

ENERGIZING INCLUSION

AN INDEPENDENT ANTI-RACISM BODY FOR EDMONTON

REPORT OF THE ANTI-RACISM ADVISORY PANEL

August 15, 2024

We begin this important work by first humbly acknowledging and expressing gratitude as guests on the traditional lands referred to as Treaty No. 6. We also acknowledge this is Métis homeland and the home of one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel. This land is home to many diverse groups of Indigenous Peoples, including the nehiyaw (Cree), Dene, Blackfoot, Sauteaux, Nakota Sioux, Inuit and Metis.

We also acknowledge that the City of Edmonton and all the peoples here are beneficiaries of Treaty No. 6, which encompasses the traditional territories of numerous western First Nations who have called these lands home since time immemorial. The Anti-Racism Advisory Panel acknowledges the Treaty, the land, the laws and the territories of Indigenous Peoples in Alberta as a reminder of our obligations and responsibility to the land and to Indigenous Peoples; and our accountability to redressing the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization that are distinct to Indigenous Peoples.

In making this acknowledgement, we do so with intent and purpose. As an Advisory Panel tasked with the establishment of an independent anti-racism body to oversee anti-racism for Edmontonians, the territorial acknowledgement is not simply words. It is an urging for us to collectively understand the key role we play in either advancing the status quo, or to making substantive change and creating conditions throughout the City of Edmonton that meaningfully improve the quality of life, well-being, sense of belonging, and lived experiences of the First Peoples of this land. Through that lens, we have an important and compelling task to attend to the specific needs and experiences of Indigenous Peoples who have been disproportionately impacted and historically excluded by systemic discrimination underpinned by anti-Indigenous racism in Alberta, and the City of Edmonton specifically.

Therefore, when acknowledging the Treaty and the traditional lands upon which the City of Edmonton is situated, we are confronting the painful legacies of exclusion and discrimination and committing to doing no more harm. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission made clear in 2015, reconciliation is not a platitude, nor is it a metaphor. Reconciliation is a verb that requires concerted and collective action by many people working to advance a more just and equitable society where Indigenous Peoples cannot merely survive, but thrive, in ways that meet the self-determined and distinct visions, aspirations, and needs of Indigenous Peoples and communities themselves. It is also important to remember that truth is bedrock precondition of reconciliation. An understanding of the truth is vital before meaningful reconciliation can occur.

In the face of ever-growing local and global inequality, as well as the unreconciled wrongs endured by Indigenous Peoples over centuries, we are urged to consider the understanding that our work, and its outcomes, should neither be neutral nor apolitical. Rather, our work and outcomes should be the foundation and catalyst for social change for all excluded populations and for Indigenous Peoples specifically. Further, our work must focus on creating the conditions for current and future generations of Indigenous Peoples to take their place as leaders, community builders, and change makers who will build and strengthen a more equitable and inclusive society for all.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 1, 2021, in the wake of a sharp rise in hate-based incidents in Edmonton, Edmonton City Council unanimously passed a motion to pursue work on an anti-racism strategy. Approved by City Council in 2022, that anti-racism strategy called for:

1. The creation of an independent anti-racism body, separate from City entities, that would “oversee anti-racism in Edmonton and have the ability to stimulate reflection on and challenge systemic racism at all levels in Edmonton.”
2. The creation of a high-level anti-racism organization in the City of Edmonton Administration, to drive internal change across City-run and City-managed processes and structures to challenge systemically racist structures in the Administration.
3. The establishment of core operating and capacity-building funding, to provide predictable funding for grassroots organizations to sustain meaningful anti-racist work.

Since the independent anti-racism body (the “Body”) is expected to be based in community, the Office of the City Manager recognized the importance of having members of the community inform how the Body could be formed. Accordingly, in January 2023 the City of Edmonton established our Anti-racism Advisory Panel (our “Panel”).

Recruited through a robust process, members of our Panel represented a cross-section of Edmonton, with diverse experiences, backgrounds and vocations. We met on average every two weeks, and at times more frequently through working groups and committees.

Our Panel undertook an expansive exercise in which we canvassed the broad range of work encompassed by anti-racism, considering the public, non-profit and private sectors. We then organized this wide-ranging inventory into common threads, which identified several potential key functions for the Body. We examined these functions to determine whether and how the Body could fulfill them effectively.

We also engaged communities for input, to inform our deliberations. This engagement process included an online survey; meetings with Indigenous Elders and representatives of Indigenous organizations; and meetings with community organizations known to have significant amounts of knowledge and experience in relation to the intersections of age, racial, cultural, religious and sexual minorities.

These discussions helped our Panel craft recommendations about the Body’s functions, areas of focus, and structure.

A More Inclusive, More Equitable Edmonton

Our Panel articulated important framing for the Body, through an aspirational vision, a realistic mission, and an understanding of beliefs on which the Body work should be premised. These are anchored in a desire to make Edmonton a more inclusive and equitable city. They also recognize that we are on Treaty land, and the unique struggles Indigenous peoples have had with systemic racism.

- **Vision**

Our vision for Edmonton, on the land called Amiskwaciy-wâskahikan, is that of a pluralistic and inclusive community, grounded in the principle of equity, where every individual is able to exercise their inherent Treaty rights, human rights, Indigenous rights, and civil rights free from discrimination. We strive for a world without racism, starting at home, where every person has equitable opportunities in a vibrant and prosperous city.

- **Mission**

Working in close collaboration as a community, we challenge and support the anti-racist transformation of oppressive systems and colonial structures in society, and hold them to account for their responsibilities to the Indigenous and racialized peoples of Edmonton.

- **Understanding**

We aspire to create a city that exemplifies the values of racial justice, acknowledges the existence of structural injustices that have perpetuated systemic racism, and is resolute in its efforts to dismantle these barriers for all peoples.

We recognize the urgent need to dismantle structures of racism and commit to fostering a stronger connection to anti-racism principles in all aspects of our city's life.

We acknowledge and are aware of the historic and ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples caused by colonialism.

We recognize that the path to racial justice includes honouring the various Treaties with Indigenous peoples and their rights to self-determination.

We also commit to fulfilling and exceeding the 94 Calls to Action outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Edmonton's Reference Point for Anti-Racism

Our Panel believes the Body can and should serve as a major reference point for anti-racism in Edmonton. This can be analogized as a backbone or central nervous system, providing vital support for anti-racism knowledge, initiatives and dialogue across our city.

We envision the Body working in three major functional areas to advance its mission:

- **Enriching community work.** Across Edmonton there are many different initiatives being undertaken to counter racism, identify and dismantle systemic discrimination, raise awareness, promote inclusion and assist victims of racism. Among these initiatives, there is a great deal of promising and meaningful work being accomplished.

However, there are varying levels of awareness about these initiatives, and many are limited in their capacity. Moreover, there is room for better coordination of existing initiatives, and there are concerning gaps in services that need to be filled.

There is no benefit to be gained in having the Body duplicate existing anti-racism work in the community, or be in competition with existing community organizations for funding or other

resources. Accordingly, our Panel recommends the Body serve as a supportive and strengthening force, to enrich community work that is already taking place.

This would see the Body play roles such as:

- identifying opportunities to better coordinate existing work;
 - providing insight on how to expand programs;
 - connecting community organizations with one another to bring about synergies;
 - helping raise awareness about existing anti-racism work; or
 - partnering with one of more community organizations to help their initiatives expand, have wider reach or become more accessible; and
 - building collaborations with community partners to address existing gaps.
- **Building and sharing knowledge.** Knowledge helps point the way to truth and helps us better understand each other. Together, truth, knowledge and understanding pave the way for greater inclusion and equity. Our Panel believes the Body should be a powerful builder, learner and disseminator of knowledge on anti-racism.

For instance, the Body can play a role in harnessing data around race, systemic racism and anti-racism. It can also strengthen research in anti-racism, such as examining anti-racism best practices used in other jurisdictions. These types of efforts should be undertaken in collaboration with partners such post-secondary students and faculty, public bodies, private sector firms and community organizations.

As a result of performing roles in gathering data and advancing research, the Body is expected to become a repository of knowledge on anti-racism. This knowledge must be leveraged to serve the broader end of dismantling systemic racism and enhancing inclusion for Edmontonians. Information amassed by the Body should be broadly shared with decision makers and communities. Ideally, the Body earns a reputation as a ‘first place to call’ when policy makers, members of the media, grassroots organizations or citizens have questions or seek information about systemic racism and anti-racism work.

- **Breaking down barriers.** One of the most important objectives for communities is the dismantling of systemically racist structures that oppress and disadvantage racialized Edmontonians. Accordingly, our Panel recommends the Body play a strong advocacy role in this area, through the pursuit of its own projects and in partnership with community organizations.

Given its capabilities, the Body will be in an ideal position to identify policies, programs and barriers that embody systemically racist elements. The Body can lead the coordination and amplification of advocacy efforts to challenge these structures. To this end, the Body should develop an annual advocacy plan, in collaboration with communities, supported with appropriate resources to target and challenge specific systemic changes.

There is also value in having the Body contribute external perspectives to the City of Edmonton’s High Level Office for Reconciliation and Anti-Racism. This could include sharing evidence and information, providing independent advice, and conveying community needs and priorities.

Issues, Focus and Work Plan

Based on input we gathered from communities, together with our own research and expertise, our Panel identified how the Body should optimize the deployment of its resources. This includes several areas where the Body should place short term focus, as well as other areas of ongoing concern.

Short-Term Focus	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hate Crimes System Support • Indigenous Self-Determination and Treaty Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth and Reconciliation • Intercultural Relations • Restorative Processes in Racial Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Long-term Anti-Racism Action Plan for Edmonton 	
Ongoing Areas of Concern	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community foci • Race-based data • Youth protection and development • Mental and public health • Employment equity • Workforce management • Taxation and budgeting • Access to sport and recreation • Access to art and culture 	<p>Nurturing connections with, and establishing dedicated forums for, the discussion, identification and pursuit of unique anti-racism actions needed for particular communities in Edmonton.</p> <p>The collection of meaningful and useful race-based data in respect of interactions that systems, institutions and processes have with racialized communities in Edmonton, through own-source and partnership efforts.</p> <p>Exploring and pursuing initiatives that enhance the protection and insulation of youth from systemically racist structures, and to support their development to reduce disparities in future outcomes.</p> <p>Identifying and taking action to dismantle systemically racist policies, practices and decisions in the health systems, to reduce disparities in mental and public health outcomes for racialized communities.</p> <p>Pursuing anti-racist actions to promote greater equity in employment amongst racialized communities, recognizing the relationships between race and socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Examining and pursuing initiatives that address systemically racist structures within, and improve the management of, workplaces across the economy, helping to promote greater equity, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Examining and taking action on ways in which taxation and assessment frameworks (e.g., property taxes, fee-for-service levies) and budgetary approaches have systemically discriminatory impacts on communities.</p> <p>Identifying and taking action to dismantle systemic racism in sport and recreation generally, with the aim of enhancing inclusion of racialized communities in sport and recreation activities in Edmonton.</p> <p>Examining and taking action to address systemic barriers to greater participation and inclusion of racialized communities in arts and culture programs and services across Edmonton.</p>

Structure of the Body

The Body is intended to be “independent”, which to our Panel means:

- being outside of Western colonial structures;
- having community-based decision-making;
- maintaining autonomy from public bodies, such as City Council;
- having the ability to enter into independent contracts;
- having the freedom to partner with others;
- fulfilling a mandate established by community; and
- having the ability to raise and manage funds.

