

Anti-Racism Strategy

RECOMMENDATION

That Community and Public Services Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That the Anti-Racism Strategy, as set out in Attachment 5 of the February 14, 2022, Community Services report CS00872, be approved.
2. That the 2022 operating expenditure budget for the Social Development branch be increased by \$2 million on a one-time basis, with funding from the Edmonton Police Services funds held within Financial Strategies.

Report Purpose

Council approval required

Council is being asked to approve the Anti-Racism Strategy to support the equity of racialized communities in Edmonton, structural changes within the City of Edmonton Administration, as well as the development of an implementation and financing plan to activate the Strategy. This work will be prioritized in Administration's work for the long-term City Plan alignment.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the November 1-5, 2021, City Council meeting, the following motion passed:

That Administration work with the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and the BIPOC community, in a collaborative decision making way, to develop actionable items and a comprehensive strategy on anti-racism that:

1. address hate based violence and supports for communities experiencing hate and violence;
2. champion anti-racist and anti-violence initiatives to the provincial and federal governments to secure resources and support, and advocating for legislative tools; and
3. work with partners to support and amplify anti-racist initiatives and responses.

Executive Summary

- Anti-racism can be defined as the active, ongoing strategy and process that seeks to identify and eliminate racism by changing systems, institutions, policies, and attitudes

Anti-Racism Strategy

that perpetuate racism. For the purposes of this report, 'racialized' will refer to those who experience the impact of systemic racism, and includes Indigenous Peoples, Black and People of Colour.

- The proposed Anti-racism Strategy outlines the three elements to advance the ongoing efforts of anti-racism in Edmonton:
 - **Independent Anti-racism Body:** A community-driven, equitably resourced body that is independent from other city bodies (such as City of Edmonton Administration, Edmonton Police Service, school boards and districts, etc.) will be established to oversee anti-racism in Edmonton and have the ability to stimulate reflection on and challenge systemic racism at all levels in Edmonton.
 - **High Level Anti-racism Organization in City Administration:** A new anti-racism organization within Administration will be created to challenge racism within the City of Edmonton corporation, including challenging systemic racism, developing a culture of anti-racism, embedding anti-racist action into all processes within Administration, and acting as a collaborative partner with the Independent Anti-Racism Body to co-create a long term Anti-Racism Strategy and Plan for Edmonton.
 - **Core Operational and Capacity-Building Funding:** In order to strengthen grassroots, BIPOC-led organizations and support them to be more effective with work that empowers BIPOC communities, influences the greater Edmonton culture, and is linked to long term goals in an Anti-Racism Strategy and Plan for Edmonton; the City will establish funding for core operations, capacity-building and other needs identified through collaborative decision making.
- Should the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy be approved, an implementation plan and financing strategy will need to be developed for Council approval.

REPORT

Context

Attachment 1 outlines the perspective of the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee, BIPOC youth and members of BIPOC communities in the preparation of the Anti-Racism Strategy;

“The aim for this work was to return an Anti-racism Strategy Report to City Council in 100 days (and this presentation is close to that timeline). While the time was short, it seemed possible to complete this task given the commitment for action expressed by both City Administration and the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee. The City Manager’s Office took responsibility for Administration’s side of this work, supporting the various business units, and proactively aiming to do things differently than had been done before. ARAC had already developed deep relationships with those most marginalized and impacted within BIPOC communities, embodies significant expertise in grassroots anti-racism, operates a culture and process of acting in anti-racist ways, and is able to

Anti-Racism Strategy

bring these strengths to the process through its position by the motion as a collaborative partner.”

During the collaborative decision making and report writing process the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee was able to raise a number of concerns to Administration;

“Nevertheless, succeeding in bringing forward this Anti-Racism Strategy turned out to be extraordinarily difficult, and at times felt impossible, given the significant barriers built into the administrative system. When systems are built from colonial ways of thinking and acting, cultures and processes are formed which continue those perspectives. This is how systemic racism forms and exists, and this happens even when the individuals within that system desire and intend to function differently.”

The Anti-Racism Advisory Committee also included critiques around systemic racism:

“Anyone who has experienced some baseline anti-racism education has learned that this perpetuation is not personal, and may not even be conscious. It is not a failing of individuals. Rather, the systems, policies and procedures are inherently designed to function in this way. Furthermore, ...Members of ARAC, BIPOC youth and BIPOC communities appreciate and respect the work that is done by the various Branches, as well as all BIPOC staff within city administration. We honour the achievements and successes they have gained while working within the administrative system and processes.”

