operational excellence transformations focused on people, process, and technology. Melanie is well-known for leadership coaching, problem-solving, and leading high-performing teams in complex and ever-changing environments. Melanie is also the co-founder of Botembe Tulloch Group, a boutique professional services advisory firm whose mission is to help clients build best-in-class, inclusive organizations. Outside of the office, Melanie uses her business acumen to serve and advocate for marginalized communities. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends and teaching fitness classes in the community; she is a part-time fitness instructor for the City of Mississauga. Melanie holds a Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion from Cornell University, an MBA in Finance from Howard University, and a BCom in Finance from McGill University. She is also a Certified Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt and a Change Management professional.

Lori Brotherton manages a corporate governance research centre at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. She leads and oversees the execution of all research projects and centre programming. Lori has built a wealth of experience in corporate governance over the past several years. Her career, drawing on specialized expertise and training, focuses on equipping board directors and organizations with tools to embody good governance and effectiveness.

While at the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD), she led a board education portfolio, researching and developing a curriculum on director and corporate governance issues. Subject areas included executive compensation, audit committees, human capital management, strategy, and enterprise risk. Her professional portfolio also includes leading stakeholder engagement initiatives to improve boardroom diversity and inclusion at OnBoard Canada (at Ryerson University), and launching advanced not-for-profit director education at the Canadian Board Diversity Council.

BLACK CAUCUS

Audrey Campbell is a passionate community advocate. She is the Co-chair of the Toronto Police Service's Police and Community Engagement Review (PACER) Advisory Committee, which is a civilian and police committee that works on community and police models that addresses the underlying issues of public trust, accountability, and transparency. She has recently been appointed to the RCMP Management Advisory Board currently assigned to the taskforce reviewing education and training for new recruits.

Len Carby is a Financial Planner with RBC Wealth Management, where he helps Mass Affluent clients and Business Owners with Investment, Retirement, Tax and Estate Planning advice. With a sterling record of over twenty years of community service in Canada and abroad, Len is driven to serve his community by bringing practical and innovative social leadership. He believes in offering new ideas to make his community more caring, inclusive, and welcoming.

He holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA), the Personal Financial Planner (PFP) designation, a Fellowship of the Life Management Institute (FLMI), and several professional qualifications for the Canadian Financial Services industry.
Len is passionate about volunteering with several community initiatives including:

- Strategic Resource Development Committee—United Way Greater Toronto
- Black Community Advisory Council (Chair 2012-2018)—United Way Greater Toronto
- Co-Founder/Board Member (2016-2019)—Federation of Black Canadian
- We Rise Together Steering Committee —Peel Public School Board
- Black Community Advisory Committee—Peel Regional Police
- Mississauga Mayor's Black Advisory Committee
- Mentors with LEAD Organization and Stand-Up Conference

In addition, Mr. Carby has earned the 2018 Community Leadership Award from the United Way Greater Toronto as well as the 2018 and 2019 RBC Royal Bank - Community Service Awards.

Dion Carter works in the diversity, inclusion, and accessibility space, and has focused on how to operationalize inclusion through various initiatives at the University of Windsor, CAMH, and Hamilton Science. Mr. Carter has also worked on HIV initiatives within racialized communities. He belongs to the Ontario Black Teachers' Association.

BLACK CAUCUS

Tobi Ogude, aka "Amad Freeman" works on investment and artistic initiatives that focus on the promotion of Black and Queer artists and entrepreneurs. By working closely with both land developers and music industry moguls, Mr. Ogude is determined on creating initiatives for affordable housing, as well as new and creative music platforms for racialized communities.

Martin Reid has extensive experience working with at-risk youths. He also explores the cross-sectionality of fitness and anti-racism and is a strong proponent of body-positivity and creating spaces of inclusivity and accessibility. Martin Reid is a Ward 9 Resident in the City of Mississauga and he celebrates the rich heritage of the descendants of the Mississaugas of the Credit, upon whose land we tread. He and his wife Alexandra are in a blended family with four teenagers. With his Master's Degree in Counselling from Tyndale University, he started working in the Social Services sector, connecting with the Community as a Housing Coordinator at The Dam - Develop, Assist, and Mentor, and still he serves as a board member for this non-profit organization. Due to his direct community impact, Martin Reid was selected to be one of 12 members of Mayor Crombie's Black Caucus to advise on what the City could do to diminish systemic barriers to promote greater well-being within Black communities and throughout the City as a whole. Holding a degree in Counselling along with 20 years of experience in the fitness industry, he understands the importance of building healthy homes and cities. Currently, Martin is a Movement Specialist, and in 2020, he launched The Core Conversations Podcast, which speaks to the intersectionality of race and fitness. He also opened a The Reid Method Pilates Studio.

Heather Relf has served on the Mississauga Traffic Safety Council for 12 years in a variety of roles including Vice-Chair and the Mississauga Library Board for four years as a committee member. She is also a Dr. Arthur Wood Award Recipient for her dedication and worked with the Mississauga Traffic Safety Council. She is the former President and Treasurer of the Mississauga Girls Hockey League, serving for 11 years, with a focus on increasing the accessibility of hockey to not only the Black community but increasing overall diversity.

BLACK CAUCUS

Shelly Scott-England immigrated to Canada as an education and business professional in 2014. As a resident of Mississauga, she co-owns and operates a small family business specializing in digital signage deployment. She has extensive experience working on initiatives pertaining to early childhood education, Black youths, and community development in North America and the Caribbean from both the public and private sectors. She is involved in various community groups committed to promoting respect for human rights and sustainable community welfare. Shelly has over 20 years of government service and business experience, as well as over 30 years of active civic engagement.

Lisa Small is an anthropological archeologist with a specialization in African diasporic history and culture who has lectured on race relations at universities across Canada. Ms. sits on Mississauga Heritage Advisory Committee and is a Board Member for Museum of Ontario Archeology.

Craig Wellington is currently the Executive Director of the Black Opportunity Fund, which aims to establish a sustainable pool of long-term funding to help combat the impact of systemic, anti-Black racism and promote social and economic empowerment. Wellington has held progressive leadership positions in not-for-profit organizations for almost 30 years, with extensive experience working in partnership with corporate Canada, educational institutions, and all three levels of government.

Craig is an experienced DE & I consultant delivering thought-provoking presentations on diversity, equity and inclusion, and helping organizations to develop impactful DE & I strategies. He was recently a member of the Toronto Chief of Police's Black Community Consultative Committee, is a current member of the City of Mississauga's Mayor's Black Caucus, and an advisory board member of the Black Community Action Network of Peel Region (BCAN).

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