We considered several structural options for the formation of the Body, and examined how well each option would align with the above-noted hallmarks of independence.

Our Panel recommends the Body be established as a separate legal entity that is not an External Civic Agency. This entity would be registered under appropriate legislation such as Alberta’s *Companies Act* or *Societies Act*. Once legally established, the Body should seek charitable status with the Canada Revenue Agency.

The Body will be governed by a Board of Directors. The Board’s membership should serve as a representation of the community. One of the Board’s key tasks will be to appoint an Executive Director, who will be the Board’s employee and accountable to the Board. The Executive Director will serve as the senior management leader of the Board, executing on strategy, priorities and needs. As part of its leadership role, the Board should also ensure that at least one member of the appointed senior leadership team is First Nations, Métis or Inuit and has lived experience.

Capacity and Budget

Being able to fulfill its functions well, and in turn be credible and effective, will require the Body to have sufficient internal capacity. The Body should staff up gradually. At full strength, the Body is likely to require a staff of six full-time equivalent positions in addition to the Executive Director.

Our Panel has developed a recommended high-level budget for the Body, based on its mission, expected functions and required capacity. This budget includes several reasonable assumptions based on known variables and discussions with the Office of the City Manager. By year three, the Body’s proposed operational budget is \$1,645,000. Up to \$600,000 of this could be disbursed to community organizations to support coordination, expansion, amplification and gap-filling of anti-racism initiatives. Our Panel also recommends the Body be given authority for the administration and distribution of the current Anti-racism Grant Program.

A NEW APPROACH FOR A GROWING CITY

Amiskwaciy-wâskahikan (Edmonton) is growing – in terms of its economy, its confidence, its ambition and its population.

Many Indigenous Peoples, and their ancestors, have lived on these traditional lands for centuries. Throughout modern history, generations of newcomers have moved to these lands – from the earliest European colonial settlers, to migrants and refugees from across Canada and around the world. Today, our city is more diverse than it has ever been – home to a vibrant mix of cultures and communities, each with unique traditions, stories and experiences.

Like most other urban centres, our city derives tremendous benefits from this richness in diversity, including new ideas, innovative thinking, and increasing global connections. Regrettably, it can also experience challenges and tensions similar to other major urban centres, including the ugly realities of racism.

Edmontonians have borne witness to what those realities look like, and sadly, far too many of our residents have experienced them directly and indirectly. Many times the incidents are easy to identify, such as hate speech, symbols of racism and white supremacy, and vicious physical attacks. Spotting others can be more difficult. A refusal of service. A denial of tenancy, or the application of differential rental rates. A lengthy stare from a loss prevention officer. A passing-over for promotion. Actions that might be rooted in racism, yet insidiously justified with alternative narratives.

As a city that prides itself on being open and welcoming, we know Edmontonians expect better – of our institutions, our fellow residents, and ourselves.

The good news is that the City of Edmonton is not “starting from zero” when it comes to tackling racism. In 2007, the City of Edmonton formed the Racism Free Edmonton Committee, following the City’s declaration of membership in the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination.

Several other initiatives have been undertaken since then to address, reduce and eliminate racism in our city. These initiatives have evolved to reflect the changing demographics, needs and circumstances of Edmontonians.

In 2019, for instance, the City of Edmonton established the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee (ARAC). In 2020, following several killings of Indigenous and racialized people (including Colten Boushie, Jacob Sansom, Morris Cardinal, Breonna Taylor, Chantel Moore, George Floyd and Sheffield Matthews), the City established the Community Safety and Well-Being Task Force, to make recommendations rooted in anti-racism regarding the future of safety and well-being in Edmonton.

On November 1, 2021, in the wake of a sharp rise in hate-based incidents in Edmonton, including racist attacks on Black Muslim women and Asian communities, Edmonton City Council unanimously passed a motion to pursue work on an anti-racism strategy. Advanced by Mayor Amarjeet Sohi, the motion instructed City officials to work with ARAC and racialized communities to identify actions that would, among other things, address hate-based violence, champion anti-racist efforts to governments, and support anti-racist initiatives in the community.

“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.”

*-Motion Approved by Edmonton City Council,
November 1, 2021*

In response to the motion, a broad anti-racism strategy was prepared. Approved by Edmonton City Council in 2022, it called for the pursuit of structural changes to effectively address hate-based violence and racism in Edmonton.

The anti-racism strategy recommended structural changes, comprised of three major elements:

1. **The creation of an independent anti-racism body.** Envisioned to be established as a stand-alone entity, separate and independent from other City entities, the anti-racism body would “oversee anti-racism in Edmonton and have the ability to stimulate reflection on and challenge systemic racism at all levels in Edmonton.” Importantly, it would be by community and for community, with the ability to “hold the trust and uplift the voices of BIPOC communities, especially the most marginalized members of these communities.”
2. **The creation of a high-level anti-racism organization in the City of Edmonton Administration.** Envisioned as a formalized office within the City Administration structure, the high-level office would “challenge racism within the City of Edmonton corporation, including challenging systemic racism.” This would include driving internal change across City-run and City-managed processes and structures. The high-level office would work collaboratively with the independent anti-racism body in order to help foster change across Edmonton and to address systemic racism.
3. **The establishment of core operating and capacity-building funding.** Effectively challenging, addressing and reducing systemic racism and hate-based violence requires the right set of tools, knowledge and capability. This creates an imperative to build capacity to sustain meaningful anti-racist work, through predictable and sustainable funding for grassroots organizations.

The independent anti-racism body (the “Body”) is intended to be a powerful voice and agent of change for racialized communities. As such, the Office of the City Manager recognized the importance of having members of the community inform how the Body could be formed.

To that end, the City of Edmonton established our Anti-racism Advisory Panel (our “Panel”) in January 2023. This document outlines our Panel’s considered thinking about how to best approach the establishment and function of the Body.

It is important to note the concepts in this document represent our Panel’s recommendations to the City Manager. They do not represent recommendations made by the City of Edmonton, Edmonton City Council, or any other party.

Why an Independent Body?

Our Panel was asked to explore the best approach for the new Body, not to justify its creation. For context, though, it helps to review the rationale for establishing this entity.

The concept of the Body is informed by past experiences. For many community members, the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee (ARAC) has been appreciated. ARAC regularly interfaces with and advocates on behalf of community, and it has realized some key successes.

Yet ultimately, ARAC is a creature of City governance. It takes instruction from and reports to Edmonton City Council. It is bound by City processes and decision-making conventions. As an advisory committee, the work of ARAC is undertaken on a completely voluntary basis. It does not receive operational funding, limiting its capacity.

By contrast, the Body is intended to be based in community. It will have the ability to determine its own processes – such as how it conducts meetings, how it makes decisions, and how it undertakes community engagement. It will be the community, not Edmonton City Council, that sets the Body's priorities. It will also be funded, thereby giving it more capacity.

Importantly, the Body will also have the benefit of independent vision.

A significant aspect of anti-racism work is dismantling systematically racist structures. These structures have arisen due to the contours of history and colonialism. Some were put there deliberately, due to racist beliefs and explicit discrimination.

Identifying these systemically racist structures is harder to do if you are a part of the system that created them in the first place.

An independent entity, on the other hand, can have greater objectivity and clearer sight. Standing outside City structures, it will not be unduly compromised or undermined by the blind spots of colonial history or Western governance.

Being separate and apart from City structures and colonial institutions will also give the Body a clean slate from which to work. Past wrongs and disempowering experiences have led many members of racialized communities to distrust formal government processes. Without such baggage, the Body stands a stronger chance of forming productive, trusting relationships with racialized communities and community organizations, and helping fashion a more inclusive, prosperous Edmonton.

OUR PROCESS

Considerable research, hard work, dedication and passion has gone into our Panel's process. To the fullest extent possible, our Panel's deliberations have been anchored in knowledge and analysis, and informed by lived experience.

We have also taken the necessary time to address our mandate sensibly and thoughtfully. Our Panel chose not to rush this work, given the stakes. The establishment of the Body stands to have substantial and lasting consequences for communities and for Edmonton as a whole. We all want the Body to be impactful and successful.

Discussing systemic racism, and anti-racism broadly, also encompasses a wide array of subjects and concepts. It involves difficult and sensitive discussions amongst diverse communities. Providing time and space for these conversations was critical.

This has resulted in a journey that was longer than originally intended. Yet it has also resulted in increased dialogue with racialized communities, richer understanding amongst individuals, and a blueprint for a Body that will meaningfully enhance anti-racism work across our city.

Panel Establishment

Our Panel's mandate was to provide recommendations and advice to the City Manager on the establishment and function of a Body to oversee anti-racism efforts.

Since the Body is meant to be community driven, it was critical for our Panel to be composed of representatives from communities. To that end, the Office of the City Manager undertook a recruitment process starting in October 2022.

The process to become a member of our Panel was relatively thorough. Interested parties submitted applications through an online portal. Applicants were assessed against a matrix of skills and competencies, to help ensure our Panel could draw upon an array of talents and knowledge. Strengths and experience were also considered in respect of representing communities and grassroots organizations, to ensure our Panel could be informed by community interests and have touchpoints with community members. Following these assessments, applicants were interviewed by the Office of the City Manager.

These efforts culminated in the selection of our Panel's membership. Representing a compelling cross-section of Edmonton, our Panel was composed of individuals with diverse experiences, backgrounds and vocations. These included educators, legal scholars, policy analysts, grassroots organizers, diversity and inclusion practitioners, multifaith leaders, retirees, and students. Each of us came to the work with unique views and perspectives, which made for animated discussions at times. Yet we shared a deep commitment to provide insightful

Our Panel's Membership

- Andre Tinio (Chair)
- Amer Abuhamed[‡]
- Kyla Amrhein*
- Nadira Barre[†]
- Terri Cardinal
- Antonio Flores[‡]
- Evelyn Hamdon[‡]
- Tibetha Kemble**
- Jackie Liu
- Janice Makokis
- Shafana Mitha
- Netta Phillet
- Deborah Shoctor
- Sam Singh
- Duns Stroschein[‡]
- Elaine Tran

Biographies of Panel members are provided in Appendix A.

* *Departed Panel in May 2023*

** *Departed Panel in September 2023*

† *Departed Panel in January 2024*

‡ *Departed Panel in April 2024*

analysis and guidance on an issue dear to all of our hearts, and important to our lived experience.

Due to the extended timelines and intense nature of the work, a number of individuals originally appointed to our Panel had to step away before our mandate was fulfilled. Their wisdom and efforts helped advance our deliberations and our Panel appreciates their involvement.

On average, our Panel convened every two weeks between the time of our appointments and the approval of this report. Members of our Panel met more frequently as necessary, through their participation in committees and working groups.

Planning the Way Forward

At the outset, a great deal of context-setting was required as our Panel came together. Each of our members were at different starting points, with varied backgrounds and perspectives. Some of us already knew each other, while others had less familiarity.

