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Item No. 11.1.10
Halifax Regional Council
June 8, 2021

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by 
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 6, 2021

SUBJECT: Framework for Anti-Black Racism Strategy and Action Plan Development

ORIGIN

July 21, 2020 Regional Council motion (item 11.1.9):

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Karsten

THAT Halifax Region Council:

1. Authorize the Mayor, on Regional Councils behalf, program the years 2015-2023 as the International Decade for People of African Descent and sign the proclamation set out in Attachment to the [staff report](#) dated July 14, 2020 and,
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to develop an anti-Black racism action plan in support of the Proclamation and return to Regional Council for its endorsement.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, S.N.S. 2008, c. 38

s. 2 The purpose of this Act is to

- (a) give broad authority to the Council, including broad authority to pass by-laws, and respect its right to govern the Municipality in whatever ways the Council considers appropriate within the jurisdiction given to it;
- (b) enhance the ability of the Council to respond to present and future issues in the Municipality; and
- (c) recognize that the functions of the Municipality are to
 - (i) provide good government,
 - (ii) provide services, facilities and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality, and
 - (iii) develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PAGE 2

s. 34(3) The Council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the Municipality to the Chief Administrative Officer.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Endorse the Anti-Black Racism Framework, as set out in Attachment 1 of this report, which will guide the development of a strategy and action plan; and
2. Request that the Chief Administrative Officer provide annual updates to Regional Council on the progress of the plan.

BACKGROUND

Regional Council has expressed a desire to address anti-Black racism with the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and the community at large. In response to the July 21, 2020, Regional Council motion asking staff to develop an anti-Black racism action plan, an [Information Report](#) dated November 30, 2020, with an attached Project Charter, was presented to Regional Council in December 2020. The Project Charter will guide the leadership and the coordination of efforts towards the development of an Anti-Black Racism (ABR) Strategy and Action Plan.

Context

There is a long history of anti-Black racism in Canada. Slavery was part of Canadian society at the height of the transatlantic slave trade and systemic discrimination towards persons of African descent was an everyday reality for early Black pioneers. Many of these early pioneers faced de facto segregation across institutions and in every aspect of life. They contended with discrimination in employment and education; they fought against exclusion from public places such as restaurants, and theatres; and they were constantly underserved with public amenities that many in the mainstream took for granted. This cycle of systemic oppression has become entrenched in every facet of society and operates explicitly and implicitly at individual, community and system levels.

Researchers and advocates have also shown how pervasive anti-Black racism is across various establishments and its generational impact on people of African descent (Benjamin, 2003; Black Health Alliance, n.d.; City of Toronto, 2017)¹. For James et al. (2010) anti-Black racism is a form of racism directed towards Black people and rooted in “specific laws and practices that are responsible for segregation in education, housing, employment and within broader society”.² Likewise, Kumsa et al. (2014)³ qualifies anti-Black racism as “a virulent form of racism” sustained by the legacies of enslavement and colonization (Philips & Pon, 2018)⁴ In a similar tone, noting how prevalent anti-Black racism is within systems and

¹ Lorna Akua Benjamin, *The Black/Jamaican Criminal: The Making of Ideology* (PHD Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2003) [unpublished]; Black Health Alliance. *Anti-Black racism*. Available: <https://blackhealthalliance.ca/home/antiblack-racism/>. Accessed March 22, 2021; City of Toronto (2017). *Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism*. Available: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-109126.pdf>. Accessed March 22, 2021.

² James, C., Este D., Bernard Thomas, W., Benjamin, A., Lloyd, B., & Turner, T., (2010). *Race & Well-Being: The Lives, Hopes, and Activism of African Canadians*, Fernwood Publishing.

³ Kumsa, M.K. et al., “The Contours of Anti-Black Racism: Engaging Anti- oppression From Embodied Spaces” (2014) 1:1 *J Critical Anti-Oppressive Social Inquiry*.

