



CABR Strategy Implementation – Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People

Item 5

June 15, 2021

Board of Directors

Report: TCHC:2021-36

To: Board of Directors (the “Board”)

From: President and Chief Executive Officer

Date: June 8, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Board regarding the work scope, functions, structure and the proposed 2022 funding sources for the Centre for Advancing the Interest of Black People.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Approve the 2022 budget for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People as set out in Attachment 3 to this Report;
2. Approve the staffing plan for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People as set out in Attachment 2 to this Report; and
3. Direct TCHC staff to develop a funding strategy for the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People that funds any staff positions, aside from the 5.5 FTE that will be permanently assigned to the Centre, through the existing TCHC divisional operating budget allocations.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Decision History

At its meeting of November 20, 2020 TCHC provided the Board with an update on its efforts to develop and implement a Confronting Anti-Black Racism (“CABR”) Strategy and work undertaken to that date. Since that date, the work to develop and implement the CABR Strategy has continued.

TCHC’s sole shareholder, the City of Toronto, adopted an Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism at City Council’s meeting of December 5-8, 2017.

Most recently, City Council received a year two update on efforts to implement the City’s Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism at its meeting of November 25 and 26, 2020.

At its meeting of February 26, 2021 the Board:

1. Approved TCHC’s Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy, as set out in Attachment 1 to Report TCHC:2021-07, and the 8-Point Plan for implementation set out therein;
2. Authorized the establishment of a new TCHC Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People (the “Centre”) and the hiring of staff to develop and implement the Centre;
3. Required semi-annual reporting to the Board of Directors, by TCHC on steps taken to implement the Strategy in order to ensure alignment between staff implementing the Strategy with Board oversight;
4. Directed staff to consider the manner in which the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Strategy informs TCHC’s ongoing Human Resources refresh; and
5. Authorized appropriate staff to take the necessary actions to give effect to the above recommendations including the creation of action plans and actions to give effect thereto.

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

The Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People

The Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People (the “Centre”) will become fully operational by the end of 2021, following the approval of the Centre budget during the 2022 budgeting process. The Centre is a fundamental component of TCHC’s CABR Strategy and works to address issues of anti-Black racism for tenants and for staff.

Positioning TCHC to Execute on the CABR Strategy

The CABR Transition Team is currently providing support to TCHC divisions to advance the CABR Strategy through the provision and review of divisional work plans in alignment with the outcomes set out in the previously approved Strategy.

The Transition Team is also supporting TCHC in the implementation of the Centre and addressing urgent tenant, staff and institutional matters related to anti-Black racism prior to the Centre’s formal launch. The team has received several escalations from tenants and staff, and continues to work to navigate TCHC policies and programs to address needs in real time. Learnings and recommendations from these escalations have been integrated into the work plans.

BACKGROUND:

The Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People

Dealing with anti-Black racism at TCHC requires more than training; it requires systemic as well as immediate changes. To address this, the Board approved the TCHC CABR Strategy which included the development of the Centre as a central office within TCHC with a mandate to advance the interests of Black tenants and staff. The Centre will report directly to TCHC’s President & CEO.

As noted in the CABR Strategy, the Centre’s goal is to transform the operations and experiences at Toronto Community Housing, and lead the sector in defining the experience of social housing for all tenants. Its work is primarily concerned with the experience of anti-Black racism, however, the

Centre is intended to evolve into a space that is able to respond to all forms of racism and discrimination including anti-Indigenous and anti-Asian racism. It will drive tenant satisfaction and staff engagement by embedding an anti-Black racism analysis into the culture and operations of TCHC. It will drive institutional reform through strategy design and implementation, accountability and oversight, strategic training and coaching, capacity building, public education, investigations into human rights issues through an anti-Black racism (“ABR”) and an equity lens, advocacy, communications, and an oversight network made up of both tenants and staff. The Centre will achieve its mandate by influencing TCHC’s service delivery model, providing data and information that improves decision making, building relationships with Black communities, and increasing organizational capacity to confront anti-Black racism.

While instituting organizational change, the Centre will support actions at the Divisional level to implement TCHC’s CABR Strategy. It will provide divisions with information regarding the implementation of the CABR Strategy and its underlying principles. It will provide resources, for divisions, when gaps exist in the ability of divisions to implement the CABR Strategy, in order support divisional efforts to fulfill the objectives of the CABR Strategy. Recognizing that there is a current inability for TCHC staff to address on-going, day-to-day systemic issues of anti-Black racism that impact tenants and staff, the Centre will fill that gap. The Centre will also create the ability to track race-based incidents and use race-based data to impact and evaluate our service delivery through an anti-Black racism lens and improve service delivery based on the data. The Centre transforms TCHC’s organizational culture by developing pathways into racial equity work for TCHC divisions, by employing a systematic analysis of TCHC processes, and reviewing those processes through an ABR and equity lens, and the Centre will provide TCHC with the ability to respond to issues that require both immediate action and long-term strategy.

Attachment 1: *Centre Scope of Work & Position Descriptions* breaks down of the Centre’s mandate, each position, its uniqueness and how it will support each TCHC division.