The realities of systemic racism are such that community members have good reason to be apprehensive about efforts such as those undertaken by our Panel. Members of our Panel recognized and shared that apprehension, and we realized it was crucial to establish trust amongst ourselves and trust in the process we would go through together. Without this, our Panel would find it difficult to make meaningful headway in tackling the core issues we were tasked with examining.

Accordingly, our Panel took time to “level-set”. Panel members shared their lived experiences, their histories with anti-racism work, and the unique approaches and networks they brought to the Panel. These conversations enabled our members to better appreciate different uses of terminology and concepts. Our Panel reached common understandings about various facets of systemic racism and their interplays with communities in Edmonton. Taking time to share knowledge in this way provided excellent context.

Addressing the Needs of Indigenous Peoples

While many communities in Edmonton have experienced systemic racism, the unique histories of Indigenous peoples set their experiences apart.

As the First Peoples on this land we now call Canada, Indigenous nations have been subject to generations of racially motivated violence since their interface with colonialism. Various policies enacted and pursued by European settlers have given rise to tragedies throughout the ensuing decades. The “Sixties Scoop” and the use of residential schools are among the most notorious examples of longstanding and damaging policies characterized by cultural genocide, racial segregation, racial profiling, racially motivated chronic underfunding, and racist ‘us versus them’ rhetoric and imagery. Politicians, authorities, media and many others have been participants or complicit in this conduct throughout much of colonial history.

This historic and ongoing oppression has led to countless traumas amongst Indigenous peoples and nations, including intergenerational trauma. It has directly and indirectly resulted in continuing and disproportionately negative outcomes for Indigenous peoples relative to the non-Indigenous population. Indigenous peoples are disproportionately more likely to be represented in the justice system, represented in the child welfare system, struggle with substance issues,

be challenged by mental and physical health issues, experience homelessness, experience unemployment or underemployment, fall behind in education, and live in poverty. These are symptoms and consequences of colonialism tied to a system that is founded in racist ideologies.

Our Panel took time to discuss the unique circumstances of Indigenous peoples in relation to systemic racism, and their unique needs in respect of anti-racism work. We also took care to incorporate this recognition as a cornerstone of the new Body and initiatives it will undertake.

This country has begun to confront its wrongdoings against Indigenous peoples through efforts such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Governments have committed to the Commission's *Calls to Action*, and to move towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. In this process we recognize that truth and truth-telling are fundamental components of moving towards reconciliation in action and that we must understand truth first. A core theme that consistently came through our Panel's engagement activities and deliberations is the need for people to know and understand the Treaties, Treaty relationship, and the Indigenous laws that guide the Indigenous-Crown (i.e., non-Indigenous) relationship. Consistent with this, our Panel understands that reconciliation requires concerted and collective action, and that the Body should play a powerful role in pursuing and sustaining such action.

Accordingly, our Panel recognized that a paramount consideration of the Body is attending to the specific needs and experiences of Indigenous peoples who have been, and continue to be, disproportionately impacted and historically excluded by systemic discrimination. To the extent possible, the Body should work to advance a more just and equitable society in which Indigenous peoples and nations can thrive in ways that meet their self-determined and distinct aspirations. These tenets find expression in the Vision, Understanding and Mission that our Panel recommends for the new Body.

Grounded in Principle

To help guide our deliberations, our Panel developed a set of common principles that anchored our approaches with each other and our approach to the work. These were grounded in a Treaty-based model of governance.

Guided by the Seven Sacred Teachings of Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery or Courage, Honesty, Humility and Truth, a Treaty-based model of governance recognizes the unique role and place of each group member. Decision-making is shared, with no single individual deciding a course of action without consent and agreement of all parties. This approach honours the original intent of the Treaty relationship between First Nations peoples and the Crown.



Among the principles we agreed to adhere to during our deliberations were the following:

- Be open to new ideas, and ways of thinking different from your own.
- Do not question others' lived experiences.
- Give one another grace and lead from a place of good intent.
- Allow discomfort to lead to growth, when you are learning something new.

Canvassing and Analyzing

Essentially, our Panel was tasked with determining how to best translate the Body from ‘concept’ to ‘launch’. This involved sorting through a number of logistical and programmatic considerations. Our Panel quickly realized this could not and should not be done in a vacuum, but instead, with reference to the priorities, needs, experiences and current realities of communities across our city. That way, the Body will stand a much higher chance of being meaningful, valued and effective.

Our Panel undertook an expansive exercise in which we canvassed the broad range of work encompassed by anti-racism. For instance, we identified areas of public policy, processes and systems in which we know communities can experience racism. This took us from subject areas such as immigration to criminal justice, housing, financial services, and everything in between. We examined this landscape with regard to government-run programs and services, and public sector bodies such as agencies, education and law enforcement.

We also took stock of issues occurring beyond the public sector, such as interactions between individuals, communities and non-profit and private sector organizations; and considered the types of anti-racism initiatives that would be needed to address those issues.

The result was a wide-ranging inventory of anti-racism work. Our Panel organized the inventory into common threads, thereby identifying major areas in which the Body could be active. These areas were then assessed against the broad strategy approved by Edmonton City Council in 2022. This enabled our Panel to rationalize the wide spectrum of work and triangulate areas in which the Body could be particularly effective.

This careful analysis resulted in a series of key functions that warranted further study. To do this, our Panel undertook a committee process. A number of committees were established, comprised of members from our Panel. Each committee examined a different key function and considered whether and how it could be effectively fulfilled by the Body. Recommendations from each committee were advanced to our full Panel for review, discussion and approval.

Engaging the Community

Since the Body is intended to be based in community, it was important for community perspectives to inform our deliberations.

The members of our Panel each brought insights and wisdom on behalf of the communities they represent. While these voices of lived experience helped enrich our deliberations, our Panel recognized the need to reach out to a wider array of community members. We also recognized the importance of doing this thoughtfully, in order to respect peoples’ time and authentically gather meaningful input.

In December 2023, our Panel undertook an online survey of anti-racism organizations in Edmonton. This survey invited respondents to provide their thoughts generally and to validate draft mission, vision and mandate statements that our Panel had developed. Respondents were also asked how they would prefer to be engaged going forward.

In January 2024, members of our Panel engaged Elders from Indigenous communities. These engagements involved conversations about the experiences of Indigenous peoples with racism, the roots of that racism, ways in which systemic discrimination has and continues to oppress Indigenous peoples, and traumas resulting from racism.

As part of our Panel's committee process, a group of Panel members explored how to pursue additional engagement with the community. To develop a better understanding of the breadth and depth of community organizations that should be engaged, our Panel obtained research assistance from End Poverty Edmonton. The results of their initial research informed our Panel's plans for further community engagement in June.

In June 2024 our Panel invited a number of communities to participate in a series of engagement sessions. These invitations were extended to, and made in collaboration with, community organizations known to have significant amounts of knowledge and experience in relation to the intersections of age, racial, cultural, religious and sexual minorities. This was done to ensure the engagement conversations would be efficient and meaningful, thereby honouring people's time while providing rich insight for our Panel.

Our Panel then hosted a number of engagement sessions with communities during June and July 2024. These sessions included diverse individuals representing various racial, cultural, religious, interfaith, and minority communities.

In addition, in collaboration with Indigenous Elders and other organizations, a number of engagement discussions were held with members of various Indigenous nations during May through July 2024.

During engagement conversations, participants were provided background about the Body and proposed ideas for the Body's functions and structure. Participants were invited to provide their input on these matters and about areas of anti-racism work the Body should prioritize. These discussions enabled our Panel to gauge whether, and to what extent, communities would see value in the Body's proposed mission and functions. They also helped our Panel gain greater insight into the current landscape of anti-racism work that is being undertaken in Edmonton, including aspects of work that are in particular need of attention or support.

The input gathered from communities helped inform and refine our Panel's conclusions and deliberations.

This report contains our Panel's findings and recommendations from what has been a lengthy and robust process.

What We Heard

Among the input we received during engagement, these were some notable concepts and themes that emerged:

- Be accountable to community – To have credibility with community, the Body should communicate its work, progress and success. This could include the use of benchmarking and indicators that can be tracked over time and publicly reported.
- Enhance hate crimes response systems – Rising incidents of hate crimes are a key concern and systems that respond to hate crimes, including victim support, require enhancements. The Body should focus on working with communities to tackle and reduce hate crimes.
- Place a focus on education – Racism and hate are often rooted in ignorance. The Body should support communities in delivering more awareness-raising, education and training. Enhancing education can help reduce systemic racism and promote greater inclusion.
- Build cross-cultural connections – With the help of the Body, communities can be more creative in how they build connections within themselves and amongst each other. Having more of these opportunities will help mobilize grassroots strength for challenging racism.
- Indigenous worldviews need to be taught – Both Canadian citizens and newcomers have much to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples, the damaging impacts of colonialism, and Treaty. The Body should support Indigenous communities in delivering this learning.
- Collect knowledge about anti-racism – The Body can help all community organizations by becoming a subject matter expert in racism, inclusion and anti-racism. It should gather as much knowledge as possible about promising and proven practices around the world.
- Share information resources – Serving as a central point of reference for anti-racism work can be valuable, but only if the Body is active and generous about sharing information with communities and community organizations. This will build trust and momentum.
- Remain driven by community – A key benefit of the Body is that it will be based in community. In that spirit, the Body should enable communities to lead anti-racism work as much as practical, while serving as a reliable and steady supporter of that work.

A MORE INCLUSIVE, MORE EQUITABLE EDMONTON

Our Panel took time to consider what we hope the Body achieves over the longer term. This serves as important context and framing for work the Body will pursue.

The vision recommended for the Body is aspirational, yet achievable. The recommended mission is intended to serve as a guidepost for the Body's day-to-day choices in activities and resource deployment. Our Panel has also articulated an understanding, which offers touchstones and beliefs on which the Body is premised.

A central anchor of this framing is the desire to make Edmonton a more inclusive and equitable city. These two adjectives go hand-in-hand, given the relationships that exist between systemic racism, poverty and vulnerability. As we dismantle systemic racism, we create more equitable opportunities for Edmontonians, better enabling people to reach their fullest potential.

This framing also recognizes we are on Treaty Land, and the unique struggles Indigenous peoples have had with systemic racism.

Vision

Our vision for Edmonton, on the land called Amiskwaciy-wâskahikan, is that of a pluralistic and inclusive community, grounded in the principle of equity, where every individual is able to exercise their inherent civil and human rights free from discrimination. We strive for a world without racism, starting at home, where every person has equitable opportunities in a vibrant and prosperous city.

Mission

Working in close collaboration as a community, we challenge and support the anti-racist transformation of oppressive systems and colonial structures in society, and hold them to account for their responsibilities to the Indigenous and racialized people of Edmonton.

Understanding

We aspire to create a city that exemplifies the values of racial justice, acknowledges the existence of structural injustices that have perpetuated systemic racism, and is resolute in its efforts to dismantle these barriers for all peoples.

We recognize the urgent need to dismantle structures of racism and commit to fostering a stronger connection to anti-racism principles in all aspects of our city's life.

We acknowledge and are aware of the historic and ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples caused by colonialism.