⁴ Philips and Pon, (2018). *Anti-Black Racism, Bio-Power, and Governmentality: Deconstructing the Suffering of Black Families Involved with Child Welfare in Re-Imagining Child Welfare Systems in Canada*. *Journal of Law and Social Policy*, 28(1 & 2), <https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1298&context=jlsp>

structures, and how normalized it has become, the 2016 Employment Systems Review (ESR)⁵, conducted by the former Municipal Operations concludes that:

Systemic barriers may have evolved from historical practices (i.e., the way the organization has always done things) that may exclude members of the under-represented communities or place them at a disadvantage... On the surface, the policies and practices may appear to be neutral or even reasonable. Beneath the surface, however, they have a negative impact on members of certain groups.

The development of the anti-Black racism strategy supports recommendation # 73 of the ESR report stating:

HRM should acknowledge and put in place a plan to address anti-Black racism within the business unit. This should include education and training for managers, supervisors and all employees. It should also include celebrating African Heritage Month that will help employees understand the long history of African peoples in the province and their place in the community and organization. This will help counter the negative attitudes toward African Nova Scotians. (p. 123)

It is also important to not ignore the history of anti-Black racism and its manifestation – even in contemporary times – in terms of the relationship between the HRM and the Black community. Ten years have passed since HRM issued [an apology to Africville and its descendants](#) and many are still calling for justice for Africville. Most recently, the Chief of Halifax Regional Police issued an apology ⁶ to the Black community for the disparity in street checks protocol following the release of the [Halifax, Nova Scotia Street Checks Report](#). Many in the Black community continue to cite challenges to employment opportunities, lack of or inadequate infrastructure and service delivery, antiquated planning policies with unfavourable outcomes for the Black community as part of the negative experiences of structural anti-Black racism in their interaction with the HRM.

Furthermore, the 2021-2025 [Council priority](#) outcome of inclusive communities where “residents are empowered as stewards and advocates for their communities, and work with the municipality and others to remove systemic barriers” can only become a reality for the Black community if the Halifax Regional Municipality remains committed to addressing anti-Black racism within its structure.

DISCUSSION

The summer of 2020 was a defining moment where global consciousness was raised to a new level with respect to issues of race and race relations. Renewed interest around issues such as Black Lives Matter, conversation around anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism, and efforts to address racial injustices have been unprecedented. In the past year, individuals, organizations, corporations, communities and society at large continue to explore ways of addressing matters of racial injustice with tangible and sustainable solutions.

In the fall of 2019, the CAO tasked an internal Working Group to provide foundational information that would support the efforts of the municipality in addressing anti-Black Racism. Following Regional Council motion of July 21, 2020, directing the CAO to develop an anti-Black racism action plan, and the subsequent development of an ABR Project Charter, an ABR Steering Committee – with representation across Business Units – was established to manage the development and implementation of an ABR Strategy and Action Plan.

⁵ ESR Report - https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/accountability-transparency/2016_ESR_Report.pdf

⁶ Halifax police chief apologizes for street checks - <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/halifax-police-chief-apology-street-checks-black-males-1.5376868>, CBC, Nov 2019.

An Afrocentric Informed Process

The ABR Steering Committee agrees that an Afrocentric, culturally responsive approach that is inwardly reflective and accountable, and outwardly restorative and affirming of the agency, dignity and humanity of people of African descent, is essential for the success of the efforts of the HRM in addressing anti-Black racism.

Two Afrocentric principles, [Sankofa](#) and [Ubuntu](#) have been identified as overarching themes that will guide the collective efforts towards the development of an ABR Strategy and Action Plan. Both principles represent a positive and intentional response to the call to transformational action (attachment 1):

Project Charter Update

There are six key objectives driving the deliverables of the project charter:

1. **Address the issue of anti-Black racism in HRM with respect to HRM service delivery:** To effectively address anti-Black racism in connection to its service delivery, HRM must first acknowledge that anti-Black racism exists within its structure and put in place measures to address it. There must be an acknowledgement that on the surface, policies and practices may appear to be neutral or even reasonable but beneath the surface, they may have a negative impact on members of the Black community.
2. **Build upon the work that has taken place and that is underway regarding discrimination and barriers and create new and refreshed strategy and action plan to address organizational gaps and needs:** With a renewed effort to combat anti-Black racism, the HRM has embarked on several initiatives with specific focus on the African Nova Scotian communities. Few among these are:
 - a) [Africville Vision Process Motion](#): On April 6, 2021, Regional Council moved a motion requesting a staff report that will look at developing a collaborative process that will help create an Africville Visioning Process.
 - b) [Road to Economic Prosperity Action Plan](#) - On September 22, 2020, Regional Council endorsed and approved funding for the implementation of the African Nova Scotian Economic Action Plan in alignment with Halifax Economic Growth Plan.
 - c) **Windsor Street Exchange Reconfiguration** – The multi-million dollar project, funded by Transport Canada’s National Trade Corridors Fund, is currently looking at potential Community Benefit to Africville/ANS Community as part of the project.
 - d) **Cogswell District Project** – Engagement around commemorative ideas and exploration of community benefit opportunities for ANS and indigenous communities.
 - e) [Beechville Planning Strategy and Community Benefit Action Plan](#) – This planning strategy review will create new municipal planning documents for the community of Beechville, with a focus on responding to community concerns and opportunities. The goal of the Beechville Community Benefit Action Plan is to address matters important to the Beechville community that are outside the scope of municipal planning documents.
 - f) **Akoma Holdings Planning Application** – Planning staff continue to adopt a culturally focused approach to working on Akoma development application for the former Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children property.

- g) **Africville Interpretive Panels** – A collaboration with the Africville Heritage Trust and the Africville Genealogy to install 6 interpretive panels on the Africville site.
 - h) **ANS Employment Opportunities** – Several business units have been designating opportunities to the African Nova Scotians as part of our employment equity policy. Others have also been engaging in recruitment outreach focusing on the ANS community.
 - i) **Foundations for Aspiring Leadership cohort for African Nova Scotians**
3. **Develop an ABR lens to guide corporate decision-making:** The Office of Diversity and Inclusion/ANSAIO continues to work with senior leadership and Business Units in the development of ABR lenses that will be reflective of HRM's work with the Black community. This lens will furthermore be informed by the community through series of engagement sessions during the development of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan.
4. **Create an ABR Steering Committee to advise on and implement the goals of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan:** subsequent to endorsement of the anti-Black racism project charter, a steering committee consisting of staff at various levels of the organization, and across various business units was established. The committee has been meeting since December of 2020 and a term of reference has been developed to guide its work. Sub-committees have also been created to support the five short-term goals of the project charter (see #6 below). The steering committee has also developed a workplan with timeline and structure for its deliverables.
5. **Integrate the considerations of both internal and external partners into all recommendations and action items:** The development of the Strategy and Action Plan must be collaborative. Internally, its adoption and implementation must be supported by everyone, and at all levels of the organization. Similarly, the work must be developed in partnership with members of the Black community and with the support of the HRM community at large. Once developed, the Strategy and Action Plan must be co-owned by the community and the HRM and supported by wider groups across the municipality.
6. **Focus on five (5) tangible, clear goals to be accomplished in year one and craft realistic and impactful recommendations/goals and expectations for subsequent years of the multi-year plan.** Updates on the goals are outlined below:
- a. ***Develop a robust HRM-wide Anti-Black Racism Strategy to address both internal and external ABR-related issues with respect to municipal government service delivery:*** An Anti-Black Racism Framework has been developed to guide the development of a Strategy and Action plan (Attachment 1).
 - b. ***Create an internal African Nova Scotian Advisory Committee to help coordinate efforts of Business Units around ABR in the workplace:*** A terms of reference has been developed to guide the work of the internal committee which will have representation representatives from all business units and the anti-Black racism working group, Racially Visible Employee Caucus (RVEC). Plan is currently underway to begin conversation with senior leadership team around recruitment. It is expected that committee will be in place before the end of the first quarter.

