



**TORONTO FOR ALL:  
CONFRONTING ANTI-BLACK  
RACISM INITIATIVE  
COMMUNITY CONVERSATION**

**Facilitator Guide**

[www.TorontoForAll.ca](http://www.TorontoForAll.ca)



**#BlackInTo**





**1. Children & Youth Development**



**2. Community Engagement & Black Leadership**



**3. Health & Community Supports**



**4. Job Opportunities & Income Supports**



**5. Policing & The Justice System**



# WELCOME:



Thank you for contributing your talents to facilitating a Community Conversation on Confronting Anti-Black Racism. With your help, members of Toronto's diverse Black communities will have a productive conversation leading to a Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism.

## Facilitator Roles:

**To ensure that community members have a meaningful conversation, your role is to:**

- Promote discussion. Ensure that each participant has an opportunity to contribute, and keep the process on track and moving forward.
- Help participants review the information on the work sheets (you may have to read it out loud or give an overview and then allow participants to review in silence).
- Look for anyone having difficulty and support them by asking questions and writing for them if required.
- Designate a note-taker to ensure that the key agreements from the discussion are recorded. Notes are best captured in a way that participants can see and confirm what is written.
- You do not need to get everyone at the table to agree, unless they want to.

## Conversations will:

- Create a constructive space for a healthy dialogue
- Use an anti-oppressive framework
- Use an anti-Black racism lens
- Highlight the voices of Black people and honour their experiences
- Respond to the diverse needs and experiences of Black people in Toronto
- Promote clear communication so that everyone can understand and participate
- Provide opportunities for those who experience extreme marginalization to actively participate
- Encourage sensitive behaviours from those who carry power (institutional and community)
- Be self-renewing, allowing new voices and new leadership to emerge, including youth leadership

## **Suggested Format for the Community Conversation:**

The vision for the Community Conversation is an intimate, meaningful discussion between neighbours. This can take many forms. One form we recommend is the following:

- 3 facilitators per Community Conversation with 1 acting as Lead Facilitator/MC.
- 3 hours per session
- 3 tables with facilitator-supported discussions
- 5 - 10 residents at each table
- An identified note-taker for each table is helpful to capture input

<b>10 min</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; Review of the Agenda</b>	
<b>30 min</b>	<b>Large Group Discussion: Getting Started</b>	
<b>10 min</b>	<b>Background and Overview of Discussion</b>	
<b>1hr&amp;55mins min</b>	<b>Small Group Discussion at Tables:</b>	
	<b>15 min</b>	<b>Review Theme for Table Discussion</b>
	<b>60 min</b>	<b>Thematic Question 1: Getting to Action on Recommendations</b>
	<b>10 min</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
	<b>30 min</b>	<b>Thematic Question 2: Determining Roles for Action</b>
<b>10 min</b>	<b>Large Group Check-In</b>	
<b>5 min</b>	<b>Thanks and Next Steps</b>	

## The Community Partners

Eleven (11) non-profit, community-based organizations have formally agreed to partner with the City to host Community Conversations across Toronto. These organizations provide important services and programs in Toronto's Black communities. They reflect the diversity of Toronto's Black communities in age, sexual orientation and gender identity, neighbourhood, area of interest, etc.

### Each community partner will:

- Provide outreach for the Community Conversation
- Book appropriate space and ensure it is set up for table discussions
- Host the Community Conversations
- Organize and administer engagement supports to residents to increase access (food, child minding and tokens)  
**[The community partner will acknowledge City Councillor presence in the room and reinforce that this is an opportunity for the Black community to speak and invite City Councillor to listen.]**
- Alert the Lead Facilitator to any media in the room  
**[The community partner will advise the media that this a Black community conversation session and in order for residents to feel safe and comfortable it is not appropriate for media to attend. However, residents are free to step outside the room to speak with media privately. Also, community partners may provide the City of Toronto media contact: [media@toronto.ca](mailto:media@toronto.ca) – the Media Relations Team**