We recognize that the path to racial justice includes honouring the Treaties with Indigenous peoples and their rights to self-determination.

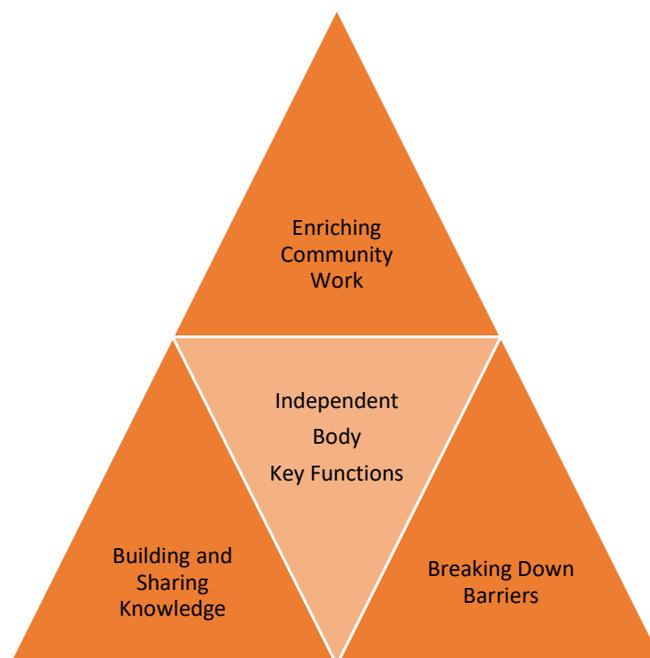
We also commit to fulfilling the 94 Calls to Action outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Edmonton's Reference Point for Anti-Racism

The Vision, Mission and Understanding offer helpful context for the work of the Body.

But within this context, how can the Body best be effective? What roles can it best fulfill?

Our Panel believes the Body can and should serve as a major reference point for anti-racism in Edmonton. Think of it as a backbone or central nervous system, providing vital support for anti-racism knowledge, initiatives and dialogue across our city.



Accordingly, our Panel envisions the Body working in three major functional areas to advance its mission:

- Enriching community work;
- Building and sharing knowledge;
- Breaking down barriers.

The next few chapters provide further detail on these functions.

ENRICHING COMMUNITY WORK

Across Edmonton there are many different initiatives being undertaken to counter racism, identify and dismantle systemic discrimination, raise awareness, promote inclusion and assist victims of racism.

These initiatives are driven by community, for community. Some may be supported by public bodies, private donations, or other partnerships, but these initiatives are often grassroots efforts developed and implemented by community organizations in response to identified needs. Our Panel salutes the dedicated people and organizations who have been pursuing these efforts.

Among these initiatives, there is a great deal of promising and meaningful work being accomplished. Yet our Panel's research has found that, too often, this work is happening in disconnected pockets. There is room for these efforts to be more coordinated, so that they can have greater effectiveness.

Another challenge is horsepower. Many existing initiatives have limited capacity, meaning that only limited numbers of people can be assisted or limited amounts of programming can be delivered. Ideally, these initiatives could be amplified and scaled so they could have wider and more significant impacts.

There are also widely varying levels of awareness about existing initiatives. Some are very well known in certain communities, and less so in others. This contributes to differing levels of use and uptake by different communities. There is room to enhance knowledge levels and accessibility of many existing services, which would help them have wider impact and greater effectiveness.

And while the tapestry of existing work is quite rich, there are also notable gaps. These gaps are not due to a lack of concern or lack of desire, but more likely due to the absence of capacity or specialized knowledge.

All of this leads to some natural conclusions about how the Body can best add value.

It is imperative that the Body is supportive, rather than competitive. There is no benefit to be gained in having the Body duplicate or undermine existing anti-racism work in the community. We also do not wish the Body to compete with existing community organizations for funding or other resources.

Rather, our Panel recommends the Body serve as a cooperating and strengthening force, whose activities are valued by the community.

Coordinating existing efforts

One way the Body can add tremendous value is by helping bring stronger coordination to existing anti-racism work. This would see the Body taking a more detailed inventory of current anti-racism initiatives in the community and making sense of how they fit together. With this 'bird's-eye view', the Body can identify opportunities to better coordinate existing work and rectify gaps, to help achieve greater impact in the community. Efforts to bring about better coordination would be done in partnership with community organizations, consistent with the grassroots nature of the work.

Amplifying and energizing

The Body can also add value by helping support and scale existing anti-racism work. This might involve various approaches such as:

- providing insight on how to expand programs;
- connecting community organizations with one another to bring about synergies;
- helping raise awareness about existing anti-racism work; or
- partnering with one of more community organizations to help their initiatives expand, have wider reach or become more accessible.

One valuable tool in these efforts will be the Body's ability to disburse funding to community organizations. Our Panel believes that having this function will enable the Body to leverage partnerships and make meaningful headway in amplifying and energizing community-led anti-racism initiatives.

Enriching anti-racism work

The Body also needs to play a leading role in addressing anti-racism work that has yet to be pursued. We envision the Body serving as a convener in such efforts, helping build collaborations with community partners to address existing gaps and enrich the overall tapestry of anti-racism work across Edmonton. By performing this function, the Body will help ensure all communities equitably benefit from anti-racism work.

For example, our Panel's research revealed that, at present, no organization is deliberately and directly addressing anti-Indigenous racism. There may be community organizations whose work touches on it in ancillary fashion, but no organization has made anti-Indigenous racism a centrepiece of their programming and pursued it robustly.

This is a glaring absence that must be addressed. As discussed later, our Panel expects the Body to place priority on addressing this gap. (See the chapter, "Issues, Focus and Work Plan".)

BUILDING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Energizing Work on Anti-Black Racism

Following substantial community engagement between December 2022 and March 2023, City of Edmonton Administration worked with communities to co-create an Anti-Black Racism Action Plan. The plan identified and recommended dozens of concrete actions aimed at eliminating anti-Black racism and increasing access and opportunities for all Edmontonians of African descent.

The recommended actions span a variety of policy areas and sectors. While many are within the jurisdiction of the federal or provincial governments, many others are being actioned by the City of Edmonton in collaboration with community organizations. Among these are the creation of an anti-Black racism convening table, which will help City Administration identify anti-Black racism priorities, monitor progress on the action plan's implementation, and provide ongoing insight on community perspectives.

Anti-Black racism initiatives that result from the action plan are all examples of the significant spectrum of anti-racism work happening across communities in Edmonton.

The Body will continually take stock of these evolving initiatives in the community, and seek opportunities to energize, enhance and amplify them. Our Panel expects the Body will work from a supportive and coordinating standpoint, partnering with community organizations and enabling them to take the lead on initiatives that meet the needs and priorities of the communities they serve.

Knowledge is a powerful commodity. It helps point the way to truth, it helps us make sense of what's happening around us, and it helps us better understand each other. Together, truth, knowledge and understanding pave the way for greater inclusion and equity.

Our Panel believes the Body should be a powerful builder, broker and disseminator of knowledge on anti-racism. As a backbone organization with capacity, the Body will be in an excellent position to gather information from communities, provide insight to community organizations, and raise overall knowledge levels about anti-racism across Edmonton.

Harnessing data

There is considerable room to strengthen our city's capacity when it comes to data around race, systemic racism and anti-racism. Having the benefit of such data enables researchers, policy makers and thought leaders to identify trends and make evidence-based decisions about how to better achieve inclusion and dismantle systemically racist structures.

Data collection can often be resource-intensive, putting such a function beyond the current capacities of many grassroots community organizations. By playing a role in harnessing data, the Body can help bring greater insight to the anti-racism community overall. As a backbone organization, the Body will be well positioned to leverage evidence to identify problematic processes and structures, and keep abreast of existing and emerging issues.

In the spirit of being based in community, the Body does not need to undertake data mobilization on its own. Our Panel envisions the Body engaging other members of the community, such as post-secondary students and faculty, public bodies, private sector firms and community organizations, to collaborate in data gathering and analysis. For instance, the Body could work in partnership to facilitate ongoing measurement of various indicators that evaluate levels of inclusivity in Edmonton.

Advancing research

In addition to data collection, the Body can strengthen research in the anti-racism space. There is considerable knowledge to be gained, for example, through research into anti-racism best practices used in other jurisdictions. Research could also help our city tap into emerging thinking and innovations that are being explored in numerous policy areas, such as law enforcement, affordable housing, poverty reduction and employment equity. Such efforts will result in our city having a stronger base of evidence-rooted knowledge on anti-racism, inclusion and cross-cultural understanding.

As with data collection, the Body should collaborate with community partners. Its prongs of research should be driven by community needs and priorities. While it might undertake primary research projects, our Panel would expect the Body to make substantial use of secondary research. This will enable the Body and community partners to optimize their resources while harnessing research findings that already exist across the world.

Sharing knowledge

As a result of performing functions in gathering data and advancing research, the Body is expected to become a repository of knowledge on anti-racism. This wealth of knowledge must be leveraged for the common good. It is a means to the broader end of dismantling systemic racism and enhancing inclusion and equity in Edmonton.

To that end, our Panel envisions the Body taking an active posture in knowledge dissemination. Information amassed by the Body should be broadly shared with decision makers and communities.

Ideally, the Body will earn a reputation as a ‘first place to call’ when policy makers, members of the media, grassroots organizations or citizens have questions or seek information about systemic racism and anti-racism work.

With its repository of knowledge, the Body should also reach out to community organizations that are undertaking anti-racism initiatives. The purpose would not be to second-guess the choices being made by community organizations, but to learn from them and provide them with knowledge it has gathered that can enhance the effectiveness, accessibility and impact of their initiatives. For example, the Body could provide knowledge about best practices in anti-racism that can be integrated into programs or services.

Example: The Body in Action

After receiving advertised information about diversity, equity and inclusion training that is being offered, a volunteer coach in a youth sports organization publicly condemns the training. The coach suggests the training is discriminatory because it won't recognize that most youth soccer players are white and Anglo-Saxon in heritage.

The governing authority of the sports organization holds a disciplinary hearing. It decides the coach was offensive but did not break any of the organization's rules. The coach is told to take a course about respectful sporting, but is otherwise allowed to continue coaching. The coach expresses frustration with the entire process, while many participating families are unsatisfied with the incident and outcome.

In the wake of this incident, the Body reaches out to the sports organization. Drawing on its wealth of knowledge, the Body assists the sports organization in reviewing its rules to make them anti-racist and more inclusive. This provides stronger clarity about behavioural expectations, helping to ensure fairness for all those involved and helping dismantle systemic barriers that are disadvantaging racialized players and families.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

One of the most important objectives for communities is the dismantling of systemically racist structures that oppress and disadvantage racialized Edmontonians. Our Panel recognizes that the Body's other functions will be of limited value unless they help advance tangible changes that address, reduce and work towards ending racism.

Accordingly, our Panel recommends the Body play a strong advocacy role. This is to be accomplished through the Body's own projects and in partnership with community organizations.

Influencing systems

As it builds and shares knowledge and supports community-based work, the Body will enrich the overall tapestry of anti-racism initiatives in Edmonton. It is logical to anticipate that having an enhanced and more coordinated anti-racism community will, over time, organically contribute to greater inclusion in Edmonton and better outcomes for racialized Edmontonians.