- c. **Create an African Nova Scotian Advisory Committee of Council through a special Administrative Order (AO) to focus on engagement with and services delivery to communities of African descent:** a special administrative order has been drafted and is currently being reviewed by the Anti-Black Racism steering committee in collaboration with the Clerk's Office. A final copy of the AO will be presented to the Executive Standing Committee for Regional Council's consideration by the end of the first quarter.
- d. **Design and roll out a sustainable corporate-wide ABR awareness campaign:** Through the support of corporate communications, a framework for a robust awareness campaign has been drafted. The awareness campaign will support the Anti-Black Racism Steering Committee, the senior leadership team and each Business Unit as part of the organization's efforts to advance and promote the Anti-Black Racism Strategy and action plan. The awareness campaign will incorporate employee and community engagement, web-based information, social media efforts, media relations and issues management.
- e. **Create and implement training program/speakers' series focused on the topics of ABR and allyship customized and available to Business Units:** The steering committee is working with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Human Resources to explore diverse and creative opportunities for ABR training. The goal of the ABR training is to bring about sustainable organizational transformation. To be successful, this form of training must be embedded into the organization's learning and leadership development programs. The training must be able to raise the consciousness of everyone, at all levels of the organization about their own racial biases and prejudices and help move everyone beyond their comfort zone. Some creative ways to embed such training into the organization include: Self-Directed, Instructor Led (In-person or webinar), Speaker Series, Part of everyday work, and as part of a team project etc. Modules are currently being developed by the ANSAIO's and a business unit targeted one is being developed for Planning and Development. It is expected that this can be modelled for other Business Units.

Other Activities Informed by the Project Charter

- **Anti-Black Racism Program Coordinator:** A permanent full-time ABR Program Coordinator has been hired to support the work of ANSAIO as it leads the Municipality in the development and implementation of an ABR strategy and action plan.
- **Anti-Black Racism Grants:** D & I and ANSAIO, with the support of the ABR Steering Committee is engaging Community Grants to develop a framework for establishing an ABR Community Grant to support ABR-focused initiatives within the Black community.

An Overview of the Framework

The ABR Steering Committee, while committed to supporting the development of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan, realizes the importance of hearing from the community and providing them a space to inform and shape the process. Similarly, it also acknowledges the Project Charter objective of a process that will "integrate the considerations of both internal and external partners into all recommendations and action items",

Key Components of the ABR Framework (Attachment 1) are outlined below:

This Framework serves as roadmap for the development of the municipality's Anti-Black Racism Strategy and Action Plan. As a foundational document, it provides an outline for the required components and supporting work required to create an ABR Strategy and Action Plan, including the critical role of engaging stakeholders to inform next steps.

- **Background:** The Strategy must acknowledge the history and reality of people of African descent and connect the experience of anti-Black racism to the legacies of enslavement and colonization
- **Key Considerations**
 - Acknowledgment the dynamic relationship of colonial settlers and indigenous people and how that continues to shape race relations
 - History of migration of black people in the HRM
 - Demographic analysis
 - Legacy of enslavement and colonization
 - Manifestations of anti-Black racism
 - History of relationship between people of African descent and HRM
- **Purpose/Vision and Principles**
 - Clear purpose guided by Afrocentric principles
 - Set a vision statement with specific goals
 - [Nguzo Saba](#) guiding Principles
 - Two over arching themes of Sankofa and Ubuntu (discussed above)
- **Scope**
 - Review ongoing work, develop project team consisting of internal and external stakeholders
 - Develop tangible goals with external implications
 - Strong Internal Collaboration
- **Goals**
 - Culturally Informed Strategy/Actions
 - Community engagement
 - Leverage existing ABR efforts
 - Effective communication
 - Community Empowerment
 - Information Sharing etc.
- **Objectives**
 - Support and work with the community to identify areas of focus
 - Clarifies roles and responsibilities
 - Active engagement and Research
- **Areas of Focus**
 - To be informed by existing HRM's initiatives and the lived experience of the community
 - Examples – Inclusive Public Service, Equitable Employment, Community Engagement etc.

- **Phases**

- Four phases with timeframe from Winter 2020 to Winter 2022 and beyond.

Conclusion

While this report is intended to seek Regional Council's endorsement for the framework which will guide the development of an ABR Strategy and action plan, it equally serves as an opportunity to provide an update on the progress of the Project Charter and the work of the ABR Steering Committee. HRM is at a pivotal point in demonstrating its commitment to addressing anti-Black racism in connection to its service delivery, internally and externally, and this is one opportunity that, if properly implemented, can have significant historic ramifications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Anti-Black racism efforts and initiatives for 2021/22 will be accommodated through the approved Diversity and Inclusion budget primarily by a transfer from Reserves. Future budgets will be presented through the annual budget process as costs are identified through the development of the strategy and action plan.