Administration unreservedly accepts all the feedback from the volunteers of the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee, the City of Edmonton Youth Council and other Indigenous Peoples, Black and Persons of Color stakeholders that participated in the strategy development processes as outlined in Attachment 1.

Some examples of the pressure points that occurred during the “collaborative decision making way” are a result of various work processes and work culture that currently drives Administration’s corporate system to meet the expectations of its governors. What Administration is used to is:

- Defined timelines and resources set by the system to meet deadlines
 - Communities and stakeholders need to be considered in helping and agreeing to the timelines, be equitably resourced, and be empowered with some control over those resources which aim to address equity
- Community advising, and then administration authoring reports
 - Public engagement is a different process to collaborative decision making. Stakeholders desire to collaborate on; designing processes, agreeing on the foundational perspectives, focus, tone and outcomes, and to participate in co-authoring to ensure marginalized perspectives are centered
- Editorial control

Anti-Racism Strategy

- Lack of trust from stakeholders that suggestions will not be deflected, distracted, buried or waterdowned with additional administrative jargon or other side agendas obscuring focus from community input
- Preparation for public release & coordinated messaging
 - Administration has the ability to formulate and manage narratives that advantage the system, manages risks without consideration of the impacted partners and sometimes erasing the experience of community

The development of the Anti-Racism Strategy was a challenging chemical formula with many elements that required consideration when being combined. This further impacted the relationship between stakeholders and Administration as further complexities were added. These elements were; the communications focus, accelerated timelines, policy and legal frameworks, internal deadlines, expectations of many stakeholders, navigating across different systems, structures and cultures, lack of resources, emotional labor, pandemic fatigue, and probably many other factors. These all contributed to the cumulative impacts in advancing on this strategy in such a short timeframe.

Administration will continue in its Anti-Racism journey, appreciating that it is an ongoing developmental process. The learning gained from the development of the Anti-Racism Strategy will be used to improve the next phase of this work. Administration is committed to listening, learning and adapting to new forms of collaboration in a space that requires impacted communities to be empowered to participate and lead.

History and Definitions

The City of Edmonton has had a complicated history with anti-racism initiatives and efforts. As the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy was developed, Administration worked to better understand the history of racism in Alberta, with a brief overview in Attachment 2. The proposed Anti-Racism Strategy is uniquely placed to help build a city of today and tomorrow that is more inclusive and compassionate.

It is helpful to begin with a clear definition of anti-racism for the purpose of the proposed strategy to situate it from other work.

Anti-racism can be defined as the active, ongoing strategy and process that seeks to identify and eliminate racism by changing systems, institutions, policies, and attitudes that perpetuate racism. For the purposes of this report, 'racialized' will refer to those who experience the impacts of systemic racism and includes Indigenous Peoples, Black, and People of Colour.

There are a number of key terms that are helpful to understand anti-racism work. Attachment 3 covers a glossary of terms that are used, such as intersectionality, settler colonialism, white privilege and systemic racism, which are often used in discussions. For the purpose of the Anti-Racism Strategy, it is helpful to be aware of these terms, and should the proposed strategy be approved, elaboration around these terms will continue with focused effort.

Anti-Racism Strategy

Municipal Scan

Edmonton is not unique in the landscape of Canadian cities that are calling for improved or enhanced anti-racism efforts. All the cities in Canada (see Attachment 4) have developed or are in the process of developing a strategy/action plan or framework to address anti-racism. Most of these initiatives were started in 2020-21, however some cities like Toronto initially started their work in 2017.

Cities that have included addressing anti-racism transformation within their organization include: Calgary, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Montreal and Halifax. Some of these cities have outlined specific budgets for staff positions required to plan and implement anti-racism initiatives.

Across these Canadian cities, there are different types of groups that have been tasked with leading anti-racism work with communities, e.g. Advisory Committee (Vancouver), Action Committee (Calgary), Secretariat (Ottawa), Steering Committee and Commissioner (Montreal).

In addition, Calgary, Toronto and Halifax have an outline to address anti-racism within the community.