At the same time, our Panel believes the Body must assume a muscular posture in challenging systemically racist structures and holding them accountable. Given its capabilities, the Body will be in an ideal position to identify policies, programs and barriers that have systemically racist elements. It may identify these in the course of harnessing data and knowledge, or through its ongoing collaborations with community organizations, or by way of input it receives from communities.

As a backbone organization, the Body can lead the coordination and amplification of advocacy efforts to challenge systemically racist structures. In this capacity, the Body can leverage its networks and resources to inform decision-makers and influence meaningful, evidence-based changes that dismantle racism and enhance inclusion.

To this end, our Panel envisions the Body developing an annual advocacy plan. This plan should be developed in collaboration with communities, and supported with appropriate resources to target and challenge specific systemic changes.

Example: The Body in Action

The elected council of a town in the Edmonton Metro Area begins debate on a new bylaw that will outlaw painting crosswalks anything other than 'white stripes'; and will prohibit the town from flying any flags other than the official flags of Canada, Alberta and the town. The bylaw is introduced after a group of students announces plans to paint Pride-related crosswalks with the town's permission.

Several councillors and town residents argue the bylaw will prevent favouritism, keep the town neutral, and avoid supporting any political causes. Critics point out the bylaw will prevent any flags or crosswalk paintings that would honour or celebrate social or cultural festivals of any kind, and that the bylaw's real intent is to prevent Pride celebrations. The bylaw generates controversy across the town and the wider Edmonton Metro Area.

In recognition that members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities are also members of racialized communities, the Body engages the issue. In collaboration with local community organizations, the Body reaches out to individual town councillors to raise awareness about how the bylaw will reinforce systemic discrimination. Furthermore, rather than projecting 'neutrality', the bylaw will send dangerous messages the town is not welcoming to residents, businesses or investors who are members of racial minorities.

The Body also raises concerns with provincial and federal elected officials and governments regarding the social, economic and legal implications of the bylaw. It also engages with public, nonprofit and private sector partners to coordinate efforts aimed at encouraging the town council to reject the bylaw.

Working with City's High Level Office

The anti-racism strategy approved by Edmonton City Council in 2022 called for the creation of a high-level anti-racism organization within the City of Edmonton Administration. This has been commenced, with the establishment in early 2024 of the High Level Office for Reconciliation and Anti-Racism (the "HLO").

The HLO is intended to do three major things.

One is to hold the City of Edmonton accountable as a responsible employer, helping ensure that employees of City Administration are having experiences in keeping with legal protections against racism. (For example, ensuring that employee experiences are consistent with guarantees under Alberta's *Human Rights Act*.)

Another is to advocate for and facilitate changes that will incorporate anti-racism into the business practices of the Corporation of the City of Edmonton. This includes considerations such as service delivery, business planning and administration.

A third is to ensure that, as a municipal government that represents all Edmontonians, the City of Edmonton values, respects and celebrates racialized communities within the identity of what it means to be Edmontonian. This includes, for instance, having a Corporation that is mindful and supportive of cultural events, festivals and observances held throughout the year, respecting the incredible diversity of Edmonton's population.

While its establishment is encouraging, it must be remembered that the HLO is a formal office of City Administration. As such, the HLO is an outgrowth of a Western institution rooted in colonialism. Though it has a mission to help reduce racism within City Administration, the HLO is also part of the very system it seeks to hold accountable. This presents a risk that the HLO may have blind spots or face conflicts of interest in the course of its work.

The Body can help mitigate those risks, since it is expected to stand outside of Western institutions. Our Panel believes there is much to be gained in having the Body work collaboratively with the HLO and contribute external perspectives. This could include sharing evidence and information, providing independent advice, and conveying community needs and priorities. Doing so will help the HLO be more effective in fulfilling its mandate, and offer the Body another vector for challenging systemically racist systems and holding them to account.

ISSUES, FOCUS AND WORK PLAN

The foregoing chapters describe the key functions that should be performed by the Body. These functions can be performed to address many different issues.

This raises the question: where should the Body start?

As our Panel discovered, there is a healthy kaleidoscope of anti-racism work that can be pursued across a range of policy areas. Ideally, this work would be undertaken all at once, given the terrible impacts that systemic racism has for many Edmontonians. Realistically, however, the Body must be strategic about how it prioritizes limited resources.

Based on input we gathered from communities, together with our own research and expertise, our Panel identified how the Body should optimize the deployment of its resources. This includes several areas where the Body should place short term focus, as well as other areas of ongoing concern.

Short-Term Focus	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hate Crimes System Support • Indigenous Self-Determination and Treaty Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth and Reconciliation • Intercultural Relations • Restorative Processes in Racial Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Long-term Anti-Racism Action Plan for Edmonton 	
Ongoing Areas of Concern	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community foci • Race-based data • Youth protection and development • Mental and public health • Employment equity • Workforce management 	<p>Nurturing connections with, and establishing dedicated forums for, the discussion, identification and pursuit of unique anti-racism actions needed for particular communities in Edmonton.</p> <p>The collection of meaningful and useful race-based data in respect of interactions that systems, institutions and processes have with racialized communities in Edmonton, through own-source and partnership efforts.</p> <p>Exploring and pursuing initiatives that enhance the protection and insulation of youth from systemically racist structures, and to support their development to reduce disparities in future outcomes.</p> <p>Identifying and taking action to dismantle systemically racist policies, practices and decisions in the health systems, to reduce disparities in mental and public health outcomes for racialized communities.</p> <p>Pursuing anti-racist actions to promote greater equity in employment amongst racialized communities, recognizing the relationships between race and socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Examining and pursuing initiatives that address systemically racist structures within, and improve the management of, workplaces across the economy, helping to promote greater equity, diversity and inclusion.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxation and budgeting 	Examining and taking action on ways in which taxation and assessment frameworks (e.g., property taxes, fee-for-service levies) and budgetary approaches have systemically discriminatory impacts on communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to sport and recreation 	Identifying and taking action to dismantle systemic racism in sport and recreation generally, with the aim of enhancing inclusion of racialized communities in sport and recreation activities in Edmonton.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to art and culture 	Examining and taking action to address systemic barriers to greater participation and inclusion of racialized communities in arts and culture programs and services across Edmonton.

The ongoing areas of concern are not to be delayed unnecessarily. Our Panel envisions that the Body will commence and gradually expand work in these areas, as community partners and knowledge are increasingly mobilized.

The short-term focus areas, by contrast, are those where coordination, advocacy and research efforts require urgent attention. Our Panel's analysis found these to be areas where there are notable gaps to be filled, key concerns to be addressed, or major opportunities to enhance impact for the benefit of racialized Edmontonians.

Our Panel examined several of these short-term focus areas, to provide insight on how the Body might best approach them. We have done this background work so that the Body can 'hit the ground running' to the greatest extent possible.

The remainder of this chapter discusses our findings and recommendations; and outlines a three-year work plan for the benefit of the Body's initial leadership.

Hate Crimes Systems Support

Various geopolitical circumstances, socio-economic volatility and other tensions have contributed to an increase in hate crimes across the world. Neither Canada nor Edmonton have been immune from this trend. Indeed, it was a rise in hate-motivated incidents in our city, including attacks on Black Muslim women, that served as a catalyst for the anti-racism strategy approved by City Council in 2022. Since that time, a range of other anti-Muslim, antisemitic, anti-Black, anti-Asian, anti-queer and other hate-motivated incidents have occurred.

This has raised questions about the accessibility and adequacy of processes dealing with hate crimes. In the anti-racism strategy approved by City Council, it was suggested the Body should have responsibilities in relation to hate crimes reporting, responses to hate crime incidents, and provision of supports for hate crime victims.

Given the very serious nature of hate crimes and their implications for the safety and security of racialized communities, our Panel examined how and to what extent the Body could effectively fulfill such responsibilities.

As part of this examination, we took stock of programs and services currently being delivered by providers in Edmonton in relation to hate crimes. We directly engaged with service providers to learn about their operations and their perspectives about needs and priorities.

One of the most important findings from this research is that hate crimes reporting, responses to hate crimes and victim support represent significant undertakings. The sensitive nature of this work requires that it be done fulsomely and well. This requires considerable resources and specialized knowledge.

Our Panel also determined that community organizations are already present and working in this field in substantial ways. This is not a field where the services are emerging or in nascent, shaky stages. As we have noted earlier, there is no desire for the Body to duplicate, undermine or inadvertently interfere with good work that is already being done in the community.

Given our findings, our Panel recommends that the Body not directly deliver hate crimes reporting or victim support services.

However, there is room for the Body to add value consistent with its coordinating, energizing and amplifying functions. For example, the Body could work with existing service providers to help standardize hate crimes reporting processes. The Body could also collaborate with partners to enhance awareness of, and accessibility to, victim-centered supports and services. The Body could also leverage its convening and advocacy functions to influence how the justice system prosecutes hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents.

It is also important to recognize that hate crimes and responses to hate crimes occur within a much broader context. The conditions that give rise to and enable hate crimes are often the result of gaps, failures and systemically racist elements in a number of laws, policies and processes. These deficiencies can directly and indirectly contribute to an unacceptable 'permission space' in society to place blame upon, spread disinformation about, and generally target racialized peoples and communities.

Addressing these wider system issues from a proactive standpoint is critical for reducing, preventing and ending the perpetration of hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents. This is an area where the Body naturally can play a strong role, within the context of its functions of addressing systemically racist structures and barriers.

To kickstart efforts, it makes sense for the Body to have a principal collaborator in the community that has leadership in this area. This would enable the Body to more easily tap into an existing network of knowledge and organizations, rather than having to establish connections from scratch. Given what we learned through our analysis, our Panel recommends the Body pursue a partnership with the Organization for the Prevention of Violence, to add value in relation to hate crimes reporting, response to incidents and victim support.

Indigenous Self-Determination and Treaty Foundations

One of our Panel's dramatic findings was that no organization in Edmonton is currently undertaking dedicated work on anti-Indigenous racism. This represents a severe gap in community-based anti-racism work.

Our Panel recommends the Body help establish new capacity in the community to address and reduce anti-Indigenous racism. This includes capacity to:

- challenge structures and policies that systematically oppress Indigenous peoples;
- advocate changes that will reduce longstanding disparities and outcomes between Indigenous peoples and the non-Indigenous population;

- expand awareness among non-Indigenous decision-makers, community leaders and the general population, about Treaties and Treaty rights;
- build structures and launch initiatives that actively and materially advance the TRC Calls to Action.

Respecting Self-Determination

In working to build capacity, a bedrock and non-negotiable principle that must be respected by the Body is acknowledging and supporting the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. While the Body can help enable the creation of capacity, it should do so from a position of deference.

For too much of Canada's history, colonial and other non-Indigenous forces have made decisions impacting Indigenous peoples. These decisions have often been directly or indirectly rooted in racism. Working in an anti-racist way means breaking with that past and setting a new course forward, in which Indigenous peoples determine how to best meet the needs of Indigenous peoples, nations and communities.