RISK CONSIDERATION

In consideration of the history of relationship between HRM and the African Nova Scotian community, not endorsing the recommendation in this report carries with it a significant reputational risk.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

While community engagement will be crucial to the development of the ABR Strategy and action plan, none was required for the purpose of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose not to endorse the attached Anti-Black Racism Framework.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Framework for Anti-Black Racism Strategy and Action Plan Development

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Tracey Jones Grant, Managing Director Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO
902.490.3677 and Ayo Aladejebi Senior Advisory ANSAIO 902.490.3326

Framework for development of an Anti-Black Racism Strategy and Action Plan

This Framework serves as roadmap for the development of the Municipality's Anti-Black Racism (ABR) Strategy and Action Plan. As a foundational document, it provides an outline for the required components and supporting work required to create an Anti-Black Racism Strategy and Action Plan, including the critical role of engaging stakeholders throughout its development and implementation.

Background

An effective strategy must be based on an understanding of the history of Black people in Nova Scotia and an acknowledgment of anti-Black racism as part of the legacies of enslavement and colonization.

An internal Anti-Black Racism Working Group report to the CAO and other documents such as the [UN Working Group Expert Report](#) on the Condition of People of African Descent in Canada, [The Lord Dalhousie Report](#), the [Street Check Report](#), [HRM Diversity and Inclusion Framework](#), [Employment Systems Review](#) and the [African Nova Scotian Road to Economic Prosperity Action Plan](#) will serve as important references.

Historical, contextual and demographic research will be essential for the development and implementation of the ABR Strategy, including but not limited to the following key considerations:

- Where the Halifax Regional Municipality exists on Mi'kmaq, the traditional ancestral home of the Mi'kmaq people, it is important to acknowledge the reality of the relationship between early European settlers and the Mi'kmaq people and how this continues to shape the conversation around race and racial justice.
- The history of early migration and newcomers of African descent with particular focus and connection to the Halifax Regional Municipality.
- Demographic analysis of the African Nova Scotian community in the Halifax region (e.g. communities, statistics, etc.).
- Unpack anti-Black racism as a legacy of enslavement and colonization and describing how this has become ingrained within systems and structures of the society.
- Contemporary manifestation of anti-Black racism and its impact on the lived experience of community of African descent.
- Unpack the history of the relationship between the Black community and Halifax Regional Municipality.

Purpose, Vision and Principles

The purpose, vision and principles of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan should be informed by a collaborative approach through stakeholder engagement and be grounded in a clear purpose and vision guided by Afrocentric principles.

Purpose

A purpose statement will summarize why the municipality needs an ABR Strategy and clarify what the Municipality aims to accomplish through the strategy and accompanying actions.

Vision

A vision statement will capture what the Municipality hopes to accomplish with the ABR Strategy moving forward, with specific goals for key milestones over a set period (e.g. 2021 – 2025).

Guiding Principles

To ensure that the ABR Strategy will produce meaningful outcomes for both HRM as an organization and the Halifax region as a community, the ABR Steering Committee has identified the [Nguzo Saba](#) as essential guiding principles that will drive the work required to develop the strategy:

- **Umoja:** Strive for unity in our approach and in interaction with the ANS community
- **Kujichagulia:** Define common interests and make decisions that are in the best interest of the community
- **Ujima:** We have a role to play in the community – past, present and future
- **Ujamaa:** Work towards collective socio-economic strength of the community and meet common needs through mutual support
- **Nia:** Set goals that are beneficial to the community
- **Kuumba:** Use our creative energies to build and maintain a vibrant community
- **Imani:** Honour the community through our work, draw upon the best in ourselves, and strive for a higher level in all we do

The development of the ABR Strategy will also be grounded in two important Afrocentric themes: Sankofa and Ubuntu. These themes will guide the process of reflection and engagement; and they will provide a lens for analyzing and implementing the strategy and accompanying actions. The themes will become operationalized through collaboration with the community, partners and stakeholders.

- **Sankofa**

The principle of Sankofa¹, derived from the Akan people of Ghana, is a reminder that “it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind,” or “to reach back and get it”. Expressed visually as a mythical bird looking backward, holding an egg in its mouth. The bird represents society progressing toward a positive future by being guided by its past. The egg represents the nurturing of new generations that will benefit from and be protected by an advance shaped by lessons from history. Sankofa calls for a truthful reckoning with the past to acknowledge and understand our own history of institutional policies and practices and continued impact of systemic racism which have disadvantaged and underserved Black communities. To continue this journey of building an inclusive organization and equitable service delivery, it is imperative to learn from the past to effectively challenge and disrupt anti-Black racism.