Funding

The Centre will be staffed by a permanent core team of 5.5 FTE and a transitional team of 10 FTE that is responsible for developing, within TCHC, the expertise and building capacity to implement the CABR Strategy within TCHC's Business units. Each transitional position has been intentionally designed to support a TCHC function and eventually embed capacity into TCHC Business units. Locating these positions in the Centre initially, ensures that the anti-Black racism lens is developed in tandem with TCHC business functions rather than being secondary to the business functions. As such, relevant Centre positions will be absorbed by the respective divisions they have been designed to support after a period of 18 months. See Attachment 2: *Centre Staffing Plan* for the Staffing Transitional Structure Diagram. This diagram demonstrates how the Centre embeds CABR into TCHC, with the size of the division aligned to the volume of work. When the positions transition out of the Centre, the Centre reduces in size and TCHC divisions gain employees with confronting anti-Black racism expertise who are embedded on their respective team.

The current projected 2022 annual budget for the Centre is \$2,168,200 (Attachment 3: *2022 Centre Budget*). The 2021 pro-rated budget of \$1,239,100 for the Transition Team is being funded by \$800K from the cancellation of 2021 programs due to COVID-19 and \$424K as a result of the favorable variance from Mortgage Principal & Interest.

For 2022 and moving forward, the Centre will be funded through the operating budget and will have a permanent staffing model of 5.5 FTE at a cost of \$663,800. As this is new work and a new corporate commitment, we will be approaching the Board in the 2022 budgeting process for 5.5 additional FTE resources that make up the core of the Centre. We will not be requesting an increase in our subsidy from the City and have confirmed there is no additional funding available through the City's CABR unit.

The cost of the additional 10 remaining FTE is \$1,082,400 and the operation of the Centre will require \$422,000 in programming costs. These amounts

will be funded through the existing budget, with divisional resources being identified during the 2022 budgeting process. Staff will find the resources to fund the divisional work from existing budget allocations. In recognition of the way CABR will impact each business unit, divisions have committed to examining their vacancies and 2022 programs, identifying what they will contribute towards CABR staff who will join their teams from the Centre.

The CABR Strategy team takes lessons from the pitfalls of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (“EDI”) initiatives and anti-Black racism work. The sustainability of anti-Black racism initiatives are impacted by how they are resourced. Historically, initiatives that target anti-Black racism have been underfunded and under resourced as evidenced by a report done by the Foundation for Black Communities. Projects that are underfunded and resourced tend to fail as staff feel frustrated and unsupported and tenants feel lied to and misled. Because projects of this kind tend to fail, stakeholders are often skeptical, which then impacts stakeholder buy-in, thereby limiting the impact of the work.

TCHC is working to avoid the pitfalls of under-resourcing this endeavor, leading to limited impact. We want to demonstrate to staff that they will have the resources and expertise needed to be successful. We also want to demonstrate to tenants and stakeholders that this initiative will be impactful and sustainable. We have heard from stakeholders, including tenants and staff, that the Centre model is a sustainable and impactful approach.

All staff will be employees of TCHC and the Office will report directly to the CEO. The Board will receive semi-annual updates on progress and emerging trends and issues.

Alignment with Equity Diversity and Inclusion

This proposed model will work with the Human Resources team to realize TCHC’s Diversity and Inclusion Policy and its on-going EDI efforts and will ensure that EDI work is supported by the CABR initiative including lending Centre staff expertise.

Staff hired for the Centre will be required to have both a CABR and an EDI lens.

Learning from the City's CABR Team

We have modeled the Centre based on our learnings from the CABR unit at the City of Toronto (see Attachment 4: *City of Toronto CABR Structure Chart*). The CABR Unit at the City began with a team of six staff, and their team has grown to 14 staff to respond to the growing need for anti-Black racism expertise and support. The unit also has an additional roster of anti-Black racism trainers and there are numerous City of Toronto divisions that have currently hired their own anti-Black racism staff to support their teams permanently, including Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (“SSHA”), Toronto Employment & Social Services (“TESS”), Children’s Services, and Pension, Payroll & Employee Benefits (“PPEB”). Further, other City divisions are relying on CABR unit approved external consultants to provide expertise and support in executing divisional initiatives related to the City’s Action Plan. Our model has learned from the City’s CABR unit’s model, expansion, responsiveness and future direction. By transitioning roles from the Centre directly into TCHC divisions over time, we recognize and account for the day-to-day expertise and supports needed to effectively deliver the TCHC strategy.

NEXT STEPS:

Subsequent to Board approval:

- The CABR Strategy Team will provide the Board with the completed Centre work plan and work scope by the end of Q2.
- The CABR Strategy Team will provide the Board with the completed TCHC-wide CABR Strategy work plan by the end of Q3.
- CABR Strategy implementation updates will be brought back to Board in Q3, and semi-annually thereafter.
- The CABR Transition Team will disband and will be replaced by the Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People by the end of Q3

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

Without the Centre, TCHC risks failing on the delivery of the CABR Strategy because without a centralized hub, the work will be disjointed and lack

strategic direction, as there is minimal institutional expertise in the area of anti-Black racism. The TCHC CABR Strategy noted that historically, our policies and procedures have been colour-blind, negatively impacting our Black tenants and staff. This is evident through our tenant satisfaction survey which showed a 58% satisfaction rate for Black tenants in comparison to a 78% satisfaction rate for other tenants. Further, since the launching of the CABR Strategy, the CABR team has needed to case manage a variety of anti-Black racism incidents, which underscores the limited organizational capacity and expertise to meaningfully respond to these issues.

SIGNATURE:

“Sheila Penny”

Sheila Penny
Acting President and Chief Executive Officer

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Centre Scope of Work & Position Descriptions
2. Centre Staffing Plan
3. 2022 Centre Budget
4. City of Toronto CABR Structure Chart
5. Presentation