The Body can set an example in that regard. To help build much-needed capacity in the community, the Body should be informed by the views of Indigenous Elders and nations. For centuries (before colonialism), Indigenous peoples managed their nations and their affairs by way of their own teachings, beliefs, knowledge, laws, governance and practices. In the same vein, Indigenous peoples should determine the form that new capacity takes and how it is leveraged for the benefit of their communities. The new capacity should be driven by and managed by Indigenous peoples, nations and communities themselves.

Recognizing and Honouring Treaty

As the Body works with Indigenous peoples and communities to build capacity and deepen relationships, it is important to place priority on honouring Treaty and the relationships that flow from this.

Treaty is a cornerstone of the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Through Treaty, First Nations and the Crown set out how co-existence would take place, including the setting out of Treaty rights for First Nations peoples regarding education, health, housing and other matters.

Properly honouring Treaty includes having respect for the nation-to-nation relationships on which it is premised. This means understanding who and which Indigenous individuals and nations should be engaged when discussing matters concerning Indigenous peoples – including topics regarding anti-Indigenous racism. cursory engagement of urban Indigenous organizations is not sufficient. Edmonton sits within the traditional territory of all the nations of Treaty No. 6, and so proper respect for Treaty comes with an obligation to engage those nations, beyond municipal boundaries.

Having respect for Treaty also means learning about and understanding Treaty from the Indigenous perspective, rather than the colonial perspective. Misconceptions about Treaty are one of many contributors to anti-Indigenous racism. As the Body enables the creation of new capacity, it should seek guidance from Indigenous nations about how it can facilitate the development and dissemination of Indigenous-created education and training around Treaty.

Truth and Reconciliation

As part of fostering the creation of new capacity, the Body should explore how such capacity can advance the Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

As noted earlier in this report, the long-term vision of the Body is an Edmonton that is more inclusive and equitable. Achieving this will involve addressing and reducing the longstanding disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This can be done, in part, through efforts in line with the Calls to Action.

Here again, the Body should act as a facilitator, seeking guidance from Indigenous peoples about what kinds of initiatives will work best for their communities. To the greatest extent possible, the Body should ensure that such initiatives are directed, led and managed by Indigenous nations and communities themselves, in keeping with the principle of self-determination.

Intercultural Relations

Challenging and dismantling systemic racism requires dedication and persistence. It is by no means easy. Yet it can be even more difficult when communities are at odds with one another. A cursory examination of history demonstrates that a strategy of ‘divide and conquer’ has been a mainstay in the toolkit of western colonizers. This has often been accomplished by manufacturing, exploiting or amplifying differences among communities, or by preferencing some over others.

When focused on differences amongst themselves, communities have less capacity to place a shared focus on bringing down the systemically racist power structures that are oppressing them. One way, therefore, to help dismantle systemic racism is to inoculate communities against being divided.

This can be accomplished in part by fostering stronger intercultural relations and understanding amongst diverse communities. In a diverse city such as Edmonton, this is a significant and ongoing undertaking – and one the Body is well positioned to assume as a backbone for anti-racism in Edmonton.

Our Panel envisions the Body doing this through several initiatives, such as hosting symposia, facilitating anti-racism roundtables, and brokering tough and sensitive conversations between communities when issues arise.

Restorative Processes in Racial Justice

In collaboration with the community, the work of the Body will ideally contribute to an Edmonton that is hallmarked by greater inclusion and less racism. This journey will not be linear. There will be times along the way when wrongs happen and individuals and communities are harmed by racist actions.

As part of its knowledge building and sharing functions, the Body can help by exploring and developing restorative processes in racial justice. These processes seek to reset relationships between victims and communities after wrongs occur. They involve practices that enable

individuals and communities to learn from incidents, take ownership of behaviours, and explore how they can better co-exist.

Given the state of today's world and the apparent rise in polarization, it makes sense for the Body to place a short-term focus on enhancing knowledge, awareness and use of these processes.

Education

Systems of education can play powerful roles in shaping how we regard and relate to one other. When delivered well, these systems can open our eyes to truths and help us overcome our preconceived notions. Yet they can also contain structures, practices or other elements that directly or inadvertently teach or reinforce prejudices.

Challenging systemic racism in education systems is thus crucial for developing a less racist society over the longer term. Ideally, our K-12 and post-secondary education systems are shining examples of inclusion, helping produce citizens who themselves will challenge racism in their everyday lives. Moreover, these systems should serve as great forces in creating more equitable opportunities for racialized communities.

Accordingly, the Body should place priority on anti-racism initiatives that address education systems. This should include working with community partners to dismantle systemically racist structures in education systems, and to enhance inclusion of students and families from racialized communities.

Long-Term Anti-Racism Action Plan

Upon its creation, one important priority for the Body is the creation of a long-term anti-racism action plan. This was identified as an objective in the anti-racism strategy approved by City Council in 2022.

The long-term action plan should identify tangible and realistic initiatives to address hate-based violence in Edmonton, and to provide supports for communities experiencing hate and violence. The action plan should be developed in collaboration with communities, community organizations and the HLO.

Ombuds Role

Another issue our Panel explored was the extent to which the Body could or should play an ombuds role in relation to systemic racism in public systems. In theory, having this kind of role would see the Body receiving, investigating and ruling on public complaints about racist interactions, actions and decisions by public authorities.

It is understandable why this function has been suggested by some people. Through conversations with community members and additional research, our Panel determined that, at present, there is no organization with an ombuds function dedicated to anti-racism.

There are, however, a number of existing organizations that serve in ombuds roles more broadly, with responsibilities to receive and investigate complaints about various forms of unfair or discriminatory treatment – including actions or decisions that are rooted in racism.

For example, the Alberta Ombudsman investigates complaints from Albertans about unfair treatment from authorities designated under the *Ombudsman Act*.¹ This includes “any decision or recommendation made... or any act done or omitted, relating to a matter of administration...in or by any department, agency, professional organization or municipality.”² The Alberta Ombudsman’s jurisdiction extends to departments of the provincial government, municipalities, and regulated professions in Alberta.

As noted in its annual report, the Alberta Ombudsman works to “address systemic issues through self-initiated large-scale investigations”. It also engages and works “with organizations that support vulnerable Albertans to identify gaps and issues with government services.”³

Another organization playing an ombuds-type role is the Alberta Human Rights Commission. The Commission addresses and investigates complaints under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*,⁴ which prohibits discrimination on specific protected grounds. One such protected ground is “race”, explicitly mentioned throughout the legislation.

Significantly, the jurisdiction of the Alberta Human Rights Commission is not limited to governments and public systems. It has broad authority to investigate complaints about interactions amongst individuals and organizations in the private and non-profit sectors. For example, a tenant or prospective tenant can bring a complaint to the Commission regarding racist treatment by a landlord. The Commission has powers to take complaints, investigate and order compensation.

There are also several organizations in Edmonton that play roles in the provision of supports, referrals and advocacy for individuals who have suffered mistreatment and discrimination. These include, for example, the Zebra Centre, C5 Hub, the Organization for the Prevention of Violence, the Victim Services Unit of Alberta Health Services, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, and the BIPOC Healing Centre.

¹ *Ombudsman Act*, RSA 2000, c. O-8.

² *Ibid.*, s.12.

³ Alberta Ombudsman. (2023). *Annual Report 2022-2023*. Alberta.

⁴ *Alberta Human Rights Act*, RSA 2000, c. A-25.5.

Having the Body assume a direct ombuds role would thus duplicate services that already exist. It would also be very challenging for the Body to perform this role effectively without the right authority. Provincial laws give the Alberta Ombudsman and the Alberta Human Rights Commissions the necessary legal power to investigate systems, individuals and organizations and hold them accountable. The Body is not envisioned to have similar legislative authority. Ombuds-type functions also require resource levels that go beyond what is envisioned for the Body.

On the other hand, the Body will be well positioned to play roles similar to organizations that provide support, referral and advocacy. It can do this in collaboration with community organizations, helping to fill discrete gaps, support greater coordination, and amplify impactful work. The Body can also explore opportunities to collaborate with public bodies that perform direct ombuds work. For example, the Body could provide data and insight to public bodies to help inform their day-to-day work.

Consequently, our Panel recommends that the Body:

- Establish relations and ongoing conversations with the Alberta Human Rights Commission and Alberta Ombudsman Office.
- Establish relations with the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council.
- Partner with organizations to promote anti-racism education and available services and supports.
- Consider playing an intake/referral role and connector role while offering spaces for wrap-around supports, and counseling and healing services.
- Advocate for people throughout the process of complaint resolution, and support organizations in complaint handling.
- Offer grants for community organizations to strengthen their capacity to conduct intake and referrals.

Work Plan

To help guide the Body's start-up and formative years, our Panel has developed a recommended work plan.

This work plan is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, the work plan is intended to identify particular initiatives that are important for the Body to pursue, based on needs and priorities in the community.

Each year of the recommended work plan signifies when the Body could commence the identified initiatives. These would be in addition to the initiatives listed under previous years. This way, the Body will scaffold its array of work and gradually expand its operation.

In addition to the recommended work plan, the Body can and should pursue initiatives that can markedly enhance and propel anti-racism work in Edmonton. This will require the Body to be flexible and responsive to opportunities that unexpectedly arise.

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Establish Anti-Racism Community Roundtable	Commence undertaking of annual Learning Workshops (2 times per year)	Create Anti-Racism Best Practice Guides for Community Organizations
Commence building Library of Experts and Resources	Begin Government Policy Reviews and Advocacy Initiatives	Undertake Program to Review City of Edmonton Services
Establish Anti-Racism Indigenous Elders Group	Create Funding Guide for Community Organizations	Begin Systems Wayfinding for Community Organizations
Establish Anti-Racism Donor's Table	Assume management of the Anti-Racism Grant Program	Commence Publication of Annual Report

STRUCTURING THE INDEPENDENT BODY

The foregoing sections outline our Panel's recommendations for how the Body should approach its mission, the areas of focus it should have, and the tactical initiatives it should pursue during its initial years. In this section, we take time to discuss legal and logistical considerations around the Body, including its organizational structure and internal capacity.

The Right Structure for the Body

Creating a new Body comes with the question of legal structure. Our Panel examined and evaluated a number of options. Using the mantra that “form follows function”, we identified criteria that are important for the Body to have and assessed potential structures against those criteria.

The Concept of Independence

Identifying the best structure for the Body begins with a fundamental question that our Panel had to consider: what does it mean to be “independent”?

This word tends to be used flexibly. Some entities, for instance, refer to themselves as “independent” to mean they are “arm’s length” from government. Others describe themselves or their work as “independent” in relation to the objectivity they purport to bring to issues or decision-making. Context matters.

To identify the proper context for the Body, it helps to refer to the broad strategy approved by City Council in 2022. The principles and reasoning in that document speak to the benefits an “independent” Body is expected to have.

One benefit is that the Body will not be an offshoot or organ of Western institutions. Today's Western institutions are rooted in the country's history of colonialism and, as such, have systemically racist aspects within them. Being a product of these institutions would undermine the Body's effectiveness, because it would effectively be part of the problem.

Another expected benefit is that the Body will serve communities and have the confidence of those communities it serves. There is a clear desire for the Body to be ‘by community and for community’.