¹ [The Power of Sankofa: Know History](#)

Figure 1. Essential elements of Sankofa



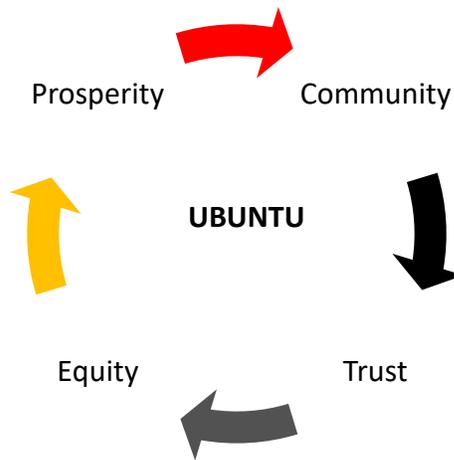
Sankofa provides a lens through which HRM can develop, implement and support the deliverables of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan by truthfully and reflectively looking inward and transforming from within to create possibilities for remedying long-standing disparities impacting people of African descent in the organization and the broader community. In this sense, Sankofa is a restorative, equity-aspiring principle. It will be understood and operationalized as an African-inspired principle to implant racial equity in policy, practice, and service delivery.

- **Ubuntu**

Ubuntu² is a phrase from Southern Africa which translates “I am because you are”. The philosophy of Ubuntu teaches that to be human is to recognize that the humanity and wellbeing of others is inseparably bound with our own. As a guiding principle, Ubuntu acknowledges human connectedness, our interwoven past, present and futures, embedded within a code of conduct to show “humanity towards others”. As a lens for this work, Ubuntu serves as a reminder to seek to repair and build trust and relationships, to ensure that human dignity is always at the core of our actions, thoughts, and decisions. The Ubuntu Framework is a lens through which the community engagement strategy will be developed, implemented and evaluated.

² [The African Concept of Ubuntu Should be at the Heart of Human Rights](#)

Figure 2. Essential elements of Ubuntu



The values and principles underpinning the African philosophy of Ubuntu and the concept of Sankofa are also embodied in and speak to the idea of racial equity³. The anti-Black racism efforts will seek to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation, it will uphold the significance of treating communities differently (tailored and targeted approaches) to produce equal outcomes so that everyone has what they need to thrive, wherever they wish to live, no matter their race. Together, Sankofa and Ubuntu will symbolize a convergence of internal and external efforts to eliminate the policies, practices, attitudes and societal practices that reinforce differential outcomes by race.

Scope

The scope of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan includes:

- Review of current work and initiatives underway which may impact the proposed goals of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan.
- Creation of the project team which includes internal and external representatives and the development of the ABR Strategy with specific action items to be completed during the multi-year plan.
- Develop tangible goals and outcomes which reflect internal needs and will positively impact services offered or supported by the Municipality.
- Work with all internal stakeholders at all levels of the organization, including unionized and non-unionized staff. (note: collective agreements will inform and provide parameters regarding potential actions and initiatives)

³ Center for Social Inclusion. (2017). [What is racial equity?](#)

Goals

The Framework's goals align with HRM's vision, mission and values while reflecting the needs and interests of the community

- Develop a culturally informed strategy and actions
- Make community engagement a priority
- Leverage existing ABR efforts
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders
- Empower community and encourage ownership
- Collect and share information
- Maintain accountability and be transparent

Objectives

The following goals of the Framework will be achieved by:

- Committing to supporting community ownership and guidance through the process of development and implementation
- Working with the community to Identify areas of focus for the strategy and accompanying actions
- Providing a foundation for a systemic approach to addressing ABR with the organization and its interaction with the community
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities of the HRM, partners and stakeholders in addressing ABR
- Actively engaging ANS community, HRM Business Units and other community partners and stakeholders
- Increasing collective knowledge and understanding of ABR and its impacts on a personal, professional, organizational and community level
- Leveraging existing ABR related work, studies and research to inform the process
- Drawing on the goals of the Diversity and Inclusion Framework to inform the areas of focus
- Aligning Strategy to the pillars of the [International Decade for People of African Descent](#)
- Providing on-going reporting, assessment and evaluation with frequent updates about the progress

Areas of Focus

The development of ABR Strategy must identify priority areas of intervention where ABR has done the most damage within the organization and society at large. These areas of focus should align with, and be informed by, existing HRM's initiatives around diversity, equity and inclusion and it should reflect Regional Council's strategic priorities. Examples of these can include: the foundational work of the internal Anti-Black Racism Working Group, the Employment Systems Review and the Diversity and Inclusion Framework.