### The Community Partner will ensure the following Room Set Up for each Conversation:

- Registration/Reception Table where staff will:
  - welcome community members
  - provide participant packages
  - advise participant about child minding arrangements
  - administer tokens
  - invite residents to share their contact information, should they wish direct follow up on future stages of Toronto For All: Confronting Anti-Black Racism
- Space for refreshments
- Tables with 5-10 chairs for participants and 1 for the facilitator (round tables where possible), flipcharts, markers and tape

Any community groups and organization, or any other member of Toronto's Black communities are welcomed to use this guide to also facilitate a local conversation. The City wants to hear from as many people as possible. **Please send the notes from your discussions to [TorontoForAll@toronto.ca](mailto:TorontoForAll@toronto.ca) or call 416-392-4627 if you have any questions.**

# DETAILED AGENDA AND FACILITATOR NOTES:

**10 min**

**Large Group: Welcome & Review of the Agenda**  
**Agency Lead, Lead Facilitator**

<p><b>Set Up</b></p>	<p>Community members sitting at tables (random at this point). Lead Facilitator and Agency Lead are in the centre of front of the room.</p>
<p><b>Goal</b></p>	<p>To have community members feel welcomed, safe and valued.</p>
<p><b>Facilitator Role</b></p>	<p>If desired, the Agency Lead should welcome community members, point out where the rest rooms are, and introduce the Lead Facilitator.</p> <p>Lead Facilitator welcomes residents and reviews the agenda for the Conversation so everyone knows what to expect over the next 3 hours. At all times, ensuring that we are working with an anti-oppression framework and an anti-Black racism lens, and that everyone feels welcome to participate.</p>
<p><b>Talking Points</b>   <b>(Suggested points to cover)</b></p>	<p>Welcome to the Community Conversation Guide for the <b>Toronto for All: Confronting Anti-Black Racism Initiative</b>.</p> <p>On Nov 2, 2016, the City of Toronto, and its partner, OCASI-Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants launched a public education campaign to raise awareness about anti-Black racism in Toronto, and to equip people with the means to identify it, question it and challenge it. The campaign builds on the anti-Black racism work of Black leaders, activists, educators, and community groups and organizations, present and past.</p> <p><b>The anti-Black racism campaign was meant to provoke, make people think, and start and continue a conversation about anti-Black racism in our city.</b></p> <p>The campaign was part of a broader City of Toronto initiative on anti-Black racism. <b>The City, as a government, has a duty to make decisions and take actions</b> that help Toronto become an inclusive and prosperous place for everyone.</p>



## Talking Points

(Suggested points to cover)  
Continued

**The City recognizes that it has work to do.** So, it listened to requests from various Black communities. They have enlisted support from individuals, communities, organizations and partners, and now they seek to engage the Black community broadly during these conversations to bring about sustainable, meaningful and collective change.

To help make sure that its decisions and actions are relevant, meaningful, and effective, **a Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism needs to be built on the recommendations that members of Toronto's Black communities have made since 1975** and prior. The Action Plan also needs to be informed by historical and current climate, while ensuring to centre community voices and grassroots ideas.

To make sure both of these happen, the City partnered with leaders, organizations and groups from diverse Black communities to have Community Conversations structured around 41 years' worth of recommendation on anti-Black racism.

While many Torontonians like to think of our city as diverse and fair, the reality is that Black Torontonians experience racism daily.

### Racism takes many forms.

**It is systemic.** It is present in policies and practices that affect our day-to-day lives, including in housing, healthcare, employment, education, and access to services. It is in policing and the criminal-justice system. It is present in our laws.

**It is daily micro-aggressions:** - snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages.

**It is violent.** It shows up in police shootings, the disproportionate destruction of Black families by the child welfare-system and the overrepresentation of Black residents in the penal system.

### Your time is precious

We are grateful that you are choosing to spend 3 hours with your neighbours to help create a Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. Over the next 3 hours, we will discuss 3 questions. The first, in this larger group format. For the second two questions, our discussions will be done in smaller table groups to allow every person to really contribute. All notes will be collected and sent to the City staff, but we will talk more about that later.

To ensure that this is a respectful space for all community members to participate, please do not take any photos or record any audio or videos.