Proposed Anti-Racism Strategy outcomes and measures

The Anti-Racism Strategy proposes addressing the following outcomes identified by the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee in Attachment 5. They are as follows:

1. Reducing, with the intent of eliminating, incidents of racism and hate-based violence in Edmonton.
2. Disempowering the causes of such violence, i.e. to disempower racism in all its forms, and empowering anti-racism into as many layers as possible in the city.
3. Stimulating healing and facilitating recovery for communities affected by hate based violence.
4. Increasing a sense of solidarity and connectedness between all diversities and communities in Edmonton.
5. Increasing knowledge of anti-racism in Edmonton and among our partners.
6. Advocating for and achieving anti-racist and anti-violence initiatives, resources and legislative tools from the provincial and federal governments.
7. Influencing all organizations and partners in Edmonton to create anti-racism strategies and policies, and connecting them to the city's long term Anti-Racism Strategy and Plan.

The outcomes will be measured using short, medium and long term measures as identified by the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee. With immediate actions being examples such as:

- Creating a clear interaction model between the Independent Anti-Racism Body, Civic Administration, City Council, BIPOC communities and partners, which forms the basis

Anti-Racism Strategy

of collaborative decision making as well as a collective response and interaction with Provincial and Federal levels of Government for advocacy for resources, supports and legislative tools.

- Further building out a sustainable model for grant funding. The inaugural grant program was created and administered by ARAC in a volunteer capacity, with support from City administration, in order to innovate an anti-racism grant process. The amount of time and resources required does not make it sustainable or conducive to be run solely by volunteers. The anti-racist process of the inaugural grant program must be preserved and strengthened for this and additional anti-racism funding programs, while putting in place an equity model to resource the labour involved.

Three pillars that will advance anti-racism work in Edmonton for the next four years and potentially beyond. Attachment 5 goes into further elaboration on the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy and suggests actions that could support the three core pillars:

1. **Independent Anti-racism Body:** A community-driven, equitably resourced body that is independent from other city bodies (such as City of Edmonton Administration, Edmonton Police Service, school boards and districts, etc.) will be established to oversee anti-racism in Edmonton and have the ability to stimulate reflection on and challenge systemic racism at all levels in Edmonton.
2. **High Level Anti-racism Organization in City Administration:** A new anti-racism organization within Administration will be created to challenge racism within the City of Edmonton corporation, including challenging systemic racism, developing a culture of anti-racism, embedding anti-racist action into all processes within Administration, and acting as a collaborative partner with the Independent Anti-Racism Body to co-create a long term Anti-Racism Strategy and Plan for Edmonton.
3. **Core Operational and Capacity-Building Funding:** Core Operational and Capacity-Building Funding: In order to strengthen grassroots, BIPOC-led organizations and support them to be more effective with work that empowers BIPOC communities, influences the greater Edmonton culture, and is linked to long term goals in an Anti-Racism Strategy and Plan for Edmonton; the City will establish funding for core operations, capacity-building and other needs identified through collaborative decision making.

The Anti-Racism Advisory Committee also provided the following analysis on the suggested three elements by situating the recommendations within the contemporary environment:

“In addition to needing a sustainable, equitable and resourced body to continue the work started by the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee, the landscape of racism in Edmonton has changed dramatically since the Bylaw to create ARAC was first enacted in 2019. Edmontonians have been in a global pandemic that has presented greater risks and worse outcomes for BIPOC people. Black Lives Matter and Black, Indigenous and Trans Lives Matter protests and demonstrations took place, effectively resulting in Council creating a Task Force on Community Safety and Well-Being. Edmonton

Anti-Racism Strategy

witnessed Tiki-Torch protests and a rise in White Nationalist activity. The attacks against visibly Muslim African women have continued, with news of another attack breaking as BIPOC communities draft this report. Also as BIPOC communities draft this report, the Freedom Convoy protests in Ottawa and Alberta with overtly racist behavior exasperates Canadians and terrifies BIPOC communities, all while more unmarked graves are found in Residential School sites in BC.”

In addition to this proposed municipal strategy, alignments to provincial and federal government anti-racism efforts must be considered. The three main initiatives of the strategy address key structural needs to adequately focus and resource anti-racism planning and implementation. However advocacy efforts must be coordinated through City Council, Administrative work units and communities as suggested in Attachment 6. Should the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy be approved, a number of upcoming meetings with other interested intergovernmental actors (such as Alberta Municipalities formally the AUMA and Federation of Canadian Municipalities) may be of interest for City Council to advocate with BIPOC communities to further anti-racism initiatives, such as addressing hate-based violence.