“The Independent Anti-Racism Body functions outside of established systems and can therefore effectively challenge systemic racism and function in an entirely anti-racist way.”

*-Broad Anti-Racism Strategy approved by
Edmonton City Council in 2022*

This speaks to the decision-making aspects of the Body. In order to be rooted in and driven by community, the Body needs to be structured in a way that enables the community to set its priorities. It must have autonomy in its decision-making and be free to operate without interference from external entities. For this the Body must not be controlled or fettered by political appointments or political entities such as Edmonton City Council.

The Body also needs to sustain its operations. Therefore, it must have the ability to raise and manage money. It must have the authority to enter into contractual relationships with employees. Similarly, the Body must have the power to enter into agreements with other

entities, in order to facilitate sponsorship agreements, cost-sharing projects, or other initiatives involving external partners.

One thing to note is the natural tension between funding and autonomy. Whether funding is from public sources (such as government grants) or private sources (such as individual donors or corporate sponsors), the Body may be asked to enter into agreements that contain expectations or conditions. For example, an agreement might include conditions requiring the Body to report on how funding is used, or to use funding for particular objectives.

Some could argue that such conditions are a problem, because they could interfere with the Body's autonomy. Our Panel sees it differently.

While it is possible that a funder may wish to attach conditions to funding, the most important consideration is that the Body maintains the autonomy to choose. If the proposed conditions of the funding will not work for the community or are misaligned with the Body's priorities or community needs, the Body can walk away from the funding arrangement. Or, conversely, the Body can agree to the arrangement, receive the funding, and fulfill the conditions.

What is intended by an "independent" Body, therefore, is one that features the following crucial hallmarks:

- Being outside of Western colonial structures;
- Having community-based decision-making;
- Maintaining autonomy from public bodies, such as City Council;
- Having the ability to enter into contracts;
- Having the freedom to partner with others;
- Fulfilling a mandate established by community;
- Having the ability to raise and manage funds.

Structural Options and Considerations

Several options exist in terms of possible structures for the Body. The most notable options are:

- A formal **Council Committee** of Edmonton City Council, similar to the structure used for the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee (ARAC);
- An **External Civic Agency** of the City of Edmonton, an example of which is REACH Edmonton, another backbone organization; or
- A **Separate Legal Entity** that is not an External Civic Agency, created under legislation, such as Alberta's *Companies Act* or *Societies Act*.

A number of considerations come with each of the foregoing structures, because each has unique characteristics. These are summarized in the below table.

STRUCTURE	CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSIDERATIONS
Council Committee (such as ARAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by Edmonton City Council • Funding is tied to Edmonton City Council • Regarded as a formal Civic entity • Has autonomy within its sphere of expertise • Can cooperate with Administration

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can provide comment on work by City Administration • Staffing can involve secondment from City Administration
External Civic Agency (such as EAC or REACH Edmonton)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to Edmonton City Council • Edmonton City Council appoints members to Board • Funding primarily from City Council • Can receive funding from other sources • Regarded as a formal Civic entity • Has autonomy within its mandated area • Can cooperate with Administration
Separate Legal Entity (formed under <i>Companies Act</i> or <i>Societies Act</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is not governed by Edmonton City Council • Edmonton City Council does not appoint members to Board • Governs itself under Alberta's non-profit legislation • Has autonomy from governments • Is not a formal Civic entity • Must seek its own funding • Can cooperate with public, private and nonprofit sectors

Having taken stock of the possible structures, and their characteristics and considerations, our Panel assessed the suitability of each structure. This was done by evaluating whether each structure would satisfy each of the crucial hallmarks of independence that we identified for the Body. The table below summarizes the results.

Crucial Hallmarks of Independence for the Independent Anti-Racism Body	Council Committee	External Civic Agency	Separate Legal Entity
Outside Western colonial structures	X	X	√
Community-based decision making	X	X	√
Autonomy from City Council	X	X	√
Ability to enter into contracts	X	√	√
Freedom to partner with others	X	√	√
Mandate established by community	X	X	√
Ability to raise and manage funds	X	√	√

From the results of our Panel's analysis, it is clear the structure of a separate legal entity, which is NOT an External Civic Agency, is the best fit for the Body.

Recommended Approach

Given the foregoing analysis, our Panel recommends that the Body be established as a separate legal entity that is not an External Civic Agency. This entity would be registered under appropriate legislation such as Alberta's *Companies Act* or *Societies Act*. Once legally established, the Body should seek charitable status with the Canada Revenue Agency.

As with other legal entities established under the *Companies Act* or *Societies Act*, the Body will be directed by a Board of Directors. Significantly, none of its Board members will be appointed by Edmonton City Council. The Board should function as a governance board, setting broad strategy and guiding the overall direction of the Body.

One of the Board's key tasks will be to appoint an Executive Director for the Body. Consistent with good governance principles, the Executive Director will be the Board's employee and accountable to the Board. The Executive Director will serve as the senior management leader of the Board, executing on strategy, priorities and needs. As part of its leadership role, the Board should also ensure that at least one member of the appointed senior leadership team is First Nations, Métis or Inuit and has lived experience.

The Board's membership should serve as a representation of the community. Initially, in accordance with the *Societies Act*, the Body will have a Board of five members. This is intended to serve as skeleton governance for the organization, but not be the long-term membership complement. After the Body is legally established, a full Board will need to be appointed to guide the organization over the medium- to longer-term.

Similarly, a set of initial governance documents will need to be prepared and used as part of the application to register the Body under the *Societies Act*. After its legal establishment, the Body will need a more fulsome and robust governance framework, which should include the development and implementation of a process to recruit the first full board of the Body.

Creating this more fulsome governance framework will be one of the responsibilities of the initial board of directors. The governance framework should comply with principles of good non-profit governance, while also enabling the Body to remain rooted in and driven by communities.

Building Internal Capacity and Credibility

An important hallmark of the Body will be its rooting in, and service to, community. The Body's connections with, understanding of, and work for communities will be critical for its success, credibility and accountability. Our Panel recognizes that, in this respect, actions speak louder than words. The Body will be regarded as having success, credibility and accountability only if it performs its functions well – that is, being effective and authentic in its listening, partnering, convening, delivering, reporting, and knowledge sharing.

Being able to fulfill its functions well, and in turn be credible and effective, will require the Body to have sufficient internal capacity. Much of this will need to be driven by the Executive Director and their staff, with input from and partnership with communities.

Capacity Building

Our Panel cannot dictate or set out in detail on how this should specifically be done. At this stage, for the purpose of providing guidance, our Panel recommends the following general schedule of tasks for building the internal capacity of the Body during its initial years of operation.

Key Capacity Building Tasks and Areas of Attention		
2024	2025	2026
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register entity under <i>Societies Act</i> Seek charitable status with CRA Convene administrative board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance society's bylaws Undertake recruitment Develop team building, organizational culture Undertake government relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue recruitment Develop board succession planning Undertake board recruitment Strengthen partnerships

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit Executive Director Develop brand and identity Address administration (office space, IT, systems) Form strong community relationships Establish relationships with City Administration Develop financial plan for 2024+ Address ceremonies and launch events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop evaluation and accountability systems Pursue community reporting Build audit function Undertake work planning Develop communications strategy Pursue partnership models Establish HR systems and policies Pursue funding strategies and donor relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop annual report
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Staffing

The Body's importance for energizing anti-racism work and enhancing inclusion in Edmonton drive the need for a complement of staff. A single Executive Director is highly unlikely to have sufficient capacity to effectively fulfill all of the Body's functions, particularly as it develops more community connections and its scope of initiatives grows. Indeed, as reflected in the table above, our Panel contemplates the recruitment of additional staff during the Body's early years.

Our Panel recommends that the Body staff up gradually, in lockstep with expansion of its operations and needs. We would expect that, at full strength, the Body is likely to require a staff of approximately six full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in addition to the Executive Director. These positions would span roles such as finance and administration, project leadership, research, and community engagement.

Budget

Our Panel has developed a recommended high-level budget for the Body, based on its mission, expected functions and required capacity. This budget includes several reasonable assumptions based on known variables and discussions with the Office of the City Manager.

High-Level Three-Year Budget			
Category	2024	2025	2026
Staffing	\$543,000	\$905,000	\$905,000
Overhead	\$13,600	\$72,000	\$72,000
One-Time Costs	\$160,000		
Governance	\$34,000	\$68,000	\$68,000
Core Program Costs	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Total Budget	\$1,050,600	\$1,645,000	\$1,645,000

- Staffing** – As noted earlier, the Body will initially require an Executive Director to lead operations. Additional staff will be recruited gradually as the Body transitions from being a legal skeleton to a full organization with continuing programs, initiatives and activities. Importantly, in accordance with the broad anti-racism strategy approved in 2022, the estimated staffing costs have been resourced equitably to the City. They are based on remuneration paid to equivalent positions in the City of Edmonton. By 2025-2026, the

high-level budget anticipates that the Body will be fully staffed with an Executive Director plus six full-time equivalent positions.

- **Overhead** – Like most organizations, the Body will have a certain degree of overhead to support its operations. This includes elements such as facility rental, utilities, maintenance, insurance, and audit and banking costs. In order to realize savings, the estimated overhead costs assume the City of Edmonton Administration will underwrite a portion of the Body’s overhead for the first three years. For example, it makes sense to use existing administrative and logistical capacity in City Administration to undertake many start-up tasks such as the Body’s legal setup and registration, audit and insurance costs, recruitment costs, and office space.
- **One-Time Costs** – A number of one-time only costs are likely to be incurred, such as establishment of IT systems, governance setup and office furnishings.
- **Governance** – The governance aspects of the Body are crucial, as they reflect and represent community. While serving as a governance board, the board members will be integral in helping facilitate community connections, serving as vectors of community wisdom and knowledge, and liaising generally with communities in respect of the Body’s activities and initiatives. Accordingly, a budget is provided for ensuring support for meetings, honoraria, hosting costs and other aspects of robust governance.
- **Core Program Costs** – The Body is expected to function as a backbone for anti-racism efforts across Edmonton. As such, much of its work is to be done in partnership with community organizations. This will essentially involve a ‘hybrid distribution’ of delivery, in which the Body will directly undertake some projects, while other projects will be undertaken by various community organizations. To this end, it is envisioned the Body will disburse funds to community organizations to support coordination, expansion, amplification and gap-filling of anti-racism initiatives. At full strength, up to \$600,000 of the Body’s budget could be disbursed to community partners.

Anti-Racism Grants

Though not presently included in the budget recommended by our Panel, another budgetary and capacity component to consider is the City of Edmonton’s Anti-racism Grant Program.

The Anti-racism Grant Program has three desired outcomes:

- Edmontonians will be more aware of racism and its impact and have a greater understanding of how to take action to address it;
- Edmontonians will be knowledgeable of the community organizations that are working to dismantle individual and structural racism;
- Edmontonians will work together to build a diverse, inclusive and equitable city.

On its face, the Anti-racism Grant Program is in alignment with the mission and goals of the Body. The structure of the Anti-racism Grant Program also aligns naturally with the Body, with grants intended to support anti-racism projects throughout community, including granting streams for:

- activating and animating projects and events led by and supporting youth and seniors, with priority for intercultural and intergenerational anti-racist initiatives;

- projects by community organizations that address barriers to participation, promote healing and reconciliation, combat structural racism and support sustaining change;
- research activities led by communities impacted by racism; and
- supporting stories led by underrepresented communities that shift narratives on racism.