**Talking Points**

**(Suggested points to cover)  
Continued**

Before we get started on our first discussion question, we should set some Guiding Principles. Guiding Principles are helpful to make sure everyone feels welcome and respected in the conversation.

**Here are a few principles for your consideration, you may add or not use at all:**

- Assume everyone comes with good intentions
- Listen to and respect different opinions
- Challenge ideas not people
- Be thoughtful when expressing yourself
- If you need to make or receive a call, leave the room
- Stay on track (These are challenging issues and we need to get through a lot of discussion, so please stick to the agenda)
- Use the "parking lot" to capture thoughts that are beyond the discussion

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



**30 min**

**Large Group: Getting Started**

**Lead Facilitator**

<b>Set Up</b>	Same large group format.
<b>Goal</b>	To get community members talking from their experience and thinking about City action.
<b>Facilitator Role</b>	The Lead Facilitator will start the discussion by inviting residents to share their thoughts on the two questions. REMINDER: In closing this section, do a high level recap of what was heard. Always acknowledge and thank the participants for sharing.
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<b>Q1. What do you think the City does well for Toronto's Black communities today?</b>  <b>Q2. What could the City do better for Toronto's Black communities?</b>
<b>Talking Points (Suggested points to cover)</b>	There is much talent and success in Toronto's Black communities. Residents are contributing to all areas of city life. However, studies show that Black Torontonians are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, in the child welfare system, and are poor or precariously employed. Poor mental health, higher unemployment, and a lack of opportunity shape the lives of many Black Torontonians.  As the government closest to the people, the City of Toronto has a responsibility to create a city that works for all residents.  Q1. What do you think the City does well for Toronto's Black communities today? Q2. What could the City do better for Toronto's Black communities?

## 10 min

### Large Group: Background and Overview of Discussion

#### Lead Facilitator

<b>Set Up</b>	Same large group format but at the end of this section, will move to tables based on theme.
<b>Goal</b>	Help residents to understand why this discussion now, how the discussions are shaped, and the focus on action.
<b>Facilitator Role</b>	<p>The Lead Facilitator will share the context for the discussion, explain the review of 41 years of recommendations, and how the thematic discussions at the tables are built on the recommendations.</p> <p>After the explanation, the Lead Facilitator notes which theme(s) will be discussed, designate the tables and ask residents to move to the appropriate table. Facilitators will join their designated table.</p> <p>If a community member wants to work on another theme not being discussed, invite them to review the participant package and answer the questions for that theme individually using the package. Note that facilitators will check in periodically.</p>
<b>Talking Points (Suggested points to cover)</b>	<p>Over the years, Black leaders, activists, educators, community groups and organizations, and public servants, have created a lot of reports that examine the impacts of anti-Black racism and have made recommendations to address it. Over the past few months, the City of Toronto reviewed 16 reports from the past 41 years. We get it – NO more reports are needed! The desire of communities at this stage are for actions to be taken based on those reports.</p> <p>Some of these recommendations have resulted in key interventions that continue to address anti-Black racism in Toronto; others have been addressed and then dismantled; and many have yet to be enacted.</p> <p>In 2016 in this city, there have been a lot of consultations by different government bodies, asking Toronto residents for ideas. Some of them speak to issues examined in those 16 reports. We have been listening and heard clearly from communities: it's time for action, but how those actions are taken, who takes the leads and the overall process surrounding these actions matter!</p> <p>The Community Conversations are structured around the recommendations from those existing anti-Black racism research studies and reports. We grouped more than 113 recommendations</p>

## Talking Points

(Suggested points to cover)  
Continued

into 5 themes to make the conversation(s) about them easier. The purpose of these conversations is to hear from Black Torontonians about how these recommendations should be implemented by the City of Toronto in collaboration with Black communities.

The results of all the Community Conversations will be compiled by City staff with help from Black leaders to inform the Action Plan to address the impacts of anti-Black racism on Black Torontonians.