In summation, should the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy be approved, an implementation plan with clear timelines as well as a financing strategy will need to be developed for council to approve.

The Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and Administration suggests the following timelines:

February 14, 2022, Immediate action recommended:

- The Community and Public Services Committee recommends approval of the Strategy to City Council on February 22, 2022.
- City Council approves the Strategy and direct resources to support an independent anti-racism team made up of members of ARAC, BIPOC communities, BIPOC youth and required experts to work in equitable conditions towards the Anti-Racism Strategy Implementation Report, the Safety For All Implementation Report and the establishment of the Independent Anti-Racism Body.

Summer 2022, Supplementary Budget Meeting:

- Council approves the Implementation Report and associated budget and enacts the Independent Anti-Racism Body.

Fall 2022, Budget Discussions

- The Independent Anti-Racism Body returns reports to Council to inform budget discussions.

Anti-Racism Strategy

Budget/Financial Implications

The strategy proposes a number of actions where the costing has not been fully calculated. As anti-racism work is iterative, the current resources to advance the transformative shifts as suggested in the proposed strategy are not available using existing program budgets.

Implementation of the Anti-Racism strategy (as outlined in Attachment 5) will require one-time funding of \$2 million to begin. Administration recommends that the strategy be funded from the Edmonton Police Services funds held within Financial Strategies.

Prior to consideration of the recommendation in this report, the balance of ongoing Edmonton Police Services funds available within Financial Strategies in 2022 is \$14.4 million, and \$18.7 million starting in 2023.

Current allocated funding for anti-racism grants includes \$300,000 annually plus additional one-time funding in 2022 of \$1.174 million.

Legal Implications

The strategy proposes actions that will require further legal analysis should the strategy be adopted.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

Community insights were obtained through the following methods, stakeholder meetings and research.

Stakeholder Meetings

- Administration hosted a series of “thought leaders” sessions with BIPOC Leaders, Agency/Not-for-Profit leaders, community activists, academic leaders and Indigenous Knowledge Keepers to bring input and insights into the strategy. This represented about 16 individuals. The themes from the discussions are summarized in Attachment 7 and align to the proposed strategy.
- The City of Edmonton’s Anti-Racism Advisory Committee hosted numerous independent BIPOC community meetings in groups and one-to-one to identify action ideas, build and critically strengthen ideas, facilitate involvement at all levels of decision making and input into the Strategy, and to finally participate in report writing. This represented numerous meetings with approximately 60 individuals. Following ARAC’s anti-racist culture and processes, attention was focused on including and collaborating specifically with the most marginalized in BIPOC communities, especially Indigenous Peoples and BIPOC 2SLGBTQ+, youth, and Muslim women. We understand that the thinking that comes from the most marginalized in a society more often benefits all members of the society, while the thinking that comes from the more privileged in society can unintentionally neglect the needs of others.

Research

Anti-Racism Strategy

- A Canadian municipal scan was conducted to explore what anti-racism initiatives, policies and actions have been taken commensurate to the direction and intent of the motion by Edmonton City Council.

GBA+

Due to time and resource constraints in the preparation of the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy, a comprehensive formalized GBA+ analysis was not able to be conducted. However, through the community insights obtained, a number of GBA+ factors were taken into consideration to ensure perspectives such as race, gender, age, immigration/migration status, socio-economic status, and other important nuances were considered through an intersectional lens. Should the proposed Anti-Racism Strategy be adopted and advanced into further action planning and implementation, a fulsome GBA+ analysis will be conducted.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Category	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (with current mitigations)	Current Mitigations	Potential Future Mitigations
Risks if the recommendation is approved.						
None						
Risks if the recommendation is not approved.						
Public Sphere	Racialized community loses faith in Administration and City Council	5 - Almost certain	3 - Major	15 - High	N/A	Continue to manage current efforts through the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee.
Governance	Inaugural City Council Motion seen as a failure, a reflection on the cohesion of this new Council.	5 - Almost certain	3 - Major	15 - High	N/A	Relationships are managed through the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Context of Report from the perspective of the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee with BIPOC Youth and members of the BIPOC Community
2. Brief History of Racism In Alberta
3. Glossary of Key Terminology
4. Municipal Scan of Canadian Cities
5. Anti-Racism Strategy
6. Intergovernmental Levers: Supporting Future Anti-Racism and Anti-Violence Advocacy Efforts
7. Thought Leaders Comments