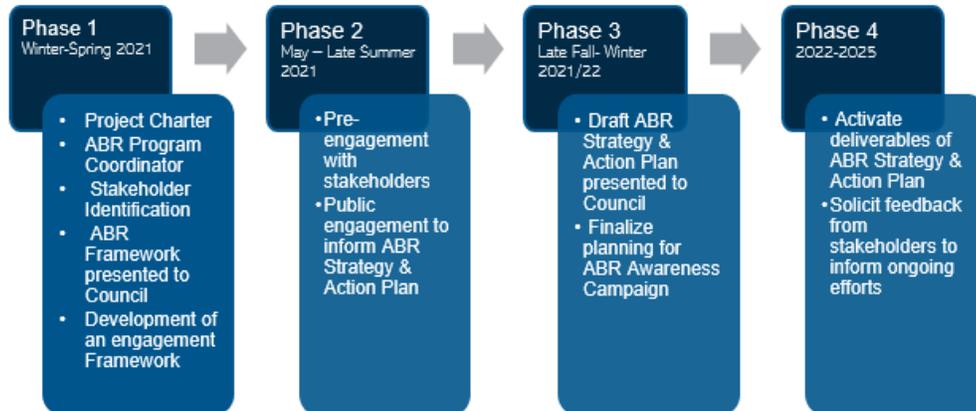
Most importantly, collaboration with the community and stakeholders, internally and externally, will help shape the focus areas for the ABR Strategy. In addition, these areas of focus must be meaningful to the community and reflect their lived experiences. Key areas of consideration may include but not limited to:

- Inclusive Public Service
- Equitable Employment
- Meaningful Partnership
- Accessible Information and
- Timely and Relevant Communication
- Policies and Procedures
- Community Engagement

The alignment, and collaborative approach will help complement the efforts of the municipality while acknowledging the live experiences of members of the Black community.

Phased Approach

A four phased approach is proposed for the development of the ABR Strategy and Action Plan:



Phases	Activities and Dates	Status
Phase 1: Winter 2020 – Spring 2021		
Project Charter	Project Charter developed and endorsed by the CAO - November 2020	COMPLETED
ABR Steering Committee	ABR Steering Committee consisting of representatives across Business Units was established - December 2020	COMPLETED
ABR Program Coordinator	ABR Program Coordinator hired - April 2021	COMPLETED
Stakeholder Identification	Identification of internal and external stakeholders - May 2021	IN PROGRESS

ABR Framework to Council	Draft Framework, which will guide the development of the Strategy and Action Plan will be presented to Regional Council in June 2021	IN PROGRESS
Community Engagement Framework development	ABR Program Coordinator, with the support of the Steering Committee, will develop a Community Engagement Framework to guide engagement efforts – Mid-May 2021	IN PROGRESS
Phase 2: May 2021 to Late Summer 2021		
Pre-Engagement with Stakeholders	Consult identified stakeholders to seek input into the Community Engagement Framework – Late May 2021	
ABR Community Engagement	Community engagement sessions to seek input into the development of the Strategy and completion of engagement report – Early June 2021 to Mid-August 2021	
Phase 3: Late Fall 2021 – Winter 2021/2022		
Completion and Presentation of Draft Strategy and Action Plan	Completion of draft Strategy and Action Plan – Early October 2021 and; presentation to Regional Council – Mid-November 2021	
ABR Awareness Campaign	Finalize planning for the ABR Awareness Campaign and begin roll out upon Regional Council’s endorsement of the Strategy and Action Plan – Late November	
Phase 4: 2022 - 2025		
Implementation and monitoring of actions in the Strategy	Implementation phase of the Strategy with ongoing monitoring and reporting to Regional Council and regular updates to the community.	