As we mentioned earlier, for this next portion of the conversation, there will be two questions for discussions which will be done in smaller table groups to allow every person to contribute. These questions are structured around the recommendations from existing anti-Black racism research studies and reports. We grouped the recommendations into 5 themes to make the conversation(s) about them easier. The themes are:

1. Children & Youth Development
2. Community Engagement & Black Leadership
3. Health & Community Supports
4. Job Opportunities & Income Supports
5. Policing & The Justice System

[Facilitator writes Themes on white board or flipchart]

[Other Facilitators note how many hands per theme and based on majority, chooses up to 3 themes (all 3 tables could discuss one theme, 3 different themes or two tables discuss the same theme). Facilitator takes printed Themes and places a Theme on each table.]

Thank you. Themes [Name the themes] have been selected for today's Community Conversation. [Point which table is which theme.] Please choose your Theme for discussion and move to the table of the theme you would like to discuss.

A facilitator will be at each table to support the conversation.

All notes will be collected and sent to the City staff, but we will talk more about that later.

## 60 min

### Thematic Question 1: Getting to Action on Recommendations Table Facilitators

<b>Set Up</b>	Same thematic table groups.
<b>Goal</b>	To focus the group on brainstorming meaningful steps that could be taken to advance the key recommendations under the theme.
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<p>Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.</p> <p><b>Q1. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented?</b></p>
<b>Facilitator Role</b>	Get the group brainstorming meaningful actions and documenting their ideas. Ensure conversation is captured in participant note sheets and, or flipchart paper
<b>Talking Points (Suggested points to cover)</b>	<p>Many Torontonians feel that something needs to change in this <b>[Name the Theme]</b></p> <p>Your ideas are important to creating action on this theme. Below, are recommendations from 41 years' worth of reports and research, and also some of the changes that have been made because of community voice.</p> <p>Black communities have made many recommendations over the past 41 years in order to improve <b>[Facilitator refers to Theme for discussion]</b>..</p> <p><b>Think about the recommendations that you have experience with or passion about.</b></p> <p><b>Q1. What are your ideas for how the recommendation(s) should be implemented?</b></p>

## 10 minute break

Lead Facilitator lets the community members know that it is time for a 10 minute break, times the break, and calls everyone back to the tables to complete the conversations



## 30 min

### Thematic Question 2: Determining Roles for Action Table Facilitators

<b>Set Up</b>	Same thematic table groups. See: What the City can do list from Participant Package (page 5)
<b>Goal</b>	To have community members specify who they believe should do what.
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<p><b>Q2a. What role(s) should the City play in taking action?</b></p> <p><b>Q2b. How would you like to see Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions?</b></p>
<b>Facilitator Role</b>	Get the group brainstorming roles and documenting their ideas.
<b>Talking Points</b>  <b>(Suggested points to cover)</b>	<p><b>[See sheet in Participant Package (page 5)]</b></p> <p><b>What can the City of Toronto really do.</b>          With three levels of government in Canada (City of Toronto, Province of Ontario, Government of Canada), it can be hard to keep track of who does what. The city government is the closest level of government to residents. The City has many roles to play in creating an equitable Toronto. The City can make policies and regulations to govern behaviour. It can create, fund and administer services. It can influence hiring practices. It can invest in community leadership and support community capacity. There are also limitations to the City’s authority. Some changes must be done by the Province or Federal Government. In these instances, the City can advocate to the Province and the Federal Government to achieve change. Here is a list of the policies and programs that City decisions and Budget can effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Peoples</li> <li>• Advocate to the Provincial and Federal Governments for Funding and Change in Legislation</li> <li>• Arts and Culture Facilities/Events</li> <li>• Bylaw Enforcement</li> <li>• Child Care</li> <li>• City Planning</li> <li>• Community Development</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Consultation and Engagement</li> <li>• Court Services</li> <li>• Economic Development</li> </ul>