One can readily anticipate that the Anti-racism Grant Program is likely to support the same types of projects that the Body will support. While it is positive to have such supplementary resources to support anti-racism work in Edmonton, our Panel believes it would make sense to formalize alignment between the Anti-racism Grant Program and the Body. This would help ensure that resources are strategically deployed in optimal and coordinated ways to realize bigger impacts across Edmonton. By contrast, a lack of formal alignment runs the risk that resources might be deployed in duplicate fashion or in ways that inadvertently run at cross-purposes.

Accordingly, our Panel recommends that the Body be given authority for the administration and distribution of the Anti-racism Grant Program.

IN CLOSING

The independent anti-racism body has the potential to significantly advance work across our city to dismantle systemic racism and enhance inclusion. Fully realizing that potential will require two key conditions.

One is connection to community. A central premise of this Body is that it will be based in community, rather than in Western or colonial institutions. This creates an imperative for the Body to, at all times, work diligently on behalf of communities and maintain strong relationships with communities. Only by nurturing these roots and connections will the Body have the strength and credibility to carry out its mission.

Another is perseverance. Our Panel knows that anti-racism work requires dedication and persistence. The journey is not linear, and can be exhausting. As a backbone organization with a real budget, the Body will have the capacity to help communities persevere in their efforts to dismantle systemic racism and enhance inclusion.

Edmontonians pride themselves on having an open, welcoming and diverse city that has opportunities for all. With this Body in place, working in collaboration with communities, our city can make meaningful headway in creating a more inclusive and equitable Edmonton that justifies this pride.

APPENDIX A: PANEL MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Panel Members at the time of report submission

Andre Tinio (Chair) – Andre is a registered social worker and holds the role of Professional Practice Associate with the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW). Andre provides ACSW registrants with practice support, ethical consultation, and is the lead staff member for the continuing competence program. Andre has diverse skills, professional experience, and lived experience that is aligned with the work of the Anti-Racism Advisory Panel. Andre was also a member of the City of Edmonton’s Community Safety and Well-being Task Force and is a proud board member with the Edmonton John Howard Society.

Terri Cardinal – Terri Cardinal is a nêhiyaw woman from Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Treaty 6 Territory. Terri works at MacEwan University, where she is an Associate Vice President- Indigenous Initiatives & Engagement and a sessional instructor in Social Work. She has previously worked in First Nations communities developing and implementing culturally appropriate programming for First Nations families while mentoring front line workers in the Health and Social Work field. In 2022, Terri assisted on a project with Blue Quills University as the Indian Residential School Coordinator in the search for unmarked graves. She completed her clinical MSW specializing in trauma and is currently pursuing her PhD in Social Work with the University of Calgary. Terri's research and passion focuses on ceremony is healing, First Nations end of life traditional practices, and nêhiyaw trauma informed practices & love. In her aspirations, she has been a part of creating and supporting many First Nations films and resources. She advocated and co-led the City of Edmonton Indigenous naming committee in 2020. Terri is the co-host and co-creator of “2 Crees in a Pod”, a podcast that amplifies Indigenous voices to honor Indigenous helping practices. In addition, along with her colleague, Amber Dion, she delivers nêhiyaw trauma informed practices and Indigenous Love workshops with Indigenous communities. She sits as a member of the Social Work National Indigenous Accreditation Board and the external Indigenous Advisory Council for Edmonton Public Schools. Terri chairs the Indigenous Advisory Council for MacEwan University and has led Indigenous focused lectures internationally.

Jackie Liu – Jackie currently holds the position of Chief Impact Officer with Homeward Trust Edmonton. Jackie is a key contributor in the community in regards to the execution of Edmonton’s Plan to End Homelessness. In addition, Jackie is currently a member of the Board of Directors, Chinatown Transformation Collaborative (CTC). Within the CTC, Jackie is able to draw upon experience(s) and knowledge in homelessness, health, and the social sector to build bridges and connection in the Chinatown community (including the Chinese Benevolent Association and the Business Improvement Association).

Janice Makokis – Janice is a proud nêhiyaw (Cree) woman from the Saddle Lake Cree Nation, in Treaty No. 6 territory. She is a legal advisor to a First Nation and is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Law, University of Windsor. She is an Indigenous legal scholar, advisor, Indigenous researcher and an educator. She has over 20 years of experience working with Indigenous peoples and elders in the area of Indigenous laws, Indigenous rights, Treaty advocacy, Indigenous governance and international Indigenous rights advocacy. Janice has also spent the last ten years working on initiatives that promote intercultural understanding, reconciliation, anti-racism, Treaty education and diversity, equity and inclusion. Janice is a co-producer of a new docu-film entitled “Awasisak Our Future: Our Children Are Our Future”, which tells the story of a group of Treaty walkers who embark on a learning journey. The walkers have conversations about the importance of Treaties, the Treaty relationship, Treaty obligations and the work required for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to work together for the betterment of future generations.

Shafana Mitha – Shafana currently holds the position of Principal, aKollage Consulting Inc. Shafana has supported community stakeholders in Alberta and other provinces in implementing new EDI policies and visions for their organizations. Shafana has led community stakeholder conversations addressing current

systemic barriers in these organizations and has produced recommended strategies to support these communities. In addition to Shafana's other experiences, she brings knowledge and lessons learned from involvement in the creation of an anti-racism committee at the provincial level.

Netta Phillet – Netta Phillet has a degree in Religious Studies and since 2006 has been the Executive Director of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education & Action. She is active in different capacities at Beth Shalom Synagogue, on the boards of the M. Gandhi Canadian Foundation for World Peace and the Jewish Archives & Historical Society of Edmonton & Northern Alberta, and was a founding member of the Phoenix Multi Faith Society for Harmony. For over 30 years she has been a sister in the Arab/Jewish Women's Peace Coalition. A significant focus of her volunteer life is inter/intra faith dialogue and the place of women in religious ritual and observance.

Debby Shoctor – For seven years until her retirement, Debby served as the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, managing a complex organization run by staff and volunteers. Throughout Deborah's career and work as CEO of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, she came into contact with many diverse cultural communities in Edmonton through involvement with the Heritage Days Festival, meetings with City Councillors, Provincial and Federal Ministers, and through her work as Chair of the Jewish Community Liaison Committee of the Chief's Advisory Committee of the Edmonton Police Service, the EPS Hate Crimes Unit and other community groups such as the John Humphries Centre and the Phoenix Society for Faith and Harmony. She also served as a founding member of the Edmonton Heritage Council, and President of the Archives Society of Alberta, as well as the Archivist for the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta, as well as the Western Regional Director for B'nai Brith Canada.

Sam Singh – Sameer Singh is a past member of the City's Anti-Racism Advisory Committee (ARAC) and one of the founders of the Edmonton Shift Lab, a social innovation project developing anti-racism prototypes for the community. Previously, he worked in strategic planning & business development roles at the City of Edmonton, the University of Alberta and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. He also served as a co-chair of MADE (Media Architecture Design Edmonton), the international coordinator of the 2017 World Indigenous Nations Games and on the WinterCity committee, and directed a documentary about the Prairies' only male bellydancer. He is a Millwoods born-and-raised Edmontonian.

Elaine Tran – Elaine Tran (she/her) is the daughter of Vietnamese refugees and a northside born-and-raised Edmontonian. She currently holds the role of Writer/Editor at the Government of Alberta, and is a proud Local 002 Chapter 002 Council Representative of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE). As a student, Elaine championed anti-racism; equity, diversity and inclusion; and human rights through the MacEwan University Vietnamese Students' Alliance (MUVSA) and Human Rights, Diversity and Equity (HuRDE) student groups. From 2022-2023, she was Vice President Student Life of the Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU), where she advocated for and represented the interests and needs of over 18,000 students, overseeing a portfolio of anti-racism, anti-sexual violence, mental health, and student wellness initiatives. Elaine is proud to have contributed her lived experience, perspective as a first-generation student and young professional, and knowledge and skills to the Anti-Racism Panel. She is grateful to have learned from and shared space with fellow Panel members to build a city that is more equitable, inclusive, and vibrant.

Contributing Members who have stepped away over time

Dr. Amer Abuhamed – Amer currently holds the position of Policy Coordinator with Alberta's Métis Relations Branch. Amer has assumed positions and worked on numerous projects focused on anti-racism, equity, and human rights. Amer is a resettled refugee to Canada and anti-racism continues to be at the centre of interest.

Kyla Amrhein – Kyla currently leads the Edmonton Public Schools Foundation representing Edmonton's 215 public schools and more than 109,000 students. Kyla has several years of governance, financial management and not-for-profit leadership experience.

Nadira Barre – Nadira currently holds the position of Director of Equity at Norquest College and collaborates with Executive and Senior leadership on the redesign of policy, procedures, and processes to address systemic inequities within the College. Nadira also advises other post-secondary institutions both locally and nationally on navigating issues of systemic racism.

Antonio Flores – Tony Flores is a retired public servant and a para-athlete. Tony worked for the Government of Alberta and was the first disability advocate of the Province of Alberta. He was appointed by the Alberta government in 2018 and had a legislative mandate under the *Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Act*. Tony appreciated his inaugural role as he was able to meet many Albertans with disabilities across the province. He learned and understood the many issues they faced on a daily basis and used these learnings to inform policy makers and bring about positive change. Tony also led a team in his Office to support individual Albertans with disabilities who required immediate advocacy supports. Tony's style of advocacy is collaborative, and he values community partnership. Tony is also an avid sportsman. He has competed as a para-athlete in wheelchair racing, para-nordic (cross country skiing), and para-canoe (sprint kayaking/canoe) events. He was a member of the Canadian Paracanoe Team and was a Canadian Champion. He immigrated to Canada from the Philippines forty years ago and appreciates the great opportunities he has had in this country and the City of Edmonton. Tony gives back by volunteering, including mentoring and coaching upcoming para-athletes, and sitting on civil society boards.

Dr. Evelyn Hamdon – Evelyn currently holds the position of Senior Advisor Equity and Human Rights, Office of the Provost, at the University of Alberta. As a Muslim woman of colour of middle eastern background, Evelyn brings lived experience and knowledge from a career of working with all levels of government, business, and not-for-profit organizations to support the development of processes and institutional structures that are fair, accessible, and free of racism.

Dr. Tibetha Kemble – Tibetha currently holds the position of Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences with Norquest College. Tibetha is a strategic leader with lived experience as an Indigenous Person and has been resolutely focused on navigating systems and designing responsive strategic interventions that ensure Indigenous peoples have access to and are meaningfully included and involved in systems and structures where they have been historically marginalized and excluded.

Dr. Dunsy Strohschein – Dunsy currently holds the position of Director, Lived Experience Research for EndPovertyEdmonton. Dunsy has lived experience as a Nigerian-Canadian along with several years of experience working in diverse corporate and academic environments with strong backgrounds in community-based research and navigating different cultures, conducting systematic reviews, research/report writing and project leadership.