**Talking Points**

*(Suggested  
points to cover)  
Continued*

- Emergency Medical Services
- Employer
- Employment Programs
- Environment
- Equity, Diversity & Human Rights
- Fire Protection
- Funding to Community Agencies
- Housing / Affordable Housing
- Hydro Services
- Libraries
- Municipal Licensing (Animals, Buildings, Businesses)
- Parking
- Parks and Forestry
- Policing
- Public Health
- Public Transit
- Recreation and Community Centres
- Seniors' Homes
- Settlement
- Shelters and Transitional Homes
- Social Assistance and Social Services
- Social Policy
- Streets and Roads
- Taxation
- Toronto Community Housing
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Waste and Recycling Services
- Water and Sewage
- Youth Services

**Q2a. What role(s) should the City play in taking action?**

**Q2b. How would you like to see Black communities involved in the implementation of these actions?**

## 10 min

### Large Group: Check-In

#### Lead Facilitator

<b>Set Up</b>	Lead Facilitator returns to front or centre of room and calls everyone's attention back to the full room. Participants do not move seats, just their focus.
<b>Goal</b>	To end table discussions and return to the large group with a chance for community members to briefly share any insights from discussions.
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<b>Q1. Were there any surprises for you?</b> <b>Q2. Did you hear any new ideas in the discussion?</b>
<b>Facilitator Role</b>	Transition back to large group from table discussions and give a chance to participants to debrief through popcorn style.
<b>Talking Points</b> <b>(Suggested points to cover)</b>	Thank you for sharing your ideas in the small group discussions. Let's take a moment to check in. <b>Q1. Were there any surprises for you?</b> <b>Q2. Did you hear any new ideas in the discussion?</b>  Anything that you want to add to this conversation that has not already been shared?

## 5 min

### Large Group: Thanks and Next Steps

#### Lead Facilitator

<b>Set up</b>	Same large group set up.
<b>Goal</b>	To have community members feel appreciated for their participation and have clarity on what comes next.
<b>Facilitator Role</b>	Tell participants that all feedback will be going to the City Remind participants that they can also provide feedback on-line – <a href="http://www.TorontoForAll.ca">www.TorontoForAll.ca</a>
<b>Talking Points</b>  <b>(Suggested points to cover)</b>	<p>Thank you for such a rich, honest and focused discussion.</p> <p><b>So here is what comes next:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will collect all the notes taken throughout our discussions today.</li> <li>2. Your ideas will help create a Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. All feedback from the conversations and online will be collected and shared with City staff who work on social development and equity issues.</li> <li>3. City staff will analyze and summarize all the ideas.</li> <li>4. Summaries of the ideas for the Action Plan will be posted on <a href="http://www.TorontoForAll.ca">www.TorontoForAll.ca</a></li> <li>5. The City will host a city-wide dialogue on the draft Anti-Black Racism Action Plan.</li> <li>6. City Council will review and consider the Action Plan for implementation in partnership with Black communities.</li> </ol> <p>And if by chance, later today, or this weekend, you realize you have more to say, you can provide additional feedback on-line – <a href="http://www.TorontoForAll.ca">www.TorontoForAll.ca</a></p> <p>If you want to receive a direct email about the next steps in this process, please fill out one the contact slips at the registration table.</p> <p>And if you have not done so yet, please sign for token if you are taking public transportation.</p> <p>Travel safe and thank you again for contributing your time, expertise and best advice.</p>





## Facilitation Tips for Staying on Track

- Your role is one of assistance and guidance, not of control.
- Always bring people back to the agenda.
- Create a “Parking Lot” system that captures an idea that is outside of the agenda. These ideas can be discussed, if time permits. Reassure the participant that the ‘parking lot’ will be submitted to the City with the rest of the feedback.
- Encourage participation, ownership and creativity in a manner that supports the group in getting as much relevant and well-validated information as possible into their discussions.
- Avoid contributing, evaluating, or thinking for the group. Remember, this is their process.
- Act as a referee by keeping your finger on the pulse of the conversation so you know when to move on or wrap things up.
- Remain sensitive yet unattached to expressed or unexpressed feelings, keep the discussion moving.
- Listen in order to understand rather than to appraise or refute.
- Support everyone to do their best thinking while respecting that everyone is unique in their way of sharing or not sharing.
- Skillfully summarize what was shared.
- Facilitation is about process – how you do something – rather than the content – what you do.
- Trust the group’s process.

